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**An Investigation of the Image Congruence of Global Consumer Brands and  
Consumers' Self-image: A Cross-cultural Perspective**

*Longfei Li, longfei.li@postgrad.mbs.ac.uk*

*Nitin Sanghavi, nitin.sanghavi@mbs.ac.uk*

*Claudio De Mattos, claudio.de-mattos@mbs.ac.uk*

*Manchester Business School, The University of Manchester, UK*

## **Abstract**

**The purpose of this study is to establish a new conceptual model of self-congruity, which incorporates brand and self-image, and the consumer culture. This study espouses the consumer culture framework of Steenkamp and de Jong (2010) in order to discover a way in which to overcome the limitations of using Hofstede's cultural framework, and measure the consumer culture on the individual level. Considering the nature of this topic, catching-up intention and facts, a mixed method will be selected as the major research method, combined with focus groups, interviews and surveys. This working paper will demonstrate the relevant frameworks and processes. The conceptual model this study has been established will be presented based on the literature review, as well as the suggested research method and possible outcomes.**

## **1 Introduction**

In current consumer behaviour research, the self-congruity theory has been studied in numerous ways, particularly focusing on the concept of "symbolic purchase" in the retail industry. Brand personalities, a crucial component of brand equity, are not only associated with a product's functional attributes, but also influenced by other virtual factors, such as consumers' self-image (Aaker, 1997). Consumer researchers assume that product/brand image interrelates with self-concept, that is, that self-image and product/brand image are congruent and therefore influence consumers' buying behaviour and brand performance (e.g. Adam, 2005; Kressmann et al., 2006; Kuester et al., 2007). Empirical studies have determined that the notion of self-congruity plays a significant role in the evaluation of global brands. Self-image also significantly influences purchase intention (Jamal & Goode, 2001). However, the results of recent studies differ exceedingly from the above expectation. Different corresponding types of self-image congruities should be outlined (Ibrahim & Najjar, 2008), since Sirgy et al. (2000) have indicated different dimensions of self-concept. On the other hand, Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) criticised the brand personality scales by challenging the conceptual validity of Aaker (1997)'s framework. Furthermore, while existing studies of self-image congruence regarding global consumer brands encountered problems with widespread implementation, a broader application of self-congruity theory could overcome these difficulties by extending product categories and target consumer groups (Kwak & Kang, 2009). Moreover, the global measurement for self-image congruence provides more clear and accurate scales rather than the traditional measurement most previous studies used.

On the other hand, it has also been observed that cultural issues significantly impact brand image and self-concept. Hofstede's cultural framework has been applied extensively, but various limitations have been identified regarding its use in assessing cross-cultural issues (Smith & Bond, 1998). Recent empirical studies of cross-cultural issues use different image congruence models and apply them to just a few countries, making it difficult to generalise their findings. Therefore, Steenkamp and de Jong (2010) have developed a whole new framework for examining cultural issues in consumer behaviour research.

The purpose of this study is to establish a new conceptual model of self-congruity: the proposed model incorporates brand image, self-image, and cultural values. The research adopts the method of Steenkamp and de Jong (2010) to investigate cross-cultural issues, which will be applied more comprehensively to measure image congruence. Moreover, in order to discover a way in which to minimise the limitations of using Hofstede's cultural framework, this study espouses the consumer culture framework of Steenkamp and de Jong (2010), which would be more applicable to consumer behaviour research regarding consumer cultural issues. Considering the nature of this topic, catching-up intention and facts, a mixed method will be used as the major research method. It will be combined with focus groups, interviews and surveys. The theoretical contribution of this study will be that the new self-congruity model can be used in various domains of global consumer brands. With regard to managerial contribution, this study could also enable global brand managers to effectively produce or modify their brand strategies.

## **2 Theoretical Background**

sectors and suitable brands for this research to study on. The research questions carry out through the process of the literature review. They are: (1) How is brand image measured in relevant studies? (2) What is the role of self-concept in consumer behaviour research? (3) How does culture serve as a source and relate to the symbolic meaning of products and brands? (4) How do these three subjects work and influence each other? The methodologies adopted in the relevant research have been analysed during the literature review process as well in order to find out better research method for the current study. The following section will determine the key issues addressed in the previous literature.

