Authors: Hellsten, Sofia 22270 | Åbonde, Adam 22134
Supervisor: Åkestam, Nina | Examinor: Sharma; Dharam Deo

IN AN UNEXPECTED FASHION

Effects of using brand-incongruent models in fashion ads

Abstract | Every day we encounter an abundance of advertising messages that condition social behaviours. Negative changes in society are often attributed to this, creating a debate about the unwanted effects of advertising. In this one prominent question is that of fashion brands not taking responsibility with regard to the physical appearance of the models they use. Companies gain much attention in media when they feature non-idealised and thus brand-incongruent models. Nevertheless, the effects of such incongruent model choices have been scarcely explored. Firstly, the intention of this thesis was to investigate how the usage of brand-incongruent models affect ad and brand attitudes. Secondly, how consumers react in terms of self-image and perceived CSR. This was tested on a well-known fashion brand through an experiment with 315 university students. The main effects of using brand-incongruent models were found to be positive. There was however a clear difference in the effects on attitudes, self-image and perceived CSR between male and female subjects. Since this study only examined a single incongruent feature and the sample was rather homogenous, further studies might be needed to fully be able to generalise the findings.

In an unexpected fashion
Effects of using brand-incongruent
models in fashion ads

Bachelor Thesis in Marketing
Stockholm School of Economics

Sofia Hellsten
Adam Åbonde

15 May 2013

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Responsible ads?

Advertising is about conveying messages. Sometimes explicit and sometimes subliminal, sometimes aimed at educating the consumer and other times merely to remind them. The goal is ultimately to affect people's attitudes and behaviours in order to gain attraction and sell products or services (Priester and Petty 2003; Jobber 2010, p. 3). In this sense ad-makers and marketing directors have the power to influence a vast amount of people, but are today taking poor social responsibility with regards to the effect their ads have on consumers. State regulations might not be the way to go, but what incentives could there be to make more responsible choices when creating communication?

People meet about 3,000 advertisement messages a day (Richards and Curran 2002), feeding us with ideals and selling concepts of normalcy; telling us what we are and who we should be (Jhally 2010). Even if you wanted to, you could probably not escape it. Since learning can be a subconscious process (Berger 2004) ads influence the way we think and feel (Sheehan 2004). As a result, social and behavioural aspects of advertising have been a topic of debate for many years and it is not uncommon to attribute different social problems to marketing, also known as the "unintended effects of advertising" (Pollay 1986; Phillips 1997). Within this debate the issue of the "Size Zero Ideals" in the fashion industry has lately gained increased attention (Cosgrave 2006; Olins 2008). Despite discussions around dangerously low body weight ideals the industry has seen a decrease in average female model weight by ten kilograms during the last ten year – now stretching well below the border for what is considered underweight (Engström, Tovatt and Åkestam 2013). Research confirming this is abundant, e.g. Spitzer, Henderson and Zivian (1999) stated that 99% of traditional female models are underweight, which emphasise the industry's great need for change.

As a reaction to this some global fashion and beauty companies, such as Unilever with their "real beauty" campaign for Dove (Dove 2013) and Ralph Lauren when they recently ran a campaign featuring a plus-size model (The Daily Mail 2012), have started to recognise this absurdity in model choices and pay attention to social responsibility with regard to societal ideals, looks and body shape fixation. They do this by going against current ideals, creating communication that is incongruent with their brand as well as and the overall industry standard. Such initiatives have gained a lot of attention and, with the current focus of conducting business in a socially responsible way, it is intriguing that not more companies have chosen a similar approach when marketing their brands; broadening the traditional view of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and point out social problems to help survive in a society where the political debate has moved from a closed forum to the public sphere.

1.2 Incongruence and non-idealisation

Numerous studies have suggested that using attractive models in ads is a very effective way to communicate ones messages (Baker and Churchill 1977; Joseph 1982). Over time beauty ideals have become rather homogenised through advertising and media exposure (Jones 2010) and this streamlining has to a large extent created an industry standard for what models are desired to look like. As a counter-reaction to this, recent research suggest that the usage of non-idealised models, with regard to physical attractiveness, could have a positive impact on the viewer's self-esteem and implicitly their perception of the represented brand (Smeesters and Mandel 2006; Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec 2012).

Another well-debated topic in the marketing industry is the use of incongruent elements and execution of unexpected or even absurd ads (Dahlén et al. 2005). Examples include effects on ad memorability when presenting incongruent information (Heckler and Childers 1992), marketing products with deviating product design (Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989; Noseworthy and Trudel 2011) and placing ads in thematically wrong media (Dahlén et al. 2008). In spite of this interest for incongruent communication, as well as the debate revolving around model appearance, substantial research on the effects of using brand-incongruent (i.e. non-idealised) models in fashion ads has not been conducted.

1.3 Brand-incongruent models in fashion ads

In order for fashion companies to make better-informed decisions, further knowledge is required regarding how the use of brand-incongruent models in ads, representing unexpected features of the brand, affects consumers' view of themselves and towards brands. In light of this the problem area of this thesis was determined.

If support can be found that brand-incongruent models have positive (or non-negative) effects on the brand and consumers, this could incite further studies on the topic and also work as a mean to further challenge existing marketing practices. If there are incentives to turn focus towards questioning ideals and expectations, companies within the fashion and beauty industry would have little reason not to take responsibility and actively contribute toward healthier ideals.

Since expected practices lack in responsibility and unhealthy ideals have become as good as industry standard, companies have started to re-evaluate their choices of female models. Drawing upon earlier studies of brand-incongruity and advertising's effects upon self-image, this study will examine the effects of an ad, from a company normally pursuing societal ideals, executed in a non-idealised (and thereby brand-incongruent) way.

1.4 Purpose

This thesis' overall aim is to shed light on *effects of using brand-incongruent models in ads for familiar fashion brands*. More specifically we want to investigate (1) *how such model choices generate effects on brand and ad attitudes, as well as ad credibility for well-known brands*, to see if there could be incentives for companies to engage in more responsible model choices, and (2) *how consumers react in terms of their own self-image and perception of the company's work with CSR*.

1.5 Delimitations

To successfully investigate the effects of model-brand incongruity it is preferable to look at a company with a strong and consistent brand image, since this mitigates the problem of positioning an unknown brand in the study subjects' minds. It thereby avoids biases as a result from subjects' possible differences in preconceived assumptions about a company. Therefore, this study examines the effects upon *familiar brands*. Further, as the focus of this study is to investigate attitudes and feelings towards ads and brands, the presented product itself becomes less significant. In the light of this, ads were chosen which had a clear focus on the featured model. *Fashion ads* were found to be a suitable choice as they almost inevitably contain models.

When selecting which company to include in this study, the choice fell upon H&M due to their great influence in the global fashion industry and known habit of using very thin and idealised models in their ads (Fridén 2013). Further they are one of Sweden's largest corporations (Interbrand 2013) and one of the world's most foremost fashion retailers with approximately 2,800 stores in 49 different countries (H&M 2013).

The choice to use *female models* was due to the fact that the discussion on model appearance today revolves mainly around female models. But since the ads of larger companies such as H&M will reach both sexes, even though primarily aimed at (in this case) female consumers, it was not desirable to exclude males from the sample population. Additionally, H&M's product line is not limited to female apparel and thus it is of interest to see how the attitude towards the brand is affected for both women and men.

Incongruence between models and brand could be investigated with several different approaches (for example age, ethnicity, body, face, height). To make the study more focused and with regards to previous research and collected empirics (see section 3.4.1), the question of congruence is here limited to the *body shape* of the model. Female underwear ads claim a constantly reoccurring focus in media and their prominence of body features makes it a good choice when altering ad information to test for effects of different body-shapes.

To avoid biases in observed effects the aim was to use two ads as similar as possible in terms of execution (lighting, colours, style). In this sense swimwear ads proved to be the best choice, why it was chosen in place of underwear ads.

Given this, one must take into consideration that conclusions drawn from our study is primarily applicable to *well-known brands with a strong position within the fashion industry*.

1.6 Expected contribution

Brand-incongruent messages that challenge ideals could be used as a means for more responsible communication, thus it is of importance to investigate possible positive and negative effects such choices can generate. Building upon current research the study investigates possible rewards and risks of using brand-incongruent models by looking at incongruence between brand and female models used in ads.

The hope is to open up for further, and deeper, research on the topic and that this in the future can serve as additional input for decision-makers in companies and agencies when it comes to their work with CSR. More precisely, when choosing to use or not to use previously standardised models in ads. Consequently the hope is also to add to the social and political debate on how usage of certain types of models in advertising honours unwanted behaviour and state obsolete norms.

1.7 Definitions

Ad (advertisement)
Advertising is a paid, non-personal message from an identifiable source delivered through a mass-mediated channel that is designed to persuade (Sheehan 2004). In this thesis ads refer to still advertising for printed and online media or out of home billboards.

Brand schema
Accumulated experiences and associations to a brand stored in the brain. It's activated by brand related information and helps to retrieve, process and distinguish new information associated with the brand.

Congruent
Congruency infers that something is corresponding or conforming to the normative expectations of a situation. Brand-congruent hence implies that something is in line with the existing perceptions of, or expectations on, a brand.

CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility)
Defined by Svenskt Näringsliv as the "responsible execution of business" (2013). It is the voluntary contribution by companies to a better society and environment, by reducing negative impact caused by the business.

Idealised
The ideal form of something – a standard regarded as perfection or excellence - to be aimed at or strived for and as such highly desirable to achieve.

Incongruent

The opposite of congruent.

Model

In this thesis, model refers to a person used in an ad to display or enhance a product (i.e. a photo model).

Norm

In this thesis, norm refer to silent expectations and rules in a group of people (i.e. silent norms).

