BRAND RELATIONSHIPS: A PERSONALITY-BASED APPROACH

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2008

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Student Bursary for the one of the ten best papers based on Doctoral researches, presented in the 36th EMAC Conference, Reykjavik University, Iceland.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This dissertation would not be possible without the contribution of several people to whom I should express my gratitude.

Doctor Carlos Melo Brito, Doctor Kip Becker, and Doctor Paulo de Lencastre who accepted the challenge of supervising the present dissertation, giving continuation to an old contribution and sharing a journey not free from obstacles and risks, I thank mainly their constant incentive, teachings and help on the accomplishment of such a hard goal.

Doctor Luis Felipe Lages, with whom I have the pleasure of sharing ideas and benefit from his wide knowledge, I would never forget his unselfish interest and availability in helping me, and his encouragement in the development of this research.

Doctor Felipe Coelho, always kind and patient in answering my questions, I acknowledge his help in the last phase of the empirical study. Doctor Francisco Vitorino and Doctor Cláudia Simões, for their availability and words of encouragement in decisive moments of the development of this study.

Doctor Pedro Nobre who actively worked in the collection of the data.

My cousin Marlene for her generous and worth help in the collection of the sample, as well as for her friendship.

ABSTRACT

Research investigated the symbolic meaning of consumer behavior. The study relied on the premise that brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer and was aimed at investigating the relationship between Brand Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationships in a Portuguese market context. The study of J. Aaker et al. (2004) was inspirational in the development of a conceptual model. The model's premise was that Brand Personality plays an important role in the establishment of ties with the consumer. The Consumer-Brand Relationships were approached according to the interpersonal relationship theory. Two instruments were imported: a Spanish framework to assess Brand Personality in the Portuguese market context, and a scale from intimate interpersonal relationships to approach Consumer-Brand Relationships. Specifically, two main hypotheses were formulated: (1) The personality of Sincerity predicts patterns of Intimacy-Loyalty relationship and (2) the personality of Excitement predicts patterns of Passion relationship. A quantitative study was conducted through a multivariate analysis design. The empirical study involved a sample of nine well-known brands in the Portuguese market within different product categories, brand personality and functional versus symbolic usage. Findings indicated that brand personalities of Sincerity and Sophistication are associated with relationships of Intimacy-Loyalty, and the personalities of Excitement and Passion are associated with relationships of Passion. Moreover, results gave support to the general hypothesis of study that Brand Personality may nurture specific Consumer-Brand Relationships and those Consumer-Brand Relationships may influence the quality, or the strength of the ties that consumers develop with brands.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research was mainly concerned with the symbolic meaning of consumer behavior. The study, aimed at investigating the relationship between Brand Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationships in a Portuguese market context, relied on two main theoretical propositions: (1) brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer and (2) Brand Personality influences the relationship the consumer establishes with the brand. A main research question was raised: How does Brand Personality relate to the type of relationship that the consumer establishes with that brand?

The trademark was a response to the need to protect property rights. As Cabat (1989) put it, a brand is a phenomenon of law. That is the reason why the first brand definition had an operational nature:

> "Brand is a name, term, sign, 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" (American Marketing Association, 1960, p. 8).

As suggested by this definition, brand is viewed as a distinctive sign. However, the development of branding brought the concept of brand image which reveals the

communicational dimension of the brand (Mick, 1986). According to that, a brand concerns itself with a collective representation of an object that gives it the power of a symbol. The symbol exists if it is communicated in the public space, as opposed to the private space of the representation of art (Cabat, 1989).

Traditionally, building a brand is considered to be a process driven by the company, which focuses on two elements: the system of identities and the proposition of value of brand (D.A. Aaker, 1991, 1996; Kapferer, 1994; Keller, 1998). According to this approach, brand image corresponds to the feedback of the market to those elements. Therefore, brand value is defined in this study as according to the notion of "customer-based brand equity" developed by Keller (1993):

> "Customer-based brand equity is … the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand… Customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong, and unique brand associations in memory" (p. 1).

The relational perspective, by contrast, defines brand as brand image (Grönroos, 2001). Brand image is the result of how a customer perceives his relationship with the brand. This relationship is a source of meaning to the person who engages it (Fournier, 1998; Caprara et al., 2001). In this sense, the consumption of a specific brand/product actually relates to, and gives meaning to the lives of the consumers (Kassarjian, 1971; Mick, 1986; Holt, 1995, 2002; Heilbrunn, 1996). Moreover, the relational approach may provide a better and broader understanding of the phenomena that arises between the customer and the brand (Fournier & Yao, 1996), and is consistent with the need of a more holistic approach for developing brand knowledge (Keller, 2003).

Consumer products have not been the main concern of Relationship Marketing literature (Fournier, 1995b, 1998; Veloutsou, 2007). According to Grönroos (2001), there are two main reasons for this. The first is that the customer is not involved in the production

process as in services, and the second is that physical goods present stable characteristics that easily serve as a basis for the development of a brand through a planned marketing communication strategy. In a Relationship Marketing perspective, instead of economic transactions there are customer-seller relationships based on emotions and cognition (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) that require customer commitment and intimacy (Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000). Thus, a brand can be an important instrument for developing symbolic bonds (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2000) in a poor face-to-face interactions environment since it has "a soul, a personality and a body language" (Gummesson, 2003, p. 112).

The conceptualization and methodological approach of Brand Personality construct are not consensual issues (J. Aaker & Fournier, 1995; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). Some of the most wide-spread Brand Personality tools are based on a trait approach (e.g., the Brand Personality Scale by J. Aaker, 1997). Some authors consider the importance of trait inference based on observation of behavior (e.g., Allen & Olson, 1995; Fournier, 1995a; Aggarwal, 2004; Johar et al., 2005), according to that a relational approach to Brand Personality becomes a pertinent way of research (D. A. Aaker, 1996).

The study of the customer relationship phenomenon according to the interpersonal relationship metaphor is something that has gained prominence in the recent marketing literature (e.g., Blackston, 1993, 1995, 2000; J. Aaker & Fournier, 1995; Fournier 1995b, 1998; Barnes 2000; Aggarwal 2004). In 1998, in an innovative approach Susan Fournier imported the inter-personal relationship metaphor to the study of Consumer-Brand Relationships. In this study, Susan Fournier postulated that brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer and highlighted the holistic character of the phenomenon.

Taking off from the study of Susan Fournier, J. Aaker et al. (2004) developed a conceptual model to explain Consumer-Brand Relationships (which was inspirational in the development of this study) based on the fact that acts of transgression and Brand Personality have a prominent role in the Relationship Strength formation. Outcomes suggested there is a relationship between Brand Personality and the relationship the

consumer establishes with the brand. However, they foresaw the need for further research in order to understand the type of bonds different consumers establish with distinct brand personalities, as well as the relevant relationship patterns that can affect consumer-brand interactions.

Inspired by this gap in literature, a conceptual model was developed (see fig. 5.1, Chapter 5). The model's premise is that Brand Personality plays an important role in the establishment of ties with the consumer. As such, the hypothesis is that Brand Personality may nurture specific Consumer-Brand Relationships and those Consumer-Brand Relationships may influence the quality, or the strength of the ties that consumers develop with brands.

In this study, an imported framework from interpersonal relationships was used - the Relationship Ideal Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999) – to assess Consumer-Brand Relationships. This instrument was the result of research in intimate relationships within social psychology field that was not tested to other relationship domains and social contexts.

Considering that consumption carries with it culture-specific meaning (Sung & Tinkham, 2005), cultural proximity was determinant in the selection of the Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions (J. Aaker et al., 2001) to address the study of Brand Personality in the Portuguese market. The limited investigation that the Portuguese brand personality has received, as well as the relevance of the work of Jennifer L. Aaker (1997) in the brand personality field (Keller, 2003), constituted two other determinant aspects in the support of this decision.

The study relied on two assumptions. First, the Relationship Ideal Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999) is applicable to the consumer-brand relationship context. Second, Brand Personality in a Portuguese consumption context is well defined by a five-dimensional structure, the Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions, due to the cultural proximity (J. Aaker et al., 2001).

Since literature provides a proliferation of tools for accessing consumer personality, Baumgartner (2002) suggests the use of the Big Five taxonomy (e.g., NEO-Personality Inventory; Costa & McCrae, 1985). However with small impact in the studies of consumer behavior, this instrument is the most consensual framework that explores the individual differences with an acceptable level of abstraction. Considering the psychometric studies developed by Lima (1997) that confirmed the reliability and predictive validity of the Portuguese version of this scale, the Big Five factors was chosen to measure the construct Consumer Personality.

J. Aaker et al. (2004) found two classes of relationships related to the brand personalities of Sincerity and Excitement (Brand Personality Dimensions; J. Aaker, 1997) that rely on the same constructs as the two ideals of relationships: Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion (Relationship Ideals Scale; Fletcher et al., 1999). This study focused mainly on these two brand personalities since they appear to represent the majority of variance in the brand personality ratings, being the more prominent in the consumption context (J. Aaker et al., 2001). Moreover, they constitute, according to J. Aaker et al. (2004), two of the three ideal partners in close interpersonal relationships: Warmth-Trustworthiness Partner and Vitality-Attractiveness Partner (Partner Ideals Scale; Fletcher et al.).

In this regard, a first hypothesis of study was posited:

H1: Brand Personality will be a predictor of Consumer-Brand Relationships.

Specifically, two main hypotheses were formulated:

H1.1: Of the variables tested, the relationship of Intimacy-Loyalty will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the personality of Sincerity.

H1.2: Of the variables tested, the relationship of Passion will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the personality of Excitement.

The second hypothesis of study was:

H2: Brand Personality will be a predictor of Relationship Strength.

Namely, brands of Sincerity are likely to be linked to more stable and lasting relationships than brands of Excitement (J. Aaker et al., 2004). Thus, a more specific hypothesis was formulated:

H2.1: Of the variables tested, Relationship Strength will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the personality of Sincerity.

A third hypothesis of study was posited:

H3: The influence of Brand Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationships will be partially mediated by the consumer perceptions of Partner Quality.

The fourth hypothesis of study was:

H4: The type of Consumer-Brand Relationship will be a predictor of Relationship Strength.

Fletcher et al. (1999) suggested that relationships of Intimacy-Loyalty, rather relationships of Passion, are associated with lasting relationships based on patterns of commitment, trust and intimacy. Thus, a more specific hypothesis was posited:

H4.1: Of the variables tested, Relationship Strength will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Intimacy-Loyalty relationship.

Considering the construct Consumer Personality, a fifth hypothesis was inferred:

H5: Consumer Personality will be a predictor of Consumer-Brand Relationships.

Finally, one more hypothesis was formulated:

H6: The influence of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationships will be partially mediated by the consumer perceptions of Partner Quality.

In order to support these hypotheses, a quantitative study was conducted through a multivariate analysis design. The empirical study involved a sample of nine well known brands in the Portuguese market within different product categories, brand personalities and functional versus symbolic usage. The brands studied were: Coca-Cola (soft drinks), Continente (stores/supermarkets), Mercedes (automobiles), Chanel (fragrances), Volkswagen (automobiles), Luso (mineral water), Ferrari (automobiles), Nike (sports apparel), and Land Rover (sport utility vehicle – SUV). A sample of 350 persons, representative of the Portuguese population in terms of the demographics of age and gender, was interviewed. The participants and the commercial brands were chosen according to the same principles that guided the research of Jennifer L. Aaker and her

colleagues in the North American, Japanese and Spanish markets (J. Aaker, 1997; J. Aaker et al., 2001).

This doctoral thesis is divided in two parts: Literature Review, and Empirical Study. Part I consists of four chapters. Chapter 2 – Brand Management focuses on three important issues of brand literature. First, the semiotic model (which assumes brand as triadic concept) and the identity structures of brand. Second, the development of a brand, regarding identity, positioning and Brand Personality. Third, brand equity. Chapter 3 – Brand Relationships offers, in the first section, a short overview of Relationship Marketing for consumer products, considering aspects such as Relational Market Behavior (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a) and Loyalty versus Relationship Strength. The second section introduces, under the topic of the symbolic meaning of consumption, some theoretical issues such as: brand as a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer, models for social relationships, and the conceptual model for Consumer-Brand Relationships proposed by J. Aaker et al. (2004). In Chapter 4 – An Approach to Consumer Personality the model of the Big Five factors is presented. Chapter 5 – Problem Formulation focuses on the objectives and hypotheses of study, and offers an explanation of the framework for analysis.

Part II is composed of three chapters. Chapter 6 – Methodology addresses the methodological aspects of the study, such as: brand selection, participants, measures, procedures of data collecting, and procedures for data analysis. Chapter 7 - Results Analysis describes, in a first section, the sample profile and the tests of non-response bias. Then, the tests of hypotheses are presented, firstly by a preliminary study based on Multiple Regression Analyses, and, in a second phase, by a Structural Equation Modeling analyses. The last section of the chapter focuses on an extra study aimed at exploring the applicability of Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions to the Portuguese population. The last chapter, Chapter 8 - Conclusion, presents the summary of the empirical outcomes, the discussion of the main contributions, the practical implications and the limitations of the study, as well as provides some suggestions for further research.

FIRST PART

LITERATURE REVIEW

CHAPTER 2

BRAND MANAGEMENT

2.1 Introduction

One of the main literature sources that supported this research was the classic theory on brand. Therefore, some important topics in the field were reviewed. Particular relevance was done to the semiotics since it opens the door to the understanding of the symbolic consumption, in particular to the relationships consumers establish with brands, and represents a valuable framework for brand conceptualization. Beyond the conceptual plane, it seemed also important to distinguish between the different identities structures that a brand can take.

The literature review focuses also on the main elements that constitute the spectrum of brand manager's action: identity, positioning, and Brand Personality. Thus, some models for brand building were studied. Since the main goal of the branding efforts is to create and maintain valuable brands, the notion of brand equity and the main sources of brand value also received particular attention in this study.

The chapter presents in Section 2.2 a semiotic conceptualization of brand according to Peirce's perspective. Then, different brand identity structures are reviewed. Section 2.3

focuses on the main elements for developing a brand: identity, positioning, and Brand Personality. In Section 2.4 the notion of brand equity is presented and the two main sources of brand value – brand awareness and brand associations – are discussed. The topic consumer-brand relationship is treated in the next chapter.

2.2 Semiotic Approach to the Brand

2.2.1 Brand as a triadic concept: sign, object and image

Every object is consumed differently by customers. Brand image is the result of how a customer perceives his relationship with the brand. The consumption of a specific brand actually relates to, and gives meaning to the lives of the consumers (Kassarjian, 1971; Holt, 1995, 2002; Heilbrunn, 1996). Thus, a Brand Relationship is a source of meaning to the person who engages it (Fournier & Yao, 1996; Fournier, 1998) beyond what the normal product use is expected to evoke, such as driving a Porsche or wearing a Cartier watch.

Baudrillard (2004) refers to the objects of consumption as signs surrounding the individual in a profusion of objects, services and material goods. This ambiguity of the sign in objects, sublimates their status as things of use and as commodities. In this sense, semiotics, as the "doctrine of signs" (Ransdell, 1997), is a valuable framework in the study of brands. It allows us to understand our symbolic abilities, both as consumers and as researchers (Mick, 1986).

Semiotics attempts to analyze the structures of delivering meaning (Larsen, 1987), whatever the systems of signs used in all types of communication (Mick, 1986). It presents two forms: general semiotic and special semiotic (Ransdell, 1997). The first one, general semiotic, refers to the part of philosophy that deals with problems such as: logic,

philosophy of logic, theory of meaning, philosophy of mathematics, philosophy of mind, philosophy of science, and epistemology. It is concerned with the nature of meaning. The second one, special semiotic, is restricted to the mental phenomenon that produces laws, manifestations and other products of the mind, and it attempts to explain how these products acquire meaning.

Semiotics enjoyed wide development in the 20th century through the independent work of the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure and the American philosopher Charles Sanders Peirce. This explains part of the differences between the semiotics approaches in France and in United States. While in France the semiotics is influenced by the philosophy of Descartes and Saussure, in the United States, semiotics is strongly based on Peirce philosophy (Buczynska-Garewicz, 1987).

Saussurean framework focuses on the "formula of stimulus-response relations" (Larsen, 1987, p. 56), and communication notion is restrict to the result of the deliberate choices of addresser and addressee. The relationships and interrelationships between words took precedence over individual words at the moment of the formation or derivation of meaning that emerges from the existence of differences among words in a language and the way they are chosen and combined. Saussure believed that reality was a sensitive thing since each person at birth received it already codified. Thus, signs are arbitrary and conventional, and learning the codes (or systems of signs) is to adopt the values and biases that underpin the vision of the indigenous world. In this context, and according to the Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (Edward Sapir and Benjamin Whorf were American linguists who studied native North American languages), to communicate is not just to inform and to generate meaning but also to establish reality, including who we are and who we will turn out to be. Therefore, the development of cultural patterns in a society is subordinate to the common language (Mick, 1986).

Stepping off from this proposition, time is perceived in different ways in different cultures through the structures of verb tenses in their languages (Holman, 1981) and, thus,

specific images about the future can affect investment and purchasing patterns, perceived risks in purchasing behavior and buyer-seller interactions.

Using a Saussurean approach to the study of symbolism involving consumption, Kehret-Ward (1988) argued that product-symbols can be understood as linguistic units in which meaning emerges from the differences among them, with scarceness being the guarantee of this difference. These differences among the products associated with people who own the products, permit to ascribe of social position (Mick, 1986).

In contrast with Saussure, who defined linguistic sign as a two-way relationship between the concept (meaning) and the image of sound (significant), Peirce approached the signs (any kind of signs, not only linguistic signs) via triadic relationships. Peirce stated "the conception of thought as a sign-interpretation process exhibiting an essentially triadic relation between sign, object, and interpretant" (Ransdell, 1997, p. 158). Buczynska-Garewicz (1983) considers Peirce's semiotic as a general philosophy of the interpretation, which allows for understanding the nature of dialogue. By including the interpretive element in the concept of sign, Peirce builds his theory in a real world made up of people, social institutions and culture. The interpreting entity is not referred only to an interpretation but rather to a reaction to the sign in question, leading to the transformation of the interpreting entity in a language or symbolic code that will propagate itself through a social medium. The interpreting entity is basically the meaning of the sign that can be infinitely re-interpreted, which means the interpreting entity is a sign for another interpreting entity and so on, successively.

In this manner, the owner/user of a product is at the same time an interpreting entity and a sign for the others. Thus, it can be seen how some users may associate human characteristics to certain brands. For instance, the image of Mercedes-Benz is usually linked to the personality of its users rather the manufacturer's reputation or the quality of its products (Safavi, 1996). Conversely, the products themselves, being the signs that they are, also influence the perceptions of the users. In particular the introduction of changes in the

product's style and design influence the meaning attributed to the already-existing products and their owners, even though they have not changed (Kehret-Ward, 1988). For example, the socio-cultural tendencies influence the concepts and perceptions of certain products and their users. What could be seen as a mark of success yesterday may be seen as a waste or a lack of social consciousness in the future.

Peirce's semiotic perspective of brand goes beyond the name, the symbol and the function of identification, and defines brand as a triadic concept constituted by the sign, the object and the interpreter. The interpreter is more than the person who interprets the signal: it is also the reaction to the signal (Mick, 1986). The set of the reactions (or responses) to the signal forms the image.

According to Peirce's theory, Mollerup (1997; cit. in Lencastre, 1999) suggests a conceptualization of brand on a triadic basis composed by the following elements (see fig. 2.1):

- *Sign:* corresponds to the brand identity that includes the name, and, in the most of cases, the logo (lettering, coloring and design), the slogans, the package, the labels and the characters, which represent the identity mix of the brand.
- *Object:* refers to both the organization and its products and services. Through different products and services, the company expresses its own mission that is the whole benefit of its brand. This is done through marketing actions of product, distribution, price and communication (the called 4 Ps of marketing), which represent the marketing mix of the brand.
- *Image:* includes two dimensions. One corresponds to the different target segments and publics where it is important to interpret the brand (such as customers, employees, stockholders, suppliers and other partners), which can be referred to as public mix of brand. The other corresponds to the interpretation of each one of those publics, which is comprised of different types of response (cognitive, affective and behavioral) and may be referred to as image mix of brand.

Figure 2.1

The Brand Triangle

| Object: |
| Mission/Marketing Mix |

BRAND

| Signal: | Interpretant: |
| Name/Identity Mix | Image/Public Mix |
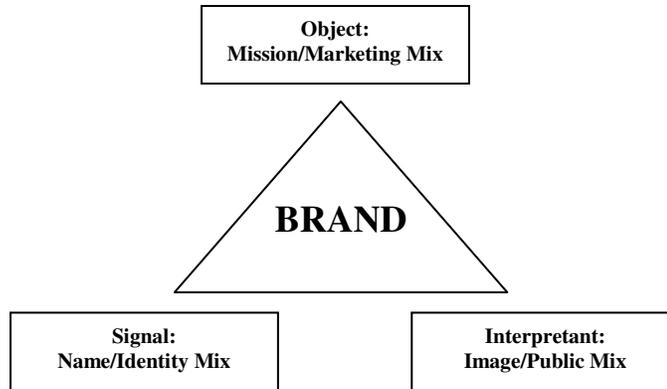
Source: Lencastre, 1999, p. 112.

The transposition of the conception of sign as a triad for the context of brand allows for greater detail and understanding of the concept, presenting itself as a useful tool in the characterization and analysis of a brand. This modeling serves to translate the systemic relationship of the brand mission, its image and the image that customers associate with it. The mission appears as a product that is offered through a specific positioning. The product must respond better than the competition to a certain consumer need or desire, and, thus, the brand displays a difference which, if sufficiently innovative, may cause discontinuity in the market. The cumulative impressions derived from the product usage contribute to its image, because "the brand is the memory of the product" (Kapferer, 1989, p. 16). Thus, managing the brand means maintaining the product within the realm of a mission and securing the promise of a difference.

2.2.2 The brand identity structures

The objective of names and logos is not only to identify companies and their products, but also to promise benefits, differentiating from competition. The advantage of well established names and logos is the brand equity they may provide, namely by new product extensions facilitating their promotion (Kapferer, 1994; Safavi, 1996).

The brand name identifies whether the product, the service or the company. In practice, different situations may arise, such as:

1. the brand of the institution is also the brand of the products/services that it offers;
2. the institution name accompanies the brand of its products/services;
3. the brands of products/services are different and independent from the brand of the institution.

In this way, three big types of brand identity structures emerge: monolithic, mist (or endorsed) and differentiated (D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

In a monolithic structure, the name of an institution takes the form of an umbrella brand (either master, or range brand) of its products and services, referred by D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler (2000) as a branded house strategy. This strategy allows for clarifying the offer, maximizing the synergy between different offers and markets, and reinforcing the umbrella brand. Moreover, it allows gains of efficiency in the promotion of new products. This type of structure is sometimes interpreted as a brand extension to new products, which can be viewed as a rewarding situation when well established corporative images get involved (Safavi, 1996).

Institution brands may have their corresponding sub-brands, as is generally the case of automotive brands in which the offer is identified by the umbrella brand followed by the reference to the model. For example, Volkswagen Golf is a sub-brand of the institution

brand Volkswagen. The function of sub-brands is generally descriptive and plays a less prominent role. Nevertheless, a sub-brand can bring new and different connotations to the institution brand, making it more differentiated and attractive to consumers, favoring its entry into areas where the master brand has yet to penetrate, and evoking the image of some new offering that is fresh and cutting edge (D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000).

This structure, however, shows some disadvantages since it limits the perception of differences in the positioning of product brands and does not facilitate the creation of distinctive brand images (D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Instead, the mist structure provides a larger independence between product brands (endorsed brands) and the endorser brand. In the mist structure the endorse brand accompanies the brands of a product which have a semi-autonomous existence. In this manner, it provides credibility to the endorsed brands and a guarantee to their users. It allows also for the implementation of a distinctive positioning and the creation of a unique brand image.

The differentiated structure is opposed to the monolithic structure. In the differentiated structure, the institution brand is hidden and product's name is independent of the umbrella name. A differentiated structure is designed by D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler (2000) as a house of brands. This structure facilitates the building of a distinctive positioning and allows for the controlling of market niches. Instead, a monolithic structure represents an easier and cheaper way to gain awareness.

Certain cultural hegemonies in terms of marketing management have been noted, namely with regard to strategies of corporate identity versus product identity (Goodyear, 1998). In the west there has been a tendency for a "house of brands" in which product brands are communicated as autonomous entities. This is the case of Unilever with its range of brands, such as Persil, Lux, and Sunlight, etc. In Japan and Korea, however, for historical reasons the brand name is usually the name of the organization which is extended to the whole range of its offer, as is noted, for example, with Sony.

In oriental culture, particularly in Japan, brand is a factor of extreme importance underlying the decision to buy. It is an instrument of social differentiation and an aspect that strongly affects the company (brand-holder) image. This leads producers to invest heavily in corporate brands that not only symbolize the identity of the firm but also its *honor* (Yoshimori, 1989). On the contrary, Thoenig & Dupuy (1989) posit that in a French context brands display a weak status that makes them vulnerable when price wars erupt and new products enter the market, where securing one's domain in the consumer market becomes the task of wide-scale distribution. In the Japanese case, the large national producers are the dominant integrating elements in the market. For United States, according to the same study, the status of brands lies more toward the middle of these two extremes.

There are several authors who have come out to defend and valorize the need for an effective investment in the identity of a corporate brand (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994; Uncles et al., 1995; Safavi, 1996). This speaks to the notion of global brands in that globalization corresponds to a corporate vision of brand management (Kapferer, 1994). However, the establishment of a global marketing faces difficulties due to cultural differences lead to distinct interpretations of brand concept (Goodyear, 1998). Such differences are reflected not only at the brand identity strategy level but also in the definition of the role and value that brand represents for consumers, and in the establishment of policies of segmentation, advertising and research.

Equally, the pressure that organizations currently feel with respect to economic efficiency have made it such that brands such as Virgin, for example, have broadened their activities, spreading into sectors completely opposite and different from that of their business core (Rubenstein, 1995). These investments highlight the essential importance of a strong corporate brand, one whose image is not confined to those associations linked to the intrinsic features and qualities of the product base.

The corporate image is transparent in the product brand image. The reputation of corporate image is strongly and positively correlated with aspects such as: effective

management, high quality products, and environmental concerns (results of a data collection on the reputations of 489 companies, developed by Yankelovich research firm) (Safavi, 1996). A corporative image must reflect the external "posture" of an organization which is a good indicator of the trustworthiness and the efficiency of that organization. Safavi identified the following elements in a corporative posture:

- corporate main activity (construction, banking, education, etc.);
- corporate character and values (integrity, credibility, trustworthiness);
- corporate market domain (local, national, regional, global);
- corporate size (small, medium or large) (p.383).

To ascribe the name of a brand to a product represents a guarantee of its performance and quality to the public. This allows for the enjoyment of the respective dividends since it is the one who names the brand that receives the most of the profits (Yon, 1989), and who holds power within the market (Contensou, 1989; Thoenig & Dupuy, 1989). Consumers easily understand that the association of two brands – the corporate brand and the sub-brand – should offer more value than a simple brand product (Uncles et al, 1995). In particular, for Japanese consumers if a brand has no links to the company, it can be interpreted as being one of a product unable to offer the quality necessary for the company to stake its reputation on.

Uncles et al. (1995) suggest the concept of brand architecture:
"brand architecture is about how to get two or more brands to partner each other and the qualities that corporate/banner brands embody to make partnerships a win-win game" (p. 83).

The concept of brand architecture requires the identification of the different levels of sub-brands inside the organization (i.e., the brand portfolio) with which it is possible to establish partnerships through a "double-branding communication strategy" (Uncles et al.

1995, p. 83) (i.e., co-branding). A double-branding strategy may involve two or more brands in an integrated and consistent offer, and can be relevant at the level of employer and customer satisfaction. Besides the brand partnerships within the organization (e.g., corporate brand and sub-brand), the concept of brand-architecture may be also extended to joint-ventures of companies based on brand partnerships.

2.3 Development of a Brand

2.3.1 Identity and positioning

Brand symbolizes homogeneity inside the industry, thus it means a coherent strategy of the company (Soulié, 1989). In this sense, building a brand must be seen as a consistent process. One can not expect a brand to be anything else other than itself. Kapferer (1994) attributes a *genetic program* to the brand, which includes an essence, an identity, a positioning and a personality. The definition of this program should be the first step in the construction of the brand. It represents the spectrum of action of the brand builder, and focuses on decisive elements for brand image formation.

The brand is an intangible communication framework. The sender, the owner of the brand asset, transmits the sign and the message of an identity to a public, the receiver. This one receives the sign and then interprets it, which results in the brand image. Thus, the brand manager should be aware of the importance of another element – the customer – for the process of brand building (Grönroos, 2001). A brand without an image is like a sign without content and a well established brand image delivers more opportunities for the preservation of the market share (Safavi, 1996).

In the traditional literature about brand the expression "brand building" is common and is used in regard to the creation of brand identity that strives to be the descriptive mark of an image (e.g., D. A. Aaker, 1991). The identity is intrinsic to the several elements of brand, such as: products, name, symbols, logo, character, geographic and historical origins, and form and content of advertisement (Kapferer, 1994). In the majority of cases, the identity does not coincide with the brand image. This may be the result of creating a brand without the participation of the customer. According to Grönroos (2001), with the inclusion of the customer in the process of brand building the distinction between brand and brand image no longer makes sense because brand image represents the brand reality. Thus, the concept of brand identity is the abstract objective of brand manager, which represents the image that he intends to have established in the imaginary of the customers.

Generally speaking, in the various models of brand building that the literature offers, both the definition of essence and identity emerge as a foundation stone for the development of a brand. Examples of this are the Model of Brand Building by D. A. Aaker (1996), the Brand Charter[TM] developed by Leo Burnett Brand Consultancy (Rubenstein, 1995) and the Brand Asset Valuator developed by Young & Rubicam, Inc. (Agres & Dubitsky, 1996).

The application of Brand Charter[TM] methodology to several large and medium-sized companies across both manufacturing and services sectors revealed that one of the most frequent problems in branding strategies is the lack of the definition of a brand essence (Rubinstein, 1995). A clear definition of the essence requires an understanding of the brand's meaning, which means answering the question "What does the brand stand for?" The definition of the essence is vital for avoiding confusions and knowing how to optimize the brand. With the objective of support managers in the identification and understanding of brand essence, Leo Burnett Brand Consultancy developed the method of Brand Essence Analysis[TM] (see fig. 2.2). The construct of Brand Essence is defined as:

> "Brand Essence is the enduring, competitive positioning of a brand and defines the main and distinctive characteristics that make that brand unique. It is at the heart of a

combination of rational elements (functions, performance differences) and emotional elements (image/personality, source of authority and values)" (Rubinstein, 1995, p. 150).

Figure 2.2.

Brand Essence Analysis Quadrants [TM]

What does it do?
What is it for?
How would I describe its functions?

What is it like?
Do I like it?
Do I respect it?
What is its personality?

BRAND

ESSENCE

How is it better?
How is it different?
How is it worse?

What are its aims?
What are the core values?
What gives it the right to say/do that?
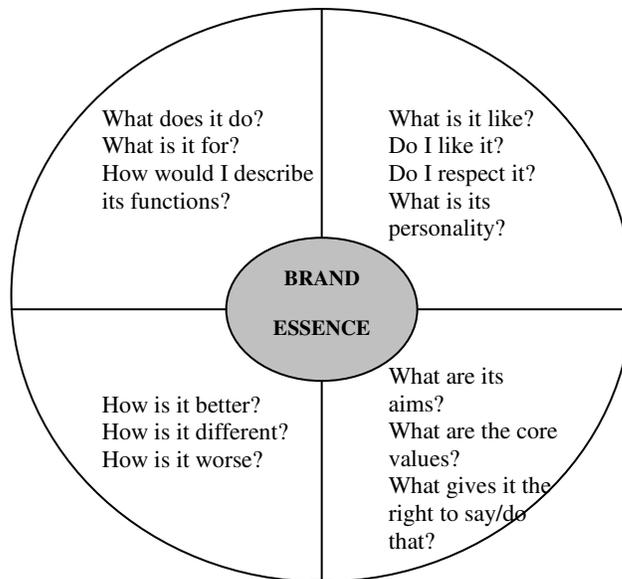
Source: Rubinstein, 1995, p. 150.

Brand identity is defined according to D. A. Aaker (1996) as the unique set of brand associations that one expects to create and maintain, which represent the mission of the brand. D. A. Aaker proposes a model of brand building (see fig. 2.3) that focuses on the System of Brand Identity. The System of Brand Identity includes the brand identity and the brand proposition of value (based on functional, emotional, and self-expression benefits),

the brand-customer relationship, and credibility. The identity is broken down into two components - the core identity and the extended identity – that constitute the brand structure altogether. The core identity represents the core and eternal essence that should be unchangeable all over different markets and product categories. The extended identity includes several elements that are organized in consistent groups. Brand identity is composed of 12 dimensions placed around four perspectives: brand as a product, brand as an organization, brand as a person, and brand as a symbol.

According to the Model of Brand Building (D. A. Aaker, 1996) positioning represents a plan of action for the System of Brand Identity Implementation, and corresponds to the part of brand identity and proposition of value that is communicated to the target through specific marketing actions. These actions constitute the competitive advantage of the company. Thus, positioning is developed in four essential steps:

1. Definition of brand identity and proposition of value;
2. Target selection;
3. Communication of the positioning;
4. Presentation of the competitive advantage.

Positioning has the function of communicating the brand value through material actions, such as: the product, the service, the organization, etc. In this sense, the offer represents the way through which the positioning make the brand conquer a distinctive place in the memory of the consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Thus, the positioning serves not only for conceiving the product, but also for creating the possibilities to place it in the consumers' mind (Ries & Trout, 1982).

Savafi (1996) considers that aspects such as the name and the logo can have a decisive influence on the image that consumers associate with it, and their effectiveness depends on the coherence that they present within the different variables of the marketing mix. Broadbent & Cooper (1987) reinforce this idea suggesting that symbols and images should

Figure 2.3

Model of Brand Building

STRATEGIC BRAND ANALYSIS

Customer analysis	**Analysis of competition**	**Internal analysis**
•Tendencies	•Brand identity/image	•Existent image
•Motivation	•Strengths and strategies	•Heritage/reputation
•Unsatisfied necessities	•Vulnerabilities	•Strengths and abilities
•Segmentation		•Organizational values

SYSTEM OF BRAND IDENTITY

BRAND IDENTITY

Extended

Core

Brand as a product
1. Product function
2. Attributes
3. Quality/value
4. Usages
5. Users
6. Country of origin

Brand as an organization
7. Organization attributes
8. Local versus global

Brand as a person
9. Personality
10. Brand-customer relationship

Brand as a symbol
11. Visual imagery
12. Brand heritage

PROPOSITION OF VALUE			**CREDIBILITY**
Functional benefits	Emotional benefits	Auto-expression benefits	Support to other brands

BRAND-CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP

SYSTEM OF BRAND IDENTITY IMPLEMENTATION

BRAND POSITIONING

•Definition of brand identity and proposition of value   •Communication of the positioning
•Target selection   •Presentation of the competitive advantage

EXECUTION

Alternatives generation   Symbols and metaphors   Pre-test

MONITORIZATION

Source: D. A. Aaker, 1996, p. 177.

be related to and involve relevant meaning for consumers in order to delivery value to them. They should also have the ability of differentiating from the competition. Olins (1989) refers the fundamental role of the business culture in a strong brand identity. In fact, a company, facing growing competition when their product features have increasingly fewer elements to differentiate themselves, must focus on a strategy that lifts human resources to more efficient level of performance. Such a strategy will reflect itself in signs, symbols, colors and icons that will be transmitted in external communication.

In a consumer perspective approach to the brand, Lambin (1989) proposes a brand modeling as a combination of attributes that represents the advantages that the consumers enjoy by using the brand. Underlying these attributes is the basic service (the common denominator of the class that the product belongs to), the complementary services associated with the basic services, and the added services which are not associated with the basic services but represent distinctive features of the brand. The consumer makes an evaluation of the brand based on the different aspects that characterize it and not particularly on the objective characteristics that make up the list of technical components of the product. For example, the comfort of an automobile is a brand attribute that is founded on different technical considerations, such as the suspension, the size of the interior cabin, etc. The attributes can be of a functional nature, as in the case of automobile comfort, but also perceptive, affective, aesthetic, etc.

Soulié (1989) considers that a strategy of differentiation shows two facets: first, the definition of the characteristics of the products which make them attractive and distinctive from the competition, and, second, the determination of the acceptable distance between the attributes of the real product (which the company truly offers) and the characteristics of the theoretical product (as is defined by product development and research centers). These aspects change for every brand and are generally addressed at positioning level. For consumers what is really important is not the theoretical definition of a product but the goods and services that it offers, which means its utility.

According to Ries & Trout (1982), there are six types of positioning, pertaining to: the attributes, the price/quality relationship, the use, the user, the product class, and the competition. The authors have proposed a methodology comprising six distinctive steps for the definition of a positioning:

1. Identifying the competition;

2. Determining the perception and valorization of the competition;

3. Drawing up a perceptual map;

4. Analyzing the consumers;

5. Selecting the position;

6. Evaluating the position.

It is important to mention that the perceptual map is a useful quantitative tool for the study of brand image. It allows for the measurement of customer perceptions related to brand with regard to certain micro-attributes that, grouped among them, constitute two axes that determine the plane on which brands are situated (Lambin, 1989). According to the methodology of the composition perceptual mapping or unrestricted attribute-elicitation mapping proposed by Steenkamp et al. (1994), consumers are called to describe and classify the brands in a certain category according to their own terminology.

The model for brand building developed by Young & Rubicam – Brand Asset Valuator (Agres & Dubitsky, 1996) – is based on four pillars: Differentiation, Relevance, Esteem, and Knowledge (see fig. 2.4). Building successful brands is a dynamic process that takes time and involves the progression of consumer perceptions. Each pillar corresponds to an evolutionary phase. The framework allows for the evaluation of "brand health" and the location of brand in a life cycle.

Figure 2.4

Young & Rubicam's Brand Asset Valuator
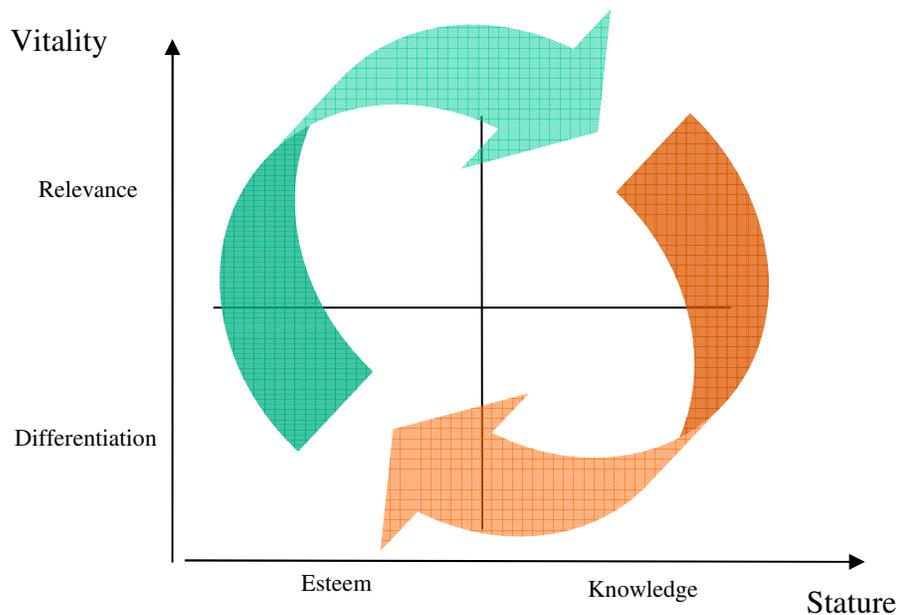
Source: Young & Rubicam, 2000.

