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Brand personality and purchase intention

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to analyze the effects of brand personality dimensions on purchase intention. Furthermore, the brand personality dimensions are compared to study the differences between users and non-users of 12 brands.

Design/methodology/approach – An estimated 400 undergraduate students participated. They were given a questionnaire divided into two sessions (six brands of think products in one session and six brands of feel products in another session). In the end, 313 participants completed the questionnaire on the six brands of think products, and 320 completed the questionnaire on the six brands of feel products.

Findings – Multiple regression analysis revealed that Hipness/Vivacity, Success, Sincerity and Sophistication brand personality dimensions are significant predictors of purchase intention. In addition, Domesticity/Emotionality and Professionalism also explain purchase intention but with a negative weight. The results are also broken down into product categories. Compared with non-users of the brands, the users rate the brands higher in all the brand personality dimensions.

Practical implications – This paper should prove useful to marketing practitioners to understand how Mexican customers perceive their brands and those of their competitors and, therefore, to understand what competitors of these brands can do to increase purchase intention.

Originality/value – The results found regarding purchase intention are important, as they can be used to identify those personality brand dimensions that appear to be most important in explaining consumer preferences.

Keywords Personality, Purchase intention, Brand, Product categories

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

A brand can be defined as:

> […] a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or combination of these, which is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from their competitors (Kotler, 1991, p. 442).

Brands provide their customers with emotional and experiential benefits (Keller, 1993), and these benefits are essential to building strong brand equity. To build this strong brand equity in the market, it is fundamental to understand the core dimensions of brand image, which is brand personality (Lee and Oh, 2006). According to Gordon (1993), brand image is made up of five different facets, which are user image, occasion image, product image, brand personality and salience.

An important concept for brand differentiation, which significantly influences consumers' purchase decision-making, is brand personality (Aaker, 1997). The more positive the brand personality is, the higher the consumers' purchase intention toward the brand would be (Wang and Yang, 2008). Brand personality is defined as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand" (Aaker, 1997, p. 347). Aaker (1996) defines the associated personality of a brand as a set of human demographic characteristics like age, gender and race; human lifestyle characteristics like activities, interest and opinion; and human personality traits such as extroversion, dependability and sentimentality. The brand becomes a living person and is often attached to a metaphor. In this way, the abstract intangible assets and characteristics can be visualized in a tangible way, and customers interact with brands as if they where human beings. Similar to human personality, brand personality is distinctive and enduring (Aaker, 1996, pp. 141-142). As such, marketing practitioners have become increasingly aware of the importance of building a clear and distinctive brand personality (Das *et al.*, 2012; Keller and Richey, 2006) as a central driver of consumer preference, usage and purchase intention (Keller, 2003).

Literature review
Measurement of brand personality
Similar to the "Big Five" model of human personality (Goldberg, 1990; McCrae and John, 1992), brand personality is measured along five dimensions that uniquely apply to consumers' brand characterization (Aaker, 1997). Aaker's research developed a generalizable (reliable and valid) scale to assess brand personality (Koebel and Ladwein, 1999). Aaker (1997) developed a theoretical framework of the brand personality construct by determining the number and nature of dimensions of brand personality traits. In addition, Aaker (1997) developed a measurement scale called the Brand Personality Scale, which consisted of 42 traits. Even when the sample was divided by age or sex, or when subgroupings of brands were used, five personality dimensions emerged. These five brand personality dimensions desired by many companies for their products are Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness.

