
The Congruence Effect of Personalities: An Empirical Analysis

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The focus of this paper is to understand the role of self-concept/ brand personality aspects on consumer buying behaviour and to probe how this brand personality consumer congruity influences the purchase intention of the consumer in the Indian apparel market. The study is based on the primary data collected through a structured questionnaire survey research method using Aaker's (1997) brand personality (BP) construct and semantic differential scaling technique for the measurement of brand personality congruity. The brands chosen for this study were Van-Heusen & Raymond's in Apparel category. The print and electronic advertisements of these brands from different secondary sources such as newspapers, magazines, television and internet were studied. The respondents were also asked to respond to items related to advertising in order to understand its role in shaping the purchase intention towards a particular brand. The findings of this study will lead to a more informed response by marketers towards self-concept. It will enable them to identify issues as being core to understanding and driving the consumption of apparel brand category and will confirm and substantiate the relevance of the concept of congruency theory in the advertising world.

KeyWords: Consumer Buying Behaviour, Brand Personality, Congruity, Purchase intention

INTRODUCTION

In today's context of ever expanding affluent society and with the growing adoption of lavish life style by the populace, the function of consumption has changed. The number of products and services offered in the market is exploding and more and more new products are launched every now and then. Besides, it is not only the total number of new products offered in a market, which increases but also their homogeneity. As a result of this product boom, the companies increasingly struggle to differentiate their products from those of competitors. Also, the shortening of product life cycle (PLC) implies that new products are entering the market more quickly. In this backdrop the consumer's decision making process in selecting a particular brand has been considered as a complex choice process. This process is becoming more complicated as manufacturers continuously introduce new brands in the market. Therefore, understanding the process by which consumers form purchase decision is of vital importance to marketing managers as well as to consumer researchers.

Consumers do not primarily purchase products to satisfy their basic physiological and safety needs only, but also to reach higher-order goals. The social needs, self-esteem needs and the need for self-actualisation come to the fore and play a more important role in the purchase of products. Thus, brands are increasingly positioned within the emotional and experiential world of the consumers. The non-functional product attributes such as the

symbolic meaning gain in importance. Within this frame, a personality-directed brand management approach has found its way into the business world.

At the most basic level, the process by which people purchase a product or brand is guided by needs and wants. Brands offer different values to the consumers; these values basically include functional (i.e., the problem solving capability of a brand), experiential (i.e., benefits related to sensory enjoyment or cognitive arousal) and symbolic brand benefits (i.e., the signal effects shown to other via the brand) as observed (Keller, 1993). Factors like necessity and desire remain the driving forces, but the consumption process is not as simple as an individual having the need or wants for a product or a brand. Consumers purchase a product / brands not only on the basis of their function or quality but do so, more importantly, because of the symbolic meanings contained in products/ brands (Veryzer, 1995). A brand with functional benefits is one designed to satisfy consumers' needs to solve consumption-related problems while a brand with symbolic benefits is one designed to fulfil consumers' desires for self-enhancement, role position, group membership, or ego identification.

Thus, the focus of this research is to understand the role of self-concept/ brand personality aspects on consumer buying behaviour and to probe how this brand personality consumer congruity influences the purchase intention of the consumer in the Indian apparel and beverage market. The focus of this study may further be elaborated as following:

1. To analyse the personality (actual self) of consumers of selected product categories in Indian market.
2. To measure and analyse the perceived brand personality of the brands selected for the study.
3. To measure the brand personality consumer congruity of chosen brands and to analyse the interrelationships (congruity effect) among the brand personality and the self concept of consumers.

4. To examine the brand personality congruity effect on consumer's purchase intention.

Thus, the study offers insights for effective brand management strategies especially advertising strategies for apparel and beverage brands in India.

The study will also add to the existing knowledge of brand personality congruity and its impact on purchasing behavior of Indian consumers. This will, no doubt, help to provide more reference to all the future researchers who may pick interest in this field.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the above fact this section focuses on published literature connected to our research problem. The shared goals of this review are to "demonstrate a familiarity with the body of knowledge in this area and to establish their credibility; to show the path of prior research and how our study is linked to them; to integrate and summarize what is known in this area, and to learn from others and stimulate new ideas" (Neuman, 2003). The literature pertaining to the constructs of proposed model of this study, including concept of brand, brand personality, congruity and the role of advertisement in creating the congruence which help in building a positive purchase intention, has been exhaustively reviewed.

Product is a physical entity that lives in the real world. A brand is a perceptual entity that lives in the consumer's mind. A brand is something different from a product, more than a simple commodity (Crockett, S. R., & Wood, L. J. (2004).

According to American Marketing Association, 1960, "a brand is a name, term, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors". Even though this definition was already formed in the early stages of marketing, it is still prevailing and captures the main idea and essence of branding. From a company perspective, brands can function as

carriers of information and symbols of certain lifestyles to attract consumers. Further, brands can represent an opportunity to achieve financial growth by adding value to the products.

The concept of personality has been immensely used in existing marketing and psychology literature over forty years of research in marketing. Levy 1959 & Martineau (1958) has shown that the perceptions and associations consumers have, about brands, go beyond their functional attributes and benefits, and include non-functional, symbolic qualities, often referred to as "brand image". There are two general types of personality research in the literature; one which considers personality as a set of internal traits that dictate a person's consistent and characteristic response to stimuli which explain a person's behavioral tendencies (Kotler, 2003; McShane & Von Glinow, 2005; Sheth & Mittal, 2004), and the other, as an interaction of the individual and the external situation he/she is in (Wee, 2004). Both research foci have aimed to examine factors that will enable researchers to predict, modify, and control human behavior, relying greatly on knowledge from psychology, sociology, and psychiatry (Sweeney & Brandon, 2006).