Unintended effects of advertising

Effects of advertising that are not specifically planned by the advertisers and their agencies but can occur among members in a society. One example is the development of perceptions of self or others in society or the influence of the overall worldview of individuals (Sheehan, 2004).

Self-image

The conception or mental picture one has of oneself and one's worth, both in terms of physical appearance and personality. It is what you believe others think about you and the result of personal learning and experience as well as the internalized judgements of others.

1.8 Disposition

Chapter 1 is comprised of an introduction to the chosen research area including background, problem formulation and purpose along with relevant definitions. In chapter 2 the theoretical background on which the study is built is reviewed. Chapter 3 describes the method used when conducting the study as well as a discussion of its reliability and validity. Analysis and reporting of results is presented in chapter 4. This is followed by discussion and implications from the results, along with limitations of the study in chapter 5. Chapter 6 is comprised of the list of references.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter describes the theoretical background of the thesis. It is divided into three subcategories for eased overview; congruence and incongruence, self-image and perceived CSR. Each section leads to the formulation of one or more hypotheses and in the end of the chapter there is a summary of all the posed hypotheses.

2.1 The conflicting and unexpected

Adding conflicting elements to advertisements can both improve memorability and enhance brand attitudes (Dahlén et al. 2005; Heckler and Childers 1992). It has also been found that incongruent information can increase the processing and elaboration of advertisements (Heckler and Childers 1992; Lee 2000; McQuarrie and Mick 1992).

Since a brand-incongruent model can be considered a highly unexpected visual element it is more prone to be recognized by the consumer than a highly expected, i.e. brand-congruent, as argued by Heckler and Childers (1992). Being an important element in fashion ads, the photo model will have a mediating effect on the subject and consequently it becomes a very important part of the conveyed message.

2.1.1 The moderate incongruity effect and ad processing

The moderate incongruity effect (Meyers-Levy and Tybout 1989) states that when consumers meet a product, which is moderately incongruent with the product category schema, they will evaluate it more favourably than when they meet one that is congruent or extremely incongruent. This is in line with social judgement theory, which implies that when a message is within the receiver's latitude of acceptance, i.e. not too extreme or absurd (as it then will be rejected by the receiver as irrelevant information), the receiver can respond to the message and shift attitude position (Griffin 2011).

Dahlén et al. (2008) argue that advertising incongruences mediate positive effects on the processing of ads, which according to Meyers-Levy (1989) and Cacioppo and Petty (1982) makes people more likely to react favourably to the communicated messages. In an earlier article though, Dahlén et al. (2005) found support that brand-incongruent ads also can give rise to negative effects on ad attitude, compared to brand-congruent ads. In this thesis it is argued that the moderate incongruity effect would be applicable also when the product is substituted with the featured photo model and the product category schema is substituted with the "brand model schema", i.e. the inherent image of a typical H&M model. The effect on ad attitude is thus expected to differ depending on the perceived level of model incongruity (H1); if the model is viewed as congruent or very incongruent ad attitude would be rated more negatively, while if the model is viewed as moderately incongruent ad attitude would be rated more positively.

> *H1: Ad attitude for ads with brand-incongruent models differs from ad attitude for ads with brand-congruent models.*

2.1.2 Credibility

Another factor found to have an effect on the perception and evaluation of brands and their advertising is ad credibility (MacKenzie and Lutz 1989). Theory suggests that the perceived credibility of an ad can be influenced in several ways. One side focuses on ad-incongruence. It argues that when consumers meet ads, they compare the presented information with inherent information they have of the brand. As the perception of a brand and its values is unlikely to change for well-known brands, if there is a divergence between the information in the ad and about the brand, they cannot attribute this divergence to the brand schema. Instead their minds handle this by degrading the ad as less credible (Dahlén et al. 2005). Using a brand-incongruent model will per se conflict with the brand schema while a brand-congruent model will not. This indicates that the credibility of the ad should differ depending on the featured model being congruent or incongruent.

An alternative view put more emphasis on the featured model, in contrast to just looking at ad incongruence. Earlier studies (Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec 2012; Ritchins 1991) have examined the effects of using idealised and non-idealised models in ads. Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec (2012) show that whenever meeting a model, consumers initiate a model-evaluation process where they judge the credibility of the model. Their study shows that non-idealised, i.e. unexpected, models are perceived as more credible than idealised ones. As stated under delimitations (section 1.5) the ads tested in this thesis are fashion ads with a clear focus on the featured model. Since the model is the single most accentuated pictorial element, the perceived credibility of the model should also affect the perceived credibility of the ad itself.

One theory thus argue that using a brand-incongruent model in ads should make the ad be perceived as less credible, while another suggest that using a non-idealised (i.e. incongruent) model should make the ad be perceived as more credible. The rating of ad credibility is thus believed to differ depending on the perceived level of model incongruity (H2).

H2: Ad credibility for ads with brand-incongruent models differs from ad credibility for ads with brand-congruent models.

2.1.3 Cognitive effort and brand schema activation

When information that contradicts one's expectations is encountered this provokes motivation to think harder and be extra attentive to it, as compared to when meeting information which is in line with one's expectations (Fiske, Kinder and Larter 1983). By such boosted elaboration and processing our perception of the brand schema is amplified (Kent and Allen 1994; Pechmann and Stewart 1990). This increased attention and cognitive effort has proven to show favourable effects on brand responses (Heckler and Childers 1992; Lee 2000) and positive effects on brand attitudes for familiar brands (Dahlén and Lange 2004). Moreover, brand attitudes has been found to be more positive under certain conditions when using non-idealised models in ads (Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec 2012). This

implies that there could be a positive effect upon brand attitude from using an incongruent model as opposed to a congruent one; just like usage of non-idealised models mediates positive effects by challenging consumer's expectations.

Though, a very recent study by Mischner, van Schie and Engels (2013) found that challenging socio-cultural norms for appearance, such as the idealised image of a photo model, indicated a reduction in attention women pay to appearance-related media. This suggests that the increased cognitive effort would be contradicted by a decrease in attention paid to an ad with information incongruent to the ideal, and thus the brand.

Based on the varied processing and cognitive effort, an incongruent model should consequently give rise to different attitudes than a congruent one (H3).

H3: Brand attitude for ads with brand-incongruent models differs from brand attitude with brand-congruent models.

2.2 Idealised images and the self

Photo models used in advertising nowadays are highly idealised and the media industry has created ideals where big brands are setting the standard (Soley-Beltran 2006; Jones 2010). To a great extent, continuously reinforced ideals create the outline of how typical fashion models should look like in order to be congruent with the industry. In turn, these ideals have proven to affect the receivers' self-image negatively and also to potentially reflect badly upon the brand itself (Bower and Landerth 2001).

There are studies showing how usage of a "girl-next-door" model can prove to be more effective than a highly attractive idealised one (Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec 2012; Bower 2001). This supports the fact that if the model is altered to be non-idealised, and therefore incongruent with the brand, this could have positive effects upon the consumers' attitude towards the brand. Further Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec in their study from 2012 made the case that the self-evaluation process has a significant impact on the evaluation of and attitude toward ads. These findings suggest that the effects on the subjects' perceived self-image is important to examine when altering the models' level of congruity.

2.2.1 Social comparison and self-esteem

The social comparison theory states that *upward social comparison* – comparison to others whom people perceive to be superior to themselves – in general lead to negative emotions and threatens self-evaluation parameters (Gibbons and Gerard 1989; Buunk and Mussweiler 2001). Further Dittmar and Howard (2004) found that a single exposure to thin models was sufficient to activate these social comparison effects. As the congruent female model is synonymous with a highly idealised image of a woman, it would induce stronger upward social comparison than would an incongruent model. This might come forth as negative effects on the subject's self-image.

Furthermore, several strings of research has proven that women to a great extent compare themselves with idealised images in advertising and that those who do this experience negative feelings about themselves, as well as lower self-esteem and body satisfaction (e.g. Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec 2012; Ritchins 1991). This is supported by Smeesters and Mandel (2006) whom argue that the use of non-idealised models, when it comes to physical attractiveness, can have a positive impact on the viewer's self-esteem. Hence self-image, as a part of the self-esteem, could be affected by being exposed to incongruent models.

Due to social comparison and the effect the model has on self-esteem, it can be argued that a brand-incongruent model would affect the subject's self-image differently than a brand-congruent model would (H4a).

> *H4a: Subject's rating of perceived self-image is higher when exposed to ads with brand-incongruent models than when exposed to ads with brand-congruent models.*

2.2.2 Different effects on self-image depending on gender

It should be noted that most studies regarding self-image have focused on the effects of female models on female subjects (Dittmar and Howard 2004). Many studies agree that women exposed to advertising with idealised images of women tend to experience a lower level of body satisfaction (Bessenoff 2006; Cahill and Mussap 2007; Richins 1991). Men on the other hand seem not to be affected by exposition to idealised images of other men nor by exposition to idealised images of women (Gulas and McKeage 2000; Hargreaves and Tiggeman 2004).

The difference in the effect on perceived self-image should thus be larger among women, between the control and test group, than among men (H4b).

> *H4b: Women's rating of their perceived self-image will differ more, between ads with brand-incongruent and ads with brand-congruent models, than will men's rating.*

2.3 Corporate responsibility or PR-tricks

Brown and Dacin (1997) argue that when consumers evaluate new products they tend to take into account the overall image they have of the company, including its CSR engagement. This is supported by Mohr, Webb and Harris (2001) whom recognise that there is a substantial market segment that considers the level of corporate responsibility, both when shopping and making investment decisions. As the level of social responsibility taken by a company can influence consumers' attitudes, it is of interest to examine whether and how perceived CSR is affected by altering the congruity of the model used in advertising.

