

AN ANALYSIS OF THE INFLUENCE OF SEX APPEAL ON ADVERTISING: ALBANIA CASE

Ana Kekezi

PhD candidate, European University of Tirana, Marketing
and Communication Consultant, Tirana, Albania
ana.kekezi@gmail.com

Drita Kruja 

Professor, European University of Tirana, Tirana, Albania
dkruja@yahoo.com

Abstract

The scope of this research is to analyse the impact of sex appeal in advertising in brand equity in the context of the industry of mode, as there is identified a gap of studies in Albania country on this issue. On the other hand on the retail clothing industry is reported to have an increasing impact on economy and growth of sales, and most important heavily impacting the culture of the Albanian consumer behaviour. If we refer to literature, it is recognized that brand equity is a key factor for companies to segment their products and gain edge over competitors. Companies need to rely on ads to reach their customer. What is not very clear is whether the use of sexual appeal in advertising increases brand equity (maximizing competitive advantage / potential earnings), since the literature for this subject is roughly divided into opinions, therefore the research will aim to analyse and explore the Albanian consumer perception on 4 fashion companies (3 well-known international brands and 1 well-known local brand). The author analyses the impact of sex appeal in advertising relying on the primary data combining qualitative (focus groups) and quantitative (questionnaires) data. On the basis of the findings, the study suggests that companies operating in developing countries, which aim to build strong brand should aim the emotional content in their ads. The sexual appeal might drive consumers to brand loyalty and it is relevant in advertising to a fashion label's brand equity. No clear evidence on link of brand and gender preference was found.

Keywords: Sexual appeal, Advertising, Brand equity, Fashion industry, Albanian consumer

INTRODUCTION

Researchers have analysed and explored whether or not a brand, as distinct from its product, can really provide additional benefit to consumers such that the product's competitive edge is improved (Sharp, 1991; pp.12).

The analysis in this research will connect the main subject to some of the main theories by conducting a marketing search in 4 fashion industry companies 3 well-known international companies and 1 local company. The companies selected for the purpose of this analysis are: Well known international companies: Dolce & Gabbana, Diesel, Bershka; Well-known local company: Krienko Jeans.

Each of these companies is identified that uses sex appeal as element in their advertisement to promote their products (clothing) - although we will notice that each has a very unique style of appealing the Albanian customer for each of these companies.

American Marketing Association (2004) defines marketing research as the function that links the consumer, customer, and public to the marketer through information. Combining appropriate theories and models underwent a marketing search by collecting primary (qualitative and quantitative) data by using focus groups and businesses and secondary data from business data and academic information. All of this data will be analysed in the research to identify potential trends if any. The conclusions will relate to the objective of research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the feverish competition it has in the market, brand, as a name, applies to the identification of the product and the company from the customer. Nowadays brand has an impeccable role in the market to distinguish one product from another. Companies trying to promote their products are also aiming to increase brand awareness. Only by the name of a product, the brand's significance has increased considerably in decades. Brand equity was complemented by market orientation towards the brand extensions. It makes it worth the assets of a company (Tauber, 1988). In 1998, Tauber defined brand equity from a financial perspective. He suggested that if a company is to enter new categories and extend there should be two approaches: 1) to launch the name of the new category and 2) to extend the original brand. It was Aaker (1991) that originally described the five dimensions of brand equity: - brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and intellectual properties. This structure is influential on the ways the companies apply the marketing and branding strategy. Offering this model, Aaker provided a solid foundation for later research. In 1993, Keller gave the definition of brand equity from the standpoint of individual consumers and it is believed that the customer will respond to all the marketing activities of a brand. The brand-based capital base of the brand has three

important concepts in the definition: differential effect, brand knowledge and response to marketing. A brand is said to have positive (negative) customer-based brand equity if consumers react more (less) favourably to the product, price, promotion, or brand delivery than they do with the same marketing element when it is attributed to a fictitiously named or unidentified version of the product or service (Keller, 1993).

Aaker (1991) also underlined the five dimensions of brand recognition - loyalty to the brand, name recognition, perceived quality, brand and intellectual property association. This structure is very influential in how today companies around the world make marketing and brand strategies. This structure brought about a lasting foundation in later research. In 1993, Keller defined the brand equity from the individual point of view of the buyer and believed that the buyer responds to brand marketing activities. Buyer-branded brand equity has three important concepts: differentiated effect, brand recognition, and marketing response. A brand is said to have capital's positives if consumers react more (little) in favour of product, price, promotion, or brand distribution and they do with the same mix marketing element when it is attributed to a name fictitious or unidentified version of the product or service (Keller, 1993).

Michell (2001) tested the impact of brand value on industrial products. He concluded that the benefits of a strong brand equity is that "industrial brand products generate more confidence in the buying decision, increase corporate reputation, offer more competitive edge, and can increase competitive access barriers."

From the literature and previous criticisms in the study, researchers gave the definition of brand equity from different perspectives. Whether from a financial point of view or from a customer-base perspective, it can be seen that brand equity has been absolutely one of the core of competitive industry advantages and is an important metric for measuring the long-term impact of marketing decisions (Simon and Sullivan, 2001). American Marketing Association on defining the brand equity suggest that consumers believe that a product with a well-known name is better than products with a lower reputation by name.

The use of sexual appeals in advertising is widely studied in literature. According to Severn, Belch & Belch (1990), the use of sexual stimuli as a motivational appeal to advertisements relates to the visual invasion of a commercial message (e.g. attractive models and nakedness), copies (articulated) as part of the message, or a combination of both. Sexual appeals are defined by Reichert, Heckler and Jackson (2001) as messages where brand information in context with ads that are related to sexual information.

There are many controversial opinions about the impact of sexual appeals in advertising. Sexual appeals, when used in advertisements grab attention, inductive, unforgettable, and somewhat more prone to increase interest in this subject (Severn et al., 1990; Yoon, Bolls &

Lang, 1999), cited in Reichert & Lambiase (2003), has similar results that the advertisement contains such materials generating more positive attitudes towards them and causing better brand memory. On the other hand, Reichert et al. (2001) indicated that sexual appeals may increase advertising attention, but not necessarily for the product or brand information.

