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Abstract

This research builds on similarity theory in order to understand the key success factors of brand naming strategies for the cross-gender extension of female patronymic brands targeting men. Study 1 demonstrates that the most common naming strategy – adding a "Men" descriptor to the brand name – does not significantly increase brand attitude as the perceived brand masculinity cannot be enhanced for men. Study 2 extends Study 1 by testing two more distant brand naming strategies: (1) dropping the first name and (2) using brand initials. The results show an inverted-U relationship pattern that reveals the key role of similarity: Dropping the first name has the most positive impact on brand extension attitude, purchase intention, and spillover effect. By contrast, the strategy using brand initials is too dissimilar from the initial brand name to be attractive to men. These findings provide managerial implications for practitioners considering a cross-gender brand extension strategy.

Stay close but not too close: The role of similarity in the cross-gender extension of patronymic brands

1. Introduction

Masculinity and femininity have proved to be relevant dimensions for brands. As a result, a clear brand gender positioning (i.e., high levels of brand masculinity or brand femininity) may have an impact on these brands' expansion potential (Grohmann, 2009). For the past 20 years, cross-gender extension (i.e., a brand previously exclusively targeting men or women expands to target the other biological gender) has been a very rational move for many masculine or feminine brands looking to grow their business (Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013; Veg-Sala, 2017). There are many examples in numerous industries: fashion (*Chanel* and *Lacoste*), razors (*Wilkinson for women*), skin care (*Nivea Men*), shower gels (*Dove Men*), deodorants (*Rexona Men*), and more. The extension to the men's market is particularly crucial for traditionally female-targeted brands since the growth of the men's segment is outpacing that of the women's segment in many markets. For instance, the high-end menswear market in the US saw a 4% year-on-year growth in 2019 compared with 2.6% for the women's market. This trend is expected to continue.[1] Meanwhile, the global men's beauty and personal care market grew 4.5% year-on-year in 2019 compared with 3% for the women's market; the former is expected to grow 19% (and the women's market only 13.8%) by 2023.[2]

However, cross-gender extensions of feminine brands toward men have proved to be more difficult, with the male segment often faring much worse than the female one. For example, within the L'Oréal portfolio, *Lancôme* is ranked second in female skin care in the US, whereas *Lancôme Men* is not even in the Top 10.[3] Indeed, research has shown a higher

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[1] Statista (May 2020).
[2] Ibid.
[3] L'Oréal Internal panel data report (2018)

desirability of masculine products/brands for women than feminine products/brands for men (Alreck, Settle, & Belch, 1982; Neale, Robbie, & Martin, 2016; Stuteville, 1971), and the consumer-brand gender congruence tends to have a positive influence over brand preference (Fry, 1971; Grohmann, 2009; Worth, Smith, & Mackie, 1992). This translates into men showing a strong reluctance to accept the cross-gender extension of feminine brands (Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013) and having a preference for highly masculine models in advertising, especially in a collective context because of social pressure (Martin & Gnoth, 2009). Therefore, it seems even more challenging for female patronymic brands – i.e., brands whose founder's name is a person (Viot, 2012) and is identified as a woman due to a female first name (e.g., *Estée Lauder, Elizabeth Arden, Carolina Herrera*, and *Sonia Rykiel*) – to extend to men. For example, *Nina Ricci* attempted to launch male perfumes but was unsuccessful, even though the brand is very successful with feminine fragrances. This specific case of the cross-gender extension of female patronymic brands will be the focus of this paper.

With regard to brand naming architecture, the literature has not previously addressed the specific case of cross-gender extensions. To the best of our knowledge, only one other paper has examined naming strategies in the specific context of mixed-target brands (Azar, Aimé, & Ulrich, 2018). Building on brand equity, a common managerial approach for cross-gender brand extensions has been to keep exactly the same brand name for both genders in many categories, such as fashion (e.g., *Chanel* or *Zara*), jewelry (e.g., *Audemars Piguet* or *Rolex)*, sports (e.g., *Nike*), and toys (e.g., *Lego*). This approach is unlikely to be effective at attracting men for female patronymic brands, which are perceived as strongly feminine because they have a prominent female first name. As a result, for the cross-gender extension of female patronymic brands, the most frequent naming strategy adopted by marketers was to add the "Men" descriptor to the brand name in an attempt to imbue the brand with masculine features (e.g., *Lolita Lempicka Men* or *Dior Homme* in perfumes). Female patronymic brands have

also implemented two other leading naming strategies in an attempt to distance the extension from the original brand name while capitalizing on its brand equity: by dropping the first name (e.g., *Ricci Homme* for *Nina Ricci*) or using initials (e.g., *CH Men* for *Carolina Herrera* male fragrances). These naming strategies have had varying degrees of success.

While the research on brand extensions has been quite extensive, there have only been a few studies on cross-gender brand extensions (Avery, 2012; Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013; Veg-Sala, 2017). These works approach men's and women's reactions to cross-gender extensions from a general perspective and do not examine different brand naming strategies. Azar et al. (2018) offer a new approach by investigating the importance of brand naming strategies for gendered brands. To the best of our knowledge, our study is the first one to examine the naming strategies of cross-gender extensions in the specific case of patronymic brands.