Sen and Bhattacharya (2001) show that consumers react more positively to CSR initiatives if they support the specific CSR domain in which the initiative is set. With the on-going discussion of model-looks in media, it is assumed that young people have some perception of existing body ideals and that the brand-incongruent model accordingly will symbolise a CSR matter they have an interest in (or at least are very aware of). In an experiment Murray and Vogel (1997) also found support that the subjects had significantly more positive attitudes toward companies who described their pro-social programs than toward companies who did not. Although the CSR statement in the advertisements tested in this thesis is very subtle (i.e. not explicitly expressed as a CSR initiative) it is anticipated that the brand-incongruent model will encourage higher ratings of perceived CSR than the brand-congruent one, due to the subjects expected awareness of the body ideal discussion.

A concept that has been increasingly referred to lately is green-washing, i.e. that companies try to "buy themselves free" from being held responsible of different unethical and non-environmental accusations by making donations or contributions to different charitable causes (Jahdi and Acikdilli 2009). This tendency of increased consumer scepticism is further supported by Mohr, Webb and Harris (2001) whom in a study found that respondents recognise that companies to some extent see CSR as being in their own self-interest. It is possible that subjects would look at the brand-incongruent model simply as a PR-trick, intended to clear the brand's image. In this case they are expected to rate the perceived CSR lower when exposed to the brand-incongruent model than when exposed to the brand-congruent one.

There are thus both theories suggesting that the subjects should rate CSR higher for the brand-incongruent model, if the subjects have a personal interest in the congruence of the models, and on the other hand that the subjects should rate CSR lower for the brand-incongruent model, since it might give rise to doubts concerning underlying reasons behind the initiative (H5a).

> *H5a: Perceived CSR for ads with brand-incongruent model differs from ads with brand-congruent model.*

The above argued importance of consumers' interest in a particular CSR field (Sen and Bhattacharya 2001) can be taken one step further; since the experiment feature images of female models, it is also likely that female subjects will react more strongly to the stimulus (i.e. models' body shape) than men due to a higher level of identification (H5b).

> *H5b: Women's rating of perceived CSR will differ more, between ads with brand-incongruent and ads with brand-congruent models, than will men's rating.*

2.4 Summary

Incongruent elements have been shown to affect both cognitive effort and the processing of ads, with the result of affecting attitudes towards ad and brand. There are theories arguing that incongruity of the ad (or featured model) also will have an effect on ad credibility. By means of social comparison subjects evaluate themselves with respect to the presented model. If the model is considered incongruent it is expected to have a different effect on the subjects' self-esteem than a congruent model would. Some theories argue that using an incongruent model should be evaluated favourably in terms of perceived CSR, while other raise cynical questions as of the motivation behind the CSR activity. Due to a greater identification factor with the model women's rating of both their self-image and perceived CSR is expected to differ more, depending on the featured models' level of congruity, than men's rating will. Following is a summary of the posed hypotheses.

TABLE I
Summary of hypotheses

H1	*Ad attitude for ads with brand-incongruent models differs from ad attitude for ads with brand-congruent models.*
H2	*Ad credibility for ads with brand-incongruent models differs from ad credibility for ads with brand-congruent models.*
H3	*Brand attitude for ads with brand-incongruent models differs from brand attitude with brand-congruent models.*
H4a	*Subject's rating of perceived self-image is higher when exposed to ads with brand-incongruent models than when exposed to ads with brand-congruent models.*
H4b	*Women's rating of their perceived self-image will differ more, between ads with brand-incongruent and ads with brand-congruent models, than will men's rating.*
H5a	*Perceived CSR for ads with brand-incongruent model differs from ads with brand-congruent model.*
H5b	*Women's rating of perceived CSR will differ more, between ads with brand-incongruent and ads with brand-congruent models, than will men's rating.*

3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the chosen scientific approach and experimental design, followed by a review of the pre-study, the main study and an individual presentation of the variables measured in the main study (ad attitude, ad credibility, brand attitude, self-image and perceived CSR). To sum up there is an examination of the reliability and validity of the thesis. Lastly there is a description of the tools used to analyse collected data.

3.1 Chosen approach

Aiming to find results that possibly can build a case for further research within the academic field, that later can constitute a basis for decision-making and applications in the marketing industry, a deductive approach is applicable. The study was conducted on a quantitative basis as it aimed for objectivity and had an emphasis on testing and verifying hypotheses based on previous theories (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005). This is further supported by the fact that quantitative research has a higher possibility of reaching more credible conclusions within larger-scale social behaviours (Bryman and Bell 2011) which is desirable when contributing to research and industry benchmarking. It also leaves room for, although limited, generalisations within the specific group studied (Malhotra 2010) accomplishing the intent to explore the effects of using brand-incongruent models on a certain population. Posing the question of what effects an incongruent model give rise to, as compared to a congruent model, endorses a casual research angle – the goal was to examine variables which potentially affect the choice of model and seek to prove relationships between dependent and independent variables (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2005).

3.2 Design of study

The study comprised two pre-studies followed by a larger main study. The pre-studies were designed to identify up to date attributes and qualities associated with a brand-congruent H&M model, respectively associations not congruent with such a model. Further they sought to confirm that the chosen models were suitable to be used in the main study.

The collection of quantitative data was accomplished through an experiment with two subject groups. A test group was exposed to a manipulated ad, followed by a short survey. These results were then tested against a control group who were exposed to a real (not manipulated) ad, followed by the same set of questions. Given that the aim was to investigate the difference in certain effects that an incongruent model give rise to, the choice of an experiment with a manipulated variable was deemed appropriate since it measures cause-effect relationships in a suitable way. With regards to the design of the study it can be argued that any differences found between the two groups can be related to the change in the manipulated variable, where the control group viewed a brand-congruent (true) H&M model and the test group a brand-incongruent (manipulated) H&M model.

3.3 Pre-studies

To find the most relevant variable of incongruity in our experiment, given that our purpose was to examine fashion models and the H&M brand, we complemented theory with two pre-studies. The first identified what feature to use as independent variable when examining effects of model incongruity. The second was then performed to help the process of deciding upon applicable photo models to use in the experimen, taking into consideration the chosen brand and type of feature in focus of the study.

The objective of the pre-studies was to:

     1) Establish attributes associated and not associated with typical H&M models

     2) Find a credible, brand-congruent H&M model

     3) Find a credible, moderately incongruent H&M model

3.3.1 Congruent and incongruent fashion model attributes

In pre-study one, to determine what model features that were and were not consistent with the H&M brand schema, a convenience sample of 20 respondents were asked to freely list the ten most salient and the ten most dissonant associations they had when thinking about an H&M model. The answers were comprised and the five most frequently occurring salient associations were: *very thin, wet hair, thin arms, small butt* and *slim*. The five most frequently occurring dissonant associations were: *belly, fat, pale skin, large thighs* and *not wearing make-up*.

From this it was concluded that the most common associations to H&M models were features of the *body shape*, supporting findings from examining already executed ads with brand-incongruent models. This research had confirmed that the most common incongruity choice within recent advertising is to pick a model where the *body shape* differs from what is typically used by the brand (most ads in such initiatives are underwear ads, which is beneficial since it also ease the experimental comparison of model body shapes). Moreover, using underwear models for testing model-incongruity is in line with the on-going size zero discussion in media (Cosgrave 2006; Olins 2008). With this context the use *body shape* as the varying variable, when looking at the effects of brand-incongruent model choices, makes the study applicable to the chosen brand and renders feasibility in an experiment. The pre-test also generated insights about the H&M brand schema and conclusions about model-choices were later used when creating pre-study two.

3.3.2 Determination of congruent and incongruent model images

The purpose of pre-study two was to identify a model seen as congruent with H&M ad and brand schema, as well as find a model that was unlikely to be used in an H&M advertisement but still seen as trustworthy enough to be used in an underwear ad (i.e moderately incongruent). The pictures tested were based on real H&M models, models used in ads with incongruent models and with reference to idealised and non-idealised models previously used in similar studies (Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boe-

dec 2012). This time a new convenience sample of 40 respondents were asked to rate three different models on how much these responded to their view of a typical underwear model and a typical H&M model. Further the sample was asked how likely/unlikely and credible/not credible the selected models were to be seen in an underwear ad, respective an H&M ad. This gave insights on which models to use in the experiment, and determined where the incongruent look turned too extreme to be credible. Table II below presents the summarised results from the second pre-study, numbers reported are the mean values of all respondents.

TABLE II
Results from pre-study two
(scale from 1 = does not correspond, to 7 = corresponds completely)

	Model 1 (μ)	Model 2 (μ)	Model 3 (μ)
Model's correspondence to the view of a typical underwear model	6,5	2,42	1,63
Likeliness that model would be used in underwear advertising	6,74	3,08	2,13
Model's correspondence to the view of a typical H&M model	6,41	1,76	1,37
Likeliness that model would be used in H&M's underwear advertising	6,47	2,16	1,47

	Male	Female	Other
Gender of respondents	53%	45%	3%
Mean age of respondents	22,2		
Number of respondents	40		

The results proved that the models feasible to use in the main study were: Model 1 as the congruent model and Model 2 as the incongruent model. Model 1 is both congruent with the view of a typical underwear model (μ=6.5) as well as with the H&M brand (μ=6.41). Further the model proves to be perceived as very credible both as a general underwear model (μ=6.74) and model used in an H&M ad (μ=6.47). Model 2 had a quite low mean (μ=2.42) for typicality as underwear model and she was confirmed as incongruent with H&M (typical H&M model: μ=1.76, likeliness to be used in an H&M ad: μ=2.16). The likeliness of being used in underwear ads however (μ=3.08) implies that she was not too unlikely to be used as an underwear model. Supporting these findings with images of non-idealised models in previous similar studies (Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec 2012) and the fact that Model 2 is a professional model, having featured on the cover of Vouge Italia and as the face of Ralph Lauren (The Daily Mail 2012), confirmed her as not being too incongruent. Model 3 was excluded as she proved to be too unlikely to occur in an underwear ad (Typical underwear model: μ=1.63, Likeliness to be used in underwear ad: μ=2.13) and the level of incongruity was thus concluded to be too high.