In reference to the paradox of personality in marketing, we all have a personality, but we do not know about its symmetrical relation with our consumer behaviour. However, some have argued that the symbolic use of brands is possible because consumers often imbue brands with human personality traits (termed animism; e.g., Pine & Gilmore 1999). A brand is perceived to possess a personality in much the same way as humans. Therefore, brand personality can be defined as the set of human characteristics associated with a brand and it tends to serve a symbolic or self-expressive function (Jennifer L. Aaker, 1997).

Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) define personality as a clear construct which is dissimilar to the cognitive construct, skills and capabilities. Since the concept of brand personality gained acceptance in the academic and corporate circles, much research has been directed to ascertain the influence of individual

personalities on evaluating brands (Levy, 1959; Kassarian, 1971; Sirgy, 1982; Plummer, 2010; Duboff, 1986; Durgee, 1988; Ogilvy, 1988; Carr, 1996; Aaker, 1997). There have been several researches devoted to studying brand personalities (Supphellen & Gronhaug, 2003; Venable et al., 2003; Okazaki, 2005). Some researchers have investigated the influence of brand personality in enabling consumers to improve their self-image and encouraging self-expression (Malhotra, 1981; Belk, 1988; Kleine et al., 1995). Rajgopal (2006) posits that brand personality traits provide a symbolic meaning to the product. In strategic terms creating distinctive personalities for the brands enables companies to differentiate their products. It assists organizations to devise communication strategies, which strengthen the traits of the brand in the minds of the consumers.

Self-concept / product-image congruity is defined as the match between a consumer's perception of him/herself and the image of the typical user of a product. Self-congruity theory asserts that consumer behaviour is partially determined by the congruence resulting from a psychological comparison involving the product-user image or brand image and the consumer's self-concept (i.e. actual self-image, ideal self-image, social self-image). This psychological comparison can lead to high self-congruity when the consumer perceives the product user image or brand image to match that of his or her self-image.

Self-congruity theory suggests that since people often use brand meaning for self-expression, then consumers will have favorable predispositions towards products and brands that serve to enhance perceptions of their own self-image (Sirgy, 1986). More specifically, consumers often prefer brands and products that project similar images (i.e., congruent) with how they perceive themselves to be as individuals, that is, their self-image (Belk, 1988; Graeff, 1996; Sirgy 1982; Solomon, 2004; Sutherland et al., 2004). Theoretically, self-congruity theory is embedded in consumer psychology and is well-grounded.

The mental process of comparing self to other objects, called self-congruity, characterizes the match or mismatch between consumer self-image and a product image, brand image, or company image (Sirgy, 1986). Derived from consumer psychology, the phenomenon self-congruity is a psychological (i.e., an internal) comparison that consumers make between a product and/or brand's perceived image and their own self-image perceptions (Sirgy, 1986). High self-congruity occurs when perceptions of a product or brand's image match perceptions of one's self-image, and low self-congruity, incongruity, is experienced when there is a mismatch between product and/or product/brand image and self-image. The present study focuses on image congruence experience between self-image and brand image termed "self-brand congruity."

In essence, the self-brand congruity experience is a function of two perceptual constructs: self-image and brand-image. In order to study this phenomenon, researchers typically employ

psychometric techniques to measure consumers' self and brand image perceptions and then use standard calculations to determine the difference or distance between the image measures (Gould, 1991; Graeff, 1996; Sirgy, 1982, 1986; Sutherland et al., 2004). Calculated congruity indicators are typically the focal point of analysis. Hence, the conceptualization of both the self-image and brand-image constructs is of central importance when studying self-brand congruity. The self-image concept, derived from self-theory, provides the "major theoretical impetus" of self-congruity theory and explains the motivational drives of self-brand congruity on consumer behavior (Sirgy, 1986).

In conclusion, the results of some previous studies clearly established a link between self-concept and consumer behaviors. As expected, the self-concept played an important role in the control and direction of consumer behavior and performance towards purchase intention. The results were also consistent with the premise that the higher the congruity between a consumer's self-concept and brand image, the more likely s/he will choose the brand.

Table 1: Major Studies on the effect of self image congruity on customer behaviour

Authors	Findings
Azevedo & Farhangmehr, 2005	A significant positive correlation does exist between self concept and brand personality congruity and advertising response.
Kleijnen et al., 2004	Consumers with low image congruity are influenced more by their surroundings than consumers with high image congruity and image congruity has a significant impact on consumer attitudes and the adoption decision.
Jamal & Goode, 2001	Self-image congruity was a very strong predictor of consumer's brand preferences and a good predictor of consumer satisfaction. And consumers with higher levels of self-image congruity were more likely to prefer the brand and enjoy higher levels of satisfaction with the brand as compared to those with lower levels of self image congruity.
Armstrong, 2001	A difference in the self-images, product-images and level of image congruity experienced, does exist between males and females.
Quester et al., 2000	Confirm the role of self-congruity in consumer's choice and show that culture influences the use of actual versus ideal self-image in the evaluation of product.
Heath and Scott, 1998	Find that when different brands of motor vehicles were physically similar, owners perceived no difference between their own self-concept and the self concept they attributed to owners of competing product brands.
Hong & Zinkhan, 1995	Brand memory is not mediated by the extent to which advertising expressions are congruent with viewer's self-concept. However brand preference and purchase intention were shown to be influenced by the self-congruity of an ad.

