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The Role of Consumer Gender Identity and Brand Concept Consistency in Evaluating Cross-Gender Brand Extensions

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by

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ABSTRACT

Cross-gender brand extensions are a developing and valuable strategy that has quickly grown to become a vital component of strategic communications management. The goal of this study is to gain a greater insight on what makes for a successful cross-gender brand extension. In order to expand upon the Basic Model of Brand Extension Evaluation (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012), this study examines how marketing factors, more specifically product positioning, combined with consumer gender roles and brand concept, affect how consumers evaluate cross-gender brand extensions. In the past gender and brand concept have been studied within cross-gender brand extension research. Yet, the present study focuses on gender roles, conceptualizing gender as levels of masculinity and femininity. The products featured were positioned as having either a symbolic or functional brand concept. The results from this study not only confirm that gender and gender roles are indeed two distinct concepts, but they also indicate that gender roles and brand concept have a significant effect on brand extension evaluations, especially when level of masculinity is a factor.

Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Given our current, global economic status, companies are increasingly seeing the need to explore and utilize new ways to advance and leverage themselves. Creating a new brand generally requires substantial financial investment (Aaker & Keller, 1990). Firms do not always have the capital necessary or they may not want to invest so heavily, therefore, many firms have progressively begun to turn to brand extensions as a solution (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). Close to 82% of all new products introduced to the market each year are brand extensions (Simms, 2005). Brand extension, as noted by Aaker and Keller (1990), is the "use of established brand names to enter new product categories or classes." Ralph Lauren now offers sunglasses and paint, Godiva now sells coffee, and parents can now be seen carting their babies around in Jeep strollers (Monga & John, 2010) Yet, not all brand extensions see success. Approximately 80% of brand extensions fail (Völkner & Sattler, 2006).

Brand extensions can be witnessed in just about every industry. There are multiple approaches to brand extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990). In order to determine which brand extension strategies are most successful, it is imperative that brand managers and marketing professionals gain an understanding of the different factors that impact consumer evaluations of brand extensions (Estes, Gibbert, Guest & Mazursky, 2011; Monga & Gürhan-Canli, 2012; Völkner &

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Sattler, 2007). Thus far, research on the success factors of brand extensions has been mainly focused on the congruence between the parent brand and its extension (Völkner & Sattler, 2007), also known as perceived fit (Jung & Lee, 2006; Monga & John, 2010; Völkner & Sattler, 2007), conceptual fit (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Park, Milberg, & Lawson, 1991), typicality (Bousch & Loken, 1991), and extension similarity (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; Martin & Stewart, 2001; Völkner & Sattler, 2007).

One of the growing trends in brand extensions is the use of the same brand to target the opposite gender segment (Jung & Lee, 2006). This is known as a cross-gender brand extension. Cross-gender extensions are not a new concept. Several brands throughout history have taken masculine brands and launched them toward females in a traditionally masculine product category. For example, Levis has been successful in doing so in the jeans market and Gillette has made its mark by extending its razors to women. Cross-gender extensions of feminine brands into generally masculine product categories are a relatively newer trend, however.

Similar to general brand extension research, research on cross-gender brand extensions has focused on external and internal factors that affect the attitudinal and behavioral responses to an extension (Seltene & Brunel, 2008). It seems obvious that product factors must be taken into account when examining cross-gender extensions. Indeed, brands in one product category may make for a more successful cross-gender extension than those in another product category. Park, Jaworski & MacInnis (1986), for example, drew the broad

distinction between image-oriented or function-oriented products and stressed their importance in cross-gender extensions research. Extending the same reasoning, Jung and Lee (2006) suggested that the positioning of a brand could influence the perceived fit of its extension, which in turn determines consumer acceptance of the extension.

Marketing communications play an important role in determining the success of different types of brand extensions (Labroo, Dhar, & Schwarz, 2008). Through advertising, public relations and other forms of marketing communications, marketers have the ability to establish or strengthen the perceived fit of an extension by, for example, highlighting product attributes and benefits shared by the parent brand and the extended brand.

Research further indicates that women tend to have a more positive attitude toward cross-gender brand extensions than men (Alreck, Settle & Belch, 1982; Jung & Lee, 2006; Lull, Hanson, & Marx, 1977). Extensions of male products into female market and extensions from female products into male markets are not symmetrical (Jung & Lee, 2006). This could be attributed at least in part to the different gender roles and identities of males and females. Gender studies have shown that there are varying degrees of masculine and feminine traits that coexist within each individual (e.g., Palan, 2001). Males and females are sociologically, physiologically, psychologically, and culturally different and therefore, their gender roles must be taken into account when examining cross-gender extensions.

This proposed study is aimed at leading the way to a stronger theoretical presence of cross-gender brand extension research. The objective of this study is to gain a better understanding of how marketing factors, such as advertising and packaging, in combination with two strongly interrelated factors within brand extension research, gender roles and brand concept, play a role in shaping attitudes toward cross-gender brand extensions.

Chapter 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Extensions

In 1990, the cost of introducing a new brand was estimated to be somewhere from $50 million to $100 million (Aaker & Keller, 1990). By 2004, the cost of introducing a new brand had climbed to as high as $200 million (Kotler & Armstrong, 2004). Firms have increasingly begun to turn to brand extensions to assist them in entering new markets. According to the American Marketing Association, a brand extension is defined as "a product line extension marketed under the same general brand as a previous item or items. When a new brand is combined with an existing brand that gives birth to a brand extension, the existing brand is called a parent/original brand (Liu & Choi, 2009)."Brand extensions provide several advantages to a firm, including reduced promotional costs (Sullivan, 1992), increased likelihood of gaining retail distribution (Montgomery, 1978) reduced risk to consumers (Aaker & Keller, 1999) and enhanced parent brand equity (Keller & Lehmann, 2006; Swaminathan, 2003).

A firm's decision to extend a brand is critical to an organization (Aaker, 1990; Singh, et al., 2012). As mentioned, not all brand-extensions are successful. Wrong extensions can lead to detrimental associations, which may end up costing the firm or may even be irreversible (Aaker, 1990; Ries & Trout, 1982). Extensions also run the risk of changing prior beliefs of the parent brand (Loken

& John, 1993). The extension product could even reduce sales of other products under the same brand. Therefore, when making the decision to extend a brand, firms must take into account the possibly negative side effects that may occur (Aaker, 1990). Without a doubt, brand extensions take a significant amount of strategic planning in order to best avoid extension failures (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012).

Keller and Aaker (1990) distinguished between the two main types of extension strategies in marketing. A line extension is to introduce a new product to a certain product line (e.g., the introduction of a new flavor of bubble gum within a bubble gum product line). A brand extension, on the other hand, entails introducing a new product line by using an existing brand name (e.g., introducing a coffee under an established chocolate brand). This study will focus on brand extension. A brand extension can be demonstrated through three types of branding strategies: sub-branding, derived or full name strategies (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). Combining a new brand name with an existing brand is referred to as sub-branding (e.g., Kellogg's Raisin Bran) (Arslan & Altuna, 2010). A derived brand extension is an extension in which only a part of the parent's brand name appears (e.g. Nestea) (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). The third strategy, full name extension, is when a parent brand name is used in its entirety on the extended product (e.g., Oral B Dental Floss).

Researchers have been investigating the multifaceted concept of brand extensions since the pioneering works of both Boush et al., (1987) and Aaker and Keller (1990). These two studies were the first to focus on consumer

behavior toward brand extensions. Since then, studies on brand extensions have continued throughout not only the U.S, but also worldwide (Czellar, 2003). For instance, in New Zealand, Sunde and Brodie (1993) replicated Aaker and Keller's (1990) study concentrating on direct effect of category fit and knowledge transfer from the parent brand to the extension. In Taiwan, Chen & Chen (2000) examined the negative impacts of brand extension failure upon the parent brand. In Germany, Völckner and Sattler (2006) investigated drivers of brand extension success including the perceived availability of the extension product in the distribution channel. Despite extensive research from all over the world, many areas within the realm of brand extensions still remain underexplored and underdeveloped (Singh, Scriven, Clemente, Lomax & Wright, 2012).

Evaluating Brand Extensions

Since the inception of the brand extension concept, studies have largely been conducted from an applied managerial perspective (Keller, 1998). Most extant research has focused on exploring product-related factors pertaining to successful brand extensions (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; Loken & John, 1993; Swaminathan, 2003). Academics have mainly relied on the categorization theory and the associative network theory to predict brand extension acceptance (Doust & Esfahalan, 2012). Categorization theory posits that the greater the feature overlaps between parent brand and extension, the greater the likelihood that consumers will perceive them both as belonging to the same cognitive category, and consequently base their evaluations of the

extension on attitudes toward the parent brand (Bao, Sheng & Nkwocha, 2010). The associative network theory views a brand as being a network of nodes (or concepts) connected by links that represent associations between the concepts (Balachander & Ghose, 2003). The strength of a link measures the association strength between the concepts. Therefore, beliefs about the parent brand and the extension are conceptualized as nodes with varying strengths of links existing between them (Bao et al., 2010). When a corresponding node is activated above a threshold level, as a result of cues such as advertising or product packaging, or by the "spreading" of activation from other linked nodes, a specific knowledge is retrieved from a consumer's memory. The degree of "spreading" activation to a new node increases as the link between the new node and the previously activated node is strengthened.

Most brand extension studies involving the categorization theory and/or the associative network theory base their analyses on product related variables of extensions. In fact, as alluded to previously, the majority of all brand extension studies completed thus far have failed to take into account individual differences and other consumer-related factors (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). Some of these prior studies have used either only actual brands or only hypothetical brands as stimuli, while others have investigated both actual and hypothetical brands simultaneously, leading to a joint affect of multiple variables (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Bhat & Reddy, 1997; Estes et al., 2012). Yet, the external validity of the technique of using both actual and hypothetical brands has been criticized (Kind & Smith, 2001).

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Focusing on the consumer, Czellar's (2003) Basic Model of the Extension Evaluation Process (Figure 1) shows the four main processes of brand extension evaluation: fit perception, formation of primary attitudes towards the extension, the link between brand extension attitude and behavior, and the reciprocal effects of brand extensions attitude on parent brand/extension category attitude.
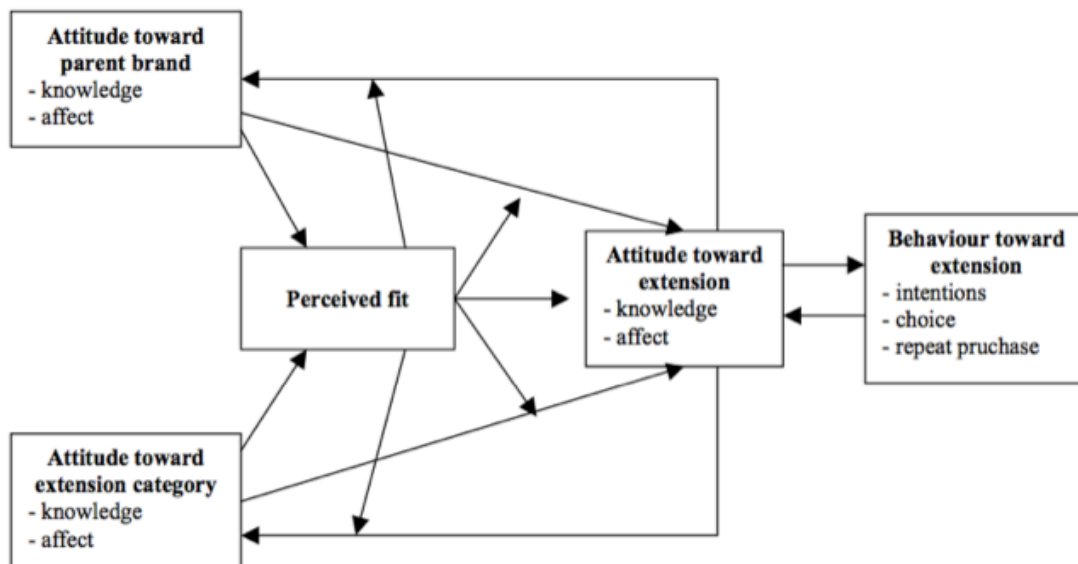
Figure 1.

