Conference Proceedings of the 12th Global Brand Conference of the Academy of Marketing

School of Business and Economics, Linnaeus University, Kalmar, 26th–28th April, 2017

Linnaeus University
Sweden
### Conference Programme

**Wednesday, 26th April 2017**

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<td></td>
<td>Professor Helen Anderson, Dean of School of Business and Economics, Linnaeus University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Dr. Clarinda Rodrigues, Conference Chair &amp; Senior Lecturer at School of Business and Economics, Linnaeus University</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Professor Stuart Roper, Chair of Academy of Marketing's Brand, Identity and Corporate Reputation Special Interest Group (SIG)</td>
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<td>A brand theoretic perspective on the Islamic State (Thompson)</td>
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|              | Dynamic nature of B2B brand equity: Investigating the mediating effect of brand relationships (Biedenbach, Hultén and Tarnovskaya) |                |                   |
|              | Explaining anti-brand community participation (Dessart, Veloutsou and Morgan-Thomas) |                |                   |
|              | **Tourism and Place Branding** (Session Room 2)  
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|              | Examining Tourists’ Perceptions of Luxury Restaurant Brands-Integrating Destination Image into a Value-Attitude-Behavior Model (Peng, Chen and Mai) |                |                   |
|              | Iconic Heritage Hotel Brand Identification: Visual and Aural Sensory Dimensions (Balmer and Chen) |                |                   |
|              | From Santa Claus to yodeling: International tourists’ brand associations of Swedish Lapland (Ek, Styvén and Strandberg) |                |                   |
|              | **Internal Branding** (Session Room 3)  
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|              | How do different types of contact employees deliver the brand to customers? (Boukis, Kaminakis, and Papastathopoulos) |                |                   |
|              | Innovative culture within organisations and brand identification among employees: a cross-cultural study of the automotive industry (Yoganathan, Ma, Grant, and McLeay) |                |                   |
|              | Brand Ambassador Programs - An analysis of the ‘ghost’ of internal branding instruments (Baumgarth and Schmidt) |                |                   |
|              | **Alternative Views** (Session Room 4)  
Track Chair – Adele Berndt |                |                   |
|              | Leveraging nascent co-brands: A literature review, suggested co-brand typology and case study evidence (Wright) |                |                   |
|              | The role of brands in the definition and preservation of ethnic cultural heritage (Round and Khan) |                |                   |
|              | Brief encounters with the discarded, degraded and different: the mere exposure effect of the altered brand stimuli (Grimes and Roper) |                |                   |
| 12:30 – 13:30 | Lunch                                                                |                |                   |
| 13:30 – 14:00 | SIG Meeting and Announcement of the 2018 Conference (Linnaeus Auditorium) |                |                   |
| 14:00 – 15:00 | Anne JM Norman, IKEA (Linnaeus Auditorium)                           |                |                   |
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|              | Stigmatised Brand Valuation: An Institutional Reconfiguration Perspective (Hirst and Beresford) |                |                   |
|              | The role of brand prominence: disparity in co-branded cause related marketing programs: Luxury vs non-luxury brands (Baghi and Gabrielli) |                |                   |
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|              | Utilizing the explicit and implicit sensory perception in gastronomy: Investigating the effects on selected brand-related performance indicators (Wiedmann, Haase, Labenz and Bettels) |                |                   |
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|              | Islamic hotels: this isn’t what I expected! (Alserhan, Rutter and Boulanouar) |                |                   |
|              | Successful Personal Branding on Social Media Building Brand Through Content on Youtube (Tarnovskaya) |                |                   |
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|              | Towards a definition of Brand Experience: an interdisciplinary perspective (Chevtchouk, Veloutsou and Paton) |                |                   |
|              | Brand experience: a multi-perspective analysis (Andreini, Solerio, Pedeliento and Zarantonello) |                |                   |
| 19:00 Onwards | Swedish Night, Restaurant Söderport |                |                   |</p>
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- Wellness as a means of personal branding – Identifying the cultural differences among the US and Finnish consumers (Hakala, Grénman and Mueller)
- Delivering a health brand promise through a value co-creation model (Centeno, Carrete, Arroyo and Peñaloza)

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A causal model of online reputation: a customer perspective
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The persuasive effects of packaging claims, packaging color
and packaging texture

Aagerup, Ulf
Halmstad University, Department of Business
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Purpose

For decades, the issue of environmental sustainability has been recognized as an important topic for marketers and society alike (Jansson et al., 2010, Leonidou et al., 2013, Powell, 2011). To counteract the environmental problems that face our planet, it is necessary to change consumer behavior towards sustainable choices (Sandhu et al., 2010). It is therefore important to identify factors that encourage consumers to act green, and to investigate the conditions under which they are most effective. To this end, this paper focuses on packaging. Packaging is relevant to consumer evaluations of green products and brands in several ways. The environmental impact of packaging itself can affect perceptions of products’ greenness (Nivaas and Deepikaa 2013), as can its design elements (Orth, 2008 #1009). Packaging can thus act as a cue for the evaluation of the whole offering. This paper however limits its scope to environmental claims on packaging, and more specifically to the effects of rational Vs. emotional claims on the packaging of environmentally friendly fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). As Hussain and Lim (2012, p. 173) note, the goal of voluntary environmental package claims is to provide information about the environmental superiority of products to consumers in order to convince them to make a green purchasing decision. This study will hopefully build knowledge on how to formulate such voluntary environmental package claims more effectively, and thus provide marketers with tools to influence consumers towards sustainable choices.

Previous research on green claims has mainly focused on advertising (e.g. Matthes et al., 2014) while previous research on packaging of environmentally friendly products has been concentrated on CSR certifications and labels rather than product claims (Bjørner et al., 2004, Dekhili and Achabou, 2015, Castka and Corbett, 2016). On a general level, it is important to study packaging because due to its presence at the crucial moment when the purchase decision is made, and consumers’ high level of involvement when they actively scan packages in their decision making, packaging has significant effects on consumer brand impressions as well as purchase intentions (Orth and Malkewitz, 2008, Underwood, 2003). What is more, it is especially relevant to study environmental claims on packaging (as opposed to environmental claims in advertising) because as Fajardo and Townsend (2016)
state “due to its proximity to the product, a marketing claim placed on a package is more believable than a marketing claim placed in an advertisement... Such claim-to-product proximity is taken as a signal of the marketers’ credibility, decreasing inferences of manipulative intent and thereby increasing claim believability and purchase likelihood”. For green products, this is crucial, as distrust of green claims is a common reason consumers refrain from buying environmentally friendly products (Chen and Chang, 2013). The effect of environmental packaging claims on consumers is thus an important, but neglected, area of research, one that this paper attempts to address.

In communicating ‘greenness’, it is common to either use appeals that are functional/rational or emotional (Hartmann et al., 2005), and there is evidence from advertising research that under the right circumstances, both types of claims can be effective (Matthes et al., 2014). However, as stated above, packaging is different from advertising. It is therefore important to understand not just whether emotional or rational green claims on packaging are most effective, but also how sensory stimuli of the the packaging design moderate their effect. The purpose of this paper is therefore to investigate how rational Vs. emotional claims on packaging of environmentally friendly products affect consumers’ brand perception and intentions to buy. What is more, the purpose is also to study how sensory stimuli (the color and texture of the packaging) moderate this effect. A series of experiments are carried out to test these effects.

Methodology/approach

Experiment 1: Main effect

Previous research (Matthes et al., 2014) on rational Vs. emotional advertising claims for green FMCG products suggests that consumers respond favorably to environmental claims Vs. neutral claims, and especially to emotional environmental claims. If this tendency holds for packaging claims, the resulting hypotheses are:

\[ H1: \text{Individuals will rate brands higher and be more inclined to purchase the product if the packaging features environmental claims than if it features neutral claims} \]

\[ H2: \text{Individuals will rate brands higher and be more inclined to purchase the product if the environmental claims are emotional than if they are rational} \]

To test the main effect a web based between-subjects experiment is carried out. There are three manipulations; rational claims, emotional claims, and neutral claims (control).
Experiment 2: The moderating effects of packaging color on the response to emotional Vs. rational claims

The color of a package invokes expectations about a product (Hannele and Harri, 2010). For food products, blue packaging signals rational benefits like health (Huang and Lu, 2016) while red packaging signifies emotional benefits like sweet taste (Lei and Ji, 2015). If the link between color and rationality extends to product claims, the resulting hypotheses are:

\[ \text{H3: Individuals will rate brands higher and be more inclined to purchase the product if emotional environmental claims are featured on red packaging rather than blue packaging} \]

\[ \text{H4: Individuals will rate brands higher and be more inclined to purchase the product if rational environmental claims are featured on blue packaging rather than red packaging} \]

To test hypotheses 3 and 4 a mixed-design experiment with one within-subjects manipulated variable (rational Vs. emotional packaging claims Vs. neutral claims) and one between-subjects induced variable per experiment (red color Vs. blue color) is carried out.

Experiment 3: The moderating effects of rough Vs. smooth haptics on the response to emotional Vs. rational claims

In a series of behavioral, neuroscience, and field studies, Wang, Zhu et al. (2016) demonstrate that incidental exposure to haptic sensation of roughness (vs. smoothness) increases individuals' enhanced empathic responses. Studies have found that empathy is essential in promoting moral behaviors and inhibiting immoral behaviors (Eisenberg and Fabes, 1991). What is more, empathy-related responding has been found to be associated with prosocial behavior (Eisenberg and Miller, 1987). Because green consumer behavior is generally considered both moral and socially desirable (Basil and Weber, 2006), it is reasonable to assume that a rough packaging surface that elicits empathic responses would promote environmentally friendly choices to a greater degree than a smooth packaging surface. Another consideration is that in order for a product to be perceived as environmentally friendly, it is important that consumers believe that the packaging in itself is eco-friendly (Nivaas and Deepikaa, 2013). It is possible that a rough surface suggests that it
is made by recyclable material, and that it is therefore more environmentally friendly. This could explain the observed effect. The reasons above lead to our final hypotheses:

\[ H5: \text{Individuals will rate brands higher and be more inclined to purchase the product if the environmental claims are emotional if they are subjected to packaging with a rough surface} \]

\[ H6: \text{Individuals will rate brands higher and be more inclined to purchase the product if the environmental claims are rational if they are subjected to packaging with a smooth surface} \]

To test hypotheses 5 and 6 a mixed-design experiment with one within-subjects manipulated variable (rational Vs. emotional packaging claims Vs. neutral claims) and one between-subjects induced variable per experiment (rough Vs. smooth haptics) is carried out.

The scales employed to measure brand perception and purchase intentions are 5-grade Likert type scales ranging from “negative” to “positive”.

The manipulation is the following: participants are exposed to packaging for organic coffee. The packaging consists of mock-ups of an article that has not been released to market. It is kindly provided by the Nestlé coffee brand Zoegas. The advantage of this approach is one of external validity; because the packaging is designed in the same way and by the same people that design Zoegas regular products, it is realistic. However, this approach introduces a potential variable that is unaccounted for. In the brand context, the fit between the brand image and the perceived attributes of the packaging could moderate the effects observed. However, Zoegas communicates its brand as environmentally friendly, so there should not be any major inconsistencies between the brand and the product. In this case, the added realism of using a real brand therefore trumps the potential impact of the brand/product fit covariate.
Findings

The expected findings are that participants will react positively to emotional environmental claims. Further, I expect to find that both packaging color and texture moderate purchase intentions so that the main effect will be amplified for packaging that is red (rather than blue), rough to the touch (rather than smooth).

Theoretical implications

As Hussain and Lim (2012, p. 173) note, the goal of voluntary environmental package claims is to provide information about the environmental superiority of products to consumers in order to convince them to make a green purchasing decision. Even though consumers express considerable skepticism towards ethical claims on packaging, ethical attributes can nevertheless influence their choices positively (Hoek et al., 2013). The expected findings extend the knowledge of how to formulate environmental claims on packaging, and on how to design packaging to promote green consumer behavior. The paper’s findings thus add to previous theory on green marketing, packaging as carrier of marketing communications, and sensory marketing.

Practical implications

The findings provide companies knowledge that will allow them to optimizing claim types and packaging execution. This may in turn lead to improved brand image and increased sales.

Limitations

While few studies using experimental methodology claim to have external validity, the main criticism of our work is naturally the fact that the manipulation is set in a lab. The paper is limited to lab experiments measuring attitudes and intentions rather than actual behavior. Future research would do well to account for this and observe the studied relationship in a more natural setting, using field experiments or qualitative techniques. On top of this, as the current experiment focuses only on product claims and sensory stimuli, future studies could include other potential influences on consumer choice, such as e.g. participants’ personal and social norms.
Originality/value

Building on previous studies of advertising (Matthes et al., 2014) and sensory marketing (Pantin-Sohier, 2009, Wang et al., 2016), the result of this paper will provide quantitative evidence of how claim type and packaging execution can drive brand perception and purchase intentions for green products.

Key words: branding, packaging, sensory marketing, green marketing

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The Paradox of Brand Similarity with Customer Uniqueness on Social Network Sites’ Satisfaction

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Purpose of the Paper
Brands’ continuous efforts to engage with consumers through Social Network Sites (SNSs) have proven to have significant and positive effect on brands’ performance and success (e.g. Pavlou, Huigang and Yajiong, 2007; Hanna et al., 2011; Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou, 2013). Most studies on consumer engagement within SNSs have mostly focused on online communities within a SNS such as Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and others, and rarely have these studies looked at the SNSs themselves. Few studies have examined the role of SNSs on consumers’ engagement with brands (e.g. Thorbjørnsen et al., 2002; Algesheimer, Dholakia and Herrmann, 2005; Shih, 2009; Kim and Ko, 2010; Wetsch, 2012). As competition is steadily growing amongst SNSs themselves, attention must be paid to the role that brands and consumers play in the satisfaction with SNSs. To do this, the paper identifies the paradox of brand similarity in relationship to customers’ needs for uniqueness. Thus, this study examines the relationship between consumers’ socialization within SNSs (Facebook), brand similarity, consumers’ need for uniqueness, and consumers’ satisfaction with the SNS.

The Theory of Uniqueness
The theory of uniqueness (Snyder and Fromkin, 1977; Snyder, 1992) argues that when the need to feel different from other people is aroused and, in events where the self-perception of uniqueness is undermined, it competes with other motives to protect and enhance such uniqueness. According to Tian et al. (2001, p. 50), consumers’ needs for uniqueness is defined as “an individual’s pursuit of differentness relative to others that is achieved through the acquisition, utilization, and disposition of consumer goods for the purpose of developing and enhancing one’s personal and social identity”.

The very essence of ‘the need for uniqueness’ is fundamentally based on counter-conformity as consumers with a high level of the need for uniqueness tend to deviate from others in their group. Feeling differentiated from other people has long been recognized to have significant impact on consumer behavior and consumer engagement (e.g. Simonson and Nowlis, 2000; Chan, Berger and Boven, 2012). Grubb and Grathwohl (1967) discussed the procession and
consumption of certain products that help consumers in developing and maintaining the
desire for self-concepts and in seeking differentiation that reflect self and social images.

Such conscious behavior generates avoidance of similarities with others leading to the loss of
interest in possessing products or brands that are commonly used by others. Such behavior
results in moving away from the shared norms with others attempting to reestablish self-
uniqueness / differentness (Tian et al., 2001). Avoiding similarity refers to “devaluing and
avoiding the purchase of products or brands that are perceived to be commonplace” (Tian et
al., 2001, p. 52). The enhancement of self-uniqueness occurs through acquiring symbolic
meanings from purchased products or engaging with brands though internal and personal
processes. The search for self-enhancement is intensive during low self-esteem or during high
perception of similarity with others (Lynn and Snyder, 2002), and can lead to a negative
emotion (Snyder and Fromkin, 1980). Moreover, the social comparison theory (Festinger,
1954) argues that an individual compares himself/herself with referent others, with whom
they share social identity.

The Paradox of Similarity

Brands are aiming at engaging consumers using different stimuli that enhance self-
perceptions of uniqueness (e.g. Grubb and Hupp, 1968; Dolich, 1969). Possessing brands
have long been seen as an integral part of our ‘selves’ (e.g., Belk, 1988; Aaker and Schmitt,
2001), signaling group/social identity (e.g. Escalas and Bettman, 2003, 2005; Muniz and
O’Guinn, 2001; White and Dahl, 2007). These associations/similarities between the social
group identity and brands “can vary according to their favorability, strength, and
uniqueness” (Keller, 1993, p. 5). Brand associations differ contingent on how they are
evaluated (Keller, 1993).

Brand similarity can motivate consumers who have the need to feel unique to look for a brand
with which they can reflect their selves better and become closely associated with. Thus,
brand similarity can contribute to a customer’s uniqueness only if this customer does not
perceive that the similarity with the brand is possessed by others within his/her social group.
In such situation, the social comparison theory (Festinger, 1954) is in action as customers in
need for uniqueness drives them to avoid similarity with others (Tian et al., 2001).

Hence, brand similarity is, on one hand, key in providing the feeling of uniqueness searched
for by a customer as engaging with and possessing it reflect the ‘unique self’ but, on the
hand, brand similarity when shared with others will not lead customers in need for
uniqueness to achieve differentiation. Instead it can lead customers to avoid engaging with
the brand as it will not contribute to the feeling of uniqueness. Therefore, while brand
similarity can contribute positively to customers’ need for uniqueness, especially when
moderated by perception of high similarity with others within the SNS, customers’ need for
uniqueness reduces satisfaction with SNS itself. However, similarity with the brand may not
have significant impact on customers’ need for uniqueness when moderated by low
perception of similarity with others within the SNS as those customers in need for uniqueness
will consciously avoid brands that shared similarity with others in their SNS. Based on this
brief discussion, the conceptual model was developed as follow:
H1: The higher the SNS’s friends’ likability, the stronger the feeling of similarity with brands.

H2: The higher the SNS’s friends’ likability, the stronger their satisfaction with the SNS.

H3: The higher the SNS’s friends’ likability, the weaker the need for uniqueness.

H4: Similarity with the brand positively increases the need for uniqueness.

H5: Similarity with the brand positively increases the satisfaction with the SNS.

H6: The higher the need for uniqueness, the lower the satisfaction with the SNS.

Figure 1 – The Conceptual Model

Methodology
Using a sample from the United States, this study conducted a survey on users of Facebook. The sample was recruited using Amazon’s Mechanical Turk (MTurk) crowdsourcing marketplace. The total useable sample was 341 surveys on which the analysis was conducted. The data was analyzed using SPSS 20 and SEM using LISREL 8.8. The scales were all adopted from existing scales from the literature.

**Findings**
The findings showed that there is a significant negative effect of friend liking on the need for uniqueness, alongside a significant negative effect of the latter variable on the overall satisfaction with the SNS. The resulting indices were chi-square $\chi^2 = 66$ (29 degrees of freedom (d.f.)) and $p$-value $= .0$. The model also had superior fit indices: $RMSEA = 0.058$, $NNFI = .983$, $CFI = .989$, and $GFI = .965$. The estimation of the model shows a good fit with $\chi^2 = 66$ (29 d.f.) and $p$-value $= .0$, $RMSEA = 0.058$, $NNFI=.983$, $CFI = .989$, $GFI = .965$.

**Figure 2 – Model Estimation**

Note: All hypotheses were significant at the $p < 0.001$ level
Theoretical Implications
Consumers’ experience on SNSs, namely Facebook, is mainly driven by (1) socialization with friends, (2) the brand experience based on friends’ endorsements, and (3) the social experience itself. The base of the social experience is driven predominantly by friends on the SNS. The similar they feel, the higher the need for uniqueness. Likewise, the lesser people feel similar to their friends on the SNS, the less they will feel the need to be unique. Our findings show that the increased level of customers’ need for uniqueness within SNSs should be a key concern for SNSs and brands alike as it would affect mainly the monetization model of the site. Although studies on the self-perceptions of uniqueness is limited, almost all studies have focused on pure consumer behavior and little or no attention has been paid to the role of brand similarity in enhancing/undermining consumer self-perception of uniqueness, especially on SNSs. Consumers’ self-perception of uniqueness influences their response to brands’ engagement efforts as well as their relationships with brands. The paradox of brand similarity in relation to customers’ seeking behavior for uniqueness has not been examined in previous literature well enough. This study contributes to existing brand literature by identifying and examining such paradox with significant implications for brands but also for SNSs which are becoming the favorite platforms for brand engagement.

Practical Implications
The paper discusses several implications for SNSs and brands that have significant presence on SNSs. As the competition amongst SNSs intensifies, maintaining satisfaction with users who may have high level of need for uniqueness is going to be challenging. This would happen in particular amongst SNSs that tend to attract brands that have high similarity level with users who develop similar social interest and liking. Accordingly, brands need to develop strategies to respond to customers’ need for uniqueness, even for those with high levels of similarity.

Limitations
The study focused on Facebook without specific focus on certain brands. We think focusing on similarity with few key brands may bring further insights into the paradox of similarity and its impact on brands and SNSs. While this study did not examine whether reduced satisfaction will actually lead those customers to switch to another SNS which can have implications for not only the SNS but also for brands within that SNS, future studies should examine this further.

Originality
The paper contributes to existing studies on branding within SNSs. This study identified and examined the paradox of similarity. It is the first to show how customer need for uniqueness can significantly reduce satisfaction with the SNS (Facebook). Although brands are looking for continuous engagement with consumer through enhancing brand similarity further, shared brand similarity with other customers can lead customer to void shared brand similarity and reduce engagement with the brand, hence impacting on brand relationship.

Keywords: Need for uniqueness, social network, likability, Facebook, brand relationship
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Re-awakening the senses: The Importance of Religiosity in Experiential Marketing

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Purpose - This research is primarily concerned with capturing one of the society’s dynamic entities and which shapes brand sensuality and brand experience through market interactions — namely, sensory cues: i.e. vision, sound, smell, touch, and taste. In doing so, the research aims to provide an enhanced understanding for interpreting how consumer experiences are influenced by the religious norms of consumers which are associated with sensorial cues and, in turn, how that affects their consumption decisions.

Methodology/Approach - This study employs a mixed-method research design, combining both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Even though the quantitative approach will be the dominant approach utilised, this approach will be bolstered by a combination of both an extensive literature review and a qualitative study (Churchill 1979; Saunders et al. 2007). Due to there being a lack of understanding about the phenomenon of religiosity and its relationship with branding-related constructs, it requires a much more expansive definition (Saunders et al. 2007). Therefore, to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, this research adopts Churchill’s (1979) paradigm, which requires a qualitative approach to achieve a better understanding by employing semi-structured interviews and focus groups (Dunn 2005; Longhurst 2010). This abstract will present the qualitative findings of the research, where in-depth interviews and focus groups were conducted with Muslim
individuals in Turkey to explore how brand experience are influenced by the religiosity of consumers, which are associated with brand sensuality and, in turn, how that affects consumers’ hedonistic behaviour and repurchase intentions.

The empirical context of this research proposes to empirically test the model in Turkey, a country which is frequently cited for its remarkable transformation in terms of reifying its Islamic values while also demonstrating that it has adopted a Western lifestyle (Ger and Fırat 2014; Karasipahi 2009; Sandikci et al. 2015; Sandikci and Ger 2010). It has been argued that globalisation, the age of advanced technologies, and the penetration of global brands across the world have all led the market to drive their strategy in a standardised way in the context of commercial, cultural, technological and societal premises. In the realm of consumption in non-Western countries, it has been acknowledged that religion is the main driving concept, which is embedded in all of the layers of an individual’s everyday life, including their consumer behaviour (Geertz 1968; Jafari 2012; Nasr 2009; Sandikci and Ger 2002).

In this sense, with its growing purchasing power (Pew Research Centre 2011), projected population growth, and the Westernisation of consumption practices during the early 2000s, practitioners and scholars have had an urge to explore Muslim consumers and their religion’s effect on their individual behaviour from all perspectives. Especially since Islam has been considered as a cognitive system, which affects each layer of an individual’s behaviour and their decision-making process (Delener 1990; Essoo and Dibb 2004; Hirschman 1983; Mokhlis 2009). Within this scope, many studies have scrutinised Muslim individuals’ consumption preferences (McDaniel and Burnett 1990), shopping behaviours (Bailey and Sood 1993; Essoo and Dibb 2004; Sood and Nasu 1995), and comparing them to the consumer behaviours of other individuals with different religious affiliations (Hirschman 1981; La Barbera ad Gurhan 1997). This has led scholars to explore the religious values of consumers merely as a segmentation variable within a limited framework (Sandikci and Jafari 2013).

Needless to say, proposing that Islamic societies and Muslim consumers be homogeneous entities is a misinterpretation and overlooks phenomena, which have shaped their societal contexts. As Jafari (2009, p. 351) highlighted, “like any other religion, Islam has also been historically indigenized in the cultural settings of each society,” with a large proportion of the cultural habits that societies had traditionally held and lived by before embracing Islam still existing in these communities.

Turkey presents an ideal consumption space and consumer population for the purpose of exploring Muslim consumers who represent themselves in the modern, Western style and who typify themselves as “Islamist elites” (Baskan 2010; Somer 2007) or the “Islamic bourgeoisie” (Kilicbay and Binark 2002). It is heavily supported by the literature that, with
the high visibility of Islam blending in with the modernized lifestyle, prosperity in terms of income has, correspondingly, changed consumption practices which have, in turn, led to Turkish society’s being referred to as “new age Muslim consumers” (Ogilvy Noor 2010; 2011). This phenomenon has, likewise, inspired other Islamic societies and marketplaces as well (ibid). Therefore, in this exploratory study, by adapting the framework developed by researchers to the Turkish context, this research attempts to deconstruct the Turkish Muslim individual, examine how their religion and religious values have been transformed, and explore the diversity of religiosity in Turkey.

Conducting this research in Turkey, a country which has been referred to as the 17th largest economy in the world (WorldBank Data 2016), the 6th largest EU economy in terms of GDP at purchasing power parity, and as taking upon itself a position of encouragement and leadership amongst all other Islamic markets in terms of its consumer dynamics (Euromonitor International, 2016; IDG Direct, 2015; The Republic of Turkey Prime Ministry Investment Support and Promotion Agency, 2015), this research will attempt to shed some light on how the religious values of Turkish Muslim individuals affect brand sensuality, brand experience, hedonism, and repurchase intention which they are exposed to in their shopping. Turkey is being permeated with shopping malls — places that consumers interpret as places in which to socialise while also receiving a pleasurable consumption experience (Manswelt 2005; Turkey Real Estate Book 2008). Seeing as shopping malls are common in other Muslim societies as well (e.g. Dubai, Kuala Lumpur), global brands should pay particular attention to understanding the social and cultural dynamics of non-Western markets — especially Islamic markets, since they are mostly driven by consumers’ religious values (Burgess and Steenkamp 2002; Sayan-Cengiz 2016; Temporal 2011). More specifically, since consumption occurs mainly in shopping malls, a brand’s specifying the particular marketing strategy to be adopted in the retail sector concerning consumers has become the top priority of global brands (Hopkins 1990; Winchester 1992). Since sight, smell, sound, and the other senses are of quintessential importance for delivering pleasurable experiences to consumers; this research will carry out a preliminary framework to gain different insights about brand sensuality, brand experiences, hedonism, and repurchase intention and how religious values shape these behaviours.

Findings- Even though the phenomenon of Halal has a complete understanding of the branding and marketing literature, the importance of religiosity in experiential marketing and its interaction with brand sensuality to deliver a positive brand experience has not fully comprehended yet. This research identified the harmony of visual, auditory and scent stimulus aligned with religiosity can deliver positive brand experience. Also, the importance of perceived value of brands also shaped the relationship between brand sensuality and brand experience collectively.
Theoretical Implications- This research has different objectives. First, this research aims to develop a model for explaining the relationship between brand sensuality, religiosity, and brand experience which shapes consumers’ hedonism and, subsequently, its impact on repurchase intention. More importantly, this research attempts to uncover the impact of religiosity on the relationship between brand sensuality and brand experience, which, in turn, affects consumer hedonism, and repurchase intention.

Practical Implications- For organisations and global companies to maximise their opportunities in emerging markets and to minimise their threats, they must be able to understand those target countries’ cultural associations and how they influence brand experience, hedonism and, in turn, repurchase intention via brand sensuality. Such knowledge could then be applied to both strategic and operational tactics in retail spaces to facilitate consumption. Understanding religious values and the dynamics of religiosity in such societies requires a conceptualisation that defines its dimensions and its domain as precisely as can be, not to mention its operationalization, which, subsequently, allows one to capture the domain that it represents. Therefore, the aim of this study is to offer a conceptualisation of religiosity in Turkish consumption-space — which is an unexplored area of experiential marketing — and to develop a measurement scale, which defines the conceptual domain of this construct.

Limitations- To gain deeper insights into the concept of experiential marketing, this research aimed to move beyond the company-consumer dyad of the experiential framework and focus on religiosity — considered to be one of a uniquely human experience (Otto 1923) in a specific country: Turkey. By extending both the conceptual and geographical scope of research on experiential branding by introducing religiosity, it might be worthwhile to investigate this study in other emerging economies or developing countries to identify different perceptions and trends in growing markets.

Originality/Value- By combining two important research streams (i.e. experiential marketing with the religious dimension of culture), this study primarily aims to shed light on how religious values influence the relationship between brand sensuality and brand experience and how they contribute to consumer hedonism, which, in turn, contribute to repurchase intention.

Keywords- Brand Sensuality, Islam, Brand Experience, Experiential marketing, Consumer behaviour.
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Islamic hotels: this isn’t what I expected!

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Keywords  
Tourism Brand Management; Hotel Branding; Hotel Marketing Communications;

Purpose of the paper  
This paper will present the results of a study which explores the variation between corporate values communicated via different media. The study is based on analysis of the websites of 20 Islamic hotels rated both “high” and “low” drawn from the Cresent Rating (CR) system. Analysis is used to identify variables which provided information on their Islamic values which are compared to the corporate values on their website, then guests’ reviews (eWOM) are used to gauge the difference between their expectations and experience whilst staying at the hotel.

Literature Review  
The literature which underlies this research relates to Islamic and corporate values, brand communication and electronic word of mouth (eWOM).

The Corporate Brand - Modern living and the “information age” often result in consumers being overloaded with information, which has led to the utilisation of signals by brands which are often used as “short cuts” in decision making. For example, the average consumer does not have time to review every single laptop on the market, so they purchase an Apple branded computer. Both practitioners and scholars now pay increased attention to corporate brands, their marketing communications and performance.

Many definitions of brand exist (de Chernatony and Dall'Olmo Riley, 1998) with the majority of definitions having been adopted by tourism scholars. Corporate branding is well established within the hotel industry (Bailey and Ball, 2006), as the corporate brand acts as
the promise and provides an expectation as to the expected experience. The brand promise must proliferate the entire organisation and closely align with experience of the brand (Hatch and Schultz, 2003). In the case of hotels, the promise may include a particular experience or facilities which must be provided. Deviation from this can often result in dissatisfaction.

The concept of corporate transparency has been explained as “the possibility of accessing information, intentions or behaviours that have been revealed through a process of disclosure” (Turilli and Floridi, 2009, p.105) and has gained importance in recent years due to the exposure of various deceptive practices which took place behind closed doors. When the actions of companies such as Enron, World-Com, and Tyco were exposed, members of the public reacted with anger, frustration, and scepticism (Rawlins, 2008). When an actual brand experience is different to expectation, dissatisfaction is a likely result. Increasingly this dissatisfaction is published online and in the form of electronic word of mouth

**Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)** - Until relativity recently corporate brands, used with a generous marketing budget, were seen as a cash cow for organisations to sell sugary food and drinks, designer t-shirts and jeans and all manner of other consumer goods at far higher than manufacturing costs to often ill-informed consumers. In the TV-Industrial complex age, corporate controlled mass media provided the perfect platform for such marketing transmissions and negative word of mouth provided limited damage. Today organisations are increasingly examining the way in which they conduct business operations and their values, and are being held to account via open decentralised communication networks which replicate traditional word of mouth, but are available for anybody to read. When a brand behaves badly or differently from what is expected, electronic word of mouth (eWOM) quickly highlights this. The hotel industry is no different in this respect. If a guest is satisfied that an experience met or exceeds expectation, a positive review may be written. When it does not, a negative review often ensues.

eWOM is an important source of influence for hotels (Litvin and Dowling, 2016) to both repeat and future guests. Approximately 80% of potential guests will check websites (such as: TripAdvisor, Yelp, and Expedia) reading between 6-8 reviews prior to their travels (Prabu, 2014). Ye et al. (2011) found that of those consumers that consulted a review website, 84% were influenced by the word of mouth when booking a reservation. Therefore how a brand experience reflects that of expectation is crucial.

**Islamic Hospitality and Corporate Values** - A growing number of Islamic Hotel’s offer their services to a growing number of patrons. An Islamic hotel emphasises Islamic values which guide the corporate brand and permeate all operations. As Islamic hotels draw their justification from the Islamic Shariah, they are clearly guided in terms of what kind of offering, behaviour or hospitality is required and also alerted to those things which are forbidden. Islamic hospitality emphasises congeniality and respect.

Islamic hotels offer a comfortable, ‘culturally compatible’ holiday experience for Muslims, by catering to their basic religious requirements. In addition to this, for any other guest, an ‘Islamic’ hotel can provide a ‘cultural and family experience’ (Moussly, 2011, Batrawy, 2015). Islamic hotels offer both tangible and intangible values to a holidaymaker, but the extent and nature of these values depends on whether the hotel is simply badged as ‘Islamic’ or is intended to provide a commercial version of traditional Islamic hospitality requirements (halal and tayyib).
Ultimately, as the success of a hotel can often be measured through the satisfaction expressed by its patrons, and the viability of a hotel depends upon its ability to conduct profitable business activities (Guilding, 2014), ensuring the correct communication of corporate values and ensuing experience is crucial.

Combining the above, this research is positioned at the intersection between the corporate communication of a hotel’s values and consumer response (eWOM) to these communication in relation to their experience. The questions being explored involve analysis of the corporate values of the hotel, the specific values underlying these concepts as communicated via the website, and the experience of guests, in relation to the Islamic offer.

More specifically, the following questions will be answered within this paper:

1. *Do hotels communicate their Islamic values through their corporate marketing communications?*

2. *How does eWOM react to the actual brand experience?*

3. *What are the most common corporate value propositions and discrepancies associated with Islamic hotels?*

**Design/Methodology/Approach**

This research considered hotel corporate value through an Islamic lens, brand communication and subsequent experience.

*Sample* - In order for hotels to appeal to consumers looking for a ‘Muslim’ guest experience, many hotels utilise the Crescent Rating system (or CR - the World's Leading Authority on Halal Travel). The CR is an accreditation system for hotels measuring particular criteria which are important within Islamic teaching. These characteristics include (but not limited to) the provision of a ‘dry’ (alcohol free) environment, availability of halal foods, and access to dedicated prayer space (Zulkharnain and Jamal, 2012). Muslim travellers increasingly consult the Crescent Rating website when booking a holiday or business trip (Zulkharnain and Jamal, 2012). The sample included 20 Islamic hotels, the most highly and least rated by the CR system, shown in table 1.
Table 1: highlighting the the sample of hotels selected for analysis.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>CR Rank</th>
<th>Hotel Name</th>
<th>Country</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Highest Ranked (10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Al Jawhara Gardens Hotel</td>
<td>UAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>Grand BlueWave Hotel Shah Alam</td>
<td>Mal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>PNB Darby Park Executive Suites</td>
<td>Mal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Mövenpick Makkah Hajar Tower</td>
<td>KSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Al Salam Holiday Inn Jeddah</td>
<td>KSA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sofyan Hotel Betawi</td>
<td>Indo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>City Seasons Suites</td>
<td>UAE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Royal Plaza on Scotts</td>
<td>Sing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Seri Pacific Hotel Kuala Lumpur</td>
<td>Mal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sonesta Hotel El Olivar Lima</td>
<td>Peru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lowest Ranked (10)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Vier Jahreszeiten Kempinski München</td>
<td>Germany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Hotel Hilltop</td>
<td>Srilanka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>City Boutique Hotel Sarajevo</td>
<td>Bosnia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
<td>Farah Hotel</td>
<td>Jordan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Tayih Landis Hotel Tainan</td>
<td>Taiwan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ambassador Hotel Bangkok</td>
<td>Thailand</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>Chaaya Tranz Hikkaduwa</td>
<td>Srilanka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection and Analysis - First, the Islamic values which underpin the corporate values were extracted from the CR website for each hotel brand. Second, the webpages were downloaded for each hotel and then underwent content analysis for identification variables which provided information as to their corporate values (within an Islamic context.) Finally, guests’ reviews were downloaded and content analysed (from “booking.com”) for each hotel. Content analysis was performed on each eWOM and classified as to the differences between expected and (brand) experience whilst staying at the hotel.

Findings and Discussion
This research measured the variation between the communicated and ideal corporate values of Islamic hotels. Findings showed that disclosure of values by Islamic hotels varied significantly across the sample, which suggests an issue of corporate transparency concerning compliant “Islamic” hotels. Clear contradictions were made between the values that appear on the CR system and the website marketing communications of hotels and the experience expressed by guests:

First, findings indicted clear contradictions between corporate values as expressed on the crescent rating system (used for certification purposes) and those experiences of guests (who seek a specific experience.) Previous research by Hassan and Christopher (2005) identified that Islamic organisations were subject to a higher level of scrutiny of their corporate values. However, our findings showed that many Islamic practices of which they claimed to be certificated for, were not being executed. These findings extend corporate values literature into the realm of Islamic business, as brands which did not provide experience consistent
with their Islamic values were shamed online at the expense of their corporate reputation. Henderson (2010) and argued that by attempting to please both Muslim and non-Muslim guests, neither were satisfied and our findings highlighted that resultant dissatisfaction was being expressed as eWOM by both “accidental guests” and also guests actively seeking an Islamic experience.

Second, hotels did not clearly proclaim their values via their marketing communications and confused non-Muslim guests, in other words, there was a lack of communication of Islamic values through the website. Previously, Henderson (2010) found a sever lack of transparency in the communication of corporate values within the Islamic banking sector and our findings support and extend these findings into the tourism sector. Considering alcohol as a driver of business, it is noteworthy that only three of the hotels examined actually declare that they serve alcohol (the most common discrepancy). AHA (2009) has suggested that hotels use sales of alcohol as a key driver of profits, and given that some customers would likely be put off by the absence of alcohol, it is perhaps unsurprising that its lack of availability is often passed over in silence.

Finally, clear contradictions existed between the information that appears for the purpose of CR system and the actual information on the hotel website. Previous research has highlighted that Islamic business models suffer from a lack of consistency between their corporate values and experience. For example, the Grand Blue Wave Hotel Shah Alam in Malaysia (holding a ranking of seven (the highest possible ranking in the CR system) actually advertises that it serves alcohol, all the while claiming two Islamic certificates.

Theoretical implications / What is original / Value of the paper
The findings of this research add to the existing body of literature on brand management, brand communication and hotel brands in the tourism sector. The literature recognises branded marketing communications within the tourism sector as important, but there has been no research to explore how Islamic hotels communicate their values and the subsequent impact on guest’s expectations. This research is therefore original in that it developed a new model of comparison for Islamic and corporate value, and provides evidence across the twenty Islamic hotels to explore these relationships. Findings highlighted the lack of clarity in communication and resultant confusion expressed by guests.

Practical limitations/Implications
The incompatibility of Islamic values with some parts of a conventional “western” business model is problematic. For example, Western hotels draw a large proportion of their revenue from the sale of alcohol. In fact, AHA (2009, p.5) regard the core business of hotels, as the “selling [of] alcoholic beverages [which] remains the primary revenue source for the industry. As a result, a hotel is defined as a business that generates income predominantly from the provision of alcoholic beverages for consumption on premise”. Other services provided by traditional hotels which may be viewed as incompatible with Islamic values include the provisions of various mixed venues and services such as night clubs and swimming pools.

This study is important for hotel marketing managers who are designing their communication strategy. Our findings show that a lack of values communicated played a significant role in dissatisfaction expressed by guests. Thus, marketing managers should seek to explore their own communication strategy with a particular emphasis on the communication of accurate values.
Research limitations/Implications
This is a single study within an Islamic context, and so the results are not generalisable to the hotel sector in general. This study used a hotel review website to measure guest opinions, thus a confirmatory study would be useful to verify opinion from other sources.

References


The effect of cognitive style and social influence on customer-based brand equity

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PURPOSE OF THE PAPER
Brands not only serve to identify products, they are concepts that create connections with customers in the form of images (Nandan, 2005), relationships (Fournier, 1998), and experiences (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009), that can be translated into several benefits like increasing marketing effectiveness and customer loyalty (Keller, 2009). But these concepts have no meaning on their own, it is the connections with customers what gives meaning to them. What customers think and feel about a brand is what ultimately gives a brand value (Keller & Lehmann, 2006) and power in the marketplace (Keller, 2013). Thus, the importance for firms to build a brand that is congruent with consumers’ wants and needs.

As has been thoroughly studied, different consumers have different needs. Segmentation has been the tool that has allowed marketers to, based on different characteristics, group people into similar consumption groups. But what about the way people think? How about the way they make decisions? Are branding decisions rational or irrational? This study explores brand decision making based on consumers’ cognitive style. Messick (1976) introduced the concept of Cognitive Style (CS) which places people into two broad groups based on their types of thinking: right hemisphere predominant and left hemisphere predominant (Allinson & Hayes, 1996).

This study also focuses on the relationship between brand identity and brand image, and how the latter affects the perceived value of the brand (brand equity). A “brand message is ‘packaged’ or ‘wrapped’ in terms of brand identity, and it is ‘unpackaged’ or ‘unwrapped’ by the consumer in the form of brand image” (Nandan, 2005, p. 268). In other words, brand
identity relates to a company’s actions, whereas brand image relates to how consumers respond to those actions and think and feel about a brand.

Furthermore, strong brands must appeal both to the head and to the heart (i.e., to both hemispheres of the brain) by blending “product performance and imagery to create a rich, varied, but complementary set of consumer responses to the brand” (Keller, 2001a, p. 22). It thus makes sense to assume that consumers with a more intuitive cognitive style would respond better to emotional brand identities, while consumers with a more analytic cognitive style would respond better to rational brand identities. Therefore we propose, based on Kelman’s (1958) theory of social influence, that to increase its value perception a brand, rationally or emotionally, is perceived to have a social influence (Baalbaki & Guzmán, 2016).

In sum, this study relates the concept of brand duality (rational and emotional) with the idea of cognitive style (analytic and intuitive) to assess how consumers bridge the gap between brand identity and brand image (brand image fit). Furthermore, we posit that the influence of brand image fit on brand equity is moderated by the degree of consumer identification, internalization and compliance with the brand. The following hypotheses are tested:

\[ H1(a): \text{A rational message will result in higher levels of congruency between brand identity and brand image for consumers with a predominant analytic cognitive style.} \]

\[ H1(b): \text{An emotional message will result in lower levels of congruency between brand identity and brand image for consumers with a predominant analytic cognitive style.} \]

\[ H2(a): \text{A rational message will result in lower levels of congruency between brand identity and brand image for consumers with a predominant intuitive cognitive style.} \]

\[ H2(b): \text{An emotional message will result in higher levels of congruency between brand identity and brand image for consumers with a predominant intuitive cognitive style.} \]

\[ H3: \text{A higher level of consumer-brand identification will lead to a stronger influence of brand image fit on brand equity.} \]
H4: A higher level of consumer-brand internalization will lead to a stronger influence of brand image fit on brand equity.

H5: A higher level of consumer-brand compliance will lead to a weaker influence of brand image fit on brand equity.

A summary of the four hypotheses and the relationship between the constructs is provided (figure 1). This relationship constitutes a framework for customer-based brand equity as a response to brand identity.

**Figure 1: Customer-based brand equity framework**

EBI: emotional brand identity message  
RBI: rational brand identity message  
CCS: consumers’ cognitive style predominance (Analytic/Intuitive)  
BIF: brand image fit  
CBBE: consumer-based brand equity  
CID: consumers’ identification  
CIN: consumers’ internalization.  
CCO: consumer’s compliance

**METHODS**  
Two studies will be conducted to test these hypotheses. Study 1 will be an experiment to assess the relationship between brand identity and brand image fit, and the moderation effect of consumers’ cognitive style. Study 2 will be a survey that will be administered right after
the experiment in order to evaluate the subject’s compliance with the brand, identification with the brand, as well as the shared values between the consumers with the brand. To analyze the values, we will build the brands according to Schwartz et al.’s 10 values that shape the structure of society and are universal across cultures (Schwartz, 1994, 1999; Schwartz & Bardi, 2001; Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004; Schwartz, Sagiv, & Boehnke, 2000), which was built on Rokeach’s (1973) view of values (Schwartz & Boehnke, 2004).

**Study One**

We will use a hybrid experimental design of randomized block posttest-only, with a sample population grouped into two relatively homogenous blocks based on cognitive style, and a treatment replicated in both blocks. Within each block every subject will be randomly assigned to either a control group or a treatment group. The treatment group will receive an emotional brand identity message, while the control group will receive a rational brand identity message.

**FIGURE 2: EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN**

The constructs for this study will be operationalized in the terms of the following variables.

**Independent variables**

Prior to the study, all subjects will be tested using the cognitive style index (Allinson & Hayes, 1996; Sadler-Smith, Spicer, & Tsang, 2000). Out of this test, subjects will be divided into two blocks representing two independent variables:

- Intuitive Cognitive Style Consumers: Subjects that, after being tested, show intuitive cognitive predominance.
- Analytical Cognitive Style Consumers: Subjects that, after being tested, show analytical cognitive predominance.

The treatment group will be exposed to an emotional brand identity messaging stimuli, while the control group will receive a rational brand identity messaging stimuli. For this study, both ‘rational’ as well as an ‘emotional’ fictitious brands will be created according to the three dimensions of brand associations proposed by Keller (1993): attributes, benefits, and...
attitudes. ‘Attributes’ will be developed as specific or abstract, and as product-related or non-product related (Nandan, 2005; Plummer, 1985). To analyze ‘benefits’ we will seize Park et al’s (1986) three categories of functional, experiential or symbolic. Finally, we will use the tri-component attitude model (Lutz, 1980; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2000) that divides attitudes in cognitive, affective and conative. Table 1 shows an example of the dimensions in each characteristic.

Table 1: Characteristics of Rational and Emotional Brand Identities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Highly Rational Brand Identity</th>
<th>Highly Emotional Brand Identity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attributes</td>
<td>Benefits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specific and Product-Related</td>
<td>Functional and Experiential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract and Non-Product-Related</td>
<td>Symbolic and Experiential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes</td>
<td>Affectively-Oriented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Dependent variables**
- Brand image fit: After the subjects are exposed to the messaging stimuli, brand image fit will be measured through a questionnaire a few items on a likert scale.

**Study Two**
The second study will consist on a survey administered to the same respondents of study one. This survey will gather information about the level of compliance, brand identification and brand internalization to the brand they were exposed to in study one. Additionally, the survey will measure the perceived value of the newly created brand using Baalbaki and Guzmán’s (2016) consumer-perceived CBBE scale.
THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS
The results of this study will provide insight into how consumers with different cognitive styles interpret a brand identity message and ultimately perceive the image of a brand, as well as how the perceived social influence of a brand—the level of brand identification and brand internalization—affects its perceived value.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS
The results of this study will help practitioners understand how to approach different consumers based on their cognitive style and how to more effectively build brands with a rational or emotional emphasis. This will offer a new tool useful to segment the market.

ORIGINALITY/VALUE
The originality of this work lies in adding both cognitive style and social influence as possible moderators in building strong brand images that lead to strengthening the perceived value of a brand.

KEYWORDS
REFERENCES


Brand Experience: a multi-perspective analysis

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1. Purpose of the paper
The most widely applied definition of brand experience stems from the work of Schmitt (1999) and Brakus et al. (2009). These authors defined brand experience as “subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand related stimuli (such as advertising) that are part of a brand’s design and identity, packaging, communications, and environment” (Brakus et al. 2009, 54). This construct has been applied by several studies, but we still have little knowledge or understanding of its nomological properties and of the theoretical perspective through which it should be approached.

A review of the literature to date shows that the brand experience construct and related framework operationalized and tested by Brakus et al. (2009) only found fertile ground in the theoretical streams grouping together studies giving casual explanations of the drivers and outcomes of brand experience. In particular, these studies were grounded in relationship theory (Fournier 1998), consumer culture theory (CCT) (Arnould and Thompson 2005; 2015) and service-dominant logic (SDL) (Vargo and Lusch 2004; 2008). Some may be tempted to attribute the substantial lack of interest in this brand experience construct to its positivistic genesis, and its tendency to objectify the chain of effects between brand experience and brand stimuli (Abimbola et al. 2012). A close look at these theoretical perspectives, however, shows that brand experience is somehow implicit or taken for granted.

In this paper, we will therefore analyze how brand experience has been (often implicitly) conceptualized and applied in theoretical approaches other than in the consumer psychology literature where the concept originated. In doing so, we will enrich the definition of brand experience and its dimensions with tenets derived from theoretical streams of the marketing literature, including on relationship theory, SDL and CCT. Drawing on these perspectives, we will suggest relational and cultural dimensions to be included in brand experience conceptualization. We will also offer a theoretical framework to shed light on the relational, value and cultural antecedents and outcomes of brand experience.
2. Methodology/Approach

We designed a rigorous approach able to select and analyze the contributions in this research area. We performed two different literature searches, first an exploratory bibliographical search using the string “brand experience” in a number of key bibliographical databases, and second, a bibliographical search of the key word “brand AND experience” in the same databases.

For the first exploratory literature search, we used a systematic process, starting by scanning a number of key bibliographical databases (Scopus, EBSCO, ABI Proquest Complete, and Web of Science). We used “brand experience” as the search string, looking for its presence in the title or abstract. This process resulted in 388 papers. Further refinements gave a final sample of 74 articles, dating from 1991 to 2016. Despite the huge interest and research efforts over the past ten years, it is worth noting that of the 74 articles analyzed, only 17 were published in journals with an impact factor. Most of the papers (48 out of 74) analyzed in this first exploratory literature review relied on a positivistic epistemology and research paradigms and generally aimed to investigate the antecedents and outcomes of the brand experience construct conceptualized by Schmitt (2009) and operationalized by Brakus et al. (2009).

We also performed a residual search using “experience” and “brand” as separated keywords. We used the same databases and criteria and ended up with more than 10,000 published works. It is therefore clear that the majority of research to date is focused on brand experience, but does not explicitly mention the concept. Three main theoretical perspectives were identified as closely linked to issues of brand experience: relationship theory, CCT and SDL. For each of these research streams, we collected and reviewed papers characterized by a focus on brand experience. This enabled us to identify 22 papers in the relationship theory stream of research, 28 papers rooted in the SDL paradigm, and 29 papers adopting one of the theoretical perspectives connected with CCT. To examine how brand experience is conceptualized in each of these theoretical streams, we identified differences between the conceptualization of “brand” and “experience”, then looked at “brand experience”. All the selected articles were independently and separately content analyzed by two authors, with a third author involved when there was any disagreement.

3. Results

The relationship theory (Fournier 1998) conceptualizes the brand as a legitimate active partner, with its own personality that shapes the form and quality of relationships with consumers (Aggarwal 2004); (Fournier 1998); (Muniz and O’guinn 2001). According to this perspective, the “brand is a collection of perceptions held in mind of consumers” (Fournier 1998, 245) and the brand–consumer relationship builds meanings at the level of individual and/or communal lived experience (Muniz and O’guinn 2001). The source of meaning can be psychological, sociocultural and relational, and the meaning that a relationship assumes is inextricably intertwined with other relationships in a network. Experiences happen during individual and collective rituals, brand habits, experiments, repeated trials and usage (Fournier 1998, Rook 1985, Wallendorf and Arnould 1991). Other stimuli can be recommendations by friends and consumers’ stories based on common experiences with the brand (Muniz and O’guinn 2001). Finally, brand experience also occurs during negative events such as the “unimaginable experience” related to negative feeling of loss, when consumers lose contact with a specific brand. All these experiences create, affirm, develop, or even destroy brand meanings.
The SDL approach instead reflects the new evolving brand logic, viewing brands as operant resources (Halliday 2016) that exist independently from the market offering. Using this perspective, the brand and its meanings and values are co-created by consumers, firms and other stakeholders. The brand therefore assumes value in terms of the stakeholders’ collectively-perceived value-in-use (Merz et al. 2009). Experience is a key issue in service research and practice. It is recognized as the context in which all actors meet, exercising interactions at multiple levels and activating service-for-service social exchange. The concept of experience can therefore be captured using the variable of value creation (Vargo and Lusch 2014) in a multi-level dynamic ecosystem (Akaka et al. 2012, Chandler and Vargo 2011, Edvardsson et al. 2011) and determined through the positive evaluation of an experience at a particular moment, or during a specific exchange encounter (Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004; 2002). Experiences can be direct and/or indirect, and can encompass usage, consumption, information, knowledge, word of mouth, and observations. The customer is the subject of the experience, but the experience characterizes service context phenomenologically as individually and socially determined, and subjective in nature.

Finally, the third stream of research concerned with the experiential value that consumers attach to brands is consumer culture theory (CCT) (Arnould and Thompson 2005; 2007; 2015). As Schembri et al. (2010) suggested, when brands are approached through a cultural approach, “the research subject is the consumer, the research object is the brand, the research focus is the consumer’s brand experience, and the research question asks how consumers use brands to construct the self” (p. 623). Based on a postmodernist perspective of consumption (Fuat Firat et al. 1995, Firat and Venkatesh 1995), which sees consumption as a social act that goes beyond the mere act of acquisition of goods and services to encompass experiential immersive practices (Carù and Cova 2007), CCT approaches consumer brands as vehicles used by consumers to fulfill their identity project (Holt 2002). Consumers tend to make brand choices on the basis of the experience(s) these brands allow them to have (Maehle et al. 2011). Brand experience is therefore interpreted by CCT scholars as naturally bounded in the consumption phenomena, and permeated by experiential values and meanings (Holt 2002). Framed in this way, brand experience comes to assume a co-constructed, negotiated and unstable meaning (Schembri 2009), often made accessible through understanding the performative practices of consumers or the collective to which they belong (Muniz and Schau 2005). These, in turn, are themselves generative of a continuous reshaping of brand experiences (Abimbola et al. 2012).

4. Theoretical/practical implications

For the three theoretical streams identified in our literature review, brand experience is somehow assumed to be implicit in consumption dynamics. We have nevertheless identified relevant theoretical insights to advance the definition of brand experience and its dimensions. This has enabled us to move from the tenets of psychological theories towards those of cultural consumer behavior, relationship theory and value co-creation, enlarging the brand experience definition with relational (brand-related relational response of consumers) and cultural dimensions (creation of collective and identitarian meanings and values). Unlike the original framework proposed by Brakus (2009), we propose a circular framework where the antecedents of brand experience, other than brand stimuli, reside in collective and individual practices such as rituals, self-identity representations and communitarian usage. Finally, the outputs of brand experience are related to functional, cultural and symbolic brand meanings able to contribute to consumers’ self-identitarian project, which in turn creates collective and individual practices and related brand stimuli.
In a post-modern society, brands are part of the societal culture and vice versa. Brand stimuli and the related experience are therefore no longer the prerogatives of managers and firms. Instead, they are co-created with consumers outside the sphere of consumption and usage. We believe that our definition and framework will help managers to take into account the relational and cultural dynamics of brand experience, and will therefore be useful for brand management practices.

5. Originality/value
This paper advances our understanding of brand experience, by showing the different facets of meaning that this concept has taken in research streams other than its original one. It is the first paper that critically analyzes the concept of brand experience and aims to enlarge its current conceptualization and operationalization.
References


Moving beyond a monolithic approach of brand femininity

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Even though brand personality has been studied extensively in marketing literature, little research has delved into a deep exploration of the different sexual aspects attributed to brands (Alreck 1994; Grohmann 2009; Azar 2015). Some issues about brand sexual attributions have been addressed in the branding literature such as their impact on brand evaluation (e.g. Sirgy 1982; Vitz and Johnson 1965; Lieven et al. 2014) and brand extension strategies (Jung and Lee 2006; Ulrich 2013). For instance, Vitz and Johnson (1965) showed that feminine women consumed cigarettes with feminine brand image. Yet, till date, brand feminine image remains an unexplored construct. All this lead us to raise some questions concerning the nature and the structure of this construct: can brand femininity be considered as a uni-dimensional or a multidimensional construct? In other words, should we talk about brand femininity or brand femininities?

In order to answer those questions, one of the main purposes of this research is to examine the structure and the nature of brand femininity as perceived by consumers. The first part of this paper focuses on a brief review of the literature about gender and femininity in general before developing brand as a person metaphor and the theoretical gap that this paper attends to fill. We then develop a series of studies allowing us to explore the nature and the structure of brand femininity dimension. Study 1 investigates the content validity and the feminine brand items’ generation. Study 2 explores the major feminine brand dimensions and study 3 allows for the development of a reliable and a valid feminine brand gender scale generalizable across product categories’ gender. Based on studies 2 and 3, we conduct a clustering approach and propose a new typology of brand femininity based on the main feminine dimensions explored in previous studies. The last study 4 assesses the nomological validity of the clustering solution found previously. To conclude, theoretical and managerial implications are developed and future research directions are suggested.

1. Background:

Gender and Femininity: Most of authors who worked on gender have noted confusion between sex and gender in the literature (e.g. Deaux 1985; Pryzgoda and Christler 2000). To avoid later confusion, it is important to distinguish those two aspects. While sex refers to the
biological sex, gender reflects the social or psychological sex of the person (Bem 1985). After the call of Constantinople (1973) to move beyond a binary opposition of masculinity and femininity, Sandra Bem was the first to consider masculinity and femininity as two orthogonal and independent dimensions. She defines gender as “the degree of masculinity and femininity of an individual”. The sociological literature regard femininity from a subordinate perspective (Weltzer-Lang 2000) stressing the men’s domination over women (Delphy 1998; Mathieu 1991), and most recent studies showed the existence of different kinds of femininities (Alèx 2006). To summarize, the psychological literature teach us the independence of masculinity and femininity, as for the sociological literature, it highlights the multiplicity of the feminine construct.

**Brand Personality and Brand Gender:** Although femininity figures as a component of brand personality scale (Aaker 1997), it is considered as a uni-dimensional construct in most studies on brand research (Ferrandi et al., 1999; Grohmann 2009) and most of the time it was measured using a single item (Aaker, 1997) or as an opposition to masculinity (Koeble and Ladwein, 1999; Wolin, 2003). Even thought, the work of Grohmann (2009) gave a new vision of brand gender by considering masculinity and femininity independently, the uni-dimensionality of those constructs has been criticized by academics (Azar 2013). On the other side, recent studies on brand sexual associations revealed the existence of three sexual constructs that can be attributed to brands: brand sex, brand gender and brand sexual orientation (Azar, 2015). Therefore, there are risks of confusion in the mind of consumers while scoring brand femininity on a single item. In order to overcome those problems, the development of a scale to capture the multi-dimensional feminine gendered aspect of the brand personality must be conducted.

2. **Construct definition and scale development**
Brand femininity is defined as the set of human personality traits associated with femininity applicable and relevant to brands (Grohmann 2009). In this regard, we consider brand femininity as dimension of brand personality. To develop a scale measuring brand feminine gendered dimension, we followed the steps recommended by Churchill (1979).

**Study 1: Content Validity and Item generation.**
To generate the pool of feminine brand items, we followed the three theoretical recommendations of Osgood et al. (1957).

**Item Factorial composition:** We included in our pool of items, items from different psychological scales capturing the feminine gendered dimension of human being such as the
Bem Sex Role Inventory (Bem, 1974) and the Personal Attribute Questionnaire (Spence et al. 1975). Moreover, we added items from different brand personality scales.

**Usage frequency of Items:** Both a paper-pen exercise and an interview approach were used to generate frequently used feminine items. 18 semi-structured interviews using projective techniques combined with a paper pen exercise asking respondents to quote all the traits they use to describe separately a brand for men and a brand for women.

**Item Relevance:** Overall, 273 masculine and feminine items were evaluated by 4 experts in brand management scales development according to their levels of reflecting the masculine/feminine brand constructs and also according to their applicability to brands. By the end of this evaluation, only 58 items were considered. Since gender is culturally defined, we tested statistically the relevance of those 58 items from a consumer’s perspective. To do so, 157 French undergraduate students evaluated those items as to their level of representing separately a brand for man and a brand for woman, consistently with the approach of Bem (1973). A paired sample t-test was conducted on the overall sample. Only items with significant t test (sample and across the sexes) were kept and used to conduct a median split. The median split allowed us to distinguish the feminine brand items; At this level, 14 feminine items listed below were left.

**Study 2: Exploring Dimensions of Brand Feminine Gender.**

140 French undergraduate students evaluated 16 well known brands using the 14 feminine traits mentioned above using a seven point Likert-type scale. On an average, each respondent evaluated 4 brand names. To control for product categories’ effect on the perception of feminine brand personality scale, we had both symbolic and utilitarian brands represented in our sample of brand names. 494 usable responses were analyzed. An exploratory factor analysis revealed two major feminine dimensions. We conducted a confirmatory factor analysis and eliminated five items to have better fit indices: $\chi^2/ \text{dof}=2.985; \text{NFI} = .988, \text{TLI} = .985, \text{CFI} = 1.000, \text{GFI} = .983, \text{AGFI}=.956. \text{SRMR} = .0242, \text{RMSEA} = .063.$

**Naming the two factors, reliability and internal validity:** The first factor included items “tender”, “affectionate” and “cuddle” and was called “Philanthropy”. This factor accounted for 64.93% of total variance explained with Cronbach’s alpha = .881 and $\rho_{jöreskog}=.881$. The second factor included two items “charming”, “passionate” and “seductive” and was called “attractive”. This factor accounted for 17.19% of total variance explained with Cronbach’s alpha of .894 and $\rho_{jöreskog} =.895$. The correlation between the two factors is positive, high and significant ($r = .678; p=.000$). This correlation strongly suggests that both dimensions “Philanthropist” and “Attractive” measure the same construct “femininity”. A second order exploratory factor analysis confirmed this interpretation.
**Convergent validity:** AVE is greater than .5 for both philanthropist (.712) and attractive (.741) dimensions (Fornell et Larcker 1981), leading us to assume the unidimensionality of both dimensions. Moreover, all the links between latent variables and indicators are significant (Bagozzi et Yi 1981).

**Discriminant Validity:** For each philanthropy and attractive dimensions, AVE is greater than the square of the correlation between the constructs (.47) (Fornell and Larcker 1981).

**Study 3: Generalization of these dimensions across product categories’ gender.**

**Stimuli selection:** 140 French undergraduate students evaluated different product categories according to their levels of masculinity and femininity, separately measured on a seven point Likert-type scale. After conducting t-test and a classification using the median split approach, we could identify 4 product categories’ gender heterogeneous in their levels of masculinity and femininity. We had 33 well known brand names representing the different product categories tested before. Overall 1155 inputs were included in this study; table 2 represents the input data considered for each case.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>study 2</th>
<th>study 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undifferentiated Product Categories</td>
<td>Masculine Product Categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>χ²/ ddf</td>
<td>2.985</td>
<td>4.092</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GFI</td>
<td>.983</td>
<td>.975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AGFI</td>
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<td>.935</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>.992</td>
<td>.982</td>
</tr>
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<td>TLI</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>NFI</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td>RMSEA</td>
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<td>.085</td>
</tr>
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<td>OK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usable input</td>
<td>494</td>
<td>424</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 – Psychometric properties Study 2 and Study 3
Psychometric properties across product categories’ gender are very good for undifferentiated, feminine and androgynous product categories and fairly good for the masculine product categories as shown in table 2. Again, convergent and discriminant validity were supported across product categories as shown in table 3. Thus, the structure of feminine brand gender dimension is generalizable across product categories.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>study 2</th>
<th>study 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Undifferentiated Product Categories</td>
<td>Masculine Product Categories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIMENSION 1: PHILANTHROPY (3 ITEMS)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronbach’s alpha</td>
<td>.881</td>
<td>.850</td>
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<tr>
<td>ρJöreskog</td>
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<tr>
<td>AVE</td>
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<td>.665</td>
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<tr>
<td>DIMENSION 2: ATTRACTIVE (3 ITEMS)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chronbach’s alpha</td>
<td>.894</td>
<td>.864</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ρJöreskog</td>
<td>.895</td>
<td>.875</td>
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<tr>
<td>AVE</td>
<td>.741</td>
<td>.703</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(r_{D1D2})^2</td>
<td>.471</td>
<td>.577</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 – Discriminant’s and internal reliability’s psychometric properties for study 1 and 2

3. Exploring types of brand femininities
Based on the feminine dimensions explored before, the classification using dynamic clouds allowed us distinguishing four different types of brand femininities:

- **Fluffy Femininity**: concerns brands who scored low on both philanthropy (final class center=2.43) and attractive (final class center=2.55) dimensions.

- **Altruist Femininity**: concerns brands who scored low on attractive (final class center=3.46) but high on philanthropy dimension (final class center=3.81).
• **Tempting Femininity**: concerns brands who scored low on philanthropy (final class center=3.43) but high on attractive (final class center=4.82) dimension.

• **Emphasized femininity**: concerns brands who scored high on both philanthropy (final class center=5.07) and attractive (final class center=5.43) dimensions.

4. **Nomological validity: Brand femininity-Self-concept congruence effects on consumer responses**

   In order to test the nomological validity, we tested the following hypothesis: while compared to brand respondent femininity incongruence situation, brand respondent femininity congruence enhances consumer responses to brand in terms of passion and attachment.

   **Methodological details and sample size**: 953 French non student respondents (48.6% men) evaluated their favorite brand belonging to one of the six product categories (prêt à porter, perfumes, cars, water, cosmetics and skin care).

   **Measures**: Brand femininity was measured with two dimensions explored before; brand attachment was measured using Lacoeuilhe (2013) scale (alpha=.871) and brand attachment was measured using Albert et al (2013) scale (alpha=.873).

   **Findings**: again the models psychometric measures were all good. An independent sample t test was conducted and confirmed our hypothesis.

**Key References (the full list of references available upon request)**


Grohmann (2009), Gender dimensions of brand personality, Journal of Marketing Research, 105-119
The role of brand prominence disparity in co-branded cause related marketing programs: Luxury vs non-luxury brand

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Introduction

Nowadays more and more companies around the world consider the necessity to define their roles in society and apply social, ethical and responsible standards to their brand management strategy (Wymer & Sargeant, 2006). Cause related marketing (CRM) represents a brand ethics orientation and it is an important tool for activating relationship between non-profit organization, company and consumers (Kotler & Lee 2005).

We define CRM as a strategic partnership between a for-profit brand and a charitable organization that produces a promotional marketing campaign; a specific proportion of the profits earned from sales of a firm’s products or services get donated to the designated charitable cause (Boenigk & Schuchardt, 2013).

A growing trend in CRM campaigns involves the luxury brand segment. For example, Bulgari and Save the Children ran a prominent “Rewrite the Future” campaign that raised more than $7.4m for education programs in 2011 thanks to the sales of a dedicated ring. Another well-known is the special edition Sukey bag by Gucci to support UNICEF’s “Schools for Africa” initiative. As these examples suggest, partnering with highly admired luxury brands (Phau & Prendergast, 2000; Ko & Megehee, 2012) offers compelling reasons for the rising popularity of CRM luxury campaigns among charities (Bennett & Ali-Choudhury, 2009). Moreover Hagtvedt and Patrick’s results (2015) show in a retailing context that an association with a charity at the point of sale can increase consumers’ intention to purchase a luxury brand and can facilitate upselling to a luxury store. Although, empirical research on CRM (Brown & Dacin, 1997; Gupta and Pirsch, 2006) lacks to investigate luxury offerings deeply and none of the above-mentioned research has compared a CRM campaign promoted by a luxury brand with the same CRM activity managed by a brand positioned in a different (lower) segment.
Hoeffler and Keller (2002) suggest that a co-branding strategy is the most appropriate way to develop CRM activity effective for both brand partners (Michel & Rieunier 2010). Following this suggestion, Baghi and Gabrielli (2013a) investigated the role of brand awareness in co-branded CRM program in shaping consumers’ willingness to buy and to pay for the CRM product.

The current study contributes to this debate in several ways. Firstly, we explore the effect of CRM in a luxury versus a non-luxury brand positioning (within the same product category). Secondly, we go further the previous research focused on brand awareness (Baghi & Gabrielli (2013b), and we investigate the influence of the different visual prominence (Han, Nunes & Dreze, 2010) of the for-profit and the non-profit brand on consumers’ responses toward a CRM program.

Theoretical background and hypothesis

Brand prominence is the extent to which a product has visible markings that help consumers to recognize the brand, in other words it is “the conspicuousness of a brand’s mark or logo on a product” (Han et al., 2010, p. 15). Manufacturers can produce a product with “loud” or conspicuous branding or tone it down to “quiet” or discreet branding. Following Han and colleagues approach (2010) a “loud” brand prominence means that the brand logo is very well showed up on the product while a “quiet” brand prominence entails that the brand is hidden or unobtrusive on the physical appearance of the product. Han et al. (2010) demonstrate that brand prominence plays an important role within luxury context as the consumers seek to display the brand name to others (self expressive function; Cheah, Phau, Chong & Shimul, 2015c; Koschate-Fischer, Stefan & Hoyer, 2012). In the domain of CRM, brand prominence could play a crucial role because the signalling function of the two brand partners is different: the non-profit brand may express the social engagement while the for-profit one may express consumers’ personality traits (Knight & Kim, 2007). The intent is to analyse the influence of brand prominence on consumers’ attitude and behaviours toward a CRM co-branded products in two different positioning: luxury and non-luxury. The ultimate aim of the present study is to verify if in a CRM activity it is advisable that one brand has more prominence than the other one (brand prominence disparity) and eventually which one is important to be the most prominent on the CRM product. Moreover the intent is to consider two different contexts in which the for-profit brand should have different value proposition and meaning: luxury and non-luxury. The hypotheses are the followings:

H1 Consumers’ attitude toward the CRM product is different in the presence of brand prominence disparity
H2 Consumers’ willingness to buy the CRM product is different in the presence of brand prominence disparity

H3 Brand prominence disparity and the brand positioning (luxury vs non-luxury) have an interaction effect on consumers’ attitude toward the CRM product

H4 Brand prominence disparity and the brand positioning (luxury vs non-luxury) have an interaction effect on consumers’ willingness to buy the CRM product.

Methodology

A sample of 150 students of an Italian public university voluntarily participated in the research (59% female, mean age 24). The student sample was appropriate because we present a product that they can frequently buy (chocolate). The participants were randomly assigned to one of six experimental conditions (between-subject design) in a 2 (luxury vs non-luxury) x 3 (brand prominence disparity: for-profit “loud” and non-profit “quiet” vs for-profit “quiet” and non-profit “loud” or “equal” for-profit and non-profit brand prominence) experiment1.

The product selected for the main study was a chocolate box in a luxury or in a value-for-money (Wiedmann, Hennings & Siebels, 2009) version. A pre-test was conducted to select a luxury (Ladurée), a value (Pernigotti) for-profit brands and a non-profit brand (Save the Children) with similar brand awareness and brand like2. Participants were presented with a hypothetical scenario in which they were asked to imagine being in a purchase situation; they were presented with a picture of a co-branded CRM Ladurée (or Pernigotti) chocolate box involved in a Save the Children’s campaign to support children in need in the war zones. It was said that 5% of the sale revenue of the product will be donated to support the campaign. Also the price of the product was indicated and it was in line with the average market price.

Participants were asked to rate their attitude toward the CRM product (4 items on a 7-point Likert scale; Voss, Spangenberg & Grohmann, 2003) and to evaluate their intention to buy in terms of the probability to purchase that product in a everyday life shopping situation (2 items on a 7-point Likert scale; Robinson, Irmak & Jayachandran, 2012). As control check of the manipulation, participants were also asked to rate their perception of the visual prominence of the brands (2 items on a 7-point Likert scale Han, et al, 2010); the luxury

1 The six independent samples showed the same frequency distributions in terms of gender (Chi-Square Test Sig. .555) and age (Chi-Square Test Sig. .503).

2 Ladurée \( M_{\text{luxury}} = 5.25 \) vs Pernigotti \( M_{\text{luxury}} = 1.07 \) (p<.05). The selected brands had the same rate in term of awareness (Ladurée \( M_{\text{aw}} = 3.7 \), Pernigotti \( M_{\text{aw}} = 4.4 \); Save the Children \( M_{\text{aw}} = 4.5 \) p > 0.05) and brand love (Ladurée \( M_{\text{lik}} = 4.3 \), Pernigotti \( M_{\text{lik}} = 4.7 \); Save the Children \( M_{\text{lik}} = 4.8 \) p > 0.05)
feature of the for-profit brands (3 items on a 7-point Likert scale Vigneron, & Johnson, 2004) and the brand awareness of the for-profit and non-profit brands involved in the CRM campaign (2 items on a 7-point Likert scale; Aaker 2006).

Table 1: Experimental design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Positioning</th>
<th>Brand Prominence Manipulation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>For-profit Loud +</td>
<td>Non-profit Loud + For-profit Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-profit Quiet</td>
<td>Equal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Luxury</td>
<td>Ladurée + Ladurée + SAVE THE CHILDREN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td>Pernigotti + Pernigotti + SAVE THE CHILDREN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ladurée + Ladurée</td>
<td>Ladurée + Ladurée + SAVE THE CHILDREN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>Save the Children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pernigotti + Pernigotti</td>
<td>Pernigotti + Pernigotti + SAVE THE CHILDREN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Save the Children</td>
<td>Save the Children</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Findings

Manipulation checks: All the manipulation check’s results were in line with our expectations in terms of brand prominence, luxury perception and brand awareness3.

Attitude: ANOVA analysis showed a main effect of the brand prominence disparity on attitude toward the CRM product (for-profit “loud” $M_{attitude} = 5.48$ vs non-profit “loud” $M_{attitude} = 4.52$ vs equal $M_{attitude} = 5.00$, $F(1, 149) = 9.38; p < .05$). H1 is supported. Results showed also an interaction effect between brand prominence disparity and brand positioning on attitude ($F(1, 149) = 6.63; p < .05$; see descriptive table 2). H3 is supported.

Willingness to buy: ANOVA analysis showed a main effect of the brand prominence disparity on willingness to buy the product (“loud” for-profit brand $M_{wtb} = 4.84$ vs “loud” non-

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3 Ladurée $M_{prominence}: 5.82$ vs $3.02$ vs $4.83$; $F(1, 143) = 25.71; p<.05$; Pernigotti $M_{prominence}: 5.71$ vs $3.40$ vs $4.76$; $F(1, 143) = 21.74; p<.05$; luxury perception (Ladurée $M_{luxury} = 4.40$ vs Pernigotti $M_{luxury} = 2.32$; $t (1, 148) = 15.31; p < .05$), brand awareness (Ladurée $M_{awareness} = 4.54$ vs Pernigotti $M_{awareness} = 4.22$ vs Save the Children $M_{awareness} = 4.78$; $F(1, 143) = 12.71; p > .05$).
profit brand $M_{\text{for-profits}} = 3.89$ vs equal $M_{\text{equal}} = 4.21$, $F(1, 149) = 2.47$; $p < .05$). H2 is supported. Results showed also an interaction effect between brand prominence disparity and brand positioning on willingness to buy ($F(1, 149) = 4.47$; $p < .05$—see descriptive table 2). H4 is supported.

### Table 2: Mean value for the dependant variable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Luxury Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>Non-profit Loud + For-profit Quiet</td>
<td>Equal</td>
<td>For-profit Loud + Non-profit Quiet</td>
<td>Non-profit Loud + For-profit Quiet</td>
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<tr>
<td>Attitude</td>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>5.29</td>
<td>3.70*</td>
<td>5.12</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
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<td>1.36</td>
<td>.80</td>
<td>1.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Willingness to buy</td>
<td>Mean</td>
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<td>3.08*</td>
<td>4.27</td>
<td>5.08</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SD</td>
<td>1.39</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>1.20</td>
<td>1.14</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < .05

### Discussion

The present study is devoted to comprehend if consumers’ intention to participate to a CRM, buying a co-branded product, is conditioned by a different prominence of the for-profit or the non-profit brand on the packaging, and which brand is the most important to be visually prominent in a luxury CRM co-branded product in comparison with a non-luxury co-branded product. Results confirm the hypothesis: findings show that a brand prominence discrepancy between the for-profit brand and the non-profit one on the packaging of a CRM co-branded product has a role in defining consumer behaviours.

### Managerial implications

The present findings suggest important managerial implications. First of all marketing practitioners have to consider that, if they want to carry on social causes by their product, they have to carefully manage strategic branding decisions. In particular, if the CRM product
is positioned on a luxury segment, the brand that should be more prominent to appease consumer’s attitude and purchase intention is the for-profit one, while in the case of value for money CRM product the different levels of brand prominence seem not to influence consumers’ attitude and intention to buy. Also for non-profit organization a branding strategy seems to become more and more important. The results of this study suggest that the non-profit brand has a weak signalling ability, that is an important evidence for non-profit organization that have rightly taken into consideration the importance to build a strong and meaningful brands.

**Originality and limitations**

The study contributes further to research on brand prominence (Han, et al 2010) revealing its potential in promoting responsible consumption decisions. Moreover the present study enlarges the brand prominence analysis to the co-branding strategy adopting a relative concept, highlighting the importance of a different brand prominence between the two brands involved. Finally, the study is the first investigation of CRM activities within a luxury positioning compared to a non-luxury positioning for the same product category.

This study is only a starting point in CRM activities branding comprehension. We investigated only one product: chocolate. Further studies could extend the research field to different product categories and/or to different co-branding strategies.
References


Koschate-Fischer, N., Stefan, I. V., & Hoyer, W. D. (2012). Willingness to pay for cause-
related marketing: The impact of donation amount and moderating effects. *Journal of Marketing Research, 49*(6), 910-927.


Iconic Heritage Hotel Brand Identification: Visual and Aural Sensory Dimensions

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Purpose:
This study examines the customer corporate brand attractiveness dimensions of iconic Heritage Hotel Brands (HHB): in particular, it examines the saliency of two sensory dimensions (visual and aural). The research is placed within the corporate heritage field and utilises company-customer identity theory as applied to a corporate heritage context – corporate heritage identification - which is predicated on customer attractiveness being a precursor to identification. Insights are made from, and for, corporate heritage, heritage hotel brand tourism and place branding literatures. The research seeks to shed light on the strategic significance of corporate brand heritage traits of iconic heritage hotels; and examines the significance of corporate sensory heritage traits for customers.

Sensory identification has, increasingly, become a leitmotif within the identity canon. For example, back in 2001 (Balmer, 2001), making a prescient observation noted: “the non-visual senses can be just as powerful in communicating the identity of a collective group. For example, the aural sense has a dominant role in the recognition of identities of radio stations. The aural sense also helps to differentiate one nation state from each via the use of language and national anthems”. He went on to give the example of the catholic church which uses all the senses in order to convey a distinct sense of identification> He noted (Balmer 2001) “the church’s distinctiveness is communicated, among others, through symbolism (church furnishings, vestments, architecture, posture of clergy and laity,) sound (Gregorian chant, Latin, polyphony) smell (incense), touch (holy water), and taste (taking the sacrament).

The focus of this research is the 5* Shanghai Peace Hotel: the hotel dates back to the 1930s – arguably the heyday of Shanghai city’s illustrious past. (“the Venice of the East”). Built by Sir Victor Sassoon, the hotel was, and remains for many, the most luxurious hotel in Shanghai (and arguably the Far East): in particular, its distinctive art deco exterior and interior – visual corporate heritage - are redolent of this period.

Whilst this research focusses on one iconic five start hotel, the Peace Hotel belongs to a distinctive global category of heritage hotel brands. For example, iconic luxury heritage
hotels also exist in other cities including Raffles (Singapore); the Dorchester (London); Peninsular (Bangkok); Imperial (New Delhi); Galle Face Hotel (Colombo); Fairmount Hotel (Vancouver); Grand Hotel (Stockholm); Hotel Georg V (Paris) etc.