These researches provide evidence about the positive effect of self image congruity in the tangible product context on purchase intentions of the consumer (Ericksen, 1996; Mehta, 1999; Sirgy, 1985).

Prior studies reveal that viewers' attitudes toward ads are more favourable when the congruity between programs and ads is achieved. Many styles of congruity are discussed, such as induced mood congruity (happy vs. sad) (Kamins et al. 1991; Lord et al. 2001), involvement type congruity (affective vs. cognitive) (Celuch et al. 1993) and content congruity (product category) (Furnham et al. 2002). General advertising research also claims that the congruity between the nature of product and appeal of ad makes the ad become more persuasive (Johar et al. 1991). Prior independent studies of various congruities between different factors contribute to the accumulation of the knowledge on this issue.

Arens and Bovee (1994) define advertising as, "non-personal communication of information usually paid for and usually persuasive in nature, about products, services, or ideas by identified sponsors through various media". From this definition, we can see that advertising is a type of communication related with three actors—products (or service, ideas), media and sponsors. However, there is another actor implicitly represented in the definition, i.e., consumers who receive ads.

With the intensifying competition, the major challenge ahead is to create a distinctive image for the individual product. Distinctiveness is the core of the innovative character of an advertising strategy. Consumers with high involvement in purchase evaluate advertising information more thoroughly than individuals with low involvement (Peltier and Schibrowsky 1994; Mantel and Kardes 1999). Such consumers who have high need for cognition often need rational reasons before buying any product. Thus, in such cases consumer response can be initiated by offering information rich

advertisements (Petty et al. 1983; MacInnis and Jaworski 1989; Suri and Monroe 2001).

Product features which deliver meaningful product benefits are generally central to the brand image creation process in that it is the ability of the product offering to satisfy buyer needs that is at the core of image formation. However, where there is little real functional difference between competing product offerings, then the weight of the image creation task falls more heavily on other aspects of identity. In such circumstances particular emphasis is placed on marketing communications in general, and advertising in particular, in order to provide the basis for consumer discrimination.

RESEARCH GAP

After the deep analysis of the literature available on the constructs to be considered under this study, i.e., the brand personality construct, self-image and congruity construct and the study on the impact of this congruity on the purchase intention of the consumers, it has been found that there are some lack still present in this field of research.

1. This literature review has indicated lack of relevant studies regarding brand personality and congruity effect on the purchase intention of consumers in Indian context, particularly.
2. There is lack of literature on the brand personality congruity study, brand-wise, as not much of the categories of brands with their image, has been taken under consideration to measure their brand personality and congruity with that of the brand users.
3. Moreover, to our knowledge there has been very less research identifying what kind of brand personality is preferable for different types of consumers.

Hence, this study has tried to fill this gap in the literature by adding to the existing knowledge of brand personality congruity effect on purchase intention of the consumer in Indian context.

THEORETICAL FRMEWORK

The proposed conceptual framework in this study is based on the findings in the literature review presented in previous section. This research intends to investigate the relationships among brand personality, consumer personality, establish the relationship between the Brand Personality Congruity (BPC) and the pre purchase consumer evaluations of the purchase intension. The following conceptual model was developed where BPC was hypothesized to have significant and positive associations with the Purchase intention of the consumer.

The study is based on primary data collected through a structured questionnaire survey research method using Aaker's (1997) brand personality (BP) construct and semantic differential scaling technique for measurement of brand personality congruity. The brands chosen for this study belong to two diverse categories of products i.e. Van-Heusen & Raymond's in Apparel category. The print and electronic advertisements of these brands from different secondary sources such as newspapers, magazines, television and internet were studied. The respondents were also asked to respond to items related to advertising in order to understand its role in shaping the purchase intention towards a particular brand.

Figure represents the theoretical model and consequently proposes the hypothesis to be tested in this study.

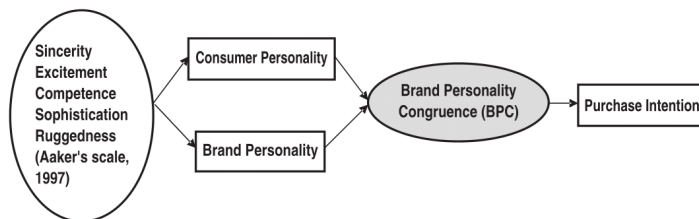


Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework

Therefore, a distinctive brand personality can help to create a set of unique and favourable associations in consumer memory, and thus build and enhance brand equity. A well established brand personality and its fitness with the consumer self-concept influences consumer preference and patronage and develop stronger emotional ties and build a positive purchase intention.

Hypothesis Development

This analysis of past literature led to the following general hypothesis. A total of 32 hypotheses have been formulated. These hypotheses gave a direction to the flow of the research. The various major and sub-hypotheses of the study are listed below:

H1_a: There is no significant and positive relationship between brand personality congruity and purchase intention of the brands.

H2_a: There is no significant and positive relationship between brand personality dimensions and the Purchase Intention of the consumers.

H3_a: There is no difference between the purchase intention of high congruency group and low congruency group.

H4_a: High congruency group does not lead to high purchase intention.

The hypothesis is broad based to test all the aspects of brand building and also is specific to brand personality dimensions. Next section will focus on the research methodology which has been followed to test the hypotheses.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

As our aim was to determine the properties of product characteristics in terms of brand personality and to make specific predictions, we adopted descriptive research approach.