Czellar's (2003) Basic Model of the Extension Evaluation Process

According to the model, there are at least two ways that attitudes toward a brand extension can be formed: computation of affect and retrieval of prior affect (Boush & Loken, 1991; Loken & John, 1993; Czellar, 2003). Computation of affect includes both product-related and non-product related associations (Keller, 1993). Product-related associations consist of functional and experiential qualities of the existing products within a specific category. Non-product related

associations refer to symbolic beliefs (e.g., brand personality) derived from the brand name. Retrieval of prior affect takes place when consumers evaluate a new extension on the basis of their previous attitudes towards the parent brand (Czellar, 2003; Fiske & Pavelchak, 1986). If there is no prior knowledge of the parent brand, the computation of affect is based solely on a consumer's experience with the extension brand category (Fiske & Pavelchak, 1986; Sheinin, 1998). If the consumer is familiar with the parent brand, but the extension category is new to them, then the computation of affect is based solely on a consumer's experience with the parent brand (Sheinen, 1998). If the consumer has knowledge of both the parent brand and the extension category, a third affect -- the perceived fit between the parent brand and extension -- arises (see Figure 1). Doust and Esfahlan (2012) elaborated on Czellar's (2003) Basic Model of the Extension Evaluation by proposing an integrated model composed of the following for groups: parent brand characteristics, brand extension characteristics, consumer characteristics and extension marketing support. They determined that organizing these four groups as such encompasses the key variables impacting brand image and affecting brand associations. Similar to Czellar's (2003) model, Doust and Esfahlan's (2012) model (Figure 2) incorporates the consumer characteristic variable and the extension marketing support. Consumer characteristics include the consumer's age, cognitive capacity, and innovativeness (Czellar, 2003; Völckner and Sattler, 2006). Extension marketing refers to things like marketing, advertising and distribution support (Doust and Esfahalan, 2012).
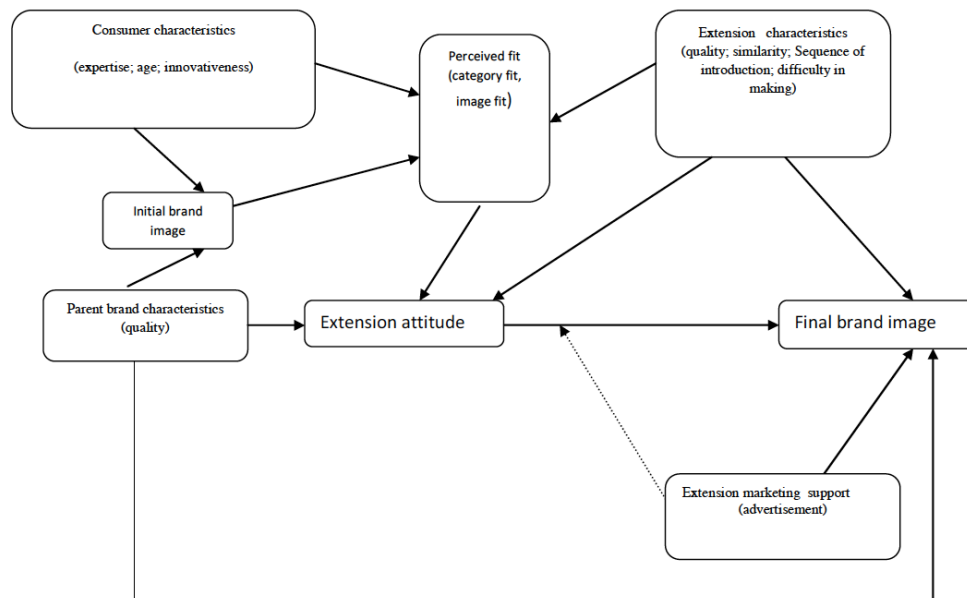
Figure 2.

Doust and Esfahlan's (2012) Basic Model of the Extension Evaluation Process

Perceived Fit and Similarity

Perceived fit is arguably the most important strategic factor in the brand extension evaluation process (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). The concept is popularly known throughout brand extension literature to incorporate factors such as perceived similarity, relatedness, typicality and brand concept consistency (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991; Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991). Boush et al., (1987) were the first to propose the idea of perceived similarity as they examined the process of affect transfer from parent brand to extension. Their study used undergraduate students as participants and an fictional company called Tarco with six different models of calculators as stimuli. Participants were assigned randomly to one of seven treatment conditions and completed several

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subsequent evaluative judgment measures including attitudes toward each of the six models of Tarco calculators, overall attitudes toward Tarco, attitudes toward a new Tarco calculator, and attitudes toward nine proposed new Tarco products. Additionally, participants were asked to judge the perceived similarity between calculators and each of the nine additional product categories. Their analysis showed mediating effects of similarity between parent brand and extension. They found that the greater the similarity between the parent brand and extension, the greater the transfer of positive or negative affect to the extension product.

Aaker and Keller (1990) introduced the term perceived fit, which is synonymous to perceived similarity. They conducted two studies in order to gain insights on consumer attitude formation toward extensions. One study examined consumer reactions to 20 hypothetical brand extension concepts from six well-known brand names. In this study they found attitude toward the extension to be higher when (1) both a perception of "fit" between the two product classes along one of three dimensions and a perception of high quality for the parent brand were present or (2) the extension was not viewed as too easy to make. Aaker and Keller's second study focused on the different positioning strategies for extensions. Their results showed that potentially negative associations could be neutralized more effectively when the attributes of the brand extension are elaborated on instead of reminding the consumers of the positive associations with the parent brand. Boush and Loken (1991) extended Aaker and Keller's (1990) research by focusing on the evaluative process of perceived fit. Perceived fit influences consumer attitudes toward extensions in two ways. It can mediate

the transfer of attitude components from the parent brand and extension category to the new extension and it can also moderate the relative influence of brand and category attitude on extension attitude (Czellar, 2003; Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). When fit is absent, no associations are transferred; when fit is present, the transfer of associations is facilitated (Van de Wetering, 2007).

Perceived fit, called also perceived similarity, is said to be composed of two aspects: product feature similarity (category-based product fit) and brand image-concept consistency (image-based product fit) (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Park et al., 1991; Bhat & Reddy, 1998). Product feature similarity is the perceived similarity between extension category and the parent brand's existing product categories (Czellar, 2003). Consumers tend to favor extensions in product categories closer to the parent brand (Boush & Loken, 1991). Yet, as noted by Monga and John (2010), not all brands follow this rule when making the choice to extend. There have been several successful extensions from brands that launch extensions into product categories with little in common with their parent brands (e.g., Ralph Lauren paints, Virgin Airlines). The ability of a brand to do as such is what Monga and John (2010) referred to as brand "elasticity".

Brand image-concept consistency is the degree of match between the specific brand's overall image and the extension product category. Martinez and De Chernatony (2004) demonstrated that the strategy of brand extension has a dilution effect on parent brand image. Their analysis found both perceived quality of the parent brand and consumers' attitudes toward the extension to have a positive influence on overall brand image and product brand image after

the extension. Their study also revealed that, while familiarity with a brand's products affect overall brand image after extension, perceived fit only affects the product brand image after extension. Expanding on Martinez & De Chernatony's (2004) study, Arslan and Altuna (2010) studied the effects of fit, perceived quality, familiarity and attitude toward the brand on the parent brand image after the extension. They used a questionnaire consisting of seven constructs (general brand image, product brand image, quality, familiarity, fit, attitude, and demographic variables. Although they used the same brands as Martinez and De Chernatony (2004), Arslan and Altuna's (2010) study differed in that it only examined brand image before the extension in order to compare the two brands. Their findings showed that, while brand extensions have a negative effect on product brand image, fit between the parent brand and extension decreases the negative effect. Arslan and Altuna also found the loss of image, as a result of an extension, to be greater when the quality of the brand and the perceived image are viewed as higher. In regards to cross-gender extensions, the main concern for marketers would be the consistency of brand image concept. This is due to the fact that product feature similarity is of little significance because the parent and extension brand are in the same category and they generally share the same product features.

More recently, Estes et al. (2011) made a similar distinction between taxonomic similarities and thematic similarities in their dual process model of brand extension. They proposed that the two types of similarities are distinct in terms of both neural and behavioral causes and consequences, and that they

each provide "unique contributions" (p. 89) to product evaluation. The model has been supported by empirical evidence showing, among other things, that taxonomic and thematic similarities differ in the ease with which common features, whether concrete or abstract, can be obtained from memory (Blaye & Bonthoux, 2001; Osborn & Koppel, 2011; Whitmore, Shore & Smith, 2004).

Taxonomic, or feature-based, similarities consist of memberships in common categories based on shared features. An example of a taxonomic feature-based similarity would be boots and heels as they share similar features (both worn on your feet) and, therefore,32 belong in the same taxonomic category of "footwear." Another example would be apple juice and orange juice as they share similar features (both made of fruit and you can drink them) and therefore belong to the taxonomic category of "fruit juice beverages." Taxonomic relations are characterized by two conditions: (1) internality, in the fact they are based on the features of the objects themselves, and (2) similarity, where they are united by shared features (Estes et al., 2011; Hampton, 2006; Markman & Wisniewski, 1997).

Thematic, or relation-based, similarities are functional, social and situational (Ahluwalia, 2008). Most significantly, thematic relations are "external" as they occur between a variety of objects, concepts, people or events. An example of a thematic relation-based similarity would be motorcycles and helmets or pizza and beer. Motorcycles and helmets have an external relation because they carry out different roles in the same theme of motorcycle travel. Most thematic relations tend to have dissimilar features due to the fact that they

play different roles within a common concept or event (Estes, 2003; Wisneiwski, 1996). Thematic relations are characterized by two conditions: (1) externality, in that that they stem from two or more things, and (2) differentiation, as they must perform different functional roles in that relation (Estes et al., 2011).

Functional vs. Symbolic Brand Concept

An alternative approach to the study of brand extension emphasizes the importance of the perceived fit of the overall brand concept (or positioning) itself. Originally proposed by Park et al. (1986), "A brand concept is a firm-selected brand meaning derived from basic consumer needs (functional, symbolic, and experiential)" (p. 136). "Functional brands satisfy immediate and practical needs. Symbolic brands satisfy needs such as those for self-expression and prestige and their practical usage is only incidental" (Bhat & Reddy, 1998, p.32). According to Park et al. (1986), brands should be positioned as either functional or symbolic but not both. Positioning a brand as both functional and symbolic poses multiple issues; consumers are unable to relate the brand to either their functional or their symbolic needs, and it increases the number of competing brands, which makes brand image management more difficult.

Due to a shift in focus from different types of needs or benefits to memory structures and product attributes, the experiential concept has since been replaced by the "usage" concept, as it is understood that functional and usage-based brand names are organized differently than the symbolic brand concept (Van de Wetering, 2007). Relating to memory structures, Park et al. (1989, p.