Therefore, the goal of this research is to build on similarity theory in order to understand the key success factors of naming strategies for the cross-gender extension of female patronymic brands. Specifically, the aim is to compare and contrast the impact of the three most common naming strategies on men's acceptance of cross-gender extensions.

Two studies have been carried out. The aim of Study 1 is to understand men's reactions to the most common naming strategy for cross-gender extensions of female patronymic brands, namely adding the "Men" descriptor to the female patronymic name. As this strategy does not appear to be relevant to female patronymic brands, Study 2 extends Study 1 with two brand naming strategies that are more distant and are common in the marketplace: 1) dropping the first name and 2) using brand initials. This research contributes to theory by revealing an inverted-U relationship pattern for brand naming similarity variations in men's acceptance of female patronymic cross-gender brand extensions and spillover effect. In addition, this work adds to the gender literature by uncovering the mediating role of brand gender perception

change and the moderating role of consumer gender identity (Bem, 1981) to explain the evaluation of cross-gender extensions for patronymic brands.

2. Study 1: Exploring men's reaction to female patronymic cross-gender brand extensions

2.1 Conceptual framework

2.1.1 Brand gender and patronymic brands

Consumer perceptions of brands' feminine/masculine dimensions have long been included in the marketing literature (J. L. Aaker, 1997; Levy, 1959; McCracken, 1989). Brand gender is defined as "*the set of human personality traits associated with masculinity and femininity applicable and relevant to brands*" (Grohmann, 2009, p. 106) and can be captured by two independent scales: the masculine brand personality (MBP) scale and the feminine brand personality (FBP) scale. As a result, brands can be categorized as masculine (high on masculinity and low on femininity), feminine (high on femininity and low on masculinity), androgynous (high on both dimensions), or undifferentiated (low on both dimensions). Brand gender appears to be theoretically and managerially relevant because it influences brand attitude, purchase intention, and word-of-mouth communication (Grohmann, 2009), and high levels of brand femininity or masculinity elicit higher ratings of brand equity (Lieven, Grohmann, Herrmann, Landwehr, & Tilburg, 2014).

The brand name is one key element that generates brand gender perception (Azar, 2015; Lieven, Grohmann, Herrmann, Landwehr, & Tilburg, 2015): It conveys gendered associations because the phonemes contained in names convey masculinity or femininity (Klink, 2000; Wu, Klink, & Guo, 2013). In the case of patronymic brands, defined as brands "*whose name is a person's name, whether this is a real or a fictitious person*" (Viot, 2012, p. 27), the brand

gender perception is associated with masculinity or femininity as the brand is identified with a man or a woman via the first name and surname. This type of brand is anchored in a physical person (often the brand's namesake founder) who gives his/her identity to the brand (biological gender, personality traits, values, etc.) (Viot, 2012). Indeed, many patronymic brands can be found in international markets with either female first names – such as Estée Lauder in cosmetics and perfumes, Donna Karan in fashion, Chantal Thomass in lingerie, Betty Crocker in biscuits, and Marie Brizard in spirits – or male first names – such as Hugo Boss in fashion, Johnnie Walker in whisky, Philip Morris in tobacco, etc. (Table 1). Historically, many of these gendered brands targeted only one biological gender: that of the patronymic brand name. However, in order to sustain growth and go global, expanding to target the opposite sex by capitalizing on the existing brand name emerged as a rational strategy to potentially double the business while limiting launch costs. However, this extension from the female target to the male target may not always be fruitful, and the naming strategy can face obstacles.

- Insert Table 1 here -

2.1.2 Men, cross-gender brand extensions for patronymic brands, and naming strategies
Previous research has shown that men tend to reject feminine brands and traditionally female-targeted products (e.g., cosmetics), whereas women more easily accept and use masculine brands and traditionally male-targeted products such as alcohol and cigars (Alreck et al., 1982; Fry, 1971; Neale et al., 2016; Stuteville, 1971). In fact, in most cultures, masculinity and masculine traits are attractive to women, whereas femininity is far less attractive to men (Kramer, 2005): Many men report a dread of the feminine given the importance of being considered "real men" in society (Connell, 1993; Kimmel, 1996). Using feminine brands carries a greater stigma for men (Avery, 2012) as androcentrism reigns in most cultures, and

masculinity and masculine traits are often highly valued (Kramer, 2005). Most men manage their masculinity through consumption to ward off fears that others will view them as effeminate or gay (Kimmel, 1996).

Consequently, cross-gender brand extension is a more difficult move for feminine brands seeking to expand by catering to the male target. Jung and Lee (2006) show that consumer acceptance is lower when the extension is made from a feminine brand to target men than vice versa. They also show that men are less receptive than women to cross-gender extensions and have a lower attitude toward and purchase intention regarding the extension. Moreover, Ulrich and Tissier-Desbordes (2018) reveal that men with traditional and 'resistant' masculinities perceive cross-gender brand extensions as threats.

In terms of naming strategy, cross-gender extensions of feminine brands to the male target are often executed by keeping the same master brand name for both genders in the fashion industry (e.g., *Zara*). Some brands try a sub-brand strategy (D. A. Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000) by adding the "*Men/Man*" descriptor to their initial master brand name (e.g., *H&M Man*). In other industries, the most frequent move is the sub-brand strategy with the "*Men*" descriptor added to the initial name and sometimes translated into the local language (e.g., *Nivea Men* or *Mary Cohr Homme*), as detailed in Table 2.

