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## COMPARISON OF IMAGE PERCEPTION OF BRAND PERSONALITY OF PERFUME PRODUCTS BETWEEN TWO AGE-GROUPS

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to study brand image of perfume products from perception of Generation X and Generation Y consumers in Chiang Mai, and compare difference in perfume brand image perception between Generation X and Generation Y consumers. This study also studies relationship between perfume brand image perception and relationship level consumers have with brand. The sample group used in this research is 200 buyers of designated perfume brands, 100 are in Generation X (Extraordinary Generation) and 100 are in Generation Y (Generation Why). Tool used in primary data collection is a questionnaire. Analysis of relationship between perfume brand image perception and relationship level consumers have with brand is done by deductive statistics, such as Pearson Correlation analysis. The research found that the two age-groups have the same level of perfume brand image perception for all 5 groups and 3 brands. Such result may be due to Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint-Laurent products are leading products from Paris, France, that is already famous for perfume, also all 3 brands have longstanding reputations with worldwide consumer bases and markets, including Thailand. Although market share is different per spending and financial status of consumers, both age groups are always interested in the 3 perfume brands, which could be seen from high amount of attention when any of the brands releases new product, especially on Social Network.

**KEYWORDS:** Image Perception, Brand Personality, Perfume Products

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Brand personality or a set of human-like characteristics of the brand is an important tool to distinguish the brand from competitors. The consumer will create relationship with the brand through brand personality that reflects the consumer's own personality and identity. The consumer tends to choose the brand that is compatible with the consumer's own thoughts and personality (Belk, 1988, Sirgy, 1982) which is part of sale promotion. Creation of human-like brand personality and use of marketing tool to communicate with the consumer in order to distinguish the brand from competitors, and use of resulting brand perception to create Top-of-Mind brand image are advantages in competition, both for

the consumer and the organization. However, feeling to the brand that forms as Top-of-Mind awareness is different, depending on environmental context such as social, cultural, or age contexts per Consumption Symbols as Carriers of Cultures a Study of Japanese and Spanish Brand Personality Constructs by Jennifer Aaker et al. (2001) that compares product personality in countries with different lifestyle and culture. The study found that brand is useful for studying cultural belief, presented value, perception and race psychology. Our study specifies that the meaning under the brand is both universal and culturally specific. Therefore, the researcher is interested in comparing perception of brand personality in two age-groups: Generation X and Generation Y, as the two age-groups are different in both personality and consumption behavior due to social, norm, and lifestyle differences (Mentioned by Aker in Natalia Maehle, 2008, 917-918) In this study, the researcher is interested in relationship between brand personality and human personality in product context that is perfume, as the use of perfume and clear reflection of personality and taste.

Moreover, perfume products can reflect identity and taste of the consumer, and of course personality of the brand much better than other products. This study is done by research and purchase of designated brand perfumes by 100 individuals from Generation X (Extraordinary Generation) and the other 100 individuals from Generation Y (Generation Why). This study is done on the two parts of image: symbolic image and expressive image, to analyze and conclude as perceived personality factors in two age-groups. Symbol and expression are closely intertwined and there is no clear line between both, but study of both factors shall help in study of perfume brand personality, whether to see personality of each brand or perception of brand personality by the consumer. This study is useful for the interested party that may work on future brand communication planning and marketing communications for perfume products.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Sumonthip Tanathikom (1999)'s study of cosmetic shampoo brand personality creation strategies aimed to study cosmetic shampoo brand personality creation strategies and cosmetic shampoo personality portrayed in advertisement. The study was done by detailed interview of 13 advertisers, as the personality creators of 5 cosmetic shampoo brands: Sunsilk, Organics, Lux, Superrich and Lavenus. The study found that some cosmetic brands can present brand personality as specified, others can partly present brand personality and also present additional unspecified personality. Only one brand was unable to present brand personality as specified.