726) stated that "Some brand names are represented in memory based on individual features and cues (feature-based) while others are represented in memory based on a more abstract holistic array of cues (concept-based). According Park et al., (1991), the functional feature-based memory structure combines both functional and experiential product characteristics; while the prestigious (symbolic) concept-based memory represents non-product related attributes. In a study by Park et al., (1989), participants who were given a list of brands were able to identify links between brands with prestigious (symbolic) brand concepts but were unable to do the same with brands with functional brand concepts. Based on their findings they suggested that functional concepts are formed and categorized in what can be portrayed as a "bottom up" process, referring to the assessment of feature similarity in products. The prestigious (symbolic) concept, on the other hand, can be portrayed as a "top-down" process, referring to the assessment of what is implied by the brand name while there is a difficulty determining specific features. As a result, Park et al., (1991) concluded that functional brand concepts are less readily accessible than prestigious (symbolic) brand concepts.

Bhat and Reddy (1998) questioned Park's et al., (1981) findings, suggesting that brand functionality and symbolism might be two separate phenomena. This means that a brand might not necessarily need to be uniquely functional or symbolic. Bhat and Reddy (1998) administered two separate questionnaires with questions on five of 10 stimulus brands. They chose five product categories with two brands each. One brand was considered symbolic

and one functional. Both of the questionnaires consisted of the same 20 adjectives and phrases, which were each identified as relating to functionality or symbolism of a brand. To avoid comparative biases in responses, each participant only answered questions relating to either a symbolic or functional brand but not both. As they had suspected, the majority of the functional brands scored high on the functional scale and low on the prestige and personality expression scales, just as most of the symbolic brands had high ratings on the prestige and personality expression scales and low scores on the functional scales. These findings provided Bhat and Reddy with some evidence on what to base their claim that functionality and symbolism exist as two distinct concepts.

Symbolic brand benefits are linked to one's underlying need for social approval or one's self-expression and self-esteem, while functional brand benefits are generally more inherent and tend to correspond with product-related attributes (Jung & Lee, 2006; Solomon, 1983). They are often tied to such basic motivations as safety and physiological needs (Fennel, 1978). The symbolic benefits of a brand become more important when functional differences between brands are limited. An example of a functional brand would be a Honda motorcycle, as its main purpose is generally transportation. A BMW motorcycle, on the other hand, would be more of a symbolic brand, as it is not just used for transportation, but also stands for an attitude or a lifestyle (Aaker, 1996).

In relating brand concept to brand extension, Reddy, Holak and Bhat (1994) used a collection of secondary data and expert judgment to show that a brand's symbolic associations have a positive impact on an extension's market

share. Park, Milberg and Lawson (1991) found that the effect of brand concept consistency was larger for symbolic brands than for functional brands, which in turn resulted in symbolic brands having greater extendibility. The results from their study suggest that managers should select a specific concept (symbolic or functional) for a brand at the time it is introduced and then utilize the marketing mix to support and reinforce it. Through the marketing mix, any brand can theoretically be positioned as symbolic or functional.

The distinction between functional and symbolic brand concept is particularly valuable in examining cross-gender brand extensions. As stated earlier, most parent and extension brands in cross-gender extensions belong to the same product category where product features are largely identical. The real challenge is to achieve the highest possible brand concept-image consistency between a brand originally designed for men (or a masculine brand) to one designed for women (or a feminine brand), and vice versa. An experimental study conducted by Jung and Lee (2006) presented some initial support for these assumptions. The results of their study showed that, compared to a symbolic product category, a cross-gender extension in a functional product category resulted in greater perception of brand image fit, a more positive attitude towards the extension, and a more positive attitude toward the original brand. The results also revealed a gender effect: Compared to men, women appeared to be more receptive to cross-gender extensions. Perhaps the most interesting finding was an interaction effect between gender and product category: Perceived fit is higher among men for the functional brand than the symbolic brand, whereas perceived

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fit among women was not different for brands in both product categories. Ye (2008) did a cross-cultural investigation on the impact of gender effects on consumers' perceptions of brand equity in China and the U.S. The study was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. The results for the U.S. participants, more specifically the men, were similar to that of Jung and Lee's (2006) study. Ye's (2008) findings showed femininity to be a predictor of functional brand equity for females in both countries, yet masculinity could only predict functional brand equity in China. This suggested that the self-brand connection is the U.S. Generation Y consumers' priority, and that the functional brand connection is less important.

Brand Gender

"Throughout history, our consumption has been gendered and consumers have relied on gendered products and brands as props to perform their gender identities" (Avery, 2012, p. 3). Pennel (1994) suggested that products are made for girls or boys upon their arrival into this world and consumers understand gender segmentation by as early as the age of two or three. Similarly, Milner and Fodness (1996) observed that several sex-typed products could be marketed effectively on the basis of possessing a specific gender quality. Fournier (1998) stated that consumers relate to brands as much as they do their friends or partners. Therefore, brands tend to be associated with human personality traits such as masculinity and femininity. Masculinity and femininity are key

characteristics of brand personality, which has been defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker 1997, p. 347).

Through things like product-related attributes, product category associations, logos or symbols, brand names, advertising style, and price, brands become associated with certain personality traits (Batra, Lehmann, and Singh, 1993). It is not unusual for marketers to highlight gender-related characteristics of their brands (e.g., Harley Davidson's "big toys for big boys") (Grohmann, 2009). Many brands attempt to establish or reinforce their strong gender association through advertising symbols, signs, codes, narratives and packaging (Veg & Nyeck, 2007). Aaker (1997) developed a brand personality framework consisting of five distinct personality dimensions that consumers perceive brands to have: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness. The results of Aaker's study indicate that, when investigating brand personality, a possible reason for weak findings in self-congruity literature is the fact that an asymmetric relationship exists in the structure of brand versus human personality.

In contrast to human personality, which tends to be inferred from an individual's physical characteristics, behavior, attitudes, beliefs and demographic characteristics, brand personality can be contrived or influenced by any direct or indirect contact a consumer has with the brand (Park, 1986; Plummer, 1985). Therefore, Grohmann (2009) suggested that the scales used to measure human personality traits do not necessarily transfer over accordingly to the description of brand personality traits. In regard to brand gender, Grohmann (2009) suggested

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that rather than relying on existing scales of masculinity and femininity as human personality traits, a scale to measure gender traits associated with brands is necessary. Grohmann (2009) developed a 12-item scale consisting of six masculine brand personality dimensions (adventurous, aggressive, brave, daring, dominant, sturdy) and six feminine brand personality dimensions (expresses tender feelings, fragile, graceful, sensitive, sweet, tender). In this regard, gender dimensions of brand personality are independent, which allows for brands to be classified as (1) high-masculine/low-feminine, (2) low-masculine/high-feminine, (3) low-masculine/low-feminine and 4) high-masculine/high-feminine. Particularly relevant to the present study, Grohmann (2009) described that the ability to arrange brands in the matter of their masculinity/femininity could serve as a diagnostic tool to analyze consumer perceptions of competing brands and/or to identify (re)positioning strategies.

Indeed, the marketplace is full of brands that possess clear gender identities, often stereotyped as being masculine or feminine (Allison, Golden, Mullet, & Coogan, 1979). In order for brands to extend beyond their traditional, gender-specific market segment, many marketers have turned to cross-gender brand extensions; using the same brand name to target the opposite sex (Jung & Lee, 2006). For example: Levi's and Gillette, which were both traditionally regarded as masculine brands, have made their way into the successfully female domain; while Dove and Chanel, which were traditionally regarded as feminine brands, have successfully made their way into the male domain.

Gender-identity congruency theory states that an individual's product usage is in someway reflective of his or her own image or identity, meaning products are not solely purchased based on their functional attributes (Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). Both marketing and psychological research have consistently supported the idea that consumers develop gender identities both for themselves and for products (Woolfolk, 1995). Gender Identity congruency can be seen at both brand and product category levels (Cowart, Fox, & Wilson, 2002). Stern, Gould, and Tewari (1993) argued that not only products, but also services have gender. They suggested that nearly all products have sex-typed identities and that there is rarely any uncertainty as to whether a product is masculine or feminine.

Gender Roles and Identities

Just as a brand's gender depends on perception, a consumer's gender role or identity does as well. The terms sex and gender are often used interchangeably. The study of gender roles and consumption is often complicated because there is substantial overlapping and confusion about the labeling of terms and the meaning of concepts used (Winstead & Derlega, 1993). It has now become more standard to use the term "sex" to refer to an individual's biological sex, whether one is male or female (Palan, 2001). Gender, on the other hand, refers to psychological traits of masculinity and femininity that exist to varying degrees across individuals (Fugate & Phillips, 2010). Gender is not a trait that is granted at birth; it is attained through situated symbolic social interaction (West &

Zimmerman, 1987). Masculinity is generally perceived as unemotional, dominating, and workplace oriented, while femininity is generally perceived as nurturing, compliant and empathetic (Fugate & Phillips, 2010).

The terms gender role, gender identity and gender role attitudes have been used interchangeably throughout consumer behavior studies, when in fact they are not synonymous (Palan, 2001). Gender roles consist of culturally derived actions and behaviors related to masculinity and femininity that one chooses to adopt. Gender role attitudes refer to one's beliefs about the responsibilities, roles and rights of men and women. Although the concepts are undoubtedly related, an individual's gender identity does not necessarily have to be congruent with his or her gender role or gender role attitudes (Fischer & Arnold, 1994). Sullerot (1992) noted that women have taken over some of the characteristics and attributes that were traditionally associated with masculinity including work, knowledge, money, voting and the control of procreation and birth control. Women and men are even being depicted differently in advertising men are now being portrayed as sex objects and women, partaking in acts like cigar smoking in marketing communications (Kimmel & Tissier-Desbordes, 1999).

Two competing gender identity theories reign within consumer behavior research, gender schema theory and multifactorial gender identity theory (Palan, 2001). Gender schema theory posits that one's traits, attitudes and behaviors are adopted to be consistent with one's gender identity (Bem, 1981). It is through this gender identity that individuals discover information about themselves and the rest of the world. However, gender identity effects vary depending on whether or

not an individual is sex-typed (or gender schematic). Individuals more likely to be influenced by his or her gender identity are sex-typed (or gender schematic) male or female, while those less likely are non-sex-typed (or gender aschematic) men and women. Those who are cross-sex-typed view their gender traits as better portrayed by those of the opposite sex (Payne, Conner, & Colletti, 1987).

Bem (1974) developed one of the most well-known and popularly utilized models of gender identity: a two-dimensional model where masculinity and femininity are established as two separate uni-dimensional bipolar opposites on one continuum. With this model, it is possible for masculinity and femininity to co-exist at different degrees within an individual (Palan, 2001). Bem (1974) created the first instrument of its kind designed specifically to provide independent measures of masculinity and femininity. The test consists of 60 different adjectives representing personality characteristics. Twenty of these adjectives represent feminine traits, 20 represent masculine traits and 20 represent traits that are considered to be gender-neutral. Individuals rate themselves on a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (never or almost never true) to 7 (always or almost always true). The scoring of the BSRI has evolved over time (Hoffman & Borders, 2001). Originally, when the BSRI was first published, if an individual's femininity raw score exceeded his or her masculinity raw score at a statistically significant level, then the individual would be classified as "feminine". If the opposite occurred, and the individual's masculinity raw score exceeded his or her femininity raw score, then the individual would be classified as "masculine". One year after the BSRI was first published, it was noted that this scoring method did

not differentiate between those who scored high or low on both scales (Spence, Helmreich, and Stapp, 1975). Bem (1977) acknowledged this shortfall and proposed a modified scoring method using a median-split classification to form four distinct groups: masculine, feminine, androgynous and undifferentiated. The androgynous group consisted of individuals who scored high on both the masculine and feminine dimension, while the undifferentiated group consisted of those who score low on both. This scoring method is now used most frequently (Hoffman & Borders, 2001).

Bem's (1981) gender schema theory bears significance in marketing research because it not only cautions against equating gender identity with biological sex, it also questions the general assumption that masculine products appeal only to males and feminine products appeal only to females (Alreck et al., 1982). As the society becomes increasingly receptive to men and women who adopt behaviors and traits that are frequently associated with the opposite sex, researchers must expand their traditional concept of gender from biological sex to psychological orientations of individual consumers.

