

The Relation of Brand and Emotions in Consumer Decision Making

The Investigation of Perfume Brand Personality

ABSTRACT

Brands fill meaningful character in consumer decision making. They help consumers to select alternatives for satisfaction of their desires. In addition to this brands have another role, which is not so evident, precisely the lever for self expression. Loads of consumer decisions are made by considering a certain brand's acceptance and prestige. Generally, the consumers are who set expectations and formulate widely accepted image of brands. Moreover, brand choice is considerably affected by the decisions made by other consumers, who are belonging to similar social group. This phenomenon is known as the effect of consumer externality. Of course, the information communicated by firms tends to control brand awareness and acceptance.

One step further, brands are increasing the value and worth of a given product. Consumers tend to be more satisfied and confident if they possess certain brands. By this, they want to communicate particular values and characteristics about themselves. As a result of this, to make the best brand choice has become extremely difficult for most of the consumers. Brand awareness is influenced by numerous factors – the greater part resides in the customers' mind. That is why so important to know brands from a different angle, to investigate the possible contributions to consumer decision.

In addition to this, within the perceptual factors – emotions got important role from the point of this discussion. Emotional responses and feelings are contributing to formulate relationship between brands and consumers themselves. This connection leads to symbolic brand perceptions and formulating brand personality dimensions. As a conclusion, what originally contributes to a brand choice is the emotional link between the brand and the person. Obviously, other factors have effect, like affordability, availability on brand choice. Take into account all these aspects, choosing a brand is mainly founded on emotional and perceptual reflections.

Based on consumers' brand value perceptions, the most relevant dimension from the side of consumer decision is the created and perceived brand personality dimensions. The recognition of brand personality elements, consumers have the opportunity for self-expression by that brand choice. In consideration of perfume product category the aforementioned factors are highly relevant. The majority of perfume brand choice based on the fragrance, brand perceptions and emotions aroused by that particular scent. In this field, the wide selection and similarities among perfume characteristics pose difficulties to consumer brand choice. In

making the best possible perfume brand choice consumers involve symbolic brand values into the decision process, as well.

Within the framework of the empirical research the underlying factors of consumer decision making, effect of brands, emotional brand attachment and arousal, experience and impression formation has been investigated.

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INTRODUCTION

This discussion deals with the function of brand and emotions in consumer decision making. In addition to this, the investigation of the decision background, underlying factors and motivations also filled considerable part.

The importance of this research field is originated in the need for understanding consumer decision making process. Recently, in the market there are enormous numbers of brands, which yield difficulty in consumer decision making. From my point of view consumers tend to sort alternatives by the help of brand choice and they evaluated their decisions based on aroused emotions and feeling.

The purpose of the research to observe role of brands in consumer decision making, motivations and underlying forces that formulate relationship with a certain brand, and method of brand evaluation. At last but not least, as the measurement of the communicated brand value perception, associative aspects used in practice. By this method, there is a chance to evaluate the appropriate marketing message communication in consideration of consumer perceptions.

The applied research questions formulated in accordance to these assumptions and recent market trends. In order to gather relevant and reliable data from the respondents – in respect to the nature of the topic – qualitative face to face in-depth interviews were applied.

The structure of this discussion built in the following way. *Chapter 1* is focusing on the importance of brands in consumer decision making. This part directed to highlight how brands may make easier consumer choice. In line of this, the particular nature of brands presented; mainly brands are discussed from the consumers' point of view. In addition to this the realized brand values and functions also involved in this section. *Chapter 2* deals with consumer decision in consideration of emotion's side. This part is motivated by the fact that perceived and aroused emotions toward brands or certain products partly influence consumer decision making. The importance of emotions declared and the way how these feelings and attitudes lead to brand purchase or refusal. Take into account the essential role of emotions, brand identification process, consumer-brand relationship formation discussed in the last part of this chapter. In *Chapter 3* the most characteristic symbolic brand value, the brand personality discussed. Based on my point of view, beyond emotions the perfect fit between a consumer's personality and the chosen brand fulfils even more important aspect in the decision making. In connection to this, this brand value element took into consideration, and an individual posture toward a communicated brand personality observed. The very last part

of the discussion, *Chapter 4* consists of the process and the results of the empirical research. This section directed to evaluate those principles and assumptions found along with the literature review.

1. THE ROLE OF BRANDS IN CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

In today's world a great deal of products and services are introduced in the market by competing firms. This wide selection ensures that potential consumers can fulfil their reshaped needs and wants. The ethos of consumer society, the consumption externalities and the advertising messages communicated by the companies resulted considerable changes in consumer desires.

The transformed social expectations play significant role in consumer decision-making. In addition to this, consumers seek to receive confirmation about their decisions. The impacts coming from the society in consumption put heavy pressure both on consumers and companies. This feature results the overcrowding effect of offers in the market. As a result of this, the difficulty to make the best satisfying consumer decision has increased. There is an obvious solution for the potential consumers, by which they have the possibility to make their decisions easier, namely the *brands*.

From the consumers' side, they tend to sort the alternatives by applicable and distinctive product characteristics. In other words, consumers claim something relevant, which may help them to choose one product instead of the other ones. Furthermore, they apply particular patterns of buying by observing other consumers. These consumers may implement or evaluate the others' decisions. Generally, a consumer presumably made decisions by measuring the alternatives' functional, emotional and symbolic values.

1.1. The Literature Review of Brand Definition

In the literature countless definitions can be found of a brand. One of the most frequently used that brand is a "name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers" (American Marketing Association 1995).

Basically, most of the definitions point out certain features of brands. Brands are focus on satisfying consumers' desires (De Chernatony, 2007) and also may be one of those tools that can solve the difficulty of consumer decision. Based on Kotler and Armstrong's (2001) opinion, consumers regard brands as a significant element of products as well as brands may

increase the value of a given product. They represent this effect by the different consumer perceptions when a product is displayed with or without a brand. “Brands speak imagistic language.” (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2003 p. 211).

Another prevailing feature of brands is building trust and confidence which “results from repeated brand interactions characterized by consistency and a perception that the brand cares for the customer” (De Chernatony, 2007 p. 4). Taking into account the intangibility of brands Wheeler (2006 p. 4) states that “brand is the promise, the big idea, and the expectations that reside in each customer’s mind about a product, service or company”. Walter Landor thought further this dimension of brands and he argues that “...brands are created in the mind” (Wheeler, 2006 p. 4).

Franzen and Bouwman (2001) write that our memory contains around 10,000 brands and approve particular nature of brands. They state that “a brand exists only in the memory of people, sign of recognition and evokes associations in people” (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. xvii). Consumers develop techniques to sort the enormous number of alternatives, “brands act as a shorthand device of functional and emotional characteristics, enabling rapid recall of information in memory and speedier purchase decisions” (De Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley, 1998 p. 419). As a result of this, brand names can be regarded as a tool of time saving method in consumer decision. The majority of consumers speed their choice by following brands that they have already experienced (De Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley, 1998). Kotler and Armstrong (2001 p. 571) argue that a brand “first brings to mind certain product attributes”. For example, a lady who uses Mexx perfume suggests being a creative, cheerful and young person (Fragrantica, 2013).

Landa (2006) takes the overcrowding effect in the market as the initial point and proposes that as a result of this there is quite considerable need for brands to be able to differentiate products. Moreover, she interprets brands as “a proprietary name for a product, service or company” (Landa, 2006 p. 4). Based on this argument, brands are the collection of functional, emotional elements of a product or service. Brands have three dimensions: the sum total of all characteristic of a product or company, the brand identity and the current perceptions of brands by consumers.

The sum total of all characteristics of a brand involves “assets that differentiate it among the competition and distinguish it in the audience’s mind” (Landa, 2006 p. 4). The emotional, functional and cultural elements arise in response to the brand identity also implied by the total characteristics of a brand. The brand identity helps in the relevant understanding about the importance of the brands for the consumers, which is “the visual and verbal articulation of a brand, including all pertinent design applications, such as logo, or packaging” (Landa, 2006 p. 5). Brand name helps to modify recognitions of brand image. Furthermore, a brand’s logo can elicit one of the finest sensations related to a brand (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2003).

Brand identity explains how the potential consumers meet with the brands, and from the other angle, how the companies present their brands to gain the attention of the consumers. As a result of this, the brand identity should carry catchy, stable and special attributes. When consumers find the brand identity attractive, they are tend to choose the certain brand loyally (Landa, 2006). According to Landa’s (2006) consideration, brand identity has three dimensions: the brand name itself, the logo, and the packaging. Generally, all these three components play evident role in the consumers’ perceptions about a certain brand. Based on the definition of the brand identity the mentioned components largely emphasize the presence of visual elements of the brand and the design.

Consumers’ perceptions and opinions really counts of a brand, brand identity and the brand promise. Actually, consumers’ and the entire society’s perceptions on a brand determine its success and position in the market. This phenomenon is a consequence of several factors that a brand brings out from the consumers. “A brand is what it actually is - plus the user’s perception and beliefs about the brand.” (Landa, 2006 p. 8) Besides, the attitudes and reactions of the other consumers have considerable altering effect to the response of a particular brand. Based on Landa’s (2006) analysis, there are several dominant factors that affect consumers’ perceptions on a brand. These factors can be the extent of delivered brand promise, the consumers’ response to the brand identity, the general relationship (may be positive, negative or neutral) between the brand and the consumer, the public image of the company, and so forth.

Another characteristic brand dimension is the brand image. A certain brand’s image comprises “the organized set of perceptions consumers have formed about the brand” (Foxall,

Goldsmith and Brown, 2005 p. 63). A brand's image is the "mental representation that the brand evokes in the consumer's mind as the combined result of marketing and advertising strategies, the influence of opinion leaders and other social communication, and the brand's performance" (Foxall, Goldsmith and Brown, 2005 p. 63). In other words, the brand image is the sum total of all consumer perceptions of a brand. The role of brand image in the consumer decision process is even more essential. This is a particular mental process in order to distinguish a brand from the competition. De Chernatony (2007 p. 48) defines brand image as "set of associations perceived by an individual, over time, as a result of direct or indirect experience of a brand". The brand image can be interpreted as the basis for the purchasing decision.

1.2. The Practical Application of Brand Dimensions

The following part of the discussion focuses on the practical application of the aforementioned brand dimensions – how the consumers make their decisions based on a certain brand. Brand choice is a very complex and hardly expressible process which takes place in the consumers' memory.

The introduction part of the discussion highlighted that the consumers presented with a large number of alternatives, and the difficulty to make reasonable and rational purchase decisions from these alternatives. Franzen and Bouwman (2001 p. 130) regard this situation as "when an individual is confronted with a problem, a need or want related to consumption, he will look in his memory or in his surroundings for brands that may solve the problem or fill his need". In addition to this, the authors highlighted that the purchasing decisions mostly made unintentionally or by the help of brands in the memory, because "very few decisions are taken on the basis of information offered on an exclusively external basis, such as publicity" (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. 130).

In the case when consumers select brands, they perceive risk before and after the consumer decision. The matter of my opinion is that perceived risk yields the difficulty to make decisions and brand choices. Based on De Chernatony (2007 p. 36) argument, the following dimensions can be distinguished of the perceived risk:

- *Performance risk* - will the brand meet the functional specifications? In the case of perfumes this dimension refers to lasting fragrance.
- *Financial risk* - will the customer get good value for money from the brand? It means, whether the amount of money spent for a fragrance worth it, and the extent to which that brand delivered the expected quality.
- *Time risk* - will more time have to be spent evaluating unknown brands, and if the brand proves inappropriate, how much time will the customer have wasted? For this particular product type the time spent on brand decision is mainly result of sensing the fragrance and implementing symbolic brand values.
- *Social risk* - what associations will the customer's peer group link with him or her as a result of the brand choice, and will this enhance or weaken their views about the customer? Basically, sensing the fragrance of a certain perfume largely modified by the chosen brand's social and symbolic perceptions.
- *Psychological risk* - does the customer feel right with the brand in so far as it matches his or her self-image? This refers to the consistency between the scent and the consumer's personality traits, while dress in a pleasant fragrance.

Simultaneously, potential consumers make associations between the perceived brand functions and the brand itself. Given that brands are need satisfiers, consumers tend to buy brands because they expect functional, emotional or symbolic values from that purchase decision.

1.3. The Perceived Brand Values and Functions

The following section of the discussion focuses on the values and contents that a certain brand may mean to a consumer. Besides, brands serve as a self-expression tool, the process of matching self to a brand is also involved in this section. Finally, the most characteristic brand types explained from the point of the suppliers.

