Luxury Brands Perceptions: An Applied Research to the Spanish Luxury Fragrances Market

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Abstract: This paper reviews the literature about the perceptions of luxury brands and brand identity, image and positioning concepts and proposes a model to study the image and positioning of luxury-fragrance brands. The research follows three stages: (1) a desk study of general luxury market, and one particular luxury fragrance, and literature on perceptions of luxury brands, brand identity, image and positioning; (2) qualitative empirical research using focus groups of luxury-fragrance consumers, whose results were validated by professionals of the luxury perfumery sector; (3) quantitative empirical research executed by a survey of luxury-fragrance consumers, whose results corroborated the proposed model. The image attributes of luxury-fragrance brands are identified, and a scale built and used to measure and analyze the brands' image and positioning in a luxury-fragrance competitor context. The image of the ideal brand is determined, confirming that none of the brands studied approximated to the ideal brand in the key attributes for consumers. The study is conducted in Spain, and the brands are selected based on the ranking of the Spanish luxury-fragrances market. Thus, the brands studied should extend the model's usefulness by applying it in different territories and competitor contexts.

The model will allow luxury-fragrance brands to modify their image, and improve their market position to better match the ideal brand as perceived by consumers. Additionally, the model extends the literature on perceptions of brands, thereby overcoming the limitations of some existing models.

Key words: luxury, perceptions, fragrances, brand image and positioning

JEL code: M3

1. Introduction

Luxury is a complex phenomenon, based on the human urge to respond to the need for aesthetic enjoyment and self-expression, as well as the desire to be admired and respected by others (Veblen, 1899; Baudrel, 1979; Allérès, 1990; Vickers & Renand, 2003; Campuzano, 2003).

Although luxury has always existed (Drioton & Vandier, 1964; Cenival, 1965; González Blanco, 1980;

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Keyes, 2011), over the past few decades its consumption has experienced spectacular growth, being one of the sectors that has shown the greatest resistance to the economic crisis of recent years: -8 percent in 2009, +13 percent in 2010, +11 percent in 2011, +10 percent in 2012 and +2 percent in 2013. Sales figures over this past year are estimated to have reached 217 milliards Euros (Bain & Company, 2013a)

There are numerous reasons for the increase in the consumption of luxury goods. Among these are the continued economic growth in developing countries; the increase in the size of the middle class and its income level; an increase in life expectancy in the wealthier population; an increase in the percentage of individuals with high incomes; an increase in consumer information and knowledge regarding products; and greater flexibility of payment systems. And more recently, the extraordinary economic development of so-called "emerging countries" (Cavusgil, Ghauri, Akcal, 2012), such as Brazil, Russia, India and China, has led to the creation of new millionaires, who have become true "devourers" of luxury articles, as shown in studies by consultants, Verdict (2013) and Bain & Company (2013a, b).

One of the largest luxury market product categories is that of perfumes and cosmetics, which makes up some 20 percent of the market (Bain & Company, 2013a). Perfumes, in particular, is one of the main gateways into the world of luxury consumption, being one of the so-called "affordable luxuries" (Allérès, 1990); therefore, most of the luxury fashion and jewelry brands have included these products in their diversification strategies (Campuzano García, 2007).

However, despite the growing importance of the phenomenon of luxury and the consumption of luxury goods, academic and professional literature around it is quite limited, particularly in the area of research on the perception of luxury, with research on luxury-fragrance perceptions being virtually non-existent.

Up until now, limited models have been developed for the exclusive measurement of individual perceptions on the inherent degree of luxury in brands and luxury products, with each of these relying on earlier versions that modify or increase the dimensions and attributes considered in the evaluation of luxury.

Discussing perceptions also entails making reference to the concept of image. The importance of this concept has been acknowledged by marketing professionals and academics, who see it as a determining element in consumer decision-making behavior, and therefore, in the purchase decision-making process. Thus, image is a decisive factor for businesses and brands when it comes to designing strategies and marketing tactics.

However, there is a great deal of confusion surrounding the concept of image. This confusion is firstly due to the polysemy of the term (Capriotti, 1999); secondly, it is caused by excessive and sometimes inappropriate use (Dobni & Zinkhan, 1990; Stern, Zinkhan, & Jaju, 2001); and finally, it may be due to the wide range of interpretations offered by different authors regarding the concept of image (Stern, Zinkhan, & Jaju, 2001).

As suggested by Stern et al. (2001), many authors consider this confusion to be the cause of the existing gap between definition, methodology and theoretical development of the concept itself. Lougovoy and Linon (1972) differentiated between symbolic image, global image, activity image, product image, human image and image based upon the act. Costa (1987) spoke of graphic images, visual images, material images, company images, corporate images and global images. Jefkins (1988) defined five types of image: mirror image, current image, desired image, corporate image and multiple image. Marion (1989) referred to three company image classes: the deposited image, the desired image and the portrayed image. Today, most authors refer to both company and brand image. But there is still no clear agreement as to the meaning of these latter terms.

