

Comparative Study Between the Impact of Brand Aesthetics and Brand Congruence on Zoomer's Fashion Purchase Intention

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ABSTRACT

This research aims to answer the impact of brand aesthetics and brand congruence in terms of the fondness and the resistance of the respondents regarding the campaign and whether this has a significant relationship between Zoomers' purchasing intention and the effectiveness of brand congruence. A quantitative approach was utilized for this paper to measure the Zoomers' purchasing behavior toward fashion campaigns, a total of 385 respondents were taken from the NCR (National Capital Region), Philippines between the age range of 18-25. An online survey was used for this research and questionnaires were distributed to the respondents through Google Forms using convenience and snowball sampling techniques. The findings indicate that whenever customers are exposed to brand campaigns implementing plus-sized models, they are more likely to support the brand since they feel connected to what is being illustrated, hence, a brand campaign revolving around inclusive characteristics generates a positive brand impression from consumers. Brand campaigns gather positive attraction from consumers as it brings out feelings and emotions that connect to the brand. Brand congruence is a more effective strategy when it comes to attracting Zoomers and having an effective purchase driver, therefore, fashion brands should be more inclined to inclusive marketing strategies to be successful in the industry. Since fashion is one of the biggest industries in the world, the results can be used by brands to connect with their customers using either brand aesthetics or brand congruence.

Keywords: Brand Aesthetics, Brand Congruence, Self-Image, Straight-Size, Inclusivity.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Fashion brand campaigns utilize models that would attract their audience to purchase their products since this is the modern way how to generate sales for a fashion brand because the audience perceives that it is possible that they will look like or be similar to the illusion that is being presented in front of them once they see advertisements or inside stores. According to Khalid and Yasmeeen (2019), the physical appearance of the endorser has an impact on consumer purchase intentions, and businesses have used it to market their products to generate their purchase intentions. Attractive endorsers have dominated the fashion industry, creating a beauty standard that consumers want to imitate like mannerisms associated with the product (Awasthi & Choraria, 2015). In the Philippines, it can be observed how brands source fair-skinned, thin, and have eurocentric features. Advertisements favor fair-skinned endorsers, portraying them as superior to those with a tan complexion (Pham, 2018). These types of endorsers have become the ideal ones since the audience's perception is that obtaining and maintaining this kind of skin color will lead to attracting other people while also being admired boosting their self-confidence and esteem. Studies show that consumers have a favorable response, especially if they positively perceive the said endorser (Kok Wei, & Li 2013). Though these attractive endorsers in brands generate attention, the advertisement does not impact the customers' attitude towards the brand (Ha & Lam, 2017). Customers are only influenced by advertisements if they somehow feel that they are compatible and related to what the brand is illustrating to them to convince them to try it out and be regular buyers for the benefit of both sides. With the rise of Inclusive Marketing, a stark contrast between the eurocentric beauty standard portrayed in the fashion industry and the native features of Filipinos is seen in advertisements and campaigns. Finding brands that have models with Filipino features are very limited.

In recent years, brands have adopted inclusive marketing wherein models match the consumers' self-concept to convey uniqueness in their marketing strategy. This approach has created consumers to have a brand attachment through the use of consumers' self-image congruence that matches brand image because representation is what draws the audience into purchasing their products (An et al., 2020). Seeing the result of brand congruence, self-concept in campaigns is being utilized due to its positive impact on the preferred brand of consumers and increased satisfaction. Having designs, messages, packaging, and other relatable elements guide customers to a better brand experience influencing their purchase intention (Tsai et al., 2015). Once these customers are satisfied with their experience within the brand, it is most likely that they will be inclined to brand itself resulting in them disregarding other fashion brands that are against their perception. Furthermore, inclusivity in fashion marketing has begun to become a demand rather than an option for brands to utilize since it has been observed that consumer interest decreases if a brand does not align with its self-image (Estrina 2021). Though this type of strategy offers a connection between the consumer and the brand, it does not necessarily show whether it creates an impact on the consumer's intent to purchase. Unlike campaigns that use brand aesthetics, knowing whether congruity in campaigns can enlighten consumers to want to buy the products shown.

