

## Identifying With the Brand Placed in Music Videos Makes Me Like the Brand

Anjala S. Krishen<sup>a</sup> and M. Joseph Sirgy<sup>b</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Department of Marketing & International Business, Lee Business School, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, Las Vegas, NV, USA; <sup>b</sup>Department of Marketing, Pamplin College of Business, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, Blacksburg, VA, USA

### ABSTRACT

Three studies are reported here, designed to answer two questions: (1) Does self-congruity influence brand attitude in music video product placements? (2) If so, under what conditions? Three correlational studies were conducted to answer these questions. Study 1 demonstrates the self-congruity effect of product placement in music videos: Consumers who experience high levels of self-congruity with the brand personality are more likely to have a favorable attitude toward that brand than those who experience low self-congruity with the same brand personality. The second study hypothesized that the self-congruity effect is likely to be stronger under high than under low conditions of involvement with the celebrity musician. However, the results showed that self-congruity had a main effect on brand attitude with no interaction with involvement with the celebrity musician. The third study hypothesized that the self-congruity effect is also more evident under high than under low conditions of congruence between the brand and musician. The results showed that self-congruity had a main effect on brand attitude with no interaction with congruence between the brand and musician.

Product placement is widely recognized as an effective marketing tool, and its popularity has increased significantly in the last two or three decades (La Ferle and Edwards 2006). Early research in the psychological effects of product placement demonstrates that consumers recall and recognize brands featured in television and film (e.g., Gupta and Lord 1998; D'Astous and Chartier 2000) but that attitude change is weak (e.g., van Reijmersdal 2009).

However, much of the existing research has focused on factors and conditions that strengthen the cognitive and attitudinal effects of product placement (for a comprehensive review of the product placement literature see Balasubramanian, Karrh, and Patwardhan 2006). For example, some research focuses on the effects of repetition of branded product placements in television and movies (e.g., Gupta and Gould 2007; Homer 2009; Bressoud, Lehu, and Russell 2010).

Much of the existing research on product placement focuses on films and movies (e.g., Gupta and Gould 1997; Gupta and Balasubramanian 2000; Morton and Friedman 2002). Product placement has seen a significant rise in music videos (Plambeck 2010); however, hardly any of this research discusses product placement in music videos with the exception of three studies: Delattre and Colvic (2009), Schemer, Matthes, Wirth, and Textor (2008), and Englis, Solomon, and Olofsson (1993). The Delattre and Colvic (2009) study involved a Web survey that analyzed recall and recognition of 17 brands placed in two songs and attitude toward the use of brands in the songs. The study results show that the recall of

**CONTACT** Anjala S. Krishen, PhD  [Anjala.krishen@unlv.edu](mailto:Anjala.krishen@unlv.edu)  Associate Professor, Marketing & International Business, Lee School of Business, University of Nevada, Las Vegas, 4505 Maryland Parkway, Las Vegas, NV 89154, USA.

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brands varied from 0 to 36.1 percent, and recognition from 9.2 to 68.9 percent—rates significantly lower than placements in movies. Also, the study found that a positive evaluation of a song influences the attitude toward the use of the brand. Schemer et al. (2008) conducted an experiment with an authentic rap video in which the appearance of placements and the image of the rap actors vary. The results show that the pairing of a brand with positively evaluated artists produces a favorable attitude toward the brand. Conversely, pairing a brand with negatively evaluated artists produces an unfavorable attitude toward the brand. Furthermore, the study results indicate that conditioning effects are even stronger when preference for rap music is high and recognition of the brand is low. Englis, Solomon, and Olofsson (1993) examined the prevalence and nature of consumption imagery in music television (MTV and VH-1) for the purpose of comparing the socializing effects of such imagery between the United States and Sweden. The study found more consumption imagery in the U.S. sample than in the Sweden sample. The authors concluded that this may reflect greater use of paid product placement in the United States.

But how does an audience develop a favorable or unfavorable attitude toward a brand placed in a music video (i.e., brand attitude)? One important factor may be self-congruity—the audience of a music video experiences self-congruity (actual, ideal, social, or ideal social self-congruity) with the brand personality, which may be influenced by the musician, and these self-congruity effects may lead to a positive attitude toward the brand. *Brand personality* is broadly defined as a set of associations or characteristics that represent a consumer's memory of a brand in terms of human personal characteristics, and as such it can influence consumer decision making (Huang, Mitchell, and Rosenaum-Elliott 2012). *Actual self-congruity* is the degree to which the video music audience perceives the brand personality of the product placement to be similar to their own persona; *ideal self-congruity* is the degree to which the video music audience perceives the brand personality of the product placement to be similar to the kind of person they aspire to be; and *social self-congruity* is the degree to which the video music audience perceives the brand personality of the product placement to be the kind of person similar to their public persona. Finally, *ideal social self-congruity* is the degree to which the video music audience perceives the brand personality of the product placement to be similar to the kind of person others expect them to be (Sirgy 1982).

