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## Responsible and active brand personality: On the relationships with brand experience and key relationship constructs

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## ABSTRACT

Brand personality is a key concept in marketing that can be used to create competitive differentiation. Two of the most relevant dimensions of brand personality for academics and practitioners are responsible and active. However, only few studies examine these two personalities, particularly their relationship with prominent marketing constructs. This paper attempts to identify which dimensions of brand experience (i.e., sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual) lead to higher consumers' perception of responsible and active brands and in predicting key relationship constructs (i.e., satisfaction, trust and brand loyalty). Based on a survey of 339 Spanish respondents, the results suggest that not all dimensions of brand experience predict brand personality. The findings also suggest that being responsible leads to higher satisfaction and trust compared to being active. On the other hand, being active leads to higher loyalty compared to being responsible.

### 1. Introduction

Since Aaker's (1997) seminal work on brand personality (BP), a growing body of research on this topic has been built. The concept of BP is based on human personality using a brand-as-person metaphor to understand brand perception (Caprara, Barbaranelli, & Guido, 2001). BP is defined as “the set of human personality traits that are both applicable to and relevant for brands” (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003, p. 151). BP is an important concept for marketing since consumers assign personality qualities to brands in an anthropomorphism process to animate, humanize or personalize brands in order to build a strong consumer-brand relationship (CBR) (Fournier, 1998). In recent years, the values of BP for the success of a brand have been well documented in the literature (e.g., Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Sung & Kim, 2010) and BP is among the most important research streams on CBR research (Fetscherin & Heinrich, 2015).

A number of studies have been focusing on the development of reliable, valid and practical measurement tools of BP (see Geuens, Weijters, & De Wulf, 2009; Rauschnabel, Krey, Babin, & Ivens, 2016). Among these studies, the predominantly applied measure is the Aaker's (1997) BP scale (BPS) (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013). She adapts the human five-factor model of personality “the Big Five” to develop a five-dimension BPS: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. In spite of the wide use of Aaker's BPS in research and its important contribution for the theory of BP, it also received several

criticisms due to its conceptual and applicability limitations (Avis, Forbes, & Ferguson, 2014; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; Geuens et al., 2009; Rauschnabel et al., 2016).

In response, researchers offer a wide range of BPS alternatives (Avis et al., 2014). However, most of them include human attributes (e.g., age, gender), and only “a few studies focus exclusively on attributes derived from human personality research” (Rauschnabel et al., 2016, p. 3078). A BPS based exclusively on human personality traits avoids the conceptual and empirical muddle among distinct brand identity facets (e.g., physical facet, culture, relationship) that can be induced by a too-global definition of BP (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). In regard to this, Geuens et al. (2009) propose a new five-dimensions BPS (i.e., responsibility, activity, aggressiveness, simplicity, and emotionality) based only on attributes derived from human personality (Rauschnabel et al., 2016), that is reliable and cross-culturally valid that resembles but distinct from Aaker's BPS. However, only a few studies apply Geuens et al.'s BPS (e.g., Garsvaite & Caruana, 2014; Goldsmith & Goldsmith, 2012; Gordon, Zainuddin, & Magee, 2016; Matzler, Strobl, Stokburger-Sauer, Bobovnick, & Bauer, 2016).

Geuens et al. (2009) suggest that a further investigation of the antecedents and consequences of the different BP dimensions is needed. In an attempt to provide further empirical evidence on the validity of Geuens et al.'s BPS, the present study tests the scale in a nomological network that includes two BP dimensions (i.e., responsibility and activity); four brand experience (BE) dimensions (i.e., sensory, affective,

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behavioral, and intellectual) as their antecedents; and three CBR constructs (i.e., satisfaction, trust, and loyalty) as their consequences. Responsibility includes three personality traits: down to earth, stable, and responsible; while activity refers to the other three personality traits: active, dynamic, and innovative. This study focuses on these two dimensions of BP because responsibility and activity dimensions are the two most relevant BP traits with regard to CBR (Clemenz, Brettel, & Moeller, 2012; Gordon et al., 2016). In addition, nowadays brands are more interested in being perceived as either socially responsible (Sen, Du, & Bhattacharya, 2016) or dynamic and innovative (Nguyen, Yu, Melewar, & Chen, 2015).

Aaker (1997) suggest that BP can be influenced through various contacts with the brand. Previous research propose that BE influences BP (Brakus et al., 2009; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014). BE occurs when the brand stimuli (i.e., brand's design, identity, packaging, communications, and environments) evokes consumer's sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral responses (Brakus et al., 2009). These responses lead to inferences about BP of the brand. Although previous research have started to investigate the link between BE and BP, most of these studies evaluate the relationship using BE as a second order factor model. To the best of our knowledge, there is only one study (i.e., Nysveen, Pedersen, & Skard, 2013) that investigates the individual dimensions of BE on BP. Although the authors examine individual dimensions of BE, they consider BP as a second order factor model and do not include responsible and active BP dimensions.