There have been limited journals and research regarding these two types of brand campaigns to easily determine which factor is more effective in generating purchase intention. There is also no justification for whether these two campaigns have a difference when it comes to the perspectives of customers to convince them to purchase

from a specific fashion brand. Now that brands are starting to adapt to inclusivity, it would be beneficial to know the effectiveness of this approach in generating purchase intention. The results of this study will give significant insights into brands that are integrating inclusivity. While this study covers the Filipino (Philippine) market, fashion is borderless thus the results can be used by brands catering to international markets, as a reference to improve and/or introduce campaigns related to brand aesthetics and congruence.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Aesthetics in Marketing Campaigns

Marketing campaigns of fashion brands that have been implementing physically attractive endorsers result in positive feedback from their consumers. For instance, an attractive endorser becomes a factor in gaining the attention of the consumer seeing the advertisement. In the study of Khalid & Yasmeen (2019), results show that the physical attributes of endorsers have a positive impact on consumer purchase intention. The attractiveness and credibility of an endorser are essential for them to execute an effective endorsement in the perception of consumers (Kok & Li, 2013). Attractiveness is measured by physical attributes, like body type and skin tone, which can be deemed as socially exclusive to some customers.

Body Type

Businesses find endorsers that would fit their brand image and further portray their persona. An example would be sports apparel wherein endorsers used in their campaigns have an outstanding physique so consumers may try to mimic and resemble the body of the model (Von Felbert & Breuer, 2020). Though there have been efforts into putting size-inclusive models in the fashion industry, there is still a significant number of models that are thin which drives the brand's customers into mimicking and aspiring to achieve the physical characteristics seen in the advertisement making them willing to purchase a product (Agerup, 2021).

Skin Tones

Having a fair complexion has been a standard of beauty in the Philippines due to the country's history. Colorism can be observed as rooted in colonial influences, though skin color bias is relatively low in the Philippines (Chen & Francis - Tan, 2021), it is manifested in advertisements. Light skin is perceived as beautiful compared to individuals with tan skin making them inferior. Furthermore, in a study by Pham (2018), it is stated that the whiteness of the skin becomes a commodity to which success and prestige are associated with the color of the skin. Advertisements have always depicted the two colors, light and dark, to be opposites, therefore, making the audience perceive light as the best and superior color.

Socially Exclusive

Marketing fashion brands have a certain level of exclusivity when it comes to advertising their products. Market segmentation is used to determine their target consumers from the non-target consumers who either have no inclination toward the brand, or those who feel rejected due to their inclination with no means to obtain or are challenged by their desire for the brand (Yan, 2019). Exclusive marketing creates a level of prestige and brand status that affects the brand image and therefore builds on the

aesthetic of their campaigns. It creates a desire to be up to par with the models and has the same aesthetic. Brand image has also played a big role in making purchase decisions (Rueangmanee & Wannamakok, 2023).

Brand Impression for Brand Aesthetics

Marketing campaigns and advertisements that implement sexy female models are more likely to offend female audiences especially if they perceive that they do not look like what is being shown throughout the campaign, an advertisement will only catch their attention once the advertisement features male models with ideal bodies since it is their opposite gender on which they can be attracted to (See, 2018). Due to what is being illustrated and showcased by aesthetic brands, women have been invested in achieving the idealized skin tone and body type because they believe that if they achieve this type of beauty, it will boost their self-esteem and confidence since this is the desired look of majority of women in the modern era (Ringrose, 2018).

Brand Congruence in Marketing Campaigns

As brands grow, marketing strategies develop and change to adapt to their growing customers, where business campaigns are being utilized to connect and increase brand awareness and equity among consumers. These campaigns derive their purpose by penetrating the experiences of sensing, feeling, thinking, acting, and relating instead of the physical characteristics of what is being promoted (Ketter, 2018). Fashion brands have also adopted e-commerce platforms to connect with their customers through inclusive marketing. This way, they can characterize and portray their self-image and inclusivity. This type of marketing is a way to communicate to a diverse market and appeal to different races, gender, ethnicities, and more (Dimitrieska et al., 2019). Furthermore, consumers use it as a comparative element when choosing a brand, making brand images paramount in directing consumers' trust and purchase intention (An et al., 2020).

