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Brand Experience:

What is It? How do We Measure It? And Does It Affect Loyalty?

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Brand experience is conceptualized as sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments. We distinguish several experience dimensions and construct a brand experience scale that includes four dimensions: sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral. In six studies, we show that the scale is reliable, valid and distinct from other brand scales including brand evaluations, brand involvement, brand attachment, customer delight and brand personality. Moreover, brand experience affects consumer satisfaction and loyalty directly and indirectly through brand personality associations.

How do consumers experience a brand? How do we measure brand experience? Does brand experience affect consumer behavior?

Many useful constructs and measurements have been developed recently in the branding literature including brand personality, brand community, brand trust, brand attachment and brand love (Aaker 1997; Carroll and Ahuvia 2006; Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Alemán, and Yagüe-Guillén 2003; McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002; Thomson, MacInnis, and Park 2005). However, a conceptualization and scale for measuring brand experiences has not been forthcoming. Also, research has studied contexts in which specific product and service experiences arise (Arnould, Price, and Zinkhan 2002). Yet, research has largely ignored the exact nature and dimensional structure of brand experiences.

Interestingly, brand experience has attracted a lot of attention in marketing practice. Marketing practitioners have come to realize that understanding how consumers experience brands is critical for developing marketing strategies for goods and services. Numerous trade writings have appeared that present useful concepts as well as some *ad hoc* experience measurements (Chattopadhyay and Laborie 2005; Pine and Gilmore 1999; Schmitt 1999, 2003; Shaw and Ivens 2002; Smith and Wheeler 2002).

In this paper, we present a conceptual analysis of brand experience and a brand experience scale. As with other brand research, the development of a brand experience scale must go hand-in-hand with conceptual development of the construct itself. We need to identify the underlying dimensions of brand experience (analogous to the "big five" dimensions of brand personality or the dimensions of affection, connection and passion that make up brand attachment) and develop a scale that can measure the strength with which a brand evokes each experience dimension. However, the experience construct and its measurement is not as well

established in basic disciplines (like psychology) as some other brand concepts, which allowed

marketing researchers to adopt the construct and scale items directly from psychology. In

contrast, writings on experience can be found in a wide range of fields, including marketing,

philosophy, cognitive science, and management practice.

To define and further develop the brand experience construct, we begin with a review of

consumer and marketing research, which examines when experiences occur and how they affect

judgments, attitudes and other aspects of consumer behavior. Next, we review the literature in

philosophy and cognitive science as well as applied management writings to distinguish brand

experience dimensions and develop a brand experience scale. We then examine the psychometric

properties of the scale using standard scale validation procedures. Finally, we test whether brand

experience affects consumer satisfaction and loyalty.

THE EXPERIENCE CONCEPT IN CONSUMER AND MARKETING RESEARCH

Consumer and marketing research has shown that experiences occur when consumers

search for products, when they shop for them and receive service, and when they consume them

(Arnould, Price, and Zinkhan 2002; Brakus, Schmitt, and Zhang 2008; Holbrook 2000).

Product Experience. Product experiences occur when consumers interact with products,

e.g., when consumers search for products, examine, and evaluate them (Hoch 2002). The product

experience can be direct when there is physical contact with the product (Hoch and Ha 1986) or

indirect when a product is presented virtually or in an ad (Hoch and Ha 1986; Kempf and Smith

1998). Respondents are typically asked to reflect upon a combination of direct and indirect

product experiences in order to investigate how the combination affects product judgments,

attitudes, preferences, purchase intent, and recall (Hoch and Ha 1986; Hoch and Deighton 1989; Huffman and Houston 1993).

Shopping and Service Experience. Shopping and service experiences occur when a consumer interacts with a store's physical environment, its personnel, and its policies and practices (Hui and Bateson 1991; Kerin, Jain, Howard 2002). Research in this area thus investigates how atmospheric variables and salespeople affect the experience (Arnold et al. 2005; Jones 1999; Boulding, Kalra, Staelin and Zeithaml 1993; Ofir and Simonson 2007)). A number of articles has investigated customers' interaction with salespeople and how that experience affects customers' feelings, brand attitudes, and satisfaction (Grace and O'Cass 2004).

Consumption Experience. Experiences also occur when consumers consume and use products. Consumption experience are multi-dimensional including hedonic dimensions such as "feelings, fantasies and fun" (Holbrook and Hirschman 1982). Much of the interpretive research on consumption experiences has analyzed hedonic goals that occur during and after the consumption of, for example, museums, river rafting, baseball, and skydiving (Arnould and Price 1993; Celsi, Rose, and Leigh 1993; Holt 1995; Joy and Sherry 2003).

In sum, experiences arise in a wide variety of settings. Most experiences occur directly when consumers shop, buy and consume products. Experiences can also occur indirectly, e.g., when consumers are exposed to advertising and marketing communications including Web sites.

CONCEPTUALIZING BRAND EXPERIENCE

Most of the research on experiences to date has focused on utilitarian product attributes and category experiences, and not on experiences provided by brands. To be sure, when consumers search for, shop for and consume brands, they are exposed to utilitarian product attributes. But

they are also exposed to a variety of specific brand-related stimuli such as brand-identifying colors (Bellizzi and Hite 1992; Gorn et al. 1997; Meyers-Levy and Peracchio 1995), shapes (Veryzer and Hutchinson 1998), typefaces, background design elements (Mandel and Johnson 2002), slogans, mascots and brand characters (Keller 1987). These brand related stimuli appear as part of a brand's design and identity (name, logo and signage), packaging, marketing communications (ads, brochures, and Web sites) and in environments where the brand is marketed or sold (stores and events). These brand-related stimuli constitute the major source of subjective, internal consumer responses that we refer to as "brand experience."

We thus conceptualize brand experience as subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) as well as behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments. In the following sections, we will explicate the brand experience construct further and differentiate it from other brand concepts. Most important, we will distinguish various dimensions of brand experience.

Further Explication of the Brand Experience Construct

Brand experiences vary in strength or intensity; that is, some brand experiences are stronger or more intense than others. Like product experiences, brand experiences also vary in valence; that is, some are more positive than others; and some experiences may even be negative. Moreover, some brand experiences happen spontaneously without much reflection, and are short-lived; others occur more deliberately and last longer. Over time, these long-lasting brand experiences, stored in consumer memory, should affect consumer satisfaction and loyalty (Oliver 1997; Reicheld 1996).

Differences between Brand Experience and Other Brand Constructs

Brand experience is, in part, related but also conceptually distinct from other brand constructs. Brand experience differs, in particular, from evaluative, affective and associative constructs such as brand attitudes, brand involvement, brand attachment, customer delight and brand personality.

Attitudes are general evaluations based on beliefs or automatic affective reactions (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; Murphy and Zajonc 1993). Brand experiences, in contrast, are not general evaluative judgments about the brand (e.g., "I like the brand"). They include specific sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioral responses triggered by specific brand related stimuli. For example, experiences may include specific feelings, not just an overall "liking." To be sure, experiences may result at times in general evaluations and attitudes, especially evaluations of the experience itself (e.g., "I like the experience"). However, the overall attitude toward the experience captures only a very small part of the entire brand experience.

Brand experience also differs from motivational and affective concepts such as involvement (Zaichkowsky 1985), brand attachment (Thomson, MacInnis, and Park 2005) and customer delight (Oliver, Rust, and Varki 1997). Involvement is based on needs, values and interests that motivate a consumer toward an object, e.g., a brand. Antecedents of involvement include the perceived importance and personal relevance of a brand (Zaichkowsky 1985). Brand experience does not presume a motivational state. Experiences can happen when consumers do not show interest or have a personal connection with the brand. Moreover, brands that consumers are highly involved with are not necessarily brands that evoke the strongest experiences.

If involvement may be characterized by mild affect, brand attachment refers to a strong emotional bond (i.e., "hot affect") between a consumer and a brand, as evidenced by its three

dimensions--affection, passion, and connection (Thomson, MacInnis, and Park 2005; Park and MacInnis 2006). In contrast to brand attachment, brand experience is not an emotional relationship concept. As described earlier, experiences are sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli. Over time, brand experiences may result in emotional bonds, but emotions are only one internal outcome of the stimulation that evokes experiences.

Like brand attachment, customer delight is characterized by arousal and positive affect; it may be considered the affective component of satisfaction (Oliver, Rust, and Varki 1997). Customer delight results from disconfirming, surprising consumption (Oliver, Rust, and Varki 1997). In contrast to customer delight, brand experiences do not occur only after consumption; they occur whenever there is a direct or indirect interaction with the brand. Moreover, a brand experience does not have to be surprising; it may be expected or unexpected.

Finally, brand experience is distinct from brand associations and brand image (Keller 1993). One of the most studied construct of brand associations is brand personality (Aaker 1997). Consumers tend to endow brands with human characteristics that result in a brand personality, consisting of five dimensions—sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness (Aaker 1997). Brand personality is based on inferential processes (Johar, Sengupta, and Aaker 2005). That is, consumers do not feel sincere or excited about the brand; they merely project these traits onto brands. In contrast, brand experiences are actual sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioral responses. Thus, as brand experience differs from brand evaluations, involvement, attachment and customer delight, brand experience is also conceptually and empirically distinct from brand personality.