See appendix for full version of pre-study two.

3.4 Main study

In the creation of the main study, findings from the two pre-studies were used along with knowledge from academic praxis and results from previous studies in similar research areas. The experiment was then tested and revised before distributed to the sample.

3.4.1 Design of experiment

To conduct the experiment and collect data the online survey tool *Qualtrics* was used. Two groups, one test group and one control group, were presented with one ad each where the featured model (independent variable) was manipulated for the test group. Following the ad was a set of 15 questions, identical for both test and control group. The subjects were randomly assigned the experiment, where half of the sample was presented with the congruent model (Model 1 = control group) and the other half was presented with the incongruent/manipulated model (Model 2 = test group).

<div align="center">

Control group - Exposure: congruent model (model 1)
Test group - Exposure: incongruent model (model 2)

</div>

3.4.2 Collection of data

As the study does not focus on being generalised for a wider population, but rather serve as a springboard for further research and linking together existing findings, it was decided to use a convenience sample of subjects when collecting data (Bryman and Bell 2011). The experiment was distributed by email and through online social media to 1,300 students at Stockholm School of Economics. The sample consisted of people living in the same city and of approximately the same age ($\mu = 23.03$, $\sigma = 2.33$), thus the sample can be considered to have been fairly homogenous. There are according to Malhotra (2010) risks associated with using a homogenous group, as this is not representative for a whole population, making generalisations more difficult. Lynch (1982) on the other hand claims that a homogenous sample can be of preference since the probability of discovering flaws in a theory is superior in such cases. In total 330 subjects was part of the study. Of these 15 were excluded on a basis of their age, since they were considered outliers with regard to the majority of the sample (outside the range 19-30 years old). Subjects with these characters represented an insignificant part of the sample but deviated from the rest of the subject's and in order to keep the sample homogenous the decision fell upon dropping them. 148 subjects were exposed to the congruent model and 167 to the incongruent one.

3.4.3 Design of experiment questions

To investigate the dependent variables we used multiple-item measures, this in order to limit measurement errors and improve the internal reliability (Bryman and Bell 2011). The questions were posed by using two opposing statements, where the subjects rated their agreement with either side on a semantic seven-graded differential scale (Malhorta 2010). Cronbach's alpha was then calculated for these measures to

ensure their reliability and the items were averaged together for each variable. Before performing the experiment full scale it was tested on a small group of people considered to be homogenous with the sample population. The five people participating in this pre-testing gave both spontaneous input on issues with the design of the experiment and the comprehensiveness of the questions, as well as provided indications on whether variables and questions answered what they sought to investigate. This helped to understand and improve flaws within the experiment, the formulation of questions and measures. After the test, received input was adjusted for and the experiment finalised.

3.5 Variables of investigation

The basis for measurement and analysis, after the subjects had been exposed to one of the two ads, was: ad attitude, ad credibility, brand attitude, self-image and perceived CSR.

Ad attitude

To test the hypothesis regarding changes in ad attitude the subjects were asked to rate three statements on a seven-graded semantic differential scale. These were: *My impression of the ad is… bad/good, unpleasant/pleasant* and *unfavourable/favourable* (Dahlen et al. 2005; MacKenzie and Lutz 1989). Cronbach's alpha for this item was 0.94.

Ad credibility

To measure the credibility of the ad a triple statement measure taken from Dahlén et al. (2005), measuring attitude on a seven-graded semantic differential scale, was used. The following were endpoint items: *convincing/unconvincing, believable/unbelievable* and *biased/unbiased*. Despite using established endpoint items Cronbach's alpha for the items taken all together was only 0.56. The conclusion after investigating the reason behind this was to exclude the measure biased/unbiased, which increased the alpha to 0.80.

Brand attitude

Brand attitude was measured on a three item seven-point semantic differential scale, using the items: *good/bad, negative/positive* and *satisfactory/unsatisfactory* (Dahlen et al. 2005). Cronbach's alpha was measured to 0.95.

Self-image

To measure the effects that the ad had on the subjects' self-image the following statements was put in use; *At this moment … I feel/don't feel good about myself, I like/dislike the way I look,* and *I feel attractive/ unattractive*, and measured on a seven-point semantic differential scale. The statements were selected from previous self-image studies (Bengtsson 2012; Antioco, Le Boedec and Smeesters 2012) and had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.94, which proves them to be internally reliable and a workable proxy for perceived self-image.

Perceived CSR

A majority of the studies on perceived CSR revolve around perceptions when companies making explicit statements regarding their CSR work. The goal here was to test how perceived CSR was affected by the subtle CSR statement the incongruent model displays. The items used have not previously been put in practice, but were worked out through arrangement and benchmarking of previously applied measurements (Salmones, Crespo and Bosque 2005; Wagner, Lutz and Weitz 2009). To measure how the subjects perceived the brand's social responsibility when exposed to the incongruent ad compared to the congruent one, the experiment included a seven-point semantic differential scale with the items: *I believe that H&M is … irresponsible/responsible*, *disrespectful/respectful* and *inconsiderate/considerate*. As Cronbach's alpha was measured 0.94 the items prove to have good internal consistency and the measure is thus argued to be reliable.

See appendix for full version of the experiment.

3.6 Credibility of the study

If a study is to be considered credible, it is of importance to evaluate its reliability and validity. These measures are not synonymous but the relationship between them is strong since good validity presumes good reliability (Söderlund 2001).

3.6.1 Reliability

For the results of this thesis to be reliable they need be repeatable, especially since the research is quantitative, demanding use of measurements that are stable over time (Bryman and Bell 2011) and with the goal of minimising random errors (Malhotra 2010). This implies that to be considered as highly reliable, a study needs to achieve similar results if it is being replicated – one way to accomplish this is to perform the same test at numerous points in time. Though in this case, with the volatile nature of the fashion industry and time restrictions of the thesis, this was hard to achieve. Pre-tests conducted before the actual experiment strengthened the stability of the measures used and in addition to this the experiment was designed as to attain relatively high reliability in terms of replication.

To measure internal consistency for multiple-item measures, calculations of Cronbach's alpha were performed. For an internal consistency assessment to be reliable a Cronbach's alpha of 0.70 or higher is typically considered to be acceptable, often referring to Nunnally (1978). However, a paper by Lance, Butts and Michels (2006) argue that such references to Nunnally are very doubtful as his original work rather recommended a reliability of 0.80 (not 0.70) to be used for basic research, which later also was suggested by Carmines and Zeller (1979). As the overall results in this thesis were high (Cronbach's alpha > 0.80) the measurement reliability of the experiment should be considered good. This allowed for computing the multiple-item measures into new averaged variables.

When performing statistical analysis, examined data are often assumed to follow a normal distribution. With large enough sample sizes this is approximately true since, as the sample gets larger, the t-distribution converges towards a standard normal distribution. For n > 120 the two distributions even become practically the same. The data set considered in this study included a sample of 330 (315) responses, which thus is enough to support and strengthen the statistical reliability (Wooldridge 2009, p. 775).

3.6.2 Validity

The validity of a study shows how well the variables of investigation actually measure what they aim to measure (Bryman and Bell 2011). Following is a discussion of the internal and external validity of the study.

Internal validity

Internal validity is reached if there is a casual relationship between the dependent and the independent variable (Malhotra 2010), i.e. if the change in the dependent variable is caused by a change in the independent variable and these effects are not caused by any variable other than the tested one. Since the two subject groups were exposed to identical experiments both in execution, design (apart from the change of the model) and distribution it is argued that differences in measured effects on the dependent variables can be linked to the subjects' view upon the chosen model. The experiment was available for completion during the time span of one week, why risks of the results being affected by external factors occurring over time were minimised – a longer test period would possibly have incurred changes in the environment that could have affected the results. However, all respondents preformed the experiment online and as such the limited control over environmental factors could have proven to be a problem, possibly lowering the validity. This implies that diverse environmental factors could have affected the subjects in different ways and thus skewing the results; for example given that the situation and time-frame for completing the experiment could have differed between subjects.

Having the subjects divided into two groups on a fully random basis gives the internal validity additional strength. One needs to be aware that this study makes use of a considerably well-known, already existing brand (H&M) which implies that one can expect the subjects to have previous perceptions about it that may have affected the results – thus weakening the internal validity. On the other hand, because of the choice of such a big and well-known brand, with a very clear and consistent image in Swedish society, the potential differences in brand perceptions should be quite insignificant. In addition to this, bearing in mind that the collection of data was timed before the seasonal swimwear advertisings started popping up, the possibility of the subjects being affected by similar media in their surroundings was limited. Apart from these aspects the internal validity gain additional strength by the fact that between, and within, the test groups demographic characteristics were very similar to each other. Ensuring content validity, and to make sure that content and response choices comprised everything that the theoretical variable sought to measure, multi-item measures were used (Söderlund 2001). To a great extent these were proven measures and it can therefore be argued that the validity is further strengthened.

Altogether it should be noted that there are limits to the internal validity of this study. But in the light of the homogeneity within the sample and the secured tools for measurement within a short timeframe, it can be argued with some certainty that the observed effects were caused by differences in the models' level of congruity.