Size-Inclusive Campaigns

The gradual use of Size-Inclusive Models among mainstream apparel brands has been quite typical recently. People started to value brands that can project their self-concept and overlook those that make them feel otherwise, leading companies to use average and plus-size models instead of skinny ones to represent their brands. Up to this time, several brands are still hesitant about using non-industry-standard size models for fear of hurting their brands. However, female audiences find products worn by plus-size models more attractive than skinny models since their attitudes toward more realistic physiques are still similar regardless of their body type (Aagerup & Scharf, 2018), which implies having an inclusive brand image would be more beneficial than harmful. Lou and Tse (2020) stated that regular consumers confirmed that an average-sized campaign model helped increase their purchase intention more than the skinny ones because they perceived more similarity to an average-sized model.

Diverse Representation of Skin Tone

The current mainstream media seems to be more inclusive than before, as Fashion brands are particularly starting to select more ethnicities as the face of their labels in advertisements to consider themselves inclusive brands. However, they still favor lighter-skinned models over darker-skinned ones and even utilize image-editing software to achieve their 'ideal' lightness or whiteness for their retail images to stay in

tuck with their brand aesthetic (Butkowski et al., 2022). The usual industry practice of brands manipulating models' skin tones to represent their brands is considered socially unethical as it may contribute to audiences' dissatisfaction with their appearance, encourage unrealistic media representations, and are also unable to generate audiences' purchase desire. According to Kennedy (2020), pushing for a more diverse and suitable representation among brand campaigns is paramount since it develops audiences' brand relatability when seeing models who look like them, enhancing their self-confidence and brand impression. Yet, the audience found the products promoted by models that have similar skin-tone like them to have a more significant influence on their purchase intention; some of them are even willing to spend a higher price to purchase the promoted products (Forbes-Bell et al., 2019).

Socially Inclusive Brand Image

Inclusive marketing is becoming ordinary in today's brand campaigns since the mainstream media are hugging inclusivity and canceling exclusion brandings, which is quite prominent among apparel brands. For instance, an inclusive brand campaign of the apparel brand, Aerie, has been presenting diverse and authentic advertisements with a highly favorable outcome since the audience felt less pressure than the typical thin and "ideal" mainstream advertisements (Rodgers et al., 2019). Consumers tend to be more inclined toward brands that align with their self-image. According to Astakhova et al. (2017), inclusive brand campaigns can make audiences internalize the brand as their self-identity since it generates audiences' congruence by incorporating facets of their lives, leading to a greater passion for the brand and eventually becoming their consumers.

Brand Impression on Inclusivity

Various studies have shown the positive impression a brand leaves when their campaign revolves around inclusivity of race, gender, or body size (Newman, 2014; Joo & Wu, 2021). Inclusivity can be correlated to the catalysis of a positive brand impression. In a study by Joo and Wu (2021), they suggest that in order to successfully reach the mainstream market, newly established businesses could thrive by supporting the use of plus-sized models.

Generation Z Purchasing Intention

The rapid growth of modern technology and the internet has drastically changed the world of commerce. It catalyzed the creation of hundreds of online shopping platforms (Tunsakul, 2018). The digital era has opened the doors for many traditional businesses to expand their market range and scope, reaching consumers from different cities or even internationally. E-commerce and social media are the two most important channels for any business to thrive and increase its sales if marketed properly.

Individuals born into Generation Z are known to have unique qualities such as being more open-minded and being much more welcoming towards change. Aside from this, the majority are also well-versed in terms of technology. The Generation Z age group is the target market and audience for the majority of retailers in these contemporary times, because of their influence and growth in numbers (Tunsakul, 2018). They are considered to be adaptable and are more flexible in terms of thinking but at the same time, they stay true to their stands and opinions (Turner, 2015). Overall, the values, and decisions of individuals belonging to this age group have evolved due to many influences that surround them (Twenge, 2017).

3. HYPOTHESES

H1: Brand Aesthetics' straight-sized models generate a positive brand impression.

H2: Brand Aesthetics' skin tone bias generates a positive brand impression.

H3: Brand Aesthetics' socially exclusive promotion generates a positive brand impression.

H4: Brand Congruence's inclusive-sized models generate a positive brand impression.