DIMENSIONS OF BRAND EXPERIENCE

To identify dimensions of brand experience, we next review pertinent work in philosophy, cognitive science, and applied writings on experiential marketing and management. In this literature, across a variety of disciplines, a fairly consistent set of experience dimensions, which are highly relevant to brands, has been proposed.

Philosophical Investigations. Philosopher John Dewey viewed experience as the intertwining of human beings and their environments (Dewey 1922, 1925). He thus critiqued the purely cognitive Kantian view of experience as knowledge. Dewey argued that knowledge (classifying, analyzing and reasoning about things) is only one part of our understanding of the world. In addition to intellectual experiences resulting from knowledge, experiences also include perceiving (through the senses), feeling, and doing. Moreover, human beings are fundamentally connected with other people. Following Dewey, Dubé and LeBel (2003) distinguished several "pleasure dimensions": intellectual, emotional, social, and physical pleasures.

Cognitive Science. Cognitive scientists have investigated "mental modules"—special purpose computational systems that respond to specific environmental cues and solve a restricted class of problems (Fodor 1998). Pinker (1997) identified four mental modules that correspond closely to the experiences postulated by Dewey: sensory perception, feelings and emotions, creativity and reasoning, and social relations. Yet, Pinker does not list a separate "doing" module; he considered bodily experiences and motor actions and behaviors to be part of the "sensory-motor module," similar to Lakoff and Johnson's concept of embodied cognition (1999).

Applied Writings on Experience Marketing and Management. Pine and Gilmore (1999) studied "staged experiences" in retail environments and events. For these settings, the authors have distinguished aesthetic (including visual, aural, olfactory and tactile aspects), educational,

entertaining, and escapist experiences. While Pine and Gilmore's framework is limited to retail settings and events, their four experience dimensions nonetheless overlap with some of the dimensions of experience discussed earlier, thus confirming the need for conceptualizing a sensory/aesthetic, intellectual/educational and emotional/entertaining dimension.

Schmitt (1999) proposed five experiences, referred to as "sense," "feel," "think," "act," and "relate." The "sense" experience includes aesthetics and sensory qualities. Consistent with recent research in consumer behavior (Richins 1997), the "feel" experience includes moods and emotions. The "think" experience includes convergent/analytical and divergent/imaginative thinking. "Act" refers to motor actions and behavioral experiences. Finally, "relate" refers to social experiences such as relating to a reference group. The five experiences are closely related to Dewey's categorization, Dubé and LeBel's pleasure construct, and Pinker's mental modules, especially if we consider Pinker's "sensory" module to include sensory and behavioral components.

Summary. There has been considerable agreement in the categorization of experiences by philosophers, cognitive scientists, and management thinkers. For the scale development that follows, it is therefore necessary to generate items along the five experience dimensions that broadly emerged from our literature review: sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioral and social.

Following our conceptualization, the experience dimensions are evoked by brand-related stimuli (for example, colors, shapes, typefaces, designs, slogans, mascots and brand characters). It is important to note that there is no one-to-one correspondence such that a certain stimulus type would trigger a certain experience dimension, and only that dimension. For example, while colors, shapes, typefaces and designs usually result in sensory experience, they may also result in emotions (e.g., red for Coca Cola) or in intellectual experiences (e.g., when designs use complex

patterns). Similarly, slogans, mascots and brand characters, while they may result in imaginative thoughts, they may also trigger emotions (e.g., "Bibendum," the Michelin Man) or stimulate actions (e.g., Nike's Just Do It). Also, when we present a brand experience scale to consumers, we are usually not directly assessing the dynamic, "online" experience that a consumer has in the here and now; rather, we assess a lasting trace stored in long-term memory based on multiple exposures to brand-related stimuli.

Before we move on to the actual scale development, we first report the results of an exploratory, qualitative study that we designed to see whether the conceptualization of brand experience presented here was in line with consumer conceptions of brand experience.

CONSUMERS' CONCEPTIONS OF BRAND EXPERIENCE

Do consumers have a conception of experience that is similar to our conceptualization? To address this question, we asked MBA students (N = 25) to describe their experience with a brand of their choice. Participants were instructed to choose a brand that provides a strong experience for them, to list the brand and then to describe their experience in an open-ended fashion on one sheet of paper. Next, they were asked to choose a brand in the same or in a related category that provides a weak experience for them, or no experience at all, and to describe in an open-ended fashion the "sensations, feelings, thoughts and behaviors that they might have or engage in, alone or with others." Note that, given the instructions, participants had to rely on their own conceptions of experience for the experiential brand but were primed with terms related to experience dimensions for the weak experiential brand. This allowed for a conservative assessment of whether consumers shared our conception of experience and whether consumers perceived a difference between strong experiential and weak experiential brands.

Participants in the study provided open-ended responses for a wide variety of goods and service brands. They considered the following brands to be strong experiential brands: Abercrombie and Fitch, American Express, Apple/iPod (chosen by six respondents), Body Shop, BMW, Crest, Disney, Google, HBO, Home Depot, MasterCard, Nike (chosen by four respondents), Starbucks, Target, W Hotel, Washington Mutual, and Williams-Sonoma. Participants provided descriptions of weak experiential brands for Aeropostale, Canon, Dell, Dick's Sporting Goods, Douglas, Dunkin Donuts, Hilton, Macy's, Microsoft, Reebok (chosen by two respondents), Sony, Sur La Table, Tim Horton's, True Value, Visa (chosen by two respondents), Volkswagen, and Wal-Mart. Some respondents defined "category" more broadly than others (e.g., consumer electronics rather than MP3 players). Six respondents did not provide a specific weak experiential brand in the same category, but described weak experiential brands in the category generically. Although these respondents did not strictly follow instructions, we included their responses to avoid biasing the results.

A content analysis of the open-ended responses indicated that all consumers had a concept of brand experience. Respondents reported brand experiences that occurred when they shopped and consumed brands. Also, they viewed brand experiences as being evoked by brand-related stimuli. For each experiential brand, we asked two raters to select descriptions that corresponded with our conceptualization of sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral and social experiences. As an illustration, in Table 1 we present three descriptions per strong experiential brand, which had been selected by both raters. (For Apple and Nike, which had been selected as strong experiential brands by more than one respondent, we provide six descriptions each.). As Table 1 shows, participants provided descriptions of sensations (e.g., "touch and feel," "appeal to different senses," "smells nice and is visually warm"), a wide range of feelings (e.g., "fun,"

"refreshed," "inspired," "nostalgia," "in a good mood"), analytical and imaginative thoughts (e.g., "the brand intrigues me," "I think of topics like animal testing, purity and wellness," "reminds me to use my imagination," "makes me think about precious things in life"), and behaviors (e.g., "enjoy playing with all the products," "I change the way I organize and interact with information," "I want to work out," "It's a place I want to go"). Participants also made occasional references to the social context of branded experiences (e.g., "It's like a membership in an exclusive, country-clubish community," "I am part of a 'smarter' community," "I feel like an athlete"). We also analyzed the descriptions for the weak experiential brands. In contrast to the strong experiential brands, participants described weak experiential brands mostly in terms of price and promotions, as well as functionality and basics, despite the fact that they had been explicitly primed with an experiential terminology. Consider, for example, the following descriptions of Wal-Mart, Visa and Aeropostale: "They focus on price as low as price can be; their retail stores are incredibly basic" (for Wal-Mart); "Visa is not about experience. Visa promotes being accepted everywhere. Visa is about convenience and reliability and less about how I as a customer feel about the brand."; "Aero's brand stands for little more than cheap clothing" (for Aeropostale).

- - - - Insert Table 1 about here - - - -

Two other findings are noteworthy. First, almost all descriptions of strong experiential brands were positive; only 2 out of 25 respondents provided some negative descriptions (see W Hotel and Washington Mutual in Table 1). Moreover, many descriptions were at the general level of experiences at which we provided our conceptualization. Only six respondents provided detailed descriptions of highly specific elements of their experiences, e.g., by referring to the colors and design of Apple products, the background music or visual design in stores, or the way

a BMW drives ("I love the sensations I get from BMW: The noise of the motor during acceleration; the grip on curves, the resistance on the steering wheel when I turn.").

In sum, the qualitative study showed that consumers' conception of brand experience was aligned with the concept of brand experience that we had developed based on prior research and theoretical writings in a variety of disciplines.