Researchers display that brand personality leads to many favorable outcomes, such as: strong brand associations (Freling & Forbes, 2005), brand quality (Clemenz et al., 2012), brand attitude (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001), brand satisfaction and brand loyalty (Brakus et al., 2009; Nysveen et al., 2013; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014), among others. However, little is known about the relative effects of the BP dimensions on key CBR constructs such as satisfaction, trust and loyalty (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013), particularly responsible and active dimensions because most of these studies used Aaker's BPS. These three constructs (i.e., satisfaction, trust and loyalty) are among the major consequences of CBR (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Fetscherin & Heinrich, 2015; Fournier, 1998; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Knowing the individual effects of each of these two important BP dimensions would allow brand managers to develop the right personality traits in order to reach the brand goals.

As there is still a lack of empirical research concerning the antecedents and consequences of responsible and active BP dimensions (see Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013), this study contributes to the literature in the following ways. First, this study provides further empirical evidence on the validity of Geuens et al.'s (2009) BPS by analyzing the antecedents and consequences of the two most relevant BP traits (Clemenz et al., 2012; Gordon et al., 2016). In testing these relationships, this study responds to several studies (e.g., Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Geuens et al., 2009) that suggest the need to enhance understanding on the antecedents and outcomes of the different BP dimensions. Insights from this study can therefore help inform the development of CBR with appropriate brand personality traits.

Second, rather than examine the effects of BE as an entirety, this study analyzes the effects of each of its four dimensions (i.e., sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual) on responsible and active BP dimensions. This adds a deeper and more nuanced understanding of brand experience effects. This is important for brand managers because it improves their knowledge on how to develop the preferred BP by adjusting the individual dimensions rather than BE as a single construct (Nysveen et al., 2013). Third, this study analyzes the effects of responsible and active dimensions on key CBR constructs (i.e., satisfaction, trust, and loyalty), and in doing so, the study responds to Keller and Lehmann's (2006) and Geuens et al.'s (2009) call to assess the value of the different personality dimensions at driving preference or loyalty. This study also contributes to the understanding of the relative impacts

of responsible and active BP on the three CBR constructs. There is a paucity of research about the relative effects of responsible and active BP on these three important CBR constructs (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013). This allows brand managers to differentiate their brand personalities beyond Aaker's (1997) BPS in order to develop stronger relationships.

The remainder of this article is structured as follow. First, the literature review begins with the conceptual framework linking brand experience, brand personality and key relationship constructs. This is followed by the hypotheses development. Next, the research method is explained. The findings are then presented, which followed by discussion on theoretical contribution and managerial implications.

## 2. Literature review and hypotheses

### 2.1. Brand experience (BE)

The starting point of the experiential approach is a renewed way to consider the concept of consumption as a holistic experience that involves a person and a company (Gentile, Spiller, & Noci, 2007). Nysveen et al. (2013) define customer experience as a function of a set of interactions between a customer and an organization, stimulated either through direct interactions (e.g., with a product) or indirect contact (e.g., communication) with company, in a personal and memorable way. In the last decade, an emergent research stream suggests that brands provide consumers with experiences (Beckman, Kumar, & Kim, 2013; Brakus et al., 2009; Dennis, Brakus, Gupta, & Alamanos, 2014; Ding & Tseng, 2015; Lin, 2015; Nysveen et al., 2013). BE is conceptualized as consumer's sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, and social responses to the brand-related stimuli from the brand marketing activities (Brakus et al., 2009). Thus, BE refers to the consumer's perception of their experience with the brand (Ding & Tseng, 2015).

Brakus et al. (2009) propose BE to include four dimensions of experiences: sensory, affective, intellectual, and behavioral. Sensory experiences refers to the sensations to the consumer five senses (e.g., touch), affective refers to a wide range of feelings (e.g., fun), intellectual refers to the analytical and imaginative thoughts, and behavioral refers to the actions (e.g., workout) being induced as the results of the brand stimuli. This four dimensions brand experience concept has been validated in a variety of product and service settings such as: tourism destinations (Beckman et al., 2013), consumer events (Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2013), personal care products (Francisco-Maffezzoli, Sempredon, & Prado, 2014), airlines (Lin, 2015), and coffeehouses (Choi, Ok, & Hyun, 2017).