External validity

External validity is concerned with the extent to which results from the study can be generalised to other situations and persons, settings and times (Ghauri and Grønhaug 2009). Further, external validity for experiments refers to whether the cause-effect relationship can be generalised beyond the experimental environment (Malhotra 2010). Thus when not using randomly selected samples in a study the external validity can become a problem (Bryman and Bell 2011). The use of a convenience sample in this thesis could lower the external validity of the study, as it is hard to generalise the results beyond the tested sample; the geographical scope was narrow, university students in a large Swedish city has a limited representativeness for the whole Swedish population and can not directly be generalised outside of Sweden – there may be cultural differences in attitudes towards models and brands in other countries compared to Sweden. This is especially true for H&M as it is one of Sweden's largest and most well-known brands.

Still, the debate regarding extreme ideals and theories of ad-brand incongruences are similar in other nations. Generalisations toward other industries could prove difficult as we tested specific features of a fashion model, though the study could be applicable on other products within the fashion industry and on other of model features than body shape. However since generalisation is not the main focus of the thesis, it is suggested that the results should be used as a springboard for further research, a means for discussion and as a source for starting to question habitual choices within the industry.

3.7 Tools for analysis

Collected data was analysed in the statistical program STATA. Calculations of Cronbach's alpha, tests for heteroskedasticity[*] (Breusch-Pagan test and White test), frequencies and mean comparisons through regression analyses (simple and multiple) and independent samples t-tests were performed.

---

[*] Heteroskedasticity implies that "the variance of the error term, given the explanatory variables, is not consistent" (Wooldridge 2009, p. 839)

4. RESULTS

In this chapter the results of the main study are reported. Presented first is a summarised overview, then the individual results for each of the examined variables and lastly a summary of the tested hypotheses and their outcomes.

4.1 Summary of data

The data set consisted of cross-sectional data[*] and thus there was a risk of heteroskedasticity in the sample. Each of the dependent variables (ad attitude, ad credibility, brand attitude, self-image and perceived CSR was hence tested with a Breusch-Pagan test of heteroskedasticity as well as a White test. Both tests implied that ad attitude could not be rejected as homoskedastic, while the other variables could. Ad attitude was further tested using robust regressions and the remaining variables with separate mean comparison t-tests. The results are listed in Table III below.

TABLE III
Individual t-test results

Variable	Congruent model (μ_c)	Incongruent model (μ_i)	Diff.	Statistics
Ad attitude	*4.80*	*4.54*	*-0.26*	*n.s.*
- female	4.53	4.85	0.33	n.s.
- male	5.11	4.11	-1.00	t = -3.60, p < .01
Ad credibility	*4.36*	*4.78*	*0.41*	*t = 2.34, p < .05*
- female	4.29	4.98	0.70	t = 3.01, p < .01
- male	4.45	4.47	0.02	n.s.
Brand attitude	*5.28*	*5.24*	*-0.04*	*n.s.*
- female	5.42	5.41	-0.01	n.s.
- male	5.13	5.04	-0.09	n.s.
Self-image	*5.03*	*5.22*	*0.19*	*n.s.*
- female	4.75	5.19	0.44	t = 2.10, p < .05
- male	5.35	5.28	-0.07	n.s.
Perceived CSR	*4.46*	*4.82*	*0.37*	*t = 2.37, p < .05*
- female	4.24	4.82	0.59	t = 2.69, p < .01
- male	4.70	4.86	0.15	n.s.

Comparison of the effect between sexes

Variable	Female diff. ($\mu_i - \mu_c$)	Male diff. ($\mu_i - \mu_c$)	Diff.	Statistics
Self-image	*0.44*	*-0.07*	*-0.51*	*t = -1.66, p < .1**
CSR	*0.59*	*0.15*	*-0.44*	*n.s.*

*Only significant on 10 %-level

---

[*] Data was gathered from a sample of individuals at a given point in time.

To test H4b and H5b (that the rating difference between the test group and control group would be greater for females than for males) an interaction term was generated that represented Subject Gender x Model Congruity. The hypotheses were tested through individual regression analyses. Since no signs of heteroskedasticity were found there was no need to make these regressions statistically robust. These results are also listed in Table III.

4.2 Individually reported results

Incongruity effect on ad attitude

The results does not support that there is a significant difference in ad attitude between ads featuring brand-congruent and brand-incongruent models (diff = -0.26). *Thus H1, that ad attitude is different for ads with brand-incongruent models and ads with brand-congruent models, is rejected*. When re-running the regression, with male and female subjects separated, a strongly significant negative effect upon ad attitude was found for males exposed to the brand-incongruent model (diff = -1.00, $p < 0.01$). For women the effect was slightly positive when exposed to the brand-incongruent model (diff = 0.33). These results, however, were not significant.

Incongruity effect on ad credibility

Perceived ad credibility was affected by model incongruity in a positive manner and with statistically significant results (diff = 0.41, $p < 0.05$). The results imply that *H2 cannot be rejected and ad credibility is different for ads with brand-incongruent models and ads with brand-congruent models*. Just as with ad attitude, there was a difference in observed effects depending on the gender of the subject; females found the brand-incongruent model more credible than the brand-congruent (diff = 0.70, $p < 0.01$), while for males there was no significant difference (diff = 0.02) in ad attitude between the two groups.

Incongruity effect on brand attitude

No significant support was found for any differences in brand attitude towards the ad featuring a brand-congruent and ad featuring a brand-incongruent model (diff = -0.04). This was also true when looking at male (diff = -0.09) and female (diff = -0.01) subjects separately. *This suggests that H3 is rejected and that brand attitude is not affected by exposition to ads with brand-incongruent models versus ads with brand-congruent models.*

Incongruity effect on subject's self-image

No significant support was found for any differences in the subjects' perceived self-image between the group exposed to the brand-incongruent model and the group exposed to the brand-congruent model (diff = 0.19). The results imply that *the subject's perceived self-image is not higher when exposed to the brand-incongruent model, rather than the brand-congruent one, and subsequently H4 is rejected*. The results support that there is a significant difference in females rating (diff = 0.44, $p < 0.05$), while for males the difference (diff = -0.07) was not statistically significant. Additional t-tests were conducted in

order to test H4b, that the self-image rating differ more for women between ads with brand-congruent and brand-incongruent models than it do for men. The results (diff = -0.51, p < 0.1) suggest that; *support is found for H4b and the self-image rating differs more between women exposed to the different models than between men exposed to the different models.*

Incongruity effect on perceived CSR

There was a significant difference in the rating of perceived CSR between subjects exposed to the brand-congruent and the brand-incongruent model (diff = 0.37, p < 0.05). Thus *H5a cannot be rejected; perceived CSR will be different between subjects exposed to the brand-congruent and brand-incongruent model.* Females' perceived CSR rating is significantly different (diff = 0.59, p < 0.01) between the two groups, while for males no significant support was found that the self-image rating would differ depending on the brand-congruity/-incongruity of the featured model. Additional t-tests show that this difference in the effect on perceived CSR rating between the sexes is not statistically significant; *H5b is rejected, that the self-image rating will differ more for women than for men depending on which model the subject is exposed to.*

4.3 Summary of findings

Following is a summary of the study findings: the hypotheses tested and short interpretations.

TABLE IV
Summary of study findings

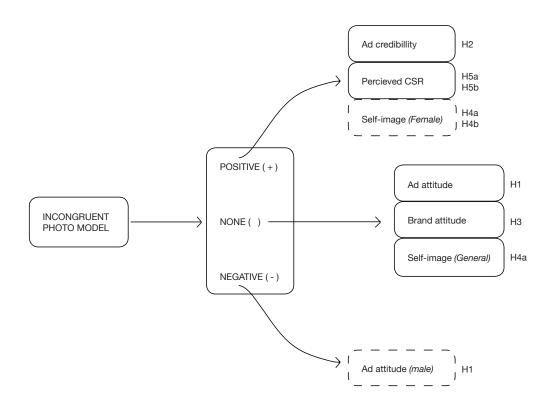| Hypothesis	Result	Short interpretation
H1	Rejected	*Ad attitude for ads with brand-incongruent models does not differ from ad attitude for ads with brand-congruent models.*
H2	Failed to be rejected	*Ads with brand-incongruent models are perceived as more credible than ads with brand-congruent models.*
H3	Rejected	*Brand attitude for ads with brand-incongruent models does not differ from brand attitude towards ads with brand-congruent models.*
H4a	Rejected	*Subject's perceived self-image is not higher when exposed to ads with brand-incongruent models versus ads with brand-congruent models.*
H4b	Failed to be rejected	*Women's self-image rating differ more, between ads with brand-incongruent and ads with brand-congruent models, than men's rating do.*
H5a	Failed to be rejected	*Ads with brand-incongruent models rated higher on perceived CSR than ads with brand-congruent models.*
H5b	Rejected	*Women's rating of perceived CSR does not differ more, between ads with brand-incongruent and ads with brand-congruent models, than men's rating do.*

5. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

This chapter starts by discussing the results presented in the previous chapter, walking through the effects on ad, brand, self-image and CSR subsequently. Next comes a critical stance as of the limitations of this thesis. Finally there is a review of what academic and managerial implications the study provides.

5.1 In support of using incongruent models

In accordance with this thesis' purpose of examining certain consequences of using brand-incongruent models in fashion ads, it can be concluded that effects of incongruity prevail among some factors while inexistent in others. Overall, the results show positive or no effects upon the tested parameters, with the exception of ad attitude among males, and the findings support that there are no undesirable effects upon the brand from using incongruent photo models in print advertising. Further the results indicate that choosing incongruent models in fashion ads give rise to positive effects in ad credibility as well as, in the case of females, mediates positive outcomes on the social factors of self-image and CSR. Thus the findings show that there is a difference in the responses from females and males. As only very limited negative effects were found, this supports usage of brand-incongruent models for familiar fashion brands. Following is a model illustrating of the direction of established effects.