These brand values categorized by Franzen and Bouwman (2001):

- Values that emanate from the products to which the brand is connected
- Symbolic meanings that are 'added' to the product by the brand
- 'Purchasing behaviour values', meaning the functions of brands in the purchasing behaviour itself
- 'Relationship values': the values that are connected with having lengthy relationships

From the point of this discussion, the most relevant aspect is the symbolic brand value. In the case of observing symbolic consumption, there is the opportunity to analyze those intervening factors that contribute to the decision made by consumers on some emotional or influential basis. For the majority of brands, the symbolic function is the most significant for the consumers.

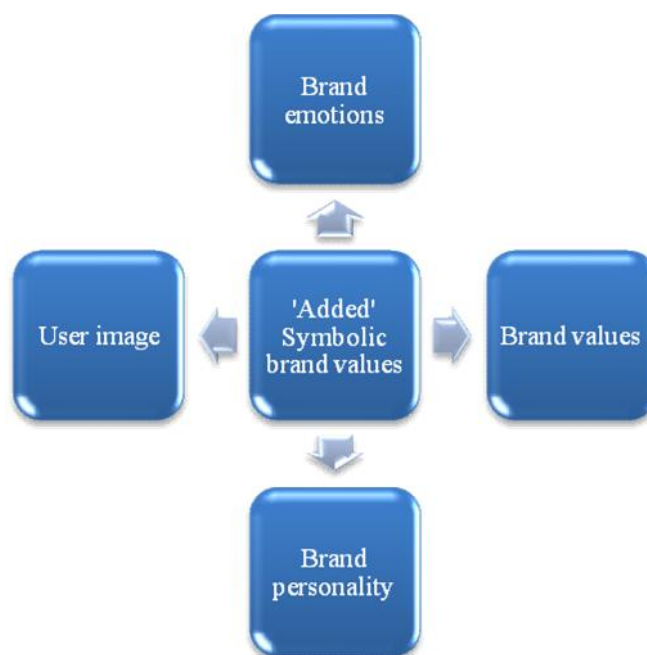


Figure 1: Symbolic brand value components, Source: Franzen and Bouwman (2001 p. 163)

The symbolic brand values mean how brands manifest themselves, what is the relationship between other consumers and the brand. Franzen and Bouwman (2001 p. 165) distinguishes the following symbolic meaning of a brand:

- *Brand personality*: human personality traits that are attributed to a brand. In addition to this, a brand also projects a certain consumer's personality. "Motivation researchers sometimes ask, 'If this brand were a person, what kind of person would it be?' The brand will attract people whose actual or desired self-images match the brand's image." (Kotler, Philip and Armstrong, 2007 p. 572) Brand personality is all of the impressions on a consumer, which are elicited by a brand (Foxall, Goldsmith and Brown, 2005). For example, outgoing and open lady rather choose intensive fragrances while a restrained one prefers delicate and pleasant scents. Brand's importance for consumer decision making arises when functional values presented with emotional values additionally. When celebrities involved in advertisements, consumers may evaluate easier the brand's emotional values. Furthermore, when consumers use a certain brand, this leads to the formulation of their brand experience. By this evaluation, they develop their opinion about the brand, and the expression of that personified brands (De Chernatony, 2007).

If consumers happen to choose between competing brands they estimate the consistency between personalities of certain brands and the personalities they desire to show (De Chernatony, 2007). From the point of the position that the consumers are in, this can be the self they believe they are. Another type is the self that consumers desire to be. The situational self can be characterized by a brand choice of a perfume for the first meeting or date. The last one is the rejected self, absolute example for this is the rejection of choosing a perfume promoted with a very sensual and extravagant advertising by a restrained, smooth woman. This rejection lies on the unwillingness of that type of association (De Chernatony, 2007). To sum it up, consumers choose brands for many reasons. Their brand choice declares something about them – how they want to be recognized. Mainly, a brand choice helps consumers to believe that they show their best self. This self can be the image of a person they aspire to be by possessing or experiencing a high prestige brand. The effect of aforementioned factors on brand choice is exemplified by Figure 2. after the listing of further symbolic brand value components.

- *User image*: perceived social-economic attributes and personality traits of the stereotype users of a brand.
- *Brand emotions*: the cognitive association of brands with specific emotions, or more holistic affect (positive, negative).

- *Brand values*: the associations of a brand with abstract meaning (e.g. ‘individualistic’ versus ‘bringing together’).



Figure 2: Choosing a brand to match self, Source: De Chernatony (2007 p. 42)

Brands encompass symbolic functions for the consumers in several ways. Franzen and Hoogerbrugge (1996 cited in Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. 165) distinguishes three variants of this function:

- (1) The expressive function
- (2) The social adaptive function
- (3) The impressive function

The expressive function provides an opportunity for consumers to show the values which are important for them. This expression can happen through the brand choice, which made during the process of purchase decision making. “Brands offer the consumer the possibility of controlling certain messages about themselves.” (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. 165) The expressive function can be described more precisely by the following areas:

- The brand shows others who you are
- The brand shows what you stand for
- The brand shows what you consider important
- The brand shows what you consider to be worthy of pursuing or rejecting.

Taken the expressive function of brands, it projects that brands can be perceived as the “extension of someone’s personality” (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. 165). Based on this

consumers tend to choose that brand which mostly fits their individual image and by this they can increase the effect of expressive function.

The social adaptive function relates the societal pressures intervening in the purchase decision process. Nowadays, consumers are more likely to incorporate the decisions made by others into their own buying decision. Franzen and Bouwman (2001 p. 166) draw up this tendency when they argue that “people like to look at other people out of curiosity, but also by doing so to find out more about their own position”. Here comes the point, where brands are used as a possible lever for this particular kind of perception. In this case, brands are mostly functioning as symbols for consumption. “Using the same symbols can even be a way to be accepted by that specific social group.” (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. 166)

The impressive function of brands explains “the feelings of contentment, self-satisfaction or self-confidence that emanate from the possession or use of a brand” (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. 166). This entails the fact when a consumer uses or possesses a brand it may increase his or her self-confidence. For example, when a consumer chooses a brand on social values, it can be regarded as the impressive function of brands. As a result of this, making a brand decision on this basis is a kind of social ideal outcome and to acquire pleasant feeling about the choice made is the most essential function for the consumers (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001). The impressive function mainly emphasizes the gratification of the consumers’ private self. “Sensory and intellectual satisfactions are also examples of the impressive function. A brand can be pleasing because of its design, colour, taste or smell.” (Franzen and Bouwman, 2001 p. 166)

Another contributing factor of brands for the consumer decision making is described by the brand promise. When a consumer meets with a brand he or she may perceive that the brand delivered or not delivered its brand promise. “The brand promise is the functional and emotional advantage and value pledged to the user.” (Landa, 2006 p. 8) Practically, everything contributed to the perception of a brand. The brand promise is closely related to the brand experience in the manner that how the consumer interacts with a brand, every time when that consumer interacts with that particular brand (Landa, 2006).

Generally, all the brand values and functions largely influence how consumers interpret and perceive a certain brand. “In a consumer society, [...] and with branded environments (in

stores, malls, zoos, museums, and in public spaces), each visual communication application builds our perception of a brand and is an individual experience that contributes to the overall brand experience.” (Landa, 2006 p. 9) One additional element can cooperate to the consumers’ brand awareness, which is the brand name. “Powerful brand names have consumer franchise – that is, they command a strong consumer loyalty.” (Kotler and Armstrong, 2001 p. 571) The brand name’s visual projection is the logo, which is “a word or phrase that serves to identify an organization.” (American Marketing Association, 1995) Logos have major role in brand associations, since they “speed brand recognition through provoking memory” (De Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley, 1998 p. 419). This assumption states that visual evidence help consumers to identify a given brand, and by this they can immediately make judgements about that brand’s image. Moreover, logos positively affect brand selection (De Chernatony and Dall’Olmo Riley, 1998).

In the recent part of the discussion it is worth to define brands from the point of supplier decision. Based on this the opportunity is given to distinguish brand types introduced into the market. When a brand created and considered to launch in the market, it is necessary to determine the company which cares and organizes the brand. The product can be presented with a *manufacturer’s brand*, which sometimes called a national brand. Another option is the *distributor’s brand*, which is refers to the retailer, store or private brand. The third possibility is the *licensed brand name*. It can occur that a manufacturer may produce one part of its products under its own name, and the remaining under distributor trademark (Kotler, 1997 p. 447). For example, perfume Chanel No. 5. is marketed exclusively by Chanel Société Anonyme, Paris. On the contrary Gucci, Lacoste, and Escada fragrances belong to Procter & Gamble. To sum it up, the three branding decisions encounter the majority of brands presented toward the consumers. Basically, the current discussion focuses on those branded products which are directly aimed toward consumers. This type of branding focuses on the recognition of products, and products with consumer brands is bought by individuals rather than companies. As the branding decisions propose, discrepancies exist amongst brand name selections as well. As mentioned earlier, the role of brand names in consumer perception is quite important. In support of this fact, my argument is that a consumer make evaluations and judgements about a company based on brand names, plus the additional associations (i.e. earlier experiences, opinions of other consumers, current users of that certain brand, etc.) As a consequence of this, brand names affect brand choice for a certain consumer in projection of values, attitudes and social position. Based on Kotler’s (1997) argument, four categories of

brand names can be described. Individual brand names, blanket family name for all products, separate family name for all products and company trade name combined with individual product names.

A retail brand is defined as “a group of the retailer’s outlets which carry a unique name, symbol, logo or combination thereof” (Zentes et al., 2008 cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 97). Ailawadi and Keller (2004, cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 97) explain retail brand that determines products of a retailer and makes different from competitors.

2. THE ROLE OF EMOTIONS IN CONSUMER DECISION MAKING

Consumer decision making is affected by many factors with various importance. The decision making happens based on the perceived and additional values that a given good or service (hereinafter products) provides for a consumer.

Generally, we purchase products to feel better. This elementary assumption stems from the fact that consumers expect fulfilment of their desires and needs. However, consumers experience several impacts that may raise their well-being. Beyond need fulfilment the emotional link between the consumer and the products has become more relevant in some decisions. This effect mostly characteristics for those products which mean additional values and features for the potential consumers. More precisely there are products where symbolic values play even more dominant role in the decision making.

2.1. Definition of Emotions

Emotions are the essence of our most characteristic experiences and memories. It is not different in the world of marketing and business; emotions affect consumer impulses and brand loyalty Marketing's experience implies that emotion can initiate buying interest, regulate choices, arouse buying motives, and influence expected buying decisions (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2003).

Two emotional mental states can be distinguished, one is the pleasant (e.g. joy) and another one is the unpleasant (e.g. fear). These types of emotions can arise as a result of buying experience as well as influencing decision making or brand choice. By its very nature, it is difficult to give appropriate definition what is emotion. Emotion characterized by the following dimensions:

- Emotions have an *object*. Emotions are directed toward an object, namely it is a response for something. By understanding the consumers' emotional response, the object of the emotion can be identified to develop those characteristics of an object which is resulted that emotions.
- Emotions provoked from highly *negative* or *positive* appraisals.

- Emotions increase the *tendency to action*. That is when consumers have certain feelings toward a product (can be positive or negative), emotional link established between the product and the consumer and simultaneously attractiveness is increasing, the desire for possession also exist (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2003).

Laros and Steenkamp (2005) establish a hierarchical framework of consumer emotions. They divide consumer emotions into two groups; negative affect and positive affect. They based this ranking approach on Shaver et al. (1987) and Storm and Storm (1987) (cited in Laros and Steenkamp, 2005 p. 1440) findings; consumer emotions can be divided into groups resulting a hierarchical order. The widest level contains negative and positive affects, than the subordinate levels built up from basic emotions (see Figure 3). These basic emotions can be divided further into groups of individual emotions.



Figure 3: Hierarchy of negative and positive affects, Source: Laros and Steenkamp (2005 p. 1441)

Malär et al. (2011) argue that emotional brand attachment can be created by the adequate match between the brand's personality and the consumer's self. According to their point of view, it does matter that this connection is directed toward the actual or the ideal self. They found that "actual self congruence has the greatest impact on emotional brand attachment" (Malär et al. 2011 p. 35). Gilmore and Pine (2007, cited in Malär et al., 2011 p. 35) also concluded that actual self is more essential for consumers in connection of marketing messages reality. However, Sirgy (1982, cited in Malär et al., 2011 p. 35) proposes that the ideal self remains significant, since consumers regard those brands that do not match with their actual reality, instead serves as an aspiration. Aaker (1999, cited in Malär et al., 2011 p. 35) defines self congruence as the "fit between the consumer's self and the brand's personality or image". Chaplin and John (2005, cited in Malär et al., 2011 p. 35) explain that presence of consumer self-concept is inevitable from the point of emotional brand attachment. Malär et al. (2011) suggest that different contributing variables have effect for actual self-congruence and ideal self-congruence. This relationship is shown in Figure 4.