- Insert Table 2 here -

However, this may not be an effective strategy to attract men as female patronymic brands carry strong feminine associations because of their female first name. In fact, female patronymic brands have used two other naming strategies that build on their initial brand name to capitalize on brand equity. The first strategy is to drop the first name and keep the surname while adding the "*Men*" descriptor (e.g., *Ricci for Men* in perfumes, *Aubade Men* in underwear, and *Rykiel Homme* in fashion). The second is to use initials while adding the

"*Men*" descriptor (e.g., *CH Men* for *Carolina Herrera* perfumes for men or *MK Men* for *Mary Kay* skincare products for men). These different strategies (detailed in Table 2) have had mixed market results. For instance, *agnès b. homme* is rather successful, but *Rykiel Homme* (dropping *Sonia*) had to discontinue its menswear line in 2008; by contrast, *Ricci for Men* (dropping *Nina*) achieved better results than *Lolita Lempicka au Masculin* on the perfume market. Thus, it is not clear which naming strategy would be more beneficial to managers, as real brand launches require product development, advertising, and promotion, which makes it almost impossible to isolate the effect of the naming architecture. To the best of our knowledge, no previous research has focused on this brand naming architecture issue for cross-gender brand extensions, and no other paper has dealt with patronymic brand extensions. Only Azar et al. (2018) have studied naming strategies in the specific context of gendered brands targeting both males and females.

Therefore, this first study aims to address this gap by exploring the most common naming strategy for cross-gender extensions of female patronymic brands, namely adding the "Men" descriptor to the female brand name, as described above (e.g., Estée Lauder *Men* or Elisabeth Arden *Men*).

Based on prior literature outlined earlier that shows strong male resistance to cross-gender bending (Avery, 2012; Jung & Lee, 2006), the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: *For men, cross-gender brand extension by adding the "Men" descriptor to a female patronymic brand name does not significantly increase (a) brand attitude and (b) brand purchase intention.*

In an attempt to understand the underlying mechanism behind the consumers' evaluation of these cross-gender extensions, it seems relevant to examine the potential implications of the brand masculinity and femininity in this process. Azar, Aimé, and Ulrich (2018) show the

asymmetrical evaluation of masculine vs. feminine gendered dimensions of brands. The authors demonstrate that adding a masculine endorsed name to a feminine master brand already targeting both genders (e.g., *He by Mango*) cannot increase the perceived masculinity of the brand but does decrease its femininity. Therefore, when adding the "Men" descriptor to a female patronymic brand name, the perceived femininity of the cross-gender brand extension should decrease, but the perceived masculinity should not increase significantly, as men would find it difficult to ignore the (strength of the) feminine associations of the female first name. Thus, we predict:

H2a: *For men, cross-gender brand extension by adding the "Men" descriptor to a female patronymic brand name decreases the perceived femininity of the brand.*

H2b: *For men, cross-gender brand extension by adding the "Men" descriptor to a female patronymic brand name does **not** significantly increase the perceived masculinity of the brand.*

Furthermore, the gender perception change between the new cross-gender extension and the initial master brand should have a significant impact on the attitude and purchase intention of the new extension. Previously, Azar, Aimé and Ulrich (2018) have shown that the perceived brand masculinity change (MBP change) mediates the brand attitude change with an indirect-only mediation, in the case of feminine master brands moving toward an endorsed brand strategy by adding a strong masculine endorsed name. Moreover, research has suggested that masculinity (MBP) is a more important dimension than femininity (FBP) in brand gender as it has a greater impact on brand equity, brand loyalty, brand love, brand perceived quality and consumer-brand engagement on social media (Machado, Vacas de Carvalho, Azar, André, & dos Santos, 2019; Vacas de Carvalho, Azar, & Machado, 2020). Therefore, in our case of cross-gender extension by adding a "Men" descriptor, the increase in masculinity perception (MBP change) should have a significant impact on the brand extension attitude and purchase

intent. As for the perceived femininity change (FBP change), we expect it not to have a significant impact, since men are driven more by masculinity (Avery, 2012; Kramer, 2005), as previously highlighted:

H3a: *For men, the perceived brand masculinity change has a significant impact on the attitude and purchase intention toward the female patronymic brand's cross-gender extension.*

H3b: *For men, the perceived brand femininity change does **not** have a significant impact on the attitude and purchase intention toward the female patronymic brand's cross-gender extension.*

Finally, consumers' gender identity is defined as the degree to which they identify with masculine or feminine personality traits (Bem, 1981); individuals are categorized as masculine, feminine, undifferentiated (low masculine and feminine), or androgynous (high masculine and feminine). Gender identity has a significant effect on consumer behaviors in situations of gender salience where gender cues are activated (Palan, 2001; Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2013). In the case of cross-gender extensions of patronymic brands, it seems relevant to posit an effect of consumers' gender identity on the attitude toward and purchase intention regarding the extension. Grohmann (2009) shows that consumers with a high feminine (masculine) gender identity tend to evaluate feminine (masculine) brands more positively. Worth, Smith, and Mackie (1992) also show the influence of consumer gender identity on brand preference, with consumers who have a feminine (masculine) gender identity evaluating brands with a feminine (masculine) image more favorably. Vitz and Johnston (1965) report that masculine men prefer cigarettes with a masculine brand image, and Fry (1971) shows that feminine men prefer cigarettes with a less masculine image. Therefore, men with a high level of femininity (feminine and androgynous consumers) should

have a more positive view of the feminine patronymic brand proposing a cross-gender brand extension by adding a "Men" descriptor. Thus, H4 posits:

H4a: *Compared with men who have a low level of femininity (i.e., masculine and undifferentiated men), men with a high level of femininity (i.e., feminine and androgynous men) will have a stronger attitude regarding cross-gender brand extensions that add the "Men" descriptor to a female patronymic brand name.*

H4b: *Compared with men who have a low level of femininity (i.e., masculine and undifferentiated men), men with a high level of femininity (i.e., feminine and androgynous men) will have a higher purchase intention regarding cross-gender brand extensions that add the "Men" descriptor to a female patronymic brand name.*

2.2 Methodology

An experiment was conducted with two fictitious cross-gender extensions of real female patronymic brands in two distinct product categories.

2.2.1 Selection of product categories and brands

The following procedure was used to select the product categories. First, fashion, skin care, perfumes, make-up, and underwear were listed as potential product categories with existing well-known female patronymic brands not yet engaged in cross-gender extension. Second, product categories with a differently gendered image were selected. As people have a gendered perception of products (Allison et al., 1980; Azar, 2015), product categories are perceived as feminine, masculine, androgynous (strongly masculine and feminine), or low masculine/feminine (Fugate & Phillips, 2010). Skin care was chosen as a feminine product category, and perfume was chosen as an androgynous category (Azar, 2013; Fugate & Phillips, 2010). Masculine or low masculine/feminine product categories could not be selected

as none appeared on the list of potential candidates. Finally, for each product category, desk research helped generate a list of well-known female patronymic brand names not yet engaged in cross-gender extension. This enabled the experimental testing of fictitious extensions of real brands. Candidates were then screened according to the level of awareness and their size (i.e., Facebook and Twitter brand followers, sales revenues, and media coverage), which led us to consider the Estée Lauder and Elizabeth Arden brand names in skin care and perfume, respectively.

2.2.2 Sample, procedure, and measures

After a pilot test with 15 male consumers to ensure the clarity of the items used, data was collected in the US through an online questionnaire by Qualtrics. Qualtrics Panels have been shown to generate high-quality responses and have been adopted to collect data in previous studies (Brandon, Long, Loraas, Mueller-Phillips, & Vansant, 2014; Ibarra, Agas, Lee, Pan, & Buttenheim, 2018; Zhao, Anong, & Zhang, 2019). Respondents were screened for their use of the particular product category and their awareness of the tested brands. After quality control checking and data screening procedures, 115 completed responses from men (Estée Lauder, n=60; Elizabeth Arden, n=55) remained and were used in the data analysis. This is above the minimum number of participants required by an a priori power analysis (G*power 3 (Faul, Erdfelder, Lang, & Buchner, 2007) based on previous literature (108 participants given a significant level (p) =.05; power (1-β)=.8 and expected effect sizes estimated from Azar et al., 2018). The sample demographics and characteristics are presented in Appendix 1. Respondents were screened for their use of the particular product category that was being tested and their awareness of the tested brand. Each participant was randomly assigned to one product category and one brand name only (i.e., skin care/Estée Lauder or perfume/Elizabeth Arden). As opposed to sequential monadic evaluation, which creates an order effect

(Friedman & Schillewaert, 2012), this monadic design is recommended to avoid bias when testing new concepts.

After answering some general questions about their use of skincare or perfume products, the respondents evaluated their familiarity with the particular brand name (two items: α=.942; adapted from Lai, 2002; Michel, 1999), their brand attitude (three items, α=.908; adapted from Kapoor and Heslop, 2009; Michel and Donthu, 2014), brand purchase intentions (two items from Grohmann, 2009; α=.923), and perceived brand gender. This last construct was captured using two dimensions from Grohmann (2009): masculine brand personality traits (MBP, six items, α=.864) and feminine brand personality traits (FBP, six items, α=.853). Then, a short message was presented to introduce the brand cross-gender extension: "*Building on its strong expertise in skincare (perfume) products for women, Estée Lauder (Elizabeth Arden) is launching a new skincare (perfume) range for men only.*" Next, we presented the brand name of this new skincare (perfume) range exclusively targeted at men. For this first study, we added the "Men" descriptor as a sub-brand to the patronymic brand name (e.g., "*Estée Lauder Men*"). This naming strategy is used most often in cross-gender brand extensions (Ulrich, 2013, p. 800). Respondents were asked to answer questions related to their evaluations of the new brand extension. Brand attitude (α=.910), brand purchase intention (α=.950), brand gender (MBP, α=.931; FBP, α=.92), brand fit (two items, Monga and John, 2010; α=.892), and product category fit (three items from Aaker and Keller (1992), α=.909) were also measured. The last part of the questionnaire asked personal questions related to job status and level of education. We also asked respondents to respond to the two dimensions of the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1981): the Masculinity scale (10 items, α=.872) and the Femininity scale (10 items, α=.918).