Model I
The effects of using a brand-incongruent model

5.1.1 Effects on ad and brand

Negative ad attitude among males

No support for a general difference in ad attitude was found, contrasting what is stated by the social judgement theory and the moderate incongruity effect. Moreover this does neither support the findings of Dahlén et al. (2005), that brand-incongruent elements would result in more negative attitudes toward an ad. The cause behind the lack of attitude effects may originate from the incongruity being too imperceptible to influence the overall ad attitude, despite what was indicated in the pre-study. However, looking at the two sexes separately a distinct finding (although not embraced by our hypotheses) can be distinguished; difference in ad attitude among males was found to be significantly negative for the ad with the incongruent model, whereas there was no effect among females. This negative change in ad attitude among men might be due to that meeting an incongruent model, not in line with current ideals rise a lower level of positive emotions than an idealised model would, as argued by Kendrik et al. (1993).

Incongruent models are perceived as more credible

The most significant effect found was that of greater ad credibility for ads with brand-incongruent models. This is confirmative with the findings of Antioco, Smeesters and Le Boedec (2012) but contradicts the conclusions of Dahlén et al. (2005), that incongruent elements would lower the credibility of the ad. A possible explanation for the positive difference in ad credibility could be that, in the case of females, the incongruent model was perceived as more similar to themselves and thus the ad itself was perceived as more credible (Deshpandé and Stayman 1994; O'Keefe 1990). Among men no significant difference was found, this in spite of ad-brand incongruity theories, which state that men should consider the ad with the incongruent model as less credible than with the congruent one. One possible explanation could be their lack of comparison with the model.

Brand unaffected by incongruent models

The study failed to uphold any effects upon brand attitudes as a result of the incongruent element in the ad, opposing both expected positive and negative effects (Antioco, Le Boedec and Smeesters 2012; Dahlén and Lange 2004; Mischner, Van Schie and Engles 2013). This indicates that there might be a lack of increased processing and cognitive activity, as anticipated from earlier findings (Kent and Allen 1994; Pechmann and Stewart 1990). Further reasons behind this may be the fact that the study was preformed in a very short time interval – with only one exposure of the ad. When the sender has such a strong brand image as H&M a one-time exposure to something different or new can be too insignificant to change any inherent attitudes towards the brand.

5.1.2 Effects on social factors

The major conclusion drawn is that there is a significantly positive difference in how the incongruent model choice affect females' self-image. This is in line with the social comparison theory (Gibbons and Gerard 1989; Buunk and Mussweiler 2001) and confirmatory with theories stating that non-idealised images of women have favourable effects upon self-evaluation parameters (e.g. Antioco, Le Boedec and Smeesters 2012). Another clear finding is that there is a difference between the sexes – males are not significantly affected differently by the incongruent and congruent ad on the social parameters. This could be explained by the lower level of comparison between male subjects and the models than between female subjects and the models. Thus identification with the model is lower among men. Another complimentary explanation for lack of difference in self-image could be that of Gulas and McKeage (2000) and Hargreaves and Tiggeman (2004); even if men encounter idealised images of other men, there is no significant effect on their self-image. The results support that using an incongruent model in terms of body shape did not have a negative effect in terms of lowered social well-being. Dittmar and Howard (2004) suggest that if negative effects are supported after a single exposure to idealised models, recurring exposure could have even stronger negative consequences. In contrast to this, if positive effects are supported after a single exposure to non-idealised models, recurring exposure could have even stronger positive consequences.

Talking about identification, it is possibly the underlying reason to why women tend to perceive the brand as more responsible than men when exposed to the incongruent ad. Higher level of comparison with the model (Festinger 1954), together with the size-zero ideals being more salient among females than males, may initiate the cognitive process of thinking about the drivers behind the unexpected model choice when comparing it to the inherent brand schema. It should be noted that the ad did not communicate any direct CSR-message but sought to investigate if the subtle statement of choosing a non-idealised model would change the perceived standpoint of the brand. It is therefore not surprising that there were no significant effect on an overall level. Declaring a clear cause would perhaps render greater effects but on the other hand this could be seen as the company taking advantage of the social cause (Drumwright 1996; Jahdi and Acikdilli 2009) in order to make money or just to comply with norms.

5.1.3 Conclusion

This thesis support that there are no short-time negative effects upon the brand of using an, in terms of body shape, incongruent female model in print ads. There is an expected negative effect upon ad attitude – though this is limited to male subjects whom are not the target group for the advertisement. Moreover, since no negative effects were found upon brand attitude the difference in ad attitude should be considered unimportant with regard to the overall effects of using a brand-incongruent photo model. The social effects of self-image and perceived CSR are positive or neutral between both sexes – thus there is little reason for well-known brands not to deviate from their typical, idealised model. Rather the study found motives, which indicate that such usage could have positive effect upon society and the responsibility image the brand displays.

5.2 Limitations

Pre-studies and testing of the experiment before launching was intended to mitigate possible problems with the study. However there are limitations to the study, one of the main being time and monetary constraints. Due to these it was only possible to conduct a one-time test where the variables were measured once. The subjects were exposed to the ads at a single point in time and directly after exposure the responses were recorded. It is thus not possible to make any conclusions of the long-term effects of exposition to the different ads. Factors such a brand attitude develops over time and is then quite stable (Macrae and Bodenhausen 2000), why it can be argued that this thesis was not of best possible design in order to examine such effects.

The design of the study did not allow for any comparison between the subjects' inherent beliefs and attitudes, and those occurred as a consequence of the ad exposure. Part of this problem was avoided through the pre-tests, which indicated the most salient brand schema elements. Measuring the variables both before and after exposure to the ads and then make comparisons could also have added valuable insight and more reliable results. This is especially true for the social factors self-image and perceived CSR, which might have been affected by factors not being controlled for. Though, by not measuring before and after could have helped to avoid biases in the spontaneous reactions towards the ads. This in the sense that questions about the brand and self could have advocated the subjects to over-analyse the experiment, trying to come up with the "right" answer. One way to strengthen this argument could have been to use de-briefing questions at the end of the experiment, in order to establish that the subjects did not understand exactly what the intention of the study was.

Other factors which the study design did not control for was the timeframe in which the subjects studied the ads as well as external factors possibly affecting them. The survey was completed online, not giving room for any control in terms of how much time the subjects spent on answering, at what time of the day it was completed and other environmental factors that could have an influence on the answers. This since the surrounding elements were not controlled, which would have been preferable. When it comes to the sample population used to test the hypotheses, this was quite homogenous both socio-economically and age wise. This supports the possibility to apply the findings of this study on similar groups of people, but it does not allow for generalisation on a wider take.

It is common to include the variable "purchase intentions" when measuring effects of advertising. Though as the focus of this study was to examine general effects of using incongruent models on *ad, brand* and *self* examining buying behaviour felt less relevant with regard to the research question. If the emphasis instead had been on examining the effects incongruent models have upon *a certain product*, purchase intentions would have been interesting to look at.

When it comes to the product featured in the ads, this was one weakness in the execution of the experiment. Neither the swimwear nor the models were identical in appearance, something that could have spawned different reactions in attitude. The optimal choice would have been to produce two ads with the same model, featured in the same setting, and then digitally manipulate the model's body shape in one of the ads. Time and money constraint made this impossible and instead the two ads were thoroughly examined in the pre-tests. This to ensure that both photo models were seen as credible. The fact that the models were wearing different bikinis might have given rise to biased responses, as the feelings toward the products could have rubbed off. Though, as mentioned above, the focus of this study was not on the product but on the model.

5.3 Academic and managerial implications

The results of this thesis answer some questions regarding the effects of using brand-incongruent models in ads, but have also underlined the importance of pursuing further research on the area. Both academic and managerial implications have been derived and will be discussed in subsequent sections below.

5.3.1 Further research

There are several directions in which future studies could be aimed. One aspect is the applicability of this study on a general level. It was a good starting point to use swimwear advertising for a well-known fashion brand when looking at effects of using brand-incongruent models in ads (see 2. *Theoretical framework*). This however limits the findings to some extent. The study subjects were also, although intentionally, very homogenous as this facilitates finding flaws in the theory (see 3.5.2 *Collection of data*) which is good when performing introductory research. In order to justify the findings more research would have to be conducted within other sectors, both geographically as well as industry wise, and the experiment should be tested on a more heterogeneous group of subjects so that the results can be fully validated. Possible attitude changes towards the brand could also be tested after repeated exposure to the brand-incongruent model, so as to examine the effects of the incongruity over time.

Ad attitude among males was found to be significantly negative for the incongruent model, whereas there was no significant effect among females. These findings could serve as a basis for further studies on what extent brands with products aimed at both sexes need to take into consideration the effects a certain featured model have upon the opposite (not targeted) sex. Using a brand-incongruent, in terms of body shape, female model also seems to mediate essentially positive effects on female subjects. It would be interesting to see whether the same goes for men being exposed to a brand-incongruent male model, as Bengtsson (2012) argues. In addition to this there are many possibilities to look at model-brand incongruences other than body shape, take for example age.

5.3.2 Practical application

This thesis has implications primarily for corporations within the fashion industry, but which could be taken into consideration also in other industries such as beauty. The findings are also relevant for the social and political debate concerning beauty norms and advertising that glorifies unreachable ideals.

The results show no short-term negative effects on the featured brand but do entail several positive ones; increased ad credibility, stronger perception of the brands work with CSR and (for women) higher rating of the subject's self-image. These findings imply that companies have incentives to broaden their approach towards CSR and look beyond the focus on the environment; partake in other social problems such as body ideals and appearance fixation. Attempts in this direction have been made (see *1.1 Preface*) but mainly as temporary campaigns. This study plants a seed for companies to start challenging their habits and dare deviate from the standard. Using "real women" not as hyped PR-tricks but, if long-term support can be found, on a daily basis.

