

**Clothing Branding Strategies: Influence of Brand Personality on Advertising Response**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This paper examines the influence of brand personality on advertising response in fashion clothing branding context. Print ad stimuli of 30 fashion clothing brands with different nationalities and different expected personalities were evaluated by young students (16-25 years old) in terms of Brand Personality Scale of Aaker (1997). The self-congruence implications are discussed. From the brand builder perspective, some benchmarks brands were identified. The results should help the understanding of antecedents and consequences of brand personality processing.*

*Keywords: Brand personality, fashion clothing branding, advertising, self-congruence, youth market.*

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**Introduction**

At the beginning of the third millennium, brand differentiation based in tangible attributes is difficult to achieve. Therefore concepts like “customer-brand relationship”(Blackston, 1993), “brand magic” (Biel, 1997) or “lovemark” (Beckman, 2002) rise their importance in brand building literature. The key for success seems to be in the emotional and self-expression benefits that brands provide to their customers. In this context, brand personality and self-concept congruence (shortly designated by self-congruence), has a decisive role in brand adoption and decision-making processes.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the personality of clothing brands and to examine the influence of self-concept and brand personality congruence on youth advertising response. This paper is part of a doctoral research project, developed by authors, which aims to study clothing branding strategies moderated by a number of relevant demographic, psychographic, and situational variables. From a brand builder perspective, brand personality is an important input variable, normally considered in branding strategy models (Kapferer, 1991; Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1996). The understanding of branding advertising processing and buying decision-making is essential for the definition of customer oriented branding strategies.

In this paper we will first look at literature review of the relevant concepts like brand personality and self-congruence in branding advertising processing context. Then we discuss the results of an experimental study that was conducted in order to assess the brand personality profile of 30 fashion clothing brands. The implications of the validation of the hypotheses that postulate the influence of self-congruence and involvement upon advertising response are also highlighted.

### **Brand personality**

Brand personality is defined as “the set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (Aaker, 1997, p.347). According to Johar and Sirgy (1991, p.23) the brand image building strategy implies the definition of a brand personality and a user personality. The match between brand personality and consumer personality (ideal or real) is also an underlying concept of *relationship marketing* studied by Blackston (1993, 1995) and Fournier (1998) which is based on the self-image congruence notion introduced by Dolich (1969) and further studied by Martin and Bellizi (1982) and Sirgy (1982), amongst others.

Brand personality is an important source of imagery, a soft attribute of image (Biel, 1993, 1997). According to Aaker (1996) brand personality can create brand equity according to three models: self-expression model, relationship basis model and functional benefit representation model. Brand personality is also a differentiation factor that is used as a heuristic cue under low motivation, which can also bias brand attribute information (Chaiken and Maheswaran, 1994).

To measure brand personality, researchers may use different methods often referred to in the literature: personification techniques (Lannon, 1993), the Zaltman’s Metaphor Elicitation Technique – ZMET (Zaltman and Higie, 1993) or the IMPSYS model (Heylen, 1990; Heylen et al., 1995).

More recently, Aaker (1997) developed a measurement scale - the *Brand Personality Scale*. She identified five brand personality dimensions and 15 facets: sincerity (down-to-earth, honest, wholesome and cheerful); excitement (daring, spirited, imaginative and up-to-date); competence (reliable, intelligent and successful); sophistication (upper class and charming); and ruggedness (outdoorsy and tough).

### **Self-concept and brand personality congruence**

The notion of self-image congruence states that consumer preferences are determined by a cognitive matching between consumer self-image and brand image. Johar and Sirgy (1991) suggested two alternative routes to persuasion: a) self-congruity, defined as the match between the product’s value-expressive attributes (product-user image) and the audience’s self-concept; b) and functional congruity, defined as the match between the beliefs of product utilitarian attributes (performance related) and the audience’s referent attributes.

Self-congruence is the main route used in what Rossiter and Percy (1987) refer to as “transformational advertising”, in contrast with functional congruity which is often used in “informational advertising”. Fashion clothing is a product category with higher levels of conspicuousness and product involvement, implying that self-congruence is the dominant persuasion route.

Clothing is a non-verbal communication form of the individual personality and self-image (Thomas et al., 1991). The symbolic, self-expression and socialisation roles of fashion clothing brands (Belleau et al., 1992; Elliot, 1994; Shim and Koh, 1997) also enhance the relevance of the study of the influence of self-image congruence upon brand choice.

In this paper, the brand/product image concept is replaced by the brand personality dimension which is the anthropomorphic component of brand identity (Aaker, 1996).