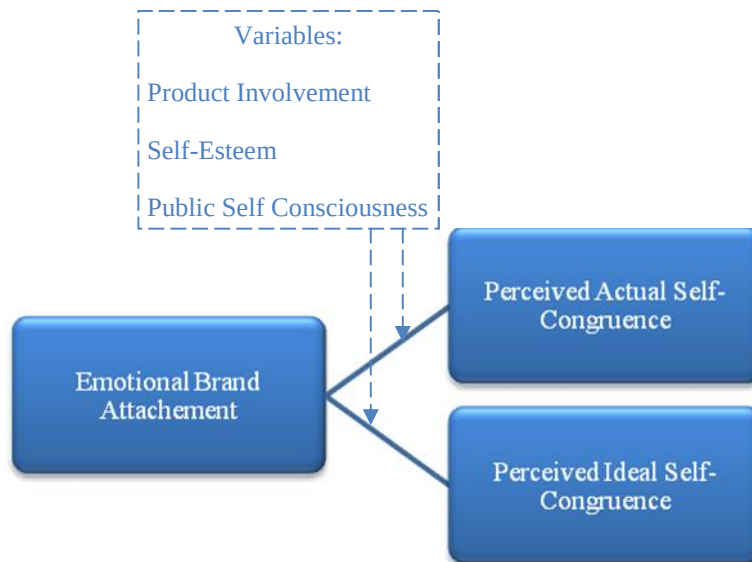


Figure 4: Linking self congruence to emotional brand attachment, Source: Malär et al. (2011 p. 36)

Schmitt (2012) in a discussion distinguishes three level of consumer engagement; object-centered, self-centered and social. In addition to this the consumer psychology model is represented with five processes, namely identifying, experiencing, integrating, signifying and connecting.

In the construction of the model, the investigation of the underlying psychological factors to brand choice or loyalty play essential role.

In most of the cases, powerful relationship can be observed between emotions and the consumer choice criteria. Consumers have many reasons for choosing one product rather than another which involves that they have some criteria against comparable options (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy, 2003).

The following section points out the process of generating emotions. As it has been previously formulated, there are various elements in decision making that arouse emotions in consumers. These antecedents can be applicable stimuli, wants and beliefs.

The process of generating emotions (shown in Figure 5) involves the state of mind of the individual (consumer's values, beliefs and wishes/wants/desires), relevant stimuli (evaluated in accordance with the consumer's values) and emotional effects or experience. These three components divided into five phases in the production of emotion.

1. Consumer's value system or key concerns
2. Emotive stimuli
3. Appraisal of emotive stimuli
4. Beliefs and wishes/wants/desires
5. Emotional responses

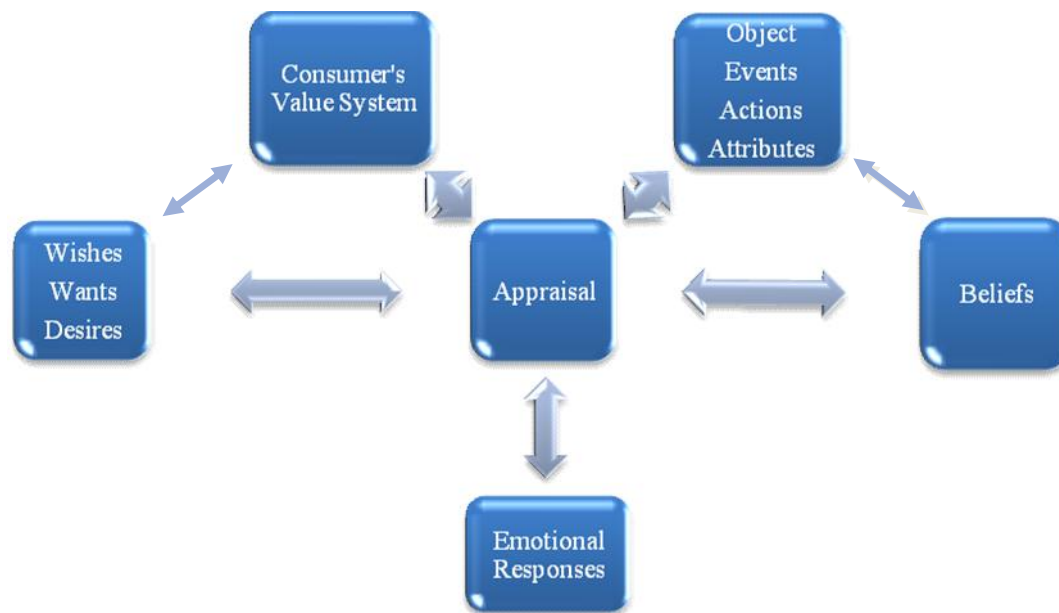


Figure 5: Generating emotion, Source: O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy (2003 p. 37)

Those values which incorporated into the buying decision can be related to consumer choice criteria explained earlier.

- *Show a special self-image to protect their self-esteem.* Consumers appreciate mental state in which they feeling positive about themselves. Certain features of a product which increase the self-esteem of a consumer will possess strong attraction. In addition to this a parallel relationship can be observed between self-esteem and self-confidence that is high self-esteem raise self-confidence and means more optimism in decision making. Any factors that change the aforementioned personal traits are emotionally based; however brand choice and some product possessions exploit associations, identity and self-esteem.
- *Secure self-integrity.* Consumers generally seek to protect their personal integrity. This element is closely related to socially responsible consumption. By acting with integrity, consumers can have the feeling that they are good members of the society.

- *Intensify interpersonal relationships.* Consumers value appropriate relations with other members of the society, since everyone depends on others in many aspects.
- *Avoiding risk.* One option for risk reduction can be to choose a well known brand. Consumers prefer certainty and they try to avoid any risk occurring in decision. The perception of risk based on the possibility to making a mistake during decision making, as well as to regret the purchase of certain product. An unknown brand, deficient product information and unfamiliar preferences (in the case of gift giving) result uncertainty and risk-averse attitude incorporated into buying decisions. (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2003)

2.2. A Consumer Psychology Model

The following part represents a consumer psychology model of brands by (Schmitt 2012). Consumer perceptions and judgments are incorporated into this model as they connected to a brand, by focusing on the unique characteristics of it. The design of the model take into account the different levels of consumer engagement resulted by special needs, motivations and aims.

The first level of engagement related to the object-centered and functional engagement, say consumer gathering information about a brand's utilitarian benefits.

Secondly, another level of engagement identifies the so called self-centered type, when a brand is considered as personally relevant to the consumer.

And the third level reflects the social engagement with the brand, which implies the method when a brand is regarded from interpersonal and socio-cultural viewpoint. Moving from the first level of engagement to the third, the brand becomes more meaningful to the consumer.

The model (see Figure 6) differentiates five, brand related processes. *Identifying* stage related to brand recognition and formation of associations. *Experiencing* means different experiences connected to a brand. *Integrating* refers to the transformation of information into general brand concept, personality and connection with the brand. *Signifying* implies the usage of a brand as an informational sign, identity and symbol. *Connecting* with a brand involves the attitude formation, and the extent of personal attachment.

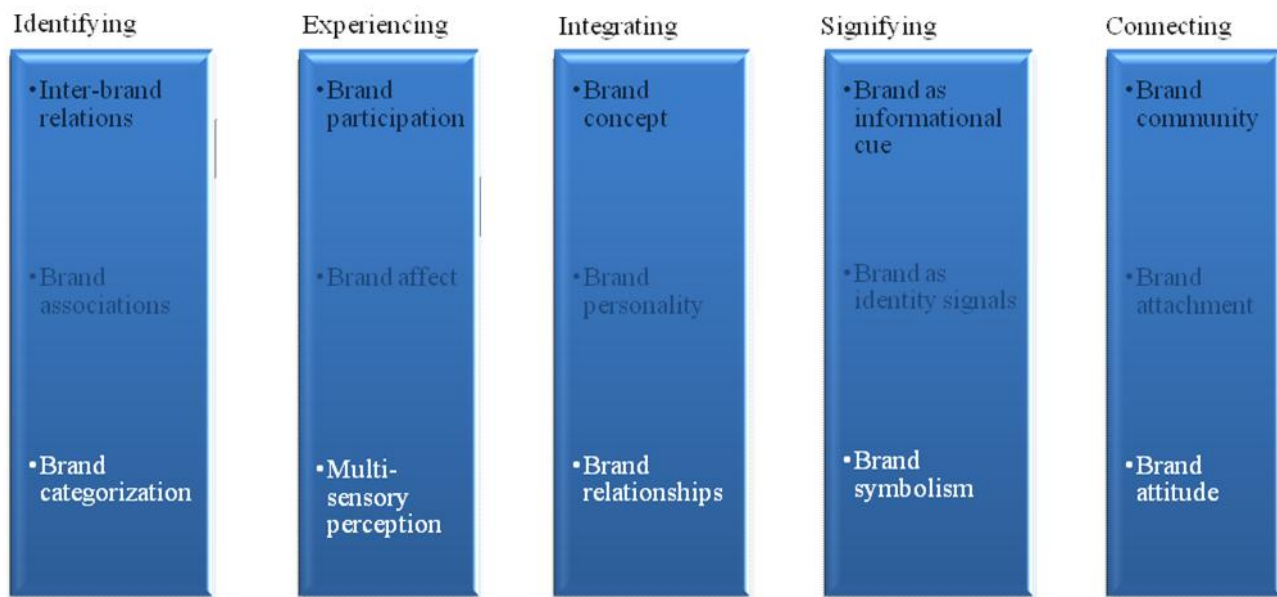


Figure 6: Consumer psychology model of brands, Source: Schmitt (2012 p. 9)

From the point of this discussion the self centered engagement is the most relevant in the case of each five stages.

- *Brand associations*

When consumers sort information that is applicable to them, they join with a brand in self-relevant way. “In addition to associations provided by firms, consumers will develop their own associations with brands, for example, cognitive responses that the consumer generates about the brand (Keller, 2003 cited in Schmitt, 2012 p. 10).

- *Brand affect*

The self centered way of brand engagement may also arouse negative or positive emotions and feelings, like joy and sadness. Emotions are mostly the result of an appraisal process (Smith & Ellsworth, 1985 cited in Schmitt, 2012 p. 10). Moods on the contrary are moderate states and mediate information about a brand when consumers apply the “how do I feel about it?” examining (Pham, 2004; Schwarz, 1990 cited in Schmitt, 2012 p. 10).

Consumers may perceive uncertain feelings about brands or regret after the purchase decision.

- *Brand personality*

Brand personality is generated when consumers process information and experiences, and convert it into traits or personality of a brand (Aaker, 1997 cited in Schmitt, 2012 p. 11). An essential point is created personality differentiate brand in the memory of the consumers. Based on Aaker's (1997) framework, the following five-category measure can be applied best to brands: *Sincerity*, *Excitement*, *Competence*, *Sophistication*, and *Ruggedness*. Three of these dimensions (*Sincerity*, *Excitement*, and *Competence*) refer closely to three human personality traits (*Agreeableness*, *Extraversion*, and *Conscientiousness*), and the remaining two (*Sophistication* and *Ruggedness*) are not consistent with those of the big-five human personality traits (McCrae and Costa, 1997 cited in Schmitt, 2012 p. 11).

- *Brand as identity signals*

When a brand becomes personally engaged, it can serve as a tool for consumer's identity either for the consumer or to the other members of the society. "The part of the self that is defined by brands is referred to as self-brand identity. Consumers may apply brands to express and better understand their selves (Swaminathan et al., 2007 cited in Schmitt, 2012 p. 12). In connection with this a brand may serves as self expression ("I choose Chanel because I view myself as sophisticated") or to project self to the others ("I choose Chanel to show others that I am sophisticated") (Kirmani, 2009 cited in Schmitt, 2012 p. 12).

- *Brand attachment*

This dimension is the most important that declare the consumer's connection with a brand. This can be formulated as a result of past experiences, perception of the aforementioned brand values and based on the opinion of others. The connection between the consumer and the brand mostly powered by aroused emotions and feelings. Companies in the market tend to apply lot of marketing tools in order to establish beneficial brand-consumer relationship.

2.3. Brand Identification

Tuškej, Golob and Podnar (2012) in their research propose that proper match between consumer and the brand values poses positive effect on consumers' brand identification. They

find that “most of the definitions of consumer’s identification with a brand derive from social identity theory based on social psychology” (Tuškej, Golob and Podnar, 2012 p. 54).