## **2.1 Brand Image**

Kotler et al. (2005, p. 282) define brand image as “*the set of beliefs that consumers hold about a particular brand*”. Brand image, as the perceptions of brand traits or prototypical buyers, is often represented by qualities to which the consumer relates, such as reputation (Kotler, 2003). The perception is reflected by the brand associations held in the consumer’s memory (Keller, 1993). It would also be a challenge to change on brand image is established (Kotler, 2003). From consumer’s perspective, brand image is the result of the cumulative effects of the company’s marketing mix activities (Roth, 1995). Moreover, Keller (1993) identifies that brand associations include the attributes of product-related or non-product-related. These associations could be different based on the favorability, strength, and uniqueness. This also includes the symbolic and functional meaning of products. A congruence theory of brand image developed by Keller (1993) indicates that brand associations share content and meaning with other attributes and associations. This type of associations can help consumers to recall the brand and connect to the brand node in consumer’s mind. However, brand image is not always easy to built for service intangibility and variability (Kotler, 2003), which also take time to develop and prevents duplication by competitors. Therefore, from this perspective, brand image is significant to all marketers. Nevertheless, Wood (2000) states that brand image is impossible to quantify.

### **2.1.1 Symbolic or Functional**

Another importance of brand image is that a brand can be either symbolic or functional, although some authors argue that a brand could not be both symbolic and functional because the two aspects serve in different purposes (Park et al., 1991; Park et al., 1986). However, the empirical study shows that consumers do not only focus on symbolic side of a brand, but they also prefer the functional performance of the product (Bhat & Reddy, 1998). Jaffe and Nebenzahl (2006, p. 19) state that “brand names serve as abstract symbols for attributes of products”. In addition, a number of researchers recognise that products have symbolic images that are often more important to a product’s success than its actual physical attributes and characteristics (Aaker, 1991; Graeff, 1996). The current study started with the brand concept developed by Park et al. (1986) who proposed brand concept management (BCM), which states that a brand concept can be either symbolic or functional. They suggested that a brand concept should be remain for the brand’s life in order to maintain its consistency once the concept is selected for the brand (Park et al., 1986). Their conceptual framework directly relates to the current study. However, the assumption made by Park et al. (1986) was based on brand concepts being unidimensional without empirical studies to examine their assumption. Thus, how to measure and scale whether a specific brand is functional or symbolic is the problem and needs to be solved. Furthermore, there is a argument that Park et al. (1986) assert that brands should be positioned to appeal to being either functional or symbolic; otherwise, they could not clearly relate the brand to either their functional or their symbolic need.

The research of Bhat and Reddy (1998) might give a clarification to Park et al. (1986). They suggest that consumers see a brand’s functionality and symbolism as separate phenomena. However, they continue to say that consumers accept brands that had both symbolic and functional meaning (Bhat & Reddy, 1998). Additionally, the current research notices that Bhat and Reddy (1998, p. 40) state, “if the associations representing the different brand concepts do not fit well, the resulting confusion among consumers can

generalising knowledge.

### **2.1.2 Brand Personality**

The symbolic use of brands often involves consumers' perceptions of endowing brands with human personality traits Aaker (1997). Plummer (1984) declared that personality of brand itself is one of the components of brand image. He characterises brand with such attributes like "youthful," "colorful," or "gentle". Those attributes could also reveal emotions induced by brand (Keller, 1993). Aaker (1997, p. 347) formally defined brand personality in his paper formally as "the set of human characteristics associated with a brand". She cited Sirgy (1982) to designate the elusiveness of how and when brand personality could develop a relationship with the consumer's personality and then influence consumer preference. Aaker is the first one to explore the effect of the "Big Five" dimensions into consumer behaviour – sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness - on brand personality. She reviewed numerous studies regarding the "Big Five," which were first documented by Digman (1990), and brought it to the highest organisational level by citing Goldberg (1993). Aaker provided a systematically generalisable scale across product categories that can measure brand personality. She also developed a theoretical framework of brand personality. Aaker's framework has a far-reaching impact on future studies. It is essential to the current study, because it could also help to build up the scales for measuring self-congruity. Moreover, the contribution of Aaker's research can also provide a general understanding about the symbolic use of brands. It partially filled in the gap in the work of Park et al. (1986). The variables Aaker analysed made a huge impact on brand personality, which would link brands' symbolic meaning to consumers' self-image.

However, Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) have criticised the brand personality scales by challenging the conceptual validity of Aaker (1997)'s framework. They do not agree that brand personality scales actually measure brand personality but, rather, brand identity. In fact, brand personality is one of the dimensions of brand identity (Kapferer, 1992, 1998). Hence, Aaker might have combined different levels of brand identity and mixed all the aspects into brand personality only (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). On the other hand, Aaker (1997) recognised the difficulties of applying the scale of measuring brand personality in different cultural contexts. Those dimensions might not all be valued across cultures, which remind us to carefully choose the measurement scales in the current study.

### **2.1.3 Measurement of Brand Image**

Based on the literature review, brand personalities and the brand-consumer relationship seems significantly influence brand image. Viot (2003) developed a set of brand image dimensions from the brand identity concept to explain the effect of brand image of consumers' brand (Fig.1). In his framework, there are four components to define brand image dimensions: brand personality, brand values, brand-consumer relationship, and consumer image. The components of Viot's (2003) definition of brand image dimensions are consistent with Kapferer's (1992, 1998) brand identity prism. Viot's (2003) also used a second-order factor analysis to demonstrate how the four modules related to inner and social dimensions of brand image. The brand personality and brand symbolic values are two features of the inner dimension, whereas the brand-consumer relationship and user image are related to the social dimension of brand image.

However, there is no consensus on how to measure brand image (Martinez & de Chernatony, 2004). In the brand identity literatures, researchers have used different methods to measure brand image from the variable angles of the brand (e.g. Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000; Hsieh, 2002; Aaker, 1997; de Chernatony, 2001; Kapferer, 1998; Keller, 2001). Hsieh (2002) argued that image dimensions as consistency with consumers' various desires were represented as members of the higher-order category, which served as the foundation of brand associations. Therefore, identifying brand image dimensions is critical for the current study. Hence, despite the framework of Viot (2003) might be the most comprehensive model regarding brand image dimensions located in the literature, the framework has not been tested by empirical studies. Except brand personality, the rest of three brand image dimensions of Viot (2003) still need to be justified in order to establish their relationship with brand image. On the other hand, Martinez and de Chernatony (2004)

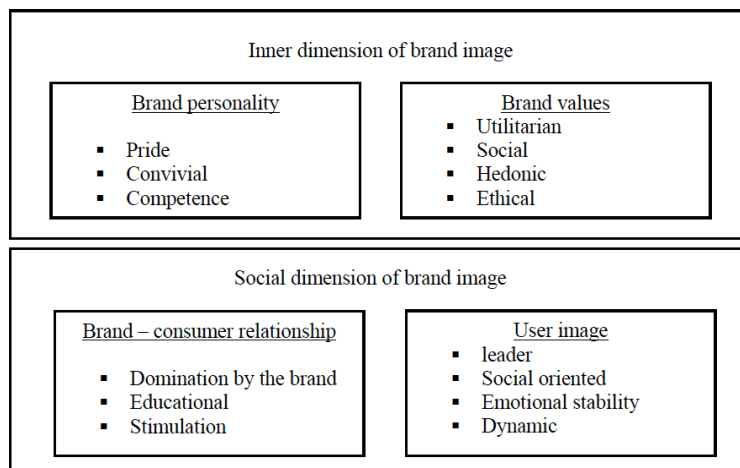


FIG.1: BRAND IMAGE DIMENSIONS (Viot, 2003)

## 2.2 Self-concept

Self-concept is defined as “the totality of the individual’s thoughts and feelings having reference to himself as an object” (Rosenberg, 1979, p. 9), but it is treated in variable ways. Previous research has identified that consumers’ purchasing is based on products and brands’ symbolic values as well as functional properties (Aaker, 1997; Kwak & Kang, 2009; Adam, 2005; Bhat & Reddy, 1998; Dennis et al., 2002b; Hsieh, 2002; Kapferer, 1998; Levy, 1959; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Sheth et al., 1991). Brand name capture the symbolic value connected with a brand or product, as well as the realisation of the symbolic value represented by consumers’ consumption of those products or brands (Kapferer, 1998). Hence, brand image can ensure favoritism and purchase intention when it comes to match consumers’ self-image. This is called self-congruity defined by Sirgy (1985, 1986).