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## Advertising response

From the customer perspective, the adoption of new brands is a consequence of advertising processing (Mehta, 1994, 1997; Cobb-Walgren et al., 1995; Meenaghan, 1995). In this research the theoretical framework is based on the relationship  $A_{ad}$ - $A_b$ -PI (attitude towards the ad – attitude towards the brand – purchasing intention) proposed by MacKenzie et al. (1986). This stimulus-based model claims the dual influence of attitude towards the ad ( $A_{ad}$ ) upon brand cognition ( $C_b$ ) and attitude towards the brand ( $A_b$ ), which in turn influences purchase intention (PI). This model is supported by several studies (Biehal et al., 1992; Brown and Stayman, 1992).

## Hypotheses

In this study, the researchers wish to confirm the results obtained by Sirgy (1982), Johar et al. (1991), Ericksen and Sirgy (1992), Shank and Langmeyer (1994), Hong and Zinkhan (1995), Sirgy et al. (1997) and Hogg et al (2000) that supported the image congruence hypothesis. Therefore personality congruence hypothesis was formulated:

*H1 – Consumers will have a more favourable response (in terms of attitude towards the ad, attitude toward the brand and purchasing intention) toward a print ad of a brand with a personality congruent with their (ideal) self-concept.*

Because the moderating influence of involvement is significant as suggested by Andrews et al. (1990), Browne et al. (1997a, 1997b), amongst others, a second hypothesis was stated:

*H2 – Consumers will have a more favourable response (in terms of attitude toward the ad, attitude toward the brand and purchasing intention) in a higher involvement context.*

## Methodology

In order to satisfy the research project needs, 30 active brands in the Portuguese market were selected. As presented in Table I, five subsets of six brands were defined according to the following criteria:

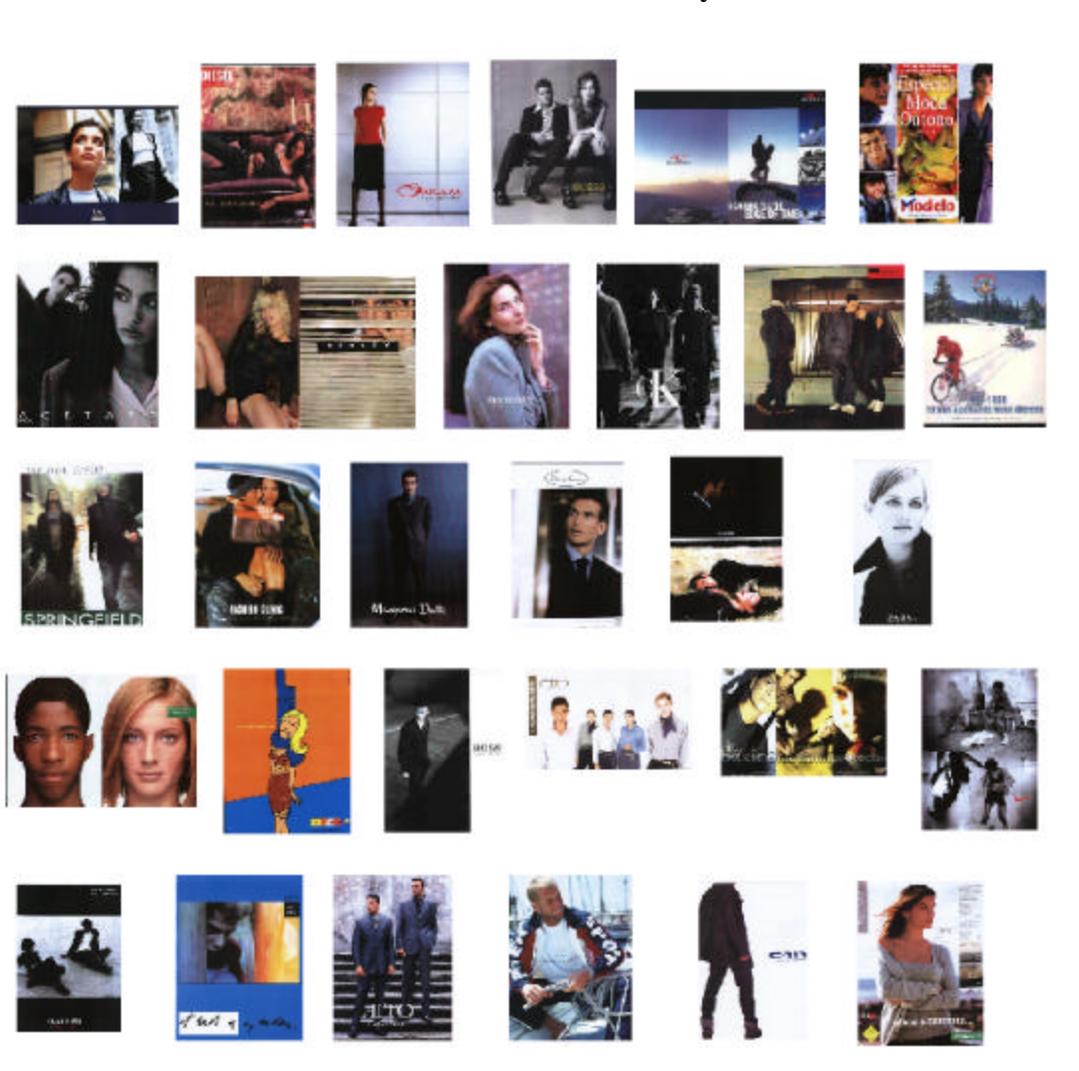
- 1- Based on experts and researchers evaluations, for each brand personality dimension, two Portuguese brands, two foreign brands, and one Portuguese brand with foreign name were indicated - this strategy is designated as *foreign branding* by Leclerc, Schmitt and Dubé (1994);
- 2- Researchers also defined a “miscellaneous group” which included a direct selling brand (*La Redoute*), a retailer brand (*Modelo*), a sports clothing brand (*Nike*), and a brand extended to clothing category (*Coronel Tapiocca*), and *Zara*, which was the market leader retailer in Portugal; Each subset had one brand of each personality type and a brand of the “miscellaneous group”;
- 3- Fashion clothing brands oriented to the youth segment of the market for both sexes and with their own stores or franchising system were preferentially selected;
- 4- Brands with web sites were preferentially selected to allow further digital image treatments. Print ad stimuli were collected from magazines and catalogue front covers and modified to A4 format (see Figure 1);
- 5- In order to avoid bias caused by the stimuli presentation order (Buda and Zhang, 2000), or the primacy and recency effect, the researchers made 30 books (6 books by each brand subset) with different presentation orders. This procedure assured that each brand was presented in all possible book positions (from first to sixth)