Sample Unit and Sample Area

An 'individual respondents' was considered as a sampling unit and the non probabilistic convenience sampling method was adopted to select the sample items. The respondents represented different age groups, educational levels and income groups. They were selected from the some urban parts of Northern India. A structured closed-ended questionnaire designed specifically for the study and was personally administered by the researcher in the shopping malls of National Capital Region comprising of New Delhi, and surrounding cities like Noida, Greater Noida, Gurgaon, Faridabad, and Ghaziabad. The data was collected through field survey with the help of non - disguised, pre - structures questionnaire. The purpose of the study was briefed to all the respondents in order to elicit precise responses from them and minimising the errors involved in primary data collection. A total of 460 respondents participated in the study. After removing the questionnaires that have less than 50 per cent of the questions answered, 423 valid questionnaires remain for further analyses.

The research technique adopted in this study was Survey method in which the information is gathered from a sample of people by the use of questionnaire or interviews.

Since the subjects of this study will be the specific segment of the population rather than a general cross-section of the population, non-probability sampling procedure will be applied, employing Convenience Sampling so as to obtain responses from customers who buy the branded products which makes their self personality.

The brands were selected for the study on the basis of following criteria:

1. All products must be consumed by the population being sampled.
2. They must be readily available in a wide variety of outlets.
3. Brands within a product category must be similar in form, size, shape, composition, and price.
4. Product consumption should be fairly rapid to develop a frequent purchase pattern.
5. An indication of advertising appeals that develop brand preferences based on social-psychological concepts should be present.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Sample Profile

The data was collected using survey method drawing from a sample of the residents of National Capital Region (NCR) and Delhi. A total of 460 respondents participated in the study. After removing the questionnaires that have less than 50 per cent of the questions answered, 423 valid questionnaires remain for further analyses. Thus the survey response rate was 91.96%. Finally a set of 423 complete responses was statistically analysed in order to achieve the objectives of the study. This section provides sample profile detailing sample statistics such as sex, age, marital status, income, education and occupation etc.

Table 2: Summary of Familiarity Statistics			
Brands	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Van Heusen	423	3.49	1.395
Raymond's	423	4.28	.908

These results indicate that the respondent's familiarity level for brands may further affect the responses of the customers on other variables related to brand personality dimensions. As the respondents with high level of brand familiarity may respond more positively on the brand dimensions as compared to that of low level of brand familiarity.

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Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted For Vanheusens

Table 3: Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted For Vanheusens			
	Scale	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Sincerity	Down to earth	0.98	0.83
	Family oriented		
	Conservative		
	Honest		
	Sincere		
	Real		
	Wholesome		
	Original		
	Cheerful		
	Sentimental		
Friendly			
Excitement	Daring	0.97	0.82
	Trendy		
	Exciting		
	Spirited		
	Cool		
	Young		
	Imaginative		
	Unique		
	Up-to-date		
	Independent		
Contemporary			
Competence	Reliable	0.98	0.87
	Hardworking		
	Secure		
	Intelligent		
	Technical		
	Corporate		
	Successful		
	Leader		
	Confident		
Sophistication	Upper Class	0.98	0.92
	Glamorous		
	Good looking		
	Charming		
	Feminine		
	Smooth		
Ruggedness	Outdoorsy/Adventurous	0.96	0.83
	Masculine		
	Western		
	Tough		
	Rugged		
Purchase Intention	I'll search for information for this brand!	0.97	0.89
	In case of non-availability, I would actively seek out information for this brand at other places (like Dealers, Internet etc.)!		
	I'll visit the store of this brand!		
	I usually go for this brand as my first choice!		
	I'll recommend this brand to others!		
	I intend to continue buying this brand in future!		

Hence based on the above statistics, the data was found to be reliable and valid.

The Congruence Effect of Personalities:
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Table 4: Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted For Raymonds			
	Scale	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Sincerity	Down to earth	0.98	0.86
	Family oriented		
	Conservative		
	Honest		
	Sincere		
	Real		
	Wholesome		
	Original		
	Cheerful		
	Sentimental		
	Friendly		
Excitement	Daring	0.98	0.83
	Trendy		
	Exciting		
	Spirited		
	Cool		
	Young		
	Imaginative		
	Unique		
	Up-to-date		
	Independent		
	Contemporary		
Competence	Reliable	0.98	0.88
	Hardworking		
	Secure		
	Intelligent		
	Technical		
	Corporate		
	Successful		
	Leader		
	Confident		
Sophistication	Upper Class	0.97	0.85
	Glamorous		
	Good looking		
	Charming		
	Feminine		
	Smooth		
Ruggedness	Outdoorsy/Adventurous	0.97	0.88
	Masculine		
	Western		
	Tough		
	Rugged		
Purchase Intention	I'll search for information for this brand!	0.97	0.88
	In case of non-availability, I would actively seek out information for this brand at other places (like Dealers, Internet etc.)!		
	I'll visit the store of this brand!		
	I usually go for this brand as my first choice!		
	I'll recommend this brand to others!		
	I intend to continue buying this brand in future!		

Based on the above statistics, the data for the brand Raymonds, the composite reliability and the average variance extracted was found to be quite appropriate for further analysis.