Noteworthy, too, is the fact that the Peace Hotel is part of the (Canadian) Fairmount Hotel group. One especial characteristic of the Fairmount corporate brand is its intimate association with many iconic and luxury heritage brands in North America, Europe and Asia. For instance, in Canada, the Fairmount includes the following corporate heritage hotels: The Banff Springs Hotel (Banff); and the Château Frontenac (Montreal); the Château Laurier (Ottawa); The Empress (Victoria, Vancouver Island); the Hotel Macdonald (Edmonton); The Palliser (Calgary); The Royal York (Toronto); and the Hotel Vancouver (Vancouver). In the UK, the Fairmount brand includes The Savoy (London), and Fairmont St Andrews (St Andrews, in Scotland). Unquestionably, the Peace Hotel is one of the brand’s most illustrious corporate heritage hotels in the Orient which enjoys a place of prominence in terms of the repertoire of heritage hotels owned or managed by the Fairmount Hotel Group.

As such, the insights from this research have the potential to meaningfully inform and have the capacity to be analytically generalisable apropos our comprehension of the corporate heritage attractiveness dimensions – and in particularly visual and aural heritage - underpinning customer identification to this significant category of iconic hotels.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:**

Balmer, Greyser, and Urde (2006) and Urde, Greyser, and Balmer (2007) identified the existence of corporate heritage brands as a distinctive category of institutional brand and argued that corporate heritage institutions subsisted in omni-temporal times frames and were, therefore, of the past, present and prospective future . Since that time there has been an exponential growth in interest, as well as advances apropos conceptual and theoretical insights, not only on corporate heritage brands but in relation to the broad corporate heritage notion (Balmer 2013). According to social identity theory (Tajfel and Turner, 1985), and its application within marketing (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003), company-customer identification occurs when customers find certain attributes to be attractive and self-defining. Customer identification with a company means that customers have a propensity for strong and sustainable company relationships (Curras-Prez et al., 2009; Marín and Ruiz, 2013). As such, taking cognisance of the aforementioned, corporate heritage identification (which is often multi-generational in character) can be an important part of corporate heritage brand management. In behavioural terms, such identification is selective and volitional in character (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003) and customers may derive their social identity via cognitive links with a company (Marín and Ruiz, 2013), and more specifically from multiple sensorial factors (sight, sound, smell, taste and touch) (Rodrigues, Hultén and Brito, 2011).

This study extends the corporate heritage literature and broadens social identity theory owing to its focus on the heritage hotel industry sector and because it takes account on sensory heritage dimensions. Moreover, it seeks to be revelatory apropos our comprehension of the impact of the key attractiveness factors of corporate heritage hotels. In terms of sensory corporate heritage attractive dimensions, this research focusses on the Visual and Aural sensory factors and contemplates the degree to which they meaningful inform the attractiveness and resultant identification with corporate heritage hotel brands. A conceptual model comprising six hypotheses was developed based on an extensive literature review and this informed a survey-based questionnaire administered to customers of the Shanghai Peace Hotel.
The hypothesized research framework

H1: The emphasis on high quality is important to the heritage hotel brand attractiveness.

H2: Having prominent Art Deco characteristics (visual sensory corporate heritage) is important to the heritage hotel brand attractiveness.

H3: Located in a famous city (City: Shanghai) is important to the heritage hotel brand attractiveness.

H4: The heritage hotel brand attractiveness impacts on the hotel brand identification.

H5: Situated in a well-known locale of the city strengthens the impact of its identical place on the heritage hotel brand attractiveness.

H6: The eminent features of the heritage hotel brand strengthen the impact of the heritage hotel brand experience on its attractiveness (i.e. having a hotel museum (a), multigenerational customer loyalty (b) and aural sensory corporate heritage (the celebrated Old Jazz Band (c))

At the preliminary data collection stage, information on the studied heritage hotel brand were scrutinised prior to the collection of qualitative data and recourse was made to company-specific documents including annual reports, newsletters, strategic reports, press articles and an history. Furthermore, the researchers also studied the literature on the Bund of Shanghai, Shanghai and China. The aforementioned confirmed the hotel’s corporate brand’s status as a prominent tourists/customers attraction. Qualitative data was drawn from interviews with senior hotel managers (present and past) of Shanghai Peace Hotel, the hotel museum manager, and guests/tourists/visitors with the hotel museum. Notes were taken of the above
discussions. The qualitative findings have helped the development of the proposed conceptual model and the questionnaire.

Data for the survey questionnaire was undertaken over a one-week period inside the hotel and also in the Bund area near the hotel. The researchers - along with two postgraduate Chinese students from Shanghai - administered the questionnaire. To assess all the focal model constructs this research adopted a variety of multi-item scales. All the scales were informed from the literature review and developed to fit the research purpose and context. The measures of both the constructs relied on five-point Likert scales ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree.” In total 252 useful responses are collected for this study.

Results
According to the 252 responses, the sample of this study is mainly customers of the hotel from Shanghai (86.1%) and outside Shanghai within China (13.1%). The Composite Reliability (CR) of all the constructs is more than 0.7 suggesting adequate levels of reliability. In terms of Convergent Validity, Average Variances Extracted (AVE) results are all above 0.5. All the square roots on the diagonal of AVE are also greater than inter-construct correlations, suggesting a good validity of the measurement model (see Table 1 for details).

Table 1 Descriptive Results, CFA Validity, Reliability and Factor Correlation Matrix with Square root of the AVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std.</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arc Deco</td>
<td>2.05</td>
<td>0.583</td>
<td>0.768</td>
<td>0.685</td>
<td>0.828</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Quality</td>
<td>2.04</td>
<td>0.555</td>
<td>0.864</td>
<td>0.683</td>
<td>0.466</td>
<td>0.826</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City Brand</td>
<td>2.02</td>
<td>0.551</td>
<td>0.828</td>
<td>0.662</td>
<td>0.562</td>
<td>0.618</td>
<td>0.812</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHB Attractiveness</td>
<td>2.01</td>
<td>0.537</td>
<td>0.873</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>0.419</td>
<td>0.528</td>
<td>0.595</td>
<td>0.814</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HHB Identification</td>
<td>2.11</td>
<td>0.589</td>
<td>0.820</td>
<td>0.649</td>
<td>0.643</td>
<td>0.683</td>
<td>0.462</td>
<td>0.532</td>
<td>0.806</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes: N=252
As Table 2 below shows that all the hypotheses developed are accepted.

Table 2 Hypotheses Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>β (t) Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>High Quality → Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Arc Deco → Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3</td>
<td>City Brand → Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4</td>
<td>Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction → Heritage Hotel Brand Identification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Moderation Effect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>β (t) Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H5a</td>
<td>Well known heritage locale → Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5b</td>
<td>Well known hotel locale → Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6a</td>
<td>Hotel Museum → Heritage Hotel Brand Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6b</td>
<td>Multigenerational customer loyalty → Heritage Hotel Brand Identification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6c</td>
<td>Aural sensory Heritage Jazz Band → Heritage Hotel Brand Identification</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Mediation Effect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypotheses</th>
<th>β (t) Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High Quality → Heritage Hotel Brand Identification</td>
<td>Full Mediation by Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arc Deco → Heritage Hotel Brand Identification</td>
<td>Partial Mediation by Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City → Heritage Hotel Brand Identification</td>
<td>Partial Mediation by Heritage Hotel Brand Attraction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p< 0.01

**Findings:**
This study identified the vital factors influencing the attractiveness of a luxury corporate heritage hotel brand are found to be high quality, Art Deco (visual sensory), and the influence of the city where the hotel is located.
The impact of these fundamental factors on the heritage hotel brand identification is mediated by its heritage attractiveness.

It is important to report that situated in a well-known locale strengthens the impact of the city influence on the heritage hotel brand attractiveness.

We also find that the eminent features of the heritage hotel brand - such as having a hotel museum, multigenerational customer loyalty and aural sensory corporate heritage (the Jazz Band-aural corporate sensory heritage) and its visual heritage (art deco prominent design and architectural features-visual corporate sensory heritage) made the hotel more attractive to customers.

**Practical implications:** Managers of corporate heritage hotel brands (HHB) need to be cognisant of the corporate heritage attractiveness dimensions (including sensory corporate heritage dimensions) and, in addition, appreciate that the appeal of a corporate heritage hotel is not only what it does but what it symbolises (including its symbolic role apropos place branding). More generally, the research insights are likely to have a general applicability to analogous corporate heritage tourism/corporate heritage hotel brand brands; no more so the case, that with well-known corporate heritage hotels/hotel chains whose distinctiveness and attractiveness, is grounded in their heritage and, as this study showed, in terms of their provenance apropos corporate heritage sensory corporate brand identity.

**Originality/value:** The first empirical study to focus on corporate heritage hotel brands and, moreover, to focus on the attractiveness of corporate heritage sensory identity. Furthermore, it is one of the first studies to examine a Chinese corporate heritage/corporate heritage hotel. As such, the study compliments more western approaches to corporate heritage and meaningfully contributes to the luxury heritage hotel management literature. We have identified and tested the key factors that meaningful underpin the attractiveness of corporate heritage hotel brands which, among others, includes sensory heritage dimensions: dimensions which, hitherto, have largely been neglected.

**Keywords:** Corporate Heritage Brand, Heritage Hotel Brand, Heritage Hotel Experience, Art Deco, High Quality Hotel, Place Brand, Bund, Shanghai.

**References**


Brand Ambassador Programs - An analysis of the ‘ghost’ of internal branding instruments

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Purpose of the paper

Internal branding (synonymous: behavioral branding) at all is a relatively recent brand topic. First papers mention the term internal branding in 1999 (Keller 1999; Thomson et al. 1999). Since these first publications, a huge number of articles and books was published (for overviews see Piehler 2011; Saleem & Iglesias 2016). The increasing relevance of the internal anchorage of the brand inside the company is particularly reasoned by broadening the brand concept to services, b-to-b and non-profit markets. These markets are characterized by a lower relevance of mass communication (e.g., advertising) and packaging, higher relevance of face-to-face communication and personal interaction and corporate brands. Therefore, the employees of a company are pivotal brand touchpoints and fundamental drivers of brand equity. In addition to that, employees are via positive word of mouth also very important brand communicators off the job (e.g., Löhndorf & Diamantopolulos 2014).

In the last years, a lot of academic research conducted to test the link between the internal anchorage of the brand (e.g. internal brand equity, internal brand commitment etc.) and the external brand performance (e.g. Baumgarth & Schmidt 2010; Henkel et. al. 2007). More or less, all these empirical investigations supported the positive impact of the internal brand anchorage on the external brand performance. Hence, the next logical step of this discussion was the question how management can increase the internal brand anchorage. Leadership, communication (internal and external) and the implementation of internal brand ambassadors are three potential approaches. Whereas leadership (e.g., Morhart et al. 2009; Vallaster & de Chernatony 2006; Dunn & Davis 2004) and communication (e.g., Gilly &Wolfinbarger 1998; Wentzel et al. 2010) were tested by empirical studies, the scientific knowledge about the third option is predominately anecdotic.
Hence, the main goal of this paper is to analyze the impact and the success factors of a brand ambassador program (BAP). BAP is defined as a planned program to select and manage a network of brand ambassadors in order to anchor the brand relevance, the brand values and the brand management by a face-to-face communication inside the company (similar Fisher-Buttinger & Vallaster 2008).

Approach

On the basis of the scarce BAP literature (e.g. Ind 2007; Davis & Dunn 2002; Anderson & Ekman 2009; Causon 2004; Rehmet & Dinnie 2013; Koch 2014) and related topics on the macro (brand orientation, e.g., Urde 1994, 1999), meso (internal brand and change management, e.g., Kotter 1996; Cummings & Worley 2008; Xiong et al. 2013; Burmann et al. 2009) and micro level (WoM, opinion leader, change agent and brand evangelist, e.g., Godes & Mayzlin 2004; Rogers 2003; Buchanan & Badham 1999; Pimentel & Reynolds 2004), a framework with seven building blocks (elements A – G, see Figure 1) and 25 potential success factors was developed.

Fig. 1: BAP framework
This BAP success factor model was then tested and adjusted by the conduction of an in-depth single-case study. The case study in the insurance industry covers a time period from 2010 to 2016 and considers multiple sources of evidences (three interviews with the management, documentations, internal surveys, physical artifacts, own observations and participation) (Yin 2014). The quality of the case study analysis was amongst others ensured by the independent analysis of the material by two researchers and the communicative validation of the case study by the program coordinator (e.g., Beverland & Lindgreen 2010).

The combination of the theoretical framework and the case study resulted in an adjusted BAP model with all in all 30 potential success factors (see appendix).

Findings

It is beyond the scope of this abstract to motivate and to report all findings, but the following list summarizes the main results of the analysis:

- The success of a BAP can be measured by the acceptance of and the satisfaction with the BAP as well as the change of the internal brand equity.

- BAP is not an isolated project of internal brand management, but an integral part of all brand management activities, the corporate culture and the C-level behavior.

- The skills and motivation of the program coordinator as well as the support of the program coordinator by the C-level, budgets and power are pivotal.

- BAP is a project, and therefore, the regular requirements for projects (e.g., clear goals, measurements) are relevant.

- BAP design should be based on vertical and horizontal communication in all directions. A solely sender oriented approach is not sufficient.

- The selection of brand ambassadors with relevant skills and capabilities (e.g., pro-active, creative, open, extroverted, good involving others) and knowledge (e.g., brand management in general, brand values of the company) is a pivotal success factor.

- The target groups of BAP must possess a basic understanding of the relevance of a brand for the success of the company and an acceptance of the BAP.

- BAP is a dynamic and phase-oriented approach and for the internal acceptance depends on the “right” intensity.
Theoretical implications

The relevance of internal brand management in general as well as the analysis of single constructs (e.g., brand citizenship behavior) and instruments (e.g., external communication, leadership) are in the meantime standard topics of the brand management research. However, the often in the real world implemented and by consultants recommended instrument BAP is so far an unexplored topic. Hence the theoretical deduction of a BAP model as well as the test of this framework by an in-depth case study broadens the knowledge in the field of internal brand management. In addition to that, the findings show some new insights: Firstly, BAP is not an isolated instrument of internal brand management, but its impact depends on background factors like brand orientation, (internal and external) brand management as well as the C-level support. Secondly, the success of a BAP is a combination of positive characteristics of the coordinator, the program design, the brand ambassadors as well as the target groups. For example, the selection of the wrong brand ambassadors, low internal power of the coordinator or a missing acceptance of the BAP by the target groups will decrease the chance of an impactful and successful BAP. Thirdly, BAP is not a static program, but a dynamic and phase oriented approach. For example, the “optimal dose” of the BAP in different stages of the program is an important finding.

Practical implications

On the basis of the general insight, that particular in service and b-to-b companies, the success of the brand management depends on the internal anchorage of the brand inside the company, the paper discussed with the BAP a concrete and in the literature often mentioned tool. The derived BAP with 30 potential success factors supports the planning and implementation of BAPs. Additionally, the derived list of success factors can support the monitoring of ongoing BAPs. Also, the critical reflection of completed BAPs and the organizational learning for future BAPs could support by the framework and the success factor list.

Limitations

The complexity and huge number of potential success factors is a first limitation. The purpose of the paper is the identification and categorization of potential success factors. Hence, future research should try to reduce the number of factors and to analyse the causal links between the most relevant factors in more detail.

Another limitation is that the study is based only on one in-depth case study in one industry (insurance) and one country in Europe. The advantage of this approach is a deep and longitudinal analysis of a real case. However, any kind of generalizability is limited. Future studies should use the adjusted BAP model and test this in other sectors (e.g., b-to-b, other service industries) and additional regions (e.g., Asia).
Complimentary, the researchers had a good, but not a perfect access to the field. For example, some of the potential success factors about the characteristics of the brand ambassadors and the target groups couldn’t be analyzed in the case study. Future research projects can try to close the gap by approaches with stronger ties to the empirical field (e.g., action research, McNiff & Whitehead 2011).

Lastly, the paper is generally based on the idea of success factor research. This type of research framework is keenly criticized regarding the method and the content (e.g., March & Sutton 1997; Nicolai & Kieser 2002). Future research should complement our research by the implementation of additional empirical master techniques (Konrhauer & Lazarsfeld 1955) like experimental research, expert interviews or surveys.

**Originality**

To the best of our knowledge, this study is the first study which analyses a brand ambassador program in the service industry by a six-year case study. BAPs were often mentioned particular in the consultant-oriented literature. However, empirical findings are scarce.

Furthermore, the proposed framework integrates BAP specific literature and literature from related fields like brand orientation, internal brand and change management as well as Word-of-Mouth and similar constructs with an in-depth empirical inquiry of one case.

**Keywords**

internal brand management, brand ambassador, brand ambassador program, case study

**References**


Appendix: Adjusted list of success factors of BAP

A. Background factors
1. High level of brand orientation
2. Professional external and internal brand management
3. Support of the BAP and the BAP coordinator by the C-level

B. Coordinator
4. Experiences in marketing and brand management
5. Selection of a well-accepted BAP coordinator with strong internal networks
6. Self-motivation
7. Extra time budget for the coordinator role

C. Program design
8. Clear formulated goals and measurements
9. Access to budget (money, time)
10. Explicit selection of BA
11. Resilience
12. Enduring motivation of the BA by fun, pride and interaction
13. Continuous training and support of the BA
14. Regular vertical and horizontal interaction
15. Use of tangible symbols
16. Explicit job description
17. Support of the BAP by professional tools

D. Brand ambassadors
18. Credible BAs
19. Pro-active and creative BAs
20. BAs can involve others good.
21. BAs know the brand values.
22. BAs are committed to the brand.
23. BAs should not be introverted and shy.

E. Target groups
24. Target groups participate in the BAP.
25. Target groups have a basic understanding of brand management and the brand values.
26. Target groups recognize the relevance of the brand for the success of the company.
27. Target groups recognize the role of all employees and their own role for the success of the brand.
28. Acceptance of BAP by the line manager of the BAP and by employees

F. Time
29. Phase-oriented BAP
30. Adjusting of the BAP intensity throughout the process
Branding of Social Movements: A Framework

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Purpose of Paper
Over the past six years, social movements—“a form of collective action (a) based on solidarity, (b) carrying on a conflict, (c) breaking the limits of the system in which action occurs” (Melucci, 1985, p.795)—have been on the rise. Beginning in Tunisia in 2010, the Arab Spring utilized social media to mobilize protests across the Middle East, including Egypt, Libya, Syria, Iraq, and Iraqi Kurdistan (Anderson, 2016). In 2011, people around the globe watched rallies in New York, Amsterdam, London, Madrid, Paris, Montreal, Rio de Janeiro, and more than 1,000 other cities (Occupy Solidarity Network, 2012) to protest income inequality. The U.S. political scene alone has seen several “movements” over its past few presidential elections, beginning with the Tea Party movement and extending to the current election, where supporters of Sen. Bernie Sanders and Donald Trump have demonstrated characteristics of social movement actors. Most recently, police shootings of African-American men have given rise to the Black Lives Matter movement, which has led to protests in several U.S. cities.

Social movements become more prevalent in periods of transition, and are both reactions to and products of societal development and change (Gundelach, 1988). Further, civil unrest only becomes a social movement when it is translated—through social means such as networks, organizations, and mass media—to political action (Gundelach, 1988). Given the ever-growing list of contemporary movements, it appears safe to assume that our global society is in a period of transitions. The developments that eventually result, however, depend in large part on the ability of modern social movements to sustain their actions until social and/or political change is achieved. This research proposes that among the elements critical to a social movement’s sustainability are its brand and, more specifically, its brand equity.

To the authors’ knowledge, little – if any – research has examined the role of branding in the sustainability of social movements and the achievement of their goals. The purpose of this research is thus to explore the importance of branding a social movement. Using service dominant logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2004), systems theory (Keller & Lehmann, 2006; Katz & Kahn, 1978), social identity theory (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Tajfel & Turner, 1979), framing theory (Chong & Druckman, 2007; Goffman, 1974), and brand co-creation theory (Hatch & Schultz, 2010; Iglesias, Ind & Alfaro, 2013; Kennedy & Guzmán, 2016), this research assesses the ties between various components of, and proposes a, social movement brand model (Figure 1).
Methodology/Approach

This research implements a comprehensive literature review and thematic analyses to derive patterns, interactions, and evolutions related to the components of the social movement brand model using the Occupy Wall Street movement as a case study. The units of analysis include more than 500 paragraphs of social movement organizations’ websites and communications, more than 2,000 items of news coverage, and more than 150,000 tweets posted by Occupy Wall Street and individual stakeholders from August 2011 until January 2017. The themes and concepts derived from these analyses are used to support the conceptual framework and build an agenda for future research to empirically test the social movement brand model.

The model assumes an overarching systems theory and service dominant logic perspective by which researchers assess a movement as both a component of and a reaction to its environment (Gundelach, 1998), and that social movements are service brands as they typically do not produce tangible products and their value comes from the interactions of actors (Vargo & Lusch, 2004).

The three main components of the model are: (a) the movement—its mission (Kirk & Nolan, 2010) and presented communications (Berry, 2010); (b) external communications related to the movement—messages such as publicity and word-of-mouth that the organization does not control (Berry, 2000); and (c) the organization’s stakeholders—what those in the general public, who might be affected either positively or negatively by the movement, communicate about it (Berry, 2000; Vargo & Lusch, 2004). These components overlap on a secondary level to form (a+b): areas of alignment between the movement’s presented communications and the media’s external communications, (b+c): areas of alignment between the media’s and stakeholders’ external communications, and (a+c): areas of alignment between stakeholders’ external and the movement’s presented communications. Each area of overlap can be understood as a specific form of co-creation, and each is measured using the thematic overlaps between the two distinct communications that comprise it. The final, central element of the movement’s brand (a+b+c), then, can be understood as the amalgamation of the most widely accepted presented, external, and co-created messages related to the entity.
The results of this study build on the existing foundation of contemporary social movements and contribute to the brand co-creation literature. Future research that could stem from this model carries normative and empirical implications, as it will allow researchers to not only understand the branding practices of contemporary social movements, but also to appraise the potential for movements to utilize the proposed research tenants to achieve longevity and an increased social good. The methodological implications of this paper concern the creation of a new model and, subsequently, a new scale to measure the strength of a social movement’s brand, factoring in the interactions of the media and publics, in addition to the external social and political environments. This model will allow for researchers to conduct quantitative studies on topics related to the branding and longevity of social movements.

Practical Implications
Though many contemporary social movement leaders might recognize the importance of branding, it is unclear whether their understanding of the brand construct extends farther than a logo and hashtag. These leaders use the tenants of social identity theory and co-creation daily—through press releases, news appearances and interviews, and social media interactions. However, they might be unaware of the theoretical bases of their practices and/or how to best implement the tools at their disposal to maximize the effectiveness and longevity of their organizations. This research closes the gap between sociology and marketing literature and practitioner application by developing a framework to which social movement leaders can refer when developing their brands. Additionally, the components
identified in the model and framework will help to advance the understanding that a social movement’s brand extends beyond its logo and hashtag to encompass every interaction by every individual affiliated with the movement.

**Originality/Value**
The originality of this work resides on studying an area of social movements where relatively little research has taken place. Especially in democracies, where it is assumed that the populous has the power to enact social change, and in the current global environment, topics related to how social movements might best harness their limited resources for maximum impact and sustainability are paramount. Academics, practitioners, politicians, media, and the public are stakeholders in the ongoing creation and practices of social movements. A formal model to analyze such phenomena from a marketing and branding perspective will close the gap between the literature and practice. The study has value because of the continuous prevalence of social movements and the transitional nature of the modern global society.

**Keywords**
Branding, Social Movements, Model Development, Exploratory Research

**References**


Introduction
Brands continue to be regarded as critical in the success of an organisation, serving as a key contributor to an organisation’s competitive advantage (McDonald, de Chernatony, & Harris, 2001). Research in branding has largely focused on the positive aspects, such as brand love, brand attachment (Japutra, Ekinci, & Simkin, 2014; Thomson, MacInnis, & Whan Park, 2005), with a dearth of research focusing on the negative aspects of branding such as brand hate, brand aversion and brand avoidance (Cherrier, 2009; Dalli, Gistri, & Romani, 2006; Lee, Conroy, & Motion, 2009a). Previous research on brand avoidance identified five types namely experiential avoidance, identity avoidance, moral avoidance, deficit-value avoidance and advertising (Knittel, Beurer, & Berndt, 2016; Lee, 2008; Lee et al., 2009a; Lee, Motion, & Conroy, 2009b) (see Figure 1). With previous research generally ignoring the role of advertising on negative brand aspects, this paper seeks to broaden our understanding by not only considering advertising but the role of communication as a type of brand avoidance.

Literature review
Brand avoidance is regarded as a decision made by a consumer to reject a specific brand (Lee et al., 2009a; Lee et al., 2009b) and it can be considered as an attitude or as a behaviour (Cherrier, 2009).
Actual use of the product or service is not required for these types of avoidance to manifest, except in the case of experiential avoidance, which comes about as a consequence of the interaction with the organisation, its products or its employees (Knittel et al., 2016; Lee et al., 2009b).
Communication with the consumer concerning the product is regarded as a basic marketing activity, with its inclusion in the marketing mix (Kotler, Armstrong, & Parment, 2011). Organisations communicate with consumers making use of various elements of the marketing communication mix, comprising both traditional media (such as television advertising) and electronic media (such as social media). As part of developing the message, the organisation considers the message content, most appropriate channel and the frequency of the communication (Belch, 2012). Thus the organisation decides on the copy, the music (soundtrack), the actors (perhaps a celebrity) who will feature in the advertising while taking the medium selected into account.

It has been suggested in advertising research that advertising can result in avoidance (De Pelsmacker & Van Den Bergh, 1999; Dolliver, 2010; Harris Interactive, 2010), but investigation of broader types of communication (including social media and word-of-mouth (WOM)), suggests that other types of communication can also have this outcome (Khan & Lee, 2014; Kim, Wang, Maslowska, & Malthouse, 2016).

Communication does not, however, only emanate from the organisation but also takes place between consumers. As the organisation is not associated with it, WOM is regarded as more trustworthy by many consumers (Kim et al., 2016).

**Purpose of the paper**
Advertising avoidance comes about as result of communication concerning the brand (either from the organisation or other consumers), resulting in a decision to avoid it. While brand
communication with the consumer is critical (Kotler et al., 2011), various communicative behaviours can result in avoidance. This paper seeks to broaden our understanding by considering advertising and communication as a type of brand avoidance.

Methodology/approach
Research into brand avoidance is still in its infancy, suggesting the suitability of qualitative methods when seeking to understand and explore this phenomenon. This paper reports on 3 qualitative studies involving communication avoidance that were conducted. The studies involved the use of focus groups and interviews among Swedish consumers. Study 1 focused on communication avoidance in a sportswear context (4 focus groups), Study 2 focused on communication avoidance related to cosmetics products (18 participants) and Study 3 on communication avoidance of automobile brands (3 focus groups and 6 interviews). These product categories were selected due to their relative importance to Swedish consumers, with household expenditure of 4.9% on clothing and footwear and 13.4% spent on transport (Anon, 2016).

In the case of cosmetics, it is estimated that Swedes spend SEK700 per month on this product category (Rohdin & Hansson, 2011). Use was made of purposive samples in the studies. An interview guide was used to probe how participants viewed marketing communication in order to understand the aspects that contribute to brand avoidance. All the interviews were transcribed and coded to improve trustworthiness.

Findings
The communication driven by organisations and targeting their customers has been uncovered as a reason for avoidance in Study 1.

The content of the advertisement, the music used in the advertisement and their response to it were identified as factors influencing the viewer and their resulting behaviour.

“What do they even show. Is it a car or a shoe?” (Fg3P4)
“the music annoys me” (Fg4P3)

“I like the advert in the beginning where the woman is shown as very strong and tough. However, I find it provoking that they change the content into the woman being cute. Why can’t girls be tough?” (Fg2P2)

The use of celebrities was mentioned, specifically their credibility and trustworthiness as spokespeople for the brand. Specific mention was made of Janni Delér (Reebok) and Kevin Hart (Nike).

“she ruins the video and I don’t want to buy Reebok, she is not known for anything” (Fg2P3)
“it was childish; he’s not appropriate for sports commercials” (Fg3P5)

The choice of channel in the case of sportswear was viewed as important, with printed brochures viewed least positively, though it did suggest a general need for the product category (running shoes) rather than a specific brand.

“I throw away the flyers immediately” (Fg2P6)
“print creates an idea of the fact that I need new shoes in general, rather than specifically those shoes” (Fg3P4)

Communication frequency, specifically in social media was mentioned where participants expressed brand posting too frequently.

“It’s annoying if there are too many updates and commercials” (Fg3P6)

Sponsorship is particularly relevant in the case of sportswear, and the positive and negative aspects associated was mentioned.

“I would never buy Adidas soccer shoes, just because they sponsor Messi (Fg3P1)

Study 2 also identified communication as a reason for avoidance. Advertising was perceived as unrealistic and the choice of celebrities associated with the product and the role of WOM in the cosmetics industry was also highlighted.

“I wouldn’t use Maybelline...and Max Factor...and Nivea...it’s always such an exaggeration of their product, because it’s not like that in reality...its very unrealistic” (2P12)

“I don’t think Ida Östberg (from Ex on the beach) is particularly representative, so if she would use any makeup, I wouldn’t want to be associated with her profile” (2P16)

I purchased ACO when I was younger...then my mother told me to use Dermologica. So I basically stopped using it” (2P7)

Study 3 differed in that automobiles are high involvement products, and the aspects associated with communication were approached differently. Initially the participants mentioned the importance of WOM as their starting point in their brand decisions, followed by the quality of the manufacturer website, which is associated with the communication channels used.

“I do not know much about cars. I would follow the recommendations given by my personal contacts” (Fg1P3)

“A website really matters. It shows how serious the company is” (Fg2P2)

“the website reflects the company’s overall quality” (Fg3P4)

Celebrities (for example Zlatan Ibrahimović for Volvo) were also mentioned, specifically those negatively associated with the various brands.

“it would be better if he did a commercial for football shoes” (IP1)

The commercial (including the content and music were also cited) as reasons for avoidance.

“BMW only has cars that travels in their commercials” (IP4)

“they have ruined Queen for me” (Fg2P2) (referring to the soundtrack from the Dacia advertisement).
Theoretical implications
The studies conducted find support for the role of advertising and communication in brand avoidance behaviours in these product categories, as suggested in previous research. In the case of sportswear and cosmetics, the findings are consistent with those in advertising research with regards to the advertisement and the role of WOM (Harris Interactive, 2010; Kim et al., 2016; Muehling & McCann, 1993). Celebrities were also identified as contributing to avoidance, which is consistent with previous research (Knittel et al., 2016; McCracken, 1989). The frequency of marketing communication also served as a factor influencing the brand avoidance, with participants viewing it as too much, too often and being too aggressive (De Pelsmacker & Van Den Bergh, 1999). The importance of the website in the purchase decision in the case of automobiles is reflected in that consumers spend an average of 16.75 hours prior to a purchase being made, and these findings support previous research (Autotrader, 2015).

Table 1 Summary of findings across the studies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study 1</th>
<th>Study 2</th>
<th>Study 3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sportwear</td>
<td>Cosmetics</td>
<td>Automobile brands</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content, music and response to an advertisement</td>
<td>Content and response to an advertisement</td>
<td>Content, music and response to an advertisement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Celebrities</td>
<td>Celebrities</td>
<td>Celebrities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication channel</td>
<td>Communication channel, specifically websites (manufacturer and dealership)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communication frequency</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sponsorship</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WOM</td>
<td>WOM</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Practical implications
Organisations should consider carefully their communication with their target market, including the development of corporate websites because of the potential effect on avoidance. Organisations should also take care when using celebrities in their advertising as these results reflect the importance of a match between the celebrity and the product endorsed. If a celebrity is used, their perceived lack of credibility and trustworthiness could result in brand avoidance.
The study highlights the importance of testing advertisements among the target audience prior to their launch to determine their potential effects as failure to do could lead to brand avoidance.

**Limitations**

Limitations including those traditionally associated with qualitative research and a focus on diverse products can be identified.

**Originality/value**

This study contributes to the discussion on brand avoidance and the limited knowledge on the impact of advertising and communication on avoidance.

**Keywords:** brand avoidance; communication avoidance; advertising; social media

**References**


Acknowledgements

The authors would also like to acknowledge the assistance of Therese Almqvist, Moa Forsberg, Anna-Sara Holmström, Anna Hellberg, Johanna Melander, Amy Vong as well as Vladan Djuvic and Alexis O’Dell in the data collection.
Dynamic nature of B2B brand equity: 
Investigating the mediating effects of brand relationships

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Purpose
The main purpose of this study is to investigate the mediating effects of brand relationships in the dynamic process of B2B brand equity development.

Methodology/approach
Learning about factors affecting brands and branding in a business-to-business (B2B) setting has become imperative as industrial markets are becoming increasingly commoditized (Li 2011; Marquardt 2013). The problem of commoditization is also challenging for firms offering services to clients in B2B markets (Ross 2016; Turner 2009). Despite the fact that this problem has been known to providers of B2B services since the 1980s (Knechel 2007), it is not until recently that researchers have started to examine the specific challenges associated with building strong services brands and enhancing their brand equity (e.g. Biedenbach et al. 2011; Kumar et al. 2015; Nyadzayo et al. 2016). However, the commoditization of B2B services is not the only problem facing service providers in industrial markets. For example, during the last two decades, providers of professional services have been involved in a large number of scandals, which were damaging to their reputation. This problem is apparent in the auditing industry, since the Enron scandal and other following scandals have changed clients’ attitudes towards the entire profession. From being perceived as respectable and independent, the accounting profession has become a profession questioned with regard to the competence and integrity of those representing it (Carnegie & Napier 2010). In other words, there have been events in this particular industry that make it difficult for service providers to win the hearts and minds of customers in the ways suggested in the branding literature (Fournier 1998; Stahl et al. 2012).

In this paper, we apply the cognitive psychology approach by focusing on customer perceptions of industrial brands and their determinable contribution to the formation of brand equity in customers’ minds (Seyedghorban et al. 2015). The definition of brand equity used in this paper draws upon the seminal work by Keller (1993), who conceptualizes brand equity as “the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand” (Keller 1993, p. 8). Following theoretical propositions by Keller (2008) and Stahl et
al. (2012), we investigate brand equity that is being formed through continuously developing associative memory networks in customers’ mindsets, which are based on what these customers have learned, felt, seen and heard about a B2B services brand. Advancing the prior findings by Marquardt (2013), who examined how factors such as corporate brand associations and trust in the buyer-seller relationship affect brand equity, our study assesses the critical role of service providers in the dynamic process of brand equity development. Thus, we contend that the perceptions of managers in the client firms provide important insights about the factors affecting the brand equity of a supplier of professional services. Considering the challenging conditions faced by firms providing auditing services, we have selected this category of professional services as a research context for our study.

Drawing upon the classical model of brand equity (Aaker 1996), this study focuses on the following dimensions of brand equity: brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. In line with recent theoretical propositions (Chatzipanagiotou et al. 2016), we adopt a dynamic perspective on the development of brand equity. More specifically, we consider the causal effects between the dimensions of brand equity, and the mediating effects of brand relationships. Based on prior works (Selnes & Sallis 2003; Youndt et al. 2004), brand relationships are conceptualized in this study as perceptions of service clients about human capital of their service provider and established relational trust. The conceptual model illustrates the hypothesized effects between the dimensions of brand equity and factors capturing the brand relationships between B2B service providers and their clients (see Figure 1).

![Conceptual model](image)

Figure 1. Conceptual model

The data was collected by gaining access to the customer database of one of the Big Four auditing firms in Sweden. The clients of this provider of professional services had answered to the survey over the telephone. The data collection resulted in 632 valid surveys and the overall response rate of 21%. We assessed the contextual conditions of specific organizations acquiring auditing services and excluded surveys completed by representatives of religious organizations, which led to the effective response rate of 20%. In total, 587 responses provided by CEOs and CFOs were analyzed by using structural equation modeling. The measurement scales were adapted from prior research on brand equity (Aaker 1991, 1996;
Aaker 1997; Biedenbach & Marell 2010; Koçak et al. 2007; Pappu et al. 2005; Washburn & Plank 2002; Yoo & Donthu 2001), human capital (Youndt et al. 2004), and relational trust (Selnes & Sallis 2003).

Findings
The findings of this study confirm the importance of brand relationships established between service providers and their clients in the B2B context. More specifically, the study demonstrates the significant mediating effects of customer perceptions about human capital and established relational trust on B2B brand equity. The existence of significant effects between the dimensions of brand equity, human capital, and relational trust confirms the relevance of considering these factors in the dynamic process of brand equity development. Table 1 shows the main findings of this study.

Table 1. Structural model estimates and fit indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Standardized estimates*</th>
<th>Conclusion</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1a: Brand Associations ↔ Perceived Quality</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b: Brand Associations → Brand Loyalty</td>
<td>0.20</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1c: Perceived Quality → Brand Loyalty</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: Human Capital → Relational Trust</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a: Brand Associations → Human Capital</td>
<td>0.46</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b: Brand Associations → Relational Trust</td>
<td>0.36</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a: Perceived Quality → Human Capital</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b: Perceived Quality → Relational Trust</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5a: Human Capital → Brand Loyalty</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5b: Relational Trust → Brand Loyalty</td>
<td>0.17</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p < 0.05. Fit indices: $\chi^2 = 822.91$, df = 160, $\chi^2$/df = 5.14, RMSEA = 0.08, GFI = 0.87, CFI = 0.90, IFI = 0.90.

Theoretical implications
The study advances the extant literature on brand equity in industrial markets by investigating factors, which have a critical role in determining service clients’ perceptions about their service providers. By investigating the impact of human capital and relational trust, our research answers to the calls for studies on determinants of B2B brand equity (Leek & Christodoulides 2011; Seyedghorban et al. 2016). We explore the dynamic nature of B2B brand equity by measuring the mediating effects of these variables in the process of brand equity development. This study draws attention to the importance of exploring factors, which capture relationships established between service providers and their clients in industrial markets.

Practical implications
Marketing managers are encouraged to consider the dynamic nature of B2B brand equity in their planning and implementation of marketing strategies. Considering the significant mediating effects of human capital, marketing managers are recommended to assess current perceptions of their customers about human capital of their organization, and to consider the
impact of these perceptions on outcomes of their brand building efforts. Marketing managers are advised to work more proactively with communicating information beneficial for increasing customers’ knowledge about their service providers. Furthermore, marketing managers are recommended to devote additional resources to working with activities relevant for enhancing relational trust, for example by introducing special events for customers, and training programs for employees.

**Limitations**

The study was conducted in the context of professional services. Based on the findings, we suggest that future studies would investigate the impact of factors capturing brand relationships on B2B brand equity in other industrial settings. The study focused on measuring the mediating effects of two factors, which were human capital and relational trust, on the core dimensions of brand equity. The results of this study highlight the importance for future research to apply the dynamic perspective on brand equity development, and to examine the mediating effects of other factors measuring customer perceptions about attitudes and behaviors of service providers.

**Originality/value**

The study applies a dynamic perspective on investigating the process of brand equity development, which advances the current static views on the formation of B2B brand equity. The study considers the mediating effects of relational factors and their significance for enhancing brand equity in industrial settings. The findings advance the current state of knowledge on industrial branding characterized by the limited number of contributions focusing the roles of service providers in enhancing B2B brand equity.

**Keywords**

Brand equity, brand relationships, human capital, relational trust, business-to-business.

**References**


How do different types of contact employees deliver the brand to customers?

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Purpose of paper

An important aspect of service employee performance is related to their ability to fulfil the promises that companies make to their customers (Akdeniz and Calantone, 2015). This remains the main focus of internal branding which aims at the enhancement of corporate brand equity by aligning front-line employees’ behaviour with the brand promise made to customers and enacting them as brand ambassadors (Vallaster, 2004). An extensive amount of work in this area examines how frontline employees affect customers’ experience with the brand (e.g. Boukis et al., 2014) and a variety of organizational-, interpersonal- and intrapersonal factors which affect employees’ ability to deliver the brand consistently is explored in pertinent studies (e.g. Baker, Rapp, Meyer, and Mullins, 2014; Dean et al., 2016). The majority of this work explores employees’ cognitions, affect and behaviours as key drivers of a firm’s ability to deliver a customer service experience that is congruent to the promise the organisation had made to the customer (e.g. Punjaisri and Wilson, 2007; Helm et al., 2016).

Nevertheless, much of the published work espousing the importance of frontline employees makes two implicit assumptions. First, most of these studies presume that employees share a common understanding of the firm’s brand (Sirianni et al., 2013), despite evidence showing that individual job perceptions are affected in different way from the way they understand the brand and also might have different motives when it comes to fulfilling various brand-related objectives (Muller, 2016). Second, current internal branding conceptualizations view employees as a homogenous group of stakeholders who respond to the firm’s internal branding efforts in an unvarying way (e.g. Punjaisri et al., 2009). However, these assumptions remain unproven, as interpersonal variations among individuals need to be taken into account when examining each employee’s ability and motives to meet existing brand delivery standards when interacting with customers (Di Mascio, 2010). Without accommodating these intrapersonal variations into existing internal branding frameworks, managerial insights cannot be uniformly applied to their entire service staff. Hence, investigating whether perceived importance of meeting various role-based expectations (e.g. communicating consistently the brand promise to customers) and engaging in brand-supporting behaviour varies among employees is crucial and needs further investigation. This
becomes even more crucial in high employee-customer interaction setting, as employees’ consistent delivery of the brand promise represents a significant part of customers’ evaluations of the brand (Wallace and de Chernatony, 2011).

The main purpose of this study is to categorize service employees based on their perceptions of the firm’s brand and their understanding of their role in the brand delivery process and also examine whether different types of employees deliver the brand to customers in a consistent way. This study introduces an individual-level perspective of internal branding which accounts for intrapersonal variations among frontline employees. First, a typology of employees is introduced drawing from 34 exploratory interviews with frontline staff which categorizes employees in 4 distinct types based on their brand perceptions. Second, a conceptual framework is also tested which examines the responses of these employee types to different human resource management practices as well as their consequent extra-role brand-related behaviour.

**Methodology**

To test these hypothesized relationships, data was obtained from the hospitality industry and especially from frontline staff in this sector, as employees have a more central role in this context owing to high face time with customers. All companies selected were identified on the basis of a UK-based sample of hospitality firms. Initially, store managers and senior executives from each firm were contacted with the aim of collecting data from one employee and the correspondent supervisor from each firm. Two different online questionnaires were developed and were sent through a link was sent to both a supervisor and the correspondent employee who agreed to participate in the study. A single supervisor-employee dyad was identified in each firm and both parties were approached at different time intervals.

Employees report on coaching, training, brand mindfulness and brand attachment whereas brand development and brand-resilience is based on their supervisor’s views. All constructs of interest were measured using established scales with response options anchored at ‘strongly disagree’ (1) and ‘strongly agree’ (7). Coaching, and formal training scales are based on Elmadag et al.’s work (2008). Brand attachment was measured with 4 items based on Punjaisri and Wilson (2011). Brand mindfulness was adapted from previous work in the OB area (Luthans, 2002; Luthans et al., 2007). Brand resilience is also based on pertinent work (Barber and Heale, 2014; Ngo et al., 2016). The categorization of employees takes place through cluster analysis using a newly developed scale derived from two initial exploratory studies.

**Findings**

Using an interpretative approach four distinct types of employees are identified and validated (i.e. brand enthusiasts, brand conformists, brand deviants and brand rejectors) (studies 1a, 1b). Building on these findings, study 2 empirically confirms that the role of human resource management practices (i.e. training, coaching) is not equally effective for all types of employees and also that employees’ responses to the firm’s development efforts (i.e. brand mindfulness, brand attachment) vary significantly depending on their perceptions of the firm’s brand. Results also indicate that each employee’s responses affect his/her in- and extra-role brand-related behaviour (as captured by brand development and brand resilience) in different ways.
Theoretical Implications

Drawing from schema theory (Daft and Weick, 1984) and action identification theory (Vallacher and Wegner, 1987), this study extends the service employee and the internal branding literature in introducing an individual-level perspective which takes into account intrapersonal variations of frontline employees when assessing their ability to be enacted as brand ambassadors. Also, this study extends the human resource management area in that it illustrates that the impact of HRM and managerial practices on employees should not be taken for granted across whole internal audience and also confirms that the effectiveness of two central HRM practices for different types of employees varies significantly. Third, the typology of service employees introduced extends the internal branding area in that employees with a different perspective of the brand are likely to perform their assumed brand-related tasks with different levels of motivation and be more or less prone to embark on brand citizenship activity.

Practical Implications

The introduction of this employee-based typology will add significantly to the existing internal branding efforts in the hospitality industry. First, managerial focus on employees will not remain consistent across all employee types but managers can accordingly adjust their efforts so that all types of employees meet brand-related goals. Moreover, the more comprehensive understanding of how to render individuals more prone to brand-consistent behaviour is also likely to facilitate line managers’ efforts to ensure that a positive and coherent image of the company emerges from the service staff. Third, managers will be more cognizant of the effect of HRM practices on their subordinates’ ability to communicate the brand promise successfully and might be alarmed about the disadvantages associated with specific employee groups and their approach to brand communication toward customers.

Limitations

This study draws from a hospitality context and findings cannot be easily generalized in other service or retail settings. Second, this typology only captures employee-based perceptions of the firm’s brand and not their ability to provide service excellence to the firm’s customers. Third, the role of uncontrollable factors which might shape individual employee brand perceptions is not considered in this conceptual framework. Last, this study does not examine whether employees are likely to switch eventually from one employee type to another depending on various contextual contingencies.

Originality/ value

This study advances current knowledge in three different ways. First, it introduces an employee-based categorization according to employees’ perception of the firm’s brand and their understanding of their role in the brand delivery process, accommodating intrapersonal variations in the internal branding area. Second, results extend current understanding in that not all employee types reciprocally respond to different human resource management practices while their brand-related behaviour is shaped from different organizational and work conditions. This study is expected to significantly facilitate practitioners to successfully design and implement internal branding strategies via accommodating individual employees’ inclination to be enacted as brand ambassadors.

Keywords

internal branding, human resource management, brand-citizenship behaviours
List of references


The effects of materialism and brand identification on brand teasing behavior

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Purpose of the paper

Teasing is commonly defined as communicating a message that makes fun of the receiver in a humorous way either with or without cruel intent (Raskauskas & Stoltz, 2007). Teasing is typically considered as a subtype of bullying behaviour (Willard, 2007) and, compared to other types of bullying such as harassments or physical threats, relates to more mild forms of social aggression (Bollmer, Harris, Milich, et al., 2003). Although some authors have suggested that teasing represents a harmless type of humour (Wooten, 2006), studies show that those being teased tend to report to prefer for it to not have happened (Keltner, Capps, Kring, et al., 2001), leading to this paper’s view that, overall, teasing presents an undesirable form of social behaviour.

While studies in psychology have explored teasing behaviour which focuses on others’ physical appearance (Menzel, Schaefer, Burke, et al., 2010), academic competence (Jones, Newman & Bautista, 2005), norm violations (Keltner, Capps, Kring, et al., 2001) and various socio-demographic factors (Storch, Roth, Coles, et al., 2004), consumer research suggests that teasing can further be based on the brands individuals possess. Focus group studies conducted by Roper and colleagues for instance report that wearing no-name fashion items as opposed to established fashion brands can lead to teasing behaviour among both children and adolescents (Roper & Shah, 2007; Isaksen & Roper, 2012). Similarly, interviews by Wooten (2006) amongst African Americans indicate that teasing is a likely consequence of violating consumption norms and peer pressure to acquire the ‘correct’ material items.

Despite these initial exploratory efforts however, research to date on consumers’ engagement in brand teasing remains scarce (Isaksen & Roper, 2012; Van Laer, 2014), and particularly little is known as to the antecedents of such behaviour (Breitsohl & Roschk, 2016). The present study aims to complement and enrich the existing literature by empirically examining the role of consumer materialism and brand identification in predicting brand teasing behaviour. As such, we address several research gaps.

First, existing research on brand teasing is purely qualitative in nature and draws upon small-scale samples. Our study is first in exploring brand teasing in a quantitative manner, using a sample of 675 consumers. In particular, we hypothesise that consumers’ materialistic aspirations positively predict brand teasing behaviour. Following Kasser and Ryan (1993), individuals whose aspirations in life are driven by materialistic values - being wealthy, attractive, popular with others, and fitting in - are likely to exhibit dysfunctional social behaviour. Whilst the relationship between materialism and brand teasing has been
speculated upon in previous work (Isaksen & Roper, 2012), an empirical verification has not been conducted yet.

Since individuals were found to use teasing as a means to establish their social identity (Boxer & Cortés-Conde, 1997), and since brands can present a substantial part of one’s identity (Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen, 2012), this study further tests whether a consumers’ identification with his/her brand mediates the relationship between materialism and brand teasing. Whilst research provides strong evidence for a positive relationship between materialism and consumer-brand identification (Alden, Kelley, Youn, et al., 2016; Goldsmith, Flynn & Clark, 2012; Sprott, Czellar & Spangenberg, 2009), the effect of the latter on teasing behaviour has not been investigated so far.

In sum, we hypothesise that materialism has a positive effect on brand-related teasing behaviour (H1), and that this relationship is mediated by consumers’ brand identification (H2).

**Methodology**

An online survey was designed for the purpose of data collection, following a convenience sampling approach. Scale items were taken from previous studies and based on five-point Likert scales (1= ‘strongly disagree’, 5= ‘strongly agree’). Two items for teasing were taken from Marsh et al. (2011) and slightly adapted to adjust it to the brand context. Following others (Banerjee & Dittmar, 2008; Kasser, Rosenblum, Sameroff, et al., 2014), materialism was operationalised as a second order construct based on four subscales, consisting of values linked to money (2 items), popularity (3 items), attractiveness (4 items) and conformity (2 items) from Grouzet, Kasser, Ahuvia, et al.’s (2005) Aspiration Index. The scale for consumer brand identification (4 items) was taken from Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar and Sen (2012).

To verify item comprehensibility and instrument consistency, a pilot test of 53 members from several Facebook brand communities was conducted, and minor adjustments were made as a result. Subsequently, the survey was placed on 21 consumption communities for the period of three weeks. A total of 675 utilisable questionnaires were collected from communities resolving around sports and fashion brands. Respondents were dominantly male (73%), between 22 and 44 years old (45%) and reported a monthly income ranging from 1,650-7,000 USD (48%).

**Findings**

Data analysis was conducted using LISREL 8.7 and the two-step structural equation modelling approach recommended by Anderson and Gerbing (1988). An exploratory factor analysis (EFA) confirmed the unidimensionality of analysed factors. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) revealed that all standardized loadings were larger than 0.7 and significant at 0.001, and AVE values exceeded 0.5, thus providing adequate convergent validity. Since all CR values exceeded 0.7, reliability was deemed acceptable. The square root of the AVE was always larger than the factor correlation coefficients, suggesting discriminant validity. Following the common criteria (Bagozzi & Yi, 2012; Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al. 2009), the results of the first and second order measurement model indicated an adequate goodness of fit (Table 1). Finally, based on Harman’s single-factor test, common method bias was unlikely to have affected our results since a one-factor model provided a worse fit than the original measurement model, and an EFA where all variables were loaded onto a single
factor explained less than 41% of the data variance (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, et al., 2003).

Table 1. First and second order measurement model results (CFA)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FIRST ORDER MODEL</td>
<td>CR</td>
<td>AVE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(1) Money (λ=.82; t-value=30.4)</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>.87</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(2) Popularity (λ=.87; t-value=32.7)</td>
<td>.89</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.77</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(3) Attractiveness (λ=1.00; t-value=n.a.)</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.72</td>
<td>.85</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(4) Conformity (λ=.65; t-value=19.8)</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td>.67</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goodness of fit: $\chi^2=135.77$ (p=.00); RMSEA=.055; NFI=.99; CFI=.99; IFI=.99; RFI=.98; GFI=.97

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
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<th></th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
<th>(7)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SECOND ORDER MODEL</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(5) Materialism</td>
<td>n.a.</td>
<td>.79</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(6) Brand Teasing</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.83</td>
<td>.22</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(7) Consumer-Brand Identification</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.86</td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goodness of fit: $\chi^2=444.23$ (p=.00); RMSEA=.057; NFI=.97; CFI=.97; IFI=.97; RFI=.97; GFI=.94

Notes: Roots squared AVEs (in bold) on diagonal; shared correlations above diagonal

Using the maximum-likelihood estimator to test our hypotheses, the results for the structural model indicated an acceptable fit ($\chi^2=414.44$ (p=.00); RMSEA=.057; NFI=.97; CFI=.97; IFI=.98; RFI=.96; GFI=.94). As illustrated in Figure 1, both hypotheses were corroborated. Consumer materialism had a positive effect on brand bullying (H1; $\beta=.18$, p<0.000), and consumers’ identification with a brand partially mediated this relationship (H2). The mediation was established following Baron and Kenny (1986), in that a significant direct effect was present for materialism on consumer-brand identification ($\beta=.12$, p<0.000) and for consumer brand identification on brand teasing ($\beta=.45$, p<0.000), and the effect of materialism on brand teasing became weaker when consumer brand identification was included in the model ($\beta=.053$, p<0.01).
Figure 1. Structural model results

![Structural Model](image)

Notes: ***p<.001; t-values in brackets

Theoretical implications

This study advances the branding literature by providing quantitative evidence, for the first time, for the positive effects of consumers’ materialistic aspirations and brand identification on brand teasing. We thereby address calls for more research on consumer bullying behaviour in general (Breitsohl & Roschk 2016; Van Laer, 2014), and offer an empirical verification for prior suggestions on the relationship between materialism and teasing behaviour (e.g. Isaksen & Roper, 2012). Importantly, these findings also contribute to the psychological literature which so far has focused on teasing in relation to individuals’ physical appearance (Menzel, Schaefer, Burke, et al., 2010) and neglected the role of brands and materialism as part of appearance-related teasing. We therefore suggest to add brand teasing as an additional form of bullying to existing taxonomies on aggressive social communication behaviour (e.g. Willard, 2007) and call for more research on consumer aggression which relates to brands and materialistic aspirations.

The finding that materialistic aspirations predict teasing independent of consumers’ identification with a brand also contributes to our theoretical understanding of consumer bullying behaviour as portrayed in past work (Breitsohl & Roschk, 2016; Ewing, Wagstaff & Powell, 2013). The scarce literature in this area has so far implicitly assumed that identifying with brands or brand communities is a necessary precondition to elicit aggressive consumer communication behaviour. Our findings challenge this view since general materialistic life aspirations alone were found to be sufficient in predicting teasing without identifying with a particular brand. Future research may therefore explore further predictors of consumer teasing behaviour which go beyond brand-specific constructs. For instance, following self-determination theory, we recommend to investigate how intrinsic life aspirations (see
Grouzet, Kasser, Ahuvia, et al., 2005) affect consumer teasing behaviour, since the present study exclusively focused on extrinsic aspirations.

Besides looking at antecedents of brand teasing, the literature would also benefit from an investigation of the potential outcomes of teasing behaviour. For instance, an interesting research question would relate to whether consumers’ brand loyalty and brand advocacy increases as a consequence of teasing others about a brand, and whether this is true for both the teaser and those being teased.

Practical implications
The negative consequences of teasing behaviour for social well-being are well-documented. Our study shows that teasing can be based on consumers’ material possessions and identification with brands, thus giving companies the opportunity to demonstrate corporate social responsibility by addressing this harmful behaviour. Our study is a first step in providing practitioners with a better understanding of consumption-related factors which drive their customers to tease others about their brands. While our findings do not allow us to offer possible managerial strategies, promotional campaigns to tackle teasing may be grounded in research findings from successful teasing interventions as evidenced in past work from psychology (see Mishna, Cook, Saini, et al., 2011 for a review).

Limitations
This study focused on two brand categories (sports and fashion) which are arguably high-involvement products and thus our findings may not be generalised for low-involvement products. However, recent netnographic work shows that teasing behaviour may occur in relation to products such as food and beverages as well (Breitsohl & Roschk, 2016). Furthermore, data was collected from online brand communities which tend to be used by younger market segments and may explain the lack of elderly consumers in our sample. It remains to be seen whether future work will be able to verify the present findings for elderly consumers and those who do not engage in online communities as well.

Originality/value
This study is first to provide quantitative evidence for the positive effect of materialism and brand identification on brand teasing. We thereby verify qualitative suggestions made in prior studies, and add to the scarce literature on consumer teasing in general.

Keywords (3–5)
Consumer aggression; Bullying behaviour; Social identity; Extrinsic aspirations
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When is sponsoring more effective for an “outsider” than an “insider” brand? An accessibility perspective on multiple brand sponsorships

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Purpose of this paper

Previous research within the branding field argues that brand similarity is an important success factor when launching a new product under an existing brand name or building brand alliances (e.g. Aaker, 1990; Aaker & Keller, 1992; Völckner & Sattler, 2006). Nevertheless, there is theoretical support that under certain conditions, dissimilarity might be more beneficial, as contrast effects can help to enhance consumers’ attention paid to a brand. This perspective is based on the Accessibility-Diagnosticity Framework (Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Lynch, 2006). In this research project, it is argued that, for sport events in which multiple sponsors that are similar with regard to each other (e.g. offering tennis equipment for a tennis event), dissimilarity can help a brand to stand out from the group of sponsor brands.

Theoretical Background

Our starting point is celebrity advertising, the idea of which is that the communication of a celebrity and a brand at the same time increases brand awareness and brand image.

Ideally, key attributes of the celebrity will be transferred on the brand image and reinforce or enlarge the brand association network (e.g. Keller, 1993; Smith & French, 2011). Similarly, brands invest in sponsorship activities, such as the 2014 FIFA World Cup and 2016 Rio Olympics in Brazil, to benefit from the awareness and the image that consumers evoke to such an event (Henseler, Wilson, & de Vreede, 2009). Event sponsorship has emerged as a dominant element of the promotion mix, attracting the interest of brands (Lacy & Close, 2013).
In an increasingly cluttered landscape, consumers perceive sponsorship as being less commercially oriented than advertising (Meenaghan & Shipley, 1999). This can facilitate a sponsor brand of an event achieving cut-through and being noticed by consumers, as brands engaged in sponsorship activities are perceived as seeking the interest of the sponsored entity (e.g. event) in addition to their own (Carrillat & d’Astous, 2012).

However, several brands typically sponsor such events at the same time. For example, Budweiser, Castrol, Continental, Johnson & Johnson, McDonalds, Moy Park, Oi and Yingli, amongst others, were official 2014 FIFA World Cup Sponsors at the same time. In addition to this, there were several national supporters of the event as well. More recently, 60 brands were able to use the Rio 2016 Olympics logo, with the top 12 sponsors paying $1.3 billion for the current four-year cycle (SMH, 2016).

**Research gap and significance of this paper**

Event-sponsoring organisations have expressed concerns where there are too many sponsors, where the sponsorship landscape can become ‘cluttered’ and thus making it difficult for the main sponsors to stand out (SMH, 2016). A reason for this argument is that consumers have limited cognitive resources to perceive process and elaborate a huge amount of information at the same time (e.g. in case of a TV spot for the event in which several sponsors are mentioned), and are ‘cognitive misers’ in terms of allocating their scarce cognitive resources (Meyvis & Janiszewski, 2004). Therefore, the question arises if the positive effects of multiple sponsorship activities are limited if the number of sponsoring brands is too high, as several brands are ‘competing’ for the consumer’s attention and awareness. Particularly, it is a valid question, if consumers are already able to allocate correctly multiple sponsoring brands to such an event or if dilution effects occur. The later one would mean that due to a high number of similar diverse brands (e.g. from similar product categories), the sponsorship activity would be unsuccessful for the brands itself. In addition to this, positive as well as negative image-spillover effects between brands may occur due to the fact that sponsor brands are typically engaging in marketing communications related the event.

The relationship between sponsor and sponsored event (or ‘fit’) has a central role in sponsorship (Bruhn & Holzer, 2015; Speed & Thompson, 2000). As brands often support an event due to the high fit between their own brand and the event, such brands ‘compete’ amongst similar associations in consumers’ minds. Therefore, the question arises if a brand should rather support events with a low fit between their brand and the event compared to a high fit. The reason behind this is the idea that brand associations might be less accessible if (very) similar brands sponsor an event simultaneously, whereas consumer associations about ‘outsider’ brands might be more accessible and diagnostic when confronted with multiple brand-sponsorship advertisements (e.g. Feldman & Lynch, 1988;
Lynch, 2006). Similarly, it could be shown that brand extensions from ‘broader brands’ are more successful (Meyvis & Janiszewski, 2004).

Even though research has emphasized the need for high fit between a brand and communication activity (e.g. Cornwell et al, 2006; Donahay & Rosenberger, 2007; Koo, Quarterman & Flynn 2006; Roy & Cornwell, 2004), the results for multiple sponsorship seem to differ. We posit that this difference is based on the Accessibility-Diagnosticity Framework (Lynch, 2006), which argues that consumer associations ‘compete’ for the consumer’s awareness in the situation where several brands are sponsors. Accessibility is the degree to which a piece of information can be retrieved from memory for input into a judgment and diagnosticity is the degree to which that piece of information is relevant for that judgment (Feldman & Lynch, 1988; Lynch, 2006). Memory-based accessible information about a brand is not used when more diagnostic stimulus-based inputs (e.g. print ads, point-of-purchase materials, event sponsorships) are contextually available during judgment and thus can override past impressions (Boisvert, 2016).

However, findings based on the accessibility-diagnosticity perspective are sometime divergent, and more field investigation is necessary (Boisvert, 2016, Meyvis & Janiszewski, 2004). Therefore, we answer calls for more research regarding multiple sponsors of events (Lacy & Close, 2013; Ruth & Simonin, 2006).

**Empirical study**

We seek to contribute by improving the understanding in this area through undertaking a 2 (fit between brand and event: high / low) x 3 (number of brands: 4, 7, 10) x 2 (processing depth: high / low) between-subject experimental design, by which the key factors influencing this relationship and their influence on variables of interest (e.g. attitude towards the sponsor brand, purchase intention to buy the brand’s products or services, Appendix 1) will be empirically investigated. Two stimuli are shown as examples in Appendix 2.

An experimental design is appropriate for this context, due to the grouping nature of the independent variables and metric dependent variable (e.g. attitude towards the sponsor brand). Experimental designs are typical for research in the area (e.g. Boisvert, 2016; Carrillat & d’Astous, 2012; Henseler, Wilson, & de Vreede, 2009; Ruth & Simonin, 2006). Furthermore, mediating and moderating variables such as brand familiarity (e.g. Zajonc, 1968; Sundaram and Webster 1999) and product category involvement (e.g. Zaichkowsky, 1985; Kapferer & Laurent, 1986) will be taken into account in the design and subsequent analysis.

A small pilot study has been undertaken with a small convenience sample of students to validate the planned theoretical approach. As the next stage in this research, the authors are
planning to conduct a much larger consumer sample (i.e. non-student sample), sufficiently large enough to test the 2x3x2 between subject experimental design and facilitate establishing its external validity. A sample of 720 consumers is proposed for data collection in this research due to the complexity of the experimental design (i.e. number of cells). This will yield 40 respondents per cell, which should be sufficient for achieving a reasonable power for the design and allow determining significance for any effects.

Theoretical and practical implications and limitations
From a theoretical point of view, this paper aims to answer the question if similarity or dissimilarity is key when multiple brands sponsor an event. It has been often argued in the literature that the similarity between sponsor and sponsored event is important (e.g. Bruhn & Holzer, 2015; Speed & Thompson, 2000). However, contrary to this argument, in the case of multiple sponsorship, too many brands might ‘compete’ amongst similar associations in the consumers’ minds, leading to the situation whereby dissimilarity might be more effective with regarding to achieving desirable sponsorship outcomes. This theoretical question, which is a very important practical question for companies and their brands, will be answered in the data collection planned to be undertaken. These practical implications could lead companies and their brands to consider, for example, investing more effectively in sponsoring activities and seeking to better differentiate their brand-sponsorship activities from competitors’ branding activities in the consumer’s mind.

From a methodological point of view, this research uses an experimental design. Even though this ensures high internal validity, the study will need to be replicated in other sponsoring contexts, as well as for other product categories and brands. Due to the external-validity limitations of an experimental design, a more realistic approach should be encouraged for future research to follow, e.g. using a consumer panel of a sport event over time.

Keywords
Multiple Branding, Sponsoring, Accessibility-Diagnosticity Framework, Brand Similarity, Sport Event
References


### Appendix 1. Measures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of construct</th>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>Original source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Familiarity with the event      | How familiar are you with the event [name of the event]?
|                                 | (unfamiliar/familiar)                                                                 | Sundaram and Webster 1999, 665                        |
| Attitude towards the event      | 1. The event [name of event] is bad/good                                                | Modified from MacKenzie and Lutz 1989, 58 and Mitchell and Olson 1981, 323 |
|                                 | 2. The event [name of event] I dislike/like                                             |                                                       |
|                                 | 3. The event [name of event] is unpleasant/pleasant                                     |                                                       |
|                                 | 4. The event [name of event] is unfavourable/favourable                                 |                                                       |
|                                 | 5. The event [name of event] is made of poor quality/high quality                      |                                                       |
| Brand familiarity               | How familiar are you with the brand [name of the brand]?
<p>|                                 | (unfamiliar/familiar)                                                                 | Sundaram and Webster 1999, 665                        |
| Attitude towards the brand      | 1. The brand [name of brand] is bad/good                                                | MacKenzie and Lutz 1989, 58 and Mitchell and Olson 1981, 323 |
|                                 | 2. The brand [name of brand] I dislike/like                                             |                                                       |
|                                 | 3. The brand [name of brand] is unpleasant/pleasant                                     |                                                       |
|                                 | 4. The brand [name of brand] is unfavourable/favourable                                 |                                                       |
|                                 | 5. The brand [name of brand] offers poor quality/high quality                           |                                                       |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of construct</th>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>Original source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity with products</td>
<td>How familiar are you with the products of the brand [name of the brand]? (unfamiliar/familiar)</td>
<td>Sundaram and Webster 1999, 665</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Attitude towards the products of the brand | 1. The products of [name of brand] are bad/good  
2. The products of [name of brand] I dislike/like  
3. The products of [name of brand] are unpleasant/pleasant  
4. The products of [name of brand] are unfavourable/favourable  
| Product purchase intention | 1. How likely would you buy a product from the brand [name of brand]? (unlikely/likely)  
2. How possible would it be for you to buy a product from the brand [name of brand]? (impossible/possible)  
3. How probable would it be for you to buy a product from the brand [name of brand]? | modified from Schlosser, White, and Lloyd 2006, 146 |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of construct</th>
<th>Independent variables (Manipulation check)</th>
<th>Original source</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fit between brand and event</strong></td>
<td>1. How do you evaluate the similarity between the brand [name of brand] and the event [name of event]? (not very similar/very similar) &lt;br&gt; 2. How do you evaluate the match between the brand [name of brand] and the event [name of event]? (very low match/very high match) &lt;br&gt; 3. I think that the sponsorship of [name of brand] to support the event [name of event] is appropriate? (not appropriate at all/very appropriate) &lt;br&gt; 4. How do you evaluate the extent to which the associations about the event [name of event] are relevant for the brand [name of brand] (not relevant at all/very relevant)</td>
<td>Item 1: modified from Völckner and Sattler 2006, 32X Aaker and Keller (1990) &lt;br&gt; Item 2 and 3: modified from Nan and Heo (2007) &lt;br&gt; Item 3 in another context: Aaker and Keller (1990) &lt;br&gt; Item 4: Broniarczyk and Alba (1994), 221</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fit between brand and other sponsoring brands</strong></td>
<td>1. How do you evaluate the similarity between the brand [name of brand] and [name of competing brand A]? (not very similar/very similar) &lt;br&gt; 2. How do you evaluate the match between the brand [name of brand] and [name of competing brand A]? (very low match/very high match) &lt;br&gt; 3. I think that the joint sponsorship of [name of brand] and [name of competing brand A] is appropriate? (not appropriate at all/very appropriate)</td>
<td>Item 1: modified from Völckner and Sattler 2006, 32X Aaker and Keller (1990) &lt;br&gt; Item 2 and 3: modified from Nan and Heo (2007) &lt;br&gt; Item 3 in another context: Aaker and Keller (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cognitive load of subjects</strong></td>
<td>1. How mentally occupied were you during this study? (not very mentally occupied/very mentally occupied) &lt;br&gt; 2. How effortful was it to fulfil the task that you got</td>
<td>Adapted from Menon and Kahn, 2003, 320</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Name of construct</td>
<td>Control variables</td>
<td>Original source</td>
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<tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Involvement towards event** | 1. How interested are you in [name of event]? (not interested/interested)  
2. How often do you go to events similar as [name of event]? (seldom/often)  
3. How familiar are you with [name of event]? (not familiar/familiar)  
4. How do you evaluate events such as the [name of event] | modified from Zaichkowsky 1985, 350s |
| **Attitude towards the advertisement** | 1. The advertisement is bad/good  
2. The advertisement I dislike/like  
3. The advertisement is unpleasant/pleasant  
4. The advertisement is unfavourable/favourable  
5. The advertisement is made of poor quality/high quality | Modified from MacKenzie and Lutz 1989, 58 and Mitchell and Olson 1981, 323 |
| **Complexity of advertisement** | 1. How do you rate the complexity of this advertisement? (not complex at all/very complex)  
2. How complicated do you rate this | modified from Cox and Cox, 1988, 113X Cox and Cox, 2002, 124 |
| **Product category involvement** | 1. How interested are you in [name of product category]? (not interested/interested)  
2. How often do you use [name of products]? (seldom/often) | modified from Zaichkowsky 1985, 350s |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3. How familiar are you with [name of products]? (not familiar/familiar)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How do you evaluate [name of product category] in general? (bad/good)</td>
<td></td>
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</table>
Appendix 2. Stimuli of two experimental groups with a high (low) fit between brand and event (insider versus outsider brand) and a medium number of sponsors.
Delivering a health brand promise through a value co-creation model

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Purpose

The aim of this paper is to propose a conceptual model, which addresses the co-creation of value between consumers, and brand firms by which both actors intervene in the delivery of a health food brand promise. Both actors enjoy the benefits of the promise as they participate on the consummation of health. This concept may persuade firms to recognize the brand opportunities undertaken through a co-creation of value in conjunction with brand consumers who are active participants in the delivery of a health food brand. It also aims to offer a new perspective by which academics can further develop the concept of brand promise and value co-creation process through the context of health.

Approach – Theoretical framework

Brand promise

First discussed by Calonius (1986), promises are described as benefits offered by a party to another one in the future with a group of conditions previously set to be accomplished. Later, Bitner (1995) elaborates by defining a three-stage process composed of three activities. Each activity sustained by a particular marketing activity. In the first activity, making a promise is derived when external marketing activities assist in communicating the brand promise. This communication can be accomplished through advertising, selling, or servicing consumers. The second activity, enabling the promise, is accomplished with the internal marketing activities in which the firm uses some of its resources such as employee skills, abilities, tools and internal systems to deliver the promise. The third and last activity, keeping the promise, is accomplished during the so-called ‘moment of truth’ when the consumer either meets the
employee, the technology or the product service. In keeping the promise, the firm recognizes that the product is intrinsically a service when consumers actually value the product during its usage.

More recently, de Chernatony et al (2000) and Van Durme et al (2003) state that brands are constructed by all actors and represent relationships. Later, Brodie et al. (2006) coined the value triangle framework arguing that the brand is central to the role of service brands in the creation of value. Furthermore, consumers today want to interact with brands in the value creation while they reach their own brand expectations (Anker et al., 2011).

To this respect, consumer brand expectations are derived from the brand promise. We can define a brand promise as those benefits offered by a brand which are based on particular conditions set by the brand. Moreover, Anker et al. (2012) elaborates by making a distinction between clear and fuzzy promises. With clear brand promises, the delivery of the promise depends on the internal brand conditions. That is, consumers are merely expected to consume the brand. In contrast, with fuzzy brand promises, the delivery of the promise is dependent on other conditions outside the consumption, which help reenact their understanding of health. The impact behind this distinction poses then particular implications on the way brands should interact with consumers in order to deliver the fuzzy brand promise. Health food brands in particular may need to state clearly how this consumer interaction occurs as the “fuzziness” of its promise is outside the condition of consumption. Consumers may need to know about food nutritional values and their relationship to exercise, good social relations and mental well-being. Today, it is yet unclear how this fuzzy health food brand promise interacts with consumers in order to deliver the health promise. We propose a model, which may close the gap in distinguishing how this collaborative interaction occurs between consumers and health food brands.

Health food brand promise

The concept of health brand is contentious as to what is actually healthy about a brand. In terms of health food brands, it is a general agreement that it is more than a food product with nutritional and health claims. While Evans et al. (2008) make reference that health brands consist of two elements: consumer brand benefits and consumer-brand interaction, Anker et al. (2012) state that the former may only evolve when the latter takes place. Such argument poses important implications on the way the health food brand decides on how this consumer brand interaction occurs. In other words, brand firms may require securing that both components secure the delivery of the health food brand promise.
The paradigm of value co-creation

The concept of value and its creation has shifted since consumers have taken a more active role. Value has shifted from product to consumer-centred as consumers are considered to be a source of value because they are experts of product usage and hence, of extreme importance in co-creating value through consumption (Edvardsson et al., 2005; Matthing et al., 2004; Payne et al., 2008, 2009).

Such paradigm suggests that firms are yet to modify their current structures and processes to better serve consumers through new processes, spaces and mechanisms (Grönroos, 2008, 2011; Grönroos and Ravald, 2011; Grönroos and Voima, 2013). In particular, health food brands may require to internally readdress their current approach to better service their consumers by including them in their health food brand value co-creation.

The proposed model

This model has the intention to propose that the consummation of a health food brand promise is undertaken through the collaboration of consumers and health food brand firms. The model combines the making, enabling and keeping of the promise (Bitner, 1995) while actively participating in a collaborative manner with consumers in order to achieve the promised health. This model (Figure 1) also considers that the health brand promise in not a clear one, but fuzzy in as much that the consumer requires more than the consumption of the health food brand.

Figure 1. A proposed value co-creation model for delivering fuzzy health food brand promise
As figure 1 shows, how the health firm depicted here by the health food brand interacts with their consumers with the objective to consummate the fuzzy health food brand promise.

At the start, consumers are at the current consumption experience while the health brand recognizes the distinction of a fuzzy health food brand promise. At a second stage, the health brand makes the brand promise by communicating the fuzzy health food brand promise while the consumer becomes aware of the fuzzy health food brand promise. At this stage, the brand firm may use particular brand communication tools. For instance, nutritional and health claims may appear in packages or advertising campaigns. Such claims are the expression of the fuzzy health food promise as the claim per se holds a fuzziness around the health promise. This means that while the brand manager may hold the direction on how this claim is expressed, the consumer at this stage becomes aware of the brand promise and in the third stage, the consumer interprets this fuzzy health food brand promise. In this same stage, the health food brand becomes aware of consumer’s interpretation and follows through by enabling the fuzzy health food brand promise. Here, the firm is required then to reconfigure if necessary their resources in order to establish new spaces and mechanisms. At this stage, for instance, the firm may work internally in making decisions on how to better procure their web page interactivity, so that consumers may participate actively with the fuzzy health food brand promise in the next stage.

In the fourth stage, consumers enact health through the active participation of the spaces and mechanisms established by the brand surrounding the fuzzy health food brand promise. The health food brand at this stage requires to keep the health food brand promise by securing the so-called moment of truth. At this stage, the reconfiguration of resources in the previous stage are activated in order to establish the appropriate consumer-centred experience. Finally, in the last stage, the fuzzy health food brand promise is consummated by the outcome of consumer health. At this stage the relationship has strengthened as both actors have benefited in the co-creation of health.

**Theoretical implications**

While a literature review has identified general brand value co-creation models which may apply to different brands and provide us with the importance of a brand co-creation process (Iglesias et al., 2013; Payne et al., 2009), they do not consider the particularities of such an important topic as health. In the case of health food brands, research has been limited in understanding the interaction between consumers and health food brands in such a complex matter as a health promise. By elaborating on the three activities of promises (Bitner, 1995; Brodie et al., 2006), this model extends the possibilities of integrating them with consumers in a collaborative manner as proposed by the paradigm of value co-creation. It also suggests the importance of shifting some of the brand resources from product production to a consumer service orientation.
This model also makes a marketing proposition at times when society requires theoretical models that may better integrate consumers in processes that impact their own lives in matters as important as health.

**Practical implications**

The model may be considered as a managerial instrument, which helps delineate the process and the concerns arising at each stage of the process, so that they become more effective in the development of the health food brand promise and its delivery. Another important aspect of this model is that as managers develop their process of value co-creation, they will enforce their managerial skills under a new perspective of value, which may add a different and innovative brand perspective. They may also learn new insights about consumers, which will benefit other organisational processes in directing future resource investments and other organisational capabilities.

**Originality**

This model presents a way by which health food brands may actively be involved in seeking the participation and understanding of consumers. By drawing from previous studies on brand promises, health brands, and the paradigm of value co-creation, we believe that this model offers a new perspective on how to venture the delivery of health food brand promises through such paradigm. In particular, food brands which seek a fuzzy health brand promise, may need to readdress some of the processes used to connect with consumers in order to secure the re-enactment of health through their participation. This paper also adds to Christodoulides (2009) discussion suggesting that the issue is not about letting go of brand control to consumers, but rather having the brand become part of their lifestyle.

**Keywords:** health brand, health brand promise, brand promise, fuzzy promise, value co-creation

**References**


Examining Tourists’ Perceptions of Luxury Restaurant Brands – Integrating Destination Image into a Value-Attitude-Behaviour Model

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Purpose of Paper

The purpose of this research is to explore luxury restaurant’s appeal to tourists through incorporating destination image into a value-attitude-behavior model. Consumers dine at luxury restaurants for reasons beyond fulfilling basic needs (Chen, Peng, & Hung, 2015). This phenomenon is particularly apparent for luxury restaurants as luxury brands have grown significantly and have become more accessible to middle-class consumers since the late-1990s. Much research has been done on how to build luxury restaurant brand through managing the environment (e.g., Chen et al., 2015; Jang & Namkung, 2009; Lee & Hwang, 2011; Peng & Chen, 2015; Wu & Liang, 2009) but there are gaps in the knowledge.

First, how restaurant’s perceived luxury values affect consumers’ attitude toward luxury restaurants and consumption intentions can be further investigated because existing research has been scarce and inconsistent. In addition, further luxury brand research focusing on services is likely to add new insights to the theories on branding.

Second, tourists are more interested in gastronomy tourism than they have been in the past (Chang, Kivela, & Mak, 2010; Lee & Hwang, 2011; Min & Lee, 2014). Famous restaurants have the potential to attract tourists’ patronage (Horn & Tsai, 2010; Kivela & Crotts, 2006; Sánchez-Cañizares & López-Guzmán, 2012). However, because tourists who travel from aboard have leisure time before and after dining, their perceptions toward the image of the city where the luxury restaurant located must be taken into account. The current gastronomy tourism literature on the influence of destination image will be benefitted from further exploration.
To examine the gaps in the luxury restaurant branding and gastronomy tourism literature, this study incorporates destination image into a value-attitude-behavior model. The value-attitude-behavior model is rooted in the field of psychology and personality studies (Homer & Kahle, 1988) but is increasingly being applied to the field of consumption research (e.g., Allen, Ng, & Wilson, 2002; Peng & Chen, 2014; Soutar & Sweeney, 2001; Williams & Soutar, 2009). Scholars largely agreed that customer perceived value can serve as a predictor of individuals’ attitude toward a given consumption decision, which, in turn, can affect individuals’ behavior (Allen et al., 2002; Chen & Peng, 2014).