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**Table I– Brands selected by expected brand personality.**

<b>Expected personality</b>	<b>Sincerity</b>	<b>Excitement</b>	<b>Competence</b>	<b>Sophistication</b>	<b>Ruggedness</b>	<b>Miscellaneous</b>
<b>I</b>	1- Lanidor	6-Diesel	11- Origem	16-Guess	21-O'Neil	26- Modelo
<b>II</b>	2- Acetato	7-Sisley	12- MacModa	17-Calvin Klein	22- Levi's	27- C.Tappioca
<b>III</b>	3- Springfield	8-Fashion Clinic	13-Massimo Dutti	18-Rosa & Teixeira	23- Salsa	28- Zara
<b>IV</b>	4- Benetton	9- Buzz	14- Hugo Boss	19- Trindade-classic	24-Portugal Radical	29- Nike
<b>V</b>	5-Nathan Road	10-Cheyenne	15-Alto Colection	20- Peter Murray	25- C111 stores	30- La Redoute

**Figure 1 - Print ad stimuli of 30 brands selected for the study.**



Legend: The print ad stimuli are placed according to the order displayed in Table I.

## Subjects

A convenience sample of 156 students of 16-25 years old (66% female), comprised of two groups of 78 subjects: group A, collected from a high school (16-19 years old); and group B, collected from a university (20-25 years old).

The brand sub-sets defined in Table I were evaluated by the following sub-samples:

Brand sub-set I) - 16 respondents of group A (8 female) and 16 of group B (9 female);

Brand sub-set II) - 18 respondents of group A (10 female) and 16 of group B (9 male);

Brand sub-set III)- 15 respondents (8 male) of each age group;

Brand sub-set IV)-14 respondents of group A (10 female) and 16 of group B (9 female);

Brand sub-set V) – 15 respondents of group A (10 female) and 15 of group B (9 female).

## Measures

First, subjects were invited to provide the following data: the ten most important clothes buying decision factors (for example, price, clothing quality, brand image, brand personality, fashion, store image, magazine ads, clothing style, country of origin, use of endorsers in advertising, sponsorship, catalogue, clothing physical characteristics, easiness to find and fashion shows); and fashion clothing brands usually worn by the subject or by the people of this age segment (16-25 years old), which is an indirect measure of knowledge and spontaneous brand awareness of the brands evaluated in this study.