In mass media often are used sexual images and coated models to sell products. In men it was found that exposure to the ideal muscular parts on TV leads to low muscle satisfaction, especially in people with a high orientation towards the sight. (Barlett, Vowels & Saucier, 2008; Sengupta and Dahl, 2008), cited in Dahl, Sengupta and Vohs (2009), had different findings showing that men prefer an advertisement where a sexual image is displayed against a non-sexual commercial advertisement, while women's positions on advertising explicitly sex issues are worse than non-sexual advertising. Dahl et al. (2009) have shown that the spontaneous dislike of women's sex ads is softened when advertising can be interpreted regarding resource engagement related to what men offer to women. By contrast, men's positive attitudes towards sexual advertising were relatively untouched by the lazy engagement in relationships. Lanseng (2016) suggest that when sex appeal is related to the advertised brand, attitudes are less positive for women when they are influenced by a commitment context and he recommends that advertisers should be cautious when targeting female audiences with sexual content.

The exact impact of the sexual appeal in advertisement on brand equity has not been thoroughly investigated, without any persuasive evidence to support a positive or negative effect. Our study will aim to further investigate this issue and attempt to fill the void present.

QUESTIONS AND SUB QUESTIONS

As (Malhorta & Birks, 2003: 43) suggest after concluding the literature review, the next step is to generate the problem further, and as a consequence show the particular components of that problem. As a summary of the aforementioned literature, brand equity (Aaker, 1991) can play a key role in creating the competitive advantages of a brand. He also emphasized the importance of advertising in order to reach consumers - also known as low customer involvement (Elliot & Percy, 2007) to help influence on their purchase. However, the literature on the impact of sex appealing appeals in advertising is less convincing, with different thoughts - for example, some believe that its impact differs from gender (Dahl et al, 2009; Lanseng, 2016), religious beliefs (Boddeyen & Kunz, 1991), and sexual appeal or not in advertising would affect consumer buying behaviour at all (Mitchell 1986). From this it was possible to identify a possible hole in the existing literature to form the broad research question

The Research Question

The analysis will be "A Study on the Impact of Sexual Appeal on Advertising on Brand Capital, Fashion Industry", where the "fashion industry" will be determined by studying the marketing campaigns of four clothing brands as follows:

D & G

Diesel

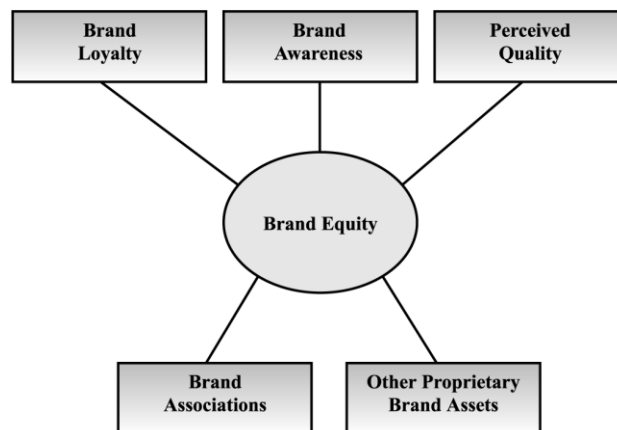
Krienko Jeans

Bershka

Sub questions of research

Aaker (1991) defined brand equity in five major sub-sections, and these would form the basis of the sub-questions required in order to answer the above broad question. The sub-questions will try to assess how the use of sexual appeals in fashion advertising affects the following elements of brand equity (see figure 1)

Figure 1: The 5 dimensions of Brand Equity



Source: Aaker (1991)

THE THEORIES & MODELS

Considering of the above questions, a number of the theories have been studied in order to leverage the proposed marketing research, such as, assisting in defining the appropriate questions to ask for in the proposed questionnaire. Theories include: segmentation in consumer markets, the definition of three broad categories (Behaviour, Psychology and Profiles), and Semiotics theory which is also important for this study as it is through advertising and a "communicates" brand with its group, consumer segments. (Refer to Annex A)

We have seen in two different models and marketing mix with brand equity. The two conceptual models overlap in many areas and both models contain all the essential elements of brand equity. Regarding the purpose of this research, it is considered that the Aaker model (1991) may be an important guide to examining the role of sexual appeals in relation to any dimension of brand equity.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses preliminary and final research types (Malhorta & Birks, 2003: 63). Due to the nature of the subject, it is important to get information on consumer behaviour and attitudes to sexual appeals in advertising through prior research, such as focus groups. The finalized questionnaires will help reinforce the findings of the preliminary design. Following the approaches of Malhorta & Birks (2003), the main data used in this study will include focus groups (qualitative study) and questionnaires (quantitative study). Secondary data will include Books, Textbooks related to Mark's Capital and Brand Management and academic and business articles from literature (all information possible to be accessed is provided in the literature). For academic and facility purposes of the researcher the primary data run on European University of Tirana facilities. The tools applied will have a well-defined scope on the research to help identify the answer of this scientific research.

Focus Groups

For identified companies: Krienko Jeans, Diesel, Bershka, Dolce & Gabbana, we will identify the impact of sexual appeals on the following elements of brand equity (Aaker, 1991:17):

- a) Brand Loyalty: Customer Standards to continue buying brands by applying different degrees of sexual appeals in advertising.
- b) Brand recognition: Knowing fashion brands that include the most sexual appeals from the target audience (top of mind). Supported unsupported
- c) Perceived Quality: Identifying the Impact of Sexual Appeal in: Reason for Purchase, Position, Price Pricing (Perceived Quality Model Value - Aaker, 1991: 86)
- d) Mark Association: Identifying the Impact of Sexual Appeal on: Information obtained, positioning, and the creation of positive attitudes/ feelings (Mark Association Value-Aaker, 1991: 111)
- e) Other brand ownership assets: symbols, slogans, ideas, etc.

Target group

In this study the psychological and demographic fragmentation (segmentation) will be applied (Baines, & Page, 2008: 235). The study will analyse customer responses to fashion brands

about the objectives outlined in the focus group. Recruitment based on the target segment for each brand (see Annex C)

The study is focused on customers of four brands: D & G, Diesel, Bershka and Krienko Jeans. Each group is based on four participants, forming a mini-group (Malhorta & Birks, 2003: 169) because the nature of the subject needs a wide-ranging discussion of questions that may be difficult to maintain in a regular 8-12 member group.