Differentiation is linked to the ability of a brand to be perceived as distinct from the competition. Such a thing implies the definition of an identity that allows for assigning difference under the form of an offer. The offer is communicated according to the guidelines of the positioning. Relevance deals with bringing the brand up to an adequate level of consumer acceptance. Esteem is verifiable when the brand reaches a level of differentiation that is relevant for customers and deals with popularity and high-level quality. Knowledge emerges as the rallying-point of the efforts that allowed the brand to attain the three previous pillars. Knowledge implies, beyond brand recognition, customer

understanding of the proposition of brand value and brand image (Agres & Dubitsky, 1996).

Taken together, Differentiation and Relevance constitute the Vitality of the brand, and Esteem and Knowledge underlie the Stature of the brand. Vitality and Stature are the two coordinates where brand is evaluated (see fig. 2.4).

New brands are located in the lower left-hand section and evolve in terms of the life cycle, as the green arrow indicates in fig. 2.4. A brand that is located in the upper right-hand area (i.e., a market leader) must take care to manage its Vitality because if it is no longer being perceived as different from the competition and relevant for consumers it may reach the end of its life cycle, as the red arrow in the same figure shows. New brands generally have Esteem ranked higher than Knowledge. It can not be concluded, however, that leadership in the market is related to brand's age (Agres & Dubitsky, 1996).

2.3.2 Brand Personality

The Brand Personality construct enjoys a certain consensus as an explanatory element for symbolic consumption and the affective bonds that consumers establish with brands (Keller, 1993; J. Aaker & Fournier, 1995; D. A. Aaker, 1996; J. Aaker, 1997; J. Aaker et al., 2004). It displays broad practical applications, namely on the level of advertising (Plummer, 1985). Literature offers different tools and models for representing the construct. However, all of them are based on the premise that consumers ascribe human personality characteristics to the brands (Allen & Olson, 1995; McCraken, 1989). This phenomenon finds some explanation in the theory of animism (see Gilmore, 1919). Thus, Brand Personality can be defined as "the human characteristics associated with a brand" (J. Aaker, 1995, pp. 393-394).

Brand Personality is a differentiating element in an environment of symbolic consumption (Lannon, 1993), which is presented to the consumer as a vehicle of self-expression and the expression of an ideal (Sirgy, 1982; Malhotra, 1988), and the source of personal meaning (Levy, 1959; Allen & Olson, 1995; J. Aaker, 1995, 1997). Brand Personality is thus a factor that influences consumer choice and preference (Biel, 1993) and, as such, is an element that generates value for the consumer and for the company (D. A. Aaker, 1991, 1996).

The congruency between brand personality traits and consumer self-concept or ideal-concept may be a determining factor in brand preference (Sirgy, 1982; Malhotra, 1988). However, the preference for brand use may stem from the need or desire of the consumer to establish a relationship with the brand that personifies certain human characteristics, even though the consumer does not see him/herself in that characteristics or aspire to them (Lannon, 1993). For example, in choosing a fragrance the customer might opt for characteristics that denote sophistication to which he/she aspires, whereas in the choice of a bank the person might opt for a personality opposed to his/her own as long as it inspires the confidence and competence that he/she thinks as necessary. Similar to the relationships the consumer establishes with people, he/she can also choose a brand according to the type of the relationship desired. D. A. Aaker (1996) concludes that Brand Personality must generate value in three distinct ways: as a function of self-expression, in support to Consumer-Brand Relationships and in providing functional benefits for the consumer.

Lannon (1993) goes on to add that Brand Personality plays firstly the role of differentiation instead motivation. Brand Personality must be built in consonance with the function of the product since it allows for the simplification of the process of selection. Its importance is greater in the categories that bear a more symbolic load value, such as fragrances and automobiles for example. Beyond this, personality represents a consistent way of brand image be understood and accepted in different cultures (J. Aaker et al., 2001; Sung & Tinkham, 2005).

Similar to the human personality, Brand Personality is based largely on customer inferences about observations of behavior. These inferences deliver meaning that is condensed in personality traits (Allen & Olson, 1995). Fournier (1995a) suggests a relational approach to Brand Personality, which can be inferred from the observation of the behaviours the brand develops as a partner in a relationship with the customer. Indeed, Brand Personality will be better conceptualized in terms of the roles that the brand assumes in a relationship with the consumer rather than stable personality traits (J. Aaker et al., 2004)

In a narrative based approach, Allen & Olson (1995) concluded that "personality meanings have a useful function as they are abstract meanings that can be used to summarize complex behaviors and form expectations of future behaviors" (p. 392). Brand Personality is the result of brand personification that can be done in two ways: first, brand becomes an action figure that acts and does things (e.g., brand gets involved in a program of environmental preservation, exhibiting ecological concerns); or, second, brand takes the form of a character (e.g., Joe Camel for Camel cigarettes).

In the same way, consumers transfer the characteristics of the people directly to the brand (McCraken, 1989). Generally, the people associated with brand are either the typical users of the brand, that is "the brand user imagery" (J. Aaker, 1997, p. 348), the workers and administrators who are the visible face of the company, or the sponsors. In addition, personality traits of the brand may also include demographical characteristics, such as gender, age and class (Levy, 1959).

The perceptions of Brand Personality can also be formed and influenced by the indirect contact of the consumer with the brand (Plummer 1985), through the attributes and benefits of the product, the associations with the category of the product, the origin of the product, and the signs of brand identity such as name, logo, etc., advertising, price and distribution (Batra et al., 1993; Kapferer, 1994). Thus brand components should be presented to the

target-public in a consistent and relevant way, accordingly to the Brand Personality, along the different variables of the marketing mix (Brand, 1997).

Through a multivariate analysis methodology, J. Aaker (1997) developed the Brand Personality Dimensions (see fig. 2.5), operationalized in terms of human characteristics. A set of 37 brands within different product categories, from utilitarian to symbolic usage, was used as stimulus in its development that also included a North American representative sample of 631 individuals, encompassing the five demographics of gender, age, income, ethnicity, and geographic location. This scale was inspired by the Big Five factors of human personality, a factorial structure composed of five dimensions: Extraversion, Agreeableness, Conscientiousness, Emotional Stability versus Neuroticism, and Openness (see Chapter 4). Similarly, the Brand Personality model is represented by five factors, which are: Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness. According to the author, the Brand Personality Dimensions is a reliable framework for any kind of product category.

In a study about the re-examination of the generalizability of J. Aaker's (1997) work, Austin et al. (2003) suggested that some limitations should be considering in the application of this framework. J. Aaker's research involved the aggregation of data across all product categories under study, however when applied to a single product category, instead to aggregated data of different product categories, the framework may not provide successful results.

Despite its importance in the representation and explanation of Brand Personality (Keller, 2003), the scale is not generalizable to different cultures (J. Aaker, 1997). The main reason for this is the nature of the symbolic or self-expression consumption of brands that changes from culture to culture (J. Aaker & Schmitt, 1997). Because of that, some transcultural studies were developed in order to adjust the scale to other populations. Two of them are noteworthy. The first, developed by J. Aaker et al. (2001), offers two factorial