Extending Bem's (1981) gender-schema theory, the multifactorial gender identity theory suggests that gender-related phenomena are multifactorial and each identity factor consists of a different developmental history (Palan, 2001). Desirable gendered personality traits (e.g., masculinity and femininity) therefore only constitute one factor of gender identity (Spence, 1993). Spence (1993) proposed that, although an individual's basic sense of maleness or femaleness will likely remain the same over his or her life, variation among other factors such

as interests, values, social norms, socialization and attitudes might occur. The multifactorial model of gender implies that it is necessary to design research in which numerous elements of gender are assessed simultaneously in order to fully understand the complexity of gender (Aube, Norcliffe & Koestner, 1995; Spence, 1993).

There is a multitude of marketing literature that addresses gender and branding (Ye, 2008). Much of the research suggests that gender difference plays an important role in how consumers perceive and relate to brands (Monga, 2002). Consumption behavior is believed to follow one's gender identity. According to Milner and Fodness (1996), both men and women "want to know what is culturally 'theirs' in some normative sense" (p. 41). Connell (1987) argued that one's most significant social identity is his or her gender identity. Consumers constantly engage in creating and maintaining a sense of gender identity through their product and brand purchase (Belk, 1988; Holt & Thompson, 2004).

The congruency between gender and brand has a substantial effect on consumer brand choices (Ye, 2008). Gender identify is part of an individual's self-image and, according to the self-congruity theory (Sergy, 1982), consumers prefer certain products or brands that are congruent with or can enhance their gender identities. Since gender identities may become blurred over time, consumers often use brands that fit their own gendered image while showing others a gendered self beyond just sex and traditional gender roles (Ye, 2008). In other words, how consumers perceive themselves and their brands under

various usage conditions may have substantial influence on their brand attitudes and behavior (Fischer & Arnold, 1990). While some studies view gender as a multifactorial construct, others argue that sex remains a highly reliable predictor of consumers' self-descriptions, feelings, attitudes and choices (Roberts, 1984).

Men tend to define their gender identity in terms of external possessions and are likely to establish their gender identity through the material goods they purchase and use (Alreck, et al., 1982). They tend to exaggerate differences in brands more than women; they also see masculine brands as more masculine and feminine brands as more feminine. Stuteville's (1971) early studies suggested that it would be easier for a male-oriented product to attract females than vice versa. Prior research also suggests that it is possible to influence an individual's gender perceptions through advertising and other elements of the marketing-mix (Craig, 1992; Fowles, 1996). Debevec and Iyer (1986), for example, stated that, "Advertisers often work to create a gender image for a brand by featuring the targeted gender in an advertisement as a 'typical' user of the product" (p.12). Both males and females prefer goods and spokespeople that match their sense of masculinity or femininity (Fry, 1971). In order to gain a better understanding on how sex roles influence consumption, a number of researchers have explored the link between the sexual images of consumers and products (Kimmel & Tissier-Desbordes, 1999). Fry (1971) revealed that, compared to men, women were more likely to smoke less masculine cigarettes. Utilizing data from the 1988 National Survey of Adolescent Males, Pleck, Sonenstein and Ku (1993) found that American males who held traditional

attitudes towards masculinity were less likely to use condoms than males who held less traditional attitudes.

Brands tap into consumers' needs and motivations, which can be either utilitarian (functional) or expressive (symbolic) (Hirschman & Holbrook, 1982). The majority of ad campaigns call upon gender identity with imagery that is derived primarily from the stereotyped characterization of masculinity and femininity (Schroeder & Zwick, 2004). Moutinho, Davies, and Curry (1996) observed a clear difference in brand attitudes of males and females. Specifically, female attitudes are more affected by rationality, expectations and self-image, while male attitudes are more influenced by price and confidence about products. Similar findings were found by Dittmar, Beattlie, and Friese (1995) whose research revealed that men are more likely to impulsively purchase instrumental and leisure goods conveying independence and activity, while women on the other hand, are more likely to purchase symbolic and self-expressive goods associated with appearance and emotional aspects of self. Parsons (2002) found that males tend to prefer functional brands as gifts, while females look for symbolic (prestigious) brands as gifts. Orth (2005) presented similar findings, stating that females are more involved in symbolic/prestigious brand benefits, while males are more likely to vary in perceived quality of a brand. It has also been suggested that males who possess strong feminine personalities may hold more favorable attitudes toward feminine brand images (Fry, 1973; Vitz & Johnson, 1965). Kimmel and Tissier-Desbordes (1999) completed a qualitative study in France utilizing in-depth interviews to examine the relationship between

men and their product consumption. This exploratory research uncovered several mixed results. For example, the participants, who were all men, revealed that they believed the differentiation between men and women in terms of sex-roles and sex-typed behaviors no longer exist. Yet, the majority of these same participants suggested that they perceived consumption to be more of a feminine matter, something associated with the household and tasks typically performed by women. Several studies have showed that men hold a more unfavorable view of femininity, while women tend to adhere less to the traditional sex role prescriptions and, consequently, have a more positive attitude toward cross-gender brand extensions than men (Alreck et al., 1982; Lull et al., 1997; Jung & Lee, 2006).

Research Hypotheses

More and more companies utilize cross-gender brand extensions to grow their market space. No longer are masculine brands the only ones attempting to reach out to the opposite gender. Feminine brands are now attempting to make the transition as well. As consumer behavior continues to evolve, so must brand extension strategies. In his review of the brand extension literature, Czellar (2003) points out that an effective model of the extension evaluation process should include both consumer characteristics and marketer-controlled factors. This study is, thus, designed to test hypotheses pertaining to these two sets of variables and, more importantly, their interaction effects on cross-gender brand evaluations.

The consumer characteristic examined in this is study is gender role, defined as levels of masculinity and femininity within an individual. As stated earlier, men and women are likely to react differently when they encounter cross-gender extensions. Since brands are often used to express personalities, men tend to perceive a masculine brand to be more masculine and a feminine brand to be more feminine. Men are also more likely to find their gender identity in the products they buy and use than women (Alreck, Settle & Belch, 1982). Compared to men, women tend to be more sensitive and critical of gender identities (Lull, Hanson & Marx, 1977). Women also tend to be more receptive to gender-crossing than men because they prefer to adhere less to the traditional gender role prescriptions. In evaluating cross-gender extensions, the differences between men and women suggest that it would be more difficult for a man than a woman to accept an extension from a female brand to a male brand if it contradicts his masculine gender role, and it would be less difficult for a man than a woman to accept an extension from a male brand to a female brand if it asserts the more rigid definition of male gender roles (June & Lee, 2006). Based on the same reasoning, it is expected that individuals high on masculinity (femininity) would exhibit the same evaluative tendencies as men (women). The first two hypotheses, thus, predict the interaction between gender role and the direction (male to female vs. female to male) of cross-gender extension:

H1: In evaluating cross-gender brand extensions, compared to individuals who rank low on their level of masculinity, individuals who rank high on their level

of masculinity will:

a) perceive a greater fit of a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension;

b) have a more positive attitude toward a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension;

c) have a more positive attitude toward the overall brand for a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension;

d) have a stronger purchase intention for a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension.

H2: In evaluating cross-gender brand extensions, compared to individuals who rank high on their level of femininity, individuals who rank low on their level of femininity will:

a) perceive a greater fit of a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension;

b) have a more positive attitude toward a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension;

c) have a more positive attitude toward the overall brand for a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension;

d) have a stronger purchase intention for a male-to-female than a female-to-male extension.

In addition to interacting with the direction of cross-gender extension, a controllable marketing factor, gender role may also interact with brand concept, another controllable marketing factor. The increasingly prevalent cross-gender

brand extensions may be attributed in part to consumers' increasing use of brands as means of gendered self-expressions (Kates 2002; Tuncay, 2005). The fit between gender perception and brand concept, thus, holds a greater significance in cross-gender extensions. The research reviewed earlier indicates that symbolic brands serve self-expression needs more than practical needs, while functional brands serve practical needs more than self-expression needs (Bhat & Reddy, 1998). Empirical evidence also supports the prediction that cross-gender extensions in a functional product category tend to generate more positive evaluations than in a symbolic product category. It was further noted that women tend to be more receptive to cross-gender extensions than men (Jung & Lee, 2006). Extending these research findings, the following hypotheses for the interactions between gender role and brand concept is proposed.

H3: In evaluating cross-gender brand extensions, compared to individuals who that rank low on level of masculinity, individuals who rank high on level of masculinity will:

a) perceive a greater fit of a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

b) have a more positive attitude toward a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

c) have a more positive attitude toward the overall brand for a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

d) have a stronger purchase intention for a functional than a symbolic brand extension.

H4: In evaluating cross-gender brand extensions, compared to individuals who rank high on their level of femininity, individuals who rank low on their level of femininity will:

a) perceive a greater fit of a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

b) have a more positive attitude toward a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

c) have a more positive attitude toward the overall brand for a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

d) have a stronger purchase intention for a functional than a symbolic brand extension.

Leaving gender roles aside, the direction of extension and brand type may also generate interaction effects on evaluations of cross-gender extensions. While symbolic brands tend to stress subjective, non-product related benefits associated with the underlying needs for social approval, personal expression and self-esteem (Soloman, 1983), functional brands tend to hinge on objective, product-related attributes associated with such basic motivations as physiological, problem removal or avoidance needs (Fennell, 1978). As indicated earlier, the success of cross-gender extensions are determined more oby perceived consistency between brands designed for opposite sex. A symbolic brand extension would, thus, experience greater difficulties in achieving consumer acceptance than a function brand extension. The difficulties for a symbolic brand extension might be compounded when the extension is from a female brand to a male brand since it is more difficult for a female brand to attract

males than a male brand to attract females (Stuteville, 1971), and it is easier for a male to female extension to elicit positive evaluations than a female to male extension (June & Lee, 2006). This line of reasoning points to the following hypothesis for the interaction between brand concept and direction of extension.

H5: In evaluating cross-gender brand extensions, compared to a female-to-male extension, a male-to-female extension will result in:

a) greater perception of fit of a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

b) more positive attitude toward a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

c) more positive attitude toward the overall brand for a functional than a symbolic brand extension;

d) stronger purchase intention for a functional than a symbolic brand extension.

Chapter 3

METHODOLOGY

Participants

The study's participants consisted of 82 students solicited from undergraduate courses within the University of South Florida's College of Arts and Sciences. Although using students as participants may create concerns in regard to the generalizability of the study's findings and external validity, the use of students as research participants is common practice in brand extension studies (Chen & Liu, 2004; Grohmann, 2009; Jung & Lee, 2006; Martinez & Chernatony, 2004; Monga & John, 2010; Park et, al, 1991). Professors were asked for permission to visit their classes to solicit participants. The students were encouraged to participate in the study by their professors, who offered extra credit for participation. The students were assured that their participation was strictly voluntary, and that there was no penalty for refusal to participate. The distributions of participants' gender, age and student status are shown in Tables 1-3.