This research focuses symbolic value, experiential value, and functional value as presented by Berthon, Pitt, Parent, and Berthon (2009) when examining luxury restaurant’s values. In this research, functional value refers to a restaurant’s core benefits and quality, such as food quality (Jang & Namkung, 2009; Wiedmann, Hennings, & Siebels, 2009). Experiential value refers to a luxury restaurant’s ability to evoke customers’ fantasies, feelings and fun (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Based on Hung et al.’s (2011) definition, the symbolic value of luxury restaurants indicates the ability of the luxury restaurant to relay information about its customer’s wealth and status. Attitude is defined as the degree to which a customer has a favorable or unfavorable evaluation or appraisal of a luxury restaurant (Ajzen, 1991). When examining behavior, this research focuses on consumption intentions, which is tourist’s intention to dine at luxury restaurant. The following hypotheses are examined:

H1: Luxury restaurant’s functional value has a positive effect on tourists’ attitude.
H2: Luxury restaurant’s experiential value has a positive effect on tourists’ attitude.
H3: Luxury restaurant’s symbolic value has a positive effect on tourists’ attitude.
H4: Tourists’ attitudes toward luxury restaurants have a positive effect on their consumption intentions.

Method

Trained interviewers were recruited to gather data from tourists visiting the United Kingdom. A purposive sampling method was used to select the participants. To qualify for the
interview, potential participants needed to be 1) over the age of 18, 2) visiting UK for tourism purpose, and 3) have dined at Michelin-starred restaurants before. Michelin-starred restaurants are considered luxury restaurants in this research because their prices are generally higher than other full-service restaurants. Furthermore, these restaurants are subjected to stringent inspections, high customer expectations, and competition from nearby restaurants (Johnson, 2005; Lane, 2010; Peng & Chen, 2015).

A total of 168 valid responses were obtained after six weeks of data collection. The questionnaire consists of 35 statements on consumption intentions, attitude, functional value, experiential value, symbolic value, and destination image. The items for each variable are available upon request.

IBM SPSS AMOS 20 was used to analyze the data. Following Anderson and Gerbing’s (1988) two-step approach, this study examined the adequacy of the measurement model and the structural components of the model by using CFA and structural equation modeling. All of the factor loadings on the intended latent variables were significant and greater than 0.7 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The squared multiple correlations supported the reliability of the measurement items. Convergent validity was examined in terms of factor loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). AVE is the average variance shared between a construct and its measurement (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The AVE values ranged from 0.78 to 0.95. Therefore, convergent validity was confirmed (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Finally, the discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the AVE of each individual construct with the shared variances between this individual construct and all of the other constructs. Because the AVE value for each construct was greater than the squared correlation between constructs, the discriminant validity was confirmed. (Data upon request)

Findings

After the overall measurement model was found to be acceptable, the structural model was tested with the entire sample again (n=168). The model fit was good ($\chi^2=905.096$, $df=197$, $\chi^2/df=4.594$, RMSEA=0.08, CFI=0.901, GFI=0.876). After the overall measurement model was found to be acceptable, the structural model was tested with the entire sample again. Based on the analysis, H1 is supported ($t=3.201$; $\beta=0.465$; $p<0.001$); therefore, functional value has a positive influence on tourist’ attitude. H2, which suggested that experiential value would have a positive influence on participants’ attitude, is supported by the findings ($t=3.878$; $\beta=0.16$; $p<0.001$). H3 is also supported, as symbolic value was shown to have a positive effect on attitude ($t=2.240$; $\beta=0.93$; $p<0.05$). Moreover, the results support H4
(t=3.477; β=0.168; p<0.001) and thus confirm that attitude can positively influence consumption intentions.

To test the hypothesized moderating effects of destination image, multi-group invariance analysis was performed (Jurowski & Wan, 2004), following the procedure recommended by Bell and Menguc (2002). This allows participants to be divided into high (n=86) and low positively inclined destination image groups (n=82). The structural path coefficient indicated that there was a positive relationship between attitude and consumption intention in the high positive destination image group (β=0.64, t=1.99, p<0.05). Hence, in the low positive destination image group, the structural path coefficient revealed that attitude did not affect consumption intention (β=0.12, t=0.35) p>0.1). Based on this finding, hypothesis H5 is supported.

**Theoretical implications**

The findings of this research could contribute to the branding literature and gastronomy studies. First, in this study, three luxury value dimensions have been examined. The results show that tourists’ perception of restaurants’ luxury value (i.e., functional, symbolic and experiential value), will influence their attitude. In other words, when trying to improve diners’ attitude, it is important for luxury restaurants to signify wealth, evoke fantasy, and have a superior quality. Second, this research adds incremental contribution to the gastronomy tourism literature by confirming destination image has an impact on moderating a diner’s attitudes and consumption intentions. For tourists with a more positive destination image, their attitude toward luxury restaurants will have stronger relationship with consumption intentions, than tourists with less positive images.

**Practical implications**

For restaurants that want to target tourists who intend to dine at luxury restaurants, they could consider highlighting their carefully-prepared, high quality dishes on social media and travel guide because food and beverages are a restaurant’s core products (Kwun & Oh, 2006). They can also build their image through promoting a stunning dining environment. Last, restaurant managers and owners can use premium pricing strategy to price their products and services. It add to their restaurant’s symbolic value through relaying information about its customer’s wealth and status.
Although restaurant owners and managers have little control of their city’s image as a tourism destination, they need to take this factor into consideration if they want to target the tourists. As tourists travelling from aboard will have leisure time before and after dining, their attitude’s effect on consumption intention is influenced by the city’s image. Cities that are perceived as friendly, relaxing, having many attractions, good night life and natural environment are more suitable for promoting gastronomy tourism activities. If that is not the case, owners and managers should consider focusing their effort on attracting local residents.

Limitations

This research has two limitations. First, there are luxury restaurants that do not have Michelin stars. It would be interesting to explore whether the model applied in this study can explain diners’ consumption behavior at luxury restaurants that are luxurious but are not in the Michelin guide. Second, some Michelin-starred restaurants are much more affordable than others. The issue of average price per dish or average price per meal should be taken into account.

Originality/value

Through examining luxury restaurant branding in the context of gastronomy tourism, this research contributes to the luxury restaurant branding literature and practice in three aspects. First, it incorporated a “destination image” variable into a value-attitude-behavior model, which supports the analysis of tourists’ consumption of luxury restaurants. Second, this research confirms the ability of destination image to moderate the influence of attitude on tourists’ consumption intentions. Third, this research confirms that perceived luxury restaurant values can influence tourists’ attitudes to luxury restaurants.

Keywords: luxury brand value, luxury restaurant, destination image, value-attitude-behavior
References


Towards a definition of Brand Experience: an interdisciplinary perspective

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Purpose
The concept of brand experience has become common place among practitioners with Forbes alone publishing over 450 articles to date. Although there is great interest in brand experience, many commentators have noted that its conceptualisation and measurement remain problematic.

The conceptualization of brand experience as a 'subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand’s design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments' (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantello 2009, p. 53) may be tracked over a period of three decades. It origins may be traced back to Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) who suggested the need for a more holistic view of consumption that incorporated an experiential perspective. This paved the way for the development of Pine & Gilmore's (1998) experience economy; which placed experiences as distinct economic offerings, separate from goods and services, which in turn led to Schmitt's (1999) five types of experiences; think, feel, act, sense and relate. Brand experience has since, to name but a few, been connected with several outcomes including brand personality (Brakus et al., 2009, Helm & Jones 2010, Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014), brand awareness (Presasa, Munoz & Johnston 2011, Ding and Tseng 2015), brand loyalty (Biedenbach & Marell 2010, etc) and brand relationships (Tully, Hershfield & Meyvia, 2015).

Many consider the accepted conceptualization of brand experience as being somewhat limited and have called for a greater interdisciplinary approach to be adopted when grappling

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https://www.google.ca/search?q=site%3Awww.forbes.com+%22brand+experience%22&oq=site%3Awww.forbes.com+%22brand+experience%22&gs_l=serp.3...15629.15629.0.15929.1.1.0.0.0.0.79.79.1.1.0....0...1c.1.64.ser p..0.0.92My5mMY5MI&tbas=0 (site:www.forbes.com 'brand experience' 452 as of Nov 2, 2016)
with the complexity of brand experience (Taylor & Strutton 2010, Rose, Hair & Clark 2011; Morgan-Thomas & Veloutsou 2013). The concept of experience has been examined across centuries and scores from other social science fields most notably from philosophy and psychology respectively. However, marketing academics have only selectively engaged with these disciplines. For example, Brakus et al. (2009) included John Dewey, a notable philosopher and Dr. Steven Pinker, a cognitive scientist however they did not fully explore these two disciplines. The aforementioned is one of the very few attempts to enrich the conceptualization and a wider embracement of psychology and philosophy is needed. As such this paper reviews literature from other disciplines on experience more widely and puts forth that philosophy and psychology can contribute to the definition of brand experience.

Methodology
In an effort to better understand brand experience the researchers undertook a systematic literature review (SLR), in order to identify gaps in knowledge and understanding (Jesson, Matheson & Lacey, 2011). SLR's 'provide a [methodological], transparent, means for gathering, synthesizing and appraising the findings of studies on a particular topic or question' (Sweet & Moynihan, 2007, p.1). There are several key principles that support the use of SLR's in the context of experience most importantly those of Coverage and Synthesis (Pittaway, Robertson, Munir, Denyer & Neely, 2004; Thorpe, Holt, Macpherson & Pittaway 2005). SLR's have been used across disciplines (Petticrew, 2001) and are particularly useful when trying to make sense of large bodies of information (Petticrew & Roberts, 2006, p.2). Table 1 provides an overview of journal sources and the selection criteria. The CABS Journal Quality Guide was chosen as it is generally accepted within the business domain and has been found to have high levels of internal and external reliability (Morris, Harvey & Kelly, 2009). The Philosopher's Index was chosen as it is considered to be the most comprehensive index of scholarly philosophical contributions. The schools of Empiricism, Pragmatism or Positivism were chosen due to their similarity between the schools (since Pragmatism and Positivism were evolutions of Empiricism) facilitating a larger base from which to source from. The choice to go with these specific three movements stem from the researcher's perspective of reality and appropriateness for the rest of the study design. SCImago's Index was chosen due to its use of SJR, where journal rankings are normalized and take into account prestige and relatedness of the citing journal (Mingers & Yang, 2017).

Table 1 - Source Selection Criteria

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<tr>
<th>Journal Selection</th>
<th>Marketing</th>
<th>Philosophy</th>
<th>Psychology</th>
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<tr>
<td>CABS 3-4* plus top 2 journals in branding</td>
<td>Contained in Philosopher's Index (Proquest). Philosophers from Modern historical period (including Age of Reason, Enlightenment and Modern). Philosopher's own writing and academics writing on those philosophers. Within Quartile 1 and 2 by SCImago (Scopus), h-index minimum 40</td>
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<td>epistemology and Empiricism, Pragmatism or Positivism schools of thought.</td>
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| **Keywords** | **Brand experience, service experience, consumption experience, customer/consumer experience, product experience,** experience | experience |

| **Exclusion Criteria** | Not dealing with concepts directly contributing to brand experience | Not dealing with concepts directly contributing to experience | Not dealing with concepts directly contributing to experience (having gone through something) Specialized cases (i.e. Autism, Addiction, Eating Disorders, Crime) |


| **Additional information** | Allowed to be included if authors did not publish in above journal selection criteria but had high citation counts | None | Allowed to be included if lower than 40 h-index only if in Quartile 1. Highly cited practitioner books were also included. |

| **Number of Sources Survived** | 132 | 75 | 22 |

**Findings**

In the marketing literature, brand experience has been defined by various authors to primarily consist of cognitive, behavioral and affective components (i.e. Brakus, et al., 2009; Nysveen, Pedersen, & Skard, 2013; Aurier & Guinicheva, 2014) or a subset of those components (i.e. Juttner, 2013; Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar & Sen, 2012) with only some agreement to the
Brand experience in marketing is currently conceptualized with cognitive, behavioral, affective, sensory, social, formative and ABC (affective, behavioral and cognitive) components. ABC contains concepts that are known to have elements of affect, behavioral and cognition (Bagozzi, 1976; Vivek, Beatty & Morgan, 2012) and as such cannot be separated into any singular component. The cognitive component is characterized as benefits, values, brand image, cognition (general), learning, needs, expectations and perceptions (Edvardsson, Enquist & Johnston, 2005; Payne, Storbacka, Frow, & Knox, 2009; Cho, Fiore, & Russell, 2015). The behavioral component is characterized as general behaviours (Edvardsson et al., 2005; Gilboa & Vilnai-Yavetz, 2013; Nguyen et al., 2015). The affective component is characterized as connection, feeling and emotion (Hill & Robinson, 1991; Morrison & Crane, 2007; Meenaghan & O’Sullivan, 2013). The sensory component is characterized as general sensations (Burnett & Hutton, 2007; Nguyen et al., 2015). The social component is characterized as the social environment, encounters, interaction and relationships (Prahald & Ramaswamy, 2004; Schembri 2009; Brocato, Voorhees & Baker, 2012). The formative component is characterized as self-transformation and meaning (Caru & Cova, 2003; Granitz & Forman, 2015). The ABC component is characterized by bonds, attitude and engagement (Prahald & Ramaswamy, 2004; Biedenbach & Marell, 2010; Meenaghan & O’Sullivan, 2013).

Philosophy and psychology contribute to our understanding of experience by introducing the conative component and further solidifying the sensory, social/relational and formative components to the definition. Experience consists of what we perceive (James, 1979 [1911]; Stob, 2011), attention is required to form conclusions or judgements (Gibson, 1917). This focused attention is the result of an inner motive (James 1981a; James 1981d; Seigfried, 1992). This conative view does not feature in the current conceptualization of brand experience; implying that any consumer experience will be paid attention to, processed and consumed in the same manner. This implication goes against psychological underpinnings of human nature. According to Sutherland (1983) the self is the controller of perception and action, and "only when its interactions with the environment are appropriate to the needs of the human being - physically, socially and creatively" will someone bother to pay attention to what is happening (Sutherland, 1993, p. 21). Motivation arises from humans wanting to fulfill these needs and desires and we look for them to occur in events that may signal the opportunity for this fulfillment (Lichtenberg, 1989).

Much of the measurable qualities of the brand experience scale are generalized which negates the realities of the human experience. For example the sensory component measured as 'This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses' (Brakus et al., 2009, p. 60) implies that all senses are created equal, which is not the case. Schifferstein & Desmet (2007) found that when specific sensory information was missing subjects responded to brands in drastically different ways. Smell and sound is associated with more emotion than the other senses and the visual sense plays more of an informational and supporting role to the others. The affective component measured via 'This brand is an emotional brand' (Brakus et al., 2009, p. 60) implies that emotion is a dyadic idea in its existence or absence. The field of psychology suggests a continuum of affectivity; placing affect, feelings and emotions as
separate ideas with distinct outcomes (Batson, Shaw, & Oleson, 1992; Cupchik 2011; Bartsch 2011).

Theoretical and Practical Implications
The SLR confirms the need for interdisciplinary work as both psychology and philosophy can contribute to our understanding of brand experience in marketing. The two additional disciplines bring to light the richness of each component of experience and posit that this richness can also change the outcomes of brand experience. From a practitioners perspective this offers an opportunity to create truly meaningful and satisfying experiences for their consumers. It provides a greater scope from which to design and alter these experiences to become more flexible.

Limitations
The researcher acknowledges that the exploration into psychology is not as deep as it could have been and is selective by the exclusion of certain groups (i.e. eating disorders, crime) and judgement of applicability via abstracts of articles. Furthermore, only philosophers from the Modern era from schools of Empiricism, Pragmatism and Positivism were included. There may be additional opportunity to explore the idea of experience from other eras and schools of thought in philosophy.

Originality/Value
If experiences are different economic offerings as was posited by Pine & Gilmore (1998) then our theoretical understanding of experiences requires inputs that are separate from goods and services. If goods are standardized and tangible while services are customized and intangible, then experiences are personal and memorable (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). The underlying systems that are used to create and deliver goods and services are fundamentally different (Peillon, Pellegrin & Burlat, 2015) as such one could argue the same could occur for experiences.

This paper contributes to the conceptual knowledge of experience by bringing in the disciplines of psychology and philosophy. These disciplines introduce the conative component to the definition of experience and further substantiate the inclusion of sensory, social/relational and formative components to the definition of brand experience. Both fields introduce a richness to the diversity of each component taking it away from a generalized, dyadic process towards a nuanced approach. Given the possible contribution of the aforementioned disciplines a qualitative approach is required to explore the definition of brand experience.

Keywords
brand experience, senses, definition, philosophy, psychology
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Perception is Reality… Haptic Factors and Digital Engagement

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Purpose

“Everything you can imagine is real.” (Pablo Picasso).

Luxury products are by nature experiential and complex. In the last decade, luxury retailers have focused more on digital techniques, often with questions on which digital channels to use and how. For a high involvement luxury brand, for instance, consumer engagement is essential for positive brand evaluations. In absence of touch, as is the case when shopping online, the decision becomes challenging and complex (Ginsburgh 2003; Hadj Ali, Lecoq, & Visser 2008).

Luxury marketers have recently begun experimenting with sensory marketing, “marketing that engages the consumers’ senses and affects their perception, judgment and behaviour,” (Krishna 2010, 2). Vision is used in over 80% of all marketing communications (Jayakirishnan 2013; Krishna 2012) though recent research indicates haptic (touch) senses are most important for luxury brands (Cummings 2016), Elder and Krishna (2010) find that combining multiple sensations results in better persuasion and deeper emotional attachment.
Proceedings of the 12th Global Brand Conference of the Academy of Marketing, School of Business and Economic, Linnaeus University, Kalmar, 26th-28th, April, 2017

(see also Conner 2015). It is the goal of this research to explore the importance of sensory marketing for luxury brands, specifically pertaining to the haptic (touch) and visual (telepresence) senses. A secondary objective of the research is to examine individual product category knowledge as a moderator, as this has been largely unexplored. Finally, a third objective is to assess imagination as the underlying mechanism responsible for sensory marketing’s impact on luxury brand evaluations.

For marketing professionals seeking to help consumers produce their own experiences (e.g., Schmitt 1999; Schmitt & Rogers 2008), virtual reality allows customers to enter the intimacy of a luxury brand universe while learning about it in an immersive experience. Virtual reality allows visualizing, manipulating and interacting with complex data online (Aukstakalnis & Blatner 1992) to foster the experience of being in a virtual world (Rheingold 1993). The more dynamic the media, the more positive reactions a brand can expect (Klein 2003). The resulting psychological mechanism is telepresence, the rewarding sense of being present in a media environment that appears as if it were natural (Lombard & Ditton 1997; Sheridan 1992; Shih 1998; Steuer 1995). Interactivity stimulates deep information processing, reproduces cognitive pleasures, and engenders imaginations of direct experience (Edwards & Gangadharbatla 2001; Grigorovici 2003).

Engaging individuals in an absorptive manner, makes individuals feel that the engagement is real (Schau 2000), and results in higher felt ownership and purchasing intentions (Phillips 1996; Sujan, Bettman, & Baumgartner 1993). Since higher involvement leads consumers to imagine more (Spears, Ketron, & Ngamsiriudom 2016), adding more sensory elements could result in negative brand evaluations, via sensory overload, causing the imagination to shut down (Spears & Yazdanparast 2014). Therefore, imagination will be examined as a potential mediator to the effect of sensory marketing efforts on brand evaluations. Moreover, the three objectives of this research include: 1) examining sensory vs. multi-sensory (telepresence and touch) marketing efforts on brand evaluations, 2) treating product category knowledge as a moderator, and 3) assessing imagination as a mediator.

Methodology

Three experiments were conducted to answer the research questions. The purpose of Study 1 is to examine a single sensory factor’s (telepresence) influence on luxury brand evaluations, moderated by product category knowledge, using one manipulated factor, sensory experience (telepresence vs. control), and one measured factor, product category knowledge. Telepresence required using the Ruinart application, while those in the control condition watched a YouTube video of the same experience. The moderator, champagne product knowledge, was measured with 2 items (Mueller, Francis, & Lockshin 2008). Americans (n=228) completed the questionnaire on MTurk (57% female, mean age 37), including purchase intention (Voss, Spangenberg, & Grohmann 2003) and brand attitudes (Luna, Lerman, & Peracchio 2005).
The second study examined how the senses (single sensory vs. multi-sensory marketing) impact brand evaluations. Using the same context, product category knowledge was considered as a manipulated factor, through participant nationality. A 2 (Single vs. Multiple Sense) x 2 (Country: High Product Category Knowledge vs. Low Product Category Knowledge) between-subjects design was devised. While all participants touched a Ruinart champagne bottle (haptic only), half randomly assigned to the multisensory condition also played with the application (adding telepresence). French and Irish samples (n=128) represented varying champagne knowledge (45% men, median age 28).

To add generalizeability, a high involvement luxury category was selected for the third study: automobiles, where digital marketing is critical (Anderson 2015). This study examined the cumulative effects of sensory marketing online, including imagination (Walters, Sparks, & Herrington 2007) as a mediator. A 2 (virtual experience: telepresence vs. control) x 2 (haptic experience: touch instructed vs. control) x product category knowledge between-subjects design was devised. The virtual experience required respondents to click on a link to view a BMW X5 SUV, either user-controlled or providing only information and pictures. For the haptic manipulation, participants followed instructions adopted from Peck, Barger, and Webb (2013), either imagining touching or looking at the automobile. American respondents (n=185) completed the questionnaire on MTurk (45% female, mean age 38).
Findings

For study 1, a regression with sensory experience (telepresence vs. control), product category knowledge, and their interaction term as the independent variables yielded a significant interaction on brand attitudes ($\beta =-.17, t = -2.11, p < .03$) and purchase intentions ($\beta =-.24, t = -2.54, p < .01$). In the control condition (YouTube), product category knowledge positively impacted attitudes ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.39$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 4.90; \beta = .16, t = 2.65, p < .008$) and purchase intentions ($M_{\text{high}} = 5.21$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 4.03; \beta = .40, t = 4.94, p < .001$). When engaged in the sensory experience, product knowledge negatively affected purchase intentions ($M_{\text{high}} = 4.39$ vs. $M_{\text{low}} = 4.78; \beta = -.13, t = -1.98, p < .04$), but not attitudes ($p > .9$).

In analysing Study 2, an ANOVA revealed an insignificant 2-way interaction between telepresence and country on purchase intention ($F(1, 124)=.206, p > .05$) and attitudes ($F(1, 124)=.004, p > .05$). Yet, there was a main effect for the sensory experience, with multisensory (touch and telepresence) leading to higher purchase intentions ($M=5.82$) and brand attitudes ($M= 6.30$) than a single sense (touch) alone (purchase intentions: $M = 5.08, F(1,126) = 12.24, p< .001$; brand attitudes: $M = 5.62, F(1,126) = 23.67, p< .001$).

To analyse study 3, a regression with virtual sensory experience, haptic sensory experience, product category knowledge, and their interaction terms as the independent variables yielded a significant interaction on attitudes ($\beta =.39, t = 2.46, p < .01$) and purchase intentions ($\beta =.69, t = 2.38, p < .01$). Main effects of knowledge ($\beta =.50, t = 2.02, p < .04$) and haptic sensory experience instructions ($\beta =.51, t = 6.95, p < .001$) drove the 3-way interaction on purchase intentions. To piece apart the 3-way interaction, separate 2-way interactions of the haptic (touch) sensory experience manipulations were further examined.

Analysis revealed that with the haptic control condition (looking only), there was a 2-way interaction of category knowledge and virtual experience on attitudes ($\beta =.51, t = 3.75, p < .001$) and purchase intentions ($\beta =-.51, t = -2.19, p < .03$). Without either sensory experience (both control conditions), knowledge increased attitudes ($M_{\text{low}}= 5.59$ vs. $M_{\text{high}}=6.41; \beta =.25, t = 2.09, p < .03$) and purchase intentions ($M_{\text{low}}= 2.65$ vs. $M_{\text{high}}= 5.28; \beta =.79, t = 4.98, p < .001$). Within the virtual experience (telepresence) condition (but without touch instructions), knowledge did not affect attitudes ($p>.3$), but increased purchase intentions ($M_{\text{low}}= 3.00$ vs. $M_{\text{high}}= 3.95; \beta =.49, t = 1.62, p < .05$). With haptic experience (touch) instructions present, there were no 2-way interactions or main effects on attitudes ($p>.23$) or purchase intentions ($p>.39$). PROCESS revealed imagination as a mediator for the 3-way interaction on attitudes ($LLCI=.1957, ULCI=.0112$).
Theoretical Implications

This research makes three theoretical contributions: 1) illustrating the importance of haptic versus visual sensory efforts for luxury brands, 2) adding to current literature on sensory marketing, by examining how visual and haptic senses interact with consumer product category knowledge, and 3) providing evidence that consumers’ imaginations moderates these relationships and predicts luxury brand evaluations.

Practical Implications

The current research provides many suggestions for luxury branding efforts. For instance, Study 1 and 3 suggest a sensory experience positively impacts the brand, but only when consumers have lower product category knowledge. Though, as seen in Study 1, higher product category knowledge, can negatively influence brand evaluations when engaged in telepresence. Depending on the expense and importance of the luxury product, a brand should consider operating only one or two separate websites, to engage different knowledge levels.

Study 2 suggests that, for at least lower involvement luxury brands, multi-sensory (vs. sense of touch alone) marketing efforts produce more positive brand evaluations. Digital engagement beyond touching a luxury product in-store will positively impact brand evaluations and purchase intentions. Therefore, in a physical store where touch is possible, enhancing the experience through QR codes linking to user-controlled content, or adding touch screens to experience the brand, can enhance luxury brand evaluations. Study 3 indicates that in a digital channel, sensory marketing influences do not necessarily have a cumulative effect on brand evaluations, as they might when haptics (physical touch) is present. Consistent with more recent articles in the luxury sector, haptics (sense of touch) has a more influential impact on brand evaluations than telepresence. However, at least one sensory element is critical for positive brand evaluations when individuals have low product category knowledge.

Limitations

Study 2 has a younger sample, though results are consistent with prior research on telepresence. The sample size in study 3 is also somewhat small. Yet, the significance levels are strong enough to highlight interactions and differences in means.
Originality and Value

In addition to examining sensory factors for luxury branding, this research is one of the first of its kind to examine digital sensory marketing efforts in a digital environment, especially discerning haptic and other sensory marketing efforts for luxury brands and their cumulative effects. Moreover, it examines how product category knowledge influences sensory marketing’s impact on brand evaluations, highlighting positive and negative effects, and supports imagination as a mediator. Additionally, the research advocates more research concerning haptic factors, which has been suggested, only in a luxury news article, to be the most critical sensory factor for luxury brands.

Keywords

Sensory marketing, telepresence, haptics, luxury brands, digital marketing

References


Do I look exciting or competent? Visual identity and brand personality in a higher education institution

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As business schools deliver services to their students based on commercial transactions, they could benefit a lot from establishing a clear brand strategy. This would help them differentiate from others and lead to recruit and retain the best students and staff members. In particular, the logo is an important part of branding, it is a symbol and a help to brand recognition (Henderson & Cote, 1998). Its design is generally carefully thought to make sure that its constitutive elements lead to a quick recognition and a positive evaluation. Among them, shape (Walsh, Mittal & Page, 2007; Jiang et al., 2012; 2016) and colors (Hynes, 2009; Labrecque & Milne, 2012) play a critical role in logo recognition and evaluation. Especially the processing of colors affects customers` behavior (Aslam, 2005; Grossman & Wisenblit, 1999), the perception of price and quality (Crowley, 1993; Kerfoot et al. 2003) and helps brand recognition (Lightfoot & Gerstman, 1998, in Labrecque, Patrick & Milne, 2013). Logo shape is also of critical importance. A specific design of a static image can still convey a certain perceived dynamism (Cian, Krishna & Elder, 2014) and a complete or incomplete logo can lead to different perceptions of innovativeness and trustworthiness (Hagtvedt, 2011). Based on these elements, we investigated two research questions: How does logo’s color and shape (manipulated through logo’s orientation) interaction impact perceived service quality and recommendation intention? How important is brand personality (competence and excitement dimensions, Aaker, 1997) in explaining this relationship?

The choice of the two colors under study (i.e blue and red) was based on previous research that highlighted the impact of red on the excitement dimension compared to blue (Bellizzi &
Hite, 1992; Crowley, 1993; Labrecque & Milne, 2012). Blue color positively affected “calm” and “cool” brand dimensions (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992) but also behaviors (Bagchi & Cheema, 2013). Sincerity and excitement brand personality dimensions have been hypothesized to be levers of long consumer-brand relationships (Aaker, Fournier & Brasel, 2004). However, since the present study deals with a school brand, excitement and competence were chosen as the dimensions of brand personality as these two were found to be the most important in Higher Education Institution brands differentiation (Rutter, Lettice & Nadeau, 2016). Concerning logos’ shapes, previous research showed that consumers prefer upward shape orientation (Westerman et al., 2013), which can be linked to a positive symbolic meaning. Orth and Malkewitz (2008) also showed that brands should design their package consistently with their consumers’ brand impressions. In particular, exciting brands should have contrasting designs and competent brands should have delicate designs. As a consequence, there might be a conflict effect between red/blue and upward/downward on excitement/competence brand dimensions.

Based on the reasoning above, we postulated the following hypotheses:

- **H1.** The up-orientation red logo will have the greatest impact on the excitement dimension than all other conditions (no logo, blue logo up- and down-orientation, and red logo down-orientation).

- **H2.** The up-orientation blue logo will have the greatest impact on the competence dimension than all other conditions (no logo, red logo up- and down-orientation, and blue logo down-orientation).

- **H3.** Perception of service quality (a) and recommendation intention (b) will be higher (vs. lower) with the blue color (vs. red) through a mediating effect of the competence variable.

**Methodology/approach**

The present research has been realized *in situ* with a real logo (cf. appendix) and with students of a business school. A 2 (blue vs. red) x 3 (no logo, upward-orientation logo, downward-orientation logo) experiment was carried out to test the hypotheses. Two hundred and eight students (61% of women and aged between 18 and 22 years, M_age = 20.08) participated in the study on a voluntary basis. They were randomly assigned to one of the six experimental conditions and had to complete the survey on one of the lab laptop.

The questionnaire was a structured instrument with closed questions measuring respondents’ agreement on a seven-point Likert scale. The variables are listed below:
• **Dependent variables**: service quality (Parasuraman, Zeithaml and Berry 1988; Syed Alwi and Kitchen, 2014.) (7 items, M = 5.72, SD=.95, α= .846) and recommendation intention (1 item, M = 5.64, SD=1.09).

• **Mediator variables**: two dimensions of the brand personality (Aaker, 1997): Excitement (11 items, M = 5.69, SD=.67, α= .691) and Competence (9 items, M = 5.42, SD=.78, α= .851).

• **Control variable**: school (brand) familiarity (1 item, M = 4.74, SD=1.13).

**Findings**

In order to test H1 and H2, contrasts were performed.

Excitement dimension: the simple contrast was significant when comparing the “no logo” condition and the down logo orientation, both within the blue (F(2,202) = 3.26, p < .01) and the red conditions (F(2,202) = 3.70, p < .01). Down-orientation increases perceived excitement in the blue condition whereas it diminishes this dimension in the red condition. The simple contrast was not significant when comparing the “no logo” condition and the up logo orientation, both within the blue (F(2,202) = .23, p > .05) and the red conditions (F(2,202) = .001, p > .05). H1 is not supported.

Competence dimension: the simple contrast was significant when comparing the “no logo” condition and the up logo orientation, both within the blue [F(2,202) = 10.70, p < .01] and the red conditions [F(2,202) = 11.46, p < .01]. Up-orientation increases perceived competence in the red condition whereas it diminishes perceived competence in the blue condition. The simple contrast was not significant when comparing the “no logo” and down-orientation conditions, both within the blue [F(2,202) = .23, p > .05] and the red conditions [F(2,202) = .001, p > .05]. H2 is not supported. Results demonstrate a difference between red and blue conditions in the up-orientation condition, but in an opposite way to our hypotheses. Results will be discussed.

Figure 1. Means for brand personality dimensions
In order to test H3, two models were estimated: one for service quality and one for recommendation intention, using PROCESS (estimating simultaneously multiple moderators and mediators (Hayes, 2012), model 8).

Table 1. Bootstrap coefficients, standard errors and confidence intervals for mediation test in the model for perceived service quality. *Mediators are the two brand personality dimensions.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediator</th>
<th>Moderator condition</th>
<th>b (SE)</th>
<th>95% CI for Bootstrap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excitement</td>
<td>No logo</td>
<td>.06 (.05)</td>
<td>(-.01, .21)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up-orientation</td>
<td>.00 (.01)</td>
<td>(-.03, .04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Down-orientation</td>
<td>-.06 (.02)</td>
<td>(-.17, .01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>No logo</td>
<td>.10 (.07)</td>
<td>(-.03, .28)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up-orientation</td>
<td>.13 (.06)</td>
<td>(.03, .26)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Down-orientation</td>
<td>.16 (.09)</td>
<td>(.01, .35)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceived excitement does not reliably mediate the effect of color on perceived service quality for the three logo conditions. Perceived competence mediates the effect of color on perceived service quality only for the two logo conditions, but not for the “no logo” condition. H3a is supported.
Table 2. Bootstrap coefficients, standard errors and confidence intervals for mediation test in the model for intention to recommend. *Mediators are the two brand personality dimensions.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mediator</th>
<th>Moderator condition</th>
<th>b (SE)</th>
<th>95% CI for Bootstrap</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excitement</td>
<td>No logo</td>
<td>.06 (.05)</td>
<td>(-.01, .20)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up-orientation</td>
<td>-.00 (.02)</td>
<td>(-.04, .03)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Down-orientation</td>
<td>-.06 (.04)</td>
<td>(-.17, .01)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competence</td>
<td>No logo</td>
<td>.10 (.09)</td>
<td>(-.06, .30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Up-orientation</td>
<td>.14 (.07)</td>
<td>(.02, .29)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Down-orientation</td>
<td>.19 (.11)</td>
<td>(.01, .43)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perceived excitement does not reliably mediate the effect of color on intention to recommend for the three logo conditions. Perceived competence mediates the effect of color on intention to recommend only for the two logo conditions, but not for the “no logo” condition. H3b is supported.

**Theoretical implications**

The present results are consistent with previous research showing that the processing of the same information presented into different colors produce different reactions. However they also demonstrate that perception is holistic. A specific color will specifically impact brand personality, but the interaction between color and orientation will further impact brand personality in a different (and specific) way. Gestalt theory models (Schiffman, 2001, in Brunner-Sperdin, Scholl-Grissemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2014), and multimodal episodic memory models already showed that conceptual representations are sensory-dependent (Martin & Chao, 2001; Weinberger, 2004). As a consequence, changing several elements (e.g. color and orientation) of a logo at once affects its perception and evaluation in a very different manner than the simple sum of the effects of each change (effect of color + effect of orientation). Another important implication is that the visual exposure to a logo affects the perception of the quality of service the logo is associated with. In the services sector, logo is sometimes the only visual and tangible element brand customers are exposed to (Lovelock et
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al., 2014). The logo can be a part of the customer voluntary performance (Rosenbaum and Martin, 2012), i.e. it’s essential for companies to have the right logo for sending the right signal. Previous research already showed that logo’s design could have an impact on the evaluation of the firm (Henderson, Giese and Cote, 2004). Further studies should thus systematically investigate the effects of interactions between the different elements of the logo, taking into account possible hierarchical effects between shape, color or other elements.

Practical implications

A better understanding of the impact of the different elements of a logo is especially useful for companies when deciding to create or to change a logo. Relying on the impact of each separate component of the logo is not enough. Following a common remark in marketing research (Keller & Lehmann, 2006), the present study encourages companies to always test their logos as a whole, including the presentation medium and the background displaying the logo. In particular, the choice of color and orientation is not neutral. It can have huge impact through brand personality mediation on perceived service quality and recommendation intention. Companies with one color and with just a letter or symbol (e.g., Mc Donald’s, Chanel…) have to be particularly cautious when they change their logos, because a little change in orientation or hue could have a huge impact on customers’ perceptions.

Limitations

The present study suffers first from the limited numbers of elements that have been manipulated (only color and orientation, only two types of each). Another limitation, as we know perception is holistic, is that the logo was always displayed on the same neutral background. Further research may be needed to understand the impact of color and orientation of a logo displayed on other types of backgrounds (print ads, walls…).

Originality/value

This research has been realized in a real context, on a real logo. Orientation and color were manipulated to study the global impact of changes on current consumers’ perception. As human perception is holistic (Bitner, 1992) it is crucial to work on a real context with multiple variables under study. Our research also tried to better understand the nexus between logo color and shape and brand’s image dimensions (Aaker, 1997) as these elements are important for companies’ communication.

Key words
Logo visual perception, logo color and shape, brand personality, perceived service quality, sensory marketing

References


Appendix

Appendix 1: Logos’ pictures, example of red logos

Red logo, down-orientation

Red logo, up-orientation

Red color
Sensory Brand Experience via Augmented Reality in the Italian fashion retailing system. A preliminary analysis

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Purpose of paper
There is no doubt that Augmented Reality (AR) strategies can be considered drivers for brand and retail innovation. AR settings motivate consumer behavior by attracting, maintaining customer attention, improve customer engagement by reinforcing the link with brands, and offering an exciting immersive shopping experience (Olsson et al. 2013; Parise et al. 2016; Dacko 2016). AR tools (Caudell & Mitzell 1992; Azuma 1997; Trubow 2011) added digital information, both textual and graphical, allow firms to give extra-value to the brand experience, functional, cognitive or emotional.

Hence, the purpose of the paper is to verify whether, how, and under what conditions AR affects customer behavior and the relation with brands, especially in physical stores. By stimulating two or more senses – touch and sight first of all in a singular way – AR may generate a new kind multi-sensory perception of the brand in retail spaces, developing a
distinguished brand-related process of identifying, experiencing, integrating, signaling and connecting with the customer (Esmailpour & Zakipour 2016).

The sensorial and emotional linkage between brands and consumers has been considered really important by scholars in building strong brands (Beom Kim et al. 2009). It has also been confirmed in research that consumers look for and buy emotional experiences in their consumption activities and no longer mere products and services (Cuomo et al. 2015). By using AR settings purchaser perceptions of a brand are solicited by the addition of information and emotional levels (through multimedia content, i.e. video, audio and animations), enjoyed unrestrictedly, and at the same time, transferable to other users – once modified by the former, who has meanwhile in his turn, added virtual content (Milgram et al. 1994). By this way AR enriches brand of extra-contents – both informational and sensorial – amplifies its significance toward consumers and inflects its commercial and emotional charm through new dimensions in the store. In the post social era, market experiences the transition from the Digital Convergence, based on the combination of voice, text, imagines, media streaming and personalized services, to the Convergence Augmentation, with the meeting of digital environment and real world in a new comprising context (Hoffman & Novak 2012), by achieving and communicating the “feel of a brand” generating an immersive and emotional relationship and has positive effects on consumer based brand equity (Alexander & Nobs 2016, 421-422).

Methodology/approach
The adoption of in-store innovative tools represents an extraordinary opportunity that enables management of numerous features that enrich sensory branding experience value. Touch points pick-up in-store, on-line visibility on stock available in store, integrated customer care, reserved apps, RFID/QR code, smart mirrors, and so on, to access in-store digital content are just some examples of assisted shopping services that support sensory branding strategies (Huang & Liu, 2014; Choi et al., 2015; Groß, 2015). Hence these tools may add a sixth sense to the overall brand conception. Thus, starting from the analysis of the literature on sensory branding (Lindstrom 2005a, 2005b; Yoon & Park 2012) in the light the AR systems the following research hypothesis was conceived:

The more augmented is the context, the higher is the extra-value of the sensory branding.

To testify the research hypothesis two main dimensions were taken into consideration: (i) implementation of in store augmented reality settings; (2) affective/cognitive/functional structure of the experiential brand value from the customer point of view.

In actual fact an immersive extra-value shopping experience can be realized only when the customer has an active participation in the situation and when the environment setting organized by the firm/retail/brand is really immersive (Pine & Gilmore 1998, 2002, 2011, 2016). According to the technology acceptance model (TAM – Davis 1989, 1993; Roman et al. 2015) and its contextualization in applying augmented reality in stores (Olson et al. 2012) the following elements are widely assumed to be the most relevant drivers of the user’s acceptance and the intention to use the technology: perceived usefulness, as the ability to access relevant product information via augmented reality applications (apps); perceived ease of use, as the user-friendliness of the application; perceived enjoyment, as the extent to which
the activity of using a technology “is perceived to be enjoyable in its own right” (Spreer & Kallweit 2014).

As described above, these implications should be considered when putting in place an augmented scenario for identifying the relation between brand and consumer with reference to high/low levels of informational content (functional, cognitive and/or emotional via AR tools). In the light of this, by means of a preliminary factor analysis the items affecting this relation, and consequently, the experiential brand value has been identified. According to their influence on consumer behavior two kind of potential customers were identified, defined low info eagers and high info eagers.

To collect data, a questionnaire was submitted during the period November/December 2015 to 100 selected customers to an Italian fashion chain store uninterruptedly organized as an augmented context, with the presence of augmented settings (magic fitting rooms, dressing room mirrors, interactive kiosks and mobile applications). All the customers were selected randomly during their visit to the store and divided into two groups: a treatment group, prepared for a scenario of augmented reality, and control group, not been previously informed either about augmented reality supports. At the end of their visit, all the customers were asked to answer a set of questions concerning: in-store experience; practice, acceptance and utility of augmented reality tools; level of interest in augmented reality tools. To analyze data in a quantitative modeling framework, the authors develop a structural model based on the previous conceptual model resulting from the previous theoretical analysis that embodies the components of what makes for a compelling augmented brand experience.

Findings
Preliminary findings showed that in general terms augmented reality tools were considered by customers as efficient pre-purchasing supports or to render them free to buy without assistance, thus enhancing the functional dimension of the brand in the use of full immersion technologies. On the contrary, the emotional dimension of the augmented brand experience, linked to sharing information with other consumers or linked to entertainment were considered unimportant by the participants of both the treatment group and control group in co-creating customer added value. In short, the whole sample agreed that that additional information, speed in surfing the web, ease of use and content innovation were the main features that customers take into consideration when judging the benefits of an augmented brand experience and although knowledge of augmented reality settings had a clear impact on consumer awareness, it represented merely an essential but insufficient pre-requisite in orientating the augmented brand experience.

In any event, findings showed four kinds of augmented brand experience of the customers and namely: (1) “core brand experience”, including customers that live the in-store activity in a traditional way and chose the points of selling on the basis of previous trustworthy relation with the brand; (2) “sub-dimensional brand experience” that embraces customers that are interested in additional information, both from a functional and emotional aspect, and that live a traditional relation with the brand, because of unclear communication strategies; (3) “supra-dimensional brand experience” involving customers that bought in qualified stores or when brands conquered their loyalty, but were confused by additional information in store; and (4) “augmented brand experience” composed of expert customers with reference to the
topic (50% had previously experienced it) that considered in-store communication, added information and involvement of the brand as key factors when choosing channel for shopping. They appreciated the in-store augmented experience, in terms of innovation, involvement with the brand and independence, taking advantage of the augmented reality tools to enjoy their purchases and achieving an active behavior in the process. In general terms, it appears that augmented brand experience creates active experiential values, enriching consumer ROI, including returns on time, behavioral, and mental investments that these consumers made to acquire rewards and benefits.

**Theoretical implications**
The preliminary findings suggest the surfacing of two critical components for shaping augmented brand experience: technological acceptance and people inclination, in terms of knowledge and willingness in use it. Thanks to the support of new information and communication technologies, purchases take place in new spaces, pending among digital and physical organization (Pantano & Timmermans, 2014) where touch points, atmospheric, technological, communicative and product interaction elements facilitate brand–customer interactions in a cognitive and emotional manner, affecting the customer based brand equity. Thus, sensory branding models should be updated by including AR mechanism in which sensory appeal affects consumer-brand relationship.

**Practical implications**
AR represents a very efficacious resolution to display multimedia content of the brand. Indeed, in the light of the preliminary findings it is crucial presenting the right information in the right way, to effectively engage users without requiring them a high degree of cognitive effort. In other words it is necessary to consider that an aimless use of augmented reality tools, i.e. the case of supra-dimensional brand experiences, could easily cause an “information chaos” for the consumer, that is confusion and disorientation because of data overflow and of users inadequacy/difficulty to select really useful indications. Thus, even sometimes removing additional information, which can result redundant, is another way to engage customers. Despite the lexical antithesis, “diminished reality” (DR) can be considered a form of augmented reality, too.

**Limitations**
There are several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the results, in order to the “innovativeness” and unfamiliarity of the AR settings that reduced the representativeness of the sample. The lack of a theoretical framework is another limit, together with very few retail distribution structures with “augmented” organizations in Italy that makes difficult to extend empirical researches.

**Originality/value**
In actual fact, even though the contribution of augmented reality is easily understood in selling activities from a marketing perspective, very few retail applied studies can be found to-date. In addition such studies have a descriptive intent, i.e. collecting data in a simulated context (Olsson et al., 2012; Ganapathy et al., 2013). The present analysis based on
quantitative research aims to narrow this gap in literature. This paper also contributes to the further understanding of the complexity of sensory marketing, stimulating the integration of AR dimension as additional facet of a brand tool kit in the “project” for value co-creation.

**Keywords:** augmented reality, immersive, experience, sensory
List of references


How an unequal intra-firm distribution of dynamic marketing capabilities affect market share

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Keywords: dynamic marketing capabilities, brand performance, market share

Purpose of paper:
The marketing research community has limited knowledge of how important marketing assets, such as investments in brand performance, brand equity, or brand differentiation affect brand performance outputs, such as market share or price premium. The study addresses how marketing assets and capabilities of the firm perform under different product (brand) innovation conditions using the dynamic marketing capabilities (DMC) research perspective.

The study contributes to the DMC research stream using the Resource-based theory (RBT) research framework. Academic research to date has paid a little attention on the interrelationship among market share as a performance metric, dynamic capabilities and product (brand) innovation. The research bridges this gap by empirically validating the effects of DMC on market share performance outputs.

Theoretical implications:
Despite the scholarly attention that resource-based inquiry has received within the strategic management and marketing literature, no studies have examined the relationship between brand-based resources, DMC and firm performance (Barney, 2014; cf. Barrales-Molina et al., 2014). We attempt to bridge this knowledge gap by empirically examining how brand equity, marketing investments, and differentiation influence the relative effects of brands on firm performance. Our attempt is in line with recent calls in the RBT literature for further examination in the field of marketing research. (Barney, 2014; Davcik & Sharma, 2016; Day, 2011; Kozlenkova et al., 2014)

Dynamic capabilities are organizational and strategic routines that managers shape to generate new value creation strategies (Grant, 1996). Therefore, they are the drivers behind the creation of competitive advantage. A dominant market share may be achieved if the innovation strategy is superior (Urban et al. 1986). Applied technology and brand quality are among the most important factors in obtaining competitive advantage for a firm (Kotler & Keller, 2012).

Methodology/approach:
Several data sources have been used in this study. The first, scanner data from ACNielsen Italy’s research into the food buying patterns of Italian households. Different variables that
describe consumption and market behaviour, such as price, market share, brand volume and qualitative behaviour of brands were extracted from the data. A summary of these variables and their descriptions appears in Tables 2 and 3. To obtain data from ACNielsen, the Consumer Panel Solutions (CPS) and Homescan® panel tool were used. The CPS consumer-centric marketing solutions were used to make in-depth analyses of purchase behavior, demographic profiles, quantities sold, prices paid, at points of purchase. Second, data obtained from the Bureau Van Dijk Electronic Publishing Amadeus financial statements database on 940,000 Italian companies were used. The models are estimated with standard ordinary least squares (OLS). The R-squared and adjusted R-squared values have been reported to provide goodness-of-fit indicators of regression. To provide more stable estimates and to account for some eventual heteroskedasticity problems, we compute robust standard errors (e.g. Zaman et al. 2001). The logarithmic transformation of brand equity and marketing investment was conducted. We have undertaken this transformation in order to reduce a large range of values in the dataset that may cause econometrical discrepancies in the estimation process.

Brand performance output, such as a higher market share, is often used in theory and practice to determine brand success (O’Regan 2002). Market share is regressed on brand equity, marketing investment in brand, and controlled for price, company and innovation type. To control for possible multicollinearity problems, we have used the Stata regression collinearity diagnostic to test the variance inflation factors (VIFs) for all independent variables.

Findings:
In order to assess the results of brand performance outputs in the FMCG sector, market share is regressed on brand equity, marketing investment, price, company and innovation. The basic model has been described in a formal econometric manner with equation 3, in section 4. Models M1, M2 and M3 represent the extension of the basic model and they have been reported in Table 4.

Model 1 represents the control variables of the model and we use it to establish its basic performance. Model M2 includes also the independent variables and the model shows the acceptable fit between variables. The results indicate that brand equity, marketing investment in a brand, price, and innovation type have a high statistical effect on market share (p<.01). The Italian brands have no statistical significance on market share. The goodness-of-fit tests show that M2 has a good predictive potential, because the R-squared value is 0.2589 and the adjusted R-squared value is 0.2517.

We undertook the Markov chain Monte Carlo simulations in order to test the parameters of the model for their consistency and robustness. Mean values of the simulated estimates of regression coefficients show the effect of outcome on experimentations. However, of more interest for the researcher are the estimated true standard errors of estimate of the regression coefficient. The results of experimentation reveal that standard deviation is raising up to 1000 simulations.

The Hausman specification test has been used to control for the potential misspecification of the model due to the difference between exogenous and endogenous estimators in the model (Hausman 1978; Wooldridge 2001). We have found that among estimators (χ² df=7 19.88; p > .95) have no statistical difference. This result implies that the hypothesized regression
approach can be applied and the endogeneity issues will not cause the model misspecification.

A cluster analysis was conducted to explain the relationship between quality independent variables and dependent variables. The brand share cluster profiles for the innovation type indicates that 4 clusters exist in the enriched-food market, as presented in Table 5. The brand share sample has 753 brands; 218 brands in cluster 1, 26 in cluster 2, 293 in cluster 3 and 216 in cluster 4. These results suggest that cluster 3 has the highest brand share, even though it was not possible to assess information on profitability of these brands due to the proprietary nature of the data.

**Originality/value:**
Our investigation suggests several conclusions regarding how dynamic brand capabilities affect market share. In doing so, we have taken several steps toward a formal evaluation of the brand capability and firm performance relationship. First, Kozlenkova, et al., (2013) laments the paucity of recent literature in RBT in marketing research. For instance, according to Kozlenkova, et al. (2013), not only is this research stream underdeveloped, research in this area tends to focus too heavily on either the narrow scope of radical marketing innovation or incremental marketing innovation; which substantially limit the research and future developments in the field. We attempt to develop the literature on the relative effects of market based resources (e.g. brands) on firm performance. We did so by examining the effect of a firm’s pricing and branding on their market share/performance, from a RBT perspective and DMC research framework.

Second, we contribute to the better understanding of the product market competitive dynamics. This problem and lack of empirical research in this stream of the RBT was addressed by Barney (2013), who laments the recent paucity of product based explanations for superior firm performance in management and marketing literature. To address the gap in the literature, scholars might address product based explanations of superior performance from several viewpoints. For example, future research could address superior firm performance by examining how dynamic capabilities drive innovation, which in turn drives new product development.

**Limitations**
We present an empirical model showing the relationship that brand and price have on firm market share performance. Future studies can synthesize additional marketing related capabilities and value creation assets (e.g. marketing communications, logistics factors) and non-marketing related capabilities (e.g. supply chain management, managerial decision-making approaches) to develop a more robust model for examining firm performance.

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Levering advertising to a whole different dimension: An experimental study on the impact of VR advertising on brand personality impressions, brand attitude and purchase intentions

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Keywords
Virtual Reality, Advertising, Brand Personality, Brand Attitude, Purchase Intentions

Purpose of paper
While new advertising formats are emerging (Rosengren 2016), research is needed regarding their effectiveness (Stipp 2016). For example, brands are heavily experimenting with 3D product presentations and recently even Virtual Reality technology to persuade the consumer. Virtual Reality (VR) allows a user to be immersed in and interact with a realistic, computer-generated environment (Borsci et al. 2016; Sharar et al. 2008) and has been proclaimed most recently as the next big thing in advertising (Crabtree 2016). Unlike with traditional 3D product advertising (cf. Debbabi et al. 2010; Choi & Taylor 2014; Li, Daughtery & Biocca 2002), users are no longer confined to simple ‘mouse-clicks’ on a screen to interact with products (e.g. enlarging or rotating them), but they can actually experience the products or brands in a virtual setting while being immersed in that specific scenery. Subsequently, VR advertising provides a much richer experience than mere 3D product advertising and as such takes advertising to a whole different dimension. Implementing VR in communication
strategies can be particularly interesting for experience brands, such as apparel brands, due to
the fact that the creation of imagery is a key driver for such brands to achieve consumer
recognition and interest (Kim 2000; Lau & Lee 2016). Because of its particular vividness,
which intensifies the power of the portrayed imagery (Van Kerrebroeck et al. 2017), VR
advertising can reinforce the creation of strong, favourable and unique brand associations
(Keller 2001) and as such can be valuable for building brand personality, which is of strategic
importance in product branding (Jin 2010). A well-established brand personality can offer a
point of differentiation (Aaker 1997) and helps to build consumer-brand relationships
(Fournier 1998). Building and maintaining a distinct brand personality has been demonstrated
to lead to positive brand equity, which proves its potential as a long-term brand management
instrument (Valette-Florence, Guizani & Merunka 2011).

The purpose of the current study is to examine whether VR advertising can positively impact
managerially relevant brand outcome variables, such as brand personality perceptions,
consumer attitudes toward the brand and purchase intentions. Our contribution is twofold.
First, while several studies on 3D advertising have been published already, research on VR
advertising is still very much in its infancy. Up until now, related studies have also mainly
been focusing on informational/functional advertising appeals (i.e. bringing across product
attributes), while the current study is interested in the potential of VR for transformational
advertising appeals (i.e. building brand imagery). Second, while several antecedents of the
brand personality construct have already been studied (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer 2013),
among which even the usage of Augmented Reality or the portrayal of 3D virtual objects in
real 3D environments (Stoyanova, Brito, Georgieva & Milanova 2015), the potential of VR to
bring brands to life has not yet been examined.

Methodology/approach

This research has been particularly conducted for ‘The North Face’, an outdoor clothing and
accessories brand, widely recognized among students, targeting both women and
men (Goldsmith R. & Goldsmith E. 2012). In terms of brand personality, youngsters between
18 and 34 years perceive ‘The North Face’ as an ‘active’ and ‘stable’ brand (Goldsmith R. &
Goldsmith E. 2012).

This brand was also in particular chosen for this study because it is a pioneer in its category
to provide a VR experience (Yin 2015). Via the recently launched VR-enabled app ‘The
North Face: Climb’ (Google Play 2015), they allow users to participate in an adventurous
rock climbing experience, whereby the viewer is exposed to product placements, or the
portrayal of branded products of The North Face ‘in action’ so to speak in VR. A similar 2D
video was available, which was used for comparison. The sample comprised 160 usable
responses from a Belgian student sample (80 men/80 women), with an average age of 23.19
(SD = 2.57, age range: 20-35), evenly distributed over the two experimental conditions which
they were randomly assigned to: the 2D or VR condition. The experiment was executed in a
classroom setting. In the first condition, participants were subjected to the 2D advertisement
via a YouTube video¹ on a smartphone. In the second condition, the participants were

¹https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FLiipi5jamA
subjected to the VR advertisement via a Google Cardboard-type VR headset. Apart from the virtual experience provided, everything else in the experimental stimuli remained constant (e.g.; the scenery was comparable, and the duration and the background music were identical).

The questionnaire consisted of a pre- and post-measurement of the brand personality impressions of the North Face gauged according to Aaker’s (1997) brand personality construct containing fourteen 7-point Likert scale items (ranging from ‘1’ strongly disagree to ‘7’ strongly agree). A satisfactory check for internal consistency was performed for each of the five dimensions; sincerity (3 items, α = .764), excitement (3 items, α = .702), competence (3 items, α = .739), sophistication (2 items, r = .248, p < .001) and ruggedness (2 items, r = .503, p < .001). The pre-measurements were captured before exposure to the 2D or VR advertisement to be able to control for potential a priori differences in brand personality perceptions between the groups.

Furthermore, also brand attitude and purchase intentions were measured by means of respectively three (α = .868) and two (r = .914, p < .001) items on 7-point Likert scales (adapted from Homer, 1990).

ANOVA analyses were conducted to identify any differences in impact on the five brand personality dimensions (i.e. the dependent variables) between the two different advertising media (2D/VR), using the respective pre-measurements as covariates. Finally, two independent samples t-tests were conducted to test whether brand attitude and mean purchase intentions were rated significantly higher in the VR condition than in the 2D condition.

Findings

Firstly, the ANCOVA analyses yielded significantly different effects between the 2D and the VR advertisement treatments with respect to two of the five brand personality dimensions, namely in terms of perceptions of ‘excitement’ and ‘sophistication’ of the brand. The by the ad generated levels of brand excitement were significantly higher in the VR condition compared to the 2D condition (mVR = 5.75; sd = 0.90 versus m2D = 5.14; sd = 1.00; F(1,156) = 18.23, p < 0.001). Furthermore, there was also a significantly higher impact of VR over 2D advertising on the resulting generated level of brand sophistication (mVR = 4.49; sd = 1.10 versus m2D = 4.02; sd = 0.95; F (1,156) = 8.70, p = .004). For the dimensions ‘sincerity’, ‘competence’ and ‘ruggedness’ no significant differences could be revealed between the 2D and VR advertising conditions based on the outcomes of the performed ANCOVA analyses.

Furthermore, two independent samples t-tests were conducted to examine whether ‘attitude towards the brand’ and ‘purchase intentions’ were rated significantly higher in the VR condition than in the 2D condition. The results indicate that respondents who viewed the VR advertisement scored indeed significantly higher in terms of brand attitude (mVR = 5.40; sd = 0.86 versus m2D = 4.89; sd = 0.88; t (157) = -3.656; p (one-tailed) < 0.010) and purchase intentions (mVR = 4.23; sd = 1.34 versus m2D = 3.62; sd = 1.67; t (151,134) = -2.533; p (one-tailed) = 0.006 < .05).
Theoretical implications

This study is one of the first of its kind to investigate the impact of VR advertising on several important brand outcome variables. Not only could we confirm that, in the case of an outdoor apparel brand, VR can contribute more than 2D advertising to brand personality dimensions excitement and sophistication, but also that it has a stronger impact on crucial consumer response variables such as brand attitude and purchase intentions. Future research should not only further explore the impact of VR advertising on other strategically relevant branding variables like trust, affect and commitment, but also on the other brand personality dimensions sincerity, competence and ruggedness. Both the product category under investigation as well as the particular content of the VR experience are presumed to have an impact on which specific brand personality dimensions consumers perceive as more pronounced after exposure to the VR ad.

Practical implications

The main practical implication of this study is that it provides key insights to brand managers, regarding the effectiveness of VR advertising to bring their brands to life. The findings reveal that with the aid of this novel advertising method, brands such as the outdoor apparel and accessories brand ‘The North Face’ can emphasize their brand personality with respect to dimensions ‘excitement’ and ‘sophistication’ more effectively than with traditional 2D advertising. For ‘The North Face’s’ existing and potential client base, being profiled and seen as ‘exciting’, is meaningful as it is essentially what the segment is looking for in this product category. The more pronounced elicitation of the dimension ‘sophistication’ should also add more value to the brand. Fundamentally, ‘The North Face’s’ ‘all-weather-protection’ equipment (The North Face 2016) is profiled as high standing and classy. As such, the brand should clearly benefit from these enhanced brand personality impressions. Moreover, the present experiment indicated that brand attitudes and purchase intentions were significantly higher for consumers exposed to the VR advertisement than the 2D version. For VR content developers this study may provide some inspiration as there seems to be an urgent call for generating relevant content creating valuable brand experiences (Crabtree 2016).

Originality/value

To date, no attempt has been made to investigate the impact of VR advertising on perceived brand personality. The value of this research lies in the fact that VR advertising is identified as an antecedent of brand personality, and driver of brand attitudes and purchase intentions. As such it opens the doors to a virtually unexploited area of how VR advertising can be a vehicle for brand managers to bring their brands to life, while reaping the rewards in terms of more positive consumer responses.

References


Van Breukelen, G.J., 2006. ANCOVA versus change from baseline had more power in randomized studies and more bias in nonrandomized studies. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology, 59*(9), pp.920-925.


Explaining anti-brand community participation

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Purpose
Consumers do not always have positive feelings towards brands. Negative feelings, as brand hate, are a growing phenomenon whereby consumer can signal rejection of the hegemony of a specific brand (Cromie & Ewing, 2009; Zarantonello et al., 2016) and represents a specific form of anti-consumption. Like fandom, which leads people to gather in communities around a loved brand, brand hate leads consumers to form anti-brand communities, online groupings of consumer centered on the common detestation of a corporate brand name (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006). Both types of brand-related communities seem to share similar functioning and they often emerge online (Hollenbeck & Zinkhan, 2006, 2010). Brands are thus social glue, whether we love or hate them and Internet technologies work to reinforce this phenomenon, by empowering consumers (Labrecque et al., 2013).

Little research to date has focused on understanding their emergence and impact on other consumers, despite the fact that brands can experience serious damages from such persistent attacks (Cova & D’Antone, 2016). This paper aims to understand the relational and social mechanisms that drive anti-brand community participation. Research on brand community shows that people are motivated to participate for brand relationship motives (Algesheimer et al., 2005), and social approval also plays a role in consumer membership in various contexts (e.g. Guzmán & Sierra, 2012). Brand hate literature also informs us on some reasons for
hating brands, such as moral violations (Romani et al., 2015) or identity incongruence and experiential issues (Lee et al., 2009).

Despite recent advances on the link between brands hate and brand communities (Awasthi et al., 2012; Cova & D’Antone, 2016) to date, few studies have explored the relational and social reasons why people join anti-brand communities and how this impacts their behavior. Cromie & Ewing (2009) show that people join consumer communities dedicated to a competitive product to the hated brand for reasons such as utility or sense of control and freedom. Hollenbeck & Zinkhan (2006) also explain that anti-brand communities form because they provide support networks, resource hubs, or help people with workplace difficulties. Further work is required to understand the relational and social mechanisms whereby consumers find it important to join anti-brand communities. The research questions are therefore: (1) how do brand relationship between the consumer and the hated, or competitive brand affect anti-brand community participation (2) does social approval play a role in this affiliation and (3) do members recommend the anti-brand community as a result of their participation in it?

Based on the knowledge that the strength of the relationship with hated brands impacts hate conditions (Grégoire et al., 2009; Romani et al., 2015), this paper focuses on the emotional and communicational aspects of relationships (Veloutsou & Moutinho, 2009). Rather than forming positive emotional relationships with brands, brand hate presupposes a negative emotional relationship (Kähr et al., 2016), complemented with a need to stay informed about the hated brand and share their thoughts with it: the need to communicate as a part of the relationship (Veloutsou, 2007). Social approval and oppositional loyalty are also considered to be drivers of anti-brand community participation because anti-consumption has a symbolic meaning, which can be reinforced by community participation and foster identity formation (Hogg et al., 2009). Anti-brand community participation is represented by community engagement and identification (Algesheimer et al., 2005). Since the vitality of communities lies partly in its capacity to attract new members (Schau et al., 2009), the paper investigates whether members are willing to recommend the community to other non-members. The figure below represents the research model and depicts the hypotheses (all expressing positive causality).
Methodology

The study focuses on anti-brand communities hosted online, which are populations difficult to access (Salganik & Heckathorn, 2004; Wright, 2005). A two-level sampling procedure was adopted, targeting first the communities of interest, and then the individuals within these communities (Dessart et al., 2016). One of the authors first contacted 35 anti-brand community managers on social media, focusing on multinational corporate brands (Balabanis, 2013) selling technology products (Lam & Shankar, 2014). In total, five community managers posted the link to the survey on their group, representing a total of 17,317 group members. With 472 initiated questionnaire, the survey managed to attract 2.73% of the population to answer, on a self-selected basis (Breitshol et al., 2015). A proportion was abandoned before completion, resulting in a final sample of 300.

The study sample comes from different countries with dominating nationalities: US (25.7%) and UK (19.2%). The average age is just over 31 years old. 75% cent has a graduate school degree or higher, half of the respondents are employed for wages (51%). 87% of the sample is male, which is not surprising considering the focus on technical products.

The negative relationship strength, measured through negative emotions and communication are adapted from Veloutsou (2007). Social approval is measured using Veloutsou & Moutinho’s (2009) scale. Oppositional loyalty was measured with seven items developed for this project. Community engagement, community identification and community recommendation intention are adapted from Algesheimer et al. (2005). All items are measured using 7-point Likert scales.
Results

CFA model involving 7 constructs shows adequate fit as reflected by absolute, incremental and parsimony fit indexes. Results showed that the model fit the data well with goodness-of-fit statistics as follows: chi-square = 669.442 (df: 354), CFI = 0.93, TLI = 0.92, CMIN = 1.89 and RMSEA = 0.05. The measures also exhibit internal consistency with all Cronbach’s Alphas above 0.75, as well as high inter-items correlations (above 0.50) for the items representing each variable of the model. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) also evidences good internal consistency (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) with all AVEs above 0.50 (Bagozzi & Yi 1988). Discriminant validity is then evidenced by good correlations figures between the latent constructs Additionally, the AVE of each construct is compared with all the squared correlations involving this construct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) and all AVEs are greater than all the paired-squared correlations related to it. The structural equation model includes all 7 study constructs and 11 hypotheses. The structural model exhibited good model with fit values similar to the CFA model, (a Chi-square = 698.141 (df: 362), CFI = 0.92, TLI = 0.91, CMIN = 1.92 and RMSEA = 0.05). These values indicate a good fit of the data with the hypothesized model (Hair et al., 2006). The table below summarizes the results of the hypothesis testing: all hypotheses are supported except H2b and H4a.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Causal path</th>
<th>Std. reg. weights</th>
<th>C.R.</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
<th>Support</th>
</tr>
</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1a</td>
<td>NER --&gt; SA</td>
<td>0,30</td>
<td>3,90</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 1b</td>
<td>NER --&gt; OL</td>
<td>0,33</td>
<td>3,88</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2a</td>
<td>CR --&gt; SA</td>
<td>0,33</td>
<td>3,96</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 2b</td>
<td>CR --&gt; OL</td>
<td>0,02</td>
<td>0,29</td>
<td>0,77</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3a</td>
<td>SA --&gt; COMMENG</td>
<td>0,30</td>
<td>3,24</td>
<td>**</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 3b</td>
<td>SA --&gt; COMMID</td>
<td>0,64</td>
<td>8,42</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4a</td>
<td>OL --&gt; COMMENG</td>
<td>0,01</td>
<td>0,31</td>
<td>0,75</td>
<td>Not supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 4b</td>
<td>OL --&gt; COMMID</td>
<td>0,30</td>
<td>4,60</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hypothesis 5</td>
<td>COMMID --&gt; COMMENG</td>
<td>0,41</td>
<td>3,72</td>
<td>***</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 1: Summary of SEM results

Theoretical implications

The results of this study show that participation in the community is dependent on relational and social factors, and that participation determines member’s intentions to recommend the community. In particular our results show the role of the emotional and communicational relationship that users have with the hated brand in increasing their oppositional loyalty to another brand (Thompson & Sinha, 2008), as well as their need for social approval. These two factors in turn are the main drivers of participation to the community. This study extends knowledge into the drivers of anti-brand community participation beyond identity, experiential, moral or societal motives (Lee et al., 2009; Iyer & Muncy, 2009), evidencing the role of communicative and emotional relationships in this process. The findings also evidence the role of oppositional loyalty and social approval. Lastly, an important contribution concerns the empirical evidence that anti brand community participation impacts members’ recommendations intentions of the community. This answers the call to find out what may influence consumers to share brand sabotage actions with other people (Kähr et al., 2016), and proves the role of anti brand community participation in generating more negative buzz around the hated brand.

Practical implications

This study provides insight on the psychology and behavior of brand haters. This has implications for brands who want to understand and possibly control negative word of mouth around anti brand communities, and thus their proliferation. Our findings suggest that brands should at the very least ensure to perform well in terms of service and quality. Moreover, given the impact of oppositional loyalty, brands with strong competitive positioning are more prone to attract brand hate action. This signals that monitoring competition is important to avoid falling behind in terms of the basic requirements of the industry. The role of social approval in the hate process also has an important impact, signaling that affiliation with an anti-brand community might also be linked with approval seeking rather than real hate for the brand: social influence needs to be controlled as a brand that falls out of faith for influencing consumers might have a wider impact over consumers that are less strong minded.
Limitations

The study is limited in scope since it includes only technology brands. It would be interesting to expand findings to other product categories to evaluate potential idiosyncrasies to the technology sector. Further, other drivers of anti-brand community affiliation could be explored, and a particular focus on the social elements granted.

Originality/value

This study advances knowledge in the emerging field of anti-brand community by evidencing the role of relational and social motivations to join these communities. This has implication for the comprehension and management of brand hate, which is a proliferating phenomenon in online settings. The results show that the sources of hate group affiliation should not be underestimated since they contribute to the publicity and, as a result, growth of these harmful movements.

Keywords

Anti-branding, community, brand hate, brand relationship
References


Visual-Tactile Multisensory Interplay: Literature Review and Research Directions

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Keywords: Consumer behavior, Sensory interplay, Sensory Marketing, Visual-tactile

Purpose of the Paper

Marketing and product design have for a long time considered and utilized visual and haptic cues in different contexts (Littel and Orth, 2013; Balaji et al., 2011). Visual or touch cues, in isolation, such as light, hue, shape, temperature or texture, have shown to have an impact on different cognitive, emotional and behavioral attributes of consumers (e.g. Reimann et al., 2010; Custers et al., 2010; Chebat and Morrin, 2007; Klatzky and Peck, 2012; Williams and Bargh, 2008). In marketing, these attributes are considered as positive and desired consumer outcomes, which can be anything from better brand experience to increased reaction time (Littel and Orth, 2013; Klatzky et al., 1993). The concept of the stimuli organism and response (S-O-R) is central to the discipline of sensory marketing and measures how stimuli affect emotion, which subsequently facilitates responses (see Hultén, 2015; Krishna, 2012; Spence et al., 2014).

Humans undoubtedly perceive the world as multisensory (Spence et al., 2014) and the interplay between senses and cues have evidently shown to be more complex and contextual than initially believed (Helmefalk, 2016). Although the multisensory interplay between various senses have been inquired in different contexts (Elder et al., 2010), the importance of visual-haptic interplay remains still the most personal and crucial for experiential based consumption and marketing (Streicher and Estes, 2016).
Despite that research evidence, the impact of visual-tactile interplay on humans much more is required within the scope of marketing. Krishna (2013, p. 163), agrees with this notion, “One of the main areas of research is the interaction between the senses, where there are unlimited opportunities for multi-sensory stimuli whose effects are not yet known.”. In regard to this, it is equally important to know what has been conducted as to what needs to be conducted.

Moreover, although prior literature highlights the different effects of the interplay between visual and tactile cues, these findings are eclectic and covering many different cognitive, emotional and behavioral outcomes in various research fields.

To address these issues, the literature review aims to explore what visual-tactile interplay of cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects exists in different contexts and how marketing theory and firms can utilize these.

This review contributes to the marketing theory with the notion of visual-tactile interplay and a conceptual model showing how it influence consumer cognition, emotion, behavior and subsequent marketing applications. This work contributes to existing knowledge in sensory marketing by providing research propositions for further inquiry by conducting an interdisciplinary literature review.

**Methodology/Approach**

In relation to the purpose of the study, this literature review is partly (Littel and Orth, 2013; Balaji et al., 2011) systematic, with the intention of producing a comprehensive list of literature categorized in tables based on predefined criteria (Dwan et al., 2008). A complementary qualitative review was subsequently used to discuss and analyze literature.

Two eligibility criteria were employed. Firstly, articles were included that inquired visual-tactile interactions. The articles were identified in scientific databases across the fields of psychology, marketing, hospitality, and neuroscience. It resulted in a sample of 62 (n) articles. The second criterion was to include all research that fit within the evident effects on cognition, emotion, and behavior, for instance, purely chemical or biological responses were excluded. The final sample of articles were 50 (n).
Following the sampling criteria and guidelines of Ogawa and Malen’s method in Randolph (2009), the research process of the literature review employed summary databases of articles. Thereafter, the research was then categorized under context and potential cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects. Under each article, it was discussed and analyzed how these effects can correspond to existing marketing concepts. Subsequently, conceptual linkages and constructs were analyzed and investigated if they fit within the scope of the purpose of this review and then reading the material more in-depth. Lastly, validation measures were used to exclude studies questionable in nature, such as fit with question and quality of paper.

Findings

Although literature shows a wide array of cognitive, emotional, and behavioral effects of visual-tactile interplay, these are undoubtedly demonstrated as positive, in terms of enhancing perceptions or facilitating certain behaviors (Streicher and Estes, 2015). Interestingly, many different cognitive and affective effects were self-evaluative and perceptual in various ways, for example, tactile evaluation (Spence and Gallace, 2011), food choice, calorie estimation (Biswas et al., 2014b) or product judgment confidence (Yazdanparast and Spears, 2012). Visual-tactile interplay, which impacts on emotions was mostly inquired in self-administrated surveys measuring affect as a part of a larger evaluation, and not a solitary entity. Patterns in the table confirm the old notion of emotions as a mediator between concepts, similarly as discussed in sensory marketing literature (Hultén, 2015; Spence et al., 2014; Krishna, 2012).

Moreover, visual-tactile effects in these studies were either showing to impact and enhance each other’s originally isolated effects, such as identifying objects faster or easier. Thus, one common term involved within the visual-tactile interplay is the crossmodal and congruency effects between the sense of vision and touch (Spence and Gallace, 2011). The review indicates that the correspondence of visual and tactile cues enhances various cognitive and behavioral effects. Sampling, reaction time and touch behaviors were, for example, inquired as behaviors and was evidently influenced by the visual-tactile interplay (Yazdanparast and Spears, 2012; Spence et al., 2004).

Prior research shows that visual and tactile sensory cues are imperative respectively in consumption (Grohmann et al., 2007; Krishna, 2012). However, evaluating products and consumption are considered as multi-sensory experiences (Hultén, 2012; Spence et al., 2014). In the literature review, it can be clearly seen that visual-tactile interplay has several marketing applications. Although the majority of the studies in the review explore consumer behavior (see Table 1), it shows the importance of cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses in consumption. For instance, visual-tactile interplay in product design influences product aesthetic (Workman and Caldwell, 2007; Tilburg et al., 2015), product evaluation
(Krishna, 2006; Ordabayeva and Chandon, 2013) and willingness to pay (Müller, 2013; Streicher and Estes, 2016). Moreover, studies in the review of the visual-tactile interplay covers a broad range of contexts from retailing (McCabe and Nowlis, 2003; Hultén, 2012; Rahman, 2012; Biswas et al., 2014a) to food industry (Müller, 2013; Szocs and Biswas, 2015). Thus, patterns in the review indicate that psychology and marketing studies are interwoven and may benefit from each other. Although studies in consumer behavior explore consumers cognitive, emotional and behavioral responses, these result can be incorporated into brands and products to influence consumer's preferences subconsciously.

**Figure 1, Visual-tactile interplay conceptual model**

Figure 1 illustrates how visual-tactile interplay operates in marketing & psychology. Initially, visual-tactile cues are considered on an individual level and with its effects have impact on marketing application. Many cognitive, emotional and behavioral effects follow the sequence and rationale of S-O-R model (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974). Moreover, the concept of fit and congruency saturates many studies. The complexity of it is discussed in different dimensions, such as semantic or sensory congruence. In addition, the majority of the studies concerns cognitive perceptions, the emotional and behavioral effects is suggested to be further explored. While the majority of these effects builds upon consumers learned associations and knowledge, evidence shows that it is synesthetic and neurologically embedded in the individual. However, the visual-tactile interplay in marketing is still a
neglected area. Although the application of visual-tactile interplay has been discussed from a consumer perspective, such as consumer behavior and products in various settings, the marketing application remains unexplored.

Based on the current review and suggested model, the following propositions are identified:

P₁: How does visual-tactile interplay differentiate between various product categories such as fast moving consumer goods and high involvement products

P₂: What sequence does visual-tactile interplay follow, for example, S-O-R

P₃: How may various effects strengthen the visual-tactile interplay

P₄: How does tactile-visual interplay in products and brands influence consumers brand experience

P₅: How can brand moderate (mediate) effects of visual-tactile interplay

P₆: What kind of incongruence effects may occur in visual-tactile interplay

P₇: How can visual-tactile interplay be applied to construct a preferable brand image

P₈: How can firms embed visual-tactile interplay as sensory cues in products and brands

P₉: How can firms embed visual-tactile interplay as sensory cues in product design

Theoretical Implications

The review of visual-tactile interplay revealed three implications in the domain brands and products. Firstly, research so far emphasizes that visual-tactile interplay in brands and products influence consumer’s cognitive, emotional and behavioral response. However, the link towards branding literature is neglected. Secondly, although that visual-tactile interplay influence consumers, most research departures in consumer behavior. Consequently, more research is needed to explore how firms can utilize visual-tactile interplay as sensory cues embedded in brands and products in a conceptual framework and empirical context. Thirdly, the review reveals that consumer behavior and product design is interlinked, but not fully explored. Future research is suggested to examine how visual-tactile interplay in product design may influence consumer’s behavior, cognition, and emotions in relation to the brand image.
Practical Implications

The review reveals how brand managers may influence consumer’s perception of products and brands. Thus, implement visual-tactile interplay in brands and products can assist in positioning a preferable brand image in the consumer’s mind. How to design brands and products provides brand managers with an opportunity to influence consumer’s cognitive, emotional and behavioral response through brands and products. With this help, brand managers can embed sensory cues in brands and product design to positioning a preferable brand image in the consumer's mind to increase the possibility of individual’s preference of competitors.

Limitations

Although the review contributes to the understanding of the visual-tactile interplay work, it has limitations that open up for future research. A limitation is the generalization of the findings. The review covered conceptual and empirical studies concerning how the visual-tactile interplay influence consumer’s cognitive, emotional and behavioral, but not what the actual outcome is. Future research is suggested to study consumer’s response of visual-tactile interplay, embedded as sensory cues in product design to understand the actual outcome. For example, does visual-tactile interplay lead to increase brand awareness, enhance brand loyalty or to a positive brand image and if it differs between contexts and is applicable for fast moving consumer goods and high involvement products and vary between customer segments.

Originality/Value

This review contributes to the marketing theory with the notion of visual-tactile interplay and a conceptual model showing how it influence consumer cognition, emotion, behavior and subsequent marketing applications. This interdisciplinary review contributes to existing knowledge in sensory marketing by providing and developing innovative and exploratory research propositions for further inquiry.

References


Appendix

Table 1. Literature review

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Visual–Tactile interplay</th>
<th>Effect(s)</th>
<th>Marketing application(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheng (1968)</td>
<td>Tactile/kinesthetic perception, visual perception</td>
<td>Consumer behavior, product design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Klatzky et al. (1993)</td>
<td>Haptic exploration, visual exposure</td>
<td>Consumer behavior, product design</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sklar and Sarter (1999)</td>
<td>Visual and tactile automation feedback</td>
<td>Consumer behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farnè et al. (2000)</td>
<td>Visual and tactile extension</td>
<td>Consumer behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavani et al. (2000)</td>
<td>Tactile perception, visual distractor</td>
<td>Consumer behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forster et al. (2002)</td>
<td>Tactile simulation, visual attention, reaction time</td>
<td>Consumer behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McCabe and Nowlis (2003)</td>
<td>Product evaluation, purchase decision</td>
<td>Consumer behavior, retailing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wansink and Van Ittersum (2003)</td>
<td>Shape and area perception, elongation</td>
<td>Consumer behavior, product design</td>
</tr>
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Co-creating corporate brands on social media: exploring managerial practices

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Purpose

The widespread use of social media has substantially impacted brand management (Hennig-Thurau 2013) by becoming platforms for ongoing interpretations and negotiations between customers, brand managers and other stakeholders. Consequently, managers can no longer control brand meaning (Vallaster & von Wallpach, 2013), rather the role of a brand manager is to facilitate interactions around the brand (Gyrd-Jones & Kornum 2012; Ind et al., 2013) and, negotiate brand meaning with relevant stakeholders (Iglesias et al., 2013; Asmussen et al., 2013). Branding has therefore become a “collaborative, value co-creation activity of firms and all of their stakeholders” (Merz et al., 2009, 329).