The impact of this model has been so profound that since 1997 most academic publications about brand personality are based on Aaker's methodology. This model has been adapted in other countries, such as France (Koebel and Ladwein, 1999), Japan and Spain (Aaker *et al.*, 2001), Mexico (Álvarez-Ortiz and Harris, 2002; Toldos, 2012), Russia (Supphellen and Gronhaug, 2003), Korea (Lee and Oh, 2006) and Venezuela (Pirela *et al.*, 2004). The studies conducted in these countries differed in three aspects: the use of Aaker's methodology, the dimensions found and the conclusions. For example, in a study conducted in Mexico, Alvarez-Ortiz and Harris (2002) found a dimension called Gender, which was more representative than that of Ruggedness and contained only feminine and masculine traits. In a recent study conducted in Mexico by Toldos (2012), a factorial solution of seven factors was obtained; Success, Hipness/Vivacity, Sophistication, Sincerity, Domesticity/Emotionality, Ruggedness and Professionalism. Also, the brand personality dimensions were compared to analyze the differences between males and females; it was found that women rated the brands higher for Success and Hipness/Vivacity, while men rated the brands higher for Domesticity/ Emotionality, Ruggedness and Professionalism. Three of the brand personality dimensions in the Toldos (2012) study were very similar to Aaker's findings: Sincerity,

Sophistication and Ruggedness. Nevertheless, other dimensions that were found in this study, such as Success, Hipness/Vivacity, Domesticity/Emotionality and Professionalism, were found to carry more specific cultural meanings. The brand personality dimensions that were found in this study were more similar to those that Aaker originally proposed, compared with the dimensions found in other countries.

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Brand personality and purchase intention

Brand attitude can be defined as the expression of an individual's favorable or unfavorable evaluation or feelings toward a brand (Berger and Mitchell, 1989; Kotler and Armstrong, 1996). Brand attitude and brand image have shown to have significantly positive relationships with brand equity (Chang and Liu, 2009; Faircloth *et al.*, 2001; Na *et al.*, 1999). Brand equity is essential because brands with higher levels of brand equity generate higher levels of customer brand preference, purchase intentions (Berry, 2000; Chang and Liu, 2009; Senthilnathan and Tharmi, 2012) and repurchase intention (Hellier *et al.*, 2003). Therefore, brand personality as a component of brand imagery – a soft attribute of an image – helps to create brand equity (Batra *et al.*, 1993; Biel, 1993).

Brand personality has been one of the most important issues in marketing, because consumers tend to make purchase decisions based on brand images that have already been formed in their minds rather than from original attributes or characteristics of the product itself (Dick *et al.*, 1990). The importance of stored memories of a brand in consumer decision-making has been well-documented (Keller, 1993). Over time, brands form powerful associations in the minds of consumers (Saavedra, 2004) which help consumers recover information archived in their minds to make decisions: once recovered, the information provides a reason to acquire the product (Aaker, 1992). Therefore, distinctive brand personality can help create a set of unique and favorable associations in consumer memory and thus build and enhance brand equity (Keller, 1993). As a result, brand personality is considered to be an important factor for a brand's success in terms of preference and choice (Biel, 1993). But the importance of brand personality and its effect on purchase intention have not been widely acknowledged. Some studies found that brand personality dimensions have a significant influence on brand choice, regardless of product type. However, Lim *et al.* (2003) found that the relative influence of brand personality dimensions compared with that of product attributes is different based on product type. While the relative influence of brand personality is stronger than that of product attributes for low-involvement products, product attributes had a much stronger influence on consumers' brand choices for high-involvement products. In addition, Lee and Oh (2006) found that personality dimensions, such as Excitement/Sophistication, Competence, Sincerity and Ruggedness, were significant predictors of brand preference, satisfaction and loyalty.

In her study, Aaker (1997) measured the degree of positive or negative attitude toward each brand and found that personality dimensions were significantly related to attitude: that specific relationships varied with different brands. For example, Excitement and Competence were related to positive attitudes toward Apple and American Express. Ruggedness was related to positive attitudes toward Levi's but to negative attitudes toward McDonald's. Participants who perceived Mercedes or Porsche as sophisticated were more likely to have a positive attitude toward the brand. Of all the personality traits, those associated with positive attitudes were mainly the dimensions

Sincerity (e.g. real, sincere, original and honest) and Competence (e.g. reliable, secure, intelligent and leader). These results explain why some brands have used these dimensions to create their personality. For example, many brands have moved toward the authentic and genuine as part of their basic identity; some even use these personality traits in their advertising slogans (e.g. Genuine Chevrolet, Genuine Jockey Comfort, Dockers Authentic). Excitement is another personality trait that has worked very well for cosmetic products, athletic equipment, cars, etc. An exciting personality, as compared with a weak and boring one, appears much better to a consumer (Aaker, 1996).