Table 5: Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted For Consumer Self

	Scale	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted
Sincerity	Down to earth	0.98	0.85
	Family oriented		
	Conservative		
	Honest		
	Sincere		
	Real		
	Wholesome		
	Original		
	Cheerful		
	Sentimental		
	Friendly		
Excitement	Daring	0.97	0.75
	Trendy		
	Exciting		
	Spirited		
	Cool		
	Young		
	Imaginative		
	Unique		
	Up-to-date		
	Independent		
	Contemporary		
Competence	Reliable	0.98	0.86
	Hardworking		
	Secure		
	Intelligent		
	Technical		
	Corporate		
	Successful		
	Leader		
	Confident		
Sophistication	Upper Class	0.96	0.84
	Glamorous		
	Good looking		
	Charming		
	Feminine		
Ruggedness	Smooth	0.97	0.88
	Outdoorsy / Adventurous		
	Masculine		
	Western		
	Tough		
	Rugged		

From the above table, it is again seen that the data was quite reliable and valid.

Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Results of Fit Indices for the CFA Measurement Model for the brand Vanheusen

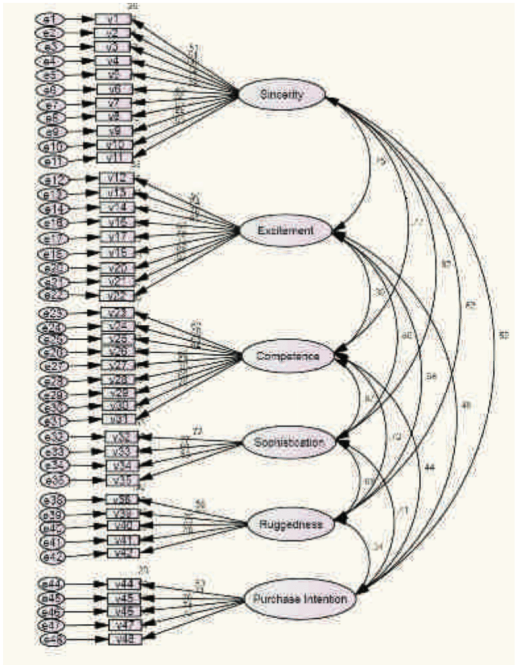


Figure 2: CFA Measurement Model for the brand Vanheusen

For purposes of assessing the CFA Measurement Model, the items in the five subdimensions (Sincerity, excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness), were subjected to CFA. The first step in assessing the CFA Measurement Model was to consider the fit indices.

The results from analyzing the model indicate a good fit. The value of CMIN/DF was 1.283, below the recommended value of 3.0. The RMSEA for the measurement model was .079. Browne and Cudeck (1993) suggest that a value less than .08 indicate a good model fit. Other fit indices also point to a fair and acceptable model fit (NFI = .932, GFI = .920, TLI =

.945, CFI = .918). Table provides the results for each of the fit indices of the CFA Measurement Model. Figure depicts the CFA Measurement Model.

Table 6: Results of Fit indices for CFA Measurement Model for brand Vanheusen	
RMSEA	0.079
CMIN/DF	1.283
NFI	.932
GFI	.920
TLI	.945
CFI	.918

Results of Fit Indices for the CFA Measurement Model for the brand Raymonds

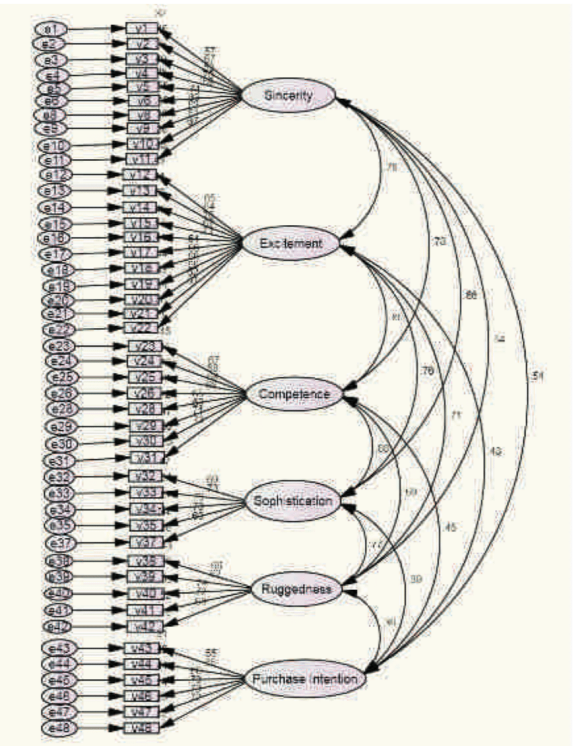


Figure 3: CFA Measurement Model for the brand Raymonds

The results from analyzing the model indicate a good fit. The value of CMIN/DF was 1.882 , below the recommended value of 3.0. The RMSEA for the measurement model was .074. Browne and Cudeck (1993) suggest that a value less than .08 indicate a good model fit. Other fit indices also point to a fair and acceptable model fit (NFI =.953 GFI = .932, TLI = .950, CFI =.932). Table provides the results for each of the fit indices of the CFA Measurement Model. Figure depicts the CFA Measurement Model.