The active role of customers and other stakeholders in co-creating corporate brand identity and corporate brand image cannot be accommodated within traditional brand management frameworks (e.g. Abratt 1989; Urde 1999; de Chernatony 1999; Hatch & Schultz 2001; Balmer 2012) which assume building a corporate brand is a one-way process from an organisation to stakeholders (Cornelissen et al., 2012), implying that brand identity is developed and maintained internally (Joachimsthaler & Aaker 1999; Harris & de Chernatony 2001; Kapferer 2008).

The concept of co-creation (Prahalad & Ramaswamy 2004) underpins service-dominant (S-D) logic (Vargo & Lusch 2004) which in turn informs the evolving brand logic given that branding has shifted from being the property of the organisation to a social process of value co-creation (Merz et al., 2009). S-D logic views a customer as an active player, with knowledge and competencies, who engages in dialogue and interacts with the firm to co-create value. In that sense, corporate brand meaning is phenomenologically determined and realised in customer-brand touch points and also in the customer’s own sphere (Grönroos & Voima 2013). Thus, firms can only introduce brand propositions which consumers can work with to further co-create their own version of what the brand means and stands for (Grönroos & Voima 2013; Vargo & Lusch 2008). As such, this paper views co-creation as a collective
and collaborative process of building the corporate brand identity and corporate brand image as salient elements of the corporate brand.

Contemporary research on branding regards brand building as a social collaborative process wherein brands are continuously co-created by multiple stakeholders. Rindell and Strandvik (2010) recognise the social and temporal dimensions of image and argue that corporate brand images are “constructed and re-constructed” in that brand image continuously evolves in consumers’ various consumption activities, experiences and interactions. The authors use the term brand image-in-use to assist in understanding how the brand image evolves over time. Payne et al. (2009) and Iglesias et al. (2013) also observe that consumers and other stakeholders are able to shape and co-create a brand identity that is different from the organisation’s intended identity thereby affirming the idea that a corporate brand is subject to unceasing negotiations. Congruent with the notion of brands as social processes, Iglesias et al. (2013) introduce an organic view of the brand (OVB) and argue that brands are organic entities because they are built together with multiple stakeholders and many aspects of this co-creation process lie outside the boundaries of the organisation. According to this view, co-creation happens in what the authors termed a “conversational space” where the organisation and consumers interact through “brand interfaces” such as products and visual identity as well as interactions between consumers and frontline employees. Although Iglesias et al. (2013) recognise interactions as a basis for co-creation, the conversational space they refer to only entails organisational practices (i.e. brand interfaces) which imply that the organisation is in control of the conversation, the quality of interactions and the co-creation process. Their notion of conversational space does not include virtual interactions among consumers.

Gyrd-Jones and Kornum (2013), in turn, looked at the brand co-creation processes in relation to multiple stakeholder ecosystems in the context of product innovation. They found that successful co-creation outcomes depend on the firm’s ability to maintain cultural synergies between the brand and multiple stakeholders using core brand values as a mutual reference point.

Given the growing importance of co-creation within the branding literature, the dynamics of how managers engage with consumers in online brand communities to co-create the corporate brand remains unclear. To the best of the authors’ knowledge, there has been no research on how corporate brands are co-created through social media in terms of how firms engage consumers and manage corporate brand-related online conversations. As echoed by Ramaswamy and Ozcan (2016), the relevance of co-creation in brand building remains undertheorised. Furthermore, research on how organisations effectively integrate stakeholders into organisational processes has been lacking (Kornum & Mühlbacher 2013; Driessen et al., 2013). Thus, the purpose of this paper is to address this gap and provide answers to the following question: How are marketers engaging with consumers in online brand communities in order to co-create the corporate brand identity and corporate brand image?

Furthermore, as the corporate brand integrates broader internal and external stakeholder groups (Balmer & Gray 2003), this work is part of a broader study, which takes a stakeholder approach and considers corporate brand building from both a managerial and a consumer perspective by comparing and contrasting the views of managers and members of online brand communities with respect to this phenomenon. This is important because on-line brand communities have been shown to negotiate and symbolically interpret brand-related information and integrate it with personal narratives (Merz et al., 2009), thus actively co-creating brand meaning (Iglesias & Bonet 2012; Gensler et al., 2013).
**Methodology/Approach**

The empirical work is based on a single case study (Yin 2009) to enable theory building (Eisenhardt & Graebner 2007). A luxury carmaker, widely regarded as an iconic automotive brand, was chosen because it is in the process of repositioning its corporate brand to a luxury lifestyle brand using social media marketing as its major communications tool. This affords the opportunity to explore how changes in corporate brand identity and corporate brand image are discussed and negotiated by different types of stakeholders.

The study follows a social constructionist philosophical approach (Gergen 1999) wherein those engaged in the social interaction (i.e. the researcher and participants) co-construct meaning during data collection and analysis. Data has been collected through: (1) qualitative in-depth interviews with five senior managers (2) company-related documents and artefacts (memos, reports, news articles), and (3) a netnography of the brand’s Facebook community (215 threads and their posts and comments) over an exceptional five month period for the corporate brand with the announcement of new models and repositioning following the launch of a new five-year business plan.

As indicated earlier, this paper focuses on managerial practices to engage consumers in corporate brand co-creation in the social media context. The interviews, which lasted 60 minutes on average, explored managers’ perceptions of the current and desired corporate brand identity and brand image, core values of the brand, the role of managers and consumers in brand building, the influence of consumers on the branding strategy, and the challenges social media presents for the management of the corporate brand. Each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed, then inductively and manually analysed allowing themes to emerge directly from the raw data. Initially, each interview was analysed separately in order to identify the views of each participant, using open coding (Strauss & Corbin 1998) to develop concepts and categories. As a result, 141 descriptive codes were initially generated and then reduced to 46 open codes through constant comparison. As the analysis moved from description to abstraction using axial coding (Strauss & Corbin 1998), 12 themes emerged at a higher level of abstraction (Corley & Gioia 2004).

**Findings**

The themes emerging from the data can be grouped into (1) conditions that facilitate a range of (2) managerial practices to co-create brand identity and image with the customers via a social media interface. To stimulate and facilitate co-creating the corporate brand with customers, it was important for the case organisation to clearly articulate its mission, embrace digital culture, recognise its limitations (e.g., extent of engagements) and, to take on a moral responsibility. These conditions set the scene for managers and customers to interact, engage and collaborate on-line, and thus co-creating the corporate brand. In total we identified eight distinct managerial practices for co-creating corporate brand image and identity, including ‘nurturing’, ‘story-telling’, ‘legitimising’, ‘conversing’, ‘negotiating brand identity’, ‘engaging in brand image’, ‘inclusiveness’ and ‘brand guardianship’ (see Figure 1). These practices demonstrate that the corporate brand is a continuous process of interaction, dialogue, interpretation and re-interpretation maintained through a symbiotic relationship between the organisation and the consumer in which both parties are jointly involved in the co-creation process.
Figure 1: Conditions and Practices of Corporate Brand Co-Creation

**Research limitations**
The findings are based on a single case study and need to be further validated before they can be generalized to other corporate brands.

**Theoretical implications**
This study extends the co-creation concept by providing some preliminary insights into corporate brand identity and brand image formation within a social-media environment. The paper introduces a framework for corporate brand building with consumers, which sets out the necessary conditions and sheds light on a range of co-creation practices.
Practical implications

Nowadays marketers are challenged to view corporate branding as a collaborative activity undertaken by multiple stakeholders. The current study explores this area and will provide guidance on ways for managers to better engage consumers in corporate branding activities within a social media context.

Originality/value

The purpose of this paper is to help understand how corporate brands are co-created within the social media environment and understand how firms engage consumers and manage corporate brand-related online conversations with them. This study also considers the process of brand co-creation from the consumer perspective by utilising netnographic data collected from the organisation’s sponsored brand community on Facebook, thus adopting the stakeholder approach to corporate brand management.

Keywords

Corporate branding, brand co-creation; service-dominant logic, brand communities, consumer engagement.

References


Brief Encounters with the discarded, degraded and different: the mere exposure effect of the altered brand stimuli

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Purpose
The mere exposure effect (hereafter, MEE) is a robust psychological phenomenon whereby judgments of a stimulus are improved simply by incidental and unreinforced exposure to it (Zajonc, 1968). These conditions are common in the contemporary marketing environment, and thus the MEE is relevant to understanding, explaining, and influencing the effects of marketing communication (Bornstein and Craver-Lemley, 2004).

On the assumption that the effect is a product of enhanced perceptual fluency (Bornstein & D’Agostino 1992, 1994), marketing-specific mere exposure research has universally employed perceptually identical stimuli at exposure and test. However, psychological (lab-based) evidence for the structural MEE and the generalised MEE suggests that the effect may be robust to some violations in perceptual matching between exposure and test/judgment (Gordon and Holyoak, 1983; Winkielman, Halberstadt, Fazendeiro and Catty, 2006; Zebrowitz, White and Wieneke, 2008). This is of great importance to marketing, as brand stimuli are often subject to minor changes in their perceptual form (both planned and unplanned) over time and space. For example, brand logos might be altered between executions while brand packs are encountered in various forms of natural degradation (e.g. litter) in public spaces. This study tests the proposition that the MEE for brand stimuli will be resistant to minor changes in perceptual form between exposure and the point of consumer choice.

Theoretical background
The MEE has been the subject of over 300 experimental demonstrations, usually with respect to unfamiliar stimuli (e.g. Kimura figures and irregular polygons) that are presented fleetingly and in isolation (for reviews see Bornstein, 1989; Bornstein & Craver-Lemley, 2004). The vast majority of these studies have focussed upon improving affective response (e.g. liking or preference), although there is some evidence to suggest that mere exposure can also influence cognitive response to the stimulus when it is subsequently encountered (Mandler et al., 1987).
In the marketing literature, demonstrations of the MEE have been extended to products, brand names and brand logos, which are encountered in isolation or peripherally as part of a wider scene (e.g. Janiszewski, 1993; Shapiro, 1999; Vanhuele, 1995). Furthermore, marketing studies of the MEE have found that the enhancement of attitude extends beyond liking for the stimulus to factors such as brand liking, brand choice, and inclusion in a consideration set (e.g. Janiszewski, 1993; Lee, 2002; Shapiro, 1999). Mere exposure has also been identified as a possible means of influencing product quality perceptions (Moorthy and Hawkins, 2005).

The most prominent theoretical explanation of the MEE is that it is a product perceptual fluency and misattribution (Bornstein and D’Agostino, 1992, 1994). That is to say, the perceptual features of the stimulus are rendered fluent (i.e. easier to process) by prior exposure, and this ease of processing is misattributed to other qualities of the stimulus when it is subsequently encountered (e.g. that it is more likeable). The implication here is that ‘perceptual matching’ (i.e. ensuring equivalence in the perceptual features of the stimulus) between exposure and test is a necessary condition for the MEE.

However, the perceptual fluency/misattribution account is not a universally accepted theory of mere exposure, and not the only credible explanation (Bornstein and Craver-Lemley, 2004). There is comparable empirical support for the uncertainty reduction hypothesis; whereby mere exposure is presumed to passively increase familiarity, reduce uncertainty and thus increase positivity towards the stimulus in question (Lee, 2001). Furthermore, the effect has been found to be robust to violations in perceptual matching between exposure and test during laboratory-based experimentation. That is to say, mere exposure to a stimulus in a partial or perceptually similar (but different) form might be sufficient to enhance judgments of it (e.g. Gordon and Holyoak, 1983; Winkielman et al. 2006; Zebrowitz et al. 2008). On this basis, there are theoretical grounds to assume that the MEE will be resistant to minor changes in the physical form of the brand stimulus between exposure and the point of consumer choice. This might occur, for example, when discarded brand packs become degraded (e.g. crushed, crumpled or smeared) and are then subsequently encountered as intact merchandising. Taking this as our context, we thus derive the following hypotheses:

\[ H1: \text{Mere exposure to a naturally degraded brand pack in a public environment will increase liking of the untarnished brand pack when it is subsequently presented.} \]

\[ H2: \text{Mere exposure to a naturally degraded brand pack will lead to greater perceptions of brand quality when it is subsequently presented in untarnished packaging.} \]

\[ H3: \text{Mere exposure to a naturally degraded brand pack will lead to a greater willingness to try the brand when it is subsequently presented in untarnished packaging.} \]

Methodology/approach:
Participants: 123 adult consumers drawn from a large US panel.

Stimuli: Eight brand packs were selected from familiar product categories (chocolate bars, soft drinks, fast food, and snack bars), and pretested to ensure they were not familiar to participants (removing any influence of prior brand experience on our measures). Each of the
8 brand packs was photographed as a piece of isolated, discarded and degraded litter in four different naturalistic street scenes. By degraded it is meant that the packs were crumpled, crushed and/or smeared; damaged to a greater extent than that which would be necessary for the product to have been consumed, but not to the extent that it would render the stimulus unidentifiable as the packaging for a particular brand (e.g. a wrapper that has been torn, screwed up and tossed aside).

**Procedure:** Participants were presented with three repetitions of four different street scene photographs (in random order), each photograph visible for 7-seconds. Each of the 12 photographs contained one of four brand packs. Two were depicted as isolated, discarded and degraded litter in three different photographic scenes, and two were depicted relatively intact and in-use by a consumer. The frequency with which each pack was exposed as degraded litter, in-use or not at all was balanced across the sample. The sole purpose of the ‘in-use’ photographs was to better disguise the purpose of the study and thus reduce the risk of demand effects; it thus constitutes a decoy rather than a treatment condition. This crossed-design allowed all participants to contribute data to the treatment and control condition.

The conditions for incidental exposure were created by the adoption of a paced visual search task during the short time for which each photograph was presented (e.g. identify the number of people in the picture). This allowed for exposures to brand litter that were repeated, brief and incidental (i.e. ‘mere’); the target stimuli being repeatedly presented for a limited time, outside of the participant’s focal purpose but within their visual field.

Following an unrelated 5-minute filler task, participants were presented with pictures of all 8 packs, untarnished and in isolation on a shelf. For each in turn they indicated the extent to which they liked the pack, how willing they would be to try the brand, and their perceived quality of the brand. They then reported whether they remembered seeing any of the 8 brands earlier in the experiment (following Stafford & Grimes, 2012), whether they believed they had consumed any of the 8 brands previously, and whether they perceived the packs they had seen in the photographs to be ‘degraded litter’.

**Findings**

The mean judgments made in the treatment and control conditions were analysed by way of t-tests, the results of which are presented below.
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Figure 1: Evaluations of target brands (low numbers more positive)

Table 1: Comparison of means (no exposure versus degraded exposure)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pack liking</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>2.526</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>0.013</td>
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<tr>
<td>Willingness to try</td>
<td>0.154</td>
<td>1.616</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>0.109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perceived quality</td>
<td>0.29675</td>
<td>3.211</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>0.002</td>
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</table>

The sample means indicate that all three judgments (brand pack liking, perceived brand quality and willingness to try the brand) are more positive following prior exposure to a discarded and degraded version of the brand pack. These differences are significant with respect to brand pack liking and perceptions of brand quality, but non-significant for willingness to try the brand. The data thus support the hypotheses that repeated mere exposure to naturally degraded brand packs improves pack liking (H1) and perceptions of brand quality (H2), but not necessarily willingness to try the brand (H3), when the pack is subsequently encountered in an untarnished form.

Theoretical implications

The findings extend the applicability of the MEE in applied marketing settings. The weight of evidence suggests that the MEE for brand stimuli is robust to some violations in perceptual matching between exposure and brand judgment/choice, at least to the extent that the stimulus remains identifiable as being substantively the same as that which has been previously encountered. These findings are important because they indicate the potentially widespread nature of the MEE, specifically with respect to unplanned, uncontrolled marketing communication. Furthermore, they reinforce the conclusion that mere exposure might positively enhance both affective and cognitive consumer judgments of brand stimuli.
(Bornstein, 1989; Bornstein and Craver-Lemley, 2004); even when these stimuli are encountered in a perceptually altered form.

**Practical implications**
The overarching implication for marketing practitioners is that they can expect to benefit from the positive influence of mere exposure to brand stimuli more often and in a wider set of circumstances than previously assumed. If the brand stimulus remains identifiable it will lead to an MEE, even as it undergoes unplanned and uncontrolled degradation as part of the full cycle of consumption (e.g. brand litter, faded logos and torn advertisements); and even when these changes are visually unappealing and unattractive. As an empirical demonstration of the structural and/or generalised MEE, it also implies that the effect will be robust to minor planned alterations to brand stimuli between time and place. From a public policy perspective, the findings detract from the simple commercial case for organisations to produce less litter, and to quickly clean up that which they do produce, on the basis that exposure to it will inevitably prime negative consumer judgments of the brand (e.g. Keep Britain Tidy, 2013b). A more convincing commercial case is thus likely to lie outside of the priming paradigm; e.g. the long-term reputational benefits of being seen to be a good corporate citizen (see Hillman and Keim, 2001).

**Limitations**
This study focussed on perceptual changes in brand packs via natural degradation. Future research might seek to specifically test the degree to which the MEE is robust to the perceptual alteration of other brand stimuli (e.g. outdoor advertising), and to intentional changes, such as the refreshment of brand logos between executions and contexts. Research might also usefully seek to test the boundaries within which the MEE is robust to violations in perceptual matching (i.e. how perceptually different the stimulus can become before the influence of mere exposure is eliminated).

**Originality/value:**
This original study provides new insights into the impact of mere exposure on attitudes to brand stimuli that are naturally encountered frequently and incidentally. Specifically, it provides the first marketing-specific demonstration that the MEE is resistant to violations of perceptual matching between exposure and test.

**Keywords:**
Brand, Attitudes, Mere Exposure, Perceptual Fluency
References:


Wellness as a means of personal branding – Identifying the cultural differences among the US and Finnish consumers

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Background and purpose of the paper

This paper discusses wellness in relation to branding, introducing a new concept – wellness branding – which suggests that wellness can be used as a means to brand oneself. The concept combines two major components, wellness and personal branding, which we will briefly discuss in the following.

Greying of the society, increasing obesity and sedentariness have resulted wellness to become one of the most recognised and important lifestyles in the Western consumer societies. Wellness can, indeed, be considered as a by-product of the current consumer culture (Grénman & Räikkönen 2017 (forthcoming)). The wellness lifestyle is expressed in everyday life through the consumption of healthy food, vitamins and supplements, physical exercise, fitness and wearable technology as well as beauty care and anti-aging (cf. Müller & Lanz Kauffman 2001). During the recent years, wellness has moved from the grass root movement of a small niche to the mainstream, creating a global multi-trillion dollar wellness market (Pilzer 2007) that circles around health, fitness, and beauty.
Wellness combines well-being to fitness, referring to both inner and outer fitness, i.e. the way one feels and looks. It is considered as a lifestyle of self-discovery that originates from an individual himself. Wellness emphasizes self-responsibility and proactive behavior in achieving holistic well-being i.e. the balance of physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being (Müller & Lanz Kauffinan 2001). It combines the pursuit of health and physical appearance to experiential, symbolic, and transformational aspects of consumption (Grénman & Räikkönen, 2017 (forthcoming)), and is manifested through the consumption of various health-related products, services, and experiences (Sassatelli 2012). In such a way, it also signals social status and can be seen as a status symbol among individuals, who prioritize maintaining a well-balanced, good life (Smith Maguire 2008).

This takes us to the other key component of this paper, branding. Branding is not just for companies anymore; also individuals are utilizing the means of branding, i.e. they are branding themselves. In this paper, we suggest that wellness can be used as a means to position and brand oneself as an advocate of holistic well-being. Personal branding is about creating a brand identity that associates certain perceptions and feelings with that identity (Rampersad 2009). Having a strong personal brand can be an important asset in today’s online, virtual, and individual age. Personal branding is a strategic process – it is about intentionally taking control of other people’s perceptions and managing those perceptions strategically to help people achieve their goals.

Brands are generally built on an area of specialization. Montoya (2002) lists different ways of specializing oneself: by ability, behavior, lifestyle, mission, product, profession, and by service. In fact, wellness branding relates to all of these ways of specialization. It focuses on self-improvement and taking responsibility of one’s own life as the means to achievement (cf. Lair, Sullivan & Cheney 2005). Wellness branding is also a question of self-packaging, i.e. labelling oneself with interest in healthy lifestyle and wellness-related products, services, and technological innovations.

The purpose of this paper is to examine how wellness can be used as a means of personal branding. Herein, the phenomenon is first approached by launching a new concept ‘wellness branding’ which we base on previous literature on wellness and personal branding. Thereafter, the concept is empirically studied among the US and Finnish consumers. The following research questions are addressed, each of which contributes to the overall aim:

1. How do the US and Finnish consumers understand and define wellness?

2. How do the consumers perceive the role of wellness-related products, services,
and technological innovations in reaching wellness on a personal level?

3. What cultural and generational differences can be found in these perceptions?

Methodology/approach
In order to answer to the purpose of the study, focus group discussions will be conducted both in the US and Finland in November-December 2016. In total, eighteen discussions will be carried out, nine in each country. There will be three discussions among three age cohorts: generation Y (born 1977–1994) and X (born 1965–1976) consumers as well as baby boomers (born 1946–1964) (Gardyn & Fetto 2000). The results will be presented at GBC 2017 in April.

Theoretical implications
Thus far, personal branding has been scarcely covered in brand research. This study, on its part, aims to fulfil this gap. In addition, by combining the concept of wellness with personal branding we herein launch a new concept, wellness branding. Brands are generally built on an area of specialization, and wellness offers a new way of doing this; wellness ideology fits in the current consumer culture, at the same time offering sustainable and long term benefits for individuals as well as the society on a larger scale. The multidisciplinary nature of the wellness branding concept offers new avenues for further research, both in marketing and consumer research.

Practical implication
Examining the wellness branding concept in two different countries produces new knowledge on how wellness is understood and perceived in different cultures, offering important managerial implications. Moreover, the study produces new knowledge on generational differences between the potential use of wellness in personal branding. This information is valuable when targeting wellness products and services to consumers of different age groups and in different cultures. Personal branding can become more popular than product or corporate branding because people are trusted more than companies and people are more accountable than companies.
Limitations

This is, to our knowledge, the first attempt to conceptualize the concept of wellness branding on a theoretical level. More research needs to be conducted in order to validate the concept. The fact that the empirical study is carried out only in two countries, limitates the generalizability of the findings.

Originality/value

Research on personal branding has, thus far, been rather limited. This paper adds to the scale and scope of personal branding research by bringing in a new dimension, wellness, to the literature. In addition, the new concept – wellness branding – adds both theoretical and practical value to academic discussion.

Keywords – Wellness; personal branding; consumers; cultural differences; focus groups

References


Stigmatised Brand Valuation: An Institutional Reconfiguration Perspective

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Purpose of Paper
A recent paper in the Journal of Consumer Research has theorized change in marketplace and consumption systems, which offers a range of workbench methods by which to study such phenomena through the collection and analysis of complex longitudinal data (Giesler & Thompson, 2016). This current paper presents research that is aligned with this tradition and offers a practical demonstration of how a discount supermarket brands meaning has been shaped and changed over time by institutional forces. That is to say, this research offers an empirical longitudinal account of how the discount supermarket brand ALDI in the UK has been institutionally reconfigured to such extent that it now appeals to hitherto incongruent market segments. Institutional reconfiguration has been conceived as the ways through which "consumer subjectivity... [and brand meaning etc., are]... produced and reshaped by intersecting marketplace discourses, conflicting goals and agendas among institutional actors" (Ibid, 2016, p.505). In particular this research demonstrates the significant role that the UK news media has played in reshaping this brands image from the stigmatized associations it held in the popular media and by large numbers of consumers in the UK to a range of associations that appeal to middle class taste and sensibilities.

Methodology and Approach
This paper is theoretically positioned with research from Consumer Culture Theory (CCT) (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), cultural marketing (Peñaloza, Toulouse, & Visconti, 2013) cultural branding theory (Holt 2004; 2006), and studies which explore market mediated notions of stigma, trivialization and legitimacy (Kozinets, 2001; Arsel & Thompson, 2011) as well as cultural interpretations of Service Dominant Logic (SDL) (Arnould, Price & Malshie, 2006). Accordingly, this research aims to make a contribution to knowledge in the CCT tradition about the ways in which food retailer brand image is shaped over time by institutional actors.
Particularly this study draws heavily on the work of Holt (2004) who offers a novel and unique way of thinking about branding, market creation and innovation from a socio-cultural perspective which significantly differs from economic and psychological perspectives (Holt, 2004; 2006, Holt and Cameron, 2010). Humphreys and Thompson (2014: 5) distil Holt’s treatise into the following theoretical framework:
“the marketplace [is] a constellation of resources that consumers... incorporate into their identity projects
brands function as conduits for the expression of ideological meanings
the cultural meanings of... brands are... established through the representations of brands in popular culture, [media products], political discourse, and news media coverage [as well as consumer narratives], rather than the strategic actions of marketing management per se
Brands are mythic narratives [and stories] that help to therapeutically redress cultural contradictions and anxieties salient to a particular socio-cultural group”.

This research consists of discourse analysis of newspaper articles and closely follows the method of previous studies in this tradition (Humphreys & Latour 2013; Humphreys 2014; Humphreys & Thompson, 2014; Giesler & Thompson, 2016). Five UK national newspapers were selected, including The Daily Mail, The Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, The Mirror and The Sun. These publications where chosen based on volume of readership amongst ABC1 consumers in the UK (NRS, 2014) as well as to reflect differing ideological and political viewpoints. To identify patterns and changes in the ALDI brand discourse over time a longitudinal analysis of these newspapers has been conducted. Data has been collected at three time points, including (1) the six months prior to the UK and international credit crunch and recessionary period in 2007; (2) in 2011 as a fragile UK economic recovery was becoming evident and (3) in 2014, as the UK returned to more stable economic growth, with Q2 GDP of £393.5bn finally surpassing the pre-crash peak of £392.7bn (ONS, 2014). Using the search term ‘ALDI’ on the LexisNexis database at Sheffield Hallam University, a total of 998 articles were returned at the three time points. Articles were qualitatively coded using NVivo software and thematically analysed to identify key patterns relevant to meanings, opinions and consumption of the ALDI brand (e.g. Humphreys 2014; Humphreys & Thompson, 2014).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2014</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mail</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Guardian</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Daily Telegraph</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>145</td>
<td>167</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Daily Mirror</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Sun</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>249</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>47</td>
<td>147</td>
<td>804</td>
<td>998</td>
</tr>
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</table>
TABLE 1: UK NEWS PUBLICATIONS BY YEAR AND NUMBER OF ARTICLES

Findings
The findings from the analysis of media discourse from 5 UK publications specifically relating to ALDI reveals: (1) the significant increase in overall UK media coverage over the research period (see table 1), and; (2) that the ways in which the ALDI brand has been narrated and represented during this expanding coverage has significantly changed over time.

In particular the research shows that the UK media have effectively narrated a positive representation of the ALDI brand myth (Holt, 2004), leading to cultural acceptance and legitimacy from previously incongruent audiences (ABC1). First of all the analysis shows that following the recession and credit crunch of 2007/8 negative associations of ‘thrift’, ‘down-market and low culture’ representations are dominant in the media, which continues in 2014. However by 2014 there was a significant legitimising discourse of the ALDI brand across all 5 UK news publications included in the research (See table 2). Further, the discourse shifted from the utility value of shopping at a discounter to a cultural endorser of the ALDI brand with consistent representations of high [mass] culture (Holt, 1998), symbolic value and middle class aspiration (for example media legitimation of ALDI sparkling white wine, olive oil, wagyu beef etc). Thus the brand shifted from being associated with utilitarian instrumental value and negative symbolism to one which was now being associated with positive social, symbolic and experiential value (Karababa & Kjelgaard, 2014). By 2014, the media became a prominent ‘actor’ in the positive representations of the ALDI brand resulting in discourse that ALDI was now a culturally legitimate place to shop for ABC1 & AB consumers (Holt, 2004).
### Economic Frugality: Consumers, living standards and threats

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Minimal discourse related to frugality and where it was evident it was petty middle class concerns of threats to material consumption and abundance [pre-recession] and in contrast to the squeezed middle construct that would emerge in 2008.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Increased representations of threats to consumer spending [and identity risk] significant coverage of economic malaise and growing reporting of threats to living standard. Beginnings of consumer budget advice discourse in the media [ways to save]. Early reports of the polarising nature of the grocery market [premium &amp; discount], however still depicted via economic capital, rich vs poor.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Impact on consumer living standards normalised. Significant coverage of consumer budget advice [ways to save] to mitigate impact on living standards. Media discourse regularly report the polarising nature of the grocery market [premium &amp; discount]. Emergence of savvy shopper construct [thrifty, non-loyal, save to spend].</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Retail Orthodoxy vs. Societal Disruption

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Retail orthodoxy of the big four was dominant in media discourse, particularly Tesco. Media and analysts support and back the status quo and there is a general rejection of the value proposition of discounters. Minor challenges only to retail orthodoxy due to food fraud but this included mid and discount grocers. No evidence of major societal disruption at this time point.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Media start to question the robustness of the big four supermarkets as share begins to reduce. Further coverage of ALDI growth, [particularly in tabloids The Mirror and Sun]. Retail orthodoxy still dominant, though some evidence of disruption</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Significant increase in anti-retail orthodoxy discourse across all publications. Orthodoxy of the big four is over, open season attacks on big four offer, infrastructure and declining marketshare. Significant coverage of ongoing economic malaise [UK, Europe, Global]. Significant coverage of grocery price wars</td>
</tr>
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</table>

### Middle Class Legitimacy and ALDI Brand Culture

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>Negative connotations associated with ALDI brand, negative use of humour and downmarket discounter representations [low culture]. Representations are toxic brand for middle classes. Negative associations of thrift, not aligned with middle class notions of thrift. Mocking in tone towards ALDI brand. Limited positive coverage of Aldi growth and customer satisfaction. The Sun offers some early legitimisation of ALDI utility value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>Some early legitimisation of brand evident based on acceptance by some middle class consumers. [sporadic in frequency]. Little legitimation of ALDI brand in media discourse [Mail, Guardian, Telegraph] other than function or utility value, but beginning to develop in tabloids [Mirror &amp; Sun]. Negative and downmarket representations still evident in the media narrative at this time with language associated with low culture such as struggle, cheap, teenage pregnancy, poverty, down on your luck stories</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Media discourse fundamentally changes in relation to ALDI brand [positive]. Significant legitimising discourse of ALDI brand across all publications [not just utility but symbolic value]. Celebrity and expert endorsements through taste tests commonplace and effective. Media now prominent ‘actor’ in the ALDI brand culture with majority positive representations across all publications. Discourse suggests that ALDI is now a culturally legitimate place to shop for ABC1 &amp; AB consumers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 2: SUMMARY OF MEDIA DISCOURSE 2007-2014**
Theoretical and Practical Implications
This research provides an applied academic application of process orientated marketplace research and advances understanding of how brand image is shaped in relation to institutional forces. In this respect it provides a case example of how food retailer brands evolve and acquire meaning, social significance and cultural legitimacy over time. In particular this research demonstrates the significant role that the UK news media has played in reshaping this brands image from the stigmatized associations it held in the popular media and by large numbers of consumers in the UK to a range of associations that appeal to middle class taste and sensibilities. Practically, this research offers managerial insight into how retailer brands are deeply entwined within a range of socio-historical discourses and cultural practices and reveals how a range of network ‘actors’ and ‘influencers’ shape the meaning and value of brands.

Originality and Value
Following research that theorizes change in marketplace and consumption systems (Giesler & Thompson, 2016), this paper aligns with this approach and offers a practical demonstration of how a discount supermarket brands meaning has been shaped and changed over time by institutional forces.

Key Words

References


What kind of music genre do shoppers prefer when buying coffee brands in a supermarket? A study of the impact of complementary auditory sensory cues on shopper’s emotions and purchase behavior

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Keywords
Coffee brands, auditory sensory cues, emotions, purchase behavior and music genres.

Purpose of the paper
Retail atmospherics, as sensory cues in a sensory marketing context, affect consumer’s cognitions, emotions and actual behavior in retail settings (Spence, Puccinelli, Grewal and Roggeveen, 2014). Russell and Mehrabian (1978), claim that consumers should approach a retail setting, when it is emotionally pleasant compared to one that is not. Altogether, this highlights how pleasant sensory cues could affect consumer behavior in relation to service environments as well as products (Sweeney & Wyber, 2002).

Burner (1990) means that people are influenced by music through both emotional content and experience-based, emotional reactions. It is evident that auditory cues as music affect behavioral variables such as customer frequency and time spent in a store (Turley and Milliman, 2000). Moreover, Garlin and Owen (2006) concluded that 1) the mere presence of music and familial/popular music has a positive impact on consumers, 2) slower pace and lower volume means that consumers remain marginally longer in one place, and 3) music tempo is found to have the highest impact on consumer excitement.

Spence et al. (2014) claim that “...Because so many attributes of music affect shopper behavior, further research needs to assess the impact of varying more than just a single parameter in order to determine the relative importance of different cues (e.g. tempo, type and loudness), and uncover any interactions that may exist among different musical parameters.” This study aims at filling this research gap and the impact of auditory congruent cues on consumer’s emotions and approach behavior.

The presented experimental study seeks to answer the following research question: What impact does the introduction of auditory sensory cues have on shopper’s emotions and purchase behavior in buying coffee brands?
Theoretical framework and hypothesis
The theoretical conceptualization is related to the concepts presented. Specifically, two research areas, namely retail atmospherics and the sense of sound, are highly relevant in building the hypotheses for the expected impact of auditory sensory cues on consumer’s emotions and approach behavior at point-of-purchase in a retail setting.

The stimulus-organism-response (S-O-R) paradigm is often used in examining the interplay between the commercial environment and consumer behavior and response. Most theoretical frameworks are based on Mehrabian and Russell’s (1974) approach/avoidance model of environmental psychology. The model proposes that store atmospherics create affective reactions in terms of arousal or mood, which result either in an approach or an avoidance behavior from the consumer side.

A number of studies support the S-O-R paradigm in retail settings in terms of yielding useful predictions (Russell and Pratt, 1980; Baker, Levy and Grewal, 1992; Baker and Cameron, 1996). Cues and stimuli lead to different affective and cognitive reactions, which impact on consumer behavior (Bittner, 1992; Wakefield and Baker, 1998). Recently, scholars have started to investigate these cues in a sensory marketing context (Hultén, 2011, 2015; Krishna, 2012; Spence et al., 2014). Given these assumptions the following hypotheses are suggested:

**H1:** Auditory sensory cues yield a positive relationship with perceiving a positive atmosphere when buying coffee brands.

**H2:** Auditory sensory cues yield a positive relationship with experiencing positive emotions when buying coffee brands.

It is suggested that music should be considered as the shorthand of emotions and when used in a commercial setting it might impact emotions as well as actual behavior (Turley and Milliman, 2000; Garlin and Owen, 2006). In a study it has been shown that a lowered tempo of music increased the turnover of a supermarket as well as time spent (Milliman, 1982). Moreover, studies have investigated the effects of musical modes (Knöferle et al., 2012), types of music (Areni and Kim, 1993; North, Hargreaves, and McKendrick, 1999; Yalch and Spangenberg, 1990) on sales and music volume levels (Smith and Curnow, 1966). Given these assumptions the following hypothesis is suggested:

**H3:** Auditory sensory cues yield a positive relationship with time spent at point-of-purchase in buying coffee brands.

**H4:** Auditory sensory cues yield a positive relationship with walking around at point-of-purchase in buying coffee brands.

Methodology
The aim of the empirical study was to investigate how shopper’s purchase behavior mediated by positive emotions can be affected by complementary auditory congruent cues.

Experimental design
The study was based on a quasi-experimental design with four between subject’s field experiments conducted to test H1, H2, H3 and H4. The independent variables employed in this study were music genres such as classical music, epic music and lounge music used in all experiments.
Sample and data gathering
The total number of participants was 300 (n) between the ages of 20 and 80 with female and male shoppers. A convenience sample was gathered by observing the behavior of consumers, who went into the coffee department of the supermarket.
The participants were assigned to the control group (n=75), the experimental group 1 classical music (n=75), the experimental group 2 lounge music (n=75) and the experimental group 3 epic music (n=75).

Materials and measurement
The measurement of this study was built upon the theoretical framework. A structured observational scheme and a survey was constructed in order to ease the gathering of data. Control variables, gender, assumed age, alone or in-group was registered to each observation. Furthermore, consumer’s time spent as well as walking around in the coffee department was measured.

Procedures
The study was conducted on four occasions, measuring each control and treatment group during four days between 2 p.m. and 7 p.m. The observers were cautious to reveal the intentions of the study in order not to disturb the shoppers. A loudspeaker was installed on the shelves behind coffee packages to measure the emotions and the purchase behavior of consumers when subjected to auditory sensory cues. Several people determined the loudness of the music.

Findings
On the collected data a number of ANOVA’s as well as Frequency tests were conducted. The main findings are analyzed and discussed below.

The results show that auditory sensory cues impact how shoppers perceive a positive atmosphere. Consequently, H1 is accepted, p-value .000, and statistically significant, which shows that complementary auditory sensory cues have a positive influence on how shoppers perceive the atmosphere of a coffee department compared with if no stimuli were added.

Moreover, the results show that complementary auditory sensory cues impact shopper’s emotions. When the auditory sensory cues are present the shoppers rate the emotions higher in relation to more relaxed, calmer, more satisfied, and happier with an increase in mean values between 20-30 per cent. Consequently, H2 is accepted, p-value .000, and statistically significant, which shows that complementary auditory sensory cues have a positive influence on shopper’s emotions.

When the auditory sensory cues are present, the mean value for the amount of time shoppers spend in the coffee department has a mean value of 35 seconds. In comparison to no music, shoppers spend a lower amount of time, mean value 26 seconds, resulting in an increase of over 30 percent. Consequently, H3 is accepted, p-value .007 < .05, and is statistically significant, which show that complementary auditory sensory cues have a positive influence on the amount of time shoppers spend in the coffee department.

Moreover, the results show that auditory sensory cues have a positive impact on the mean value of 21 seconds for the amount of time shoppers spend on walking around in the coffee department. In comparison to no music, consumers spend a lower amount of time, mean value 19 seconds, resulting in an increase of over 10 percent. Consequently, H4 is accepted,
p-value ,000, and is statistically significant, which show that complementary auditory sensory cue has a positive influence on the amount of time shoppers spend on walking around in the coffee department.

Finally, when it comes to music genres it is shown that lounge music contributes most to a positive atmosphere as well as positive emotions for shoppers in the coffee department in comparison with classical music and epic music.

Originality/value, implications and limitations

The presented experimental research makes a number of contributions, both theoretical and managerial, where the main conclusion is that auditory sensory cues impact shopper’s emotions and purchase behavior. Firstly, adding an auditory sensory cue to the grocery retail setting has created an emotional reaction in perceiving a more positive atmosphere as well as experiencing more positive emotions. This leads to a change of purchase behavior where shoppers spend more time and walk around for a longer period of time in the coffee department.

Secondly, introducing music genre, as an auditory sensory cue, has shown significant changes in purchase behavior. The findings demonstrate that shoppers are more likely to react and interact with a product at point-of-purchase in a coffee department, when the atmosphere is emotionally charged and encouraging.

Thirdly, this study provides guidelines for managers of grocery stores and how they can appeal to and connect with shoppers through the sense of sound. Using auditory sensory cues can create attention to products that might otherwise have been missed.

Given that the generalizability of the present study is limited, further research should be performed in connection to point-of-purchase in other retail settings as well as other product categories.

References


How does Service (sensory) Brand Experience Influence Brand Equity Considering the roles of Employee Empathy, Customer Affective Commitment, and Customer Satisfaction

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Purpose of the paper
During the last decade, several scholars have acknowledged that managing experiences should be a key concern for every brand (Berry et al. 2002; Brakus et al. 2009; Pine and Gilmore 1998; Schmitt 1999, 2009). While brands have traditionally focused on managing only the functional elements of their offerings (Shaw and Ivens 2002), they have recently understood that they need to provide their customers with unique experiences that do not only contain functional, but also emotional elements of their offerings (Berry et al. 2002; Haeckel et al. 2003; Morrison and Crane 2007). By integrating both types of elements in the brand experience, brands are likely to elicit strong affective responses from their customers and make them satisfied (Brakus et al. 2009; Brodie et al. 2009).

Accordingly, various researchers have found that a favorable brand experience positively impacts customer affective commitment (e.g., Iglesias et al. 2011) and customer satisfaction (e.g., Lin 2015), which in turn have a positive effect on brand equity (e.g., Sierra et al. 2015). Moreover, several scholars have suggested that a favorable brand experience is more relevant
in the services sector than in the field of goods/products (e.g., Markovic et al. 2015), due to the greater number of customer-brand touch-points that services settings entail (Zeithaml et al. 1985). In accordance with the previous findings, and aiming to gain further empirical insights in the services sector, we hypothesize that:

H1: Service brand experience has a positive effect on customer affective commitment.
H2: Service brand experience has a positive effect on customer satisfaction.
H3: Customer affective commitment has a positive effect on brand equity.
H4: Customer satisfaction has a positive effect on brand equity.

However, surprisingly, most of the research on brand experience in service settings has neglected the key importance of employees (e.g.; Nysveen et al., 2013; Ding and Tseng, 2015) even if the services literature acknowledges their central role in the service delivery (e.g.; Berry, 2000; Grönroos, 2011). Moreover, even if there are some conceptual contributions that emphasize the central role of employees and their attitudes and empathy in building positive brand experiences (Morrison and Crane, 2007) they need more empirical support.

Several scholars from the field of services have suggested that empathy is a core determinant of favorable employee-customer interactions (Aggarwal et al. 2005; Giacobbe et al. 2006), and therefore a fundamental skill for service employees (Ahearne et al. 2007; Beatty et al. 1996). Accordingly, researchers have proposed that when employees portray an empathic attitude, customers will have a more positive experience with the brand (e.g. Markovic et al. 2015), will be more affectively committed to the brand (e.g., Hennig-Thurau 2004) and more satisfied (e.g., Stock and Hoyer 2005). Although several authors have used the variable of employee empathy as a moderator in their studies (e.g., Homburg and Stock 2005; Stock and Hoyer 2005), there is a dearth of research studying employee empathy as a moderator of the influence of service brand experience on either customer affective commitment or customer satisfaction. Aiming to cover the subsequent research gap, and in line with the above-presented research that has examined empathy in relation to brand experience, customer affective commitment and customer satisfaction, we postulate that:

H5: The higher employee empathy, the stronger the effect of service brand experience on customer affective commitment.
H6: The higher employee empathy, the stronger the effect of service brand experience on customer satisfaction.

Finally, several scholars from the field of services have suggested that when customers have a positive experience with the brand, brand equity is likely to increase (e.g., Lin 2015; Zarantonello and Schmitt 2013), and when customers are satisfied with a brand, they are likely to become affectively committed to such brand (e.g., Hennig-Thurau 2004). Therefore, we posit that:

H7: Service brand experience has a positive effect on brand equity.

H8: Customer satisfaction has a positive effect on customer affective commitment.

**Methodology**

The questionnaire was designed using existing scale items in the literature. Data were collected through an online panel composed of 2179 customers. Each respondent was randomly assigned to one of the following two service categories: insurance companies and financial institutions.

To evaluate whether the constructs via their related scale items were invariant across these service categories, we tested for measurement equivalence (Malhotra and Sharma, 2008). Specifically, the structure invariance of the constructs across service categories was assessed using G-theory (Malhotra and Sharma, 2008). The generalizability of the scales across service categories was supported.

To ensure the adequacy of the measures, we estimated convergent validity and discriminant validity. First, as all the factor loadings, composite reliability values, Cronbach alpha coefficients, and average variance extracted (AVE) values were higher than their respective threshold values, convergent validity was supported. Second, as all the AVE values were higher than the squared correlations among constructs, discriminant validity was supported.
To deal with the potential issue of common method variance (CMV) - which exists because all respondents were customers - we implemented the marker variable technique (Lindell and Whitney 2001), using psychological risk as the marker variable. The estimations of the parameters of the hypothesized model were not biased by CMV.

Finally, to simultaneously test the above-presented hypothesized relationships, a non-parametric structural equation modeling technique via partial least squares (PLS) analysis was conducted. To analyze the indirect effects, we used the Sobel test because our sample was large enough.

**Preliminary findings**

At a significance level of .05, the estimated values of the path coefficients empirically supported all the direct effects present in our hypothesized model. The results of the Sobel test showed that customer affective commitment and customer satisfaction are partial mediators of the effect of service brand experience on brand equity.

**Theoretical implications**

To the best of our knowledge, our study is the first to empirically show that employee empathy positively moderates the effect of service brand experience on both customer affective commitment and customer satisfaction. This is a relevant contribution because most of the previous research on brand experiences in services settings (e.g.; Nysveen et al., 2013; Ding and Tseng, 2015) has surprisingly neglected the key importance of the employees, even if the services literature acknowledges their central role in the service delivery (e.g.; Berry, 2000; Grönroos, 2011).

**Practical implications**

Our research has two main practical implications. First, the positive impact of service brand experience on brand equity implies that there is a return on investment for those service brands that are able to provide their customers with unique and favorable experiences. Thus, it becomes crucial for managers to ensure that such experiences are present during every single brand-customer touch-point. To achieve this, managers should elaborate and orchestrate distinctive and inimitable brand experiences, embed them in the daily behavior of the employees, and ensure that employees understand, embody and deliver them properly when interacting with customers.
Second, results imply that if employees portray an empathic attitude towards customers, the favorable, unique, distinctive and inimitable brand experiences will make customers even more affectively committed to and satisfied with the brand. Thus, managers should implement recruitment, training and promotion policies and practices that allow for empathy to flourish and turn into employee behavior. This is crucial because, by having even more affectively committed and satisfied customers, brands can further improve their equity.

Limitations

Our research has three main limitations. First, the external validity of the findings is an issue, because the sample is only representative of the Spanish target population. Second, mono-method bias is a concern, because data were collected only through surveys. Third, the service categories that are part of this study both pertain to the business-to-consumers field.

Originality/value

This research provides empirical evidence for a positive impact of employee empathy on the effects of service brand experience on both customer affective commitment and customer satisfaction. This is a valuable contribution because most of the previous research on brand experiences focuses on product goods (e.g.; Brakus et al. 2009). Moreover, among the existing research on brand experience in services settings, surprisingly, most of it has also neglected the key importance of employees (e.g.; Nysveen et al., 2013; Ding and Tseng, 2015) even if the services literature acknowledges their central role in the service delivery (e.g.; Berry, 2000; Grönroos, 2011). Finally, there are some conceptual contributions that emphasize the central role of employees and their attitudes in building positive brand experiences (Morrisson and Crane, 2007) but they need more empirical support.

Keywords

Service brand; brand experience; brand equity; affective commitment; customer satisfaction.

References


Sensory neuromarketing – What it is and what of it?

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Purpose of paper

This study introduces the concept sensory neuromarketing. Sensory marketing, including sensory branding, refers to “marketing that engages the consumers' senses and affects their perception, judgment and behavior” (Krishna 2011, 2). Consumer neuroscience—or neuromarketing—aims to analyze and understand human behavior in relation to the marketing related stimuli with help of a variety of neuroscientific methods related to psychophysical and direct brain activity (cf. Lee et al. 2007). Although researchers (e.g. Agarwal & Dutta 2015; Hultén 2011; 2015; Krishna 2011; Krishna & Schwarz 2014; Spence & Gallace 2011) recognize the connection and importance between the two fields above, no academic article synthesizes them. This study aims to fill the gap, as combining the areas may offer new insights to each of them: consumer neuroscience offers new approaches and technologies to sensory marketing, and sensory marketing proposes novel approaches to consumer neuroscience, thereby answering the call of Plassmann et al. (2015) to enhance consumer neuroscience research with marketing theories.

The purpose of this conceptual study is to create an integrative framework for sensory neuromarketing. By integrating two previously separate areas the study makes researchers aware of a phenomenon that is missing from the previous research (MacInnis 2011; Torraco 2005): sensory neuromarketing. The paper begins by revisiting sensory marketing and consumer neuroscience literatures. The methodology section justifies the use of integration and presents the proceeding of the analyses. The results section presents findings from a literature review, proposes an integrative framework for sensory neuromarketing, and identifies novel areas for further research. The paper closes by offering theoretical and managerial implications and discussing about limitations and the value of the study.
Theoretical background

Sensory marketing builds on psychology and marketing. In general, researchers are interested in an understanding of sensation and perception as they relate to consumer behavior, including emotion, cognition, attitude, learning/memory, and behavior (Krishna 2012; Krishna & Schwarz 2014; Spence et al. 2014; Wade Clarke et al. 2012). Researchers interested in sensory branding (e.g. Hultén 2011; 2013; 2015; Hultén et al. 2009; Lindstrom 2005; Rodrigues et al. 2011) build on experiential logic and value co-creation, and focus on increasing understanding of how sensorial strategies, sensors, sensations and sensory expressions work with relation to an individual’s multisensory brand experience. Of specific interest of researchers are how the senses—vision, taste, hearing, touch, and smell—interact (Krishna 2012) and multisensory, which refers to contribution of more than one of the five senses to the perception simultaneously (Hultén et al. 2009; Rodrigues et al. 2011). Researchers say it is impossible to predict multisensory perceptions from studies that focus on the individual senses.

Neuroscience examines the structure and function of the brain (Perrachione & Perrachione 2008) from a variety of branches such as cognitive neuroscience and neuroimaging. Researchers use numerous technologies, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), electroencephalography (EEG), magnetoencephalography (MEG), positron emission tomography (PET), galvanic skin response (GSR; or electrodermal activity, EDA, or the skin conductance response, SCR), eye trackers and biometric belts, to reveal direct brain activity and psychophysical activity. Consumer neuroscience or neuromarketing applies neuroscience techniques and insights to consumer behavior and marketing problems (Smidts et al. 2014). Consumer neuroscience refers to the scientific proceeding of the research approach, whilst the term neuromarketing denotes to the managerial application of the findings (Hubert and Kenning 2008). Some researchers (e.g. Lee et al. 2007) use the terms interchangeably. In this research, the term sensory neuromarketing covers both. Neuroscience methodologies help researchers to reveal how the senses interact and influence consumers’ perception (Calvert 2013). Marketing researchers use neuroscience methodologies to examine topics such as emotions, preference, memory, decision making and early product design (Ariely & Berns 2010; Solnais et al. 2013; Yoon et al. 2012), often in relation to brands. Thus, sensory marketing and consumer neuroscience are clearly related research areas.

This research integrates the above approaches. Based on the above, the definition for sensory neuromarketing is: Sensory neuromarketing is a multidisciplinary research area which aims to analyze and understand human behavior in relation to the marketing related stimuli that engage the consumers' senses and affects their perception, experience, judgment and behavior with help of a variety of neuroscientific methods related to psychophysical and direct brain activity. As sensory marketing literature lacks the use of consumer neuroscience
methodologies, the study reviews consumer neuroscience literature through the above definition next.

Methodology

The search for academic literature includes the databases EBSCO, ProQuest and Google Scholar. The search contains various versions and combinations of the terms consumer neuroscience, neuromarketing, sensory marketing, and sensory branding, and continues till February 2017. Impact factors of the journals along with the Academic Journal Guide 2015 help to evaluate the quality of the research outlets. The reference list of each of the articles offers additional articles.

The analysis follows the structure of an integrative literature review (Torraco 2005), which draws connections between previously separate approaches by emphasizing their similarities and inseparability, sees something in a new way, and offers a unified whole whose meaning is different from its constituent parts (MacInnis 2011). First, the study reviews the extant research on consumer neuroscience through the lens of sensory neuromarketing (e.g. the underlying research phenomenon, neuroscientific methods, the five senses/multisensory, influences). Then, the research completes the results by raising some emerging aspects from the conceptual consumer neuroscience literature into discussion. Thereafter, the study synthesizes the above approaches to an integrative framework for sensory neuromarketing and suggests further research avenues.

Results

The empirical consumer neuroscience research rarely mention anything about the senses, thus the senses are implicit and self-evident concepts in the field. Majority of the research provides brand-related stimuli through one sense, the sight, only. Researchers measure direct brain activity using fMRI (e.g. Bagozzi et al. 2012; Chen et al. 2015; Hillenbrand et al. 2013; Plassmann et al. 2008; Reimann et al. 2012; Santos et al. 2012; Stallen et al. 2010; Stoll et al. 2008; Yoon et al. 2006) or EEG (e.g. Krugman 1971; Lee 2016; Lee et al. 2014; Telpaz et al. 2015). Other methods are GSR (Gakhal & Senior 2008), near-infrared ray (NIR) imaging (Lin et al. 2010) and genetic foundations (Bagozzi et al. 2012), often supporting direct brain activity results. Discussion of the research areas and results of the studies is out of the scope of this paper.

Only a handful of studies stimulate two or more senses simultaneously. Researchers who focus on taste use also visual stimuli (McClure et al. 2004; Plassmann et al. 2008) and
measure brain activity using fMRI. Studies that stimulate sight and hearing simultaneously use audiovisual commercials as the stimuli and use EEG (Boksem & Smidts 2015; Daugherty et al. 2016) to measure the brain activity as well as facial electromyography (EMG), SCR (Ohme et al. 2009), heart rate (HR) or hear rate variability (HRV) (Vecchiato et al. 2010) to measure other reactions. Despite these contributions, how the senses interact, or how they jointly influence consumers’ perception, remain unclear. Although this study finds no research that touches upon other senses, it does not mean they are non-existent.

The extant conceptual consumer neuroscience research offers various reviews of the activated brain areas (Kenning et al. 2007; Reimann et al. 2011; Plassmann et al. 2012). Research also introduces network neuroscience, which examines the networks functioning in the brain, and contemporary researchers believe that these networks are responsible for cognitive processes in human beings, instead of the specific brain location (Agarwal & Dutta 2015). The empirical research does not touch upon these networks yet.

An integrative framework for sensory neuromarketing comprises the above aspects and provides a holistic view of the phenomenon. The framework emphasizes the multidisciplinary bases of sensory neuromarketing and shows the interconnectedness of neuroscientific approaches and techniques to examine networks within and between (multi)sensorial marketing strategies and customer perception, experiences, judgment and behavior. The approach emphasizes networks over individual relationships thereby providing a novel platform for further studies, including topics such as conceptualizing the (multi)sensory network, applying neuroscience methodologies to sensory marketing research, and examining the influence of the network of sensory stimuli to the networked brain structures.

**Theoretical contribution**

The main contribution of the study is to introduce the concept *sensory neuromarketing* by integrating the two previously separate research areas: sensory marketing along with sensory branding, and consumer neuroscience. Even though researchers (e.g. Agarwal & Dutta 2015; Hultén 2011; 2015; Krishna 2011; Krishna & Schwarz 2014) recognize the connection between the topics, no article integrates them. This study closes the gap.

The study contributes to the literature on sensory marketing by proposing novel approaches and methodologies to examine the influences of sensorial stimuli as well as sensory expressions and multisensory brand experiences per se. The study contributes to the literature on consumer neuroscience by offering novel approaches of how to widen the scope of
research, thus answering the call of Plassmann et al. (2015) to enhance consumer neuroscience research with marketing theories.

Managerial implications

The results emphasize the importance of sight and hearing, but simultaneously, remind of the existence of other senses and the interconnectedness between the senses. The framework offers a platform for neuromarketing companies to advance their examinations, and for general managers to develop their corporate sensory identity (Bartholmé & Melewar 2011) and sensory marketing strategies.

Limitations

As the study focuses on consumer neuroscience, it lacks the viewpoints of neuroeconomics and social neuroscience in the field of decision neuroscience (Smidts et al. 2014). The study excludes the discussion of the ethical aspects of consumer neuroscience. Despite systematic search of the articles, the study may lack some important research. At this phase, the study lacks discussion of the neuroscience approaches (e.g. cognitive neuroscience) used in sensory marketing literature.

Originality/value

The study is a rare attempt to integrate sensory marketing and consumer neuroscience, and perhaps the first to introduce sensory neuromarketing. Despite conceptual contributions (e.g. Plassmann et al. 2015) and reviews of the empirical research (e.g. Hubert & Kenning 2008), the study might be the first to review the extant empirical research on consumer neuroscience with help of sensory marketing research, and it is a rare attempt to advance both sensory marketing and consumer neuroscience research utilizing a network approach.

Keywords

Sensory marketing, sensory branding, consumer neuroscience, neuromarketing, experience, networks
References


Motivate to co-create:  
An examination of the factors leading to consumer co-creation of brand

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Purpose of Paper

Through ever increasing ease with social media, along with other forms of electronic communication, consumers have the ability to influence the shape and position of a brand. This activity—either prompted or not prompted by a company—where consumers and brands engage in this mutually beneficial relationship is what has been defined as co-creation. Co-creation is the process where two or more parties work together to create value (Pralahad and Ramaswamy, 2004; Vargo and Lusch, 2004).

Since the formal introduction of co-creation into the literature in 2004, many scholars have focused on co-creation topics including the social interactions of stakeholders (Gyrd-Jones and Kornum, 2013; Hatch and Schultz, 2010; Kazadi et al., 2016; Kennedy and Guzmán, 2016; Merz et al., 2009; Vallaster and von Wallpach, 2013), brand storytelling (Grönroos and Voima, 2013; Hughes et al., 2016; Iglesias and Bonet, 2012; Singh and Sonnenburg, 2012); and the outcomes of co-creation—innovation, purchase intention, consumer satisfaction, and consumer loyalty (Alves et al., 2016; Cossio-Silva et al., 2016; Kennedy, 2017; Navarro et al., 2016).
Kennedy and Guzmán (2016) describe the motivations of consumers to engage in co-creation with a brand. Their model states that five factors—social, fun, value compatibility, brand commitment, and communication appeal—can lead to co-creation. However, the impact of each factor on co-creation remains unclear. Therefore, the current paper seeks to test each factor of the proposed model independently to gain a better understanding of how each factor directly impacts co-creation.

Through a series of five experiments utilizing millennial consumers, each motivational factor of co-creation is manipulated and analyzed separate from the other factors. In addition, the perceived ability to influence the brand is examined to determine if consumers are willing to co-create with brands they feel cannot be influenced. Isolating each of the factors will expand the academic knowledge of co-creation, providing specific information for each factor and the reasons that consumers engage with brands in co-creation. Additionally, practitioners will benefit from the descriptive results which provide insight into which motivational factors to employ if a brand wishes to engage consumers in co-creation.

The paper is organized as follows. First, a brief review of the background literature, which includes the development of the hypotheses, is presented. Next, each of the five experiments are presented and discussed. Finally, the practical and theoretical implications, along with limitations, are presented.

**Methodology/Approach**

The current research tests the factors in five studies, identifying the conditions when consumers do and do not engage in co-creation with a brand. For the purpose of this study, a prompted message is a social media post from a brand that explicitly asks the consumer to engage with the brand. A non-prompted message is a social media post from a brand where no explicit call to action is made. Study 1 sets out to determine which brands consumers perceive that they can or cannot influence. Studies 2 – 6 are conducted with one influenceable fashion brand and one un-influenceable fashion brand to test the effects of each factor of co-creation.

Data collection is complete on studies 2 – 6, and the full results will be reported at the conference.
Study 1

In study 1, 424 consumers recruited through a Qualtrics panel participated in an online survey where they were asked to list five brands they could influence, and five brands they could not influence. Next, the results of this survey were compiled and the top 25 most frequently occurring brands from each question were alphabetically listed in a subsequent survey. Next, another group of respondents were shown the alphabetized list of 50 brands and asked to assign each brand a score of 1 to 5, with 1 being unable to influence and 5 being able to influence. The results of this study were subjected to cluster analysis in SPSS. The results provided 3 groups of brands, which the authors coded as unable to influence, might be able to influence, and able to influence. From those groups, and for the purpose of this paper, Nike was selected as the brand that consumers perceive they are able to influence, and Gucci as the brand that consumers perceive they are not able to influence.

Study 2

Study 2 will employ a 2 (co-creation: prompted vs. non-prompted) x 2 (influence: able vs not able) between-subjects experimental design with attitude towards the ad, purchase intention, and attitude towards the brand as dependent variables. In this study, consumers will be shown a manipulation that will test the social factor. Figure 1 below shows the hypothesized model.

Study 3

Study 3 will employ a 2 (prompted vs. non-prompted) x 2 (influence: able vs not able) between-subjects experimental design with attitude for the ad, purchase intention, and attitude towards the brand as dependent variables. In this study, consumers will be shown a manipulation that will test the fun factor. Figure 2 below shows the hypothesized model.
Study 4

Study 4 will employ a 2 (prompted vs. non-prompted) x 2 (influence: able vs not able) between-subjects experimental design with attitude for the ad, purchase intention, and attitude towards the brand as dependent variables. In this study, consumers will be shown a manipulation that will test the value compatibility factor. Figure 3 below shows the hypothesized model.

Study 5

Study 5 will employ a 2 (prompted vs. non-prompted) x 2 (influence: able vs not able) between-subjects experimental design with attitude for the ad, purchase intention, and attitude towards the brand as dependent variables. In this study, consumers will be shown a manipulation that will test the brand commitment factor. Figure 4 below shows the hypothesized model.
Study 6

Study 6 will employ a 2 (prompted vs. non-prompted) x 2 (influence: able vs not able) between-subjects experimental design with attitude for the ad, purchase intention, and attitude towards the brand as dependent variables. In this study, consumers will be shown a manipulation that will test the communication appeal factor. Figure 5 below shows the hypothesized model.

Theoretical Implications

This study will combine the areas of attribution theory and co-creation to help explain, and further the knowledge of, the factors associated with consumer’s co-creating with brands. The findings will provide insight into the previously untested factors that prompt consumers to engage in co-creation.
Practical Implications

Practitioners will benefit from this study by understanding how to engage consumers to participate in co-creation, or, what prompts to avoid if the brand does not want to take an active role in the co-creation process.

Originality/Value

This value in this work derives from the combination of two streams of literature: attribution theory and co-creation. Co-creation is a current phenomenon that can be seen occurring in industry, but has little to no empirical research to better understand how firms can take advantage of the process.

Keywords

Attribution theory, co-creation, experimental design, service dominant logic

References


**Stories in co-creating corporate brand identity**

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**Purpose**

Storytelling is a natural way for humans to express ourselves – we have always told stories to each other (e.g. Shankar et al. 2001; Green 2006; Kent 2015). It is part of our cultures as an entertainment but also as means to pass e.g. knowledge and values (Spear & Roper 2016). Well-told stories and great myths (Holt 2004, 28) can raise emotions (Burke 1969, 55–59; Green 2004; Green 2006) and engage listeners to use their senses (Hiltunen 2002, XVI). Among organization researchers, storytelling has been studied as a part of organizational identity formation already for long (Boje 1991; Coupland & Brown 2004; Johansen 2014) but the subject is still relatively new for marketing researchers. There are modest signs that stories can be used to build the corporate brand identity (Janssen et al. 2012) and the identity formation is constant different stories acting as the fuel for the process (Coupland & Brown 2004; Johansen 2014) but even though companies are recommended to arise and lead conversations between stakeholders and the brand (Golant 2012) storytelling is not fully understood or investigated yet in corporate brand identity context. In this paper, we aim to explore how stories told by different stakeholders can support the co-creation of corporate brand identity.

**Approach**

**Stories in corporate branding**

Stories are always told in conversations (Boje 1991) or in interaction with other people. Stories also have multiple roles and benefits regarding to company’s brands. First, stories as communication tools resonate better with the audience and engage people more to the community than other types of communication (Kent 2015). Second, they ease to build long-lasting, emotional bonds and relationships with the stakeholders (Herskovitz & Crystal 2010) by increasing the credibility of the communication and making it more memorable (Dowling 2006). Third, stories can be used to make the brand identity and personality more appealing to enhance emotional connections with the consumers (Randazzo 2006). All brands have their own stories to tell (Hatch & Schultz 2003), and world’s best and most durable brands always tell stories (Papadatos 2006).
Brand stories are recommended and assumed to have plotlines and characters/archetypes (Holt 2004, 3; Herskovitz & Crystal 2010; Kent 2015) since most stories around the world are built around the same themes or figures (Kent 2015). Herskovitz and Crystal (2010) suggest five different archetypes for company and brand stories: champion battles regularly with his opponent, underdog is a tireless fighter who utilizes the way people underestimate him, rebel is against authorities, mother gives care and protection, and rugged individualist is about walking determined his own paths. Kent (2015) also names five different plots for companies: quest means searching some certain person, place, or thing from the protagonist’s point of view. Adventure differs from the quest in that the journey is more important than the protagonist. Wretched excess picturizes the inequity appearing in our everyday life. Rivalry places two persons, with complementary skills and hard motivation, against each other and only in the end the winner is clear. Underdog is a story about a small individual against a large company or government where the odds are never on his side, but eventually the obstacles are won with the help of e.g. intelligence, courage, and strength.

Co-creating the corporate brand identity
Broadly, the corporate brand identity takes an identity based view of the corporate brand (Balmer 2012). That definition, however, is rather plain, and the CBI has been tried to define with varying amounts of dimensions by several academics (e.g. Balmer 2012; de Chernatony 2010; Melewar et al. 2005). In this paper, we use Urde’s (2013) definition for corporate brand identity as he manages to define CBI in his matrix most unambiguous. According to Urde (2013) CBI includes nine (9) dimensions: mission & vision, culture, competences, expression, promise and core values, personality, value proposition, relationships, and position.

The construction of CBI is always about communication (Cornelissen et al. 2012) and it’s an on-going and never ending process (Blombäck & Ramirez-Pasillas 2012; Balmer 2012). Communication happens between different parties and the current co-creation theories have a broad understanding of actors involved: co-creation happens in interaction with a network of stakeholders – in stakeholder ecosystems (Pera, Occhiocupo & Clarke 2016; Gyrd-Jones & Kornum 2013). Stakeholder ecosystem includes a wider socio-cultural system in co-creation processes which are maximized when company stays open to all stakeholders’ inputs: inputs which become complementary to each other (Gyrd-Jones & Kornum 2013). In co-creating CBI accepting both internal and external point of views becomes thus important, and, in fact, different views and diversity should be embraced as even opposing opinions can contribute in with value (Pera et al. 2016; Gyrd-Jones & Kornum 2013).

Methodology
The research was conducted as a qualitative case study (Yin 2009) with the case company being a Finnish forest machine manufacturer. It is notable that the case company’s products, the forest machines, are not only an investment decision for their clients but a lifestyle and brand choice, as well, where the brand is part of the clients’ self-expressions (Holt 2004, 5).

The data consists of three (3) interviews (2 employees, 1 former employee and an owner/chairman of the board), owner’s oral company presentation to stakeholders (a group of forestry teachers) and 18 stakeholder stories from company’s webpages. In this study, we interpret all the data as stories i.e. narratives. We followed the narrative research process proposed by Czarniawska (2004). First, the stories were interpreted by reading through the data several times and then by paying special attention to especially in CBI elements suggested by Urde (2013) and plotlines and archetypes of stories (Herskovitz & Crystal 2010;
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Kent 2015; Koskinen et al., 2015). In organizing the data, we used NVivo qualitative data analysis program.

Findings
The research suggests that stories have a role in corporate brand identity formation and the different storytellers participate in the formation of CBI as co-creators. Stories are powerful as they give a more natural way for the stakeholders to be involved in the CBI formation. Interaction, the characteristic of co-creation, is the starting point for stories to emerge and stories told keep the identity formation process on-going. Even if stakeholders aren’t aware they are talking about a certain part of the CBI, their expressions engage to the CBI co-creation.

When using both archetypes and plotlines as story analyzing tools, it can be suggested that these elements help to convey the all range of feelings and emotions the brand evokes and make the brand more human. Especially archetypes seem to fit for adding different characteristics to CBI personality whereas plotlines can be suitable for shaping several CBI parts at a time. That is due to plotlines feature – to describe longer events. The influence of a certain archetype or plotline, however, is harder to specify. Just as the CBI dimensions are a bit overlapping and connected to each other, so are the story elements, too. This notion, however, doesn’t make the archetypes and plotlines weaker but more powerful as they can change several parts of the CBI at once. Overall, the story elements persuade audience to accept the proposed features as a part of the CBI.

Our empirical findings also suggest that stories of different tellers become complementary to each other. When the company might pursue to give an overall picture of a certain part of the CBI, the stakeholders’ stories can focus on small but precise insights in the same dimension. It can be said that the company and stakeholders are working together: the themes on their stories are rather consistent and only told from a different angle. The different storytellers make the CBI more complete, vivid, and multifaceted. Consequently, the viewpoints from different stories co-create value by making the CBI richer.

Theoretical implications
The study shows that stories can be used to co-create a corporate brand identity. Stories and more specifically plotlines and archetypes are suitable to convey both strategical elements and emotions in corporate branding – forms of communication which have been demanded by several researchers (e.g. Janssen et al. 2012; Spear & Roper 2013). We expand and support existing theory by pointing out that the results are also in line with the organization researchers’ notions: The identity construction is an on-going process (Boje 1991; Brown et al. 2005; Johansen 2014) which takes place in conversations between different stakeholders and through storytelling (Coupland & Brown 2004). It is also notable that the length of the stories doesn’t seem to have an impact on their power to change the CBI (Boje 1991; Johansen 2014).

The stakeholders’ possibility to strengthen the value of the brand and the identity creation (Hatch & Schultz 2009; Gyrd-Jones & Kornum 2013) and the interactive nature of corporate branding (Iglesias et al. 2013) are also supported by our results. Storytelling shouldn’t be understood as an act for only managers (Spear & Roper 2016) but the stakeholders should be taken in to the corporate branding (Merz et al. 2009; Gyrd-Jones & Kornum 2013; Biraghi & Gambetti 2015). The proposition of the consistence in corporate and stakeholder originated
contents is also supported (Shao et al. 2015) and, accordingly, our results shed light on the overlaps between internal and external storytelling (Spear & Roper 2016).

**Practical implications**
Based on our findings we recommend companies to use storytelling and stories in branding and CBI co-creation. The potential of stories in co-creating the CBI is lying on their ability to engage stakeholders, evoke emotions and on their ability to create more complete, vivid, and multifaceted CBI.

**Limitations**
This study was a single case study with the case company being a Finnish forest machine manufacturer. Therefore, more insights could be gathered through multiple case studies and with different industries. However, the chosen company case was representative regarding the storytelling nature in corporate branding and thus offered a good starting point for investigating the phenomena. More research is needed in the future to understand the meaning of the industry context. The empirical study was also limited related to time when stories were collected, hence, representing a snapshot of the co-creation process. Consequently, longer term studies related to CBI co-creation process are needed.

**Originality/Value**
The main value of this paper is to demonstrate that storytelling is a powerful tool in co-creating CBI with stakeholders. When stories are used, the CBI gets more facets and characteristics. In other words, we encourage both academics and practitioners tackle this emerging but scarcely investigated way of corporate branding.

**Keywords:** corporate brand identity, co-creation, storytelling, corporate branding

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Let’s defend our brand! A typology of response strategies to restore brand equity in non-collaborative brand co-creation

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Purpose
In brand co-creation a brand is seen as continuous social and dynamic process and the belief is that any brand is dynamically constructed through social interactions between the legal brand owner and various stakeholders (e.g. Hatch and Schultz 2010; Iglesias et al. 2013). Firm-centric approaches in brand theory and management are challenged and the creation of meaning and identity becomes a joint task based on interactions and negotiations (e.g. Round and Roper 2012; Ind et al. 2013). However, social interactions and the integration of various stakeholders bear severe dangers and risks for the brand (e.g. Gassmann et al. 2010). Integrated stakeholders can misinterpret their “new role” and misuse their grown empowerment while pushing the brand in unwanted directions (Ind 2015). What is overlooked by most of brand co-creation scholars so far, is the fact that whenever value is collaboratively co-created, it can also be collaboratively co-destroyed. Actually, co-destruction and non-collaborative behavior are significant features of interactions between an organization and its stakeholders (Echeverri and Skalen 2011).

Non-collaborative behavior in brand co-creation potentially has a negative effect on a brand’s perception in the mass market and could cause an equity dilution by leading to an inconsistency of actual brand beliefs and perceived brand attributes (Kristal et al. 2016). One example for such behavior is the so-called “Doppelgänger effect”, which describes the deformation of brand logos by stakeholders. There is the danger that the defamatory representation of brands can coalesce into a coherent set of opposing meanings that decrease the value of brands that otherwise have attained competitive success (Thompson et al. 2006). Fostered by the internet non-collaborative brand co-creation (NCBCC) can diffuse rapidly and thereby negatively impact consumer behavior towards a brand.

Hence, NCBCC can be categorized as brand related adverse event, which literature defines as brand crisis (Dutta and Pullig 2011). Besides the devastating effect a crisis may have on different brand-related outcomes (e.g. Dawar and Pillutla 2000), it can even threaten the brand’s survival (Coombs and Holladay 1996). Most of existing research in the area of brand crises focus on consumer-related consequences of crises initiated by a company and on
evaluations of possible post-crises corporate responses that could help to restore confidence in the brand (e.g. Ahluwalia et al. 2000; Cleeren et al. 2008; Huber et al. 2010). Also most of insights on brand crises refer to endogenously initiated offline crises and might be less effective or even self-defeating when studying NCBCC (Rauschnabel et al. 2016). To the best of our knowledge, there is no study explaining how to defend a brand in NCBCC. The purpose of our own study is therefore to close this knowledge gap by exploring how to manage situations in which co-creation goes wrong and endangers a brand. First, we establish a typology of different defense strategies. Real-world incidents of NCBCC and in-depth case-studies serve as a basis to develop these strategies that will be quantitatively tested for their effectiveness to restore brand equity in a second step.

The typical perspective on crises management considers only the company as possible “brand-defender” and crisis-management as a management issue (Stockmeyer 1996). We broaden this view and turn our attention also on the question if co-created defense strategies between a corporation and stakeholders can be more effective than just focusing the company as sender source in post-crises communication.

**Approach**

Although there are recent attempts to understand antecedents and characteristics of endogenous brand crises (e.g. Rauschnabel et al. 2016), the relation to co-creation and to crises initiated by non-collaborative behavior of consumers remains unclear. Also the effectiveness of responses and the idea of co-created defense strategies have not been considered yet.

Hence, NCBCC in general and defense strategies in NCBCC in particular present heavily unattended research fields. We therefore follow an explorative approach which is suitable to study an under-investigated field of interest that misses rich and robust theory (Eisenhardt 1989; Yin 2003). The aim is to evolve theory inductively and recognize existing and novel patterns of brand defense in NCBCC (Eisenhardt and Graebner 2007). The fieldwork comprises a two-phase research approach based on: (1) the identification and investigation of real-world incidents of NCBCC. Particularly, we are interested in responses of the legal brand owner and the resulting effect on the brand. Also co-creation between a company and consumers in post-crises response is focused; (2) the construction of in-depth case-studies using information from various sources (e.g. literature, expert interviews).

A later step in the research project plans a quantitative study that tests the effectiveness to restore brand equity of the previously established defense strategies in NCBCC-scenarios. An experimental research design could not only elaborate different strategies, but also test them against distinct sender-sources, as for instance a company alone against a co-created defense between a corporation and consumers.

**Findings**

During the time this paper was written the study was still ongoing. Results of the qualitative study will be presented at the conference. However, we have identified some first preliminary incidents of NCBCC that serve as starting-point to investigate patterns of brand defense. Specifically, interactions between a company and consumers and also interactions among consumers will be explored, as a fluid approach to brand building might also require an agile style of managing conflict.
For now, we have established five different responses to NCBCC: (A) non-reaction (stonewalling), (B) clearly distancing a brand from NCBCC (dissociation), (C) jointly co-creating solutions with consumers (multi-user dialogue), (D) actively motivating consumers to co-create a defense strategy (ordered protection), (E) consumers stand-up for their brand without a company being involved (brand guarding). While the first two response-strategies relate to classical post-crisis communication and image restoration strategies (e.g., Coombs 2006, 2007; Benoit 1997) with the company being fully in charge, the last three defenses are based on co-creation. We argue that there are different intensities of co-creation when it comes to brand defense in NCBCC. A multi-user dialogue presents a weaker form of defense as consumers are integrated but the company is still in the lead. Ordered protection is a stronger intensity as a company actively outsources the brand defense to external parties who co-create a defense strategy. Brand guarding presents the strongest form. Here consumers co-create a brand defense among themselves and against the attackers without the company’s involvement. Appendix provides a summary of the so far identified incidents.

Also we have noticed that NCBCC can be observed on multiple dimensions. One dimension is an instrumental approach in which brand co-creation is seen as a tool in innovation (e.g. label and product design competitions). A second dimension considers brand co-creation from a more general perspective. The brand is pushed in unwanted directions without the involvement and partially also the knowledge of the legal brand owner (e.g. anti-brand communities or brand abusement by skinheads).

In the process of further research we will broaden the accumulation of existing cases, analyze the resulting effect of each defense strategy and construct own in-depths case studies.

**Theoretical implications**
Despite Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004, p. 21) note that not all co-creation activities are positive, most of existing studies on co-creation tend to take a positive perspective. Therefore, this paper contributes to the limited amount of studies on unsuccessful co-creation. Literature suggests that managing conflict in co-creation is a multi-user dialog which should be carried out in collaboration with consumer communities (Gebauer et al. 2013). However, so far there is no empirical evidence for it. We aim to make a contribution here by creating a typology of defense strategies and testing their effectiveness in a later step. Also we focus on the importance of collaboration between a company and stakeholders in tackling situations of NCBCC. Therefore, we extend the typical perspective in literature that considers only the corporation as being mainly responsible for post-crisis communication.

Academic interest in studying consequences of brand crises and post-crisis corporate responses is rising and we answer the call of various scholars (e.g. Dawar and Lei 2009; Dutta and Pullig 2011) for more research on the impact of response strategies on brands.

**Practical implications**
Looking at various practical cases, it becomes clear that whenever value is commonly co-created, it can also be co-destroyed. NCBCC is widely prevalent and presents a serious threat. Hence, practitioners have to be aware of how to best defend a brand in NCBCC. We provide managers with clear insights into possible strategies and their effectiveness. We also evaluate the importance of stakeholders as a source to de-escalate in situations in which NCBCC occurs.
Limitations
The qualitative nature of the study is certainly a limitation. Despite the study will be based on various cases as well as on expert interviews, the generalizability of findings is problematic. Still the generated insights will pave the way for the postulation of hypotheses that will be tested by quantitative means.

Another limitation is that we focus our attention mainly on consumers and the company as possible “brand-defender”. In crises-communication also further entities might intervene and defend the brand. For instance, NGO’s could possibly defend a brand. Greenpeace, who had heavily triggered negative publicity against corporate practices at Nestle, now announces on its homepage that Nestle has met specific claims (Greenpeace 2016). This statement could be interpreted as defense and could impact public opinions towards Nestle.

Lastly, we only consider the initial response. Possibly, a company or consumers change their approach over time. For example, when a label design contest for the Pril brand, owned by German company Henkel, turned into anti-brand content Henkel remained silent. However, the creation of anti-brand content did not stop and Henkel decided to intervene.