Using a five-point Likert scale (1= not at all descriptive, 5= extremely descriptive), subjects rated the extent to which the 42 Brand Personality Scale traits (translated and adapted to Portuguese language) described each brand presented. The self-concept and brand personality congruence was measured with an adaptation of the method suggested by Sirgy et al (1997).

According to this procedure the subject first describes the brand user profile and then states directly the congruence or consistency between the brand user profile and his (ideal) self-concept.

After the presentation of each ad stimuli, the following dependent variables were measured with 1-7 Likert scales. Attitude towards the ad,  $A_{ad}$ , was measured by the average of four items suggested by Biehal et al (1992): good/bad, like/dislike, interesting/boring, creative/uncreative and informative/uninformative. Cognitive response toward the ad,  $C_{ad}$ , was assessed by the average of three items (Marchand, 1998): catch/not catch my attention, credible/not credible and convincing/not convincing. Attitude towards the brand,  $A_b$ , was measured by the average of four items (Biehal et al, 1992): good/bad, like/dislike, satisfactory/unsatisfactory, good/bad quality. The item valuable/worthless was also included in order to have a overall indicator of brand equity. Purchasing intention was measured by the average of scores of the agreement degree with four positive actions suggested by Vezina and Paul (1997): to search information about the brand, to visit a store, to buy clothing and to recommend the brand.

Researchers also measured the involvement using 10 items of Personal Involvement Inventory-PII (Zaichkowsky, 1985) adapted by Phelps and Thornson (1991): important/unimportant, of concern to me/of no concern for me, relevant/irrelevant, very meaningful/means nothing to me, fundamental/trivial, interesting/not interesting, impressive/not impressive, significant/insignificant, vital/superfluous and exciting/boring.

## Discussion of results

Sproles and Kendal (1986) proposed eight factors to describe apparel decision-making styles: quality, loyalty, image, value, fashion, recreation, confusion and emotion. On the other hand Rose et al (1994) suggested three factors utilitarian characteristics, style and brand name. For

the sample subjects, style (30.8%) which is a brand personality input, quality (25.0%), physical characteristics (16.0%) and price (14.7%) were the top buying decision factors. Hence, in terms of Shim and Bickle (1994) classification of ten psychographic factors, the respondents could be labelled as practical/conservative users of clothing (PCUC) more than symbolic/instrumental users (SIUC) or apathetic users.

Subjects spontaneously cited 178 different clothing brands that they normally wear, which means that this category is very fragmented in terms of mental brand positioning. *Levi's* was the top-of-mind brand (31.1%) and also leads the ranking of brand awareness (9.6%), followed by *Zara*

(7.4%). As forecasted, there was no Portuguese brand in the brand awareness top 20 (*Salsa* was the 21<sup>st</sup> brand with 1.41% of brand citations), however the Portuguese brand *C111* was the 20<sup>th</sup> top-of-mind brand.

### **Brand personality evaluation**

The analysis of brand personality dimensions scores (see Table II) led to a definition of groups of brands with identical profile. From the initial 30 brands listed, 12 brands belonged to the *Excitement* (E) personality group (from the most exciting to the least exciting): *Benetton, Diesel, Fashion Clinic, Levi's, Cheyenne, C111, Portugal Radical, Springfield, Nathan Road, Peter Murray, Buzz and Salsa.*