Group	Gender	Age	Others
Group 1	Male	18-25	Students/young professionals– Clients
Group 2	Female	18-25	Students/young professionals– Clients
Group 3	Male	18-25	Students/young professionals– Non-Clients
Group 4	Female	18-25	Students/young professionals– Non-Clients

Psychological Criteria

Lifestyle: Trendy & hip, fashion consciousness

Interests and Hobbies

Location - Place

Questionnaire

Designing a questionnaire

For the purpose of creating a questionnaire, for the purpose of reviewing the above mentioned literature, theories and models have been considered. Given the consumer demand model (Baines, Fill & Pag, 2008: 224), it can be concluded that consumer demographics play a very important part in consumer behaviour and may be a (variable) variable when trying to measure people's attitude to sexual appeal in advertising. For this purpose, it was important to gain demographic data from consumers, such as gender, age group, ethnical origin, and education

The models examined in this paper emphasize the importance of brand equity (Aaker, 1991. After identifying four major fashion brands in Albania (H & M, Bershka, Dolce & Gabbana, Diesel), a series of questions were identified to test loyalty the consumer in a particular brand as well as the consumer's request to identify their favourite brand from the given list, the perceived quality, and why they buy their favourite brand (for example, to significantly improve the image of since this analysis is about advertising, Semiotics theory has also been proposed to test and understand consumer attitudes to advertising (Pierce quoted in Baines, Fill & Page, 2008: 775) and to supplement the literature existing in which the inclusion of consumption (Elliot & Percy,

2007), through advertisements was measured (for example, by measuring their attitude to sample advertising and related to the positive and / or negative impact).

Finally, existing literature on the measurement of sexual appeals in advertising had to consider: gender differences (Dahl et al, 2009), religious beliefs (Boddewyn & Kunz, 1991), and regardless of whether or not these criteria are true, consumers believe, sexual appeals in advertising will affect their behaviour in buying (Mitchell 1986).

Combining knowledge gained through the literature review, relevant theories and models, the full questionnaire listed was created, which sought to quantitatively measure the attitude of people to sexual appeals in advertising using the Likert scale, according to the above criteria.

Marketing questionnaire

Before the respondents responded to the questionnaire, it was first important to identify the appropriate population monster in this questionnaire. This was identified as people within the range of <25-35 years of age for a young student / young person in a population of >3000, corresponding to the European University of Tirana student population. From this, it was possible to identify a sample size of 320 customers needed to answer our questionnaire, which is approximately 10% of the total student population, as a rule we take for granted (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970).

In order to attract respondents to fill the questionnaire the two main methods are used:

a) Manual questionnaires: manually created (in Microsoft Word), it was possible to target students around UET areas based on their age and whether they used either non-specific marketplace. b) Online Questionnaires: By creating a questionnaire using a free web-based tool (www.group-surveys.com) and promoting the URL questionnaire using social networking sites such as Facebook, it was easy to identify the respondents possible by age, and therefore target them to respond to the questionnaire. (June 2018, UET's Facebook page has about 50,000 followers and Instagram page about 6000 followers) The reason why these two different methods were chosen was to overcome some of the known obstacles to observation (Kruja, D. 2010).

a) Probable Samples vs. Non-Probable Samples: By selecting a probability sample (made by manual questionnaires), the questionnaire was able to gain advantages over probability sampling, of course, the information came from a representative group; and that sample error can be calculated and that the results are projected to the total population b) Including Internet sampling as a questionnaire collection technique: Some of the advantages associated with using the Internet include: Respondent targets can complement the questionnaire according to their facilities, cost savings, and time effectiveness. However, to

reduce the shortcomings associated with sampling from the Online Questionnaire associated with the Internet sample and non-probabilistic sample (i.e., Internet users are not representative of the general population), social networks like Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn where it was possible to target respondents based on demographic, age requirements, to keep the questionnaire centred and to gain priority over probability sampling.

Data collection

How the ways applied to the questionnaire were made by hand and the internet, there were 2 (two) methods of data collection: Manually collecting questionnaires filled in on paper; Online by downloading CSV files of questionnaire results. After all the results were collected, these data were coded using SPSS, which applied 3 types of analysis (Kruja, D. 2010):

Secondary data academic

These data are mentioned in the literature review.

Data Analysis Approach

- a) Hypothesis - The hypothesis was decided to find out whether there was any difference between men and women in emotional responses
- b) Analysis - For the analysis of descriptive data, changes and associative analysis is used and detailed analysis which is presented.

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Focus Groups

The main results related to focus groups are classified according to the search objectives:

Brand Loyalty

Group- Dolce & Gabbana customers, both female and male, had really enjoyed sex appeal in advertising, suggesting using sex bodies and beautiful and appealing people. This group found a high consistency in the brand's relationship to the all-naked images shown. After exposing another type of commercial with no sexual appeals, they thought it was ordinary and boring. Therefore, with this study we can conclude that there is a high correlation between sexual appeals and brand loyalty in a sense that only D & G can be at such a high level sexual appeals. However, a part of the group identified that was more important than the content of the ad was the style of clothing and how they feel comfortable when wearing this brand. This group turned out to be able to tolerate a certain level of sexual appeals if this part did not obscure the

product. When we compare with another ad where we do not have a sexual appeals application, this group thought these ads were more focused on clothes and style.

In contrast to the above, female customers think that D & G ads are worrying and hate naked bodies by considering it as a bad element applied to the sale of clothes. If they compare it to an ad where sex appeal is not applied, the advertisement is perceived and welcomed in a significant way by this group

As a consequence, for those who were not D & G customers - male and female - the element: sexual appeal was not a constructive element for the brand as much as other elements such as style or type of fabric

Brand awareness

The four groups agreed that D & G has the sex appeal brand at the highest applied and attractive levels due to the high erotic content in the ads. There was no consensus about the other brands, although all types are thought in the study that provides a high level of sexual content application.

Perceived quality

In all the 4 groups it was evidenced that there is no direct correlation between the sexual appeal and the quality of the dress. However, it turned out that it does not matter whether there is a sex appeal or not, there seems to be a direct correlation between advertising and price. As a result, the more expensive ads perceived, the more expensive the clothes could be. But again we can say that no clear correlation between quality and artistic application was identified. As a consequence, when viewing a non-branded ad, if the advertisement seemed expensive, its production level was of maximum parameters, and people might think that it's not a cheap outfit, and they were not 100% convinced if it was a high quality. If the ads attracted the attention of the people and they did not know which brand they belonged they did not respond to the quality element if they did not go to the store to try it. But if they saw the association mark it was direct (refer to Annex D)

Brand associations

Male and non-consumer consumers of the 4 companies chosen for this study seemed to enjoy more "surrealist" advertising than female consumers and non-consumers. For the male group, surrealist content combined with sexual appeal turned into a unique and very pleasing proposition, for example, Bershka ads and on a smaller scale than Diesel's ads. All participants could identify a D & G advertisement even if there is no brand on this ad, due to direct

association with the applied sexual element. Similarly, there is a consensus about recognizing Bershka's clothing lines, even if there was no brand in the ad.