Previous research displays that consumers use BE as the basis to appraise BP, which lead to favorable outcomes (i.e., brand attitude, brand satisfaction, brand loyalty) (e.g., Brakus et al., 2009; Chang & Chieng, 2006). However, these studies mostly measure BE on a second order factor model. Nysveen et al. (2013) advocate the need to investigate the effect of individual dimensions of BE since this would be more useful for brand managers. A positive customer experience can result in an emotional tie between a firm's brand and its customers (Gentile et al., 2007). For instance, Merrilees and Merrilees (2016) propose that BE forms consumer's cognitive and emotional engagement that lead to consumer co-creation. It is also shown that brand experience predicts brand loyalty through the mediation of hedonic emotions (Ding & Tseng, 2015). Due to inconsistent conclusions, many studies advocate the need to investigate the direct and indirect effect of BE on brand loyalty (Ding & Tseng, 2015; Francisco-Maffezzoli et al., 2014). These imply the need for further examination of the relationships of BE.

### 2.2. Brand personality (BP)

Aaker (1997) suggests that consumers do not have difficulty in assigning human personality features to brands. According to Fournier

(1998, p. 344), “one way to legitimize the brand-as-partners is to highlight ways in which brands are animated, humanized, or somehow personalized”. She suggests that people seem to need to anthropomorphize brands to facilitate their interaction with them. Brand personality (BP) is defined as human personality traits and characteristics being associated with a brand (Aaker, 1997); that is, the identification of the brand meaning with personality attributes (Aaker, Benet-Martínez, & Garolera, 2001). A distinctive BP contributes to create a set of favorable associations in consumer memory and thus positively affect favorable outcomes (Freling & Forbes, 2005; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014). As a result, personifying brands is considered a powerful activity that is essential for brands' success in terms of consumer-brand relationships, brand associations, preference and choice (Aaker, Fournier, & Brasel, 2004; Brakus et al., 2009; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Clemenz et al., 2012; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Freling & Forbes, 2005; Gordon et al., 2016; Nysveen et al., 2013).

Aaker (1997) conceptualizes brand personality as a multi-dimensional construct that represents five dimensions: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. Aaker's BPS has been used in many studies (Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013). However, it has also received some criticisms due to several reasons (Avis et al., 2014; Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; Geuens et al., 2009; Rauschnabel et al., 2016).

Geuens et al. (2009) criticize Aaker's brand personality scale (BPS) for: (1) its loose definition – embraces not only personality but also other human characteristics (e.g., age, gender, etc.); (2) its generalizability – does not generalize to situations in which analyses at the individual brand level and/or situations in which consumers are an element of differentiation; and (3) its limited cross-cultural replicability – for instance, in Spain only three of the five factors emerged, whereas in Japan only four of them (Aaker et al., 2001).

Geuens et al. (2009) propose a new BPS that is reliable and cross-culturally valid that resembles but distinct from Aaker's BPS (i.e., responsibility, activity, aggressiveness, simplicity, and emotionally). Unlike Aaker's scale, Geuens's BPS focus exclusively on attributes derived from human personality and does not subsume human attributes (Rauschnabel et al., 2016). The new BPS is more related to human personalities (i.e., Big Five Personalities) since they restrict brand personality to human personality traits that are relevant for and applicable to brands (Geuens et al., 2009). Accordingly, the Geuens et al.'s scale is deemed appropriate for use in this study.

Many studies believe that out of the five dimensions of Aaker's BPS, the two most prominent and applicable dimensions are sincere and exciting (e.g., Aaker et al., 2004; Eisend & Stokburger-Sauer, 2013; Hosany, Ekinci, & Uysal, 2006; Smit, Bronner, & Tolboom, 2007). Aaker et al. (2004) argue that sincere and exciting are interesting dimensions because they map onto warmth, vitality, and status – three ideals that are salient in interpersonal relationships (Fletcher, Simpson, Thomas, & Giles, 1999) – and capture the majority of variance in personality ratings for brands (Aaker, 1997; Caprara et al., 2001). Nevertheless, it has been discussed above that Aaker's BPS has its limitations. Based on this, we focus on responsibility and activity, which has been considered to resemble sincere and exciting (Geuens et al., 2009).

According to Geuens et al.'s BPS, responsibility dimension consists of three traits (i.e., down-to-earth, stable, and responsible), whereas activity dimension comprises another three traits (i.e., active, dynamic, and innovative). Responsible brand refers to consumer's expectation that a brand possesses down-to-earth, stable, and responsible qualities; whereas active brand refers to consumer's expectation that a brand possesses dynamism and innovation qualities (Gordon et al., 2016). Thus, responsible brand in this study refers to the consumer's perception that a brand is practical, realistic, reasonable, sensible, not likely to fail, firmly established, capable of being trusted, and morally accountable. Likewise, active brand in this study refers to the consumer's perception that a brand is engaging, tending to move about, alert, lively, original, creative in thinking, positive in thinking or feeling about

something, full of energy and new ideas.