Definitions show that significant differences can be found between *personal* identification and *social* identification. Personal identification implies that consumers are able to recognize a certain brand and establish feelings of closeness to that brand (Del Rio et al., 2001 cited in Tuškej, Golob and Podnar, 2012 p. 54). By way of contrast, social identification means when a brand is serve as a communication tool that enables consumers to belong or refuse the membership into their closest social environment (Del Rio et al., 2001 cited in Tuškej, Golob and Podnar, 2012 p. 54).

Consumer-brand identification (CBI) defined by Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar and Sen (2012 p. 407) as “a consumer’s perceived state of oneness with a brand, is a valid and potent expression of our quest for identity fulfilling meaning in the marketplace of brands. With reference to their framework, six antecedents defined of the CBI. These antecedents can be divided into three cognitive variables (brand-self similarity, brand distinctiveness, and brand prestige). Furthermore, three brand-related factors (brand social benefits, brand warmth, and memorable brand experiences) can be distinguished (see Figure 7).



Figure 7: Cognitive and brand related antecedents of the CBI. Source: Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar and Sen (2012 p. 407).

Brand loyalty and brand advocacy is interpreted as the consequence of the CBI by Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar and Sen (2012).

Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2013) in their study suggest that consumer-brand relationship and consumer-brand identification may have an effect on consumers' brand passion. They highlight another intervening factor to this emotional state, which is the brand trust.

Tuškej, Golob and Podnar (2012) and Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence (2013) observe that positive brand relationship and identification in some cases have direct influence on constructive word-of-mouth of that brand, or even the willingness to pay higher price may increase.

In the context of marketing brand passion refers to "a primarily affective, extremely positive attitude toward a specific brand that leads to emotional attachment and influences relevant behavioural factors" (Bauer et al. 2007, p. 2190 cited in Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence, 2013 p. 905). Matzler et al. (2007, cited in Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence, 2013 p. 905) explain enthusiastic consumer who occupies in emotional connection with the brand and desire the brand when unavailable. The brand passion embodies two elements: the existence of the brand in the consumer's mind and the idealization of the brand (Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence, 2008 cited in Albert, Merunka and Valette-Florence, 2011 p. 905).

3. A SYMBOLIC BRAND VALUE: BRAND PERSONALITY

The following part of the discussion focuses on brand personality definition and factors that link consumer perception to this brand value. Regarding the complexity of brands, functional and symbolic values formulated by consumers. Brands can be seen as a tool of narrowing the selection on the market, as well as to help consumer decision making.

In addition to these characteristics, a symbolic meaning is created around brands. Basically, this process is conducted mainly by the consumers. Namely, consistent characteristics and values attached to practically every brand as a result of consumer interactions and usage. This meaning formulation is originated in the assumption that consumers tend to choose a brand based on the criterion of self-expression. Brands also sign of product characteristics and serve as a confirmation of a proper decision, social perception and evaluation connected to them. Consumers expect additional meanings from a branded product and they are willing to communicate something about themselves. Brand choice is largely based on the consideration of a brand's personality. This implies what kind of specific characteristics and attributes are connected to a certain brand.

Brand personalities are not solely created by consumers. In marketing's world companies introduce branded products, that hold already created brand personality. The aim of this is to communicate additional values and influence consumers' perception about that given brand's symbolic meanings. This enables consumers to choose the best satisfying products, which explicitly match to their own personality. Due to the wide selection and competition in the market, in some cases this perfect relationship not established.

3.1. Definition of Brand Personality

The approach of *personality* in psychology has numerous explanations: a person's character, a set of behavioural traits, the conscious self and a person's social mask (O'Shaughnessy and O'Shaughnessy 2003).

One of the symbolic brand connections is the brand personality (Zentes et al., 2008 cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 93).

Aaker (1997, cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 93) defined brand personality as a “set of human characteristics associated with a brand”.

There is a general tendency that consumers impose brands with personality characteristics. Aaker (1997) finds five main dimensions which can be applied for brand personality measurements.

1. Sincerity: down-to-earth, honest, wholesome, and cheerful
2. Excitement: daring, spirited, imaginative, up to date
3. Competence: reliable, intelligent, and successful
4. Sophistication: upper-class, charming
5. Ruggedness: outdoorsy, tough

Based on Aaker’s (1997, cited in R. Orth, Limon and Rose, 2009 p. 1203) study *sincere* brands are warm, caring and considerate.

Exciting brands have characteristics of energy and youthfulness. These brands are quite alluring, arouse interest and emotional attachment.

Competent brands are reliable, intelligent and successful. These brands enhance recognition by increasing security and dependability, which are the possible criteria for brand satisfaction.

Sophisticated brands are upper class and charming. Those consumers who can afford these types of brands, project their glamorous, elegant, and romantic personalities.

Rugged brands are outdoorsy, masculine, and tough reflect strength and simplicity for consumers who prefer symbolic brands related to power, toughness, and endurance.

Above all, Aaker’s (1997, cited in Maehle and Supphellen, 2011 p. 97) framework concludes that, *sincerity* refers to the form of warmth and acceptance, and brand *excitement* entails sociability, energy and activity. Moreover, *competence* involves terms like responsibility, dependability and security.

Hirschmann and Holbrook (1982, cited in R. Orth, Limon and Rose, 2009 p. 1203) consumers’ personality and a brand’s personality should connect to each other, because a brand’s personality serves as a tool for a consumer’s expression of the self by consumption. The authors highlight two brand personality dimensions (sincerity and excitement) and two personality traits (neuroticism and extraversion), due to the significant effect in marketing research.

Certain products contribute consumers to define their personality, and as a result of this these products become emotionally relevant for them (Ball & Tasaki, 1992; Belk, 1988; Csikszentmihalyi & Rochberg-Halton, 1981; Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988, cited in Matzler et al., 2011 p. 876). When a consumer becomes emotionally attached to a product, it means that object facilitates individualized aim for self-expression (Wallendorf & Arnould, 1988 cited in Matzler et al., 2011 p. 876). This is possible, because of the strong relationship to the consumer's personality. One of the factors that make a product attractive is the ability to communicate the consumer's self-image and personality, this means not only strong linkage, but direct expression of the consumer personality aspects. This process is an option for a product to become emotionally enchanting.

According to Batra et al., (1993) "brand personality is described in terms of consumer's evaluation of a brand based on traits used to describe a person's personality" cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin (2012 p. 93).

Brand personality is defined as the "set of meanings constructed by an observer to describe the 'inner' characteristics of another person [...]" (Aaker and Fournier, 1995 cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 93). Based on their definition, brand personality is the inner attributes of a brand that is recognized by consumers from behaviour showed by brand characters.

Brand personality may serve as a basis of building relationships between brands and human beings (Aaker, 1996; Blackston, 1993, cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 91) by arousing feelings and likings toward a brand (Aaker, 1996 cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 91).

From the point of this discussion's empirical research, the above mentioned brand personality dimensions (Aaker 1997) are not applicable. The object of this research is perfumes. In connection to this, those personality traits are used that have been provided by the fragrance creators. This implies the fact, that this product category cannot be grouped into that five personality dimensions.

3.2. Dimensions of Brand Personality Perceptions

There are various ways in which consumers perceive the messages of brand personality. This perception is largely affected by the certain attributes of the product itself. Besides, the past experiences and social evaluation also contribute to brand personality perception.

Symbolism and meanings also can create brand personality, but these are not necessarily evoked by brands. Also corporate communications and consumer reactions formulate brand personality (Maehle and Suphellen 2011). Personality traits are formulated as a consequence of behaviour observations. “Symbolic sources such as logo, endorser and typical users seem more relevant for the ruggedness and sophistication dimensions” (Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 98)

Fennis and Pruy (2006) argue that dominant brand personality traits may influence consumer perceptions of personality traits of the brand owner. This is possible by the projection of brand personality traits to consumer personality traits leading to impression formation. Aaker (1999, cited in Fennis and Pruyn 2006 p. 634) finds that consumers choose and use brands characterized by dominant personality traits in order to emphasize their own personality in different situational circumstances.

Maehle, Otnes and Suphelle (2011) declare product characteristic factors that establish the perception of brand personality dimensions expressed by Aaker (1997). The results show that, “specific brand personality dimensions are associated with particular product categories” (Maehle, Otnes and Suphelle, 2011 p. 290).

The following connections revealed by Maehle, Otnes and Suphelle (2011):

1. Sincere brands: family-related
2. Exciting brands: opportunity to get involved in exciting feelings
3. Competent brands: related to expertise and quality
4. Sophisticated brands: mostly possess feminine nature
5. Rugged brands: mostly characterized by masculine type

Take into account consumers’ identity seeking purchase behaviour; the symbolic meanings of products are usually fill prevailing role in decision making (Solomon, 1983 cited in Maehle, Otnes and Suphelle, 2011 p. 290).

The intended brand personality means how brand management (firm) wants consumers to recognize a brand's personality (what consumers should feel and think about a brand), while realized brand personality stands for the consumers' actual recognition of a brand's personality (what consumers really think and feel about a brand) (Malär et al. 2012).

Malär et al. (2012) also point out that uniqueness of brand personality profile, the differentiation of a brand, consumers' extent to product involvement, and previous brand experiences influences the degree to which realized brand personality approximate the intended brand personality. As a conclusion, in some cases consumers may not totally perceive the brand personality as intended.

Considering brand image and brand personality, each of these are result of consumer perceptions, related to translating and evaluating brand associations (Aaker, 1996; Aaker 1997, cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 93). Both are fulfilling essential role in consumer decision making.

3.3. The Individual and Brand Personality

Several researches on self congruity reveal that consumer's relationships to brands partly dependent on their experience of a brand's personality and how this personality connect and encourage their self concept (R. Orth, Limon and Rose 2009).

Matzler et al. (2011) argue that certain personality traits like extraversion and agreeableness project identification with the brand community - and parallel with product attachment - brand trust and brand loyalty. The relevant product attributes largely determine the person-brand congruity, which is the "perceived fit between the person and the brand" (Matzler et al. 2001 p. 874).

Consumers choose products not simply for their functional benefits; in addition products and brands can be translated as symbols that communicate social meaning (Levy, 1959 cited in Matzler et al., 2011 p. 875). Besides, products may fulfil the function for consumers to express their own personality, reflects their individuality in order to signify distinctiveness and uniqueness (Belk, 1988; Tian et al., 2001 cited in Matzler et al., 2011 p. 875). A brand

adds several benefits to consumers, such as functional, experiential and symbolic (Keller, 1993 cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 93). The functional benefits refer to the problem solving ability of a brand; the experimental benefits mean the sensory enjoyment from using brands, and the symbolic benefits related to signalling effects of brands (Helgeson & Supphellen, 2004 cited in Das, Datta and Kumar Guin, 2012 p. 93).

“The persona acts like a mask behind which one hides, as one plays a role in line with the persona” (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2003 p. 211). Similarly, brands can possess persona, described as the “public face a brand projects” (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2003 p. 211). When brand personality serves as social mask, it would be the same as brand persona. On the contrary, referring to *brand personality* is connected to a set of character of behavioural traits (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2003).

Consistency of a persona means certainty and commitment to anything that the image suggests. In the case of inconsistency consumers are presented with confused brand image. If a certain brand persona is appropriate for the preferred self image, choosing that brand strengthens the consumer’s own persona (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy 2003).

The wanted persona of a brand is the image communicated to the society by the firm. In addition to this, *brand image* is “the actual image the public has of the brand, which includes the consumer’s own view of the brand’s persona” (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2003 p. 211).

A brand’s persona is reinforced by the presentation of a logo, the package, the shape of the product and other additional characters. “Characters are *personification* of symbols that sharpen brand image” (O’Shaughnessy and O’Shaughnessy, 2003 p. 211). A logo is a visual figure of the brand; visual illustrations are more binding emotionally.

4. THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH

4.1. The research design

The purpose of the empirical research is to analyse attitudes of consumers toward perfume brands, attractive product characteristics, emotions aroused by brand possession, brand choice and brand emotions. Beyond this, the research focuses on measuring the perceived uncertainty and regret in case of this product category. The closing part of the research includes associative exercises in which the information communicated by companies applied. This part focuses on the extent of correct perception of this information. Finally, the topic of the research is strengthened by the assumption that a perfume choice is largely determined by the adequate relationship between the fragrance and the consumer's personality.