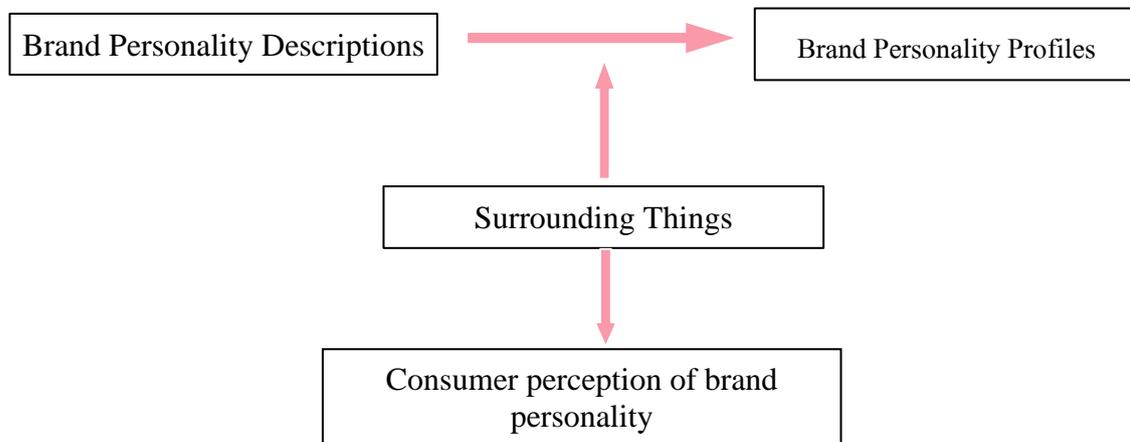
Porntip Leudjeen (2001) studied consumer personality, product personality and purchase intent of consumer, with the goal to study (1) relationship between consumer personality and product personality (2) Differences of brand personality in products that require consideration (Personal car) and requires feeling (Soft drink). The result showed that consumer personality related positively to

brand personality in both products that require consideration and feeling. Also, consumer personality and brand personality had positive relationship with the consumer's purchase intent. **2.3 Nattakarn Kunlok. (2013)** studied Quick reference, check-in, and ticket booth for Nok Air ground crew community using KM. The study used a pre-operation and post-operation test, Quick reference, check-in, and ticket booth. Analysis was done using percentage and comparison of result between pre independent study and post-independent study. It was found that 1) Ground crew has 70-80% increased check-in knowledge and 60-70% increase in ticket booth knowledge after utilization of Quick reference, check-in, and ticket booth, and 2) post-operation review showed that check-in and ticket booth knowledge increased after the use of quick reference.

Supawat Rakhiran (2001)'s Effect of Car Brand Personality on Bangkok Consumers' Perception aimed to study effect of car brand personality on Bangkok consumers' purchase intent, perception, brand communications, and personality of consumers that bought cars matching their own personalities. The study found that most of the sample group has perception of brand personality as originally specified by the manufacturer, and agreed that brand personality related to the sample group personality with statistical significance at 0.05.

Athippa Saarddee (2003)'s Study of Perception and Purchase Behavior of Men's Clothes with Foreign Brand Name. The study showed that the consumer had different perception level of clothing brand with foreign names, as in most consumers were aware that Chaps, Jaspal, Items and Sada were actually Thai brands, and most thought that Greyhound, Dapper and X-act were foreign brands. Perception, awareness and acceptance levels were different in each brand. For clothing products, consumers also had different purchase frequency and volume in each type, and different satisfaction level in each brand. Products of some Thai brands were purchased with high satisfaction level.

Chanyachom Jaturongkakul (2004)'s Perception of Brand Personality of M-Max Energy Drink on TV advertisement Life never stops in Bangkok consumers showed that the sample group had an understanding in presentation of M-Max brand personality on TV advertisement Life never stops per advertisement media openness behavior. The personality of power, strength, unruliness, modernity, expressiveness, living to the fullest, honestly, smartness, challenging, bulkiness, ability, cheerfulness, agility, straightforwardness, and independence as originally set by the company. The sample group had different understandings according to population type and personality that is similar to the sample group.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of The Study**

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Study, “Comparison of Image Perception of Brand Personality of Perfume Products between Two Age-Groups” has the goal to study perfume brand image based on perception of Generation X and Y consumers in Bangkok Thailand, to compare perfume brand image perception of Generation X and Y consumers, and relationship between perfume brand image perception and relationship level consumers have with brand. This study is about differences in perfume brand image based on perception of two age groups:

1. Generation X (Extraordinary Generation) group – people born in 1965-1979.
2. Generation Y (Generation Why) group – people born in 1980-2000.

Perfume brands studied were 3 world-famous brands: Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent, all were original French brands, the origin of perfume. The 3 brands were called Designer brands or the brand that also had its own clothing lines or use the owner’s name as the brand. 5 factors of brand personality are in this study’s scope: Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness. Tool used in primary data collection is a questionnaire. Analysis of relationship between perfume brand image perception and relationship level consumers have with brand is done by deductive statistics, such as Pearson Correlation analysis.