Focusing on these two brand personality dimensions is of great interest due to several reasons. Nowadays the economic crisis has created a growing interest in the brand's responsibilities as a result of the increased demands of society (Sen et al., 2016). Embedding a brand with responsible or active personality enhances consumer's perceptions on the quality of the product powerfully and efficiently (Clemenz et al., 2012). Many companies have allocated unprecedented resources and efforts for being perceived as responsible (Porter & Kramer, 2011). On the other hand, other brands aspire to be perceived as dynamic and innovative to increase their success (Aaker, 2004), where a brand's innovativeness provides a source of competitive advantage (Nguyen et al., 2015) and increases business performance (Santos-Vijande, del Río-Lanza, Suárez-Álvarez, & Díaz-Martín, 2013).

A review of the literature reveals that there is a lack of research on the relationships between the two BP dimensions (i.e., responsibility and active) and brand outcomes. For instances, Gordon et al. (2016) find that responsibility and activity have significant direct and indirect relationships with attitudes and behavioral intentions. In the tourism industry, Matzler et al. (2016) show that responsibility is a better predictor of consumer behavioral intention, whereas activity better predicts brand-self congruity.

### 2.3. Consumer-brand relationship (CBR)

Consumers differ not only in how they perceive the brands but also in how they relate to brands (Fournier, 1998). The validity of the CBR metaphor has been widely argued in the marketing theory literature (Aggarwal, 2004; Chang & Chieng, 2006; Esch, Langner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006; Fetscherin & Heinrich, 2015; Louis & Lombart, 2010; Morgan-Thomas & Veloutsou, 2013; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014; Smit et al., 2007). Consumers form relationships with brands in much the same way in which they form relationships with each other in a social context (Aggarwal, 2004). Among the concepts and constructs of CBR, this study focuses on three that are considered as the most relevant: satisfaction, trust and loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Fetscherin & Heinrich, 2015; Fournier, 1998).

Satisfaction is the primary positive outcome of an exchange relationship (Esch et al., 2006). Bloemer and Kasper (1995, p. 314) define brand satisfaction as “the outcome of the subjective evaluation that the chosen brand meets or exceeds the expectations”. Trust has been conceptualized as a key variable in the exchange network between a firm and its customers because it encourages the long-term relationship (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Brand trust refers to the state where consumers are willing to rely on the brand because of its reliability and integrity to perform its stated function (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Since relationships are interactions over time, the essence of a CBR is brand loyalty (Fournier, 1998). Brand loyalty reflects the strength of the relationship between a customer's relative attitude and their repeat patronage (Lin, 2010).

A substantial amount of research has focused on the drivers of brand satisfaction, such as brand equity, brand awareness, and brand image (Çifci et al., 2016; Esch et al., 2006). Only a few study have looked into the extent to which BP can lead to brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty (e.g., Aaker et al., 2004; Brakus et al., 2009; Louis & Lombart, 2010; Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014; Sung & Kim, 2010). However, these studies used Aaker's BPS. According to Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer's (2013) meta-analysis on BP, studies on the relative effects of the BP dimensions on their outcomes are still lacking. Particularly for BPS that accounts for responsibility and activity.

### 2.4. BE, BP, and CBR

Fig. 1 presents our conceptual framework. We proposed that brand experience affects brand personality, which in the end affects the key relationship constructs. Our central assumption is that when consumers

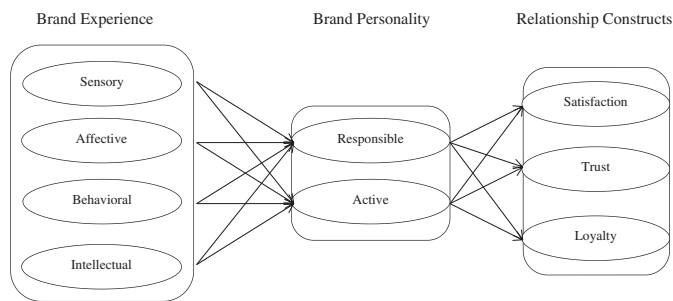


Fig. 1. Proposed framework linking brand experience, brand personality, and key relationship constructs.

receive experiences from the brand, it will form their perceptions on the brand's personality (Brakus et al., 2009). Subsequently, when they feel that the personality of the brand foster them to express their self-concept, these consumers will be loyal to the brand (Ekinci, Sirakaya-Turk, & Preciado, 2013; Malär, Krohmer, Hoyer, & Nyffenegger, 2011).