Since respondents were randomly assigned to one of the female patronymic brand names that were tested, we checked that our samples were comparable by statistical analysis. To this end,

a chi-square test of independence was performed and revealed no significance between the two groups of respondents regarding age (χ^2=1.128; p=.952), job status (χ^2=2.868; p=.720), level of education (χ^2=5.202; p=.518), or usage of product category (χ^2=1.814; p=.404). No significant differences were noted for brand familiarity, initial brand evaluations (i.e., brand attitude and brand purchase intention), product category, or brand fit for the two groups of respondents (Table 3). To assess the possibility of non-response bias, we compared the responses of the early respondents with those of late respondents; the latter were expected to have a similar profile to non-respondents (Armstrong and Overton, 1977). We divided our respondents into two groups based on the median date of survey completion (Cenamor, Parida, & Wincent, 2019; Johansson, Raddats, & Witell, 2019; Miroshnychenko, Strobl, Matzler, & De Massis, 2020; Nambisan & Baron, 2019; Porcu, del Barrio-García, Kitchen, & Tourky, 2019) and compared them with each other in terms of sample demographics (i.e., age, job status, and level of education), sample characteristics (i.e., usage of product category, brand familiarity, brand attitude, and purchase intention), and major findings (MBP perception change, FBP perception change, brand attitude change, and brand purchase intention change). A chi-square test of independence was performed, which revealed no significance between the two groups of respondents in terms of age (χ2=1.128; p=.952), job status (χ2=2.868; p=.720), level of education (χ2=5.202; p=.518), or usage of product category (χ2=1.814; p=.404). A two-way MANOVA revealed no significant differences in interaction effect between the two groups of respondents and the two tested brands on the combined dependent variables (brand familiarity, initial brand evaluations (i.e., brand attitude, brand purchase intention, initial brand gender perception), MBP and FBP perception change, brand attitude change, and brand purchase intention change): F(9,103)=1.338, p=.227; Wilks' Λ = .895 (cf. Appendix 2 for tests of between-subjects effects). We concluded that non-response bias was not a major concern in this study.

Exploratory analyses were conducted to assess the variables' reliability and validity. We checked the multicollinearity, linearity, and normality assumptions for each variable. The skewness and kurtosis z-values scored less than │1.96│, and we did a visual check of histograms, normal Q-Q plots, and box plots. We then performed an exploratory factor analysis to evaluate all the items and constructs used in this study. To aid our interpretation of the measured components, we did an oblique rotation of all the measured items and checked the data for the cross-loading items and those with communalities of less than .5. All items loaded on their respective dimensions. Prior to the statistical testing of our hypothesis, we checked for any possible violations in the assumptions.

- Insert Table 3 here -

2.3 Results of Study 1

In order to test H1 (a and b) and H2 (a and b), a one-way repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to evaluate the impact that adding the "Men" descriptor to a female patronymic brand name has on men's brand attitude, purchase intention, and brand gender perception (i.e., MBP perception change and FBP perception change). The analyses were conducted both on the overall sample and separately on each female patronymic brand. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure there was no violation of the assumptions of normality and homogeneity of variances between the groups.

2.3.1 Brand attitude

Overall, there was a significant decrease in brand attitude from Time 1/before (M=5.689, SD=1.008) to Time 2/after (M=5.411, SD=1.244), t(114)= –3.629, p=.000 (two-tailed). The mean decrease in brand attitude was –.278 [95% CI: –.430 to –.126]. The eta-squared statistic (.103) indicated a large effect size (Cohen, 1988, p. 284). We also replicated this analysis for

each brand name used in the study. Both Estée Lauder Men (M_{before}=5.716, SD=.942; M_{after}=5.466, SD=1.146; t(59)=–2.826, p(two-tailed)=.006, η^2=.119) and Elizabeth Arden Men (M_{before}=5.660, SD1.083; M_{after}=5.351, SD=1.350; t(54)=–2.399, p(two-tailed)=.006, η^2=.096) revealed similar results. These findings support H1a.

2.3.2 Purchase intention

There was no significant difference in brand purchase intention either before (M=5.417, SD=1.525) or after brand extension (M=5.565, SD=1.477), t(114)=1.479, p=.142 (two-tailed). The mean difference in brand purchase intention was .147 [95% CI: –.050 to .345]. We also replicated this analysis for each brand name used in this study: Both Estée Lauder Men (M_{before}=5.416, SD=1.429; M_{after}=5.625, SD=1.339; t(59)=1.491, p(two-tailed)=.141) and Elizabeth Arden Men (M_{before}=5.418, SD=1.637; M_{after}=5.500, SD=1.624; t(54)=.569, p(two-tailed)=.572) revealed similar results. These findings support H1b.

2.3.3 Brand gender perception change

FBP perception change: There was a significant decrease in FBP perception before (M=5.518, SD=.938) and after brand cross-gender extension (M=4.778, SD=1.355), t(114)= –7.087, p=.000 (two-tailed). The mean decrease in brand attitude was –.740 [95% CI: –.947 to –.533]. The eta-squared statistic (.305) indicated a large effect size (Cohen, 1988, p. 284). Both Estée Lauder Men (M_{before}=5.475, SD=.908; M_{after}=4.586, SD=1.319; t(59)=–5.733, p(two-tailed)=.000, η^2=.357) and Elizabeth Arden Men (M_{before}=5.566, SD=.977; M_{after}=4.987, SD=1.374; t(54)=–4.241, p(two-tailed)=.000, η^2=.249) confirmed these findings separately. Therefore, H2a is supported.