Originality
Despite various brand scholars emphasize the increasing importance of brand co-creation (e.g. Ind 2015), research on downsides and non-collaborative behavior is scarce. This paper approaches this knowledge gap by focusing on NCBCC and providing the, to the best of our knowledge, first empirical study that helps to understand how to defend a brand once co-creation goes wrong. By focusing on co-created defense strategies, the classical perspective to study brand related adverse events is extended as not only the company but also the importance of stakeholders in restoring a brand’s equity is considered.

Keywords: non-collaborative brand co-creation, defense strategies, brand crises

References


The rise of polychromatic palettes: visual identities adapting to the dynamic sensorial scene

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Introduction
Visual identities are structured around their own Visual Identity Systems (VIS), forming a unit, which is extremely important for brands. Most brand guidelines systematise the VIS usage and application, ensuring consistency and recognition. However, the current info-communication paradigm, which brought participation, interaction, appropriation, motion, mutability and ubiquity to many different aspects of human life, is also changing the way brands are used as communication instruments. Brands now adapt to the context in which they operate, where they know their audiences will be. Hence, brands are, more than ever before, allowed a certain amount of flexibility, which is inherent to a constantly evolving process. Thus, grounded on this post-modern and constructivist perspective, the brand is assumed as something that is much more than a form of differentiation, and rather as something that is intrinsically part of an identity, liable to convey a massive complexity of contextual meanings.

For the dynamic and social processes that brands more recently became, the VIS can no longer be graphically fixed, as these brands can change or transmogrify over shorter or longer periods of time, many behaving in random ways. However, the different levels of mutability and dynamism will obviously affect the organoleptic and tangible characteristics of such living brands. That would be the case with colour: corporate colours have long been one of the most prominent vectors of any VIS, being symbolically codified and meant to support certain meanings and allusions. In fact, for many brands, colour has been pivotal in terms of creating familiarity and supporting both consistency and immediate recognition, through the development of colour ownership throughout their existence.

Despite the enormous amount of existing information on colour theory, and some research on the relevance of carefully defining the right and consistent set of colours for a brand, there is little work on the rise of polychromatic corporate palettes, which have been implemented by several brands in the last decade, in response to a more open, global, interactive and flexible environment. Hence, as a start, the author investigated the most common colour palettes for dynamic visual identities with a thorough and consistent presence in multimodal flexible contexts.
1. Literature Review

It is widely recognised that brands, which are one of the most relevant manifestations of organisations and any other self-promoting entity (either a group or a single individual), are composed of several intangibles, such as the style of management, the structure, the behaviour and procedures (Lambert, 1989), values and culture, skills, assets and resources (Davidson, 1997), personality, culture and self-image (Kapferer, 1997), but also of tangible, functional components that, altogether, form the brand’s Visual Identity System (VIS): name, logo, typography, colours, slogan, signage, language (Grossman, 1994; Kapferer 1997, 2001; Mollerup, 1999; Aaker, 2004; Kreutz, 2005; Olins 2005; Keller, Aperia & Georgson, 2008, Peón, 2009; Wheeler, 2012; van Nes, 2012; Oliveira, 2013).

Recently, we have been witnessing different types of flexibility in several brands, with some of their VIS’ components changing, in more or less controlled ways, which make it harder to translate into traditional brand guidelines. Such graphical flexibility allows brands to fit within different media, to keep in line with market expectations. In fact, Merz, He & Vargo (2009) proposed that, since roughly 2000, brands have been increasingly focused on their stakeholders, which emphasises that all audiences are operating resources in co-creating brand value, in a continuous and interactive manner (Cruz, 2014).

With these new approaches in mind, Van Nes presented a taxonomy and classification system for what she defines as Dynamic Brands: organic brands (two rather good examples would be MTV and Google) with variable visual elements, taking advantage of the new available technologies, providing brands with more vivid and flexible identities, should they wish (2012, p6). One of these variable elements would be colour.

According to Chague, Mattiello & Pescio (1998), humans perceive colours faster than they perceive shapes, icons and other symbols, making colour the most influential visual resource on facilitating brands’ memorability (Caivano & López, 2006). In fact, some brands are strongly linked to a colour in particular (Coca Cola with red, Benetton with green), in a relationship that eases recognition (Henderson & Cote, 1998), with a subliminal persuasive power, as it draws various emotional responses (Eiseman, 2000). But what if a brand’s colours constantly change?

2. Purpose of this paper

Combined through different harmonies, colour seems to be one of the most mutable visual elements. Thus, the main goal for this paper was to identify the most distinctive chromatic inroads in dynamic brands, as a preliminary step for the understanding of any patterns or shared strategies in these adaptive visual approaches. Hence, the research question was: What are the most common colour palettes for dynamic visual identities in multimodal flexible contexts?
3. Method
This research is the result of a wide literature review, framed within the field of branding and of visual language, with a special focus on colour theories, followed by a thorough analytical study, based on the collection, comparison and scrutiny of 50 brands that are widely acknowledged as dynamic. These were collected from some of the most up-to-date informal online resources of specialist knowledge (such as Underconsideration and The Branding Source websites) and from the online published portfolios of four major communication agencies (Wolff Olins, BBH, Pentagram and Sagmeister & Walsh). The approach is based on the analysis of these 50 brands’ visual identities, verifying the changes that their colours may undergo in their numerous forms of representation. The two supporting frameworks for this analysis were Munsell’s Perceptual Colour Attributes (Hue, Lightness/Value and Saturation/Chroma), which are key for the most relevant colour harmonies — Monochromatic, Analogous, Complementary, Triadic and Tetradic (Munsell, 1977) (Figure 1), and Kobayashi’s Colour Image Scale (Kobayashi, 1990) (Figure 2), which has been considered a useful guide for design and marketing purposes, establishing contextual associations/meanings to moods and lifestyles, helping in matching target audiences to the right brand positioning and personality.

Figure 1 – Munsell’s Colour Space with Perceptual Attributes and Colour Harmonies
4. Findings

With the data obtained it was observed that colour in dynamic visual identities does not follow any consistent pattern regarding its application; on the contrary, hue, value and saturation are diversely explored and, with the exception of the monochromatic approach, in which either a single hue is selected and used with variations of value or saturation, none of the most commonly implemented colour harmonies in brand visual identities seems to reveal a prominent or obvious strategic preference. The triadic colour harmony is used by only one of the analysed brands. Analogous, complementary and tetradic harmonies represent 4% each of the total sample. The most recurrent tactic is a polychromatic one (not really considered a colour harmony per se), in which a variety of patterns, textures and complex backgrounds include multiple hues, values and saturation levels that change in the brand’s diverse visual versions. In these cases, which represent 58% of the gathered sample, there is a clear graphical flexibility in terms of colour, namely because some of them represent ever evolving and adapting visual identities that depend on a certain context, such as an event or a non fixed line of products/services, or the openness to a total participatory attitude. The latter is the case of OCAD University, in Canada, in which graduates are invited to design customised imagery that will be included within the brand’s basic square structure, but also of the cultural arena Casa da Música, in Portugal, a brand whose shape and colour change according to its temporary events, having inclusively developed a colour generator through which a point colour-picking mechanism guarantees colour consistency (Figure 3).
Additionally, whereas in dynamic visual identities that use common colour harmonies it is possible to identify a set of overall moods or lifestyles using Kobayashi’s Colour Image Scale — e.g. PWC’s analogous colour harmony can be classified as Warm-Soft > Casual Colourful and Natural Wild, or monochromatic IDTV can be categorised as Cool-Hard > Modern > Metallic (Figure 4) — with polychromatic dynamic identities it is impossible to get any association, which leads to the consideration that these brands do not express their positioning through colour ownership and that polychromatic approaches may be underexplored within the psychological field.
5. Theoretical and Practical Implications
The findings presented may suggest new perspectives regarding further research. From a theoretical standpoint, it would be pertinent to research the possibility of unexplored meanings/associations, considering that inappropriate or unacceptable corporate colour codes may be coming to an end, which may be related to the dissolution of communicational, cultural and ideological barriers and stereotypes. From a practical perspective, it might be relevant to 1) better understand how polychromatic palettes can successfully be implemented without affecting a brand’s recognition and still establish customer loyalty; and 2) clarifying how would brand guidelines explain the usage of polychromatic palettes for third parties to use, especially when a) these implicate higher print production costs and, b) brands increasingly allow their audiences to participate in their visual speech.

6. Limitations
This is a new and underexplored subject field and the lack of supporting empirical work in the area of dynamic brands imposed some restrictions. As Henderson & Cote (1998) state, colours may have impact on the way humans are cognitively stimulated, and colour harmonies are especially effective in this respect. With polychromatic visual identities the levels and the moments of excitation promoted by changing colours are still unknown, and the meanings/associations proposed by Kobayashi and used by marketers, designers and even Pantone® for years lose applicability in this context. Additionally, it is believed this study would benefit from an ethnographic approach, in which the audiences’ perceived experience with polychromatic dynamic brands would be measured. Empirical tests grounded on age, colour blindness, visual literacy and cultural background might also be interesting to contemplate.

7. Originality and Value
Nevertheless, the author considers this paper to be a relevant contribution to the perception of how the characteristics of visual identities (namely colour) are being combined, deconstructed and reassembled in different ways, in multimodal flexible contexts, in which brands can be extremely appealing due to their intrinsic sensorial stimulant capacity. Colour diversity, entertaining profiles, participatory strategies and memorable experiences, enabled and promoted through proper and unique interaction schemes, may be exciting ways to overcome the fuzziness surrounding the triangle of meaning – colour – visual identity.

Keywords: dynamic brands, visual identity, colour, polychromatic palette
List of References


Appendix: Example of some incidents for the so far identified defenses in NCBCC

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company (brand)</th>
<th>Brief description of incident</th>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Dimension of NCBCC</th>
<th>Defense strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alpha Industries (fashion)</td>
<td>Alpha Industries is remaining silent although the brand has increasingly gained popularity among skinheads</td>
<td>Worldwide (current)</td>
<td>General perspective on brand co-creation</td>
<td>Stonewalling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apple</td>
<td>Dutch Youtubers recreated an iPhone and fooled Apple users. This video was used as mockery on Apple. Apple fans defended their brand on social media with posts that reached on average several hundred likes</td>
<td>Netherlands (2015)</td>
<td>General perspective on brand co-creation</td>
<td>Brand guarding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ferrero (Nutella brand)</td>
<td>Ferrero clearly distanced itself from hate-speech terms such as “massacre” or “genocide” which were associated with its Nutella brand during a label design contest</td>
<td>France (2015)</td>
<td>Innovation and Design</td>
<td>Dissociation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henkel (Pril brand)</td>
<td>A label design contest for the Pril bottle turned into anti-brand content and protest. At first, Henkel remained quiet</td>
<td>Germany (2011)</td>
<td>Innovation and Design</td>
<td>Stonewalling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lonsdale</td>
<td>Lonsdale is collaborating with consumers to act against its widespread popularity among skinheads</td>
<td>Worldwide (current)</td>
<td>General perspective on brand co-creation</td>
<td>Multi-user dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mondelez (Honey Maid brand)</td>
<td>After releasing a new campaign that celebrated the diversity of modern families, the brand was attacked. To counter that, the company engaged artists to defend the brand</td>
<td>USA (2014)</td>
<td>General perspective on brand co-creation</td>
<td>Ordered protection</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPAR (retail chain)</td>
<td>SPAR immediately started to engage in dialogue and problem-solving processes together with participants once its bag design contest turned to backfire against the brand</td>
<td>Austria (2009)</td>
<td>Innovation and Design</td>
<td>Multi-user dialogue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Toyota</td>
<td>Toyota is distancing the brand from negative associations in inquiries investigating how ISIS has managed to acquire a large number of Toyota pick-up trucks and SUVs, seen in the terror group’s propaganda videos</td>
<td>Worldwide (current)</td>
<td>General perspective on brand co-creation</td>
<td>Dissociation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The impact of brand gender on consumer-brand engagement and consumer-based brand equity on Facebook

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1. Purpose
Social media, especially social networking sites (SNS), have emerged as dominant communication channels and have introduced new means of interaction and engagement between consumers and brands (Hudson, Huang and Madden 2016). Thus, Facebook and other SNS have become critical channels in brand’s efforts to drive awareness and stimulate consumer-brand engagement (Hutter et al, 2013; Rohm, Kaltcheva and Mihe 2013). This new form of engagement in social media opens many important opportunities for brands to create value (Azar et al 2016; Kabadayi and Price 2014). While consumer-brand engagement in social media includes a wide range of activities, consuming and contributing behaviors are generally used as measures of consumer engagement in social media (Gummerus et al 2012; Muntinga, Moorman and Smit 2011).

Although previous research has shown that by interacting with a brand on social media, consumers express themselves in order to affirm a personal identity (Martins and Patrício 2013; Heinonen 2011), little is known on the relationship between the human personality traits consumers associate with a brand (Aaker 1997) and consumer-brand engagement on Facebook. Therefore, in this research, we investigate how two distinct and universal dimensions of brand personality - brand masculinity and brand femininity - which constitute the two dimensions of brand gender (Grohmann 2009) influence consumer-brand engagement on Facebook. Another critical aim is to investigate the relationship between brand masculinity and brand femininity perceptions and consumer-based brand equity, on Facebook. The focus on brand gender is particularly relevant, since recent research has shown that brand masculinity and brand femininity are two critical dimensions of brand personality that influence relevant consumer-brand related responses (Lieven et al 2014; Lieven et and Hildebrand 2016; Ulrich 2013). However, the relationship between brand gender personality traits and consumer responses towards the brand on Facebook has not been empirically tested yet.

Moreover, we want to understand how the two types of consumer-brand engagement on Facebook (consuming and contributing) influence consumer-based brand equity. This is particularly relevant since little marketing research has been done to reveal the underlying
processes of consumer-based brand equity in social media (Kabadayi and Price, 2014; Rios and Riquelme 2010; Schivinski and Dabrowski 2015). This research intends to address this gap.

Ultimately, we aim to study the role of brand love as a mediating factor in the relationship between brand gender and consumer-based brand equity on Facebook. Although brand love has been the topic of several recent studies (e.g. Albert and Merunka 2013; Carroll and Ahuvia 2006; Lagner et al 2016; Loureiro et al 2013), thus far, no study has specifically addressed the influence of brand love on consumer-based brand equity on Facebook, or how consumer brand engagement on Facebook contributes to the development of brand love.

Following we present the research model and hypotheses.

H1.a: Brand masculinity (BM) has a positive influence on consuming behavior on Facebook
H1.b: Brand femininity (BF) has a positive influence on consuming behavior on Facebook
H2.a: BM has a positive influence on contributing behavior on Facebook
H2.b: BF has a positive influence on contributing behavior on Facebook
H3.a: BM has a positive influence on brand love
H3.b: BF has a positive influence on brand love
H4.a: Consuming brand-related content has a positive influence on brand love
H4.b: Contributing to brand-related content has a positive influence on brand love
H6.a: BM has a positive influence on CBBE
H6.b: BF has a positive influence on CBBE
H7.a: Consuming brand-related content has a positive influence on CBBE
H7.b: Contributing to brand-related content has a positive influence on CBBE

Figure 1. Research model
2. Methodology
Data were collected using an online questionnaire with 614 valid responses. Respondents were first asked to answer general questions related to their use of Internet and Facebook. We then asked them to report the number of Facebook brand pages they liked and identify the product/service categories they belong to. Next we invited respondents to identify their favourite Facebook brand page. For the rest of the questionnaire, respondents were asked to answer the questions keeping in mind this brand.

The constructs under study were all measured using scales from prior studies, with some minor changes to fit the SNS context. All items were measured using a seven-point Likert-type response scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree”. We measured brand gender using a 12 item scale developed by Grohmann (2009), and brand love using the 5 item scale adapted by Loureiro et al (2012). The scale developed by Tsai and Men (2013) was used to evaluate the two types of consumer engagement with the brand on Facebook. Finally, to measure consumer-based brand equity we used the 4 item unidimensional measure, the overall brand equity (OBE) scale by Yoo and Donthu (2001). Exploratory and confirmatory analyses were conducted to assess the reliability and validity of the variables.

Our dataset was first screened for missing data. We also checked the multicollinearity, linearity and normality assumptions for each variable. We then performed exploratory factor analysis using SPSS 20 to evaluate all items used in this study associated with brand masculinity (BM), brand femininity (BF), brand love (BL), consumer-based brand equity (CBBE), contributing (CONT) and consuming (CONS) to brand-related content on Facebook. To aid our interpretation of these six components, we did an oblique rotation on all of the measured items, checked the data for the cross-loading items and those with communalities of less than .5. We then performed confirmatory factor analyses with AMOS 20 using maximum likelihood estimation method.

The initial model’s psychometric values are: χ²/ddl=3.277, TLI=.917, CFI=.926, GFI=.883; AGFI=.860, RSMEA=.061 and PCLOSE=.001; these indices do not ensure a proper fit of the measurement model. To obtain better fit indices, we eliminated three items with weak factor loading (i.e. standardized parameter estimates less than .4). This procedure yielded reliable scales for analysis on a reduced set of measures; the χ² is significant and χ²/ddf=2.659, TLI=.950, CFI=.957, GFI=.917, AGFI=.897, RMSEA=.052 and PCLOSE=.230. This represents a suitable goodness-of-fit, as all the values are within the acceptable range (Hair et al 2009). The model explained 30.5% of the variance of CBBE and 40.5% of the variance of BL. As for consumer engagement with brands on Facebook, gender (i.e. masculine and feminine dimensions) explains 6 % of the variance of consuming and 4.2% of the variance of contributing.

We also tested the convergent and discriminant validity for the dimensions used in this study. For all measurement models, Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability (CR) values are greater than .82. All standardized regression weights are significant. In support of the discriminant validity, the square roots of the average variance extracted (AVE) are superior to any correlations between latent variables; these findings follow Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) guidelines.

3. Findings
Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using maximum likelihood estimation and
bootstrapping method was conducted using AMOS 20 to test for the validity of the model and the mediations hypotheses. The bootstrap estimates presented in this study are based on 200 bootstrap samples. Bootstrapping allows testing for the indirect effects (Preacher and Hayes, 2008). Standardized direct and indirect effects are presented in tables 1 and 2.

As illustrated in Table 1, BF had no significant impact on consuming behavior on Facebook (path coefficient CONS =.052, p=.127). Only BM had a significant positive impact on this dimension (path coefficient CONS= .284; p<1%). Therefore, hypothesis 1 is partially supported.

Regarding contributing behavior on Facebook, both dimensions of brand gender had a significant positive impact: for BM, the path coefficient =.228 (p<1%); for BF, the path coefficient=.070 (p=3.9%). Therefore, hypothesis 2 was fully supported.

Additionally, as expected BF and BM had a significant positive impact on brand love (path coefficient for BF=.200, p<1%; path coefficient for BM =.408, p<1%). Therefore, the impact of brand gender on brand love was supported and hypothesis 3 fully supported. An in-depth analysis showed that only BM had a positive indirect impact on brand love through both dimensions of consumer-brand engagement.

As for the link between consumer-brand engagement and brand love, results supported our hypothesis 4 as both dimensions of consumer-brand engagement, consuming (path coefficient=.294; p<1%) and contributing (path coefficient=.166; p<1%) had a positive and significant impact on brand love.

Results also show that brand love has a significant direct impact on consumer based brand equity (path coefficient.453, p<1%). Therefore, hypothesis 5 was supported also. Unlike previous research findings (Lieven et al 2015), the impact of brand gender on consumer-based brand equity was not supported. Neither BM (path coefficient=.010; p=.870), nor BF (path coefficient=-.058; p=.104) reached statistical significance level, leading us to reject hypothesis 6. Yet, the indirect impact between those two variables through the mediators was supported for both dimensions of brand gender: BM (path=.243; p=.003) and BF (path=142; p=.012). Further analysis shows that the indirect impact of brand gender on consumer-based brand equity is mediated by brand love and both dimensions of consumer-brand engagement.

As for the impact of consumer-brand engagement on consumer-based brand equity, findings show that only contributing had a positive direct impact on brand equity (path coefficient =.281, p<.1%) as consuming did not reach statistical significance level (path coefficient = .067 p=.252). Therefore, hypothesis 7 was partially supported.

4. Originality and value
This study advances prior work by showing that the influence of brand masculinity and brand femininity is mediated through brand love and through the two types of consumer-brand engagement on Facebook. This paper also contributes to the literature by shedding light on the relationship between masculine and feminine brand personality traits and the two critical types of consumer-engagement with brands on Facebook. Our findings show that brands with high levels of femininity or masculinity will encourage consumer brand-engagement, particularly the most visible and exposing type of engagement (i.e. contributing). Hence, by instilling a brand with a masculine or feminine brand personality, brand managers can
effectively foster consumer-brand engagement on Facebook.

Moreover, our findings provide relevant insights on how the different types of consumer-brand engagement on Facebook influence consumer-based brand equity. Results demonstrate that only the most visible type of engagement has a significant and positive impact on consumer-based brand equity. Though, even the more “voyeuristic” engagement is key for brands, since consuming brand-related content on Facebook also mediates the effect of brand masculinity and brand femininity on brand equity. These findings highlight that “lurking” is valuable form of social media behavior, and that lurkers are a valuable target for brand communications.

Ultimately, this research extends prior studies by suggesting that by creating a strong brand gender identity, brands will encourage brand love. Results also highlight that brand love has a mediating role on the relationship between brand gender and consumer-based brand equity. Moreover, results show that love towards the favorite brand on Facebook has a positive and strong influence on consumer-based brand equity.

5. Limitations
The sample size and profile could be considered a limitation, as the sample is composed essentially by young respondents. Moreover, we did not include specific brands in our study since we wanted to analyse the influence of brand gender on consumer brand-related responses, on Facebook, in general. Future research could thus include specific brands, namely feminine, masculine, undifferentiated and androgynous brands in order to provide a more realistic appraisal of the influence of brand gender on consumer-brand engagement, brand love and brand equity ratings.

Keywords: Facebook, consumer-brand engagement, brand gender, brand love, consumer-based brand equity

References
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Appendixes

Table 1: Standardized direct effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Regression Weights</th>
<th>P</th>
<th>Acceptance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1a</td>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>.284</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1b</td>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>.052</td>
<td>.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2a</td>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>.228</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b</td>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>.070</td>
<td>.039</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>.408</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>.200</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>.294</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>.166</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5</td>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>BL</td>
<td>.453</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6a</td>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>.010</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6b</td>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>-.058</td>
<td>.104</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7a</td>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>CONS</td>
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<td>.252</td>
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<tr>
<td>H7b</td>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>.281</td>
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Table 2: Bootstrap analysis and statistical significance of indirect effects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Standardized Indirect Effects</th>
<th>p (Two tailed)</th>
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<tr>
<td>CBBE</td>
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<td>CONS</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>CONT</td>
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<td>CBBE</td>
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<td>BL</td>
<td>.146</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>.014</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBBE</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>.031</td>
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<td>CBBE</td>
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<td>BL</td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>.067</td>
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<tr>
<td>BL</td>
<td>BM</td>
<td>CONT</td>
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<td>BL</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>CONS</td>
<td>.019</td>
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<td>BL</td>
<td>BF</td>
<td>CONT</td>
<td>.015</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
The Obesity Epidemic: The Effect of Pre-existing Lifestyle on Attitude to the Ad, Attitude to the Brand, and Purchase Intention

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Purpose of the Paper
The worldwide obesity epidemic has prompted governments, NGO’s, and companies to explore the use of advertising to promote healthy eating habits. The effect of product or issue involvement often moderates the effects of advertising on brand image. Advertising that involves a sensitive topic, namely a person's weight, runs the risk of a consumer backlash that may tarnish a brand's image. Previous research by the authors who investigated message structure in advertising to promote healthy eating found there was no significant difference between one-sided and two-sided messages on Aad and Ab. The present study assesses the effect of pre-existing eating habits on attitudes toward healthy eating after exposure to advertising.

Methodology/approach
Participants and Design
This study is a follow up to previous research investigating fast food brands perceived as healthy and unhealthy. Data was drawn from 100 participants, collected online by iResearch and participants were randomly selected and US Census stratified.

A 2 (Disclosure: no disclosure vs. disclosure) × 2 (Healthy lifestyle: healthy vs. unhealthy) × 2 (Fast food: Subway [healthy fast food] vs. Burger King [unhealthy fast food]) was used to assess the effect on proposed hypotheses.
Thirty-one percent of the participants were neutral with regards to adopting a healthy lifestyle and excluded from the final analyses. After excluding them, 8% were in the Low (unhealthy) category and 61% in the High (healthy) category.

**Considerations: Healthy Lifestyle**

One of the important moderators of the effect of advertising that promotes healthy eating is the level of consumer involvement, namely, the consumer's pre-existing attitudes to consumption. Two conflicting goals are noticeable when consumers make food consumption decisions: the hedonic goal of enjoying the taste of food and the utilitarian goal of following a healthy lifestyle (Dhar and Simonson 1999; Fishbach, Friedman, and Kruglanski 2003). Allocating the priority to hedonic goals leads the consumer to choose the tastier, less healthy, option over the healthier, less tasty one in the menu and would moderate the effects of advertising and affecting the brand image of the advertised product (Srivastava and Kamdar 2009; Park and Young 1986).

Subjects with a healthy lifestyle differ fundamentally from those who maintain an unhealthy lifestyle. Body Mass Index (BMI) can be considered as one of the indicators of healthy lifestyle, As Chou, Grossman, and Saffer (2004) have concluded, increase in fast food consumption contributes to increase in actual Body Mass Index (BMI). Also Wansink and Chandon (2006) indicated that for normal-weight people, low-fat labels only increase the consumption of healthy food; but for overweight people, it increases the consumption of all foods.

Based on outcome expectations as described in social-cognitive theory (Bandura 1986; 1997), the belief that certain decisions help in accomplishing personal goals is part of an individual’s motivation (Desrochers and Maddox 2013). Although some consumers may have the desire to maintain a healthy weight and follow healthy dietary habits, not all consumers agree on the desirability of the goals. Those who show lower interest in maintaining a healthy weight may not pay attention to health disclosures and not be motivated by them.

**Questionnaire Development**

The scale for “adopting a healthy lifestyle” (HL) is a combination of statements that show how likely the consumer will follow a healthy lifestyle in eating or not. There are several scales developed for measuring healthy eating habits. Some of these scales come with a measure of “healthy” of “unhealthy” practices like eating breakfast (Steptoe and Wardle, 1999; Monneuse et al, 1997; Wardle et al, 2000a). but they do not provide a comprehensive assessment of dietary habits. Subsequently, Kristal et al. (1990) developed a comprehensive scale for measuring adult fat-related healthy habits that was expanded to fiber-related habits by Shannon et al. (1997). Its weak point was that the questions asked about specific situations. From 1994-96, the Diet and Health Knowledge Survey (Tippett and Cleveland, 2001) remedied earlier instrument shortcomings, and the items used in this questionnaire are drawn from that nationwide survey.

This variable measures how likely it is for a respondent to use certain nutrients with questions like “I plan to avoid foods that contain too much fat,” “I plan on using sugar only in moderation,” “I plan to avoid foods that contain too much salt or sodium,” and “I plan to
choose a diet with plenty of fruits & vegetables”. This variable was measured using a 5-point Likert scale: very unlikely, unlikely, neutral likely and very likely. The “Adopting Healthy Lifestyle” variable was an 11-item construct with a high Cronbach alpha (\(\alpha = 0.96, M = 40.74, SD = 10.46\)).

**Hypotheses**

Pre-existing conditions are important in health care in general, and obesity research in particular. The focus of the research is to determine the effect of different eating habits on consumers’ attitude toward the ad and brand. Based on subjects’ differing goals (Stewart and Martin 2004), the importance and effectiveness of disclosure may be greater for the consumers who perceive more benefits from eating healthy and place higher importance on healthy eating habits (Desrochers and Maddox 2013). As Burton et al. (2009) also concluded, there are significant differences when disclosed information confirms previous perception about food. Consumers who adopted healthy lifestyles pay more attention to the disclosures and nutrition labels; but since choosing healthy fast food is a part of their lifestyle, they are not as positively affected by the new disclosed information as those who follow moderate or unhealthy eating habits.

Two sets of hypotheses were developed that connected consumers’ stated importance for a healthy lifestyle with Aad, Ab, and PI as well as the effect of disclosure on Aad, Ab, and PI.

**Preliminary analysis**

**Data reduction**

Factor analysis was undertaken for data reduction. The analysis revealed that some items cross-loaded on two or more factors on each of the three variables, Aad (2 factors), Ab (2 factors), and PI (3 factors). Details are omitted here due to space considerations. Healthy lifestyle items loaded on one factor and the factor explained 73.873% of total variance.

**Main Analysis – Model and Hypothesis Testing**

The \(2 \times 2 \times 2\) two-way ANOVA analysis was conducted with disclosure, fast food and healthy lifestyle as the three variables. The analysis yielded no significant effect of disclosure on Aad, Ab or PI choice of fast food had no significant effect.

**Findings**

There was no significant interaction between healthy lifestyle and fast food or disclosure. However, consumers with healthy lifestyles had a greater Aad, Ab and PI. This group recorded a higher score on Aad, Ab and PI for both the disclosure and no disclosure condition. The effect of affirmative disclosure was significant for one of the Ab factors (Competitive healthiness \(F= 9.721, p=.003\) and one factor of PI (Healthiness of decision \(F= 7.773, p=.007\)). The effect of healthiness of lifestyle is significant on Aad, Ab and PI (all p-values< 0.04).
Those who follow a healthy lifestyle have a higher score on Aad and Ab; however, those who have an unhealthy lifestyle show greater difference between the two conditions of disclosure and no disclosure. For Purchase Intentions, the healthy lifestyle group did not demonstrate great difference between disclosure and no disclosure.

Interestingly, in the unhealthy lifestyle group, affirmative disclosure has a different effect on purchase decision for healthy and unhealthy fast food. Although disclosures have a favorable effect for healthier fast food (Subway), for unhealthier fast food (Burger King) it decreases the purchase decision. Even more interesting is that on the contrary disclosures have a negative effect on healthiness of for healthy fast food while they have a favorable effect on unhealthier fast food. In other words, participants who follow a healthy lifestyle have higher scores in attitude toward the ad, brand and purchase intentions; those who do not follow a healthy lifestyle expressed greater change in their Aad, Ab when exposed to health disclosure compared to no disclosure.

Additional analysis was conducted for further confirmation of the first ANOVA. Since in the first ANOVA results there was no significant effect of fast food, another ANOVA was conducted with only two other independent variables, disclosure and healthiness of lifestyle. The results are reported in Table 1.

### Table 1: ANOVA results (F-Values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Main Model</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Disclosure</th>
<th>P-value</th>
<th>Healthy Lifestyle</th>
<th>P-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effect on Aad</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship to Brand</td>
<td>3.004</td>
<td>0.037*</td>
<td>3.137</td>
<td>0.081</td>
<td>7.077</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Competitive Healthiness</td>
<td>11.158</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
<td>16.201</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
<td>22.791</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Effect on Ab</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchase Decision</td>
<td>3.244</td>
<td>0.028*</td>
<td>1.700</td>
<td>0.197</td>
<td>9.017</td>
<td>0.004**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Healthiness of Decision</td>
<td>7.546</td>
<td>0.000**</td>
<td>4.920</td>
<td>0.030*</td>
<td>10.954</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Search Behavior</td>
<td>2.255</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.370</td>
<td>0.545</td>
<td>6.588</td>
<td>0.013*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The results of the second analysis show a significant effect of healthy lifestyle on Aad, Ab and PI. The main model is significant for Aad, Ab and two factors of PI (all p-values< .04). Unhealthy lifestyle participants showed a greater change in Aad and Ab when exposed to health disclosures. Those with a healthy lifestyle do not show the effect of disclosure. Those with an unhealthy lifestyle express a great change in their competitive healthiness when exposed to disclosure compared to no disclosure. However, those who follow a healthy lifestyle also have a more favorable Aad, Ab and PI when exposed to disclosure. Competitive healthiness and healthiness of decision are significantly affected by disclosure and healthiness of lifestyle. Unhealthy lifestyle participants show a slightly greater change on PI.

**Theoretical Implications**
The results broadly support Burton et al.’s (2009) contention that when disclosed information confirms previous perceptions, consumers pay more attention to the disclosures and nutrition labels. In this case, those who live a healthy lifestyle will attend to disclosures but will not be as positively affected by the information as those who follow moderate or unhealthy eating habits.

**Practical Implications**
The research offers some evidence that disclosure can promote healthier eating. In this sample, a small minority had an unhealthy lifestyle and showed an interest in improving their eating habits. Reaching them is perhaps more important than confirming the healthy eating habits of others. This group may benefit more than others by exposure to advertising. The obesity problem has been resistant to proposed solutions. Perhaps efforts to reach the most vulnerable consumers (the unhealthy lifestyle group) may bear fruit.

**Limitations**
The middle group who value neither a healthy nor unhealthy lifestyle were omitted from analysis. They represent a larger segment than the other two. A question that remains about this group is whether advertising disclosure can prompt group members to see the value in greater interest in healthy activities.

**Originality/Value**
Many studies have investigated the effects of advertising on Aad, Ab, and PI. Many have used student or convenience samples. This study used a consumer sample that mirrored the US population. In addition, it provides new evidence that consumers who have an unhealthy lifestyle may be reached by carefully designed advertising.

**Keywords:** Attitude to the Brand, Obesity, Advertising
References

From Brand Experience to Happiness: Exploring the Impacts on Brand Loyalty and Price Premium

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Purpose of the paper
Since the advent of the 21st Century, the overemphasis on the utilitarian aspects of products has shifted the interest to the hedonic facets of consumption (Pine & Gilmore, 2011). Experience marketing presents a new approach to address this shift and to achieve long and lasting competitive advantages (Gentile, Spiller & Noci, 2007) and loyalty (Smilansky, 2009). Despite the increasing number and quality of articles addressing brand experience, this research area remains underdeveloped and not as well-established as other marketing constructs, such as consumer attitudes, consumer satisfaction and brand equity (Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2013).

More recently, happiness has received attention from marketers, and studies examining happiness in consumer research have also begun to appear (Schmitt, Brakus & Zarantonello, 2015; Bhattacharjee & Mogilner, 2014; Schmitt, 2012; Bettingen & Luedicke, 2009). Further, in a world where social concerns are garnering more insistence, it is argued that brands should contribute to consumers’ happiness through experiences (Schmitt, Brakus & Zarantonello, 2014).

The main aim of this study is to model the relationship between brand experience dimensions (sensory, emotional, relational and cognitive) on the one hand and happiness on the other hand through the three orientations to happiness (pleasure, meaning, and engagement) (Peterson, Park & Seligman, 2005), and to examine the influence of happiness on brand loyalty and price premium. Therefore, the current research represents a meeting point between brand experience and happiness—two unique areas in marketing and psychology that are being afforded more importance nowadays (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2012; Carter & Gilovich, 2010; Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009; Peterson, Park & Seligman, 2005). Figure 1 displays the conceptual framework and the suggested hypotheses of the study.
It is argued that when consumers are exposed to brand-related stimuli, different scores are registered on the various dimensions of brand experience. In addition, it is proposed that every dimension will lead to more consumer happiness through three different routes or orientations (Peterson, Park & Seligman, 2005). While the first route implies indulging the self in the maximum amount of pleasures, the second route considers that happiness stems from cultivating a higher meaning and commitment to socially shared goals and values. The third route, engagement or flow, refers to the absorptive and joyful experience which becomes worth doing for its own sake to achieve a positive mental state, or happiness. (Csikszentmihalyi, 1999). Finally, the importance of making customers happy lies in not only cultivating happiness as an end-state (Higgins, 1997), but also in the favoured consumer behaviour stemming from such a state as well (Fredrickson, 2001). In other words, it is hypothesised that happy consumer will show higher levels of brand loyalty and will be more ready to pay a price premium.

**Methodology**

Services constitute a rich context for testing the relationships in the model of study due to the operational and interpersonal complexity and the high level of interactionism in services, the core of the concept of experience (Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009; Schmitt, 1999).
Restaurants were chosen as a service domain for this study since food and dining experience are being viewed as a sort of entertainment, and as a way to display status and distinction (Warde & Martens, 2003).

A review of the relevant literature and empirical studies was conducted to develop the questionnaire and measure the constructs of the model. This study adopts the quota sampling design with two control dimensions (age and gender) due to its advantages, such as enabling researcher to generalise the findings (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Respondents were not instructed to recall a dining experience at a specific branded restaurant; rather, they were asked to report on a remembered eating out experience at a restaurant of their choice and respond to the items of the questionnaire based on their visit to this restaurant. With the help of an independent online panel provider in London, survey data were collected from 1086 British consumers based on their restaurant dining experiences in the UK.

Findings
All the values of Cronbach’s Alpha for all the variables were larger than the threshold .80 proving a great reliability except for Engagement 0.78, which is considered acceptable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). After running exploratory factor analysis (EFA) with Oblique rotation, the model was re-specified by deleting the items which cross-loaded with significant loadings greater than 0.40, and 26 items were retained for ten variables. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed and a loading was produced for each variable in the data on every factor without cross-loading (Brown, 2015; Hair et al., 2014). The overall model χ² is 710.015 with 255 degrees of freedom. The GFI=0.95 is deemed to be acceptable for a good model fit (Shevlin & Miles, 1998). With a value of 0.93, AGFI is satisfactory (Hooper, Coughlan & Mullen, 2008). The value of RMSEA=0.041 is well below the stringent cut-off point of 0.07 suggested by Steiger (2007). The value of SRMR in this model is 0.036 which is below the cut-off point of 0.05 indicating a well-fitting model (Hair et al., 2014).

Structural equation modelling was employed to test the hypotheses specifying brand experience dimensions as exogenous construct, and pleasure, meaning, engagement, happiness, brand loyalty and price premium as endogenous constructs. The χ² is 959.598 with 277 degrees of freedom. The indices of the structural model are GFI=0.932, AGFI=0.914, RMSEA=0.048 and SRMR=0.053. All of these indices are within the satisfactory range for good fit. The output of the estimated unstandardised and standardised structural path estimates of the model of study were accepted except for H1(b), H1(c), H2(b) and H4(b) which were not supported by the empirical evidence.

Theoretical implications
This study is the first to validate the positive effect of brand experience dimensions on price
premium. Adding to the growing body of evidence on the importance of brand loyalty, this research also confirms the positive impacts of brand experience on brand loyalty which has been investigated in previous research (Nysveen, Pedersen & Skard, 2013; Lee & Kang, 2012; Iglesias, Singh & Batista-Foguet, 2011; Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2009). The second contribution is related to demonstrating the unique influences of each of brand experience dimensions on two behavioural outcomes, brand loyalty and price premium. The findings illustrated that, among the other dimensions, relational brand experience was the best predictor of brand loyalty and price premium alike. While the second greatest contributor was emotional brand experience, the third and fourth predictors were cognitive brand experience and sensory brand experience respectively. This extends the knowledge on the relative importance of each brand experience dimension.

The third contribution is linked to assessing the relative importance of brand experience dimensions in shaping consumer happiness. Relational brand experience was found to be the key contributor to consumer happiness. On the other hand, happiness was proved to be a better predictor of brand loyalty than of price premium. The fourth theoretical contribution is presented based on the gap addressing the limited evidence in the literature relating pleasure, meaning and engagement to happiness resulting from consumption. The current research is the first empirical study to examine the three orientation model in a consumption context. Further, it demonstrated that consumer happiness was most influenced by happiness through pleasure.

**Practical implications**

The first fundamental practical implication is related to highlighting the individual influences of brand experience dimensions on happiness and two behavioural outcomes. The findings illustrated that relational brand experience was the best predictor of happiness, brand loyalty and price premium alike. This means that marketing managers in restaurants who plan to enhance these two outcomes need to heed the relational elements when designing dining experiences. To achieve this task, they should make the most out of the concepts of brand community especially for the brands having strong images and rich histories (Muniz & O’Guinn, 2001). Themed environments and restaurants appear to be a successful tool in supporting such experiences (Gottdiener, 2006). Considering that emotional brand experience was the second best predictor of happiness, brand loyalty and price premium as well, marketing managers are recommended to pay attention to the emotions embedded in the dining experience and throughout all the touchpoints with their diners. The final managerial implication is related to the inclusion of meaning and engagement which broadens the conventional narrow understanding of happiness as pleasure, and it gives marketing managers the opportunity to map experiential diners according to their orientations.
Limitations
The limitations of this study were pertaining to issues like research design and measurement. First, consumers’ ratings on happy experiences are prone to bias as they depend on their remembered experience, not the profile of experience (Kahneman & Krueger, 2006). They count on the gestalt characteristics of the most intense moments and final moments (Schmitt, 2011). Second, happiness correlates with the relative presence of positive and negative emotions, such as moods (Bettingen & Luedicke, 2009; Diener, 2000). Therefore, the reported happiness might be contaminated with bias. To improve the measurement reliability and to eliminate the measurement bias, it is useful to employ the experience sampling method (ESM) to capture the true levels of happiness. Though this method respondents provide self-reports at random occasions about what they do, feel, and think during their daily activities (Larson & Csikszentmihalyi, 2014).

Originality
This study challenges the existing models and demonstrates the individual effects of brand experience dimensions. The knowledge of these effects will help brand managers in designing experiences that maximise a certain consumer behaviour outcome in line with the adopted marketing strategy.

Furthermore, for the first time in consumption contexts, this paper empirically reveals how different customers achieve happiness through different routes, suggesting departure from the unitary concept of happiness as pleasure to the view maintaining that happiness should be viewed as an outcome of pleasure, meaning and engagement.

Keywords: Brand Experience Dimensions, Happiness, Orientations to Happiness, Brand Loyalty, Price Premium.
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and affective commitment in determining brand loyalty', *Journal of Brand Management*, 18(8), pp. 570-582.


Does shopping with friends enhance the sensory brand experience?

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Purpose:
Customer experience is the focus for the Verhoef et al. (2009) major literature review. They indicate that a major gap in the literature is the lack of research in understanding how the social environment influences the customer experience. Specifically, following Bagozzi (2000), Verhoef et al. (2009) call for future research to examine the way customers act in groups, such as friends and families.

The fundamental research question, which the current paper addresses, is: “Does shopping with friends enhance the sensory brand experience?” The context for the study is a sample of Australian shoppers in a planned shopping centre environment.

More specifically, the study contrasts three types of shoppers: those shopping alone; those shopping with friends; and those shopping with family. Two of those categories are shoppers in a group. To what extent does the sensory brand experience vary across these three types of shoppers? A priori, the study presumes that group shopping is more experiential. Shopping with someone, either a friend or a family member, seems likely to enhance the sensory brand experience. However, empirically, we cannot be sure until the testing is done.

The study builds on a small empirical literature. Two Canadian studies (Borges, et al., 2010; Chebat et al., 2014) closely relate to the current study and explicitly compare three categories of shoppers: shopping alone and two types of companion (friends or family). The Canadian studies find that shopping with friends has a positive influence on mall arousal. Brand is not explicitly discussed in their approach, which clearly has a different purpose to the current paper, which emphasizes brand experience.

The current study only considers the effect of companion shoppers, not the mere presence of other shoppers being similar or not to the shopper ((Kwon et al., 2016). There is some relevance to broader studies of peer-to-peer customer co-creation. It is relevant to consider the motives of consumers who help in the form of customer citizenship behavior. Oyedele and Simpson (2011) show that altruism and enhancement are the strongest motives for helping. Rosenbaum and Massiah (2007) suggest that customers helping other customers often operate in reciprocal mutual exchange. The motives identified by these two studies are amplified and perhaps institutionalized in the more specific context of kinship (families) and friendship, which is where the current project heads.
Methodology/approach
The current study adopts a quantitative approach using a consumer perspective. A survey instrument was developed using factors from the literature that are known to influence consumers’ retail brand attitudes. The personally administered survey included questions about the four major retail-marketing elements: product (merchandise), pricing, atmosphere and service. Further items asked consumers for their perceptions of customer shopping centre attitudes and customer shopping centre satisfaction. Each scale is measured on a five-point Likert scale, anchored at 5 (strongly agree) and 1 (strongly disagree).

The researchers trained survey administrators, who collected responses directly within a major, large, Australian shopping centre (mall). Potential respondents were approached using an intercept method. To ensure a greater diversity of responses, interviews were spread over several weeks and over particular days. The intercept method was successful, with about a 50 percent acceptance rate of approached shoppers agreeing to participate. The final sample size was large, namely 755 shoppers.

The data analysis uses Multi-Group Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) with AMOS software. A structural model is estimated in a way that explains two dependent variables, namely customer shopping centre satisfaction and customer shopping centre brand-attitudes. Following Dabholkar et al. (1996) and Dwivedi and Merrilees (2012), a partial disaggregated method is adopted. That is, two composite variables are created for each construct by randomly selecting indicator items and averaging them. Little et al. (2002) argue that the advantages of such an approach are minimizing measurement error, reducing the prospect of spurious correlations among scale items, and achieving more stable structural co-efficient estimates.

Findings
The SEM application is satisfactory. The structural model has a good fit with the data, with GFI=0.96, AGFI=0.92, CFI=0.99, NFI=0.96, χ²=199, χ²/df=1.58, RMSEA=0.028. The structural estimates are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 shows that for the shopping centre satisfactory brand experience model, “alone” shoppers differ markedly to the two group types. For alone shoppers, the influence of ambiance on satisfaction (at a beta coefficient of 0.46) is by far the lowest of the three shopper categories, while price and service are statistically significant for the alone category only. For those shopping with family or friends, the overwhelming dominant influence on satisfactory brand experience is ambience (atmosphere), with almost no role for price or service. Indeed, although not statistically significant, the negative sign on service for those shopping with friends suggests that they almost despise service.
Table 1 Models of Consumer Shopping Centre Satisfactory Brand Experience and Consumer Shopping Centre Brand Attitudes across Three Shopper Categories
(Standardized Beta coefficients and t-values)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path in Structural Model</th>
<th>Shopping Alone n= 190</th>
<th>Shopping with Family n= 356</th>
<th>Shopping with Friends n= 209</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise $\rightarrow$ Satisfactory Brand Experience</td>
<td>0.17 (1.32)</td>
<td>0.22 (1.67)$^*$</td>
<td>0.15 (0.32)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pricing $\rightarrow$ Satisfactory Brand Experience</td>
<td>0.22 (2.10)$^*$</td>
<td>-0.06 (0.74)</td>
<td>0.01 (0.04)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service $\rightarrow$ Satisfactory Brand Experience</td>
<td>0.19 (1.91)$^*$</td>
<td>-0.10 (0.91)</td>
<td>-0.49 (1.10)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambience $\rightarrow$ Satisfactory Brand Experience</td>
<td>0.46 (3.57)$^{***}$</td>
<td>0.80 (4.58)$^{***}$</td>
<td>1.11 (1.47)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Merchandise $\rightarrow$ Brand Attitudes</td>
<td>0.39 (2.68)$^{***}$</td>
<td>0.20 (2.50)$^*$</td>
<td>0.38 (3.30)$^{***}$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory Brand Experience $\rightarrow$ Brand Attitudes</td>
<td>0.47 (3.27)$^{**}$</td>
<td>0.60 (7.52)$^{***}$</td>
<td>0.51 (4.34)$^{***}$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** denotes significant at 0.01 level
** denotes significant at 0.05 level
* denotes significant at 0.10 level

Further, Table 1 shows for the shopping centre brand attitudes model, both the satisfactory brand experience and the merchandise variables are both statistically significant for all three categories of shoppers. However, the lowest beta influence of satisfactory brand experience on consumer shopping centre brand attitudes applies to those shopping alone, while the highest influence applies to families. For the brand attitude model, the main difference is between those shopping with families and the other two categories.
Theoretical implications
Overall, the main finding is that shopping with family or friends does enhance the brand experience. The primary way that this works is the link between the ambiance/atmosphere of the retail environment and a satisfactory brand experience is much greater for those shopping with either friends or family. Additionally, mainly for those shopping with family, the satisfactory brand experience has a relatively greater weighting in influencing consumer shopping centre brand attitudes. Sensory brand experiences are most relevant for those shopping with family, closely followed by those shopping with friends, with both categories ahead of those shopping alone. The results are a major response to the Bagozzi (2000) and Verhoef et al. (2009) challenge to better understand the impact of shopping in a group context. Another way of interpreting the results is to say that co-shoppers through peer-to-peer (P2P) interaction facilitate shopping experiential value, that is, shopping companions help co-create the shopping experience.

The results build on two related Canadian studies (Borges, et al., 2010; Chebat et al., 2014). However, the current study takes a more branding rather than pure shopping perspective. Another point of difference is that the current, Australian study places more emphasis on the family compared to friends. Interestingly, those shopping with families spend considerably more money compared to those shopping with friends or alone.

Practical implications
Given the different brand experiences across shopping categories, retailers in shopping centres could consider developing different retail strategies depending on the type of customer. Specifically, consumers shopping alone rely more on service and low prices. The standard service greeting used by many retailers is ideally directed to consumers shopping alone. As other authors have noted, consumers shopping with friends or family tend to rely more on each other and less on the retailer. Thus the standard service approach and model is most relevant for consumers shopping alone. A less active and less intrusive approach is necessary for groups. Clearly the latter need some attention and will still require sale closure and payment.

So a dual system of service is called for, with a differential approach for consumers either shopping alone or with companions. Similarly, consumers shopping alone are more price-sensitive, so again a dual system is necessary when implementing pricing tactics, perhaps in conjunction with the differential service strategy.

Conversely, experience means a lot to consumers shopping with companions. For this segment of consumers it is essential to create a congenial shopping atmosphere. The shopping brand ambience must both stimulate (excite) and comfort (reassure and simplify the process) the shopper. The full set of atmosphere tools, including visual merchandising, colours, photographs, models, layout flow and interactive devices, all need to be harnessed and harmonized. Retailers with different brand positioning require a different selection of atmosphere tools. Nonetheless, the objective is to give a high priority to creating an overall, holistic, pleasant and powerful, multi-sensory brand experience that engages with consumers shopping with companions.

Limitations
The study is limited to Australian shoppers. Further testing in other countries may generate alternative results. Already, although different frame apply, the current Australian results contrast with those from two Canadian studies. Why do the Canadian studies emphasize
shopping with friends while the Australian study emphasizes shopping with family? The reasons for the differences could be explored, with further benefit of including other countries in the comparison. Future studies might also include a cultural dimension such as Individualism/Collectivism. Additionally, qualitative studies (such as Lindsey-Mullikin and Munger, 2011) could usefully provide insight into a more detailed and nuanced understanding of why the sensory branding experience is different for those shopping with companions.

**Originality/value**
The original research identifies the differential influences on consumer satisfactory brand experience and consumer brand attitudes across three categories shoppers, those shopping alone, with family or with friends. Overall, the main contribution is to demonstrate that shopping with family or friends does enhance the brand experience.

**Keywords:** group shopping; brand experience; experiential branding, sensory branding

**References**


The impact of generational cohorts on brand authenticity

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Purpose
Academic research highlights the significance of the multi-sensory brand-experience in differentiating, distinguishing and positioning a brand in the human mind as an image. Hultén (2011) suggests that the main purpose of sensorial strategies is to facilitate the multi-sensory brand-experience expressed through means as sensors, sensations, and sensory expressions in relation to the five human senses. We suggest that there is a link between authenticity and sensory branding because expressions of authentic brands include sensory expressions. For example, a study by Asiloli et al. (2014) found authenticity is what both Italian and German consumers would like to find in organic products’ flavor.

Being a socially constructed phenomenon, several scholars have claimed that brand authenticity has the power to legitimize a brand within its context (Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Kates, 2004; Rose & Wood, 2005; Beverland, 2005, 2006; Thompson et al., 2006; Beverland et al., 2010). The purpose of this research is to explore the antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity across generational cohorts. This is an important issue for marketers who aim to develop specific strategies, including sensory marketing for the different cohorts. The main objective of this study is to establish what attributes make the brand authentic for each generational cohort?

Literature Review
Brand authenticity was traditionally tied to an object, but later advancements of academics and practitioners' thinking consider it as a socially constructed shaped by multiple stakeholders’ perceptions (Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Napoli et al., 2014). Therefore, three dimensions, namely objective, subjective and self-referential, reveal the authenticity of a brand (Brown et al., 2003; Postrel, 2003; Leigh et al., 2006; Beverland et al., 2010). In general, brand authenticity increases consumers’ trust and their willingness to pay a price premium (Holt, 2002; Ballantyne et al., 2006; Beverland, 2006; Gustafsson, 2006; Greyser, 2009; Balmer, 2012; Schallen et al., 2014). In acknowledging the interpretative nature of brand authenticity, it is evident that consumers may differ in their evaluation, perceiving the same brand as authentic or inauthentic (Rose & Wood, 2004; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010).
The three dominant generational cohorts (Inglehart, 1972) are considered in this research: Baby Boomers (born 1946-1964), Generation X (born 1965-1981) and Millennials (born 1982-2000). The economic value of brands drives Boomers’ satisfaction, affected by factors such as quality and more objective, pragmatic brand-related characteristics (Littrell et al., 2005; Kumar & Lim, 2008). The GenX cohort is well educated, media and technologically savvy (Eastmann & Liu, 2012; Burnsed & Bickle, 2015). Millennials represent the first high-tech generation, preferring innovative products or services (Norum, 2003; Moore, 2012) and the emotional value of a brand has a stronger effect on satisfaction than economic value (Eastmann & Liu, 2012; Burnsed & Bickle, 2015). Millennials are more affected by brand image and by brand extravagance than previous cohorts (Loroz & Helgenson, 2007).

The following four hypotheses are posited based on the literature:

H1: Sincerity, quality, heritage, originality and reliability are the antecedents of brand authenticity.
H2: Image moderates the relationship between brand authenticity and trust.
H3: Image moderates the relationship between brand authenticity and price premium.
H4: The strength of the relationships postulated in H1 through H3 varies by generational cohort.

These hypotheses are represented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework/model

![Conceptual framework/model](image)

**Methodology**

Apple was the brand selected for this study for three main reasons: (1) the brand has high brand awareness (Interbrand, 2016) allowing both customers and non-customers to be included in the sample. This is important as non-customers might also have a crucial role in the construction of brand meanings, especially when they reject brands considered not authentic, generating brand avoidance through anti-branding communities, and diffusing a
negative doppelganger of the brand image (Holt, 2002; Gustafsson, 2006; Thompson et al., 2006). (2) Apple is a technological brand. This is important as technology usage represents one of the main characteristics differentiating the behaviour of generational cohorts. (3) Apple is a sensory brand. It has an innovative design (visual) and Apple stores allow consumers to use the products on display (touch).

A convenience sample of mobile phone users in almost all regions of Italy were interviewed face-to-face (17 out of 20 regions, exclusion of Trentino Alto Adige, Valle D’Aosta and Marche). The constructs of brand heritage, quality and sincerity were based on the instrument used by Napoli et al., (2014); originality and reliability were based on the instrument used by Bruhn et al. (2012); image, trust and price premium were based on the instrument used by Wiedmann et al. (2011). A seven-point Likert scale was used in all cases.

Exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis (EFA and CFA) was used to confirm the constructs in the study and PLS was used to test the proposed model.

Findings
The survey resulted in a total of 797 usable responses. The sample comprised 172 (21%) Boomers, 165 (21%) GenXers and 460 (58%) Millennials.

Harman’s test indicated that 60% of the total variance in the manifest variables was explained by a single factor, indicating that common method variance is present in the data. EFA revealed a very different factor structure than that postulated and a different path model emerged (Figure 2). All seven of the questions for quality, three of the four questions for reliability, and two of the four questions for sincerity loaded onto a single factor. In subsequent analysis, only the four questions with the highest loadings were used to define this new construct (Quality) so as to avoid redundancy. A second factor comprising the following questions “The brand has a strong connection to an historical period in time, culture and/or specific region” (heritage) and “The brand builds on traditions that began with its founder” (sincerity) defining a new construct (Legacy). These were the only two constructs representing brand authenticity that emerged. Three of the four questions for originality and one of the two questions for brand image loaded onto a third factor which clearly indicated the distinct characteristics of the Image of the brand. The two questions for price premium loaded onto a fourth factor as anticipated (Price). The remaining questions, including the two for trust, showed significant cross-loadings with the four factors.

CFA was performed on these four factors with correction for common method variance using a common latent factor (CLF). The asymptotic distribution method and bootstrapping with 2000 samples were used as the data displayed deviations from normality. A reasonable fit was achieved ($\chi^2$/df=2.83, GFI=0.945, SRMR=0.046, AVE for CLF=0.441). In order to avoid degrees of freedom problems, the factor scores were imputed and PLS with 1000 bootstrap samples was used to model the relationship between these constructs.
These results indicate that there is no support for H1 or H2 while H3 is supported.

To test for differences in the path coefficients by cohort, permutations tests with a 1000 samples and multi-group t-tests with 1000 bootstraps were run.

**Table 1:** Path coefficients by cohort

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Path</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Boomers</th>
<th>GenX</th>
<th>Millennials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quality → Price</td>
<td>0.422</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>0.429</td>
<td>0.404</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legacy → Price</td>
<td>0.029</td>
<td>-0.160</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>-0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Image → Price</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.184</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.135</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction: Image x Quality → Price</td>
<td>0.008</td>
<td>-0.013</td>
<td>0.037</td>
<td>0.007</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction: Image x Legacy → Price</td>
<td>0.112</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td><strong>0.170</strong></td>
<td>0.037</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R squared</td>
<td>0.270</td>
<td>0.261</td>
<td>0.303</td>
<td>0.248</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample size</td>
<td>797</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>460</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The permutation tests indicate that the paths Quality $\rightarrow$ Price and Legacy $\rightarrow$ Price are significantly different between Boomers and Millennials at a 5% level. The interaction term Image x Legacy $\rightarrow$ Price is different between GenXers and Millennials. The multi-group t-tests indicate significant differences between both GenXers and Millennials and Boomers at a 5% level for the path Quality $\rightarrow$ Price. For the path Legacy $\rightarrow$ Price, the difference between Millennials and Boomers is significant at a 5% level and between GenXers and Boomers is significant at a 10% level.

These results provide support for H4.

**Theoretical implications**
This study makes several contributions to the extant literature on brand authenticity and generational cohorts. First, brand authenticity presents a different factor structure than previously suggested by scholars (Bruhn et al., 2012; Napoli et al., 2014). This implies that using questions from previous studies does not necessarily work and may result in substantial common method variance and different factor structures. This implies that brand attributes are context specific and the relationships between them tenuous. Therefore, we would recommend that a qualitative phase be used in future studies *a priori* to establish the relevance of various brand attributes to the research context. Second, there are significant differences between generational cohorts, especially between Boomers generation and the other cohorts. In particular, in contrast with previous studies claiming a higher impact of Quality on Boomers perceptions than on successive generations (Littrell et al., 2005; Kumar & Lim, 2008), our findings suggest that Quality positively affect GenXers and Millennials more than Boomers.

**Practical implications**
In this study and for this brand, the strength of the relationship between quality and price premium for Boomers is significantly lower than for both GenXers and Millennials. Furthermore, there is an interaction between legacy and image on price premium among GenXers, which is not present for Boomers and Millennials. These differences need to take this into account when developing their marketing strategy.

**Limitations**
This study was limited to a single brand in a single country. Further research is required in order to verify and generalize the findings.

**Originality/value**
We investigated authenticity of three different consumer cohorts in Italy and found important differences among the three groups. In addition, there are important theoretical and practical implications from the results.

**Keywords**
Authenticity, Generational cohorts, Italy
References


Enhancing brand equity via social media

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In the academic literature and in the practice, a lot of attention has been paid to the issue of brand equity, as it is a parameter useful for the assessment of marketing and communication activities and a guide for brand managers that indicates the objectives in the long run or the positioning among competitors (Aaker, 1991; Ambler and Roberts, 2008). Many scholars devoted their studies to investigate the relationships existing between different communication tools and the components of consumer-based brand equity (CBBE), like country-of-origin effect, price promotions and advertising (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000; Pappu, Quester and Cooksey, 2005).

Nevertheless, the introduction of social media in the everyday lives of people has further complicated the debate about consumers’ habits and behaviour and the effect of these media on CBBE (Vanden Bergh et al., 2011; Jalilvand and Samieie, 2012; Boateng and Okoe, 2015). In fact, digital media 2.0 gave greater accessibility to information spread by other users about brands, expanding the reach of word-of-mouth and the importance of information concerning brands that are not under direct control of firms (Godes and Mayzlin, 2009; Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold, 2011; Eisend and Küster, 2011).

Moreover, as suggested by Keller (2016), social media users do not represent a single whole but it is possible to target marketing activities at individual level with reference to different aspect (Keller, 2016). Therefore, it is important for marketers to understand how to segment the population of social media users and to customize communications according to “specific goals and desires” of consumers (Keller, 2016, pg. 12). As previous authors claimed, online reviews have different impact on brand equity according to product category and the nature of comments (e.g. product-related or personal taste) and sensorial aspects play a crucial role in the relation between brand experience and brand equity (Kumar, Dash and Purwar, 2013; Ullrich and Brunner, 2015). Due to this, the present work investigates if any sensorial perceptions of consumers can influence differently the relationship between social media communication and CBBE. In particular, the research focuses on the target of fans and followers of beer brands on social media, in order to analyze the effect of both user-generated (UGC) and firm-created contents (FCC) on consumer-based brand equity. The analysis tries
to understand whether the effects of social media brand communication changes according to sensorial perceptions of users.

Structural equation modeling is used to investigate whether UGC and FCC do have an impact on active users of social media on their brand awareness/associations, as well as on their perceived quality and brand loyalty, besides their own relations with overall brand equity.

Furthermore, the multi-group analysis identifies any differences or analogies between Sensorial and Non-Sensorial consumer groups. Fans and followers paying much more attention to sensorial attributes of beer (e.g. taste, aroma and color) seem to belong to the Sensorial group, while those who give much more importance to non-sensorial attributes (e.g. percentage of alcohol; craftsmanship) seem to belong to the Non-sensorial group.

The research can help marketing managers in a twofold way. In fact, the discrimination based upon the attention paid by social media users on sensorial or non-sensorial attributes could represent a segmenting variable that allows developing specific contents and elements promoted on these media.

**Methodology**

As shown in Figure 1, a model consisting of six variables has been developed with the methodology of structural equation modeling (SEM), as this analysis allows investigating any potential relationship between different variables (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

![Figure 1 - Hypothesized model](image)

In particular, the construct of CBBE has been break up in overall brand equity and split into three components: brand awareness/associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000). Social media communication has been represented by both user-generated content (UGC) and firm-created-content (FCC) (Bruhn, Schoenmueller and Schäfer, 2012; Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2015). The items of each variable were identified in previous works and they were formulated on a 7-points Likert scale (Yoo, Donthu and Lee,
In order to verify if different impacts occur in the model according to sensorial perceptions of social media users, a dummy variable was included in the analysis. This allowed develop a multi-group analysis. More specifically, the authors have tested the model on the product category of beer, as this product is tightly related to a multiplicity of sensorial attributes, such as taste, smell and sight. The dummy variable indicates if users prefer sensorial attributes (taste, smell and sight), rather than other non-sensorial ones (e.g. percentage of alcohol, artisanship) (Calvo Porral, Lévy-Mangín and Bourgault, 2013; Calvo Porral and Levy-Mangin, 2015).

In the period between December 2015 and January 2016, 192 completed questionnaires were collected online from fans and followers of beer brands on social media, such as blog, forum, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram. Active consumers of beer compose the sample, as 95.08% have bought at least one beer in the last month, and also active users on social media, as 89.62% read news about beer brands on these channels. The variable that describes the sample’s commitment with the product category of beer shows high level of reliability (0.907).

**Findings**

Statistically significant differences between the two groups of beer lovers have emerged (Sensory and Non-Sensory). In fact, the model presents different impacts of social media communication on CBBE according to the importance given by users to the sensorial perceptions of beer. In particular, the model shows proper level of goodness fit indices like $\chi^2/df = 2.078$, CFI = 0.917 and RMSEA = 0.054.

In details, in each group, the component of perceived quality has an effect on overall brand equity (OBE), although in different ways. In the Sensory Group, beer lovers attribute greater importance to some sensorial attributes of beer, such as taste, color or aroma, as well as there is a positive effect on OBE from the only component of brand loyalty. In the Non-Sensory Group, this relation is not present, while the component of brand awareness/associations is statistically significant with positive effect on OBE.

With regard to the variables of firm-created social media communication (FCC), intra-group differences emerged. Indeed, the Sensory Group shows a positive effect on brand awareness/association and perceived quality, while, in the other group, FCC has a negative impact on perceived quality and brand loyalty.

Finally, in relation to the variable of user-generated social media communication (UGC), both groups show a positive impact on the components of perceived quality and brand loyalty. The statistical significant differences concern the strength of the impact, which is much higher in the Non-Sensorial Group.

**Theoretical implication**

Many scholars have already analysed the role of brand equity as a parameter that assesses the performance of marketing and communication activities but social media has rapidly expanded the number of touchpoint that firms have to deal with, further complicating the assessment of these activities (DiStaso, McCorkindale and Wright, 2011; Milewicz and Saxby, 2013). In particular, previous researches have investigated the effects of social media communication on CBBE, treating the target of social media users as a whole, without
analyzing any difference according to their sensorial perceptions, but users of social media can behave differently (Schivinski and Dabrowski, 2015). A consequence, active users of social media can be further segmented and the present study tries to give some insights in this direction. The objective of the work is to investigate if FCC and UGC on social media have a different effect on consumer-based brand equity according to customers’ sensorial perceptions, as it constitutes the primary component of brand experience (Kumar et al., 2013). Finally, the research combines two out of six of the topics pointed out by Keller (2016) as key in the literature devoted to overall brand equity, namely the value of brands in the digital world and sensory marketing (Keller, 2016).

**Practical implication**

The study shows different results according to the importance given to sensorial perceptions of social media users. These findings bring to identify different targets among social media fans and followers who cannot be treated as a whole. In other words, sensorial perceptions can represent a segmentation variable in marketing and communication targeting.

Due to this, if the aim of firms is to enhance their consumer-based brand equity, they have to concentrate on firm-created social media communication to reach the Sensorial Group, underlying attributes such as aroma, taste or color. Contrariwise, in the case of Non-Sensorial group, FCC could have deleterious effects on perceived quality and brand loyalty.

Shifting the focus on user-generated social media communication, both groups demonstrate positive effects on perceived quality and brand loyalty, even if with greater impact in the case of Non-Sensorial users. In light of these results, it is suggestable for firms to create and effectively stimulate fans and followers’ communities on social media in order to improve their consumer-based brand equity. At the same time, monitoring UGC (e.g. through metrics of data analysis) could help firms in managing their brand equity, especially when addressing to Non-Sensorial customers.

**Limitations**

Some limits affect the present work that can suggest further research developments. First, it would be advisable to analyze the different social media separately, in order to consider the peculiarities of each tool and its effect on CBBE. Furthermore, a comparison between other sectors could be an interesting progress for theoretical and practical implications, replicating the present model and verifying its reliability and validity in a cross-industry scenario. Finally, an evaluation of the effects of social media communication together with traditional tools on CBBE could be also carried out to investigate marketing communication in omnichannel context, as well as possible synergies and conflicts among different touchpoints.

**Originality**

This study enriches the academic debate about customer-based brand equity. It provides some useful insights on future research priorities in branding as said by Keller (2016) putting emphasis on the topics of social media marketing and sensory branding (Keller, 2016).

Moreover, combining these two fields of research, the analysis differentiates the effects of social media brand communication according to sensorial perceptions of users and helps better segmenting the active social media users. Due to this, firms can use the sensorial attitudes as a segmentation variable when managing social media.
KeyWords
Social media communication, consumer-based brand equity, sensory branding, beer, structural equation model
References


Brand Authenticity: the essence of brand value – a case in the food industry

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Purpose of Paper

Authenticity is the essence that human beings instinctively seek (Taylor, 1992). In postmodern markets, especially those identified as ‘brand-dominated’, increasing commercialization and mass standardization often cause the decline of product quality, the spread of fake or artificial offerings (Boyle, 2004), as well as fading traditional culture and the loss of meanings from goods (Arnould and Price, 2000). Consumers struggle to identify what is ‘real’ and they are triggered to seek authentic products and experiences (Brown et al., 2003). Moreover, it is evident that in the experience economy nowadays, consumers are not simply satisfied with availability, promotion and quality, i.e. goods and services alone are insufficient (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). Consumers now seek more personal, engaged and memorable experiences (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). Indeed, the authenticity that a product is endowed with, involves meanings of production and brands, as well as intrinsic personal contemplation (Beverland and Farrelly, 2010). The authentic experiences or objects that project personal values and beliefs are what consumers find a delight to possess (Molleda, 2010). Authenticity, therefore, has been regarded as the essence to a brand to express its core character and belief and build intimate relationships with consumers (Beverland, 2005a). Recently, researchers have investigated the concept of authenticity with an emphasis on brands. Napoli et al. (2014) develop a measurement scale including three critical elements to examine brand authenticity, namely heritage, quality commitment and sincerity. In that case, particular factors connected to time, place, culture, self and others are taken as the basis as consumers evaluate brand authenticity (Napoli et al., 2016).
The shift to a higher awareness of food-related lifestyle has encouraged consumers to desire finer and more genuine food products (Yeoman et al., 2006). Improved technology and communications provide easier access to information and knowledge of food products. Therefore, consumers increasingly require the clarity of authentic food to distinguish those offerings in modernized society (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). In response, businesses not only develop more new products but also incorporate authenticity into the brand’s core value, applying the concept to branding strategies to provide superior products for the finer segmentation (Lego et al., 2002). A great number of studies examined the origin of food products from a bio-chemical perspective (e.g., Camus, 2004; Liao and Ma, 2015). However, very few studies investigated the effects of brand authenticity from consumers’ perspective (Sidali and Hemmerling, 2014). Therefore, research focusing on authenticity in food brands is pointed to be a potential topic for further studies (Assiouras et al., 2015; Lu et al., 2015).

This research furthers the understanding and analyzes the concept of brand authenticity in the food industry from consumers’ perspectives. Specifically, this study examines the effects of brand authenticity on the development of customer-brand relationships, particularly brand attachment and brand trust and investigates the effects of these brand relational constructs on consumers’ behavioural consequences (i.e., brand loyalty and brand advocacy).

Brand authenticity is related to fundamental principles (i.e., integrity, credibility, and symbolism) that build multifaceted perceptions around consumers’ evaluation (Postrel, 2003). With those natures, brand authenticity has a positive effect on consumers’ emotional attachment to a brand (Morhart et al., 2015). An authentic brand with a strong heritage of certain cultural value establishes a sense of legitimacy, creating self-brand connection and consumers’ attachment to the brand (Kates, 2004). Quality commitment is also regarded with higher brand credibility that strengthens the perceived satisfaction and trust of consumers, so that the general brand reputation (i.e., an image of quality, influence, trustworthiness) is regarded positive (Assiouras et al., 2015). Therefore, quality commitment drives consumers to develop a sense of inclination to the brand, further generate brand attachment (Dennis et al., 2016).

An attachment is a tight connection of emotional and cognitive schemes between the brand and an individual that consumers often feel passionate or longing for (Ilicic and Webster, 2014). From a socio-psychological view, individuals often consider a ‘genuine’ object as a symbol which reflects their preferable and authentic self-identification and fulfillment (Park et al., 2006). Additionally, the perceived authenticity is believed to raise the extent of trust. Consumers may evaluate a brand more trustworthy with the commitment an authentic brand.
demonstrates (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003). Moreover, from CEOs perspectives, Eggers et al., (2013) propose the linkage between brand authenticity, brand trust, and SME growth.

Therefore, we have hypothesized:

H1: Brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand attachment.

H2: Brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand trust.

Literature shows that brand attachment which strongly bonds self and brands results in satisfaction, trust, and commitment (Thomson, 2006), and pledges consumers’ faith in brand in the future (Loureiro et al., 2012). The future faith involves loyalty behaviours, positive word-of-mouth, willingness to accept a premium price, as well as brand support (Assiouras et al., 2015; Bhattacharya and Sen, 2003; Fedorikhin et al., 2008; Park et al., 2010). Individuals regard an authentic band more trustworthy and tend to reflect their personal identity to the brand and show higher willingness to commit to taking future actions (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003; Eggers et al., 2013). Trust is considered as one of the most critical elements to drive consumer loyalty-related behaviours and brand advocacy (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001; Fullerton, 2011; Singh and Sirdeshmukh, 2000). Therefore, it can be hypothesized:

H3: Brand attachment (H3a) and brand trust (H3b) has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

H4: Brand attachment (H4a) and brand trust (H4b) has a positive effect on brand advocacy.
Methodology/approach

In this study, three UK-based food brands (TWININGS, Thorntons, and Warburtons) were chosen as selections of authentic brands based on the constructs of brand authenticity proposed by Napoli et al. (2014). The online survey started by asking respondents to select one brand that they are most familiar with. If the answer “None of the above” was selected, the respondent would leave the questionnaire.

All items were taken from the literature and were measured using 7-point likert scale, anchored by 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). Brand authenticity has been conceptualized and operationalized as a second order construct of quality commitment, heritage, and sincerity.

Within 286 collected cases, 50 contained missing data, resulting in 236 usable cases. Within the respondents, female accounted the most respondents (64.8%). The age of the respondents ranged widely from 18 to over 65 years old. Within the three brands provided in the survey, the sampling results show that TWINING was chosen by most of the respondents (47%) whereas Thorntons had the least of 21.6%.

Findings

The hypothesized relationships were tested using a structural equation model estimated in Amos 22 (Byrne, 2013). In the confirmatory measurement model all the items load highly on their corresponding constructs (p < .001). Cronbach’s alpha level for all constructs is above .83, indicating high internal consistency (Nunnally, 1978). Composite Reliability of all constructs exceeds .83 (Bagozzi and Yi, 1988). Average variance extracted (AVE) is above .56 for all variables, confirming construct validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Moreover, there is sufficient discriminant validity as the AVE values for any two constructs exceed the
square of the correlation estimate between them (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). The overall model fit indices ($\chi^2$ (639) = 1340.127, p < .001; RMSEA = 0.068; CFI = .92; TLI = .92; and IFI = .92) are satisfactory (Hair et al., 2010).

The structural model fit statistics indicate a good model fit: $\chi^2$ (651) = 1456.396, p < .001; RMSEA = .073, CFI = .90, IFI = .91, TLI = .90.

The data supports all the hypothesized relationships in our model at p < .001(table 1). The results confirm that brand authenticity has a positive effect on brand attachment and brand trust, and brand attachment and brand trust cause a positive impact on brand loyalty and brand advocacy. Additionally, brand authenticity is confirmed as a second-order construct of quality commitment, heritage, and sincerity.

**Table 1:** Parameter Estimates for the Hypothesized Model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Proposed Relationship</th>
<th>Std. a</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Brand Authenticity $\rightarrow$ Brand Attachment</td>
<td>0.72</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2</td>
<td>Brand Authenticity $\rightarrow$ Trust</td>
<td>0.78</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a</td>
<td>Brand Attachment $\rightarrow$ Brand Loyalty</td>
<td>0.56</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b</td>
<td>Brand Trust $\rightarrow$ Brand Loyalty</td>
<td>0.38</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a</td>
<td>Brand Attachment $\rightarrow$ Brand Advocacy</td>
<td>0.54</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b</td>
<td>Brand Trust $\rightarrow$ Brand Advocacy</td>
<td>0.31</td>
<td>Supported</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Standardized Regression Weights

**Theoretical Implications**

This study opens a new research stream that investigates the concept of brand authenticity and connects it with other aforementioned factors in one composed framework, expanding the field of exploring the effects of brand authenticity. It affirms that brand authenticity is not a detached concept; rather, the concept should be regarded as a medium which possesses the capacity in understanding relevant domains and associating with consumers’ perceptions. Importantly, this research applied Napoli et al. (2014) measurement scale to examine authenticity on consumer-based food brands addresses the gap suggested in the tourism and
hospitality industry that the concept of brand authenticity requires to be explored further in the food industry (Jang et al., 2012; Lu et al., 2015).

Practical Implications

An essential comprehension of brand authenticity is to truly understand the business value, establish a clear brand identity and cause, honor and adhere the belief, and fulfill the promise consistently (Gilmore and Pine, 2007). Therefore, a fundamental managerial implication of this study is to help companies recognize this notion to properly direct the brand. Generally, the implications can be applied to new product development, distribution and channel management, and marketing communications.

Limitations

In this study, the food types of the three chosen brands belong to commodity products. However, different food categories might cause high and low levels of perceptions on brand authenticity due to price ranges and features of the food product (Beverland, 2006). Future research can fill in this gap by investigating the effects of brand authenticity on consumer-brand relationships with brands in different food types (e.g., luxury versus non-luxury food brands).

Originality/Value

Although literature shows that brand authenticity is a central concept for a brand, what precise factors contribute to an authentic brand and how the consequences of brand authenticity impact on consumers’ perception and behaviour are overlooked (Gilmore and Pine, 2007; Minor, 2011). This study enriches the understanding of the concept of brand authenticity and empirically analyses it in the food industry. Specifically, it investigates the effects of brand authenticity on consumers’ relationship with brands (i.e., brand attachment and brand trust) and their behavioural consequences towards the brands (i.e., brand loyalty and brand advocacy).

Keywords Brand authenticity, Brand attachment, Brand trust, Brand advocacy, Brand value
References


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Visual Effects of Logo on the Attentional Filter and Perception

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Purpose

In cluttered market spaces, marketers are challenged to gain the attention of consumers. Logos are one of the main instruments to communicate image, gain attention and differentiation from competition (Henderson & Cote, 1998; MacInnis et al, 1999; Pittard et al., 2007). Moreover, logos may have an important impact on customer commitment, as well on firm performance (Park et al., 2013). Not surprisingly, companies spend a significant amount of time and money creating logos in order to perpetuate an image which they think is congruent with their brand image (Spaeth, 1999). However, humans have limited cognitive capacity and thus, some information will not reach conscious perception (Broadbent, 1958). Due to the limited capacity of cognitive resources, human attention uses a “filter”, in order to allocate attention. (Broadbent, 1958). Broadbent describes this model as the “Filter model of attention”. According to this model, certain features of objects are unconsciously processed at a basic level, including colour, pitch, loudness, and direction. Semantic features (such as meaning), on the other hand, are not processed in this initial stage of processing, but require focused attention at a later stage. Based on these basic features, some stimuli become attended, while other stimuli never receive attention and are unattended. Attended stimuli then receive additional processing at a conscious level. Binocular rivalry and binocular suppression are two ways that can be used to determine the specific visual elements of a display that help it break through the attentional filter and reach consciousness. In a typical binocular rivalry task, one image is presented in one eye (e.g., the left) and completely different image is presented in the other eye (e.g., the right). Since such a binocular rivalry situation is rarely experienced, the human processing system does not quite know what to do.
with the information presented in this situation. Thus, a compromise of sorts is achieved with the image in one eye perceived for a brief time and then the image in the other eye will be perceived for a time. Perception then alternates between the images in the two eyes. The length of time one image is perceived compared with the length of time that another image is perceived provides a measure of perceptual dominance and the visual elements that contribute to such perceptual dominance are subject to scientific study.

The purpose of this project is to understand the effects of different logo design elements (i.e. spatial frequency, contrast sensitivity, and colour) to assess their effectiveness at gaining the attention of consumers. The propensity of elemental changes to break through the attentional filter is expected to provide insight into the decisions made about brand logo design to improve the likelihood that a logo can gain attention in a busy market or communication channel.

**Methodology**

We hypothesize that logo designs with higher spatial frequencies, greater contrast and brighter colours will break from binocular suppression significantly faster than logos designed with lower spatial frequencies and lower contrast. We expect this effect to be amplified within the older adults.

In this experiment, only those participants are included with normal or corrected to normal visual acuity (i.e., 20/30 or better according to their performance on a Snellen eye chart). The methodology employed is similar to what other researchers have done to examine binocular rivalry (Ooi & He, 1999; Parker & Alais, 2007). Each participant performs the task in a dimly lit sound attenuating chamber by viewing stimuli presented on the computer screen through a mirror stereoscope. The mirror stereoscope allows the presentation of a portion of the screen to one eye and another portion of the screen to the other eye. As binocular disparity (i.e., the distance between the left and right eye) varies for each individual, adjustments to the stereoscope will be made on a case by case basis.