DEVELOPING THE BRAND EXPERIENCE SCALE

Next, we will develop a brand experience scale that captures the dimensions of brand experience and the level of experience evoked by the brand on each dimension. As part of the scale development, we must address methodological challenges. First, in contrast to some other brand scales that were adopted from existing scales in psychology, the development of a brand experience scale requires a broader search for acceptable items. Second, the items of the scale should focus on the degree to which a consumer has a sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioral or social experience with a brand rather than measuring the specific sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioral or social content of the experience (e.g., whether the experience is visually exciting or emotionally warm; or what specific imaginary thoughts or behavioral actions come to mind). There are already several scales than provide highly specific measures for specific experiences, such as the Visual Product Aesthetics Scale (Bloch, Brunel, and Arnold 2003), emotions scales (Izard 1978), or the Need for Cognition Scale (Cacioppo and Petty 1982). These scales focus on individual reactions to specific stimuli (e.g., well designed products) or tasks (e.g., abstract thinking). They use multi-faceted items to measure specific sensations, e.g., "I enjoy seeing displays of products that have superior design," "being able to see subtle differences in product designs is one skill that I have developed over time," or "when I see a

product that has a really great design, I feel a strong urge to buy it" (Bloch, Brunel and Arnold 2003); specific emotions, e.g., "affectionate," "attached," or "passionate" (Thomson, MacInnis and Park 2005); or specific intellectual processes, e.g., "I would prefer complex to simple problems," or "the notion of thinking abstractly appeals to me" (Cacioppo and Petty 1982). While reviewing such scales is important, the specific items on these scales are of limited value given our objective of measuring more generally whether and to what degree a consumer has a sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioral or social experience.

In study 1, we conduct an extensive literature review, select initial items along the five proposed dimensions and ask experts and consumers to screen these items. In study 2, we ask consumers to rate 21 brands on the remaining items of study 1 and conduct an exploratory factor analysis to determine the dimensionality of the scale; moreover, we show that the scale has criterion validity. In study 3, using a shorter scale and a new sample of consumers and brands, we use exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses to further determine the scale dimensionality. In study 4, we examine the dimensionality of the scale with a non-student population; in addition, we show that brand experience is distinct from general brand evaluations and that the scale is reliable over time. Finally, in study 5, we examine the discriminant validity of the scale from motivational and affective brand scales, such as brand involvement, brand attachment, and customer delight.

Study 1: Item Generation and Selection

The objective of study 1 was to generate specific items for the proposed dimensions of brand experience and to select those items that have face validity in terms of describing relevant brand experiences. To generate the items, we conducted an extensive literature search and review

focused on concepts related to the five dimensions of experience. For sensory experiences, we examined research related to aesthetics and sensory perception (Arnheim 1974; Berlyne 1974; Bloch, Brunel, and Arnold 2003; Parsons and Conroy 2006; Schmitt and Simonson 1997). For affective experiences, we reviewed the literature on affect and emotions in psychology and consumer research (Edell and Burke 1987; Izard 1978; Plutchik and Kellerman 1989; Richins 1997). For intellectual experiences, we reviewed research on intelligence and cognitive style as well as literature on creative thinking and applications of creative thinking in advertising (Guilford 1956; Smith and Yang 2004). For behavioral experiences, we reviewed the literature on physical/behavioral and lifestyles aspects of consumption (Helman and De Chernatony 1999; Solomon 2004). Finally, for social experiences, we reviewed the literature on brand communities and relationships (Fournier 1998; McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001).

Based on the literature review, 131 items were selected or constructed to refer to sensory impressions and appeals (25 items), feelings, sentiments and emotions (30 items), curiosity, thinking and problem solving (26 items), physical and bodily actions and behaviors (25 items), and relations and belonging (25 items). Some of the selected items had to be reworded to create linguistic style consistency for the scale so that the word "brand" appeared in each item and referred to or implied a consumer experience with the brand. The items were then included in a questionnaire in random order. After the initial screening and face validity check, 125 applicable items was retained: 24 sensory, 29 affective, 26 intellectual, 23 behavioral, and 23 social items.

Next, 30 university students were paid $5 each to participate in a study on brand experience. Instructions were closely modeled after Thomson, MacInnis and Park (2005). After explaining the concept of brand experience, we asked the participants to evaluate to what extent

the 125 items described their experiences with brands, using a seven-point Likert scale (1 = "not at all descriptive," 7 = "extremely descriptive"). One third of the items were negatively worded. We retained items with a mean value > 4.0 and a standard deviation < 2.0—a total of 83 items: 23 (seven negative) for sensory, 13 (seven negative) for affective, 10 (eight negative) for intellectual, 18 (seven negative) for behavioral, and 19 (seven negative) for social experiences.

Study 2: Item Reduction and Dimensionality of the Scale

Study 2 was designed to reduce the number of items and to examine two questions: How many brand experience dimensions are there, and what experiences are captured by these dimensions?

In a pretest, 68 university students were asked to think of three product categories and pick one brand in each category that they believed was marketed in an experiential fashion and another brand that they believed was not marketed in an experiential fashion. Brands with the highest frequency of mention were retained for a total of 21 brands (16 experiential and five non-experiential). The chosen experiential brands were (frequencies of mention are in parentheses): Apple (13); Nike (10), Whole Foods (9), BMW (8), Sony (5), Jet Blue (5), Tiffany (4), Virgin (4), Target (4), McDonald's (4), Coca-Cola (4), Abercrombie and Fitch (4), Reebok (4), W Hotels (4), Barnes and Noble (4), and Starbucks (4). The non-experiential brands were: Wal-Mart (7), IBM (6), Gristedes (5), Poland Spring (4), and Dell (4).

In the main study, a new sample of students (N = 267) was asked to indicate to what extent the 83 items described their experiences with each of five brands listed (1 = "not at all descriptive," 7 = "extremely descriptive"). Five different versions of the questionnaire were prepared; each version included four experiential brands and one non-experiential brand. To examine the consistency of ratings across the five groups, Apple, one of the experiential brands,

was included in each version of the questionnaire. Each respondent received one of the five versions randomly. To reduce primacy and recency effects, in each version the order of presentation of brands and items was varied.

Following Thomson, MacInnis, and Park (2005), we removed the items that more than 10% of participants did not rate, assuming these items were poorly understood. This resulted in the deletion of four items**.** We then conducted a factor analysis using Varimax rotation. The factor analysis revealed a nine-factor solution with eigenvalues > 1 (variance explained: 71%)**,** but only the first four factors were significant based on a scree plot (variance explained: 62%). To interpret the four factor solution, we examined items that had a loading of greater than .4 (88% of items had loadings greater than .4 on at least one factor). The four-factor analysis on the 83 items revealed two factors that were easy to interpret: factor 3 (sensory experience) and factor 4 (behavioral experience). Factors 1 and 2 included a mix of items: factor 1 focused primarily on intellectual items, and factor 2 focused on social and affective items.

To see whether the four factor solution can provide a more distinct structure and to reduce the number of items further, we also conducted an exploratory factor analysis restricting the number of factors to four (variance explained: 62%) and then using a stricter loading criterion (greater than .7) to evaluate the Varimax rotated factors. Twenty items fulfilled the criterion. Results showed a distinct pattern: only sensory items loaded on the first factor (a total of six); only intellectual ones on the second factor (a total of six) and only behavioral items (two items had loadings of greater than .7 and one item a borderline loading of .69) on the third factor. Finally, both affective and social items loaded on the fourth factor (five items), suggesting that the socially worded items include strong emotional aspects. Using the Nunnally (1978) criterion

of .7, the Cronbach alphas were satisfactory: they were high for intellectual items (.93), for

sensory items (.93), and for social/affective items (.92), and adequate for behavioral items (.78).

To check the criterion validity of the new, shorter scale, the mean value of the 20 items

for each of the 21 brands was calculated. Ratings on the Apple brand were high and consistent

(all means ranged from 4.87 to 5.07), thus indicating that respondents in the five different groups

can be considered as using the scale in a similar fashion. Moreover, the data supported the

criterion validity of the scale. Specifically, all the experiential brands had higher mean values

than non-experiential brands. The means of experiential brands ranged from 3.44 to 5.01: 3.44

(Reebok), 3.60 (Abercrombie and Fitch), 3.65 (Target), 3.72 (W Hotels), 3.86 (Virgin), 4.00

(Coca-Coca), 4.02 (McDonald's), 4.09 (Barnes and Noble), 4.10 (Jet Blue), 4.22 (Starbucks),

4.24 (Sony), 4.32 (Tiffany), 4.63 (Nike), 4.67 (Whole Foods), 4.83 (BMW), and 5.1 (Apple). In

contrast, the means of non-experiential brands were all lower: 2.92 (Gristedes), 3.08 (Wal-Mart),

3.20 (IBM), 3.27 (Poland Spring), and 3.33 (Dell). We performed 80 *t* tests, examining

statistically whether the mean of each experiential brand was significantly different from the

mean of each non-experiential brand. A total of 75 comparisons (94% of all comparisons)

resulted in significant differences (ps < .05). The non-significant comparisons included the

Reebok and Abercrombie and Fitch brands. Specifically, the mean of Reebok was not

significantly different from the means of Dell, Poland Spring, and IBM, and the mean of

Abercrombie and Fitch was not significantly different from the means of Dell and Poland Spring.

Study 3: Further Item Reduction and Confirmation of the Dimensions

In study 3, we reduced the number of scale items further and conducted both exploratory and

confirmatory analyses. To test the stability of the scale, we employed a new sample of brands

and respondents. This allowed us to examine whether responses to the scale items were truly

brand and respondent independent and thus indicative of a general brand experience.

To reduce the number of items further, two independent judges took a close look at the

20 items in terms of semantic similarity. They decided to omit eight items (three sensory, three

intellectual and two social items of the social/affective dimension). The new scale resulted in 12

items, including three items for each of the four types of experience dimensions (see Table 2,

column 1).