The Study, “Comparison of Image Perception of Brand Personality of Perfume Products between Two Age-Groups” can be concluded as follows: Comparison of Image Perception of Brand Personality of Perfume Products between Two Age Groups, using 3 French perfume brands (Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent) can be discussed in the 5 brand personality traits as follows:

**1.) Sincerity**

Study of French perfume brand personalities found that both age-groups agree with sincerity factor overall, with opinion that if a brand is a person, said brand would be most straightforward. Individual consideration of the three perfume brands (Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent) found that both age-groups agree with overall sincerity of all three brands and also view that if a brand is a person, said brand would be most straightforward. This is consistent with the three brands’ personalities. Chanel is sophisticated, classy, high-class, self-confident and strong, while Christian Dior is modern, leading, and self-confident, and Yves Saint Laurent is modern, luxurious, self-confident and sweet. This is also consistent with concept of Generation Y people such as being expressive, self-confident and unruly, but not with Generation X people that are more easygoing, informal and paying much attention to work- life balance, likely due to Generation X people are entering midlife and focus more on work and family rather than themselves.

**Table 1: Displays average rating of all 3 perfume brands by the respondents, based on Sincerity.**

Brand Personality (Sincerity)	Generation X		Generation Y	
		Interpretation		Interpretation
Unique	4.00	Agree	3.80	Agree
Straight forward	3.97	Agree	3.43	Indifferent
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.99</b>	Agree	<b>3.62</b>	Agree

**2.) Excitement**

Study of French perfume brand personalities found that both age-groups agree with excitement factor overall, with opinion that if a brand is a person, said brand would be most modern. Individual consideration of the three perfume brands (Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent) found that both age-groups agree with overall excitement of all three brands and also view that if a brand is a person, said brand would be most modern. This is consistent with the concept by Sirikarn Yimprayat (2008: 24-27) in which brand personality was a tool in expression of identity or selfness of the consumer through purchase and use of the brand. The consumer tends to like brands suitable to the consumer’s own image or perceived image. This is consistent with the three brands’ personalities. Christian Dior is modern, leading, and self-confident, and Yves Saint Laurent is modern, luxurious, self-confident and sweet, but not Chanel is sophisticated, classy, high-class, self-confident and strong, as Chanel presents adulthood that is simple but luxurious, with preference to long history rather than modernity.

**Table 2: Displays average rating of all 3 perfume brands by the respondents, based on Excitement.**

Brand Personality (Excitement)	Generation X		Generation Y	
		Interpretation		Interpretation
Reliable	3.56	Agree	3.55	Agree
Hardworking	4.36	Agree	4.38	Agree
Stable	3.72	Agree	3.57	Agree
Intelligent	2.74	Indifferent	2.77	Indifferent
Skillful	3.44	Indifferent	3.42	Indifferent
Helping	4.43	Agree	4.44	Agree
Successful	4.80	Definitely agree	4.80	Definitely agree
Has Leadership	3.87	Agree	4.08	Agree
Vary self-confident	4.68	Definitely agree	4.66	Definitely agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.95</b>	Agree	<b>3.96</b>	Agree

### 3.) Competence

Study of French perfume brand personalities found that both age-groups agree with competence factor overall, with opinion that if a brand is a person, said brand have the highest level of leadership. Individual consideration of the three perfume brands (Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent) found that both age-groups agree with overall competence of all three brands. Generation X Chanel users view that if a brand is a person, said brand would have the highest level of leadership, while Generation Y counterpart view a brand as being smart, while users of Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent, of both generations view the brands as having the highest leadership level. This is consistent with the concept that Generation X people prefer work life balance, independent working, and openness to criticism. Lifestyle of Generation X people is therefore full of progress, heavy self-challenge with work that requires both thought and execution while Generation Y people mostly grow up with computer and technology, and are still at the start of employment, therefore being more expressive and unruly.