Stern et al. (2001) classified the definitions of brand image into five categories: generic definitions that discuss brand image by emphasizing consumer perceptions as well as the divergence between perception and

reality; symbolic definitions focusing on commercial brands as symbols; definitions based on the meaning given by consumers to brand products; definitions that consider the brand image in terms of human characteristics, and those in which the brand is described as an individual, associating its personality or self-concept with that of the consumer; and cognitive-psychological definitions, derived from the relationship between the consumer and the image as a collection of intrinsic attributes of a brand, and the actual world image as a mental construct. Furthermore, the same authors (Stern et al., 2001) have also reviewed the different interpretations of the corporate or company image. All of this relates to the dimensions proposed by Aaker (1996) regarding brand identity: the brand as a product, an organization, an individual and a symbol.

This inconsistency regarding the concept of image becomes even more confusing when considering the methodology used for its study: there is no globally accepted technique for its study (with researchers using qualitative, quantitative and mixed techniques); there is no defined unique perspective or measurement context (brand image may be measured on its own, in comparison to its competitors, in comparison to the ideal consumer brand, etc.); there is no general proposal for the brand dimensions to be considered when studying brand image; and there is no single scale allowing for measurement of brand image based on a set of attributes and/or semantic items related to the dimensions of it.

Therefore, this study proposes a specific model for the study of perceptions of luxury fragrance brands based on premises derived from concrete and generalized contributions made by various authors.

In accordance with the definition of brand image offered by Kotler and Keller (2012), this model proposes the study of the brand image of luxury fragrances in a specific competitive context, and in comparison with the ideal brand (in terms of brand positioning).This will be achieved by using a mixed quantitative-qualitative technique that has been supported by many authors, and by taking into consideration both the luxury dimensions of the brands studied based on the work of Wiedmann, Hennigs and Siebels (2007a, 2007b, 2009b), and the brand identity dimensions proposed by Aaker (1996), which have also been recognized by Stern et al. (2001) and by Ambroise and Valette-Florence (2010) as dimensions of brand image.

2. Literature Review

Although there is no specific literature available on perceptions of luxury fragrances and their positioning, it is possible to make reference to the concepts of identity, image and brand positioning, and to concepts relating to perceptions of luxury brands and products in general.

2.1 Brand Identity

Brand identity may be defined (Aaker, 1996) as the unique set of associations representing the rationale behind the brand, relating to a promise made by the company to its customers. Thus, the brand, through its identity, aims to support the creation of customer relations, leading to a value proposal offering functional, emotional and self-expression benefits.

Aaker (1996) considers four dimensions of brand identity that are necessary to create the corresponding brand image:

● The brand as a product. This dimension includes associations related to the products that are offered within the brand, such as product category, quality, use, functional and emotional benefits linked to the purchase and use of the product, and so on.

● The brand as an organization. This dimension focuses on the attributes of the organization that manages the

brand, such as innovation, focus on quality, environmental considerations, culture, company values and plans, and so on, as well as on the global or local status of the brand.

● The brand as an individual or personality. In this sense, the brand may be associated with the typical traits of individuals making up the relationship base between client and brand, traits such as "superior", "competent", "simple", "formal", "young", "intellectual", and so on.

● The brand as a symbol. A strong symbol may offer cohesion and structure to the identity, and facilitates its recognition and recall. Symbols may include visual images, metaphors and brand heritage.

Kapferer (1997) emphasized the fact that through brand identity, companies may convince customers of the brand's uniqueness, while Harris and de Chernatony (2001) examined the components of brand identity: the brand vision and culture, the positioning or set of characteristics that make the brand unique, brand personality and brand presentation styles.

Thus, it may be said that brand identity defines the brand and its personality, and allows for its identification by customers, while at the same time differentiating it from other brands.

2.2 Brand Image

Brand image is configured from brand identity. This means that the brand image is generated as a result of public perceptions with regard to the brand identity. Therefore, the brand identity should be projected towards diverse audiences, via effective communication strategies, in order to facilitate creation of the desired brand image (Sanz de la Tajada, 1994).

Despite the confusion surrounding the concept of brand image, many authors have linked it to perceptions, associations and mental representations.

Ditcher (1985) defines brand image as the overall impression produced by the brand in the mind of the consumer. Dobni and Zinkhan (1990) refer to it as the set of emotional and rational perceptions that consumers associate with each brand. Aaker (1996), Keller (1998) and Kotler and Keller (2012) discuss consumer brand perceptions and beliefs based on memories, and they believe that these perceptions are multi-dimensional.