**Table II - Brand personality dimensions scores.**

<b>Brand</b>	<b>Sincerity</b>	<b>Excitement</b>	<b>Competence</b>	<b>Sophistication</b>	<b>Ruggedness</b>
Acetato	2.88 (0.55)	3.15 (0.58)	3.18 (0.74)	<b>3.48 (0.82)</b>	2.19 (0.58)
Alto Colecion	2.66 (0.51)	2.90 (0.70)	<b>3.44 (0.68)</b>	3.03 (0.67)	2.47 (0.61)
Benetton	3.28 (0.78)	<b>4.00 (0.57)</b>	3.31 (0.78)	3.26 (0.89)	2.58 (0.92)
Boss	2.89 (0.97)	3.54 (0.92)	<b>3.91 (0.67)</b>	3.70 (0.69)	2.77 (0.78)
Buzz	2.21 (0.57)	<b>3.37 (0.75)</b>	2.43 (0.66)	2.60 (0.91)	1.91 (0.72)
C111	2.74 (0.46)	<b>3.58 (0.61)</b>	2.63 (0.64)	2.57 (0.88)	2.98 (0.77)
Cheyenne	2.70 (0.66)	<b>3.63 (0.76)</b>	2.79 (0.67)	2.94 (0.86)	2.80 (0.82)
Diesel	2.61 (0.70)	<b>3.90 (0.72)</b>	2.82 (0.62)	2.90 (0.83)	2.59 (0.60)
Guess	2.72 (0.79)	<b>3.95 (0.76)</b>	3.37 (0.70)	3.70 (0.72)	2.38 (0.69)
Fashion Clinic	2.44 (0.57)	<b>3.85 (0.69)</b>	2.61 (0.78)	2.93 (0.83)	2.41 (0.76)
Lanidor	2.97 (0.68)	3.47 (0.70)	3.19 (0.69)	<b>3.67 (0.80)</b>	2.23 (0.88)
LaRedoute	3.08 (0.51)	3.19 (0.77)	2.95 (0.70)	<b>3.23 (0.81)</b>	2.44 (0.76)
Levi's	3.03 (0.63)	<b>3.66 (0.65)</b>	2.97 (0.77)	2.99 (0.72)	2.99 (0.85)
Macmoda	<b>3.18 (0.59)</b>	2.73 (0.63)	2.88 (0.71)	3.09 (0.62)	2.20 (0.64)
Massimo Dutti	2.55 (0.61)	3.08 (0.77)	<b>3.48 (0.78)</b>	3.04 (0.75)	2.54 (0.66)
Modelo	<b>2.87 (0.69)</b>	2.33 (0.78)	2.54 (0.77)	2.31 (0.73)	2.41 (0.60)
Nathan Road	3.03 (0.56)	<b>3.35 (0.73)</b>	2.77 (0.82)	3.01 (0.89)	2.75 (0.81)
Nike	3.04 (0.81)	<b>3.94 (0.72)</b>	3.49 (0.91)	3.02 (0.96)	2.96 (0.85)
O'neil	2.89 (0.64)	<b>3.87 (0.77)</b>	3.10 (0.69)	2.51 (0.76)	3.21 (0.55)
Origem	2.79 (0.70)	3.30 (0.73)	3.04 (0.65)	<b>3.55 (0.74)</b>	1.93 (0.69)
Peter Murray	3.12 (0.67)	<b>3.42 (0.68)</b>	3.29 (0.86)	2.99 (0.80)	3.26 (0.63)
Portugal Radical	2.82 (0.65)	<b>3.59 (0.62)</b>	2.67 (0.80)	2.44 (0.93)	2.72 (0.65)
Rosa & Teixeira	2.61 (0.77)	2.82 (0.77)	<b>3.41 (0.89)</b>	2.99 (0.78)	2.39 (0.65)
Salsa	2.87 (0.75)	<b>3.29 (0.80)</b>	2.64 (0.81)	2.92 (0.87)	2.87 (0.89)
Sisley	2.52 (0.66)	<b>4.11 (0.60)</b>	2.94 (0.78)	3.49 (0.85)	2.19 (0.79)
Springfield	2.73 (0.69)	<b>3.45 (0.67)</b>	2.76 (0.85)	2.65 (0.82)	2.70 (0.62)
Coronel Tapiocca	2.97 (0.65)	3.09 (0.66)	2.90 (0.62)	2.51 (0.67)	<b>3.54 (0.65)</b>
Trindade Classic	2.58 (0.78)	2.55 (1.08)	2.91 (0.89)	<b>3.11 (1.04)</b>	1.86 (0.84)
Zara	2.84 (0.71)	<b>3.56 (0.72)</b>	3.02 (0.94)	3.38 (0.82)	1.97 (0.73)

*Sisley, Guess* and *Zara* profiles presents two predominant components and therefore they were designated as *Excitement-Sophistication* (ESo) brands. Following the same criterion *Nike* may be classified as *Excitement-Competence* (EC) while *O'Neil* is an *Excitement- Ruggedness* brand (ER).

*Calvin Klein, Lanidor, Origem* and *La Redoute* were included in *Sophistication-Excitement* (SoE) group while the *Competence* (C) group comprehend the brands *Hugo Boss, Massimo Dutti, Alto Colecion* and *Rosa & Teixeira*. The brand personality evaluation of *Macmoda* showed a *Sincerity-Sophistication* profile (SiSo).

On other hand *Coronel Tapiocca* was the only brand perceived as *Ruggedness* (R) while *Modelo* did not have any brand personality dimension with mean score above 3 (sincerity is the highest score).