Table 1

Distribution of Participants' Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	27	32.9	32.9	32.9
	Female	55	67.1	67.1	100.0
	Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Table 2

Distribution of Participants' Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18.00	1	1.2	1.2	1.2
19.00	12	14.6	14.6	15.9
20.00	22	26.8	26.8	42.7
21.00	14	17.1	17.1	59.8
22.00	16	19.5	19.5	79.3
23.00	7	8.5	8.5	87.8
Valid 24.00	4	4.9	4.9	92.7
25.00	2	2.4	2.4	95.1
26.00	2	2.4	2.4	97.6
28.00	1	1.2	1.2	98.8
41.00	1	1.2	1.2	100.0
Total	82	100.0	100.0	

Table 3

Distribution of Student Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Sophomore	12	14.6	14.8	14.8
	Junior	46	56.1	56.8	71.6
Valid	Senior	23	28.0	28.4	100.0
	Total	81	98.8	100.0	
Missing	System	1	1.2		
Total		82	100.0		

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Design

In order to test the proposed hypotheses, an experiment was conducted using a 2 (direction of the cross-gender extension: male to female vs. female to male) x 2 (brand concept: symbolic vs. functional) factorial between-subjects design. The design manipulated the two independent variables (direction of extension and brand concept). The participants were randomly assigned to the four direction of extension X brand concept experimental conditions. Each condition featured either a male to female or female to male brand extension accompanied by either symbolic or functional advertising copy. As shown in Table 4, 21 participants were exposed to the male to female symbolic advertisement, 20 were exposed to the female to male symbolic advertisement, 21 were exposed to the male to female functional advertisement, and 20 were exposed to the female to male functional advertisement.

Table 4

Experimental Design

	Male → Female	Female → Male
Functional	n=21	N=20
Symbolic	n=21	N=20

Independent Variables

The brand concept factor was manipulated by exposure to symbolic or functional advertising messages. Specifically, two ads were created for male to female and female to male brand extensions, respectively. The two ads for male to female extension featured the Old Spice brand, and the two ads for female to male extension featured the Secret brand. Both brands belong to the body deodorant category which was chosen for two reasons: First, cross-gender brand extensions are more frequently seen in the personal care and grooming industry (Jung & Lee, 2006). Second, body deodorants are used by both men and women, and are thus, a relatively gender-neutral product. Appendix B shows the four ads created for this study. Each ad consists of a headline, a product shot and a body copy that highlights the symbolic or functional benefits of the brand.

1. Symbolic copy (female to male): Secret for Men has arrived! The first-ever men's deodorant line from Secret is sure to give men a new edge in the office, at the gym or out for a night on the town. Men will feel more confident than ever with the ability to express themselves. When the heat turns up or the day gets stressful, the bold freshness of Secret for Men can make all the difference in keeping a man feeling smart, assured and cool. Try it if you want to look, feel, and smell your very best.

2. Symbolic copy (male to female) Old Spice for Women has arrived! The first-ever women's deodorant line from Old Spice is sure to give women a new edge in the office, at the gym or out for a night on the town. Women will feel more confident than ever with the ability to

express themselves. When the heat turns up or the day gets stressful, the bold freshness of Old Spice for Women can make all the difference in keeping a woman feeling smart, assured and cool. Try it if you want to look, feel, and smell your very best.

3. Functional copy (female to male): Secret for Men has arrived! Free from artificial preservatives, Secret for Men is enriched with moisturizing ingredients and provides unbeatably effective 24-hour clinical strength odor and wetness protection. Using an innovative time-release formula, Secret for Men controls underarm sweat and kills odor-causing bacteria. It comes in four different scents and starts blocking odor and wetness immediately on contact. Each of the four scents is hypoallergenic and dermatologist-tested and approved.

4. Functional copy (male to female): Old Spice for Women has arrived! Free from artificial preservatives, Old Spice for Women is enriched with moisturizing ingredients and provides unbeatably effective 24-hour clinical strength odor and wetness protection. Using an innovative time-release formula, Old Spice for Women controls underarm sweat and kills odor-causing bacteria. It comes in four different scents and starts blocking odor and wetness immediately on contact. Each of the four scents is hypoallergenic and dermatologist-tested and approved.

The direction of cross-gender extension was manipulated by featuring the male extension (Secret for Men) of a predominantly female deodorant brand (Secret) and the female extension (Old Spice for Women) of a predominantly male deodorant brand (Old Spice) in the advertising messages. A pretest was carried out to ensure that the brands selected demonstrated male-to-female and female-to-male cross-gender brand extensions.

Using Bem's Sex Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1974), gender roles was treated as a measured rather than manipulated independent variable in this study. The BSRI is a self-report questionnaire to measure feminine, masculine, and androgynous traits of individuals as mutually exclusive dimensions. The inventory consists of 60 items: 20 feminine (e.g., sympathetic, compassionate, sensitive to needs of others), 20 masculine (e.g., assertive, dominant, acts as a leader) and 20 neutral (e.g., helpful, moody, unpredictable). Participants rate on a 7-point scale (1: never or almost never true, 7: always or almost always true) how true each of the items can be used to describe themselves. The BSRI has been shown to have a high degree of internal consistency (masculine α=.86; feminine α=.80) (Bem, 1974). Its validity scores also remain relatively high for contemporary use (Holt & Ellis, 1998). A complete BSRI is presented in the Appendix.

The total masculinity and femininity scores ranged from 0 to 140, and their averages (total score divided by 20) were used to determine the level of masculinity and femininity, respectively. In this study, each participant received both a masculinity and femininity score. High and low levels of masculinity were determined by a median (4.95) split of the masculinity scores. High and low levels of femininity were determined by a median (4.90) split of the femininity scores. Of the male participants, 53.8% were classified as low masculinity, 46.2% high masculinity, 46.2% low femininity, and 53.8% high femininity. Of the female participants, 52.8% were classified as low masculinity, 47.2% high

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masculinity, 50.9% low femininity and 49.1% high femininity (see Table 5 and 6). Six participants who scored high (>5.90) on both masculinity and femininity dimensions were classified as androgynous (Bem, 1974). These participants were excluded from analyses involving comparisons between high and low masculinity or femininity groups.

Table 5

Gender by Level of Masculinity Crosstabulation

			LEVEL OF MASCULINITY		Total
			LOW MASCULINITY	HIGH MASCULINITY	
GENDER	Male	Count	14	12	26
		% within GENDER	53.8%	46.2%	100.0%
	Female	Count	28	25	53
		% within GENDER	52.8%	47.2%	100.0%
Total		Count	42	37	79
		% within GENDER	53.2%	46.8%	100.0%

Table 6

Gender by Level of Femininity Crosstabulation

			LEVEL OF FEMININITY		Total
			LOW FEMININITY	HIGH FEMININITY	
GENDER	Male	Count	12	14	26
		% within GENDER	46.2%	53.8%	100.0%
	Female	Count	27	26	53
		% within GENDER	50.9%	49.1%	100.0%
Total		Count	39	40	79
		% within GENDER	49.4%	50.6%	100.0%

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables of the present study are perception of overall fit toward the extension, attitude toward the extension, purchase intention for the extension, and attitude toward the overall brand. A standardized questionnaire was used to collect responses to each of these measures.

Perceived fit of brand extension was measured by three 5-point Likert scale items (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree) adapted from Hariri and Vazifehdust's (2011):

1) The product extension fits with the brand image

2) Launching the extension is logical for the company

3) Launching the extension is appropriate for the company

Attitude toward extension was measured by three 7-point semantic differential scales as follows.

Do you find (Secret for Men/Old Spice for Women):

1) Very unfavorable   __ __ __ __ __ __ __   Very favorable

2) Very bad   __ __ __ __ __ __ __   Very good

3) Very unlikable   __ __ __ __ __ __ __   Very Likable

Purchase Intent for the extension was measured by three 5-point Likert scale items (1: strongly disagree, 5: strongly agree) adapted from Anees-ur-Rehman (2012):

1) I would like to try the (Old Spice for Women/Secret for Men) brand

2) I would like to buy the (Old Spice for Women/Secret for Men) brand?

3) I would actively seek out the (Old Spice for Women/Secret for Men) brand?

Attitude toward the overall brand was measured by three 7-point semantic differential scales as follows.

Taken together, do you find the Secret <u>and</u> Secret for Mean (Old Spice <u>and</u> Old Spice for Women) brand bundle:

1) Very unfavorable   __ __ __ __ __ __ __   Very favorable)

2) Very bad   __ __ __ __ __ __ __   Very good

3) Very unlikable   __ __ __ __ __ __ __   Very unlikable

Reliability tests were performed using Cronbach's alpha to ensure the internal consistency of the multiple-item scales of the dependent measures. As shown in Table 7, the scales for attitude toward extension, purchase intent for the extension, and attitude toward the overall brand yielded high internal consistency with coefficient alphas of $\alpha=.951$, $\alpha=.965$, and $\alpha=.920$, respectively. Perceived fit of brand extension yielded a lower internal consistency of $\alpha=.731$, yet was still acceptable.

Table 7

Internal Consistency of Dependent Measures

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	# of items
Perceived Fit	.731	3
Attitude Toward Extension	.951	3
Attitude Toward Overall Brand	.965	3
Purchase Intention	.920	3

Procedure

The study took place during one classroom visit. Each participant received a research packet at the beginning of the experiment. To facilitate data collection, the research packets were organized into four separate groups prior to distribution. Each of the four groups was assigned a specific number to denote which of the stimuli it contained (#101 = function male to female extension, #102 = functional female to male extension, #103 = symbolic female to male extension, and #104 = symbolic male to female extension). The packets were shuffled and each of the participants received a numbered packet at random containing the following: (1) the Informed Consent to Participate in Research Form, (2) one of the four stimulus ads (3) the questionnaire for dependent measures and (4) the Bem Sex Role Inventory and demographic questions. Participants completed the packets in the same order, at their own pace, within a time limit of about 15 minutes.

The consent form informed the students that his/her participation was strictly voluntary, and that there was no penalty for refusing to participate; the students were able to terminate completion of the survey at any time if s/he felt

uncomfortable by the content of the questions; the student was also able to

refuse to answer a question(s) if s/he chose to do so; the information s/he

contributed was private and confidential; and other than the researcher, no one

else had access to the completed questionnaires. Non-consenting students were

encouraged to review course materials in the classroom or leave the room until

the survey was over. Finally, participants were told that there were no known

risks associated with this study, and that there were no direct benefits to them for

their participation.

Chapter 4

RESULTS

In this section, hypothesis-testing results are presented. All hypotheses were tested using SPSS 20.0. Specifically, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed on to test each hypothesis. An alpha level of .05 was used for all statistical tests.

Hypothesis 1. H1 states that the level of masculinity and the direction of cross-gender brand extension would produce interaction effects on dependent measures. Specifically, individuals with high masculinity would perceive a greater fit (H1-a), have a more positive attitude toward the extension (H1-b) and the overall brand (H1-c), and have a stronger purchase intention (H1-d) than individuals with low masculinity when the direction of extension is male- to-female than female-to-male. Four separate ANOVAs were performed on the dependent measures with level of masculinity (high vs. low) and extension direction (male-to-female vs. female-to-male) as between-subjects factors. Results indicate that there was a significant main effect of level of masculinity on perceived fit ($(F(1, 66) = 5.219$, $p = .026$, $\eta^2 = .073$). Participants with high masculinity perceived greater fit (M=3.574) in cross-gender extension than participants with low masculinity (M=3.128). Supporting H1-a, there was a significant interaction effect on perceived fit $(F(1, 66) = 5.634$, $p = .021$, $\eta^2 = .079$).