31

Figure 2.5

Dimensions of Brand Personality

```
                              ┌─────────────────────┐
                              │  Brand Personality  │
                              └─────────────────────┘
          ┌──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┬──────────────┐
   ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐  ┌────────────────┐  ┌───────────┐
   │ Sincerity │  │Excitement │  │Competence │  │ Sophistication │  │Ruggedness │
   └───────────┘  └───────────┘  └───────────┘  └────────────────┘  └───────────┘
   ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐  ┌───────────┐  ┌────────────────┐  ┌───────────┐
   │Down-to-   │  │ Daring    │  │ Reliable  │  │ Upper class    │  │ Outdoorsy │
   │earth      │  │ Spirited  │  │Intelligent│  │ Charming       │  │ Tough     │
   │Honest     │  │Imaginative│  │Successful │  │                │  │           │
   │Wholesome  │  │Up-to-date │  │           │  │                │  │           │
   │Cheerful   │  │           │  │           │  │                │  │           │
   └───────────┘  └───────────┘  └───────────┘  └────────────────┘  └───────────┘
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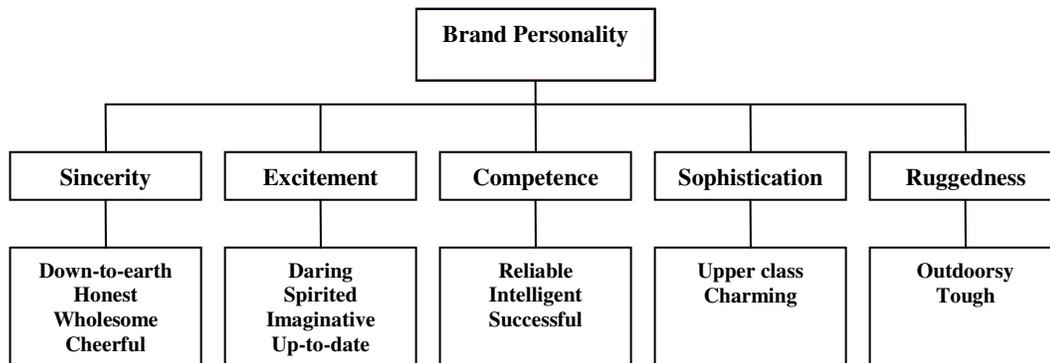
Source: J. Aaker, 1997, p. 352.

models for the Japanese and Spanish populations, demonstrating that consumption carries with it culture-specific meaning and universal-meaning. The second, developed by Sung & Tinkham (2005), proposes six common dimensions of Brand Personality for the Korean and North American populations, and two specific factors for each culture.

The Spanish model (see Appendix A) includes a culture-specific meaning element - Passion – which combines affective experience and spirituality, common in Southern European Catholic cultures (Mitchell, 1990) and other Mediterranean cultures such as Greece (Schwartz, 1994). It contains the dimension of Peacefulness, a shared element with the Japanese scale which denotes the predominance of harmony and cooperation-oriented values in East Asian and Latin Cultures. It also includes two universal-meaning components: Sincerity and Excitement (common to the United States and Japan models).

The Spanish model also covers the dimension of Sophistication that appears in the American and Japanese models as well. The Spanish Sophistication presents a facet common with the North American Sophistication (described by adjectives such as good-looking, glamorous, upper class, and stylish) and includes a blending of the traits for Competence, such as confident, successful, and leader (markers of Competence for the USA). This seems to be unique to the Spanish Brand Personality (J. Aaker et al., 2001).

2.4 Brand Equity

Brand identity and the respective marketing mix actions are two important sources of brand equity (D. A. Aaker, 1991; Kapferer, 1994). This value, however, is materialized through the public's response to those signs and actions which represents the brand image (Biel, 1993), as according to the notion of Customer-Based Brand Equity developed by Keller (1993):

"Customer-based brand equity is defined as the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand" (p. 2).

"Customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong, and unique brand associations in memory" (Keller, 1993, p. 2). Further, the differential customer's response to the brand requires "brand knowledge". Brand knowledge is defined here in terms of brand awareness and brand image (i.e., brand associations), and includes all types of thoughts, emotions, feelings, beliefs, experiences, or associated brand images, able to influence some consumer behaviors - such as perceptions, preferences, and other responses to the marketing of the brand – which help to create brand equity (Kotler & Keller, 2006). The customer response may be supported either in positive

experiences, providing positive customer-based brand equity, or in negative experiences expressed by negative customer-based brand equity (Keller, 1998).

Kapferer (1994) presents the brand construction as a lab process that has brand identity as output. The goal of brand identity is to be translated by the public into a brand image. D. A. Aaker (1996), in his model (see fig. 2.3), highlights the role the customer plays in the process of brand building, and considers the brand-customer relationship as an element of the Brand Identity System.

By contrast, Grönroos (2001) prefers the expression "creating brand relationships" (p. 291) rather to build a brand which is an inadequate expression since brand only exists if exists in the customer's mind. A brand is the result of an interaction process with the customer. The sum of the customer-brand contacts (experiences) forms a relationship that gives meaning to the branded objects (goods or services). No pre-determined marketing actions may ensure the existence of a brand and the brand identity is merely a matrix that reflects an image to be aspired to. Grönroos assumes that "brand as a concept is always an image" (p. 287) based on the notion of brand-customer relationship:

> "A brand is created in continuously developing brand relationships where the customer forms a differentiating image of a physical good, a service or a solution including goods, services, information and other elements, based on all kinds of brand contacts that the customer is exposed to" (p. 290).

From a middle position, Keller (2001) offers the Brand Resonance Pyramid, a pyramid model for brand construction, based on "blocks" that represent the several phases of brand developing. One reaches the top of the pyramid only when all blocks are in the right place (see fig. 2.6). The blocks on the left side of the figure represent the rational part of the process of brand building, and the ones located on the right side refer to the emotional part.

Figure 2.6

Brand Resonance Pyramid

4. *Relationships =* What about you and me?	Intense, active loyalty
3. *Response =* What about you?	Positive, accessible reactions
2. *Meaning =* What are you?	Strong, favorable and unique brand associations
1. *Identity =* Who are you?	Deep, broad brand awareness

Pyramid levels (bottom to top): Salience — Performance | Imagery — Judgments | Feelings — Resonance
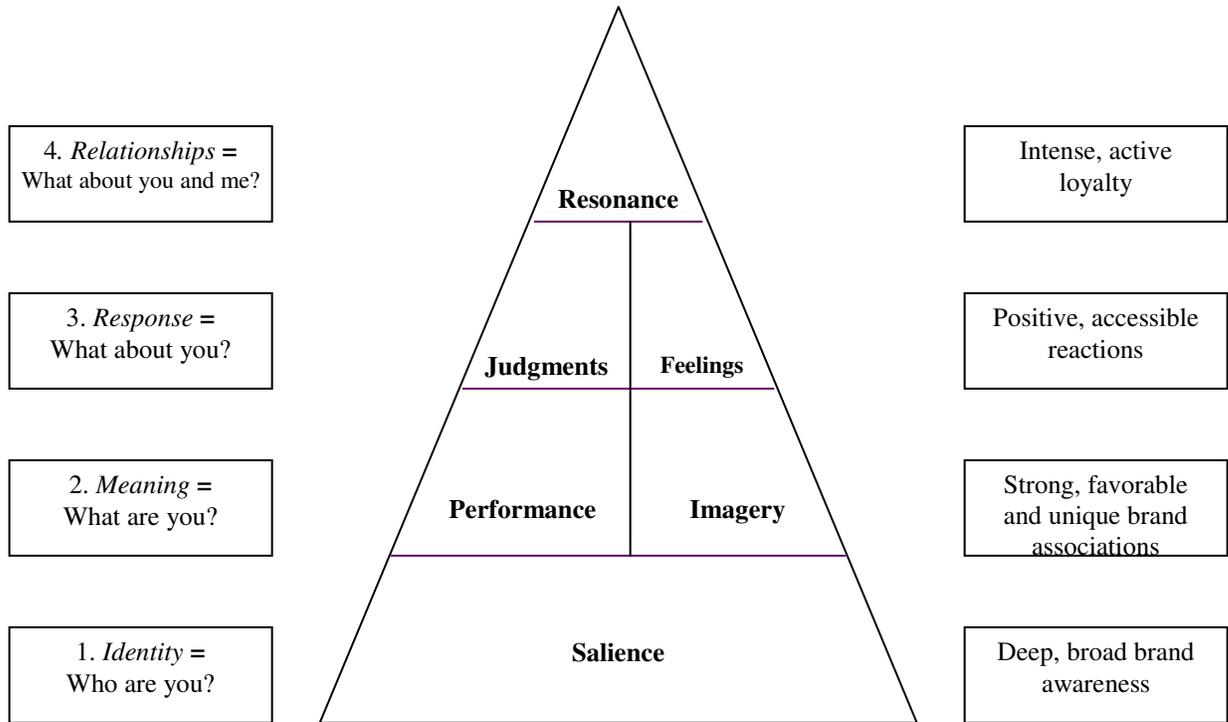
Source: Kotler & Keller, 2006, p. 281.

According to Keller (2001), in order to enhance relevant brand equity, it is necessary to reach the top of the pyramid. The model includes 6 phases (i.e., blocks): Brand Salience which "relates to how often and easily the brand is evoked under various purchase or consumption situations"; Brand Performance which "relates to how the product or service meets customers' functional needs"; Brand Imagery which "deals with the extrinsic properties of the product or service, including the ways in which the brand attempts to meet

customers' psychological or social needs"; Brand Judgments which "focus on customers' own personal opinions and evaluations"; Brand Feelings which represent "customers' emotional responses and reactions with respect to the brand"; and Brand Resonance which "refers to the nature of the relationship that customers have with the brand and the extent to which customers feel that they are "in sync" with the brand" (Kotler & Keller, 2006, p. 280).

Gummesson (2003) emphasizes that reality cannot be analyzed based on independent objects (product/service) but as a social construct that includes all interactions and relationships, such as product/service vs. buyer, product/service vs. the supplier, and buyer vs. supplier. Thus, reality comes to reside in the eyes, heart and mind of the customers and not in the objects themselves. Keller (2003) further urges that all studies and initiatives of a practical nature on brands must follow a wider and more holistic direction because it is only in this way that we can understand what consumer brand knowledge is based on and how it evolves.

Thus, it seems reasonable that the analysis of the sources of brand value must focus on the customer's response to that brand. The Brand Resonance Model establishes a hierarchy of customers' responses. At the top of the pyramid we find deep and intense brand loyalty which is grounded in a brand-customer relationship. Awareness and brand associations are located at the base of the pyramid.

Lambin (1989) defines buyer response in the following way:
"All buyer mental and physical activity influenced by either a marketing encouragement, or stimulus performed by the company according to its brand strategy." (p. 142).

A consumer response is not necessarily observable on the exterior, given that it can be simply something in the mind and therefore not expressed in a behavior. However, its

analysis allows for the understanding of the process that leads to behavior (Lambin, 1989). Consumer response to brand can have three types:

- *Cognitive response* – deals with the information known about products and brands, their attributes and the promise(s) that they represent;
- *Affective response* – corresponds to the assessment, preferences, and attitudes that consumers have toward brands;
- *Behavioral response* – corresponds to buying and post-buying behavior.

Lambin (1989) considers these levels to be a hierarchical set of three stadiums through which the consumer passes in his/her response to brand. The author proposes the following means to evaluate each one of the categories of buyer response:

- *Cognitive response* – Salience, awareness, recognition, attribution, memorization and perceived similarity;
- *Affective response* – Evoked set, importance, determination, evaluation, preference (global and explicit) and intention;
- *Behavioral response* – Testing, purchase, market share, occupation, loyalty, exclusivity and penetration.

Brand awareness is defined here in terms of "brand recognition" and "brand recall" (Lambin, 1989; Keller, 1993, Kapferer, 1994). Brand recognition corresponds to the lowest level of awareness, when the brand is recognized among a set of different brands, without necessarily any kind of involvement with it. Brand recall corresponds to the evocation of brand to fulfill certain necessities or toward a certain kind of product category. For instance, in spite of the physical absence of brand in a situation of purchase, the consumer requests it. The highest level of awareness – "awareness of top of mind" - takes place when the brand is the first one evoked in a brand recall test. (Lencastre & Pedro, 2000).

Brand equity is in part measured by the degree of awareness the brand has in the market. Brand awareness plays a determining role in the consumer's decision, given that a noteworthy brand presents itself as a viable option to the consumer during the buying decision process (Keller, 1993). As the research in the field suggests, consumers are rarely loyal to one single brand (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Fournier & Yao, 1996; Fournier, 1998), nevertheless, at the time of purchase they carry in their minds a group of brands in which are included some of the brands that they buy regularly. Thus, brand awareness increases the probability of a brand being included in this group. The capacity of identification and recognition of brand represents the first step in the building of a brand image. Kapferer (1994) defines brand awareness as a notion related with the number of persons that recognize the meaning of a brand and are aware of the promise of the symbol.

It is not enough for brands to renew themselves and add value, they must necessarily communicate these actions in order to make themselves more visible. Kapferer (1989) believes that the consumer does not see more than the visible part of the brand. That is, advertising and price as compared with similar products/brands. This explains, in part, the importance and in some cases the legitimacy underlying the trade in counterfeit and copied goods that allows consumers to boast a coveted brand for a fraction of the price, which can have harmful effects on the authentic brand's image. For instance, luxury brands live off of their image and social recognition. The luxury product is the result of added value in the details and fixtures of the real product that enables a person to show buying power, good taste and sophistication. Many brands profit from this aspect of image by putting their names on products of standardized quality (such as eyeglasses, cigarettes, socks, etc.) under the pretext that the customer is disposed to pay for the brand, something which could also have negative effects with the dilution of the image of rareness associated with luxury brands.

The situations described above have implicit the notion of "sensibility to the brand" which means the consumer takes the brand into account during the process of buying decision (Kapferer & Laurent, 1989). Sensibility to the brand is a psychological variable in

contrast with the behavioral nature of brand loyalty. These two variables are correlated, implying that a strong sensibility to the brand favors a repeated brand purchasing behavior. According to a study developed in 1983 by Kapferer & Laurent, the effect of brand sensibility, however, varies with "product category involvement" (about product category involvement, see also Laurent & Kapferer, 1985; Kapferer & Laurent, 1985). The study showed that some product categories presented higher scores in brand sensibility as compared to smaller scores in brand loyalty. For instance, automobiles were remarkable in this study because they showed the biggest indices of brand sensibility although they scored median in brand loyalty.

A brand with a high level of awareness is more likely to be chosen within a set of brands with lesser awareness. Consumers tend to adopt the rule of choosing brands that are very familiar and well established in the market. This is mainly a consequence of low motivation and small buying decision involvement, or reveals the inability to make a decision due to insufficient knowledge and experience in a certain product category (Keller, 1998). In fact, awareness influences the formation and strengthens brand associations (Keller, 1993). The associations to the brand represent the essential aspect of consumer response because they are determined by the public in its understanding, relationship, emotions and behavior with the brand (D. A. Aaker, 1991).

Safavi (1996) presents the "anatomy of brand image" comprised of three main parts: product image, corporate image, and user image. The product image includes the product attributes and benefits; the corporate image the corporate activity, corporate character and values, corporate market domain, and corporate size; the user image user lifestyle, user environment, and user occupation.

Brand associations are defined here as the perceptions about a brand that the consumer holds in memory, which represent the meaning of the brand for the consumer (Keller, 1993). Brand associations are reflected in brand knowledge. Favorable, strong, and unique

brand associations are likable determinants of brand equity, mainly in high involvement decision categories.

Brand associations can be classified into three types: attributes, benefits and attitudes. The attributes refer to the descriptive characteristics of the consumer item, which may or may not be related with it. The benefits correspond to the value/meaning that the attributes have for the consumer, which can be of a practical, symbolic or experimental nature. The attitudes express the evaluation that the consumer makes of brand. Therefore, the attitudes are good indicators of consumers' behavior (see table 2.1). For instance, a positive attitude toward brand might indicate the loyal behavior of the consumer. This demonstrates the importance of attitudes for brand profitability. In conclusion, the three types of associations are connected since the evaluation of both attributes and related benefits influences the consumer's attitudes to the brand (Nobre et al., 2005).

A brand is generally placed in a given product category to which other brands also belong due to their similarity with respect to certain associations. This set of common associations that defines a certain category is usually referred to as Points of Parity (Keller 1998). This notion assumes an important role specifically with respect to the positioning of a brand facing its competition, since brands with the same points of parity are the most direct competitors to each other. By contrast, Points of Difference can be considered as associations recognized by consumers as unique to a brand and thus ones that make them stand out among the competition.

The associations can be primary or secondary. The primary associations are price, good quality, and image of the product in terms of user and use, and Brand Personality (Lencastre & Pedro, 2000). The secondary associations refer to the relationships between the brand and other meaningful entities in the point of view of the consumers (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Those relationships can be grounded on People (employers and endorsers), on Things (events, causes, and third-party endorsements such as awards or reviews), on

Places (country of origin, and channels), and on Other Brands (partnerships, ingredients, company and co-branding).

Table 2.1

Brand Associations

Attributes	Benefits	Attitudes
Related to the product: determine the product's performance, as well as the physical composition and the technical demands.	**Practical nature:** refer to the advantages related to the product's attributes.	Express the consumer's evaluation of brand, and are determinant in his/her purchase behavior.
Not related to the product: do not determine the product's performance. Example: price, distribution channels, situations of use, etc.	**Symbolic nature:** refer to the advantages not related to the product's attributes.	
	Experimental nature: refer to the advantages related to the use of the product, and could be related to any of two types of attributes.	

Source: Nobre, 2002, p. 57.

According to Kotler & Keller (2006), there are three essential aspects of brand management as generators of brand equity:

1. Initial choice of brand identities (i.e., names, URLs, logos, symbols, characters, spokespersons, slogans, jingles, packaging and signage);

2. The product and the service and all the marketing support activities and programs;

3. Secondary associations that can be transferred indirectly to the brand (e.g., a person, placed or thing).

Safavi (1996) contests the traditional vision of choosing brand names and logos that reflect the names of the companies and their products, the benefits offered and the differentiation from the competition without displaying due concern with the level of brand image to be encouraged, and the target public. In particular men and women have different sensitivities and aesthetic preferences that must be taken into account given their influence on the design of the product, the packaging and other visual elements such as logos, for example (Moss 1995).

According to Alesandrini (1983), a brand name is better memorized if it:

1. has a direct visual equivalent (can be depicted graphically);

2. has a high concreteness value (typically arouses mental sensory images);

3. relates to an analogous object that possesses desirable attributes;

4. serves as a chunk of information that has many associated, favorable bits of information (p. 80).

Conscious of the importance of this theme, Kotler & Keller (2006) have proposed six criteria for the choice of brand elements. These should be: memorable (i.e., easily memorized and recognized), meaningful (i.e., able to allude or correspond to the product category or some product attribute), likable, (i.e., aesthetically attractive and able to suggest brand imagination), transferable (i.e., transferable to product extensions or other product categories), adaptable (i.e., adaptable and updated to new contexts) and subject to protective measures (i.e., under legal protection or safeguard).

The brand associations may also have an important role in terms of designing loyalty-building programs. In fact, in a study aimed at investigating loyalty programs from the perspective of a consumer packaged goods organization, Roehm et al. (2002) stated that the results of the loyalty program can be mediated by program's ability in facilitating brand associations. From this study, three important conclusions were inferred:

1. If participation in a loyalty program increases the "accessibility of brand associations", the postprogram loyalty increases;
2. If participation in a loyalty program does not reach "accessibility of brand associations", no changes in loyalty occurs;
3. If participation in a loyalty program introduces new associations that affect "accessibility of favorable brand associations", the postprogram loyalty decreases (p. 210).

A brand understood by the consumer as having value offers a source of benefits for all concerned: the customers, producers and distributors (Keller, 1998). For buyers, the value provided by the brand assumes different facets in accordance with the subject involved. Indeed, the notion of brand sensitivity is founded on the premise that consumers act in different ways to brands. It is possible, however, to make some generalizations about the principal functions that a brand assumes for consumers, according to a "functional vision of brand" (Kapferer & Laurent, 1989, p. 110). Lambin (1989) proposes five functions of brand: Placement, Practicality, Guarantee, Personalization, and Pleasure. Kapferer & Laurent (1989) add the function of Identification. Some authors, however, consider the function of Continuity as well and divide the function of Pleasure into Hedonistic and Ethical (Lencastre & Pedro, 2000). The description of each one of these functions is presented in table 2.2.

Table 2.2

Brand Functions for the Consumer

FUNCTION	Utility to the Consumer
Identification	Identification of the product through its characteristics, allowing for handling the information more easily.
Localization	Placement of items that satisfy the consumer's needs in a more efficient way.
Practicality	The brand facilitates the recall of early purchase experiences, what leads to repeated purchases and, consequently, loyalty to the brand. In this manner, the consumer saves time and energy.
Guarantee	The brand always ensures the same quality, independent of the time and location where the purchase was made.
Personalization	Through the use of brand, the consumer can communicate and format his own identity, or ideal identity.
Pleasure or	Brand provides pleasure to the consumer.
Hedonistic	Brand attraction provides satisfaction to the consumer.
Ethical	A responsible brand behavior toward society results in satisfaction for the consumer.
Continuity	The permanent use of the brand encourages consumer familiarity and intimacy and, consequently, provides satisfaction to the consumer.

Source: Lencastre & Pedro, 2000.

As for the producers or companies that hold brands, Lambin (1989) considers two functions: Placement and Capitalization. The function of Placement provides the support for the function of Localization for consumers, since brand facilitates the possibility for company to position itself in the market highlighting the distinctive features of its offer. Capitalization concerns to the brand's capacity to incorporate a tangible asset: the brand

image. It represents a source and a support for the announcing the brand in the market, making long-term strategies and respective investments more viable. Namely, brand associations facilitate brand extensions even when the attributes associated with brand in the original category does not exist or are relevant in the extension category. In this case the benefits induced by the original attributes must be seen as valuable in the new product class (Van Osselaer & Alba, 2003).

One of the main advantages for the company that owns the brand is the improvement of brand loyalty. Brand loyalty, as a behavioral variable, has an influence on both increased sales and reduced costs, which can be a way for the company to build market barriers and avoiding the customer transference to the competition. Brand loyalty, however, may be the result of a set of factors such as: promotions, price, habit, inertia, risk associated with change, and easiness of identifying brand in the market place. Therefore, it may be based on a weak relationship between the consumer and the brand (Lambin, 1989).

2.5 Conclusion

The development of branding brought the concept of brand image that reveals the communicational dimension of the brand. Traditionally, building a brand is considered to be a process driven by the company, based on marketing research using medium customer scores. This focuses on two elements: the system of identities and the proposition of brand value (D. A. Aaker, 1991; Kapferer, 1994). According to this approach, the brand image is built by the market feedback to those elements, which is determinant in the creation of brand equity (Keller, 1993). D. A. Aaker (1996), in his model for brand construction, considers the Identity System central to this process. However, this model presents an important and innovative element: the brand-customer relationship. For the author, the relationships the consumers establish with the brands represent one of the most important consequences of the brands' strategies, which help to form a strong brand image.

Opposing to the traditional "brand building" concept, Grönroos (2001) assumes a brand as the result of an interaction process between it and the customer. The sum of the customer-brand contacts (experiences) forms a relationship that gives meaning to the branded objects. In this sense, the definition of brand corresponds to the brand image, that is, a brand is something that exists in the customers' mind and they are the real brand builders. And the brand managers, what is their role? "The role of the marketer is to create frames for the development of a brand in the minds of customers, by providing an appropriate physical product, service process and supportive communication using various means of planned marketing communication" (p. 287).

A brand is a source of meaning to the customer in particular and the market in general. That meaning is the result of the way the consumers live and perceive their experiences with brands. In this sense, to understand consumer practices must take into account the forms the consumers take to relate with products and familiar brands (Heilbrunn, 1996). Such approach departs from the notion of Consumer-Brand Relationship that is based on the assumption that a brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the customer (Fournier, 1998; J. Aaker et al., 2004; Aggarwal, 2004).

The relational approach may provide a better and broader understanding of the phenomena that arises between the customer and the brand. To understand branding through the eyes of loyalty and customer retention concepts may eliminate possible explanations of symbolic consumption (Fournier & Yao, 1996), since loyalty is a specific kind of a relationship (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978). Additionally, adopting a relational view of consumption is consistent with the need for a more holistic approach for developing brand knowledge (Keller, 2003).

Gummesson (2003) emphasizes that reality cannot be analyzed based on independent objects but as a social construct that includes all interactions and relationships. Thus, in the analysis of brand consumption the emphasis should be placed on the Consumer-Brand

Relationships as a whole and not individually on the brand or the consumer (Heilbrunn, 1996).

However, Brand Relationships has received only limited investigation (Veloutsou, 2007). Thus, the classical literature in branding and consumer research does not provide enough frameworks to understand the phenomenon. This rose the necessity to visit others fields such as Relationship Marketing in consumer goods and Interpersonal Relationship Theory.

CHAPTER 3

BRAND RELATIONSHIPS

3.1 Introduction

In the last decade, Brand Relationships emerged as an interesting topic for the academic community. From the studies that appeared, the research developed by Fournier (1998) - an innovative approach that grounded the concept of Consumer-Brand Relationships in the interpersonal relationship metaphor - is remarkable (Keller, 2003). Taking off from the Fournier study, J. Aaker et al. (2004) developed a conceptual model to explain Consumer-Brand Relationships, based on the fact that acts of transgression and Brand Personality play a prominent role in the formation of Relationship Strength.

This chapter starts with a brief literature review on Relationship Marketing focused on consumer products. After a short introduction, whose objective is to situate the state of the art with respect to the theme, the notion of Relational Market Behavior is introduced, and the constructs of Loyalty and Relationship Strength are brought up for the sake of comparison. The present research is based on an important theoretical proposition: the brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer. This topic is presented in detail here, with special attention to the research developed by Fournier (1998). Continuing in this vein, some theoretical models considered relevant in the characterization of social

relationships are offered, in particular the Partner and Relationship Ideals (Fletcher et al., 1999). Finally, the conceptual model for Consumer-Brand Relationships developed by J. Aaker et al, (2004) is discussed.

Two main sections compose this chapter. Section 3.2 focuses on Relationship Marketing literature, especially on mass marketing relationships. Section 3.3 addresses a review of academical works on Consumer-Brand Relationships and the explanation of some models of interpersonal relationships.

3.2 A Relationship Marketing Approach for Consumer Products

3.2.1 Introduction to the relationship mass marketing

According to Sheth & Parvatiyar (1995a), the brands that appeared at the beginning of the industrialization, named by the family name of producers and marketers (e.g., Philips, Fiat, and Daimler-Benz in Europe; Ford, Johnson & Johnson, Kellogg's, and Procter & Gamble in USA; and Toyota, Honda, and Matsushita in Japan) had one main purpose: to guarantee permanence in a relationship, for the customer purchasing the brand, and for the producer who receives loyalty of the customer in return for brand development expenses.

Later, already in the fullness of mass market, vertical marketing systems such as franchising and exclusive distribution rights enable producers to take their brand directly to the customers (Little, 1979). The development of vertical channels brought an inverse phenomenon of distancing producers and customers that characterized the industrial era, putting a greater emphasis on direct marketing and the tendency to maintain long-term relationships with customers. In academic terms, this was revealed in a change of focus

from distribution functions to the understanding of consumer behavior (Parvatiyar & Sheth, 2000), whose theories constituted a stepping-off point for the building of Relationship Marketing as a field of knowledge (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995b).

Grönroos (2001) remarks that it is incorrect to consider the building of a brand as something that can be done "in a vacuum". It is necessary to understand marketing management as a continuous creative process strongly influenced by the relationship of customers with the brand – brand relationship. It thus becomes pertinent to confront a new type of brand – the relationship brand – which, according to Rapp & Collins (1995), interacts with customers and potential customers in a relationship in continuous construction. In this manner, marketers do not only promote a branded product but also a branded relationship.

Despite the importance of the theme (Keller & Lehmann, 2006), for quite some time there was a gap in terms of studies done on Relationship Marketing geared toward consumer products as opposed to that of services, an area that was covered extensively (Veloutsou, 2007). Initially, the Relationship Marketing literature about mass marketing was limited to concepts such as database marketing, affinity marketing and regional marketing (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a). Nevertheless, there are several references in the literature on the importance of customer involvement in brand creation experiences, which highlights the need for implementing management strategies for relationships and individualization (e.g., Webster, 1992; Blackston, 1993, 1995, 2000; Kapferer, 1994; D. A. Aaker, 1996; Agres & Dubitsky, 1996; Heilbrunn, 1996; Goodyear, 1998; Keller, 1998; Ravald & Grönroos, 1998; D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 1999, 2000; Carpenter, 2000; Degon, 2000; Moon & Millison , 2000; Grönroos, 2001; Diorio, 2002; Mohammed et al., 2002; Gummesson, 2003).

According to D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler (1999), to ground the building of a brand image on traditional mass media campaigns, rather than to involve customers in the process, is something that became obsolete due to the low performance vis-à-vis the big

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costs that it carries. Holt (2002) calls this stadium the Modern Branding Paradigm that defines as the "cultural authority of marketers", that is "marketers are portrayed as cultural engineers, organizing how people think and feel through branded commercial products. Omnipotent corporations use sophisticated marketing techniques to seduce consumers to participate in a system of commodified meanings embedded in brands. Likewise, consumer culture is organized around the principle of obeisance to the cultural authority of marketers" (p. 71).

Customers, namely those in western countries, began to distance themselves from this paradigm, understanding consumption as a space of autonomy where they themselves build the meaning and the value that the brands provide. In this Postmodern Branding Paradigm the brand no longer imposes a culture of consumption but rather presents itself as a source of cultural resources that allow consumers to build freely their self. This paradigm, however, presents some contradictions that led Holt (2002) to foresee a new one – the Post-Postmodern Paradigm. The Post-Postmodern Paradigm is based on the principle of "brand as citizen-artists" in which brands represent a form of proximal expressive culture seen, for example, in films and television programs or rock bands (increasingly considered brands themselves) that contribute to projects of consumer identity, and provoke and stimulate the imagination with new and original material.

In the same way, Goodyear (1998), in an article that presents a reflection on global marketing, considers that brand management is undergoing a paradigm change in which institution brands display social and cultural values and concerns that go beyond merely economic aspects, making them cultural authorities that the customers respect and with which they identify. This is the result of the change in attitudes and behaviors of increasingly well-informed consumers who demand more talent in the "art of listening" and less aggressive actions in the first moments of marketing contact. To this Goodyear adds the tendency of businesses to choose increasingly tighter segmentation strategies – "segmentation on an occasion-and-needs-determined basis" – so that they can satisfy consumers in the most personalized way.

In the beginning of the 1990s, Webster (1992) considered a change in the marketing role where consumer relationships took the place of central strategic resources for the companies. Later, Grönroos (1994) showed the evidence of a paradigm changing: from marketing mix management paradigm to a likely relationship marketing paradigm. The model of 4Ps, which can be considered the first classifical scheme in marketing, does not anymore correspond to the needs of an effective marketing management (Grönroos, 1990b). The main reason of this criticism is its negative association with sales promotion and its lack of mutual and collaborative actions that requires rather two-ways communication (Waterschoot & Van den Bulte, 1992). The traditional marketing mix approach assumes promotion (i.e., persuasion) such as the common denominator of the four categories: product mix, price mix, distribution mix and communication mix. This is a limitation for relationship marketing implementation because a one-way communication does not facilitate the relationships that emerge all over the marketing mix since "communication – not persuasation – is the platform on which relationships are built" (Duncan & Moriarty, 1998, p. 2). This, however, does not mean that companies should not use anymore the marketing mix and the 4Ps tools. Instead companies must be aware that they are not anymore the dominant paradigm and its usage as management framework has to be reformulated (Gordon, 1998, 2000).

In this sense, Grönroos (1990b) considered marketing mix approach a simple and narrow way to respond to the necessities of services management. Thus, Grönroos suggested a relational definition of marketing:

"Marketing is to establish, maintain, enhance, and commercialize customer relationships (often, but not necessarily always, long-term relationships) so that the objectives of the parties involved are met. This is done by a mutual exchange and fulfillment of promises" (p. 138).

The term Relationship Marketing was introduced in the literature by Berry in 1983. At the same time, the Nordic School of Services presented a similar idea that departed from

the notion of interactive marketing and the building of interactive relationships in services and industrial marketing (Payne et al., 1998). From the 1990s onward, Relationship Marketing became a common topic of the standard marketing literature and emerged as a relevant subject in the more important books on consumer behavior (Hennig-Thurau & Hansen, 2000).

Although the concept of Relational Marketing appeared for the first time in services literature, its origin is in industrial marketing (Payne et al., 1998). Thus, these two fields provide the main theoretical and practical sources of the Relationship Marketing domain. However, they do not include all possible perspectives of customer relationships. From the definition of Morgan & Hunt (1994) - "Relationship Marketing refers to all marketing activities directed at establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges in ... supplier, lateral, buyer, and internal partnerships" (p. 23) - other perspectives appear as important ones. Namely "buyer partnerships" that may include mass marketing relationships.

In a mass marketing context, Relationship Marketing takes on specific characteristics as Hougaard & Bjerre (2002) suggest:

"Relationship marketing on BtoC markets by nature is based on a context characterized by the one-to-many marketing model. Hence the theoretical approach to relationship marketing on this type of market tends to be focused on marketing tools as opposed to interaction orientation" (p. 43).

Companies get involved in Relationship Marketing strategies for two main reasons: customer retention which translates into higher economic advantages (Reichheld, 1994; Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000), and ability to generate competitive advantages (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a). However, for a Relationship Marketing strategy to make sense it is necessary that customers be interested in getting involved in relationships with the company. For that the relationship must display mutual trust and commitment (Morgan &

Hunt, 1994), mutual benefits (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a; Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000) and sharing of value (Reichheld, 1994, 1996).

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2000) divide relationship benefits into three types, depending on the object in question:

- *Personal level benefits* – Relationships between a single customer and an employee or service provider (applied to cases of services where great interactivity and intimacy with the customer is seen, such as with dentists, doctors, hairdressers, etc.);
- *Company level benefits* – Relationships between a single customer and the company as a whole (applied to large service companies with a high level of standardization and where there is little need for such close contact with customers, such as restaurants, travel agencies, etc.);
- *Brand level benefits* – Relationships that consumers establish with some brands.

The transactional perspective assumes the moment of buying as the moment of truth. In a relationship marketing perspective, instead of economic transactions there are customer-seller relationships based on emotions and cognition (Morgan & Hunt, 1994) that require commitment (Gundlach et al., 1995) and intimacy (Hougaard & Bjerre, 2002). For establishing customer intimacy, a necessary condition of a successful strategy of relationship marketing (Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000), it is necessary to understand the context in which the products and services are consumed in the course of the customers' daily lives. This requires a comprehensive view of consumer behavior (Fournier et al., 1998), in order to conceive specific marketing programs (Barnes, 2000).

Barnes (2000) states that the construct related to intimacy is closeness, with the distinction between them being not quite clear in the literature. The concept constitutes a good indicator of the solidness and duration of a relationship. According to a study by the author, closeness has a positive correlation with relationship satisfaction and strength. In

addition, relationships can be more or less close. Certain situations present a greater propensity for the establishment of closeness, generally when there is facility and frequency of face-to-face contacts, greater customer involvement and mutual interests among the partners (e.g., beauty services, barbers, doctors, etc.).

Service companies, given their characteristics, show greater facility in interacting with customers and thus develop customer intimacy. There is the need for direct contact between employees or service providers and customers. For large-scale consumer products, there may not be any natural contact mechanisms between the customer and the company. Thus, manufacturers should be concerned with setting up communication links to the customer which guarantee public access to mailing addresses, toll-free phone numbers, the means for making suggestion and complaints, e-mail address and the company website (Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000). Since face-to-face interactions are costly in the context of mass marketing, Parvatiyar and Sheth (2000) suggest that sellers use other means to establish bonds with customers, such as: symbolic relationships, endorsements, affinity groups, memberships and online communities.

Quality is difficult to measure because is a construct that involves a wide range of factors (Parasuraman et al., 1985). Grönroos (1994) considers customer perceived quality as a function of customer perceptions according two dimensions. First, the impact of the final result or the technical solution offered by the company, that is *what* the customer receives. Second, the impact of customer interactions with the company, that is *how* the moments-of-truth are perceived. The first dimension is referred to as the technical quality of the product or the solution offered whereas the second is the functional quality of the process of interaction. In the context of Relationship Marketing, the functional quality assumes particular importance due to the investment made in the interface with the customer as opposed to what happens with traditional marketing where the emphasis was placed on technical quality. Bearing in mind that increased standardization of the level of quality among similar products and services is being observed, the process of interaction presents itself as a possible source of differentiation for companies.

According to Bei & Chiao (2001), customer satisfaction is a function of perceived product service quality. Hennig-Thurau & Hansen (2000) consider customer satisfaction and service quality (customer perception of quality) similar constructs. Hennig-Thurau & Hansen, however, note that these are assumed to be distinct by the majority of authors, without consensus on their utilization. Some consider satisfaction to be the antecedent of quality and others the opposite. Satisfaction constitutes a core aspect of a relationship (Backaus & Doom, 2003) since a dissatisfied customer will not be a loyal one unless he/she has no other alternative (Buchanan & Gillies, 1990; Reichheld, 1994; Diller, 2000; Hennig-Thurau & Hansen, 2000; Bei & Chiao, 2001). There are some studies that confirm this relationship, presenting a significant correlation among the constructs Satisfaction and Loyalty. The same studies indicate that the relationship between quality perception and loyalty is mediated by customer satisfaction (Dabholkar et al., 2000, Caruana, 2002). However, nothing guarantees that satisfied customers will become loyal customers because the competition will modify their products and services and customers will tend to involve themselves in new experiences and to seek out alternatives (Reichheld, 1994).

Traditionally, satisfaction has been conceptualized as a static construct that does not correspond to the specificities of a relational context (Backaus & Doom, 2003). Indeed, satisfaction is usually defined as an attitude nurtured either in a post-buying judgment, or in a series of interactions between consumer and product (Fournier & Mick, 1999). According to this perspective, satisfaction measures a "state of mind" (Reichheld, 1994) which resembles the definition proposed by Hennig-Thurau & Hansen (2000):

> "Customer satisfaction is understood as the customer's emotional or empathic reaction to a perceived difference between performance appraisal and expectations" (p. 8).

In a longitudinal and phenomenological study that attempted to provide a conceptualization of satisfaction, Fournier & Mick (1999) suggested a break with the dominant paradigm. They concluded that:

1. consumer product satisfaction is a an active, dynamic process;

2. the satisfaction process often has a strong social dimension;

3. meaning and emotion are integral components of satisfaction;

4. the satisfaction process is context-dependent and contingent, encompassing multiple paradigms, models and modes;

5. product satisfaction is invariably intertwined with life satisfaction and the quality of life itself (p. 11).

Fournier & Mick (1999) identified different ways of satisfaction: awe, trust, helplessness, resignation, and love.

Diller (2000) posits customer satisfaction as a qualitative criterion of loyalty, and adds that generally the qualitative aspects are more important to the customer loyalty process than quantitative aspects. In order to get satisfaction, it is necessary that the customer's experience with the service correspond or exceed his/her expectations. Diller studies loyalty through a cross analysis of satisfaction and customer penetration (a quantitative measure of loyalty). According to this study, high customer penetration associated with a low satisfaction provides tenuous loyalty and well-founded loyalty when associated with a high satisfaction, low customer penetration associated with low satisfaction delivers no loyalty and potential loyalty when associated to a high satisfaction.

Biong et al. (1996) use the notion of relationship satisfaction which differs from customer satisfaction because it suggests the evaluation of satisfaction of both parts involved in the relationship: the company and the customer. Relationship satisfaction allows for estimating the likelihood of either part maintaining the relationship. Reichheld & Sasser (1990) propose customer loyalty as an indirect measure of that likelihood.

In Relationship Marketing, the customers are individually important and served as such through mass customization and personalization of products, services and communication

(Gordon, 1998; Peppers & Rogers, 1999). Prahalad and Ramaswamy (2001) distinguish personalization and customization in the follow way:

"Personalization… is about the customer becoming cocreator of the content of their experiences" (p. 14), and customization "assumes that the manufacturer will design a product to suit a customer's needs" (p. 13).

Customization is one of the most important variables in Relationship Marketing (Gordon, 1998), a source of competitive advantage for the company (Berry, 1995) and a determining factor in customer loyalty, mainly when quality is not the most differentiating element (Gilmore & Pine, 1997). Berry (1983, 1995) identifies five principal strategic elements in Relationship Marketing, where customer relationship customization is one of them. The nature of Relationship Marketing that focuses on the collaboration between supplier and customer, among other aspects, provides fertile ground for the development of strategies of personalization.

Customization is no longer an exclusive tool of small-sized companies with a small group of customers; instead, it has been extended to mass marketing. According to Bhattacharya & Bolton (2000), mass customization is one of the necessary conditions for the development of buyer-seller relationships. Although mass customization was nurtured in the services industry, it should be likely for products through product design and conception, branding and image, people and technology. Bhattacharya & Bolton add that "in manufacturing industries, mass customization entails the use of flexible processes, structures and management to produce varied and even individualized products at the low cost of standardized, mass production systems with short cycles times" (p. 329) (see also Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a).

3.2.2 Relational Market Behavior