The structure of the interview based on the following logical order. In the introduction general and personal information are asked. Those aspects are included at this stage, which presumably have some effect or connection to decision making. Firstly, the respondents' brand recognition and usage observed, and then the favourite brand investigated. After this, preferred fragrances are clarified and a question directed to determine an attractive product for a respondent. Afterwards, respondents are asked to describe their choice from similar brands. The criteria applied in purchase decision also analysed in the interview. At last, but not least situational brand choice and aroused emotions clarified in the following parts. Finally, uncertainty and regret measurement applied as the basis for brand relationship and experience formation. In the associative exercises, all of the respondents asked to attach fragrance to personality traits, brand to fragrance, and brand to personality traits. The aim of this part was to observe the success in perception of symbolic meanings (brand personality) generated by firms.

The object of the research is the middle category perfumes (ignoring haute-couture and counterfeit products); based on my viewpoint the respondents are more likely to use these brands at the first stage. In addition to this, it could mean difficulty to involve into the interview those respondents who use just luxury brands. In the associative exercises five brands' data are applied for both female and male respondents. The five brands for the *female* respondents are selected on the basis of distinctive product and brand features. First, I deliberately involved a brand that holds a celebrity's name. In addition to this, I choose those brands that have particular packaging and product name. For the *male* respondents the five

brands collected in consideration of the following aspects. The first was the packaging, and secondly I attempted to incorporate brands that can be regarded masculine and sporty. Finally, several aspects determined the brands applied for both gender. The very first was the price level (in consideration of assortment), and the different fragrances and personality traits created for a certain brand. Besides, I paid attention to the brand recommendations to this age group. The data applied in the associative exercises can be found in Appendix C. Regarding the Guide of the interview, a pretesting phase was applied; the interviewee feedback proved that questions are clear, understandable and the logical ordering of the questions is applicable. To sum it up, the following assumptions made:

- a favourite brand is emotionally attached to a consumer
- a certain brand has significant role in consumer choice from similar brands
- lack of information and adequate messages about a brand may increase perceived uncertainty and cause negative experiences or regret
- perfumes are typical examples for gift and not frequently bought products
- brands and company messages may help consumer choice and to recognize quality
- information communicated by companies is always applicable and lead to perfect consumer decision

The respondents of this research are university students. This sample is decided based on that the members are more sensitive to conspicuous buying behaviour, choosing variety of tools for self-expression – such a tool can be also a perfume, they following the current trends and they use brands to communicate additional messages from their personality toward the society.

The breakdown of the sample regarding gender is the following: 8 females and 8 males participated in the research. Regarding the sensitivity of this topic, the interviewees are acquaintances, because presumably they speak openly about this subject. In connection with this, the sensitivity of this subject is quite high, because most of the questions are related to the projection of the emotional state. The method of the qualitative research was face-to-face in-depth interviews in support of a Guide (Appendix A). The reason for choosing this type of research is that in-depth interview enables to observe the respondents' immediate reactions, helping them to understand the questions appropriately. Besides, opinions can be freely expressed in order investigate underlying motivation and the background of consumer behaviour. The language of the questioning in every case was Hungarian, and the answers

provided by the respondents were recorded in the Minutes, than translated precisely back into English (Appendix D).

Take into account all of the above mentioned aspects, the following research questions have been formulated.

RQ 1. What are those factors that enable a perfume brand to be considered as favourite by a consumer?

RQ 2. What factors motivate this age group in the selection of perfume brands?

RQ 3. To what extent does brand personality communicated by companies match to consumer perceptions?

4.2. The Results of the Empirical Research

Brand Recognition (*Question No. 1*)

The first question of the empirical research aims to assess the respondents' brand recognition and usage. Firstly, by this question I get clearer picture about what kind of brands females and males know or use. This knowledge has an effect on the relationship toward these medium category perfumes. In this aspect, I analyse the respondents based on gender.

Table 1 summarizes those brands that mentioned by the *female* respondents. From the answers, I experienced that two main types of answers can be distinguished. There are respondents who mentioned just the high quality brands. And there are fewer respondents who mention both high quality and middle quality brands, as well.

Brand Name	Frequency
Adidas	1
Avon	1
Beyoncé	1
Calvin Klein	1
Celine Dion	1
Chanel	2
Chloé	1
Dior	2
Donna Karan New York	2
Escada	1
Giorgio Armani	1
Gucci	3
Guerlain	1
J. Del Pozo	1
Jean Paul Gaultier	1

Brand Name	Frequency
Kenzo	1
Lacoste	1
Lancôme	1
Lolita Lempicka	2
Nina Ricci	1
Playboy	1
Prada	2
Puma	1
Shakira	1
Tom Tailor	1
Tommy Hilfiger	1
Trussardi	1
Versace	1
Yves Chantre Paris	1
Yves Saint Laurent	1

Table 1: Brands mentioned by female respondents, Own edition

Figure 8 represents the most frequently mentioned six brands by the *female* respondents. These brands are Gucci, Chanel, Dior, Donna Karan New York, Lolita Lempicka and Prada. From the results, it is clearly seen that female respondents know the high quality, haute couture brands. The reason for this can be that these brands have more social recognition, and by this these brands have more value to the consumers. Based on the result, the female respondents expect higher quality and better performance from these brands, regardless of the expensiveness.

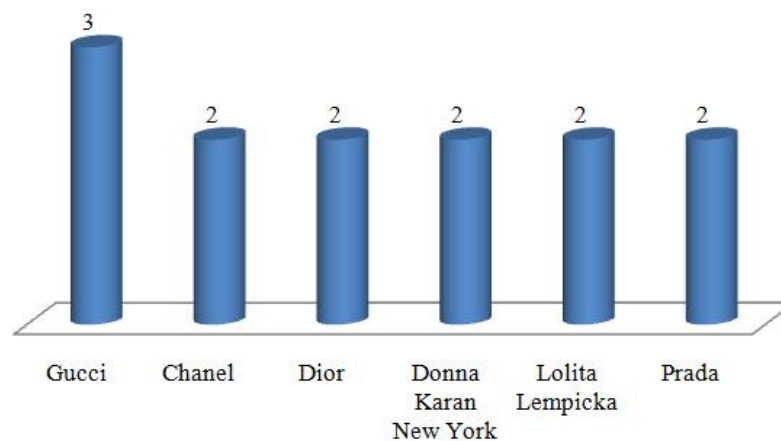


Figure 8: The most frequently mentioned brands by female respondents, Own edition

Table 2 below sums up the mentioned brands by *male* respondents. Similar to the female respondents, in the case of males it is still valid that some respondents mention just the high quality brands.

<i>Brand Name</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Brand Name</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Adidas	2	Ferrari	1
Antonio Banderas	1	Giorgio Armani	2
Calvin Klein	1	Gucci	1
Carolina Herrera	1	Hugo Boss	1
Chanel	1	Lacoste	1
David Beckham	2	Michael Schumacher	1
Diesel	3	Paco Rabanne	2
Dolce & Gabbana	2	Puma	1
Esprit	1	Tonino Lamborghini	1

Table 2: Brands mentioned by male respondents, Own edition

On the following figure 9 the most widely mentioned brands by *males* are represented. These brands are Diesel, Adidas, David Beckham, Dolce & Gabbana, Giorgio Armani, and Paco Rabanne. From the results, it is seen that those brands that can be regarded as the example for masculinity positioned on the first places. Amongst males, the presence of celebrity brands also observed by the brand of David Beckham. The high quality brands still got high level of mention but positioned after the masculine and celebrity brands.

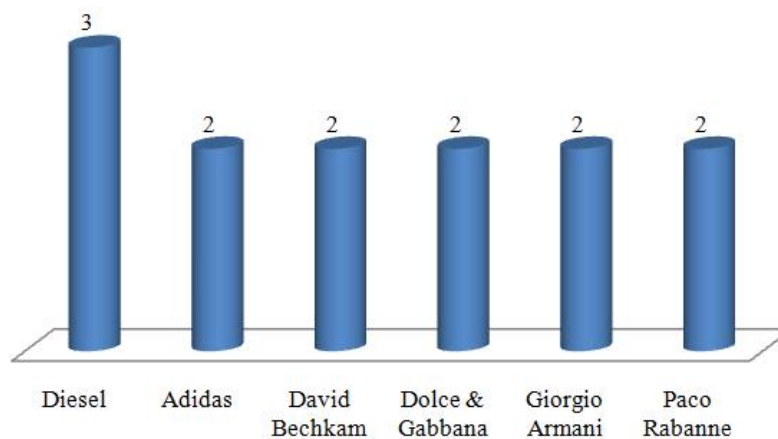


Figure 9: The most frequently mentioned brands by male respondents, Own edition

Brand Usage (Question No. 1)

Regarding the brand usage, it brings more accurate results than brand recognition. Based on my point of view, the brand usage has more powerful effect on the relationship between the consumer and the brand itself.

From the following table (Table 3) it can be depicted that *female* respondents use wide variety of brands. Amongst these brands both the higher quality and the middle category are represented.

<i>Brand Name</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Brand Name</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Adidas	1	Escada	1
Avon	1	J. Del Pozo	1
Beyoncé	1	Kenzo	1
Celine Dion	2	Naomi Campbell	2
Chanel	1	Oriflame	1
Chloé	1	Puma	1
Christina Aguleira	1	Ralph Lauren	1
Donna Karan New York	1	Shakira	1
Elizabeth Arden	1	Yves Chantre Paris	1

Table 3: Brands used by female respondents, Own edition

The most frequently used brands are Celine Dion and Naomi Campbell. This result is quite interesting since none of the most frequently mentioned brands (Gucci, Chanel, Dior, Donna Karan New York, Lolita Lempicka and Prada) used most frequently. In addition to this, the results show that some factors hinder the consumers to use regularly the most popular and high quality brands. The two most frequently used brands are celebrity brands. As a conclusion, female respondents may attach more value or trust to these brands, since they hold a name of a celebrity.

Table 4 includes brands used by the *male* respondents. The results prove my expectation that males use less brands compared to females.

<i>Brand Name</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Brand Name</i>	<i>Frequency</i>
Adidas	1	Esprit	1
Calvin Klein	1	Formula1	1
Carolina Herrera	1	Giorgio Armani	1
Chanel	1	Hugo Boss	1
David Beckham	2	Paco Rabanne	1
Diesel	2	Puma	1
Dolce & Gabbana	1		

Table 4: Brands used by male respondents, Own edition

The most frequently used brands by the male respondents are David Beckham and Diesel. From the results it is straightforward that the most frequently used brands and the most frequently mentioned (Diesel, Adidas, David Beckham, Dolce & Gabbana, Giorgio Armani, and Paco Rabanne) brands are nearly the same ones. This characteristic holds the assumption that male respondents know less brands beyond those that they use.

Conclusion: The results of the first question of the interview show the position of brands in the consumers' memory. In general, wide variety of brands mentioned, and there were fewer brands which discussed by more respondents. In connection to this, the assumption is there are not much brands that are positioned stable in the respondents' mind. In the case of females the high quality brands that can attach to fashion have higher position. On the contrary for males the sporty and masculine brands fill higher position compared to the haute-couture brands. It was really interesting that the respondents – both female and male – are thought relatively a lot to mention known brands of perfumes. In the majority of the cases the known and used brands by a respondent were the same. However, in few cases respondents were not able to name the exact brand, or the name of the perfume. The reason for this is the extremely wide variety of brands in the fragrance market, which make confusion for most of the consumers.

Brand liking and Meaning (Questions No. 2-3)

This part of the interview focuses on the investigation whether the respondent has a favourite perfume brand. In addition to this, I want to measure and evaluate those effects that drive consumers toward brand liking or loyalty. The contributing factors to the favourite brand selection also explained in this section. The second part deals with the assessment of the connected meanings and values to the favourite brand.

All of the *female* respondents have more than one fragrance, and regarding the *male* respondents Zsolt, Péter and Balázs have one fragrance.

First of all, two of the respondents (Nikoletta, Gábor) don't have favourite perfume brand. In the case of Nikoletta, she gets used to the fragrance very soon, and she explained her shopping behaviour as variety seeking in the case of perfumes. This reflects that she switch brands within her preferred fragrance. She mentioned ordering of perfumes from Avon. Gábor argued that he makes his decision exceptionally on the fragrance, not the brand. That is the reason why he doesn't have favourite perfume brand.

Regarding those respondents who have a favourite perfume brand, the most decisive aspect was the fragrance. Within this dimension the following main trends can be distinguished. First is the perfect match between the fragrance and the respondent's personality. The second one is the fragrance that is liked by the respondent (in case of females: floral, sweet, fruity etc., in case of males: spicy, woody, aromatic etc.) hold by the certain brand.

In addition to the fragrance Renáta and Réka added that the favourite brand's fragrance reminds them to their most favoured season.