H5: Brand Congruence's skin tone diversity generates a positive brand impression.

H6: Brand Congruence's socially inclusive promotion generates a positive brand impression.

H7: Brand impressions from brand aesthetics campaigns generate effective purchase intention.

H8: Brand impressions from brand congruent campaigns generate effective purchase intention.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper utilized a quantitative approach to measure Zoomer's purchasing behavior toward fashion campaigns with Brand Aesthetics and Brand Congruence. With the use of a correlational type, the proponents compared how the variables, Aesthetics, and Congruence, play in the marketing field and see what kind of relationship it has. Participants involved were from Generation Z in the age range of 18-25. The sample size was 385 with a confidence level of 95% and a margin of error of 5% computed using the Raosoft Calculator. The researchers distributed the questionnaires to respondents residing in Metro Manila (NCR), Philippines. The respondents were screened using the qualifying questions and the convenience sampling method combined with snowball sampling was used to obtain the respondents.

To accurately measure the respondents' purchasing impression when encountering the mentioned brand campaigns, the questionnaire used a Likert Scale to thoroughly analyze their perceptions. Questions for the survey were adapted from Samala and Singh (2019) and Aagerup (2021) to determine whether Brand Aesthetics and Brand Congruence influence the respondents' purchasing behavior. The data was analyzed and interpreted with the use of weighted mean to determine the Zoomers' brand impression for Brand Aesthetics and brand congruence. The relationship between the Zoomers' purchasing intention and the level of effective purchase drive of brand aesthetics and brand congruence and the difference in the responses of the level of effective purchase driver of brand aesthetics and brand congruence was determined using structural equation modeling in WarpPLS.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of the data obtained by the researchers are discussed in this section. This includes the positive purchase intention of brand aesthetics and congruence; the relationship between Zoomers' brand aesthetics and congruence and brand impression; and the relationship between brand impression and effective purchase intention.

The first concern of the study is to ascertain how zoomers' purchasing behavior is affected by brand aesthetics. It can be observed from Table 1 based on the zoomer's behavior in purchasing, respondents believed and purchased mostly with that of

straight-sized models who have perfect body proportions, respondents feel positive towards models from these brands, and they hope that they are one of the target consumers of the line brand endorsed by this type of ambassadors or models, specifically the happiness and satisfaction of the respondents is mostly recognized and achieved with this type of slender, tall and small framed model. The straight-sized models have the highest mean on this table with 2.9 and an interpretation of agree. This indicates that the respondents are mostly influenced by the slender model when it comes to aesthetic brands. The table shows that the second highest indicator and influencer for the consumer in aesthetic brands is social-exclusive promotion, which creates a level of prestige and status when an individual identifies themselves with the brand, in this area, respondents feel more connected with the brand via their campaign, they feel more superior an elite over the user of other brands, respondents feel the link and connection of them with the brand as well as they can identify and see themselves with the model and the brand itself. This area has a total mean of 2.85 and an interpretation of agree. The third highest on this table is the skin-toned bias, or the typical Filipina mestiza, a model of fair complexion with a mean of 2.76 and an interpretation of "agree." In this area, it proves that a Filipino-looking model can influence the buying of aesthetic brands.

The findings have a total mean of 2.84 and an interpretation of "agreed," indicating how each of the aforementioned indicators influences aesthetic brand movement in society and the community through their purchasing behavior.

Table 1. Zoomers' purchasing behavior for Brand Aesthetics

Indicators	M	VI
A. Straight-Sized Models – Models with perfect body proportions (e.g. tall, slender, small frame)	2.90	A
1. I feel positive toward models from this fashion brand campaign.	2.92	A
2. I will be happier if I am wearing the product.	2.88	A
3. I hope I can become one of the target consumers of the brand.	2.90	A
B. Skin Tone Bias – Pale, and fair skin. (Philippine context: Mestiza)	2.76	A
1. I feel positive toward models from this fashion brand campaign.	2.80	A
2. I will be happier if I am wearing the product.	2.71	A

3. I hope I can become one of the target consumers of the brand. 2.77 A

C. Social Exclusive Promotion – Has a specific target audience that creates a level of prestige and status when an individual identifies themselves with the brand. **2.85** **A**