Customers involve themselves in relationships with companies, brands or products because they want to reduce the range of choices, states the Fundamental Axiom of Relationship Marketing (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a). This consumer predisposition to reduce choice is referred to as Relational Market Behavior by Sheth & Parvatiyar. In opting for Relational Market Behavior, consumers seek out advantages, such as: greater efficiency in decision-making, fewer information-processing tasks, greater cognitive consistency in their decisions, and reduced risk associated with future choices. The motivations behind Relational Market Behavior are of a personal, sociological and institutional nature.

Personal motivations are grounded on some theories of consumer behavior, such as decision theories, consumer learning theories, information processing, and cognitive consistence theories. Altogether, these theories support the premise that consumers tend to reduce choice and engage in relationships with marketers, products, and brands (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a).

Reference group is defined here according to Park & Lessig (1977):
"Reference group is… an actual or imaginary individual or group conceived of having significant relevance upon an individual's evaluations, aspirations, or behavior" (p. 102).

Reference groups and in particular social groups which consumers belong to can help them to reduce the number of market alternatives, meaning that they will act in conformity with the types of consumption patterns accepted by these groups (Park & Lessig, 1977). An individual does not need to belong to or to be in physical contact with such groups to display behavior that is in conformity. Namely, familiar norms and values can have a great influence on patterns of consumption equated to the social groups to which people belong to. Additionally, word-of-mouth as well as reference groups for the consumer serve as guides to their behavior. With respect to word-of-mouth, the influence level of this type of communication depends on the credibility of the respective source and channel. Consumers

let themselves to be influenced by word-of-mouth because of their inherent desire to be socially accepted and the wish to reduce perceived risk that results in choice reduction behavior (Solomon et al., 2002).

In terms of institutional influences, Sheth & Parvatiyar (1995a) indicate four institutions able to influence consumer behavior: the government, religion, employment and marketing. Sociological and institutional aspects, however, have more influence in the action of choice reduction than personal aspects because consumers tend to yield more to the norms imposed by groups even when they come up against their own personal interests (Park & Lessig, 1977).

In conclusion, personal, sociological and institutional aspects cause consumers to encounter frequently limitations to their choice-making, as theories of consumer behavior would lead us to expect. Consumers do not fight against these limitations because they help them to reduce perceived risk, uncertainty and psychological tension while facilitating information processing. Moreover, limitations promise rewards or punishments, and favor the development of knowledge and trust that allow for the optimization of decision-making process. These limitations can fulfill social needs for self-esteem and personal effectiveness, can be associated with faith and fear, or can promote the aspirations to better lifestyle (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a).

Hennig-Thurau et al. (2000) present a model of customer relationship benefits and barriers (see fig. 3.1). The model takes off from the Fundamental Axiom of Relationship Marketing – "choice reduction" – proposed by Sheth & Parvatiyar (1995a), and considers the net benefits of a relationship as being the result of Relational Benefits (those which are positively correlated with the customer's decision to become involved in a relationship) discounting the Relational Barriers (aspects that are negatively correlated with the customer's decision to become involved in a relationship). The importance of benefits and barriers changes from customer to customer. The study presents four types of benefits:

social benefits, confidence benefits, special treatment benefits and identity-related benefits. The barriers are: independence, freedom of choice, variety-seeking and privacy.

Figure 3.1

Customer Relationship Benefits and Barriers
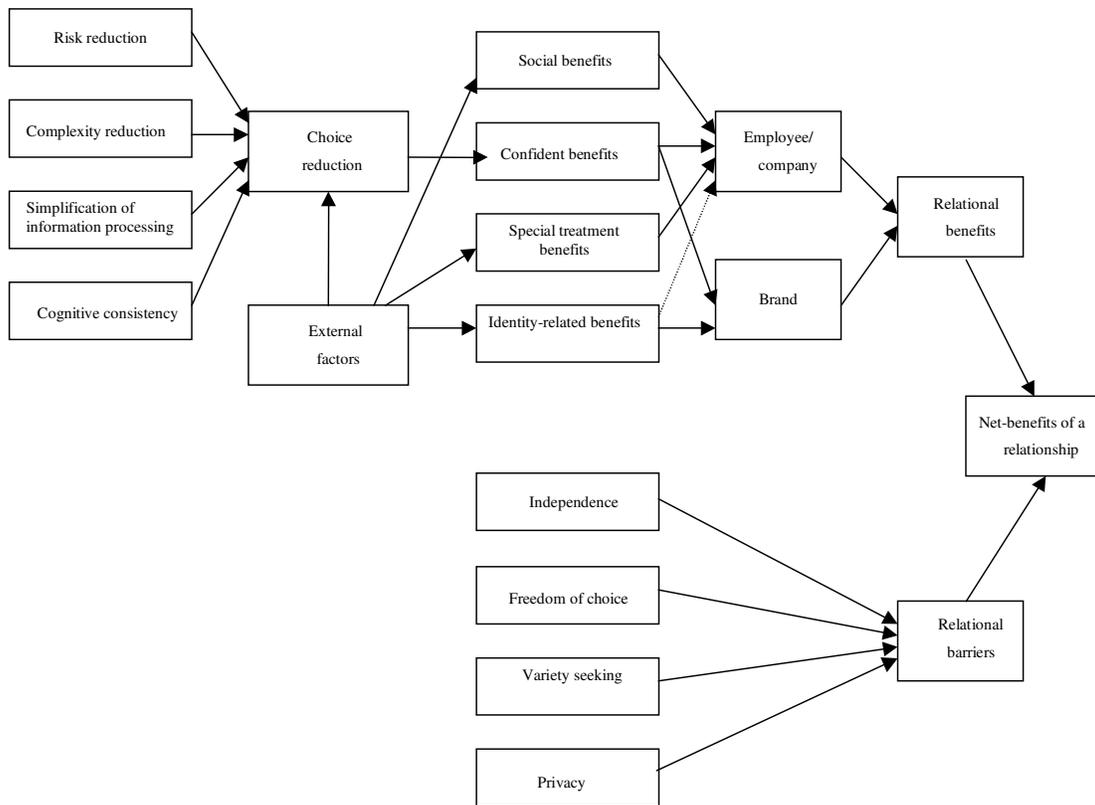
Source: Hennig-Thurau et al., 2000, p. 381.

With respect to relationships with a brand, the expected benefits can be confidence and

identity-related benefits. Hennig-Thurau et al. (2000) consider confidence benefits to be the most important but advise to the fact that they can be irrevocably destroyed by even the slightest error. This is a similar recommendation to that of J. Aaker et al. (2004) who iterate the risk involved in deep, trust-based relationships.

According to Fournier et al. (1998), consumers develop coping strategies that permit them to eliminate, minimize and control the less positive effects that the market may have on their lives. Because of this, companies must be especially concerned that their offerings take into account the emotional well-being of consumer since customer satisfaction with the product or service is intimately related to life satisfaction (Fournier & Mick, 1999). Seybold (2001) adds that it is not enough to evaluate consumer behaviors and preferences based on the contact that they establish with the company. It is necessary to enter their lives and understand them. For instance, their timestyles and the way they use the resource time in shopping (Cotte et al., 2004), or the role of creative consume as vehicle of self-expression and social communication (Burroughs & Mick, 2004), in order to find ways that help them save time, use the products and services more efficiently, and respond to any additional needs that were initially not contemplated as being part of the company's offer. In other words, to promote actions that might contribute positively to people's quality of life.

This requires a "broader intellectual peripheral vision" (Zaltman, 2000, p. 423) in the development of studies of consumer research. As basic marketing tools do not allow for such an approach, it is necessary to adopt theories of philosophy, communication, counseling, psychology and religion in order to be able to interpret people's lives (Fournier et al., 1998).

Bhattacharya & Bolton (2000) suggest a customer decision model for a customer involving him/herself in a relationship with an organization (see fig. 3.2). The model starts off in a cost-benefit perspective instead of a perspective of perceptions or processing. The model is based on the classic tool of maximizing utility, assuming the informal and

heuristic process of evaluating alternative such as a cost/benefit relationship (utility) and focusing on a multiplicity of behaviors. According to this model the customer seeks to maximize the Expected Subjective Value of his relational behavior that depends on the assessment he/she makes of the Long-run Future Value and the Trust that he/she has in the organization. For the authors, "building or maintaining an existing relationship is more likely when the future value of a particular relational market behavior is high" (p. 337).

Figure 3.2

Customer Decision Model to Keep, Build, or Withdraw a Relationship with an Organization
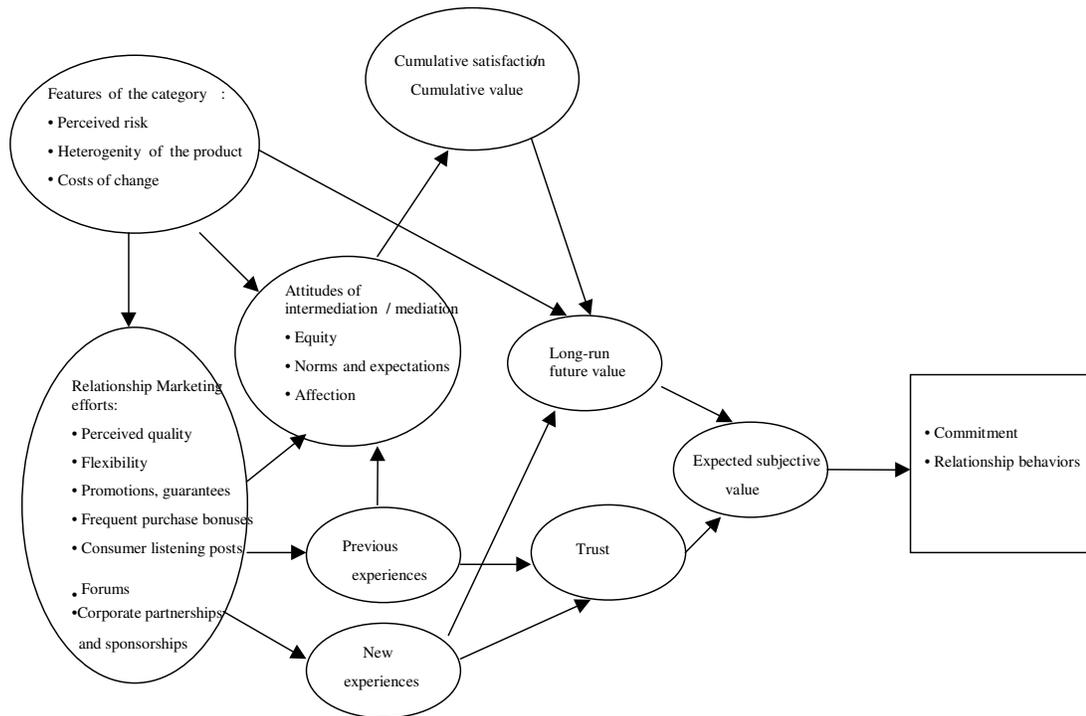
Source: Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000, p. 337.

The set of Long-run Future Value, Trust, and Expected Subjective Value constructs works as a mediator of the level of Commitment in the relationship and of the Relationship Behaviors. According to Bhattacharya & Bolton (2000), "both the customer's assessment of the long-run value of a relational behavior and the customer's trust in an organization are considered to be similar to belief, attitude, or cumulative perception" (p. 338). This set has a probabilistic character; inclusively Trust is defined as a probabilistic belief that works as the weight of the expected value. The relationship future value (i.e., Long-run Future Value) depends on the Cumulative Satisfaction. Cumulative Satisfaction is function of the assessment of the old experiences toward the norms, equity, expectations, and affect, actualized by the recent experiences (e.g., Backhaus & Van Doorn, 2003). This reflects the nature of process of relationships.

Similarly, in a study by Odekerken-Schröder & Ouwersloot (2003) on brand communities, it was concluded that affect precedes the formation of trust in the establishment of a brand relationship, and these constructs precede commitment and then brand loyalty.

It seems important to underscore the evolutionary character of this model, reflected in the concept of Cumulative Satisfaction which is according to the conceptualization of satisfaction developed by Fournier & Mick (1999), presented in Section 3.2.1. In this conceptualization it is assumed that "transaction-specific assessments of satisfaction are likely to be incomplete… if satisfaction is a pivotal facet of a cumulative and often nonlinear chronology of consumer-product interactions, restricting theory and measurement to the immediate post-purchase setting prematurely incorrectly deprioritizes the ownership horizon through which satisfaction necessarily evolves".

The model of Bhattacharya & Bolton (2000) is consistent with the model of Commitment-Trust of Relationship Marketing for industrial marketing developed by Morgan (2000). For both trust comes before commitment, from which it is reasonable to conclude that trust is a fundamental foundation of long-lasting relationships between

consumers and sellers (see also J. Aaker et al., 2004). It is not possible to conclude, however, that trust is a sufficient condition for committed relationships (Grönroos, 1994; Berry 1995). Trust implies the belief in the other party, an aspect present in the definition proposed by Moorman et al. (1993) – "trust is a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence" (p. 3) – and corroborated by Hennig-Thurau & Hansen (2000) – "trust exists if a customer believes a service provider to be reliable and to have a high degree of integrity" (p. 8). Thus, the appropriate use of personal customer information becomes relevant since it influences the degree of trust that people will place in the company.

Moorman et al. (1993) state that trust also implies a behavioral character that can only reasonably exist if the relationship is placed inside a context of uncertainty (see also Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a; Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000) and vulnerability of the partner when faced with being controlled by the other party. According to Sheppard & Sherman (1998), trust is not a singular construct, but instead can take any of four distinct shapes that vary with the nature and degree of interdependence in a relationship: shallow dependence, shallow interdependence, deep dependence and deep interdependence.

Perceived risk translates into the probability of loss by the rejection of an alternative, multiplied by a coefficient that reflects the importance of the loss. Perceived risk can also be broken down into other types of risk: financial risk, performance risk, physical risk, and risk to convenience (Peter & Targey, 1975, cit. in Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000; Srinivasan & Ratchford, 1991).

In an industrial marketing perspective, Heide & John (1992), consider norms essential for the establishment of relationships between firms. Since the parts in a relationship are interdependent the norms insure the control over the assets at risk. The authors define norms as:

"Norms are expectations about behavior that are at least partially shared by a group of decision makers" (p. 34).

According to a customer perspective, Maxwell (1999) defines social norms as "beliefs about generally approved behavior that most individuals share with the group even if they do not agree with them personally" (p. 1000). The author notes the common confusion that sometimes people makes between social norms and attitudes. While attitudes apply to individual psychological evaluations and beliefs, which may be influenced by the group, social norms apply to behaviors that conform to the rules of the group. Table 3.1 presents a classification of social norms of discrete consumer exchange.

Table 3.1

Classification of the Social Norms of Economic Exchange

	Decentralized norms	Hegemonic norms	Cooperative norms
Conditions	• High conflict of opposing self-interests • Diffused and varied sanctions • Strong deontological support	• Ambivalent conflict of opposing self-interests • Strong, clear sanctions • Little deontological support	• Low conflict of opposing self-interests • Less need for sanctions • Little deontological support
Examples	• Seller setting prices • Setting prices based on costs • Charging less to elderly	• Wall-Mart assuming right to set prices • Government setting prices	• Buyer and seller negotiating prices • Giving discount for long term commitment

Source: Maxwell, 1999, p. 1005.

According to Morgan & Hunt (1994), commitment is central to any relationship marketing initiative because it implies the development of efforts on the part of the partners of a relationship that is being maintained (Gundlach et al., 1995). This can be defined in the following way:

"Commitment is a customer's orientation towards a long-term business relationship, based on emotional bonds and a conviction that remaining in the relationship will yield higher net benefits then terminating it" (Hennig-Thurau & Hansen, 2000, p. 8).

From this definition, it seems important to highlight two aspects: emotional bonds and conviction. In the use of these terms is implicit the dual character of the concept, that is affective commitment and calculative or cognitive commitment (Hennig-Thurau & Hansen, 2000). It is worth of note that if no corresponding commitment is seen, the relationship can be undermined because it exposes the more committed partner to the risk of opportunism from the less committed partner (Gundlach et al., 1995).

It seems interesting to compare this approach with that of Diller (2000), who distinguishes between involvement and commitment. These two constructs represent, respectively, the second and third qualitative criteria for loyalty, with satisfaction being the first, as was seen in Section 2.2.1. Diller considers involvement the degree at which the customer is involved with the product. High-level involvement reveals a strong emotional relationship from the customer to the seller. In this case, loyalty is high and is called "hot loyalty" (or enthusiasm), favoring a Relationship Marketing strategy and representing greater sales potential. Low involvement may mean "cold loyalty" (or indifference), if the rate of customer penetration is high, or "absence of loyalty" when the rate is low. Through certain activities, such as shoppers' clubs or other entertainment activities or memberships, it is possible to encourage customer involvement.

With respect to commitment, Diller (2000) considers three different types: no commitment, bought commitment and voluntary commitment. Bought commitment is

induced by sellers through incentives, such as discounts, bonuses and other such offers. Establishing a cross-analysis between the qualitative criterion of loyalty and the quantitative criterion of customer penetration, the author concludes that when a high level of customer penetration is seen, three situations may occur: involuntary loyalty if commitment does not exist (for instance, when there are no alternatives accessible to the customer), bought loyalty if bought commitment is noted (in this case, one can not expect for relationship stability and other benefits), and voluntary loyalty (or genuine loyalty) when voluntary commitment is seen which guarantees relationship stability even when the supplier makes some mistake.

Jackson (1985) states that a customer/seller relationship can assume different forms based on the degree of closeness, commitment and time horizon, along a continuum of consumer behavior (see also Barnes, 1994, 2000) called Spectrum of Behavior. The Spectrum of Behavior presents two extreme opposed positions: the Always-a-share Model and the Lost-for-good Model. The Always-a-share Model concerns to transactional behavior. In this situation, the customer has various suppliers for the same product and thus the costs of changing a supplier are low and the ties that the customer establishes with the company are normally short-term. The extreme Lost-for-good Model deals with relational behavior. In this situation is assumed that at a certain time the customer will become involved with the supplier for a long period of time, switching costs are high and choosing a supplier involves the consideration of its capacity to satisfy the future needs of the customer, and not just the short-term ones.

In practice, the differences between Transactional Marketing and Relationship Marketing are not always clear. In reality, customers will gravitate toward the behavioral models closer to the middle of the spectrum, with the position of any given customer in the spectrum dependent in part on the characteristics of the product category, the usage pattern, and the actions of both the seller and the customer (Jackson, 1985).

3.2.3 Loyalty versus Relationship Strength

Brand Loyalty has a relational nature (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973). Sheth & Parvatiyar (1995a) claim that Brand Loyalty and brand equity are basic measures of relationships that consumers establish with products and symbols. According to Fournier & Yao (1996), one of the most consensual definitions of Brand Loyalty is offered by Jacoby & Chestnut (1978):

"Brand loyalty is a biased behavioral response expressed over time by some decision-making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands" (p. 80).

This definition, however, presents some limitations. It reduces the concept to a utilitarian decision making process (Fournier, 1998). By contrast, a relational approach allows for the broadest understanding of the phenomenon that occurs between the customer and the brand. A relationship does not necessarily imply Loyalty, but Loyalty implies the establishment of a relationship – "relational condition of brand loyalty" (Fournier & Yao, 1996, p. 3; see also Hennig-Thurau et al., 2000).

Loyalty can be expressed in diverse behaviors, from the classic which implies exclusivity and fidelity, to other more tenuous forms, such as casual loyalty and loyalty without fidelity (Fournier & Yao, 1996). According to the authors the traditional definitions of Loyalty have suffered from cultural bias that has reduced the concept to the "monogamous marital relationship" (p. 6). However, this does not express the reality of the universe of consumer behavior. The validity of a definition of Loyalty passes through its corresponding level of real consumer experience and thus the concept must accompany its own evolution in the experiences of consumption. Loyalty is a phenomenon of a dynamic, evolutionary and contextual nature founded on meanings that are attributed to the brand by the consumer and which are significant in his/her daily life. The construct, however, has been the target of empirical studies for the most part of a statistical nature (Fournier &

Yao), and most of the definitions of Loyalty have an operational nature, focusing on the outcome rather on the causes of the behavior (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973).

From the customer's point of view, Loyalty to a brand is based on three dimensions:

- *Cognitive*

Expresses the customer's belief that the chosen brand is superior to that of other brands that compete in the same product category;

- *Affective*

Expresses the customer's attitude toward the brand;

- *Connotative*

Expresses the customer's intent to buy the brand again

(Jacoby & Kyner, 1973; Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Oliver, 1999).

According to Diller (2000), Loyalty is the result of a process called customer bonding that "may be seen as a process which influences customers" (p. 30). In this sense, the constructs of customer bonding and customer loyalty are understood according three perspectives:

- *Suppliers* - customer bonding refers to a "bundle of activities which achieve a closer customer relationship";
- *Supplier-customer relationship* - customer loyalty is defined as "consecutive transactions…between supplier and customer within a certain time period, good atmosphere in the relationship";
- *Customer* - customer loyalty is related with a "positive attitude towards supplier combined with a willingness to perform further transactions" (p. 31).

Baloglu (2002) presents a typology for Loyalty that is based on two vectors: attitude and behavior (see fig 3.3.). Thus, the customer is faithful to the brand if there exists a strong affective commitment to the brand (attitude) and if he/she buys it frequently

(behavior). One of the possible situations is called Latent Loyalty which implies greater commitment to the brand and fewer purchases, and which can be justified by a higher price or for the difficulty of access to the good/service. Truth Loyalty is based on an attitude of greater commitment to the brand as shown in the high number of repeat purchases. Both two other types of loyalty imply low level of bonding to the brand, but while the frequency of purchase is high for Suspicious Loyalty, in the case of Low Loyalty is low. The author indicated as the probable causes of Suspicious Loyalty: financial incentives, convenience, the lack of alternatives, and issues of a personal nature.

Figure 3.3

Dimensions of Customer Loyalty

Attitudes

	Low	High
High	Suspicious loyalty	Thruth loyalty
Low	Low loyalty	Latent loyalty

Behaviors

Source: Baloglu, 2002, p.48.

Customer retention emerges generally in the Relationship Marketing literature as a determining factor in the success of relationship strategies (Buchanan & Gillies, 1990; Sheth, 1996, Payne et al., 1998; Hennig-Thurau & Hansen, 2000). However, frequent purchases are neither a guarantee of loyalty nor the existence of a relationship (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973). A necessary requisite of a true relationship is the recognition of one's existence on the part of the consumer (Czepiel, 1990; Berry, 1995). In an interpersonal relationships perspective, so that the relationship can grow both parties must self disclose (Altman & Taylor, 1973). Thus, a series of frequent interactions over a considerable period of time is not a sufficient condition for establishing a relationship with a customer (Barnes, 2000). Given that retention can be the result of a complex supplier changing process or the absence of alternatives (Diller 2000), it can be said that retention is located in a stadium under that of loyalty, without implying customer satisfaction.

Customer retention is generally defined as "repeated patronage of a marketer or supplier by a customer" (Hennig-Thurau & Hansen, 2000, p. 6). Although some authors approach retention as a synonym of Loyalty or repeated buying behavior, retention has a pure behavioral nature whereas loyalty is based on behavioral and attitudinal aspects (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973; Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Oliver, 1999; Baloglu, 2002; Caruana, 2002). In retention, the active role falls to the seller. By contrast, Loyalty focuses mainly on the interpersonal aspects of consumer behavior. In respect to repeated buying behavior, the two previous constructs differ from this one because they have an intentional nature, or in other words, there exists an underlying reason for the customer's repeated purchases.

A Relationship Marketing strategy must be thought out bearing in mind that customers have different needs for closeness with the supplier (Jackson, 1985; Barnes, 2000), there are customers that do not wish to establish bonds of continuity with suppliers (Fournier, 1998; Diller, 2000), not all customers want to be loyal to a brand (Fournier & Yao 1996; Fournier, 1998; Woratschek & Horbel, 2003; J. Aaker et al., 2004), variety seeking is a inherent rule of consumer choice (Drolet, 2002), customer perceived value is individual and subjective (Zeithaml et al., 1996), and for these reasons, customer relational needs must be

satisfied by assuming different relational segments (D. A. Aaker, 1996; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2000).

Considering that close relationships generally imply face-to-face contact, Consumer-Brand Relationships can represent a good initiative characterized as having little or no personal contact, with low levels of involvement and emotion, as an alternative to contacts with employees (Barnes, 2000; Veloutsou, 2007). Thus, Internet emerges as an excellent vehicle of two-way communication which can facilitate the development of relationships of closeness between consumers and brands.

Although Loyalty is an important relational concept, traditional research in the area has neglected its principal nuances, such as "the evolutionary character of the phenomenon itself" (Fournier & Yao, 1996, p. 4), and in practice the concept ends up being reduced to "repeated patronage". The traditional statistical approach of Loyalty, devoid of its relational character, reduces the concept to a decision-making process of a cognitive and utilitarian nature, and thus Loyalty is no more than inertia (Fournier, 1998). Moreover, the approach of Loyalty as a high level commitment long-term partnership, excludes other types of relationships of value that the consumer can establish with the brand.

Brand Loyalty is a complex multidimensional phenomenon (Jacoby & Kyner, 1973), difficult to measure because Loyalty value is a function of quantitative and qualitative aspects and, therefore, it is not easy to reward (Diller, 2000). Aware of the difficulty in explaining the qualitative aspects of Brand Relationships, Fournier (1998) offers the notion of Brand Relationship Quality as a tool for analyzing the type of relationships that consumers establish with brands, in an alternative to the notion of Loyalty. Six facets comprise the concept of Brand Relationship Quality: Love and Passion, Self-connection, Interdependence, Commitment, Intimacy, and Brand Partner Quality (see Section 3.3.3). Fournier defines Self-connection as the "degree to which the brands delivers on important identity concerns, tasks, or themes, thereby expressing a significant aspect of self" (p. 364). Deeper ties occur when brands touch some personal life themes.

Brand Relationship Quality, although allowing for greater amplitude in the analysis of Consumer-Brand Relationships, has the same objective as Loyalty: to tap the strength of the bond created between the consumer and the brand over time. The tool was developed by an ethnographic study based on consumers' life stories with the purpose of explaining the mechanism for unlocking intense relationships between brands and people that evolve over time. The model simplifies the process of comparing relationships that the consumer establishes with his portfolio of brands, enabling the analysis of the contextual environment in which they occur (Fournier, 1998).

The construct Relationship Strength is the most studied feature in the domain of inter-personal relationships (Barnes, 2000). Its significance for the study of Consumer-Brand Relationships is related to the fact that Relationship Strength is a wide notion that includes Brand Loyalty as well as other aspects of an affective and cognitive nature. The concept expresses in a more efficient way the realities of consumption characterized by product proliferation and multi-brand usage (J. Aaker et al., 2004). Moreover, Relationship Strength is determinant in relationship stability since it influences the longevity of the ties the customer establishes with a brand and thus constitutes one of the dimensions of the Brand Relationships value (Storbacka, 2000).

Barnes (2000) states that Relationship Strength can be evaluated in terms of customer business volume, the probability that the company will continue to be the main supplier in two years and the probability that the customer will make a recommendation to others. This approach provides a quantitative vision of the construct.

J. Aaker et al. (2004) in a study based on the Brand Relationship Quality model (Fournier, 1998) mentioned above, present a qualitative approach to Relationship Strength, suggesting its evaluation in terms of four variables (see Conceptual Model for Consumer-Brand Relationships, fig. 3.5, Section 3.3.3): Commitment, Intimacy, Satisfaction and Self-connection. According to J. Aaker et al., these four variables take on particular importance in the stability and duration of the relationship. This partially corroborates the research

developed by Barnes (2000) about the construct of closeness (similar to the notion of Intimacy). Indeed, results indicated a positive correlation between closeness and satisfaction, Relationship Strength, emotional tone (i.e., "the greater the frequency of experiencing positive, as compared with negative, emotions in the relationship, the closer the relationship will become", p. 97) and the longevity of the relationship.

In a middle position, Storbacka et al. (1994) consider Relationship Strength as a function of certain intrinsic factors in the relationship: the history of the relationship, volume and importance relative to the relationship (for both parties), customer commitment, customer satisfaction, developed bonds throughout the life of the relationship, and the ability of the supplier to handle "critical episodes". Storbacka (2000) points to "critical episodes" as those which are determinant in the continuation or interruption of a relationship. A successful critical episode strengthens the relationship, whereas a poorly performed one can lead to the breaking off of the relationship. This approach shows similarities with the study of J. Aaker et al (2004) in terms of the importance of Commitment, Satisfaction and Intimacy (in this case, referred to as bonds created throughout the life of the relationship) and Self-connection (partially related to the aspect of relative importance of the relationship for both parties) in Relationship Strength.

It is important to note that there may also be intrinsic factors that justify the longevity of the relationship such as market structure (competition, concentration) and likable geographical limitations for the customer (Storbacka et al., 1994).

3.3 The Symbolic Meaning of Consumption

3.3.1 Brand as a partner in a dyadic relationship

The model for brand building developed by D. A. Aaker (1996) (see fig. 2.3) contemplates the perspective of Brand as a Person where Consumer-Brand Relationship and Brand Personality are the two dimensions of Brand Identity. Furthermore, the consumer-brand relationship is both an antecedent and a consequence of this identity. That is, the consumer-brand relationship represents a source of value for the brand and, thus, one of the essential elements of its strategy (Blackston, 1993, 1995, 2000). This value is founded on the meaning that the relationships with brands have and bring to the lives of consumers (Fournier, 1998).

For Peirce, all knowledge and meaning is derived, with its basis in experience (Mick, 1986). Accordingly, it is a person's experiences with a brand that determine the meaning(s) that consumers will attribute to their familiar brands (Heilbrunn, 1996). Grönroos (2001) adds that the sum of experiences that the consumer establishes with a brand forms the "brand relationship". A "brand relationship" develops in line with a set of consumer-brand contacts, whether through the product, service, employees, word-of-mouth, other communication tools and marketing elements of the brand.

The study of Brand Relationships has emerged as an interesting topic in recent years. The research of Fournier (1998) appears as an innovative example since it imported the interpersonal relationship metaphor to the universe of the Consumer-Brand Relationships (Keller, 2003). According to Aggarwal (2004) "Once, products and brands are associated with human qualities people may interact with them in ways that parallel social relationships, and their interactions are guided by the norms that govern these relationships" (p. 88). Thus, it makes sense to view the study of Consumer-Brand Relationships, named by Gummesson (2003) as Parasocial Relationships, under the umbrella of the theories of social relationships.

The evolution which Social Psychology itself has undergone in recent years also supports this thesis. Initially, relationships were studied in a particularized way considering the type of interaction, the specificity of the situation and the social domain involved, and

placing the emphasis on personality, desires and individual objectives. This resulted in a set of distinct and independent theories subordinate to the social phenomenon in question (Fiske, 1992). It was also believed that people judged social partners (i.e., people) in a different way than non-social ones (i.e., products) (Aggarwal, 2004). By contrast, the modern paradigms suggest a unified social theory based on generalized cognitive and affective processes, taking into account that "people think of each other in much the same way they think about inanimate objects and animals" (Fiske, p. 689).

Some authors consider brand as a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer (J. Aaker & Fournier, 1995; Fournier, 1995b; D. G. Aaker, 1996; Fournier & Yao, 1996; Sweeney & Chew, 2000, 2002; Aggarwal, 2004; Veloutsou, 2007), imbued with a personality which is the outcome of the inference process the consumer develops through the observation of the brand's behaviours (Allen & Olson, 1995; Fournier, 1995a, 1998; J. Aaker et al., 2004; Johar et al. , 2005) and brand's attitudes (Blackston, 1993) According to this perspective, there is a relationship between Brand Personality and the type of relationship the customer establishes with the brand. On one hand, Brand Personality is partially determined by the experiences the consumers develop with that brand. On the other hand, it acts as an information base which provides guidance to consumers on the establishment of their relationships with brands.

Duncan & Moriarty (1998) consider communication the central aspect of a relationship. That is, a relationship is impossible without communication. In the world of consumption communication is fundamental to the "meaning-constructing process" which is based on the sharing of signs and symbols. Elements such as trust and commitment, essential to a relationship building, are fundamentally outcomes of a communication process. Since communication has an integrator role, it should be considered as a function of all company's activities and an element able to shorten the distance between consumers and brands.

Blackston (1993) developed a communicational model based on Consumer-Brand Relationships in which consumer and brand are considered two interconnected parts of a single system, similar to the interpersonal relationships. According to this model the relationship concept is defined as "the interaction between consumers' attitudes toward the brand and the brand's "attitudes" toward the consumer" (p. 113). The author states that successful Consumer-Brand Relationships rely on the consumer perceptions of the brand's attitudes and on brand's ability on creating meaning to the consumer.

The Brand Relationships Model (Blackston, 1993, 1995, 2000) states that a brand can be viewed as having two dimensions: the objective brand and the subjective brand. The former deals with the set of associations, images and personality characteristics shared by the majority of customers. The latter refers to customer perception of brand's attitude as it pertains to him/herself. The author suggests that managers should use the utmost care with brand-customer relationships. Brand-customer relationships are an important source of value for brands and constitute an area more easily changed or adjusted than the elements that make up the objective brand.

Fournier (1998) considers that Consumer-Brand Relationships follow four conditions of inter-personal relationships. These are:
1. Reciprocity and interdependence between the relationship partners;
2. Intentionality of the relationship and meaning support to people's lives, which can be of a functional or utilitarian nature, or socio-emotional or psychological nature;
3. Providing a multiplicity of benefits through different forms of relationships, across a range of different dimensions;
4. Process and temporality nature of the relationships: relationships evolve and change over the interactions between the partners and as a reaction to the context.

In the same study, Fournier (1998) identified seven dimensions as emergent categories of Consumer-Brand Relationships:

- Voluntary (deliberately chosen) versus imposed;

- Positive versus negative;

- Intense versus superficial (casual);

- Enduring (long-term) versus short-term;

- Public versus private;

- Formal (role, or task, related) versus informal (personal);

- Symmetric versus asymmetric (p. 361).

From a cross-analysis of these dimensions, fifteen different consumer-brand relationship types emerged: arranged marriages, casual friends/buddies, marriages of convenience, committed partnerships, best friendships, compartmentalized friendships, kinships, rebounds/avoidance-driven relationships, childhood friendships, courtships, dependencies, flings, enmities, secret affairs, enslavements (Fournier, 1998).

Also following the logic of interpersonal relationships, Degon (2000) suggests some types of Consumer-Brand Relationships:

Assistance Relationships – brand seeks to help customer;

Pedagogical Relationships – brand adjusts its behavior to respond to customer needs and customer rewards brand efforts through loyalty behavior, consequently consumer-brand relationship evolve;

Authority Relationships – brand imposes its personality or transfers its authority to the relationship with the customer.

The concept of "brand attachment" represents a specific kind of consumer-brand relationship. To be attached to a brand means the consumer buys the same brand in a given product category almost exclusively (McQuenn et al., 1993). Familiar brands are purchased by the consumers to satisfy different goals, necessities, and expectations. The concept of brand attachment is analyzed according to a dictomy of meaning: functional attachment and

existential attachment. This dictomy serves as a basis to classify the several categories of meanings which consumers assign to brands (Heilbrunn, 1996):

- Brands with functional significance;
- Brands related to deepening experiences;
- Brands as extension of the self
- Brands that embody cultural and personal values;
- Brands effectively related to a close person or a personal environment;
- Brands that act as an extension of memory;
- Brands associated with a social exchange and/or status.

Fournier (1998) suggests analyzing the Consumer-Brand Relationships under the logic of goal compatibility, rather the congruence between discrete attributes of products and image of personality traits. This approach is contrary to the classic theory of consumer behavior that has focused on fragmented concepts of self, such as real self, ideal self, self image, etc. (see Chapter 4), on the pre-determined product categories, and on some mechanisms of relational association, for example, the congruence between brand image and self-image. In this sense, Fournier considers the construct Self-connection as one variable of Brand Relationship Quality (see Section 3.2.3).

Baumgartner (2002) states that several studies based on consumers' narratives have shown with rare exceptions that people use consumption for self-creation. Baumgartner adds that "strong self-brand connections are associated with better quality stories involving the brand, that brand narratives that have a happy ending enhance self-brand relationships, and that brands that are linked to attainment of goals… result in somewhat greater identification with the brand" (p. 289). Thus, the experiences with brands influence the development of the individual identity.

3.3.2 Models for social relationships

Aggarwal (2004) claims that the norms of interpersonal relationships give guidance to the assessments that consumer will make of brands. Thus, respecting or violating these norms will influence their attitudes toward the brands. For purposes of the study, Aggarwal adopted the classification of social relationships developed by Clark & Mills (1993), along with the respective associated behavioral norms: exchange relationships and communal relationships (see table 3.2). This classification is based on the fact that "distinct rules govern the giving and receiving of benefits in different types of relationships" (Clark et al., 1987, p. 94).

In exchange relationships, the benefit that is granted always expects a corresponding benefit in return, or is the response to a benefit previously received. This is the current situation of relationships among strangers and commercial transactions based on economic factors. In communal relationships people feel responsible for the well-being of others and obliged (or wish) to offer benefits when others show need, or simply, to demonstrate concern and care them. In this situation, a comparable return of benefit is not expected but rather that the other also display concern for our well-being and respond in kind to our needs. This is the typical situation underlying relationships of friendship with relatives and romantic interests based on social factors (Clark et al., 1987).

Although "a measure of communal relationship strength is highly correlated with a rating of the subjective closeness of the relationship with the other person" (Clark & Mills, 1993, p. 686), the distinction between communal and exchange is not the same as the distinction between close and casual. Some communal relationships do not become close relationships and, moreover, there are some factors such as the degree of acquaintance or shared experience which imply whether a person feels close with other person. In the same manner, an exchange relationship does not need to be a casual relationship since it can last over time and become very important for the parties involved.

Table 3.2

Norms of Exchange and Communal Relationships

Exchange Relationship Norms	*Communal Relationship Norms*
Accepting help with money is preferred to no payment	Accepting help with no monetary payment is preferred
Desirable to give comparable benefits in return for benefits received	Less desirable to give comparable benefits in return for benefits received
Prompt repayment for specific benefits received is expected	Prompt repayment for specific benefits received is not expected
More likely to ask for repayments for benefits rendered	Less likely to ask for repayments for benefits rendered
More likely to keep track of inputs and outcomes in a joint task	Less likely to keep track of individuals inputs and outcomes in a joint task
Divide rewards according to each person's inputs and contributions	Divide rewards according to each person's needs and requirements
Helping others is less likely	Helping others is more likely
Requesting help from others is less likely	Requesting help from others is more likely
Keeping track of others' needs is less likely	Keeping track of others' needs is more likely
Less responsive to others' emotional states	More responsive to others' emotional states

Source: Aggarwal, 2004, p. 89.

Communal relationship strength can be measured in terms of the will to take on some costs for the benefit the other, without expecting equal reward. The precedence that the necessities of a partner take toward the necessities of the other partners of other relationships of that person can be also a form of assessing communal relationship strength. The concept can be further analyzed in terms of "how much distress a person would feel if he or she were unable to meet a communal partner's needs or how much guilt would be felt if he or she neglected the communal partner's needs" (Mills et al., 2004, p. 214).

The study of Aggarwal (2004) showed that consumers are more sensitive to the violation or the upholding of a communal norm if they are involved in a relationship of that kind. In the same way, consumers are more open to the norms of exchange relationships if they are involved in a relationship of that kind. Aggarwal, however, cautions that "the social relationship framework, although insightful, is not exactly paralleled in the brand context… since a consumer-brand context almost always involves a price tag for the products/services, it has an inherently strong element of exchange… it is likely that the commercial context creates its own norms of behavior that lay on top of the social relationships norms that ultimately determine consumer' attitudes and behavior" (p. 99). Aggarwal adds that certain typical aspects of commercial context, for instance "the customer is king", may constrain the relationship and in this case may make it asymmetric.

The classification proposed by Jackson (1985) in the scope of Industrial Marketing (see Section 3.2.3) resembles this dichotomy of relationship. A relationship can take on different forms along the behavior spectrum which varies between the two extreme points of Always-a-share (pure transactions) and Lost-for-good (Relationship Marketing), in the degree of closeness, commitment and duration in time.

In a more detailed approach to the social phenomenon, Fiske (1990) proposes four elementary psychological models that, when combined among themselves, encompass human relationships in a general way: communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching and market pricing. Communal sharing relationships are based on any limited group of similar people who share something substantial, such as a global identity, beliefs, faith, etc., and who are not differentiated in terms of individual identities. In this type of relationship, "people treat all members of a category as equivalent" (p. 689). The authority ranking model takes off from the principle of asymmetry and social hierarchy. In this case, "people attend to their positions in a linear ordering" (p. 689). In the equality matching model, relationships focus on benefit, justice and compensations reciprocity. Finally, in marketing pricing model "people orient to ratio values" (p. 689). The author presents a

detailed characterization of these models along the different domains. Table 3.3 shows some of those aspects.

Fiske (1992) believes that these four structures represent a single universal base that promises to be an important part of the foundations of a unified theory of social relationships, whether among individuals, companies or nations (Sheppard & Sherman, 1998). In any culture people use only four models to generate the majority of their social interactions, assessments and affection. However, each culture has its own specific way of implementing the model. Aggarwal (2004) extends this idea to the universe of Consumer-Brand Relationships since cognitive and affective processes that involve social relationships are similar to those involving person-object and person-animal (Fiske).

In a particular approach to the interpersonal relationships field, Fletcher et al. (1999) developed two factorial models for explaining intimate (romantic) relationships: the Partner and Relationship Ideals. The Partner Ideals Model is composed of three basic factors, which are: Warmth-Trustworthiness, Vitality-Attractiveness, and Status-Resources. The Relationship Ideals Model can be explained by two basic factors, which are: Intimacy-Loyalty, and Passion. The ideal partner of Warmth-Trustworthiness is related with ideal relationships of Intimacy-Loyalty and can be characterized by adjectives such as: supportive, sensitive, trustworthy, honest, and affectionate. The ideal partner of Vitality-Attractiveness possesses attractiveness and health, and is related to characteristics that reflect energy, adventurousness, and general vigor. The ideal partner of Status-Resources possesses aspects such as age, job, and financial resources. The ideal relationship of Intimacy-Loyalty can be characterized with adjectives such as: caring, respectful, honest, trusting, and support. The ideal relationship of Passion can be defined through adjectives such as: exciting, fun, and independent (see Appendix B).

A third Confirmatory Factorial Analysis (CFA) suggested that a higher-order factorial model better explains intimate relationships (see fig. 3.4). This model is composed of two

Table 3.3

Manifestations and Features of Four Elementary Relational Models

Domains	Communal sharing	Authority ranking	Equality matching	Market pricing
Reciprocal exchange	People give what they can and freely take what they need from pooled resources. What you get does not depend on what you contribute, only on belonging to the group.	Superiors appropriate or preempt what they wish, or receive tribute from inferiors. Conversely, superiors have pastoral responsibility to provide for inferiors who are in need and protect them.	Balanced, in-kind reciprocity. Give and get back the same thing in return, with appropriate delay.	Pay (or exchange) for commodities in proportion to what is received, as a function of market prices or utilities.
Distribution (distributive justice)	Corporate use of resources regarded as a commons, without regard for how much any one person uses; everything belongs to all together. Individual shares and property are not marked.	The higher a person's rank, the more he or she gets, and the more choice he or she has. Subordinates receive less and get inferior items, often what is left over.	To each the same. Everyone gets identical shares (regardless of need, desire, or usefulness).	"To each in due proportion". Each person is allotted a quota proportionate with some standard (e.g., stock, royalties, rationing based on percentage of previous consumption, pro-rated strike benefits or unemployment compensation).