Table 7: Results of Fit indices for CFA Measurement Model for brand Raymonds	
RMSEA	0.074
CMIN/DF	1.882
NFI	.953
GFI	.932
TLI	.950
CFI	.932

Results of Fit Indices for the CFA Measurement Model for Consumer Self

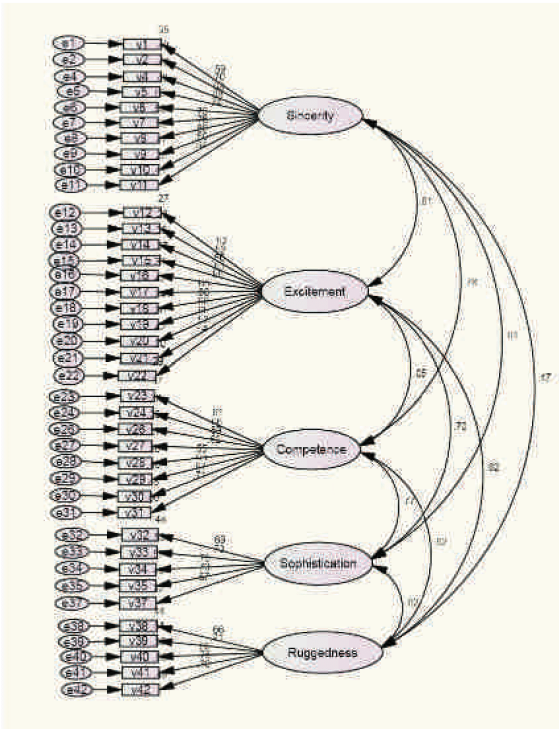


Figure 4: CFA Measurement Model for the Consumer Self

The results from analyzing the model indicate a good fit. The value of CMIN/DF was 1.924, below the recommended value of 3.0. The RMSEA for the measurement model was .078, which is a value less than .08 and it indicates a good model fit. Other fit indices also point to a fair and acceptable model fit (NFI =.922, GFI = .912, TLI = .901, CFI =.928). Table provides the results for each of the fit indices of the CFA Measurement Model. Figure depicts the CFA Measurement Model.

Table 8: Results of Fit indices for CFA Measurement Model for Consumer Self	
RMSEA	.078
CMIN/DF	1.924
NFI	.922
GFI	.912
TLI	.901
CFI	.928

Therefore the fit indices for all the constructs was found to be a good model fit.

Measuring Brand Personality and Self-Congruency (BPC) Effect

A general hypothesis of this research is that the degree of similarity (congruence) between brand image and self image will have greater effects on the attitudes of consumers towards the brand and the purchase intention. This is because the self-image ad encouraged consumers to consider their self-image as a criterion for evaluation of the brand. A generalized Euclidean distance model (as shown below) was used to calculate difference scores reflecting actual congruence (between brand image and self-image).

$$D = \sqrt{\sum_{i=1}^n (P_i - S_i)^2}$$

Where:

D=overall difference score reflecting degree of congruence between brand and self-image.

i=a particular personality image dimension

P_i= perception of the product on image dimension i.

S_i= perception of self on image dimension i.

With this approach, congruity varies by distance: the larger the d-score (distance) between brand and the respondent's personality, the less congruity, and the lower the d-score between the brand and the respondent's personality, the more congruity.

Correlation Analysis

The difference scores were calculated using Euclidean distance model for each dimension (i.e. for Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness) for all the four brands. These dimensional values were then correlated with subjects' Purchase Intention, brand-wise. The results of these correlation analyses are presented in table. Because the difference scores calculated for each subject actually measure "incongruence" and the attitudes were measured on scales where larger values indicate more favorable attitudes, negative correlations between distance scores and purchase intention indicate the hypothesized positive relationship between image congruence and Purchase Intention. That is, greater

the congruence (the smaller the distance between brand and self-image), the more favorable (larger, in terms of scale values) Purchase Intention.

Table 9: Correlation between image congruence and Purchase Intention

	Vanheusen	Raymonds
Purchase Intention	-.218**	-.304**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Above table signifies that the Image congruence of all the brands in the study (Van-heusen, Raymonds) have a positive correlation with their respective Purchase Intention. But on comparing among the brands, Vanheusen have more stronger correlation in the apparel and beverage brand categories.

This clearly, reflects that the brand advertisement had a significant effect on the brand image congruence relationship. The effect of image congruence (between brand and self-image) on Purchase Intention of the particular brand was significant as subjects match their own self with brand image portrayed through ads. This is consistent with past theorizing that for publicly consumed brands (such as beverage and apparel), product preference is more closely related to congruency, but only when consumer's knowledge of self-image is activated to influence purchase intentions.

Table 10: Correlation between brand personality dimensions and Purchase intention

	Vanheusen	Raymonds
Sincerity		
Purchase Intention	-.341**	-.358**
Excitement		
Purchase Intention	-.135**	-.252**
Competence		
Purchase Intention	-.254**	-.161**
Sophistication		
Purchase Intention	-.169**	-.089
Ruggedness		
Purchase Intention	-.082	-.136**

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

Independent Sample T-test

Median Split

The median scores for the four selected brands are as follows:

Table 11: Median Scores of the Brands

Brands	Median
Vanheusen	9.6
Raymonds	9.0

Here, values < median = Group 1 (High congruity group) & values > median = Group 2 (Low congruity group)

On average, the consumers with high congruency scores have greater purchase intention (M = 3.36, SE

= 0.055) than consumers with low congruence (M = 3.01, SE = 0.057) for the brand Vanheusen. This difference is significant t(421) = 4.473, p > .01.

On average, the consumers group with high congruency scores have greater purchase intention (M = 3.66, SE = 0.048) than consumers with low congruence group (M = 3.32, SE = 0.06) for the Raymond brand. This difference is significant t(421) = 4.353, p > .01.

Hence the independent sample t-test shows that for every brand overall it was found that there existed a difference between the two groups. The subject's of group with high congruency scores behaved differently than that of low congruency score groups.