In this research, we use a binocular suppression paradigm to assess the brand elements of spatial frequency, contrast sensitivity, and colour influence on attention based on logos selected from the Machado et al. (2015) study on logo design (2015). In this binocular suppression paradigm, a masking stimulus (in this case a pseudo Mondrian image) will be presented in one eye while a second image (target stimulus logo) will gradually appear in the other eye. Perceptually, what this results in is the full perception of the masking stimulus presented immediately in the one eye until the stimulus presented in the other eye is of sufficient contrast to break the dominance of the masking stimulus and be perceived. The amount of time required to identify the location of the target stimulus is our measure of the time required to break through the attentional filter and is expected to vary according to spatial frequency, contrast sensitivity, and colour of the target stimulus logo (going from 0% contrast to 100% contrast over the course of 1 second). After reaching 100% contrast the image remains on the screen for 5000 ms or until the correct key on the 4-button box is pressed by the participant. The computer measures and keeps track of reaction times.

**Findings**

We are currently conducting the experiments and will present our findings at the conference. Specifically, we hypothesize that logo designs with lower spatial frequencies and greater contrast will break from binocular suppression significantly faster than logos designed with
higher spatial frequencies and lower contrast. However, we expect this effect to be less apparent within the older adult group. We expect the difference in the time required for a logo to break from binocular suppression will be even longer among older adults when these designs have either high spatial frequencies or are low in contrast due to the decline in spatial selectivity and contrast sensitivity. We expect to see differences in all age groups for spatial frequency and contrast, but we expect to see the largest differences within the older group. We also hypothesize that brighter colours will also break from binocular suppression significantly faster than duller colours. Again, we expect this effect to be amplified in older adults.

Theoretical Implications
This study examines three factors which can help explain the penetration of the attentional filter which have not been examined for brand logos – contrast, spatial frequency, and colour. One aspect of a stimulus that may influence how easily it is processed or how quickly it might break free from binocular suppression and reach consciousness is the contrast within the stimulus. Spatial frequency is used to describe the density of a pattern, while contrast describes the difference between light and dark in the stimulus. It is possible that contrast and spatial frequency could influence the speed with which a stimulus breaks free from binocular suppression and could differ according to age group. Glass (2007) gave participants a series of tests that ranged from low perceptual processing demand to high perceptual processing demand, and also measured participants’ sensitivity to contrast. Glass found that contrast sensitivity is more highly correlated with tasks that have higher sensory processing demands and this contrast sensitivity is responsible for the age-related variance in these tasks. This is to be expected, as contrast sensitivity decreases as one ages. Furthermore, Previous research on visual attention has revealed that attention can increase the contrast of a visual pattern which increases how long the stimulus presented in one eye is dominant (i.e., is being perceived and is the only stimulus visible during dominance durations --Carrasco, Ling, and Read, 2004; Lu & Dosher, 1998). Endogenous attention may increase the dominance duration of the attended stimulus by increasing its apparent contrast. The role of contrast is significant, as attention is also thought to boost contrast of the stimulus, and increase its chances to become dominant.

Additionally, the ability to perceive spatial frequency (i.e., visual acuity, or the ability to detect edges of lines) declines as people age (Scheiber, Kline, & Fozard, 1992). Owsley and Sloane (1987) used contrast sensitivity and spatial frequency to determine whether or not changes in these factors would impact the perception of objects seen in everyday life (faces, road signs, common objects). Contrast thresholds were measured for visual grating stimuli as well as the everyday life stimuli. Their results suggest that age and middle to low spatial frequencies are the best predictors of thresholds for real-world targets. This indicates that spatial frequency and contrast sensitivity are able to predict how well individuals are able to perceive everyday or real world targets. These studies would suggest that contrast sensitivity and spatial frequency are factors which must be considered when attempting to determine stimulus perceivability.

While spatial frequency and contrast sensitivity are factors that may influence the way an individual processes images such as logos, colour may also play a very important role. Indeed, many studies have shown that colour can evoke emotional and physiological responses (Guilford, 1934; Leichsenring, 2004; Valdez & Mehrabian, 1994;), and that color is a critical component of brand communications cues, particularly of logos (Hynes, 2009; Madden et al, 2000; Schmitt & Pan, 1994). Colour can also be used in advertisements to capture a readers’ attention (Fernandez & Rosen, 2000).
Practical Implications
In a cluttered marketplace where consumers are exposed to virtually endless persuasion attempts, it would be valuable to understand how a brand logo can gain attention and, therefore, cognitive elaboration. Identifying elements which are positively related to attention and elaboration could lead to more effective logo designs for marketers.

Limitations
Given the experimental design of this study, it is important to note that the laboratory environment may not accurately mimic the exposure and processing of brand logo stimuli in the marketplace. However, experimental research does give us powerful insight into causal relationships among the variables studied to gain a better understanding of logo design elements which are more effective. Future research should also conduct testing in other countries to ensure that the observed effects are not cultural artifacts.

Originality/Value
This research employs a unique methodology to deepen our understanding of how marketers can gain attention in a cluttered marketplace. In addition, the research helps by identifying the role of logo spatial frequency, contrast and colour in the effectiveness of gaining attention.

Keywords: Brand Logo; Logo Design; Attention; Perception; Binocular Suppression

References


Determinants of B2B brand image elements and the relationship to price premium in the agricultural sector of South Africa

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Purpose of the paper

Much research on brand equity in business markets has focused on predicting brand loyalty, regarding the brand image elements that make consumers buy a preferred brand. This research is primarily concerned with the determinants of B2B brand image elements and the relationship to price premium in the agricultural sector of South Africa.

Persson (2010) formulated a brand equity model, as presented in Figure 1 below, where brand equity encompasses brand image which creates brand strength, ultimately leading brand value. This study is concerned with which determinants of brand image have an impact on brand strength with particular attention to the effect on price premium in the South African agricultural context.
Brand image

Brand image is determined by the combination of all forms of information of the brand as perceived in the consumer’s memory (Persson, 2010). Persson’s Model identified six components of brand image that could have a relative impact on brand price premiums. These components were identified as: brand familiarity; product solution; service; distribution; relationship and company associations. For the purpose of this study, this model has been adapted and used to test the agricultural community’s view on the importance of brand image dimensions and how these dimensions affect price premium when purchasing physical capital (equipment).
The study is built on six propositions as indicated in the proposed model (fig.2). It is proposed that brand familiarity will have a positive effect on willingness to pay a price premium, as consumers perceive better-known brands to mitigate risk (Broyles et al., 2009).

*Product solutions* are classified by Persson (2010) and Kuhn et al. (2008) as including: a) proven consistency, quality and value of the product, b) assortment and features of the product, c) innovation, d) total solution, e) performance and customisation of the product, f) ease of installation and upgrade capabilities, and g) value-in-use. This is especially relevant in the agricultural sector during their peak seasons, where the window period is small to either plant or harvest, and breakdowns of machinery and equipment due to inferior quality can be extremely costly for the farmer. As a result, agricultural customers are likely to be willing to pay a premium for strong product solutions.
Due to the time and scientifically sensitive nature of the agricultural industry as mentioned above, good service from the brand in terms of product information, purchase advice and after-sales service (in terms of availability of parts for example) is likely to lead to a willingness to pay a premium.

_Distribution associations_ include all aspects of distribution from availability and reliability, to delivery speed, ease of ordering, lead times and payment terms (Han & Sung, 2008). Distribution attributes such as reliability, speed of delivery and ease-of-ordering are therefore likely to influence the willingness to pay a price premium. Furthermore, the ability of the supplier to build not only a professional _relationship_ (service, payment terms, etc.), but also a personal relationship in which the customer experiences trust, must also be considered as an aspect that would play a part in the willingness of consumers to pay a premium on physical capital.

As consumers become more aware of the _associations they hold of a company_ (such as: credibility, social responsibility, history, size, industrial leadership, reputation, experience, networks, financial stability, personality etc.) trust is developed in the consumer’s mind that the supplier will maintain certain quality standards to maintain their reputation (Jai-Beom Kim & Choi, 2003). This may, in turn, lead to consumers being willing to pay a price premium as a result of positive company associations.

**Methodology**

Semi-structured interviews based on judgemental sampling were conducted in this qualitative study across different geographic regions of South Africa. By conducting semi-structured in-depth interviews the author gained a more profound understanding of the consumer behaviour and the determinants that really affect consumer decision-making concerning brand image. Face-to-face interviews were conducted with 17 individual representatives from the agricultural industry across a variety of farming activities (e.g. animal products, field crops, horticulture, timber etc.) who were part of a business entity like a company, close corporation, trust, sole owner or partnership, and was the final decision maker in the acquisition of physical assets.

Respondents were asked open-ended questions about why they were willing to pay a premium price for a specific brand they identified as strong. The same principle and procedure was also followed to establish a weak brand focus. Data was consequently analysed using Atlas.ti.
Findings

In terms of the propositions, each proposed brand image component was mentioned more than 5 times when respondents discussed strong price premium brands. This allows us to conclude that all the proposed brand image components have an influence on creating brand strength and willingness to pay a premium in this agricultural B2B context. The findings did show however, that relative importance of each component does differ in this context.

Based on the frequency of mention (as indicated in table 1 below) of the various different brand image components as well as the sentiment with which these were mentioned (i.e. in relation to a strong or weak brand in the respondent’s perception) it was possible to rank the brand image components in terms of importance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Image dimension</th>
<th>Mentioned in relation to strong price premium brands</th>
<th>Mentioned in relation to weak non-price premium brands</th>
<th>Total Frequency of mention</th>
<th>Example of quotes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency Rank</td>
<td>Frequency Rank</td>
<td>Frequency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Familiarity</td>
<td>19 3</td>
<td>0 4</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>“Associate the colour of the machine with quality” R4 “For me the “X” brand is quality,” &amp; Brand “X” is good quality stuff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product Solution</td>
<td>36 1</td>
<td>25 1</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>“Correct equipment for the application”, “Brand &quot;X&quot; is ahead with GPS Technology” &amp; &quot;They/the brand product are reliable&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service Association</td>
<td>29 2</td>
<td>16 2</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>“Supplier render a full services”, “Quick response time when needed”, “Spare are more available”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distribution</td>
<td>19 3</td>
<td>3 3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>“The big advantage is the they (the brand supplier) are located all over the country”, “Dealership footprint throughout the region”, “Close proximity of the dealership”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relationship</td>
<td>8 4</td>
<td>0 4</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“You build a relationship on all levels”, “Relationship with the workshop”, “If you have a difficult situation, they are willing to come to the farm on the same day”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Company</td>
<td>5 5</td>
<td>3 3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>“The supplier has been in the industry or in this region for long”, “The brand name and what it presents”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>116 47</td>
<td>163</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Frequency of mention for the six brand image dimensions in relation to price premium.

Based on the frequency of mention along with the Atlas.ti generated results around each brand image component, the findings clearly indicate the superior importance of product and service solutions in terms of the influence on price premium when purchasing capital equipment. This was followed by distribution and familiarity with the brand and finally relationship and company elements were considered least important in this case.
Practical Implications

The results have various implications for managers of agricultural equipment brands. Firstly, it is essential for these brands to have a good product as well as service offering. Brand owners must be able to innovate through advancing technologically to ensure that they are competitive in the market that will build on their products’ current points of difference. Service association and the ability to service during critical peak times is key, where the contrary is effectively a deal-breaker. A high level of service association is related to the professional conduct of the representative, his/her knowledge levels that are enhanced through constant training and the ability of the representative to understand and provide solutions to the consumer.

Secondly, building on the service component, brand managers need to ensure that a strong distribution channel is in place to be able to supply the physical equipment as well as parts in a wide geographic area and in a timely fashion. This is particularly important in peak times in the agricultural industry as down time of physical equipment could have dire consequences on the farmer’s yield and profits.

Furthermore, managers of these brands need to ensure that there is sufficient awareness of their brand in the market. Feedback on weak brands clearly indicated that if the brand is not well known, the consumer will not engage with the product solution that the brand offers.

Finally, when brand awareness is created, managers of agricultural equipment brands should ensure that this awareness is accompanied by positive company perceptions in terms of reputation. The service and company perception could be greatly enhanced by an effective sales force that build relationship with the customer by becoming an integral part of his/her agricultural operation in terms of providing value through service, superior product solutions and effective distribution.

Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical point of view this study has provided evidence that Persson’s Model is effective in B2B context as well as B2C for which it was initially developed. The theory in terms of brand image components and their relationship to price premium is equally relevant in both markets. This study has also allowed us to rank the brand image components in order of their importance in terms of willingness to pay a premium. It is recommended that this be empirically tested in a variety of contexts.
Limitations

As with each research project, this study was subject to some limitations. Firstly, the use of non-probability sampling could have an effect on the generaliseability of the findings. Secondly, the relatively small sample of 17 interviews could affect data validity. Finally, the results may represent industry-specific and regional specific factors that are not representative of all B2B sectors within the global agriculture industry.

Originality / Value

Much research on brand equity in business markets has focused on predicting brand loyalty, regarding the brand image elements. This research focused on the price premium element of brand strength rather than loyalty providing some new insight into consumer behaviour around willingness to pay a premium.

This phenomenon was also studied in a context that is often neglected from a brand research point of view - agriculture. The findings provide managers with some useful tools in terms of managing their brands in this context to be able to ensure brand strength (and value) and the ability to charge a premium.

The agricultural sector makes up a large portion of the South African economy (as is the case in many countries) and there is a real opportunity for business to add value here. This research has shown that farmers are as brand conscious as any other consumer – however, not for conspicuous reasons, but rather for economic reasons and risk mitigation. Managing brands in this industry effectively will lead to better value (and more successful yield) for farmers and in turn, higher profits for business.

Keywords: B2B, Brand image dimensions, Consumer behaviour, Price Premium.
References


A proposal of New Rating Method Applying Extended Fuzzy Logic for the Study of Consumer Behavior

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Purpose of paper
This paper proposes a new rating method for investigating Consumer Behavior, especially for the consumer survey about branded products. The new method, named “Fuzzy-set Concurrent rating method” (FCR-method), proposed by Oda(1993,1995), was developed by applying extended fuzzy logic.

The FCR-method uses two mono-polar scales for one question. From the result of rating, special index value is derived and is expected to present the hidden psychological feelings of the subject, which is never measured by traditional rating method.

By conducting the small test survey in Sweden, using the FCR-method, this study examines the usefulness of the integrated value $I$ and the contradiction- irrelevance index $C$ for analyzing the data obtained.

The main purpose of this study is to know whether the FCR-method works as expected. The sub purposes are to answer the following questions:
(A) Does the instructions appropriate for the subjects in Sweden?
(B) Is it possible to uncover the hidden feelings of the subjects?
(C) How to treat the values $I$ and $C$?
Methodology/approach

FCR-method

Traditional bi-polar rating scale has been used for the questionnaire. One of the defects of the method is the “central tendency”, which means the responses are tend to concentrate to the central part of the scale. In order to improve the tendency, Oda (1993,1995) proposed the FCR-method. The method uses two mono-polar scales for one question as shown in Fig.1.

![Fig.1 Scales of the FCR-method](image)

One scale is for positive item, and the other is for negative. The items are the paired words added at the both terminals of the traditional bi-polar scale. The examples of the words “Positive-Negative” are “Yes-No”, “Good-Bad”, “Beautiful-Ugly”, etc.

Integrated value and Contradiction-irrelevance index

The FCR-method is based on the extended fuzzy logic named “Hyper Logic Space (HLS) model”, proposed by Oda(1998), Deng et.al(2001). As illustrated in Fig.2, The HLS treats the Truthfulness dimension \( T \) and the Falseness dimension \( F \) independently. For applying the paired responses \( (p,n) \) of the FCR method to the HLS, \( (t,f) = (p,n) \) is assumed.

The area \( \{t+f>1\} \) is the “Contradiction Area”, while \( \{t+f<1\} \) is the “Irrelevance Area”.

The Intuitionistic Fuzzy set (ISF) model proposed by K. Atanassov(1999) resembles to the HLS, but the IFS does not treat the contradiction area by definition.
From the response \((p,n)\), the integrated value \(I\) and the contradiction-irrelevance index \(C\) are derived. The value \(I\) is expected to be a better alternative of the rated value by traditional rating scale.

For calculating \(I\), various algorithms have been developed.

Followings are the basic algorithms. Oda(1995, 2002)

- Simple Scoring method: \(I_1 = p/(p+n)\) If \(p+n=0\), \(I_1\) is defined to 0.5,
- Reverse Item Averaging method: \(I_2 = (p+1-n)/2\)
- Inverse Scoring method: \(I_3 = (1-n)/(2-p-n)\) If \(p+n=2\), \(I_3\) is defined to 0.5.

They can be defined by the HLS. (See Fig.3)
Recently, $I_4$ algorithm (Combined Scoring method 1) is recommended. $I_4$ is defined as follows: Oda (2013)

$$I_4 = \begin{cases} 
0.5 & \text{if } p+n=0,2 \\
\frac{p}{p+n} & \text{if } 0 < p+n \leq 1 \\
\frac{1-n}{2-p-n} & \text{if } 1 < p+n < 2 
\end{cases}$$

Hereafter, $I_4$ is written as $I$.

For calculating $C$, $C_3=p+n-1$ is recommended.

$C_3$ ranges from -$1$ to $1$. $C_3=-1$ means perfectly irrelevant, while $C_3=1$ means perfectly contradicted. Hereafter, $C_3$ is simply noted as $C$.

**Instruction**

The FCR-method requires instruction so that subjects can respond on both scales independently. Usually, the instruction includes example or exercise.

**Questionnaire**

Shirai (2006a) described that the reasons why consumers purchase branded products are that there are expectations and confidence to the product that the advantage of it balances with the
expense. She classified five advantages (Category of Benefit), and introduced 21 items refer
to the 5 advantages. (Each advantage has 2 to 7 component items.)

We adopted 10 from the 21 items. (Table 1). Each question has paired scales of 73 mm long.
The labels are “Yes” and “No”.

Table 1 Questions and its category of benefit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category of Benefit</th>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Guarantee of quality</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Quality and/or performance are good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>Many people have the product. Therefore, it is reliable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-expression</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>I can relate the product to my identity and my self-image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>My own esteem and value is raised more when I use the branded product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Self-satisfaction</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>My self-satisfaction increases when I use or own the branded product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6</td>
<td>I feel relaxed when I use or own the branded product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social satisfaction</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>I feel conscious of my superiority when I use or own the branded product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>8</td>
<td>I feel sophisticated and classy when I use the branded product.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Differentiation</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>I feel that the branded product has a good design or a good style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>10</td>
<td>The characteristics of the brand itself are easy to understand.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Subjects
76 students of Linnaeus University were asked to reply this special questionnaire. 67 subjects’ data were analyzed after 9 subjects are excluded.
Graduate school students: 15 Males and 16 Females.
Undergraduate school students: 19 Males and 17 Females.

Findings
Basic observation of Y/N pair responses.
Table 2 shows the correlation coefficient value \( r \) of the responses between \( p \) and \( n \) for the same question. If a subject behaves according to the classic logic or usual (not extended) fuzzy logic, the value of \( r \) should be -1.

Excepting Q1, the values are smaller than zero.
Figure 4.1 and 4.2 are the scatter graphs of the responses. Though subjects are not familiar to think that the “degree of Yes” and the “degree of No” can be independent, most subjects respond as instructed.
Table 2  Correlation coefficients between \( p \) and \( n \)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Q1</th>
<th>Q2</th>
<th>Q3</th>
<th>Q4</th>
<th>Q5</th>
<th>Q6</th>
<th>Q7</th>
<th>Q8</th>
<th>Q9</th>
<th>Q10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( r )</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>-0.48</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>-0.35</td>
<td>-0.42</td>
<td>-0.50</td>
<td>-0.49</td>
<td>-0.25</td>
<td>-0.27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

r-test  * p=0.05, ** p=0.01

Fig. 4.1 Scatter graph for Q1  Fig. 4.2 Scatter graph for Q2

Media affected to purchase a branded product

As shown in Table 3, ‘online media’ and the ‘references or friends’ are strongly affecting.

Table 3  Media affected to purchase a branded product

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Print</th>
<th>Audio</th>
<th>TV</th>
<th>Online_Media</th>
<th>Social_Media</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>33%</td>
<td>66%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Ratings for each question

Here, the integrated value \( I \) is treated to be the alternative of the traditional rating value.

Summary of integrated values
As seen in Table 4, many subjects are agreeing the questions.
Table 4  Summary of I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Q1_I</th>
<th>Q2_I</th>
<th>Q3_I</th>
<th>Q4_I</th>
<th>Q5_I</th>
<th>Q6_I</th>
<th>Q7_I</th>
<th>Q8_I</th>
<th>Q9_I</th>
<th>Q10_I</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>0.52</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.59</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>0.49</td>
<td>0.67</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.19</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.18</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.22</td>
<td>0.21</td>
<td>0.16</td>
<td>0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceed 0.5</td>
<td>100%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>72%</td>
<td>66%</td>
<td>84%</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>76%</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>85%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary of contradiction index value C (Table 5)

C<0 means the “irrelevance” or “little interest”, while C>0 means “contradicting” or “highly interesting”. C=0 means no contradiction.

The average of Q6_C and Q7_C are showing the relatively little interest.

Table 5  Summary of C

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Q1_C</th>
<th>Q2_C</th>
<th>Q3_C</th>
<th>Q4_C</th>
<th>Q5_C</th>
<th>Q6_C</th>
<th>Q7_C</th>
<th>Q8_C</th>
<th>Q9_C</th>
<th>Q10_C</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average</td>
<td>0.06</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>0.01</td>
<td>-0.03</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
<td>-0.10</td>
<td>-0.06</td>
<td>0.03</td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>0.24</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.33</td>
<td>0.29</td>
<td>0.28</td>
<td>0.27</td>
<td>0.26</td>
<td>0.28</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Difference by gender

The observed difference of attitude to the branded products by gender may reflect the difference of interesting products by gender. Table 6 shows that Female subjects are interested in Beauty Products, while Male subjects are interested in Cars, as generally supposed.

Table 6 The Relation of Gender and Products

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Beauty Product</th>
<th>Fashion Product</th>
<th>Car</th>
<th>Electronic Product</th>
<th>Sports Equipment</th>
<th>Other Product</th>
<th>(Not Specified)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Fig.5 shows that the average values of I are almost the same by gender. (Statistically, 2 of 10 items are significantly different by gender.)
The 2-way ANOVA shows the significance of Q1_I (Gender F=8.8053, Pr(>F)=0.004499**, and Q9_I (Product F=2.8196, Pr(>F)=0.01424*).

Fig.6 is showing the average of C.

About Q3_C, Q4_C, Q5_C, Q6_C, Q7_C and Q9_C, the 2-way ANOVA confirms the differences by observation.

Here, about the self-expression (Q3&Q4) and the self-satisfaction (Q5&Q6), female subjects seemed to have higher contradictions than male. Female seemed to be highly conscious of these psychological feelings about branded products.
Proceedings of the 12th Global Brand Conference of the Academy of Marketing, School of Business and Economic, Linnaeus University, Kalmar, 26th-28th, April, 2017

Theoretical implications

This is the first application of the FCR-method to the research of brand marketing. The method is expected to uncover the hidden psychology feelings to the ambiguous object. Without using the index, researcher will never aware that the Female subjects are conscious to the self-expression (Q3&Q4) and the self-satisfaction (Q5&Q6). On the other hand, the Integrated value $I$ does not show the clear differences by gender.

Practical implications

This is the second practical usage of the FCR-method in Europa, and the first in north Europa. The Asian (Japanese and Chinese) and Spanish people have been tested. In the previous cases, a few subjects complained the difficulty of replying, but most of them replied as instructed. The subjects of this time, conducted in Sweden, also showed the same result, i.e. 88% of the whole subjects were obeyed the instruction faithfully. It means that the FCR-method is getting the universal applicability. And, the research result using the index $C$ is showing the effective usage of the method.

Limitations

Since this investigation is the first trial, the questionnaire is needed to be simple and small. So, the items are extracted from a Japanese scholar’s contribution about brand marketing. The number of subjects may not be sufficient. So, we are conducting the same survey to the Japanese university students.

As the index $C$ is very new for marketing research, the treating method of the index value has not been developed enough. There can be better treating of the index for actual brand marketing. So, the FCR-method need to be tested to various objects by many researchers, and expected some new data processing techniques are proposed for utilizing the indexes more.

Originality

The FCR-method is the purely original tool developed by one of the authors. This study is the first application of the method to the area of brand marketing.

Key Words
Rating Scale, FCR-method, Fuzzy-Logic
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The Role of Brand Authenticity in the Development of Brand Trust in South Africa

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Purpose
South Africa is a developing country and has progressed immensely in its years of democracy. In spite of this, efforts to improve the lives of South Africans are still coming up against massive obstructions such as poor legislation and policy choices, inefficient and corrupt governance, and malfunctioning systems that all contribute to increasing feelings of pessimism and the general erosion of trust. This context makes South Africa an interesting place to conduct research on authenticity and trust. The purpose of the study is to investigate the role of brand authenticity in the development of brand trust in South Africa. In addition, the aim is to investigate whether perceptions of warmth and competence mediate the relationship between authenticity and trust. Throughout the literature on brand authenticity, warmth and competence, and brand trust, there is a golden thread in the repetition of these two dimensions of warmth and competence (also referred to as intent and ability).

The objectives are:
1. To review the literature on brand authenticity, warmth and competence, and brand trust.
2. To develop a deep understanding of the dimensions brand authenticity.
3. To develop an understanding of the attributes of warm and competent brands.

Numerous authors have pointed out that the meaning of authenticity is dependent on the context within which it is applied, and the subject that is being evaluated (Arnould & Price, 2000; Grayson, 2002; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Leigh et al., 2006; Wang, 1999). Authenticity is repeatedly described as that which is genuine, real and true (Arnould & Price, 2000; Beverland & Farrelly, 2010; Grayson & Martinec, 2004; Kennick, 1985; Reisinger & Steiner, 2006). Brand authenticity has both affective and functional attributes (Beverland, 2005). In the literature, brand authenticity is synonymous with affective attributes such as “sincerity” (Beverland, 2005; Fine, 2003; Napolí et al., 2014; Pace, 2015), “integrity” (Morhart et al., 2015) and “transparency” (Molleda & Jain, 2013; Shen & Kim, 2012). It is also synonymous with functional attributes such as “credibility” (Morhart et al., 2015), “continuity” and “consistency” (Bruhn et al., 2012; Eggers et al., 2013; Morhart et al., 2015; Schallehn et al., 2014; Shen & Kim, 2012), and “reliability” (Bruhn et al., 2012).
The theory on warmth and competence in brands is rooted in the field of social psychology. Specifically, in a model that has been repeatedly tested and validated over the past decade, known as the Stereotype Content Model (SCM) (Asbrock, 2010; Asbrock, Nieuwoudt, Duckitt, & Sibley, 2011; Caprariello, Cuddy, & Fiske, 2009; Cuddy et al., 2007, 2008; Cuddy et al., 2009; Fiske et al., 2007; Fiske et al., 2002; Judd et al., 2005). The SCM model states that people form social perceptions of others individuals and groups based on the evaluation of two dimensions: warmth and competence (Cuddy et al., 2007, 2008; Fiske et al., 2002). Simply put, warmth is based on whether one perceives another to have good intentions, and competence is based on whether one perceives another to have the ability to carry out those intentions (Kervyn et al., 2012). According to Cuddy et al., (2008), warmth traits include good-natured, trustworthy, tolerant, friendly and sincere; whilst competence traits include capable, skilful, intelligent and confident.

The general consensus is that brand trust is the belief that an organisation can accomplish their objectives, as they are both competent and have sound intentions Greenberg (2014). According to Delgado-Ballester (2004), brand reliability is dependent on whether the consumer believes that the brand can fulfil its promise towards them, and brand intentions are dependent on whether the consumer believes the brand would act in their best interests. Brand trust is derived from both cognitive and emotional perspectives upon which the consumer will make judgements about whether a brand is trustworthy (Delgado-Ballester, 2004). (p. 81). A consumer will naturally turn to a trusted brand when they feel uncertain about a possible purchase (Delgado-Ballester & Luis Munuera-Alemán, 2001). Trust is then most relevant in times of great uncertainty and higher risk (Doney & Cannon, 1997; Zehir, Şahin, Kitapçı, & Özşahin, 2011). As a result of the literature review we posit two hypotheses:

\[ H_1: \] Perceived warmth mediates the relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust.

\[ H_2: \] Perceived competence mediates the relationship between brand authenticity and brand trust.

The conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1 depicts the relationships that will be investigated.

**Methodology**

Airline brands flying domestically within South Africa were selected for this study. There are seven airlines flying within South African borders: British Airways; Kulula; Mango; Safair; South African Airways; Blue Crane; and CemAir. Many of these brands are well known to consumers and most fly to the main destinations. A convenience sample of passengers was asked to complete questionnaires at two major airports in the Johannesburg area, OR Tambo and Lanseria. The construct brand authenticity was based on the instruments used by Bruhn et al. (2012) and Mohart et al. (2015); perceived warmth and competence were based on scales used by Aaker et al. (2010) and Kervyn et al. (2012); and brand trust was based on the scale used by Delgado-Ballester (2004). A 10-point numeric rating scale was used for all questions. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was used to confirm the constructs in the study and PLS was used to test the proposed model.
Findings

The survey resulted in 355 useable responses. A brief summary of demographic details of the sample is presented in Table 1.

An EFA on the data revealed a factor structure different from that postulated. Genuine, originality and ethical emerged as the dimensions of brand authenticity and brand trust turned out to be unidimensional. This is illustrated in Table 2.

These factors display convergent validity (AVE greater than 0.5 and factor loadings greater than 0.6) as well as internal reliability (CR greater than 0.8).

The path model (refer Figure 1) was revised to accommodate the changed factor structure. The resulting PLS model failed to achieve discriminant validity because the AVEs of some constructs were less than the squared correlations between that construct and other constructs as illustrated in table 3.
### Table 1: Sample Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Education</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Degree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>No degree</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Indian/Asian</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colored</td>
<td>6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other/ ND</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25 or younger</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-35</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>26%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 or older</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ND = not disclosed

### Table 2: Results of EFA

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Genuine</td>
<td>0.919</td>
<td>0.619</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>0.752</td>
<td>0.719</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>0.836</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.766</td>
<td>0.739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity3</td>
<td>0.834</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originality</td>
<td>0.883</td>
<td>0.893</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.779</td>
<td>0.840</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethical</td>
<td>0.893</td>
<td>0.678</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuity</td>
<td>0.740</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.752</td>
<td>0.779</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integrity2</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>0.890</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Competence</td>
<td>0.884</td>
<td>0.605</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC1</td>
<td>0.875</td>
<td>0.728</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC2</td>
<td>0.678</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC3</td>
<td>0.728</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC4</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PC5</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Perceived Warmth</td>
<td>0.897</td>
<td>0.635</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW1</td>
<td>0.818</td>
<td>0.739</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW2</td>
<td>0.840</td>
<td>0.840</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW3</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td>0.759</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW4</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PW5</td>
<td>0.782</td>
<td>0.782</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand Trust</td>
<td>0.890</td>
<td>0.574</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intentions</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td>0.748</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When perceived warmth and perceived competence were excluded from the model in an attempt to replicate the Schallehn et al., (2014) model, discriminant validity was again not achieved because of the high correlation between Genuine and Brand Trust. This lack of discriminant validity implies that there is sufficient similarity between the constructs to render them indistinguishable in terms of a causal model. This is clearly illustrated in the PLS confirmatory factor analysis presented in Figure 2.

**Theoretical implications**

The findings of this research indicate that the various constructs representing the potential antecedents and consequences are very similar and not necessarily distinct. Future research in this domain should take cognizance of these results as such similarity could result in significant common method variance and/or the lack of discriminant validity when estimating causal path models. In particular, brand authenticity should be measured directly rather than as a second order construct (Schallehn et al, 2014). The various brand constructs and their related manifest variables found in previous studies may not be pertinent to a particular region, industry or specific brand being studied. It is thus recommended that future research take this into consideration by including a qualitative phase prior to the quantitative study as brand constructs tend to be contextual.
Practical implications
Managers that want to develop authentic brands must do so for their specific brand in their specific contexts. The results of previous studies cannot be relied on as many of them confirm that authenticity is dependent on the context within which it is applied. Our study shows that all the brand attributes that contribute to an authentic brand are important and work together. To be authentic, a brand has to be genuine, ethical, perceived as competent and warm, and original. All these brands attributes are seen as being similar to and indistinct from brand trust.

Limitations
The instruments used in this research relied on those used in previous studies and were not specific to the region, the industry or any of the particular brands studied.

Originality/Value
This is the first study of authenticity and brand trust in post apartheid South Africa. The context is unique and gives an insight into the role brand authenticity plays in developing brand trust in a developing country that was subject to institutionalized racism pre 1994.

Key Words
Authenticity, Brand Authenticity, Brand trust, South Africa
References


To donate or not to donate? Investigating the donation intention-behaviour gap in charity celebrity-endorsed campaigns

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Purpose of Paper:
Positive attitudes towards charitable donations are widespread in the UK (Low et al 2007). Notwithstanding this, attitudes to donate are higher than donation behaviour, as approximately half of individuals with pro-charitable donation attitudes do not donate any money to a charity in a month in the UK (Low et al 2007; Dobbs et al 2011). As Dobbs et al (2011) and NCVO/CAF (2012) demonstrate attitudes or intentions are not definite proxies for actual donation behaviour to charities. Scholars have named this disparity as “words-deeds”, “attitude-behaviour” and “intention-behaviour” gap (Smith and McSweeney 2007). Seeking to raise awareness, desperate to generate more funds from general public or to lobby for their causes, co-branding with celebrity endorsers as human brands has now become an established practice for the major charity brands (Littler 2015). Surprisingly, the celebrity focus is neglected in the literature on donation intention-behaviour gap.

The purpose of this paper is to explore the underlying mechanics of the donation intention-behaviour gap in relation to charitable celebrity-endorsed campaigns. It also aims to clarify current conceptualisation of decisions for donating versus not donating to these campaigns. Despite the considerable effort devoted to investigate the reasons for donating to charities (Merchant et al 2010), only a few studies have tackled the possibility that the psychological procedures and underlying reasons for not donating may qualitatively differ from the reasons in favour of donations (Chatzidakis et al 2016). Decisions not to donate to charities may not necessarily coincide with logical opposites of the reasons for donating (Richetin et al 2012). Pro-social behaviour is linked with empathetic concerns and self-transcending values including universalism, highlighting protection of the welfare of the beneficiary group (Verhaert and Van den Poel 2011). These are in contrast with self-prioritising values such as power and achievement evidencing the difference between the underlying motivations for and against donation to charities (Chatzidakis et al 2016). Drawing upon Self-Regulation theory, this paper acknowledges factors aligning to pro-charitable intentions and behaviours.
This paper does not limit the investigation of donation intention-behaviour gap to complementary assumptions; but also explores distinct motivational elements exposing potential barriers for acting upon intentions. Reflecting on Self-Identity theory, the paper also takes into consideration how potential donors formulate and project their self-identities and donation intentions through associating with charities and their celebrity endorsers as brands.

Methodology/Approach:

In attitudinal models of behavioural prediction, underlying cognitions, antecedents and outcomes are commonly investigated in exploratory stages of qualitative research (Chatzidakis et al 2016). 17 semi-structured interviews were conducted in the UK, lasted between 32 and 73 minutes. Data was collected until saturation was reached (Creswell 2007). Choosing snowball sampling, the study sought diversity in participants’ profiles essential for tapping into the intricateness of the donation intention-behavior and comprehension of celebrity endorsers’ roles. Participants included 9 females and 8 males, selected from a variety of ages, incomes, education and ethnicities, ranging from 23 to 64 years of age. The transcripts were content analyzed, using a line-by-line thematic analysis as suggested by Miles and Huberman (1994). Expressions that offered insight into celebrity attributes and concepts informing donation attitude, intention as well as behaviour were sought. Coding involved both theory driven, priori coding approach and open approach, moving from simple to more aggregated categories emerging from considering the relationships among the codes. Constant interaction between data and theory was sought.

Findings:

This paper suggests helps to explain intention-behaviour gap in relation to charitable donation to celebrity endorsed campaigns upon presenting six interrelated factors: (1) self-identification congruence among donors, charities and their celebrity endorsers as brands (2) prioritization of charities and causes; (3) formation of plans: what, where and how to donate; (4) action controlling (5) task self-efficacy and (6) commitment to donation, causes and charities.

Identities are defined as mental representations of how people view themselves in relation to their roles, values, goals, characteristics and traits (Oyserman 2009). Hence, self-identity manifests the extent to which individuals are impacted by societal structure (e.g. educated to be pro-charity). However, we found that identification could also occur when an individual adopts an attitude and behaviour from celebrity endorsers serving as social referents. This extends beyond attributing qualities such as trustworthiness, attractiveness or expertise to celebrities highlighted in prior studies (Um 2013). Our findings also support that self-
identification is not necessarily manifested through strong emotional attachments to celebrities as demonstrated by Loroz and Braig (2015). It can be resulted from actual-self congruency with the celebrity as a human brand, forming satisfying self-defining relationships:

Izabela, 23: “I donated cloths to the charitable cause Dobo Kata [an actress] was endorsing... The decisions she had to make are similar to mine. I come from an emotionally strong family. Her family is also like that. I have lived in some countries like her. She finally decided to move back to Hungary, and this is always a question in my head... If I want to move back or not...”

There is little known to date about prioritization in charitable donations. Findings postulate that individuals prioritize causes and charities to support based on perceived vulnerability of the beneficiary group, sense of relatedness with the cause through imagination as well as perceived recentness, severity and salience of the causes. Another crucial factor is individuals’ past experience with charities and causes such as prior suffering from the cause, volunteered for or being helped by the charity. Convenience, defined as availability and accessibility of the charity, also plays a pivotal part in prioritisation.

Reflecting on psychology literature self-regulation encapsulates three elements. Firstly individuals set standards in light of their thoughts, feeling or those pro-charitable behaviours that they either endorse or mentally represent and self-check (Sniehotta 2009). We find individuals attempt to set standards or personal guidelines to follow regarding the frequency of their donations to charitable campaigns ascribed to particular timeframes. This represents the notion of action controlling. Secondly, an enduring desire to spend effort into reducing potential discrepancies between standards and actual behaviours is entailed in the notion of commitment (Sargeant et al 2006; Merchant et al 2011). Thirdly, sufficient capacity and ability to set plans or standards and monitor them while dealing with the potential obstacles or resisting temptations along the way is captured in the concept of task self-efficacy (Hoffman et al 2012).

This paper introduces separate motivational factors for not donating, representing barriers for aligning donation intentions and behaviours: (1) self-situational barriers (lack of mood, laziness, procrastination, maladaptive response due to a sense of paralysis or being overwhelmed by the number of good charities and causes); (2) reattribution or denial of donation responsibilities; (3) ineffectiveness and inefficiencies of charities (e.g. in distributing funds and networking via the celebrity endorser); (4) scandals of charities and/or
their celebrity endorsers and (5) unethical practices (e.g. harassing, begging and bribing the existing donors to donate more). Findings exude that having faced the discussed barriers some individuals may seek to reprioritise their pro-charitable intentions and eventually exercise alternative donation behaviours (e.g. giving items, donating organs, blood, hair or donating time instead of monetary donations). Besides reattributing the donation responsibility to the government or to the beneficiary group identified in prior studies, we also evidenced denial of donation responsibility. Despite having initial pro-charity intentions, some participants started to question if there is a real need for ordinary citizens’ financial support if a wealthy celebrity is already helping the charity.

Theoretical Implications:

Only a few scholars have moved beyond cognitive intention formulation to provide insight regarding the alignment between intentions and exercised behaviours (Sniehotta et al 2014). Findings suggest that reasons against charitable donation to celebrity-endorsed campaigns consist of both logical opposites of reasons for donating (e.g. complementarity assumption: lack of planning, commitment, task self-efficacy, self-identification congruence and action controlling) as well as separate motivational factors (the five mentioned barriers). Findings are in line with and add to the recent body of literature in psychology highlighting the assumption that the pathways to act and to inaction are distinct rather than only being opposite equivalents (Richetin et al 2012). The paper contributes to the existing literature on decision-making and intention-behaviour gap by elucidating the current conceptualisations of cognitions and barriers of performing the behavior versus not acting.

Practical Implications:

Co-branding with celebrities in campaigns is costly. An increasing number of charities are now recruiting full-time celebrity relations’ managers in the UK (Brockington 2014). Even though celebrity endorsers do not receive a salary for their collaboration with charities (e.g. UNICEF 2016; Oxfam 2016), where relevant, any associated costs including transport or accommodation would be covered for them by some charities (British Red Cross 2016). Awareness of represented six factors and five barriers provide insight for a range of commercial endeavours and charity brand managers relying more than ever on a shrinking pool of private donors, yet depending heavily on celebrity endorsed campaigns in spite of their expense. For instance, building congruency among donors’ self-identity, those of celebrity endorsers and charity brands can boost the perceived reality of what charities and their celebrity endorsers as co-branding partners have to offer. To achieve this requires accurate marketing communications and branding as well as harmonizing charities’ internal regulations with public policies.
Limitations:

The study deployed a qualitative approach with the aim of theoretical contribution. A predominant methodological limitation is generalizability (McGrath 1994). Taking a mixed methods approach, the emergent discussed concepts and their dimensions could be further investigated. This would enable recognizing their potential mediating or moderating roles in respect to their relations with intentions and behaviours. Further studies could employ experimental designs directly manipulating the accessibility of the represented reasons, exploring alternative pathways and differentiating further situational factors resulting in motivated enactment versus inaction. Future studies could examine the role of culture or religion in various socio-cultural settings (Bekkers and Wiepking 2011).

Originality/Value:

Extending the current knowledge on non-complementary assumptions, this paper proposes that the reasons for not donating to celebrity endorsed charity campaigns can differ from the reasons in favour of donations. It contributes to the literature on intention-behaviour gap through presenting an in-depth analysis of its underlying mechanisms, discussing factors both closing the gap and the barriers extending it.

Keywords: Charitable donation, Intention-behaviour gap, Self-regulation, Self-identification, Non complementary assumptions

References:


Purpose of Paper
This paper explores how the sensory attributes of local food brands contribute to brand meaning. It is part of a wider study exploring the tangibility of brand meaning of local food brands. Through the development of a conceptual framework derived from Hirschman’s ‘layers of meaning’ (1980; 1998), research was conducted with consumers living in Dorset, UK. This study has a specific sensory focus, revealing that taste was the most dominant sense, with consumers going to some length to describe their tasting experiences. Taste may operate in a direct sensory capacity (afferent) and connect with other senses and associations in a multi-sensory (efferent) capacity. Consumers accept the notion of sensual incongruence.

Methodology/Approach
According to Hirschman (1980; 1998) tangible attributes can be “seen, touched, heard, tasted or smelled” and “arise directly from the product” (p.9). Hirschman and Holbrook (1982) introduce the terms ‘afferent’ and ‘efferent’. Afferent literally means something that is directed towards a nerve or organ but they used it in parallel with a direct sensory experience such as a product taste test. Efferent means to head away from a nerve or organ and this was paralleled with a consumer response when experiencing multisensory impulses, aligning with their hedonic perspective. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) assert that consumers perceive and encode a perfume’s scent, for example, and can react by generating their own internal images. These may be multisensory experiences such as sounds, tactile sensations and sight. Direct sensory is a term used by Hirschman in 1998 to describe her initial layer of meaning (see figure one) and refers to the tangible product attributes (see figure two).
3. The objective of this study was to explore the direct sensory attributes of local food brands. An interpretivist approach was adopted, enabling respondents to take a holistic view from their brand experiences, media and marketing sources, history and interactions with one another in order to imbue local food brands with meaning (Brown et al., 2003). The sample consisted of 25 households and was centred around three food fairs and six retailers committed to promoting local food brands. Defra’s 2008 segmentation study into local food consumption was used to select households. This suggested that ‘Devotees’ buy local foods frequently and ‘Persisters’ make an effort to buy based on the perceived positive attributes (Defra, 2009). Consumers could be then categorised as Devotees or Persisters using a simple screener and were recruited for the study. Data was gathered through consumer-focused, ethnographic methods including accompanied shopping trips to food fairs and local farm shops, kitchen visits and in-depth interviews (Elliott and Jankel-Elliott, 2003).
All discussions were audio-recorded, transcribed, then analysed thematically using NVivo 10 software. Braun and Clarke (2006) recognise that this thematic coding approach is a distinctive method with an accompanying set of procedures. Themes were identified in a ‘top-down’ fashion and two in particular emerged, relating to the sense of taste and sensual congruity from consumers’ consumption of local food brands.

**Findings**

The findings demonstrate that taste is mentioned the most. Respondents thoroughly engaged with trying to describe the taste as illustrated by Hilary (45-54 years, Devotee) at a food fair, trying to describe the taste of Comins Tea.

\[ H: \text{“….for some reason I can’t find the words to…..distinctive! Authentic!…..No. I’m still not sure there’s enough for me to go ‘oh’.} \]

\[ I: \text{What does it taste like?}\]

\[ H: \text{Powdery. It doesn’t taste powdery- it's not got a powdery texture, but you know there’s a taste of powder. It’s got that taste. Does that make sense?”} \]

Many of the consumer comments focused on just the taste element and respondents went to some lengths with their descriptions. They focused on trying to accurately depict the taste, and adjectives included ‘smoky’, ‘flavoursome’, ‘saucier’, ‘creamy’, ‘earthy’, ‘rich’, ‘zingy’ and ‘blue’. They were single-mindedly trying to concentrate on this one sense and used far more elaborate descriptors than sweet, salty, sour, bitter and umami that are the five separate cellular and biochemical reactions to taste (Krishna, 2012). This suggests a direct sensory, afferent approach albeit using more sophisticated descriptions.

Respondents did not seem influenced or conscious of other senses and associations as exemplified by Carrie (55-64 years Devotee) when discussing Felicity’s Farm Shop’s fishcakes.

\[ Carrie: \text{“Just particularly these? It’s taste - yes they smell fishy but they, it’s the taste they actually taste of fish rather than just synthetic or potato.} \]

\[ Interviewer: okay and do they remind you of anything? \]

\[ Carrie 2: No? [laughs]\]

\[ Samantha: Does it not remind you of Seatown? \]

\[ Carrie 2: No. ..no..[laughs]” \]

Respondents focused on taste, taking trouble to find the right adjectives for their descriptions rather than overtly bringing in the other senses or associations to help out. This contrasts with Krishna (2012) and Spence (2012) who suggest we use several senses to evaluate taste. Taste here is clearly the most important sense - a lead sense. This suggests a fit with a more afferent position (Hirschman and Holbrook, 1982) as respondents were in a direct sensory situation although not a clinical testing environment. Some efferent experiences emerge in terms of intensity and pleasure (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982) evidenced by Hilary when experiencing the Woolsery cheese. This is more than a simple afferent position and it requires further exploration of whether afferent and efferent are at different ends of a spectrum and whether the demarcation between the two is muddier.

There were some clear examples where sensual congruency was present involving several senses in addition to taste. Steve (55-64 years, Devotee) commented on Fudge’s brand of local biscuits:
“It’s got to be the taste. I mean you open the packet and the first thing is the aroma and the second thing is the taste and the texture and then you know you have got something special”

This was not always the case, however, and interesting incongruent examples emerged from consumers’ rich descriptions of local food brands and their engagement with taste. Rebecca (35-44 years, Devotee) compared the appearance to the taste.

“The Black Cow vodka is really rich and it actually tastes creamy. I know that sounds really bizarre because it’s vodka and it’s also transparent. But it tastes really creamy, it's smooth. You know the difference between drinking a blended whisky and drinking a 30-year-old single malt, it's kind of like that. It's got a richness to it. Creamy. It's lovely”

Again taste was emerging as a dominant sense and congruity with other senses did not seem important. Whilst it sounded ‘bizarre’, the Black Cow Vodka’s taste was ‘creamy’ yet the vodka was ‘transparent’. Hilary (45-54 years, Devotee) recognised that Woolserly cheese had a really unattractive appearance yet its taste was described as ‘amazing’. This sensual incongruity was usefully summed up by Jilly (54-65 years, Devotee) who said:

‘...whereas in French supermarkets you've got big things and these smaller things and slightly damaged things. They don't care about perfection and uniformity; they care about flavour. Whereas we seem to value perfection and uniformity and the way things look over variety and taste. I think that's the wrong way round. .......They were saying to you ‘taste it’ because they know that's the way you're going to buy it, as opposed to here where they just put some wax on the skin, and that's a completely different way of valuing things. I don't know where we lost taste and variety over visual qualities. .... All this stuff that turns up in French markets, every day, you've got little blokes who are producing their own little cheeses which frankly look pretty unappetising, but oh my god when you taste them they taste fantastic. We don't seem to be prepared to take that leap’.

This contrasts with many scholars’ findings partly summarised by Stach’s (2015) useful assessment on congruency effects with associated networks, especially as they argue that multisensory compared to unisensory experiences create more intense consumer reactions. Calvert and Pathak (2015) recommend that sensory clashes be avoided as our brains are good at categorising a multi-sensory experience as a single integrated phenomenon. More senses in harmony with one another is greater than the sum of any individual senses and an incongruous multi-sensory experience decreases consumers’ liking for a brand. Yet within this context of local food brands, the taste is so good it over-rides any unattractive or incongruous appearance.

**Theoretical Implications**

This study explores how relevant Hirschman’s framework, developed over thirty-five years ago, is today in understanding brand meaning. There are sensorial theoretical implications that include the notion of a direct sensory or afferent perspective and its relation to an efferent position. Sensual incongruity contributes to brand meaning. Meaning is all about patterns of relationships and the pattern may not be uniform. Creating dis-harmony causes the pattern of
associations to become more distinctive and enriched. Congruency may not be necessary as it’s the pattern of associations, not their consistency, which creates meaning.

**Practical Implications**
Defra (2009, 3) notes the growing demand for local food led by consumers, based on positive attitudes and perceptions. This study supports the importance of local food brands – particularly the sensorial tangible attributes perceived and experienced by consumers - as an area of potential growth delivering benefits to local retailers, producers, and consumers. Understanding ‘taste’ as the dominant sense that may encourage consumers to try and buy local foods supports the value of tasting and sampling products as part of the overall promotion of these brands.

**Limitations**
This study is limited to one geographic location within the UK, using local food brands specific to that area. It has a small sample and is based around understanding their experiences. Some findings and implications may be specific to this study only although arguably some of the theoretical underpinnings and research methods could be relevant to other locations and contexts.

**Originality/Value**
This study explores the direct sensory tangible attributes of local food brands mindful of their interplay with intangible associations from a consumer perspective. It adds to a growing body of brand meaning literature and this is the major contribution of the paper. It’s highly topical and one of very few interpretivist studies into tangible attributes using ethnographic methods.

**Word Count: 1683 words**

**Keywords**
Brand Meaning; Local Food Brands, Sensorial Brand Attributes.

**References**


The Effect of the Consumers Perception in Brand Love

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Purpose:
A prime interest in corporate social responsibility (CSR) is because of its perceived influence in consumer behavior at a time when consumers are demanding more from companies than just products of low prices. In this way, consumers can choose to evaluate the company based on the organization's actions consistent with the community's welfare and support of society (Marin et al., 2009).

On the other hand, brands help to define consumers' lives and play a central role in consumer behavior. Despite the brand love have emerged as an important construct in consumer's relationship with the brand, little is known about how to generate this relationship of love and what are the behavioral consequences (Albert and Merunka, 2013; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). The pioneered conceptual work on love in consumption was the work of Shimp and Madden (1988) with their model of “consumer-object-love” based analogously on Sternberg’s (1986) triangular theory of love. Fournier (1998) also has noted the importance of love in consumers’ long-term relationships with brands. For Carroll and Ahuvia (2006, p. 81) brand love is defined “as the degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has for a particular trade name”. Brand love can be defined as the degree of emotional attachment a satisfied consumer has to a particular brand that results from an established loyalty and positive-word relationship with the brand (Reimann et al., 2012).

This study was carried out in order to answer two research questions: (1) the extent to which consumer perceptions of brands' social responsibility practices influence brand love and thus lead to certain behaviors and (2) the latest measurement scales of the brand love based on interpersonal theory of love is better than that first appeared with the work Ahuvia (1993). From the academic literature review, little has been discussed about the importance of consumer perception of brands' social responsibility practices on brand love. This study aims to verify if the consumer’s perception on the CSR practices of companies enhances brand love and, as such, leads to behavioral loyalty, willingness to pay a higher price for brand and a positive word of mouth. At the same time, we intend to verify which of two scales of brand love fits better in the conceptual model. The comparison of the scales is relevant because one of the scales was one of the first scales to appear in the literature for the measurement of brand love – Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) scale and the other, is a more recently scale - Mohammadian and Karimpou (2014) scale, for the same effect.
Consumers’ perceptions about CSR practices influence the affective responses of those who identify with the company (Bhattacharya and Sen, 2004; Marin and Ruiz, 2007; Pérez et al., 2013). Research on responsible consumption has been developed combining aspects of the theory of reasoned action with personal values of consumers (Ajzen and Fishbein, 1980).

Consumers argue that a company's profile on CSR is important in the selection and purchase of certain brands (Castaldo et al., 2009; Sing et al., 2008). Recent studies have found that consumers’ responses to CSR practices are quite complex and consumers are strongly influenced by reasons related to values (Barone et al., 2007; Pivato et al., 2008; Alcañiz et al., 2010).

Strong relationships with consumers and their favorite brands (Fournier, 1998), may cause consumers to develop a true worship with some brands (Belk and Tumbat, 2005). Emotional constructs as the brand love or the brand attachment (Park et al., 2006) have also influenced consumer behavior, like a positive word of mouth (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006), brand loyalty (Batra et al., 2012) and willingness to pay a premium price. Ahuvia (1993), Albert et al. (2008) showed that an object or a brand should appear to the consumer to induce love.

Ahuvia (1993) inspired by the work of Aron and Aron (1986) defines brand love as the inclusion of others in self, suggesting a conditional integration theory to explain the feeling of love towards an object. The work of Mohammadian and Karimpou (2014) introduced two types of variables in relation to self - the current level of integration in the self and the desired level of integration in self. Thus define the brand love like the feeling that both the current and the desired type of self-integration, is high (Albert et al., 2009). However, both scales have the same theoretical basis.

**Design/Methodology/Approach:**
We chose to follow a quantitative methodology. An online survey of Portuguese consumers was conducted to collect data, between May and June of 2016, to measure all constructs (n = 254). The survey was pass in facebook and by email list and the contacts were asked to pass the questionnaire to their contacts. Were opted for a structured questionnaire. In April 2016, was conducted a pre-test to 104 university students, where it was asked to identify a brand with which they had a strong emotional attachment and which knew its social responsibility practices. Were selected the Nespresso brand because it was the one with a higher number of answers to the question "Which of the brands presented more knows his social responsibility practices?". Nespresso is a well-known brand in the Portuguese market for social responsibility practices, either by fair trade coffee as through the recycling of their capsules.

To measure the brand love, it was used two scales, one from Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) with six items and another from Mohammadian and Karimpour (2014) with five items. The CRS image was measured with six items from Dean (2002), Lichtenstein et al. (2004) and Menon and Kahn (2003). To measured brand loyalty we used the Yoo et al. (2000) scale, to measure the positive word-of-mouth we used the Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) scale and to measure the premium price we used the Netemeyer et al. (2004) scale.
Confirma
tory factor analysis and model estimation were performed using the AMOS 21 software.

**Findings**

Of the 254 respondents, 23.2% have from 19 to 25 years and 14.6% between 26 to 25 years. Mostly are females (75.6%), single (70.9%), with a monthly income between 1001 to 2000 € (45.3%), a household of 2-5 individuals (84.3%) and the secondary level (56.7%). Of the individuals surveyed 53.1% answered that knew what are CSR practices, but only 23.6% said they knew the CSR practices of Nespresso. When asked about the purchase of the brands, 40.9% replied that buy Nespresso.

Data analysis, following the two step approach, is used to validate the measurement model and test the hypotheses proposed with SEM. The evaluation of the psychometric properties of the scales used should be made according to the suggestions of methodology of Bollen (1989). CFA was then used to validate the measurement models consisting of five constructs measured, each model, by 16 observed items. The final results show a good model A and model B fit is represent in table 1. Given the know sensitivity of the statistic to sample size, use of the $\chi^2$ index provides little guidance in influencing the extent to which the model lacks fit. Thus, decisions are made on other indices of fit (Hair et al., 2006).

**Table 1 – CFA for Model A and Model B, constructs’ composite reliability (CR) and average variance extracted (AVE)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Factor Loading</th>
<th>CR</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>Cronbach’s alpha</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>BL_A</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>BL1_A</td>
<td>0.888*</td>
<td>0.941</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td>0.895</td>
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<td>BL2_A</td>
<td>0.878*</td>
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<td>BL3_A</td>
<td>0.813*</td>
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(Boot and Ahuvia, 2006) (Model A)
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<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>BL1_B</th>
<th>BL2_B</th>
<th>BL3_B</th>
<th>CRS2</th>
<th>CRS3</th>
<th>CRS4</th>
<th>CRS6</th>
<th>LOY1</th>
<th>LOY2</th>
<th>LOY3</th>
<th>WOM1</th>
<th>WOM2</th>
<th>WOM3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>BL_B</strong>&lt;sup&gt;1&lt;/sup&gt; (Mohammadian and Karimpour, 2014) (Model B)</td>
<td>BL1_B: This brand is my only choice.</td>
<td>0.787*</td>
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<td>BL2_B: I would buy this brand again even I hear bad things about it</td>
<td>0.768*</td>
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<td>BL3_B: I am prepare to defend this brand in every situation</td>
<td>0.883*</td>
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<td><strong>CSR</strong></td>
<td>CSR2: Nespresso fulfils its social responsibilities</td>
<td>0.872*</td>
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<td>CSR3: Nespresso puts something back into society</td>
<td>0.875*</td>
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<td>CSR4: I think that Nespresso acts with society’s interest in mind</td>
<td>0.850*</td>
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<td>CSR6: Nespresso integrates philanthropic contributions into its business activities</td>
<td>0.801*</td>
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<td><strong>LOY</strong></td>
<td>LOY1: I consider myself to be loyal to Nespresso.</td>
<td>0.780*</td>
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<td>LOY2: Nespresso would be my first choice.</td>
<td>0.777*</td>
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<td>LOY3: I will not buy other brands if Nespresso is available at the store.</td>
<td>0.872*</td>
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<td><strong>WOM</strong></td>
<td>WOM1: I have recommended this brand to lots of people.</td>
<td>0.833*</td>
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<td>WOM2: I ‘talk up’ this brand to my friends.</td>
<td>0.852*</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>WOM3: I try to spread the good-word about this brand.</td>
<td>0.864*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

1. BL_B: Brand Loyalty
2. CSR: Corporate Social Responsibility
3. LOY: Loyalty
4. WOM: Word of Mouth
Proceedings of the 12th Global Brand Conference of the Academy of Marketing, School of Business and Economic, Linnaeus University, Kalmar, 26th-28th, April, 2017

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PP</th>
<th>PP1: The price of Nespresso would have to go up quite a bit before I would switch to another brand of coffee.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PP2</td>
<td>I am willing to pay a higher price for Nespresso brand of (product) than for other brands of coffee.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PP3</td>
<td>I am willing to pay a lot more for Nespresso than other brands of coffee.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model A</th>
<th>$\chi^2_{(101)} = 520,083; p &lt; 0.001$</th>
<th>IFI = 0.859, TLI = 0.831, CFI = 0.858, RMSEA = 0.082</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Model B</td>
<td>$\chi^2_{(102)} = 606,558; p &lt; 0.001$</td>
<td>IFI = 0.821, TLI = 0.788, CFI = 0.820, RMSEA = 0.093</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*p< 0.001

The structural models were constructed to examine the hypothesized relationship amount constructs. The model A fit was very good: $\chi^2_{(100)} = 426,835, p < 0.000$, IFI = 0.884, TLI = 0.860, CFI = 0.883, RMSEA = 0.075. All the hypotheses arise were validated, then the CSR is positively related to brand love ($\gamma_1 = 0.613, p <0.000$), the BL_A has a positive influence on brand loyalty ($\beta_1 = 1.106, p <0.000$), the BL_A has a positive influence on WOM ($\beta_2 = 0.940, p <0.008$), and the BL_A influences the willingness to pay a premium price ($\beta_3 = 1.095, p <0.000$). For the model B, the fit is good too: $\chi^2_{(100)} = 375,328, p < 0.000$, IFI = 0.907, TLI = 0.808, CFI = 0.906, RMSEA = 0.091. For the model B, the CSR has a positive influence on BL_B ($\gamma_1 = 0.772, p <0.000$), the BL_B leads to loyal behavior by consumers ($\beta_1 = 0.806, p <0.000$), the BL_B influences positive word-of-mouth ($\beta_2 = 0.806, p <0.000$) and the BL_B means that consumers are willing to pay a higher price for the brand ($\beta_3 = 0.800, p <0.000$). It appears that the conceptual model that uses the Carroll and Ahuvia scale (2006) has better predictive results, consider the RMSEA indicator.

**Research Limitations/Implications:**
Like all the theoretical work, this also has some limitations. In particular, the use of only two alternative scales to the construct of brand love and only considering the CSR like an antecedent of brand love. Another limitation was the convenience sample who doesn’t allow generalizing the results.

This study provides theoretical contributions were demonstrated that CSR is an important antecedent in the explanation of brand love. In the case of consumers 'emotional relations with the brand, consumers' perception of corporate social responsibility practices leads consumers to improve these emotional relationships. This well according to the growing consumer interest in the CSR (Berens et al., 2005; Becker-Olsen et al., 2006; Öberseder et al., 2014).

On the other hand, continues to verify that the emotional relationship of consumers with brands, translated into brand love, contributes to consumers' very interesting behaviors, such
as loyalty, willingness to pay more for the brand, and the positive word of mouth (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Batra et al., 2012; Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen 2010).

**Practical Implications:**
This study shows that building and maintaining strong consumer brand relationships are important for the business’s success because help companies to understand that consumers connect more to social responsibility practices to be able that consumers feel love for the brand and their behavior have influenced so. Brand managers should focus on the brand relationship dimension brand love, which leads to stronger brand loyalty, more positive word of mouths and willingness to pay a premium price for the brand. All finally lead to higher sales and profits. This insight helps managers to justify expenditures in socially responsibility activities.

**What is original/value of paper:**
It is considered for the first time consumer perception on CSR practices in the creation of brand love. Moreover, it was used two scales for measuring the brand love having the same underlying theoretical basis but with a time lag relevant to see if there are significant differences.

**Keywords:** Brand Love, Consumer Behaviour, Corporate Social Responsibility
References:


Antecedents and outcomes of luxury brand love:

a millennial consumer perspective

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Purpose

Contemporary research on consumers perception of luxury has stressed a shift in consumer needs and preferences from long-term, retained luxury goods to experience goods and services that provide pleasurable instant gratification (Kapferer, 1998; Chandon et al., 2016). In that regard, the concept of modern luxury entails both functional and experiential brand attributes and is characterized as impulsive, emotional or extravagant (Dubois and Paternault, 1995), capturing the dreams of consumers as a medium of self-expression (Chandon et al., 2016). Consumers interact with many luxury products and services in their lives, but very few “fall in love” with a small subset of luxury brands. As Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2004, p.13) note “the experience is the brand” and therefore, anytime consumers interact directly or indirectly with a luxury brand, they will develop a mental image anchored on cognitive (mystery), emotional (intimacy) and sensory (sensuality) brand associations (Cho et al., 2015). Consequently, a positive and strong brand image might impact on brand-consumer relationships by eliciting passionate feelings towards luxury brands.

Brand love is defined as the “degree of passionate emotional attachment a satisfied customer has for a particular trade name” (Caroll and Ahuvia (2006, p. 81). Recent research on brand love has demonstrated that brand love tends to be higher for products, which entail symbolic
and hedonic benefits (Ahuvia, 2005; Whang et al., 2004). Additionally, it has been shown that self-identification (Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Batra et al., 2012, Albert et al., 2009, 2013), sense of community with other brand users (Bergkvist and Bech-Larsen, 2010), perceived quality and anthropomorphism (Rauschnabel and Ahuvia, 2014) are important antecedents of brand love. In another strand of research, it was demonstrated that acceptance of price increases and brand commitment (Albert and Merunka, 2013), brand loyalty, trust, resistance to negative information about brands, positive word-of-mouth (Batra et al., 2012; Albert et al., 2009) and forgiveness of brand failures (Bauer et al., 2009) are significant outcomes of brand love.

Despite the extant research on brand love, three important research gaps remain in relation to (a) which is the role of cognitive, emotional and sensory brand associations in eliciting positive feelings towards luxury brands; (b) which are the most relevant dimensions of luxury brand love among millennials; and (c) which are the outcomes of luxury brand love among millennials. Hence, the purpose of this research is twofold: firstly it intends to investigate which are the antecedents and outcomes of luxury brand love among millennials and secondly it aims to identify the main cultural differences between Nordic and Southern European countries.

**Design / methodology / approach:**

Apple was the brand selected for this pre-test study because it characterizes the modern concept of luxury among millennials by combining luxury functional attributes (price and quality) with luxury experiential attributes (need for sensory and pleasurable gratification). In order to test the hypothesized relationships, a self-administered questionnaire was conducted in both countries among consumers aged between 18 and 24 years old, using a convenience sample of university students. The data collection occurred during October 2016 and resulted in a usable sample of 213 respondents from Sweden and 249 respondents from Portugal. Branding constructs were accessed by validated scales namely brand image (22-item scale from Cho et al., 2015), brand love (25-item scale from Bagozzi et al., 2016), brand loyalty (5-item scale from Quester and Lim, 2003), purchase intention (3-item scale from Juster, 1966; Kumar et al., 2009) and word-of-mouth (4-item scale from Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006). The self-administered questionnaire was designed to test the following hypotheses stated in our conceptual model, using the Structural Equation Modeling:
Findings

In this study, we follow the assumption of Anderson and Gerbing (1982) that the modelling of structural equations must be done through two conceptual distinct models: confirmatory factor analysis and structural model for both countries.

Exploratory Factor Analysis

To evaluate the internal consistency of the mystery (M), intimacy (I), sensuality (S), brand love (BL1 and BL2), purchase intention (PI), brand loyalty (BLOY) and positive WOM (WOM+) measurement scales, we preliminarily conducted an exploratory factor analysis using SPSS 22.0. A principal component analysis clearly suggested the presence of seven correlate components that correspond to the seven constructs of the study (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin = 0.897, total explained variance = 75.4 per cent). Based on Hair et al. (2006) guidelines, the authors eliminated items with salient loadings lower than 0.6.

1 loadings are greater than 0.7 (Hair et al., 2006).

Table 1 – Measurement Models of CFA of Sweden and Portugal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constructs</th>
<th>Nº of Items</th>
<th>Composite Reliability</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>Alpha Cronbach</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL_1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.958</td>
<td>0.974</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL_2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.933</td>
<td>0.966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.903</td>
<td>0.966</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>0.979</td>
<td>0.978</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.906</td>
<td>0.984</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PI</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.964</td>
<td>0.897</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BLOY</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td>0.973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOM+</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0.977</td>
<td>0.968</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Proceedings of the 12th Global Brand Conference of the Academy of Marketing,
School of Business and Economic, Linnaeus University, Kalmar, 26th-28th, April, 2017

Sweden

\( \frac{\chi^2}{df} = 4.24; \text{RMSEA} = 0.124; \text{CFI} = 0.783; \text{TLI} = 0.769; \text{IFI} = 0.784 \)

Portugal

\( \frac{\chi^2}{df} = 3.173; \text{RMSEA} = 0.116; \text{CFI} = 0.794; \text{TLI} = 0.783; \text{IFI} = 0.790 \)

In Sweden all the constructs were validated and the global fit indices are acceptable: \( \frac{\chi^2}{df} \) ratio was lower than 5. All other indicators are below recommended. In Portugal the global fit indices are acceptable: \( \frac{\chi^2}{df} \) ratio was lower than 5 but also all other indicators are below recommended.

Structural Equation Models

After the stabilisation of the model of measurement and the analysis of the quality of the adjustment, we verified whether the hypotheses of research were confirmed or not. In the case of the model proposed, estimation was carried by the method of the maximum likelihood (ML), so that we could meet the objective of developing and testing the hypotheses.

Table 2 - Structural Model Estimated to Sweden and Portugal

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Hypotheses</th>
<th>Path Estimates</th>
<th>p-value</th>
<th>Conclusions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sweden</td>
<td>Portugal</td>
<td>Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H1: M → BL1</td>
<td>0.312</td>
<td>0.316</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2: M → BL2</td>
<td>0.481</td>
<td>0.552</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: I → BL1</td>
<td>0.524</td>
<td>0.489</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4: I → BL2</td>
<td>0.168</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5: S → BL_1</td>
<td>0.171</td>
<td>0.105</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6: S → BL_2</td>
<td>0.098</td>
<td>0.136</td>
<td>0.286</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7: BL1 → PI</td>
<td>1.181</td>
<td>0.023</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8: BL2 → PI</td>
<td>-0.081</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.219</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9: BL1 → BLOY</td>
<td>1.071</td>
<td>0.939</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10: BL2 → BLOY</td>
<td>0.028</td>
<td>-0.062</td>
<td>0.608</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11: BL1 → WOM+</td>
<td>0.940</td>
<td>1.060</td>
<td>0.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12: BL2 → WOM+</td>
<td>0.144</td>
<td>-0.095</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Goodness-of-fit

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Portugal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( \frac{\chi^2}{df} = 3.025; \text{RMSEA} = 0.098; \text{CFI} = 0.867; \text{TLI} = 0.857; \text{IFI} = 0.868 )</td>
<td>( \frac{\chi^2}{df} = 3.051; \text{RMSEA} = 0.084; \text{CFI} = 0.894; \text{TLI} = 0.899; \text{IFI} = 0.898 )</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The estimation of the conceptual model in Sweden and Portugal did not confirm all the hypotheses and showed different results (Table 2). In Sweden, brand love is explained by mystery and intimacy in both dimensions: emotional and relational (brand love 1) and self-identity (brand love 2). On the other hand, sensuality only explains brand love 1. Interestingly, brand love 2 only explains positive word-of-mouth as an outcome of brand love, and it has no impact on brand loyalty and purchase intention. These findings seem to be coherent with the identified brand love dimensions. Indeed, the emotional and relational
aspects might better explain purchase intention and brand loyalty, whereas self-identity aspects might better explain positive word-of-mouth.

In Portugal, mystery and sensuality brand image dimensions explain brand love 1 and brand love 2, whereas intimacy only explains brand love 1. As far as brand love outcomes are concerned, only brand love 1 explains brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth. These findings show that self-identity aspects are not relevant as antecedents of brand love for Portuguese consumers since they seem to be more emotionally driven by brands.

**Multigroup Analysis by Country**

Finally, the authors conducted a comparative analysis between the two countries to check for the potential differences between Portugal and Sweden. Results are shown in the table 3 and the figure 2.

**Table 3 – Multigroup Analysis**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Sweden</th>
<th>Portugal</th>
<th>Model Comparison</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M → BL1</td>
<td>0.324</td>
<td>0.327</td>
<td>7.927***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M → BL2</td>
<td>0.492</td>
<td>0.561</td>
<td>8.370***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I → BL1</td>
<td>0.572</td>
<td>0.491</td>
<td>9.540***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I → BL2</td>
<td>0.179</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>1.154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S → BL1</td>
<td>0.182</td>
<td>0.151</td>
<td>4.678***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S → BL2</td>
<td>0.097</td>
<td>0.149</td>
<td>8.370***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL1 → PI</td>
<td>1.192</td>
<td>0.021</td>
<td>1.102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL2 → PI</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.048</td>
<td>1.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL1 → BLOY</td>
<td>1.101</td>
<td>0.942</td>
<td>8.370***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL2 → BLOY</td>
<td>0.012</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>1.312</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL1 → WOM+</td>
<td>0.942</td>
<td>1.102</td>
<td>8.370***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BL2 → WOM+</td>
<td>0.145</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>1.110</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p < 0.001

For paths showing statistical differences, the authors compared differences based on statistical significance. Findings demonstrate that in Sweden there is no direct effect of sensuality on brand love 2 whereas in Portugal there are no direct effects of intimacy on brand love 2,
brand love 1 on purchase intention and brand love 2 on positive WOM. In both countries, it was found that the effects of brand love 2 are not statistically significant either in the purchase intention or in the brand loyalty. In conclusion, these results are identical to those obtained in the separately estimated structural models.

![Multigroup Analysis (Sweden and Portugal)](image)

**Theoretical implications**

From a theoretical perspective, this study stresses (a) the bidimensionality of luxury brand love among millennials and highlights two dimensions – the emotional and relational dimension and the self-identity dimension (b) the significance of cognitive, emotional and sensory brand associations as antecedents to luxury brand love among millennials; (c) a positive and direct relationship between the two dimensions of luxury brand love and its outcomes, and finally (d) the importance of cultural aspects in relation to antecedents and outcomes of luxury brand love among millennials.

**Managerial implications**

The shift in the needs and preferences for luxury brands implies that brand managers need to create innovative ways of engaging millennial consumers. Hence, it is crucial to infuse mystery, intimacy and sensuality into luxury brand experiences in order to create a strong
brand image and drive brand love among millennials. Moreover, by eliciting passionate feeling towards luxury brands, companies might enhance brand loyalty, purchase intention and positive word-of-mouth.

**Originality / value:**

This study applies, for the first time, two validated scales into a luxury context, namely the brand love (Batra et al., 2016) and brand image (Cho et al., 2015). Moreover, it investigates the antecedents and outcomes of brand love among millennials and compares results between two different cultures, which has not been addressed before.

**Keywords:** luxury brand experiences, brand love, sensory branding, millennials, SEM
References


Have Chinese consumers forgiven Japan? A Nation Brand Personality approach

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Purpose

Animosity has been defined as “remnants of antipathy related to previous or ongoing military, political or economic events” (Klein, Ettenson & Morris, 1998: 90). Chinese animosity towards Japan emerged as a war-animosity due to Japan’s invasion of China from 1931 to 1945. Klein et al. (1998) found that the Chinese perception of Japanese product quality was not affected, but the purchase decision was negatively influenced because of the animosity. In fact, the animosity has been found to be so high that Chinese customers were also unwilling to buy even hybrid products (such as Japanese brands which are made in China) (Cheah, Phau, Kea & Huang, 2016). A 2016 poll found that only 14% of Chinese people had a favorable opinion of Japan (Pew Research Center, 2016).

Previous studies have used measures of war-, economic- and general-animosity to demonstrate the negative reaction by consumers towards offers (i.e., products, tourism, and alike) coming from a country considered the source of such animosity (Funk, Arthurs, Treviño & Joireman, 2010; Nijssen & Douglas, 2004). Therefore, what can Japan do to improve the image of its country brand in China? This paper explores such issues by means of using the nation brand personality construct as an independent variable, the intentions to behave towards a country as dependent variables, and demographics as moderators on that relationship (see Figure 1). Thus, the specific objective of this paper is twofold: First, to identify the country brand personality dimensions as seen by Chinese consumers towards Japan; and second, to determine who among those in China would be more appropriate to target by Japanese entities if these are interested in reconnecting with this market.

Since animosity is an interpersonal construct, it has a positive neutralizing counterpart, namely, forgiveness. The concept of forgiveness has been explored within interpersonal models highlighting its reconciliatory value (Sapolsky & Share, 2004), evolutionary models (McCullough, 2001) and interdependence-based models (Rusbult & Van Lange, 2003). Personality psychologists have also explored forgiveness, suggesting that the experience can be different from person to person, depending on whether someone receives forgiveness or forgiving another (Wahking, 1992; Walker & Doverspike, 2001).
Nation Brand Personality
Countries and destinations try to sell their image to their intended target markets in very similar ways, with overused icons such as beaches, nature, family and couples having fun. These features are not producing a competitive advantage anymore and therefore it is important for countries to differentiate themselves from their competitors (Rojas-Mendez, 2013). A shift from focusing on physical attributes to emotions that appeal to customers is necessary (Hudson & Ritchie, 2009). Brand personality is associated more with the affective component of the brand image (Kneesel, Baloglu & Millar, 2010). The theory in nation brand personality considers countries as having human-like personality traits and these associations with consumers affect their intention to behave and overall attitude (d'Astous & Boujbel, 2007; Rojas-Méndez, Murphy & Papadopoulos, 2013). Nation brand personality is a construct that can be characterized as a set of positive and negative human personality traits that people associate with a country. Nation brand personality can be formed based on previous experience or perceptions as a result of secondary sources, such as that country’s government or society at large (Rojas-Méndez et al., 2013). If the Chinese animosity towards Japan is as true as reported in the literature, then we should find some negative personality traits associated with the brand Japan in China. This would then exert a significant impact upon intention to behave and overall attitudes of Chinese consumers.

From previous studies it is clear that NBP is culture specific, which means that cultural values play a large role in how people from a country describe the brand personality of another nation (d’Astous & Boujbel, 2007; d’Astous & Li, 2009; Rojas-Mendez et al, 2013; Rojas-Mendez & Papadopoulos, 2012). Therefore, when a new country is involved as object or subject in a relationship, it would be necessary to conduct a new study to measure the perceived components and dimensionality of NBP.

Methodology

Sample and data collection: A non-probabilistic, convenience sample was used. A survey was administrated in Shanghai, China, using a snowballing technique, and 509 questionnaires were collected. The entire questionnaire for this study was administrated in Chinese and it consisted of the Chinese views of Japan as a brand.

Research design: The research design is cross-sectional. The questionnaire was composed of three main sections: intention to behave and overall attitude (17 items); country brand personality traits (209 items); and demographics.

Analysis: The unit of analysis is at the individual Chinese respondent level. Principal component analysis (PCA) was conducted as an item reduction technique and to confirm the loading of indicators. Then, Confirmatory Factor Analysis and reliability estimates were determined using Cronbach's alpha. Finally, the moderating effect of gender and age was determined for the relationship between NBP and intention to behave and overall attitude toward Japan.

Findings
To make NBPS specific to Japan in China, the following steps were done. First, the 209 personality traits were summed (after reverse-coding 72 negative personality traits) and each trait was correlated to the total score. This is done by means of the correlation coefficient to check if the traits are related to the potential common core (Churchill, 1979). After two iterations, 62 items were removed.
In the next stage, the remaining 147 variables were subjected to PCA. Using varimax rotation a number of double loadings and loadings below 0.4 were dropped from the analysis. This resulted in a 3-factor solution with 109 items. Values for Bartlett's test (p<0.01) and the KMO coefficient (0.969) indicated that factor analysis was an appropriate analytical procedure for the data (Norusis, 1985).

A non-orthogonal rotation was performed to identify the facets within the three factors. To verify the stability of this solution, separate PCAs were run on four subsamples of subjects: males (n=260), females (n=242), and respondents younger than 35 (n=308) and 35+ (n=183) years of age. After deleting double loadings, all three factors were stable across the subsamples. Final results indicate that 15 items loaded onto factor 1, 10 items loaded onto factor 2 and 7 items loaded onto factor 3 (see Table 1). A confirmatory factor analysis was run to verify the factor solution. Results show the following ratios, which fit the data very well and fall within the accepted boundaries (Kline, 1998), thus supporting the soundness of the dimensional structure for the refined NBP scale for Japan in China: Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) = 0.05, GFI = 0.91, AGFI = 0.89, CFI = 0.95, and RMSEA = 0.04.