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As shown in Figure 3, high masculinity participants perceived a greater fit in the

male-to-female extension (M=3.745) than the female-to-male extension

(M=3.404), whereas low masculinity participants perceived a greater fit in the

female-to-male extension (M=3.483) than the male-to-female extension

(M=2.773).
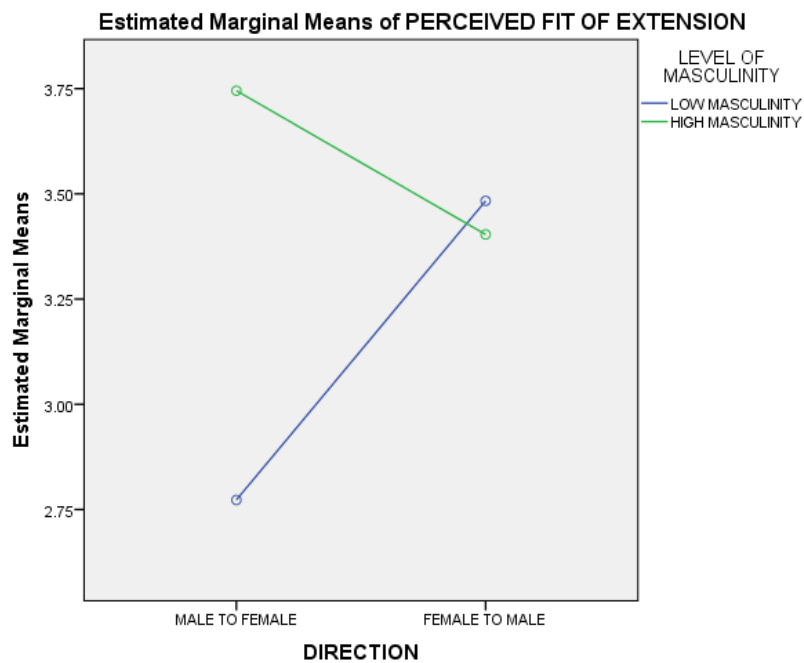
Figure 3

Interaction Effect of Level of Masculinity and
Extension Direction on Perceived Fit

However, the interaction effect between level of masculinity and extension

direction failed to achieve statistical significance for attitude toward the extension

($F(1, 67)$ = .854, p = .359, η^2 =.013), attitude toward the overall brand ($F(1, 67)$ =

1.325, p = .254, η^2 =.019), and purchase intention ($F(1, 67)$ = 1.806, p = .184, η^2

=.026). Thus H1-b, H1-c, and H1-d were not supported.

Hypothesis 2. H2 predicts the interaction effects of level of femininity and direction of cross-gender brand extension on dependent measures. Individuals with low femininity are expected to perceive greater fit (H1-a), have a more positive attitude toward the extension (H1-b) and the overall brand (H1-c), and have stronger purchase intention (H1-d) than individuals with high femininity when the direction of extension is male- to-female rather than female-to-male. Four separate ANOVAs were performed on the dependent measures with level of masculinity (high vs. low) and extension direction (male-to-female vs. female-to-male) as between-subjects factors. Results showed a significant main effect of extension direction on attitude toward the overall brand (F(1, 67) = 5.601, p = .021, η² =.077), indicating that female-to-male brand extension (M=4.948) resulted in more positive overall brand attitude than male-to-female extension (M=4.255). However, the hypothesized interaction effect failed to reach statistical significance for perceived fit (F(1, 67) = 1.328, p = .253, η² =.020), attitude toward the extension (F(1, 67) = .33, p = .857, η² =.000), attitude toward the overall brand (F(1, 67) = .586, p = .447, η² =.009), and purchase intention (F(1, 67) = .270, p = .605, η² =.004). H2a-H2d were thus unsupported by the analyses.

Hypothesis 3. H3 deals with the interaction effect of level of masculinity and brand concept on perceive fit (H3-a), attitude toward the extension (H3-b), attitude toward the overall brand (H3-c), and purchase intention (H3-d). Four separate ANOVAs were performed on the dependent measures with level of masculinity (high vs. low) and brand concept (symbolic vs. functional) as

between-subjects factors. Results indicated that the interaction effects were non-significant for perceived fit ($F(1, 67) = 1.919$, $p = .171$, $\eta^2 = .028$) and attitude toward the overall brand ($F(1, 67) = 1.340$, $p = .251$, $\eta^2 = .020$). H3-a and H3-c were thus not supported.

The results also revealed a significant interaction effect between level of masculinity and brand concept on attitude toward the extension ($F(1, 67) = 4.061$, $p = .048$, $\eta^2 = .057$). However, contrary to H3-b, high masculinity participants showed more positive attitude toward the symbolic extension (M=4.796) than the functional extension (M=4.158), while low masculinity participants had more favorable attitude toward the functional extension (M=4.460) than the symbolic extension (M=3.968). Therefore, H3-b was not supported. The interaction effect is depicted in Figure 4.
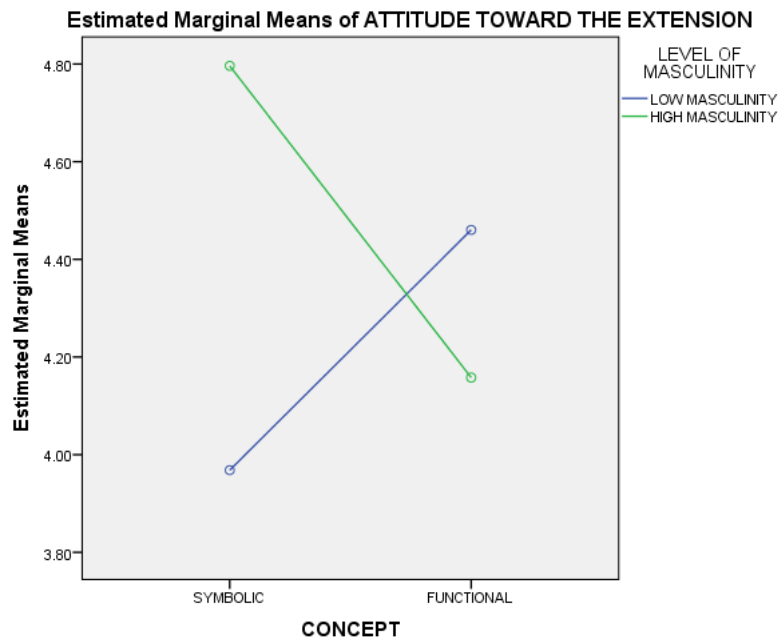
Figure 4

Interaction Effect of Level of Masculinity and Brand Concept on Attitude Toward Extension

Similar findings were obtained for H3-d. The ANOVA analysis on purchasing

intention showed that the interaction effect of level of masculinity and brand

concept on purchase intention approached statistical significance ($F(1, 67) =$

3.791, p = .051, η^2 =.040). However, as Figure 5 shows, the pattern of interaction

was contrary to prediction: High masculinity participants expressed stronger

intention of purchasing the symbolic extension (M=2.537) than the functional

extension (M=2.333), while low masculinity participants expressed stronger

intention of purchasing the functional extension (M=2.460) than the symbolic

extension (M=2.000). H3-d was thus not supported.
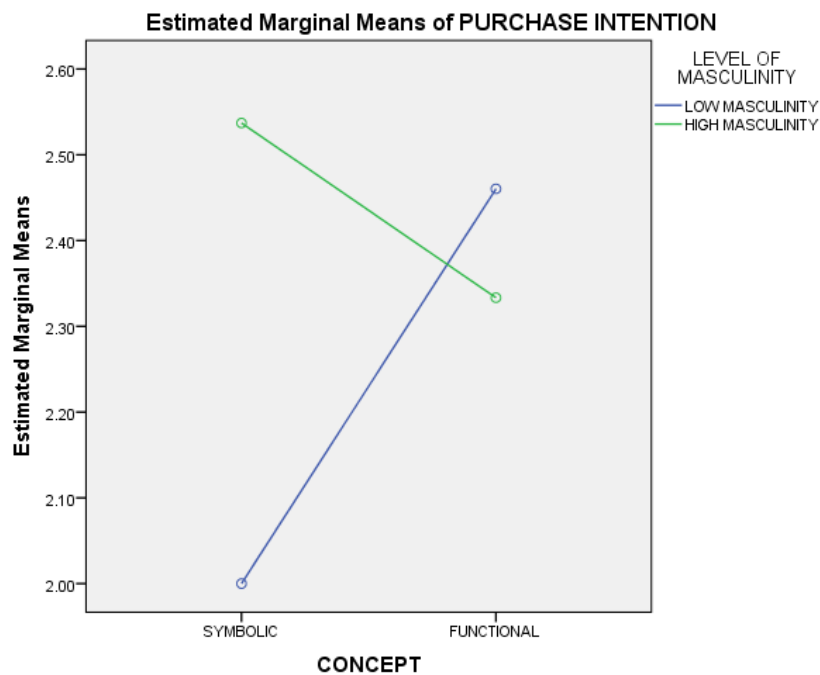
Figure 5

Interaction Effect of Level of Masculinity and
Brand Concept on Purchase Intention

Hypothesis 4. H4 states that level of femininity and brand concept would produce interaction effects on dependent measures. Specifically, individuals with low femininity would perceive greater fit (H4-a), have more positive attitude toward the extension (H4-b) and the overall brand (H4-c), and have stronger purchase intention (H4-d) than individuals with high femininity when the brand concept is functional than when it is symbolic. ANOVA results indicated that none of the hypothesized interaction effects reached statistical significance: Perceived fit ($F(1, 67) = .501$, $p = .482$, $\eta^2 = .008$); attitude toward extension ($F(1, 67) = 2.165$, $p = .146$, $\eta^2 = .031$); attitude toward overall brand ($F(1, 67) = 1.054$, $p = .308$, $\eta^2 = .015$); purchase intention ($F(1, 67) = 2.103$, $p = .152$, $\eta^2 = .030$). H4a-4d were thus not supported.

Hypothesis 5. H5 proposes that direction of extension and brand concept would produce interaction effects on dependent measures. Compared to a female to male extension, a male to female extension would result in greater perceived fit (H5-a), more positive attitude toward the extension (H5-b) and the overall brand (H5-c), and stronger purchase intention (H5-d) when the brand concept is functional than when it is symbolic. Four separate ANOVAs were performed on the dependent measures with direction of brand extension (male-to-female vs. female-to-male) and brand concept (symbolic vs. functional) as between-subjects factors. The only statistically significant result that emerged from the analyses was the main effect of brand concept on attitude toward the overall brand ($F(1, 67) = 4.083$, $p = .047$, $\eta^2 = .050$). As shown in Figure 6,

functional brand concept resulted in more favorable overall brand attitude

(M=4.765)

than symbolic brand concept (M=4.463).

Estimated Marginal Means of ATTITUDE TOWARD THE OVERALL BRAND
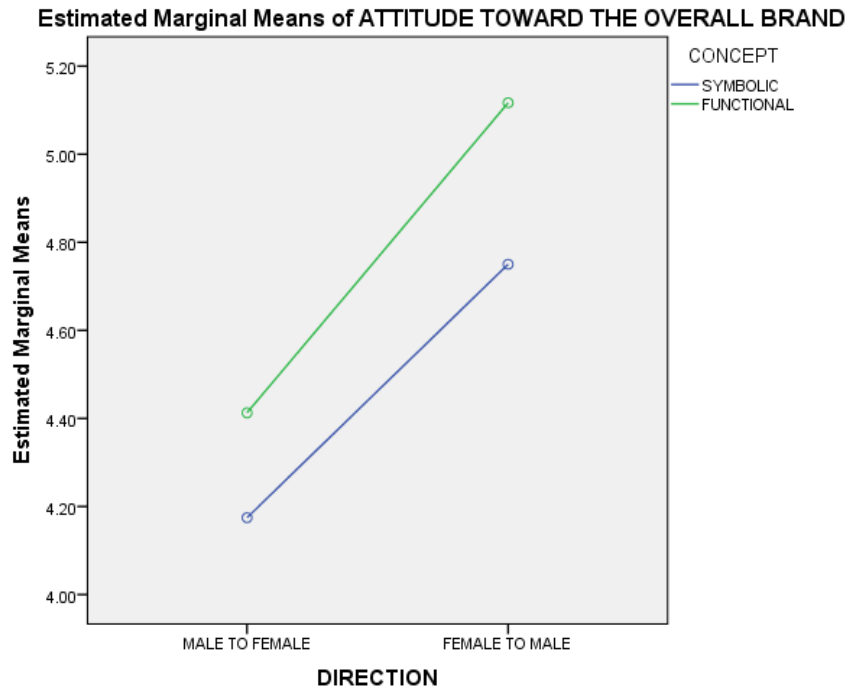
Figure 6

Main Effect of Brand Concept on Attitude Toward Overall Brand

Chapter 5

DISCUSSION & IMPLICATIONS

Discussion of the Findings

This section presents a further analysis of the results and concludes the study's findings by providing their theoretical and practical implications as well as suggestions for future research. Much of the earlier work on brand extensions and cross-gender extensions has focused on the effects of product-related variables on extension success (Doust & Esfahlan, 2012). Extending prior research, the present study investigated the role of gender roles, a consumer-related variable, and its interactions with product-related variables such as direction of extension and brand concept. Unlike previous research that regarded gender as an individual's biological sex, i.e., male or female (Alreck, et al., 1982; Avery, 2012; Fischer & Arnold, 1990; Jung and Lee, 2006), this study adopted Bem's (1981) gender schema theory by conceptualizing gender as a two-dimensional construct consisting of an individual's psychological traits of masculinity and femininity. Consistent with the theory, it was further assumed that traits of masculinity and femininity might co-exist at different levels within an individual, regardless of his or her biological sex.