The problem of self-congruity theories is that those analyses cannot be generalised across all categories of products (Sirgy, 1982). Sirgy’s (1985) hypothesis test indicates a significant relationship between self-congruity and ideal congruity towards purchase motivation. He used 30 personality images as attributes to measure the products’ image and the participants answered the questions in the form of questionnaires. Sirgy’s (1985) study shows that self-congruity mechanisms may have greater influence on consumers than ideal congruity dynamics. He also assumed that purchase motivation may be differently affected by self-esteem and self-consistency motives. It brings notice to the current study that differences in individuals’ personalities can affect purchase motivation regarding self-image/brand image congruity. However, Sirgy’s (1985) work still has the same problem as his another work back to 1982 (Sirgy, 1982). The result might not be able to apply in broader areas. The outcomes might be different to apply Sirgy’s assumption into different product categories, although they proposed a new method later on to measure self-congruity that could minimise some of the limitations of the traditional method (Sirgy et al., 1997). Moreover, the samples have limitations.

The study of Graeff (1996) links considerably to the two papers published by Sirgy (1982, 1985). He argued that consumer’s product evaluation and buying intention could be significantly influenced by the degree of the congruence of brand image and the consumer’s self-image (Coward et al., 2008; Graeff, 1996; Walchli, 2007). However, a question is also raised by Graeff (1996) regarding whether the result can be applied to both public and private brands. The limitation could also be a single choice of product, which means the result might not be suitable for products with different natures from those studies. Another contribution is that the result of his research is extrapolated into managerial implementation. Graeff emphasised the effect of advertisements on consumers’ purchasing evaluation. Thus, it means that

2006). It is crucial to understand this concept for retail managers who intend to identify and attract their target customers (Pan & Zinkhan, 2006). The model illustrates that the degree of self-congruity is determined by the retail patron's image, which is evaluated in terms of the consumer's self-concept (Sirgy et al., 2000). The significance of this model for the present research is to demonstrate the importance of self-congruity to the retailing industry and give the inspiration of how to develop the model in light of self-congruity and retail brands.

### **2.3 Image Congruence**

There are two parts of image congruence: self-image and brand image. Sirgy et al. (1997) propose two methods of measuring self-image congruence: traditional measurement and direct or global measurement. However, Sirgy et al. (1997) discover that the traditional method has three key problems: discrepancy scores, irrelevant images, and the use of the compensatory decision rule. Hence, they propose another method which is called global measurement. Global measurement would have more clear and accurate scales which would be suitable for both brand image and user's self-image. The method cues subjects to conjure up their own image of the product user (Sirgy et al., 1997). Then, the method guides them to indicate their global perception of degree of match or mismatch between how they see themselves (self-image) and the product-user image, which means this measuring process catches self-image congruence directly (Sirgy et al., 1997). In fact, the global measurement for self-image congruence aims to discover the image trails which is both suitable to the brand image and self-image. Hence, the present study will adopt the global method to measure the image congruence.

### **2.4 Culture issues**

#### **2.4.1 National culture**

Most studies regarding national cultural issues cited Hofstede's (1983b, 1984b) work. Hofstede (1983b, 1984b) developed a conceptual framework for culture dimensions as a theoretical basis or justification for the choice of countries in many studies. This typology of Hofstede's (1983b, 1984b) cultural dimensions sufficiently describes the main aspects of culture (Lu et al., 1999; Nakata & Sivakumar, 1996). However, (Smith & Bond, 1998) argued that Hofstede (1983a, b, 1984a) was particularly careful to emphasise that his core values applied to national cultures rather than individuals. The significant limitations were obvious in Hofstede's (1983a, b, 1984a) studies. They included the target sample and the scales of individualism. Therefore, the current study must not only consider Hofstede's (1983a, b, 1984a) framework, but also integrate the recent studies of cross-cultural issues.

Roth (1995) has developed a conceptual framework that can be applied in foreign markets by identifying a variety of cultural and socioeconomic environmental characteristics. One precondition that must be mentioned here is that those characteristics hypothetically affect brand image performance. Roth (1995) connected Hofstede's (1984b) influential work to brand image evaluation. Three culture dimensions linked to brand images and consumer needs, which are power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism. However, Roth (1995) does not quite clearly indicate a specific situation, such as how to make distinctions between nations in which there exist high power distance and low individualism cultures. With the trend of globalisation, a fusion of eastern and western culture has been taking place. On the other hand, Roth (1995) also realises that regional culture within countries has exerted considerable influence on brand image performance. Thus, cross-cultural issues appear to be significantly important, especially for international enterprises.