- - - - Insert Table 2 about here - - - -

We also prepared a different sample of 30 strong experiential brands (based on expert

judgments). We divided them randomly into six groups of five brands each (see Table 3,

columns 1 and 2). Next, we asked a new sample of 193 students to evaluate to what extent the 12

items were descriptive of their experience with each brand by using a seven-point Likert scale (1

= "strongly disagree," 7 = "strongly agree"). The students were paid $5 each to participate.

- - - - Insert Table 3 about here - - - -

An exploratory factor analysis revealed three factors with eigenvalues > 1. The three

factors explained 67% of variance. After Varimax rotation a clean factor structure emerged. As

Table 2 shows, the three sensory and three affective items loaded on the first factor; the three

behavioral items loaded on the second factor; finally, the three intellectual items loaded on the

third factor (see Table 3).

Because we had not anticipated that both sensory and affective items would load on a

single factor, we considered the possibility that these six items might load first on two first-order

factors "nested" within the second-order sensory/affective factor. We thus conducted another

exploratory factor analysis on the six sensory and affective items only. After Varimax rotation,

this subsequent analysis revealed two "nested" factors—the sensory factor and the affective

factor—which explained 74% of the variance. We also assessed the internal reliability of the four

dimensions of brand experience by calculating Cronbach's alpha for each dimension using the

12-item scale. All values were satisfactory: for three sensory items = .83, for three affective

items = .81, for three behavioral items = .76, and for three intellectual items = .79. Also, all

individual items within each dimension averaged item-to-total correlations of .68 and all

exceeded .52, indicating satisfactory levels of internal consistency.

Based on these results, we further investigated the following models: 1) the three-factor

model (sensory/affective, behavioral, and intellectual factors), 2) the four-factor model (sensory,

affective, behavioral, and intellectual factors), and 3) the "nested" model (two first-order

factors—behavioral items loading on one and intellectual items loading on another factor—plus

two other first-order factors, sensory and affective, loading on a second-order factor).

To find out which measurement model fits the data best, we used structural equation

modeling to conduct confirmatory factor analyses. In addition, we also analyzed a model that

assumed that all items loaded on a single brand experience construct (i.e., one-factor model), a

one-factor second-order model with four sub-dimensions, and a one-factor second-order model

with three sub-dimensions. For each model, except for the simple one-factor model, we

investigated two cases; a case where factors were allowed to be correlated and another case

where the factors were assumed to be orthogonal. Finally, we grouped the observations by

brands and centered the means of 12 items at zero to remove any brand effects.

The confirmatory factor analyses revealed that the best model was the four factor model

with correlated factors (see Figure 1 for details). The fit measures for that model suggested a

reasonable fit; the goodness-of-fit index (*GFI*) = .92, the confirmatory fit index (*CFI*) = .91, the

root mean square error of approximation (*RMSEA*) = .08, indicating acceptable fit, and $\chi^2(48) =$ 278.61, *p* < .001. Bagozzi and Heatherton (1994) have questioned the usefulness of the chi-square statistic in similar models; we thus considered other fit statistics to be more valuable in this context. Also, the ratio between the chi-square statistic and the number of degrees of freedom was 5.8, close to 5, indicating an adequate fit (lower values are desirable; Thomson et al. 2005). The fit measures for this model were better than those for all other tested models and the chi-square statistic of this model represented a significant improvement over any of the competing models, except for the one-factor second-order model (with four correlated sub-dimensions), which had the same chi-square statistic of 278.61 (with 44 degrees of freedom) (see Table 4 for details) but a higher (i.e., inferior) value of *RMSEA* at .09.

- - - - Insert Figure 1 about here - - - -

- - - - Insert Table 4 about here - - - -

Table 3 (columns 3 to 7) shows the means of the 30 brands on the overall Brand Experience Scale and its dimensions, ranked by degree of overall experience. Recall that all brands had been pre-selected by experts as experiential brands. Thus, any differences among the brands must be interpreted relative to the fact that all of them are quite experiential, and some of the perceived differences in the degree of experience may be specific to our sample. To assess whether an experiential brand is seen as being differentiated from other experiential brands by our respondents in terms of its sensory, affective, intellectual or behavioral experience, we conducted pair-wise comparison among the 30 brands on each experience dimension. For the comparisons we treated all data as between-subjects (all *p*s < .10). In Table 3, the one brand or group of brands with high means that was significantly different from all other brands is indexed by three stars (***); these brands provide what we call "unique differentiation." After excluding

uniquely differentiated brands, the remaining group of brands that had high means and was significantly different from all other brands is indexed by two stars (**); these brands provide "high differentiation." Finally, excluding uniquely and highly differentiated brands, brands with high means that are significantly different from all remaining brands are indexed by one star (*); these brands provide "moderate differentiation."

As Table 3 shows, based on the tests and cut-off criteria, on the sensory dimension (column 4), Ferrari, Victoria's Secret and Disney are unique; iPod, Starbucks and Lego are highly differentiated; and Puma, Toys 'R' Us and Ben and Jerry's are moderately differentiated from the other experiential brands. On the affective dimension (column 5), Disney is unique; Victoria's Secret and Hallmark are highly differentiated; and Starbucks is moderately differentiated. On the intellectual dimension (column 6), Lego and Sudoku are unique; iPod and Hallmark are highly differentiated; and Starbucks is moderately differentiated. Finally, on the behavioral dimension (column 7), Adidas is unique; Gatorade, Puma, Victoria's Secret, Viagra and iPod are highly differentiated; and Lego is moderately differentiated. Overall, Lego, Victoria's Secret, iPod and Starbucks were rated by our respondent sample as the most experiential brands; they were unique, highly differentiated, or moderately differentiated on overall experience (see column 3) and on three of the four experience dimensions (see across columns).

Some of the comparative data among the experiential brands may seem surprising. For example, the iconic Harley-Davidson brand only ranks number 13 on the list, behind brands such as Lego, Victoria's Secret, iPod, and Starbucks that stand out in terms of their overall experience. Also, Toys 'R' Us is seen as a more sensory brand than Crate and Barrel. One reason for the relatively low ranking of these brands may be our sample of respondents--

students who may have less direct experience with Harley-Davidson and Crate and Barrel than with other brands, and may also view these brands as icons of a prior, and not their, generation.

To assess the criterion validity of the scale, we asked two experts to categorize each of the 30 brands either as a "highly experiential brand" or a "moderately experiential brand" and, on each dimension, as either delivering a "highly" or "moderate" sensory, affective, intellectual or behavioral experience. Inter-rater agreement was 85%; only agreed-upon brands (overall and per dimension) were included in the subsequent analyses. Compared to brands that experts judged as "moderately experiential," "highly experiential brands" were rated by participants in the study significantly higher on overall experience (M = 4.81 vs. M = 3.65) and on each of the experience dimensions (M = 5.13 vs. M = 3.89 for sensory; M = 4.92 vs. 3.64 for affective; M = 3.88 vs. 3.21 for intellectual; and M = 5.03 vs. 3.60 for behavioral; all ps < .01).

Study 4: Additional Reliability and Validity Tests of the Brand Experience Scale

The purpose of study 4 was to validate the Brand Experience Scale further in several ways. First, to provide evidence of consistency across populations, study 4 was conducted in a real-life consumer setting with a non-student population. Interviewers intercepted 150 consumers (ranging in age from 15 to 56, mean age = 23) in the shopping streets of two medium-size cities and asked them to rate one brand (Nokia) on the 12-item brand experience scale. Second, to assess the discriminant validity of the scale from brand attitude, we asked consumers to evaluate the brand on three seven-point scales (good—bad, do not like—like very much, not attractive—very attractive). Finally, to assess the test-retest reliability of the scale, two weeks after completing the scale for the first time, 72 consumers (mean age: 22.7) volunteered to fill out the Brand Experience Scale for a second time for the same brand.

The non-student sample results were highly similar to the student-sample results in the previous study. Using confirmatory factor analysis, once again the best fitting model was a four-factor model with correlated factors ($\chi^2(48) = 102.85$, $p < .00001$, *RMSEA* = .088). Each item loaded on the predicted factor, with standardized coefficients raging from .77 to .9.

Moreover, the Brand Experience Scale displayed high discriminant validity from overall brand evaluations. In several exploratory factor analyses, the experience scale and its dimensions were clearly distinct from overall brand evaluations by loading on separate factors. Specifically, a factor analysis, which did not restrict the number of factors, resulted in four factors with eigenvalues > 1 (variance explained: 74%). After Varimax rotation, factor 1 had loadings > .68 for the affective and intellectual items; factor 2 had loadings > .79 for the behavioral items; factor 3 had loadings > .78 for the evaluation items; and factor 4 had loadings greater than .68 for the sensory items. All other loadings were < .4. Another factor analysis (variance explained: 79%), restricting the number of factors to 5 (thus examining whether the items of the four experience dimensions and the evaluation items would load on different factors), provided a similarly distinct rotated factor pattern that could easily be interpreted as follows: Factor 1 was "behavioral experience" (all loadings > .80); factor 2 was "affective experience" (all loadings > .72); factor 3 was "sensory experience" (all loadings > .68); factor 4 was "overall brand evaluation" (all loadings > .78); and factor 5 was "intellectual experience" (all loadings > .69); all other loadings were < .37. A final factor analysis, restricting the number of factors to 2 (variance explained: 58%), resulted in an overall experience factor (all brand experience item loadings > .65) and a separate brand evaluation factor (all evaluation item loadings > .78); all other loadings were < .2.