MBP perception change: There was no significant increase in MBP perception from Time1/before (M=5.159, SD=1.098) to Time 2/after extension (M=5.214, SD=1.274), t(114)=.605, p=.546 (two-tailed). The mean difference in brand purchase intention was .055 [95% CI: −.125 to .235]. We also replicated this analysis for each brand name used in the study: Both Estée Lauder Men (M_{before}=5.027, SD=1.099; M_{after}=5.241, SD=1.063; t(59)=1.751, p(two-tailed)=.085) and Elizabeth Arden Men (M_{before}=5.303, SD=1.089; M_{after}=5.184, SD=1.480; t(54)=−.889, p(two-tailed)=.378) revealed similar results. Therefore, H2b is supported

2.3.4 Impact of brand gender perception change on brand attitude and purchase intention

In order to test H3a and H3b, hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess the ability of brand gender perception change (i.e., MBP perception change and FBP perception change) to predict brand extension attitude and purchase intentions. This was done after controlling for the initial brand attitude. Preliminary analyses were conducted to ensure there was no violation of the assumptions of normality, multicollinearity, and homoskedasticity.

Brand attitude: The model explains 58.6% of the variance in the brand attitude change, F(3,114)=54.688, p=.000. Only MBP perception change had a significant impact (beta=.154, t=2.550, p=.012) as the FBP perception change did not reach statistical significance (beta=−.066, t=−1.086, p=.280).

Brand purchase intention: The model explains 59.7% of the variance in the brand attitude change, F(3,114)=57.203, p=.000. Only MBP perception change had a significant impact (beta=.219, t=3.657, p=.000) as the FBP perception change did not reach statistical significance (beta=.081, t=1.352, p=.179). Therefore, H3a and H3b are supported.

2.3.5 Men with a low or high level of femininity

In order to test H4, we used the classification resulting from the Bem Sex-Role Inventory (BSRI) (Bem, 1981) measurement (i.e., masculine, feminine, undifferentiated, and androgynous men). We conducted a median split method in line with Bem's approach (1981). The median values used to create the four gendered groups were 3.90 (SD=.778) for the Femininity scale and 3.70 (SD=.746) for the Masculinity scale. Men who are masculine ($M_{femininity}$=3.405, SD=.512; $M_{masculinity}$=4.138, SD=.320) and undifferentiated ($M_{femininity}$=3.119, SD=.565; $M_{masculinity}$=3.002, SD=.551) had low levels of femininity, while feminine ($M_{femininity}$ =4.384, SD=.345; $M_{masculinity}$=3.215, SD=.472) and androgynous ($M_{femininity}$=4.488, SD=.314; $M_{masculinity}$=4.316, SD=.335) men had high levels of femininity. An independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare male respondents with high and low levels of femininity with each other. Regarding the brand attitude toward the extension, there was a significant difference in scores between respondents with high and low levels of femininity: $t(113)$=4.992, p=.000 (two-tailed). Respondents with high levels of femininity ($M_{attitude}$ =5.907, SD=1.194) had a more positive attitude toward brand extension than those with low levels of femininity ($M_{attitude}$=4.851, SD=1.055). The mean difference is 1.055 [95% CI: .636 to 1.474]. The magnitude of the differences in the means is large (η^2=.180). Therefore, H4a is confirmed.

As for brand extension purchase intention, there was also a significant difference in scores for respondents with high and low levels of femininity: $t(113)$=4.126, p=.000 (two-tailed). Respondents with high levels of femininity ($M_{purchase\_intention}$=6.065, SD=1.352) had higher purchase intentions regarding the brand extension than men with low levels of femininity ($M_{purchase\_intention}$=5.000, SD=1.417). The mean difference is 1.065 [95% CI: .553 to 1.577]. The magnitude of the differences in the means is large (η^2=.130). Therefore, H4b is confirmed.

2.3.6 Post hoc power analysis

The lack of increase in MBP perception seems particularly relevant to the overall interpretation of the findings. Therefore, we checked whether our non-significant results were the result of our limited sample size. To this end, we conducted a post hoc power analysis using G*power 3 (Faul et al., 2007) with power (1-β=.8; Cohen, 1988) and a significance level (p=.05) at recommended levels. This showed that, in order for an effect of this size to be detected (80% chance) as significant at the 5% level, the sample size has to increase up to 2,612 respondents. Therefore, it is unlikely that the lack of significance is due to a limited sample size (Smeets, Leppink, Jelicic, & Merckelbach, 2009). For all significant findings, we had power greater than .8, following the recommendations of Cohen (1988, p. 22).

2.4 Discussion of Study 1

Study 1 demonstrates that adding the "Men" descriptor is not an adequate naming strategy for female patronymic brands seeking to target male consumers efficiently. It is not effective at generating a higher brand attitude and purchase intention. This result is in line with previous findings showing men's averseness to the cross-gender brand extensions of feminine brands (Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2018) and, more broadly, with the lower desirability of feminine brands and femininity for men (Alreck et al., 1982; Kramer, 2005; Neale et al., 2016). This result is also in line with findings on the move from sub-brand strategy to endorsed brand strategy, for feminine brands targeting men (Azar et al., 2018). This study adds depth to the literature by explaining the reasons for this challenge: Adding the "Men" descriptor reduces the perceived brand femininity (FBP) but does not increase the level of perceived brand masculinity (MBP), a criterion that is paramount to reducing male consumers' reluctance to engage with feminine brands.