Four sets of hypotheses were derived from this fundamental theoretical assumption. The first set of hypotheses (H1a-1d) suggested that, compared to individuals that rank low on level of masculinity, individuals that rank high on level

of masculinity would perceive greater fit of the extension and generate more positive attitudes and purchase intention when the extension is from male to female. Hypothesis testing results provided support for the interaction effect of level of masculinity and extension direction on perceived fit only: While high masculinity participants perceived greater fit in the male-to-female extension than the female-to-male extension, the reverse was true for low masculinity participants. Although no support was found for the second set of hypotheses (H2a-2d) pertaining to the interaction effects of level of femininity and extension direction, participants had a more positive overall brand attitude toward female-to-male brand extension than male-to-female extension. Of the third set of hypotheses (H3a-3d), only the interaction effect between level of masculinity and brand concept on attitude toward the extension reached statistical significance. However, contrary to expectation, high (low) masculinity participants showed more positive (negative) attitude toward the symbolic extension than the functional extension. The fourth set of hypotheses (H4a-4d) regarding the interaction effects between level of femininity and brand concept was not supported by the analyses. Likewise, no support was found for the fifth set of hypotheses (H5a-5d), which examined the interactions between brand concept and direction of extension without considering masculinity or femininity. However, the results did indicate that participants expressed more favorable overall brand attitude toward the functional brand concept than the symbolic brand concept.

While the majority of hypothesized interaction effects did not receive support in this study, the presence of the main effect of masculinity and the

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interaction effect between level of masculinity and extension direction on perceived fit suggest the important role of masculinity in the evaluation of cross-gender brand extension. As Czellar's (2003; also see Doust and Esfahlan, 2012) Basic Model of the Extension Evaluation Process indicates, perceived fit constitutes the initial and perhaps most critical stage in consumer response to brand extensions. This study extends the model by showing that the perceived fit between the original brand and its extension increases with the level of masculinity, especially when the extension is from a male brand to a female brand. However, no evidence was found in this study for the mediating effects of perceived fit on attitudes and purchase intention (Boush & Loken, 1991). One possible explanation for the null findings is participants' prior attitudes toward the highly familiar brands (Old Spice and Secret) and product category (body deodorant) tested. Once formed, these attitudes are unlikely to change as a result of a single advertising exposure. It also seems possible that the brands tested in this study enjoyed a high level of brand elasticity (Monga & John, 2010) which made their extensions acceptable despite the varying degrees of perceived fit.

Compared to level of masculinity, level of femininity seemed to have no impact on the evaluative process. The asymmetrical influence of masculinity and femininity is nevertheless consistent with previous research. Several studies have shown that men have a more unfavorable view of feminine brands, presumably because men tend to possess more masculine traits (Alreck et al., 1982; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Lull et al., 1977). The presence of higher

masculinity in men has also been used to explain why men are more likely to

seek to gender congruence with products than females and why it would be more

difficult for a feminine brand to attract males than a masculine brand to attract

females (Alreck et al., 1982; Fugate & Phillips, 2010; Jung & Lee, 2006;

Stuteville, 1971). Jung and Lee's (2006) study further showed that the

acceptance of a cross-gender extension was higher when it was made from a

masculine brand to target female consumers than the other way around. Instead

of being viewed as an empirical drawback, the asymmetrical impact of

masculinity and femininity observed in this study should be viewed as additional

evidence for an important assumption: Women tend to adhere less to the

traditional sex role prescriptions and consequently have a more positive attitude

toward cross-gender brand extensions than men.   -

Some results of the present study seem to be inconsistent with that of

previous studies, however. June and Lee (2006), for example, found that men

were more accepting of a cross-gender brand extension when the extension was

in a functional product category than in a symbolic product category, whereas

women's perceptions of cross-gender extensions were not different whether the

brand was in a symbolic or functional category. Interestingly, in the present

study, the participants who rated high on level masculinity had a greater

acceptance and greater purchase intention for the symbolic brand extension than

the functional brand extension. The inconsistencies may be due to different

manipulations of brand concepts between the studies. In Jung and Lee's (2006)

study the symbolic and functional concepts were represented by products in two

different categories, high-end fashion and hair gel/spray, respectively. In the present study, both symbolic and functional brands belonged to the same body deodorant category. The inconsistencies could also be attributed to different conceptualizations of gender. Unlike June and Lee (2006) and most other studies that conceptualized gender as a male vs. female dichotomy or a binary trait with masculinity and femininity representing opposites on a single continuum, the present study treated gender as a multidimensional concept that embodies different levels of masculinity and femininity in both males and females. That is, as West and Zimmerman (1987) argued, gender is something that people do rather than part of what people are.

Whether gender should be conceptualized as a male vs. female dichotomy or a multidimensional concept may best be determined by its relative power in explaining cross-gender brand extensions. To make such comparisons, a series of ANOVAs were performed by using gender (male vs. female), brand concept (functional vs. symbolic) and direction of extension (male-to-female vs. female-to-male) as between-subjects factors. Interestingly enough, gender had a significant main effect on three of the dependent variables (Table 8), yet none of the interaction effects between gender, brand concept and direction of extension reached significance. The results presented earlier indicate that, when conceptualized as levels of masculinity and femininity, gender exhibited not only main effects but also interaction effects on several dependent measures. Together, the findings lend support to the assumption that gender and sex are two distinct concepts (Palan, 2001). They also suggest the need to

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conceptualize gender as a multidimensional concept in cross-gender brand

extension research.

Table 8

Effects of Gender on Dependent Variables

Dependent Variable	Gender	Mean	F	Sig.
Perceived Fit	Male	2.965	5.506	.022
	Female	3.472		
Attitude toward Extension	Male	3.755	5.870	.018
	Female	4.619		
Attitude toward Overall Brand	Male	3.907	9.843	.002
	Female	4.936		

Theoretical Implications

Brand extensions have been around for decades, almost as long as brands have.

Cross-gender brand extensions are relatively newer though, and because of this,

both scholars and practitioners alike are beginning to take a look into exactly

what goes into successfully developing, marketing, and selling them. Obviously

in a cross-gender brand extension, gender would arguably be of paramount

importance. Both sex and gender play a significant role in the world of marketing.

Despite the copious amount of gender research that exists, there have been very

few studies that have examined these two factors as they relate to brand

extension evaluation, and even more so, cross-gender brand extension

evaluation. There exists a glaring need, for both scholars and practitioners alike,

to gain a modern day understanding of each individual principle. It must be made

a primary objective that these two concepts be understood in their individual

literary and sociocultural contexts, as it is apparent from the present study that they are indeed two distinct concepts. Yet, both gender and gender roles play a pivotal role in shaping consumer attitudes and perceptions. To be able to fully comprehend the impact that one concept has on additional concepts, it is essential that we, first, have a concrete grasp of the initial concept. A modern day understanding is suggested, as the current study's findings imply that there is a strong possibility that traditional gender roles may, in fact ,be evolving with men beginning to take on customarily feminine roles and vice-versa. With that being said, there is still a significant place for what some may consider as "outdated" gender role perspectives. Not all societies and cultures regard gender roles in the same light. Some societies and cultures are more conservative, or have been shaped by different values that would make them less inclined to acknowledge or accept this so called "gender bending".

The present study took a look at factors that influence extension evaluation from both a product- and consumer-related standpoint. According to Czellar's (2003) Basic Model of Extension Evaluation Process, there are two ways that attitudes toward a brand extension can be formed, computation of effect and retrieval of prior effect. Computation of effect consists of both product-related and non-product related associations. Symbolic and functional brand concepts are product-related associations, while non-product related associations refer to things like brand personality and additional beliefs associated with the brand name. Retrieval of prior effect is an evaluation on the basis of previous attitudes toward the parent brand. Although the present study

did not analyze the participants' attitude toward the parent brand, the current study's findings coincide with Czellar's (2003) model that conveys attitude toward the extension category and behavior toward the extension as being influenced by perceived fit with the parent brand. Czellar (2003) referred to his model as the "Basic Model" of the Extension Evaluation Process, suggesting that it is also necessary to consider additional factors such as marketer- and consumer-related variables and their roles in the extension evaluation process. Doust and Esfahlan (2012) extended upon Czellar's (2003) model by incorporating both the consumer characteristic and the extension marketing support variables. Yet, neither Czellar's (2003) or Doust and Esfahlan's (2012) model touched upon brand gender or gender roles. By focusing on cross-gender extensions, the present study took into account both of these variables, using a relatively gender-neutral product, body deodorant, in order to zero in on how brand concept, consumer gender roles and extension direction affect evaluation. Upon review of the results, it is suggested that each of these three variables be considered for inclusion in future models of the of the extension evaluation process. There have been studies in the past that have looked at masculinity and femininity in regard to brand personality and product image, and their impact on perceived fit and extension evaluations (Grohmann, 2009; Sirgy, 1982; Vitz & Johnston, 1965). There have also been previous studies that investigated the effect of symbolic/functional brand image and brand gender on extension success (Bhat and Reddy 2001; Grohmann, 2009; Park et al., 1991). Furthermore, Jung and Lee (2006) examined the effects of brand gender, consumer gender and

symbolic/functional product type on the evaluation of cross-gender brand extensions. Yet, it is believed that this is the first study to explore the interaction between consumer gender roles (conceptualized as two separate dimensions of masculinity and femininity), symbolic/functional brand concept (manipulated by product positioning), and extension direction and their effects on cross-gender extension evaluation.

Practical Implications

In order for brands to sustain growth and outperform their competitors, cross-gender brand extensions many-a-times provide companies with just what they need to discover and capitalize on their competitive edge. As with any marketing technique, in order to truly succeed at it, one must truly understand it. We have entered into the new economy and a company's marketing and branding capabilities have become the crux at which they will either make it or break it. Therefore, it is essential that companies learn as much about there target market, and the market in general, in order to be sure that their risk is worth their reward.

Brand extensions tend to be considerably less expense than introducing a new brand. Yet, while a cross-gender brand extension may be profitable for one brand, it may be more profitable for another brand to expand upon its current demographic. That being said, extension direction is also something to be considered. It appears from not only the current study, but also a number of others, that it may be more difficult for a female brand to extend to a male market

than vice versa. Yet, it hasn't stopped some female-to-male extensions from seeing success. The present study highlights the old adage, "you can't judge a book by its cover", as one of its main takeaways is that not every male consumer and female consumer can be taken as such. The ability of a brand to connect with its end-users' gender role identity is critical in determining how the end-user will receive the brand and ultimately purchase the product. This is especially crucial for brands involving products that traditionally cater to a gender specific user-group, such as those in the personal care and grooming industry or the apparel industry. We are guaranteed to see some traditionally gender-neutral or non-gender specific brands harness the idea of gendered products as the market continues to become even more consumer-centric and gender roles continue to evolve.