Extant research displays that strong and positive BE results in many favorable outcomes (e.g., Brakus et al., 2009; Japutra, Ekinci, & Simkin, 2016; Nysveen et al., 2013). Brand experience has been shown to positively affect brand personality (Brakus et al., 2009; Nysveen et al., 2013). For instance, Möller and Herm (2013) show that bodily experiences in retail environment shape the retail brand personality. Chang and Chieng (2006) show that individual experiences are positively related to brand personality in the coffee store industry. Another study also displays that brand experience affects brand personality in three product categories (i.e., consumer products, consumer electronics and fast-food service) (Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014).

Based on those studies, it is evident that brand experience and brand personality are closely related. However, no research to date provides empirical evidence on the relationship between the dimensions of brand experience and the two brand personalities (i.e., responsibility and activity). Only few studies investigate the drivers of the brand personality dimensions. For instance, Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer (2013) find that hedonic benefit claims, branding activities, the brand's country-of-origin, and consumer personalities are the key driver of brand personality.

Referring to previous studies, indirect and direct consumers' experiences with the brand form the brand personality traits (Aaker, 1997). Consumers should have experiences with the brand before they are able to form any subjective perceptions and personality characteristics associated with the brand (Sung & Kim, 2010). Furthermore, it is argued that brand personality is present when the consumer's mind is evoked with an integrated bundle of information and experiences (Morgan-Thomas & Veloutsou, 2013). Nysveen et al. (2013) propose that all of the experience dimensions positively influence brand personality. They argue that emotional and behavioral experiences are able to evoke the brand's sincerity and excitement. Thus, this study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H1.** Sensory (a), affective (b), behavioral (c), and intellectual (d) brand experience positively influences responsible brand personality.

**H2.** Sensory (a), affective (b), behavioral (c), and intellectual (d) brand experience positively influences active brand personality.

The link between brand personality and the three key relationship constructs included in this research are evident. In their study, Brakus et al. (2009) argue that brand personality enhances satisfaction, and loyalty due to the ability of the brand to foster consumers' self-expression. Lee, Back, and Kim (2009), in the context of family restaurants, find that brand personality plays a dominant role in influencing consumer's positive and negative emotions that predict satisfaction and loyalty. Additionally, previous research also finds that brand personality positively influences trust (Louis & Lombart, 2010; Sung & Kim,

2010).

The central assumption is that when consumers believe that the brands' personalities are congruent with their self-concept and help them expressing themselves (Malär et al., 2011), they will feel more satisfied with the brand purchase. Then, they would end up trusting the brand and increases their likelihood to repurchase the brand (Brakus et al., 2009; Japutra et al., 2016; Venable, Rose, Bush, & Gilbert, 2005).

Clemenz et al. (2012) find that responsibility and activity traits predict consumer's perceived quality. Being perceived as responsible brand increases the technical quality and expertise of the brand, which results being viewed favorably by the consumers (Gordon et al., 2016). At the same time, they also argue that being perceived as active brand means that the brand is proactively managing and maintaining the relationships with consumers, which means the brand is practicing a sound relationship marketing practices. Consumers who perceived brand as responsible have greater purchase likelihood, longer-term loyalty and advocacy behaviors (Du, Bhattacharya, & Sen, 2007). Likewise, Madrigal and Boush (2008) find that responsibility dimension has the greater effect on attitude. Responsible dimension also has a significant association with brand engagement (Goldsmith & Goldsmith, 2012). Thus, the study proposes the following hypotheses:

**H3.** Responsible (a) and active (b) brand personality positively influences satisfaction.

**H4.** Responsible (a) and active (b) brand personality positively influences trust.

**H5.** Responsible (a) and active (b) brand personality positively influences loyalty.

### 3. Methods

#### 3.1. Instrument and procedure

A questionnaire was chosen as the instrument of this study. In the questionnaire respondents were provided with a list of brands and asked to choose a brand that they frequently used to answer the questions (Huang, Mitchell, & Rosenbaum-Elliott, 2012). These brands were adapted from Geuens et al.'s (2009) study. However, in order to correspond the brands within the context of the Spanish market, we asked 3 academics to justify the brands in the list. Several brands that were considered not appropriate due to its availability and familiarity were replaced. Next, we asked 80 students to further refine the list of brands that will be used in this study. As a result, the brands that were put in the list were Apple, Chupa Chups, Coca-Cola, Hacendado, Monster, Nespresso, Nike, Ray-Ban, Red Bull, Seat, Samsung, and Zara. The respondents were provided with the list of brands at the beginning of the survey and they were asked to choose one brand from the list that they are familiar with.

A Spanish market research company collected the data through the means of electronic survey. In total, 347 participants responded to the invitation and participated in the survey. However, 8 questionnaires were dropped due to incomplete answers and missing values, leaving 339 questionnaires ready for analysis. Most of the respondents were female (54.3%). The majority of these respondents obtained a university degree (64.3%). In terms of age group, 50.4% were 24 or younger and 32.7% were between the age of 25 and 35 years old. The respondents were either employees (40.7%) or students (45.7%).