In this article, an attempt is made to empirically demonstrate the role of self-congruity in product placement in the context of music videos and to identify conditions under which the self-congruity effect can be strengthened to ensure that it does indeed lead to a strong and favorable attitude toward the brand—conditions such as the degree of involvement with the celebrity musician and brand-musician congruity. The first study tests the self-congruity effect of product placement in music videos. The study is designed to demonstrate that consumers who experience high levels of self-congruity with the brand personality are more likely to have a favorable attitude toward that brand than those who experience low self-congruity. The second study tests the notion that the self-congruity effect is likely to be stronger under conditions of high than low involvement with the celebrity musician. Finally, the third study is designed to test the hypothesis that the self-congruity effect is likely to be stronger under conditions of high than low brand-musician congruence. Thus, these three studies are designed to contribute to self-image congruence literature in marketing communications. Specifically, these studies demonstrate that the persuasion effects of self-congruity can be extended to product placement in music videos. The studies also pave way to the development of a program of research on self-congruity in relation to product placement in music videos to identify the moderators effects that can help us better explain how self-congruity would interact with situational and consumer factors to account for greater variance in brand attitude.

How do our three studies logically tie together? The logic is simple. Our goal is demonstrate the effect of self-congruity on brand attitude in product placement in music videos. We believe that the self-congruity effect is likely to be moderated by factors related to the triad involving the most proximal stimuli—the brand, the musician, and the consumer—and the interrelationships among the brand, the musician, and the consumer. This triad (brand, musician, and consumer) is based on extant research in advertising involving celebrity endorsements. As such, we chose to study the moderating effect of celebrity involvement in Study 2 and that of musician-brand congruity in Study 3. The idea is that these two moderators are likely to amplify the self-congruity effect on brand attitude (under high vs. low celebrity involvement and musician-brand congruity conditions).

The findings of these three studies are managerially useful. Data supporting the hypotheses should help marketers place products in music videos that meet three criteria: (1) The target audience should identify with the brand personality, (2) the target audience should be involved with the celebrity musician, and (3) the target consumers should perceive high congruity between the musician and the brand personality. Placing a brand in a music video that meets these three criteria should induce target consumers to experience a strong and positive attitude toward the brand.

### The self-congruity effect in consumer behavior

As previously mentioned, the first study is designed to demonstrate the self-congruity effect on product placement in music videos. Extensive research reveals that consumers purchase goods to express their identity (e.g., Malhotra 1988) such that they perceive brands to have personalities (Aaker 1997). Brand personalities may involve the stereotypic image of the typical user of those brands, and consumers may evaluate brands by matching their personalities (or symbolic attributes) with their own self-concept. This matching process reflects self-congruity and plays an important role in prepurchase behaviors (e.g., brand attitude, brand preferences, purchase motivation, brand choice), as well as postconsumption responses (e.g., consumer satisfaction, brand loyalty, repeat purchase) (Sirgy 1982; 1986). See Aguirre-Rodriguez, Bosnjak, and Sirgy (2012) for a meta-analysis of the research in self-image congruence.

According to self-congruity theory (Sirgy 1982; 1986), a match between a brand personality and consumer self-image arises when a value-expressive product triggers the consumer's self-schema, which contains self-knowledge related to the product's perceived image attributes. For example, a consumer might encounter a brand that he or she perceives as "cool" and "modern." This brand personality provides a cue that activates the consumer's self-schema about his or her own image as being cool and modern—when this consumer believes his or her identity is cool and modern ("I am cool and modern" [actual self-image] or "I would like to be cool and modern" [ideal self-image]), it matches the brand's image of cool and modern. Recent research highlights the importance of self-congruity with sponsorship events, first in terms of the event itself and its congruence with the target consumers, and second with regard to the brand being sponsored and its congruence with the event (e.g., Close, Krishen, and LaTour 2009).

Thus, based on self-congruity theory and empirical evidence, we predict that consumers who experience self-congruity with the personality of a brand placed in the music video are more likely to hold a favorable attitude toward the brand than those who do not experience self-congruity (Hypothesis 1).

### Study 1

Study 1 seeks to demonstrate the self-congruity effect on the attitude toward the brand placed in the context of the music video. The study is essentially correlational in nature (not experimental). *Self-congruity with the brand* is measured in the context of two music videos. The key dependent measure is attitude toward two brands placed in the music videos.

### Method

Since our study was exploratory by nature because of the novel context of product placement in music videos, and college students are a typical audience for music videos, we followed previous exploratory studies and chose university students as subjects for our three studies (Krishen, Hardin, and LaTour 2013; Krishen, LaTour, and Alishah 2014). Participants were randomly assigned to one of the two sets of music videos (either the Rihanna music set or the Shontelle set). The Rihanna music video had a Porsche product placement, whereas the Shontelle video had an iPhone. The Rihanna/Porsche and Shontelle/iPhone music videos, as well as the filler videos, were selected based on a pretest that identified music videos that college students are relatively familiar with.

With respect to the pretest, here is the procedure we followed. We first viewed many music videos, looking for product placements. It was an iterative process whereby we wanted to control as many things as possible. Here were the considerations in the music video selection:

- We wanted products that were not gender biased (so if a car, it should be as gender-neutral as possible).
- We also wanted to have both genders represented.
- The video length was carefully controlled so that some were not longer than others.
- The amount of product placement exposure was carefully timed so that it was almost identical in all four videos.
- The type of music had to be “top 40” so that it would be equally familiar to the audience.