Krienko Jeans was known only by their customer group - male and female. Because of being a local brand, not bombarding their customers with advertising, its unique style and variety of its clothes, it was not easy to tie it to any particular type of clothing.

Although Diesel was associated with their jeans, their ads were confusing. Referring to other brands of clothing and the relationship was not so strong with the style of clothing.

Other assets of brand equity

The study reveals that the more consistent the message given by the ads, the more consensus is taken about brand perception (by asking people "What is the first thing that comes to mind when mentioning a brand special?").

The most direct example is Bershka which is clearly identified by all brands from simply "jeans". In the case of D & G, not only the sexual appeal was related to the brand, but also an overall casual understanding and sporty outfit. Diesel was well-known by all questioning as an expensive and quality brand, the most expensive of all this study. Finally, Krienko Jeans was recognized by the entire public as an inexpensive brand, street fashion, easy to find and buy.

Analysis of data from questionnaire

Independent Sample T test

A T-test independent sample was performed by comparing the emotional aspects associated with the sexual content in advertising, the behaviour of the buyer, and the characteristics associated with the preference of other demographic factors for women of both men and women. Levi's test of Equilibrium showed that the same variation did not make any major difference in the male vs. female emotions, when we had sexual content in the ad.

Some substantive value for purchases is less than .05 (refer to Annex D) and we say that there is a big difference in the shopping of male and female sex gender. In T-test we see that the same variance scans fundamental differences between the two groups.

Frequency distribution

From descriptive analysis, we see that in our sample we have 55% male and 45% female respondents. Most ethnicities are from the north and are followed by those from the south. Most populations are under 25 and most respond to DNP levels. Krienko Jeans is the most favourite being Dolce & Gabbana, but noting that sex sharing is almost the same with these 2 brands. Most respondents spend 25-50 Euros, and shop around 1 hour in 3 months.

Examining the emotional aspect that when the advertisement had the mark over the emotional aspect was more positive than when it was struggling and the second largest group seems beyond indifferent to this fact. The bigger group has replied that the brand is important for improving their image and increasing confidence but this was not related to sexual appeals. Most have responded that advertising has given a positive feel to the brand and for their surprise they do not violate their religious beliefs or the cultural part. There was no evidence that these ads did not allow them to buy clothing from their favourite market. Perceived quality was generally good or above the average (Refer to Annex D)

One Way ANOVA Test

Age

We have a variation in the age and favourite mark.

Positive and negative feelings vary in the age group but in the case of two cases we have a value of less than 0.05

Ethnicity (cities)

Choose a different mark according to different attributes.

The significance value of the groups is less than .05 in all cases.

Education

Variable was not identified as significant.

Yearly income (family incomes or personal incomes)

There are many important variables when dealing with the purchase of goods that are not needed or the amount that is not due to the impact of having ads.

(Refer to Annex F)

The Power of Association

Based on the matrix of the Power of Association between variables we can cumulate: Very weak link between sex and brand preference. Very weak links between ethnicity and religious / cultural contradiction because of the explicit content in the ads. Very weak links between religion and cultural opposition with positive / negative feelings. A weak link between brand and gender preference, very weak link between brand preference and quality perception and very weak link between preference and importance of brand name. Very poor connection between the income and the average amount spent on shopping for the time. Very poor connection

between quality perception and brand preference, very poor connection between quality perception and the amount spent on purchases, very weak links between quality perception and brand relevance. The poor relationship between data feelings and social image growth. the poor connection between the information about the feelings of attraction and the importance of the brand name the poor connection between giving emotional feelings and self-image enhancement. Moderate relationship between social image enhancement and image enhancement poor connection between the expansion of social image and unnecessary purchases. Very poor connection between unnecessary purchase and expansion of social image points, very poor connection between unnecessary purchase and the importance of brand name

LIMITATIONS AND FURTHER RESEARCH

The study is limited in Tirana County even though it has considered the demographic analyses, taken in account the regions where respondents were born and lived up to 18 years old. The study aimed analysing mainly millennials with main focus of age 18 – 25, given the target consumer of the four companies where the study was focused. The population was restricted on European University of Tirana campus. The study is limited in clothing industry only, while sexual appeal is a characteristic that may be easily identified in advertisement in Albania in other industries.

Literature recommends that it is the primary objective of the advertising to carry out the communications between the brand and the customer. Given this, the authors recommend that further researches of what styles of advertising conscience impacts brand equity in Albania. Also the authors call other scholars and academics to study deeper on the elements that impact the advertising (beyond brand equity) and further studies to understand if advertising impact differs from demographic characteristics of the Albanian consumer. Further researches on the suggested areas will help firstly the marketers and secondly other academics on a better understanding how advertising influences not only brand but also the Albanian consumers.

CONCLUSION

As researchers suggest if advertising aim to build strong brand relationships, it needs to incorporate high levels of emotional content, and this emotional content will be most effective if less attention is paid to it (Heath, R. et al 2006, p. 417). This study produced mixed results when the authors tried to measure the impact of sexual appeals on fashion industry ads (TV ads, video ads on social networks and poster/city lights ads). The quantitative questionnaire showed that there was no significant emotional difference between female and male consumers due to

the explicit content of these branded ads that they choose. There was an association between the two: the importance of brand name and positive feelings for image enhancement and self-confidence by wearing their favourite brand. There was no persuasive evidence that consumers bought unnecessary clothing because of the explicit content on these ads, although women frequented stores much more frequently than the questioned counterparts.

The qualitative study gave more insight into what suggests that a style of advertising conscience (such as sexual appeal) creates a certain sense of brand loyalty and knowing the name, as Dolce & Gabbana knew only from advertising. The most definitive result from focus groups was a sudden revelation because while the use of sexual appeals in advertising seemed relatively fruitless to strengthen brand equity, the use of "artistic" or "surrealistic" advertising images (as demonstrated by Diesel) , definitely had an impact on the perceived use of clothing quality, and therefore automatically and for its association.

Even though in Albania population is divided in three main religions Muslims, Christians and Orthodox and people in different regions have various cultural beliefs, there was not a found in this study a proper correlation of religion with sexual appeal in advertising

This study opposes the findings of the research of Lanseg (2016) who found that women, but not men, were more negative toward an ad featuring an attractive opposite-sex model when their commitment thoughts were heightened. Albanian women consumers were also more negative toward an ad with an attractive same-sex model in the presence of commitment thoughts, but only when they scored high on sociosexuality. Albanian men consumer appeared unaffected, regardless of their level of sociosexuality.