Overall, Japan NBP in China is explained by three dimensions: Maturity, Assertiveness and Joviality. Maturity is a recognition of the enterprising character of Japan which receives quite positive scores. Assertiveness is a negative perception of Japan with high scores. Joviality encompasses positive traits but Japan receives low scores. Consumers can harbor animosity toward a country and at the same time believe that the country produces high-quality goods (Amine, 2008).

To test the expected relationship of the NBP as independent variable, four separate path analyses were run, each using one of the three intentions to behave constructs: product purchase (4 items, α = 0.9), travel intentions (5 items, α =0.88), and developing ties (4 items, α = 0.85), and one for the overall attitude toward Japan (4 items, α = 0.9), as dependent variables. Results show a very good explanatory level. The variance explained ranges from 0.39 to 0.51 (see Table 2). These results are consistent with the animosity theory, which posits that consumer animosity influences willingness to buy independently of positive product evaluations (Klein et al, 1998).

**Moderation effects**
1. It was found that gender significantly (p<=0.05) moderated the travel intent. As maturity increased, the intent to travel also increased but this effect was stronger for females than males. This result is consistent with personality theory. For example, when forgiveness is used as a mode of reconciliation, females are more likely to forgive than men (Sapolsky & Share, 2004), perhaps do to the findings that men are more drawn to justice-based actions in response to past, present and future injustices (Kohlberg, 1984). Women on the other hand, show a pattern of attitudes and behaviour that focus on dissolving conflict rather than escalating it. Furthermore, women tend to engage in tend-and-befriend actions more than men (Taylor, Klein, Lewis, Gruenwald, Guring. & Undergraff, 2000). This might be due to female-valued qualities, such as valuing relationships or dispositional qualities such as agreeableness and empathy. Furthermore, forgiveness strongly correlates with personality attributes that are predominantly found in women, such as sensitivity and warmth (Walker & Gorsuch, 2002).
2. Age significantly moderated all 4 behavioral intentions (p<=0.01 except product purchase intention where p<=0.05). Young Chinese (<35) were more likely to develop ties, purchase Japanese products, travel to Japan and have an overall better attitude of Japan than older Chinese (>=35). Similar to our research results, a recent industry research also found that younger Chinese compared to older Chinese, find the Japanese hardworking (Pew Research Center, 2016).

**Theoretical implications:** The Japanese brand from the view of the Chinese has both positive and negative traits, thus confirming its multidimensionality. Countries that focus on highlighting their positive personality dimensions and show improvements towards their negative traits will have a competitive advantage when it comes to tourism, product purchase, developing ties and also in maintaining an overall good impression.

**Practical implications:** Japanese organizations should take these perceptions and build them in their messages delivered to Chinese audiences. Consumer brands from Japan could position themselves as catering to women and younger generation Chinese since they have stronger behavioral intentions. Educational institutions, tourism and other businesses in Japan can also follow suit.

**Limitations:** First, the data was collected only from one major city in China. Data from other parts of China would largely improve the validity of this study. Second, the study was a single cross-sectional study. A longitudinal study could be used to compare the change in attitudes over time.

**Originality/value:** This paper is the first linking animosity with NBP theory. However, this paper does not focus on the traditional identification of the degree of animosity, but rather what can be done by a country if animosity exists towards it in a foreign land.

**Keywords:** Nation (country) brand personality, Animosity, Forgiveness, China, Japan.

**References:**


Figure 1: Theoretical Model

Nation Brand Personality Scale (NBPS) → Intention to Behave & Overall Attitude

Demographic variables
Table 1: Factors and facets of the Japan Brand Personality in China

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Maturity</th>
<th>Assertiveness</th>
<th>Joviality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seriousness</td>
<td>Overbearing</td>
<td>Mean = 3.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitiousness</td>
<td>Controlling</td>
<td>α = 0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 3.24</td>
<td>Mean = 3.58</td>
<td>α = 0.81</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 3.63</td>
<td>Mean = 3.46</td>
<td>Mean = 2.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 3.46</td>
<td>Mean = 0.82</td>
<td>α = 0.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 3.46</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean = 2.79</td>
<td>α = 0.88</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tough</td>
<td>Imperialist</td>
<td>Lively</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ambitious</td>
<td>Obnoxious</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meticulous</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serious</td>
<td>Disciplined</td>
<td>Bossy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active</td>
<td>High-handed</td>
<td>Humorous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stable</td>
<td>Hardworker</td>
<td>Fierce</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adventurous</td>
<td>Dangerous</td>
<td>Exciting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Strict</td>
<td>Achievement-</td>
<td>Selfish</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>oriented</td>
<td>Boring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perservering</td>
<td>Tidy</td>
<td>Vivacious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Narrow-minded</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rigid</td>
<td>Hypocritical</td>
<td>Simple</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2: Regression Analysis—Assessing the Predictive Validity of the Proposed NBP Scale

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intention to behave and overall attitude as dependent variables</th>
<th>Product Purchase Intention</th>
<th>Travel intention</th>
<th>Develop Ties</th>
<th>Overall Attitude</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Independent variables</td>
<td>Standardized coefficients</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maturity</td>
<td>0.31**</td>
<td>0.37**</td>
<td>0.26**</td>
<td>0.22**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assertiveness</td>
<td>-0.20**</td>
<td>-0.27**</td>
<td>-0.20**</td>
<td>-0.39**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joviality</td>
<td>0.22**</td>
<td>0.17*</td>
<td>0.32**</td>
<td>0.23**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Variance explained</td>
<td>0.39</td>
<td>0.47</td>
<td>0.45</td>
<td>0.51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fit indices</td>
<td>RMSEA</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
<td>0.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GFI</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.89</td>
<td>0.89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>AGFI</td>
<td>0.88</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>0.88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>IFI</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CFI</td>
<td>0.95</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>0.95</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Significant at p<=0.05.
** Significant at p<=0.01.
The role of brands in the definition and preservation of ethnic cultural heritage

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Purpose of paper  
Bespoke cultural heritage is important for the distinctive identity of ethnic minority groups within the United Kingdom. Generally it is assumed that this is sustained through family socialisation and the behaviour of peers and the local community. However, given the growth of a consumer society, it could be argued that today brands may also play an important role in the definition and preservation of ethnic cultural heritage (Ashworth et al., 2007).

This paper provides details of a proposed research study looking at this issue. The overall aim of this study is to understand the role of brands in the definition and preservation of ethnic cultural heritage. The South Asian community within Manchester is to be employed as the study site.

Methodology/Approach

Background  
The cultural identity of members of an ethnic community within the United Kingdom is influenced by many things. Contemporary mainstream British and global culture both have a material impact. However, it is specific communal ethnic heritage that is fundamental for a distinct identity within UK society (Graham et al., 2000), as it is only this that is not shared with other individuals within society.

Cultural heritage can be regarded as collective memory that has been given a particular meaning by a community and may be tangible or intangible in form (Graham and Howard, 2008). As with culture in general (Schein, 2004), this tends to be taken for granted and this accords it a certain amount of vulnerability (Orser, 2007). In other words there is a lack of an appreciation of what it is that binds an ethnic group together and also what might cause it to unravel. Accordingly it has been argued that there is a need for particular ethnic groups to better understand how their cultural heritage is constructed, defined and maintained.

There are a number of mechanisms that have been traditionally seen as supporting the preservation of ethnic cultural heritage. Socialisation activities within the family home are regarded as very important (Tolia-Kelly, 2004), as is the observation of the attitudes and behaviour of peers and the local community (Brown and Talbot, 2006; Taylor and Kneafsey, 2016). However given the asserted movement towards a consumption-centric society (Edwards, 2000), it could be argued that consumption (in other words, what we buy, use and own) (Miles, 1998) is inevitably now becoming an increasingly important mechanism for ethnic cultural heritage preservation and definition.
One way in which ethnic cultural heritage is observed within consumption is through the purchase of particular types of products and services (e.g. specific clothing, specific food). However this study aims to focus on another area within consumption, namely brands.

Brands are often purchased, used and valued for their symbolic associations and meanings (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998; McCracken 1986), rather than for any functional purpose. For example, the Nike brand’s associations of striving and achievement are arguably much more important to its purchasers than any sports performance functionality possessed by its products.

As cultural heritage is also grounded in meaning, it feels intuitively reasonable that there might be a close tie-in with branding. The proposition to be explored in this study is that brands may play a particularly important role within ethnic cultural heritage, both within its definition and its preservation, given the context of today’s consumer society.

The above discussion is summarised in a conceptual framework in Figure 1 below.

**Objectives**

In order to meet the overall research aim three objectives have been developed:

**a**-to explore where and how the UK South Asian community uses brands within the definition and preservation of their cultural heritage

There are a number of aspects that are expected to be particularly relevant. The first is that of “country of origin” brands. These are brands that are strongly associated with the original country of the ethnic group and are not seen as being UK brands. As such the brand may be
considered to be part of the specific cultural heritage of the ethnic group. The second is where a particular brand is strongly associated with a product type that is part of its cultural heritage.

**b-to identify where brands hold symbolic meanings specifically relevant to the cultural heritage of the UK South Asian community**

Different cultures tend to place particular importance on different values (Hofstede et al., 2010). Given that different brands are often also associated with different values, for example as conceptualised within brand personality theory (Aaker, 1997), it appears reasonable that certain brands will have a much stronger resonance with a particular culture than others. As such these brands may act to preserve cultural heritage through their contained symbolic meanings.

**c-to identify where brands hold a distinct meaning within the UK South Asian community that is different to that within mainstream UK culture**

It may be the case that brands hold significantly different meanings in different cultures. As an example, the Clarks shoe brand holds a very different meaning within the British Caribbean community (Fingers, 2012) to that held within mainstream UK culture. Whilst mainstream UK tends to see the Clarks brand as safe, traditional and a bit dated, in the British Caribbean community it is seen as highly fashionable, high status and a little rebellious. This is consistent with the contemporary view that the meaning of a brand is not solely determined by a corporation but is co-created (Vargo and Lusch, 2004; Batey, 2008) with input from its users. As such brands may act to define and preserve specific ethnic cultural heritage without it being immediately obvious.

**Research Method**

The study will focus on the UK South Asian community within the Greater Manchester area. This community has been selected as the researchers already have strong links with it. The South Asian community is also the largest ethnic minority group in the UK, representing 7.5% of the population (Office for National Statistics, 2016).

As this is an explorative study where rich and deep data is required, qualitative research is appropriate (Hogg and Bannister, 2001). Thirty interviews will be undertaken with members of the relevant communities within the Greater Manchester area. In particular existing developed links with local community groups, such as The Jinnah Centre (North Manchester), Pakistani Resource Centre (South Manchester) and the Shanaz Women’s group (South Manchester) will be used to recruit participants.

Interviews will be semi-structured in nature and undertaken by the research team. Interview guides will be used using questions developed to meet the objectives of the research study. Interviews will be taped and transcribed. Recruited participants will be from a variety of ages and different generations of families (Sekhon, 2007; Vijaygopal and Dibb, 2012), in order to capture the temporal aspect of cultural heritage and brands. Neither of these is static and the role and importance of brands may be changing. Thematic analysis and NVivo software will be used to analyse the data.
Theoretical Implications
Contemporary branding theory acknowledges that brands can play an important role in the creation and sustenance of a particular desired identity for an individual (Belk, 1988) and this has been extended to include distinct groups within society (e.g. Goths, middle aged bikers) (McAlexander et al., 2002). However, such thinking has not typically been extended to groups centred on ethnicity, where it has been assumed that identity is defined and preserved through other factors away from the consumption arena. Whilst it is certainly the case that there are non-consumption based aspects that link together members of an ethnic community, this study aims to ascertain whether branding theory can be extended across to incorporate groups based on ethnicity.

Practical Implications
Findings will be disseminated to the non-academic audience and in particular through events with relevant local communities. The aim of such events will be to provide these communities with greater understanding and knowledge of the role that brands play within their ethnic culture heritage. Such understanding and knowledge will act as a resource to help protect their heritage and their distinct identity.

Limitations
This carries the usual limitations of an exploratory qualitative study. It will also only consider one local ethnic community. Both of these should be addressed through future research.

Originality/Value
This is little literature in this field and this study offers an original approach to looking at the role of branding in contemporary society. It has the potential to be of great value, not only through the advancement of theory in this area but also through providing local ethnic communities with greater understanding about their cultural heritage. This is important because such heritage is regarded as a key resource for the sustenance and strengthening of an ethnic minority group, where it is often seen as being encroached by both mainstream UK and global influences (Buciek and Juul, 2008).

Keywords
Brands, Ethnicity, Cultural Heritage
References


Buciek, K. and Juul, K. (2008). “We are here, yet we are not here!: The heritage of excluded groups”, in: Graham, B. and Howard, P. (Eds.), *Ashgate Research Companion to Heritage and Identity*. Ashgate, Aldershot, pp. 105-124.


Constructing and validating a scale to measure Social media brand community enjoyment (SMBCE)

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Purpose
Social Media Brand Communities (SMBCs) enable brand managers to create strong consumer-brand relationships (McWilliam, 2000); engage with loyal customers, generate favorable purchase intentions and positive word of mouth (Algesheimer et al., 2005). In this context, the concept of enjoyment as a major force driving SMBCs becomes very relevant (Hutter et al., 2013). There has been a growing interest on enjoyment, but there is still the need to provide a comprehensive definition of enjoyment (Rogers, et al. 2016). Furthermore, to our knowledge, no prior study has undertaken a dedicated effort to understand and measure the specific dimensions of enjoyment for SMBC’s.

The purpose of our paper is to develop a reliable and valid scale to measure Social Media Brand Community Enjoyment (SMBCE). To this end, we use standard scale development procedures and developed the scale based on five studies (with total N=1073) with fours studies conducted in India (development and validation) and one in Portugal (generalization).

Methodology
We carried out the scale development procedure following the guidelines suggested by Churchill (1979) and DeVellis (2003) as given:

Study 1: Focus group discussions (FCD) followed by expert opinions and content validation checks.

Study 2: Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) of the items generated from study 1.

Study 3: Confirmatory factory analysis (CFA) on the items retained from study 2.

Study 4: Testing the SMBCE scale in a nomological network of antecedents and consequences.

Study 5: Establishing the etic validity and generalizability of the scale using data from a different country (in cultural orientation and internet penetration) than the first four studies.
India was selected as the country for the initial scale development because of multiple reasons. India is the world’s third largest economy in terms of GDP and it is projected to emerge as the world’s largest economy within the next 40 years (Alamro and Rowley, 2011). Moreover, India is ranked third in the number of Facebook users (internetworldstats.com, 2016).

**Study 1**

Based on review of literature and four FCD (subjects between 18-40 years, male female ratio 1:1) we wanted to identify the overall themes of SMBCE (N=32). The FGD data was content analyzed to identify the themes of SMBCE.

**Findings**

Five themes (covered by 40 items) emerged from the FGD: engagement; affect; fulfilment; self-expression and participation. Out of the five, engagement is one of the most used constructs in social media marketing and is found to lead to enjoyment (Calder et al., 2009; Hollebeek et al. 2014). The second theme was the affect related to the positive thoughts and feelings that consumers felt while being a part of a community (Warner 1980; Davis 1989). The third theme was fulfilment as an attitudinal outcome of the actions that consumers performed on brand communities (Lin et al. 2008). The fourth theme was self-expression of consumers’ self through the SMBC (Baldus et al., 2015). The last theme was related to the ability of the consumer to participate actively in the brand community. 37 items were retained from the initial list based on the views of an experts’ panel (4 academicians; 5 experts). These items were then tested on a random sample of 75 respondents (same profile as FGD) for relevance and understanding, and a final set of 27 were retained for study 2 based on the feedback.

**Study 2**

Study 2 was administered online in the same business school as in study 1 (screening question: name of the SMBC; N=200; male-female close to 1:1; mean age approx. 27). The respondents’ were asked to provide their thoughts/feelings/actions with respect to their favorite SMBCs on the 27 scale items on a five point Likert Scale (1 strongly agree – 5 strongly disagree).

**Findings**

We conducted EFA (principal axis factoring) to get an overview of the latent variables and to identify redundant items (Netemeyer et al., 2003; Lewis et al., 2005).

The 27 items resulted in a 5-factor solution with the items loading onto the same five theorized sub-constructs. However, seven items showed factor loadings below 0.4 and were dropped for the next round of the study. The internal consistency reliability of the five factors (after purification) was above 0.7 (Kline, 1998), ensuring acceptable internal consistency reliability. Thus, we retained 20 items for study 3.

**Study 3**

Study 3 was conducted in India using similar procedures to study 2 (N = 263; male-female close to 1:1; mean age approx. 26.5) to test the psychometric properties of the scale further.

**Findings**

The model calibrations did not reveal any high modification index (above 4), however, the self-expression construct had an item with low loading. Thus, we retained 19 items in the
solution that had statistically significant t values (table 1). The internal consistency reliability (alpha), Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and construct reliability measured through composite reliability (CR) for all the five scale dimensions were above standard cutoffs (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2010) (table 1). Thus, the convergent validity of the five dimensions of the SMBCE scale was established.

Discriminant validity of the constructs was tested by comparing the square of inter-factor correlations with the AVE values of each construct (as per Fornell and Larcker, 1981). We found the AVE values to be larger than the respective values of the squared inter construct correlations and thus discriminant validity was ensured.

However, the presence of reasonably high inter factor correlations among the five SMBCE constructs indicated the presence of a higher order construct. Thus, we tested four alternative measurement models to ascertain the right model structure (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988).

- Model 1: the base model with five correlated dimensions;
- Model 2: the five dimension model with all dimensions uncorrelated;
- Model 3: the single factor model where all 19 items load onto one factor;
- Model 4: the second-order factor model where SMBCE is modeled as a second order construct

The model fit results (and comparisons) indicated the best fit of the data to model 4 (Chi sq/df =1.92, GFI = 0.913, AGFI = 0.881, CFI = 0.933, RMR = 0.065, RMSEA = 0.061) and statistically significant loadings of the individual dimensions of FOCs on SMBCE. In addition, the construct validity statistics of SMBCE were above the required thresholds and it displayed high internal consistency reliability (CR=0.93, AVE=0.77, α=0.89). Thus, we decided to model SMBCE as a second order construct for study 4 where we tested the nomological validity of the scale.

Study 4
Study 4 was conducted in India to test for the nomological validity of the SMBCE scale (as per suggestions of Diamantopoulos and Winklhofer, 2001; Lewis et al., 2005). To this end, we used a set of antecedents and consequences of SMBCE (and their respective measures) drawn from existing literature (figure 1). The opening brief (post screening) in this case asked the respondent to provide the answers with respect to his/her most frequently used SMB. We used similar procedures to that of study 2 (N = 281; male-female close to 1:1; mean age approx. 27).

Findings
The CFA results indicated unidimensionality, internal consistency and discriminant validity for the SMBCE scale dimensions (with support for the second order factor structure). The other constructs in the model (Openness to experience, Brand affect, Brand attachment, Purchase intention and Word of Mouth) were also found to elicit accepted levels of internal consistency reliability and construct validity. The nomological model displayed good fit (Chi sq/df =1.89, GFI = 0.902, AGFI = 0.879, CFI = 0.912, RMR = 0.055, RMSEA = 0.063) and the study hypotheses (figure 1) were supported with statistically significant path coefficients (table 2) and reasonably high R square values for the endogenous constructs.
Study 5

There are contradictory views on whether scales and measures developed in one cultural setup (a country) could be used in another without changes (Ford et al., 2014). While the ‘etic’ view suggests that scales are universal, the ‘emic’ view (Malhotra et al., 1996; Craig and Douglas, 2012) points out several challenges of using the same instruments in different cultures and contexts. To avoid this trap and make the SMBCE scale more generalizable, we decided to test the scale in a different country. We selected Portugal as the second focal country because of its different cultural setup (Hofstede, 1980), varied internet penetration rates (India: 19.7% and Portugal: 64.9%) and relatively lesser proportion of social media users to total number of internet users (Chaffey, 2016).

Procedure

The questionnaire used was similar to study 4. However, we removed the Brand Attachment construct since we wanted to use a simpler model for generalization. The respondents were selected from a large business school in Portugal that had similar set of audience (both at graduation level and executive level) (N=297; male-female close to 1:1; mean age approx. 27.5).

Findings

We first tested the scale norms by comparing summated average scores on each SMBCE dimensions across Portugal (study 5) and India (study 4). The paired difference tests between the average scores were not found to be significant thereby leading to the inference that the scale would lead to similar outcomes for SMBC users across cultural contexts.

Subsequently, we tested the factor structure of the SMBCE scale for the Portugal data and found the same to lead to a reasonably good model fit (Chi Square/df = 2.12, GFI = 0.91, CFI = 0.93, RMR = 0.06 and RMSEA = 0.05). The first order factors elicited standard levels of reliability, convergent and discriminant validity and the SOC was supported. Next, we conducted a structural invariance analysis to compare the SMBCE model structure for both countries. The difference in fit ($\Delta \chi^2/\Delta df$) was not found to be significant between the country specific data models ($\Delta \chi^2/\Delta df_{\text{India}-\text{Portugal}} = 0.739; p > 0.05$) thereby supporting the presence of invariance across countries. In addition, the goodness of fit indices was similar for the country specific models. Thus, we inferred that the nature of the SMBCE construct and its sub-constructs are similar across both countries.

Following this, we tested the simplified nomological model for Portugal data (model fit: Chi Square/df = 2.77, GFI = 0.90, CFI = 0.91, RMR = 0.065 and RMSEA = 0.06) and found the hypothesized relations between antecedents and consequences to be significant. Thereby, we found the SMBCE scale to be generalizable and established its ‘etic’ validity.

Theoretical implications

The present study adds evidence to the body of knowledge concerning online consumer behavior, enjoyment theory (Tamborini et al., 2011; Rogers et al., 2016), and in particular, SMBC. The novelty of the study lies in the development of a five dimensional scale to measure SMBCE. From a psychometric viewpoint, the study followed the steps in scale development in a robust way and then went ahead to test the etic validity of the scale in a different context than where it was developed. The scale developed was found to relate empirically to its theoretical antecedents and consequences. Thereby the scale could be considered as theoretically sound, reliable and valid.
Practical implications
The findings provide valuable insights for brand managers who aim to build strong consumer-brand relationships through SMBC. The first major implication of the present study is the creation of a measure for SMBCE. The SMBCE scale will allow marketers to measure the level of consumer enjoyment on his/her brand community. This will enable marketers to understand the brand’s position in social media from the consumer’s perspective. The findings from the last two studies also provide relevant guidelines for brand managers.

Limitations
The samples used in this study consisted of majorly young audience whereas a reasonable amount of middle aged or elderly participation is visible on social media websites (Knoll, 2015). Thus, a future study involving different generations of social media users may increase the generalizability of our findings. Second, it may be relevant to investigate the moderating effect of peer group behaviour on the influence of SMBCE on response towards the brand as the former has been found to influence social media behaviour (Craig et al. 2015).

Keywords: Brand community; social media brand community, enjoyment, scale development

References


Table 1. Study 3: CFA Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Construct/Items</th>
<th>Loading</th>
<th>t Value</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Engagement</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CR=0.85, AVE=0.65, α=0.75)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am absorbed intently</td>
<td>0.848</td>
<td>8.69</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>My attention was focused</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td>9.29</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am fully concentrated</td>
<td>0.778</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Affect</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CR=0.88, AVE=0.65, α=0.77)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am happy</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>8.31</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am pleased</td>
<td>0.797</td>
<td>8.67</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am satisfied</td>
<td>0.846</td>
<td>8.27</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am relaxed</td>
<td>0.792</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Fulfillment</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CR= 0.84, AVE= 0.63, α=0.70)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It means a lot to me</td>
<td>0.772</td>
<td>8.33</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is rewarding</td>
<td>0.842</td>
<td>8.66</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>It is worthwhile</td>
<td>0.775</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Self-Expression</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CR=0.86, AVE =0.67, α=0.75)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can freely express my thoughts about the brand</td>
<td>0.822</td>
<td>8.34</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can be myself while interacting with community members</td>
<td>0.831</td>
<td>8.41</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I can share my opinions about the brand without hindrance</td>
<td>0.796</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Participation</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(CR= 0.91, AVE= 0.64, α=0.76)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel empowered</td>
<td>0.844</td>
<td>8.43</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I can contribute to the brand</td>
<td>0.869</td>
<td>8.45</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel I can interact with the brand</td>
<td>0.871</td>
<td>7.13</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I feel liking and following the brand</td>
<td>0.743</td>
<td>5.93</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get to know what others are speaking about the brand</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>6.83</td>
<td>***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I get to know latest brand happenings</td>
<td>0.715</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. Study 4: Nomological Model Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Path relation</th>
<th>Std. Estimate</th>
<th>S.E.</th>
<th>$R^2$</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1</td>
<td>Openness to Experience $\rightarrow$ SMBCE</td>
<td>0.850</td>
<td>0.14</td>
<td>0.79</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2a</td>
<td>SMBCE $\rightarrow$ Brand Affect</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.55</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H2b</td>
<td>SMBCE $\rightarrow$ Brand Attachment</td>
<td>0.784</td>
<td>0.13</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3a</td>
<td>Brand Affect $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention</td>
<td>0.474</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.80</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3b</td>
<td>Brand Attachment $\rightarrow$ Purchase Intention</td>
<td>0.531</td>
<td>0.10</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4a</td>
<td>Brand Affect $\rightarrow$ WOM</td>
<td>0.862</td>
<td>0.11</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4b</td>
<td>Brand Attachment $\rightarrow$ WOM</td>
<td>0.712</td>
<td>0.12</td>
<td>0.76</td>
<td>&lt; 0.01</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1. The Nomological Model
Insights into brand identity management in a context of co-creation:

the critical role of brand issues

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PURPOSE OF THE PAPER

A multitude of approaches have been used to apply co-creation as a concept in marketing (Grönroos et al., 2015). In brand management, most of those approaches envision consumers and managers as co-creating value for themselves and for the brand within an ecosystem of interactions that involves multiple brand stakeholders (von Wallpach et al., 2017; Ind et al., 2013; Iglesias et al., 2013; Gyrd-Jones & Kornum, 2013). Such context has implications to the practices related to brand development and especially to brand identity (BI) management. The idea that consumers and managers are collectively involved in the BI management process in contexts associated with co-creation has been addressed (e.g., Payne et al., 2009; von Wallpach et al., 2017) but the need remains to investigate how this process unfolds. Arguing that the co-creation paradigm demands new insights into BI management, we built an empirical research to explore how the co-creation process develops in BI management and how managers and consumers co-create BI. This paper reveals the critical importance of brand issues in BI management within a context of co-creation.

APPROACH

The rationale of our study is based on the idea that managers and consumers are BI co-creators under certain conditions. Hence, the literatures of co-creation and BI grounded the approach reflected in this paper.

Co-creation. Various approaches to co-creation are currently discussed in the literature (Grönroos et al., 2015). Three main “logics” underlying those approaches – Service-dominant
logic (Vargo & Lusch, 2006; 2008); Service logic (Grönroos, 2006) and Customer-dominant logic (Heinonen et al., 2010; 2013) – reveal different views on the role of the consumers and the managers in the co-creation process, but all acknowledge that managers and consumers are increasingly collaborating to co-create value for themselves and for the firm. Based on research related to co-creation (e.g., Vargo & Lusch, 2006; 2008; Prahalad & Ramaswamy, 2004; Grönroos 2012; Grönroos & Ravald, 2011) transposed to brands (Hatch & Shultz, 2010), we propose conditions to assume managers and consumers as BI co-creators: (a) consumers should participate in the process of brand management; (b) consumers should be involved in a dialogue with the brand managers; (c) brand managers should ensure transparency and access to information to consumers; and (d) risks related to the brand and its consumers should be co-assessed by brand managers and consumers. In accordance with previous research (Lam et al., 2010), we propose that under the conditions exposed above, managers and consumers are both brand members.

Brand identity. Contrary to extant definitions of BI as an internal and enduring concept providing direction, meaning and stability for the brand and its consumers (Aaker, 1996; de Chernatony, 2010; Kapferer, 2012), this paper adopts a flexible, dynamic and multi-stakeholders view on BI, in line with recent perspectives on brands (Merz et al., 2009). We define here BI as a concept that combines manager and consumer-determined influences and is adaptive over time (von Wallpach, 2013; Iglesias et al., 2013; da Silveira et al., 2013). This view is substantiated by the increasing prevalence of co-creation in the branding literature and in practice.

In order to address the drivers of BI adjustments over time, we propose to retain from the organizational identity domain the notion of brand issues, defined according to Dutton and Dukerich (1991), as identity-threatening events that call into question the brand image and potentially tarnish the image and self-identity of the brand members. Concerning the interpretation of BI, we suggest adapting and transposing from Gioia et al. (2010) the notions of identity understandings and identity claims. BI understandings denote the brand members’ beliefs and interpretations of the character and attributes of the brand, while BI claims designate the statements brand members make to define the brand to each other and to outside stakeholders.

METHODOLOGY

We developed a single, longitudinal, qualitative case study (Yin, 2014, Eisenhardt, 1989), investigating the BI development of a leading brand in the post-graduate higher education
sector. A preliminary stage of the fieldwork provided evidence that the brand was suitable for the study. That is, the brand had an underlying context of co-creation, in which managers and consumers were BI co-creators. The research covered a period of approximately four years and included amongst multiple sources of evidence, 67 in-depth semi-structured interviews with 42 informants:

- 12 Managers, defined as the individuals that the consumers turn to for interpretations when predicaments arise (Ginzel et al., 1993). Within the context of higher education, managers encompass brand managers, staff and faculty;
- 25 Consumers (students and alumni);
- 5 Potential consumers (applicants who eventually became students).

Informants were selected through a theory driven (Miles & Huberman, 1994) and purposive sampling technique (Silverman & Marvasti, 2008). The computer analysis software NVIVO 9 assisted the data coding and facilitated the analysis. Overall, we collected 948 references on 19 brand issue categories, 400 references of BI understandings, and 261 references of BI claims.

**FINDINGS**

The research suggests that BI co-creation is triggered by a sequence of intertwined brand issues interpreted by both managers and consumers as events that threaten the way they believe the brand, and by extension themselves, are perceived by external stakeholders. Most brand issues are identified by the consumers, who subsequently bring them to the managers. Then, the combination of consumers’ and managers’ actions to address the brand issues activates the whole process of BI adjustment.

However, when managers anticipate an issue that may be identified by consumers as a threat for the brand and by extension for the consumers, they interpret this issue as a possible threat for themselves (i.e., managers). Managers consequently take preventive actions to address the issue with the collaboration of the consumers. Those actions, in turn, trigger the process of BI development. An illustrative example from our research is the sudden detection by the brand managers of a possible replication of main brand features by competitors, that would lead to a lack of tangible brand distinguishing characteristics from the consumers’ viewpoint. In this example, actions taken to prevent the brand issue (i.e., turn the brand features less imitable) involved the development (by managers and consumers) of two initiatives difficult to replicate because connected to the specificity of the culture and language of the brand’s
BI development emerged throughout our research as a process where brand issues play a critical role, affecting first BI understandings, then BI claims. Although consumers and managers do not interpret the brand issues the same way, they are equally committed to addressing them because brand issues engender a gap between original BI claims and BI understandings. Such a gap generates embarrassment because it conflicts with the brand members’ aspiration to project a “true” image of the brand, and by extension, of its members (themselves) towards outsiders. However, BI claims vary little because brand members feel that the original BI claims cannot be excessively distorted. BI claims are the traits of the BI that brand members think outsiders use to form an opinion about their affiliation (i.e., the brand), and by extension about themselves. Brand members are therefore concerned about making BI claims in ways that are consistent with what they believe others will value. They seek to project a favorable view of the brand because preserving their image as a brand member and preserving the brand’s image are processes recursively connected. Both processes imply preserving positive BI claims over time, which in practice means mitigating the gap between current and original BI claims.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

Our research shows that, within a context of co-creation, BI adjustments are triggered by a sequence of intertwined brand issues. The analysis reveals an apparent association between brand issues and unfulfilled expectations. Brand members had initially formed expectations about the brand. Our data suggest that those expectations derive from the brand members’ view of the original BI claims. Original BI claims trigger brand issues, as they may generate expectations that cannot be fulfilled. This observation echoes the interpretation of issues proposed by Dutton and Dukerich (1991): issues are events that are inconsistent with [organizations’] members’ initial view of the identity and therefore compromise that identity. Overall, this branding study concurs with organizational identity researchers (e.g., Dutton & Dukerich, 1991; Gioia & Thomas, 1996) on the reciprocal and recursive relationship between issues and identity. Issues trigger identity development – as brand issues directly impact BI understandings and activate the whole process of BI adjustment, while identity shapes issues’ interpretations and processing – as explained above.
PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS
In line with the development of co-creation in the business world, researchers have proposed to practitioners a dynamic and socially oriented approach to BI management (e.g., Iglesias et al., 2013; Hemetsberger & Mühlbacher, 2009). We further suggest that while managing BI with the consumers, managers ought to take into account the critical importance of brand issues. As this work suggests, a brand issue for the consumers becomes an issue for the managers. This issue should be addressed by both parts in order to project a favorable image of the brand and its members to outsiders. This leads to the implication that managers should seek to maximize consumer involvement in the process of brand issue handling to convey the most favorable image of the brand and of themselves, as managers of this brand.

MAIN LIMITATIONS
Although our case meets most significant criteria for a single case as it is a critical, representative, and longitudinal case (Yin, 2014; Miles & Huberman, 1994), the research endures the usual limitations of studying a single brand. In addition, findings are likely to relate to certain “types” of brands – brands that present an underlying context of co-creation that is, in which consumers are brand co-creators, for example professional services’ brands.

ORIGINALITY/VALUE
In the branding related domain and to the best of our knowledge, our research stands alone in depicting the mechanism by which managers and consumers engage in BI management to serve their own interests. A main value of this paper is to demonstrate that brand members’ main motivation to engage in the BI co-creation is the enhancement of their self-image.

KEYWORDS
Brand Identity; Brand Issues; Co-creation.

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Consumer-based Label Equity: a Multidimensional Scale

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INTRODUCTION
In response to consumers’ growing concern with what they are eating, numerous food labels have been developed. The question, however, is whether these labels indeed have any impact on consumer decision-making, i.e., how to evaluate the potential equity of these labels. Such a measure would be of both theoretical and managerial interest: first, to guide officials responsible for promoting these food certifications in developing their marketing strategies and tactical decisions (Ailawadi and Keller, 2004; Ambler, 2003); then, to support food product marketing managers when they must choose the certification which will ensure the greatest added value for their products (Norberg et al., 2011; McEachern and Warnaby, 2004; Grunert, 2005). While a number of measurement models exist for evaluating the equity of conventional trademarks (Yoo and Donthu, 2001, Pappu et al., 2005, Buil et al., 2008; Netemeyer et al., 2004; Till et al., 2011), these models are not suitable for food labels, which have legal ramifications that make them more complex for consumers to evaluate. The objective of this study is therefore to develop a tool that is suited for measuring label equity.

PURPOSE
Measuring brand equity
Consumer-based brand equity has been measured within two frameworks: direct and indirect. In the direct framework, the authors generally define brand equity as the added value or utility that the brand confers on the product (Farquhar, 1989). While the direct framework makes it possible to evaluate the magnitude of brand equity, it is of limited usefulness from the managerial standpoint because it provides no insight into the sources of brand equity. The indirect framework, on the other hand, focuses on the dimensions or facets underlying brand equity. In this line of research, investigators generally subscribe to the formulations of brand equity proposed by Aaker (1991) or that of Keller (1993). According to them, brand equity is composed of either five asset factors (Aaker, 1991) or two dimensions (Keller, 1993).
The framework of Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993) has inspired a number of brand equity measurement models (e.g., Yoo and Donthu three dimensional scale, 2001; Pappu et al. four-dimensional scale, 2005). While the scales mentioned above have been validated with conventional brands, they are not suitable for labels. First, of the dimensions considered in these scales, none explicitly takes credibility into account. And yet, this dimension is important in evaluating labels (e.g. Carpentier and Larceneux, 2008). Secondly, the perceived quality dimension used in the above scales applies imperfectly to labels. Thirdly, a number of the proposed dimensions do not seem relevant to the label case: associations related to personality, interpersonal relations, history.

Label equity
As with conventional brands, measuring the equity of labels has attracted the attention of marketing researchers. However, past studies on the effects of label equity have only examined the relative impact of a label as a function of the equity of the brand with which it is associated (Larceneux et al., 2012, for the organic label). They show that the impact of a label depends on the brand equity of the brand with which it is associated, with the positive impact of the label increasing as the brand equity decreases (Chameroy and Veran, 2014). While the studies on labels are very interesting, they remain incomplete and do not provide a general view of the dimensions of label equity. In this study, therefore, we will develop a measurement model for label equity, based on the indirect framework.

METHODOLOGY
Qualitative study and item selection
We conducted a first exploratory, qualitative study in Quebec, on 100 respondents. Respondents were asked to make six choices between 16 labels, out of 116 label combinations on agri-food products, and to provide the rationale for their choices. The aim was not to study the choices made but to extract statements from the reasons given for these choices. This procedure generated 752 statements, which were subsequently reduced by the authors to 42 items after a content analysis. A number of brand equity dimensions emerge from this qualitative study, in particular items related to awareness. On the other hand, more label-specific items also emerge, particularly those related to trust in the label or the labeling agency and the perceived value of the information conveyed by the label. Moreover, this study also reveals that the logo is an important element, notably confirming a recent study (Machado et al., 2015).

Construction and validation of the multidimensional label equity scale
To purify the measuring instrument, we conducted an initial quantitative study on 1219 individuals, primarily women (89%), between the ages of 45 and 64 years (51.4%). Each respondent was asked to evaluate one of four labels (Bio Québec, Aliments du Québec, Fair Trade or Visez santé) on each of the 42 statements identified in the preceding stage, using a Likert 5-point scale. Exploratory factor analyses with varimax rotation were performed. Based on the eigenvalue criterion, 7 factors grouping 21 items were identified: label visibility, logo clarity, label awareness, logo design, label trust (credibility and honesty), relevance (perceived information value).

To validate the scale, a second quantitative study was conducted in Quebec with a representative sample of the population, originating from an Internet panel. A total of 607 individuals (48.8% women) evaluated 3 labels: Aliments du Québec (n=607), Aliments préparés au Québec (n=607), and one of the following two labels: BioQuébec (n=281) or Visez Santé (n=326). Respondents evaluated the labels on the 21 statements previously
identified. To assess the internal validity of the constructs, a confirmatory factor analysis was performed. Based on the adjustment indices, the results of the confirmatory factor analysis are acceptable (Chi-square/ ddl = 4.027, CFI = .970, RMSEA = 0.041). Moreover, the tests confirm the reliability of the constructs (Cronbach’s alphas for all constructs are at acceptable levels; $\alpha > 0.7$), the convergent validity ($CV_{\text{rho}} > 0.72$) and the discriminant validity (for all constructs, the percentage of variance shared between the constructs is lower than the convergent validity rho).

**Testing nomological validity**
In order to confirm the structure of the new label equity scale and assess its nomological validity, we conducted a third survey of 551 persons originating from a consumer panel (52% women). Respondents were asked to evaluate 5 labels out of 10 on the 21 statements previously presented and a measure of attitude towards the label comprising 5 statements: *I have a very good opinion of products displaying this label; If a product displays this label, that prompts me to buy it; I would advise my friends to buy products displaying this label; I prefer products that display this label; I am willing to pay 10% more for products displaying this label.*

**FINDINGS**
First, we confirmed the proposed label equity scale and refined its overall structure, since it is now comprised of seven first order facets, namely label visibility, logo clarity, label awareness, logo design, credibility, honesty and relevance, of which two of them depend on an order 2 dimension (i.e. label trust for credibility and honesty; label identification for label visibility, logo clarity and label awareness). All taken together, these facets and dimensions derive from an overall third order more general label equity orientation. Secondly, we assessed the predictive validity of our overall label equity orientation on a measure of attitude towards the label.

As recently suggested by Henseler et al., (2016), we present the results according to overall model fit, measurement model and structural model. All assessments are based on bootstrapping with 5000 replications. As for the overall model, the absolute GoF is 0.574, far above the 0.36 threshold for excellent fit suggested by Wetzels et al. (2009) and close to the bootstrapped GoF (0.585). Once the overall quality of the proposed model has been established, we can assess internal consistency, reliability, and convergent and discriminant validity. Indicators of convergent validity and reliability are satisfactory: the reliability is greater than 0.7 and the convergent validity is greater than 0.5 for all of the first- and higher-order constructs encompassed within this research. Ultimately, discriminant validity is established, according to Fornell and Larcker’s (1981) criteria. Finally, we can evaluate the structural part of the model. The $R^2$ for the target-dependent variable is fairly high (0.601). All of the path coefficients were evaluated for significance by means of a bootstrapping approach with 5000 bootstrap samples and all are statistically significant, with t values greater than 2 and confidence intervals which do not include zero. All in all, the study validates the influence of the overall label equity orientation on the measure of attitude towards the label (0.760; $R^2=0.567$).

**THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS**
In theoretical terms, the findings of this study are twofold. First, although for a number of authors the awareness dimension is a major source of brand equity, in the case of label equity, the notions referred to by this dimension are slightly different. Thus, for authors such as Aaker (1991) and Keller (1993), brand awareness refers to buyers’ ability to recognize or recall a brand. In contrast, label awareness refers to how widespread the label is and how easy
it is to understand the label. Secondly, while brand perceived quality is considered as an important source of brand equity in a number of models (Aaker, 1991; Yoo and Donthu, 2001; Pappu et al. 2005; Netemeyer et al. 2004), the findings of our studies show that this component was not evoked in the universe of label associations. Instead, the components Label Trust (credibility and honesty) and Relevance (perceived information value) are major sources of label equity, whereas they are absent in brand equity measurement models. This confirms that conventional brand equity models are not suited to the specific characteristics of labels, i.e., the fact that labels are marks attesting to unobservable quality dimensions for which information and trust in the information provided are paramount.

PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS
The findings of this study enable label managers to identify the relative importance of sources of label equity. Thus, the existence of label identification and label associations suggests that in order to optimize their actions, label managers must work on these two dimensions simultaneously. Next, analysis of the relative weights of the four label associations components highlights the factors underlying a label’s success. For instance, it shows the importance of perceived information value and label trust, particularly for the sustainability-related labels chosen in this study.

LIMITATIONS
Nonetheless, this study is not without its limitations. First, it was conducted in a single country, with a small number of labels, making generalization to all labels impossible. Replication of the present study in other countries should allow us to confirm the validity of the label equity scale and test the model in other contexts.

ORIGINALITY/VALUE
This paper provides the first consumer-based scale of label equity and shows its specificities in comparison to brand equity.

KEYWORDS
Consumer brand equity, Label equity, Measurement scale, Agro-food marketing

REFERENCES


From Santa Claus to yodeling: International tourists’ brand associations of Swedish Lapland

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Purpose

Place branding has become increasingly important for destination marketers (Anholt, 2005). Brand image is a critical component of a destination brand due to the connection between image and tourists’ preferences and visitation intentions (Baloglu & McCleary, 1999; Hunt, 1975; Leisen, 2001). By definition, brand image and brand associations can be seen as intertwined, with image being reflected by the associations held in the memory of the consumer (Keller, 1993; Stepchenkova & Li, 2014). These associations can vary in terms of how favorable, strong, and unique they are (Keller, 1993), which will be reflected in consumers’ evaluations of the destination brand (Huang, Li, & Li, 2015). Further, it is important to understand consumers’ awareness of the brand, which together with brand image constitute destination brand knowledge (Li, Petrick, & Zhou, 2008). According to Keller (1993), this could be the most valuable asset for improving marketing productivity. Li et al. (2008) conclude that while awareness seems to provide a necessary, though not sufficient condition for the creation of a brand image, more empirical studies are needed to clarify this relationship.

Hence, by understanding patterns of brand knowledge among different target groups, marketers can instill positive attitudes towards brands, differentiate them, and design more effectively targeted promotional activities (Kemp, Childers, & Williams, 2012). In this regard it is of interest to analyze similarities and differences in perceptions held by different groups of visitors. Researchers have concluded that the contribution of different attributes varies across cultures and countries of origin (Huang et al., 2015; MacKay & Fesenmaier, 2000), and recent calls for further research in terms of cross-cultural studies to discern patterns of similarities and differences have been made (Huang et al., 2015; Kim & Stepchenkova, In press). Moreover, Kislali, Kavaratzis, and Saren (2016) point out that secondary images, i.e. pre-visit perceptions, need to be further investigated.
Thus, the purpose of this study is to identify and compare destination brand associations and awareness between potential visitors from different countries. In light of the growing importance of the international travel market and the role that image plays in individuals’ travel destination choice, it is imperative to substantiate the image international tourists have of rural travel destination areas (Chen & Kerstetter, 1999; Hedström & Littke, 2011). The context of this study is the region Swedish Lapland, a vast and mostly rural destination in northern Sweden.
Methodology/approach

Swedish Lapland is a destination brand comprising the Norrbotten county, the northernmost county in Sweden, plus two neighboring municipalities in the adjacent Västerbotten county. Geographically, the region is larger than Austria but very sparsely populated. The brand Swedish Lapland provides a joint communication platform for tourism entrepreneurs in the region and communicates the place brand, local brands and the Swedish country brand (SLVB, 2015). Marketing communication of the brand is largely focusing on the possibilities to experience unexploited nature and its peacefulness, snow and ice, the midnight sun, northern lights, and unique places such as the Ice hotel (SLVB, 2012).

Surveys measuring destination image is a common way to explore how tourists view a destination and, in extension, how to define and develop the intended destination perceptions and image (Dolnicar & Grün, 2013). Kim and Stepchenkova (In press) suggest that by asking for tourists’ freely expressed thoughts and opinions, valuable information could be captured on their original perceptions and attributions. Hence, we used an open-ended question to capture respondents’ top-of-mind associations of the destination Swedish Lapland (cf. Stepchenkova & Li, 2014). Brand awareness was measured by five items, rated on a seven-point Likert scale (Oh, 2000). The questionnaire also contained questions on travel experience (Teichmann, 2011), as well as past visit frequency to Sweden (Lam & Hsu, 2006), and general impression of the country as a tourist destination, ranging from very negative to very positive. Background questions covering socio-demographic descriptors such as age, gender, education level, and occupation were also included.

Data were collected by distributing an online questionnaire to web panels of consumers between 20 and 69 years in UK, USA, Germany, and Norway. Only panelists who had been travelling abroad within the past 12 months were invited. The sampled countries represent different levels of knowledge and awareness of Sweden as a tourist destination (SLVB, 2012) and were chosen in collaboration with managers of tourism companies and destination management organizations in Swedish Lapland.

Findings

In total, 1 360 valid responses were collected; ranging from 153 (Norway) to 622 (UK) per country. Gender distribution was similar in all country samples, with 51% of respondents in the total sample being female. Responses were also fairly evenly distributed between age groups, with approximately half of the total sample being under 45 years. More than half (54%) of all respondents had a university degree and 67% were working.
Respondents from all four countries had very similar levels of travel experience (µ=4.51 on a seven-point scale in the total sample). Brand awareness of Swedish Lapland was generally low, in particular among the US respondents (µ=2.81), but slightly higher in the UK sample (3.89). Those who had visited any destination in Sweden (most of whom had never been in the Swedish Lapland region) had significantly higher brand awareness of Swedish Lapland compared to respondents who had never been in the country (4.04 vs. 3.22, p<.001).

For the text responses to the brand association question, a new variable was created indicating the overall valence of each response. The table below displays the results of the valence analysis.
Table 1. Overall valence of brand associations to Swedish Lapland (N=1 360)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>UK</th>
<th>USA</th>
<th>GERMANY</th>
<th>NORWAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Positive</td>
<td>5.6</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>15.4</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neutral</td>
<td>78.8</td>
<td>41.6</td>
<td>59.7</td>
<td>60.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Negative</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nothing/don’t know</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>46.1</td>
<td>24.5</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Differences in valence of the brand associations were significant at $p<.001$ with a Chi-square of 170.28. The majority of the responses fell into the neutral category, with the exception of the US sample, in which almost half of the respondents could not think of anything in particular that they would associate with Swedish Lapland. An ANOVA of brand awareness across the valence categories ($F=111.56, p<.001$) shows that brand awareness of Swedish Lapland is highest among those respondents that have positive associations ($\mu=4.46$), followed by neutral (3.90), negative (3.29), and nothing/don’t know (2.19).

In the second step of the analysis, each textual response containing more than one distinct association was separated so that each row in the data set contained only one association. At this point, the nothing/don’t know responses were excluded. This process resulted in 1 538 unique associations. Then, a thematic analysis was used to qualitatively identify, analyze and report patterns within the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006; Oguztimur & Akturan, 2016).

Results from the thematic analysis show that the dominating theme is related to the nature and natural phenomena, including weather and climate. In particular, it appeared frequently among the German (65.0%) and British (45.5%) respondents. The Brits referred to a larger extent than the others to cold or snow, and they also mentioned northern lights more often. Reindeer were quite frequently mentioned in all samples, whereas only the Germans made associations to moose.

Among the Norwegian respondents, a theme related to culture, attractions and activities was much more distinct than in the other samples – 37.1 percent of the Norwegians’ associations fell into the “culture” theme while 36.6 percent were mainly related to nature. Most of these referred to the Sami people and culture; perhaps expectedly as the Sami area (Sápmi) also stretches across northern Norway, Finland, and Russia. The UK sample also differs from the others as its second largest theme (36.2%) involved associations to Christmas or Santa Claus, whereas almost none of the respondents from the other countries mentioned such
associations. The Christmas theme might not seem surprising considering the geographical location and the connotations of the word “Lapland”. However, Swedish Lapland does not market any “Christmassy” destinations or activities at all, whereas Finnish Lapland has a popular Santa Claus destination.

With regard to the US respondents, it appears that most of them had rather vague associations to Swedish Lapland, even after excluding the “nothing/don’t know” responses. The second most common theme (18.1%) included general attitudes or emotions (e.g., interesting, unfamiliar), followed by places (12.9%), which often were very general, such as “Europe” or “some area in Sweden”, or even wrong, such as “Dutchland” or “Switzerland”. Clearly, some of the US respondents were thinking about Switzerland instead of Sweden (examples include cheese, chocolate, the Swiss alps, yodeling, Sound of music).

Theoretical implications

This study contributes to extant research by addressing not only current or previous visitors, but focusing mostly on secondary images, i.e. pre-visit perceptions. Higher brand awareness was shown to be connected to more favorable associations, providing empirical insight to the awareness – image relationship. We have started to discern patterns of similarities and differences across different countries of origin; an area for which recent calls for research has been made. Moreover, the use of unsolicited, top-of-mind associations adds to the understanding of destination brand image in a way that complements the prevalent use of listed attributes with 7- or 5-point scales.

Practical implications

For managers of DMOs and tourism entrepreneurs, it is essential to know how the destination is perceived by their target audience in order to build the brand and differentiate from others. Having a strong and positive image increases visitation intentions; thus, identifying important attributes is key to instill positive associations to the destination. Qualitatively measuring top-of-mind associations along with a quantitative brand awareness scale could be a useful and straightforward way of achieving such knowledge.

Limitations

The use of online consumer panels is a limitation in the sense that respondents are not necessarily representative of the general population. They are on average more highly educated and more experienced internet users. While using an open question to capture
associations has benefits, it could also mean that potentially relevant attributes are left out because they are not among the top-of-mind associations. As with any qualitative approach, it is also possible that the resulting themes could be different if other researchers analyzed the same data.

Originality/value

This study combines aspects of destination image that are seldom addressed; i.e. secondary (pre-visit) images, cross-cultural comparisons, and top-of-mind associations.

Keywords

Destination image, brand associations, brand awareness, tourism

List of references


Tasting with your eyes: Country of Origin and Organic Information Bias Taste Perception

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Purpose

This study was designed to investigate how product type: organic/regular and country-of-origin (COO) both create bias in taste perception and affects purchase intention and willingness to pay (WTP). While organic labeled food is perceived to be healthier (Magnusson, Arvola, Hursti, Åberg, & Sjödén, 2003), but less tasty than regular (non-organic) food (Schuldt & Hannahan, 2013; Westcombe & Wardle, 1997), what happens when the factor of country of origin is added into the equation? The Japanese market is known to be one of the most challenging and unique in the world. Japanese consumers also tend to place more trust in local brands and prefer branded products (Moriuchi, 2016; Nagashima, 1970; Palumbo and Herbig, 2000). Would this national bias change the taste perception? This study looks at examining whether country of origin (COO) effects the taste perception of both organic and regular food, and how these combinations affect and are reflected in consumer purchase decisions in terms of intention and willingness to pay.

Methodology

Participants
The sample pool was composed of a convenience sample size of 110 undergraduate students (50 male, 60 female) from the Economics, Business and International Languages departments respectively. Students were given extra class points that added up to their final grade in exchange for their participation.
Pretest Stimuli
A pretest was conducted to identify the product that will be used in the study. A simple questionnaire was administered to the 110 undergraduates assessing their consumption habits and patterns, purchase frequency and product choices. Based on the results of a seven-point scale, chocolate and potato chips were identified as the main products (where the main product is identified by the purchase frequency and consumption frequency). The means from the pretest reflected 5.35, 6.01 for chocolates and 6.25, 6.76 for potato chips respectively.

Study Design
This study employed a between-subjects (2 x 2) field experiment in which the contents of the stimuli focused on two factors: country of origin (local; in this case Japan or foreign), and product material type (organic or regular). The participants were asked to sample and evaluate two food samples accordingly.

Experimental Instrument
Identical chocolate and chips were used for the experiment with changes made only to the labels and ads that accompanied the foods when distributed to the participants. While the participants were provided the labels that indicated that the chocolates and chips were either organic or otherwise, with the country of origin being local or foreign, in reality the chocolates and chips supplied were all organic and foreign brands.

Four briefing reports, presented in the form of labels and leaflets were developed as stimuli. The labels and leaflets reflected the different compositions of the two factors (country of origin and product material type). For country of origin, Japanese are known to be brand conscious and label conscious consumers hence, fictitious companies were created and used to eliminate existing brand loyalty or preferences.

For product type, the labels and leaflets provided succinct information such as background of the organic product and regular product. However, no company name is indicated to remove any form of brand bias.

Procedures
Participants were informed that they were participating in a consumer survey where there was no right or wrong answers, conducted by a business school to explore the differences in food taste; namely chocolate and chips between regular and organic products. This was administered over the course of one week.

As this study was conducted as a between-subjects design, participants were served either the chocolate or chips option. The snack was distributed on a single tray with accompanying labels specifying the country of origin and material type (organic or regular). The leaflets accompanied each tray accordingly to provide further information regarding the background of the products.

Basically, two sets of leaflets (one for chocolates and another for chips) were distributed detailing the background of the snacks respectively. These materials introduced the concepts of organic and regular, the background of the raw materials used as well as the country of origin. While the length of the leaflets was kept to a minimal, illustrations were included for the ease of comprehension. Different leaflets were circulated as they basically reflected the
different compositions of the two factors. Participants were asked to pay attention to the labels with each snack and to read the leaflets while consuming the chocolates and chips.

After the participants had finished sampling the chocolates and chips, they were instructed to respond to a series of questions in the form of a paper questionnaire. The questionnaires asked the participants to rate the snacks; organic and regular, local and foreign in terms of taste, texture, and smell attributes, Willingness-to-Pay (WTP) and purchase intention. The questionnaire also asked about behavioral attributes with regards to purchase decisions, habits, product selection criteria and attitude towards organic products as well as country of origin.

**Measures**
To measure taste and preferences, a 9-point Hedonic scale (Peryam and Pilgrim, 1957) and a five-item attitude with a seven seven-point semantic differential scale was used with endpoints of flavorful/ tasteless, rich/ weak, good taste/ bad taste, natural/ artificial, fresh/ stale For texture, a two-item attitude with a seven seven-point semantic differential scale was used with endpoints of smooth/ chalky, soft/ solid (for chocolate), crispy/ soggy, hard/ soft (for chips), and a three-item attitude with a seven seven-point semantic differential scale with fragrant/ foul, strong/ weak, natural/ artificial endpoints was used to measure smell.

For behavioral attitudes, a seven-item attitude with a seven-point semantic differential scale was used. The items were positive/negative, trustworthy/untrustworthy, reliable/ unreliable, convincing/unconvincing, favorable/unfavorable, matter/ does not matter and informative/ uninformative. A five-point Likert scale was also used to measure purchase habits such as frequency of snack purchase and purchase made based on Organic and COO factors. The purchase intention measure used a five-item scale based on Dodds, Monroe and Grewal’s (1991) willingness to buy and Spears and Singh’s (2004) purchase intention. The items were very low/high purchase interest, definitely not buy/ definitely buy, probably not/probably buy it, definitely do not intend to buy/definitely intend, and definitely consider to buy/ will not consider at all.

Willingness-to-pay is measure using an open ended question format (Abrams 1964; Arrow, Solow, Portnoy, Leamer, Radnor & Schuman, 1993; Mitchell and Carson 1989). The price is based on the getting participants to indicate the highest amount (in Japanese yen) that they are willing to pay for the chocolates and chips for the different combinations (based on the labels and serving size).

**Findings**
This data collection phase has just completed at the time of this abstract writing. Analysis is scheduled to be completed by early December, 2016 and will be ready to be reported during the conference in April, 2017.

**Theoretical Implications**
In terms of theoretical implications, this study seeks to enhance the discipline of marketing especially with regards to sensory marketing and consumer perception. There are various studies on the effect of organic food perception and taste (Lee, Shimizu, Kniffin & Wansink, 2013; Schuldt & Hannahan, 2013; Westcombe & Wardle, 1997). This study seeks to add to
the existing literature while at the same time, expand the scope and introduce a new factor, the effect of country-of-origin and national bias.

**Practical Implications**
The findings from this study will provide practitioners the understanding of the effect of interaction between country-of-origin (in this case, local versus foreign) and organic as well as regular (non-organic) products. While often times organic products do have a more positive perception, nationalistic bias tendencies may influence the perception in terms of quality and taste. Practitioners will be able to utilize the findings to develop effective positioning strategies that take into account the intricate relationship between country-of-origin and product type.

**Limitations**
One major limitation is the number of participants that took part in the study. This study was limited to 110 undergraduate university students that were also at the same time undergraduates mainly from the Kanto region particularly Chiba prefecture. In the future, a larger sample size from different regions around Japan should be obtained.

In terms of product selection, the study merely focuses on chocolates and chips. It would be interesting to expand the product scope to cover other goods including non-perishable items such as apparel and examine if there are any differences in terms of sensorial perception based on country of origin and material type.

**Originality/ Value**
While various studies explore willingness-to-pay (WTP) for ethical products ((Arnot, Boxall, & Cash, 2006; Aschemann & Hamm, 2008; De Ferran & Grunert, 2007; De Pelsmacker, Driesen, & Rayp, 2005; Loureiro & Lotade, 2004; McDonagh, 2002; Sirieix & Tagbata, 2008) and the impact of organic products on consumer taste perception (Schuldt and Hanahan, 2013; Torjusen, Lieblein, Wandel, & Francis, 2001; Westcombe & Wardle, 1997), the core focus has solely been on either fair or organic products. This study attempts to shed light on how country-of-origin (COO) will influence the perceived taste of both organic and regular snacks. This is pertinent as country of origin effects product quality evaluation and purchase intention (Koschate-Fischer, Diamantopoulos & Oldenkotte, 2012; Tse & Gorn, 1993) and in turn shapes purchase decisions. This study basically adds another dimension to understanding the drivers of purchase and product taste perception. As with most research, the findings will shed light on how marketers can effectively position their products with regards to organic and regular snacks based on country of origin.

**Keywords**
Country-of-origin, Organic, Purchase Intention, Willingness-to pay
References


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Successful Personal Branding on Social Media Building Brand Through Content on Youtube

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Purpose:
The purpose of this paper is to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon of personal branding on social media. In particular, I aim to identify the key factors needed for ‘ordinary persons’ to be successful on social media. The focus is on YouTubers and the process of creating the branded content and succeeding with it on-line.

Methodology/approach
The globalized world we live in today has created pressures, such as fiercer competition in most aspects of our daily lives, which require people to ‘stand out’ from the crowd (Brooks & Anumudu, 2016; Shepherd, 2005). Hence, the idea of differentiating ourselves is becoming a more common notion. As a response to these pressures, personal branding has taken hold among professionals. Most of the personal branding literature suggests that branding yourself is the key to personal and professional success (Gehl, 2011; Khedher 2013; Gandini, 2016; Harris & Rae, 2011; Schwabel, 2011; Lair, Sullivan & Cheney, 2005). Moreover, the argument that “if you don’t brand yourself, others will” (Kaputa, 2003, cited in Shepherd, 2005, p. 590) seems to have led to the increased interest in personal branding that we have seen for the past two decades.

Personal branding has been commonly regarded as a means to achieve professional advancement or sustain popularity (Peters, 1997; Arruda, 2013; Shepherd, 2005). Therefore, personal branding has traditionally been the domain of celebrities, politicians or professionals who strive to succeed in their careers (Labrecque, Markos & Milne, 2011). However, with the introduction of Web 2.0 and the concurrent rise of social media, personal branding has evolved into a phenomenon not exclusive to professionals and celebrities.

Social media has enabled personal branding to take a new form, in which people brand themselves through the content that they share on their personalized ‘profiles’. One platform in which personal branding is arguably especially evident is YouTube - the currently leading video sharing website. According to Statista (2016, n.p.), “[m]ore than 400 hours of videos [are] uploaded to YouTube every minute” and interestingly, some of the most popular YouTube channels are not maintained by corporate brands or celebrities but by ‘ordinary people’ online.

Since the beginning of the 90’s, personal branding has primarily been the domain of self-help consultants, experts and practitioners (Peters, 1997; Shepherd, 2005; Lair, Sullivan & Cheney, 2005; Chen, 2013), although the original idea of marketing persons appeared already in 1969 (Kotler and Levy, 1969). While much research has been done on the phenomenon of branding on social media (Barware & Meehan, 2010; Holt, 2016; Gensler et al. 2013; Singh
& Sonnenburg, 2012), it is only recently that branding from a personal perspective has sparked an interest among academics.

Most practitioners argue that branding of humans is similar to the branding of products and services, which is also supported by academic research viewing this phenomenon through the prism of marketing theory (e.g. Labrecque, Markos & Milne, 2011, Shepherd, 2005). However, another stream of literature, which explores personal branding from a sociocultural perspective (e.g. Nolan, 2015) argues that this phenomenon is much more complex. Khedher (2015) applies a multidisciplinary approach arguing that personal branding is a three stage process of 1) defining the brand identity based on Bourdieu’s (1983) theory of social and cultural capital; 2) brand positioning based on Goffman’s (1959) theory of self-presentation, and 3) brand image based on Schön’s (1983) theory of reflexivity.

Personal branding is usually associated with the desire to achieve professional advancement (Gandini, 2016; Lair, Sullivan & Cheney, 2005; Nolan, 2015). However, personal branding on social media is not necessarily based on professional motives but can be driven by the desire to stay in touch with friends and family, entertainment and knowledge-sharing (Labrecque, Markos & Milne, 2011; Papacharissi, 2002). In this paper, the following definition of personal branding is used: “The effort made by individuals to create awareness and visibility of their persona among a target audience, which enables them to stand out from the crowd and gain personal or professional success” (Labrecque, Markos & Milne, 2011).

The content plays an important role when building and promoting a brand on social media (Gensler et al, 2013) and it should be relevant to the target audience, consistent and valuable as well as include some call for action. For example, the research has shown that the branded content that tends to create positive engagement among users in the form of “likes”, “comments”, “sharing” and increased sales (for product-related content) is informative (Ashley & Tuten, 2015), vivid and interactive (de Vries, Gensler “ Leeflang, 2012). Besides, the richness of the content, i.e. inclusion of images and videos has been found to have a positive impact on consumer engagement (Sabate et al, 2014) and sharing (Berger & Milkman, 2012). There is, however, no real consensus in the literature of what constitutes an effective in terms of consumer engagement branded content. The literature also points out that we lack understanding of the process, in which amateur individuals (ordinary people) use social media to brand themselves.

This study follows the call of Chen (2013) to uncover the personal branding process used by amateur individuals on-line by analyzing the content of their videos. Methodologically the study applied the qualitative content analysis of on-line videos of 4 successful YouTubers. The total of 72 videos, featuring 2-3 years on-line, were viewed, transcribed (texts), described (gestures, appearances) and categorized in the period of March – May 2016. The themes related to brand identity, positioning, image as well as brand-building process were identified. The selected YouTubers had at least 1 million subscribers and were active on YouTube for at least 3 years. Among the featured YouTubers were: 1) Jenna Marbles, a comedian and entertainer with more than 15 mln subscribers in 2013, 2) Bethany Mota – a young girl talking about beauty, fashion, DIY with nearly 10 mln subscribers, 3) Tyler Oakley – talking about issues of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender communities with 7 mln transcribers and 4) Casey Neistat talking about his hectic life as a husband, father, adventurer and filmmaker.
Findings
The preliminary findings show that YouTubers are actively involved in personal branding and they undertake the steps similar to conventional product or service brands: establishing the brand, communicating the brand and developing relationships between the brand and its target audience. It is also important to note that these steps are not always separated in time but often overarching. Several important factors have been also identified at each of these steps.

In the first step of establishing the personal brand, it is essential for the person in question to have a clear brand profile and stay loyal to it. The personal profile is comprised of such elements as personality of YouTuber, typical topics, tone of voice, environment (setting) and product brands used by the YouTuber. This content is aligned with the profile and communicated in a clear and consistent way to the audience. Thus, YouTubers are not building brands by just “being themselves” as some literature suggests (Labrecque et al, 2011) but rather via a planned and strategic decision of building a clear identity (Arruda, 2005) drawing close parallels between individuals as brands and product (service) brands (de Chernatony and McDonald, 2003). Besides, by investing in their social (networks) and cultural (knowledge, experience) capital (Khedher, 2015), YouTubers increase the probability of standing out of the crowd. Among other factors facilitating the identity building is authenticity achieved via the disclosure of personal stories and personality traits. While authenticity has been pointed out as a key factor for successful online branding by many authors (Fournier and Avery, 2011, Barwise and Meehan, 2010), some of them (e.g. Chen, 2013, Shepherd, 2005) warn that in personal branding online authenticity might be purposefully manipulated by the individuals.

In the second step of enforcing the personal brand, it was essential to promote multiple social media accounts to increase the visibility of the individual brands in question. All YouTubers were promoting themselves on sites such as Twitter, Facebook and in this way constantly staying in “top of mind” of their users. Striving for being constantly exposed to their target group resembles the attempts of product brands to maintain the “mind share” of their audiences (Holt, 2016).

In the third step of maintaining the personal brand, it is essential to develop and maintain close and personal interactions with the audience to encourage the co-creation of new content. This is also essential for personal brands to remain relevant to their audience. Brand relationships are given much attention in the literature, arguing for the complexity and multiplicity of brand-consumer relationships. According to Fournier (1998), four elements should be in place to qualify relationships in the interpersonal field: mutuality, purpose, complexity and evolving nature. YouTubers have mastered their relationships with the users across all these dimensions, achieving what Fournier (1998, p. 362) calls “best friendships” (voluntary union relying on reciprocity principle, ensured through continual provision of positive rewards; symbolized by revelation of honesty, true self and intimacy). However, there are also multiple examples of different kind of “brand dependencies” developed by the users (obsessive, highly emotional, selfish attractions concretized by feeling that the partner is irreplaceable; separation anxiety and high tolerance of relationship transgressions.)

Moreover, YouTubers have managed to involve their audiences in the active co-creation of content, for example, by responding to their demands to include some topics in the show, calling them for actions and publicly thanking them on-line. There were multiple examples of
consumers collectively praising or criticizing particular product brands featured by the YouTuber. These empirical observations add to the literature on brand value co-creation in the on-line context (Healy and McDonagh, 2013; Pongsakornrungrungsilp and Schroeder, 2011; Payne et al., 2009). However, unlike brand communities, where value co-creation relies on the sharing of information and the making of social relationships, meaning and knowledge among members, and constitutes a rather democratic process leading to consumer empowerment (McAlexander et al., 2002; Merz et al., 2009), personal branding on-line by individuals is of a more totalitarian nature as they act as the key “providers” of branded content while users play the roles of “beneficiaries” mostly contributing to the status and increasing popularity of the branded persons. In this way there is an implicit and explicit exploitation of users going on adding to their dependencies over the branded individual. This process has been featured in the literature (Cova and Dalli, 2009; Zwick et al., 2008) and requires a closer focus and attention.

Theoretical implications
The study advances our knowledge of personal branding in social media by identifying the steps of personal branding process and critical factors of successful content creation on-line. It proves the applicability of classical principles of product branding and typology of consumer-brand relationships as well as brand meaning co-creation to the personal branding phenomenon while at the same time calling for a closer attention to the outcomes of these processes for users.

Practical implications
Managers are encouraged to stay aware of the increasing influence of successful YouTubers as personal brands in the Internet. It is important that managers monitor and analyze what is being said about their brands by the famous personalities on-line as these individuals are capable to influence the consumers’ perceptions about brands and companies.

Limitations
The study has focused on four branded individuals and cannot be generalized for other on-line individuals, brand communities and on-line (product, service) brands.

Originality/value
The study applies a multi-disciplinary perspective on the phenomenon of personal branding on-line and advances the current knowledge of on-line branding by proving the applicability of many established branding theories to the on-line context. It also elevates the need for better understanding of the outcomes of personal branding for the wider audience of consumers.

Keywords
Personal branding, YouTubers, on-line branding, social media, brand relationships, value co-creation
References


A brand theoretic perspective on the Islamic State

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Introduction and purpose
This paper offers a brand-based perspective on the combination of terrorist action and digital promotion that has created and sustained awareness of Islamic State (IS) as a global terrorist brand. The brands and logos of terror groups have been thoroughly catalogued by Beifuss and Bellini (2013) and this author moves beyond their impressive sectoral description to interpret one group’s activities as an example of global brand communications in an era of post-classical and post-regional terrorism (Wieviorka, 2007). The result is a conceptual model of the integrated digital media system that promotes Islamic State. The hope is that this conceptual interpretation of the group’s propaganda from a brand theoretic perspective will improve understanding of Islamic State’s communications and be of interest to marketing scholars and practitioners as well as to terrorism scholars, at least one of whom has already used terms from marketing to analyse the “narrative themes of the IS brand” (Winter, 2015).

Methodology
The research approach applies case study methodology to IS’s branding and digital media operations alongside a contemporary history of its promotional infrastructure. This case-based method is viable for “examining contemporary events” (Yin, 2003, p. 7) such as the aspects of IS brand management that are explicated here. This methodology is also consistent with the “instrumental” use of a case-based approach to aid general understanding (Stake, 1995, p. 3) rather to undertake experimental inquiry, which would not be suited to this subject area. A picture of IS branding and communications was built based on analysis of online artefacts, which were organised as an illustrative case study to show the different elements of brand theory in action. Here, the content analysis of IS’s brand communication material was based on the methodology described by Baines and O’Shaughnessy (2014, p. 169) in their study of Al Qaeda, in which material was considered at the content, propaganda and semiotic levels. The resulting content was further organised using the methodological framework of historical institutionalism (Hall & Taylor, 1996, p. 937) to define IS’s core ideas and ambitions along with the agents and mechanisms for communicating them. The results are presented in the form of a conceptual model and explanatory text.

Findings
Islamic State: A brand of strategic claims
The sense of conviction, momentum and threat associated with Islamic State starts with a core brand that makes a series of strategic claims and achieves high levels of salience with the public at large and resonance with sympathisers (Keller, 2007, p. 76). Not a word is wasted in the two-word brand, Islamic State, which simultaneously asserts the group’s Islamism, statehood and the promise of a kalifah or caliphate for the global Muslim community (ummah). The efficacy of this naming strategy demonstrates a coherent, rational and modern approach to branding that has the advantages of simplicity (Saatchi, 2006) yet
also includes enriching factors such as leader/founder influence and national origin, as proposed by Melewar (2003) in his corporate identity construct.

**Brand imagery and heritage branding**

The words of Islamic State’s identity are supplemented with a logo of a distinctive black flag with white lettering. Monochrome flags are traditional in Arabic and Islamic history and Muslims believe that one of the Prophet’s original banners was black, which is why IS adopted this style to visually identify its cause with Muslim tradition. This incorporation of history (alongside myth and prophecy) and the emphasis on the longevity of Islam shows a high “heritage quotient” (Urde, Balmer and Greyser, 2007) that is coherently applied by IS to the group’s brand identity.

**Branded content: Digital outreach via verbal and visual channels**

Branded content produced and distributed on behalf of IS by its various affiliated media centres is central to the digital outreach of the organisation for ideological promotion and for recruitment. The verbal channel of IS includes the messages at the core of Islamic State’s promotion of itself, through a combination of digital public relations, in-house publications and propaganda. The material is distributed via a media system of sub-brands, some of which are explicit in their links with the group such as Islamic State Reports, while others operate at a distance, such as Dabiq magazine, Al-Bayan online radio and the Dawn of Glad Tidings twitter app that distributes radio and written content.

The visual content includes posters in IS territory and videos, with violent videos of beheadings widely understood in the West to be the group’s main media output, although it makes up only 5% of the total, with depictions of life in the caliphate accounting for the majority. The video content is displayed with sub-brands - such as Al-Hayat media centre that produces English language videos and Al-Furqan, IS’s Arabic video producer - in a way that mimics the on-screen branding of mainstream Arabic news producers such as Al-Jazeera and Abu Dhabi television.

**Brand involvement: co-creation, crowdsourced terror and open source jihad**

IS has been described promoted as a pop-up caliphate that reflects the temporary nature of modern consumer society. Extremist groups have also used metaphors of information technology in their publications, such as the discussion on “open source jihad” in issue 12 of Inspire magazine which stresses the informal approach that allows extremists to train at home instead of taking the risk of travelling to Syria. Brand involvement methods such as co-creation of content and crowdsourcing have been used in macabre ways, including the use of competitions and votes in online forums to engage followers in devising and choosing methods of execution of hostages (Burke, p.102).

**Digital artefacts of terror: A campaign multiplier**

The warnings of planned terrorist acts given by IS in its visual and verbal communication channels are designed to create fear and uncertainty in the Western far enemy through what extremists call the propaganda of the deed. The propaganda effects from this action channel are multiplied many times by the depictions of terrorist acts in what Keller (2003, p. 391) has called a “program multiplier” effect in the brand value chain that generates increased awareness and brand associations. Viewed as a program multiplier, terrorist action can be understood as a “violent communication strategy” that delivers the most compelling, attention-getting and ferocious form of brand promotion available (Schmid, de Graaf and McQuail, 1982, p.15).
Automated distribution and algorithmic targeting

IS’s promotional system includes automated tools such as Twitter Bots that retweet content at high volumes, in ways that distribute extremist messages to the screens of followers and sympathisers. One example of malevolent digital media automation was the hijacking by IS operators of Twitter hashtags for the 2014 football World Cup. Similarly, in its recruitment operations, IS combines algorithmic and manual scanning of social media in order to determine personal affinities which it then uses to make an initial outreach to a recruitment prospect. Personality types are segmented based on keyword searches of social media profiles and the likes given to the characters of TV shows and video games, such as Assasin’s Creed and Call of Duty, as well as characters from the Lord of the Rings.
Figure 1: A conceptual model of the brand communications system of Islamic State

The model consists of several components:

**ISLAMIC STATE**
- Claim of Islamic allegiance
- Claim of statehood
- Claim against non-believers (kuffars)
- Claim of a caliphate (khalifah)

**Verbal Channel**
1. Language of conviction, intent and ambition
2. Messages to appeal to Muslims in near and far lands and territories near and far enemies
3. Links between IS ideology and prophetic claims of Islam
4. Message of belonging and fictive kinship for recruitment
5. Propagation of ultraviolence and sexual rewards

Distribution via:
- Dabiq Magazine
- Islamic State Report
- Al-Bayan radio
- Dawn of Glad Tidings
- Twitter app
- Ajnad Media anthems

**Ideology**
1. Hijrah: The requirement to migrate from the West for Muslim lands and join the caliphate
2. Khalifah: The establishment, support and defence of a holy land — or caliphate — refuge for all Muslims
3. Jihad: The invocation to wage holy war both to establish and defend the caliphate — as well as making pre-emptive attacks on the land of crusaders or non-believers (darul kufi)

**Media System**
- Islamic State Media Infrastructure
  1. Communications command and control: Abu-Muhammad al-Adnani
  2. Message origination and management: Islamic State Institute of Public Information

**Visual Channel**
1. Images intended to appeal to Muslims and repel enemies
2. Humiliation of near and far enemies through videos of beheadings
3. Visual signals of revenge for Muslims e.g. use of Spanish Bay-style Orange jumpsuits in prisoner and beheading videos
4. Competent administration and workings of the protostate e.g. videos of Islamic State Health Service providing healthcare
5. Harmony in the caliphate among ummah (the global Muslim community). E.g. videos and photos of different ethnic groups sharing comradeship as fighters
6. Action and ultraviolence
7. Martyrdom as nobility as a Muslim

**AUDIENCES**
- Uncommitted audience: Western society and Middle East states
- Sympathetic audience: Hardline / extreme Muslims in West and Middle East

**Action Channel**
Propaganda of the Deed against Near and Far Enemy
Ultraviolence for Local Terror and Global Reaction against:
1. Far Enemy in Middle East
   - e.g. Beheading American journalists and aid workers in Syria
2. Far Enemy in Arab Countries
   - e.g. Al Qaeda beach attack of 15 June 2015 and bombing of Russian airliner flying from Egypt on 31 October 2015
3. Far Enemy in Western Countries
   - e.g. 13 November 2015 attacks on Paris, 22 March 2016 attacks on Brussels
4. Near Enemy in the Khalifah
   - e.g. Executions of Syrians named as alleged British spies by Jihad: 11 January 2016

**Military Operations System**
1. Unified command and control
2. Skilled in urban and guerrilla warfare
3. Viable bomb-making and suicide terror teams

**Islamic State Command and control**

Linnaeus University
Practical and theoretical implications
Islamic State has shown an impressive level of digital agility in the way it assesses, deploys, and exits online platforms, in ways that ensure its content is matched closely to the online channel achieving tight communications fit between medium and message. Islamic State may be best known for its use of Twitter and online video but has also used Ask.FM, Facebook, Instagram, Justpasteit, Kik, Telegram and Youtube as distribution channels. This level of agility and flexibility is less evident in corporate marketing, for example, where it is more common to make a big commitment to one or two platforms (often for understandable resource allocation reasons) rather than spreading promotional effort across multiple channels in a more experimental approach. Similarly, IS’s focus on tight control of the core message and then a looser approach to members of the group distributing personal messages about life in the caliphate offers a challenge to the orthodoxies of control that pervade corporate social media policies. IS’s alliance of brand totalitarianism on the core messages with digital liberalism in encouraging freedom in the use of social media has led to a stream of unorganised but clearly potent social media output targeting different audiences.

Islamic State’s success in recruiting in the West has shown that some young people are open to brand messages that derive much of their meaning from heritage and religious dimensions. This behaviour is consistent with theoretical writing by international relations scholars on the need for Western planners with a secular perspective to be aware of religiosity – or at least the possibility of the what Mustapha Pasha (2012) has called the “post-secular” - in certain regions of the world (particularly the Islamic cultural zones) and in certain communities in Western democracies,

Limitations
While seeking to build a conceptual model based on a broad spread of evidence, the rudimentary Arabic language skills of the author meant that the content analysis was limited to material translated by extremist groups themselves for circulation in English or translations by monitors of extremist groups. One effect of this content limitation was that the study did not examine Arabic content used to recruit and propagate the IS message in Iraq, Syria, Saudi Arabia, Yemen and other Middle Eastern countries, as well as Arab-speaking North Africa.

Originality/value
Globalisation in the form or transnational media platforms, such as satellite television and the internet, have become key enablers of the transnational violent extremist groups of the 21st century and have been used to promote their brands online. Yet the branding aspect of extremist terror groups has attracted relatively little scholarly attention in comparison with the study of terrorist operations and propaganda, which has been covered by international relations and terrorism studies. This paper offers what the author believes at the time of writing to be the first analysis of Islamic State’s communications system from a brand theoretic perspective alongside an original conceptual model of the group’s brand communications infrastructure.