Once the top set of videos was selected, we asked another set of students ( $n = 20$ ) a few basic questions after having them view the videos. We ended up selecting the most “neutrally appealing” videos and left out the ones that were highly disliked or overly liked.

In the final analysis, each participant viewed three music videos within a set. The order of these videos was counterbalanced to reduce possible presentation order bias. Participants were instructed to watch all three music videos, after which they completed a survey questionnaire (after viewing all three videos). The exact links of these videos are provided in Appendix A.

### **Participants and procedure**

In total, 99 undergraduate students enrolled at a large state-supported Western university received course credit for participation (47 female and 52 male, median age = 24 years). In a lab setting (approximately 15 subjects per session), subjects first viewed a set of music videos (three videos). After completion of the videos, all participants completed the questionnaire containing the key measures at their own pace. At the front of the questionnaire, they read the general instruction page, including a statement of the cover story for the experiment: “This is a study about advertising and related forms of promotion. The purpose of this study is to research advertising in multiple contexts. The information gathered should help guide practitioners regarding their advertising and integrated marketing communications.”

### **Constructs and measures**

Participants were asked to complete a survey to capture both independent and dependent measures as well as demographics. *Self-congruity with the brand* was measured with eight items in which responses were captured using 5-point Likert-type scales (Sirgy et al. 1997). The self-congruity items are shown in Appendix B. Note that we measured self-congruity in terms of actual, ideal, social, and ideal social self-congruity (two items for each dimension). We treat the eight items as belonging to one overall construct: self-congruity at large. A sample item is “Do you feel that using (BRAND NAME) reflects who you are?” Reliability of the self-congruity construct was satisfactory ( $\alpha = .71$ ). Self-congruity was subjected to a factor analysis to determine dimensionality. The scale included four reverse-scaled items; when they were reversed, they loaded on a separate factor (variance explained = 17.6%). All eight items loaded on a larger component that explains 35.3 percent of the variance, and hence the scale was used in its entirety based on previous research. *Brand attitude* was measured using a three-item, 5-point semantic differential scale with the statement: “Please rate the brand along the following attributes: favorable/unfavorable, good/bad and likeable/unlikable” (Makenzie, Lutz, and Park 1989). The reliability of this construct was also acceptable ( $\alpha = .94$ ).

Several covariates were introduced into the model: For *familiarity with the celebrity musician* (“How familiar are you with (MUSICIAN NAME)?” responses were captured using a 5-point rating scale varying from “1 = not at all familiar” to “5 = very familiar”); for *familiarity with the music video* (“How familiar are you with (MUSICIAN NAME) video?”) responses were captured using a 5-point rating scale varying from “1 = not at all familiar” to “5 = very familiar”); and there were also age, gender, and product ownership (“Do you own (BRAND NAME)?” “1 = yes” or 2 = no”) (Dawar and Lei 2009). Past research in product placement has shown that familiarity with the celebrity musician, familiarity with the music video, age, gender, and product ownership all may be associated with brand attitude (Balasubramanian, Karrh, and Patwardhan 2006).

In a purely experimental context, we might have chosen to create music videos instead of utilizing actual videos with existing brands. However, this is not possible when considering generalizability issues and previous product placement literature (Law and Braun 2000). The choice of artists and music videos as well as products for our studies was based on prominently placed product placements in the videos themselves. Due to the duration of a music video, we surmised that a background placement should not be employed in this set of initial studies. In lieu of the possible impact of existing attitudes and familiarity with the brands and celebrities, several covariates were taken into account in our analyses. Future research can manipulate (or control) prominent versus background product placement of familiar versus fictitious brands and celebrities.

## Results

The results of the self-congruity hypothesis are shown in Table 1. The self-congruity effect is shown by individual video (Rihanna/Porsche and Shontelle/iPhone) and pooled across the two videos (cf. Muthukrishnan and Kardes 2001). The regression analysis treated brand attitude as the criterion variable and self-congruity as the predictor variable with the control variables (familiarity with the celebrity musician, familiarity with the music video, age, and gender). As hypothesized, self-congruity was a significant predictor of brand attitude (Beta = .490;  $t = 5.32$ ;  $p = .000$ ) with the control variables being largely non-significant (familiarity with the celebrity musician: Beta =  $-.192$ ;  $t = -1.874$ ;  $p = .064$ ; familiarity with the music video: Beta = .129;  $t = 1.361$ ;  $p = .177$ ; age: Beta = .189;  $t = 2.019$ ;  $p = .046$ ; gender: Beta =  $-.062$ ;  $t = -.666$ ;  $p = .507$ ). Percentage of variance accounted for by all the variables (total  $R$ -squared) was .306 and the adjusted  $R$ -squared was .261. These results of the individual videos reinforce the results of the pooled sample (see Table 1). Hence, we conclude that the study results provide good support for the hypothesized effect of self-congruity on brand attitude in relation to product placement in music videos (Hypothesis 1).

## Study 2

Study 2 was designed to test the hypothesis that involvement with the celebrity musician moderates the effect of self-congruity on brand attitude. More specifically, the self-congruity predictive effect on brand attitude is likely to be stronger if participants are highly involved with the celebrity musician than if they are not (Hypothesis 2).