Studies in Mexico about brand personality and its relationship to consumers' brand purchase intentions are limited, and none of them compare different types of products and level of involvement. Therefore, this study explores the effects of brand personality dimensions on purchase intention and the differences in product category-related purchase intention. As Aaker (1996) suggests, brand personality dimensions might operate in different ways or influence consumer preference for different reasons. Whereas Sincerity, Excitement and Competence represent an innate part of human personality, Sophistication and Ruggedness tap dimensions that individuals desire (Rajagopal, 2005). In the same way, Aaker (1996) found that the personality traits associated with positive attitudes were the dimensions Sincerity, Competence and Excitement. On the other hand, as various studies have shown, positive brand attitudes have significantly positive relationships with brand equity (Chang and Liu, 2009; Faircloth *et al.*, 2001; Na *et al.*, 1999), essential to the generation of higher levels of purchase intention (Berry, 2000; Chang and Liu, 2009; Senthilnathan and Tharmi, 2012). Hence, the following hypothesis was made:

H1. The dimensions that are most related to purchase intention will be Sincerity, Excitement and Competence.

How brand personality is formed
According to Aaker (1996), brand personality is formed both from characteristics related to the product and those unrelated to it. Among the characteristics related to the product, we find that the type of packaging, price, attributes and category of the product and even the perceived socioeconomic class of the product can affect its personality. On the other hand, among the characteristics unrelated to the product, which can affect its brand personality, are the style of advertising, its symbol, its time in the market, its country of origin, the image of the company and its president, the endorsement of celebrities, its sponsorship and the imagery of the user. Fournier (1994) suggests that in the same way that the behavior of a person affects the perceptions of others of his or her personality, also the actions of brands affect their personality, and therefore the brand – client relationship. Because the use of and experience with brands provide consumers with favorable memories and enhance brand equity, and because brand personality is formed by the consumer's experience with the brand and by advertising, another objective of this study was to compare the ratings of brand-personality dimensions of users and non-users of brands. It is important to compare these groups to understand how they perceive brands differently, and with this information help a company to maintain sales and brand loyalty, or increase the size of its consumer base. When brand personality is studied with regard to users and non-users, significant differences are found. Brand users have a greater level of direct experience with the brand than non-users do. This experience means that the quantity and power of knowledge of the

brands, including their personality traits, should be greater for users than for non-users (Romaniuk, 2008). Each experience with the brand reinforces the existing memory associations, which increases the accessibility of those memories even with the passage of time or there has been interference from a competitor (Kent and Allen, 1994). Those who do not consume or buy a certain brand do not have this opportunity to construct or reinforce these associations in the memory. Therefore, users often perceive a brand as having a stronger personality than do non-users (Aaker, 1996). In studies such as that of Lee and Oh (2006) it was found that users tended to rate all the personality dimensions higher than did non-users. As a result, the following was posited:

H2. Compared with non-users of the brands, users will tend to rate the brands higher for all the brand personality dimensions for all the product categories.

Methodology

Brand selection

Similar to Aaker's (1997) brand selection, four products were determined on the basis of the Foote, Cone & Belding (FCB) grid (Ratchford, 1987; Vaughn, 1986) that allows products to be classified as *feel* or *think* and as having high or low involvement. Following the FCB Grid, four product categories were selected:

(1) *laptops* as think products with high involvement;
(2) *shampoos* as think products with low involvement;
(3) *perfumes* as feel products with high involvement; and
(4) *soft drinks* as feel products with low involvement.