Another important framework of national culture was developed by Inglehart and Baker (2000). It is more useful for consumer and brand/product research because it is grounded in materialism and modernisation theory (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010). The national-cultural value theory of Inglehart and Baker (2000) emphasises on both national and individual levels, which Steenkamp and de Jong (2010, p. 22) summed up as "two concepts occupy a central position in both consumer culture theory and globalisation

survival/self-expression dimension (Inglehart & Baker, 2000). Hence, this framework is more suitable for the current study and it will be applied into the conceptual model instead of using Hofstede's framework.

#### **2.4.2 Self-congruity and cross-cultural issues**

Quester et al. (2000) empirically apply the self-congruity theory into different cultural contexts from the perspective of market behaviour; the current research might use a similar approach. Quester et al. (2000) notice that two determinants of market behaviours, consumer behaviour and the managerial decision-making process, can be influenced by culture (Tse et al., 1998; Usunier, 1996). Nevertheless, an analysis of Quester et al. (2000) reveals the difficulties of generalising and predicting such results. Through this paper, the present study understands that the role of the self-congruity concept in consumers' choices in cross-cultural contexts still needs to be further investigated. How to generalise such knowledge is the crucial matter the current study needs to consider. Moreover, due to the complexity of self-congruity, self-image congruence models include the actual self-congruity model, the ideal self-congruity model, the social self-congruity model, the ideal social self-congruity model, and the affective self-congruity model (Sirgy et al., 1991). The nature of this complexity might make it difficult for the current study to evaluate self-congruity across different retail product categories. Aside from involvement in cross-cultural issues, this difficulty would be a significant hurdle to overcome.

#### **2.4.3 General Values**

Basic human values theory has two core components: Openness to Change versus Conservation and Self-Enhancement versus Self-Transcendence (Schwartz, 1992, 1994; Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). Values are defined by this theory as desirable, trans-situational goals which are important in different ways as guiding principles in human's lives (Ros et al., 1999). 10 motivationally distinct types of values relate dynamically to one another (Ros et al., 1999) and can be arranged around the perimeter of a circle (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010): universalism, benevolence, conformity, tradition, security, power, achievement, hedonism, stimulation, and self-direction. According to the analysis of Steenkamp and de Jong (2010, p. 23-24), "associations of any external variable should decrease monotonically when going around the circular structure of value types in both directions from the most positively associated value type to the most negatively associated value type" (Schwartz & Sagiv, 1995). Moreover, during to globalisation, the consumers who value stimulation will have more significant influences on global products (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010) which fits the purpose of the current study.

#### **2.4.4 Consumer Culture**

From another perspective, culture is a system of shared meanings (Smith & Bond, 1998). Smith and Bond (1998) asserted that the studies of value differences provided the best conceptual frameworks to guide cross-cultural research. They stated that consistency across cultures could be shown by the structure of individual values (Smith & Bond, 1998). Value differences across countries was crucial when the selected values were different both within and across countries, which could help to explain cultural differences (Smith & Bond, 1998). They also categorised the levels of cross-cultural studies as culture-level and individual-level comparisons. Hence, it is fundamental to recognise the differences between as culture-level and individual-level in any cross-cultural research.

The value classifications are in the two different levels: culture-level and individual-level (Smith & Bond, 1998). It seems Hofstede's (1983b, a, 1984a) cultural framework was more closely related to culture-level. Consequently, it could demonstrate a limitation of Hofstede's (1983b, a, 1984a) framework to some extent. However, Schwartz and Sagiv (1995) found that the problem of establishing criteria from sample deviation for separating actual cultural differences was rarely addressed by previous cross-cultural researchers who conducted studies of values. Schwartz and Sagiv (1995) claimed that indexes of value types could be constructed from single values, the meanings of which were reasonably similar across



categories (e.g. time, space, and occasions), which could transfer meanings to the product and the consumer respectively (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2009). Consumers also attempt to discover meaning in their lives throughout the consumption of products that are generally recognised as international and transcending individual national cultures (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010). Hence, in the recent study of Steenkamp and de Jong (2010), they classify consumer culture values into three categories by recognising that consumer culture deals with the consumption of products, across times, and across space consistent with Hoyer and MacInnis (2009) by considering materialism, innovativeness, nostalgia, ethnocentrism, and environmentalism (Fig.2). The first two consumer values are related primarily to products, nostalgia to the time perspective, and ethnocentrism and environmentalism to the social and physical context (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010). This set of consumer values is comprehensive, but they are among the more important consumer values to study as antecedents of attitudes toward global and local products (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010).