This study concludes that sex appeal is relevant in advertising to a fashion label's brand equity. However, this sex appeal needs to be carefully controlled to create a unique sense of identity, which will help produce brand loyalty and brand awareness, and more definitively, if used in a creative or artistic sense, rather than simply sexually charged for the sake of it, will have a positive impact on perceived quality, and brand associations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To the extent of the authors' knowledge, in the developing countries, such as Albania is, there is no relevant literature or academic research to propose how elements deployed in the advertising (such as sexual appeal) may affect the brand equity and the local consumer. It is important to emphasize that this study is limited in clothing industry. The implications and findings in this study for impact of sexual appeal advertising to a fashion label's brand equity, may not reveal as same if in other industries will be studied.

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ANNEXURE

Annex A- The Theories

Segmentation in Consumer Markets

This theory suggests that instead of applying segmentation of products (and defining an appropriate advertising strategy and possibly the level of sexual appetite that a company should include in its advertising), market information should be gathered on "key consumers, product, or situation- related criteria (variables), "(Baines, Page, 2008: 223). Customer Criteria can be defined in three broad categories (Baines, Fill & Page, 2008: 224).

The behaviour

This category is related to the following segmentation criteria:

- **Purchase / Transaction:** This gives customers insight into the buying trends and provides valuable data to isolate "lucrative customer segments" (Baines, 2008 p. 224).
- **Product Usage:** This is about the use of a product as a frequency.
- **Media Use:** Understanding a customer's lifestyle provides insight into how companies can reach a consumer

Psychological

This category is related to the following segmentation criteria:

- **Psychographic (lifestyle):** By understanding the lifestyle of consumers (seen as an interest), this can give a company a means of understanding consumer behaviour that will lead to the reflection of such factors in the process of decision-making.

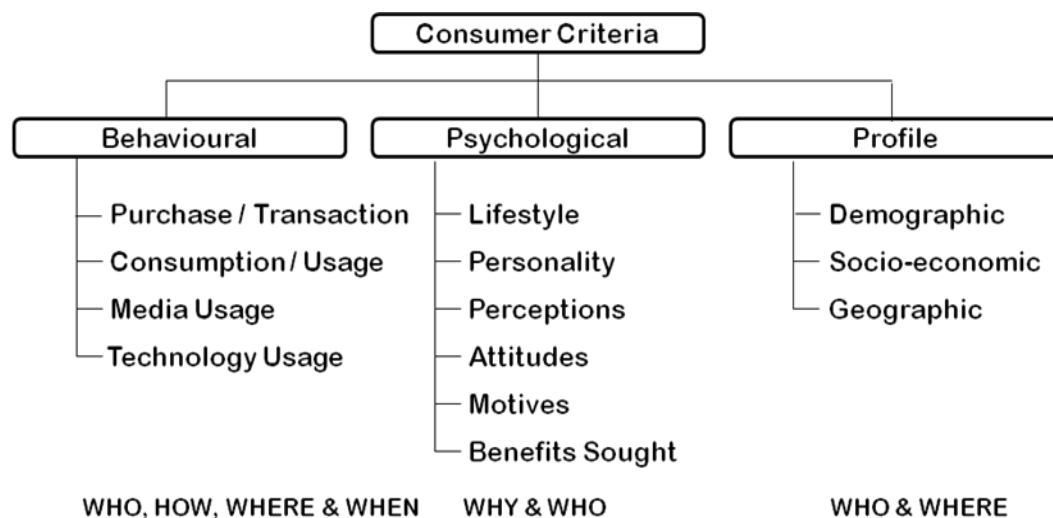
• **Benefits Required:** This helps to better understand what benefits where a consumer applies for a particular product.

Profile

This category is related to the following segmentation criteria:

- **Demographic:** by collecting key variables for a consumer such as: their revenue features, helping a company determine the ability of potential buyers to buy a product.
- **Stages of Life:** this revolves around the fact that consumers need different products at different stages of their lives.
- **Geographic:** Here it is understood that consumer needs are different across different areas of Albania due to such factors as climate or tradition.
- **Geodemographic:** this takes a link between habitat and location and consumer behaviour on purchases.

The figure below illustrates how these three categories link together and a summary of their value:



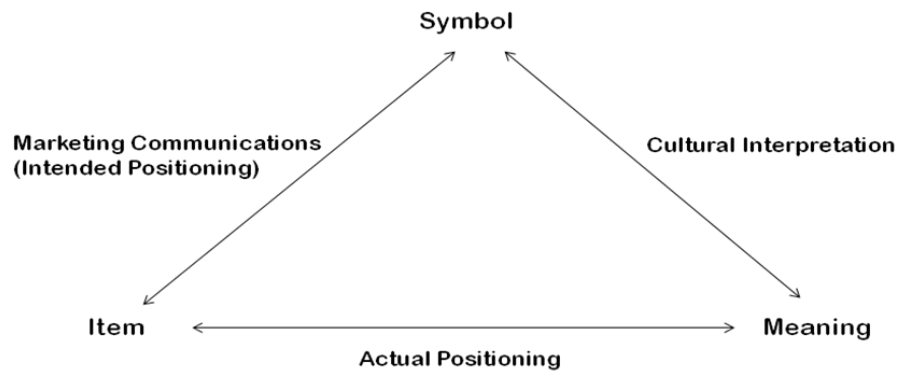
Source : P. Baines, C. Fill, K. Page; Marketing; 2008; p223

Semiotics

The semiotics theory is crucial in this study because the brand "communicates" through the consumer groups of the consumer. Semiotics is about mark analysis, such as the particular style of advertising that a company applies. According to a famous Swiss lingo Ferdinand de Saussure a sign is a relationship between:

- Significant / distinctive (i.e. dress from Dolce & Gabbana).
- Distinctive e.g. (e.g. well-known and well-known images selected by American models).

Pierce (cited d in Baines, Page, 2008: 775) continued to explore further that the sign processes are part of three-way process. This is illustrated in the following diagram:



Source : P. Baines, C. Fill, K. Page; Marketing; 2008; p776

The considered example is Dolce & Gabbana, the product of which is the dress. By creating symbols (such as her very small American body-worn clothing), she may aim, for example, to create an understanding culture that by purchasing Dolce & Gabbana clothes, the customer has joined a part of a demographic elite of sympathetic models.