These were considered the best categories because the students are consumers of these products and they purchase them for themselves. A total of 150 undergraduate student participants were asked to write the first three top-of-mind brands for these four product categories. Finally, using a combination of top of mind and top of share, the brands selected were the following:

• *laptops* (Dell, HP, Apple);
• *shampoos* (Pantene, Herbal Essences, Sedal);
• *perfumes* (Ralph Lauren, Hugo Boss, Chanel); and
• *soft drinks* (Coca-Cola, Pepsi, Sprite).

Three brands were selected for each one of the four categories of products, resulting in a total of 12 brands that were used for the study.

Participants

The research adopted a non-probability convenience sampling. Participants were recruited from the Tecnológico de Monterrey, Campus Guadalajara, México. The study was conducted with the approval of the university, where participants were selected from classes in the School of Business and Humanities. An estimated 400 undergraduate students participated from the classes that were selected as part of the study. They were given a questionnaire divided into two sessions (six brands of think products in one session and six brands of feel products in another session). However, not all the students attended class on both days, so some only completed one of the two sessions. In the end,

313 participants completed the questionnaire on the six brands of think products, and 320 completed the questionnaire on the six brands of feel products. Of the 313 students who completed the questionnaire on the six brands of think products, 48.6 per cent were women and 51.4 per cent were men. Their ages were between 17 and 25. The group's average age was 20.44 with a standard deviation of 1.76. In addition, of the 320 students who completed the questionnaire on the six brands of feel products, 47.8 per cent were women and 52.2 per cent were men. The average age of the group was 20.60 years (SD = 1.83).

Instrument measures
Brand personality. The Aaker (1997) scale was validated in previous study (Toldos, 2012). Each participant evaluated the personality of 12 brands in each of the 42 items that comprised the questionnaire. In this way, the total sample for the validation of this scale was made up by 3,798 evaluations. To extract the underlying brand personality dimensions, an exploratory factor analysis (Principal component) with Varimax rotation was used. Without forcing the number of factors, a seven-factor solution was obtained: Success, Hipness/Vivacity, Sophistication, Sincerity, Domesticity/ Emotionality, Ruggedness and Professionalism (Toldos, 2012, p. 40). For the statistical analysis of this study, those data which lacked an evaluation on the brand personality or purchase intention scale were eliminated, giving a total of 3,313 evaluations. Table I shows a definition of the personality dimensions used in the study with the more representative traits that explain each dimension. The internal consistency of the brand personality scale, evaluated by Cronbach's alpha, was 0.95, also it was calculated for each personality dimension (Table I).

Dimensions	Description	Items	Cronbach's alpha
Success	Primarily defined by attributes such as leadership, success, originality and security	12	0.919
Hipness/Vivacity	Includes youth, spirit, cool and cheerfulness	7	0.854
Sophistication	Defined by terms such as attractiveness, glamour, femininity and sophistication	5	0.804
Sincerity	Includes traits such as honesty, sincerity, reliability, wholesomeness and lack of affectation	6	0.861
Domesticity/Emotionality	Defined by attributes such as family-oriented, gentleness, friendliness and sentimentality	6	0.754
Ruggedness	The characteristics that define this dimension are masculinity, ruggedness and toughness	3	0.640
Professionalism	The characteristics that define this dimension are technical, corporate and hard-working	3	0.677

Note: The complete list with the personality traits of each invention can be consulted in Toldos (2012)

Table I.
Brand personality
dimensions

To compile all of the statistical analyses that subsequently appear in this paper, the seven dimensions of brand personality obtained in a previous study with the same sample (Toldos, 2012) were transformed into a scale from 1 to 100. In this way, the scores nearest to 1 in each dimension imply that the personality dimension does not describe the brand, whereas the scores nearest to 100 mean that the personality dimension describes the brand completely.