#### ***Self –concept and brand personality congruence and advertising response***

*Levi's All Duty* was the brand with highest self-congruence score and it was also the most valuable brand (see Table III). In general, youth subjects preferred brands with Excitement personality. *Guess* (ESo) was the brand that obtained the highest buying intention, while *Nike* (EC) was the most preferred brand, probably due to its print ad that obtained the highest attitude toward the ad score. *Salsa* (E) in turn, was

the Portuguese brand perceived as more congruent to the respondents, *Peter Murray's* print ad was favourably evaluated, while *Lanidor* was the brand most preferred.

As expected, significant positive correlations between self-concept and brand personality congruence and advertising response measures were found (see Table IV) which supports hypothesis H1. We also verified the existence of a significant correlation between involvement and self-congruency thus validating hypothesis H2.

The respondents confirmed the expected brand personalities of excitement brands like *Diesel, Sisley, Fashion Clinic, Cheyenne, Buzz*, competence brands like *Massimo Dutti, Boss, Alto colecion*, sophistication brands like *Trindade, Calvin Klein*, and the ruggedness brand *C.Tapiocca*. On other hand, some brands (*Levi's, Guess, O'Neil, Portugal Radical, C111, Nathan Road, Springfield, Peter Murray* and *Salsa*) had a higher excitement score than expected. This will allow brand builders to analyse pictorial material from these pre-tested brands, considering them as benchmarks in terms of brand personality. From the brand builder perspective, the results should help the understanding of antecedents and consequences of brand personality processing, as proposed in several branding models (Kapferer, 1991; Blackston, 1993, 1995; Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1996; Fournier, 1998).

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**Table III - Descriptive statistics of self-concept and brand personality congruency scores, advertising response measures and involvement.**