Another aspect mentioned why a perfume brand has become a favourite is the performance of the perfume, namely the long-lasting permanence. Aletta, Zsófia, Zoltán, and Péter mentioned long lasting characteristic of a fragrance as the second most important regarding their favourite brand. On the contrary, Balázs also emphasized this aspect, but he evaluated his favourite brand's fragrance not so long-lasting.

Another interesting fact, amongst male respondents (Zsolt, András, Ákos) a certain perfume brand has become their favourite just because that fragrance is liked by their girlfriend.

The following criteria can be distinguished in the choice of favourite perfume brand. The fragrance still is determinative in this case and Dorka, Bernadett, Ákos, Zoltán, and Balázs point out the appropriate match between their personality and the fragrance. Another aspect is the recommendation coming from other people. In case of Zsófia, Zsolt and Dániel certain types of recommendations can be observed. Zsófia's favourite perfume was recommended by her family member, Zsolt considered the help of the shop assistant, and Dániel relied on one of his friend recommendation. Besides, external information gathering also plays significant role in the respondents' favourite brand evaluation. Alexandra heard information about the brand's perfume, she tried it and that fragrance has become her favourite. In case of Réka, she reads websites and reviews or opinions about fragrances. This effect can be regarded as a tool for narrowing the wide selection of brands. Moreover, other cautious consumers can be distinguished by the fact that they probe the fragrance, then wait for a while, and make the final decision after the evaluation. Renáta, Alexandra, Dorka, and Bernadett use this practice in their brand choice. Aletta, Nikolett, Bernadett and Péter mentioned price as a major criterion that they used to incorporate into their decision making. For Dániel and Réka it is important the style of the perfume brand to fit into their appearance. Another main feature can be observed is that Renáta, András, Zoltán, and Péter got their favourite perfume as a gift.

The most frequently mentioned value that can be attached to the favourite brand is reliability and permanent quality (Renáta, Aletta, Dorka, Zsófia, Ákos, Dániel, and Péter). For Aletta and Dorka the favourite brand means wide variety and selection, as well. Another important value of a favourite brand is that respondents do not feel the necessity to switch to another brand, since they got the values they have expected in consideration of the price. The basic assumption is that particular brand fulfilled their expectations, appropriate the fragrance for their personality and taste (Renáta and Alexandra). Zsófia is the only respondent who said the popularity and the wide recognition of the brand as the major meaning to her (Kenzo). Zsolt is

the only one from the respondents for whom the favourite brand (Carolina Herrera) means nothing. He argued that the only value that can be mentioned is the good fragrance; he does not admire the brand itself. This is similar in case of Péter, who is not dependent solely on the brand. Péter sets expectations toward fragrance, quality, and price. Réka and Gábor regarded the most influential value of a brand that they can accomplish certain style by using the brand, namely they have the possibility to represent themselves by the fragrance. Bernadett, Ákos, Dániel, András, Zoltán and Balázs mentioned the brand's personality as major value to them.

Conclusion: The major experience when the respondents were asked about their favourite brand is that they could decide not so easily what their favourite is. Obviously, this is true in the case when the respondent have more than one fragrance. To sum up the previous section, the most influential aspect in the decision making is the fragrance and the long-lasting performance. The majority of the male respondents would match their perfume choice to the taste of their girlfriend, as well. In the case of those examples, in which a gifted perfume has become a favourite to a respondent, all of them claimed that it was perfect choice for them.

Fragrance Characteristics (Question No. 4)

In order to get clearer picture about the respondents' perfume and brand choice it is not necessarily enough to gain information about their brand recognition. In the previous section it is clearly argued that for a favourite perfume brand choice, the brand-personality fit is very important for most of the respondents. Every fragrance has a certain personality type for which it is created. In the case of fragrances, respondents have minor difficulties to decide which category they would choose.

This part of the interview focuses on the preferred fragrances by a certain respondent. This information in line with the personal information shows a respondent preference and personality. In addition to this, these relationships can be useful for the evaluation and comparison of the results in the associative exercises of the respondents. In this aspect I follow the analysis based on gender grouping.

In the case of *female* respondents unique and various tastes can be observed. The majority likes the fruity fragrances (Aletta, Nikoletta, Dorka, Alexandra and Réka). Aletta, Nikoletta and Zsófia mentioned floral fragrances, as well. Alexandra and Réka choose sweeter ones, but Réka remains to moderate sweetness. Bernadett really likes citrus fragrances; also Renáta likes fresh and citrus fragrances. Dorka and Zsófia prefer also the spicy ones. Table 5

summarizes the preferred fragrances, favourite brand, free time activities and clothing of the *female* respondents.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Preferred scent</i>	<i>Favourite brand</i>	<i>Free time activities</i>	<i>Clothing</i>
Renáta	fresh, citrus, green	Elizabeth Arden	walking, reading, shopping	neat, elegant
Aletta	fruity, floral	Beyoncé	watching handball, drawing, reading	casual
Nikoletta	fruity, floral	none	reading, sports, playing chess	casual, elegant
Dorka	fruity, spicy	Oriflame	cycling, singing, cooking	casual, elegant
Zsófia	floral, spicy	Kenzo	doing zumba, reading, cinema	depends on her mood
Alexandra	fruity, sweet, intense	Escada	reading, watching films, walking	sporty
Bernadett	citrus	Puma	playing music, puzzling, sports	comfortable, elegant
Réka	fruity, sweet, moderate	Chloé	sports, cinema, student organization	elegant, comfortable

Table 5: Summary of preferred scent, favourite brand, free time activities and clothing of female respondents, Own edition

From this summary it can read out that there is not so strong relationship between the preferred fragrance and free time activities or clothing. However, those who like casual style choose fruity fragrances. And those, who are doing sports it is more likely to choose fruity, sweet and spicy ones.

In the case of *male* respondents it is really interesting that the two dominant fragrances are the sweet and spicy ones. Ákos, Dániel and András prefer spicy fragrances, besides Ákos, Zsolt, Gábor, Zoltán, and Péter like sweet ones. Intense and powerful-fresh fragrance is characteristic for Gábor and Péter. Balázs would prefer unique and special fragrances. Table 6 summarizes the preferred fragrances, favourite brand, free time activities and clothing of the *male* respondents.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Preferred scent</i>	<i>Favourite brand</i>	<i>Free time</i>	<i>Clothing</i>
Ákos	spicy, sweet, woody	Diesel	sport, reading, writing articles	casual, sporty
Zsolt	sweet	Carolina Herrera	sport, reading, networking, self-education	neat, sporty
Gábor	sweet, intensive	none	sport	casual, elegant
Dániel	spicy	Giorgio Armani	sport, going out, playing games	sporty, elegant
András	spicy, woody	Giorgio Armani	sport, reading, travelling	sporty, elegant
Zoltán	sweet	Chanel	watching films, travelling	casual, elegant
Péter	sweet, powerful, fresh	Formula1	sport, watching film, girlfriend, work	sporty, casual
Balázs	unique, special	Puma	sport, work	loose, elegant

Table 6: Summary of preferred scent, favourite brand, free time and clothing of male respondents, Own edition

From this table, it is clearly seen that most of the male respondents doing sports in free time. This related to the fact, that these respondents would rather wear sporty clothes. The most preferred fragrances are sweet and spicy ones in this case.

Conclusion: Generally, based on the summary of the aspects that influencing the perfume brand personality, cannot establish strong relationship between fragrance and personality. However, several characteristic connections can be observed. Both for male and female respondents the typical fragrance types have different meanings, and in connection to this the majority of the respondents are willing to use a certain fragrance as a tool of self expression.

Attractive Product Characteristics and Brand Comparison (*Questions No. 5-6*)

This part is focusing on the measurement of appearance, and typical products that arouse interest of a consumer. The second element observes those factors that are used by the consumer to differentiate similar perfume brands.

Based on my point of view, the packaging and the bottle of a perfume have dominant influence on the consumer choice. Generally, perfumes are appropriate examples for products where the combination of effects directed toward sight and smelling is more influential. For most of the consumers the first impression about a perfume is generated by the package and the bottle. Relying on the interview's result, these features are similar for both female and male respondents. Namely, the attractiveness of a perfume manifested in packaging, bottle, colour, brand logo, advertisement, and so forth. However, few respondents mentioned the fragrance and the price as a factor by which they narrow the selection first.

Table 7 outlines the answers provided to the above detailed factors in consideration with the preferred fragrance.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Colour</i>	<i>Bottle / Shape</i>	<i>Preferred scent</i>
Renáta		simple, well-designed	fresh, citrus, green
Aletta	bright and garish	not mentioned	fruity, floral
Nikoletta	not mentioned	not mentioned	fruity, floral
Dorka	  	○, simple, well-designed	fruity, spicy
Zsófia	   	□, moderate, special	floral, spicy
Alexandra	 	□, 0	fruity, sweet, intense
Bernadett	  	∩	citrus
Réka	  (fluid) 	□, □, transparent	fruity, sweet, moderate
Ákos	  	□, particular	spicy, sweet, woody
Zsolt	 	minimal with pattern	sweet
Gábor	   	powerful and particular	sweet, intensive
Dániel	light	simple, transparent	spicy
András	 (fluid) 	elegant, simple, transparent	spicy, woody
Zoltán	  	□, elegant	sweet
Péter	 	extravagant, asymmetric	sweet, powerful, fresh
Balázs	not mentioned	not mentioned	unique, special

Table 7: Summary of colours and shapes mentioned by all respondents in consideration of preferred scent, Own edition

The most frequently mentioned aspects for an attractive perfume are the packaging, bottle and colours. From the table, it is clearly seen that the female respondents mention the feminine colours and the male respondents mostly the masculine and shiny colours. Regarding the shape male respondents are more likely to choose elegant, minimal and rectangular shapes. Besides, Ákos mentioned Paco Rabanne 1 million, as a particular shape. Ákos and Gábor emphasized Diesel's bottle shaping a fist representing masculinity and power. On the contrary, the female respondents prefer thin, delicate and ground shapes.

Renáta, Zsófia and Bernadett mentioned light green and they prefer fresh, citrus and spicy fragrances. Dorka, Zsófia, Alexandra highlighted bright and warm colours, and they more likely to prefer the feminine fragrances, namely fruity and sweet ones.

Dániel, Péter and Balázs not mentioned black as an attractive colour. Péter prefers powerful and fresh fragrances and he attached garish blue and green to this fragrance. In the case of male respondents straight relationship between the fragrance and the attractive colour cannot be observed.

Another visible character mentioned by Nikoletta, Dániel and Zoltán, which is the logo of the popular brand. Beyond the shape and colour, the presence of the brand logo is important for these respondents regarding an attractive perfume. On the contrary, for Dorka and Péter the visibility of the brand logo on the bottle is absolutely negligible. Nikoletta also mentioned that

something particular should have on the bottle in order to become an attractive one. Dorka is the only respondent who mentioned the cap as a possible object that grasps her attention.

Additional factor mentioned by Aletta and Bernadett which is the price that determines the attractiveness of a perfume. Based on their opinion the price fulfils the role of narrowing the selection into consideration of those perfumes that they can afford. A similar effect can be observed in the answer provided by Zsófia. She did not emphasize the price, but she considers the assortment (ml) of the perfume first in comparison of the price asked for it.

Finally, another interesting example showed in the answer by Réka and Péter. For both person, the most expensive and popular branded perfumes are attractive. In each case, the reason for this is simple curiosity. According to them, they want to experience the performance (quality, fragrance composition and permanency) of these brands, and then evaluate those perfumes are really worth that price and whether the high social evaluation is justifiable. They use these experiences as a benchmark into their decision making.

Question No. 6 attempted to represent a situation for the respondent in which they had to choose from similar brands. The aim was to get insights into how consumers decide if they hesitate between similar brands. Two main directions are observable; the first is still the fragrance of a perfume and the second one is the practical/experiential and economic aspects. Renáta, Aletta, Nikoletta, Bernadett, Ákos, Dániel did not mentioned the fragrance as a decisive factor, that would help their decision to choose one brand instead of the other ones. For Renáta the symbolic brands, like Chanel means trust and reliability, by focusing on this aspect she tries to avoid disappointment and uncertainty. Aletta mentioned the availability of a perfume as the most decisive factor. In the case of Nikoletta, Bernadett, Réka and Dániel the brand and the social judgement connected would play even major role than the fragrance in the decision. Dániel, Dorka and Bernadett would rely more on the appearance of the perfume, say the bottle and the shape. There is an assumption related to this, which is they would attempt to determine the quality and the fragrance based on the appearance of the perfume. Another factor is the advertisement of a fragrance, this mentioned by Aletta, Nikoletta, Bernadett, Ákos, András and Balázs. However, in case of Balázs, advertisements give him direction that what brands he should *not* choose. Bernadett and Balázs mentioned the major confusing aspect of the intrusive smell in the perfumery, which cause more difficulty in their decision making. Finally, the fragrance of a perfume is mentioned by Dorka, Zsófia, Alexandra, Réka, Zsolt, Gábor, András, and Péter.