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (Petty et al. 2005) prescribes that viewers of a persuasive communication are prone to engage in more effortful (i.e., “central”) processing of the ad’s message content when their motivation, ability, and opportunity to process are relatively high. Alternatively, when elaboration likelihood is low, few resources are made available for message processing, and product and brand attitudes are more likely to be formed by less effortful peripheral cue processing or through affect transfer (Coulter 2005). In the context of music videos, the only cues that are provided to the viewer are directly related to the musician and the brand personality. Thus, involvement with the musician is likely to motivate the viewer to focus and allocate cognitive processing capacity to evaluate the symbolic cues related to brand personality. Doing so is likely to accentuate the self-congruity process that would result in a favorable brand attitude in case of high self-congruity and unfavorable attitude given low self-congruity.

**Table 1.** Regression analysis results of study 1 ( $n = 99$ ).

	Beta	$R^2$ (Adj. $R^2$ )
Self-congruity (SC) as predictor (w/covariates)		
SC (pooled data)	0.49***	0.31 (0.26)
SC (Rihanna/Porsche)	0.54***	0.37 (0.28)
SC (Shontelle/i-Phone)	0.42***	0.31 (0.20)

Note. Brand attitude is the dependent variable.

\* $p < .10$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .01$ .



## Method

Similar to Study 1, Study 2 was also correlational in nature (not experimental) in the sense that the independent variables (self-congruity and celebrity involvement) were measured (i.e., not experimentally manipulated).

### Subjects and procedure

In total, 73 undergraduate students enrolled at a large state-supported Western university received course credit for participation (61.6% female, median age = 24.0 years). The procedure we used in Study 2 was essentially the same as that of Study 1.

### Constructs and measures

The same measures of *self-congruity with the brand* and *brand attitude* constructs were used as in Study 1. The reliability of these two measures was satisfactory (self-congruity: average  $\alpha = .71$ ; brand attitude: average  $\alpha = .95$ ). Self-congruity was again subjected to a factor analysis to determine dimensionality. Similar to Study 1, the reverse-scaled items loaded on a separate factor (variance explained = 15.9%). A larger component explained 32.8 percent of the variance and thus the entire eight-item scale was utilized. The *celebrity involvement* construct involved 15 items in which responses were captured using 5-point Likert-type scales. It is based on celebrity worship research (McCutcheon, Lange, and Houran 2002; McCutcheon, Ashe, Houran, and Maltby 2003). The construct of celebrity worship has three dimensions, namely, (1) entertainment–social values; (2) intense personal feelings; and (3) borderline pathological tendency. For the purposes of Study 2, only dimensions 1 and 2 were used. Items 1–7 in Appendix B reflect the entertainment–social values dimension (e.g., “I like watching and hearing about [MUSICIAN NAME] when I am in a large group of people”), and items 8–15 are indicators of the intense personal feelings dimension (e.g., I share with [MUSICIAN NAME] a special bond that cannot be described in words”) (Chia and Poo 2009). The reliability of this measure was acceptable ( $\alpha = .88$ ). A factor analysis of the celebrity involvement construct yielded three components, one of which accounted for the majority of the variance (variance explained values were 41.4%, 17.8%, and 8.2%). All 15 items loaded on the largest component and hence the scale was kept in its entirety.

The same covariates (and based on the same reasoning) used in Study 1 were also used in Study 2. Specifically, the covariates are *familiarity with the celebrity musician* (single 5-point item), *familiarity with the music video* (single 5-point item), and age, gender, and product ownership.

## Results

A moderated regression analysis was performed with the pooled data and with the individual videos too. Each analysis was conducted into two steps. The first step examined the direct effects of self-congruity and celebrity involvement on brand attitude while partialing out the effects of the covariates (familiarity with the celebrity musician, familiarity with the music video, age, and gender). The second step involved entering the interaction effect into the equation (see Table 2). With respect to the first step involving the pooled data, the results provide support for the self-congruity effect on brand attitude (Beta = .60,  $p < .01$ ). The results of the individual videos also reinforce the self-congruity main effect (Rihanna/Porsche: Beta = .33,  $p < .10$ ; Shontelle/iPhone: Beta = .94,  $p < .01$ ).

However, the results pertaining to the interaction effect of celebrity involvement with self-congruity did not support the hypothesis. In other words, the interaction effect was not significant for the pooled data (Beta = -.13,  $p > .10$ ), as well as for the individual videos (Rihanna/Porsche: Beta = .57,  $p > .10$ ; Shontelle/iPhone: Beta = .32,  $p > .10$ ). See Table 2.

These results uphold the effect of self-congruity on brand attitude but failed to show that the self-congruity effect is amplified more under high than under low celebrity involvement conditions.