Purchase intention. This variable was measured with item 1: "If you had to buy a laptop/shampoo/perfume/soft drink, can you indicate what the probability would be of your buying a laptop/shampoo/perfume/soft drink of this brand?" This question was used to evaluate the purchase intention for each of the 12 brands used in the study. Responses were given on an 11-point Likert scale ranging from 0 (0 per cent sure) to 100 (100 per cent sure).

Users vs Non-users. To know whether or not the participants were users of the brands selected in the study, a question for each product category was included:

Q1. "What brand of laptop do you have?"

Q2. "What brand of shampoo do you use?"

Q3. "What brand of perfume do you use?"

Q4. "What brand of soft drink do you consume?"

Procedure
The questionnaires were administered to each group by the researcher during class time, with previous consent of their professors. Participants received a booklet; the first page contained instructions for completion, sociodemographic data and questions to measure purchase intention and to determine whether or not they were users of the brands. The following pages included questions concerning the 42 items of brand personality traits for the six brands in each product category. To minimize possible fatigue and boredom of the respondents, which could potentially result in response bias, the scale was applied at two different times with one week of rest between sessions to avoid the learning effect and lack of motivation. A counterbalancing process was carried out; in the first session, half of the sample was given the personality scale section for the six brands of think products, and in the second session, after a week had passed, they completed the six brands of feel products. The other half of the sample began first session with the personality scale for the six brands of feel products, followed by the week of rest and then the personality scale section for the six brands of think products.

Findings
Brand personality and purchase intention
For each one of the 12 brands used in the study, participants evaluated both brand personality as well as purchase intention. A multiple regression analysis was used to examine whether the brand personality dimensions (dependent variables) explain the purchase intention (independent variable) of the brands used in the study. Additionally, a regression analysis was carried out for each of the product categories.

Multiple regression analysis revealed that Success, Hipness/Vivacity, Sophistication, Sincerity, Domesticity/Emotionality and Professionalism explained purchase intention (Table II). Among these, Hipness/Vivacity was the most significant predictor, followed by Success, Sincerity and Sophistication. In addition, for Domesticity/Emotionality and

Dimensions	12 brands Standard coefficient (t-value)	High involvement Laptops Standard coefficient (t-value)	Low involvement Shampoos Standard coefficient (t-value)	High involvement Perfumes Standard coefficient (t-value)	Low involvement Soft drinks Standard coefficient (t-value)
Success	0.342 (5.665***)	0.523 (4.312***)	0.068 (0.600)	0.251 (1.723*)	0.492 (3.865***)
Hipness/vivacity	0.371 (7.035***)	0.103 (0.964)	0.305 (3.089***)	0.605 (5.647***)	0.367 (3.111***)
Sophistication	0.076 (2.192**)	0.078 (0.973)	0.325 (3.905***)	−0.013 (−0.150)	0.157 (2.171**)
Sincerity	0.292 (6.446***)	0.427 (4.097***)	0.459 (5.022***)	0.287 (2.580***)	0.024 (0.280)
Domesticity/emotionality	−0.082 (−2.403**)	−0.206 (−3.360***)	−0.220 (−2.958***)	0.023 (0.335)	0.057 (0.619)
Ruggedness	−0.008 (−0.326)	−0.040 (−0.744)	0.092 (2.176**)	−0.051 (−1.026)	−0.018 (−0.277)
Professionalism	−0.063 (−2.217**)	0.050 (0.694)	−0.088 (−1.724*)	−0.179 (−3.207***)	−0.175 (−2.543**)
Model summary					
R	0.926	0.936	0.939	0.929	0.904
Adjusted R^2	0.857	0.877	0.882	0.864	0.817
F	2,814.146*** (0.000)	839.905*** (0.000)	874.801*** (0.000)	722.574*** (0.000)	523.640*** (0.000)

Notes: Standardized coefficient values; the t-value is given in brackets; *** $p < 0.01$; ** $p < 0.05$; * $p < 0.10$

Table II.
Results of multiple
regression analysis
of the purchase
intention

Professionalism, the *t*-value was negative, which indicates that the more domestic/emotional and professional a brand is perceived to be, the lower the purchase intention will be. Also, it was found that Ruggedness was not significant, and eliminating this variable from the equation did not change the model.