Finally, we examined the test-retest reliability of the brand experience scale by correlating the ratings at the two measurement points, separated by two weeks. The test-retest reliability for the overall scale was $r = .77$, ranging from $r = .69$ to $r = .73$ for the dimensions. Given the time frame, participants and environments, the test-retest reliability seems adequate.

Study 5: Divergent Validity of the Brand Experience Scale

Study 5 was conducted to provide additional evidence for the divergent validity of the scale in relation to brand evaluation, and, in particular, key motivational and affective brand constructs. Participants (N = 144) completed the 12-item Brand Experience Scale and four 7-point general brand evaluations items (bad—good; unfavorable—favorable; dislikeable—likeable; disagreeable—agreeable). In addition, participants completed items related to the following motivation and affective scales: Zaichkowsky's (1985) brand involvement (6 items; 7-point scale; unimportant to me—important to me; of no concern to me—of concern to me; irrelevant to me—relevant to me; means nothing to me—means a lot to me; useless to me—useful to me; insignificant to me—significant to me); Thomson, MacInnis and Park's (2005) brand attachment (10 items; 7-point scales; affectionate, loved, peaceful, friendly, attached, bonded, connected, passionate, delighted, captivated) and Oliver, Rust and Varki's (1997) customer delight (10 items; 5-point scale; astonished, surprised, contented, happy, cheerful, pleased, excited, enthused, stimulated, elated). To create variation in brand experience scores, we manipulated "experience strength," asking one third of respondents each to think about a brand that provides a "strong experience," a "moderate experience," or a "weak, or almost no experience" for them. The manipulation was successful: on the composite experience index, participants felt a stronger

experience when asked to report on a "strong" compared to a "moderate" and a "weak"

experiential brand (M = 5.15; M = 3.84, M = 2.95, respectively, all ps < .01)

To prepare the data for further analyses, we reversely coded negatively worded items and

computed composite scores for the four brand experience dimensions (sensory, affective,

intellectual, and behavioral), overall brand evaluation, brand involvement, the three brand

attachment dimensions (affection, connection and passion), and customer delight. (Based on a

factor analysis, we considered Customer Delight to be a one-dimensional scale).

Next, we conducted a factor analysis on the 10 composite brand scales, which revealed a

three factor solution (explaining 75% of the variance). Table 5 shows the factor pattern after

oblique (Promax) rotation. As Table 5 shows, two of the three brand attachment dimensions

(Affection and Passion) as well as Customer Delight had their highest loadings on factor 1; the

third Brand Attachment dimension, Connection, also had a considerable loading on this factor.

We interpreted the factor as "brand feelings." All four experience dimensions (sensory, affective,

intellectual and behavioral) had the strongest loadings on factor 2; importantly, no other scale

loaded strongly on this factor. We interpreted the factor as "brand experience." Finally, Brand

Evaluation, Brand Involvement, and the Brand Connection dimension of Brand Attachment

loaded high on factor 3, interpreted tentatively as "brand relationship." Inter-factor correlations

among the three factors were moderate, ranging from .48 to .54. In sum, brand experience, as

measured by the Brand Experience Scale, seems to be distinct, yet related, to other constructs

such as brand involvement, brand attachment, customer delight, and brand evaluation.

- - - - Insert Table 5 about here - - - -

We also examined a Varimax-rotated three-factor pattern that forces the scales into an

orthogonal structure. Again, brand experience emerged as factor 2, with high loadings, ranging

from .58 to .73, for all experience dimensions on the factor; no other scale had substantial loadings, except a .48 loading of Brand Involvement. However, as in the oblique solution, involvement had a higher loading again on factor 3 (.69), together with Brand Evaluation (.76) and the Brand Connection dimension of Brand Attachment (.63).

Finally, we examined a four-factor solution, explaining 81% of the variance. In both the oblique and orthogonal solutions, we obtained the same factor patterns for the Brand Feelings and Brand Relationship factors. The Brand Experience dimensions, however, now loaded on two separate factors: the affective and behavioral dimensions loaded on one factor (.71 and .83, respectively), and sensory and intellectual dimensions loaded on the other factor (.87 and .61, respectively). These results further attest to the discriminant validity of the Brand Experience Scale from other brand scales.

Conclusion

The 12-item Brand Experience Scale captures in a reliable and stable way four dimensions of brand experience: sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual. The scale is short and easy to administer; it is internally consistent and reliable. Importantly, the Brand Experience Scale is related, yet distinct, from other brand scales. Based on the results of studies 3, 4 and 5, the scale as a whole may also be viewed as indicating the overall degree in which a brand evokes experiences, in the sense of a single higher-order factor. In the next study, we examine how brand experience relates to brand personality, and whether it can predict behavioral outcomes.

USING BRAND EXPERIENCE TO PREDICT CONSUMER BEHAVIOR

In study 6, we focus on two key behavioral outcomes--customer satisfaction and loyalty (Chandrashekaran et al. 2007; Oliver 1993). Based on prior consumer research, we expect that brand experience affects these behavioral outcomes via a direct and indirect route (Chaiken, Liberman, and Eagly 1989; Petty and Cacioppo 1986). If a brand evokes an experience, this alone may lead to satisfaction and loyalty. In addition, an experience may be the basis for more elaborative information processing and inference-making that results in brand related associations (Keller 1993). These associations, in turn, may affect satisfaction and loyalty.

One prior study has examined how experience affects consumer behavior. Chang and Chieng (2006) examined how experiences and brand personality affect brand relationships. However, the study did not use various brands but focused on coffee retail shops in Shanghai and Taipei and included one dimension of brand personality only—namely, excitement.

Hypotheses Development

In the following section, we first discuss the direct effects of brand experience on consumer behavior and then the indirect effects mediated by brand personality.

People seek sensory stimulations (McAllister, Leigh, and Pessemier 1982) and show negative effects under sensory deprivation (Goldberger 1993). They seek pleasure and avoid pain (Freud 1920/1950; Higgins 1997). They need intellectual stimulation to avoid boredom (Cacioppo and Petty 1982). Experiences thus provide value and utility similar to utilitarian attributes (Brakus, Schmitt and Zhang 2008). The notion of experiential value is also inherent in the applied work on experience, especially in the work Pine and Gilmore (1999). Because experience provides value, we expect that the more a brand evokes multiple experience

dimensions and therefore has a higher overall score on the scale, the more satisfied a consumer

will be with the brand.

Moreover, because experiences result from stimulations and lead to pleasurable outcomes,

we expect consumers to want to repeat these experiences. That is, brand experience should not

only affect past-directed satisfaction judgments but also future-directed consumer loyalty.

Consumers should be more likely to buy a brand again and recommend it to others, and less

likely to buy an alternative brand (Mittal and Kamakura 2001; Oliver 1997; Reicheld 1996).

H1: Brand experience affects consumer satisfaction positively.

H2: Brand experience affects consumer loyalty positively.

In addition to these direct effects, brand experience is also likely to result in further

processing and thereby affect satisfaction and loyalty indirectly. One construct—and

measurement scale—that has been discussed extensively as a key inferential-associative concept

is brand personality, which is defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with the

brand" (Aaker 1997). Both brand experiences and judgments of a brand's personality occur in

response to brand contact and include a categorization process; however, the formation and

updating of brand personality is a highly inferential process (Johar, Sengupta and Aaker 2005).

Following Aaker (1997), a brand's personality may be inferred from people associated with the

brand (such as users, company representatives, or endorsers), from product attributes, category

associations, brand name, or communications. One useful input in this inference is likely to be

brand experience. A trait judgment about a brand's sincerity, excitement, competence,

sophistication, or ruggedness can be facilitated when the consumer attends to specific sensory,

affective, intellectual or behavioral experiences. For example, to conclude that Hallmark is

"sincere" (Aaker 1996), a consumer may attend to his or her feelings of happiness, romance, or

nostalgia, or thoughts of holiday activities. Similarly, to conclude that a clothing brand like Levi's is "rugged" (Aaker 1996), a consumer may attend to his or her sensory experiences based on the brand's colors, or thoughts about the "Wild West" origin of the brand, or bodily experiences based on the fit and texture of the jeans. Experiences are thus used as information (Pham 2004). This information, in conjunction with other information, may be combined into a brand personality judgment.

As a result, we expect brand experience to be an antecedent of brand personality. The higher the overall score on the Brand Experience Scale, the more likely the consumer will endow the brand with personality associations. The reverse process -- brand personality preceding brand experience -- is conceptually less plausible; it is not clear how sensory, affective, intellectual, or behavioral experiences could easily result from a summary judgment like brand personality.

H3: Brand experience affects brand personality positively.

Brand personality provides differentiation, increases preference, and enhances trust and loyalty (Biel 1993; Fournier 1998). Moreover, selecting a brand with a certain personality allows consumers to express themselves (Aaker 1999). Thus, brand personality offers value to consumers similar to experiences. Therefore, the more a brand is associated with human characteristics, the more satisfied and loyal a consumer will be.