**Table 2.** Moderated regression analysis of study 2 ( $n = 73$ ).

Study 2 Pooled data			
Step 1: Direct Effects (w/covariates)			
Beta wt. of SC (pooled data)	0.60***		
Beta wt. of CI (pooled data)	0.23		
$F$	2.53**		
$R^2$	0.24*		
Step 2: Interaction			
SC $\times$ CI	-0.13		
$\Delta F$	0.19		
$\Delta R^2$	0.002		
Study 2 Separate videos			
Rihanna/Porsche ( $n = 36$ )		Shontelle/iPhone ( $n = 37$ )	
Step 1: Direct effects (w/covariates)		Step 1: Direct effects (w/covariates)	
Beta wt. of SC	0.33*	Beta wt. of SC	0.94***
Beta wt. of CI	-0.34	Beta wt. of CI	1.09**
$F$	2.41**	$F$	2.82*
$R^2$	0.42**	$R^2$	0.45**
Step 2: Interaction		Step 2: Interaction	
SC $\times$ CI	0.57	SC $\times$ CI	0.32
$\Delta F$	3.26	$\Delta F$	0.10
$\Delta R^2$	0.07	$\Delta R^2$	0.002

Note. Standardized regression coefficients (Beta weights) are reported in the table, the values of which correspond to those from the full model. SC = self-congruity; CI = celebrity involvement.

\* $p < .10$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

### Study 3

Early research on the congruence between a spokesperson and the advertised brand dates back to Mowen (1979), who introduces the notion of “balance” to predict brand endorser effectiveness. The underlying principle is that perceptions of endorser believability are a function of the consistency or congruence of the image of the spokesperson and the brand. Kamins (1990) finds that the effect of a physically attractive spokesperson on brand attitude is stronger when the advertised products are related to physical attractiveness compared to attractiveness-unrelated products. A study conducted by Kamins and Gupta (1994) in which the fit or congruence between spokesperson type and brand image (higher vs. lower congruence) shows that increased congruence for the spokesperson/product combination results in a more favorable attitude toward the brand (Lynch and Schuler 1994). Recent research shows that fit between a celebrity endorser and a consumer’s ideal self-image leads to higher attitude toward the advertisement and higher purchase intentions (Choi and Rifon 2012). Lastly, the research on parasocial attachment with sitcom characters (e.g., Russell, Norman, and Heckler 2004; Russell and Stern 2006) shows that consumers are affected by balance. In other words, there seems to be a psychological alignment between attitude toward the brand (placed in the sitcom) and the attitude toward the sitcom characters. The goal of Study 3 is to investigate the role of musician–brand congruence as a moderator of the self-congruity effect on brand attitude. Musician–brand congruity may interact with self-congruity to amplify the positive brand attitude effect under high rather than low self-congruity conditions. Thus, brand attitude should be the most positive under high conditions of both self-congruity and musician–brand congruity. The positive affect toward the brand is likely to be amplified when the audience members identify themselves with the brand (high self-congruity) and perceives a match between the brand image and the musician. However, the match between the brand image and the musician is not likely to undermine the positive affect generated in the high self-congruity condition. Why? Our hypothesis that the self-congruity effect is likely to be amplified under high rather than low musician–brand congruity is supported by research on brand alliances (e.g., Simonin and Ruth 1998) that demonstrates how a co-branded product can influence brand awareness and attitude. In the context of our study, one may treat the musician as the “co-brand,” and attitude toward the musician is likely to spill over on the brand, especially given that the image of the brand is consistent with that of the musician. In other words, the evaluation of the brand

alliance with the musician is likely to be influenced by the perceptual coherence between the musician and the brand (cf. Cegarra and Michel 2001). The hypothesis is also supported by research on balance. For example, Russell and Stern (2006) used balance theory (Heider 1958) to explain attitude alignment for links between a triad involving the consumer, the sitcom character, and the product placed in the sitcom program. Translated in the context of our study, the self-congruity effect is likely to be amplified when there is cognitive balance between the image of the musician and the brand.

In sum, Study 3 tests the hypothesis that the self-congruity effect on brand attitude is likely to be stronger under the high musician-brand congruity condition and weaker under the low musician-brand congruity condition. This is the essence of Hypothesis 3.

## Method

Similar to studies 1 and 2, Study 3 was also correlational (not experimental).

### *Subjects and procedure*

In total, 115 undergraduate students enrolled at a large state-supported Western university received course credit for participation (57.4% female, median age = 23.0 years). The procedure we used in Study 3 is as follows. In a small classroom setting (approximately 15 subjects per session), each participant viewed a total of four music videos, which were presented in randomized order so as to reduce possible order bias. After watching all four music videos, subjects were instructed to complete the survey instrument. The videos consisted of four different celebrities with four different products (links of these videos are provided in Appendix A). These videos and products were selected based on a pretest that identified music videos and products that college students are relatively familiar with (see pretest that was used to select music videos in Study 1). As in studies 1 and 2, and following previous research on product placements (Law and Braun 2000), actual videos and products were used to enhance ecological validity.

### *Constructs and measures*

The same measures of *self-congruity with the brand* and *brand attitude* constructs in studies 1 and 2 were used in Study 3 (but slightly modified to focus on the BMW motorcycle, Nokia cell phone, Porsche 911 convertible, and Apple iPhone). The BMW motorcycle was placed in the context of the Taio Cruz video, the Nokia cell phone in the context of the Alicia Keys video, the Porsche 911 was placed in the context of the Rihanna music video, and the Apple iPhone was placed in the context of the Shontelle video.