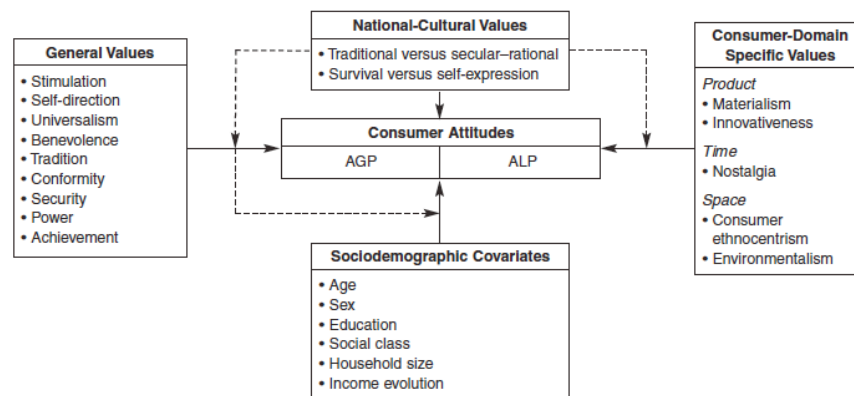


FIG.2: VALUES-BASED FRAMEWORK OF ANTECEDENTS OF AGP AND ALP

The feature of consumer culture could be defined during products consumption (Arnould & Thompson, 2005), which should resonate with consumers when they value materialism (Richins & Dawson, 1992). In addition, new products play an important role that could stimulate consumption to a higher level (Ritzer, 2007). Accordingly, when consumers value a new product, they relate to the core of consumer culture (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010). People tend to be more prospective than living in the past (nostalgic), which is crucial for researchers to figure out how they continuously respond to this dynamism (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010). At the same time, the sales of locally conceived products as well as globally conceived products are independent to each other in the terms of sociological notions of groups (Shimp & Sharma, 1987). However, people with high ethnocentrism could fill more strong tension between them (Shimp and Sharma, 1987). Finally, critical theorists criticise that environment have impact on consumer culture consumption frequently (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010). This claim might be especially resonant with those consumers who are high on environmentalism (Steenkamp & de Jong, 2010).

## 2.5 The conceptual model

Based on the literature review, this study establishes a conceptual model to measure the image congruence toward global consumer brands from a cross-cultural perspective (see Fig.3).

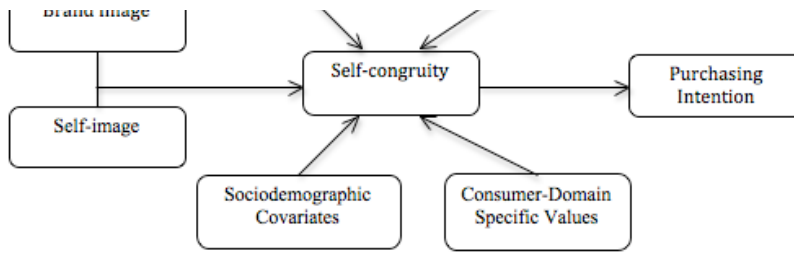


FIG.3: THE CONCEPTUAL MODEL

### 3 The Suggested Research Method

To present, this study has identified the general problems of the concepts and frameworks regarding brand image, self-concept, and cultural values. In view of the complexity of these subjects, it is impossible to generate a universal model that measures self-congruity across all product categories in all cultural contexts. Many studies have considered self-congruity, but they used limited product categories in only two specific countries. The problem with such findings is that they are difficult to generalise, creating a gap to be explored for the current research. Assuming that culture can be measured, this study will seek a way to discover how to evaluate self-congruity across product categories. Considering that global consumer brands are one of the most common industries in the international retail business, the project will focus on examining self-congruity among those brands that are distributed through retailers. Moreover, considering a conceptual framework has been established, the study will go to the stage of data collection.

This study has conducted two focus groups in order to select a group of brands within four product categories based on the consumer culture studies of Holt (1998; 2002), McCracken (1986), Steenkamp and de Jong (2010), and Tomlinson (1999) which could represent global consumer brands. Four brands have been chosen based on the in-depth interviews those are Apple, Zara, Häagen-Dazs, and IKEA. The study has also conducted 69 pre-tests to select suitable brand/self-image dimensions among 50 image attributes. As a result, 21 image dimensions will be used in the following questionnaire. Fig.4 shows the research approach of this study.