Numerous authors agree with this multi-dimensional nature of the brand image. For instance, Stern et al. (2001), who prefer to use the term "marketing image" rather than "brand image", grouped together different perspectives of image for study, such as product, organization, symbol, individual, sales establishment, and so on. Cerviño (2002) believes that brand image focuses on the way in which consumers view the brand, and how they perceive and decode information released by these brands on their products, services, communications, logotypes, and so on. Hsieh (2002) links the dimensions of brand image with consumer needs. Koubaa (2008) highlights how the consumer's country of origin has a significant influence on brand perception. Ambroise and Valette-Florence (2010) believe that brand personality has the primary function of offering uniqueness to the brand.

Based on this perspective, and despite the importance of brand image when adopting strategic decisions and marketing tactics to favor the creation of a specific brand image, a unique model or standardized technique is yet to be created that will allow for the determination and measurement of the brand image for any market or activity sector (Low & Lamb, 2000; Stern et al., 2001). This raises two issues:

(1) Agreement has yet to be reached regarding the relevance of qualitative or quantitative techniques. While some authors have defended the use of the former (Gardner & Levy, 1955; Durgee & Stuart, 1987; Danes, Hess, Story, & Vorst, 2012), others have opted for the latter, and the majority of authors have suggested the use of mixed techniques for image studies, combining qualitative and quantitative tools during the different study phases (Churchill, 1979; Zaichkowsky, 1985; Sanz de la Tajada, 1994; Low & Lamb, 2000; Del Rio, Vazquez, & Iglesias,

2001; Martinez & De Chernatony, 2004; Dolnicar & Grün, 2007; Koubaa, 2008; Park, 2009; Huang, 2010).

(2) Although there are scales that allow for the measurement of partial dimensions of brand image, there is yet to be agreement on a standard set of attributes; that is, items to be included in a scale for measuring the overall image of any type of brand, regardless of the specific brand product category.

Dobni & Zinkhan (1990) sum up the process that is typically followed when studying brand image using combined qualitative and quantitative instruments. Once again, the lack of agreement as to a specific technique and measurement scale is evident.

2.3 Brand Positioning

While the basis of brand image is identity, the basis of brand positioning is image. These two concepts — image and positioning — are very closely related. In fact, the study of brand image makes no sense unless it is done within a competitive framework. In other words, the brand image must be compared with that of its competitors. Therefore, we begin from the notion of positioning, which is itself built upon the concept of image.

A company occupies a market position based on a series of attributes that individuals associate with that company in comparison with its competitors. Individuals experience this association based on their impressions, beliefs and perceptions regarding the company; it is what we refer to as "image". When this perceived image is compared with that of competitor companies, and distances are established between them, the relative positioning of the different companies is established within a specific sector (Sanz de la Tajada, 1994).

Aaker (1996) defines positioning as that part of the brand identity and value proposal that is actively communicated to the target audience and that reveals an advantage over competitive brands.

Rao and Steckel (1998) suggest that brand positioning is the way in which the brand is perceived by a relevant group of consumers compared with its competitors. Thus, positioning has no value unless it refers to a specific market segment. Similarly, Perreault and McCarthy (1999) indicate that positioning is defined by what consumers perceive to be the different brands found in a market.

Cerviño (2002) states that positioning is applied to the process of emphasizing the different and motivating attributes of a brand compared with those of its competitors. Thus, positioning is closely related to the concepts of associations and image, but its reference framework consists of its competitors.

Gwin and Gwin (2003) suggest that, in order to effectively position or reposition a brand, the company must know how the brand is perceived compared with other brands in its same product category. Through brand positioning, the company attempts to create a sustainable competitive advantage based on product attributes, both tangible and intangible, existing in the minds of the consumers.

To summarize, brand positioning may be defined as the way that each market segment perceives said brand in comparison to its competitors and the ideal brand, based upon a series of image or type attributes. Thus, each brand has a positioning that differentiates it from its competitor brands in each market segment.

Furthermore, the study of brand positioning is based on the study of brand image in relation to that of other brands, or compared with the ideal brand in a specific product category.

2.4 Perceptions of Luxury Brands

As previously stated, literature related to perceptions of luxury is quite limited, and the models developed for the study of luxury brand images have been restricted to measuring only the perceptions of the brand itself based on the value of the luxury. Each of these models relies on existing models, expanding upon the information that they have provided.