#### 3.2. Measures

All constructs were measured using items adapted from previous studies on a 7-point scale anchored by (1) = 'strongly disagree' and (7) = 'strongly agree'. *Brand experience*, adapted from Brakus et al. (2009), was measured on the dimensional level: sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual. These dimensions were measured using three items

each. *Responsible and active brand personalities*, adapted from [Geuens et al.'s \(2009\)](#) brand personality scale, was measured using three items each. *Trust* was measured using four items adapted from [Chaudhuri and Holbrook \(2001\)](#). *Satisfaction* was measured using two items adapted from [Brakus et al. \(2009\)](#). Finally, to measure *Brand loyalty*, a five items scale was adopted from the work of [Yoo and Donthu \(2001\)](#).

4. Results

Partial least square (PLS) using SmartPLS 3.0 was used to analyze the data. PLS was chosen because PLS is able to address a broader range of problems by efficiently work with a much wider range of sample sizes with less restrictive assumptions about the data ([Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011](#)). We follow a two-stage approach ([Hair, Sarstedt, Hopkins, & Kuppelwieser, 2014](#)), where the first stage estimates the latent constructs' scores (i.e., outer model evaluation) and the second stage calculates the outer weights and loadings as well as the path coefficients of the structural model (i.e., inner model evaluation).

Based on the PLS-SEM algorithm results, the constructs were reliable since the composite reliability scores exceed the threshold of 0.60 ([Bagozzi & Yi, 1988](#)). Next, we assessed the convergent validity of the constructs. Convergent validity is achieved if the average variance extracted (AVE) scores are above 0.50 ([Fornell & Larcker, 1981](#)) and each item has outer loadings above 0.70 ([Hair et al., 2014](#)). Based on the initial results, we have to remove one item each from sensory, behavioral and intellectual constructs. These items are reversed items. After removing these items, the AVE scores were above 0.50 and the factor loadings of each item were above 0.70, indicating convergent validity was achieved. [Table 1](#) displays the reliability and validity of the constructs.

**Table 1**  
Descriptive, reliability and convergent validity.

Composite	Factor loading	Mean	SD	CR	AVE	Item
1. Sensory	0.91	4.65	1.61	0.92	0.84	This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses. I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.
	0.92					
2. Affective	0.92	3.46	1.74	0.93	0.82	This brand induces feelings and sentiments. I do not have strong emotions for this brand. (R) This brand is an emotional brand.
	0.89					
	0.90					
3. Behavioral	0.86	3.10	1.55	0.82	0.70	This brand results in bodily experiences. I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand.
	0.81					
4. Intellectual	0.92	2.71	1.62	0.91	0.83	This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving. I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.
	0.90					
5. Responsible	0.80	4.49	1.41	0.88	0.70	Down-to-earth Stable Responsible
	0.86					
	0.86					
6. Active	0.91	5.06	1.41	0.91	0.78	Dynamic Innovative Active
	0.86					
	0.87					
7. Satisfaction	0.94	5.11	1.43	0.94	0.89	I am satisfied with the brand and its performance. My choice to get this brand has been a wise one.
	0.95					
8. Trust	0.87	4.32	1.48	0.92	0.75	I trust this brand. I rely on this brand. This is an honest brand. This brand is safe.
	0.83					
	0.87					
	0.90					
9. Brand loyalty	0.86	4.52	1.56	0.93	0.73	I consider myself to be loyal to this brand. I will buy this brand again. This brand would be my first choice. I will not buy other brands if this brand is available at the store. I will recommend this brand to others.
	0.84					
	0.92					
	0.77					
	0.87					

Note: SD: Standard deviation; CR: Composite reliability; AVE: Average variances extracted.

**Table 2**  
Summary of discriminant validity (HTMT).

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Sensory									
2. Affective	0.72								
3. Behavioral	0.75	<b>0.94</b>							
4. Intellectual	0.54	0.68	<b>0.96</b>						
5. Responsible	0.49	0.44	0.45	0.41					
6. Active	0.74	0.52	0.59	0.48	0.68				
7. Satisfaction	0.59	0.50	0.54	0.47	0.83	0.70			
8. Trust	0.54	0.59	0.64	0.58	0.83	0.60	<b>0.93</b>		
9. Brand loyalty	0.53	0.56	0.54	0.48	0.62	0.56	0.82	0.85	

After examining the convergent validity, we assessed the discriminant validity using heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio. According to [Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt \(2015\)](#), discriminant validity is achieved if the HTMT value does not exceeds the threshold value of 0.90. [Table 2](#) displays the HTMT scores.