Ads that convey these kinds of meanings can be considered as texts - that is, a mechanism applied by a company to convey a certain meaning about its products - and helps us understand how advertisers want the audience to see their product. By decoding these signs through the techniques mentioned below in market research, we can better understand a positioning strategy for advertisers, and to understand if this strategy really helps lead to a competitive edge to the company.

Annex B - Models

These five points build the brand equity and more importantly they make a stronger brand. Having positive brand equity creates positive values for both: the customer and the company. Higher Brand Capital means that consumers have a very positive and strong brand association, and perceive the brand as of high quality, are loyal to the brand. Capital Mark may affect the consumer's self-confidence in the purchase decision, this is not something the company can do or sell to the consumer.

Any sub-category of brand equity in Aaker cannot individually perform, they are key elements of brand equity, and having positive brand equity will lead the company to a very lucrative path that is the convertible advantage

A study (You, Donthu, and Lee 2000) suggests that "Any branding effort will be positively linked to brand equity when it conveys likelihood to a key product rather than an equivalent not branded product.

The results of the study suggest that mixed marketing can play a decisive role in building capital brand. They defined two types of brand equity activities: a) brand building and (b) activities that damage the brand. According to this analysis, (Yoo, Donthu, and Lee 2000) the frequent use of price promotion is the activity for brand damages. High advertising and distribution costs through image vendors with good storage image examples of building brand activity.

The Keller model suggests a model for brand equity in consumer and consumer (Keller, 2003). (CBBE) focuses on elements that may be included in the capital of the brand. In addition, it is an approach to identify ways to build a strong brand. The CBBE model tries to measure the degree of brand positioning in the eyes of customers and also accepts how it can be improved in order to be as strong as possible. According to the model, the following 4 steps provide a strong brand (Keller, 2003):

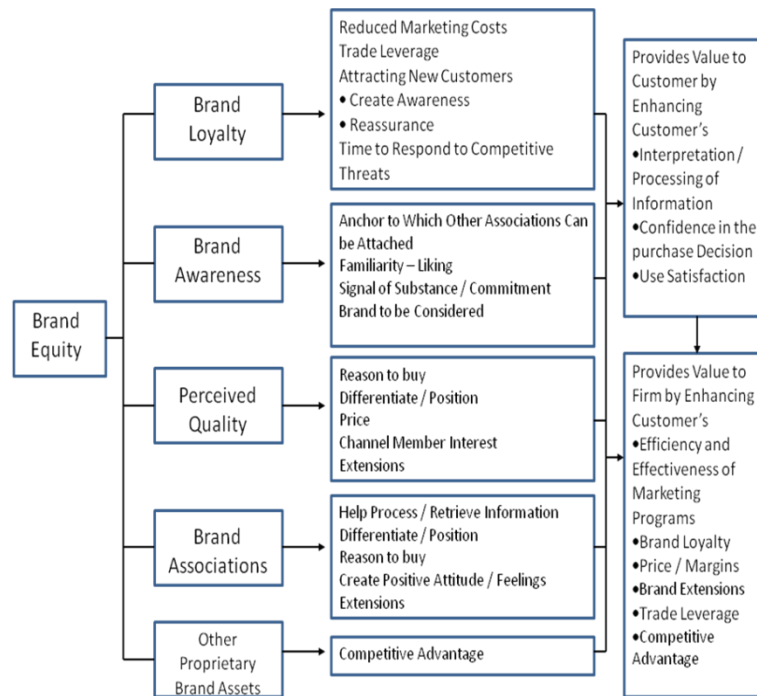
- 1- Brand identity
- 2- Brand meaning
- 3- Brand response
- 4- Relationship

The brand recognition to the customer provides the brand identity stage. The distinction is related to customer recognition that is determined by the depth and breadth. Depth determines the degree of easy recognition of the brand, and the width recognizes the purchase rates. The bigger the depth and breadth of a brand, the stronger the brand's appearance

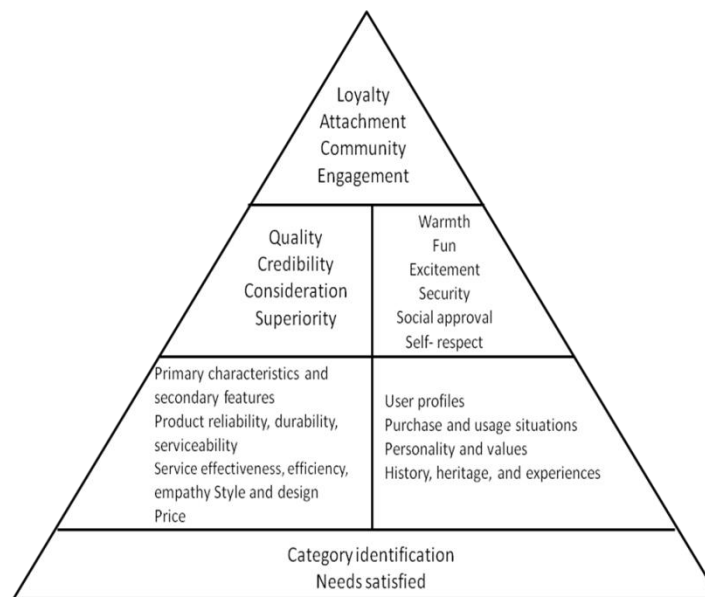
Branded images and brand performance give the meaning of the brand in the mind of the customer. As long as the mark can distinguish between the combinations of its attributes it can achieve a higher meaning. In addition, images can meet and influence the consumer in relation to social and psychological aspects (Keller, 2003). Consumer feelings and consumer judgments focus on customer emotions and their ratings as a response to the brand. If consumers have positive feelings and brand thinking when they experience thinking about it, there may be a very strong position

Forms of resonance psychological relationship between client and brand. At this stage, the customer has a strong brand affiliation not only in the purchase but also beyond. The client follows the brand and associates it with having strong ongoing connections. In fact, the degree of customer loyalty is experienced at exactly that level.