Table 12: T-test for the brand Vanheusen

	Group	N	Mean	F-value	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Purchase Intention	High Congruity	215	3.36	.068	4.473 3	421	.000
	Low Congruity	208	3.01				

Table 13: T-test for the brand Raymonds

	Group	N	Mean	F-value	t	df	Sig(2-tailed)
Purchase Intention	High Congruity	213	3.68	12.043	4.353	421	.000
	Low Congruity	210	3.32				

Table 14: Overall Purchase Intention of Brand Categories

Brand	Vanheusen		Raymonds	
Groups	High	Low	High	Low
Mean Value	3.36	3.01	3.68	3.32

The purchase intention of the subjects was found to be high for the subjects' with high congruence while for that of low congruence score group, the Purchase intention was low.

HYPOTHESES		R	SIG	REMARKS
H1 ₀ :	There is no significant and positive relationship between brand personality congruity and purchase intention of the brands.			
H1.1 ₀	There is no significant and positive relationship between brand personality congruity and purchase intention of the brand Vanheusen.	-.218**	.000	Not Accepted
H1.2 ₀	There is no significant and positive relationship between brand personality congruity and purchase intention of the brand Raymonds.	-.304**	.000	Not Accepted

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HYPOTHESES		R	SIG	REMARKS
H2_g: There is no significant and positive relationship between brand personality dimensions and the Purchase Intention of the consumers.				
SINCERITY				
H2.1 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Sincerity and Purchase Intention of the brand Vanhuesen	-.341**	.000	Not Accepted
H2.2 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Sincerity and Purchase Intention of the brand Raymonds	-.358**	.000	Not Accepted
EXCITEMENT				
H2.5 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Excitement and Purchase Intention of the brand Vanhuesen	-.135**	.005	Not Accepted
H2.6 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Excitement and Purchase Intention of the brand Raymonds	-.252**	.000	Not Accepted
COMPETENCE				
H2.9 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Competence and Purchase Intention of the brand Vanhuesen	-.254**	.000	Not Accepted
H2.10 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Competence and Purchase Intention of the brand Raymonds	-.161**	.001	Not Accepted
SOPHISTICATION				
H2.13 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Sophistication and Purchase Intention of the brand Vanhuesen	-.169**	.000	Not Accepted
H2.14 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Sophistication and Purchase Intention of the brand Raymonds	-.089	.067	Accepted
RUGGEDNESS				
H2.17 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Ruggedness and Purchase Intention of the brand Vanhuesen	-.082	.094	Accepted
H2.18 _o	There is no significant and positive relationship between Ruggedness and Purchase Intention of the brand Raymonds	-.136**	.005	Not Accepted

HYPOTHESES		t	SIG	REMARKS
H3_g: There is no difference between the purchase intention of high congruency group and low congruency group.				
H3.1 _o	There is no difference between the high congruency groups and low congruency groups for the brand Vanhuesen.	4.473	.000	Not Accepted
H3.2 _o	There is no difference between the high congruency groups and low congruency groups for the brand Raymonds.	4.353	.000	Not Accepted

HYPOTHESES		M (High group)	M (Low group)	SIG	REMARKS
H4_g: High Congruency does not lead to High Purchase Intention.					
H4.1 _o	High Congruency does not lead to High Purchase Intention for the brand Vanhuesen.	3.36	3.01	.000	Not Accepted
H4.2 _o	High Congruency does not lead to High Purchase Intention for the brand Raymonds.	3.68	3.32	.000	Not Accepted

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This study concludes that there exists a congruity between the brand personality congruity and the purchase intention of the brands. And the subjects possessing high congruence score possess high attitude towards the factor of purchase intention while that with low congruence score possess the low attitude towards purchase intention. The advertisement affects the purchase intention of the customer by the congruity effect. Therefore it can be concluded that congruity is an important factor which helps in decision making of a customer. Confirmatory Factor Analysis has validated the constructs reliability and validity.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Overall, the findings of the study indicated that there is a positive relationship between the brand personality and consumer personality and the congruence had significant impact on consumers' purchase intention. This implies that it is quite important to create a brand image congruent with target customers' self-image, as per Aaker's five personality dimensions scale used in this study. The evidence from the statistical analysis also supports the above propositions that people's consumption decision for certain brands are based on their individual identities and how they see themselves and relate to that particular brand.

The research lends support to the claims (Sirgy et al., 1997) that the similarity between a consumer's own self-image and the typical user's image can play a significant role in consumers' attitude for purchase intentions. The findings are also consistent with (Sotiropoulos, 2003) report that usage imagery has a significant effect in both attitude toward and purchase intentions for a brand (Sirgy et al., 2008). Specifically the findings of this research can be summarised as follows:

1. The findings suggest that brands could be described using personality traits as per Aaker's five brand personality dimensions i.e. Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness.

2. Congruency on Brand Personality dimensions in Apparel Brands:

- Sincerity: Raymonds is considered to be more Sincere brand than Vanhuesen.
- Excitement: Raymonds is considered to be more Excitement full brand than Vanhuesen.
- Competence: Vanhuesen is considered to be brand with more Competence than Raymonds.
- Sophistication: Vanhuesen is considered to be more Sophisticated brand than Raymonds.
- Ruggedness: Raymonds is considered to be more Rugged brand than Vanhuesen.

3. The study empirically validated the notion the brand personality and consumer personality are related. Indian customers are becoming more brands aware and evaluate the available brands to find a match with the brand personality and their own personality in order to make a choice.

4. There is a significant and positive relationship between brand personality and self-concept. These findings suggested that the degree of congruence between brand personality and self-concept also influences the consumer's choices; therefore this further reinforces the importance that brand marketers should take both brands' self-concept and brand personality into consideration when developing marketing strategies. Brand promoters should develop and promote their products and services that could reflect the personality traits of the brands and, at the same time, are congruent with the consumers' self-concept.