Keywords:
Brand identity, heritage branding, terrorism.
References
The Effect of Endorser Credibility on Brand Credibility, Consumer-based Brand Equity, and Brand Attachment of Smartphone Users

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Purpose
The purpose of this research is to examine the structural relationships between endorser credibility, brand credibility, consumer-based brand equity, and brand attachment of smartphone users. Grounded in theory of brand signaling, this research provides a better understanding on the extent to which endorsers’ culture and attitude impact on the brand related constructs and the way it effects on users’ brand attachment.

Worldwide marketers often consider celebrity endorsement as one of the effective promotional tools. To demonstrate the outcome of the endorser credibility, Steph Curry, one of NBA star has now become the endorser of the Apple IPhone 6 with a 15-second commercial video demonstrating his live photos, which is supposed to represent the new features of IPhone. It is likely that credibility or reliability of the endorser consequently be transferred to a particular brand. Celebrity endorsers can help in building brand equity (Till and Shimp, 1998, Till et al., 2008). An endorsement helps in creating the remembrance effect for the endorsed brand as well as emotional connection with the brand, i.e., brand attachment (Park et al., 2010).

Hypotheses
There is a positive relationship between endorser’s credibility and H1: Brand credibility; H2: Consumer-based brand equity; H3: Brand attachment of smartphone users.
According to Erdem and Swait (2004), the credibility aspect can be considered as the most significant characteristic of a brand indicating a product’s market positioning. Furthermore, greater credibility would bring higher consumer’s evaluations of quality (Wernerfelt, 1988). In other words, consumers might appraise brands that are high in credibility as good/high quality brands (Baek and King, 2011). The credibility of brands support consumer-based brand equity (Erdem and Swait, 1998). The brand signaling theory proposes that brand credibility is able to build brand equity. Even though Erdem and Swait (2004) claim that credible brands are able to function with lesser information-gathering, information-processing costs as well as lower risk perceived, the influence it may have on the brand’s emotional connection remains as yet untapped.

**H4:** There is a positive relationship between brand credibility and consumer-based brand equity of smartphone users.

**H5:** There is a positive relationship between brand credibility and brand attachment of smartphone users.

Aaker (2009) operationalizes brand equity as a group of assets or liabilities consisting of several aspects: perceived quality, brand associations, brand awareness, and brand loyalty (Pappu et al., 2006). Alternatively, Keller (1993) defines customer-based brand equity as the customer’s response in order to market a brand. Consumer-based brand equity also can be described as consumer’s associate value or connection with a certain product or brand (Pappu et al., 2006). Little research was conducted on the role of consumer-based brand equity and brand attachment. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

**H6:** There is a positive relationship between consumer-based brand equity and brand attachment of smartphone users.

**Methodology/approach**

This study used convenience sampling approach and to measure the variables, measurement items were adopted from prior established researches as a methodological norm in measuring latent variables (Westland, 2015, Valaei et al., 2017). The first order measurement items were adopted from previous studies: endorser credibility from Ohanian (1990), brand credibility
from Erdem and Swait (2004), consumer-based brand equity from Spry et al. (2011), and brand attachment from (Zhou et al., 2012, Thomson et al., 2005). Prior to data analysis, we applied several steps to ensure that any possible bias is avoided. For instance, Harman’s one factor test (Podsakoff et al., 2003) was used to address common method bias. We addressed missing values through expectation-maximization algorithm (EMA) (Little, 1988) applying SPSS software (Version 20). Finally, a-priori sample size calculator for structural equation models (Soper, 2015) was used to assess sample size adequacy.

A total of 497 responses were used to assess the measurement and structural models using partial least squares (PLS), a variance-based structural equation modeling approach (Valaei and Jiroudi, 2016). To analyze the hierarchical component model, SmartPLS software version 3.2.4 (Ringle et al., 2015) is applied. As a part of measurement evaluation, this study considers composite reliability, average variance extracted (AVE=convergent validity), outer loadings, Cronbach’s alpha, cross loading and discriminant validity. To test the reliability of measurement model, composite reliability and Cronbach’s Alpha values are examined to ensure the reliability of the measurement model. Furthermore, to assess the discriminant validity between constructs, Fornell and Larcker (1981), loadings and cross-loading criterion, and Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio of correlations are used. Validity and reliability of the first order factors on their respective second order factors are also assessed. Bootstrapping algorithm is applied to examine significance level of the paths between each construct. Blindfolding technique is used to assess the predictive relevancy of the proposed model. Finally, to examine the role of demographic factors as categorical moderating variables, PLS-multi group analysis (PLS-MGA) is applied.

Findings

The findings show that all hypotheses are supported (shown in Appendix A). The positive relationships between endorser credibility and brand credibility ($H_1$: path coefficient = 0.488, standard error = 0.040, T-value = 12.050), consumer-based brand equity ($H_2$: path coefficient = 0.151, standard error = 0.029, T-value = 5.252), and brand attachment ($H_3$: path coefficient = 0.125, standard error = 0.039, T-value = 3.219) are supported. The hypotheses on the positive associations between brand credibility and consumer-based brand equity ($H_4$: path coefficient = 0.762, standard error = 0.026, T-value = 29.689), and brand attachment ($H_5$: path coefficient = 0.137, standard error = 0.057, T-value = 2.398) are substantiated. The results also show that there is a positive relationship between consumer-based brand equity and brand attachment ($H_6$: path coefficient = 0.639, standard error = 0.056, T-value = 11.458).
Moreover, endorser credibility is confirmed as a second order factor of three first order factors: attractiveness, expertise and trustworthiness. Consumer-based brand equity is corroborated as a second order factor of four first order factors: brand awareness, brand associations, brand loyalty, and perceived quality. Brand credibility is confirmed as a second order factor of expertise and trustworthiness and brand attachment is corroborated as a second order factor of three first order factors: affection, connection, and passion. The results of PLS-MGA show that gender, age, and race moderate the structural relationships between constructs.

**Theoretical contributions**

As one of the eventual goal of marketing is to establish a bond between the consumer and the brand (Hiscock, 2001), the results of this study reveal that the relationship between endorser credibility and brand attachment, brand credibility and brand attachment, and consumer-based brand equity and brand attachment (schematically shown in Appendix A) are supported. Taking into account that brand attachment develops over time (Thomson et al., 2005), the impact of endorser credibility, brand credibility, and consumer-based brand equity could be considered as a surprising findings in smartphone industry.

Marketers often consider celebrity endorsement as one of the effective promotional tools (Biswas et al., 2006). An endorsement helps in creating the remembrance effect for the endorsed brand (Dean, 1999). Celebrity endorsement can directly affect the perceived value of the product and quality and it can help the customers in understanding more about the brand details as to satisfy customer’s needs and expectations. Furthermore, in order to convince customers to buy the specific products, the celebrity’s posture acts as an important tool that can influence their buying decisions and guarantee the success of company’s advertising in mass media (Leung and Kee, 1999). It helps in creating a recognition impact in customers’ minds with the celebrities’ attractive voice (Mohammad and Mohammad, 2011). Consistent with the findings of Spry et al. (2011), higher level of credibility of the endorsers can essentially lead to greater levels of credibility of the brand. Thus, it implies that the use of endorser credibility is one of the favorable approaches amongst hedonic goods i.e., smartphones to capture market share and more sales. Finally, in line with the results of this study, enhancing brand credibility can help in building brand equity effectively and provide methods for choosing endorsers (Jafar et al., 2011).

The reputation of the endorser will have positive impacts on the financial outcomes of companies (Wang et al., 2013). However, the extent to which endorser credibility could have influenced the branding perceptions of the customers was unclear in smartphone industry and the proposed model of this study provided a clearer understanding towards the concepts of brand credibility, consumer-based brand equity, and brand attachment for hedonic goods through the influence of endorser credibility.
Practical contributions

The results showed that the proposed model has high level of predictive relevancy in terms of $R^2$ (shown in Appendix B) and $Q^2$ values. Taking endorser credibility as the exogenous construct, the findings indicate that all endogenous constructs received medium to high effect sizes: brand credibility ($R^2 = 0.238$, $Q^2 = 0.145$), consumer-based brand equity ($R^2 = 0.715$, $Q^2 = 0.367$), and brand attachment ($R^2 = 0.689$, $Q^2 = 0.426$). These findings help managers in their strategy formulation in terms of the extent to which endorser’s attitude, culture, posture, and voice can influence on different brand related contents. In addition, managers should notice that the break-up of the brand-consumer bond is impending when the brand disappoints the consumer (Schmitt et al., 2015). Therefore, magnifying endorser credibility, brand credibility, and consumer-based brand equity is a prime concern in creating brand attachment in cellphone industry.

Another significant implication of this research is revealed through the results of PLS-MGA. Examining group differences, managers can observe the extent to which the role of endorser credibility on brand attachment can vary across different demographic groups. In terms of the moderating effect of gender, the study found that the relationship between endorser credibility and brand credibility as well as endorser credibility and consumer-based brand equity is stronger for female smartphone users. The relationship between brand credibility and consumer-based brand equity is stronger for male smartphone users. The relationship between consumer-based brand equity and brand attachment is stronger for age range of 18 to 24, 25 to 34, and 45 to 54. Furthermore, the relationship between endorser credibility and brand attachment is stronger for 25-years-old and above. However, these results imply that when the users grow older the endorser’s culture, attitude, posture, and voice can influence their degree of attachment to the brand. Also, the relationship between endorser credibility and brand credibility is stronger for age range of 25 to 34 and the relationship between endorser credibility and customer-based brand equity is stronger for age range of 18 to 24.

Examining the moderating role of race between latent constructs, the relationship between brand credibility and brand attachment is stronger for Chinese users and the relationship between brand credibility and consumer-based brand equity is stronger for Indian users. Interestingly, the relationship between consumer-based brand equity and brand attachment is stronger for Malay users. Finally, the results showed that the relationship between endorser credibility and brand attachment as well as endorser credibility and brand credibility is stronger for Malay and Indian users. Therefore, these results help marketing managers to come up with better variations in their promotion mix activities to address different races effectively.
Limitations
Even though Malaysia has a multi-cultural environment consisting of Malays, Chinese, and Indians and its cultural values is somehow identical with its neighboring South-East Asian countries, one of the limitations of this research is that the collected data may have biases in terms of generalizability. In addition, the role of product types such as Apple vs. Samsung should be considered as another moderating variable that need to be investigated in future studies.

Originality/value
This is the first study that examines the relationships between endorser credibility, brand credibility, and consumer-based brand equity on brand attachment. No previous study has examined these relationships in the context of smartphone users.

Keywords
Endorser credibility; brand credibility; consumer-based brand equity; brand attachment; smartphone users
Appendix A: Bootstrapping results
Appendix B: PLS results
References


Consumer-Based Brand Equity Development Process: A Diagnostic Tool for Least Favourite Brands

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Purpose

Developing strong brands is the aspiration of most managers and Consumer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) has been used for a long time as a good indicator of the strength of brands (Aaker, 1991; Christodoulides & de Chernatony, 2010; Veloutsou, Christodoulides & de Chernatony, 2013). Although most existing research approached brand equity in a linear manner, conceptually academics appreciate that the overall CBBE development is CBBE is a process with evolutionary stages of closely interrelated brand concepts and create strong brands through a “branding ladder” (Keller, 1993; Keller 2016) and there are some attempts to capture this complexity that sometimes still adopt a linear approach (Lehmann, Keller & Farley, 2008). Recent research by Chatzipanagiotou, Veloutsou and Christodoulides (2016) sees the development of brand equity as a process and suggests that the formation of the overall CBBE is non-linear and complex and an outcome of specific building blocks and include a number of interrelated brand concepts as shortcuts of information. The 15 concepts capture in this study are organized in three building blocks, namely the Brand Building (functional-related brand elements: brand quality, competitive advantage, leadership and experiential-related: personality, heritage and nostalgic elements), the Brand Understanding (brand awareness, associations, reputation, self-connection) and the Brand Relationship (brand trust, relevance, intimacy, partnership quality). The approach looks for sufficient
configurations of the elements/concepts constituting a certain block that contribute to produce the following blocks and the overall CBBE and suggests theoretical recipes that can lead to the development of the CBBE.

The existing research on CBBE examines the strength of specific pre-selected brands or the most favourable brands. Marketing scholars and practitioners have traditionally been interested in positive aspects of consumption rather than negative ones, as understanding to what extent consumers are willing to buy the products of a company seemed to be more important in building strong brands (Dalli, Romani & Gistr, 2006; Huber, Meyer & Schmid, 2015). However, recent research appreciates that consumers often have negative feelings towards brands, and even reach a level that they hate brands (Romani, Grappi, Zarantonello & Bagozzi 2015; Zarantonello, Romani, Grappi & Bagozzi, 2016). It is now recognised that it is more common for consumers to have negative feelings towards brands rather than positive feelings (Fournier & Alvarez, 2013; Alvarez & Fournier, 2016). Research focusing on brand that are not preselected or characterised as favourable from consumers is limited and identifying ways that brands that are not the favourite brands can be strengthened has not been reported. Given the recognised increasing negativity towards brands, understanding how negative assessment can be reduced is of high importance for companies that want to increase their customer base (Fournier and Alvarez, 2013).

The study seeks to illuminate the process by which unfavourable brands may become stronger in the minds of the people who characterize them as unfavourable, by securing a stronger CBBE. This paper conceptualizes CBBE as a sequential, causal process, a complex system, which includes three sub-systems suggested from Chatzipanagiotou et al (2016) (Brand Building, Brand Understanding and Brand Relationship) and aims to see whether the suggested process that is appropriate to examine preferred brands can be also relevant to strengthen brands suggested as least favourite.

Methodology

The data collection instrument was the same used by Chatzipanagiotou et al. (2016). All respondents had to select a category from a list of categories spanning goods (e.g., shampoo), services (e.g., coffee shop, bank), and the Internet (e.g., retailer) and to identify their least favourite brand from that category. They then responded to subsequent questions about the preselected brand.
The data was collected through face-to-face interviews contacted by trained researchers primarily in urban centres in the United Kingdom. The study set quotas for age and gender to ensure the sample was representative of British population. To increase the response rate, respondents were invited to enter a drawing for one of two gift cards worth £100. This procedure produced 300 fully completed questionnaires. Given the purpose of the present study the utilisation of an indicator of consumers’ favourability towards the chosen brands lead us to focus on 242 consumers that had strongly characterised the brands as least favourable.

The study adopts complexity and configural theory and leverages the advantages of fs/QCA (Ragin, 2008; Woodside, 2013; 2014) in order to test the study’s major research propositions and shed new light on consumers’ brand rejection.

**Results**

The results confirm the major tenets of complexity and configural theory highlighting the complex, dynamic and idiosyncratic nature of CBBE for consumers’ unfavourable brands. Specifically, the results indicate that consumers’ poor evaluations of experiential and functional-related brand characteristics lead through separate core-periphery models (e.g. Fiss, 2011) to consumers’ poor brand understanding, which in turn leads to low brand relationships and finally CBBE.

Specifically, separate pathways of the brand building block elements can explain consumers’ low understanding of the brand in terms of brand awareness, reputation, brand associations and brand self-connection. The results stress that the lack of a distinct brand personality and brand nostalgic elements constitute core causes leading to low scores in consumers’ brand awareness. In addition, consumers’ poor perceptions about a brands’ reputation stem from separate pathways, detecting that consumers’ low perceptions about a brand’s competitive advantage and heritage or low evaluation of brands’ functional-related characteristics lead consumers to reject these brands as reputable. Additionally, consumers do not manage to generate favorable brand associations when they do not understand and accept these brands’ distinct personality and have poor perceptions about brand’s heritage and competitive advantage. Finally, a combination of consumers’ poor evaluation regarding brand’s quality, leadership, heritage and nostalgic elements lead to poor brand self-connection, which is dominant in order to establish a relationship with the brand and consequently an overall CBBE.
Thus, consumers’ low brand understanding generates difficulties in any consumers’ attempt to build brand relationships in terms of brand trust, intimacy, relevance and partnership quality. Specifically, the lack of consumers’ self-connection with the brand in combination with low perceptions about brand reputation, do not allow consumers to build trust feelings towards these brands. Additionally, consumers who do not find any brand self-connection and cannot recognize or recall the brand as a member of a certain product category (low brand awareness) make consumers feel low intimacy and relevance towards these brands. Even if consumers recognize these brands as reputable, the lack of any self-connection does not allow them to build valuable brand relationships in terms of brand partnership quality. The consumers’ lack of brand trust, intimacy and relevance constitute a core causal combination leading also to low score in overall CBBE.

Highlighting the importance of fs/QCA in branding theory, this is the first empirical study revealing the theoretical ‘recipes’, which can explain the causes lead consumers to reject specific brands as unfavourable and simultaneously how brand managers can re-activate the CBBE development process making consumers to better understand, feel and thus express CBBE for unfavorable brands. Thus, the study highlights that brand managers should invest in their brand building elements focusing on both experiential (nostalgic elements, heritage) and functional aspects (quality and competitive advantage) of the brand in order to increase CBBE. Consumers’ self-connection with the brand constitutes high priority in order for consumers’ to build a better relationship with the brand in terms of consumers’ brand intimacy, relevance, partnership quality and trust, whilst the latter three constitute a core causal combination that can lead consumers to increase their low CBBE.

Theoretical implications

This study advances knowledge in the emerging fields of brand rejection, which constitutes an area of high priority for the branding theory and practice. Acknowledging the complex, dynamic and idiosyncratic nature of the phenomenon of CBBE, this is the first empirical study, which identifies the core causes and the theoretical ‘recipes’ that pervade consumers’ low brand understanding and relationship with the brand, which consequently lead to brand rejection.

Practical implications

The study put forward a number of managerial implications. By identifying not only the causes but also how consumers can improve their understanding and relationship with unfavouurable brands the study highlights the significance and usefulness of the specific framework as a diagnostic and strategic tool for brand managers. In addition, the utilisation of
the specific framework in brand-specific research would give valuable insights regarding a specific brand further facilitating brand’s managers understanding of ‘what has gone wrong’ with their brands, which consumers reject as unfavourable and what would be the corrective actions.
Limitations

The replication of this study in different contexts (e.g., country, industry, time period) would be particularly helpful for the conceptual framework's further testing and establishment. Specifically, detection of potential differences in the study's CBBE configural model between types of brands (e.g., goods vs. services) or among groups of consumers with different demographic/psychographic characteristics would significantly extend our knowledge on the consumers’ brand rejection.

Originality/value

The results of this study confirm that the principle of supporting favourable brands is the same with the principle of supporting unfavourable brands, since the process of building CBBE is similar for both favourable and unfavourable brands (Chatzipanagiotou et al. 2016).

Keywords

Consumer Based Brand Equity; Brand Hate; Fuzzy set qualitative comparative analysis

References


The potential of sensory stimuli in print advertisement: Analyzing the effects on product design, brand experience, brand perception and consumer behavior

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1 Purpose of the paper

Nowadays it becomes increasingly complex for marketing practitioners to reach out to the consumer effectively. The rapidly growing number of products with same qualities and unsatisfying effects of conventional marketing techniques lead to a demand for more innovative approaches. Looking for new ways to differentiate products and brands from competitors, sensory marketing has recently become more and more popular for both marketing researchers and managers. As sensory cues may be perceived on an explicit or implicit level, it is important to focus on both to assess specific relationships with product- and brand-related key factors (Krishna 2012). Especially product design and brand experience have been singled out in marketing literature as relevant factors determining consumer perception and behavior (e.g., Moon et al. 2015; Brakus et al. 2014). Even though recent studies have helped to give a better understanding of how specific sensory cues are effecting the consumers’ perception, there is still a lot to learn about causal relationships between sensory perception and brand-related key factors (e.g., Streicher & Estes 2016; Spence 2012). The objective of this paper is to close this gap in the context of potential effects of sensory cues in print advertisement.
2 Conceptual model and hypotheses

The following section discusses the constructs and assumed relations of sensory perception, product design, brand experience and brand-related outcomes (see Figure 1).

Sensory perception represents the initial driver of the conceptual model. Within this paper, sensory perception is considered as the consumer’s evaluation of an object (e.g., product or brand) based on its sensory stimuli (i.e., visual, acoustic, haptic, olfactory or gustatory properties). Consumers can form these evaluations either in their subconscious (implicit) or in their conscious (explicit) mind. The implicit system (System 1) generally works fast, automatic and effortless, while the explicit system (System 2) operates slow, deliberate and effortful (Kahneman 2003; Sloman 2002). Furthermore, System 2 has a very limited capacity, so that it often adopts the intuitive suggestions of System 1 (Kahneman 2011). Thus,

\[ H1: \text{Implicit sensory perception has a positive effect on explicit sensory perception.} \]

Aside from external factors (e.g., situational atmosphere or individual preferences), especially the intrinsic factors of a product (e.g., color or taste) represent the core elements of the perceived product design and have an impact on the consumers’ perception (Veryzer 1999). There are three dimensions of product design: aesthetic, functionality and symbolism. All three dimensions can potentially be influenced by both explicit and implicit sensory perception (Homburg et al. 2015). Consequently, the perception of product design is influenced by all sensory cues sent out from the product itself. Hence,

\[ H2: \text{Implicit sensory perception has a positive effect on product design.} \]

\[ H3: \text{Explicit sensory perception has a positive effect on product design.} \]

Whether having an explicit (e.g., background music) or implicit (e.g., loud music) context, the consumer’s sensory perception of a product or a brand may contribute to a memorable experience (Hultén 2011). Brakus et al. (2009, 53) defines brand experience as “subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand’s design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments”. Hence,
H4: Implicit sensory perception has a positive effect on brand experience.

H5: Explicit sensory perception has a positive effect on brand experience.

Furthermore, marketing research has already shown a causal relationship between the product design dimensions and key indicators of marketing success (Homburg et al. 2015; Montana et al. 2007). Thus,

H6: Product design has a positive effect on brand experience.

H7: Product design has a positive effect on brand perception.

H8: Product design has a positive effect on consumer behavior.

To embed brands deeply in consumers’ mind, brand experiences become an important component in marketing communication. As brand experiences are highly subjective and engage the customers at different levels, we follow Brakus et al. (2009) and differentiate between four dimensions: affective, behavioral, cognitive, and sensory. Furthermore, experiences are assumed to cause internal consumer responses and behavioral outcomes. Therefore,

H9: Brand experience has a positive effect on brand perception.

H10: Brand experience has a positive effect on consumer behavior.

Brand perception is considered as a key driver of brand equity and has therefore the potential to create a strong effect on consumers’ willingness to buy and to pay a price premium (e.g., Belén del Rio et al. 2001; Faircloth et al. 2001). Thus, brand perception should lead to behavioral outcomes. So,

H11: Brand perception has a positive effect on consumer behavior.
3 Methodology

The constructs are conceptualized as either formative or reflective. For formatively capturing sensory perception and product design, we adapted the sensory perception items (SPI) developed by Haase and Wiedmann (2016) and the original scale of Homburg et al. (2015), respectively. Regarding the reflective constructs of brand experience, we adapted the original scale of Brakus et al. (2009), for brand perception and consumer behavior, the items of Wiedmann et al. (2011). Finally, all items were specified to an advertisement context and rated on a five-point Likert scale.

A laboratory experiment was conducted to test the hypotheses. The main task was to absorb sensory stimuli from a print ad promoting a perfume bottle. The print ad was specially prepared (e.g., with a self-adhesive foil for a haptic effect, a QR code playing the advertising jingle for acoustics, and the perfume appealing to the olfactory sense). After the stimulus contact, participants were asked to complete a forced-choice implicit association test. Subsequently, the questionnaire including the product- and brand-related measures was filled out.
A total of 77 subjects participated in the study (see Table 1). The age ranged from 19 to 82, gender distribution was almost equal and most of the respondents received a higher educational level and had a higher income.
Table 1: Demographic profile of the sample

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<td>scholar</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>trainee</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>student</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>42.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>full-time employee</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>41.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>part-time employee</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>housewife/househusband</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>retired</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>very low income (&lt; 1000 €)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>low income (1000 – 2000 €)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>middle income (2000 – 3000 €)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>high income (3000 – 4000 €)</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>16.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>very high income (&gt; 4000 €)</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>20.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no answer</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total sample size | 77  | 100.0 |

4 Findings

Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using the software SmartPLS 2.0 was conducted. The measurement models are checked regarding relevant quality criteria, before the structural model is examined (Henseler et al. 2009). Table 2 shows the items of the formative measurement models, Table 3 presents the respective quality criteria. As required by Hair et al. (2012), all items show outer weights higher than 0.1. Further, except for the implicit visual and acoustic perception, all items are significantly important for the respective measurement model. Additionally, the maximum variance inflation factor (VIF) is 1.834, far
below the limit of 10, so that there are no multicollinearity problems (Diamantopoulos et al. 2008).
Table 2: Items of the formative measurement models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implicit sensory perception / explicit sensory perception</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aesthetic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attractive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beautiful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pretty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Acoustic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>euphonic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good-sounding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>melodic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sonorous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Haptic</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>soothing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>well-shaped</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pleasant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Olfactory</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fragrant</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nice-smelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>perfumed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>scented</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Product design

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Aesthetics</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The product is visually striking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product is good looking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product looks appealing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Functionality</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The product is likely to perform well.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product seems to be capable of doing its job.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product seems to be functional.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>Symbolism</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The product would help me in establishing a distinctive image.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product would be helpful to distinguish myself from the mass.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The product would accurately symbolize my achievements.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3: Evaluation of the formative measurement models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weights</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Implicit sensory perception</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>1.154</td>
<td>1.555</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acoustic</td>
<td>0.135</td>
<td>1.096</td>
<td>1.378</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haptic</td>
<td>0.591</td>
<td>3.579</td>
<td>1.834</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olfactory</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>1.923</td>
<td>1.722</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Explicit sensory perception
Table 4 gives the items of the reflective measurement models, Table 5 presents the values checking for reliability and validity. The quality criteria are throughout satisfied. The factor loadings, having a minimum value of 0.785, all exceed the limit of 0.7 (Hair et al. 2011). The average variance extracted (AVE) clearly exceeds the requirement of 50% as it shows a minimum amount of 74.2%. Moreover, the AVE is always higher than the highest squared correlation with another latent variable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Finally, the composite reliability shows its minimum at 0.901 and Cronbach’s alpha at 0.833, which is far above the limit of 0.7 and 0.6, respectively (Bagozzi & Yi 2012; Churchill 1979; Peterson 1994).

Table 4: Items of the reflective measurement models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand experience</th>
<th>Sensory</th>
<th>Affective</th>
<th>Behavioral</th>
<th>Intellectual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The brand makes a strong impression on my senses.</td>
<td>The brand induces feelings and sentiments.</td>
<td>I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use the brand.</td>
<td>I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter the brand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I find the brand interesting in a sensory way.</td>
<td>I have strong emotions for the brand.</td>
<td>The brand results in bodily experiences.</td>
<td>The brand makes me think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The brand appeals to my senses.</td>
<td>The brand is an emotional brand.</td>
<td>The brand is action oriented.</td>
<td>The brand stimulates my curiosity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Perception</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand image</td>
<td>I like the brand very much.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The brand is really likable.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **Brand satisfaction** | *I am very satisfied with the brand.*  
*The brand absolutely meets my expectations.* |
| **Brand trust** | *I trust the brand.*  
*I rely on the brand.* |

**Consumer behavior**

| **Brand loyalty** | *I would recommend the brand to my friends.*  
*I would regret if the brand was not existent.* |
| **Willingness to pay a price premium** | *I am willing to pay a higher price for products of the brand than for products of other brands.*  
*Products of the brand are worth a higher price than products of other brands.* |
| **Willingness to buy** | *I plan on buying products of the brand in the future.*  
*I intend to buy products of the brand in the future.* |
Table 5: Evaluation of the reflective measurement models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>ρ_c</th>
<th>FLC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(AVE &gt; r²)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand experience</td>
<td>0.844 - 0.884</td>
<td>0.742</td>
<td>0.884</td>
<td>0.920</td>
<td>0.742 &gt; 0.480</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand perception</td>
<td>0.862 - 0.910</td>
<td>0.790</td>
<td>0.867</td>
<td>0.918</td>
<td>0.790 &gt; 0.625</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer behavior</td>
<td>0.785 - 0.909</td>
<td>0.752</td>
<td>0.833</td>
<td>0.901</td>
<td>0.752 &gt; 0.625</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AVE = average variance extracted; α = Cronbach’s alpha; ρ_c = composite reliability; FLC = Fornell-Larcker-criterion; r² = highest latent variable correlation squared.

Table 6 gives the findings concerning the quality of the structural model. The coefficient of determination (R²) testifies a satisfactory goodness of fit as it ranges from 0.372 to 0.667 (Chin 1998). Furthermore, the cross-validated redundancy measure (Q²) confirms the model’s predictive relevance with all values being positive (Geisser 1974; Stone 1974).

Table 6: Evaluation of the structural model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Q²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit sensory perception</td>
<td>0.551</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Product design</td>
<td>0.372</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand experience</td>
<td>0.440</td>
<td>0.309</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand perception</td>
<td>0.557</td>
<td>0.400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consumer behavior</td>
<td>0.667</td>
<td>0.453</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As thus the hypotheses can be checked, Table 7 shows the t values and path coefficients representing the significance and strength of the structural relations between the latent variables. The results reveal that nine of the eleven hypotheses find full empirical support, so that a causal chain of direct and indirect effects from sensory perception to consumer behavior is detected (see Figure 2).

Table 7: Evaluation of the structural relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Original sample</th>
<th>Sample mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H1: Implicit SP → Explicit SP</td>
<td>-0.743</td>
<td>-0.753</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>0.068</td>
<td>10.867</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
H2: Implicit SP → PD -0.087 -0.131 0.091 0.091 0.955
H3: Explicit SP → PD 0.543 0.566 0.111 0.111 4.874
H4: Implicit SP → BE 0.295 0.293 0.122 0.122 2.414
H5: Explicit SP → BE 0.423 0.437 0.123 0.123 3.433
H6: PD → BE 0.497 0.490 0.068 0.068 7.353
H7: PD → BP 0.359 0.355 0.079 0.079 4.560
H8: PD → CB 0.032 0.066 0.050 0.050 0.644
H9: BE → BP 0.471 0.475 0.073 0.073 6.441
H10: BE → CB 0.272 0.278 0.088 0.088 3.095
H11: BP → CB 0.582 0.570 0.088 0.088 6.635

Note: SD = standard deviation; SE = standard error; SP = sensory perception; PD = product design; BE = brand experience; BP = brand perception; CB = consumer behavior.

5 Theoretical implications

The data analysis confirms a major part of the theoretical based model. The results show that the coherent use of sensory stimuli has a positive effect on consumer behavior. Moreover, the findings reveal a positive indirect effect of explicit sensory perception on both brand perception and consumer behavior. In this context, product design and brand experience work as mediators. In detail, the coherent use of different sensory stimuli in print advertisement has a positive impact on perceived product design and brand experience, which is carried further on brand perception and consumer behavior. Moreover, just two of four drivers of the implicit sensory perception are indeed significantly relevant (haptic and olfactory perception). However, the direct effect of implicit on explicit sensory perception is negative.
6 Practical implications

In the given context of print advertisement, the empirical results give evidence that the application of multisensory stimuli is an important success factor in creating experiences and influencing the perception of product design. In detail, great potential lies in haptic and olfactory senses. Thus, marketing managers can appeal to the customers through the use of, for example, singular scents or special materials. However, to address the customer effectively, marketing managers have to be aware of both the explicit and implicit effects while implementing different sensory stimuli to ensure that there is no conflict between the two perception levels.

7 Limitations

The study was conducted to analyze the effects of sensory cues in the context of print advertisement. For future research it would be interesting to find out what sensory modalities have the strongest impact. Therefore, a group comparison study with different amounts of sensory stimuli per group would be necessary. Further, the impact of demographics, cultural, and situational aspects as moderator variables could be assessed to get an even better understanding of the underlying relationships.
8 Originality

The study provides new insights regarding the effects of both explicit and implicit sensory perception on product design and brand-related outcome variables, that is, brand experience, brand perception, and consumer behavior. The findings will help brand managers, especially in the field of print advertisement, on how to manage sensory stimuli effectively in order to succeed in a competitive market.

Keywords: sensory perception, product design, brand experience, brand equity, print advertisement.

References


Utilizing the explicit and implicit sensory perception in gastronomy: Investigating the effects on selected brand-related performance indicators

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Purpose of paper

Along with the continuous homogenization of products and services, it becomes indispensable for companies to differentiate from competitors. In this context, sensory marketing is increasingly gaining importance to better appeal to the consumer. The service industry, and in particular gastronomy, has a high potential to apply a holistic communication concept taking all five senses – sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste – into account (Hui & Bateson 1991; Brakus et al. 2009). Through a coherent sensory marketing approach, gastronomy has the opportunity to create an overall experience leading to positive brand perception and actual consumer behavior (Wiedmann et al. 2013; Turley & Milliman 2000; Zeithaml 1988). However, it is essential to investigate both modes of information processing (explicit and implicit) as sensory stimuli may be processed consciously and subconsciously (Friese et al. 2006).
The aim of the study is to analyze the direct effects of explicit and implicit sensory perception on brand experience and the resulting indirect effects on brand-related outcomes, that is, brand perception and consumer behavior. The results may provide a better understanding for brand managers how to manage sensory marketing communication effectively to prevail in competition.

**Conceptual model and hypotheses**

In the following, the constructs and relations of sensory perception, brand experience and brand-related outcomes are explained (see Figure 1).

The basic driver of the conceptual model is sensory perception. Within this paper, sensory perception is understood as the consumer’s evaluation of an object (e.g., product or brand) based on its sensory stimuli (i.e., visual, acoustic, haptic, olfactory or gustatory properties). This evaluation results from cognitive information processing, which can be either subconscious (implicit) or conscious (explicit). In the first case, the judgement typically comes fast, automatic and effortless; in the latter case, slow, deliberate and effortful (Kahneman 2003; Sloman 2002). In addition, as the explicit system has a very limited capacity, it often adopts the intuitive suggestions of the implicit one (Kahneman 2011). Hence,

\[ H1: \text{Implicit sensory perception has a positive effect on explicit sensory perception.} \]

Furthermore, sensory stimuli, whether perceived subconsciously or consciously, play a major role in establishing outstanding customer experiences with a brand (Hultén 2011). According to Brakus et al. (2009, 53), brand experience represents “subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand’s design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments”. Thus,

\[ H2: \text{Implicit sensory perception has a positive effect on brand experience.} \]

\[ H3: \text{Explicit sensory perception has a positive effect on brand experience.} \]

Compliant with Pine and Gilmore (1999), brand experiences are highly subjective and encompass the customer at different levels. Thus, we follow Brakus et al. (2009) and conceptualize brand experience along four dimensions: sensory, affective, behavioral, and
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Intellectual. With special focus on internal consumer responses towards the brand, experiences are assumed to be stored in consumer memory affecting brand perception (e.g., brand image, brand satisfaction) and consumer behavior (e.g., brand loyalty, willingness to pay a higher price, buying intention). Therefore, we suggest:

H4: Brand experience has a positive effect on brand image.

H5: Brand experience has a positive effect on brand satisfaction.

H6: Brand experience has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

H7: Brand experience has a positive effect on price premium.

H8: Brand experience has a positive effect on buying intention.

Moreover, in marketing literature, it has been shown that the abovementioned key performance indicators have various effects between each other (Wiedmann et al. 2011). Thus, we assume:

H9: Brand image has a positive effect on brand satisfaction.

H10: Brand image has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

H11: Brand image has a positive effect on price premium.

H12: Brand image has a positive effect on buying intention.

H13: Brand satisfaction has a positive effect on brand loyalty.

H14: Brand satisfaction has a positive effect on price premium.

H15: Brand satisfaction has a positive effect on buying intention.

H16: Brand loyalty has a positive effect on price premium.

H17: Brand loyalty has a positive effect on buying intention.

H18: Price premium has a positive effect on buying intention.
Methodology/approach

Our proposed model contains two formative and six reflective constructs. For measuring the formative constructs (i.e., implicit and explicit sensory perception), the sensory perception items (SPI) developed by Haase and Wiedmann (2016) are applied. Regarding the reflective constructs (i.e., brand experience and brand-related outcomes), we adapt the original scale of Brakus et al. (2009) and Wiedmann et al. (2011), respectively. All applied items are specified to the gastronomy context and rated on a five-point Likert scale.

To test the proposed model, we conducted a field experiment. 138 participants were invited to a coffee house serving gastronomic specialties. To avoid any disruption, the gallery providing a view down on the seating area and the counter display was closed for the study. To investigate the sensory perception of the café, participants were asked to observe the coffee house and its products (e.g., listen to the ambient sound, feel the furniture, and taste a chocolate). Then, the sensory stimuli were assessed via questionnaire and a forced-choice implicit association test and the brand-related variables were inquired.
Table 1 presents the characteristics of the sample. The participants have an average age of 25.7 years, gender distribution is almost equal, most of the participants are students and have a monthly income below 1000 €.

**Findings**

For hypotheses testing, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 2.0 is conducted. First, the measurement models and, second, the structural model are assessed concerning relevant quality criteria (Henseler et al. 2009). Regarding the formative measurement models, Table 2 presents the items and Table 3 shows the quality criteria. Except for gustatory perception, all sensory perception dimensions show outer weights that are higher than 0.1 and significant as proposed by Hair et al. (2012). Moreover, as the maximum variance inflation factor (VIF) is 1.635, multicollinearity can be precluded (Diamantopoulos et al. 2008).

**Table 2: Items of the formative measurement models**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implicit sensory perception / explicit sensory perception</th>
<th>Visual</th>
<th>Acoustic</th>
<th>Haptic</th>
<th>Olfactory</th>
<th>Gustatory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Visual</strong></td>
<td>aesthetic</td>
<td>euphonic</td>
<td>comfortable</td>
<td>fragrant</td>
<td>appetizing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>attractive</td>
<td>good-sounding</td>
<td>handy</td>
<td>nice-smelling</td>
<td>flavorful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>beautiful</td>
<td>melodic</td>
<td>soothing</td>
<td>perfumed</td>
<td>palatable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pretty</td>
<td>sonorous</td>
<td>well-shaped</td>
<td>scented</td>
<td>tasty</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: Quality criteria**

For hypotheses testing, partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using SmartPLS 2.0 is conducted. First, the measurement models and, second, the structural model are assessed concerning relevant quality criteria (Henseler et al. 2009). Except for gustatory perception, all sensory perception dimensions show outer weights that are higher than 0.1 and significant as proposed by Hair et al. (2012). Moreover, as the maximum variance inflation factor (VIF) is 1.635, multicollinearity can be precluded (Diamantopoulos et al. 2008).
Table 3: Evaluation of the formative measurement models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Weights</th>
<th>t value</th>
<th>VIF</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Implicit sensory perception</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>3.654</td>
<td>1.355</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acoustic</td>
<td>0.278</td>
<td>2.521</td>
<td>1.231</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haptic</td>
<td>0.488</td>
<td>3.988</td>
<td>1.597</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olfactory</td>
<td>0.181</td>
<td>1.653</td>
<td>1.410</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gustatory</td>
<td>0.013</td>
<td>0.167</td>
<td>1.635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Explicit sensory perception</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visual</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>3.946</td>
<td>1.444</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acoustic</td>
<td>0.299</td>
<td>3.044</td>
<td>1.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Haptic</td>
<td>0.349</td>
<td>3.222</td>
<td>1.661</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olfactory</td>
<td>0.246</td>
<td>2.395</td>
<td>1.237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gustatory</td>
<td>0.153</td>
<td>1.571</td>
<td>1.407</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: VIF = variance inflation factor.
With reference to the reflective measurement models, Table 4 displays the items and Table 5 gives the results concerning reliability and validity. For all variables, the quality criteria are fulfilled. With a minimum of 0.744, all factor loadings are higher than 0.7 (Hair et al. 2011). The average variance extracted (AVE) having a minimum amount of 65.9% throughout surpasses the requirement of 50%. Additionally, in each case, the AVE is higher than the highest squared correlation with another latent variable (Fornell & Larcker 1981). Finally, Cronbach’s alpha always takes a value above 0.6 and composite reliability above 0.7 (Bagozzi & Yi 2012; Churchill 1979; Peterson 1994).

Table 4: Items of the reflective measurement models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand experience</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sensory</td>
<td>The coffee house makes a strong impression on my senses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I find the coffee house interesting in a sensory way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house appeals to my senses.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective</td>
<td>The coffee house induces feelings and sentiments.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I have strong emotions for the coffee house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house is emotional.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavioral</td>
<td>I engage in physical actions and behaviors in the coffee house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house results in bodily experiences.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house is action oriented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Intellectual</td>
<td>I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter the coffee house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house makes me think.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house stimulates my curiosity.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Brand Perception</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand image</td>
<td>I like the coffee house very much.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house is really likable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand satisfaction</td>
<td>I am very satisfied with the coffee house.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house absolutely meets my expectations.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Consumer behavior</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand loyalty</td>
<td>I would recommend the coffee house to my friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I would regret if the coffee house was not existent.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price premium</td>
<td>I am willing to pay a higher price in the coffee house than in others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The coffee house is worth a higher price than others.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying intention</td>
<td>I plan on buying products in the coffee house in the future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>I intend to buy products in the coffee house in the future.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5: Evaluation of the reflective measurement models

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Loadings</th>
<th>AVE</th>
<th>α</th>
<th>ρc</th>
<th>FLC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brand experience</td>
<td>0.744 – 0.851</td>
<td>0.659</td>
<td>0.829</td>
<td>0.885</td>
<td>0.659 &gt; 0.389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand image</td>
<td>0.833 – 0.906</td>
<td>0.757</td>
<td>0.684</td>
<td>0.862</td>
<td>0.757 &gt; 0.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand satisfaction</td>
<td>0.895 – 0.917</td>
<td>0.821</td>
<td>0.783</td>
<td>0.902</td>
<td>0.821 &gt; 0.569</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand loyalty</td>
<td>0.849 – 0.889</td>
<td>0.756</td>
<td>0.678</td>
<td>0.861</td>
<td>0.756 &gt; 0.609</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price premium</td>
<td>0.941 – 0.953</td>
<td>0.897</td>
<td>0.886</td>
<td>0.946</td>
<td>0.897 &gt; 0.430</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying intention</td>
<td>0.976 – 0.978</td>
<td>0.954</td>
<td>0.952</td>
<td>0.976</td>
<td>0.954 &gt; 0.609</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: AVE = average variance extracted; α = Cronbach’s alpha; ρc = composite reliability; FLC = Fornell-Larcker-criterion; r² = highest latent variable correlation squared.

To assess the quality of the structural model, Table 6 presents the results. The coefficient of determination (R²) ranges from 0.358 to 0.660, indicating a satisfactory goodness of fit (Chin 1998). Furthermore, the cross-validated redundancy measure (Q²) is throughout positive confirming the model’s predictive relevance (Geisser 1974; Stone 1974).

Table 6: Evaluation of the structural model

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>R²</th>
<th>Q²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Explicit sensory perception</td>
<td>0.647</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand experience</td>
<td>0.358</td>
<td>0.214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand image</td>
<td>0.389</td>
<td>0.290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand satisfaction</td>
<td>0.574</td>
<td>0.467</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand loyalty</td>
<td>0.535</td>
<td>0.399</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price premium</td>
<td>0.493</td>
<td>0.435</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Buying intention</td>
<td>0.660</td>
<td>0.630</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consequently, the hypotheses can be examined. Table 7 shows the t values and path coefficients giving the significance and strength of the structural relationships. The findings provide full empirical support for 12 of the 18 hypotheses. As a result, a causal chain is stated with sensory perception as the basic success driver for brand-related key performance indicators through the establishment of a positive brand experience (see Figure 2).
Table 7: Evaluation of the structural relations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>H1: Implicit SP $\rightarrow$ Explicit SP</th>
<th>Original sample</th>
<th>Sample mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>SE</th>
<th>t value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H2: Implicit SP $\rightarrow$ BE</td>
<td>0.804</td>
<td>0.809</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>0.040</td>
<td>19.886</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H3: Explicit SP $\rightarrow$ BE</td>
<td>0.073</td>
<td>0.118</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.082</td>
<td>0.890</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H4: BE $\rightarrow$ BI</td>
<td>0.539</td>
<td>0.550</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>0.114</td>
<td>4.727</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H5: BE $\rightarrow$ BS</td>
<td>0.623</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>0.052</td>
<td>12.040</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H6: BE $\rightarrow$ BL</td>
<td>0.090</td>
<td>0.099</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>1.419</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H7: BE $\rightarrow$ PP</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.273</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>3.539</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H8: BE $\rightarrow$ BU</td>
<td>0.250</td>
<td>0.247</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>0.078</td>
<td>3.207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H9: BI $\rightarrow$ BS</td>
<td>0.104</td>
<td>0.109</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>1.648</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H10: BI $\rightarrow$ BL</td>
<td>0.698</td>
<td>0.699</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>10.664</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H11: BI $\rightarrow$ PP</td>
<td>0.267</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>2.859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H12: BI $\rightarrow$ BU</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.162</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>0.102</td>
<td>1.437</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H13: BS $\rightarrow$ BL</td>
<td>0.267</td>
<td>0.271</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>0.093</td>
<td>2.859</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H14: BS $\rightarrow$ PP</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H15: BS $\rightarrow$ BU</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H16: BL $\rightarrow$ PP</td>
<td>-0.034</td>
<td>-0.083</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.063</td>
<td>0.547</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H17: BL $\rightarrow$ BU</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>0.510</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>5.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H18: PP $\rightarrow$ BU</td>
<td>0.146</td>
<td>0.147</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>0.072</td>
<td>2.026</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: SD = standard deviation; SE = standard error; SP = sensory perception; BE = brand experience; BI = brand image; BS = brand satisfaction; BL = brand loyalty; PP = price premium; BU = buying intention.
Theoretical implications

The data analysis confirms the introduced model for the most part. In detail, brand experience is explained to a considerable degree by explicit sensory perception. In contrast, implicit sensory perception has an indirect effect through explicit sensory perception. Four of five sensory drivers are shown to be significantly relevant (see Table 3). For implicit sensory perception, haptic is the most powerful driver, followed by visual, acoustic and olfactory. Regarding explicit sensory perception, visual is the most important driver, followed by haptic, acoustic and olfactory. In both cases, the gustatory perception plays no significant role. The reason may be found in the brand’s name, which contains the German word for “room”. So, participants might have been confused whether answering the questions referring to the brand or the store. Naturally, the store itself cannot taste. Moreover, brand experience shows a positive impact on the brand-related outcomes. However, the indirect impact on consumer behavior is higher than the direct one. So, when consumers have a positive experience with the brand, the overall assessment of the brand becomes more favorable finally leading to a positive behavior towards the brand.
Practical implications

The findings show that sensory marketing seems to be an important success factor for creating a unique brand experience. In the case of gastronomy, the visual and haptic sensory perception appear to be the most relevant ingredients of a convincing sensory marketing mix, for example, implemented in terms of exceptional designs, signature colors, precious materials and furniture. That way, gastronomes not only have the potential to improve brand image and satisfaction, but actually may bring consumers to be more loyal, have a willingness to pay a higher price and to buy their products and services.

Limitations

The study examined the effects of a multisensory stimulation on brand-related outcomes in the context of gastronomy. Future research may analyze the relationships for different application areas and diverse industries. In addition, the majority of the subjects were students. Further studies could verify our results for larger and more heterogeneous samples. Finally, to get an even better understanding of the effects of sensory marketing activities, examining the moderating effects of sociodemographic aspects would be insightful.

Originality/value

Our study gives new insights on the causal relationships of explicit and implicit sensory perception on brand experience and other brand-related performance indicators. The implicit perception always acts through the explicit perception. Furthermore, brand experience plays a major role operating as a mediator between the consumers’ sensory perception and their response. The results may support gastronomes to effectively set sensory stimuli and thus, to succeed in a competitive market. Additionally, it may also benefit brand managers, as our empirically confirmed research model may be adapted to other contexts.

Keywords: sensory perception, brand experience, brand perception, consumer behavior, service industry, gastronomy
References


Leveraging nascent co-brands: A literature review, suggested co-brand typology and case study evidence

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Purpose of paper:
The purpose of this paper is twofold. First a co-brand typology is presented to more effectively represent distinctly different approaches to this form of building brand equity. Historically co-branding has been represented in the brand literature as product (Aaker, 2004; de Chernatony, 1998; Keller, 2003) or corporate (organisational) related (Harris & de Chernatony, 2001; Balmer, 2001; Temporal, 2002). And this, to a large extent, remains the case. But with the advent of retail branding (which carries similar characteristics to product and corporate-related brands) the retailer can also implement a multi-sensory approach (through the retail mix) to leverage external sources of brand equity, that includes co-branding (Ailawadi, & Keller, 2004). This potential addition of the retail mix creates a more complex version of co-brand strategy by introducing an experiential layer to consumer brand engagement (Wright et. al., 2007). So brand managers and researchers can further understand and investigate different forms of co-brand strategy a typology is presented which encompasses promotion, product and corporate/retail attributes within the brand architecture process and from a competitive strategy perspective. A more comprehensive definition of co-branding is also developed.

Secondly, and arising from the typology, this research investigates why (some) retailers create nascent retail co-brands to improve their brand competitiveness. Research to date has investigated the depth and breadth of co-branding with some focus on antecedent conditions pertaining to the choice of co-branding within the brand architecture framework (Keller & Lehmann, 2006; Newmeyer et. al. 2014; Oeppen & Jamal, 2014). Conditions have been proposed as factors important to the establishment of retail co-brand outlets (such as necessity, asymmetry, reciprocity, efficiency, stability, and legitimacy). But while these conditions form a generic framework for owners to assess co-branded partnerships (Dahlstrom & Dato-on, 2004) the theory assumes significant brand equity contributed by all partners in the relationship. So in this context creating and partnering with a nascent co-brand is not effectively explained (Wright et. al, 2007).

A brief review of co-branding literature and definition
The concept of co-branding emerged from the study of product/price bundling scenarios located in economic literature (Adams & Yellen, 1976; Schmalensee, 1982; Wernerfelt, 1988). Subsequent research efforts proceeded to firmly connect product bundling with branding using consumers as the unit of analysis (Gaeth et al, 1991; Yadav & Munroe, 1993; Simonin & Ruth, 1995). So common features of both product bundling and co-branding include the combination of products and/or brands from different organisations, or distinctly different businesses within the same organisation, contributing significant equity to create a synergistic offering to a current or new target market (Gaeth et al, 1991; Rao & Ruekert, 1994; Washburn, et. al. 2000). But, since Rao & Ruekert’s (1994) seminal paper into the
phenomenon of joint branding (one of the plethora of terms used to describe co-brand relationships), co-branding has been presented as a collaborative marketing effort where two (or more) brands are combined at a promotional level for more effective market coverage (Kapferer, 1997; Samu, Krishnan & Smith, 1999; Temporal, 2000; Fang Gammoh & Voss, 2013); a combination of raw (product) ingredients to reinforce/boost existing category sales (Hillyer & Tikoo, 1995; Blackett & Russell, 2000; Blackett et. al., 1999); a new composite product to boost ailing sales or expose lesser known brands to the market (Rao 1997; Rao et al. 1999; Park et. al. 1996; Shocker et al. 1994; James, 2006; Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Hadjicharalambous, 2006; Washburn, Till & Priluck, 2000); services related co-branded offerings under a service-dominant logic umbrella (Helm & Ozergin, 2015); co-located retail offerings to improve operational performance (and thereby sales) to a specified target market (Young et. al. 2001; Wright et. al. 2014; Boone, 1997); and fully integrated retail offerings to attract multiple target markets at a single location (Wright & Frazer, 2007; Wright, Frazer & Merrilees, 2007; Wright & Clarke, 2014; Dahlstrom & Nygaard, 2016). The (unified) purpose of these differing co-brand approaches is to significantly (and positively) affect both brands with the lesser known partners experiencing strong (and positive) spill-over effects and the parent (or dominant) brand experiencing improved consumer attitudes and trust (Simonin & Ruth, 1998; Desai & Keller, 2002; McCarthy & Norris, 1999; Kumar, 2005; Askegaard & Bengtsson, 2005; Ueltschy & Laroche, 2011). While these studies focus on consumer perceptions the strategy of co-branding has been extended to the contexts of business-to-business (Bengtsson & Servais, 2005) and charitable institutions (Lafferty & Goldsmith, 2005), with similar results.

Research categorising the applications and attributes of co-branding/brand alliances have been scant (see for example, Hadjicharalambous, 2006; Gammoh & Voss, 2011) and do not appear to clarify the types and/or differing contexts of co-brand applications. To commence such as discussion an extensive review of the literature was conducted on co-branding (and similar) research. A summary of this review is presented in Table 1. This body of research has grown beyond a paucity of disparate perspectives and is now a significant and diversified body of knowledge.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time period</th>
<th>Research Type</th>
<th>Research Focus</th>
<th>Unit of Analysis</th>
<th>Citation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1990s</td>
<td>Conceptual; explanatory; industry</td>
<td>Brand alliance decision-making framework; consumer brand evaluation; international market entry evaluation; extension/co-brand evaluation; reciprocal brand effects; intellectual property, unobservable brand attributes</td>
<td>Product, advertising, ingredient combinations, packaging</td>
<td>Voss &amp; Wells, 1993; Rao &amp; Ruckert, 1994; Hillyer &amp; Tikoo, 1995; Park et al, 1996; Boone, 1997; Grossman, 1997; Simonin &amp; Ruth, 1998; Boad, 1999; Voss &amp; Tansuhaj, 1999; McCarthy &amp; Norris, 1999; Rao &amp; Ruckert, 1999; Samu et al, 1999.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000s</td>
<td>Conceptual, case study; explanatory; industry; multiple methods approach</td>
<td>Pre-post-test consumer evaluations; industry databases; legal ramifications; sponsorship associations; antecedents to the formation of co-brand relationships; industrial market applications; symbolic dimensions; analytical</td>
<td>Product, ingredient combinations. restaurant and franchise brands, sport related organisations, charities,</td>
<td>Washburn, Till &amp; Priluck, 2000; Young, Green &amp; Paswan, 2000; Hahm &amp; Kahn, 2001; Young Hoggatt &amp; Paswan, 2001; Abratt &amp; Motlana, 2002; Desai &amp; Keller, 2002; Prince &amp;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Methodology/approach: Two method approaches were deployed for this research. First, to the best of this author’s knowledge no previous systematic review of co-branding literature has been undertaken. While the body of co-branding literature is, anecdotally, not that large (in comparison to other areas of branding) a structured approach could yield further insights for future research (Osareh, 1996). So a range of search methods and databases were utilised to gather the academic related literature. Digital database indices, including Google and Google Scholar, were searched highlighting articles and other related studies which utilised terms such as co-branding and brand alliances. These items were reference checked to ascertain further studies in the area. A brief summary of each study was created. This is represented in Table 1. From this the typology was formed.

Second, this paper adopts a qualitative, case-based approach involving three Australian based franchise retailers (all with significant retail exposure). In-depth interviews were conducted with senior executives and company documents examined for each brand to derive antecedents to these organisations co-brand strategies (Yin, 2014).

Findings:
The typology of co-branding bridges the gap between theory and empirical observations (represented in the literature review) (McKinney, 1966) and provides a platform for future research endeavours. The use of competitive strategy as a typological attribute was suggested by Prince & Davies (2002) from which the competitive advantage is portrayed as a
fundamental driver of co-brand strategy and provides further indications of management decision making in this area.

Preliminary case study findings suggest established franchise retailers create nascent brands (thereby with limited equity) to produce a model of system expansion, discrete from their established collaborative brand partnerships. Central to this (offensive) strategy is the positive introduction and maintenance of intra-system franchise relationships to avoid catastrophic outcomes with business partners (du Toit, 2003; Olazábal, Cava & Sacasas, 2006). Organisational structure and business relationships are, therefore, intrinsic and antecedent to co-brand choice (Jevons, Gabbott & de Chernatony, 2005).
Table 2 – Co-brand Typology

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type</th>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Target Market</th>
<th>Competitive Strategy (Best, 2014)</th>
<th>Investment Level</th>
<th>Investment Type</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Promotion</strong></td>
<td>Multiple (discrete) product brands forming a single offer</td>
<td>Expanded target market</td>
<td>Defensive Strategy</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Promotional material only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Product</strong></td>
<td>Multiple product brands combined to form a single product (either ingredient based or new product)</td>
<td>Expanded target market and new target market</td>
<td>Primarily defensive but some offensive strategies</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Product R&amp;D and promotional material</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Retail</strong></td>
<td>Multiple brands forming a new retail outlet/s</td>
<td>Expanded target market and new target market</td>
<td>Offensive Strategy</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>R&amp;D (product and store design) and promotional material</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Theoretical implications;
Co-branding research has been traditionally descriptive in nature with a focus on consumer perceptions and with a product related brand. Investigations into antecedents and organisational structure remain limited. This research identifies franchise systems which have developed nascent co-brands to improve the performance of the parent (or corporate) retail brand, counter intuitive to the prevailing wisdom found in co-brand theory. the development of a co-brand typology adds structure to this theory and provides a sense making approach for further research.

Practical implications;
This research reveals complex processes that franchise (retail) systems must deploy in a co-brand strategy. The composite nature (and trial and error foundations) of this strategy might be a significant impediment to its broader adoption in either the retailing or franchise sectors. The co-brand typology provides a method by which less developed (or less mature) retail or franchise systems can deploy discrete stages of this theory to inform and create co-brand alliances leading to more sophisticated partnerships and therefore, more resilient operations.

Limitations;
The case study research is exploratory in nature (and limited to management perceptions) with the findings providing an imperative for further investigation into the effects of organisational structure (for example the triangulation of franchisor and franchisee perspectives) on retail (and franchise) co-brand strategy and consumer perceptions of those outcomes.
Originality/value;
The contributions of this paper are two-fold. A typology of co-branding as a basis for future research and initial findings into new forms of co-branding where organisation structure is a key influence on retail co-brand strategy.

Keywords
Retail co-branding, brand leveraging, nascent brands, co-brand typology
References:


Sensory Marketing For Improving The Competitiveness Of Ethical Brands Online

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Purpose
Ethical consumption is increasingly being viewed as the answer to many global environmental and social challenges, including environmental protection, employee rights (sweatshop labour), and animal welfare. Research has already shown the importance of appropriately presenting information on ethical products to consumers via product labels (Testa et al., 2015; Vecchio & Annunziata, 2015), but studies have also questioned if ethical labels are indeed effective (Bradu et al., 2014; Borin et al., 2011; van Amstel et al., 2008). Hence, approaches to ethical branding that do not over-rely on ethical product information or labels need to be considered, especially in the context of online channels. Multisensory marketing techniques offer an interesting perspective to this debate, as potential means by which ethical brands can build a deeper level of engagement with consumers. Whilst carefully crafted imagery, symbols, and sounds have been shown to impact on consumers’ experiences and preferences at a neurological level (Hultén, 2015; Borgelink et al., 2014; Hultén, 2011), the online environment represents a challenge in reproducing such multisensory effects. Given the steady growth of e-commerce in general however, online channels offer much potential for ethical brands to develop and access wider markets. We therefore investigate if multisensory techniques can influence customers’ evaluation of ethical brands in an online environment.

Influencing the level of consumers’ self-referencing has been shown to heighten the effect of sensory cues, and lead to favourable brand evaluations (Yoon & Park, 2012), which presents a potential opportunity for enhancing the multisensory appeal of a typical online channel (e.g. website). In this respect, we examine the combination of two sensory stimuli to increase self-referencing: synesthetic and visual. The effect known as synaesthesia is indirect means by which to stimulate a particular sense; certain words used as part of caption could mimic the effect of stimulating the tactile sense (e.g. "softness you can smell" - see: Spence & Gallace, 2011). The synesthetic approach prove useful in mitigating the disadvantage of online channels in terms of engaging the tactile sense (Spence & Gallace, 2011). Also, images have been shown to influence a consumer’s level of self-referencing in an online environment (Keng & Liu, 2013). Consequently, images that are congruent with the ethical attributes of a product (e.g. fair trade, eco-friendly) could help increase the level of a consumer’s self-referencing with an ethical product online. Together, synesthetic and visual cues may produce a positive multisensory impact on consumers online, and lead to a more ethical perception of a brand by increasing the consumers’ level of self-referencing with the ethical attributes of a product. Our study therefore examines synaesthesia through word-associations as a proxy for the sense of touch, as well as stimulating the visual sense through imagery congruent with the
product’s ethical attributes to increase self-referencing, thus leading to a more ethical perception of a brand. Accordingly, we test the following hypotheses:

H1: An image that is congruent with the ethical attributes of a product will have a positive effect on the Consumer Perceived Ethicality (CPE) of its brand.

H2: The relationship between congruent imagery and CPE of a brand as proposed in H1 is mediated by consumers’ level of self-referencing with the ethical product.

H3: A synesthetic cue in the form of a targeted caption will have a positive effect on the Consumer Perceived Ethicality (CPE) of a brand.

H4: The relationship between synesthetic cue and CPE of a brand as proposed in H3 is mediated by consumers’ level of self-referencing with the ethical product.

H5: Consumers’ level of self-referencing will be highest when both the visual and synesthetic cue are presented.

H6: CPE of a brand will be highest when both the visual (congruent image) and synesthetic cue (caption) are presented.

H7: CPE has a positive effect on Purchase Intention (PI).

Methodology

Main study
We devised an online experiment of a 3 (with congruent image; with incongruent image; without additional image) x 2 (with synesthetic cue; without synesthetic cue) within subject factorial design. In the control condition (without additional image, and without synesthetic cue), an image of the product only is presented with relevant ethical information (e.g. this is a fair trade product).

Self-referencing is measured by a four-item scale adapted from Yoon and Park (2012), and the CPE of a brand is measured by a four-item scale developed by Brunk (2012). Further, we include manipulation checks and control for respondents’ Need For Touch using a 12-item scale adopted from Peck and Childers (2003). Purchase intention (PI) is measured using scales from Osburg (2016).

Pre-test
With a view to selecting an appropriate type of product for the online experiment, based on the relevance of multisensory-appeal as well as ethical criteria, we initially identified 18 types of products sold online from sales statistics (www.statista.com). Out of the 18, two types of products were excluded on initial evaluation based on the relevance of multisensory-appeal for these. We then designed an online survey, in which respondents were asked to rate the importance they give to three ethical criteria: environmental friendliness, fair trade, and animal welfare, for each of the remaining 16 types of products.

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance of each of four senses (touch/feel; taste; smell; and sight), and their perceived relevance of ethical criteria (environmental protection; fair trade; animal welfare) for each product type. We excluded the auditory sense from this, as this was inapplicable to the 16 types of products. The product type with high importance of the four senses and high relevance of ethical criteria will be selected for the main study. This pre-test is currently underway; and the main study will be conducted between Dec 2016 and Feb 2017.
Theoretical implications
Our study answers calls for further research on multisensory marketing effects in online and multimedia environments (Spence & Gallace, 2011). Extant literature on ethical product marketing and ethical brands seems to be somewhat fixated on the presentation of ethical product information, which is a cognition-oriented approach to marketing communications. This approach however has shown limited success in terms of changing behaviour and promoting ethical consumer-choices (Borin et al., 2011; van Amstel et al., 2008). Our study aims to highlight the importance of an alternative approach: through multisensory appeals, which trigger deeper functions in the human brain, thus creating a more powerful impact on consumers (Lindstrom, 2006; 2005).

Practical implications
Successful online marketers and ‘e-retailers’ use various sensory appeals through their web and other multimedia interfaces to attract customers. However, for ethical products, organisations typically tend to have limited scope in terms of deploying above-the-line marketing techniques (e.g. TV adverts) to supplement their online marketing, in addition to basic web-marketing. Therefore, proven techniques are necessary to attract all types of consumers, not only those with ethical-orientations, towards ethical consumerism and ethical brands online.

Moreover, for any kind of branding online, adding a multitude of features to a web, or particularly mobile interface, can render the interface inefficient (e.g. by increasing page loading times) as well as costly to develop and maintain. Therefore, using technologically uncomplicated features or stimuli can help online brands/marketing to be more competitive.

Limitations
Whilst our study is expected to provide useful insights into developing the potential for ethical brands online by using multisensory marketing, our investigation is limited to visual and synesthetic cues through words. Other senses can also be influenced to produce positive effects on brand associations or evaluations, such as the auditory sense (Hultén, 2015; Ballouli & Bennett, 2014), which can be replicated in online or multimedia shopping environments.

Interestingly, 3D online advertisements, including avatars, have already shown to impact on consumers’ self-referencing and brand attitudes (Keng & Liu, 2013). Hence, alongside the developments in augmented reality and virtual reality technologies, further research could also explore how consumers’ interaction with a virtual image of a product online or through multimedia platforms would impact on their brand evaluations.

Originality/value
Several studies have added empirical support to the efficacy of multisensory marketing from multiple perspectives. However, the online and other multimedia environments (e.g. mobile devices) present challenges in adopting these proven multisensory marketing techniques owing to technical limitations as well as the obvious lack of physical connection. Despite this, the importance of online and multimedia channels cannot be overlooked for ethical brands, as they represent significant opportunities for growth. Our study is amongst a small and nascent stream of research that aims to develop a better understanding of multisensory marketing techniques for online and multimedia environments. Finally, our attempt also addresses the dearth of research in ethical product/brand marketing online, by standing apart from the conventional approach of (ethical) information overload.
Keywords
multisensory-marketing, ethical-brands, online-marketing
List of References


Innovative Culture within organisations and brand identification among employees: a cross-cultural study of the automotive industry

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Purpose
Internal Marketing (IM) has been a widely discussed topic in Marketing in the last fifty years, and has been advocated particularly in the context of service organisations to develop employee satisfaction and positive attitudes towards employer’s brand (Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2015; Hung, 2012; Punjaisri et al., 2009; Berry, 1986). However, IM has received less attention in the context of manufacturing organisations; especially in industries where innovative organisational cultures play an important role in developing competitive advantage. Moreover, whilst there are substantial but separate bodies of literature on internal marketing and on organisational culture management, there is much less combining the two. Hence, this study considers the importance of internal marketing within organisations, and seeks to establish the relationship between internal marketing, organisational culture that fosters creativity and innovation, and employees’ attitudes and behaviour that are aligned with their employer’s brand. In addition, we seek to examine potential cross-cultural differences by comparing results from UK and Chinese automotive industries.

IM’s earliest tenets include treating employees as internal customers (Berry & Parasuraman, 1991), and jobs as internal products that can be designed to enhance employee satisfaction (Berry et al., 1976). More recent development in IM theory however, are founded in the view of IM as a tool for aligning the values of employees with those of the organisation they work for, and particularly for developing employees’ commitment and loyalty to their employer’s brand (Matanda & Ndubisi, 2013; Lings & Greenley, 2010; Burmann et al., 2009; Punjaisri et al., 2009). In this respect, the culture within organisations is an important factor that influences the employee-based outcomes of IM programmes, as highlighted by a small body of emerging research (Hume & Hume, 2015; Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2014; Burmann et al., 2009; Kelemen & Papasolomou, 2007). As such, this research examines the notion of ‘marketing’ for innovation within manufacturing organisations, and if this would have a favourable effect on the extent to which employees relate to the organisation’s brand. Further, we consider if potential cross-national differences exist in terms employee-based outcomes of IM as well as the influence of an innovative or creative culture within an organisation.
Different national cultures can influence workplace or industrial practices within respective countries (Edwards et al., 2015; Michailova & Hutchings, 2006); conversely, research has also highlighted that corporate culture within organisations as being a more influential driver of innovation (Tellis et al., 2009). Consequently, this study aims to address the need for further cross-cultural research into IM’s effectiveness in developing key employee-based brand outcomes, and particularly the role of an innovative organisational culture in this process.

Accordingly, we consider two key employee-based brand outcomes: Brand Identification (Punjaisri et al., 2009), and Brand Citizenship Behaviour (King & Grace, 2010; Burmann et al., 2009), as well as three essential aspects of IM: Internal Marketing Communications, Internal Marketing Research, and Employee Training (Huang & Rundle-Thiele, 2015). The following figure illustrates the interrelationships among these key variables and the proposed hypotheses:

**Methodology**
A voluntary, questionnaire-based survey is used to gather anonymous data from staff working in the automotive industry in UK and China. The Chinese questionnaire was translated and back-translated to ensure accuracy. Scales for measuring Internal Marketing Research, Training, and Internal Marketing Communications were adopted from Huang and Rundle-Thiele (2015). Brand Identification is measured using Punjaisri et al.’s (2009) eight-item scale, and Brand Citizenship Behaviour is measured using a seven-item scale from King and Grace (2010). Finally, Perceived Innovative Culture is measured by a fifteen-item scale developed by Scott and Bruce (1994).

**Findings**
This survey is currently underway and will be completed by Feb 2017. We expect to present the results at the GBC conference.

**Theoretical implications**
IM literature has hitherto focused primarily on the service sector; meanwhile, manufacturing and retail organisations increasingly stand to benefit from the application of effective IM strategies to help improve their competitiveness (Korhonen-Sande & Sande, 2014; Panigyrakis & Theodoridis, 2009). In addition, whilst extant literature offers some insights into the role of organisational culture in IM’s effectiveness, further understanding of IM strategies and their role in fostering creativity and innovation within an organisation is needed, which our study aims to provide. Furthermore, our research aims to shed light on
questions surrounding the role of national culture’s influence on IM, its employee-based brand outcomes, and innovative organisational culture.

**Practical implications**
Fostering an innovative culture is a substantial challenge for even the leading organisations, especially in large, complex organisations such as those in the automotive industry. Our results may prove useful for managers of such organisations in different countries, who seek to align employee attitudes with the organisations brand whilst fostering innovation and creativity amongst them.

**Limitations**
Whilst our study is based on the UK and Chinese automotive industries, a larger comparative study that considers several industries within various nations would offer a more developed understanding of IM, innovative organisational culture, and IM’s employee-based outcomes under different cultural and industrial contexts.

**Originality/value**
Previous research has examined IM in different national and industrial contexts, but cross-national studies have been rather limited. Moreover, the role of innovative culture has not been specifically considered in existing literature on IM.

**Keywords**
*internal-marketing, brand-citizenship-behaviour, innovative-culture*
List of References


A causal model of online reputation: a customer perspective

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Purpose of Paper
Firms are becoming more conscious that intangible assets add more competitive advantage than functional attributes. Studies describe reputation as one of the most important intangible assets. Reputation is an intangible asset that provides companies with sustainable competitive advantage in the marketplace (Boyd et al. 2010). In order to manage their reputations, firms need to measure it. All existing measures deal with the stakeholders of the firm; however, a particular emphasis should be given to customer, who remains the most important stakeholder for marketers. To the best of our knowledge, the customer-based corporate reputation scale (Walsh & Beatty 2007) is the only known measurement scale that takes the customer aspect into consideration but it has been developed in an offline context.

With the development of e-commerce, firms have now a greater interest than before in investing in intangible assets, especially their e-reputation. The literature review shows that studies in the field of e-reputation are still limited. Furthermore, existing studies (e.g. Walsh & Beatty 2009) tend to focus on antecedents and consequences of reputation that are associated with the offline context, but do not analyze variables related to e-consumer behavior.

The objectives of this paper are hence twofold: (1) examining the dimensions of the customer-based online reputation; (2) introducing a causal model that associates online reputation with some key antecedents and consequences.

Theoretical Background and Hypotheses
The reputation consists of the emotions and knowledge held by people (Hall 1992). From the client perspective, a definition was proposed by Walsh and Beatty (2007) and was characterized as the overall evaluation done by the clients of a company based on their reactions to its offerings and communications activities.

With the development of e-commerce, managing e-reputation is becoming essential. Literature review shows that there is no study that measures e-reputation from the customer perspective. In this research, we define more precisely the customer-based online reputation as “the assessment done by online buyers of a company based on their reactions to its products, communication activities, and interactions with its website”.

The main focus of this study being on the antecedents and the consequences of e-reputation, we will first start by presenting the antecedents and then the consequences of e-reputation.

Antecedents
Trust: Walsh and Beatty (2009) demonstrated that trust is an antecedent of corporate reputation. Thus, it is likely that online customers who trust the company will positively evaluate its online reputation. Thus, our first hypothesis is

H1: Trust has a positive effect on customer-based online reputation.

Heritage: Heritage brands have built a meaningful past, and having a heritage helps to make a brand relevant to the present and prospectively to the future. Therefore, we suggest that heritage has a positive influence on customer based online reputation:

H2: Heritage has a positive effect on customer-based online reputation.

Consequences

Commitment: Bennette and Gabriel (2011) demonstrated that a good reputation provides buyers with repeated positive reinforcement, which created commitment. Bartikowski and Walsh (2011) proved that customer based corporate reputation positively influences customer commitment. Thus, our third hypothesis is

H3: Customer-based online reputation has a positive effect on customer commitment.

Word of mouth: The relationship between reputation and WOM has been emphasized in marketing. Hong and Yang (2009) proved that when buyers perceive a company’s reputation to be favorable, they are more likely to engage in favorable WOM. We therefore hypothesize that

H4: Customer-based online reputation has a positive effect on customers’ positive WOM.

Methodology

Before testing our hypotheses, we chose to build up a new e-reputation scale. The process went through two phases. First, we designed three qualitative studies in order to delineate the main dimensions surrounding e-reputation and to generate corresponding items. The first study employed interviews with experts in the field. The second and third studies relied on projective techniques (collages and pictures metaphorical associations). A total of 42 items emerged from these approaches.

Second, we collected preliminary data on 452 customers among a set of 8 websites. Exploratory as well as confirmatory factor analyses allowed us to create a new e-reputation scale structured around 8 dimensions with sound psychometric properties as for reliability, convergent and discriminant validity indices (detailed results are available upon request).

In order to test the hypothesized relationships, a new online survey was conducted. A questionnaire was sent by mail to randomly chosen samples in France. The respondent had to be a client and to choose the one he was the most familiar among the top 6 websites in France. The data collection process lasted 6 weeks. This process resulted in a usable sample of 1100 respondents.

Trust (Hess 1995) is assessed according to a three-dimensional structure, representing the reliability, honesty, and altruism dimensions. The global coefficient alpha is 0.86. Heritage is assessed by a seven-item scale adapted from Merchant and Rose (2012). Coefficient alpha is 0.95. Affective (α=0.83) and calculative (α=0.70) commitments are each assessed by a three-item scale (Bansal et al. 2004; Fullerton 2005). Normative commitment (α=0.94) is assessed.
by a five-item scale (Bansal et al. 2004). WOM is assessed by a six-item scale adapted from Goyette et al. (2010) with a coefficient alpha of 0.89.

Findings
A PLS approach has been selected because its suitability to handle higher order latent constructs and violation of multivariate normality. Furthermore, we used non-parametric bootstrapping with 5000 replications to obtain the standard errors of the estimates (Hair et al. 2012). First, the reliability and validity of each concept have to be first estimated. As shown in Table 1, indicators of convergent validity and reliability are satisfied: the reliability is greater than 0.7 and the convergent validity is equal to or greater than 0.5. In order to assess discriminant validity, we relied on the discriminant validity check (available upon request) put forward by Fornell and Larcker (1981) and that shows that all the latent variables encompassed within this research are different. Before we look into more details the path coefficients, we would like to stress the good structure of the new e-reputations scale which achieves high convergent and reliability indices. This second survey does confirm the structure of the new online reputation scale which comprises six main dimensions one of which (quality) has three specific sub-facets.

Table 2: Convergent Validity and Reliability Indices

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Latent variable</th>
<th>Convergent validity (AVE: Average Variance Extracted)</th>
<th>Reliability (Jöreskog’s Rho)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Heritage</td>
<td>0.576</td>
<td>0.856</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TRUST (second order)</td>
<td>0.750</td>
<td>0.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Altruism</td>
<td>0.626</td>
<td>0.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Honesty</td>
<td>0.753</td>
<td>0.902</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliability</td>
<td>0.690</td>
<td>0.870</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E-REPUTATION (higher order)</td>
<td>0.566</td>
<td>0.920</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer orientation</td>
<td>0.747</td>
<td>0.899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good Employer</td>
<td>0.911</td>
<td>0.968</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Financially Strong</td>
<td>0.741</td>
<td>0.896</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Responsibility</td>
<td>0.756</td>
<td>0.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Price</td>
<td>0.710</td>
<td>0.880</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality</td>
<td>0.527</td>
<td>0.869</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reliable Delivery</td>
<td>0.542</td>
<td>0.780</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Innovativity &amp; Singularity</td>
<td>0.695</td>
<td>0.872</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Savings Offerings</td>
<td>0.644</td>
<td>0.845</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COMMITMENT (second order)</td>
<td>0.774</td>
<td>0.911</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affective Commitment</td>
<td>0.837</td>
<td>0.939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive Commitment</td>
<td>0.717</td>
<td>0.884</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Normative Commitment</td>
<td>0.654</td>
<td>0.881</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Word of Mouth</td>
<td>0.578</td>
<td>0.890</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1 below presents the path coefficients. The predictive power of the model is fairly high and all the path coefficients are statistically significant. All in all, trust seems to be a better antecedent of e-reputation than heritage. One possible explanation lies in the fact that pure e-commerce brands are fairly new and hence not able to establish themselves with a high heritage level as for instance high-end luxury brands. More importantly, e-reputation is equally balanced as a good predictor of either commitment or word of mouth. Moreover, a finer analysis (bootstrapped analysis with 5000 replications) of the indirect paths form respectively heritage and trust on both commitment and WOM shows that they are all
statistically significant, hence putting the stress in our research on the core mediating role played by e-reputation.

Figure 1: Causal Model of Antecedents & Consequences of E-Reputation

Theoretical Implications
Despite rising practitioners’ interest in online reputation, research in this area is still limited. Prior academic research focuses on studying the reputation and its relationships with other variables in the offline context. All four hypothesized model relationships are supported. Our results show that a high level of trust positively impacts the online reputation. The same is true for heritage, but with less impact, maybe because the online commerce is relatively new, and e-commerce websites do not have a heritage yet compared to well-established brick and mortar companies. In terms of consequences, a favorable reputation increases the customer commitment toward the website, meaning that online customers will have a higher desire to maintain this valued relationship. In addition, the positive influence on WOM is very important especially in our digital era where brand choices and personal influences are increasingly taking place online. As for the measure of e-reputation, our results confirm that it can be assessed through 8 specific factors: Customer orientation, Reliable Delivery, Innovativity and Singularity, High Standard Offerings, Price, Social and Environmental Responsibility, Good employer, and Financially Strong Company.

Practical Implications
From an operational point of view, the customer-based e-reputation scale could be used repeatedly as a barometer enabling to periodically assess the e-reputation of diverse online companies. Our results also point out some potential managerial implications as far as improving customer-based online reputation is concerned. From the perspective of antecedents, increasing trust should be the choice in order to improve online reputation. With regards to the consequences, online reputation is a significant indicator of customer commitment to the website and spreading a positive word-of-mouth. Hence, and in order to have a positive e-WOM, managers should focus on enhancing their online reputation.
Limitations
Since than two of our chosen websites are bricks and clicks, further testing should be conducted to understand the relationship between online and offline reputation. Second, our study is also limited as for the number of antecedents and consequences encompassed. Future studies should test other potential related concepts such as website quality or perceived risk. Ultimately, the applicability of this model could be evaluated in other cultural setting than the French one selected in this research.

Originality:
Besides to providing a new e-reputation scale, our research tests for the first time a causal model that links online reputation to two antecedents (heritage and trust) and to two consequences (commitment and WOM). Moreover, our results are based on a large sample of customers (1100) from the top 6 e-commerce websites in France, hence giving full credence to our theoretical as well managerial implications.

Keywords: e-Reputation, Trust, heritage, Commitment, WOM, PLS SEM

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