Since there were HTMT scores above the threshold (i.e., 0.90), we checked on the upper confidence interval scores. [Henseler et al. \(2015\)](#) note that discriminant validity is achieved when the value of HTMS is above 0.90 but the upper confidence interval value is less than one. We ran the bootstrap resampling procedure (5000 subsamples) to obtain the upper confidence interval value and to test the research hypotheses.

The upper confidence interval for intellectual-behavioral, behavioral-affective and trust-satisfaction were 1.09, 1.07 and 0.96, respectively. Since the upper confidence interval for trust-satisfaction was less than one, discriminant validity is achieved. For intellectual-behavioral and behavioral-affective, the upper confidence interval scores were > 1. However, the squared correlation between intellectual-

**Table 3**  
Results of hypotheses testing.

Path	SPC	t-Value
H1a: Sensory → responsible	0.27	3.97***
H1b: Affective → responsible	0.14	1.94*
H1c: Behavioral → responsible	− 0.03	0.51 <sup>ns</sup>
H1d: Intellectual → responsible	0.15	2.73**
H2a: Sensory → active	0.53	9.62***
H2b: Affective → active	0.04	0.58 <sup>ns</sup>
H2c: Behavioral → active	0.04	0.53 <sup>ns</sup>
H2d: Intellectual → active	0.12	2.04*
H3a: Responsible → satisfaction	0.53	11.53***
H3b: Active → satisfaction	0.61	14.22***
H4a: Responsible → trust	0.38	7.39***
H4b: Active → trust	0.30	5.91***
H5a: Responsible → brand loyalty	0.17	3.47**
H5b: Active → brand loyalty	0.28	5.43***

Variance explained	
Responsible	20.5%
Active	40.4%
Satisfaction	55.3%
Trust	52.2%
Brand loyalty	34.7%

Note: SPC: Standardized path coefficient; \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ .

behavioral (0.41) and behavioral-affective (0.45) were lower than the AVE, indicating discriminant validity is achieved (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 3 displays the results of the bootstrapping procedure.

The results show that sensory, affective, and intellectual brand experiences positively affect responsible brand personality, supporting H1a, H1b, and H1d. H1c was not supported, this means that behavioral brand experience did not influence responsible brand personality. For active brand personality, the results show that only sensory and intellectual brand experiences have significant positive associations, supporting H2a and H2d. Affective and behavioral brand experiences did not influence active brand personality. It was also evident that sensory brand experience was a better predictor of active compared to responsible brand personality. Meanwhile, intellectual brand experience was a better predictor of responsible compared to active brand personality.

Both responsible and active brand personalities positively affect satisfaction, trust, and brand loyalty, supporting H3, H4, and H5. However, it was evident that active brand personality was a better predictor of satisfaction and brand loyalty, while, the findings show that responsible brand personality was a better predictor of trust.

## 5. Conclusion

### 5.1. Theoretical contributions

This study extends prior research on brand experience and brand personality (Brakus et al., 2009; Dennis et al., 2014; Geuens et al., 2009; Nysveen et al., 2013) by providing some of the first empirical evidence on the role of the dimensions of brand experience together with responsible and active brand personalities on key relationship constructs. More specifically, the findings reveal that not all dimensions of brand experience are capable in building responsible and active personalities. The findings also show which brand personality leads to higher key relationship constructs.

This study shed a light into how the dimensions of BE perform in predicting the two dimensions of BP. Nysveen et al. (2013) show that sensory experiences positively affect brand personality, whereas intellectual experiences negatively affect brand personality. They also find that affective experiences do not influence brand personality.

Apparently this study shows the other way around. The results show that sensory and intellectual experiences positively affect both responsible and active brand personalities. Meanwhile, affective experiences only influence responsible personalities and not active personalities. This means that building not only sensory but also intellectual and affective experiences help in framing the desired personality of the brand.

The findings also show that behavioral experiences do not influence either responsible or active personalities. This supports Nysveen et al.'s (2013) findings that behavioral experiences do not influence brand personality. Sensory experiences are more likely to influence active rather than responsible personalities; on the contrary intellectual experiences are more likely to influence responsible rather than active personalities.

This study also highlights the mediating effects of responsible and active personality. Nysveen et al. (2013) show that affective experiences do not influence brand personality, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty. At the same time, they show that intellectual experiences negatively influence brand personality. First, we show that affective experiences positively affect satisfaction, trust, and loyalty through the mediation of responsible personalities. Thus, when a brand is framed with active personalities, it would be better to foster sensory and intellectual experiences rather than affective experiences. Second, we show that intellectual experiences help in building stronger brand personalities.