Conclusion: Taken the enormous selection of perfume brands as the initial point, each consumer want to apply certain tools to narrow this selection. This is reflected in the

application of a single criterion, or the combination of the following aspects. In the case of more deliberate and cautious utilization of factors – fragrance, price, appearance and brand judgement – consumers have the chance to choose the best possible brand which satisfies their expectations. However, up to a point the packaging, bottle, and colour make easier consumer decision making in the case of perfumes. For instance, when consumers have difficulties in the choice of similar products, they are willing to use fragrance in the first place on the point of decision.

Brand Purchase (*Question No. 7*)

In the previous sections of the interview we got insights to the respondents' fragrance preferences, an attractive perfume characterized, and it assessed how the respondents compare those brands that mean similar value to them.

The following part deals with the most influential aspects that lead to purchase decision. More precisely, what are the decisive points where a consumer is willing to pay for those brands, which bring pleasant fragrance, and fit to the consumer's personality. This aspect is not evaluated on the basis of gender grouping.

From the answers it is clearly experienced that the most influential factor for buying a perfume is its fragrance and in connection to this the long-lasting performance. This aspect not mentioned by Aletta, Dorka, Alexandra, Bernadett, Réka, Ákos, Dániel and Péter.

Within those who did not mention the fragrance, the following decision patterns can be distinguished. Surprisingly, only female respondents (Renáta, Bernadett, and Réka) mentioned that they do not buy a fragrance immediately when it liked by them. This projects their cautious buying patterns. All of them argued that they try the fragrance on their skin, wait for a while or go home – by this the long lasting performance can be evaluated. After this, they can arrive to a purchase decision, or in some cases refuse to buy that particular brand. Bernadett pointed out that by this she is willing to avoid buying same fragrance that she has as her favourite. Réka added that for her purchase decision the opinion of others is really important. In the case of Zsófia similar pattern can be observed, she used to incorporate into her buying decision, that a fragrance should be liked by a person who is important to her. Brand as an influential aspect mentioned by Aletta, Dorka, Alexandra, Ákos, Gábor and Dániel. However, Dorka interpreted brand as the dimension based on which she doesn't want to buy a perfume. Regarding on her argument, she doesn't want to buy the most popular brands (prefers uniqueness), that is why she ordering perfumes from Oriflame. The past

experiences and attitude toward already used brands mentioned by Aletta and Ákos. The rational amount of money in line with the assortment (ml) is influential in the purchase decision for Aletta, Alexandra, Zsolt, Dániel, András, Péter and Balázs. From this result, it can be concluded that male respondents have a certain level above they don't want to spend money for a fragrance. Although, some respondents argued that a fragrance should be really good in order to devote more amount of money. Only two respondents mentioned mood and feelings in the purchase decision. Gábor purchase a certain brand in consideration of his life stage and mood, while for Zoltán the fragrance is not enough, he expects additional effects from a fragrance like arousing pleasant feelings and mood.

Conclusion: In the buying decision the fragrance still plays important role for both male and female respondents. A low proportion of the respondents mentioned the brand, as the most influential aspect. These respondents are taking into consideration of the social interpretation and the past experiences connected to brand. Only two respondents claimed that they pay attention to the tastes of others into their decision. Finally, from the economic aspect, the price also determines the final choice. Price is relevant compared to the assortment of a perfume. Two main answers can be observed regarding the price. The first one is that respondents get sufficient quality for a lower price. The second one is when just there is a minor difference in the price, they willing to pay for the more expensive brand.

Situational Brand Selection (*Question No. 8*)

The interview question No. 8 is directed toward gaining information about how the respondents select fragrance for special occasion or for a simple day. In this aspect, several external and inner factors influence brand choice. Based on the result, a very few differences can be observed between female and male respondents. Table 8 contains the criterion mentioned on the first places for situational brand choice.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
Renáta	mood, weather, expect a good day
Aletta	mood
Nikoletta	mood, actual favourite
Dorka	fragrance, event
Zsófia	mood, whom will meet
Alexandra	fragrance
Bernadett	mood, boyfriend's taste
Réka	mood, obligations in a day

<i>Name</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
Ákos	mood
Zsolt*	fragrance appropriate for every occasion
Gábor	fragrance
Dániel	obligations in a day
András	fragrance
Zoltán	mood, actual preference
Péter*	special occasions only, good mood
Balázs*	no criterion mentioned

*Respondents have one fragrance

Table 8: Summary of criteria used in situational brand selection by all respondents, Own edition

This evaluation is more relevant in the case, when the respondent has more than one fragrance, Zsolt, Péter and Balázs use one. In case of Zsolt, he argued that the fragrance is appropriate for every occasion and his girlfriend loves it. Péter doesn't use perfume every day, however sometimes he wears his favourite one for special occasions. Also he said that, if he has good mood he would use the fragrance even for a simple day. Balázs has mentioned no criterion, since he uses one fragrance for every day.

First things first, the most widely mentioned criterion is the mood. This element is more characteristic for the female respondents. The majority of the respondents are willing to match a fragrance to their mood. Réka mentioned that she adjusts perfume choice regarding her mood; when she feel good she prefer sweet ones, while if she worried she uses discrete and mild scents. This differentiated choice based on mood can be observed in case of Renáta, as well. Other characteristic criteria which is connected to the latter one, is the expectations toward a perfect day. Renáta and Alexandra mentioned this aspect, so when their expectations on the morning is positive, they will wear the most favoured fragrances for that day. Thirdly, for Dániel and Réka the ongoing obligations and tasks of a day play even significant role in perfume choice.

Moreover, another dominant answer was the fragrance; and the thought relationship between the fragrance and the event characteristic. For special occasions both female and male respondents prefer intensive and high quality fragrances. Zsófia regarded a wedding and Christmas as special occasions. A dinner or a date marked as special occasion by Dorka and Bernadett. For a simple day, respondents do not make deep consideration, the above mentioned factors (mood and fragrance) play dominant role in the decision.

Some particular answers can be observed in this dimension. Alexandra is a loyal consumer to Escada. She confessed that she has a fragrance by this brand, which causes her headache, but she still uses it. The reason for the usage is that her friends and peers like the fragrance and

she got positive feedback. This can be a typical example when the meaning of the brand is more dominant for a certain consumer than the fragrance itself. Nikoletta doesn't have favourite fragrance, this related to the fact that she uses for either a simple day or special occasion her actual favourite. Zoltán was unable to provide precise answer for this question, because he claimed that both brands (Chanel, Paco Rabanne) bring similar values to him. He cannot differentiate between the two fragrances sharply, he uses regularly both for a simple day or a special occasion.

Regarding the following male respondents similar responses are observable. For Ákos and Dániel Adidas mean lower quality and used on simple days. Paco Rabanne and Dolce & Gabbana for Ákos, Carolina Herrera for Dániel means higher quality brands.

Conclusion: It is worth to assess how consumers choose a given brand for a certain occasion or a single day. This is the point when they get confirmation about purchase decision. By the different decisions respondents can feel the match between their feelings and the fragrance. Finally, when a certain usage pattern established consumers are able to decide whether the given brand brought the expected value to them, and even they get pleasant feeling by wearing a fragrance.

Brand Emotions (*Question No. 9*)

In this part of the interview the respondents were asked to describe the feelings and emotions that they experience while wearing a fragrance. After the purchase decision and the situational brand choice, consumers get affirmation about their choice. The initial point is that every consumer chooses a fragrance to communicate something about them. In addition to this, they want to experience the pleasant fragrance and feel themselves good in line with the chosen brand. Based on the emotions aroused and experienced consumers may evaluate the performance of a given brand's fragrance. This is the very last point, when consumers decide liking, and formulate attitude toward perfume brands. The following factors may contribute to emotional arousal: fragrance, long-lasting performance, quality, and at last but not least the feedback coming from others. These experiences and evaluations serve as the input for the generation of a brand judgement and liking. Also, in the future this opinion will serve as past experiences that remain in consumers' mind.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Feelings and Emotions</i>
Renáta	confident, wear more, feedback
Aletta	confident, cheerfulness
Nikoletta	comfort, very good
Dorka	extremely good, proud
Zsófia	more feminine, arousal of pictures, feedback
Alexandra	good, happiness, satisfaction
Bernadett	confident, more feminine
Réka	good, released, feedback

<i>Name</i>	<i>Feelings and Emotions</i>
Ákos	confident, happiness, feedback
Zsolt	confident
Gábor	confident, wear more, self-presentation
Dániel	confident
András	confident
Zoltán	positive attitude, attach memory
Péter	attractive, pleasant
Balázs	good, pleasant

Table 9: Summary of aroused feelings and emotions by the favourite brand for all respondents, Own edition

From table 9, it can read out that for most of the respondents wearing a fragrance cause them feeling of confidence. In the case of female respondents, Zsófia and Bernadett become more feminine, as well. The feedback coming from others are even more essential aspects, because the respondents get confirmation by others about their best choice. Basically, this is really good for them and they can get the feeling that they achieved the goal of impression and self expression. This positive feedback means for Dorka pride, for Zsófia femininity, and for Ákos happiness. In case of Zsófia and Zoltán the fragrance arouse in them pictures and past memories as a consequence.

Conclusion: Generally speaking positive emotions and feelings are aroused by a pleasant fragrance for both female and male respondents. However, the feeling of confidence is not so straightforward, few respondents from both gender did not mention this dimension.

Uncertainty and Regret (Questions No. 10-11)

The last part of the interview targeted to assess ambiguity or mistrust related to brand choice. The second component of this section measures regret and negative experiences of a particular brand. The main emphasis is on the reasons and antecedents of these negative consequences. According to my assumption, brands not always fulfil the expected requirements, or consumers have feelings that they did not make the right choices. Moreover, the choices of a perfume brand belong to those consumer selections that can be made quite complicatedly. In the case of this product category the felt extent of uncertainty may be very high and the possibility to regret may even higher. Finally, some questions are tending to study certain elements that consumers apply to reduce uncertainty and verify correct decisions.

<i>Name</i>	<i>Uncertainty</i>	<i>Reason</i>	<i>Help</i>	<i>Regret</i>	<i>Reason</i>
Renáta	yes	wrong choice / fragrance	mother	yes	fragrance
Aletta	yes	fit to her taste	try on skin	yes	fragrance
Nikoletta	yes	fit to her taste, fragrance		yes	fragrance, allergic reaction
Dorka	yes	wide selection, necessity		yes	similar packaging
Zsófia	no	fragrance made her certain	fragrance	no	gift (fragrance)
Alexandra	yes	unavailability of favourite brand	refuse purchase	yes	gift (fragrance)
Bernadett	yes	similar fragrance	test the fragrance	no	always correct decision
Réka	yes	disappointment in quality		no	gift (fragrance)
Ákos	yes	similar fragrance	friends, worthiness	yes	similar packaging
Zsolt	yes	similar fragrance	worthiness	yes	counterfeit product
Gábor	yes	similar fragrance	intuition	yes	fragrance, wrong choice
Dániel	yes	similar fragrance	friends	no	brand, quality, past experience
András	yes	similar fragrance	worthiness	no	gift (fragrance)
Zoltán	no	got perfume as gift	good choice	no	ask others opinion
Péter	yes	wide selection	girlfriend	no	gift (fragrance)
Balázs	yes	intensive fragrance in the store	try on skin	no	complex decision making

Table 10: Summary of felt uncertainty and regret in consideration of underlying reasons for all respondents, Own edition

The result of the question directed to assess uncertainty shows that most of the respondents experienced this feeling during purchase decision. However, one female and male respondent described confidence in decision making. Zsófia claimed that she is sure about the fragrance, this feature of a brand cause her certainty (Kenzo). Zoltán always get perfume as gift, and his taste and preferences are clear that ensures good choice by the gift giver (Chanel, Paco Rabanne).

Amongst those respondents who experienced uncertainty, the main reason is the wide selection with similar products. This feature is mostly characteristic for the male respondents. They claimed that they cannot distinguish directly lot of fragrances. In Questions No. 4-7 most of the respondents clarified the process and choice criteria they used to narrow the wide selection. However, from those few brands they still make final choice hardly. In connection to the wide selection, Balázs mentioned the intrusive fragrances that greet him at the shop which makes difficult his choice. Réka follows buying pattern that she makes background research about the brand's quality, fragrance and evaluation. In possession of such information, she tried the fragrance at the store and it caused her disappointment. This was the point when she experienced uncertainty. Dorka is the only respondent who mentioned the necessity of purchasing more fragrances beyond her owned ones. This is related to the situation in which she considered whether she is really need that perfume and this hesitation drove her toward uncertainty.