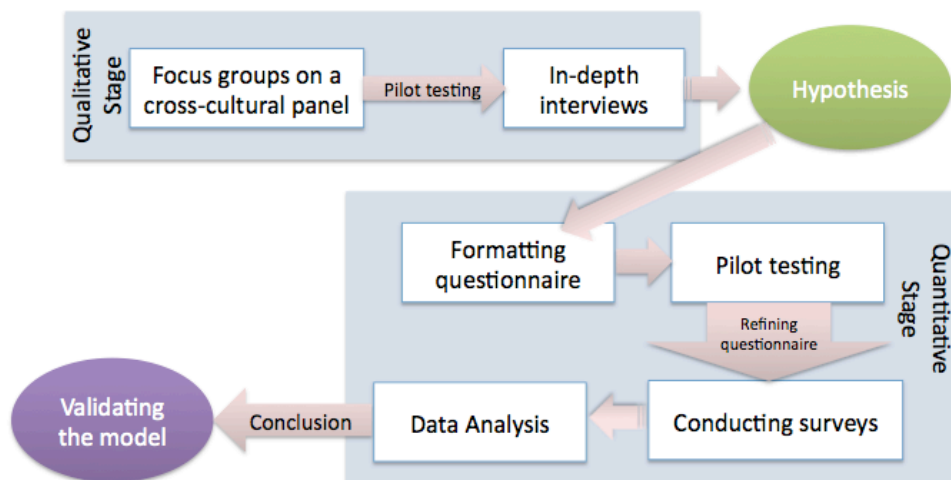


FIG.4: GRAPHICAL REPRESENTATION OF RESEARCH

measure self-congruity. The selection of the global brands will be based on the consumer culture studies of Holt (1998; 2002), McCracken (1986), Steenkamp and de Jong (2010), and Tomlinson (1999). The results of focus groups and interviews will also contribute to the refinement of the model and strengthen the development of hypotheses. In the third stage, surveys will be conducted in three countries: China, the Netherlands, and the United Kingdom. The sample size will be expected more than 300 for each market. The final stage is to analyse the data using structural equation modeling (SEM). SEM allows for the quick creation of models with which to test hypotheses and confirm relationships among observed and latent variables, moving beyond regression to gain additional insight.

## **4 Conclusions**

This study has reviewed the significant features of the three subjects in terms of brand image, self-concept, and cultural issues. Consumer researchers have recognised that product/brand image is intertwined with self-concept. That is, the congruency of self-image and product/brand image influences the consumer's buying behaviour and brand performance (e.g. Adam, 2005; Kressmann et al., 2006; Kuester et al., 2007). Sirgy et al. (2000) report there are different self-concept dimensions. Thus, this study should include different types of corresponding self-image congruities (Ibrahim & Najjar, 2008). Moreover, studying value differences could lead to the development of a better conceptual framework to assist cross-cultural researchers (Smith & Bond, 1998). In hopes of achieving these aims, this study has critically reviewed relevant research investigating this issue at both the culture and individual levels. The most suitable framework of consumer culture for this study developed by Steenkamp and de Jong (2010).

Theoretically, This study would be the first to apply the consumer cultural framework of Steenkamp and de Jong (2010) to self-congruity for cross-cultural studies, and would give practitioners an alternative framework to improve the effectiveness of their marketing. Second, this study would be the first to measure image congruence by integrating national-cultural values, consumer cultural values, and general values as the measurement of cross-cultural issues. Third, the model could extend the application of the existing self-congruity frameworks across more product categories and different cultural contexts.

In practice, the framework that this study will develop can help brand managers to understand the differences between the congruence of their brand images and consumers' self-image in a cross-cultural context. They can utilise this information both in their home country and in a number of culturally diverse nations. Brand managers need to understand the crucial role of self-congruity in predicting consumers' intentions (Ibrahim & Najjar, 2008). The model will help them to establish and implement strategies in order to enter into new countries and build their market share in different cultures. The managers will also be able to evaluate and amend their current marketing strategies using the framework, thereby maintaining and enhancing their compatibilities and market shares.

Based on the literature review thus far, this study has proposed a conceptual model to measure self-congruity regarding the research topic. The methodology and research approach are proposed in terms of the previous literature research. SPSS will be used as a statistical tool to analyse the data, whereas Amos will be utilised to discover the relationships between variables and validate the model.

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