Furthermore, multiple regression analysis was used to examine whether the brand personality dimensions affected the purchase intention for the *laptops* brands (Table II). The participants' responses regarding purchase intention of the three laptop brands were used as a dependent variable. Multiple regression analysis revealed that Success, Sincerity and Domesticity/Emotionality provided significant information about purchase intention. Among these, the dimension that most affected purchase intention was Success, followed by Sincerity. For Domesticity/Emotionality, the model yielded a negative *t*-value, which indicates that the more domestic/emotional a laptop brand is perceived to be, the lower the purchase intention will be. For the *shampoo* brands, there are six personality dimensions that contribute significant information to the model and one non-significant coefficient (Success), indicating that this variable does not make a significant contribution to the model. Of importance, the dimensions that most affected purchase intention were the following: Sincerity, Sophistication, Hipness/Vivacity and Ruggedness. Domesticity/Emotionality and Professionalism scored negatively, which indicates that the more domestic/emotional and professional a shampoo brand is perceived to be, the lower the purchase intention will be.

For the *perfumes* brands, multiple regression analysis revealed that Success, Hipness/Vivacity, Sincerity and Professionalism affected purchase intention. Among these, Hipness/Vivacity was the most significant predictor, followed by Sincerity and Success. For Professionalism, the *t*-value was negative, which indicates that the more professional a perfume brand is perceived to be, the lower the purchase intention will be. Finally, for *soft drinks* brands, there are four significant coefficients, indicating that these dimensions contribute significant information to the model. The dimension Success explained the purchase intention and had a positive weight. The same happened with Hipness/Vivacity and Sophistication. Also, Professionalism had a negative weight on the purchase intention, which indicates that the more professional a soft drink brand is perceived to be, the lower the purchase intention will be.

Comparison of brand personality dimension ratings of users and non-users
To discover whether or not the participants were users of the brands selected in the study, we analyzed the questions "What brand of laptop/shampoo/perfume/soft drink do you consume or use?". The participants who responded to these questions with one of the brands used for the study were categorized as users, whereas those who responded with a different brand from those used in the study were categorized as non-users. Student's *t*-tests were performed to compare users' and non-users' ratings of each brand personality dimension.

Without considering either the type of product (feel or think) or the involvement level (high or low), the ratings of the users and non-users were compared for all of the brand personality dimensions. It was found that users rated all seven brand personality dimensions higher than non-users did. As we can see in Table III, compared with the non-users of all 12 brands, users tended to rate Hipness/Vivacity highest, followed by Success, Sincerity, Sophistication, Professionalism, Domesticity/Emotionality and Ruggedness.