This study investigates patronymic brands and uses an American context to replicate the asymmetrical evaluation of masculine vs. feminine gendered dimensions of brands, which has previously been demonstrated in a European and an Asian context (Azar et al., 2018; Jung & Lee, 2006). The experiment also confirms the mediating effect of masculinity perception change to explain brand extension attitude and purchase intentions, as in the case of feminine master brands moving toward an endorsed brand strategy (Azar et al., 2018). Hence, the study contributes to research suggesting that the masculinity dimension is more important than the femininity dimension in brand gender (Machado et al., 2019; Vacas de Carvalho et al., 2020). Moreover, in this study, we show that averseness to cross-gender brand extensions is higher for masculine and undifferentiated men than for men who are feminine or androgynous, which adds depth to prior findings on cross-gender extensions (Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013) and is in line with previous research on the effect that consumer gender identity has on brand evaluation (Grohmann, 2009; Worth et al., 1992).

However, the limitation of Study 1 is that we do not show brand managers the best naming strategy to target this specific segment of male consumers. Thus, Study 2 will explore the two other main naming strategies that brand managers use in this specific context.

3. Study 2: Exploring the impact of similarity on brand naming strategies for female patronymic cross-gender brand extensions

3.1 Conceptual framework

In terms of brand architecture, Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2000) indicate that the sub-brand strategy creates a close link between the master brand and the sub-brand name. This should be the case for cross-gender extensions of female patronymic brands, executed with full name + "Men" descriptor, as in *Estée Lauder for Men*. However, as outlined earlier, female

patronymic brands have tried two other naming strategies for their cross-gender extension to the male target, which build on their initial brand name franchise. One strategy is to drop the first name and keep only the family name: i.e., Surname + Men (e.g., *Ricci for Men* in perfumes or *Rykiel Homme* in fashion). Another strategy is to use brand name initials + Men (e.g., *CH Men* for *Carolina Herrera* perfumes for men or *MK Men* for *Mary Kay* skin care for men). From a linguistic perspective, the Surname + Men strategy appears to be perceptually less similar and not as close to the initial master brand because the female first name was dropped. This option could be described as moderately dissimilar/distant. The last strategy (i.e., brand name initials + Men) appears extremely distant from and extremely dissimilar to the master brand because it shares even fewer features: Only the initials of the founder's first name and surname are kept to convey the same meaning and concept.

Prior literature has shown that moderate incongruity between the attributes of a new drink and its product category leads to more favorable product evaluations than category-congruent or -incongruent attributes (Meyers-Levy & Tybout, 1989). Similarly, brand name extensions are evaluated more favorably when a product brand's name is moderately incongruent with the product than when it is either congruent or extremely incongruent with the product (Meyers-Levy, Louie, & Curren, 1994). Thus, there is an inverted-U-shaped relationship between brand name incongruity and evaluative responses. In the same vein, Kronrod and Lowrey (2016) show this inverted-U-shaped relationship for the degree of similarity between a new brand name launch and an existing one: Variations on that name elicit more positive attitudes when they are moderately similar to the original name than when the variation is either close to or distant from the original name.

Thus, the literature suggests that new names that are extremely similar to and extremely distant from familiar brands elicit less favorable attitudes than moderately similar names. If so, too similar and too distant brand name variations for cross-gender extensions of female

patronymic brands should elicit less positive attitudes than the moderate variations. Thus, H5 a and b states:

H5a: *Compared with moderate brand name variations, too dissimilar or too similar brand name variations should elicit a less favorable attitude toward the female patronymic brand's cross-gender brand extension.*

H5b: *Compared with moderate brand name variations, too dissimilar or too similar brand name variations should elicit a less favorable purchase intention toward the female patronymic brand's cross-gender brand extension.*

Moreover, branding literature has demonstrated that brand extensions may affect consumers' attitude toward the parent brand. Since the seminal work of Sullivan (1990), extensive research has looked at the positive and negative brand extensions' spillover effects in brand extensions strategies (Aaker & Keller, 1992; Ahluwalia & Gurhan-Canli, 2000; Balachander & Ghose, 2003; Czellar, 2003; Loken & John, 1993). This feedback effect on the parent brand was also studied in the specific case of cross-gender brand extensions (Jung & Lee, 2006; Ulrich, 2013). Following the rationale of H5a and H5b, we could expect:

H5c: *Compared with moderate brand name variations, too dissimilar or too similar brand name variations should elicit a less favorable attitude toward the parent brand.*

Tsai, Bei, and Monroe (2014) show that the name in the initial position in a branding name receives more attention and serves as a basis for forming impressions in the case of co-branding. As both of the new strategies that were tested (Surname + Men; Initials + Men) had dropped the highly feminine first name, their associated masculinity perception (MBP) should logically show an increase over the initial strategy (i.e., Name Surname + Men). However, for the Initials + Men strategy, we expect consumers to be affected by the dissimilarity between the parent brand name and the initials, with the disappearance of the founder's surname,

making it difficult to really evaluate the potential masculinity of the new extension. Therefore, for this strategy, masculinity perception should not increase significantly. For the "close" strategy (Name Surname + Men), Study 1 also did not show a significant increase. In parallel, for brand femininity perception (FBP), we expect a decrease in all strategies as this dimension is easy to manipulate (Azar et al., 2018). Therefore, we predict:

H6: Brand name variations that are too dissimilar or too similar do not significantly increase brand masculinity perception, but intermediate brand name variation significantly increases it.