Notes on the side

In connection to the finalisation of this thesis the debate around using dangerously thin models in ads got raised again when model agencies were caught searching for models outside a Swedish clinic for anorectics. This issue was given considerable attention in media and prove even further how important it is for brands to keep up with the prevailing opinions in society – brands not taking responsibility in marketing communications gain increasing critique. An additional note concerns the brand studied in this thesis; H&M just released their new online swimwear ads, featuring a "larger" model. Though she only displays the H&M+ collection and not the regular swimwear collection, making the fact that they have been promoted in media for their initiative for using "normal" models laughable.

6. LITERATURE AND SOURCES

Literature

ANTIOCO, M., SMEESTERS, D. and LE BOEDEC, A., 2012. Take Your Pick: Kate Moss or the Girl Next Door? The Effectiveness of Cosmetics Advertising. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 52(1), pp. 15-30.

BAKER, M.J. and CHURCHILL, G.A., JR., 1977. The Impact of Physically Attractive Models on Advertising Evaluations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 14(4), pp. 538-555.

BENGTSSON, J., 2012. The power of the ideal man - exploring the effects of using him in media. Masters edn. Stockholm: Stockholm School of Economics, Department for marketing and strategy.

BERGER, A.A., 2004. *Ads, fads, and consumer culture : advertising's impact on American character and society.* 2. ed. edn. Lanham, Md. ; Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield.

BESSENOFF, G.R., 2006. Can the media affect us? Social comparison, self-discrepancy, and the thin ideal. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 30(3), pp. 239-251.

BOWER, A.B., 2001. Highly Attractive Models in Advertising and the Women Who Loathe Them: The Implications of Negative Affect for Spokesperson Effectiveness. *Journal of Advertising,* 30(3), pp. 51-63.

BOWER, A.B. and LANDRETH, S., 2001. Is Beauty Best? Highly versus Normally Attractive Models in Advertising. *Journal of Advertising*, 30(1), pp. 1-12.

BROWN, T.J. and DACIN, P.A., 1997. The Company and the Product: Corporate Associations and Consumer Product Responses. *Journal of Marketing*, 61(1), pp. 68-84.

BRYMAN, A. and BELL, E., 2011. *Business research methods*. 3rd edn. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

BUUNK, B.P. and MUSSWEILER, T., 2001. New directions in social comparison research. *European Journal of Social Psychology,* 31(5), pp. 467-475.

CACIOPPO, J.T. and RICHARD E. PETTY, 1982. The Need for Cognition. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, (42), pp. 116-131.

CAHILL, S. and MUSSAP, A.J., 2007. Emotional reactions following exposure to idealized bodies predict unhealthy body change attitudes and behaviors in women and men. *Journal of psychosomatic research,* 62(6), pp. 631-639.

CARMINES, E.G. and ZELLER, R.A., 1979. *Reliability and validity assessment*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

DAHLÉN, M. and LANGE, F., 2004. To Challenge Or Not to Challenge: Ad-Brand Incongruency and Brand Familiarity. *Journal of Marketing Theory & Practice*, 12(3), pp. 20-35.

DAHLÉN, M., LANGE, F., SJÖDIN, H. and TÖRN, F., 2005. Effects of Ad-Brand Incongruency. *Journal of Current Issues & Research in Advertising* (CTC Press), 27(2), pp. 1-12.

DAHLÉN, M., ROSENGREN, S., TÖRN, F. and ÖHMAN, N., 2008. Could placing ads wrong be right? Advertising effects of thematic incongruence. *Journal of Advertising,* 37(3), pp. 57-67.

DESHPANDÉ, R. and STAYMAN, D.M., 1994. A tale of two cities: Distinctiveness theory and advertising effectiveness. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 31(1), pp. 57-64.

DITTMAR, H. and HOWARD, S., 2004. Professional hazards? The impact of models' body size on advertising effectiveness and women's body-focused anxiety in professions that do and do not emphasize the cultural ideal of thinness. *British Journal of Social Psychology,* 43(4), pp. 477-497.

DRUMWRIGHT, M.E., 1996. Company Advertising with a Social Dimension: The Role of Noneconomic Criteria. *Journal of Marketing*, 60(4), pp. 71-87.

DUNN, S.W. and BARBAN, A., 1986. *Advertising, Its role in modern marketing*. Chicago: Dryden.

FESTINGER, L., 1954. A theory of social comparison processes. *Human relations*, 7(2), pp. 117-140.

FISKE, S.T., KINDER, D.R. and LARTER, W.M., 1983. The novice and the expert: Knowledge-based strategies in political cognition. *Journal of experimental social psychology*, 19(4), pp. 381-400.

GHAURI, P.N. and GRØNHAUG, K., 2005. *Research Methods in Business Studies*. 3 edn. London: Prentice Hall.

GIBBONS, F.X. and GERRARD, M., 1989. Effects of Upward and Downward Social Comparison on Mood States. *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 8(1), pp. 14-31.

GRIFFIN, E., *A First Look at Communication Theory*. 2011 edn. New York: New York: McGraw Hill, pp. 194–204.

GULAS, C.S. and MCKEAGE, K., 2000. Extending Social Comparison: An Examination of the Unintended Consequences of Idealized Advertising Imagery. *Journal of Advertising*, 29(2), pp. 17-28.

HARGREAVES, D.A. and TIGGEMANN, M., 2004. Idealized media images and adolescent body image: "comparing" boys and girls. *Body Image*, 1(4), pp. 351-361.

HECKLER, S.E. and CHILDERS, T.L., 1992. The Role of Expectancy and Relevancy in Memory for Verbal and Visual Information: What Is Incongruency? *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(4), pp. 475-492.

JAHDI, K. and ACIKDILLI, G., 2009. Marketing Communications and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR): Marriage of Convenience or Shotgun Wedding? *Journal of Business Ethics*, 88(1), pp. 103-113.

JHALLY, S., 2010. *Killing me softly - Advertising's Image of Women*. Media Education Foundation.

JOBBER, D., 2012. *Principles and practice of marketing*. 6 edn. McGraw-Hill Education.

JONES, G., 2010. The Dream Machine. *Beauty imagined : A history of the global beauty industry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 350-365.

JOSEPH, W.B., 1982. The Credibility of Physically Attractive Communicators: a review. *Journal of Advertising*, 11(3), pp. 15-24.

KENRICK, D.T., MONTELLO, D.R., GUTIERRES, S.E. and TROST, M.R., 1993. Effects of physical attractiveness on affect and perceptual judgments: When social comparison overrides social reinforcement. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 19, pp. 195-195.

KENT, R.J. and ALLEN, C.T., 1994. Competitive Interference Effects in Consumer Memory for Advertising: The Role of Brand Familiarity. Journal of Marketing, 58(3), pp. 97.

LANCE, C.E., BUTTS, M.M. and MICHELS, L.C., 2006. The Sources of Four Commonly Reported Cutoff Criteria: What Did They Really Say? *Organizational Research Methods*, 9(2), pp. 202-220.

LEE, Y.H., 2000. Manipulating Ad Message Involvement through Information Expectancy: Effects on Attitude Evaluation and Confidence. *Journal of Advertising*, 29(2), pp. 29-43.

MACKENZIE, S.B. and LUTZ, R.J., 1989. An Empirical Examination of the Structural Antecedents of Attitude toward the Ad in an Advertising Pretesting Context. *Journal of Marketing*, 53(2), pp. 48-65.

MACRAE, C.N. and BODENHAUSEN, G.V., 2000. Social cognition: Thinking categorically about others. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 51(1), pp. 93-120.

MALHOTRA, N.K., 2010. *Marketing Research: An Applied Orientation*. 6th edn. Upper Saddle River, USA: Pearson Education.

MCQUARRIE, E.F. and MICK, D.G., 1992. On Resonance: A Critical Pluralistic Inquiry into Advertising Rhetoric. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 19(2), pp. 180-197.

MEYERS-LEVY, J. and TYBOUT, A.M., 1989. Schema Congruity as a Basis for Product Evaluation. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 16(1), pp. 39-54.

MISCHNER, I.H.S., VAN SCHIE, H.T. and ENGELS, R.C.M.E., 2013. Breaking the circle: Challenging Western sociocultural norms for appearance influences young women's attention to appearance-related media. *Body Image*. [only published online]

MOHR, L.A., WEBB, D.J. and HARRIS, K.E., 2001. Do Consumers Expect Companies to be Socially Responsible? The Impact of Corporate Social Responsibility on Buying Behavior. *Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 35(1), pp. 45-72.

MURRAY, K.B. and VOGEL, C.M., 1997. Using a Hierarchy-of-Effects Approach to Gauge the Effectiveness of Corporate Social Responsibility to Generate Goodwill Toward the Firm: Financial versus Nonfinancial Impacts. *Journal of Business Research*, 38, pp. 141-159.

NOSEWORTHY, T.J. and TRUDEL, R., 2011. Looks Interesting, but What Does It Do? Evaluation of Incongruent Product Form Depends on Positioning . *Journal of Marketing Research*, 48, pp. 1008–1019.

NUNNALLY, J.C., 1978. *Psychometric Theory*. 2 edn. McGraw-Hil.

O'KEEFE, D.J., 1990. *Persuasion: Theory and research*. CA: Sage: Newbury Park.

PECHMANN, C. and STEWART, D.W., 1990. The Effects of Comparative Advertising on Attention, Memory, and Purchase *Intentions*. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 17(2), pp. 180-191.

PHILLIPS, B.J., 1997. In Defense of Advertising: A Social Perspective. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 16(2), pp. 109-118.