Brand	Self-congruence	PII	A <sub>ad</sub>	C <sub>ad</sub>	A <sub>b</sub>	Brand Equity	PI
All Duty Levi's	4.85 (1.52)	4.30 (1.32)	4.79 (1.22)	4.64 (1.19)	5.63 (1.19)	5.15 (1.42)	4.68 (1.52)
Guess	4.56 (1.61)	4.33 (1.20)	4.89 (1.42)	4.87 (1.26)	5.66 (1.12)	4.94 (1.22)	5.25 (1.31)
Nike	4.53 (1.53)	4.78 (1.13)	5.35 (1.16)	5.51 (1.03)	6.03 (1.24)	5.10 (1.45)	5.21 (1.45)
Benetton	4.43 (1.45)	4.80 (1.21)	5.03 (1.39)	5.11 (1.38)	5.55 (1.54)	4.67 (1.69)	5.25 (1.39)
Zara	4.37 (1.67)	3.95 (1.34)	4.35 (1.37)	4.40 (1.47)	4.83 (1.48)	4.40 (1.65)	4.41 (1.57)
Diesel	4.34 (1.70)	4.23 (1.20)	4.89 (1.19)	4.80 (1.24)	5.22 (1.35)	4.34 (1.52)	4.75 (1.32)
Calvin Klein	4.29 (1.70)	4.50 (1.00)	4.91 (1.13)	4.81 (1.29)	5.42 (1.15)	4.62 (1.52)	4.43 (1.60)
O'neil	4.28 (1.59)	4.33 (1.12)	5.25 (1.29)	5.16 (1.19)	5.66 (0.99)	4.31 (1.55)	4.83 (1.48)
Boss	4.10 (1.75)	4.83 (1.13)	5.17 (1.20)	5.16 (1.19)	6.09 (1.15)	4.87 (1.28)	5.08 (1.36)
Salsa	4.07 (1.89)	4.17 (1.28)	4.36 (1.45)	4.34 (1.30)	4.78 (1.41)	4.53 (1.22)	4.63 (1.46)
Lanidor	3.97 (1.69)	3.86 (1.22)	4.52 (1.21)	4.71 (1.19)	5.35 (1.17)	4.31 (1.12)	4.76 (3.14)
Cheyenne	3.93 (2.02)	4.20 (1.39)	4.59 (1.30)	4.47 (1.17)	5.18 (1.26)	4.43 (1.81)	4.91 (1.71)
Springfield	3.90 (1.56)	4.27 (1.08)	4.66 (1.21)	4.70 (1.16)	5.07 (1.13)	4.50 (1.23)	4.76 (1.14)
C111	3.87 (1.96)	3.97 (1.16)	4.48 (1.13)	4.43 (1.10)	4.81 (1.27)	4.20 (1.40)	4.16 (1.86)
Massimo Dutti	3.77 (1.89)	3.79 (1.22)	4.23 (1.40)	4.48 (1.25)	5.49 (1.26)	4.37 (1.50)	4.52 (1.45)
Nathan Rowland	3.70 (1.71)	4.16 (1.26)	4.58 (1.24)	4.76 (1.28)	4.67 (1.33)	4.37 (1.33)	4.42 (1.59)
Acetato	3.65 (1.52)	3.81 (1.20)	4.45 (1.17)	4.27 (1.22)	4.79 (1.19)	3.94 (1.21)	3.83 (1.37)
Peter Murray	3.63 (1.73)	4.24 (1.38)	5.03 (1.23)	5.09 (1.21)	5.23 (1.11)	4.43 (1.43)	4.78 (1.73)
Fashion Clinic	3.43 (1.31)	4.15 (1.01)	4.50 (1.03)	4.67 (1.15)	4.60 (1.17)	4.33 (1.45)	4.49 (1.56)
Origem	3.41 (1.66)	3.51 (1.20)	4.16 (1.28)	4.16 (1.33)	4.52 (1.26)	3.97 (1.31)	3.84 (1.70)
C.Tapiocca	3.35 (1.69)	4.14 (1.11)	4.88 (1.09)	4.71 (1.17)	4.45 (1.19)	3.82 (1.14)	3.99 (1.33)
Rosa & Teixeira	3.33 (1.56)	3.49 (1.27)	3.94 (1.47)	4.08 (1.56)	4.68 (1.35)	4.03 (1.22)	3.86 (1.55)
Macmoda	3.32 (1.70)	3.51 (1.08)	3.91 (1.18)	4.05 (1.22)	4.19 (1.26)	3.79 (1.09)	3.49 (1.33)
Portugal Radical	3.20 (1.37)	3.45 (1.11)	3.87 (1.23)	3.84 (1.11)	4.21 (1.12)	3.43 (1.38)	4.07 (1.53)
Sisley	3.17 (1.68)	4.38 (1.27)	4.92 (1.43)	5.16 (1.17)	4.63 (1.25)	3.82 (1.60)	4.18 (1.34)
La Redoute	3.17 (1.95)	3.65 (1.15)	4.35 (1.34)	4.67 (1.37)	4.43 (1.51)	3.47 (1.67)	3.57 (1.88)
Buzz	2.83 (1.44)	3.50 (1.31)	3.80 (1.37)	3.94 (1.39)	3.55 (1.14)	3.23 (1.19)	4.12 (1.45)
Modelo	2.78 (1.36)	3.00 (1.12)	3.45 (1.15)	3.43 (1.26)	3.03 (1.13)	2.81 (1.23)	2.98 (1.23)
Alto Colection	2.70 (1.47)	3.38 (1.27)	4.09 (1.49)	4.23 (1.42)	4.38 (1.34)	3.03 (1.47)	3.56 (1.54)
Trindade	2.50 (1.89)	3.16 (1.45)	3.92 (1.44)	3.88 (1.38)	3.99 (1.60)	3.63 (1.73)	3.37 (1.72)

**Table IV– Pearson correlation coefficients between self-congruency and advertising response measures, brand equity indicator and involvement.**