Contribution	Everyone gives what they have, without keeping track of what individuals contribute. "What's mine is yours."	*Noblesse oblige*: superiors give beneficently, demonstrating their nobility and largesse. Subordinate recipients of gifts are honored and beholden.	Each contributor matches each other's donations equally.	People assessed according to a fixed ratio of percentage (e.g., tithing, sales, or real estate taxes).
Meaning of things	Heirlooms, keepsakes, sacred relics that are metonymic links to people with whom a person identifies.	Prestige items and emblems of rank. Conspicuous consumption to display superiority. Conversely,	Tokens of equal, independent status, one for each. For example, a bicycle, a car, a weapon, a trophy, a set of	Commodities produced or purchased to sell for profit; productive capital and inventory.

		sumptuary laws that forbid inferiors to own these items.	tools, or a house when each peer must have one to be coequal with the others.	Products developed and presented in terms of marketing considerations. Also private property valued because of its cost.
Social influence	Conformity: desire to be similar to others, to agree, maintain unanimity, and not stand out as different. Mutual modeling and imitation.	Obedience to authority or deference to prestigious leaders. Subordinates display loyalty and strive to please superiors.	Compliance to return a favor ("log rolling"), taking turns deciding, or going along to compensate evenly or keep things balanced.	Cost and benefits incentive – contacts specifying contingent payments, bonuses, and penalties. Bargaining over terms of exchange. Market manipulation. Offering a "special deal" or a bargain: apparent scarcity and time limitations may move people to act.
Social identity and the relational self	Membership in a natural kind. Self defined in terms of ancestry, race, ethnicity, common origins, and common fate. Identity derived from closest and most enduring personal relationships.	Self as revered leader or loyal follower, identity defined in terms of superior rank and prerogative, or inferiority and servitude.	Self as separate but co-equal peer, on a par with fellows. Identity dependent on staying event, keeping up with reference group.	Self defined in terms of occupation or economic role: how one earns a living. Identity a product of entrepreneurial success or failure.
Motivation	Intimacy motivation.	Power motivation.	Desire for equality; apparently unstudied	Achievement motivation.
Moral judgment and ideology	Caring, kindness, altruism, selfleness generosity. Protecting intimate personal relationships. *Traditional legitimation* in terms of inherent, essential nature of karma of group.	What supreme being commands is right. Obedience to will of superiors. Heteronomy, charismatic legitimation.	Fairness as strict equality, equal treatment, and balanced reciprocity.	Abstract, universal, rational principles based on utilitarian criterion of the greatest good for the greatest number (since this calculus requires a ratio metric for assessing all costs and benefits). *Rational-legal legitimation.*

Source: Adapted from Fiske, 1992.

higher-factors – Warmth-Loyalty and Vitality-Status-Passion – and five lower-factors (the three Partner Ideals and two Relationship Ideals) which loaded on the two higher-factors. According to this study, the partner ideal of Warmth-Trustworthiness was strongly and positively correlated with the relationship ideal of Intimacy-Loyalty, the partner ideal of Vitality-Attractiveness was strongly and positively correlated with the relationship ideal of Passion, and the partner ideal of Status-Resources was weakly to moderately correlated with the relationship ideals of Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion.

Figure 3.4

Higher-Order Model For Intimate Relationships
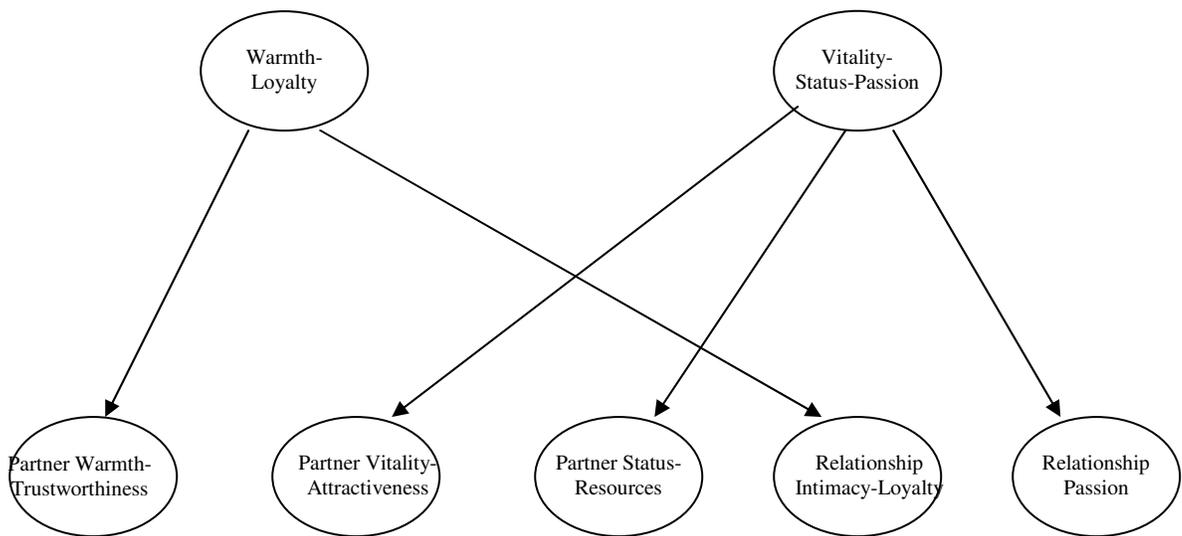
Source: Fletcher et al., 1999, p. 80.

According to Fletcher & Simpson (2000), ideals have three important functions of evaluation, explanation, and regulation. Besides the characteristics of individuals and interactions, the mental images of ideal partners and relationships are determinant in forming judgments on the relationships. In fact, "people do not enter into close relationships as cognitive tabula rasa. Rather, they come into such liaisons replete with knowledge structures concerned with close relationships including attitudes, expectations, causal attributions, and beliefs" (Fletcher & Kininmonth, 1992, p. 371). Murray et al. (1996) suggest that idealization provides self-fulfilling and is a potential source of high relationship quality. In fact, Fletcher et al. (2000) state that, on one hand, higher ideal-perception consistency is associated with perceptions of higher quality of relationships and partners, and, on the other hand, higher levels of ideal-perception consistency predicts lower rates of relationship dissolution but this relationship is mediated through perceptions of relationship quality. The similarity of these theoretical propositions and the model for Consumer-Brand Relationships proposed by J. Aaker et al. (2004) in the next section (see fig. 3.5) is noteworthy.

Fletcher et al. (1999) note that results may not be necessarily generalized to other relationship domains and social contexts, and this issue may represent a future direction of research. Nevertheless, Fletcher et al. (2004) have reframed the scales in order to use them in short-term relationships and long-term relationships, concluding they work well, and correlate moderately, within dimensions and across relationship contexts. It is interesting to note that current perceptions influence ideal standards over time and not the contrary (Fletcher et al., 2000), which may result in different ideals for a short-term relationship and a long-term relationship.

In a cross-cultural study involving informal rules of 22 different social relationships, ranging from highly intimate to task-focused relationships (such as friendship, hierarchical and peer work relationship, neighbors, dating and cohabiting, kin and in-laws, and also conflict relations with a dislike individual), Argyle et al. (1986) found cross-cultural differences on these rules. The higher differences appeared on rules relating to intimacy.

Also, important differences were seen on rules concerning to giving/denying affect and status. The study, however, confirmed also universal rules for each relationship.

3.3.3 A conceptual model for Consumer-Brand Relationships

J. Aaker et al. (2004) developed a conceptual model to explain Consumer-Brand Relationships (see fig. 3.5), based on two assumptions:

1. Acts of Transgression represent one of the most important factors in Relationship Strength;
2. Brand Personality has influence on Relationship Strength.

Figure 3.5

Conceptual Model of Consumer- Brand Relationships
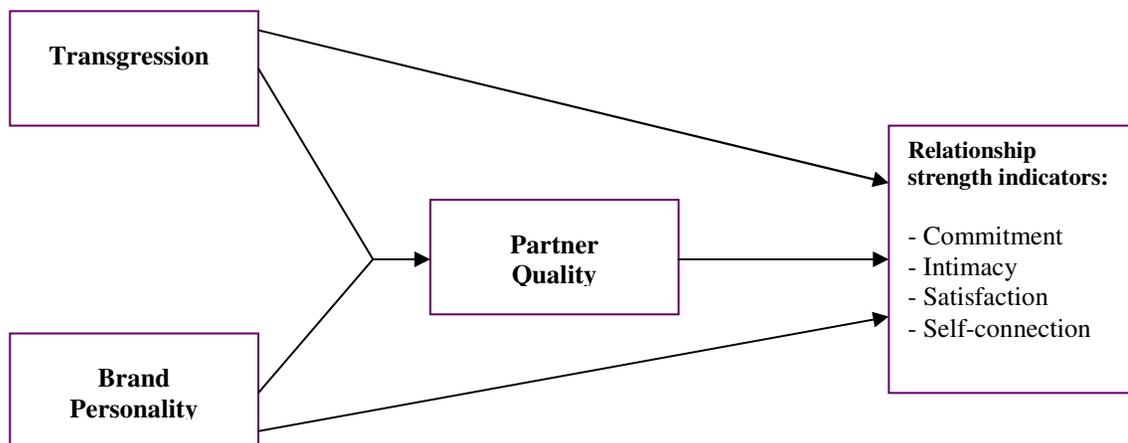
Source: Aaker et al., 2004, p. 3.

Acts of transgression might be the most significant events in a relationship and the most remarkable experiences that a consumer can have with a brand. Therefore, the response to acts of transgression is determinant to the quality and course of the relationship. Customers are generally more emotionally involved and observant regarding the process of "recovery service", rather than in a "routine or first-time service" (Smith et al., 1999, p. 356). A relationship has underlying norms of behavior that guide people on the assessment of the partner (Aggarwal, 2004). In this sense, consumers make inferences by observing the brand's behaviors (Fournier, 1998) and attitudes (Blackston, 1993). The sum of these inferences forms the global evaluation the customer does of the brand and its role as partner in a relationship (J. Aaker et al., 2004).

The relationship context can help to dilute the negative effects of transgressions in strong, long-term relationships (J. Aaker et al., 2004). In this sense, the context may be an element of moderation in the establishment of a relationship (Fournier & Yao, 1996; Fournier, 1998; Fournier et al., 1998; Hair & Clark, 2003). On the one hand, relationships are the target of pressures brought on by the market and by suppliers. On the other hand, it is necessary to keep the networking nature of a relationship in mind since it exists in a context made up of other relationships (Parks & Eggert, 1991). Thus, a Consumer-Brand Relationship has its own meaning integrated into the universe of consumption of the customer.

Baudrillard (2004) refers to this phenomenon as "profusion of objects of consume" and adds that "few objects today are offered alone, without a context of objects which "speaks" them. And this changes the consumer's relation to the object: he no longer relates to a particular object in its specific utility, but to a set of objects in its total signification" (p. 27).

Partner Quality Inferences are an important subclass of character inferences (Altman & Taylor, 1973). They act as a mediating variable of the effects of Brand Personality and transgressions on Relationship Strength in the conceptual model proposed by J. Aaker et al.

(2004). Partner Quality Inferences are nurtured in judgments of equity and justice, in socio-emotional benefits, and have the purpose of calibrating the belief the customer has in his relationship with the brand. It includes aspects of dependability, reliability, trust, support and accountability, regarding brand's performance in terms of respect for promises, avoidance of failures, problem-solving processes and long-term consumers' interests served.

Brand Personality is a potential source of relational expectations (Allen & Olson, 1995), serves symbolic and expression purposes (Keller, 1993; J. L. Aaker, 1997), influences Partner Quality inferences (Blackston, 1993), and has the ability to evoke emotions and increase the preference level (Biel, 1993). According to Auhagen & Hinde (1997), the personality of the partners in a relationship are determinant in both the behaviours the partners adopt in the relationship and the character inferences they make from the observation of these behaviours. Thus, the partner's traits may be a moderator of transgressions effects (J. Aaker et al., 2004).

The perceptions of partner's quality include aspects related to trust, from which it can be inferred that Brand personality, a source of identity as mentioned previously, is also a source of benefits related to trust. This statement is according to the model proposed by Hennig-Thurau et al. (2000) (see fig. 3.1), where the benefits of Brand Relationships can be trust and identity-related.

J. Aaker et al. (2004) tested the effects of two opposed brand personalities: Sincerity and Excitement (see Brand Personality Dimensions, fig. 2.5, Section 2.2.2). They concluded that sincere brands tend to facilitate strong and stable relationships based on trust, but they are more sensitive to the effects of transgression which may be irreversible. By contrast, brands of excitement tend to nurture less stable relationships, but customers are more benevolent with their acts of transgression and the resolution and reparation of problems can reinforce the relationship.

J. Aaker et al. (2004) identified two classes of relationships related to the brand personalities of Sincerity and Excitement, respectively: close, increasingly intimate, "long-term oriented friendships" and "initially enthused, but subsequently declining flings" (p. 14). They considered, however, the need for further research in order to understand the type of bonds different consumers establish with distinct brand personalities, as well the relevant relationship patterns that can affect the consumer-brand interactions. That is, it is necessary to assess the degree in which those relationships are conceived by distinct brand personalities, and to specify their contractual terms, such as: relationship objectives, norms, rules of satisfaction assessment, and the content of the expectations that they create.

Certain relationships are characterized by high reciprocity, that is equity and justice (Bhattacharya & Bolton, 2000), while others are more asymmentric, focusin on socio-emotional benefits. According to the study of J. Aaker et al. (2004), the personality of Sincerity shows a greater tendency to undergo judgments of justice, indicating high reciprocity whereas the personality of Excitement is more relevant in terms of socio-emotional benefits and indicated less reciprocity. The authors consider that it is important to identify what are the types of relationships where strength derives from judgments of equity and justice versus socio-emotional benefits.

J. Aaker et al. (2004) brought up the dichotomy of relationships for social relationships proposed by Clark et al. (1987) (see Section 3.3.2), defining trust as having two dominant forms: calculative trust and emotional trust. The former is associated with exchange relationships and thus more appropriate to the personality of Excitement; the latter is linked to communal relationships and thus more appropriate to the personality of Sincerity. The authors suggest the need for further research in order to understand the extent to which different processes of trust are encouraged by different brand personalities, when a transgression can only affect a certain type of trust, and what type of infraction can the recovering process repair.

3.4 Conclusion

It appears that when contact with producers is difficult or infrequent, consumers tend to establish relationships with products and their symbols (Sheth & Parvatiyar, 1995a). In this sense, a relationship with a brand is a source of consistent quality and identity for the consumer (Hennig-Thurau et al., 2000) as well as a way to offset the absence of consumer-producer relationships which characterize the industrial era (Palmer, 2000). Gummesson (2003) adds that a brand plays an important role in building relationships with the consumers, because similar to people, it has "a soul, a personality and a body language" (p. 112).

Brands represent banks of meaning which can be used purposely and distinctly by the consumers in the creation and consubstantiation of their selves (Blackston, 1993; Fournier & Yao, 1996; Baumgartner, 2002). This meaning is nurtured by the trivial relationships with daily consumer products since "meaningful relationships are qualified not along symbolic versus functional product category lines or in terms of high versus low involvement classes, but by the perceived ego significance of the chosen brands" (Fournier, 1998, p. 366). Consumers can develop strong relationships whether with utilitarian brands, such as Dell or Amazon, or with traditional symbolic and high-involvement brands such as Chanel or Rolex. Besides, the individual's Brand Relationships need to make sense in a reality of consumption, where they can evolve in an interdependent way with other relationships within the *constellation* of consumer brands.

In 1998, in an innovative approach, Susan Fournier imported the inter-personal relationship metaphor to the study of Consumer-Brand Relationships, according to the modern paradigms which believe in the necessity of a unified social theory. Susan Fournier postulated that brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer and highlighted the holistic character of the phenomenon. She concluded that Consumer-Brand Relationships are source of self-efficacy, self-esteem and self-identity.

Departing from Fournier's study, J. Aaker et al. (2004) developed a conceptual model to explain Consumer-Brand Relationships, based on the fact that acts of transgression and Brand Personality have a prominent role in the Relationship Strength formation. The outcomes suggested that there is a relationship between Brand Personality and the kind of relationship the consumer establishes with that brand. Specifically, relationships with sincere brands develop in line of friendship templates, and relationships with exciting brands reflect aspects of "short-lived flings" (p. 1).

Inspired on this study, Aggarwall (2004) tested the norms of social relationships on Consumer-Brand Relationships context. Results supported that customers relate with brands in ways that resemble their social ties. Moreover, the norms of interpersonal relationships are a basis for the assessment that customers make of their relationships with brands.

These three studies provide important material for the comprehension of Brand Relationships (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). They imply that generally the relationships that consumers establish with brands are equally meaningful and follow the norms of their social relationships. Specifically, two main theoretical propositions can be inferred: (1) Brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer and (2) Brand Personality influences the relationship the consumer establishes with the brand.

Moreover, it is common accepted that the individual differences of a consumer can influence the way he/she relates and purchases products and brands, which are in part determined by individual's temporally and situationally invariant attributes (i.e., dispositions), basically defined as personality (Kassarjian, 1971) or assumed as the ground level of the personality concept according to a modern approach (McAdams, 1995, 1996). Therefore, it seems pertinent to explore the influence of individual differences of consumers on the establishment of Brand Relationships, from a personality traits perspective.

CHAPTER 4

AN APPROACH TO CONSUMER PERSONALITY

4.1 Introduction

The literature provides a proliferation of tools that attempt to be specific measures for Consumer Personality in a "Babel of concepts and scales" (Jonh & Srivastava, 1999, p. 102). To avoid this diversity of measures, Baumgartner (2002) suggests the Big Five taxonomy which is the most consensual framework in personality psychology that explores the individual differences with an acceptable level of abstraction, as a base to structure a trait specific framework to consumer behavior. This tool, however, has had small impact on the studies in consumer behavior.

This chapter introduces the notion of consumers as dispositional entities and discusses the importance of the Big Five factors to consumer research.

4.2 The Big Five Factors

The concept of personality is related with behavior and experience (John & Srivastava, 1999). According to Kassarjian (1971), the notion of human personality may be basically defined as "the inferred hypothetical constructs relating to certain persistent qualities in human behavior" (p. 409). These "certain persistent qualities in human behavior" are generally designed by personality traits that can be perceived by the behavior, physical characteristics, attitudes and beliefs, or demographic characteristics of the individual (Park, 1986). Personality traits can be viewed as dispositions which are personal characteristics that tend to be constant across different temporal and situational contexts and reflect individual differences. This perspective assumes individuals as dispositional entities (McAdams, 1995, 1996)

In his conceptualization of human personality, McAdams (1995) considers that individual differences may be described at three different levels of analyze. First level concerns to the set of traits that "provide a general, comparative, and nonconditional dispositional signature for the person" (McAdams, 1996, p. 295). That is, the characteristics that distinguish individuals from each other, which are behavioral constants under different situations and observed long-term. The second level is related with the personal concerns. That is, the objectives that people pursue and the way to attain them, which may include personal strivings (things that people usually try to do in their daily life), personal projects (sequence of actions in order to get a global goal) and life tasks (problems that people face in a particular stage of their lives). The third level – life stories – consists of personal narratives that reflect the way people interprets the world and differentiates themselves from others. These narratives cover past memories, present experience and the anticipated future. Through these stories consumers build identity and bring meaning and purpose to their lives.

The first level – personality traits - can be considered the elementary base for characterizing an individual. However necessary, they do not provide a complete description of people, for that it is necessary to go further and use the second and third levels of personality description (McAdams, 1995, 1996). In reference to the second level,

"compared to traits, personal concerns are more idiographic in nature, more closely tied to behavior, and more highly contextualized" (Baumgartner, 2002, p. 287). Finally, there is evidence that experiences with brands helps consumers to establish self-identity. Thus, the detailed analysis of personal narratives is particularly useful for understanding how consumers use consumption in "self-creation".

While literature offers a proliferation of trait frameworks for Consumer Personality few studies have focused on goal-striving nature of consumer behavior (Baumgartner, 2002). Similarly, the life stories approach has only received limited attention from consumer researchers (the study of Fournier (1998) is a good and innovative example of a narrative approach to the study of Consumer-Brand Relationships). In this study, for the sake of simplicity, the construct Consumer Personality was studied at the first level of analysis according to McAdams (1995). In this manner, as suggested by Baumgartner, the Big Five taxonomy was adopted for measuring Consumer Personality.

With regard to the first level of analysis, Baumgartner (2002) remarks that there is not a reasonably stable and consensual tool in the studies of consumer behavior. Thus, the author suggests the use of the Big Five taxonomy as the instrument that gathers the greatest amount of consensus and is able to be used in different contexts given the degree of abstraction that it presents. The author claims that "it would seem that our task as consumer researchers is not to suggest yet another taxonomy of personality traits at the highest level of abstraction …, but to develop an integrated conceptual framework for getting to know consumers as dispositional entities. It is tempting to assume that an existing classification of personality traits (e.g., the five-factor taxonomy) could be used as an organizing principle to hierarchically structure the multitude of domain-specific traits relevant to consumer behavior" (p. 287). As a possible alternative to what was said, the author goes on to suggest to investigate the relationship that may exist between the personality traits that emerge as relevant in a context of consumer behavior and the basic traits taken from a tool such as the Big Five model.

In 1971 Kassarjian claimed that there is not a consensual definition of human personality but personality is transversal and embodies "the concept of consistent responses to the world of stimuli surrounding the individual" (p. 409), which is based on the fact that human personality can be explained by a set of factors. According to John & Srivastava (1999), Cattell's pioneering work, in the 1940s, influenced a number of studies that attempted to build factors structures resembling the Big Five (i.e., a factorial structure represented by five human personality dimensions) based on different lists of personality variables. In the earls of 1980s, the model of Five Factors took a relevant place in the study of human personality since it became the most consensual framework for academics in the field (Woods & Hampson, 2005).

John & Srivastava (1999) note that the Big Five structure does not mean that human personality differences can be simply represented by five dimensions. This structure is only a way of representing personality at the broadest level of abstraction, and each dimension embodies a large number of more specific human characteristics that can explain the diversity and complexity of personality (Baumgartner, 2002).

The Big Five model is represented by a structure of five basic factors. These are, according to John & Srivastava (1999):

1. *Extraversion or Surgery*, talkative, assertive, energetic;
2. *Agreeableness*, good-natured, cooperative, trustful;
3. *Conscientiousness*, orderly, responsible, dependable;
4. *Emotional Stability* vs. *Neuroticism*, calm, not neurotic, not easily upset;
5. *Intellect* or *Openness*, intellectual, imaginative, independent-minded (p. 105).

In some studies the conversed dimension Emotional Stability is used, rather Neuroticism. Thus, the items in the respective questionnaire are inverted and the results should be interpreted in this sense.

Each one of the dimensions above is composed of six facets. Each facet consists of different adjectives – the markers – which obtained high loadings in the factor they belong and low loadings in the remaining factors (Goldberg, 1992). Each one of the dimensions can be assessed by the NEO-Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1985; McCrae & Costa, 1989), or by its short version - the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992). In Appendix D is presented the Portuguese version of NEO-FFI, translated by Lima & Simões (2000).

According to Lima (1997), Neuroticism (N) assesses the individual's capacity for adaptation, or the converse, his/her emotional instability. It reflects negative affectivity or nervousness. High levels of Neuroticism are found to be more accentuated in people who are worried, nervous and emotionally insecure, with their tendency to feel negative affection and to develop inappropriate coping responses. By contrast, individuals who score low in this characteristic are emotionally stable, calm, secure, and satisfied with themselves and ones who deal with stressful situations in an adaptive way.

Extraversion (E) measures the quantity and intensity of interpersonal interactions, the level of activity, the need for stimulation and the capacity to express joy. It reflects energy, or enthusiasm. Individuals who score high in this characteristic are typically sociable, affirming, optimistic, affectionate and active. Lower scores reflect individuals who are less sociable, more distant and timid, and who manifest more reserved behaviors (Lima, 1997).

Openness to Experience (O) is related to an active imagination, aesthetic sensitivity, intellectual curiosity and independent judgment. It reflects originality, or open-mindedness. Subjects with high Openness to Experience are curious about the internal and external world, their range of life experiences is usually very rich, and they are always available to accept new ideas and values. At the extreme opposite is someone with little Openness to Experience, reflecting the tendency for more conventional and conservative operations and a more limited range of interests (Lima, 1997).

Agreeableness (A) measures the level of interpersonal orientation that varies in a continuum from sympathy to antagonism in thoughts, feelings and actions. It reflects altruism or affection. The individual with a high score in Agreeableness is altruistic, cooperative, trustworthy and kind to others. In contrast, persons who score low in this area are usually characterized as being unpleasant, rude, suspicious, unhelpful, vindictive, manipulating and more competitive than cooperative (Lima, 1997).

Conscientiousness (C) relates to the degree of organization, persistence and motivation in behavior directed toward a certain objective. It reflects control or constraint. The conscientious individual has strong force of will, is determined, scrupulous, punctual, organized, hard-working, self-disciplined, ambitious, persevering and trustworthy. A low score in this characteristic depicts individuals who are sloppy in the pursuit of their objectives, unconcerned, negligent and with a weak force of will (Lima, 1997).

The adoption of an instrument based on the analysis of personality traits may exclude some aspects of the self capable of influencing consumer behavior. According to Kassarjian (1971), there is a real-self and an ideal-self. Their sum represents the set of everything an individual owns: the body, personality traits, abilities, vocations and avocations, material resources, family, friends, enemies, etc. This self also includes evaluations and definitions about him/herself, and influences much of his/her actions, namely consumer behavior. The congruence between product/brand perceived image and self-image is likely to undergo a positive evaluation, preference, and buying the product/brand. Moreover, individuals understand themselves as similar to those that use the same brands. Thus, consumer brand choices are consistent and reinforce his/her self-concept that can be considered as an important segmentation tool.

Reed (2004) underscores also the role of social identity in consumer behavior, which is defined as "mental representations that can become a basic part of how consumers view themselves" (p. 286). Social identity has a contextual nature, instead of being the representation of the stable personality traits or the self-esteem of the consumer. In some

cases it has greater influence on information processing than the personality traits (Lindberg-Repo & Brookes, 2004). Furthermore, there is evidence of the existence of a strong relationship between social identity and the consumption of brands (see also Park & Lessig, 1977). It is important to note that consumers have several social identities that may become systematic or situational salient. Identity salience means "a temporary state during which consumer's identity is activated" (Reed, p. 286).

4.3 Conclusion

Although there is a wide variety of definitions and approaches to human personality offered up in the literature (John & Srivastava, 1999), all of them contemplate the idea that the personality of an individual is reflected in the responses to the diverse stimuli to which he/her is exposed to, and based on situational and temporal consistency (Kassarjian, 1971).

McAdams (1995, 1996) suggests that the study of human personality should involve three different levels of analysis: personality traits, personal concerns and life stories. Accordingly, Baumgartner (2002) considers consumers as "dispositional, goal-striving, and narrative entities engaged in consumption in the broadest sense" (p. 291) and calls attention to the importance for consumer behavioral studies to incorporate the developments of Personality Psychology. In respect to the trait tools, he suggests the adoption of the Five Factors model as a framework to assess Consumer Personality. However the importance of the Big Five, it has had a small impact on the study of consumer behavior.

The Five Factors model represents the most comprehensive approach to the conception of human personality in terms of traits, and brings the greatest consensus among academics in the area (Woods & Hampson, 2005). One of more popular scales for assessing the Five Factors is the NEO-Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1985; McCrae & Costa,

1989), or its short version - the NEO Five Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992).

For the sake of simplicity, in this study the construct Consumer Personality was studied at the first level of analysis proposed by McAdams (1995), through the Big Five taxonomy, as suggested by Baumgartner (2002). Thus, the Portuguese version of NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992) translated by Lima & Simões (2000) was used to measure Consumer Personality.

On the trail to find an approach for consumer personality traits, important concepts in the explanation of consumer behaviors are excluded, such as self-image or self-concept, self-esteem (Kassarjian, 1971), and social identity Reed (2004). Additionally, the study of consumer behavior through the approaches of goal striving and life stories may reveal themselves to be more efficient (Fournier, 1998).

CHAPTER 5

PROBLEM FORMULATION

5.1 Introduction

The present study was aimed at investigating the relationship between Brand Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationships. The conceptualization of Consumer-Brand Relationships proposed by J. Aaker et al. (2004) relied on the assumption that Brand Personality has a prominent role in the Relationship Strength formation and may influence the relationship the consumer establishes with the brand. They, however, foresaw the need for further research in order to understand the type of bonds different consumers establish with distinct brand personalities. Inspired by this gap in research, a conceptual model was developed. The model's premise was that Brand Personality plays an important role in the establishment of ties with the consumer. As such, the hypothesis was that Brand Personality may nurture specific Consumer-Brand Relationships and those Consumer-Brand Relationships may influence the quality or the strength of the ties that consumers develop with brands.

This chapter is divided in two main sections. Section 5.2 presents the objectives and hypotheses that guided the study. Section 5.3 offers the description and explanation of the

framework for analysis based on a consumer-brand relationship conceptualization which has as source the theoretical review.

5.2 Objectives of Study

The objective of the research is to explain the relationships so as to better understand to what extent Brand Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationships are related to each another. A main research question was raised: How does Brand Personality relate to the type of relationship that the consumer establishes with that brand?

Two instruments were imported: the Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions (J. Aaker et al., 2001) to assess Brand Personality in the Portuguese market context, and the short version of the Relationship Ideal Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999), from intimate interpersonal relationships, to approach Consumer-Brand Relationships.

The study relied on two assumptions. First, the Relationship Ideal Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999) is applicable to the consumer-brand relationship context. This instrument is the outcome of research on intimate relationships within the field of social psychology, which lacks support in its generalization to other relationship domains and social contexts.

The second assumption was that Brand Personality in a Portuguese consumption context is well defined by a five-dimensional structure: the Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions (J. Aaker et al., 2001). According to J. Aaker et al., the Spanish Brand Personality framework may be replicated in other Catholic cultures in southern Europe. In the interest of simplicity, an imported instrument was used according to an *imposed-etic* approach, rather the construction of an indigenous instrument according to an *emic* strategy (Berry, 1969). Imposed-etic approach instruments are original works of a specific culture that were imported and translated into the local language of other culture (Enriquez, 1979;

cit. in J. Aaker et al., 2001). Although the advantage of allowing cross-cultural comparisons, the use of imposed-etic instruments may produce distortion in the data since they carry with them culture-specific meanings. Despite cultural proximity, Portugal and Spain present different levels of economic and social development that may represent differences in consumption.

Besides the characteristics of individuals and interactions, the mental images of ideal partners and relationships are determinant in forming judgments on relationships (Fletcher & Simpson, 2000). J. Aaker et al. (2004) tested the effects of two opposed brand personalities: Sincerity and Excitement (J. Aaker, 1997; J. Aaker et al., 2001). They concluded that sincere brands tend to facilitate strong and stable relationships based on trust, but they are more sensitive to the effects of transgression which may be irreversible. In respect to exciting brands, they tend to nurture less stable relationships, but customers are more benevolent in accepting acts of transgression, and the resolution and reparation of problems can reinforce the relationship. These two classes of Consumer-Brand Relationships reported by J. Aaker et al. (2004) rely on the same attributes as the two ideals of relationships: Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion (Fletcher et al., 1999) (see Appendix B).

This study was mainly concerned with these two brand personalities: Sincerity and Excitement. They appear to represent the majority of variance in the brand personality ratings (J. Aaker, 1997) and seem to cross borders, cultures, and product categories, being the most prominent in the consumption context (J. Aaker et al., 2001). Additional, they constitute, according to J. Aaker et al. (2004), two of the three ideal partners in close interpersonal relationships: Warmth-Trustworthiness Partner and Vitality-Attractiveness Partner (Fletcher et al., 1999) (see Section 3.3.2).

In a paper about the applicability of the Big Five (see Chapter 4) on the brand context, Caprara et al. (2001) concluded that a higher two-factor structure is better replicated to the brand world. The first factor, composed of the traits of Agreeableness and Emotional Stability (versus Neuroticism), is defined in terms of patient and affectionate, and is related

to "brands linked to stability, predictability, and pleasantness" (p. 389). The second factor, composed of the traits of Extroversion and Openness, is defined in terms of active and modern and is related to "brands linked to dynamism, activity, and innovation" (p. 389). J. Aaker (1997) suggests that the asymmetric relationship between the factorial structures of brand and human personalities may be one of the reasons for the weakness of self-congruity literature.

The parallelism between the two broad factors proposed by Caprara et al. (2001) and the partner ideals of Warmth-Trustworthiness and Vitality-Attractiveness, respectively, seems to be clear. According to Fletcher et al. (1999), "the Partner Warmth-Trustworthiness dimension included personal characteristics that seem particularly relevant for developing an intimate and loyal relationship ... The Partner Vitality-Attractiveness dimension assesses an ideal partner's attractiveness, health, and personality characteristics that reflect energy, adventurousness, and general vigor" (p. 85). The Partners Ideals Warmth-Trustworthiness and Vitality-Attractiveness are strongly and positively correlated with the relationship ideals of Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion, respectively.

Considering these facts, a general hypothesis of study was set: Brand Personality may nurture specific Consumer-Brand Relationships and those Consumer-Brand Relationships may influence the quality, or the strength of the ties that consumers develop with brands. Specifically, two main hypotheses were investigated: (1) The personality of Sincerity predicts patterns of Intimacy-Loyalty relationship and (2) The personality of Excitement predicts patterns of Passion relationship.

5.3 Framework for Analysis

The study of customer relationships phenomenon as according to the interpersonal relationship metaphor is something that has gained prominence in the recent marketing

literature (Blackston, 1993, 1995, 2000; J. Aaker & Fournier, 1995; Fournier 1995a, 1995b, 1998; Barnes 2000; Sweeney & Chew, 2000, 2002; J. Aaker et al., 2004; Aggarwal 2004). The research developed by J. Aaker et al. (2004), which tries to explain "how the strength of consumer brand relationships may be affected directly and indirectly by different brand personalities, particularly as they commit transgression acts" (p. 3), is a relevant example. In that study, which inspired the present research, results suggested that Brand Personality may influence Consumer-Brand Relationship. The authors, however, considered the need for further investigation on this topic.

Inspired by this gap in literature review, a conceptual model was developed (see fig. 5.1). Two main theoretical propositions supported the present study: (1) Brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer and (2) Brand personality influences the relationship the consumer establishes with the brand. The model has as its premise that Brand Personality plays an important role in the establishment of distinct ties with the consumer, and those ties have different impacts on the course of the relationship. As such, the hypothesis is that Brand Personality may nurture specific Consumer-Brand Relationships and those Consumer-Brand Relationships may influence the quality, or the strength of the ties that consumers develop with brands.

Kassarjian (1971) claims that there is not a consensual definition of human personality but that personality is transversal and embodies "the concept of consistent responses to the world of stimuli surrounding the individual". Thus, the concept of personality can be defined as "the inferred hypothetical constructs relating to certain persistent qualities in human behavior" (p. 409). Additional, in an interpersonal-relationship theory perspective, Altman & Taylor (1973) consider that the development of a relationship implies the gradual overlapping and exploration of the mutual selves of the partners involved in that relationship. Thus, they admit an unequivocal relevance of some features of personality on interpersonal processes.

Figure 5.1

Conceptual Model of the Influence of Brand Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationships
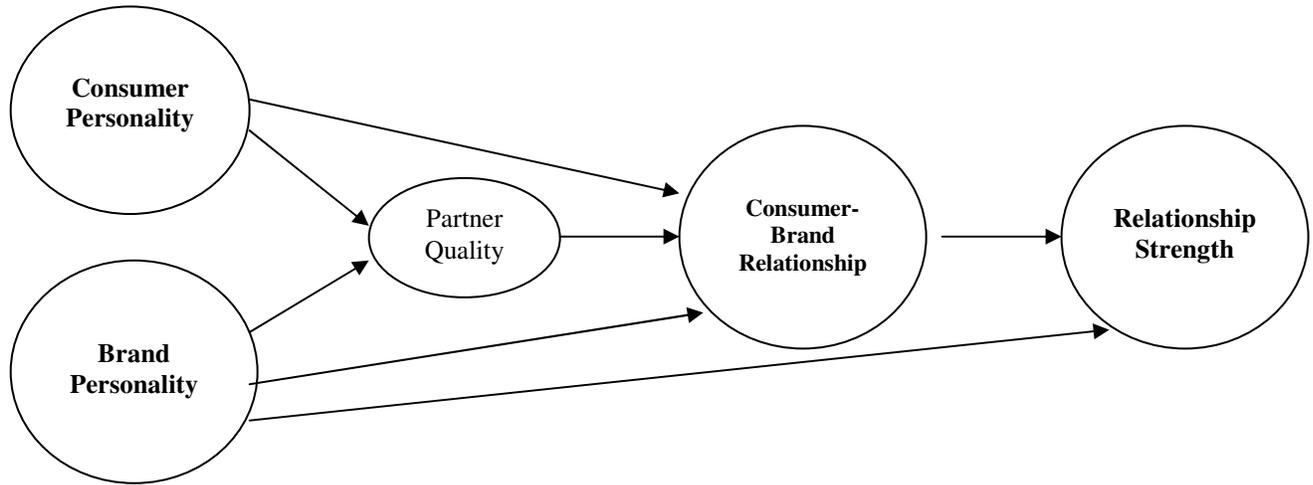
In this manner, it seems that there is a relationship between Brand Personality and the type of relationship the customer establishes with the brand. On one hand, Brand Personality is partially determined by the experiences the consumers develop with that brand. On the other hand, it acts as a base of information which provides guidance to consumers on the establishment of their relationships with brands (Aggarwal, 2004). Considering these facts, the follow hypothesis was posited:

H1: Brand Personality will be a predictor of Consumer-Brand Relationships.

Regarding the characteristics of brands with the personalities of Sincerity and Excitement, as were presented in the previous section, two more specific hypotheses were formulated:

H1.1: Of the variables tested, the relationship of Intimacy-Loyalty will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the personality of Sincerity.

H1.2: Of the variables tested, the relationship of Passion will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the personality of Excitement.

The study of J. Aaker et al. (2004), which was inspirational in the development of this conceptual model, indicated that Brand Personality influences Relationship Strength. This statement let one to hypothesize:

H2: Brand Personality will be a predictor of Relationship Strength.

Namely, brands of Sincerity are likely to be linked to more stable and lasting relationships than brands of Excitement (J. Aaker et al., 2004). Thus, a more specific hypothesis was formulated:

H2.1: Of the variables tested, Relationship Strength will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the personality of Sincerity.

Brand Personality is one potential source of relationship expectations (Allen & Olson, 1995; Aggarwal, 2004), in particular relationship expectations relating to Partner Quality that are determinant to relationship development (see also Govers & Schoormans (2005) about product and brand personality and its influence on consumer preference). Partner Quality inferences have their origin in judgments of equity and justice, in socio-emotional benefits, and have the purpose of calibrating the belief the customer has in his/her relationship with the brand (J. Aaker et al., 2004). Therefore, Partner Quality is considered to be a mediating variable between Brand Personality and Relationship Strength and can

influence the type of the relationship the consumer establishes with the brand. In an interpersonal-relationship theory perspective, people tend to adjust their relationship according to the perceptions of the Partner Quality and with their own desires and expectations (Fletcher & Simpson, 2000). Thus, the follow hypothesis was set:

H3: The influence of Brand Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationships will be partially mediated by the consumer perceptions of Partner Quality.

J. Aaker et al. (2004) state that sincere brands are associated with long-term relationships according to close friendships and exciting brands to short-lived flings. In this categorization of relationships longevity appears as an underlined construct, which is associated with the quality and stability of the relationship (Fournier, 1998) or the strength of the relationship (Storbacka et al., 1994; Storbacka, 2000). Considering this it was hypothesized:

H4: The type of Consumer-Brand Relationship will be a predictor of Relationship Strength.

The characterization of the two Relationship Ideals, proposed by Fletcher et al. (1999), suggested that relationships of Intimacy-Loyalty, rather relationships of Passion, are associated with lasting relationships based on patterns of commitment, trust and intimacy. Thus a more specific hypothesis was posited:

H4.1: Of the variables tested, Relationship Strength will account for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Intimacy-Loyalty relationship.

It seems consensual in literature, either Relationship Marketing, Product Brands, Consumer Behavior, and Social Psychology, that the personality of the partners influences the nature, content and development of the relationship (e.g., Altman & Taylor, 1973; Clark et al., 1987; Czepiel, 1990; Barnes, 1994, 2000; Fournier et al., 1998; Fletcher et al., 1999, 2000; Diller, 2000; Hennig-Thurau et al., 2000; Sweeney & Chew, 2000, 2002; Baumgartner, 2002; Woratshek & Horbel, 2003; J. Aaker et al., 2004; Agarwall, 2004). Auhagen & Hinde (1997) call attention to the complexity of this proposition because:

1. it is not an easy task to identify the dimensions along which people differ;

2. attributes that an individual displays are not constant across different situations;

3. some characteristics of relationships are the result of the interaction process between the participants;

4. individual characteristics affect relationships in diverse ways.

Aware of the difficult task of choosing a stable framework to access Consumer Personality, Baumgartner (2002) suggests the Big Five taxonomy which is the most consensual framework that explores the individual differences with an acceptable level of abstraction and focus on the stable characteristics of the individuals. Thus, it seems likable the follow hypothesis:

H5: Consumer Personality will be a predictor of Consumer-Brand Relationships.

This influence can also be indirect. Indeed, the way the consumer evaluates a partner in a relationship is influenced by one's own personality. It would be expected that cooperative people would be more tolerant when evaluating a partner and, in opposition, competitive people would be more demanding (Clark & Finkel, 2005). Thus, the customer character orientation would be determinant in the way one evaluates the performance of a brand (Agarwall, 2004). According to Auhagen & Hinde (1997), partner personality influences the behaviours in a relationship and biases the character inferences based on the

observation of these behaviours. Taking this into account, it was inferred one more hypothesis:

H6: The influence of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationships will be partially mediated by the consumer perceptions of Partner Quality.

The individual self-concept plays a central role in the perception of benefits, value and meaning of the relationship with the brand (Lindberg-Repo & Brookes, 2004), and one's self-perceptions may influence Partner Quality perceptions. Thus more positive self-perceptions would predict more demanding ideals standards and less positive self-perceptions more flexible ideals standards (Fletcher & Simpson, 2000). As this was not considered in the framework for analysis, it would be interesting to explore the difference of personality and self-identity (about real-self and ideal-self see Section 4.2) in terms of their influence on the development of a consumer-brand relationship. Some brands are an extension of "who we want to be" (self-identity) and not "who we are" (personality). Moreover, Baumgartner (2002) asserts the importance of consumption on the self-creation process, considering the role of brand experiences in the development of consumer self-identity.

5.4 Conclusion

The relational approach may provide a better and broader understanding of the phenomena that arise between the customer and the brand (Fournier & Yao, 1996; Fournier, 1998), as compared to other approaches based on constructs such as loyalty, commitment and intimacy. All of these constructs, which have a relationship basis, do not offer the global picture of the consumer-brand phenomenon instead they represent strict aspects of that.

The conceptualization of Consumer-Brand Relationships developed by J. Aaker et al. (2004) (see fig. 3.5) consider brand as a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer, imbued with a personality which is the outcome of the inference process the consumer develops through the observation of the brand's behaviors (Allen & Olson, 1995; Fournier, 1995a, 1998; J. Aaker et al., 2004). Thus, it makes sense to view the study of Consumer-Brand Relationships, named by Gummesson (2003) as Parasocial Relationships, under the umbrella of the theories of inter-personal relationships and Relationship Marketing (Barnes, 2000).