Dimensions	Total sample			Think — High involvement Laptops			Low involvement Shampoos			Feel — High involvement Perfumes			Low involvement Soft drinks		
	n	Mean (SD)	t-value	n	Mean (SD)	t-value	n	Mean (SD)	t-value	n	Mean (SD)	t-value	n	Mean (SD)	t-value
Success															
Non-users	3,008	72.12 (16.63)	-11.38***	735	73.20 (17.04)	-3.08***	759	68.73 (15.96)	-7.19***	825	76.19 (15.78)	-4.48***	689	69.82 (16.75)	-10.01***
Users	583	79.87 (14.73)		132	77.65 (16.85)		70	84.92 (13.89)		210	81.12 (13.48)		171	78.09 (13.37)	
Hipness/vivacity															
Non-users	3,064	73.99 (16.43)	-9.99***	747	73.39 (17.31)	-2.95***	774	73.84 (16.41)	-5.95***	844	75.89 (15.61)	-6.20***	699	72.51 (16.29)	-7.53***
Users	603	80.53 (14.31)		132	77.68 (16.50)		71	85.35 (12.03)		226	80.75 (13.58)		174	81.34 (12.76)	
Sophistication															
Non-users	3,096	69.17 (19.32)	-3.86***	754	67.50 (18.89)	-2.71***	782	69.76 (17.28)	-6.41***	853	64.62 (18.02)	-4.32***	707	56.79 (17.20)	-5.86***
Users	600	72.28 (17.77)		131	71.37 (16.47)		71	86.70 (11.36)		224	80.38 (16.30)		174	78.77 (14.43)	
Sincerity															
Non-users	3,081	69.76 (17.83)	-5.91***	750	73.56 (16.39)	-2.52**	781	69.91 (17.14)	-6.14***	837	68.19 (17.89)	-4.03***	713	61.93 (17.97)	-4.53***
Users	600	74.47 (17.69)		131	77.15 (18.25)		72	81.57 (17.42)		225	72.89 (17.51)		172	77.83 (12.97)	
Domesticity/emotionality															
Non-users	3,052	62.35 (16.52)	-8.20***	742	60.75 (17.34)	-2.46**	775	64.49 (15.50)	-2.95**	834	60.41 (16.57)	-2.00**	701	63.98 (16.24)	-6.94***
Users	597	68.40 (16.37)		132	64.41 (17.75)		73	64.47 (17.30)		223	72.51 (15.04)		169	68.76 (14.48)	
Ruggedness															
Non-users	3,116	59.48 (19.45)	-3.72***	756	63.77 (18.43)	-0.84	789	50.28 (17.77)	-2.48**	856	62.84 (20.32)	-1.13	715	61.06 (17.89)	-2.65***
Users	605	62.69 (19.43)		132	65.08 (18.26)		73	65.66 (21.67)		227	64.69 (18.38)		173	54.49 (19.36)	
Professionalism															
Non-users	3,102	65.21 (19.23)	-6.37***	756	76.47 (16.16)	-1.87*	786	58.02 (18.37)	-2.39**	849	63.00 (19.25)	-1.54	711	63.83 (17.96)	-4.67***
Users	607	70.66 (19.44)		132	79.00 (15.96)		72	67.40 (23.53)		228	70.17 (17.38)		175	62.22 (20.37)	

Notes: *** p < 0.01; ** p < 0.05; * p < 0.10

Table III.
Comparison of brand personality ratings of users and non-users

Significant differences were found between users and non-users of the three *laptops* brands for all of the brand personality dimensions except Ruggedness. Compared with the non-users of the laptop brands, HP, Apple and Dell users tended to rate Professionalism highest, followed by Hipness/Vivacity, Success, Sincerity, Sophistication and Domesticity/Emotionality. When we compared ratings between *shampoo* brands users with those of the non-users, we found significant differences for all the brand personality dimensions. Users of these brands tended to rate all the brand personality dimensions higher than did non-users. Pantene, Herbal Essences and Sedal users rated Hipness/Vivacity highest, followed by Sophistication, Success, Sincerity, Domesticity/Emotionality, Professionalism and Ruggedness.

Significant differences were found between users and non-users of the three *perfume* brands used in the study (Ralph Lauren, Hugo Boss and Chanel) for all of the brand personality dimensions except for Ruggedness and Professionalism. Compared with non-users of these perfume brands, users tended to rate Sophistication highest, followed by Hipness/Vivacity, Success, Sincerity and Domesticity/Vivacity. As for the *soft drinks* brands (Coca-Cola, Sprite and Pepsi), we found significant differences between users and non-users for all of the brand personality dimensions. Compared to the non-users, users tended to rate Success highest, followed by Hipness/Vivacity, Domesticity/ Emotionality, Professionalism, Sincerity, Ruggedness and Sophistication.