POLLAY, R.W., 1986. The Distorted Mirror: Reflections on the Unintended Consequences of Advertising. *Journal of Marketing*, 50(2), pp. 18-36.

PRIESTER, J.R. and PETTY, R.E., 2003. The Influence of Spokesperson Trustworthiness on Message Elaboration, Attitude Strength, and Advertising Effectiveness. *Journal of Consumer Psychology* (Lawrence Erlbaum Associates), 13(4), pp. 408-421.

RICHARDS, J.I. and CURRAN, C.M., 2002. Oracles on "Advertising": Searching for a Definition. *Journal of Advertising*, 31(2), pp. 63-77.

RICHINS, M.L., 1991. Social Comparison and the Idealized Images of Advertising. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 18(1), pp. 71-83.

SEN, S. and BHATTACHARYA, C.B., 2001. Does Doing Good Always Lead to Doing Better? Consumer Reactions to Corporate Social Responsibility. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(2), pp. 225-243.

SHEEHAN, K.B., 2003. *Controversies in contemporary advertising*. Thousand Oaks, Ca: SAGE.

SMEESTERS, D. and MANDEL, N., 2006. Positive and Negative Media Image Effects on the Self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(4), pp. 576-582.

SÖDERLUND, M., 2001. *Den lojala kunden*. 1. uppl. edn. Malmö: Liber ekonomi.

SOLEY-BELTRAN, P., 2006. Fashion Models as Ideal Embodiments of Normative Identity. Trípodos. *Facultat de Comunicació Blanquerna*. (18).

SPITZER, B.L., HENDERSON, K.A. and ZIVIAN, M.T., 1999. Gender differences in population versus media body sizes: A comparison over four decades. *Sex Roles*, 40, pp. 545–565.

WAGNER, T., LUTZ, R.J. and WEITZ, B.A., 2009. Corporate Hypocrisy: Overcoming the Threat of Inconsistent Corporate Social Responsibility Perceptions. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(6), pp. 77-91.

WOOLDRIDGE, J., 2008. *Introductory Econometrics - A Modern Approach*, International Edition. 4 edn. South Western College, pp. 172-179, 774-775.

Electronic sources

COSGRAVE, B., 2006 November 20-last update, *Skeletons on the runway: The "Size-zero Debate"* [Homepage of Britannica], [Online]. Available: **http://www.britannica.com/blogs/2006/11/skeletons-on-the-runway-the-size-zero-debate/** [March 17, 2013].

DOVE, 2013-last update, *Bara 2 % av kvinnorna ser sig som vackra* [Homepage of Unilever], [Online]. Available:**http://www.dove.se/sv/Tips-och-knep/Artiklar-och-rad/Only-2per-of-women-think-they-are-beautiful.aspx** [7, March, 2013].

ENGSTÖM, I., TOVATT, L. and ÅKESTAM, N., 2013 April 22-last update, *Särskild modellagstiftning krävs mot modevärldens sjuka ideal* [Homepage of SVT], [Online]. Available: **http://debatt.svt.se/2013/04/22/sarskild-modellagstiftning-kravs-mot-modevarldens-sjuka-ideal/** [April 23, 2013].

FRIDÉN, H., 2013 March 28-last update, *Sluta hyckla H&M – ni tar minst ansvar i modesverige* [Homepage of SVT Debatt], [Online]. Available: **http://debatt.svt.se/2013/03/28/sluta-hyckla-hm-ni-tar-minst-ansvar-i-modes-verige/** [May 4, 2013].

H&M, *Our Markets* [Homepage of H&M], [Online]. Available: **http://about.hm.com/AboutSection/en/About/Facts-About-HM/About-HM/Sales-Markets.html** [April 14, 2013].

INTERBRAND, 2013-last update, *Best Global brands 2012* [Homepage of Interbrand], [Online]. Available: **http://www.interbrand.com/en/best-global-brands/2012/Best-Global-Brands-2012.aspx** [April 16, 2013].

OLINS, A., 2008 August 13-last update, *Fashion capitals end London's plan to ban size zero* [Homepage of The Times], [Online]. Available: **http://www.thetimes.co.uk/tto/life/fashion/article1752801.ece** [February 7, 2013].

SVENSKT NÄRINGSLIV, 2009 June 2-last update, **Kort om Svenskt Näringslivs syn på CSR** [Homepage of Svenskt Näringsliv], [Online]. Available: **http://www.svensktnaringsliv.se/multimedia/archive/00013/Kort_om_v_r_syn_p__C_13610a.pdf** [April 16, 2013].
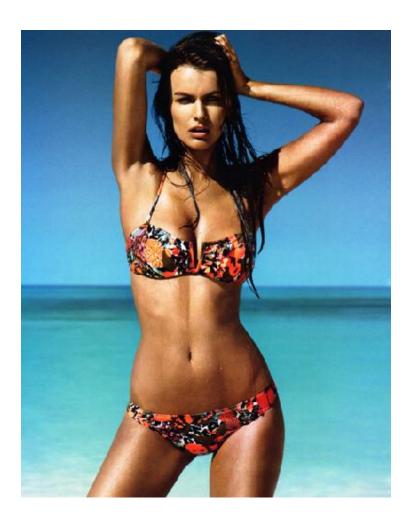
THE DAILY MAIL, 2012 September 19-last update, *Ralph Lauren casts first ever plus-size model, as Vogue beauty Robyn Lawley takes starring role in new campaign* [Homepage of Associated Newspapers Ltd], [Online]. Available:**http://www.dailymail.co.uk/femail/article-2205739/Ralph-Lauren-casts-plus-size-model-Vogue-beau-ty-Robyn-Lawley-takes-starring-role-new-campaign.html** [May 11, 2013].

7. APPENDICES

The following pages include *presudy two* and the *main experiment (control group, test group)*.

Pre-study two

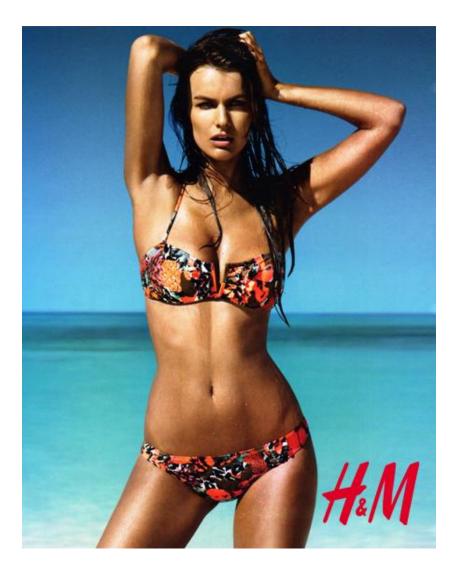**The following pictures show women in their underwear. In your opinion...**

How well does this person correspond to your view of a **typical** underwear model?

Does not correspond   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   Correspond completely

How **likely** is it that this model would be used in underwear advertising?

Not at all likely   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   Very likely

How well does this person correspond to your view of a **typical** H&M model?

Does not correspond   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   Correspond completely

How **likely** is it that H&M would use this model in their underwear advertising?

Not at all likely   ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○   Very likely

Pre-study two

How well does this person correspond to your view of a **typical** underwear model?

Does not correspond ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Correspond completely

How **likely** is it that this model would be used in underwear advertising?

Not at all likely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very likely

How well does this person correspond to your view of a **typical** H&M model?

Does not correspond ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Correspond completely

How **likely** is it that H&M would use this model in their underwear advertising?

Not at all likely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very likely

What is your age?

What is your gender?

Male	Female	Other
○	○	○

How well does this person correspond to your view of a **typical** underwear model?

Does not correspond ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Correspond completely

How **likely** is it that this model would be used in underwear advertising?

Not at all likely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very likely

How well does this person correspond to your view of a **typical** H&M model?

Does not correspond ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Correspond completely

How **likely** is it that H&M would use this model in their underwear advertising?

Not at all likely ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ Very likely

What is your age?

What is your gender?

Male	Female	Other
○	○	○

Main study (control group)

You will be presented with a fashion ad, please look at it and then answer the following questions.

My impression of the ad is:

	Bad	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Good
	Unpleasant	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Pleasant
	Unfavourable	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Favourable

I believe the ad is:

	Unconvincing	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Convincing
	Unbelievable	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Believable
	Unbiased	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Biased

My impression of H&M is:

	Bad	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Good
	Negative	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Positive
	Unsatisfactory	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Satisfactory

I believe that H&M is:

Irresponsible	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Responsible
Disrespectful	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Respectful
Inconsiderate	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Considerate

At this moment I:

Don't feel good about myself	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Feel good about myself
Dislike the way I look	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Like the way I look
Feel unattractive	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Feel attractive

My age (in years):

☐

I am:

○ Male

○ Female

○ Other

Thank you for participating and taking the time to help us.
Best regards,
Sofia Hellsten and Adam Åbonde

Main study (test group)

My impression of the ad is:

Bad	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Good
Unpleasant	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Pleasant
Unfavourable	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Favourable

I believe the ad is:

Unconvincing	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Convincing
Unbelievable	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Believable
Unbiased	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Biased

My impression of H&M is:

Bad	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Good
Negative	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Positive
Unsatisfactory	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	Satisfactory

I believe that H&M is:

Irresponsible	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Responsible
Disrespectful	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Respectful
Inconsiderate	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Considerate

At this moment I:

Don't feel good about myself	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Feel good about myself
Dislike the way I look	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Like the way I look
Feel unattractive	○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○ ○	Feel attractive

My age (in years):

[ ]

I am:

○ Male

○ Female

○ Other

Thank you for participating and taking the time to help us.
Best regards,
Sofia Hellsten and Adam Åbonde