It has been documented that sensory experiences lead to high-risk sports activities, such as river rafting and skydiving (Arnould & Price, 1993). Thus, when the brands foster sensory experiences, consumers will consider the brands to have active personalities. Meanwhile, Brakus et al. (2009) note that intellectual experiences are closely related to cognitions. Individuals who prefer intellectual experiences are usually high in need for cognition (Tuten & Bosnjak, 2001). Extant research argues that individuals with high need for cognition tend to search for new information, opportunities, and innovation (Wu, Parker, & De Jong, 2014). Furthermore, it has been shown that need for cognition is positively related to openness to experience and conscientiousness (Sadowski & Cogburn, 1997). Thus, increasing intellectual experiences may increase consumers' perception of the brand being responsible and active.

Dennis et al. (2014) find that affective experiences are stronger on attitude toward the ad and the approach behavior toward the advertiser compared to intellectual experiences. Although both personalities are strongly associated with the three CBR constructs, our findings show that affective experiences only influence responsible but not active personalities, whereas intellectual experiences influence both personalities. Thus, we argue that intellectual experiences are stronger than affective experiences in predicting favorable consumer behavior.

### 5.2. Managerial implications

The findings enlighten on how to build personalities through experiences. Managers should start increasing intellectual experiences apart from sensory and affective experiences since these experiences lead to both responsible and active personalities. Managers could combine these experiences in their marketing activities. For example, when conducting a 'fun run', marketing manager could insert 'little known facts' about the surrounding area. Another example that can be used is to create an event like the 'Amazing Race', where participants should finish several quests while they are racing. For affective experiences, managers could create a 'family-bonding' run or create other activities that induce consumers' sentiments. By doing these, firms are able to create the desired personalities for their brands.

In terms of the relationships between responsible and active brand personality on key relationship constructs, the findings display that active brand personality is a better predictor of satisfaction and brand loyalty compared to responsible brand personality. Stronger key

relationship constructs are likely to result from active rather than from responsible personalities, contrasting Aaker et al.'s (2004) study which find that sincere personalities are better predictor of relationship strength indicators (i.e., commitment, intimacy, satisfaction, and self-connection). These results also contrasting Su and Tong's (2015) findings, which show that neither activity nor excitement influences brand equity. However, our results are in line with Eisend and Stokburger-Sauer's (2013) study, which show that exciting personalities are more likely to influence brand relationship strength and purchase behavior than sincere personalities.

Smit et al. (2007) note that consumers perceive brands with unique and exciting personalities are more qualified as partners. They argue that brands with those personalities are more outspoken and make it easier for consumers to relate with the brands. This is also related to the age of the consumers since most of the respondents in this study are young consumers. It is not that they do not think about the brands' responsibility to the society. The problem lies in their skepticism on the brands' action (Loussaïef, Cacho-Elizondo, Pettersen, & Tobiassen, 2014). It should also be noted that the findings show that responsible personalities also affect satisfaction and loyalty.

Our findings show that responsible personalities are more likely to result in higher trust compared to active personalities. This is in line with Sung and Kim's (2010) study, which show that sincere and rugged personalities are more likely to influence brand trust rather than exciting and sophisticated personalities. In addition, this is also in line with Rampl and Kenning's (2014) findings that sincere personalities rather than exciting personalities are more likely to influence employer brand trust. It seems that consumers are more likely to think that a responsible brand have higher reliability and integrity.

Managers, particularly those who are targeting younger consumers, should pay attention to their brands' actions. They should not only communicate that their brands are responsible, but they should also create dynamic and innovative events together with it. For instance, managers could involve their consumers or even endorse the brand community in their Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities. Furthermore, managers should also try to communicate that their brands are outspoken.

## 6. Limitations and future studies

This study provides explanation on the dimensions of brand experience that help in building responsible and active personality. Moreover, this study presents initial empirical evidence on which personality (responsibility or activity) is more important in building key relationship constructs. However, it is not without its limitations.

First, half of the respondents in this study are young Generation Y consumers. Although it has been argued that young Generation Y is a large and lucrative market segment (Norum, 2008), further research should test the conceptual framework that covers different generations. Second, this study is bound by a single market and culture (i.e., Spanish). Hence, the generalizability of the results should be increased through investigating other culture in the future studies. Third, the present study eliminated the reversed items on three dimensions of brand experience (i.e., sensory, behavioral, and intellectual). Future research should pay attention to the wording of these reversed items carefully.

Next, we believe that it is noteworthy to further investigate variables that might moderate the link between brand experience, brand personality, and key relationship constructs. For instance, Mende, Bolton, and Bitner (2013) argue that consumers with different attachment style will act differently to the relationship activities being offered by a brand. Furthermore, future studies could also include consumers' positive and negative emotions since these are found to mediate the relationship to satisfaction and loyalty (Lee et al., 2009).

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