Modern day science and technology have supplied us with some unbelievable research and design tools that allow us to gather both product and consumer data like never before. It is up to people such as the marketers, the advertisers and the brand managers to utilize them to take their brands to the next level. Unfortunately, gender and gender roles are not the only things these individuals have to worry about when looking to develop and/or maintain a successful brand. Practitioners need to take into consideration that while their consumers' personalities are composed of several traits and attributes, so are their brands. The present study has shown that positioning can play a key role in shaping not only a brand's so-called gender, but also its brand image concept. This study illustrates how the same product can be assigned a functional or a

symbolic brand image concept proving a product's image concept goes far beyond just the product itself. In essence, a company is seemingly just like the next company until it goes through the necessary steps to become a true "brand". These necessary steps are an example of the integrated marketing process at its finest.

Research Limitations and Future Research Suggestions

With regard to study limitations, this present study's findings should not be generalized. Although this study reveals some noteworthy implications, and efforts were made to ensure validity, several limitations are evident. First and foremost was the sample population. Due to time constraints and available resources, this study consisted of a total 82 undergraduate participants, 55 of which were female and 27 of which were male. The small sample size and the lack of male participants may have had an impact on the results. Also, with the participants being undergraduate students, most of them ranged from the age of 19-22. Prior research has suggested that age may have an impact on gender role perception, and therefore a replication of this study with a larger, more gender-balanced sample size and a wider age range is warranted. Also, replications or extensions of this study should be done different geographic locations both statewide and nationwide.

Secondly, this study only utilized one relatively gender-neutral product, body deodorant. Body deodorant was chosen due to the fact that almost all men and women use it, yet it was not pretested for gender neutrality. Future studies

should feature multiple products. They also may want consider featuring a combination of parent brands, some with masculine brand personalities and others with feminine personalities to see how the results differ. If this consideration is taken into account, then participants should be asked questions regarding the gender dimensions of the parent brands. Regardless of the parent brands' brand personality, it is suggested that the brands are pretested since prior attitudes toward the products may have an effect on the study's outcome.

Last but not least, the brands that were chosen for this study were both preexisting brands, Old Spice and Secret. The participants' prior experience with each brand may have influenced responses. If existent brands are to be used in the future, participants should be measured on brand familiarity and attitudes toward the parent brand. Subsequent studies may consider using hypothetical brands. In addition, the extensions featured in the present study were an example of full-name extensions, as the parent brands' full names were used in the extension products. It would be valuable for future research to incorporate alternative types of cross-gender brand extension strategies including sub-branding, and derived brand extensions.

Conclusion

The overall goal of the present study was to integrate theories and research in gender, branding and consumer behavior in order to provide a more holistic view of the evaluation of cross-gender brand extensions. This study intended to elaborate on Czellar's (2003) Model of Extension Evaluation Process

by employing two interrelated variables of gender roles and brand concept, in combination with the marketing-related variable of product positioning, to examine the impact they have on cross-gender brand extension evaluations. Findings from the current study indicate that there exists a discord between scholars in regards to how the term "gender" 'should be defined. As both the review of literature and findings indicate, gender roles undoubtedly play a part in shaping consumer attitudes toward products, especially when the product is a cross-gender brand extension. This study has shown that gender roles may play a more influential role on extension evaluation when the end consumers' are of different levels of masculinity.

Although a critical factor, gender roles are not alone in affecting extension evaluation, the study's findings also show that brand concept is an essential factor to account for as well. Unlike most studies that have dealt with brand concept, the current study made in attempt to manipulate the variable of symbolic vs. functional concept. In response to this, the findings further justified the belief that the marketing mix plays a significant role in attitude and acceptance of gender extended products. The results also indicate that this significance may be greater when the consumer is of a high level of masculinity. Last but not least, the study also revealed that not all gender-extensions are equal, not just in terms of gender roles and brand concept, but also in regards to their direction. The present study further confirms that it might be more difficult for a female-to-male extension to gain acceptance and succeed. Despite its limitations, collectively this study illuminates several valuable implications and considerations for the

academic world, business and industry, and society at large.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Research Packet

University of South Florida

INFORMED CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Please read this consent form carefully before you decide to participate in this study.

Thank you for taking time to participate in this study. Your participation is completely voluntary, and there is no penalty for refusal to participate.

The answers from this questionnaire will assist the researcher in completing a Masters thesis. You may terminate completion of this questionnaire at any time if you feel uncomfortable by the content of the questions. You may also refuse to answer any question(s) if you so choose. Furthermore, the information you contribute is **private** and **confidential.** Other than the researcher, no one else will have access to the completed questionnaire. In addition, to protect your confidentiality, you are not required to write your name on the survey. There are no known risks associated with this study, and there are no direct benefits to you for your participation.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact the faculty advisor, Dr. Scott Liu, at 813-974-6797. Or you can contact the School of Mass Communications at 813-974-2592. You may also contact the researcher, Laura Frieden, at 757-650-3026. In the event that participants want to voice concerns or complaints about the research or obtain answers to questions about their rights as a research participant, they may contact the Institutional Review Board at 813-974-5638.

Again, Thank you for your participation

On the following page you will see an advertisement for a product. Please read the advertisement in its entirety and answer the questions that follow.

<u>SECRET FOR MEN</u>

Secret for Men has arrived! The first-ever women's deodorant line from Secret is sure to give women a new edge in the office, at the gym or out for a night on the town. Women will feel more confident than ever with the ability to express themselves. When the heat turns up or the day gets stressful, the bold freshness of Secret for Men can make all the difference in keeping a woman feeling smart, assured and cool. Try it if you want to look, feel, and smell your very best!

<u>OLD SPICE FOR WOMEN</u>

Old Spice for Women has arrived! The first-ever women's deodorant line from Old Spice is sure to give women a new edge in the office, at the gym or out for a night on the town. Women will feel more confident than ever with the ability to express themselves. When the heat turns up or the day gets stressful, the bold freshness of Old Spice for Women can make all the difference in keeping a woman feeling smart, assured and cool. Try it if you want to look, feel, and smell you're very best!

SECRET FOR MEN

Secret for Men has arrived! Free from artificial preservatives, Secret for Men is enriched with moisturizing ingredients and provides unbeatably effective 24-hour clinical strength odor and wetness protection. Using an innovative time-release formula, Secret for Men controls underarm swear and kills odor-causing bacteria. It comes in four different scents and starts blocking odor and wetness immediately on contact. Each of the four scents is hypoallergenic and dermatologist-tested and approved.

OLD SPICE FOR WOMEN

Old Spice for Women has arrived! Free from artificial preservatives, Old Spice for Women is enriched with moisturizing ingredients and provides unbeatably effective 24-hour clinical strength odor and wetness protection. Using an innovative time-release formula, Old Spice for Women controls underarm swear and kills odor-causing bacteria. It comes in four different scents and starts blocking odor and wetness immediately on contact. Each of the four scents is hypoallergenic and dermatologist-tested and approved.

Please indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements about the original brand (Secret) and its extension (Secret for Men) by circling the number that most closely reflects your response:

1) The extension (Secret for Men) is similar to the original Secret brand.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

2) The extension (Secret for Men) fits the Secret brand image.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

3) Launching the Secret for Men extension is logical for the company.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

4) Launching the Secret for Men extension is appropriate for the company.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

5) I would like to try the Secret for Men brand.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

6) I would like to buy the Secret for Men brand.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

7) I would actively seek out the Secret for Men brand.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

Do you find Secret for Men: (please place an X at the point between the two adjectives which most closely reflects your opinion)

8) Unfavorable ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ Favorable

9) Bad ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ Good

10) Unlikeable ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ Likeable

Taken together, do you find the Secret and Secret for Men brand bundle: (please place an X at the point between the two adjectives which most closely reflects your opinion)

11) Unfavorable ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ Favorable

12) Bad ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ Good

13) Unlikeable ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ ____ Likeable

Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; Bem, 1974)

Instruction: Rate yourself on each item from **1 (never or almost true)** to **7 (always or almost true)**. Then, follow the scoring guidelines below to add your score. This test requires approximately 7-15 minutes.

1. self-reliant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. yielding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. helpful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. defends own beliefs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. cheerful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. moody	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. independent	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. shy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. conscientious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. athletic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. affectionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. theatrical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. assertive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. flatterable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. happy	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. strong personality	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
17. loyal	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
18. unpredictable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
19. forceful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
20. feminine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

21. reliable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
22. analytical	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
23. sympathetic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
24. jealous	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
25. leadership ability	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
26. sensitive to other's needs	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
27. truthful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
28. willing to take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
29. understanding	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
30. secretive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
31. makes decisions easily	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
32. compassionate	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
33. sincere	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
34. self-sufficient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
35. eager to soothe hurt feelings	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
36. conceited	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
37. dominant	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
38. soft-spoken	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
39. likable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
40. masculine	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
41. warm	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
42. solemn	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
43. willing to take a stand	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

44. tender	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
45. friendly	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
46. aggressive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
47. gullible	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
48. inefficient	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
49. act as leader	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
50. childlike	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
51. adaptable	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
52. individualistic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
53. does not use harsh language	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
54. unsystematic	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
55. competitive	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
56. loves children	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
57. tactful	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
58. ambitious	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
59. gentle	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
60. conventional	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

For masculinity score: Add items 1, 4, 7, 10, 13, 16, 19, 22, 25, 28, 31, 34, 37, 40, 43, 46, 49, 55, and 58. Divide by 20.

For femininity score: Add items 2, 5, 8, 11, 14, 17, 20, 23, 26, 29, 32, 35, 38, 41, 44, 47, 50, 53, 56, and 59. Divide by 20.

Scores on both the masculinity and femininity scales above 4.9 are described as having androgynous traits.

The test requires approximately 7-15 minutes.

APPENDIX B

IRB Approval

2/20/2013
Laura Frieden, B.A.
Mass Communication
305 S. Westland Ave., Unit C
Tampa, FL 33606

RE: **Exempt Certification**
IRB#: Pro00011481
Title: The Role of Consumer Gender Identity and Brand Concept Consistency in
Evaluating Cross-Gender Brand Extensions

Study Approval Period: 2/18/2013 to 2/18/2018

Dear Ms. Frieden:

On 2/18/2013, the Institutional Review Board (IRB) determined that your
research meets USF requirements and Federal Exemption criteria as outlined in
the federal regulations at 45CFR46.101(b):

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic,
aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation
of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner
that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the
subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the
research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or
be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

As the principal investigator for this study, it is your responsibility to ensure that
this research is conducted as outlined in your application and consistent with the
ethical pr
inciples outlined in the Belmont Report and with USF IRB policies and
procedures. Please note that changes to this protocol may disqualify it from
exempt status. Please note that you are responsible for notifying the IRB prior to
implementing any changes to the currently approved protocol.

The Institutional Review Board will maintain your exemption application for a period of five years from the date of this letter or for three years after a Final Progress Report is received, whichever is longer. If you wish to continue this protocol beyond five years, you will need to submit a new application at least 60 days prior to the end of your exemption approval period. Should you complete this study prior to the end of the five-year period, you must submit a request to close the study.

We appreciate your dedication to the ethical conduct of human subject research at the University of South Florida and your continued commitment to human research protections. If you have any questions regarding this matter, please call 813-974-5638.

Sincerely,
Kristen
Salomon, Ph.D., Vice Chair
USF Institutional Review Board