Despite the acceptance of the Brand Personality construct in academic literature and marketing practice, its conceptualization and methodological approach are not consensual issues (Blackston, 1993; J. Aaker & Fournier, 1995; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). Some of the most widespread brand personality tools are based on a trait approach (e.g., the Brand Personality Scale by J. Aaker (1997) operationalized in terms of human characteristics through a multivariate analysis methodology). In contrast, some authors consider the importance of trait inference based on the observation of behaviors (Fournier, 1995a, Allen & Olson, 1995; Aggarwal, 2004; Johar et al., 2005). In that sense, Brand Personality seems to be better conceptualized in terms of the roles that the brand plays in a relationship with the consumer than stable personality traits (J. Aaker et al., 2004). Consequently, a relational approach to Brand Personality becomes a pertinent way of research (Blackston, 1995, 2000; D. A. Aaker, 1996; Fournier, 1998).

J. Aaker et al. (2004) report two classes of relationships related to the brand personalities of Sincerity and Excitement (J. Aaker, 1997; J. Aaker et al., 2001): close and flings. According to these, sincere brands tend to develop relationships aligned by patterns of friendships, namely close friendships, and brands with the personality of Excitement tend to build less stable short-lived flings. They consider that there is a need for further research to confirm these propositions.

Inspired by this gap in the research, a conceptual model was developed (see fig. 5.1). The model implies several hypotheses of study. First, Brand Personality directly and indirectly (through Partner Quality) influences Consumer-Brand Relationships. Second, Brand Personality influences Relationship Strength. Third, Consumer-Brand Relationship influences Relationship Strength. Fourth, Consumer Personality directly and indirectly (through Partner Quality) influences Consumer-Brand Relationship.

SECOND PART

EMPIRICAL STUDY

CHAPTER 6

METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

Research followed a quantitative approach, based on a multivariate analysis design. The empirical study involved a sample of nine much known brands, within different product category, brand personality and functional versus symbolic usage (Coca-Cola, Land Rover, Mercedes, Volkswagen, Ferrari, Nike, Chanel, Continente and Luso); and a convenience sampling with quotas, close to the Portuguese population in terms of the demographics of gender and age, in a total of 350 consumers. The participants and the commercial brands were chosen according to the same principles that guided the research of J. Aaker and her colleagues in the North American, Japanese and Spanish markets (J. Aaker, 1997; J. Aaker et al., 2001).

For the sake of simplicity, some instruments were imported to measure each one of the constructs studied. The construct of Brand Personality was measured by the Spanish Brand Personality Framework (J. Aaker et al., 2001); the construct of Consumer-Brand Relationship was assessed by the short version of the Relationship Ideals Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999), the construct of Consumer Personality by the Portuguese version of the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992; translated by Lima & Simões,

2000), the constructs of Relationship Strength and Partner Quality by the Relationship Strength Indicators, and the Partner Quality scale (J. Aaker et al., 2004), respectively.

This chapter describes the methods used in the empirical study. In Section 6.2, the process of stimuli selection is presented, followed by the characterization of the sample of study in Section 6.3. Section 6.4 describes the scales used to measure the constructs. Section 6.5 explains the data collection procedures and Section 6.6 presents the main statistics and software used for the data analysis.

6.2 Brand Selection

The empirical study involved a sample of nine well known brands, within different product categories, brand personality and functional versus symbolic usage. The brands studied were Coca-Cola (soft drink), Land Rover (sport utility vehicle - SUV), Mercedes (automobiles), Volkswagen (automobiles), Ferrari (sport automobiles), Nike (sports apparel), Chanel (fragrances), Continente (stores/supermarkets) and Luso (mineral water). The 2005 Superbrands Portugal, the 2005 Best Global Brands (Interbrand, 2005), and the information about sales performance of the Portuguese automobile industry in 2006 supplied by the Automóvel Clube de Portugal (ACP) have provided guidance in the brands selection.

Brands were chosen according to the criteria followed by J. Aaker (1997) and J. Aaker et al. (2001): salient and well-known brands for the Portuguese population in order to get a representative sample; diversity of brand personalities to extend the scope of the study; and different product categories, both symbolic and utilitarian, to achieve generalization of the model. Two other aspects influenced the stimuli selection procedure. First, Brand Personality takes more importance in symbolic categories such as automobiles and fragrances (Lannon, 1993). Second, since the effect of brand sensibility varies with product

category, the automobiles category is remarkable in terms of brand sensibility (Kapferer & Laurent, 1989). In this manner, the stimuli included mainly symbolic and both utilitarian and symbolic brands, and automobile brands than other product category.

The study developed by Superbrands Portugal in 2005, based on both consumer and managers interviews, has provided the most familiar and salient brands in Portugal. Coca-cola, Continente and Luso were chosen within that set of brands. Coca-cola and Continente were considered the Golden Brands because they scored higher in each measure used in the SuperBrand's study. Luso was selected due to its characteristics which seemed to be associated with traits of Peacefulness (Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions; J. Aaker et al., 2001; see Appendix A). This set of familiar brands showed a lack of symbolic brands and did not match all of the brand personalities. Therefore, the remaining brands, except Ferrari and Land Rover, were chosen according the list of 100 Best Global Brands by Value (Interbrand, 2005).

Chanel fragrances, one of the 100 Best Global Brands by Value (Interbrand, 2005), with strong image in the Portuguese population, seemed to resemble traits of the Sophistication personality, and was used in the three brand personality studies in United States (Brand Personality Dimensions; J. Aaker, 1997), Spain (Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions; J. Aaker et al., 2001), and Japan (Japanese Brand Personality Dimensions; J. Aaker et al.). In the same way, Nike, a 100 Best Global Brand very popular in Portugal, which sponsors the Portuguese soccer team, was used in both studies USA and Korea (Brand Personality Structure in Korea; Sung & Tinkham, 2005). Volkswagen and Mercedes, two other 100 Best Global Brands, had one of the highest market shares in the Portuguese automobile industry: Volkswagen, in the utilitarian and median executive vehicles and, Mercedes, on superior and luxury executive segment (Automóvel Club de Portugal, 2006). These brands were used, the first one, in the studies of Spain and Korea, and, the second one, in the studies of USA, Japan, and Korea. The use of common brands in similar studies may be a way to benchmark different cultural contexts.

Land Rover and Ferrari were chosen mainly for the symbolic meanings they could embody. Land Rover is one of the oldest brands of SUV in the world and the second most important in Portugal (Automóvel Club de Portugal, 2006), and seemed to have similar characteristics with the personality of Excitement. Ferrari is a symbolic brand with a strong image in the Portuguese population, which seemed to resemble traits of the Passion personality.

In order to reduce the possibility of participant fatigue that could bias the results, two groups of four brands were formed (see table 6.1). To ensure a close profile to the sample, each group was composed of at least one symbolic brand (e.g., fragrance, apparel, and sport automobiles), one utilitarian brand (e.g., mineral water, supermarkets), and one both symbolic and utilitarian brand (e.g., automobiles and soft drinks). This classification of symbolic versus utilitarian brands was established according to the Portuguese habits of consume and is based on the classifications proposed by J. Aaker (1997), J. Aaker et al. (2001), and Sung & Tinkham (2005).

Table 6.1

Groups of Brands

Group 1	Group 2
Continente	Luso
Nike	Volkswagen
Mercedes	Chanel
Land Rover	Ferrari
Coca-cola	Coca-cola

An additional brand – Coca-Cola - was included in each group as a control element in order to assess the variations in the consumer perceptions. Coca-Cola was chosen because it was recognized as one of the most familiar brands in Portugal, according the study of 2005 Superbrands Portugal, and in the world (Interbrand, 2005). Coca-Cola was also the control in the Spanish, Japanese, and Korean studies of brand personality (J. Aaker et al., 2001; Sung and Tinkham, 2005), which could serve as a benchmark of different cultural contexts.

6.3 Participants

A total of 388 subjects participated in the study. A sample of convenience, by quotas in terms of age and gender, of 350 valid questionnaires was obtained. Age and gender were not significantly different from the Portuguese population (age: (Msample = 40.3, Mpop. = 39.5) $t = .97$, $p = .33$, gender: Qui-square = .100, $df = 1$, $p = .75$). The respondents were between 18 and 86 years old and presented a higher mean rate of educational level than the Portuguese population. The sample showed an interesting diversity regarding this item (see table 6.2) and a considerable number of persons older than 60 with only the 1[st] cycle (four years of education) which is usually difficult to obtain in this kind of study.

278 questionnaires were collected in different regions of Portugal (mainly in the North) by a group of volunteer Portuguese undergraduate students. The students performed this job in order to be evaluated in the class. The students were advised to collect the questionnaires in different public spaces such as schools, supermarkets, malls, and at other organizations. This sample by quotas coincided with the demographics statistics of the 2001 Portuguese Census (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2002) in terms of age, gender, marital status, and education level (close but not exactly). The participants consumed mainly Coca-Cola, Continente, Luso, and Nike. The two versions of questionnaires were randomly assigned. 38 of those questionnaires were refused due to either very incomplete or incoherent data content.

Table 6.2

Educational Level

Level of education	Portuguese population (according to 2001 Census)[1] (%)	Sample N = 350 (%)
1st cycle (four years)	35.1%	17.8%
2nd cycle (two years)	12.6%	7.8%
3st cycle (3 years)	10.9%	10.3%
High school (3 years)	15.7%	20.1%
Technological degree	0.8%	3.2%
BA / Master[2]	10.8 %	37.9%
MSc. / Ph.D[3]		2.9%

1. These percentages are according to the Census 2001 (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2002) and refer to the population who achieved some educational level even they did not conclude it;

2. Refers to the people who achieved either a Bachelor (BA), a scientific Bachelor (BSc.) or a BA plus a Master/MBA;

3. Refers to the people who achieved either a BSc. plus a scientific Master (MSc.) or a Doctoral (Ph.D).

Notes: 1) 9% of population in Portugal (with 10 or more years old) can't read;

2) There were so far two graduations in Portugal: Bachelor (BA - 3 years) and scientific Bachelor (BSc. - 4 or 5 years). The last one was a necessary condition to realize a scientific Master (MSc.). Recently, after the Bologna Process implementation, in almost all the Portuguese schools there are only BA degrees which give access to a Master usually shorter than the scientific Masters.

53 questionnaires were collected in MBA classes. Most of them lived in Porto (North of Portugal). All of them had a BA and consumed mainly Coca-Cola, Continente, Luso, and Nike. The two versions of questionnaires were randomly assigned.

In order to increase the relationships with the other five brands, 57 questionnaires were collected for consumers of Volkswagen, Mercedes, Chanel, and Land Rover (although very well known, Ferrari is not a brand that is widely consumed in the Portuguese market). Around half of the participants were from Lisbon (South of Portugal), some from the

Center, and few from North of Portugal. These respondents presented a high education level (more than 80% had, at least, a BA).

The participants were chosen according the same principles that guided the research of J. Aaker and her colleagues in the North American, Japanese and Spanish markets (J. Aaker, 1997; J. Aaker et al., 2001).

6.4 Measures

6.4.1 Brand Personality scale

For the sake of simplicity, imported instruments were used to measure each one of the constructs studied. The construct of Brand Personality was measured by the Spanish Brand Personality framework (J. Aaker et al., 2001; see Appendix A), according to an *imposed-etic* approach (Berry, 1969) as mentioned before.

The Spanish Brand Personality framework (see Section 2.2.2) is a factorial model composed of 5 dimensions: Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion. A principal-components analysis with a varimax rotation nurtured this structure and two additional analyses, one using disaggregated data and the other with an oblique rather an orthogonal rotation, have provided similar structures. Each dimension is composed of 2 facets (except Excitement composed by 3 facets), and each facet is represented by a set of 3 attributes of Brand Personality, totaling 33 attributes. Moderate to high convergent and discriminant validities were enhanced. Cronbach's alphas for each factor ranged from 0.80 to 0.91, suggesting high levels of internal reliability (J. Aaker et al., 2001).

Excitement and Sincerity correspond to the universal-meaning factors (common to the United States and Japan models, see Section 2.2.2). Spanish Sophistication presents a facet common with the USA Sophistication, described by markers such as good looking, glamorous, upper class, and stylish; and includes a blending of Competence factor's traits such as confident, successful and leader (markers of USA Competence). This type of Sophistication seems to be unique to Spain. Peacefulness is a shared element with the Japanese scale, which denotes the predominance of harmony and cooperation-oriented values. Passion is the culture-specific meaning factor that combines affective experience and spirituality.

This scale originally developed through a multi-variate analysis for the Spanish population may be appropriated, according to the authors, for other populations of southern Europe. Therefore, the Spanish scale was used in this study to access the Portuguese Brand Personality due to the absence of a comparable indigenous instrument.

6.4.2 Consumer-Brand Relationship scale

The construct of the Consumer-Brand Relationship was assessed by the short version of the Relationship Ideal Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999; see Appendix B). The Relationship Ideal Scale is a factorial model composed of two dimensions: Intimacy-Loyalty relationship ideal and Passion relationship ideal (see Section 3.2.2). A principal-components analysis with oblique Harris-Kaiser rotations indicated these two-factor solutions accounting for 40.2% of the total variance. The internal reliabilities (Cronbach's alphas) and test-retest reliabilities were all acceptably high and positive for each sub-scale, ranging from .82 to .93 and .75 to .86, respectively.

Each one of the two factors (in the short-form) is represented by a set of 6 relationship attributes. The ideal relationship of Intimacy-Loyalty can be characterized with adjectives

such as: caring, respect, honest, trusting, and support. The ideal relationship of Passion can be characterized with adjectives such as: exciting, fun, and independent.

This scale lacks validation in others relationship domains and social contexts (Fletcher et al., 1999). Nevertheless, Fletcher et al. (2004) have reframed the scales in order to use them in short-term relationships and long-term relationships, concluding they work well and correlate moderately within dimensions across relationship contexts.

According to a personal e-mail of the author Garth Fletcher, on January 31st 2006, the short form of the Ideal Relationship Scale works well with good reliability and predictive validity. In this communication Garth Fletcher has also provided some guidance in the application of the instrument, which is as follows:

- the subheadings for each ideal relationship dimension should be deleted in the forms given to participants;
- the items within each dimension are added to produce sub-totals.

6.4.3 Consumer Personality scale

To access the Consumer Personality, the Portuguese version of the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1992; translated by Lima & Simões, 2000; see Appendix D) was applied.

The NEO-FFI is the short version of the NEO-Personality Inventory (Costa & McCrae, 1985; McCrae & Costa, 1989), a factorial model of 5 factors that attempt to be a universal base for understanding human personality (see Chapter 4). The Big Five factors are: Extraversion (energy or enthusiasm), Agreeableness (altruism or affection), Conscientiousness (control or constraint), Neuroticism (negative affectivity or nervousness), and Openness to Experience (originality or open-mindedness) (Baumgartner, 2002). Each one of the Five Factors is composed of 6 facets and each facet is represented

by a set of adjectives - the markers (Goldberg, 1992). The short version contains a total of 60 items.

The long version showed good internal consistency and test-retest reliability, as well as the short version, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .86 to .95, and test-retest correlations ranging from .63 to .81 for the five dimensions (Costa & McCrae, 1992). Convergent and discriminant validities were also obtained. Similarly, psychometric studies developed by Lima (1997), confirmed the reliability and predictive validity of the Portuguese version of NEO-Personality Inventory.

6.4.4 Relationship Strength and Partner Quality scales

The Relationship Strength construct was measured by the Relationship Strength Indicators - Commitment, Intimacy, Satisfaction, and Self-connection - and the perceptions about brand as a relationship partner by the scale for Partner Quality (J. Aaker et al., 2004; see Appendix C).

Commitment is defined according to Morgan & Hunt (1994) as a lasting and strong desire to keep the relationship and the willingness to make efforts toward it, and is described according to the Gundlach et al. (1995)' works by items that reflect the instrumental nature of the investments in commitment, the time horizon that the construct implies, and more widely, the behaviors suggesting loyalty. Intimacy is posited according to Altman & Taylor (1973) as a deep comprehension of the partners as the result of information disclosure. It is measured by the perceived depth of brand's understanding of the consumers and, vice-versa, by the consumers' understanding of the brand, and consumers' willingness to share personal information with brand that allows for more intimate relational ties. Satisfaction includes as according to the work of Lewis & Spanier (1979) items indicating evaluations of satisfaction and happiness in the relationship, and according to Oliver (1997) perceptions about the differential between relationship

performance and expectations. Self-Connection is defined according to Aron et al. (2000) as deep and strong ties created by actions that evoke the person's identity system, and assesses according to Fournier (1998) the degree to which the relationship delivers on nuclear identity themes, or according to Belk (1988a, 1988b) on expression of real and collective selves.

Partner Quality, which captures the inferences the consumer makes from the observation of brand performance as a partner, includes items that focus on aspects of trust and trustworthiness (Moorman et al., 1993; Sheppard & Sherman, 1998; Braun & Zaltman, 2000), "behavioral indicators of benevolence", "problem-solving prowess", "perceived reliability and dependability" (J. Aaker et al., 2004, p. 7), and transgression commission (Smith et al., 1999).

These multi-item scales were developed for a longitudinal experimental study in the USA consumer context that attempted to explain the evolution of Consumer-Brand Relationships (see Section 3.2.3). The longitudinal field experiment involved a fictitious on-line photographic service brand, two different brand personalities - Sincerity and Excitement (Brand Personality Dimensions; J. Aaker et al., 1997) - and two different transgressions. Questionnaires were passed three points in time: before the transgression, after the transgression and post-recovery. The scales showed high internal consistency over the three points in time, with Cronbach's alpha ranging from 0.80. to .96.

6.5 Data Collection

The Relationship Ideals and Relationship Strength Indicators scales were translated from English to Portuguese. The Spanish Brand Personality framework was simultaneously translated from Spanish and English to Portuguese. For the Consumer Personality scale the

Portuguese version of NEO-FFI was used. The translations from English were assessed by two bilingual researchers and from Spanish by a bilingual researcher.

In order to test content validity (see for instance Lancastre & Lages, 2006), a preliminary instrument was developed. This procedure allows to improve the translation process, the comprehensiveness of the questions, the graphical aspects that avoided misunderstanding and non-response, and to collect suggestions and critiques. This instrument was replicated in two questionnaires according to two different groups of brands. Each group contained two different brands and one common brand (Coca-cola), from the 2005 SuperBrands for Portugal. The first group contained Continente (stores/supermarkets), Vodafone (mobile communications service provider), and Coca-cola (the control brand). The second group contained TAP (the Portuguese airline company), Martini (alcoholic drink), and Coca-cola. 42 questionnaires were collected, mainly between faculty staff – professors and administrative staff – and some post-graduate students. This stage helped also to develop a group of questions about brand familiarity, brand usage, and brand attitude for the final instruments (see Appendix E).

The final sample was collected using non-random methods. Participants were contacted directly by the volunteers who explained the purpose of the study and gave them the questionnaire with the instructions. These participants were instructed to answer the questionnaires when alone and then to return them. Participants were not paid.

Each participant answered one of the two different questionnaires related to the two groups of brands (see table 6.1). The order in which the five brands were presented in the questionnaires was rotated. Also, the order in which the personality and consumer-brand relationship traits appeared was counterbalanced for each questionnaire to avoid primacy and regency effects (J. Aaker, 1997).

In the first section of the instruments, the participants were asked about some own demographic characteristics: Gender, Age, State, Occupation, and Educational Level. Then,

they answered the short version of the NEO-FFI Scale in a 5-point Likert scale (0 = Strongly disagree, 4 = Strongly agree) under the label of "Consumer characteristics", with the follow instructions:

Carefully read each one of the following sentences and check the answer which best represents your opinion. Answer all the questions.

The second section of the instruments assesses the constructs of Brand Personality, Consumer-Brand Relationship, Relationship Strength, and Partner Quality. This section is repeated for every five brands of each questionnaire. First, the participants were asked about their familiarity with the brand in a 5-point Likert scale (1 = I don't know the brand, 5 = I know very well the brand). The answers of the respondents who rated below 3 or failed this item were rejected, unless they are (or have been) consumers/users of the brand. Second, respondents were invited to fill the Brand Personality scale in a 5-point Likert scale under the label of "Brand characteristics", with the follow instructions:

*If we asked you to give us your impression of a particular person, you might answer with a set of personality attributes. Now, let's think about brands in the same way. For example, you may be asked to rate the extent to which a set of attributes describes **…brand….** Please ask yourself, "If **…brand…** were a person, how would you describe him/her?", and then circle __one__ number between "Not al all descriptive" (1) to "Extremely descriptive" (5) for the following set of attributes.*

Third, consumers were asked about "Brand usage", that is if they use/consume the brand, why ("It is one of my favorite brands", "Price", "Convenience", "There is not other alternative", or "Other"), and how long ("Less than 6 months", "Between 6 months and 1 year", "More than 1 year up to 2 years", "More than 2 years"). In the case they are no longer brand users, they are asked why not. The respondents were advised to continue answering the questionnaire only in the case they are (or have been) current users of the brand. Otherwise, they were invited to stop answering the questionnaire.

Fourth, the brand users answered the Consumer-Brand Relationship scale in a 7-point scale under the label of "Characteristics of the relationship with the brand", with the following instructions:

*If we asked you to describe your relationship with a particular person, you might answer with a set of attributes for characterization that relationship. Now, let's think about brands in the same way. For example, you may be asked to rate the extent to which a set of attributes adequately describes your relationship with **…brand…**. Please ask yourself, "If **…brand…** were a person, how would you describe your relationship?", and then circle **<u>one</u>** number between "Very inadequate" (1) to "Very adequate" (7) for the subsequent set of attributes.*

Finally, the brand users answered the items related with Relationship Strength and Partner Quality in a 7-point Likert scale under the label of "Brand connection", with the follow instructions:

*Keep thinking about your relationship with **…brand…**. Tell us the extent to which you agree with the following sentences. Circle **<u>one</u>** number between "Completely disagree" (1) and "Completely agree" (7).*

6.6 Data Analysis

The empirical study included several statistical analyses that were of our exclusive responsibility. The statistics – univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA), multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA), multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), principal component analysis, internal consistency analysis, correlation and regression analysis - were performed by SPSS15.0 and, recently, by SPSS16.0 for Windows 2003. The path analysis by structural equations model (SEM) and the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) were developed using the AMOS 16.0 (Arbuckle, 2007) for Windows 2003. This

software was used for estimating parameters, computing goodness-of-fit measures, and making comparisons across groups.

Although most of the references presented in this chapter are based on studies developed in LISREL, AMOS corresponds to the usual capabilities of the usual SEM programs, and displays similar methods for estimating structural equation models (Ullman, 2007). It provides the very common Full-Information Maximum Likelihood (FIML) estimator that was used in this research. Additionally, AMOS has the advantage of replacing missing data by FIML, instead of using ad-hoc methods like listwise or pairwise deletion, or mean imputation (Arbuckle, 2007).

CHAPTER 7

RESULTS ANALYSIS

7.1 Introduction

This study followed a quantitative research approach based on a multivariate analysis design. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Models (SEM) were used to test the theoretical framework described in fig. 5.1. The analyses were conducted on the general sample of consumer-brand relationships under study (N = 733). The tests of generalizability were conducted on a sub-sample (N = 350) that was randomly extracted from that general sample. The hypotheses were considered acceptable at a statistical level of p equal to or less than 0.05.

In order to explore the several relationships proposed by the framework for analysis (see Section 5.3), multiple regression analyses were firstly performed. In this preliminary stage the hypotheses of study were tested. The analyses were conducted on the general sample of consumer-brand relationships (N = 733). The hypotheses were considered acceptable at a statistical level of p equal to or less than 0.05.

This chapter presents, first, a discussion about sampling profile and non-response bias analysis in Section 7.2. Second, in Section 7.3 a preliminary study based on multi-regressions analysis is described. Third, in Section 7.4 the measurement model is established, the path model is investigated, and the tests of mediation and generalizability are performed. Finally, in Section 7.5 an exploratory analysis about brands personality according to the Spanish Brand Personality Framework is presented.

7.2 Sample Profile and Non-response Bias

A sample of convenience by quotas, N = 350, close to the Portuguese population in terms of gender and age was obtained. According to the 2001 Census (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2002) age and gender were not significantly different from the Portuguese population (age: (Msample = 40.3, Mpop. = 39.5) $t = 0.97$, $p = .33$, gender: Qui-square = 0.100, $df = 1$, $p = .75$). Considering that 16% of Portuguese population is equal to or less than 14 years old and 14.3% are between 15-24 years old, it seems reasonable to assume that about 20% of population is less than 18 years old. Respondents in sample, however, are 18 years old or older.

The global sample (N = 350) aggregates two sub-samples referring respectively to each one of the two groups of brands (Ngroup1 = 176, Ngroup2 = 174; see table 6.1, Section 6.2). The sub-sample of Group 2 matched the Portuguese population in terms of age and gender (age: (Msample = 38.84, Mpop. = 39,5) $t = -.57$, $p = .57$, gender: Qui-square = 3.34, $df = 1$, $p = .07$). The sub-sample of Group 1 only matched the Portuguese population in terms of age since gender was significantly different from the Portuguese scores (age: (Msample = 41.74, Mpop. = 39.5) $t = 1.93$, $p = .06$, gender: Qui-square = 5.11, $df = 1$, $p = .02$). In contrast with the sub-sample of Group 2 and the Portuguese population, more males than females answered Questionnaire 1.

As table 7.1 shows, these two sub-samples also presented a high diversity of education level, and a similar distribution with the global sample N = 350. It is interesting to note that, according to the 2001 Census (Instituto Nacional de Estatística, 2002), 9% of population (age 10 or more) can not read.

Table 7.1

Comparison of the Educational Level between the Global Sample and the Two Sub-samples

Level of education	Global sample N = 350 (%)[1]	Sub-sample of Group 1 N = 176 (%)[1]	Sub-sample of Group 2 N = 174 (%)[1]
1st cycle (four years)	17.8%	17.1%	18.5%
2nd cycle (two years)	7.8%	6.3%	9.2%
3rd cycle (3 years)	10.3%	10.9%	9.8%
High school (3 years)	20.1%	18.9%	21.4%
Technological degree	3.2%	4.6%	1.7%
BA / Master[2]	37.9%	40,0%	35.8%
MSc. / Ph.D[3]	2.9%	2,3%	3.5%
TOTAL	100%	100%	100%

1 These percentages refer to the population who achieved some educational level even they did not conclude it;

2 Refers to the people who achieved either a Bachelor (BA), a scientific Bachelor (BSc. - 4 or 5 years), or a BA plus a Master/MBA.

3 Refers to the people who achieved either a BSc. (4 or 5 years) plus a scientific Master (MSc.) or a Ph.D

The sub-sample of Questionnaire 1 showed a higher mean age and educational level, and higher proportion of men than women. This can be explained by the two different

groups of brands. Questionnaire 1 included Mercedes and Land Rover while Questionnaire 2 included Volkswagen (a very popular brand, inclusively in the young population, that offers a wide range of utilitarian and economic models) and Luso (one of the most popular mineral water in Portugal). Moreover, more men than women presented relationships with Mercedes, Land Rover and Nike (Questionnaire 1), and more women than men had relationships with Chanel fragrance and Luso (Questionnaire 2).

According to Weinfurt (2005), a MANOVA should be performed first in the case of multiple dependent variables. If the multivariate test shows significance then one univariate ANOVA for each one of the dependent variables can be developed. This procedure avoids the possibility of a Type I error which can be defined as "the probability of detecting a significant effect when there is no real effect in nature" (Kleinbaum et al. 1988; cit. in Weinfurt, p. 247). This occurrence may happen when unwarranted multiple ANOVAs are performed first.

In this study three MANCOVAS were conducted in order to compare the different dimensions of the Brand Personality scale, the Consumer-Brand Relationship scale and, simultaneously, the Relationship Strength and the Partner Quality scales in the two sub-samples. Age, gender and education level were used as covariates in order to control their effects on the dependent variables. No significant differences were found among the rates of Brand Personality for Coca-Cola [λwilks = .985, $F(5, 307) = .910$, $p = .48$]. However, the unvariated tests showed a trend for the sub-sample of Group 2 to present higher levels of Excitement [$F(4, 311) = 3.875$, $p = .05$] and Passion [$F(4, 311) = 3.838$, $p = .05$] compared to the sub-sample of Group 1. Regarding the Consumer-Brand Relationship scale, the MANCOVA showed a significant effect [λwilks = .974, $F(2, 242) = 3.270$, $p = .04$], however the unvariated tests did not show significant differences for both dimensions between the two sub-samples [Intimacy-Loyalty - $F(4, 243) = .140$, $p = .71$; Passion - $F(4, 243) = 1.935$, $p = .17$]. The MANCOVA for Relationship Strength and Partner Quality did not show significant effects [λwilks = .993, $F(5, 237) = .323$, $p = .90$].

A fourth MANCOVA, conducted in order to compare the Consumer Personality rates in the two sub-samples, did not show significant differences among them [λwilks = .989, F(5, 322) = .732, p = .60]. Age, gender and education level were also used as covariates.

In order to test the conceptual model (see fig. 5.1), a sample of consumer-brand relationships was extracted from the 350 valid questionnaires as according to the procedure used for sampling building by Cronin & Taylor (1992). The fact that J. Aaker's Brand Personality framework might not work with aggregating data of a single product category (Austin et al., 2003) was determinant in the choice of this sampling strategy. The sample (N = 733) was composed by the Brand Relationships collected with the two Questionnaires. Table 7.2 presents the total number of consumer-brand relationships obtained by brand and by gender.

7.3 Regression Analysis

A regression is the most used statistical method for conducting studies exploring relationships between variables (Bryman & Cramer, 2001). A Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) is a useful technique for testing theoretical models aimed at investigating the set of variables (the predictive variables) that predict the score of one variable (criterion variable) (Brace et al., 2003). A MRA represents a more robust method for testing the hypotheses of study than the analysis of individual correlations between the observable variables, since "the absolute level of prediction must be at least as good, and most likely better, with multiple predictors than with any one of these predictors taken by itself" (Licht, 2005, p. 22).

Table 7.2

Number of Consumer-Brand Relationships Obtained by Brand and by Gender

Brand	Nº of relationships	% of relationships	Nº of relationships (Men)	Nº of relationships (Women)
Coca-Cola	252 118 (Quest.1) 133 (Quest. 2)	34%	120	132
Continente	124	17%	71	53
Luso	120	16%	47	73
Nike	92	12,6%	49	43
Volkswagen	49	7%	22	27
Chanel	42	6%	9	33
Mercedes	34	5%	19	15
Land Rover	19	2.6%	12	7
Ferrari	1	0%	1	0
Total	**733**	**100%**	**350**	**383**

The independent contribution of the predictors' variables on the criterion variable can be assessed by two different indexes: the partial regression coefficients (*Beta*) and the partial coefficients of correlation (r_p). They differ in the fact that while partial regression coefficients measure the amount of change that occurs in the criterion when the predictor changes one unit, the partial coefficients of correlation indicate the degree in which the individual variance of the predictor explains the variance on the criterion (i.e., shared variance). While these both indexes provide the independent contribution of a predictor, the bivariated correlation (*r*) captures the degree of relationship between a predictor and the criterion, ignoring instead of controlling the other predictors (Licht, 2005). In this study it

was chosen to examine only the *Beta* coefficients since they serve more efficiently the test of hypotheses.

In order to explore the several relationships proposed by the conceptual model in fig. 5.1, several multiple regression analyses were performed. The analyses were conducted on the general sample of consumer-brand relationships (N = 733). The consumers' responses to the items showed high internal consistency for each dimension of Brand Personality (Cronbach's alphas ranged from .80 to .90), of Consumer-Brand Relationship (Cronbach's alphas were .89 and .91, respectively), of Relationship Strength (Cronbach's alphas ranged from .87 to .93), and for the one-dimensional scale of Partner Quality (Cronbach's alpha was .91). With regard to Consumer Personality, high internal consistency was achieved for the measures of Neuroticism and Conscientiousness (Cronbach's alphas were, respectively, .82 and .80), and acceptable internal consistency for Extroversion and Openness. For these two dimensions the Cronbach's alpha was .71 in each case, above the minimum of .70 recommended by Nunnally (1978, cit. in Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006; see also Hair et al., 1998). Therefore, the items were averaged for each one of the factors all over the scales (Bagozzi et al., 1998). Although Agreeableness showed poor internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .54, the items were also averaged in a single factor as according to the procedure used by Bagozzi & Dholakia (for more details about the psychometric studies of the scales see Section 7.4.1). The factors served as variables in the regressions.

Two analyses involving the independent variable Consumer Personality were conducted: Consumer Personality (measured by the Portuguese version of NEO-FFI; Costa & McCrae, 1985; translated by Lima & Simões, 2000) predicts Partner Quality (measured by the Partner Quality scale; J. Aaker et al., 2004), and Consumer Personality predicts Consumer-Brand Relationship (measured by the short version of the Relationship Ideals Scale; Fletcher et al., 1999). Three analyses involving the independent variable Brand Personality were conducted: Brand Personality (measured by Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions; J. Aaker et al., 2001) predicts Partner Quality, Brand Personality predicts Consumer-Brand Relationship, and Brand Personality predicts Relationship Strength

(measured by the Relationship Strength Indicators; J. Aaker et al., 2004). One analysis involving the independent variable Consumer-Brand Relationship was conducted: Consumer-Brand Relationship predicts Relationship Strength. Finally, two correlations between the independent variable Partner Quality and each one of the two Consumer-Brand Relationships were assessed.

A multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using Partner Quality as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Consumer Personality questionnaire - Neuroticism, Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness - as the predictor variables indicated that, when taken together, the five dimensions of Consumer Personality significantly predict Partner Quality [$F(5, 700) = 3.28$, $p < .01$]. However this composite explained only 2% of the dependent variable variance (R = .15). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Neuroticism accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with Partner Quality (*Beta* = .13, $p < .01$). Table 7.3 provides the general results for this analysis.

A multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the dimension of Intimacy-Loyalty of Consumer-Brand Relationship as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Consumer Personality questionnaire - Neuroticism, Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness - as the predictor variables indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 703) = 3.80$, $p < .05$]. However this composite explained only 3% of the dependent variable variance (R = .16). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Neuroticism accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Intimacy-Loyalty Relationship (*Beta* = .11, $p < .05$).

A second multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the dimension of Passion of Consumer-Brand Relationships as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Consumer Personality questionnaire - Neuroticism, Extroversion, Openness, Agreeableness, and Conscientiousness - as the predictor variables indicated that, when

Table 7.3

Consumer Personality as Predictor of Partner Quality

Consumer Personality Dimensions	Partner Quality
	$N = 706$, $R = .15$, $R^2 = .02$, $p < .01$
Neuroticism	$Beta = .13$, $t = 3.040$, $p < .01$
Extroversion	Non-significant
Openness	Non-significant
Agreeableness	Non-significant
Conscientiousness	$Beta = .09$, $t = 2.067$, $p < .05$
Relationship explained by	Neuroticism and Conscientiousness

taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 703) = 5.02$, $p < .001$]. However this composite explained only 3% of the dependent variable variance ($R = .19$). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Neuroticism and Extroversion accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Passion relationship (*Beta* $= .11$, $p < .01$ and *Beta* $= .10$, $p < .05$, respectively). Table 7.4 provides the general results for these two regression analyses.

A multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using Partner Quality as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Brand Personality questionnaire - Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion - as the predictor variables indicated that, when taken together, the five dimensions of Brand Personality significantly predict Partner Quality [$F(5, 722) = 57.6$, $p < .001$]. This composite explained 29% of the dependent variable variance ($R = .53$). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Sincerity

Table 7.4

Consumer Personality as Predictor of Consumer-Brand Relationship

Consumer Personality Dimensions	Intimacy-Loyalty Relationship	Passion Relationship
	$N = 709$, $R = .16$, $R^2 = .03$, $p < .01$	$N = 709$, $R = .19$, $R^2 = .03$, $p < .001$
Neuroticism	$Beta = .11$, $t = 2.57$, $p < .05$	$Beta = .11$, $t = 2.697$, $p < .01$
Extroversion	Non-significant	$Beta = .10$, $t = 2.503$, $p < .05$
Openness	$Beta = -.08$, $t = -2.106$, $p < .05$	$Beta = -.09$, $t = -2.314$, $p < .05$
Agreeableness	Non-significant	$Beta = .09$, $t = 2.159$, $p < .05$
Conscientiousness	Non-significant	Non-significant
Relationship explained by	Neuroticism, Openness (negative direction)	Neuroticism, Extroversion, Agreeableness, Openness (negative direction)

accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with Partner Quality ($Beta = .39$, $p < .001$). Table 7.5 provides the general results for this analysis.

A multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the dimension of Intimacy-Loyalty of Consumer-Brand Relationship as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Brand Personality questionnaire - Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion - as the predictor variables indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 725) = 198.75$, $p < .001$] and its composite explained 58% of the dependent variable variance ($R = .76$). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Sincerity, as hypothesized (hypothesis 1.1, Section 5.3), accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Intimacy-Loyalty relationship ($Beta = .60$, $p < .001$).

Table 7.5

Brand Personality as Predictor of Partner Quality

Brand Personality Dimensions	Partner Quality
	N = 728, R = .53, R^2 = .29, p < .001
Excitement	Non-significant.
Sincerity	*Beta* = .39, *t* = 7.636, *p* < .001
Sophistication	*Beta* = .26, *t* = 4.59, *p* < .001
Peacefulness	Non-significant
Passion	Non-significant
Relationship explained by	Sincerity, Sophistication

A second multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the dimension of Passion of Consumer-Brand Relationship as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Brand Personality questionnaire - Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 725) = 249.95$, $p < .001$] and its composite explained 63% of the dependent variable variance (R = .80). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Excitement, as hypothesized (hypothesis 1.2, Section 5.3), and Passion accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Passion relationship (*Beta* = .35, p < .001 and *Beta* = .28, *p* < .001, respectively). Table 7.6 provides the general results for these two regression analyses.

A multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Commitment indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Brand

Table 7.6

Brand Personality as Predictor of Consumer-Brand Relationship

Brand Personality Dimensions	Intimacy-Loyalty Relationship	Passion Relationship
	$N = 731$, R = .76, R^2 = .58, $p < .001$	$N = 731$, R = .80, R^2 = .63, $p < .001$
Excitement	Non-significant	*Beta* = .35, *t* = 8.212, *p* < .001
Sincerity	*Beta* = .60, *t* = 15.54, *p* < .001	*Beta* = .10, *t* = 2.695, *p* < .01
Sophistication	*Beta* = .21, *t* = 4.867, *p* < .001	*Beta* = .11, *t* = 2.674, *p* < .01
Peacefulness	*Beta* = .10, *t* = 2.238, *p* < .05	Non-significant
Passion	Non-significant	*Beta* = .28, *t* = 6.346, *p* < .001
Relationship explained by	Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness	Excitement, Passion, Sophistication, Sincerity

Personality scale - Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion - as the predictor variables indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 724) = 48.472$, $p < .001$] and its composite explained 25% of the dependent variable variance (R = .50). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Sincerity accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Commitment indicator (*Beta* = .29, *p* < .001).

A second multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Intimacy indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Brand Personality scale - Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 723) = 46.20$, $p < .001$] and its composite explained 24% of the dependent variable variance (R =

.49). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Sincerity accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with Intimacy (*Beta* = .26, *p* < .00).

A third multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Satisfaction indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Brand Personality scale - Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 723)$ = 66.68, *p* < .00] and its composite explained 32% of the dependent variable variance (R = .56). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Sincerity accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Satisfaction (*Beta* = .29, *p* < .001).

A fourth multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Self-connection indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Brand Personality scale - Excitement, Sincerity, Sophistication, Peacefulness, and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(5, 720)$ = 60.90, *p* < .001] and its composite explained 30% of the dependent variable variance (R = .55). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Sincerity accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with Self-connection (*Beta* = .30, *p* < .001).

These four multiple regression analyses have provided support for hypothesis 2.1 (see Section 5.3). The respective results are presented in table 7.7.

A multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Commitment indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Consumer-Brand Relationship scale – Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(2, 729)$ = 149.687, *p* < .001] and its

Table 7.7

Brand Personality as Predictor of Relationship Strength

Brand Personality Dimensions	Commitment	Intimacy	Satisfaction	Self-Connection
	N = 730, R = 0.50, R^2 = 0.25, $p < .001$	N = 729, R = 0.49, R^2 = 0.24, $p < .001$	N = 729, R = 0.56, R^2 = 0.32, $p < .001$	N = 726, R = 0.55, R^2 = 0.30, $p < .001$
Excitement	*Beta* = .16, $t = 2.671, p < .01$	*Beta* = .20, $t = 3.225, p < .01$	*Beta* = .12, $t = 2.062, p < .05$	Non-significant
Sincerity	*Bet*a = .29, $t = 5.522$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .26, $t = 5.047$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .29, t = 5.783, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .30, $t = 5.922$, $p < .001$
Sophistication	Non-significant	*Beta* = .20, $t = 3.41, p < .01$	*Beta* = .20, $t = 3.575, p < .001$	*Beta* = .18, $t = 3.162, p < .01$