H4: Brand personality affects consumer satisfaction positively.

H5: Brand personality affects consumer loyalty positively.

Finally, it has been shown that consumer satisfaction affects loyalty. When a consumer feels good about the relationship and appreciates the product or brand, then high level of commitment and loyalty result (Anderson and Sullivan 1993; Mittal and Kamakura 2001; Oliver 1997). Therefore, we expect

H6:   Consumer satisfaction affects consumer loyalty positively

Procedure

A total of 209 students participated in study 6 for a compensation of $5. Each participant rated to

what extent the items described their experiences with the brands listed; the personality of the

brands listed; and their satisfaction and loyalty towards the brands.

The Brand Experience Scale included the 12-items scale used previously in studies 3, 4

and 5. To measure brand personality, we included a version of the scale that consisted of the 15

brand personality items representative of the five brand personality dimensions: "down-to-earth,"

"honest," "wholesome," "cheerful," (for sincerity); "daring," "spirited,"; "imaginative," "up-to-

date" (for excitement); "reliable," "intelligent," "successful," (for competence); "upper class,"

and "charming" (for sophistication); "outdoorsy," and "tough" (for ruggedness) (Aaker 1997, p.

352). Items were measured on a seven-point Likert scale (1 = "not at all descriptive, 7 =

"extremely descriptive"); the instructions provided were based on Aaker (1997).

Consumer satisfaction was measured using five items proposed by Oliver (1980): "I am

satisfied with the brand and its performance," "if I could do it again, I would buy a brand

different from that brand" (negative item, reverse-coded), "my choice to get this brand has been

a wise one," "I feel bad about my decision to get this brand" (negative item, reverse-coded), and

"I am not happy of what I did with this brand" (negative item, reverse-coded). Each seven-point

Likert scale was anchored by 1 = "strongly disagree" and 7 = "strongly agree."

Finally, to measure consumer loyalty, five standard loyalty items were adopted from You

and Donthu (2001): "In the future, I will be loyal to this brand," "I will buy this brand again,"

"this brand will be my first choice in the future," "I will not buy other brands if this brand is

available at the store," and "I will recommend this brand to others." Again, items were measured

on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 7 = "strongly agree."

Participants rated a set of 12 brands for six categories: Apple and Dell (computers); Fiji

and Poland Spring (water); J. Crew and Liz Clairborne (clothing); Puma and New Balance

(sneakers); Volkswagen and Saturn (cars); and New York Times and USA Today (newspapers).

Each participant evaluated two categories and both brands within that category. The order of

presentation of the category and the order of brands within each category was counterbalanced.

Results and Discussion

Before we estimated the structural equation model based on our conceptual model, we examined

the discriminant validity of the brand experience scale from the brand personality scale. Given

the large sample size, we were able to conduct an exploratory factor on the entire set of original

items--the twelve items of the Brand Experience Scale and the 15 items of the short version of

the Brand Personality Scale that addressed the five dimension of brand personality (sincerity,

excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness). The exploratory factor analysis

revealed five factors with eigenvalues > 1, but the scree plot exhibited a significant dip between

the fourth and the fifth factor. The first four factors explained 62% of the variance. After

Varimax rotation, a clean factor structure emerged (see Table 6). In general, brand experience

and brand personality exhibited high levels of discriminant validity: the respective items loaded

on separate factors. Factor 3 was the only factor that included both personality and brand

experience items, namely, behavioral experience and ruggedness items.

- - - - Insert Table 6 about here - - - -

We also conducted a factor analysis on the composite scores of each brand- experience and brand-personality dimension, which further confirmed the discriminant validity of the scales. Two factors had eigenvalues > 1; after Varimax rotation the experience dimensions and the personality dimensions loaded separately on the two factors; however, on the three-factor solution the behavioral experience dimension and ruggedness formed their own factor.

Figure 2 shows the estimated structural equation model. To estimate the proposed model given the number of observations, we used composite measures of the four brand experience and the five brand personality dimensions to reduce the number of parameters. Internal consistencies of the composite measures were satisfactory (Cronbach's alphas: for the sensory dimension = .77, for the affective dimension = .74, for the intellectual dimension = .79, for the behavioral dimension = .72, for sincerity = .85, for excitement = .88, for competence = .86, for sophistication = .72, and for ruggedness = .71).

- - - - Insert Figure 2 about here - - - -

The estimated model fits the data reasonably well; *GFI* = .86, *CFI* = .91, and *RMSEA* = .08, with $\chi^2(146) = 793.9$, $p < .001$ (ratio between chi-square and the number of degrees of freedom = 5.4). All path coefficients in the model are significant (*p*s < .05). As predicted, experience affects satisfaction and loyalty both directly and indirectly through brand personality. The direct and indirect effects of brand experience on loyalty are roughly equal: the total direct effect on loyalty (through satisfaction) is .33 (.24 + .15 * .59), and the total indirect effect is .36 (.69 * .67 * .59 + .69 * .13), resulting in a total effect of .69. The total effect of brand personality on loyalty is .53 (.13 + .67 * .59), and thus higher than the total direct effect of experience on loyalty. Interestingly, there are differential effects of brand experience and brand personality on satisfaction and loyalty: the direct effect of experience on loyalty (.24) is higher than the direct

effect of experience on satisfaction (.15); however, the direct effect of brand personality on loyalty (.13) is lower than the direct effect of brand personality on satisfaction (.67). Thus, brand experience seems to be a stronger predictor of actual buying behavior than brand personality, which, in turn, better predicts satisfaction. This result may relate to the very nature of experience: if a brand stimulates the senses, makes the consumer feels good, engages the mind and body, then a stimulation-seeking organism may strive to receive such stimulation again. Or the private nature of experiences may make them less malleable and less subject to situational influences than the more social and self-expressive brand personalities (Aaker 1999).

In addition to the proposed model, we tested an alternative model that considered that brand experience and personality may affect consumer behavior independently. In this model, we therefore did not include the path linking brand experience to brand personality. The alternative model had a worse fit: *GFI* = .84, *CFI* = .88, and *RMSEA* = .096, with $\chi^2(146) = 1,186$. The difference in chi-square values between the two models was 392.1, *p* < .001.

GENERAL DISCUSSION

Brand experiences arise in a wide variety of settings when consumers search for, shop for and consume brands. Accordingly, we conceptualized brand experience as subjective consumer responses that are evoked by specific brand-related experiential attributes in such settings. We demonstrated that brand experience can be broken down into four dimensions (sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral), which are differentially evoked by various brands.

The Brand Experience Scale that we constructed is short and easy to administer, consisting of only 12 items. Psychometrically, the scale is internally consistent and consistent across samples and studies. The scale also successfully passed various reliability and validity

tests including test-retest reliability and criterion validity. Most importantly, the Brand Experience Scale displays discriminant validity from some of the most widely used branding measures and scales including brand evaluations, brand involvement, brand attachment, customer delight and brand personality. Finally, brand experience has behavioral impact; it affects consumer satisfaction and loyalty directly and indirectly through brand personality.

The scale will not only be useful in academic research but also in marketing practice. As marketers engage in projects to understand and improve the experience that their brands provide for their customers, they can use the scale for assessment, planning and tracking purposes.

We encourage further research on the Brand Experience Scale. The scale currently does not measure whether an experience is positive or negative. As we have conceptualized and shown empirically, having experiences in and of themselves seem to have value and result in positive outcomes. Future research, however, should explore positively worded and negatively worded versions of the scale and investigate how positive and negative experiences affect consumer behavior. There seem to be two ways to create valenced versions of the scale. One way is to reword the scale items slightly by including the words "positive" or "negative"--for example, "this brand makes a strong positive/negative impression on my visual sense or other senses," "this brand induces positive/negative feelings and sentiments," "this brand results in positive/negative bodily experiences," or "I engage in a lot of positive/negative thinking when I encounter this brand." Another way is to add a phrase and a bipolar response scale after each scale item—for example, " …and this results in an experience that is: (1) very positive -- (7) very negative." Future research should determine which method will be more reliable and valid.

Future research should also examine whether the scale will be able to predict specific behavioral outcomes. Based on our theorizing, we would expect the sensory dimension to predict

future design and aesthetics perceptions and usages; the affective experience to predict emotional judgments; the intellectual dimension to predict creative usages of the brand; and the behavioral experience to predict specific actions and physiological reactions when interacting with a brand.

Besides research on the scale, we encourage research on the experience concept as such. For example, many experiences, especially in service businesses (e.g., restaurants, spas, airline flights), extend over time. Research has shown that the pattern of extended experiences (e.g., increasing or decreasing in intensity) can affect how experiences are evaluated (Ariely 1998; Ariely and Zauberman 2003). Such research has used the term "experience" generically to refer to responses within a certain timeframe. Based on the studies reported here, it will be worthwhile exploring which patterns occur for which experience dimensions. Moreover, in the present research we assessed experiences retrospectively; we did not directly assess a consumer's dynamic experience with a brand. Future research should investigate whether retrospective experiences are different from dynamic experiences, both structurally (that is, in the type of dimensions that are most commonly involved) and in terms of content (that is, regarding the specific sensations, feelings, cognitions, and behaviors that are involved).