Kapferer (1998) identified 18 attributes-items to measure the degree of luxury associated with these luxury

brands. Dubois, Laurent and Czellar (2001) extended this to 20 attributes that were similar to the 20 proposed by Vigneron and Johnson (2004), who also grouped these into five luxury factors (conspicuousness, uniqueness, quality, hedonism and extended self). Wiedman, Hennings and Siebels (2007a, 2007b, 2009) established that perceptions of the value of brand luxury are based on four interrelated dimensions (financial, functional, individual and social) grouped into 10 factors (usability, quality, uniqueness, self-identity, hedonic self-gift giving, hedonic extravagance, hedonic self-directed pleasure, hedonic life enrichment, materialistic, prestige), which themselves consist of a total of 48 attributes or semantic items. Godey et al. (2009) introduced and validated a measurement scale of aesthetic styles applied to luxury goods stores, and, finally, Ciornea et al. (2011) added to the model of Wiedman, Hennings and Siebels by suggesting that luxury is characterized by a set of 11 values.

Despite the interest shown in the existing models, certain limitations have been found:

● None is operational from a point of view of studying the positioning of competitor brands. The brands that have been used in the different proposed models belong to distinct activity sectors. And while positioning refers to the relative state of a brand in comparison to other competitors, little information is offered to said brand if the knowledge of the state of other brands does not refer to direct competitors.

● All of the models analyze only perceptions regarding the value of luxury of the brands, but do not consider other equally important perceptions related to other brand dimensions.

● The items used in each model are only valid in a specific cultural and geographic context. Therefore, in order to guarantee the appropriateness and comprehension of the model, the corresponding semantic items should be generated, enunciated and validated in whichever context the model is to be used.

3. Objective and Methodology

Based on the concept of image as defined by Kotler and Keller (2012) and its multi-dimensional nature, the principal objective of this study is to propose a model to study luxury fragrance brand image and positioning. This model will include the contributions made by various authors regarding consumer perceptions of the degree of luxury of the brands, the personality assigned to them, and the benefits proposed in terms of product, organization and symbol. Thus, this model considers both the dimension of luxury of the brands being studied in accordance with the work of Wiedmann, Hennigs and Siebels (2007a, 2007b, 2009b), and the dimensions proposed by Aaker (1996) regarding brand identity. Furthermore, to overcome the other limitations of existing models used to measure the degree of luxury of the luxury brands, the brands studied here belong to the same sector and compete with one another. In addition, the attributes of the brands studied have been generated, enunciated and validated in Spain, where the proposed model has been applied.

To apply the model used to analyze its image and positioning, the product category chosen was luxury fragrances. This was based on the importance of this category in the global luxury market (Bain & Company, 2013a), and its widespread availability for purchase and use as an accessible luxury product (Allérès, 1990; Campuzano García, 2007). It was also based on data from Stanpa 2013 (Spanish Cosmetic Toiletry and Perfumery Association), which revealed the significance of luxury fragrances in the Spanish market of select perfumery and cosmetics (62 percent) and in the total Spanish fragrance market (73 percent). Finally, it was also selected based on the growth registered by the specific luxury fragrance market in Spain which, according to data from European forecasts, was over 120 percent from 1997 to 2011. This emphasizes the strong penetration rate of this luxury product in the Spanish population.

The methodology used in this study was based on a process defined by Dobni and Zinkham (1990) for the study of brand image using a combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques; this process has been accepted and used by many authors (among others: Joyce, 1963; Sanz de la Tajada, 1994; Low & Lamb, 2000; Del Río, Vázquez & Iglesias, 2001; Koubaa, 2008).

Therefore, in the initial qualitative phase of the study, six focus groups were conducted, in which 35 luxury-fragrance consumers in Spain participated (distributed between men and women, and grouped by age: between 18 and 29, 30 and 44, and 45 and older), and were selected using the snowball sampling method. This phase allowed for identification of the most well-known and most widely used luxury fragrance brands for the individuals studied, and for determination of the basic criteria used in purchase decision-making and consumption of the product purchased. It focused on attributes of image, stating them as items in precise and easily understood terms for Spanish consumers.

The results of this phase were reviewed with professional experts from the Spanish perfume-sector (distributors and manufacturers), resulting in a reduction of the 33 initial image attributes to 21 definitive attributes, with their corresponding semantic items. In addition, the final brands to be studied were selected, based on the ranking of the main brands of the Spanish luxury-fragrance market (European Forecasts 2008-2011): Chanel, Calvin Klein, Armani, Dior, Loewe, Paco Rabanne, Jean Paul Gaultier and Hugo Boss.

The second quantitative phase was carried out using a structured individual survey.

The final sample (already treated) of 520 individuals was based on a population made up of individuals over the age of 18, middle-class and above, and residing in Spanish cities with over 50,000 inhabitants (adjusting to the sociodemographic profile of the Spanish luxury fragrance consumer defined by distributors and manufacturers of the selective Spanish perfume and cosmetics sector). The sample was selected using non-random sampling by quotas based on gender or age, with simple allocation.