Peacefulness	*Beta* = -.13, $t = -2.414, p < .05$	Non-significant	Non-significant	Non-significant
Passion	*Beta* = .16, $t = 2.491, p < .05$	Non-significant	Non- significant.	*Beta* = .20, $t = 3.354, p < .01$
Relationship explained by	Sincerity, Excitement, Peacefulness (negative direction), Passion	Sincerity, Excitement, Sophistication	Sincerity, Sophistication, Excitement	Sincerity, Passion, Sophistication

composite explained 29% of the dependent variable variance (R = .54). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Passion relationship accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with Commitment (*Beta* = .35, $p < .001$).

A second multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Intimacy indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Consumer-Brand Relationship scale – Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(2, 728) = 168.252$, $p < .001$] and its composite explained 32% of the dependent variable variance (R = .56). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships accounted for similar contributions to the relationship with Intimacy (*Beta* = .31, $p < .001$, in each case).

A third multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Satisfaction indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Consumer-Brand Relationship scale – Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(2, 728) = 192.123$, $p < .001$] and its composite explained 35% of the dependent variable variance (R = .59). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships accounted for similar contributions to the relationship with Satisfaction (*Beta* = .31, p < .001; and *Beta* = .33, $p < .001$, respectively).

A fourth multiple regression analysis (*enter* method) using the Self-connection indicator of Relationship Strength as the dependent variable and the dimensions of the Consumer-Brand Relationship scale – Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion - as the predictor variables was conducted. This analysis indicated that, when taken together, the effect of these predictors on the criterion variable was statistically significant [$F(2, 725) = 213.137$, $p < .001$] and its composite explained 37% of the dependent variable variance (R = .61). The analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships accounted for similar contributions to the relationship with Self-connection (*Beta* = .32, $p < .001$; and *Beta* = .35, p < .001, respectively).

However these four analyses have provided support for hypothesis 4, hypothesis 4.1 (see Section 5.3) was not supported. Table 7.8 describes the general results for the four regressions.

Table 7.8

Consumer-Brand Relationship as Predictor of Relationship Strength

Brand Relationship Dimensions	Commitment	Intimacy	Satisfaction	Self-Connection
	$N = 732$, $R = .54$, $R^2 = .29$, $p < .001$	$N = 731$, $R = .56$, $R^2 = .32$, $p < .001$	$N = 731$, $R = .59$, $R^2 = .35$, $p < .001$	$N = 728$, $R = .61$, $R^2 = .37$, $p < .001$
Intimacy-Loyalty	*Beta* = .23, $t = 5.493$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .31, $t = 7.401$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .31, $t = 7.717$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .32, $t = 7.855$, $p < .001$
Passion	*Beta* = .35, $t = 8.321$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .31, $t = 7.347$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .33, $t = 8.058$, $p < .001$	*Beta* = .35, $t = 8.737$, $p < .001$
Relationship explained by	Passion, Intimacy-Loyalty	Intimacy-Loyalty, Passion	Passion, Intimacy-Loyalty	Passion, Intimacy-Loyalty

The correlations between the independent variable Partner Quality and each one of the two Brand Relationships were also assessed. These analyses demonstrated two strong relationships: between Partner Quality and Intimacy-Loyalty relationship ($R = .60$, $R^2 = .36$, $p < .001$), and between Partner Quality and Passion relationship ($R = .47$, $R^2 = .21$, $p < .001$).

7.4 SEM Analysis

7.4.1 Measurement model

According to Bagozzi & Burnkrant (1979), the convergent validity of the measures is a pre-requisite for establishing predictive validity. However, convergent validity represents only the first requirement of construct validity which requires also discriminant validity evidence (Campbell & Fiske, 1959). Convergent validity is "the degree to which multiple attempts to measure the same concept are in agreement", and discriminant validity is "the degree to which measures of different concepts are distinct" (Bagozzi & Yi, 1993, p. 144). An evidence of convergent validity can be achieved by examining the factor loadings of each measure that should be high and significant (Bagozzi & Foxall, 1996). In respect to discriminant validity, if different measures access the same construct it will not be warranted (Bagozzi & Yi). Thus, high degrees of correlation between exogenous variables means they share big amounts of explained variance on the construct that may be an indication of discriminant validity absence (Bagozzi et al., 2001).

Validity evaluates the accuracy of constructs. However, it is not a guarantee of their internal consistency (Hair et al., 1998). The reliability of the measures should be assessed since it ascertains the degree of error a measure contains. If one of the measures were not consistent with the data it would not be legitimate to investigate further hypotheses of study (Strube, 2004). Thus, in this study it was first examined the internal consistency of the measures. Reliabilities were calculated through Cronbach's alphas coefficients based on the items (measures) of a given scale (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). Reliabilities were all acceptable with coefficients above .80, except for Consumer Personality with an alpha of .71. Table 7.9 presents the mean, standard deviations, and the standardized Cronbach's alphas for the five scales.

Table 7.9

Mean, Standard Deviations, and Reliabilities of the Scales

Scales	Mean	Standard deviation	Reliability[1]
Brand Personality	3.44	.41	.95
Consumer-Brand Relationship	4.47	.37	.93
Consumer Personality	2.48	.53	.73
Relationship Strength	3.42	.56	.95
Partner Quality	4.24	.24	.91

1 Refers to the standardized Cronbach's alphas. Except for Consumer Personality, the standardized coefficients were equal to the non-standardized coefficients.

Note that standardization is a way of improving reliability, which attempts to control the source of measurement error (Strube, 2004).

One common and effective way of assessing construct validity is through first order confirmatory factor analysis model (CFA) (Steenkamp & Van Trijp, 1991). Developing a CFA corresponds to the specification of the measurement model, that is to say, the transition from the factor analysis phase, where one has no control over which variables describe each factor, to the confirmatory phase, where one specifies which variables (indicators) define each latent construct (factor) (Hair et al., 1998). As DiStefano (2002) suggests, a covariance matrix was used as input to CFA analyses since it has the advantage of allowing valid comparisons between different populations or samples, as opposed to when models are estimated with a correlation matrix. The covariance matrix was estimated from the ordered categorical data using the estimator Maximum Likelihood with Pearson Product-Moment input (ML-PPM) that assumes Likert data as if it was continuous.

A CFA was conducted in order to assess the correspondence between measures and data, using the general sample of relationships (N = 733). Each item or component was restricted to load on its pre-specified factor with the five first-order factors allowed to

correlate freely (Lages & Fernandes, 2005). This model contained 5 latent variables, corresponding to the constructs of Brand Personality, Consumer-Brand Relationship, Consumer Personality, Relationship Strength, and Partner Quality, and 22 measures. As before, the items were averaged for each one of the components of the scales. These composite variables (Grimm & Yarnold, 2004) served as indicators in the CFA, except in the case of the one-dimensional scale of Partner Quality where the six items served as measures. This strategy was subordinated to the minimum sample size requirements for SEM designs that demands a ratio of 5 cases for each estimated parameter (Bentler, 1989; cit. in Bagozzi et al., 2001).

The approach of measurement used for the first four constructs (Brand Personality, Consumer-Brand, Consumer Personality, and Relationship Strength) is termed by Bagozzi & Foxall (1996) the most aggregative approach (i.e., the items in a factor are aggregated in a single indicator), and the approach used for the fifth construct of Partner Quality is termed the most disaggregate (i.e., each item corresponds to a different indicator). While the first approach has the disadvantage of lost information and attenuates the distinctiveness between components, the second is very sensitive to measurement error and requires large samples due to the necessity of estimating many parameters.

Missing values were treated by mean imputation. This procedure was chosen because, first, missing values were scattered throughout cases and variables which could represent an important loss of information if a deleting process were chosen. Second, the most failed items were related to the Consumer Personality scale, suggesting a non-random distribution among the data and a likable distortion of sample whether cases were deleted. Third, mean imputation is easy to perform and, since the rate of missing values was much smaller than 5%, similar results were expectable from the almost other procedures (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). It is interesting to note that, although AMOS allows for replacing missing data in a sophisticated way by FIML estimates, similar results were achieved when performing CFA and SEM analyses with these two different procedures (mean imputation and FIML estimates).

Results, as interpreted by the goodness-of-fit measures, indicated that the model fits the data well. The chi-square of the model was significant ($\chi^2(107) = 408.4$, $p < .001$) in opposition with the convention that an acceptable model is one that p is equal or in excess of .05. The chi-square test provides an indication about how far the hypothesized model is from reality, testing whether the measures fit the population covariance matrix of the observed variables. It ranges from zero (perfect fit) to infinite (extreme lack of fit) (Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1992). Since the chi-square statistic is sensitive to sample size because it is a component of the qui-square test's formula (Kaplan, 1990), additional fit measures (independent of sample size) are recommended. Besides, chi-square does not provide a degree of fit in contrast with the measures normed from 0 to 1 (Bagozzi & Foxall, 1996), such as: the Normed Fit Index (NFI), the Comparative Fit Index (CFI), the Incremental Fit index (IFI) , and the Tucker-Lewis Fit Index (TLI) (Lages & Fernandes, 2005). This model achieved .95, .96, .96, and .95 for NFI, CFI, IFI, and TLI, respectively. Since larger values indicated higher levels of goodness-of-fit, values of .90 or bigger are recommended for an acceptable fit. Additionally, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA) was assessed, which is a good indicator of goodness-of-fit for large samples (Hair et al., 1998) and includes a penalty for lack of parsimony (Lancastre & Lages, 2006). The model has provided again evidence of a good fit with a RMSEA of .06 since acceptable values range from .05 to .08, as according to Hair et al (1998).

The analysis of the standardized loadings of each indicator on its construct, which were all statistically significant and sufficiently large (the small one was .50, much above the minimum usually required of .30, as according DiStefano, 2002) with an average loading size of .77, demonstrated evidence of convergent validity.

Discriminant validity was assessed in three different ways. First, it was checked whether the correlations between any two constructs were significantly different from 1. The test showed that the respective confidence intervals (± two standard errors) do not include the value of 1 (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006), suggesting evidence of discriminant validity. The matrix of constructs inter-correlations is present in table 7.10.

Table 7.10

Matrix of Constructs Inter-correlations

	BP	C-BR	CP	RS	PQ
BP	1				
C-BR	.82*	1			
CP	- .08	- .10	1		
RS	.63*	.71*	- .07	1	
PQ	.51*	.58*	- .05	.69*	1

BP = Brand personality, C-BR = Consumer-Brand Relationship, CP = Consumer Personality, RS = Relationship Strength, PQ = Partner Quality.

* Correlation is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

Note: All correlations are significantly less than 1.

Second, two chi-square tests were performed for each pair of latent constructs on a measurement model constraining their correlation to equal 1 and on a baseline measurement model without this constraint. The difference between these two chi-square tests was submitted again to a chi-square test for each pair of constructs (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). This procedure resulted in 10 significant chi-square-difference tests, providing also evidence of discriminant validity.

Third, the shared variance between any two constructs (i.e., the square of their correlation) was compared with their both extracted variances (i.e., average variances explained in the items by the constructs) (Fornell & Larcker's, 1981, MacKenzie et al., 1999, cit. in Lages et al., 2005). Since the tests showed that all the shared variances were less than the respective extracted variances, evidence of discriminant validity in the measures of all constructs under study was again taken for granted (see table 7.11).

Table 7.11

Matrix of Squared Constructs Inter-correlations and Construct Extracted Variances

	BP	C-BR	CP	RS	PQ
$\rho_{vc(n)}$	.69	.69	.30	.71	.74
BP	1				
C-BR	.67	1			
CP	.01	.01	1		
RS	.39	.51	.01	1	
PQ	.23	.34	.00	.47	1

BP = Brand personality, C-BR = Consumer-Brand Relationship, CP = Consumer Personality, RS = Relationship Strength, PQ = Partner Quality; $\rho_{vc(n)}$ = variance extracted (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; cit. in Lages et al., 2005).

Note: The squared constructs inter-correlations in cells correspond to the shared variances between constructs.

7.4.2 Path model parameter estimates

In order to check the overall goodness-of-fit of the model, a covariance matrix was also used as input. According to (Hair et al., 1998), "the researcher should employ the variance-covariance matrix any time a true "test of theory" is being performed, as the variances and covariances satisfy the assumptions of the methodology and the appropriate form of the data for validating causal relationships" (pp. 603-604). Since the model showed construct validity, the path diagram was estimated. This step is comprised of key parameters estimation that provides an indication of the significance of the relationships of prediction, and the determination of the R^2 values (structural equation fits) that reflect the percentage of variance that the predictor explains in the dependent variable.

Fig. 7.1 presents the path diagram and the respective estimates. The Maximum Likelihood Estimator was again used in the sample of general relationships (N = 733). The

Fig. 7.1

Path Diagram
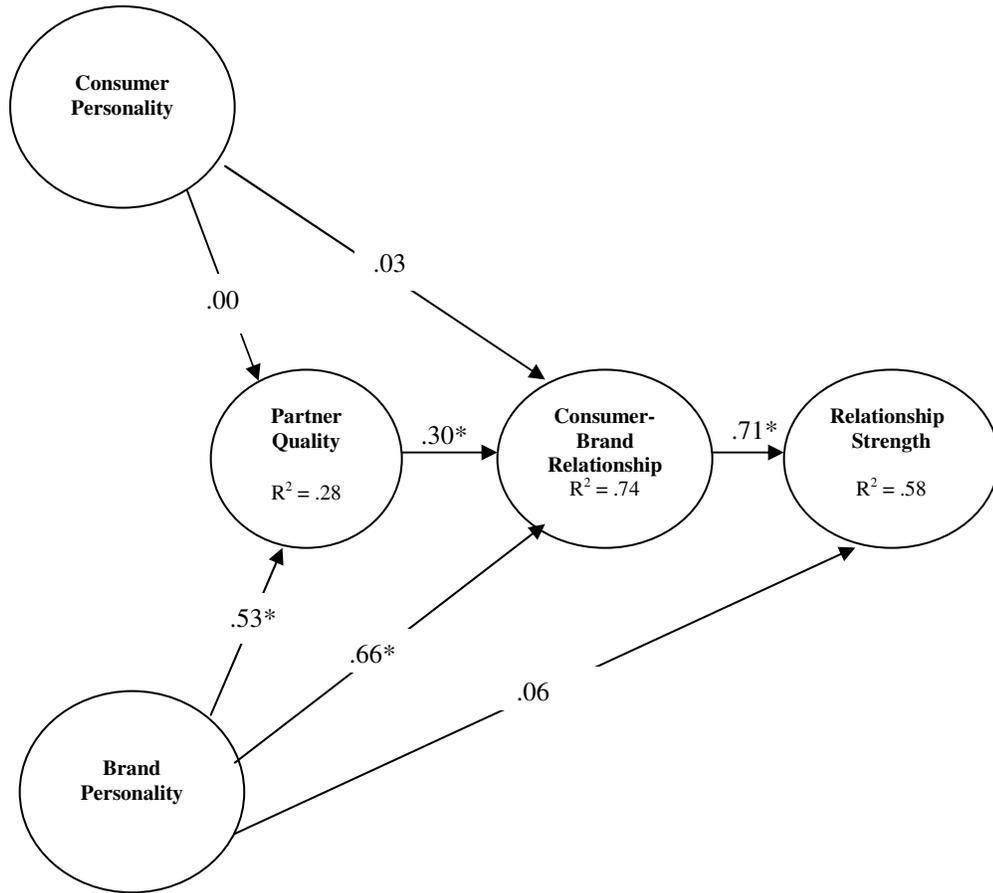
* Coefficient is significant at the .001 level (2-tailed).

Note: The estimates were completely standardized.

final model achieved a good fit: $\chi^2(109) = 519.0$, $p < .001$, RMSEA = .07, CFI = .95, IFI = .95, NFI = .94, and TLI = .94. Most of the direct paths in the figure were statistically significant, with the exception of the direct relationships between Consumer Personality

and Partner Quality, Consumer Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationship, and Brand Personality and Relationship Strength.

As expected, the estimates presented in table 7.12 confirmed that Brand Personality is a predictor of Consumer-Brand Relationships (hypothesis 1). Brand Personality had a significant positive direct effect (.66, $p < .01$) on Consumer-Brand Relationship. This prediction was strengthened by a significant indirect effect (.16, $p < .01$) through Partner Quality. Although small, this indirect effect gave support to the hypothesis that Partner Quality partially mediates the influence of Brand Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship (hypothesis 3).

Table 7.12

Standardized Effects of the Structural Model

	Partner Quality			Consumer-Brand R.			Relationship Strength		
	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total	Direct	Indirect	Total
BP	.53*		.53*	.66*	.16*	.82*	.06	.58*	.64*
C-BR							.71*		.71*
CP	.00		.00	.03		.03		.02	.02
RS									
PQ				.30*		.30*		.22*	.22*

BP = Brand personality, C-BR = Consumer-Brand Relationship, CP = Consumer Personality, RS = Relationship Strength, PQ = Partner Quality

* Coefficient is significant at the .01 level (2-tailed).

Note: Values in cells are completely standardized estimates. The rounding is the cause of some discrepancies between total effects and the respective direct effect plus the indirect effect.

According to Lehmann (2001), "treating moderation or mediation as a yes-no question leaves out a lot of information" (p. 91). Thus, a more continuous approach based on the size of the effects, ranging from 0 (complete mediation) to 1 (no mediation at all), seems to be a better and realistic way of testing these kind of relationships.

The total effect (.82, $p < .01$) showed that Brand Personality had a strong positive effect on Consumer-Brand Relationship. Since no significant effects were achieved for the path between Consumer Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationship and by contrast significant effects were found for Partner Quality on Consumer-Brand Relationship (.30, $p < .01$), it is reasonable to conclude that taken together both Brand Personality and Partner Quality explain almost 74% of Consumer-Brand Relationship ($R^2 = .74$).

Again as expected, a positive significant effect (.71, $p < .01$) of Consumer-Brand Relationship on Relationship Strength was achieved, providing support to the hypothesis that Consumer-Brand Relationship is a predictor of Relationship Strength (hypothesis 4). However, no support for the hypothesized influence of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength (hypothesis 2) was found since any significant direct effect appeared. This seems to indicate that about 58% of the variance in Relationship Strength was accounted by Consumer-Brand Relationship. Moreover, a significant indirect effect of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength (.58, $p < .01$) was achieved, suggesting that Consumer-Brand Relationship mediates all the effects of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength.

As shown above, no support was found for the hypothesized prediction of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship (hypothesis 5) since the analysis did not demonstrated significant effects for this path. Similarly, no significant indirect effects of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship through Partner Quality were demonstrated and, consequently, the hypothesis that Partner Quality partially mediates the effects of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship (hypothesis 6) was not implied.

Partner Quality showed a moderate to small indirect effect on Relationship Strength (.22, $p < .01$) through Consumer-Brand Relationship, and by contrast no significant indirect effects were found for Consumer Personality on Relationship Strength through Consumer-Brand Relationship as according to the relationships implied in the model of fig. 7.1.

7.4.3 Test of mediation

Since any path in fig.7.1 involving Consumer Personality was supported, only one formal test of mediation was performed for Partner Quality on Relationship Strength through Consumer-Brand Relationship. To perform the test a direct path from Partner Quality to Relationship Strength was added to the baseline model in fig. 7.1. Then, a qui-square difference test between these two models was performed (Bagozzi & Dholakia, 2006). The qui-square values of the one path added model and baseline model were $\chi^2(108) = 408,4.0$ and $\chi^2(109) = 519.0$, respectively. Since the qui-square difference test was significant ($\chi^2(1) = 110.6$, $p < .001$), the statistical significance of the direct path of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength was implied.

According to Ullman (2007), there are two main reasons to modify a structural equations model: first, to improve model fit and, second, to test hypotheses. One of the more common methods to do that is the chi-square difference tests.

A significant direct effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength (.40, p < .01) and a week significant indirect impact (.09, $p < .01$) were achieved for this added path. Further, the fit indices were in general slightly improved (CFI = .96, NFI = .95, IFI = .96, TLI = .95, and RMSEA = .06).

7.4.4 Generalizability

In order to investigate model generalizability, a sub-sample (N = 350) was randomly extracted from the general sample of consumer-brand relationships (N = 733), which included the same proportion of relationships for each brand presented in the general sample (see table 7.1). Thus, the sub-sample was composed by 121 consumer relationships with Coca-Cola, 59 with Continente, 57 with Luso, 44 with Nike, 24 with Volkswagen, 20 with Chanel, 16 with Mercedes, and 9 with Land Rover. This sample was quite smaller than the conventional minimum of 5:1 ratio of observations to parameter estimated. However, it represents a typical sample size of scientific literature (DiStefano, 2002).

A CFA was run on the sub-sample (N = 350), providing the same factorial structure as with the large sample (N = 733). The path diagram in fig. 7.1 also achieved a good fit for the small sample: $\chi^2(109) = 344.3$, $p = .00$, RMSEA = .079, CFI = .94, IFI = .91, NFI = .94, and TLI = .92.

According to the multiple group procedures (Jöreskog & Sörbon, 1996; cit. in Bagozzi et al., 2001) a simultaneous CFA was conducted in both samples to test whether the model presented an equal structure for both groups. Again, this model fit the data well: $\chi^2(214) = 663,1.3$, $p = .00$, RMSEA = .079, CFI = .96, IFI = .96, NFI = .95, and TLI = .95. Once the hypothesis of equality of model structure was established, it was necessary to access the statistical significance of the differences in the parameter estimates across the two groups, that is, to investigate the hypotheses of invariance (Bagozzi & Foxall, 1996) according to a specific order (Ullman, 2007).

The first step was to test the equality of factor loadings. A non-significant qui-square difference test of the multiple group restricted model to equal loadings against the unconstrained multiple group model (the baseline model) confirmed the failure to reject this hypothesis of invariance ($\chi_d^2(12) = 3.1$, $p > .05$). Equal factor loadings indicate that correspondence between factors and indicators are the same in both samples, and are generally accepted as the minimum degree of equivalence necessary for an adequate examination of regression parameters (Bagozzi et al., 2001). More constraints, however,

were introduced and the respective tests of invariance were performed before assessing the difference in the path diagram across the two groups. The second one consisted of the test of invariance of error variances. The constraints of equal error variances were introduced in the multiple group restricted model. A non-significant qui-square difference test ($\chi_d^2(19) =$ 16.8, $p > .05$) indicated the failure to reject this hypothesis. First, it was investigated whether factor variances and covariance matrices were equal across groups. Again, a non-significant qui-square difference test ($\chi_d^2(15) = 9$, $p > .05$) did not allow for the rejection of this hypothesis.

In a second step, the differences between regression coefficients in the path diagram of fig. 7.1 across groups were examined, considering the unconstrained structural multiple group model as the baseline. The constraints of regression weight equality were added, and a qui-square difference test was performed. A non-significant qui-square test ($\chi_d^2(41) =$ 22.5, $p > .05$) suggested that the hypothesis of regression weight invariance could not be rejected. Then, the constraints of structural residual variances equality was introduced and the respective invariance test was performed as before, providing again a non-significant qui-square test ($\chi_d^2(3) = 0.9$, $p > .05$).

The invariance of all regression coefficients, variances, and covariances across two groups indicated that the two samples represented the same population that means the failure to reject of the null hypothesis (Ullman, 2007).

7.5 Analysis of Brand Personality according to the Spanish Framework

In order to explore the applicability of Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions to the Portuguese population, an extra analysis involving the brands that served as stimulus in the

main study was performed. The tests were considered significant at a statistical level of $p <$ .05. For that, a sample of N = 1203 was extracted from the 350 valid questionnaires. To build this sample, it was considered, as before, all the Brand Personality questionnaires when the participant rated more than or equal to 3 on the brand's familiarity question. The answers of the respondents who failed this item were rejected, unless they were (or had been) consumers/users of the brand. Table 7.13 describes the individual brands' samples concerning to the sample size, age, gender, and educational level.

The mean age ranged from 38.36 (for Nike) to 41.85 (for Continente). The samples of Nike, Volkswagen and Ferrari presented the smallest mean ages, and the samples of Continente and Mercedes the biggest ones. All the brands' samples showed large and similar age intervals. While Coca-cola presented the most equity in the men to women ratio (49.7% of men and 50.3 of women), Land Rover and Mercedes showed the biggest proportion of men (69.2% and 61.0%, respectively) over women (30.8% and 39.0%, respectively). By contrast, Chanel and Luso showed the biggest proportion of women (69.4 and 60.3, respectively) over men (30.6 and 39.7, respectively). In respect to the educational level around 50% of the participants in every sample (except for Luso and Continente) had at least a B.A. All the samples presented a varied and not very different educational level profile.

A multivariate analysis of covariance (MANCOVA), using brand as the independent variable and the five dimensions of the Spanish framework as the dependent variables, was conducted in order to study the differences in personality among brands. The variables gender and education level were used as covariates in order to control their effects on the dependent variables [gender [λ_{wilks} = .977, $F(5, 1171)$ = 5.61, $p < .001$], educational level [λ_{wilks} = .927, $F(5, 1171)$ = 18.33, $p < .001$]]. Since age had no significant effect, it was not included as covariate. The F tests the multivariate effect of the independent variable Brand on the mean of the dependent variables (Grimm & Yarnold, 2005). This test is based on the linearly independent pairwise comparisons among the estimated marginal means. The

multivariate test showed that there were significant differences on personalities across brands [λwilks = .460, $F(40, 5176) = 24.82$, p < .001].

Table 7.13

Description of Brands' Samples

Brand	N	Age		Gender (%)		Educational Level (%)			
		Mean (S.D.)	Min Max	M	F	1st cycle	2nd & 3rd cycles	High school & Tech. degree	BA, Master & PhD
Coca-cola	322	39.79 (15.56)	18 - 86	49.7	50.3	17.5	17.8	22.8	41.9
Luso	151	38.6 (15.42)	18 - 86	39.7	60.3	17.3	21.7	23.4	38.0
Continente	149	41.85 (15.18)	18 - 81	55.0	45.0	17.3	16.0	20.6	46.0
Nike	124	37.36 (13.53)	18 - 75	53.2	46.8	9.6	20.0	23.2	47.2
Mercedes	121	40.62 (14.55)	19 - 81	61.0	39.0	10.6	17.9	26.0	45.5
Volkswagen	107	37.37 (14.41)	18 - 80	47.7	52.3	12.3	17.9	22.6	47.2
Chanel	85	38.24 (14.79)	18 - 86	30.6	69.4	10.7	14.2	25.0	50.0
Land Rover	82	40.78 (12.39)	18 - 81	69.2	30.8	7.7	17.6	22.0	52.8
Ferrari	62	37.98 (15.14)	18 - 80	56.9	43.1	10.9	14.0	21.9	53.1

The univariate tests indicated significant differences among brands on all five personality dimensions (see table 7.14). The *F* tested the univariate effect of Brand on each one of the personality dimensions. The stronger effects were found for Excitement (η^2 = .16), Passion (η^2 = .15), and Sophistication (η^2 = .13). In contrast, Sincerity (η^2 = .07) and Peacefulness (η^2 = .02) presented low effect sizes.

Table 7.14

Univariate Tests of the Effect of Brands on the Spanish Personality Dimensions

Brand Personality	*F*(8, 1175)	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Excitement	28.379	.00	.162
Sincerity	8.778	.00	.056
Sophistication	22.770	.00	.134
Peacefulness	2.513	.01	.017
Passion	26.602	.00	.153

The Pairwise Comparisons indicated several significant differences among brands regarding the personality dimensions. Excitement was significantly higher among Ferrari and Coca-cola, compared to the remaining brands, except Nike (which showed significantly higher scores compared to Luso, Continente, Volkswagen, Chanel, and Land Rover). Luso showed significantly lower Excitement compared to the remaining brands, except Continente and Chanel with which differences were not statistically significant. Continente

showed significantly lower Excitement compared to the remaining brands (except Chanel and Volkswagen), and Chanel also showed significantly lower Excitement compared to the remaining brands (except Mercedes, Land Rover, and Volkswagen).

Sincerity was significantly higher for Mercedes compared to the remaining brands, except Volkswagen which showed significantly higher scores compared to Coca-cola and Ferrari.

Sophistication was significantly higher for Mercedes compared to the remaining brands, except Ferrari and Chanel with which differences were not statistically significant. Ferrari showed significantly higher Sophistication compared to Continente, Luso, Coca-cola, and Land Rover. Chanel showed also significantly higher Sophistication compared to Continente and Luso. Continente showed significantly lower Sophistication compared to the remaining brands except Luso (which showed significantly lower scores compared to the remaining brands with exception of Volkswagen).

Peacefulness did not show significant differences among brands.

Passion was significantly higher for Ferrari compared to all the remaining brands, except Chanel which showed significantly higher scores compared to Continente, Luso, and Volkswagen. Continente showed significantly lower Passion compared to the remaining brands except Luso (which showed significantly lower scores compared to the remaining brands with exception of Volkswagen). The output of Pairwise Comparisons is available in Appendix F.

7.6 Discussion of the Results

This study used a quantitative research approach based on a multivariate analysis design. Two main studies were conducted. In Study 1 Multiple Regression Analyses (MRA) were conducted to explore the several relationships proposed by the model (see fig. 5.1), and to understand the extent to which Brand Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationships are related to each another. In study 2 a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Models (SEM) were used to test the measurement and structural models implied in the theoretical framework. Additionally, a third study was performed through Multivariate Analysis of Covariance (MANCOVA) in order to access the differences in the Spanish personality's dimensions across the brands under study, when the covariate effects of gender and educational level were controlled. Study 1 and study 2 were developed in the general sample of consumer-brand relationships (N = 733), and study 3 on a sample of Brand Personality questionnaires (N = 1203). For all the studies it was defined the statistical level of p equal to or less than 0.05.

In study 1, several Multiple Regressions Analyses were conducted. In testing the influence of Brand Personality on the Consumer-brand Relationship (hypothesis 1), two MRA using the Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions (J. Aaker et al., 2001) as predictors and each of the dimensions of the Relationship Ideals Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999) as criterion were conducted. All the MRA were statistically significant, indicating that, when taken together, the five dimensions of the Brand Personality framework significantly predict both the Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships. In particular Sincerity accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Intimacy-Loyalty relationship, and Passion personality accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with the Passion relationship, providing support to the hypotheses *H1.1* and *H1.2*, respectively.

While Sincerity showed a strong and significant impact on Intimacy-Loyalty relationship (*Beta* = .60, $p < .001$), the impact of Excitement on Passion relationship was significant and moderate (*Beta* = .35, $p < .001$). Sophistication showed a moderate to week significant positive impact on Intimacy-Loyalty relationship and a week significant positive

impact, as well as Sincerity, on the Passion relationship. Passion personality presented a moderate significant positive impact, as well as Excitement, on the Passion relationship (*Beta* = .28, *p* < .001), and Peacefulness showed a week significant positive impact on the Intimacy-Loyalty relationship.

In order to test the influence of Brand Personality on the Relationship Strength (hypothesis 2), four MRA were conducted using the Spanish dimensions as predictors and each of the indicators of the Relationship Strength scale (J. Aaker et al., 2004) as criterion. All the MRA were statistically significant, indicating that, when taken together, the five dimensions of Brand Personality significantly predict each one of the Relationship Strength Indicators. In particular, the analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Sincerity accounted for the greatest contribution to the individual relationships with all the Relationship Strength Indicators. These four analyses have provided support for hypothesis 2.1.

Regarding the hypothesized influence of Consumer-Brand Relationship on the Relationship Strength (hypothesis 4), four MRA were conducted using the Consumer-Brand Relationship dimensions as predictors and each of the indicators of the Relationship Strength scale as criterion. All the MRA were statistically significant, indicating that, when taken together, the two dimensions of the Relationship Ideals Scale significantly predict each one of the Relationship Strength Indicators. Since the analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships accounted for similar contributions to the relationship with all the Relationship Strength Indicators, hypothesis 4.1 was not supported.

With regard to the paths involving Consumer Personality as predictor, no relevant results were found. Although statistically significant, in both cases, the effects of the human personality dimensions (Costa & McCrae, 1992; translated by Lima & Simões, 2000), when taken together, on the criterion variables were to low, ranging from 2% of the variance explained for Partner Quality and 3% for Consumer-Brand Relationship. The

analysis of the beta weights demonstrated that Neuroticism accounted for the greatest contribution to the relationship with Partner Quality and the Intimacy-Loyalty relationship, and both Neuroticism and Extroversion accounted for the greatest contribution to the Passion relationship.

In testing the influence of Brand Personality on Partner Quality, as implied in the model, an MRA was conducted using the Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions as predictors and Partner Quality as the criterion. This MRA was statistically significant, indicating that, when taken together, the five dimensions of Brand Personality significantly predict Partner Quality. In particular both Sincerity and Sophistication showed strong to moderate significant positive effects on the perceptions of Partner Quality, in contrast to the remaining brand personalities which did not show significant effects.

In study 2, a CFA was used to access construct validity and to analyze the goodness-of-fit of the measurement model. Then, in order to further investigate the expected multiple linear relationships between latent variables, as the path diagram in fig. 7.1 suggests, a SEM analysis was developed. As expected, Brand Personality showed a strong significant positive direct effect on Consumer-Brand Relationship, giving support to hypothesis 1. This prediction was strengthened by a small significant indirect effect through Partner Quality, and also hypothesis 3 was supported. Thus, it seemed reasonable to conclude that, when taken together, Brand Personality and Partner Quality explain 74% of the variance in Consumer-Brand Relationship.

A strong positive significant effect of Consumer-Brand Relationship on Relationship Strength was achieved, giving support to the hypothesis 4. In contrast, no significant effect was found for the path of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength. Thus, hypothesis 2 was rejected. Moreover, a strong to moderate significant indirect effect of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength was achieved, suggesting that Consumer-Brand Relationship mediates all the effects of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength. Thus, it

was also concluded that Consumer-Brand Relationship has a strong impact on Relationship Strength since it accounts for 58% of the variance in Relationship Strength.

No significant direct path of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship was found. Thus, hypothesis 5 was rejected. Also, no significant indirect effects of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship through Partner Quality appeared and again hypothesis 6 was rejected.

Partner Quality showed a small positive indirect effect on Relationship Strength through Consumer-Brand Relationship, as implied in the structural model. A formal test of mediation demonstrated the statistical significance of the direct path of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength. The one path added model was tested, providing a moderate significant positive direct effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength and a week significant positive indirect effect for the same path. The fit indices of the extended model were in general slightly improved. Therefore, it seems that the effects of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength are only partially mediated by Consumer-Brand Relationship, in contrast with the initial model.

Still in the aim of the study 2, the generalizability of the model was examined in a sub-sample (N = 350) randomly extracted from the general sample of relationships (N = 733). This process respected the proportion of relationships for each brand presented in the general sample (see table 7.1). A multiple group procedures were used to access the several hypothesis of invariance. The tests suggested that the two samples represented the same population that supported the hypothesis of model generalizability to other similar populations under the same conditions and incidents that characterized the sample of study (Barker et al., 2005).

Generalizability is not only a question of sampling, other aspects as the setting, the time, the measures, etc., are also important. Moreover, a large sample size is not a guarantee of generalizability (Barker et al., 2005). Thus, this study did not allow inferences

to be made about external validity. That is, to what extent the results in this particular sample can be valid to other people with similar characteristics.

In study 3, a MANCOVA showed that there were significant differences in personalities across brands when gender and education level were controlled. Accordingly, the univariate tests indicated significant differences among brands in all five personality dimensions. The stronger effects were found for Excitement, Passion, and Sophistication (in that order). In contrast, Sincerity and Peacefulness presented the low effect sizes (in that order).

Regarding the personality dimensions (see Appendix F), the Pairwise Comparisons indicated several significant differences among brands under study. The comparative tests showed that Ferrari and Coca-cola were the brands that elicited the most Excitement, followed by Nike. On the other hand, Luso presented the lowest score in Excitement, followed by Continente and Chanel (in that order). In reference to the Sincerity dimension, Mercedes presented the best scores, followed at a considerable distance by Volkswagen. Sophistication was also significantly greatest for Mercedes compared to the remaining brands, except Ferrari and Chanel with which differences were not statistically significant. Continente showed significantly lower Sophistication followed by Luso. Peacefulness did not show significant differences among brands. In respect to Ferrari, this brand presented the highest scores in Passion compared to all the remaining brands except Chanel. By contrast, Continente and Luso showed the less Passion.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.1 Introduction

Research investigated the symbolic meaning of consumer behavior. The study was developed in line with two important theoretical propositions derived from the literature review: (1) The brand is a partner in a dyadic relationship with the consumer and (2) The brand personality influences the relationship the consumer establishes with the brand. As such, a conceptual framework was developed (see fig. 5.1), based on the general hypothesis of study that Brand Personality may nurture specific Consumer-Brand Relationships and those Consumer-Brand Relationships influence the quality, or the strength of the ties that consumers develop with brands.

The research incorporated several studies which each supported the general hypothesis of study. The results indicated that the personality of Sincerity and Sophistication may predict patterns of Intimacy-Loyalty and the personality of Excitement and Passion may predict patterns of Passion relationship. Moreover, the study provides two main contributions that have both academic and managerial implications. First, it emphasizes the role of consumer-brand relationship in understanding multi-brand, symbolic consumption

and second, it offers a more holistic perspective in the understanding of the construct Brand Personality.

This chapter summarizes, in Section 8.2, the results obtained from the several empirical studies. The main contributions and practical implications of the study are discussed in Section 8.3 and Section 8.4, respectively. In Section 8.5, the limitations of the study are presented and future research directions are proposed.

8.2 Summary

The results of each of the several studies conducted in this research presents evidence that supports strong influence of Brand Personality on the relationship the consumer establishes with the brand. While recognizing the eventual contribution of some external factors to this study (e.g., the product category or the context), the results in both studies showed a clear contribution of Brand Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship, providing support to hypothesis 1. This contribution was strengthened by a significant indirect effect through Partner Quality, and also the hypothesis of partial mediation of Brand Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship through Partner Quality (hypothesis 3) was supported. Since, the influence of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship was not significant and, consequently, hypothesis 5 was not supported, it is reasonable to conclude that, taken together, Brand Personality and Partner Quality explain about 74% of the variance in Consumer-Brand Relationship.

In particular results gave support to the hypotheses *H1.1* and *H1.2*. Indeed, the personality of Sincerity showed a strong positive impact on the Intimacy-Loyalty relationship, and Excitement showed a moderate positive impact on Passion relationship. Beyond our expectances, Sophistication showed a moderate to week positive impact on Intimacy-Loyalty, and a week positive impact, as well as Sincerity, on Passion relationship.

Passion personality presented a moderate positive impact on Passion relationship, and Peacefulness showed a weak positive impact on Intimacy-Loyalty. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude that the personalities of Sincerity, Sophistication and Peacefulness are associated with consumer-brand relationships of Intimacy-Loyalty, and personalities of Excitement and Passion are associated with consumer-brand relationships of Passion.

In reference to the templates of Partner Ideals in Intimate Relationships (see Appendix B), Sincerity and Excitement resemble, according to J. Aaker et al. (2004), the ideal partners of Warmth-Trustworthiness and Vitality-Attractiveness. According to Fletcher et al. (1999), the partner ideal of Warmth-Trustworthiness is strongly and positively correlated with the relationship ideal of Intimacy-Loyalty and the partner ideal of Vitality-Attractiveness is strongly and positively correlated with the relationship ideal of Passion. The Spanish personality of Sophistication (which includes a blending of some traits of US Competence dimension, as mentioned before) seems to share some traits with the Partner Status-Resources which is weakly to moderately correlated with Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships (Fletcher et al.). The personality of Passion (which was strongly and positively correlated with the personality of Excitement) shares traits with the Partner of Vitality-Attractiveness, and the personality of Peacefulness (which was strongly and positively correlated with the personality of Sincerity) shares traits with the Partner of Warmth-Trustworthiness.

Regarding the hypothesized influence of Consumer-Brand Relationship on Relationship Strength (hypothesis 4), another strong positive relationship was reported. It is interesting to note that both Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships showed similar positive moderate contributions for each one of the four strength indicators. Thus, it can be concluded that not only the Intimacy-Loyalty relationships seem to influence the Relationship Strength, as hypothesized, but also the Passion relationships. Consequently, hypothesis 4.1 was not supported.

SEM analysis did not demonstrate a significant direct effect of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength, contrary to which the hypothesis 2 suggests. Moreover, a strong to moderate significant indirect effect of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength was achieved, suggesting that Consumer-Brand Relationship mediates all the effects of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength. Thus, it can be concluded that Consumer-Brand Relationship explains about 58% of the variance in Relationship Strength.

These results were not consistent with the conceptual model for Consumer-Brand Relationships proposed by J. Aaker et al. (2004) where a direct effect of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength is indicated, and any mediation through Consumer-Brand Relationship is suggested. However, the study of multiple regressions analysis indicated that Sincerity accounted for the greatest contribution to all the Relationship Strength Indicators, giving support to the hypothesis 2.1. In contrast to the other brand personalities, Sincerity consistently demonstrated a positive moderate effect on Commitment, Intimacy, Satisfaction, and Self-Connection.

In contrast, the strong positive significant effect of Brand Personality on Partner Quality as the studies revealed was consistent with the conceptual model for Consumer-Brand Relationships proposed by J. Aaker et al. (2004). The results showed that only the personalities of Sincerity and Sophistication had significant effects on the perceptions of Partner Quality, which were positive and moderate to high in the case of Sincerity and positive and moderate in the case of Sophistication.

Regarding the role of Consumer Personality on Consumer-Brand Relationship and Partner Quality constructs, as reported in the framework for analysis, the studies showed no relevant results. These results, despite indicating the rejection of the respective hypotheses *H5* and *H6*, could be influenced by the fact that the theoretical framework used to measure consumer personality was not appropriate. In fact the NEO-FFI is a scale of human personality based on some stable traits of individuals. Although a consensual framework in the Psychology field, it has not been greatly explored in terms of consumer behavior

(Baumgartner, 2002), and has not seemed to have used in the Portuguese branding context. Another reason that might influence these results was the lack of confidentially in the responses since the questionnaires were returned directly to the volunteers that collected the data.

Although not indicated in the theoretical framework, an extra formal test of mediation showed a positive strong to moderate direct effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength. Additionally, as implied in the model, a positive moderate indirect effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength was found. Thus, a modified model (with this direct path added) was tested, providing a positive moderate direct effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength and a positive weak indirect effect for the same constructs. The fit indices of the extended model were slightly increased. Therefore, it can be concluded that, rather than as implied in the model, the effects of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength may be only partially mediated by Consumer-Brand Relationship. It is interesting to note that the model of J. Aaker et al. (2004) reports the effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength as direct, and again any mediation through Consumer-Brand Relationship was suggested.