1. Exclusive campaigns make me feel connected. 2.97 A

2. I can identify myself with brand campaign models. 2.82 A

3. Part of me is defined by brand campaign models. 2.73 A

4. There is a link between fashion brand campaign models & how I view myself. 2.90 A

Overall Mean **2.84** **A**

Note: 4-Strongly agree, (SA) 3-Agree (A), 2-Disagree (D), and 1-Strongly disagree (SD)

Table 2 is based on the Zoomers' purchasing behavior for Brand Congruence. The respondents believed and purchased mostly with that of a Skin Tone Diversity, which is a wide range of skin tones, from darkest to the fairest complexion. In a Philippine context of Morena, the respondents feel a positivity vibe for models on this indicator they aspire that they are target consumer on this area. They believed that socially inclusive promotion has a wide range of target audiences and that its campaigns incorporate and embrace diversity, which makes them feel connected with the brand, because they can identify themselves in the brand's campaign models and because there is a link between fashion brand campaign models and how they view themselves. These two areas, skin tone diversity and socially inclusive promotion, have a mean of 2.93 and an interpretation of "agree," which connotes how purchasing behavior for brand congruence is an effective factor. This table's third highest category is inclusive size models, or models with a wide range of body sizes.

This table has a total mean of 2.91 with the interpretation of "agree," which indicates how each of the aforementioned indicators can influence the purchasing power when considering brand congruency behavior.

Table 2. Zoomers' purchasing behavior for Brand Congruence

Indicators	M	I
A. Inclusive Size Models – Models with a wide range of body sizes.	2.87	A
1. I feel positive toward models from this fashion brand campaign.	3.04	A
2. I will be happier if I am wearing the product.	2.82	A
3. I hope I can become one of the target consumers of the brand.	2.77	A
B. Skin Tone Diversity – Wide range of skin tones, from darkest to the fairest complexion. (Philippine context: Morena)	2.93	A
1. I feel positive toward models from this fashion brand campaign.	3.07	A
2. I will be happier if I am wearing the product.	2.87	A
3. I hope I can become one of the target consumers of the brand.	2.85	A
C. Socially Inclusive Promotion – Has a wide range of target audiences, and its campaigns incorporate and embrace diversity.	2.93	A
1. Inclusive campaigns make me feel connected.	3.07	A
2. I can identify myself with brand campaign models.	2.94	A
3. Part of me is defined by brand campaign models.	2.84	A
4. There is a link between fashion brand campaign models & how I view myself.	2.87	A
Overall Mean	2.91	A

Note: 4-Strongly agree, (SA) 3-Agree (A), 2-Disagree (D), and 1-Strongly disagree (SD)

Table 3. Level of Brand Impression through Brand Aesthetics and Brand Congruence

Fondness	Brand Aesthetics		Brand Congruence	
	M	I	M	I
1. The advertisement makes me happy.	2.89	ME	3.01	ME
2. I will consider purchasing the advertised product.	2.91	ME	2.97	ME
3. I have a favorable reaction to the advertisement.	2.89	ME	2.98	ME
4. I have a positive initial response to the advertisement.	2.95	ME	3.02	ME
5. The advertisement makes me feel confident about myself.	2.71	ME	2.98	ME
Overall Mean	2.87	ME	2.99	ME

Note: 4-Highly effective, (HE) 3-Moderately effective (ME), 2-Slightly effective (SE), and 1-Not effective (NE)

The above table shows the brand impression through brand aesthetics and brand congruence. The advertisement that makes respondents happy, the advertisement that entices the public to buy, the one that obtains a favorable reaction, and has a positive response, and lastly, the one that creates the feeling of consumer confidence is Brand Congruence. In all aspects in this table, Brand Congruence leads the impression, which has a total mean of 2.87 for brand aesthetic and 2.99 for brand congruence, which shows that brand congruence shows and affects more comfortability and satisfaction of the respondents or consumers.