The reliability of these two measures was satisfactory (self-congruity: average  $\alpha = .76$ ; average brand attitude:  $\alpha = .95$ ). Self-congruity across each of the four videos was again subjected to a factor analysis to determine dimensionality. Similar to Studies 1 and 2, the average of the reverse scaled items loaded on a separate factor (average variance explained = 14.7%). The average of the larger component constitutes 37.3 percent of the variance and thus the entire eight-item scale was utilized. The *musician-brand congruity* construct involved four items in which responses were captured using 5-point Likert-type scales (e.g., "Do you feel that the [BRAND NAME] reflects the persona of [MUSICIAN NAME]?"). The measurement items were adapted from Moorman, Neijens, and Smith (2002). See all measurement items in Appendix B. The average reliability of the musician-brand congruity measure across all four product placements was satisfactory ( $\alpha = .86$ ). Musician-brand congruity across each of the four videos was subjected to a factor analysis to determine dimensionality. The average of all four items loaded on one component, which explains 71.7 percent of the variance, and thus all four items were used in further analysis.

The same covariates used in studies 1 and 2 were also used in Study 3: *familiarity with the celebrity musician* (single 5-point item), *familiarity with the music video* (single 5-point item), and age, gender, and product ownership.



**Results**

Because the design used in Study 3 involved repeated measures, the number of observations per video stimulus was deemed sufficient to conduct separate regressions (i.e., the data were not pooled across the four targeted music videos; the relationships were analyzed per music video). As such, we conducted four sets of moderated regression analyses (one for each video: Rihanna/Porsche, Alicia/Nokia, Shontelle/iPhone, and Taio/BMW). The results of these analyses are shown in Table 3.

Similar to the moderated regression reported in Study 2, the moderated regression analysis was conducted into two steps. The first step examined the direct effects of self-congruity and musician-brand congruity on brand attitude while partialing out the effects of the covariates (familiarity with the celebrity musician, familiarity with the music video, age, and gender). The second step involved entering the interaction effect into the equation (see Table 3). With respect to the first step, the results provide support for the self-congruity effect on brand attitude across all four videos (Rihanna/Porsche: Beta = .50,  $p < .01$ ; Alicia/Nokia: Beta = .62,  $p < .01$ ; Shontelle/i-Phone: Beta = .96,  $p < .01$ ; and Taio/BMW: Beta = .46,  $p < .01$ ).

However, the results pertaining to the interaction effect of musician-brand congruity with self-congruity did not support the hypothesis. In other words, the interaction effect was not significant in relation to three of the four videos (Rihanna/Porsche: Beta = -.25,  $p > .10$ ; Alicia/Nokia: Beta = .06,  $p > .10$ ; and Shontelle/i-Phone: Beta = -.06,  $p > .10$ ). An interaction effect was revealed in relation to the Taio/BMW video; however, the interaction effect was opposite to what was hypothesized (Beta = -.37,  $p < .01$ ). In other words, in the context of the Taio/BMW video, the self-congruity effect was found to be significantly stronger under low rather than high musician-brand congruity conditions (see Table 3). These results provide no support for the hypothesized effect of self-congruity on brand attitude as moderated by musician-brand congruity (Hypothesis 3).

**Discussion**

The studies reported here empirically demonstrate the predictive effect of self-congruity in product placement in music videos. However, the findings also failed to demonstrate that the self-congruity

**Table 3.** Moderated regression analysis results of study 3 ( $n = 115$ ).

Rihanna/Porsche		Shontelle/i-Phone	
Step 1: Direct effects (with covariates)		Step 1: Direct effects (with covariates)	
Beta wt. of SC	0.50***	Beta wt. of SC	0.96***
Beta wt. of MBC	0.38***	Beta wt. of MBC	-0.06
F	8.67***	F	14.52***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.40***	R <sup>2</sup>	0.52***
Step 2: Interaction		Step 2: Interaction	
SC × MBC	-0.25	SC × MBC	-0.06
ΔF	3.17	ΔF	0.31
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.02	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.001
Alicia/Nokia		Taio/BMW	
Step 1: Direct effects (with covariates)		Step 1: Direct effects (with covariates)	
Beta wt. of SC	0.62***	Beta wt. of SC	0.46***
Beta wt. of MBC	0.25**	Beta wt. of MBC	0.04
F	7.49***	F	4.85***
R <sup>2</sup>	0.36***	R <sup>2</sup>	0.27***
Step 2: Interaction		Step 2: Interaction	
SC × MBC	0.06	SC × MBC	-0.37***
ΔF	0.09	ΔF	7.91***
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.00	ΔR <sup>2</sup>	0.05***

Note. Standardized regression coefficients (Beta weights) are reported in the table, the values of which correspond to those from the full model. SC = self-congruity; MBC = musician-brand congruity.