In this phase, a seven-point differential semantic scale was used to measure the image of relevant brands. This scale was created based on the attribute-items identified in the previous phase, some of which were similar to others that had already been validated in academic literature for the measurement of perceived brand quality (Keller & Aaker, 1992), as well as the attitude towards the brand (Zinkhan, Locander, & Leigh, 1986), its personality (J. L. Aaker, 1997) or its degree of luxury (Wiedmann et al., 2007a, 2007b, 2009b). The reliability of the scale was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha for the different dimensions of the considered image.

To study the positioning of the analyzed brands, factorial analysis was used, and corresponding positioning maps were produced for each of the studied segments, which were: the whole population, men, women, subjects aged between 18 and 29, subjects aged between 30 and 45, and subjects over the age of 45.

Finally, a principal components analysis was conducted in order to reduce the 21 attributes of the studied brands to seven key factors of the luxury-fragrance image.

4. Results

4.1 Qualitative Phase

Initially, 33 image attributes were identified, together with their semantic items, for luxury fragrance brands. After review by experts of the Spanish perfume and cosmetics sector, the number of these attributes was eventually reduced to 21, grouped into five categories linked to the dimensions of the brand image. These categories were: luxury brand attributes, brand personality attributes, fragrance brand attributes, organizational

brand attributes, and symbolic brand attributes (see Table 1).

(a) Luxury brand attributes

Many of the identified attributes were found to relate to the degree of luxury attributed to the brands, specifically the following: (1) price — the higher the price, the more luxurious the fragrance, (2) packaging — the more luxurious the packaging, the more luxurious the fragrance, (3) link to a prestigious designer or creator — the higher the renown of the designer or creator of the fragrance, the greater the perception of luxury attributed to the fragrance, (4) belonging to a brand that is already considered to be luxurious — creating another product of the same brand results in it automatically being considered luxurious and, therefore, the more luxurious the brand, the more luxurious it will be considered, (5) exclusivity — the fewer the people that use the fragrance, the more luxurious it is considered to be, and (6) the fragrance's ability to seduce — the greater this seduction ability, the more luxurious the fragrance.

These attributes directly relate to the values of luxury as suggested by Wiedmann, Hennigs and Siebels (2007a, 2007b, 2009) — for use, uniqueness, quality, identity reaffirmation, materialism, hedonism and prestige in social groups and networks.

Therefore, price directly affects the usage value attributed to the luxury fragrance, and indirectly affects its uniqueness value — the higher the price, the fewer individuals that will use the fragrance and thus the more unique and exclusive it will be. Price also indirectly affects its quality — the higher the price, the greater the quality attributed to the fragrance.

More luxurious packaging directly affects the following: the quality value, by improving the perceived quality; the materialism, by association with the importance attributed to all that is material; and hedonism, by increasing the personal pleasure offered.

The link to a prestigious designer or creator directly influences the prestige value of the social groups and networks, thus increasing the social recognition attained by those using the creator's fragrance, and indirectly influences identity reaffirmation. On the one hand, the greater the social recognition attained, the greater the self-esteem and self-assurance; on the other hand, the very identity of the creator allows for the reinforcement of the personal identity of those using his or her creation. Such a link results in the following: materialism — the manufacturer of the fragrance should demonstrate signs allowing for recognition of the creator or designer and suggesting the importance of those objects created by him or her; quality — it is understood that a creator or designer has become well known and attained prestige based on the quality of his or her creations; and hedonism — the quality attributed to the products created by a prestigious creator or designer influences the personal pleasure resulting from its use and consumption.

Belonging to a luxurious brand is directly impacted by the same factors described in regards to the link to a prestigious designer or creator; and, the more luxurious the brand is considered to be, also directly increases the usage value of the products belonging to this brand and its uniqueness value, since fewer people will have access to the brand.

Exclusivity directly affects the uniqueness value, and indirectly affects the social prestige and reaffirmation of identity.

Finally, the greater the seduction ability of the fragrance being used directly influences the prestige value in social groups and networks — the greater will be the social recognition achieved by those using the fragrance the and reaffirmation of identity, thus increasing the user's self-esteem and self-assurance.

(b) Brand personality attributes

All participants agreed that the luxury-fragrance brand should project a personality in accordance with their own, and in line with their lifestyle. For many, it should also be in line with their age. Thus, they indicated that brand correspondence to their style, personality and age were evaluation attributes of the luxury fragrance image, and that the brand should also project specific traits that are typically linked to individuals or lifestyles. Among the latter, the following are of special note: femininity, masculinity, youth, maturity, formality, informality, modernity, classicism, romanticism, sophistication and naturalness (all of which are mentioned by J. L. Aaker, 1997).

(c) Fragrance brand attributes

Regarding this point, participants alluded to the benefits offered by the fragrances themselves, as well as those that also create the corresponding brand image.