A test of generalizability of the proposed conceptual model was developed in a sub-sample randomly extracted from the general sample of relationships. This test supported the hypothesis of model generalizability to other similar populations, under the same conditions and incidents that characterized the data-collecting process and, consequently, the general sample.

An exploratory analysis of the Portuguese perceptions of Brand Personality according to the Spanish Framework showed that there were significant differences in personalities across the brands under study when gender and education level were controlled (age did not demonstrate significant effects). The stronger effects were found for Excitement, Passion, and Sophistication (in that order), and the weak effects for Sincerity and Peacefulness (in that order).

The comparative tests showed that Ferrari and Coca-cola were the brands with the greatest Excitement, followed by Nike. Mercedes was the most sincere brand, followed at a considerable distance by Volkswagen. Mercedes also showed the greatest Sophistication score, followed by Ferrari and Chanel. Ferrari presented the highest scores in Passion followed by Chanel. Finally, Peacefulness did not show significant differences among brands. On the other hand, Luso and Continente were consistently the brands with the lowest scores in all the brand dimensions and, therefore, they did not show any differentiation in terms of Brand Personality. It is important to note that these two brands were introduced in the study as utilitarian brands, in contrast with the others which were classified as symbolic and both symbolic and utilitarian. This is consistent with the literature, which reports that the role of Brand Personality in consumer perceptions is more evident in symbolic product categories.

8.3 Study Contributions

This study followed an innovator line of research, beyond the classic constructs and aspects usually related with symbolic consumption, such as Brand Personality, sensibility to the brand, brand attachment, and so on. It focused on Brand Relationships (or Consumer-Brand Relationships) as according to the new theories of Social Psychology people interact with products and brands in ways that resemble their social relationships. The study explores the literature of Relationship Marketing in a mass marketing perspective which has not received much attention from researchers. According to this perspective the interactions between consumers and producers are transferred to the brand scope which can be seen as a partner in a dyadic relationship with a customer.

While Brand Personality has been quite developed in literature and has wide applications in brand management, the notion of Consumer-Brand Relationship emerged recently and seems to be lacking so far for practical implementation. Research has

demonstrated that the concept of Brand Relationship makes sense and brings meaning in consumers' mind. Data analysis has indicated a high internal consistency for Consumer-Brand Relationship scale suggesting that the construct is quite applicable for Portuguese consumers. This may be considered one of the main contributions of this research as few studies have focused on the Brand Relationships topic and most of them presented an exploratory nature.

J. Aaker et al. (2004) reported two classes of relationships related to the personalities of Sincerity and Excitement (J. Aaker, 1997; J. Aaker et al., 2001): close and flings. According to them sincere brands tend to develop relationships aligned by patterns of friendships, namely close friendships, and brands with a personality of Excitement tend to build less stable short-lived flings. However, they considered there to be a need for further research to confirm these propositions.

Considering this, a conceptual model was developed (see fig. 5.1) based on the hypothesis that Brand Personality may nurture specific Consumer-Brand Relationships and those Consumer-Brand Relationships influence the quality, or the strength of the ties that consumers develop with brands. As referred before, the results gave support to this general hypothesis. Brand Personality was showed to be an important predictor of the type of relationship the consumer establishes with the brand, which is determinant in the Relationship Strength.

Giving support to the propositions of J. Aaker et al. (2004) findings indicated that brand personality of Sincerity was strongly related to Intimacy-Loyalty relationship, and the personality of Excitement was moderately related to Passion relationship. Results allowed some inferences to be made for the other brand personalities: Sophistication and Peacefulness seem to be associated to patterns of Intimacy-Loyalty relationship, and Passion seems to be associated to patterns of Passion relationship.

The study introduces a new element in the study of J. Aaker et al. (2004). In contrast with their conceptual model, which suggested a direct effect of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength results indicated that Consumer-Brand Relationship mediates all the effects of Brand Personality on Relationship Strength.

However, findings revealed that both Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships have a similar positive influence on Relationship Strength. Considering that Relationship Strength should be a predictor of relationship stability and longevity (as reported in the literature) these results seemed quite unpredictable. They raise some questions about the set of indicators used to measure this construct, such as: in what extend these indicators really measure Relationship Strength; specifically, in what extend Commitment, measures the tendency that a consumer-brand relationship will last. In particular Passion relationship showed moderate to high individual contributions for all of the four Relationship Strength Indicators that were in general a little higher than the respective contributions of Intimacy-Loyalty relationship. Considering that Passion is a relationship characterized by high level of emotional bonds, it seems quite understandable that it provokes in consumers deep feelings about their ties with brands, although they tend to decline over time. This raises the question "in what extent do Relationship Strength indicators ascertain the evolution of these scores over time?"

Again in contrast with the conceptual model proposed by J. Aaker et al. (2004), where no mediation effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength was reported, findings suggested that the effects of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength may be partially mediated by Consumer-Brand Relationship. Thus, the study confirmed the influence of consumer perceptions of Brand Quality on the evaluations consumer makes about his/her relationship with the brand, and suggested a mediation effect of the Consumer-Brand Relationship construct in this influence.

The study indicated that the personalities of Sincerity and Sophistication have considerable impact on Partner Quality, suggesting that these brand personalities may be

important determinants of the consumers' perceived quality of brands. Taking in account that results showed an important direct effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength, it seems expectable that the personalities of Sincerity and Sophistication might induce better quality and stability for the relationships with brands.

One of the most interesting observations was the successful application of an interpersonal relationship inventory (from intimate relationships) to the context of Consumer-Brand Relationships which demonstrated that consumers can relate with brands in similar ways as they relate with their peers. In contrast with some typologies of Consumer-Brand Relationships offered in the literature (e.g., the typology of Fournier (1998) composed of fifteen different relationships), it appears that this taxonomy may provide a base for studying Brand Relationships, in a less complex way.

In consideration of the innovative application of the Big Five model of human personality to the Consumer Personality, it is interesting to note that while no effects were found involving this construct the influence of Consumer Personality on consumers' brand evaluation seems to be clear. Thus, this initiative may offer an exploratory basis for further developments of the applicability of the Big Five to the consumer behavior context, as well as to ascertain the influence of individual characteristics on the establishment of relationships with brands.

Brand Personality has received only limited investigation in the Portuguese market context. So the study introduced the Spanish Brand Personality inventory as a way to explore the Portuguese population, in consideration that it might be a useful managerial and product brand management instrument. Results, however, did not entirely corroborate the conclusions of J. Aaker et al. (2001) according to whom this scale can be safely used in the countries of Southern Europe. In particular the personality of Peacefulness did not show important effects in terms of consumer perceptions. The personality of Passion was highly correlated with the personality of Excitement, suggesting that consumers did not clearly distinguish between these two dimensions. Notice that Passion corresponds to the Spanish

specific factor of Brand Personality. Thus, it may not be perceived by Portuguese consumers in the same manner as the Spanish. These conclusions need to be further developed and contrasted with more brands within different product categories.

Although Consumer-Brand Relationship is measured by a scale of attributes the study of this phenomenon is not limited to attitudinal aspects. The behavioral component of Brand Relationships is captured by Relationship Strength through Commitment (see Appendix C), which is described by Gundlach et al. (1995) as items that reflect operational investments in committed and lasting relationships and are behavioral indicators of loyalty.

8.4 Practical Research Implications

The empirical study has provided implications of a practical nature. One of more importance is related with the concept of Consumer-Brand Relationship which was well understood in consumers' mind under the interpersonal relationships metaphor. Namely, the well succeed application of the Relationship Ideals Scale to the context of brand consumption was a good indicator of that. Therefore, managers should be aware of this new construct when the establishment of strategies to deal with symbolic consumption.

According to the empirical outcomes Brand Personality seems to be an important predictor of the type of relationship the consumer establishes with the brand which is determinant for Relationship Strength. This finding can be of interesting practical application as it reveals that, as people, Brand Personality has the ability of influencing the type of relationship that evolves between consumer and brand. It seems that personality of Sincerity is related with Intimacy-Loyalty relationship patterns and personality of Excitement is related with Passion relationship patterns. Since these personalities represent the two universal-meaning dimensions, such results may serve as a valuable guide for marketers in coping with Brand Relationships management. Another interesting effect was

obtained for Sophistication on Intimacy-Loyalty relationship. Although, the Spanish Sophistication can not be considered as a pure universal-meaning factor it presents some universal facets of Sophistication and Competence personalities that may also be able of practical application.

Consumer-Brand Relationship seems to influence customer Commitment, Intimacy, Satisfaction, and Self-connection, as well as the quality, or strength, of that relationship. Brand Personality does not demonstrate any direct impact on these constructs, which may indicate to managers that, although important in terms of brand image, Brand Personality *per si* does not insure relationship stability and durability. The type of Consumer-Brand Relationship may rather be an important indicator of customer loyalty.

Findings also suggested that Brand Personality has impact on the inferences of Partner Quality. Namely, the personalities of Sincerity and Sophistication may positively influence the consumer's judgments about brand quality. Since Partner Quality strongly influences Relationship Strength the inferences of brand quality should be taken in account by managers when seeking lasting and strong Brand Relationships.

When interpreting these findings one should have in mind that product category interactions might bias results. In respect to the Brand Personally framework significant differences were found only for symbolic or both symbolic and utilitarian brands rather for utilitarian brands. This may be also a confirmation of the relative importance of Brand Personality construct in less symbolic categories.

The successful application of an interpersonal relationship inventory in a branding setting would be of particular interest to marketers and would reaffirm the need for psychographic segmentation bases. In contrast with some complex typologies of Consumer-Brand Relationships in literature, it appears that this study may provide a basic and a user friendly framework that might be useful in the development of a relationship brand strategy.

Usually, imported models are used in accessing Portuguese Brand Personality and the Spanish Brand Personality inventory was applied to this study. Contrary to the expectations, results did not entirely confirm the validity of this scale for Portugal. Since, there does not seem to be an indigenous framework, this study indicated the need for developing a unique framework for Portuguese market, to provide marketers with a useful national product brand management instrument.

It is import to note that the study confirmed that generally the evaluations consumers make about symbolic brand characteristics present a clear dichotomic scheme between exciting and sincere personalities, as well as the personalities are located between these two characteristics, with particular importance to Sophistication. These results are consistent with other transcultural studies about the application of Jennifer Aaker's framework (1997) to other populations. They partially resemble the three factorial structure of Partner Ideals developed by Fletcher et al. (1999).

Another implication is that the behavioral component of the Consumer-Brand Relationships can be captured by the Commitment scale through items that assess wide behavioral indicators of loyalty. Other essential and determinants aspects of loyal relationships are captured by the Relationship Strength framework, such as: Intimacy, Satisfaction, and Self-connection. This can provide relevant support in the management of Brand Relationships.

8.5 Limitations and Suggestions for Further Research

The following eight are limitations the author notes are present in this study:

1) One of the most important is the use of NEO-FFI inventory in accessing Consumer Personality that implied the rejection of the paths involving this

construct in the structural model present in fig. 7.1. The NEO-FFI has not been significantly explored in terms of consumer behavior and it does not seem to have been used in the Portuguese branding context.

2) A second limitation is related with the confidentially in the responses which was not always ensured. This could have influenced results. Since the questions under the rubric of Consumer Characteristics deal with personal and intimate information, this problem should be addressed in future research.

3) The individual self-concept takes a central role in the perception of benefits, value and meaning of consumer's relationship with the brand, and one's self-perceptions may influence the Partner Quality perceptions. This, however, was not considered in the conceptual model of this study. It would be interesting to explore the difference of personality and self-identity in terms of their influence on the construction of a Consumer-Brand Relationship, since some brands are an extension of "who we want to be" (self-identity) not "who we are" (personality).

4) As referred before, no significant differences were found about the influence of Intimacy-Loyalty and Passion relationships on the Relationship Strength. Regarding that Relationship Strength should be a predictor of relationship stability and longevity, as reported in the literature, these results seemed question about the applicability and relevance of the Relationship Strength Indicators to this study. It was believed that Passion is a relationship characterized by high levels of initial involvement, which may nurture deep feelings in partners mind about Relationship Strength, that tend to decline over time or to evolve in line with friendship templates. It seems expectable that people when highly involved score high in Satisfaction, Self-connection and Commitment. Thus, a longitudinal approach may be more adequate to

investigate the evolutionary nature of Relationship Strength, in each type of Consumer-Brand Relationship.

5) Another kind of limitation is related to the use of the Spanish framework for measuring Portuguese Brand Personality, in an *imposed-etic* approach. Since consumption carries with it culturally specific meaning, perhaps the creation of a specific instrument would be more appropriate.

6) Caprara et al. (2001) state that the effect of "brand-adjective interaction" should not be forgotten when one is using factor structures to describe brands. The authors considered that "In order to avoid ambiguous, invalid or unreliable results, factor structures cannot be accepted a priori without attempting to assess the presence of an interaction between the concept to be described (e.g., a brand or a product) and the terms to be used to describe it. This step is crucial before comparing different brands across personality dimensions" (p. 390). This procedure was not applied in this study though some interactions were evident. For instance, an interaction was detected in some responses between the adjective sweet (which is an attribute of Peacefulness personality) and the intrinsic characteristics of Coca-cola (a sugar added drink, thus sweet) and Luso (mineral water, thus no sweet). According to Austin et al. (2003), one way of avoiding brand-adjective interaction may rather be to embed the personality attributes in descriptive phrases. This procedure could be a good way to avoid these type of interactions.

7) Another limitation concerns a positive strong to moderate direct effect of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength that was not reported in the initial model (fig. 5.1), suggesting that the effects of Partner Quality on Relationship Strength may be only partially mediated by Consumer-Brand Relationship. In a future study the correspondent modified model (with this direct path added) should be considered and further explored.

8) Although this study relied on a rich database that supported some studies that provided important contributions, more different categories and more different brand personalities, both utilitarian and symbolic, should be introduced in order to further extend the findings to a larger domain. In particular two different brands in a single product category might be a good way of controlling the likable product category influence on brand image (Drolet & J. Aaker, 2002).

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APPENDICES

Appendix A – Spanish Brand Personality Framework

Appendix B – Short Versions of Relationship and Partner Ideals Scales

Appendix C – Relationship Strength Indicators and Partner Quality

Appendix D – Portuguese Version of NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI)

Appendix E – Instruments of Data Collection

Appendix F – Output of the Pairwise Comparisons Between Brands

APPENDIX A – Spanish Brand Personality Framework

Spanish Brand Personality Dimensions (Aaker et al., 2001)

Dimension	Original Spanish (Castilian) term	Original English translation	Portuguese translation
Excitement	• alegre • extrovertida • divertida • atrevida • jovem • viva • única • creativa • independiente	• happy • outgoing • fun • daring • young • spirited • unique • imaginative • independent	• alegre • extrovertida • divertida • ousada • jovem • viva • única • criativa • independente
Sincerity	• considerada • atenta • correcta	• considerate • thoughtful • well mannered	• ponderada • atenta • correcta
	• real • sincera • realista	• real • sincere • down-to-earth	• real • sincera • realista
Sophistication	• elegante • glamorosa • moderna	• good looking • glamorous • stylish	• elegante • com "glamour" • moderna
	• segura de si misma • persistente • dirigente	• confident • persistent • leader	• segura de si mesma • persistente • líder
Peacefulness	• cariñosa • dulce	• affectionate • sweet	• carinhosa • doce

	• amable	• gentle	• amável
	• ingenua • apacible • pacífica	• naive • mild mannered • peaceful	• ingénua • afável • pacífica
Passion	• fervorosa • apasionada • intensa	• fervent • passionate • intense	• fervorosa • apaixonada • intensa
	• espiritual • mística • bohemia	• spiritual • mystical • bohemian	• espiritual • mística • boémia

APPENDIX B – Short Versions of Relationship and Partner Ideals Scales

Short Version of Relationship Ideals Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999)

Relationship type	Original English term	Portuguese translation
Passion	• exciting • challenging • humorous • fun • independence • passionate	• entusiasmante • estimulante • com humor • divertida • independente • apaixonada
Intimacy-loyalty	• honest • commitment • caring • trusting • support • respect	• honesta • comprometida • que cuida dos outros • de confiança • que dá apoio • de respeito

Short Version of Partners Ideals Scale (Fletcher et al., 1999)

Partner type	Original English term	Portuguese translation
Vitality-Attractiveness	• adventurous • nice body • outgoing • sexy • attractive • good lover	• aventureiro • corpo bonito • extrovertido • sexy • aparência atraente • bom amante
Warmth-Trustworthiness	• understanding • supportive • considerate • kind • a good listener • sensitive	• compreensivo • dá apoio • considerado • bondoso • sabe escutar • sensível
Status-Resources	• good job • financially secure • nice house or apartment • successful • dresses well	• bom emprego • segurança financeira • boa casa/apartamento • bem sucedido • veste bem

APPENDIX C – Relationship Strength Indicators and Partner Quality

Relationship Strength Indicators and Partner Quality (Aaker et al., 2004)

Measure	Items Original English version for the study of Captura brand (Aaker et al., 2004)	Items Portuguese version for the Questionnaire of Brand Personality and Consumer-Brand Relationship
Relationship strength indicators:		
Commitment	• "I am very loyal to Captura" • "I am willing to make small sacrifices in order to keep using Captura" • "I would be willing to postpone my purchase if the Captura site was temporarily unavailable" • "I would stick with Captura even if it let me down once or twice" • "I am so happy with Captura that I no longer feel the need to watch out for other photography alternatives" • "I am likely to be using Captura one year from now"	• "Eu sou muito leal à Coca-Cola*" • "Estou na disposição de fazer pequenos sacrifícios de forma a poder continuar a consumir Coca-Cola" • "Estaria na disposição de adiar a minha compra se a Coca-Cola estivesse temporariamente indisponível nos pontos de venda" • "Continuaria consumidor da Coca-Cola mesmo se ela me desapontasse uma ou duas vezes" • "Estou tão contente com a Coca-Cola que não sinto necessidade de estar atento a outras alternativas" • "Provavelmente, vou continuar a consumir Coca-Cola num futuro próximo"
Intimacy	• "I would feel confortable sharing detailed personal info about my self with Captura" • "Captura really understands my needs in the photographic services category" • "I'd feel comfortable describing Captura to someone who was not familiar with it" • "I am familiar with the range of products and services Captura offers" • "I have become very knowledgeable about Captura"	• "Sentia-me confortável se partilhasse informação pessoal detalhada sobre mim com a Coca-Cola" • "A Coca-Cola entende realmente as minhas necessidades na sua categoria de produto" • "Sentia-me confortável em falar da Coca-Cola a alguém que não a conhecesse" • "Conheço bem os produtos e serviços que a Coca-Cola oferece" • "Estou muito informado acerca da Coca-Cola"

Satisfaction	• "I am completely satisfied with Captura" • "I am completely pleased with Captura" • "Captura is turning out better than I expected"	• "Estou completamente satisfeito com a Coca-Cola" • "Estou completamente deleitado com a Coca-Cola" • "A Coca-Cola está revelar-se melhor do que eu esperava"
Self-Connection	• "The Captura brand connects with the part of me that really makes me tick" • "The Captura brand fits well with my current stage of life" • "The Captura brand says a lot about the kind of person I would like to be" • "Using Captura lets me be a part of a shared community of like-minded consumers" • "The Captura brand makes a statement about what is important to me in life"	• "A marca Coca-Cola associa-se a uma parte de mim que realmente me entusiasma" • "A marca Coca-Cola corresponde bem à minha actual fase de vida" • "A marca Coca-Cola tem muito a ver com a pessoa que eu gostaria de ser" • "Consumir Coca-Cola faz-me pertencer a uma comunidade partilhada por consumidores com interesses parecidos" • "A marca Coca-Cola exprime aquilo que é importante para mim na vida"
Partner Quality	• "I can always count on Captura to do what's best" • "If Captura makes a mistake, it will try its best to make up for it" • "I know I can hold Captura accountable for its actions" • "Captura is reliable" • "Given my image of Captura, letting me down would surprise me" • "A brand failure would be inconsistent with my expectations"	• "Posso sempre contar com a Coca-Cola para fazer o que é melhor" • "Se a Coca-Cola cometer um erro, ela fará o seu melhor para resolver o sucedido" • "Eu sei que posso esperar que a Coca-Cola se responsabilize pelas suas acções" • "A Coca-Cola é fiável" • "Dada a imagem que eu tenho da Coca-Cola, surpreendia-me se ela me desapontasse" • "Uma falha da marca seria inconsistente com as minhas expectativas"

Notes: 1. Coca-Cola appears here as an example of the brands studied in this research.

2. The items were adjusted in the questionnaires for each brand.

APPENDIX D – Portuguese Version of the NEO Five-Factor Inventory (NEO-FFI)

Portuguese Version of NEO-FFI (Costa & McCrae, 1992; translated by Lima & Simões, 2000).

Dimensions	Items	Nº Items
N – Neuroticism	1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31, 36, 41, 46, 51, 56	12
E – Extraversion	2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27, 32, 37, 42, 47, 52, 57	12
O - Openness	3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28, 33, 38, 43, 48, 53, 58	12
A – Agreeableness	4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29, 34, 39, 44, 49, 54, 59	12
C - Conscientiousness	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60	12

Inverted Items

1, 3, 8, 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, 18, 23, 24, 27, 29, 30, 31, 33, 38, 39, 42, 44, 45, 46, 48, 55, 57, 59

Original Portuguese Items
1. Não sou uma pessoa preocupada.
2. Gosto de ter muita gente à minha volta.
3. Não gosto de perder tempo a sonhar acordado(a).
4. Tento ser delicado com todas as pessoas que encontro.
5. Mantenho as minhas coisas limpas e em ordem.
6. Sinto-me muitas vezes inferior às outras pessoas.
7. Rio facilmente.
8. Quando encontro uma maneira correcta de fazer qualquer coisa não mudo mais.
9. Frequentemente arranjo discussões com a minha família e colegas de trabalho.
10. Sou bastante capaz de organizar o meu tempo de maneira a fazer as coisas dentro do prazo.
11. Quando estou numa grande tensão sinto-me, às vezes, como se me estivessem a fazer em pedaços.
12. Não me considero uma pessoa alegre.
13. Fico admirado(a) com os modelos que encontro na arte e na natureza.
14. Algumas pessoas pensam que sou invejoso(a) e egoísta.
15. Não sou uma pessoa muito metódica (ordenada).
16. Raramente me sinto só ou abatido(a).
17. Gosto muito de falar com as outras pessoas.
18. Acredito que deixar os alunos ouvir pessoas, com ideias discutíveis, só os pode confundir e desorientar.
19. Preferia colaborar com as outras pessoas do que competir com elas.
20. Tento realizar, conscienciosamente, todas as minhas obrigações.

21. Muitas vezes sinto-me tenso(a) e enervado(a).
22. Gosto de estar onde está a acção.
23. A poesia pouco ou nada me diz.
24. Tendo a ser descrente ou a duvidar das boas intenções dos outros.
25. Tenho objectivos claros e faço por atingi-los de uma forma ordenada.
26. Às vezes sinto-me completamente inútil.
27. Normalmente prefiro fazer as coisas sozinho(a).
28. Frequentemente experimento comidas novas e desconhecidas.
29. Penso que a maior parte das pessoas abusa de nós, se as deixarmos.
30. Perco muito tempo antes de me concentrar no trabalho.
31. Raramente me sinto amedrontado(a) ou ansioso(a).
32. Muitas vezes, sinto-me a rebentar de energia.
33. Poucas vezes me dou conta da influência que diferentes ambientes produzem nas pessoas.
34. A maioria das pessoas que conheço gosta de mim.
35. Trabalho muito para conseguir o que quero.
36. Muitas vezes aborrece-me a maneira como as pessoas me tratam.
37. Sou uma pessoa alegre e bem disposta.
38. Acredito que devemos ter em conta a autoridade religiosa quando se trata de tomar decisões respeitantes à moral.
39. Algumas pessoas consideram-me frio(a) e calculista.
40. Quando assumo um compromisso podem sempre contar que eu o cumpra.
41. Muitas vezes quando as coisas não me correm bem perco a coragem e tenho vontade de desistir.
42. Não sou um(a) grande optimista.
43. Às vezes ao ler poesia e ao olhar para uma obra de arte sinto um arrepio ou uma onda de emoção.
44. Sou inflexível e duro(a) nas minhas atitudes.
45. Às vezes não sou tão seguro(a) ou digno(a) de confiança como deveria ser.
46. Raramente estou triste ou deprimido(a).
47. A minha vida decorre a um ritmo rápido.
48. Gosto pouco de me pronunciar sobre a natureza do universo e da condição humana.
49. Geralmente procuro ser atencioso(a) e delicado(a).
50. Sou uma pessoa aplicada, conseguindo sempre realizar o meu trabalho.
51. Sinto-me, muitas vezes, desamparado(a), desejando que alguém resolva os meus problemas por mim.
52. Sou uma pessoa muito activa.
53. Tenho muita curiosidade intelectual.
54. Quando não gosto das pessoas faço-lhes saber.
55. Parece que nunca consigo ser organizado(a).
56. Já houve alturas em que fiquei tão envergonhado(a) que desejava meter-me num buraco.
57. Prefiro tratar da minha vida a ser chefe das outras pessoas.
58. Muitas vezes dá-me prazer brincar com teorias e ideias abstractas.
59. Se for necessário não hesito em manipular as pessoas para conseguir aquilo que quero.
60.Esforço-me por ser excelente em tudo o que faço.

English Translation of the Portugese Items

1. I am not a worried person.
2. I like to have a lot of people around me.
3. I do not like to waste a lot of time daydreaming.
4. I try to be kind to all the people that I meet.
5. I keep all my things clean and tidy.
6. I often feel inferior to other people.
7. I find that I laugh easily.
8. When I find the right way of doing things, I no longer make changes.
9. I frequently get into arguments with my family and co-workers.
10. I am very good at organizing my time to get things done within deadlines.
11. When I am feeling particularly under pressure I sometimes feel that I am being pulled apart.
12. I do not consider myself a happy person.
13. I am surprised by the models that I see in art and nature.
14. Some people think that I am jealous and selfish.
15. I am not a very methodical (orderly) person.
16. I rarely feel alone or lonely.
17. I like to talk to other people very much.
18. I believe that having students listen to people with debatable ideas can only confuse and disorient them.
19. I would rather collaborate with other people than compete with them.
20. I try to conscientiously fulfill all my obligations.
21. I frequently feel tense and nervous.
22. I like to be where the action is.
23. Poetry appeals to me little or not at all.
24. I tend to doubt or not believe the good intentions of others.
25. I have clear goals and do what it takes to achieve them in an orderly way.
26. Sometimes I feel totally useless.
27. Normally I prefer to do things by myself.
28. I often try new foods that I have never tasted before.
29. I believe that most people will take advantage of us, if we let them.
30. I waste a lot of time before I get down to work.
31. I rarely feel afraid or anxious.
32. I often feel that I am bursting with energy.
33. I hardly ever realize the influence that different environments can have on people.
34. The majority of people that I know like me.
35. I work a lot to get what I want.
36. I am often angered by the way people treat me.
37. I am a person who is happy and in a good mood.
38. I think that we should keep religious authority in mind when we make decisions regarding morals.
39. Some people consider me cold and calculating.
40. When I commit to doing something, you can be sure that I will keep my word.
41. Often, when things go bad, I lose my courage and I feel like giving up.
42. I am not really an optimistic person.
43. Sometimes when I read poetry or look at a work of art I feel a shiver or wave of emotion.
44. I am inflexible and stern in my attitudes.

45. Sometimes I do not feel as secure or trustworthy as I should be.
46. I am rarely sad or depressed.
47. My life runs at a fast pace.
48. I like speaking about the nature of the universe and the human condition only a little.
49. I generally try to be attentive and kind.
50. I am a diligent person, always getting my work done.
51. I often feel helpless, wanting someone to resolve my problems for me.
52. I am a very active person.
53. I have a lot of intellectual curiosity.
54. When I do not like people, I let them know it.
55. It seems that I can never get myself organized.
56. There have been times that I was so embarrassed that I wanted to hide in a hole.
57. I prefer to take care of my life by being the boss of other people.
58. I often feel pleasure by playing around with theories and abstract ideas.
59. If necessary, I do not hesitate to manipulate people to get what I want.
60. I try to be outstanding in everything I do.
37. I am a person who is happy and in a good mood.
38. I think that we should keep religious authority in mind when we make decisions regarding morals.
39. Some people consider me cold and calculating.
40. When I commit to doing something, you can be sure that I will keep my word.
41. Often, when things go bad, I lose my courage and I feel like giving up.
42. I am not really an optimistic person.
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56. There have been times that I was so embarrassed that I wanted to hide in a hole.
57. I prefer to take care of my life by being the boss of other people.
58. I often feel pleasure by playing around with theories and abstract ideas.
59. If necessary, I do not hesitate to manipulate people to get what I want.
60. I try to be outstanding in everything I do.

APPENDIX E – Instruments of Data Collection

APPENDIX F – Output of Pairwise Comparisons Between Brands

Pairwise Comparisons

Dependent Variable	(I) MARCA	(J) MARCA	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.(a)	95% Confidence Interval for Difference(a)	
						Upper Bound	Lower Bound
ENTUSIASMO	COCA-COLA	LUSO	,790(*)	,074	,000	,553	1,027
		CONTINENTE	,706(*)	,074	,000	,468	,944
		NIKE	-,027	,079	1,000	-,281	,227
		CHANEL	,464(*)	,092	,000	,169	,759
		VW	,472(*)	,083	,000	,205	,740
		MERCEDES	,264(*)	,080	,035	,008	,520
		LAND ROVER	,314(*)	,093	,026	,017	,612
		FERRARI	-,256	,104	,505	-,590	,077
	LUSO	COCA-COLA	-,790(*)	,074	,000	-1,027	-,553
		CONTINENTE	-,084	,087	1,000	-,363	,194
		NIKE	-,817(*)	,091	,000	-1,109	-,525
		CHANEL	-,326	,102	,052	-,653	,001
		VW	-,318(*)	,095	,029	-,621	-,015
		MERCEDES	-,526(*)	,092	,000	-,820	-,231
		LAND ROVER	-,476(*)	,104	,000	-,807	-,144
		FERRARI	-1,046(*)	,113	,000	-1,409	-,683
	CONTINENTE	COCA-COLA	-,706(*)	,074	,000	-,944	-,468
		LUSO	,084	,087	1,000	-,194	,363
		NIKE	-,733(*)	,091	,000	-1,025	-,441
		CHANEL	-,242	,103	,673	-,571	,087
		VW	-,234	,095	,505	-,538	,071
		MERCEDES	-,442(*)	,092	,000	-,735	-,148
		LAND ROVER	-,391(*)	,103	,005	-,721	-,062
		FERRARI	-,962(*)	,113	,000	-1,325	-,599
	NIKE	COCA-COLA	,027	,079	1,000	-,227	,281
		LUSO	,817(*)	,091	,000	,525	1,109
		CONTINENTE	,733(*)	,091	,000	,441	1,025

	CHANEL	,491(*)	,106	,000	,150	,832
	VW	,499(*)	,099	,000	,183	,816
	MERCEDES	,291	,096	,086	-,015	,598
	LAND ROVER	,342(*)	,107	,050	9,24E-005	,683
	FERRARI	-,229	,117	1,000	-,602	,145
CHANEL	COCA-COLA	-,464(*)	,092	,000	-,759	-,169
	LUSO	,326	,102	,052	-,001	,653
	CONTINENTE	,242	,103	,673	-,087	,571
	NIKE	-,491(*)	,106	,000	-,832	-,150
	VW	,008	,109	1,000	-,342	,358
	MERCEDES	-,200	,107	1,000	-,543	,143
	LAND ROVER	-,149	,117	1,000	-,525	,226
	FERRARI	-,720(*)	,126	,000	-1,123	-,316
VW	COCA-COLA	-,472(*)	,083	,000	-,740	-,205
	LUSO	,318(*)	,095	,029	,015	,621
	CONTINENTE	,234	,095	,505	-,071	,538
	NIKE	-,499(*)	,099	,000	-,816	-,183
	CHANEL	-,008	,109	1,000	-,358	,342
	MERCEDES	-,208	,099	1,000	-,526	,110
	LAND ROVER	-,158	,110	1,000	-,510	,195
	FERRARI	-,728(*)	,120	,000	-1,111	-,345
MERCEDES	COCA-COLA	-,264(*)	,080	,035	-,520	-,008
	LUSO	,526(*)	,092	,000	,231	,820
	CONTINENTE	,442(*)	,092	,000	,148	,735
	NIKE	-,291	,096	,086	-,598	,015
	CHANEL	,200	,107	1,000	-,143	,543
	VW	,208	,099	1,000	-,110	,526
	LAND ROVER	,050	,107	1,000	-,291	,392
	FERRARI	-,520(*)	,117	,000	-,895	-,145
LAND ROVER	COCA-COLA	-,314(*)	,093	,026	-,612	-,017
	LUSO	,476(*)	,104	,000	,144	,807
	CONTINENTE	,391(*)	,103	,005	,062	,721
	NIKE	-,342(*)	,107	,050	-,683	-9,24E-005

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		CHANEL	,149	,117	1,000	-,226	,525
		VW	,158	,110	1,000	-,195	,510
		MERCEDES	-,050	,107	1,000	-,392	,291
		FERRARI	-,571(*)	,126	,000	-,974	-,167
	FERRARI	COCA-COLA	,256	,104	,505	-,077	,590
		LUSO	1,046(*)	,113	,000	,683	1,409
		CONTINENTE	,962(*)	,113	,000	,599	1,325
		NIKE	,229	,117	1,000	-,145	,602
		CHANEL	,720(*)	,126	,000	,316	1,123
		VW	,728(*)	,120	,000	,345	1,111
		MERCEDES	,520(*)	,117	,000	,145	,895
		LAND ROVER	,571(*)	,126	,000	,167	,974
SINCERIDADE	COCA-COLA	LUSO	-,211	,079	,283	-,466	,043
		CONTINENTE	-,041	,080	1,000	-,296	,215
		NIKE	-,251	,085	,119	-,523	,022
		CHANEL	,056	,099	1,000	-,260	,373
		VW	-,305(*)	,090	,025	-,592	-,018
		MERCEDES	-,589(*)	,086	,000	-,864	-,314
		LAND ROVER	-,138	,100	1,000	-,457	,182
		FERRARI	,137	,112	1,000	-,221	,495
	LUSO	COCA-COLA	,211	,079	,283	-,043	,466
		CONTINENTE	,171	,093	1,000	-,128	,469
		NIKE	-,039	,098	1,000	-,352	,274
		CHANEL	,268	,110	,529	-,083	,619
		VW	-,093	,102	1,000	-,419	,232
		MERCEDES	-,378(*)	,099	,005	-,694	-,062
		LAND ROVER	,074	,111	1,000	-,282	,430
		FERRARI	,348	,122	,155	-,042	,738
	CONTINENTE	COCA-COLA	,041	,080	1,000	-,215	,296
		LUSO	-,171	,093	1,000	-,469	,128
		NIKE	-,210	,098	1,000	-,524	,104
		CHANEL	,097	,110	1,000	-,256	,451
		VW	-,264	,102	,351	-,590	,063

	MERCEDES	-,548(*)	,098	,000	-,863	-,233
	LAND ROVER	-,097	,110	1,000	-,451	,257
	FERRARI	,177	,122	1,000	-,212	,567
NIKE	COCA-COLA	,251	,085	,119	-,022	,523
	LUSO	,039	,098	1,000	-,274	,352
	CONTINENTE	,210	,098	1,000	-,104	,524
	CHANEL	,307	,114	,260	-,059	,673
	VW	-,054	,106	1,000	-,394	,285
	MERCEDES	-,338(*)	,103	,037	-,668	-,009
	LAND ROVER	,113	,114	1,000	-,254	,479
	FERRARI	,387	,125	,072	-,014	,788
CHANEL	COCA-COLA	-,056	,099	1,000	-,373	,260
	LUSO	-,268	,110	,529	-,619	,083
	CONTINENTE	-,097	,110	1,000	-,451	,256
	NIKE	-,307	,114	,260	-,673	,059
	VW	-,361	,117	,076	-,737	,015
	MERCEDES	-,645(*)	,115	,000	-1,013	-,277
	LAND ROVER	-,194	,126	1,000	-,597	,209
	FERRARI	,080	,135	1,000	-,353	,513
VW	COCA-COLA	,305(*)	,090	,025	,018	,592
	LUSO	,093	,102	1,000	-,232	,419
	CONTINENTE	,264	,102	,351	-,063	,590
	NIKE	,054	,106	1,000	-,285	,394
	CHANEL	,361	,117	,076	-,015	,737
	MERCEDES	-,284	,107	,280	-,626	,057
	LAND ROVER	,167	,118	1,000	-,211	,545
	FERRARI	,441(*)	,128	,022	,030	,852
MERCEDES	COCA-COLA	,589(*)	,086	,000	,314	,864
	LUSO	,378(*)	,099	,005	,062	,694
	CONTINENTE	,548(*)	,098	,000	,233	,863
	NIKE	,338(*)	,103	,037	,009	,668
	CHANEL	,645(*)	,115	,000	,277	1,013
	VW	,284	,107	,280	-,057	,626

300

		LAND ROVER	,451(*)	,114	,003	,085	,818
		FERRARI	,726(*)	,125	,000	,323	1,128
	LAND ROVER	COCA-COLA	,138	,100	1,000	-,182	,457
		LUSO	-,074	,111	1,000	-,430	,282
		CONTINENTE	,097	,110	1,000	-,257	,451
		NIKE	-,113	,114	1,000	-,479	,254
		CHANEL	,194	,126	1,000	-,209	,597
		VW	-,167	,118	1,000	-,545	,211
		MERCEDES	-,451(*)	,114	,003	-,818	-,085
		FERRARI	,274	,135	1,000	-,159	,707
	FERRARI	COCA-COLA	-,137	,112	1,000	-,495	,221
		LUSO	-,348	,122	,155	-,738	,042
		CONTINENTE	-,177	,122	1,000	-,567	,212
		NIKE	-,387	,125	,072	-,788	,014
		CHANEL	-,080	,135	1,000	-,513	,353
		VW	-,441(*)	,128	,022	-,852	-,030
		MERCEDES	-,726(*)	,125	,000	-1,128	-,323
		LAND ROVER	-,274	,135	1,000	-,707	,159
SOFISTICAÇÃO	COCA-COLA	LUSO	,341(*)	,071	,000	,113	,568
		CONTINENTE	,360(*)	,071	,000	,131	,588
		NIKE	-,149	,076	1,000	-,393	,094
		CHANEL	-,266	,088	,096	-,549	,017
		VW	,055	,080	1,000	-,201	,312
		MERCEDES	-,543(*)	,077	,000	-,788	-,297
		LAND ROVER	-,022	,089	1,000	-,307	,263
		FERRARI	-,463(*)	,100	,000	-,783	-,143
	LUSO	COCA-COLA	-,341(*)	,071	,000	-,568	-,113
		CONTINENTE	,019	,083	1,000	-,248	,286
		NIKE	-,490(*)	,087	,000	-,770	-,210
		CHANEL	-,607(*)	,098	,000	-,920	-,293
		VW	-,285	,091	,061	-,576	,005
		MERCEDES	-,883(*)	,088	,000	-1,166	-,601
		LAND ROVER	-,363(*)	,099	,010	-,681	-,044

					Lower	Upper
CONTINENTE	FERRARI	-,804(*)	,109	,000	-1,152	-,456
	COCA-COLA	-,360(*)	,071	,000	-,588	-,131
	LUSO	-,019	,083	1,000	-,286	,248
	NIKE	-,509(*)	,087	,000	-,789	-,229
	CHANEL	-,625(*)	,098	,000	-,941	-,310
	VW	-,304(*)	,091	,031	-,596	-,012
	MERCEDES	-,902(*)	,088	,000	-1,184	-,621
	LAND ROVER	-,381(*)	,099	,004	-,697	-,066
	FERRARI	-,823(*)	,109	,000	-1,171	-,475
NIKE	COCA-COLA	,149	,076	1,000	-,094	,393
	LUSO	,490(*)	,087	,000	,210	,770
	CONTINENTE	,509(*)	,087	,000	,229	,789
	CHANEL	-,117	,102	1,000	-,443	,210
	VW	,205	,095	1,000	-,099	,508
	MERCEDES	-,394(*)	,092	,001	-,688	-,099
	LAND ROVER	,127	,102	1,000	-,200	,455
	FERRARI	-,314	,112	,181	-,672	,044
CHANEL	COCA-COLA	,266	,088	,096	-,017	,549
	LUSO	,607(*)	,098	,000	,293	,920
	CONTINENTE	,625(*)	,098	,000	,310	,941
	NIKE	,117	,102	1,000	-,210	,443
	VW	,321	,105	,080	-,014	,657
	MERCEDES	-,277	,103	,254	-,606	,052
	LAND ROVER	,244	,112	1,000	-,116	,604
	FERRARI	-,197	,121	1,000	-,584	,190
VW	COCA-COLA	-,055	,080	1,000	-,312	,201
	LUSO	,285	,091	,061	-,005	,576
	CONTINENTE	,304(*)	,091	,031	,012	,596
	NIKE	-,205	,095	1,000	-,508	,099
	CHANEL	-,321	,105	,080	-,657	,014
	MERCEDES	-,598(*)	,095	,000	-,903	-,293
	LAND ROVER	-,077	,105	1,000	-,415	,261
	FERRARI	-,519(*)	,115	,000	-,886	-,151

	MERCEDES	COCA-COLA	,543(*)	,077	,000	,297	,788
		LUSO	,883(*)	,088	,000	,601	1,166
		CONTINENTE	,902(*)	,088	,000	,621	1,184
		NIKE	,394(*)	,092	,001	,099	,688
		CHANEL	,277	,103	,254	-,052	,606
		VW	,598(*)	,095	,000	,293	,903
		LAND ROVER	,521(*)	,102	,000	,193	,848
		FERRARI	,080	,112	1,000	-,280	,439
	LAND ROVER	COCA-COLA	,022	,089	1,000	-,263	,307
		LUSO	,363(*)	,099	,010	,044	,681
		CONTINENTE	,381(*)	,099	,004	,066	,697
		NIKE	-,127	,102	1,000	-,455	,200
		CHANEL	-,244	,112	1,000	-,604	,116
		VW	,077	,105	1,000	-,261	,415
		MERCEDES	-,521(*)	,102	,000	-,848	-,193
		FERRARI	-,441(*)	,121	,010	-,828	-,055
	FERRARI	COCA-COLA	,463(*)	,100	,000	,143	,783
		LUSO	,804(*)	,109	,000	,456	1,152
		CONTINENTE	,823(*)	,109	,000	,475	1,171
		NIKE	,314	,112	,181	-,044	,672
		CHANEL	,197	,121	1,000	-,190	,584
		VW	,519(*)	,115	,000	,151	,886
		MERCEDES	-,080	,112	1,000	-,439	,280
		LAND ROVER	,441(*)	,121	,010	,055	,828
SERENIDADE	COCA-COLA	LUSO	-,060	,081	1,000	-,320	,201
		CONTINENTE	,153	,082	1,000	-,108	,415
		NIKE	,046	,087	1,000	-,233	,325
		CHANEL	-,174	,101	1,000	-,499	,150
		VW	-,001	,092	1,000	-,295	,293
		MERCEDES	-,158	,088	1,000	-,440	,124
		LAND ROVER	,151	,102	1,000	-,176	,478
		FERRARI	,181	,114	1,000	-,186	,547
	LUSO	COCA-COLA	,060	,081	1,000	-,201	,320

		CONTINENTE	,213	,095	,935	-,093	,519
		NIKE	,105	,100	1,000	-,215	,426
		CHANEL	-,115	,112	1,000	-,474	,245
		VW	,058	,104	1,000	-,275	,392
		MERCEDES	-,098	,101	1,000	-,422	,225
		LAND ROVER	,211	,114	1,000	-,154	,575
		FERRARI	,240	,125	1,000	-,159	,640
CONTINENTE	COCA-COLA	-,153	,082	1,000	-,415	,108
	LUSO	-,213	,095	,935	-,519	,093
	NIKE	-,107	,100	1,000	-,429	,214
	CHANEL	-,328	,113	,136	-,689	,034
	VW	-,154	,104	1,000	-,489	,180
	MERCEDES	-,311	,101	,072	-,634	,011
	LAND ROVER	-,002	,113	1,000	-,364	,360
	FERRARI	,027	,125	1,000	-,372	,427
NIKE	COCA-COLA	-,046	,087	1,000	-,325	,233
	LUSO	-,105	,100	1,000	-,426	,215
	CONTINENTE	,107	,100	1,000	-,214	,429
	CHANEL	-,220	,117	1,000	-,595	,154
	VW	-,047	,108	1,000	-,395	,301
	MERCEDES	-,204	,105	1,000	-,541	,133
	LAND ROVER	,105	,117	1,000	-,270	,481
	FERRARI	,135	,128	1,000	-,276	,545
CHANEL	COCA-COLA	,174	,101	1,000	-,150	,499
	LUSO	,115	,112	1,000	-,245	,474
	CONTINENTE	,328	,113	,136	-,034	,689
	NIKE	,220	,117	1,000	-,154	,595
	VW	,173	,120	1,000	-,212	,558
	MERCEDES	,016	,118	1,000	-,361	,393
	LAND ROVER	,326	,129	,419	-,087	,739
	FERRARI	,355	,138	,375	-,088	,799
VW	COCA-COLA	,001	,092	1,000	-,293	,295
	LUSO	-,058	,104	1,000	-,392	,275

			CONTINENTE	,154	,104	1,000	-,180	,489

			Mean diff	Std error	Sig	Lower	Upper
		CONTINENTE	,154	,104	1,000	-,180	,489
		NIKE	,047	,108	1,000	-,301	,395
		CHANEL	-,173	,120	1,000	-,558	,212
		MERCEDES	-,157	,109	1,000	-,507	,193
		LAND ROVER	,152	,121	1,000	-,235	,540
		FERRARI	,182	,131	1,000	-,239	,603
	MERCEDES	COCA-COLA	,158	,088	1,000	-,124	,440
		LUSO	,098	,101	1,000	-,225	,422
		CONTINENTE	,311	,101	,072	-,011	,634
		NIKE	,204	,105	1,000	-,133	,541
		CHANEL	-,016	,118	1,000	-,393	,361
		VW	,157	,109	1,000	-,193	,507
		LAND ROVER	,309	,117	,303	-,066	,685
		FERRARI	,339	,129	,306	-,073	,751
	LAND ROVER	COCA-COLA	-,151	,102	1,000	-,478	,176
		LUSO	-,211	,114	1,000	-,575	,154
		CONTINENTE	,002	,113	1,000	-,360	,364
		NIKE	-,105	,117	1,000	-,481	,270
		CHANEL	-,326	,129	,419	-,739	,087
		VW	-,152	,121	1,000	-,540	,235
		MERCEDES	-,309	,117	,303	-,685	,066
		FERRARI	,030	,138	1,000	-,414	,473
	FERRARI	COCA-COLA	-,181	,114	1,000	-,547	,186
		LUSO	-,240	,125	1,000	-,640	,159
		CONTINENTE	-,027	,125	1,000	-,427	,372
		NIKE	-,135	,128	1,000	-,545	,276
		CHANEL	-,355	,138	,375	-,799	,088
		VW	-,182	,131	1,000	-,603	,239
		MERCEDES	-,339	,129	,306	-,751	,073
		LAND ROVER	-,030	,138	1,000	-,473	,414
PAIXÃO	COCA-COLA	LUSO	,652(*)	,081	,000	,392	,911
		CONTINENTE	,787(*)	,081	,000	,527	1,048
		NIKE	,089	,087	1,000	-,189	,367

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		CHANEL	-,094	,101	1,000	-,417	,229

		CHANEL	-,094	,101	1,000	-,417	,229
		VW	,374(*)	,091	,002	,081	,666
		MERCEDES	,059	,087	1,000	-,221	,340
		LAND ROVER	,120	,102	1,000	-,206	,445
		FERRARI	-,531(*)	,114	,000	-,896	-,166
	LUSO	COCA-COLA	-,652(*)	,081	,000	-,911	-,392
		CONTINENTE	,136	,095	1,000	-,169	,440
		NIKE	-,563(*)	,100	,000	-,882	-,244
		CHANEL	-,746(*)	,112	,000	-1,104	-,388
		VW	-,278	,103	,263	-,610	,054
		MERCEDES	-,592(*)	,101	,000	-,914	-,270
		LAND ROVER	-,532(*)	,113	,000	-,895	-,169
		FERRARI	-1,183(*)	,124	,000	-1,580	-,785
	CONTINENTE	COCA-COLA	-,787(*)	,081	,000	-1,048	-,527
		LUSO	-,136	,095	1,000	-,440	,169
		NIKE	-,698(*)	,100	,000	-1,018	-,378
		CHANEL	-,882(*)	,112	,000	-1,242	-,521
		VW	-,414(*)	,104	,003	-,747	-,081
		MERCEDES	-,728(*)	,100	,000	-1,049	-,407
		LAND ROVER	-,667(*)	,112	,000	-1,028	-,307
		FERRARI	-1,318(*)	,124	,000	-1,716	-,921
	NIKE	COCA-COLA	-,089	,087	1,000	-,367	,189
		LUSO	,563(*)	,100	,000	,244	,882
		CONTINENTE	,698(*)	,100	,000	,378	1,018
		CHANEL	-,183	,116	1,000	-,556	,190
		VW	,285	,108	,305	-,061	,631
		MERCEDES	-,029	,105	1,000	-,365	,306
		LAND ROVER	,031	,117	1,000	-,342	,405
		FERRARI	-,620(*)	,128	,000	-1,028	-,211
	CHANEL	COCA-COLA	,094	,101	1,000	-,229	,417
		LUSO	,746(*)	,112	,000	,388	1,104
		CONTINENTE	,882(*)	,112	,000	,521	1,242
		NIKE	,183	,116	1,000	-,190	,556

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	VW	,468(*)	,120	,003	,085	,851
	MERCEDES	,154	,117	1,000	-,221	,529
	LAND ROVER	,214	,128	1,000	-,197	,625
	FERRARI	-,437	,138	,057	-,878	,005
VW	COCA-COLA	-,374(*)	,091	,002	-,666	-,081
	LUSO	,278	,103	,263	-,054	,610
	CONTINENTE	,414(*)	,104	,003	,081	,747
	NIKE	-,285	,108	,305	-,631	,061
	CHANEL	-,468(*)	,120	,003	-,851	-,085
	MERCEDES	-,314	,109	,142	-,663	,034
	LAND ROVER	-,254	,120	1,000	-,639	,132
	FERRARI	-,905(*)	,131	,000	-1,324	-,485
MERCEDES	COCA-COLA	-,059	,087	1,000	-,340	,221
	LUSO	,592(*)	,101	,000	,270	,914
	CONTINENTE	,728(*)	,100	,000	,407	1,049
	NIKE	,029	,105	1,000	-,306	,365
	CHANEL	-,154	,117	1,000	-,529	,221
	VW	,314	,109	,142	-,034	,663
	LAND ROVER	,060	,117	1,000	-,313	,434
	FERRARI	-,590(*)	,128	,000	-1,000	-,180
LAND ROVER	COCA-COLA	-,120	,102	1,000	-,445	,206
	LUSO	,532(*)	,113	,000	,169	,895
	CONTINENTE	,667(*)	,112	,000	,307	1,028
	NIKE	-,031	,117	1,000	-,405	,342
	CHANEL	-,214	,128	1,000	-,625	,197
	VW	,254	,120	1,000	-,132	,639
	MERCEDES	-,060	,117	1,000	-,434	,313
	FERRARI	-,651(*)	,138	,000	-1,092	-,210
FERRARI	COCA-COLA	,531(*)	,114	,000	,166	,896
	LUSO	1,183(*)	,124	,000	,785	1,580
	CONTINENTE	1,318(*)	,124	,000	,921	1,716
	NIKE	,620(*)	,128	,000	,211	1,028
	CHANEL	,437	,138	,057	-,005	,878

VW	,905(*)	,131	,000	,485	1,324
MERCEDES	,590(*)	,128	,000	,180	1,000
LAND ROVER	,651(*)	,138	,000	,210	1,092

Based on estimated marginal means
* The mean difference is significant at the ,05 level.
a Adjustment for multiple comparisons: Bonferroni.