5. Brand personality factors positively affect the Purchase Intention of the consumer. The purchase intention of the consumer with low congruency may get diluted or to some extent it may lead to purchase intention, but by some factors other than congruency such as functional utility. Therefore the advertisers and brand managers should focus on proper strategies to

position these brands in the minds of their prospective consumers in a manner to reinforce this congruency effect on appropriate brand personality dimensions so as to elicit the high brand personality consumer congruency for building favourable purchase intention.

- Advertising is instrumental in activating the factor 'congruency' to build the brands and sell the products by the companies. The advertisement plays a colossal role in building a unique brand image, appealing to its target markets and differentiating the products.
- This research does contribute to the body of knowledge because through a systematic and scientific investigation this study tested the existing theory regarding the most of the relationships that were tested did exist. The research added credibility and affirmation of the current research.

This research study proposed and tested the theoretical model that attempts to investigate the influence of brand personality congruency on purchase intention of consumers and the results shows that there is a significant positive relationship between the image congruency and the purchase intention. The results of this study provided important implication for brands' marketing and advertising strategies, as an understanding of what factors or dimensions influence consumer behaviour tested in this study can aid in designing and implementing marketing strategies for creating and enhancing consumer brand personality, tailoring unique brand personality to attract target markets, differentiating and positioning brands by the effective use of congruency. If the advertisements are related to personality traits, then it will be quite possible to predict to some extent, what kind of customer will respond to different types of ads and how much it affects their purchase intention. Because personal traits evoke specific and known behaviour, it will be possible to predict the future behaviour of the target customer grouping a much effective way. However, the only way of adjusting the advertising message is by managing the theme of

the product. Different ad types may be more appealing to different personality traits and brand personality attracts similar customer because of the need for self identification with the brand.

These findings will lead to a better, more informed response by marketers to self concept and identify issues as being core to understanding and driving the consumption of apparel and beverage brand categories. The findings of this study confirm and substantiate the relevance of concept of congruency theory in advertising world. Hence through this study a modest improvement in our understanding of consumer and brand relationships is done, which will have significant benefits to consumer as well as to advertisers.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This research examined the effects of brand and self-image on consumers' evaluations of only two brands. It was found that the effect of brand image on brand evaluations was moderated by the degree to which consumers think about their own self-image and that this can be manipulated through the use of promotional messages. The following recommendations should extend these results by examining other variables that might moderate this image congruence relationship by incorporating the following aspects:

- The study can be extended to diverse product categories, more brands, and other regions of the country on the basis of proposed and validated framework.
- Another interesting future pursuit would be a cross-cultural study. People in a collectivist society are often more influenced by others than those in an individualistic society (Hofstede, 2001; Choi et al., 2005). This difference implies that user imagery may play a more important role than usage imagery or brand personality in a collectivist society, than in an individualistic society. The current study utilizes a sample from Northern India, a population that is regarded as an individualist culture. A cross-cultural study

including both individualistic and collectivist cultures would be able to test whether culture has an impact in the relationships tested in this study. As most brands target consumers globally (Wiedmann 2005), a cross-cultural study would be able to provide important insights to luxury brands on the issue of localization vs. standardization.

- The exploratory part of the study can be further be carried out as conclusive study where causal relationship between/ among variables can be established by testing it empirically through inferential statistics.
- Future research should examine the purchasing behaviour of high level of congruency between the brand image and self-concept and low level of congruence between the same, more exclusively and factors leading to such a difference in their purchase intention.
- The procedures used in this research were designed to manipulate the extent to which consumers think about their self-image while evaluating a brand. Future research could replicate the current study, while also measuring personality variables (individual difference variables) related to the extent to which they are aware of, and concerned with, maintaining and projecting a desired self-image in social situations.
- Another recommendation for future research is that the researcher should design more questions related to brand personality and congruency in order to obtain a more equal distribution of questions or constructs.

CONCLUSION

Based on the theory of brand personality, it is obvious that the consumers self-concept plays an important role with regard to a personality-directed brand management which is also supported by Sirgy (1986) self-concept theory that consumers are thought to prefer brands with personalities similar to their own personality. This purpose of this study

has been to examine the relationship between brand personality and the consumer personality; and the Brand Personality Congruency and its effect on the purchase Intention of the consumers.

The study broadly aimed at bridging the gap in existing knowledge of personality based research and further validating the Aakers' (1997) Brand Personality Scale measurement framework in the Indian apparel and beverage market context. Another major aspect of this research work is the discussion on implications for advertising strategies adopted by various marketers to promote their products.

Finally, the research explored quite relevant perspectives on the Indian market, as it offers insights into the minds of the consumer and probes the brand influence in their buying decision making process. This can only be achieved when marketers and advertising strategists have a clear understanding into building apparel and beverage brands and the role of various factors that drive the consumption.

The following section provides a detailed discussion on the findings of the study on research questions, hypotheses testing, brand personality measurement model and the proposed conceptual model linking BPC, Purchase intentions and its implications for advertising strategies.

In terms of overall congruency scores in both the product categories the Raymond's was preferred over VanHeusen in Apparel category as shown below:

Table 10: Comparison of Brands on Brand personality dimensions	
Brand Personality Dimensions	Apparel Brand (Van-Heusen Vs. Raymonds)
Sincerity	Raymonds
Excitement	Raymonds
Competence	Van-Heusen
Sophisticated	Van-Heusen
Rugged	Raymonds

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