Finally, future research should focus on the antecedents and long-term consequences of brand experiences. For example, regarding antecedents, how exactly are brand experience dimensions evoked by brand-related stimuli? Also, while we have shown the impact of brand experience, both directly and indirectly, on short-term consequences such as satisfaction and loyalty, the question arises whether brand experiences affect customer lifetime value (Rust, Zeithaml and Lemon 2000; Vogel, Verena, Heiner Evanschitzky, and B. Ramaseshan, in print). That is, can brand experiences build customer equity, and how do marketers need to manage brands to create experiences that build such equity?

TABLE 1

DESCRIPTIONS OF EXPERIENTIAL BRANDS

Abercrombie and Fitch
- It's a complete experience when you enter the store
- Stimulates me; sexy.
- It's like a membership in an exclusive, country-clubish community.

American Express
- It's an interactive experience
- Part of luxury, sophistication, exclusivity
- Because of sponsoring activities, I feel fun, excitement and entertainment

Apple/iPod
- I love the touch and feel of the products
- I enjoy playing with all the products
- I am part of a "smarter" community
- This brand intrigues me.
- I really feel Apple products go with my way of life
- I use the iPod when I am jogging and I exercise more because of the iPod

Body Shop
- Appeals to different senses
- I think of topics like animal testing, purity and wellness
- I want to be with people that share the values that the brand promotes

BMW
- I feel young; I feel stylish
- It's just great to drive
- A BMW is the symbol of my success

Crest
- I feel refreshed
- Don't really like the smell
- Feels clean, fresh and healthy

Disney
- Stimulates my senses
- I feel like a child; I feel warm and safe; I want to discover things; the brand reminds me to use my imagination.
- I feel part of the magic

Google
- The search is elegant; it creates a mood of playfulness and curiosity
- I feel happy and proud because I am "smart" and "in-the-know"
- With Google, I changes the way I organize and interact with information

HBO
- Puts me in a good mood
- It's "discussion inducing"; I want to discuss the shows with others.
- I enjoy the entertainment

Home Depot

- I did not know anything about construction, but I felt really comfortable.
- I felt confident and in good hands.
- Provides the experience that any customer can tackle any home improvement project.

MasterCard

- Makes me think about precious things in life
- I feel more youthful than using AmEx or Visa
- Initially the Priceless campaign was emotive, but it's now simply a way of identifying the brand for me.

Nike

- Makes me think of how to live an active lifestyle
- Makes me feel powerful
- I want to work out
- I feel inspired to start working out
- I feel like an athlete
- The store incites me to act, like swing the baseball bat, or put on the running shoes
- I enjoy designing my own shoe that perfectly fits my personality.

Starbucks

- Smells nice and is visually warm
- It's comfortable and puts me in a better mood
- It's like being around a Barnes and Nobles crowd

Target

- Shopping experience is very pleasant
- Products are displayed to please the eye
- Many stores are putting in Starbucks for an even more enhanced shopping experience.

W Hotel

- Being part of something fun, happening and exciting
- It was an amazing feeling to hang out in the lobby
- Service is disappointing

Washington Mutual

- I have positive feelings because of their friendliness
- It's a place I want to go and do not have to go
- I also had a negative one-time experience

Williams Sonoma

- I had a feeling of nostalgia
- Full of memories of home
- It's relaxed and unhurried

TABLE 2
STUDY 3: EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS –
REVEALED BRAND EXPERIENCE DIMENSIONS

Item	Factor		
	sensory/affective	behavioral	intellectual
This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	**.75**	.34	.19
I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.	**.63**	.47	.15
This brand does not appeal to my senses.*	**.59**	.35	.22
This brand induces feelings and sentiments.	**.82**	.13	.27
I do not have strong emotions for this brand.*	**.72**	.12	.38
This brand is an emotional brand.	**.75**	.13	.17
I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand.	.18	**.80**	.22
This brand results in bodily experiences.	.33	**.77**	-.03
This brand is not action oriented. *	.13	**.72**	.27
I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.	.39	.12	**.76**
This brand does not make me think. *	.26	.11	**.80**
This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.	.15	.24	**.75**

Note: Factor analysis uses Varimax rotation. Bold values indicate the factor on which each item predominantly loads. Items marked with an * are negatively phrased and reverse-coded.

TABLE 3
STUDY 3: MEANS BY BRAND FOR
OVERALL EXPERIENCE AND EXPERIENCE DIMENSIONS

BRAND	GROUP	OVERALL EXPERIENCE	SENSORY	AFFECTIVE	INTELLECTUAL	BEHAVIORAL
Lego	3	5.34***	5.34**	5.24	5.60***	5.19*
Victoria's Secret	1	5.28**	5.78***	5.67**	4.18	5.51**
iPod	5	5.15**	5.70**	5.03	4.63**	5.24**
Starbucks	2	4.95*	5.55**	5.27*	4.35*	4.62
Disney	6	4.90	5.72***	5.78***	4.26	3.84
Puma	1	4.72	5.26*	4.63	3.50	5.51**
Viagra	4	4.70	4.70	4.82	3.85	5.35**
Ferrari	6	4.64	5.79***	4.75	3.36	4.67
Toys 'R' Us	6	4.64	5.25*	5.16	3.62	4.52
Gatorade	4	4.56	4.85	4.33	3.55	5.52**
Hallmark	1	4.47	4.71	5.47**	4.39**	3.33
Ben & Jerry's	3	4.42	5.13*	4.42	3.56	4.58
Harley Davidson	4	4.41	4.66	4.38	3.66	4.97
Adidas	5	4.33	4.46	4.02	3.14	5.68***
Nokia	1	4.26	4.63	3.71	4.14	4.56
Hershey's	5	4.17	4.90	4.75	3.22	3.80
Sudoku	6	4.07	4.03	3.31	5.27***	3.65
Blackberry	2	3.92	3.92	3.80	4.00	3.86
Samsung	3	3.86	4.32	3.32	3.87	3.91
L'Oreal	3	3.85	4.40	3.75	3.26	3.88
Gilette	3	3.74	4.14	3.46	2.87	4.49
Tropicana	5	3.63	4.42	3.76	2.95	3.39
Clinique	2	3.62	4.17	3.53	3.18	3.62
American Express	4	3.60	3.67	3.67	3.94	3.12
Prada	2	3.58	3.90	4.26	3.46	2.69
Motorola	5	3.52	3.57	3.20	3.56	3.73
Dannon	1	3.51	4.07	3.76	2.97	3.23
Calvin Klein	6	3.39	4.25	3.75	2.68	2.89
Crate & Barrel	4	3.27	3.55	3.31	3.35	2.91
LaPrairie	2	2.97	2.99	3.01	2.80	3.08
OVERALL		4.18	4.60	4.25	3.71	4.17

***Unique; ** Highly Differentiated; *Moderately Differentiated; all *p*s < .10

TABLE 4
STUDY 3: CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS MODEL FIT COMPARISONS

Model	Chi-square	*df*	Chi-square difference[b]
Null	5079.50	66	. . .
1-factor	1043.50	54	4036, $p < .001$
3-factor	527.90	51	515.60, $p < .001$
1-factor higher order (3 sub-dimensions)	1497.16	48	969.26, $p < .001$
"Nested"[a]	1209.89	48	287.27, $p < .001$
4-factor	278.61	48	931.28, $p < .001$
1-factor higher order (4 sub-dimensions)	278.61	44	0

	GFI	*CFI*	*RMSEA*
1-factor higher order (4 sub-dimensions)	.92	.91	.09
4-factor	.92	.91	.08

Note: *df* is degrees of freedom, *GFI* is Goodness-of-Fit index, *CFI* is Comparative Fit Index, *RMSEA* is Root Mean Square Error of Approximation. [a]See the text for details on this model. [b]Chi-square differences represent comparisons of subsequent models (e.g., null vs. 1-factor, 1-factor vs. 3-factor etc.).

TABLE 5
STUDY 5: EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (PROMAX ROTATION), BRAND EXPERIENCE DIMENSIONS AND OTHER BRAND SCALES