Aaker, CCBE, Keller Models

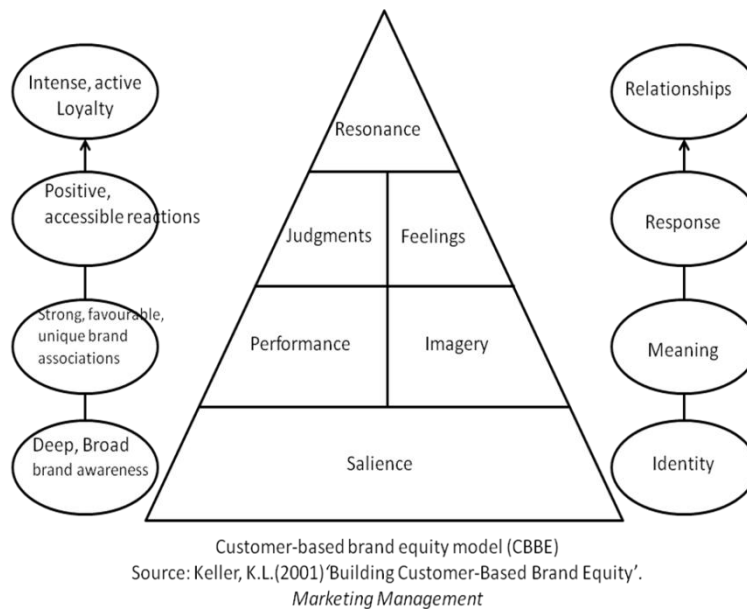


David A. Aaker, "Brand Equity Model", Managing Brand Equity, New York : Free Press, 1991



Sub-dimensions of brand—building blocks

Source: Keller, K.L.(2001)'Building Customer-Based Brand Equity'. *Marketing Management*



Annex C - Materials of Focus Groups

Promotion

Dolce & Gabbana worldwide promote their brand through their website, television advertisements and social media, while in Albania not being present in the market officially consumer faces their ads mainly online and social networks. Dolce & Gabbana leads to massive promotion of the brand. They are infamously known for their controversial advertisements that always manage to catch the attention of the viewers. They make use of gender stereotypes to sell their products and even objectify women/men in many of their advertisements.

Customer expectations have evolved and they expect content to be bespoke and tailored to their own needs. Dolce & Gabbana is in the lead, followed by Armani, in addressing customers according to gender/title, (ContactLab showed_.

Dolce & Gabbana – segmentation of the target

Youth and Millennials looking for luxury is what Dolce Gabanna is aiming. (Nowfashion, 2017; Wall Street Journal, 2018)

<https://nowfashion.com/dolce-gabbana-the-dawning-of-the-age-of-millennial-20882>

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/dolce-gabbanas-quest-for-youth-1526652257>

Krienko Jeans- segmentation of the target

'Krienko is one of the biggest local clothing retailers in the country. It focuses mainly on casual sport focusing on jeans clothing. We target youth, young millennials born after 1995, who wants to dress with design at low and affordable price (Krienko, Product Manager, 2018, personal communication)

Bershka's – segmentation of the target

"Bershka's public is characterized by adventurous young people, who are aware of the latest trends and are interested in music, social networks and new technologies" (Bershka, 2018)

Inditex suggest that the age target of their brand Bershka is 15-25 years old (Inditex, 2016)

Retrieved May, 2018 from

<https://www.inditex.com/documents/10279/199088/Group+Profile+October+2016.pdf/f8825f6b-4409-4a82-b76a-9aa06f3f353f>

Diesel segmentation of the target

'Diesel S.p.A., known as Diesel, based in Italy with primary target 18 – 35 years old.' (Crocandco, 2010)

'Trendy' people; interested on the latest fashion, which hugs the cultural modern life (Griffiths, 1996).

Annex D - Analyses of Data: Independent Sample T test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Importance of Brand Name	Equal variances assumed	.011	.917	.021	318	.983	.003	.129	-.251	.257
	Equal variances not assumed			.021	308.665	.983	.003	.129	-.251	.256
Cultural-religious contradiction	Equal variances assumed	2.947	.087	-2.644	318	.009	-.326	.123	-.569	-.083
	Equal variances not assumed			-2.659	312.903	.008	-.326	.123	-.567	-.085
Entity (regions)	Equal variances assumed	1.200	.274	-.640	318	.522	-.097	.152	-.396	.201

Education	Equal variances not assumed			-.642	309.294	.522	-.097	.151	-.395	.201
	Equal variances assumed	.092	.762	.373	318	.709	.035	.093	-.148	.218
	Equal variances not assumed			.376	314.020	.707	.035	.092	-.147	.216
Does it attract you?	Equal variances assumed	1.053	.306	-3.250	318	.001	-.324	.100	-.521	-.128
	Equal variances not assumed			-3.290	316.935	.001	-.324	.099	-.518	-.130
	Equal variances assumed	.043	.836	-.104	318	.917	-.012	.117	-.243	.218
Social image	Equal variances not assumed			-.105	313.450	.917	-.012	.116	-.241	.217
	Equal variances assumed	.091	.763	-1.290	318	.198	-.152	.118	-.383	.080
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.289	306.390	.198	-.152	.118	-.383	.080
Improving self- image	Equal variances assumed	1.609	.206	2.120	318	.035	.226	.107	.016	.436
	Equal variances not assumed			2.130	311.842	.034	.226	.106	.017	.436
	Equal variances assumed	.001	.971	-1.087	318	.278	-.136	.125	-.381	.110
Positive/ negative feelings	Equal variances not assumed			-1.090	310.246	.277	-.136	.124	-.380	.109
	Equal variances assumed									
	Equal variances not assumed									
No need clothes to buy	Equal variances assumed									
	Equal variances not assumed									
	Equal variances assumed									

Annual incomes	Equal variances assumed	.527	.468	-.474	318	.636	-.060	.126	-.306	.187
	Equal variances not assumed			-.476	311.847	.634	-.060	.125	-.305	.186
Spending amount	Equal variances assumed	.974	.324	.566	318	.572	.083	.146	-.205	.370
	Equal variances not assumed			.569	313.494	.570	.083	.145	-.203	.368
Quality perception	Equal variances assumed	.599	.440	2.329	318	.020	.173	.074	.027	.319
	Equal variances not assumed			2.342	312.708	.020	.173	.074	.028	.318
Frequency on shopping	Equal variances assumed	6.882	.009	2.272	318	.024	.284	.125	.038	.530
	Equal variances not assumed			2.247	291.069	.025	.284	.126	.035	.533
Preferences on brands	Equal variances assumed	.387	.534	4.990	318	.000	.630	.126	.382	.879
	Equal variances not assumed			4.972	302.441	.000	.630	.127	.381	.880
Age	Equal variances assumed	.006	.938	-.671	318	.503	-.065	.097	-.257	.126
	Equal variances not assumed			-.671	306.51	.503	-.065	.098	-.257	.126