Table 4 shows the effective purchase intention of brand aesthetics and brand congruence, consumers believed that purchasing brand aesthetic over brand congruence would make them stand out from the crowd, they believed that the products would make them the center of attention and a head turner, they believe on models with a perfect body like the models of aesthetic brands. Brand congruence is chosen over brand aesthetics considering whether the clothes or product itself will make them purchase it or if the skin tone is for Morena. The table's total mean for Brand aesthetic and Brand congruence is both 2.81 with an interpretation of ME or moderately effective This connotes that if we are gauging the intention level of the consumer, they clearly consider not one factor but the overall effect of the brand itself.

Table 4. Level of effective purchase Intention of brand aesthetics and brand congruence

Effective Purchase Intention	Brand Aesthetics		Brand Congruence	
	M	VI	M	VI
	1. Purchasing the product will make me stand out from the crowd.	2.71	ME	2.69
2. I will be purchasing products from this fashion campaign.	2.97	ME	2.90	ME
3. The clothes from this campaign makes me want the product.	2.66	ME	2.79	ME
4. I am inclined to buy clothes from a campaign with this skin tone range.	2.85	ME	2.93	ME
5. I intend to buy clothes with models with this body type.	2.84	ME	2.76	ME
Overall Mean	2.81	ME	2.81	ME

Note: 4-Highly effective, (HE) 3-Moderately effective (ME), 2-Slightly effective (SE), and 1-Not effective (NE)

Evaluation of the Measurement model

The estimation technique describes an iterative algorithm that is based on the partial least squares structural equation modeling approach. A PLS-SEM analysis considers a measurement model and a structural model. The measurement model estimates the relationship between the latent variables and their corresponding manifest variables evaluated considering the composite criteria. The structural model investigates the existing relationships between latent variables.

As Hair et al. (2004) claim, it is necessary to fulfill these criteria in order to accept the model. Three metric tests are applied to check the convergent validity: reliability of the indicators, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) from the latent variables. In terms of composite reliability, all scores are above 0.7 and it is recommended by the theoretical background. Concerning the Cronbach's alpha indicator, all manifest variables registered scores above the 0.70 threshold. This shows the indicators used are reliable and valid to the participants of the study. In the case of the average variance extracted (AVE), the researchers considered relevant a score higher

than 0.50, which was a criterion met for all latent variables. These results prove the convergent validity of the measurement model.

Table 5. Evaluation of the Measurement model

Variable	Abbreviation	CR	CA	AVE
Straight-size Models	SSM	0.902	0.836	0.754
Skin tone bias	STB	0.924	0.877	0.803
Social exclusive promotion	SEP	0.924	0.890	0.753
Inclusive size model	ISM	0.949	0.918	0.860
Skin tone diversity	STD	0.954	0.927	0.873
Socially Inclusive promotion	SIP	0.963	0.948	0.866
Fondness	F	0.949	0.933	0.790
Effective purchase intention	EPI	0.948	0.932	0.786

Note: CR = Composite Reliability, CA = Cronbach's Alpha, AVE = Average Variance Extracted

Discriminant Validity

The discriminant validity completes the analysis of the measurement model. As Chin (1998) indicates, discriminant validity consists of verifying that variables relate more strongly to one factor than to another factor. Table 5 shows these data, thereby testing the discriminant validity of the measurement scales used. This implies that all constructs are statistically significant. In Fornell-Larcker criterion was measured, and further validated using heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratios. According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), Kock (2015), and Kock and Lynn (2012), discriminant validity requires that the square roots of average variance extracted (AVEs), the diagonal values in Table 5, must be higher than those off-diagonal coefficients. Based on the results, the latent variables possess discriminant validity.

Table 6. Discriminant Validity of Latent Variables Using Fornell -Larcker Criterion of Reflective Construct

	SSM	STB	SEP	ISM	STD	SIP	FA	FC	EPIA	EPIC
SSM	0.868									
STB	0.643	0.896								
SEP	0.585	0.531	0.868							
ISM	-0.204	-0.227	-0.169	0.927						
STD	-0.202	-0.203	-0.177	0.864	0.934					
SIP	-0.222	-0.241	-0.143	0.839	0.852	0.930				
FA	0.590	0.534	0.518	-0.368	-0.320	-0.336	0.889			
FC	-0.294	-0.296	-0.237	0.760	0.756	0.773	-0.370	0.960		
EPIA	0.806	0.809	0.673	-0.257	-0.238	-0.263	0.651	-0.348	0.808	
EPIC	-0.160	-0.171	-0.018	0.904	0.914	0.882	-0.298	0.763	-0.171	0.886