Brand	Self-congruency Vs A <sub>ad</sub>	Self-congruency Vs PII	Self-congruency Vs C <sub>ad</sub>	Self-congruency Vs A <sub>b</sub>	Self-congruency Vs PI	Self-congruency Vs Preference	Self-congruency Vs Equity
Acetato	0,40 *	0,60	0,37 *	0,49 **	0,69	0,49 **	0,64
Alto colection	0,60	0,65	0,48 **	0,70	0,75	0,69	0,39 *
Benetton	0,65	0,63	0,58 **	0,68	0,47 **	0,82	0,58 **
Boss	n.s.	0,41 *	n.s.	n.s.	n.s.	0,71	0,44 *
Buzz	0,57 **	0,79	0,57 **	0,66	0,59 **	0,77	0,50 **
C.Tapiocca	n.s.	0,48 *	n.s.	0,48 **	0,43 *	0,56 **	0,41 *
C111	0,59 **	0,56 **	0,48 **	0,59 **	0,63	0,66	0,55 **
Calvin Klein	n.s.	0,39 *	n.s.	0,37 *	0,44 **	0,81	0,63
Cheyenne	0,52 **	0,72	0,52 **	0,77	0,63	0,84	0,70
Diesel	0,62	0,66	0,70	0,67	0,48 **	0,81	0,66
Fashion Clinic	0,44 *	0,56 **	0,50 **	0,53**	0,74	0,63	0,51 **
Guess	0,62	0,70	0,58 **	0,65	0,54 **	0,76	0,56 **
La Redoute	0,37 *	0,53 **	n.s.	0,45 *	n.s.	0,75	n.s.
Lanidor	0,55 **	0,57 **	0,50 **	n.s.	n.s.	0,66	n.s.
Levi's	n.s.	0,63	0,46 **	0,50 **	0,46 **	0,73	0,46 **
Macmoda	0,40 *	0,52 **	0,38 *	0,54 **	0,53 **	0,55 **	0,39 *
Massimo Dutti	n.s.	0,47 *	n.s.	0,41 *	n.s.	0,84	0,40 *
Modelo	0,69	0,74	0,44 *	0,70	0,59 **	0,79	0,53 **
Nathan Road	0,50 **	0,75	0,66	0,71	0,65	0,77	0,58 **
Nike	0,45 *	0,58 **	0,52 **	0,54 **	0,49 **	0,59 **	0,54 **
O'Neil	n.s.	0,49 **	n.s.	0,66	0,46 *	0,74	0,63
Origem	0,41 *	0,54 **	n.s.	0,53 **	0,66	0,75	0,47 *
Peter Murray	0,72	0,79	0,67	0,69	0,66	0,63	0,47 *
Port. Radical	0,61	0,56 **	0,39 *	0,42 *	0,44 *	0,74	0,42 *
Rosa Teixeira	n.s.	n.s.	0,41 *	0,47 *	n.s.	0,75	0,41 *
Salsa	0,65	0,67	0,58 **	0,68	0,51 **	0,77	0,62
Sisley	0,44 **	0,68	n.s.	0,56 **	n.s.	0,68	0,65
Springfield	0,56 **	0,54 **	0,46 *	0,44 *	0,48 **	0,64	n.s.
Trindade	0,64	0,77	0,59 **	0,56 **	n.s.	0,84	0,73
Zara	0,41*	0,52 **	0,48**	0,66	0,55 **	0,75	0,43 *

Advertising response measure: self-congruency; involvement – PII; attitude toward the ad - A<sub>ad</sub>; Cognitive response toward the ad - C<sub>ad</sub>; attitude toward the brand - A<sub>b</sub>; brand equity indicator; buying intention – PI; Significance level: \* p<0,050; \*\* p<0,010; \*\*\* p<0,001; n.s. – not significant.

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***Influence of demographic variables (sex, age) and involvement***

Self-concept and brand personality congruence is also significantly influenced by sex. For some brands, perceived as female brands, like *Lanidor*, *Acetato*, *Fashion Clinic*, *Calvin Klein* or *La Redoute*, girls self-congruence is naturally higher. The inverse occurs with a male brand like *Coronel Tapiocca* but with a less significant difference.

Although they were perceived as male brands, some competent brands whose ads only had a male model, like *Rosa & Teixeira*, *Alto Colection* or *Boss*, were more favourably judged by girls. On the other hand, the print ad stimuli of an ES brand with female models (e.g. *Sisley*) were more favourably judged by male youth in terms of excitement score, competence score, attitude toward the ad, cognition of the ad and brand equity. This could be explained by a significantly higher involvement experienced by male subjects.

The researchers verified significant differences between group A (16-19 years old) and group B (20-25 years old) in terms of the evaluation of brand personality scale and advertising response, that showed that the younger group respondents always rated with higher scores. This can also be explained by a higher involvement experienced by these younger respondents associated to a higher self-monitoring level at this age.

### **Recommendations and suggestions for future research**

Some methodological limitations must be considered: the use of a convenience sample; unknown bias in pictorial stimuli processing or in questionnaire application.

On other hand, the Brand Personality Scale may be adapted to European context as pointed out by the result of the adaptation made by Koebel and Ladwein (1999) to the French market, that suggested a different spectrum of brand personality dimensions.

Self-concept and brand personality congruence is moderated by several psychographic variables like self-monitoring (Snyder, 1974; Graeff, 1996; Browne and Kaldenberg, 1997a, 1997b; Hogg et al, 2000), social values (Rose et al, 1994), fashion leadership (Goldsmith, Flynn and Moore, 1996), susceptibility to interpersonal influence (Bearden, Netemeyer and Teel, 1989) or shopping orientations (Sproles and Kendal, 1986). The choice of brand and style is also related with external social values like affiliation, conformity or group identification (Rose et al, 1994). Therefore we think that is important to assess these consumer characteristics in order to identify clusters with a very clear profile, as suggested by Shim and Bickle (1994).

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