Group Statistics

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Importance of Brand Name	Male	175	2.92	1.157	.087
	female	145	2.92	1.140	.095
Cultural-religious contradiction	Male	175	2.34	1.128	.085
	female	145	2.67	1.061	.088
Entity (regions)	Male	175	2.50	1.364	.103
	female	145	2.60	1.335	.111
Education	Male	175	1.77	.856	.065
	female	145	1.73	.793	.066
Does it attract you?	Male	175	3.23	.939	.071
	female	145	3.56	.824	.068
Social image	Male	175	3.13	1.075	.081
	female	145	3.14	1.004	.083
Improving self-image	Male	175	3.20	1.045	.079
	female	145	3.35	1.051	.087
Positive/negative feelings	Male	175	3.41	.971	.073
	female	145	3.18	.925	.077
No need clothes to buy	Male	175	2.19	1.126	.085
	female	145	2.32	1.092	.091
Annual incomes	Male	175	2.15	1.142	.086
	female	145	2.21	1.088	.090
Spending amount	Male	175	2.83	1.339	.101
	female	145	2.75	1.250	.104
Quality perception	Male	175	2.90	.679	.051
	female	145	2.72	.640	.053
Frequency on shopping	Male	175	2.96	1.052	.080
	female	145	2.68	1.184	.098
Preferences on brands	Male	175	2.75	1.105	.084
	female	145	2.12	1.148	.095
Age	Male	175	1.58	.866	.065
	female	145	1.65	.870	.072

Annex E – Data Analysis

Independent Samples Test

Gender

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	175	54.7	54.7	54.7
	Female	145	45.3	45.3	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Annual incomes

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Less than 2000 e	114	35.6	35.6	35.6
	2.1k-3.9k e	95	29.7	29.7	65.3
	4k-5.9k e	50	15.6	15.6	80.9
	Over 6k e	61	19.1	19.1	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Entity (regions in Albania)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	South	114	35.6	35.6	35.6
	Centre Albania	13	4.1	4.1	39.7
	North Albania	138	43.1	43.1	82.8
	South-East	14	4.4	4.4	87.2
	Others	41	12.8	12.8	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Under 25	195	60.9	60.9	60.9
25-29	65	20.3	20.3	81.3
30-34	49	15.3	15.3	96.6
Over 35	11	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Cultural – Religious Contradiction

Quantity Percent

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Low	5	1.6	1.6	1.6
Medium	90	28.1	28.1	29.7
Good	183	57.2	57.2	86.9
Excellent	42	13.1	13.1	100.0
Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Annex F - Analyses of the Questionnaire: One way ANOVA test

Descriptive

Cultural – Religious Contradiction

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Totally disagree	79	24.7	24.7	24.7
Disagree	71	22.2	22.2	46.9
Indifferent	115	35.9	35.9	82.8
Agree	44	13.8	13.8	96.6
Totally agree	11	3.4	3.4	100.0
Total	320	100.0	100.0	

Age / Emotions positive/negative

Amount that spent

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	25 euro and above	55	17.2	17.2	17.2
	25-50 euro	100	31.3	31.3	48.4
	50-75 euro	63	19.7	19.7	68.1
	75-100 euro	59	18.4	18.4	86.6
	Over 100 euro	43	13.4	13.4	100.0
	Total	320	100.0	100.0	

					95% Confidence Interval for Mean			
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Minimum	Maximum
Totally disagree	11	1.36	.809	.244	.82	1.91	1	3
Disagree	50	1.32	.621	.088	1.14	1.50	1	4
Indifferent	119	1.58	.849	.078	1.43	1.73	1	4
Agree	111	1.78	.899	.085	1.61	1.95	1	4
Totally agree	29	1.69	1.072	.199	1.28	2.10	1	4
Total	320	1.61	.867	.048	1.52	1.71	1	4

ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.515	4	2.129	2.897	.022
Within Groups	231.435	315	.735		
Total	239.950	319			

Age / Emotions positive/negative

Descriptive

Age /Importance of Brand name

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Totally disagree	47	1.32	.663	.097	1.12	1.51	1	3
Disagree	65	1.46	.831	.103	1.26	1.67	1	4
Indifferent	93	1.68	.796	.083	1.51	1.84	1	4
Agree	97	1.76	1.008	.102	1.56	1.97	1	4
Totally agree	18	1.78	.808	.191	1.38	2.18	1	3
Total	320	1.61	.867	.048	1.52	1.71	1	4

ANOVA

Age /Importance of Brand name

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	8.603	4	2.151	2.929	.021
Within Groups	231.347	315	.734		
Total	239.950	319			

Descriptive

Entity (cities) / Religion

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Totally disagree	79	1.96	1.363	.153	1.66	2.27	1	5
Disagree	71	2.58	1.359	.161	2.26	2.90	1	5
Indifferent	115	2.64	1.230	.115	2.42	2.87	1	5
Agree	44	3.00	1.276	.192	2.61	3.39	1	5
Totally agree	11	3.73	1.104	.333	2.99	4.47	2	5
Total	320	2.55	1.350	.075	2.40	2.70	1	5

ANOVA

Entity(cities) / Religion

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	52.522	4	13.131	7.822	.000
Within Groups	528.774	315	1.679		
Total	581.297	319			

Descriptive

Etnia (regions)/unneeded clothes to buy

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Totally disagree	103	2.35	1.487	.146	2.06	2.64	1	5
Disagree	90	2.56	1.273	.134	2.29	2.82	1	5
Indifferent	79	2.91	1.370	.154	2.60	3.22	1	5
Agree	40	2.43	.903	.143	2.14	2.71	1	4
Totally agree	8	2.00	1.512	.535	.74	3.26	1	5
Total	320	2.55	1.350	.075	2.40	2.70	1	5

ANOVA

Entity/ Unneeded clothes to buy

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	17.502	4	4.376	2.445	.047
Within Groups	563.794	315	1.790		
Total	581.297	319			

Descriptive

Annual Incomes / Unneeded clothes to buy

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Totally disagree	103	2.06	1.110	.109	1.84	2.28	1	4
Disagree	90	2.19	1.069	.113	1.96	2.41	1	4
Indifferent	79	2.48	1.207	.136	2.21	2.75	1	4
Agree	40	2.00	1.013	.160	1.68	2.32	1	4
Totally agree	8	1.63	.744	.263	1.00	2.25	1	3
Total	320	2.18	1.116	.062	2.06	2.30	1	4

Annual Income

ANOVA

Annual Incomes / Unneeded clothes to buy

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	12.452	4	3.113	2.547	.039
Within Groups	385.036	315	1.222		
Total	397.488	319			