Note: SSM = Straight-size Models, STB = Skin tone bias, SEP = Social exclusive promotion, ISM = inclusive size model, STD = Skin tone diversity, SIP = Socially inclusive promotion, FA = Fondness Aesthetics, FC = Fondness Congruence, EPIA = Effective purchase intention Aesthetics, EPIC = Effective purchase intention congruence

Direct Effects and hypotheses Conclusions

According to Figure 2, all relationships were statistically significant, so based on the direct effects, it can be concluded that the relationships established as hypotheses were valid with 95% level of confidence. Table 6 summarizes the information, the size effect size (2) as a measure of variance explained, and conclusions of the hypotheses. The relationship between fondness for both brand aesthetics and congruence and effective purchase intention for both aesthetics and congruence had a p-value of < 0.001, this obtained a Cohen's effect size of large. This implies that the strength of the relationship between brand impression and effective purchasing intention is strong. Hence, all endogenous variables influenced exogenous variables

Table 6. Direct Effect and Hypotheses Conclusions

Hypotheses	Beta	P-values	SE	f2	Interpretation
H1: SSM → FA	0.334	p < 0.001	0.048	0.198	Supported
H2: STB → FA	0.208	p < 0.001	0.049	0.111	Supported
H3: SEP → FA	0.215	p < 0.001	0.049	0.112	Supported
H4: ISM → FC	0.279	p < 0.001	0.049	0.218	Supported
H5: STD → FC	0.223	p < 0.001	0.049	0.172	Supported
H6: SIP → FC	0.357	p < 0.001	0.048	0.281	Supported
H7: FA → EPIA	0.652	p < 0.001	0.046	0.425	Supported
H8: FC → EPIC	0.771	p < 0.001	0.045	0.594	Supported

Note: SSM = Straight-size Models, STB = Skin tone bias, SEP = Social exclusive promotion, ISM = inclusive size model, STD = Skin tone diversity, SIP = Socially inclusive promotion, FA = Fondness Aesthetics, FC = Fondness Congruence, EPIA = Effective purchase intention Aesthetics, EPIC = Effective purchase intention congruence; B = standardized path coefficient, SE = standard error, f2 is the Cohen's (1988) effect size: >0.02 (small effect), >0.15 (medium effect), >0.35 (Large effect).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

The model was generated with the final variables and items after the validation process. The efficiency indicated in the evaluated model is illustrated below. It was observed that they met the high and low established cut-off values, concluding that it has sufficient predictive validity, good data fit to the model, and no collinearity problems. The evaluated model is illustrated in Figure 2.