As functional benefits of the fragrances, they indicate those that are linked to an intense or fresh quality, the heaviness or lightness of the fragrance itself, and its long or short duration.

Emotional benefits of the fragrance include links to its originality, which is of special importance, and the personal enjoyment offered by its consumption.

(d) Organizational brand attributes

In all of the focus groups, history of the organization, experience and tradition in perfume making was considered to be a collective brand image attribute.

Another factor mentioned by the majority of the participants as a brand evaluation attribute was the degree of brand knowledge, based on geographic location (local, national or international). Thus, a national brand will be more well-known than a local one, and an international brand will be better known than a national one. Therefore, the more well known the brand, the greater its degree of development and the greater the importance of the brand's own organization.

(e) Symbolic brand attributes

In this case, it was verified that the evaluation of the luxury-fragrance brands was carried out while considering whether or not the brand's advertising reflected a world of luxury; that is, if it allowed participants to strengthen its identity as luxury symbols.

Furthermore, participants also recognized the influence of advertising pressure carried out by the luxury-fragrance brands in order to facilitate their recognition and improve their memory.

4.2 Quantitative Phase

Based on the attributes and semantic items identified in the prior phase (see Table 1) a seven-point differential semantic scale was constructed (with a total Cronbach's alpha of 0.87), including five subscales, in order to measure the corresponding dimensions of the luxury-fragrance brand image.

Table 1   Brand Image Attributes — Items for Luxury Fragrances

Attributes-items	Cronbach's alpha
Luxury brand attributes	**α = 0.682**
Its price is/is not accessible	
Its packaging is/is not luxurious	
The brand is/is not linked to a prestigious designer or creator	
It is/is not a top luxury brand	
Their fragrances are used by many/few people	
Their fragrances are very/not very seductive	
Brand personality attributes	**α = 0.768**
This brand does/does not correspond to my age	

It is a brand that does/does not correspond to my style and personality
It is feminine/masculine
It is young/mature
It reflects a formal/informal style
It is a classic/modern brand
It is sophisticated/natural
It is/is not romantic
Fragrance brand attributes   **α = 0.703**
Their fragrances are fresh and light/intense and heavy
Their fragrances are very/not very long lasting
Their fragrances are/are not original
Organizational brand attributes   **α = 0.828**
It is a well-known/not well-known brand
It has/doesn't have a strong tradition in perfume making
Symbolic brand attributes   **α = 0.564**
Its advertising reflects/does not reflect a world of luxury
They do a lot/little advertising

Prepared by authors

In the subsequent analysis, we studied the typical profile of the different brands and that of the ideal brand and, using factorial analysis of correspondence, we determined their positioning and created the corresponding positioning maps (see one of them in Table 2 and Figure 1). The segments were defined in accordance with the gender and age of those studied, and on whether or not they were consumers of the brands studied.

Table 2   Graphic Representation of the First Two Factors

	Factorial analysis of correspondences			
	Basis = luxury fragrance consumers who know each brand			
	Identification of variables	Graphic code	Axis 1 coordinate	Axis 2 coordinate
columns	CHANEL	A	0.26	0.00
	CALVIN KLEIN	B	-0.21	-0.07
	ARMANI	C	0.02	-0.04
	DIOR	D	0.20	-0.01
	LOEWE	E	0.08	0.00
	RABANNE	F	-0.06	-0.04
	GAULTIER	G	-0.02	-0.02
	HUGO BOSS	H	-0.19	-0.06
	IDEAL	I	-0.11	0.23
	Evaluation (1-7)			
rows	Its price is accessible/not accessible	1	-0.21	0.04
	Its packaging is/is not luxurious	2	-0.23	-0.07
	Its advertising does/does not reflect the world of luxury	3	0.12	-0.02
	Their fragrances are used by many/few people	4	0.06	0.18
	The brand is/is not linked to a prestigious designer or creator	5	-0.15	0.12
	They do a lot/a little advertising	6	-0.05	0.14
	Their fragrances are fresh and light/intense and heavy	7	0.18	-0.08
	It is well-known/not well-known	8	-0.13	0.21

	Factorial analysis of correspondences			
	Basis = luxury fragrance consumers who know each brand			
	Identification of variables	Graphic code	Axis 1 coordinate	Axis 2 coordinate
	It has/doesn't have a strong tradition in perfume-making	9	-0.16	-0.10
	Their fragrances are very/not very seductive	10	0.02	0.03
	This brand does/does not correspond to my age	11	-0.11	0.05
	It is masculine/feminine	12	0.18	0.06
	It is young/mature	13	0.22	-0.02
	It reflects a formal/informal style	14	-0.24	-0.05
	It is a modern/classic brand	15	0.24	0.01
	It is/is not romantic	16	-0.15	-0.09
	It is sophisticated/natural	17	-0.20	-0.05
	Its fragrances are/are not long lasting	18	0.03	0.06
	It is/is not a top luxury brand	19	0.12	-0.01
	It is a brand that does/does not correspond to my style and personality	20	0.10	-0.15
	Its fragrances are very/not very original	21	0.04	-0.12