**Table 3: Displays average rating of all 3 perfume brands by the respondents, based on competence.**

Brand Personality (Competence)	Generation X		Generation Y	
		Interpretation		Interpretation
Challenge-seeking	4.13	Agree	4.44	Agree
Modern	4.20	Agree	4.25	Agree
Excitable	4.64	Definitely agree	4.73	Definitely agree
Unique	4.77	Definitely agree	4.85	Definitely agree
Determined	4.55	Definitely agree	4.65	Definitely agree
Smart	4.43	Agree	4.54	Definitely agree
Youthful	3.75	Agree	3.72	Agree
Imagination	4.72	Definitely agree	4.74	Definitely agree
Modernist	4.55	Definitely agree	4.65	Definitely agree
Independent	3.76	Agree	3.75	Agree
Contemporary	4.60	Definitely agree	4.59	Definitely agree
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.37</b>	Agree	<b>4.42</b>	Agree

#### 4.) *Sophistication*

Study of French perfume brand personalities found that Generation X group definitely agrees with sophistication factor overall, while Generation Y group only agrees sophistication factor overall. Both groups share the view that if a brand is a person, said brand would definitely be of high-class, which is consistent with personality of Chanel that is sophisticated, high-class, self-confident and strong. While users of Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent, of both generations scored “Definitely agree” with the brands, and share the view that if a brand is a person, said brand would definitely be of high-class, which is not the personality of either Christian Dior or Yves Saint Laurent. Christian Dior is modern, leading, and self-confident, and Yves Saint Laurent is modern, luxurious, self-confident and

sweet.

**Table 4: Displays average rating of all 3 perfume brands by the respondents, based on Sophistication.**

Brand Personality (Sophistication)	Generation X	Generation Y		
		Interpretation		Interpretation
High class	4.78	Definitely agree	4.69	Definitely agree
Luxurious	4.29	Agree	4.24	Agree
Good-looking	4.43	Agree	4.42	Agree
Charming	4.49	Agree	4.46	Agree
Feminine, soft	4.49	Indifferent	3.26	Indifferent
Simple	4.43	Indifferent	3.16	Indifferent
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.37</b>	Agree	<b>4.04</b>	Agree

### 5.) *Ruggedness*

Study of French perfume brand personalities found that both age-groups are indifferent with ruggedness factor overall, both groups share the view that if a brand is a person, said brand would be brave. Individual consideration of the three perfume brands (Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent) found that both age-groups are also indifferent with overall ruggedness of all three brands. Both groups have an opinion that that if a brand is a person, said brand would be brave. Both groups are indifferent to ruggedness factor of Chanel, which is not consistent with Chanel's presentation as sophisticated, high-class, self-confident and strong, while Christian Dior and Yves Saint Laurent are viewed by Generation X group as "Agree" while Generation Y group is indifferent to both brands, which is in contrast of Generation X personality that prefer work-life balance, independent working, and openness to criticism. Lifestyle of Generation X people is therefore full of progress, heavy self-challenge with work that requires both thought and execution. This result is also inconsistent with Generation Y personality of being energetic, self-confident, expressive and unruly.

**Table 5: Displays average rating of all 3 perfume brands by the respondents, based on Ruggedness.**

Brand Personality (Ruggedness)	Generation X		Generation Y	
		Interpretation		Interpretation
Manly, strong	4.78	Indifferent	3.48	Indifferent
Outdoor-loving	4.29	Indifferent	2.87	Indifferent
International	4.43	Definitely agree	4.76	Definitely agree
Strong	4.49	Agree	4.07	Agree
Brave	4.49	Indifferent	3.43	Indifferent
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.37</b>	Agree	<b>3.72</b>	Agree

## CONCLUSION

Both age-groups have similar perfume brand personality perception of all 5 groups, 3 brands, likely because Chanel, Christian Dior and Yves Saint-Laurent products are leading products from Paris, France, that is already famous for perfume, also all 3 brands have longstanding reputations with worldwide consumer bases and markets, including Thailand. Although market share is different per spending and financial status of consumers, both age groups are always interested in the 3 perfume brands, which could be seen from high amount of attention when any of the brands releases new product, especially on Social Network, which is consistent with an article by Keller (2003) which stated that Brand image is a positive image created by a marketer's program to connect strength, liking and identity related to the brand and embed in the consumer's mind. Aside from information source under marketer's control, brand association may be created by many means, such as word of mouth, and reference on the product itself such as trademark or logo, including identity definition through importing companies, sales channel, or certain person, location and activity. This is consistent with an article by Sirikarn Yimprayat (2008) which stated that brand image expresses the brand through various communication channels around the consumer. The consumer interpret and connect thoughts and feelings, which is very important due to it being a perception that connects everything known about the brand to evaluate the consumer's feeling of the brand. One important factor of brand image is of course, brand personality.

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