\* $p < .10$ , \*\* $p < .05$ , \*\*\* $p < .01$ .

effect may be amplified under high rather than low involvement with the celebrity musician and musician–brand congruity conditions. The first study builds on existing theory and tests the self-congruity effect of product placement in music videos. The study findings show that consumers who experience high levels of self-congruity with the brand personality are more likely to have a favorable attitude toward that brand than those who experience low self-congruity with the same brand personality. This finding is highly consistent with other studies of self-image congruence applied in various contexts such as consumer durables, services, stores, and tourist destinations (e.g., see literature reviews: Sirgy 1982; Aguirre-Rodriguez, Bosnjak, and Sirgy 2012). Thus, Study 1 contributes to the self-image congruence literature by demonstrating that the effect also applies in a very different setting, that of product placement in music videos. Study 1 also contributes to the product placement literature (Balasubramanian, Karrh, and Patwardhan 2006) by demonstrating that self-congruity is an important determinant of brand attitude in the context of product placement in music videos. The managerial implication for the self-congruity effect in brand placement in music videos is important. Marketers should ensure that the music video is targeted to consumers who have self-concepts (actual, ideal, social, and ideal social self) that are congruent with the brand personality being promoted through the placement. Thus, our study implies that marketers should know their brand personality and the self-concept profiles of their target music video audiences to ensure that brand placements in music videos are targeted toward audience members who have self-concepts congruent with the brand personality.

The second study also reinforced the self-congruity effect on brand attitude and showed that this effect is indeed robust while partialing out the effects of involvement with the celebrity musician, in addition to the other covariates (familiarity with the celebrity musician, familiarity with the music video, age, gender, and product ownership). Unfortunately, the study findings did not provide support for the hypothesis that the self-congruity effect of product placement in music videos can be strengthened given high rather than low celebrity involvement conditions. Research shows that the consumer's attitude toward a brand placed in a sitcom is influenced by the consumer's parasocial attachment with the sitcom characters. In other words, there seems to be a psychological alignment between attitude toward the brand (placed in the sitcom) and attitude toward the sitcom characters (e.g., Russell, Norman, and Heckler 2004; Russell and Stern 2006). This research supports the notion that celebrity involvement should play a role in brand attitude. Revisiting the results as shown in Table 2, we see that celebrity involvement registered a strong main effect in the context of the Shontelle/iPhone video ( $\text{Beta} = 1.09, p < .01$ ), but no interaction effect with self-congruity ( $\text{Beta} = .32, p > .10$ ). In other words, this finding suggests that celebrity involvement may contribute to brand attitude through a conditioning process, independent of self-congruity (cf. Russell, Norman, and Heckler 2004).

The third study provides further evidence that brand attitude is positively influenced by self-congruity with the brand, reinforcing the notion that self-congruity plays an important role in product placement in music videos. However, the study findings failed to support that the hypothesized effect that self-congruity is likely to be amplified under high rather than low musician–brand congruity conditions. As a matter of fact, one video (Taio/BMW) showed an interaction effect contrary to what was hypothesized. The interaction effect indicates that the self-congruity effect may be strengthened under low rather than high musician–brand congruity conditions. Can this finding be explained? One can argue that self-congruity plays a stronger role when the musician–brand congruity is weak, which seems consistent with the study findings of Moorman, Neijens, and Smith (2002), who have detected an effect of thematic congruence (brand image and magazine image) on ad recognition, but not ad attitude. The same finding is also in line with the study findings of Dimofte, Forehand, and Deshpande (2003), which underscores the principle that ad schema incongruity tends to cause the audience to become more self-aware. Indeed, the study strengthens the notion that self-congruity involves hot cognitions, whereas musician–brand congruity involves cold cognitions. Hot cognitions trump cold cognitions in their influence on brand attitude (e.g., Hogarth and Reder 1987; Kahneman, Slovic, and Tversky 1987; Dietz and Stern 1995). Furthermore, hot cognitions such as self-congruity play a more prominent role on brand attitude when the audience perceives a mismatch between the brand image and the musician's persona. Such a mismatch strengthens the effect of self-congruity on brand attitude. Of course,

future research should investigate this explanation through both correlational and experimental research.

With respect to study limitations and future research, there are several that should be noted. To begin with, one can argue that the moderation effects of celebrity involvement and musician-brand congruity were not supported by the data because of the possible confounding effects of brands and musicians. Different brands and different musicians were used across all studies. Future research should control for the effects of the brand and musician by using a research design involving several brands with the same musician and several musicians with the same brand.

Another possible source of confounding in the three studies is attitude toward the song. Although we controlled for familiarity with the celebrity musician, familiarity with the music video, age, gender, and product ownership, we failed to control for attitude toward the song. Future research should introduce this construct as an additional covariate in any study design.

Most important is the issue of causation, which could be addressed in future research. That is, the three studies reported here, although conducted in a lab setting, were correlational in nature. In other words, neither self-congruity nor the moderators (celebrity involvement and musician-brand congruity) were experimentally manipulated under randomized conditions.

Further testing is needed across a wide range of music videos using a broader range of consumer goods and services. Such testing should reinforce the basic findings of this study and possibly highlight conditions and limitations. Also, future research should explore the role of musician-self congruity (i.e., the match between the musician's persona and the consumer self-concept). Musician-self congruity may be considered a hot cognition, and matches and mismatches between the musician image and the consumer self-image may influence consumer attitude toward the musician. One can hypothesize that the greater the self-congruity with the musician, the more favorable will be the consumer's attitude toward the musician, and vice versa. Such an attitude toward the musician is likely to influence the attitude toward the brand through associative learning. Future research should bring into the self-congruity model of product placement in music videos the construct of self-congruity with the musician, and should explore mediating and moderating effects. Also of interest for future research is the co-branding that can take place in multiple forms of product placements and how that may be impacted by congruity theory—for example, music videos in which a Samsung cell phone might appear with a celebrity driving a Nissan car (Walchli 2007).