In all cases, the factorial 1 axis (called "Modernity-Tradition") is based on the style and personality assigned to the brands, on the fragrance presentation, and on their accessibility based on price.
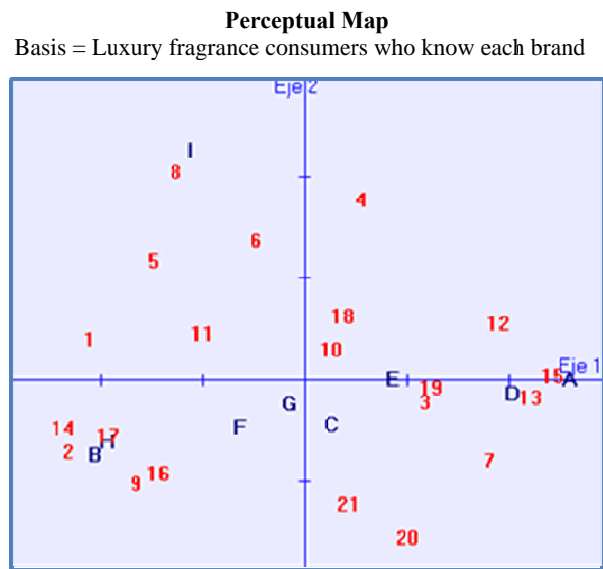
Perceptual Map
Basis = Luxury fragrance consumers who know each brand

Figure 1   Graphic Representation of the First Two Factors

Axis 2 ("Personalization-Generalization") is determined, in all examined segments, by the ideal brand. Its meaning is based on the brand's degree of exclusivity and its adaptation to user style and personality. Therefore, none of the brands examined approached the ideal in regards to these aspects.

Therefore, while individuals tend to idealize their ideal brand, isolating them from reality, this also constitutes a great opportunity for fragrance makers to satisfy consumer desires in those areas where satisfaction

has not yet been fully attained.

On the other hand, a principal components analysis with varimax rotation was used in order to reduce the 21 image attributes to seven factors, explaining 60.5 percent of the variance of the original attributes (Table 3). These factors also relate to the degree of luxury, the brand personality and the benefits that it offers as a product, organization and symbol: "seduction, prestige and age appropriateness", "accessibility", "exclusivity and tradition", "differentiation and style", "modernity and freshness", "naturalness" and "gender".

Factor 1 reflects consumer interest in luxury fragrance brands corresponding to their age, and the development of long-lasting and seductive fragrances. It also reveals a preference for brands that are situated near the top of the luxury status. Thus, this factor represents "seduction, prestige and age appropriateness" associated with the brand.

Factor 2 reveals a preference for fragrances that are somewhat accessible, and have packaging that is not excessively luxurious. Furthermore, it shows an interest in fragrances that are used by a large number of people, though not too many, and in ones that have advertising that does not reflect an excessively luxurious world. Therefore, this factor may be identified as brand "accessibility".

Factor 3 reveals an interest in brands that do not engage in excessive advertising, those that are not overly well-known, and preferably those that are linked to a prestigious designer or creator, and have a certain tradition in perfume creation. Thus, this factor may be identified as "exclusivity and tradition".

Factor 4 reflects a preference for a brand having a style and personality that corresponds to the consumer, and whose fragrances are quite original. Therefore, this factor is identified as "differentiation and style".

Factor 5 indicates that there is a predisposition towards brands with a somewhat youthful and modern style, not overly formal and with light and fresh fragrances. Therefore, this factor is identified as "modernity and freshness".

Factor 6 reveals an interest in brands whose style is not overly romantic and sophisticated, thus identifying it as "naturalness".

Finally, factor 7 reflects a preference for brands that are somewhat feminine, being identified as "femininity" or "gender".