One interesting fact noticed that is Gábor and Ákos found similar situation buying a pair of shoes to purchasing perfume. Based on their arguments they experience similar extent of uncertainty in both cases.

Regarding the possible solutions and helps applied in the decision process to reduce uncertainty, the following aspects mostly observed. First one is to call help of a friend or family member (Renáta, Ákos, Dániel, and Péter). Renáta inclined to choose those fragrances at the first stage that are not appropriate for her taste, she calls the help of her mother. For Ákos and Dániel the opinions of their friends are important and they narrow the selection by the applied opinions. Ákos argued that sometimes friend's opinion confirm him about what brand should *not* he choose. Péter relies on the help of his girlfriend to reduce uncertainty and avoiding regret. Balázs and Aletta mentioned that they try the fragrance on skin, observe intensity and long-lasting performance, than they come to purchase decision. Ákos, Zsolt and András regard the worthiness of the similar fragrances, namely they compare the price to the assortment (ml).

Regarding brand purchase regret half of the respondents did. Three main reasons can be mentioned for regretting. The first one is problems with the fragrance long-lasting performance and composition (Renáta, Aletta, Nikoletta). An extreme example is Nikoletta who got allergic reaction from a Playboy perfume. The second one is that respondents got a perfume as a gift, and the fragrance was not liked by them (Zsófia and Alexandra). The third case is represented by Dorka and Ákos, similar packaging and routine buying caused wrong choice and then regret.

Those who are not regretted a purchase (Zsófia, Réka, Bernadett, Dániel, András, Zoltán, Péter and Balázs) several aspects can be observed. The most frequently mentioned reason is that they ask a perfume for a gift with clear expectations and preferences. Finally, Bernadett and Balázs argued that they are always able to make correct decision; Zoltán asks others' opinion and Dániel uses brand and past experiences to avoid regret.

Conclusion: Most of the cases respondents experience uncertainty during their decision process. They use solutions and help regarding the type and extent of uncertainty. Also the reason for uncertainty in the case of males is said to be identical, while in the case of females various elements can cause this feeling. Finally, regret can be seen as the result of uncertainty in the decision making. This can be proved by the fact that most of the respondents have doubts regarding the fragrance of a perfume.

Associative exercises (*Appendix E*)

After the questions of the in-depth interview all of the respondents presented with three associative exercises. These exercises measure how consumers perceive the relationship between fragrance, personality and a brand. Three main types were applied.

In the first stage the respondents asked to show their opinion about the thought relationship between main fragrance types and personality traits. The data applied in these exercises are gathered from official sources of perfumes' or perfumeries' websites (see Appendix C). The aim was to get clearer picture about how respondents with different personalities regard that possible connections.

The second part focuses on particular brands and the fragrances connected to them. In this aspect respondents presented with particular products with the fragrances that determined by the companies (see Appendix C). In this situation I wanted to measure whether the colour, brand, shape of the bottle or the name suggest the fragrance.

Finally, the third example analyses the perceived relationship between the particular brand and the personality. In this case, the respondents asked to show their opinion which brand would use by what personality type. The data used in this dimension also accessed from the official website of brands or perfumeries (see Appendix C). It can be possible that respondents tried to give the best answer by using the given picture and the previous answers they had. In this case, the respondents could only rely on their memory, since at one time they presented with only one exercise from the three.

The personal experiences regarding these exercises are the following. It was really interesting to see that respondents in the first stage felt absolutely difficult to find the best answer. And then, when real brands were presented they experienced slight easiness. The most liked exercise is the very last one; since some respondents claimed that they tried to match the elements based on their own perception and experiences.

The aggregate results show that male respondents gave more correct answers (21), than females (18). Regarding the three exercises the highest match experienced in the aspect of brand-personality relationship (20). In addition to this, from the results it is seen that the most difficult exercise was matching personality to fragrance for both females and males (8).

The presented numbers in parentheses counts cases in which correct answer has given.

▪ Fragrance-Personality Relationships

In case of female respondents the *fruity-floral-sweet – joyful-energetic-confident* relationship matched by two respondents. This answer means the highest correct choices. Besides, five of the female respondents regarded the *oriental-vanilla* fragrance preferred by *alluring-sophisticated-natural* lady, the correct personality dimension is irresistible-sexy-ultra feminine. Four of the female respondents matched oriental-floral fragrance to *sexy-elegant-feminine-mysterious* personality, while the correct answer is lively-vivid-sexy for this fragrance.

Male respondents provided similar low correct responses. The large number of mismatches also observable in this case, as well. Two male respondents correctly perceived the relationship between *woody-aromatic – rugged-masculine-sophisticated* relationship. Three-three male respondents connected *citrus spicy* fragrance to either *rugged-masculine-sophisticated* or *funky-partying-popular*; the correct dimension is intensive-hyper masculine-improver. Three male respondents perceived relationship between *woody-aromatic-spicy* fragrance and *intensive-hyper masculine-improver* personality; in this case the correct choice is cool-youthful-conqueror. Also three male respondents marked relationship between *oriental-woody* fragrance and *cool-youthful-conqueror* person, the correct answer is funky-partying-popular.

Conclusion: From the results it can be clearly depicted that respondents have difficulties to match correct relationships. Besides, the large number of mismatching also observable in the case of males and females.

▪ Brand-Fragrance Relationship

For female respondents the most interesting tendency can be observed in the case of brand Beyoncé. Three of the female respondents gave correct answer, that *Beyoncé – fruity-fresh-intensive*. However, in this case four of the female respondents mismatch the fragrance to *oriental-floral*. In addition to this, one-one respondent perceived correct relationship in case of *Adidas* and *Bruno Banani*.

Two correct answers given by male respondents in the case of brands *Mexx*, *Bruno Banani* and *Adidas*. The highest level of mismatch can be found in the case of *Azzaro*, where the fragrance regarded as *oriental-woody*, while the correct answer is woody-aromatic. The second highest level of mismatch happened in the case of *Playboy* and *Mexx*, three male respondents perceived the fragrance of *Playboy* brand as *woody-aromatic*, the correct answer

is oriental-woody. Also three male respondents linked *Mexx* to *woody-spicy fragrance*; the correct answer is woody-aromatic-spicy.

Conclusion: Since the aggregate number of correct matches is higher than in case brand-fragrance relationship, it can be concluded that respondents have easier situation in this dimension. However, the moderate number of mismatches also experienced, amongst female respondents the proportion of mismatches is nearly the same, three to four cases.

- Brand-Personality Relationship

Considering the female respondents the highest number of correct responses belongs to brand *Adidas*. Six of the female respondents correctly revealed the relationship between *joyful-energetic-confident* personality and brand *Adidas*. In the case of brands *Beyoncé*, *Mexx* and *Playboy* equal amount of mismatches are observable.

In the case of male respondents, *Playboy* got the highest number of correct answer. In the case of this brand four of the male respondents revealed right connection to *funky-partying-popular* personality. Although, in the case of this brand a relatively high level of mismatch shown; three of the male respondents connected *cool-youthful-conqueror* personality to this brand. The highest level of mismatch related to brand *Mexx*, in which four of the male respondents connected to *rugged-masculine-sophisticated* person. The right answer in the case of this brand is cool-youthful-conqueror.

Conclusion: on aggregate level in this exercise the correct answers are the highest. By gender, male respondents gave more correct relationships compared to females. In the case of females, one brand (*Adidas*) achieved high matches, namely most of the female respondents could connect the right personality to it. In the case of male respondents, relatively similar scale of mismatch observed for brands *Azzaro*, *Playboy* and *Bruno Banani*.

4.3. The Summary of the Empirical Research Results

Among the respondents it can be observed that few brands are positioned sufficiently. In connection to this, to recall brand names was not so evident for few respondents. Regarding brand usage, it can be concluded that brands with past experiences and greater social evaluation have higher position in consumers' mind.

Based on the interview results, several aspects play role in favourite brand establishment. Those brands for which particular emotions can be attached are more likely to become favourite one. To narrowing the selection, consumers use diverse approach; they consider product characteristics and brand evaluations. In addition to this, the opinion of peers and family members also involved in the decision making process.

Taking the huge brand and fragrance competition for consumers' attention, this leads to ambiguity and uncertainty in purchase decision. Consumers mainly make their decision on straightforward aspects in this case, like the fragrance or past experiences connected to brands.

Moreover, consumers wear fragrances to cause good mood for themselves in the same way as to generate good impressions in other people. The communication of preferences and personality of each consumer can happen through perfume brand choice that entails the preferred fragrance as well.

Consumers regard perfume choice as a complicated one, they apply conspicuous buying patterns and levers for uncertainty reduction. Also, emotions generated by a certain brand's fragrance and situational usage implied into decision making.

In most of the cases fragrance characteristics cannot be directly attached to personality traits and even to brands. However, higher level of success in communication can be observed in between dimensions of personality and brands.

5. SUMMARY

This discussion is mainly focusing on the facets and dimensions of consumer decision making. Considering the recent market forces and circumstances brands fulfil even more essential role for consumers. However, several new and symbolist values created of brands.

One of the most dominant factors – the emotions – got considerable attention in this discussion. As a result of the literature overview shows, emotions are the most influential binding dimension between brands and consumers. In addition to this, another contributing factors involved by consumers in the brand relationship formulation. Brand personality is one of the widely debated symbolic brand meanings that is observed by marketing researchers.

The companies in the market started to recognize that valuable and relevant marketing messages largely affect consumer's purchase decision. By this application companies want to differentiate its brand from the competitors in order to win consumers exceptional attention. However, in some cases consumers perceive these information pieces differently. This mismatch between the consumers perceptions originated in various habits, tastes, and brand recognitions. Besides, consumers tend to formulate their brand evaluations more likely as a result of earlier experiences and relationships. However, the opinions and recommendations by other consumers also contribute to brand value evaluation. In order to smooth these discrepancies in perception of marketing messages, symbolic brand values and particular meanings got more attention.

In the empirical research of this discussion, the success of marketing message perception is evaluated in line with brand personality. The object was the product category of perfumes, since several emotional relationships and significant elements play role in these purchase decisions. Based on the research application the aim was to measure the underlying motivations and factors in the consumer decision making regarding perfumes. On the one hand various attitudes toward brands and brand knowledge identified in the investigation. On the other hand, the antecedents and results of emotional brand attachment also expressed based on respondents' opinion. In addition to this the effects and impressions observed in the case when the expectations set toward brands are not fulfilled. All of these aspects contributed

to formulate the applied guide for the in-depth interviews leading to expressing the research questions presented in section 4.1.

Within the used perfume brands, most of the respondents have identified at least one brand which has become a favourite one. The most influential reason for this emotional interpretation is the attachment to the fragrance of that certain brand. Closer interpretation of the proper fit between consumers' personality and the fragrance can be regarded as more relevant. In addition to this, the performance of the product (long lasting fragrance) also regarded as a highly mentioned expectation toward a certain perfume brand in order to become a favourite one. Beyond these factors, with lower importance the values held by a brand, earlier experiences and recommendation from other people also affect the evaluation of favourite brand. From this dimension, it is worth to mention that a brand has become favourite one, since respondents got that perfume as a gift.

For the most influential motives and factors for brand choice can be regarded are reliability and the permanent quality. These values mostly hold by the favourite or a pleasant brand for the respondent. This implies the fact that a favourite brand means insistence for the respondents and maximal fulfilment of expectations in line with the price paid for that brand. The additional dominant motive for perfume brand selection is the opportunity given to self-expression. This symbolic communication by the brand manifested in the real look of perfume packaging and the bottle. By these aesthetics, respondents can match their appearance with the design hold by the brand, by this reaching the outlook and style they want to accomplish.

In the measurement of accordance between the communicated company messages (fragrance and scent, targeted personality traits and the brand) and the respondents' perception on these factors, the following conclusions can be formulated. Regarding the relationship between fragrance and personality traits, straight and stable relationship cannot be established. This entails that a precise association did not generated in the respondents' mind regarding certain fragrance types. However, between brand and created fragrance of it, higher amount of correct associations are made. Finally, the highest number of correct associations experienced in the case of brand and personality trait relationship. From this point, in the case of females, Adidas brand can be regarded as successful in the brand personality communication. While, in the case of males, Playboy brand communicates brand personality dimensions more effectively than the competitors or similar brands do.

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