Discussion

The main objective of this study was to analyze the effects of the brand personality dimensions on purchase intention. Studies in Mexico about brand personality and its relationship to consumers' brand purchase intentions are limited, and none of them compare different types of products and levels of involvement. Furthermore, the brand personality dimensions were compared to study the differences between users and non-users of 12 brands. With these objectives in mind, two hypotheses were made; they will be reviewed and corroborated with the results found in this study. *H1* predicted that the most related dimensions to purchase intention would be Sincerity, Excitement and Competence. The results confirmed this hypothesis partially. The dimensions Success, Hipness/Vivacity (both related to Aaker's Excitement), Sophistication, Sincerity, Domesticity/Emotionality and Professionalism explained purchase intention. Among these, Hipness/Vivacity was the most significant predictor, followed by Success and Sincerity. In addition, Domesticity/Emotionality and Professionalism also explained purchase intention, but with a negative weight, which indicates that the more Domesticity/Emotionality and Professionalism a brand is perceived to have, the lower the purchase intention will be. Contrary to previous studies (Aaker, 1997; Lee and Oh, 2006), the Competence dimension (related to the Professionalism dimension in this study) had a negative weight, which indicates that if our participants perceive the brands as competent or professional, the purchase intention decreases. Perhaps, this can be explained by the participants' age in this study: young people prefer to buy brands that represent or possess a personality similar to theirs or that correspond to their lifestyle. Young people look for brands that are hip/vivacious, successful and sincere; it appears that at least at their age they do not want to see themselves reflected in brands that are domestic/emotional or professional.

As other studies (Lim *et al.*, 2003) found that the relative influence of brand personality dimensions compared with product attributes is different based on the

product type, it was decided to analyze the differences in purchase intention related to product categories. The results showed that for think products with high involvement, the dimensions that most affected purchase intention were Success, followed by Sincerity. Also, results showed that the more domestic/emotional a think product with high involvement is perceived to be, the lower the purchase intention will be. For the think products with low involvement, results showed that the more sincere, sophisticated, hip/vivacious and rugged, and less domestic and professional a brand is perceived to be, the greater the purchase intention will be. Also, results showed that the more hip/vivacious, successful (similar to Aaker's Excitement) and sincere, and the less professional a brand of feel product with high involvement is perceived to be, the greater the purchase intention will be. The Sophistication dimension was not related to the purchase intention. Finally, for feel products with low involvement, the dimensions that best explained purchase intention were Success, Hipness/Vivacity and Sophistication: the more successful, hip/vivacious (similar to Aaker's Excitement) and sophisticated, and the less professional a brand of feel product with low involvement is perceived to be, the greater the purchase intention will be.

Finally, another objective of this study was to compare ratings of brand personality dimensions between users and non-users of the brands. *H2* predicted that compared with non-users of the brands, users would tend to rate the brands higher for all the brand personality dimensions and for all the product categories. The results of this study confirmed the hypothesis: users rated all seven brand personality dimensions higher than did non-users.

Conclusions, limitations and implications
This study should prove useful to marketing practitioners to understand how Mexican customers perceive their brands and those of their competitors, therefore to understand what competitors of these brands can do to increase purchase intention. The results uncovered regarding purchase intention are important, as they can be used to identify those personality brand dimensions that appear to be more important in explaining consumer preferences. These analyses can be done for different brands, product categories and segments of consumers to define which communication strategies should be used to reach strategic targets.

This study has limitations; the sample being one of them. Although the intention was to sample a diverse pool of young Mexican college students, for convenience we were able to sample students from only one university. Mexico is a country with many public and private universities, and thus, future research should compare these findings with personality taxonomies from other institutions or Mexican states. Another limitation of the study is that only 12 brands were used; it would be interesting to use other brands to make comparisons with their different competitors. Also, it is possible that other product categories would result in different findings. Future research might consider the possibility of using customers' personality as a variable that can be associated with brand personality, as well as studying how dimensions of brand personality explain brand loyalty, brand satisfaction and brand preferences. Also, the possibility of using local Mexican brands could be helpful in improving the applicability of these results.

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