Future research should test with a broader sample in order to add ecological validity to our results (Schmoll, Hafer, Hilt, and Reilly 2006). As we investigated music video product placements and such videos have a worldwide audience, future research can explore the cross-cultural generalizability of our findings (Eisend 2009). Finally, future research should attempt to rule out alternative explanations by introducing additional covariates in the study such as attitude toward the musician.

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## APPENDIX

### Appendix A: Music videos used in studies 1 and 2

#### Rihanna: Shut Up and Drive; Take a Bow; Rehab

- Shut Up and Drive:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=up7pvPqNkuU&videos=VVSAXc4NFY&force\\_ap=1&playnext=1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=up7pvPqNkuU&videos=VVSAXc4NFY&force_ap=1&playnext=1)



- Take a Bow:  
[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3UjJ4wKLkg&videos=VVSAXc4NFY&force\\_ap=1&playnext=1](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J3UjJ4wKLkg&videos=VVSAXc4NFY&force_ap=1&playnext=1)
  - Rehab: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJYcmq\\_\\_nDM&videos=VVSAXc4NFY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rJYcmq__nDM&videos=VVSAXc4NFY)
- Shontelle: Impossible; T-Shirt; Licky**
- Impossible: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NWdrO4BoCu8>
  - T-Shirt: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eb-Vfe61W6A&playnext=1&videos=mu5EiNyqioI&feature=artistob>
  - Licky: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=M-SSbwaXaKU>
- Music Videos Used in Study 3**
- Taio Cruz: Dynamite: <http://new.music.yahoo.com/videos/TaioCruz/Dynamite-218695643>
  - Alicia Keys: Superwoman: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-AphKUK8twg&ob=av2e>
  - Rihanna: Take a Bow: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?force\\_ap=1&playnext=1&v=J3UjJ4wKLkg&list=TLVVSAVXc4NFY](http://www.youtube.com/watch?force_ap=1&playnext=1&v=J3UjJ4wKLkg&list=TLVVSAVXc4NFY)
  - Shontelle: T-Shirt: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Eb-Vfe61W6A&playnext=1&videos=mu5EiNyqioI&feature=artistob>

### Appendix B: Selected measures used in studies 1–3

Self-congruity with the brand (adapted from Sirgy et al. 1997)

1. Do you feel that using (BRAND NAME) reflects who you are?
2. Do you feel that people who use (BRAND NAME) are very different from you? (*reverse coded*)
3. Do you admire and look up to people who use (BRAND NAME)?
4. Do you feel that the image of the kind of people using (BRAND NAME) is an image you don't aspire to or don't care for? (*reverse coded*)
5. Do people you know think of you as the kind of person who uses (BRAND NAME)?
6. Do people you know think of you as the kind of person who would never use (BRAND NAME)? (*reverse coded*)
7. Do people important to you think you should use (BRAND NAME)?
8. Would people you look up think poorly of you because you may want to use (BRAND NAME)? (*reverse coded*)

Note. Responses are captured on a 5-point rating scale varying from "1=no, not at all" to 5="yes, very much so."

Celebrity involvement (adapted from Chia and Poo 2009)

1. I like watching and hearing about (MUSICIAN NAME) when I am in a large group of people.
2. Keeping up with news about (MUSICIAN NAME) is an entertaining pastime.
3. I love to talk with others who admire (MUSICIAN NAME).
4. Learning the life story of (MUSICIAN NAME) is a lot of fun.
5. It is enjoyable just to be with others who like (MUSICIAN NAME).
6. News about (MUSICIAN NAME) is a pleasant break from a harsh world.
7. I enjoy watching, reading, or listening to (MUSICIAN NAME) because it means a good time.
8. If I were to meet (MUSICIAN NAME) in person, she would already somehow know that I am her biggest fan.
9. I share with (MUSICIAN NAME) a special bond that cannot be described in words.
10. I am obsessed by details of (MUSICIAN NAME's) life.
11. I consider (MUSICIAN NAME) to be my soul mate.
12. When something good happens to (MUSICIAN NAME) I feel like it happened to me.
13. The successes of (MUSICIAN NAME) are also my successes.
14. I have frequent thoughts about (MUSICIAN NAME), even when I don't want to.
15. I have pictures and/or souvenirs of (MUSICIAN NAME) which I always keep in exactly the same place.

Note. Responses are captured on a 5-point rating scale varying from "1=strongly disagree" to 5="strongly agree."

Musician–brand congruity (adapted from Moorman, Neijens, and Smith 2002)

1. Do you feel that the (BRAND NAME) reflects the persona of (MUSICIAN NAME)?
2. Do you feel that the image of the (BRAND NAME) is very different from the image of (MUSICIAN NAME)? (*reverse coded*)
3. Do you think that the image of (BRAND NAME) is consistent with (MUSICIAN NAME's) persona?
4. Do you feel that the brand personality of (BRAND NAME) does not fit the personality of (MUSICIAN NAME)? (*reverse coded*)

Note. Responses are captured on a 5-point rating scale varying from "1=no, not at all" to 5="yes, very much so."