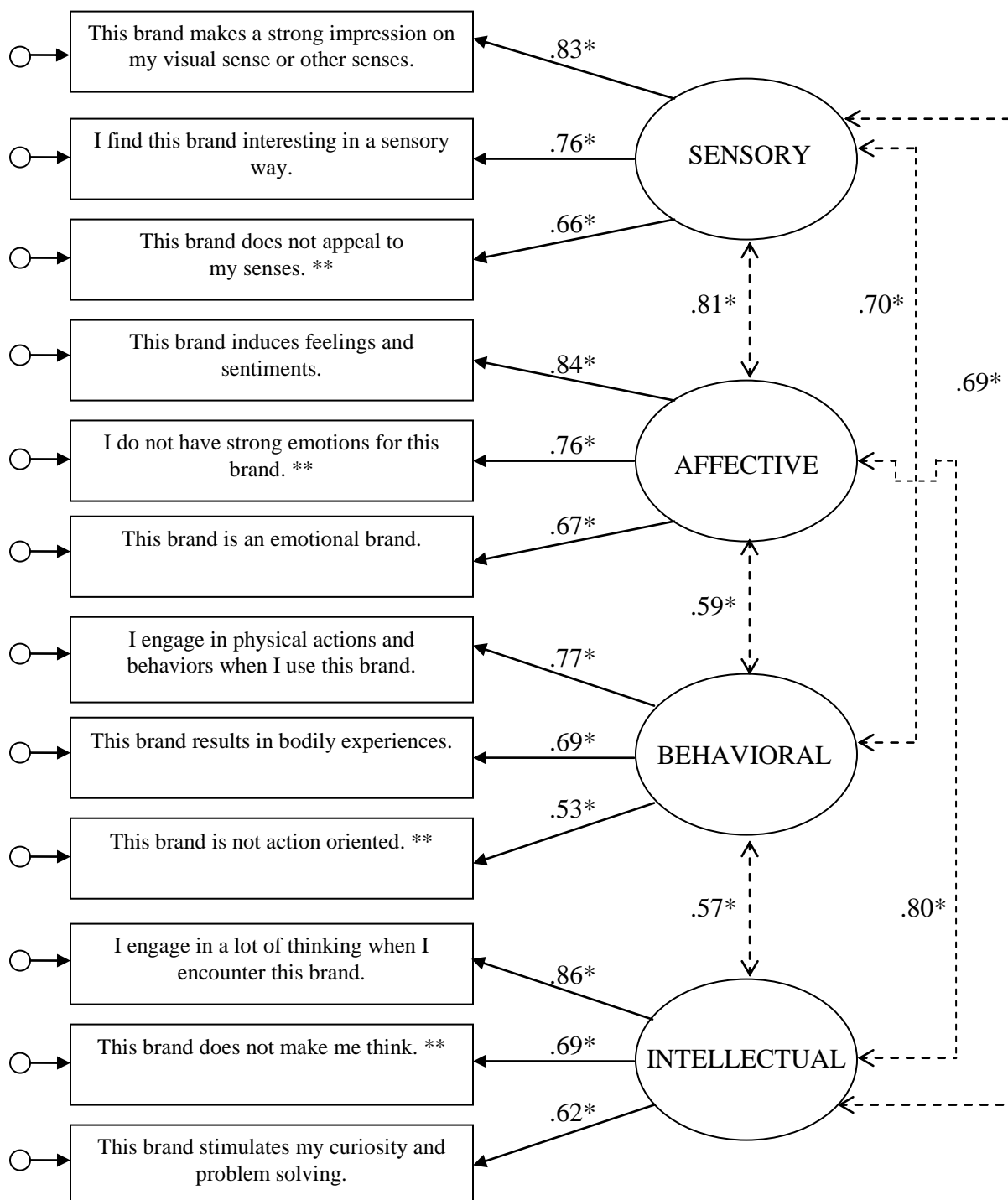|	Factor		
	1	2	3
Sensory Experience	.07	**.75**	.01
Affective Experience	.21	**.48**	.32
Intellectual Experience	.26	**.82**	-.13
Behavioral Experience	-.23	**.58**	.54
Overall Brand Evaluation	.19	.14	**.81**
Brand Involvement	-.05	.33	**.68**
Affection	**.55**	.00	.45
Connection	..44	-.02	**.58**
Passion	**.73**	.23	.05
Customer Delight	**..88**	.02	.00

Note: Standardized regression coefficients. Bold values indicate the factor on which each item predominantly loads.

TABLE 6
STUDY 6: EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS (VARIMAX ROTATION) WITH BRAND
PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS AND BRAND EXPERIENCE DIMENSIONS

|	Factor			
	1	2	3	4
Sensory1	.36	**.67**	.25	.17
Sensory2	.25	**.60**	.41	.15
Sensory3	.22	**.62**	.13	.07
Affective1	.23	**.71**	.20	.15
Affective2	.08	**.73**	.12	.05
Affective3	.15	**.58**	.32	.08
Behavioral1	.03	.28	**.73**	.09
Behavioral2	-.01	.22	**.78**	.11
Behavioral3	.11	.27	**.47**	-.03
Intellectual1	.25	**.78**	.08	.08
Intellectual2	.15	**.74**	-.13	-.09
Intellectual3	.27	**.72**	.11	.05
Sincerity1	.03	.07	.14	**.86**
Sincerity2	.34	.17	.06	**.79**
Sincerity3	.16	.04	.16	**.86**
Sincerity4	.45	.08	.33	**.50**
Excitment1	**.69**	.25	.41	-.06
Excitment2	**.68**	.25	.40	.09
Excitment3	**.63**	.29	.29	.07
Excitment4	**.80**	.26	.05	.05
Competence1	**.63**	.15	.06	.42
Competence2	**.77**	.31	-.05	.27
Competence3	**.77**	.24	-.05	.22
Sophistication1	**.69**	.19	.07	.08
Sophistication2	**.57**	.21	.36	.26
Ruggedness1	.15	-.12	**.66**	.32
Ruggedness2	.33	.06	**.55**	.10

Note: Bold values indicate the factor on which each item predominantly loads.

FIGURE 1:
STUDY 2: CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS – THE FOUR FACTOR MODEL

This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.

I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.

This brand does not appeal to my senses. **

This brand induces feelings and sentiments.

I do not have strong emotions for this brand. **

This brand is an emotional brand.

I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand.

This brand results in bodily experiences.

This brand is not action oriented. **

I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.

This brand does not make me think. **

This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.

SENSORY

AFFECTIVE

BEHAVIORAL

INTELLECTUAL

.83*
.76*
.66*
.84*
.76*
.67*
.77*
.69*
.53*
.86*
.69*
.62*

.81*
.59*
.57*

.70*
.69*
.80*

Note: *GFI* = .92, *CFI* = .91, *RMSEA* = .08, χ^2 (48) = 278.61, *p* < .001
All coefficient values are standardized and appear above the associated path. Dotted lines represent correlations.
**= reverse-coded. * *p* < .01

FIGURE 2:
STUDY 6: DISCRIMINANT AND PREDICTIVE VALIDITY OF THE BRAND
EXPERIENCE SCALE
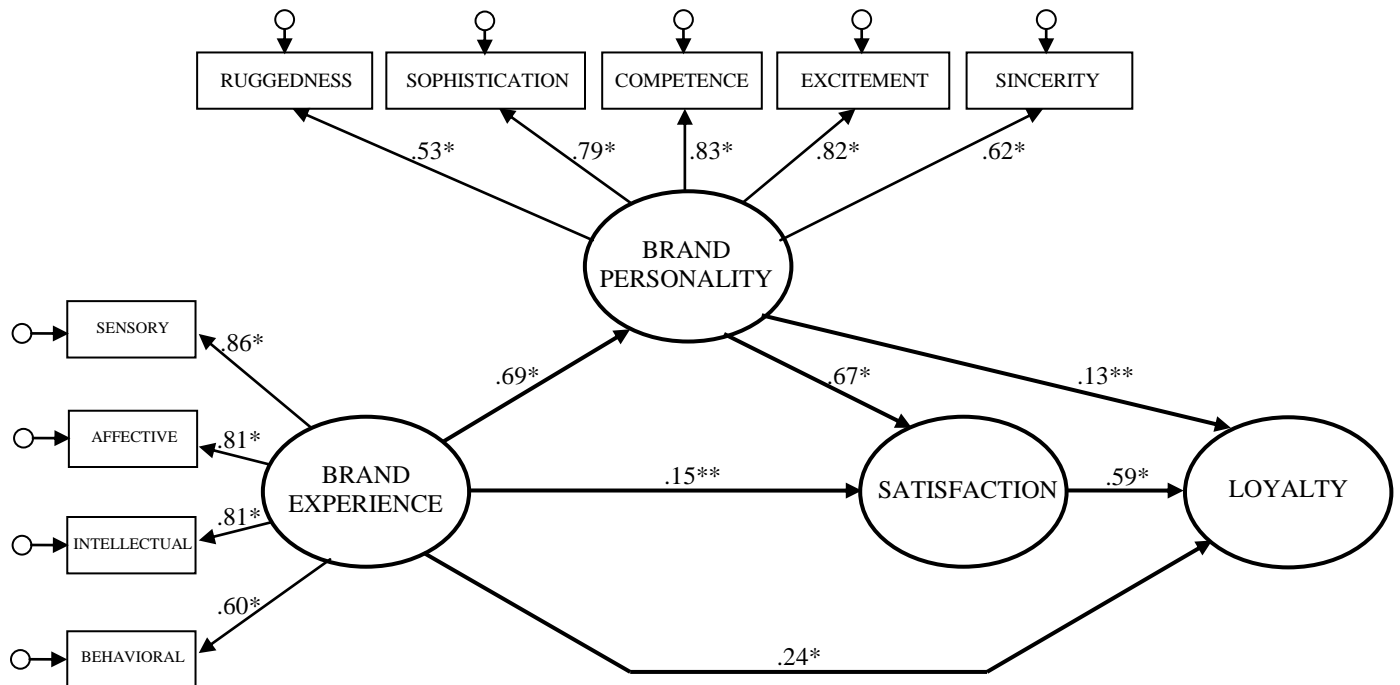
Note: *GFI* = .86, *CFI* = .91, *RMSEA* = .08, $\chi^2(146)$ = 793.9, *p* < .001 All coefficient values are standardized and appear near the associated path. *p* < .01. ** *p* < .05.

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