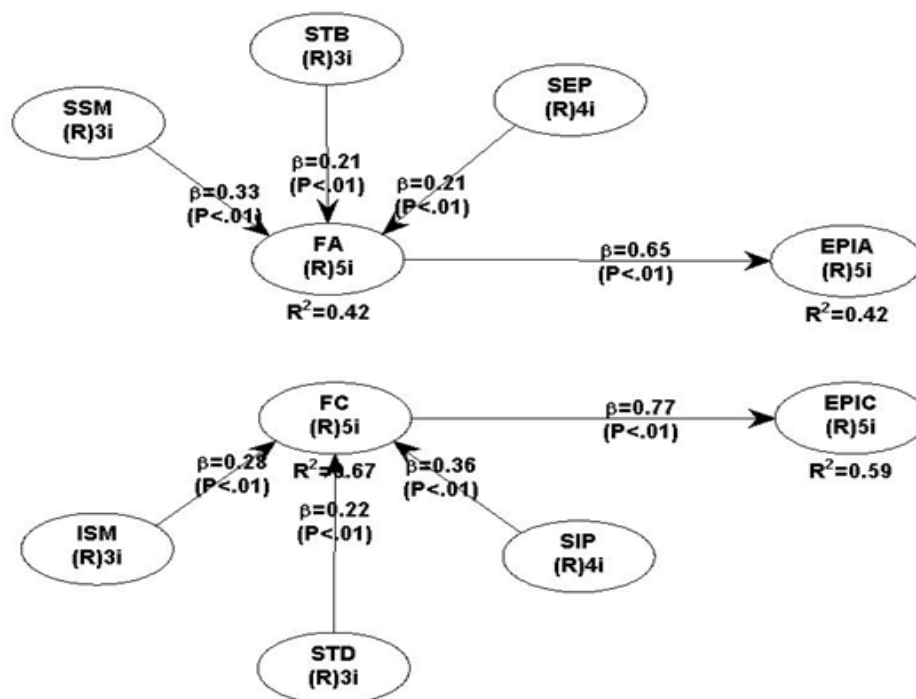


Figure 2: Emerging Model

6. DISCUSSION

Results of the study reveal that the purchase intention of brand aesthetics is significantly and positively related to brand impression. These findings indicate that when customers are exposed to fashion brands implementing slim and light-skinned models, they will support them if they are satisfied with this type of campaign. The results support the study of Ringrose (2018) which says that customers who are inclined toward this type of campaign are invested in achieving the characteristics of aesthetics since it will boost their confidence and self-esteem. The findings also reveal that purchase intention of brand congruence is significantly and positively related to brand impression. These findings indicate that when customers can see fashion brands utilizing plus-size models, it will convince them to purchase products from the brand and support them even more. The results support the study of (Mishra & Amal, 2021, Newman, 2017, Joo & Wu, 2021) which says that customers tend to generate a positive brand impression towards a brand if their campaign revolves around using inclusive characteristics of size, gender, and race of an individual and not body shaming.

The result also reveals that brand impression of brand congruence is significantly and positively related to effective purchase intention. The finding suggests that fashion brands should consistently apply brand congruence within their brand campaigns so that customers will be more inclined to purchase their products for them to be able to generate more sales and satisfaction for the customers. The results support the study of Lou & Tse (2020) which says that producing an average-sized model campaign will most likely increase the purchase intention of customers compared to aesthetic models since they will feel that they are related to what they are visible to.

The results from the present study indicate that there is a significant and positive relationship between the purchase intention of brand aesthetics and brand impression. Furthermore, this emphasizes that when customers are exposed to fashion brands that have a more exclusive campaign and hire and utilize slim and light-skinned models for their campaigns, they are most likely to support the brand as it leaves a positive impact on the consumer in the sense that they are motivated to imitate the models. In a study by Ringrose (2018), consumers with this campaign preference are inclined to this type of campaign because they are highly invested in imitating the aesthetics of the campaign in a similar light which boosts their confidence and self-esteem. On the other hand, the purchase intention of brand congruence was also revealed to have a significant and positive relationship with brand impression. Consumers are driven closer to the brand when it shows congruity with their self-concept which results in personal comfort and consumer satisfaction. When consumers are introduced to brands with socially inclusive campaigns (eg. plus-sized models, models of color), it will convince them to purchase products from the brand and support them even more. Many other studies suggest that purchase intention is sparked, and a positive brand impression is generated towards a brand when its campaigns are revolved around social, racial, and gender inclusivity (Mishra & Amal, 2021; Newman, 2017; Joo & Wu, 2021).

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7. CONCLUSION

In light of the findings, the following conclusions were drawn from the result of the study:

- Brand campaigns gather positive attraction from consumers as it bring out feelings and emotions that connect to the brand. Brand aesthetics, though often used in marketing, shows a lower brand impression as compared to brand congruence. The congruity of consumers to the campaign has a high brand impression as it makes the consumers feel connected to the brand.
- Overall, brand congruence is a more effective strategy when it comes to attracting Zoomers and having an effective purchase driver.
- Fashion brands that cater to this younger demographic should be more inclined to use inclusive marketing strategies to connect with their target audience.
- The findings indicate that brand congruence is a more persuasive strategy than Brand Aesthetics for attracting Zoomers and having an influential purchase driver.

While this represents the insights of the Filipino Zoomers, it is important to note that fashion in general is a worldwide phenomenon. The factors that influence Filipino Zoomers based on the analysis of this research can be used as a source of information on

brands that operate on a global scale. This is very timely considering that brands are into inclusivity.

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