Table 3   Principal Components Analysis

Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Communality
Varimax rotation								
Retained factor loads (after rotation)								
Its price is accessible/not accessible	0.3183	0.6449*	0.0002	-0.1339	-0.1163	0.1010	0.0846	0.5660
Its packaging is/is not luxurious	0.0254	0.6805*	0.2785	0.0933	0.0313	0.1960	-0.1098	0.6014
Its advertising does/does not reflect a world of luxury	0.3037	-0.4364*	-0.1363	0.0863	0.1709	-0.1375	-0.1363	0.3753
Its fragrances are used by many/few people	0.1714	-0.5358*	0.4827	-0.2870	0.0856	0.1506	-0.0029	0.6618
The brand is/is not linked to a prestigious designer or creator	-0.0658	0.2903	0.6335*	0.1510	-0.0661	0.0803	-0.0811	0.5302
They do a lot/a little advertising	-0.0037	-0.0045	0.7708*	-0.0527	0.0955	-0.0164	0.0151	0.6065
Their fragrances are fresh and light/intense and heavy	0.0454	-0.3446	0.1041	0.2251	0.5623*	-0.1504	-0.0846	0.5282
It is well-known/not well-known	-0.0715	0.0082	0.7600*	-0.0566	0.0825	0.1613	0.0810	0.6253
It has/doesn't have a strong tradition in perfume-making	0.0298	0.1655	0.5103*	0.3809	-0.1043	-0.0358	-0.1726	0.4756
Their fragrances are very/not very seductive	0.6372*	-0.1749	0.0450	-0.0437	-0.0743	-0.3194	0.1391	0.5675
This brand does/does not correspond to my age	0.7108*	0.2135	0.0273	-0.0646	-0.0701	-0.0824	-0.0502	0.5699

Varimax rotation								
Retained factor loads (after rotation)								
Variables	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6	Factor 7	Communality
It is masculine/feminine	0.1187	0.0456	-0.0517	0.0229	0.1251	-0.0785	0.8616*	0.7834
It is young/mature	-0.0184	0.0090	0.0419	0.2119	0.7825*	-0.0089	0.1624	0.6858
It reflects a formal/informal style	0.0847	0.0812	0.2301	0.1752	-0.6372*	0.3302	0.3348	0.7245
It is a modern/classic brand	-0.0871	-0.0626	0.1212	-0.0087	0.6860*	0.3121	0.1904	0.6306
It is/is not romantic	-0.1216	0.0610	0.0958	0.2036	0.1165	0.7350*	-0.2709	0.6964
It is sophisticated/natural	-0.0501	0.2992	0.1229	0.0732	-0.1589	0.7243*	0.1540	0.6861
Its fragrances are/are not long lasting	0.6805*	-0.0167	-0.0658	-0.1663	-0.0192	0.1389	0.1077	0.5267
It is/is not a top luxury brand	0.4309*	-0.4294	-0.3065	0.1636	0.1776	-0.1104	-0.0060	0.5346
It is a brand that does/does not correspond to my style and personality	-0.1320	-0.0702	-0.0213	0.7942*	0.0941	0.0275	0.0992	0.6731
Its fragrances are very/not very original	-0.0889	-0.0082	0.0434	0.7294*	0.1670	0.2793	-0.0566	0.6510
Own value	1.8678	1.9588	2.3731	1.6873	2.0208	1.6435	1.1488	
% variance	8.89%	9.33%	11.30%	8.03%	9.62%	7.83%	5.47%	
% accumulated	15.89%	28.44%	37.79%	44.98%	50.77%	55.66%	60.48%	

5. Conclusions and Theoretical and Practical Implications

Based on this study, a model that is specifically adapted to measure perceptions of luxury-fragrance brands has been defined, taking into account, on the one hand, those attributes related to dimensions of the product, organization, personality and inherent symbols of the referred brands, and on the other hand, those that are related to the dimension of luxury, as a collective set.

Having established the basis of said model, it was then verified that the positioning of the main luxury fragrances of the Spanish market do not vary significantly from the various segments studied.

Additionally, it was established that none of the brands analyzed by the consumers match the ideal brand when it comes to its most important attributes (exclusivity degree and adaptation to the style and personality of consumer), and that the key attributes, in terms of brand positioning, are those that define consumer style and personality, as well as those related to its presentation, accessibility and exclusivity.

This previous point confirms that the luxury fragrance brands are able to develop products that consumers can clearly identify with when taking into account lifestyle and inherent personality factors. Therefore, they can project this in their fragrances. The brand that manages to do this, as well as paying consideration to consumer demands regarding fragrance presentation and its degree of exclusivity, shall triumph in the market.

It is important to recall that the conclusions reached from this study refer to a specific time and in a specific competitive context.

Furthermore, the study is geographically limited to Spain. Thus, its results may not be generalized to more extensive areas.

Therefore, those brands that take advantage of the proposed model may extend its usefulness by regular application to the geographical area and competitive context of their choice.

Finally, it should be noted that the competitive context of this study was defined in terms of brand, not product.

In this respect, it is necessary to clarify that in the perfume and cosmetics sector, the term "brand" is used to refer to a generic name of the brand under which different fragrance sub-brands are sold, while the term "product"

refers to these sub-brands; that is, the name of the fragrances themselves. Thus, "Armani" is a brand, while "Acqua di Gio" is a product made by that brand.

So it is, in fact, these sub-brands or products that are actually acquired by consumers. Thus, competitive structures may be defined by analyzing the image and the positioning of the product in question.

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