H7: Brand femininity perception decreases independently of the distancing in terms of brand name variations.

Finally, based on prior literature on consumer gender identity (Bem, 1981) and following the results of Study 1 and the rationale supporting H5, we expect men with a low level of femininity to be particularly receptive to the intermediate brand naming strategy and display higher ratings:

H8a & H8b*: Men with a low level of femininity (undifferentiated + masculine) will have a higher a) attitude toward and b) purchase intention regarding the intermediate brand naming strategy than for the other naming strategies.*

However, there should be no effect for men with a high level of femininity, so we posit:

H8c & H8d*: Men with a high level of femininity will not have a significantly higher c) attitude toward and d) purchase intention regarding any of the different brand naming strategies.*

Figure 1 shows our conceptual model tested in Study 2.

- Insert Figure 1 here -

3.2 Methodology

As Study 1 had examined one naming strategy in two product categories (i.e., skin care and perfumes) with two brands (i.e., Estée Lauder and Elizabeth Arden), we decided to evaluate the other naming strategies in Study 2 while using the same brands and product categories.

3.2.1 Experimental design building

A quantitative pre-test (n=115 men; 60% full-time workers) was conducted to check the similarity between the three brand names and the parent brand. Respondents were assigned to evaluate the brand naming strategies deployed by Estée Lauder and Elizabeth Arden. The scenario presented the brands' (Estée Lauder and Elizabeth Arden) willingness to build on the strong expertise each of them has to target the male audience by launching a new skincare or perfume range exclusively designed for men. Then we explained that each brand was considering three main options as the name of this new range: (1) Name Surname Men (i.e., Estée Lauder Men/Elizabeth Arden Men); (2) Surname Men (i.e., Lauder Men/Arden Men), and (3) Brand name initials + Men (i.e., EL Men/EA Men). To evaluate the similarity between the three brand names, respondents were asked to evaluate each brand name option on a 10-point semantic differential scale using two items (Correlation=.843): similarity (similar/dissimilar) and distance (close/far). Similarity is commonly used as a proxy to capture the distance between a family brand and its extensions/sub-brands (He, Chen, Tam, & Lee, 2016). This specific similarity scale has been used in prior studies on brand names (He et al., 2016; Kronrod & Lowrey, 2016). The distance scale was transposed from prior work on distant/close brand extensions (Goedertier, Dawar, Geuens, & Weijters, 2015) to help fully capture how consumers perceive the distance and the level of similarity between the extension names.

We performed one-way between-groups ANOVA to test for differences across the three groups for the overall sample and for each brand name separately. Statistically significant differences were noted at the $p<.001$ level for the overall sample ($F(2,694)=30.335$), Estée Lauder ($F(2,345)=14.719$), and Elizabeth Arden ($F(2,346)=15.507$) regarding the similarity between the three brand naming strategies. Post hoc multiple comparison tests were used to test for significant differences among groups of brand names (Table 4). In order to decide on the level of similarity between each brand naming strategy and the original brand name, we compared the score obtained in that cluster with the overall mean score for the whole sample and also compared the results of the post hoc analysis.

- Insert Table 4 here -

We will refer to the Name Surname + Men strategy as the "close strategy," the Surname + Men as the "intermediate strategy," and the Initials + Men as the "distant strategy."

3.2.2 Sample, procedure, and measures

After a pilot test with 20 male consumers, data was collected in the US by administering an online questionnaire with Qualtrics Panels, as in Study 1. The pilot test aimed to ensure the respondents' understanding of the scenario, as well as the clarity of items used in this study. Based on Study 1's findings and previous literature (Azar et al., 2018), a power analysis using the G*power 3 program (Faul et al., 2007) indicated that 96 respondents were required for each group to conduct ANOVA repeated measures within factor analysis and a total sample of 117 respondents to conduct ANOVA repeated measures between factor analysis (power=.8; p=.05; number of groups = 3; number of measurements = 2). Therefore, our final sample (after quality check control and screening, as in Study 1) consisted of 301 completed responses, which ensured more than 96 responses for each tested brand naming strategy

(N_{close}=101; $N_{intermediate}$=101; $N_{distant}$=99). Our sample was heterogeneous in terms of age and level of education, and 58.8% of the respondents were full-time workers (cf. Appendix 1).

We tested the sample for non-response bias (Armstrong & Overton, 1977; Johansson et al., 2019) following the same procedure as Study 1. Between early respondents and late respondents, no significant differences were reported regarding demographic characteristics ($\chi2_{age}$=4.898, p=.428; $\chi2_{job\ status}$=6.631, p=.356; $\chi2_{level\ of\ education}$=2.916, p=.819), sample characteristics ($\chi2_{usage\ product}$=2.330; p=.312), and major brand characteristics and findings: $F(45,1260)$=1.108, p=.290; Wilks' Λ = .841 (see Appendix 2 for details on the tests' between-subjects effects). We could conclude that non-response bias was not a major concern in this study. We also checked for preliminary assumptions (the multicollinearity, linearity, normality, univariate and multivariate outliers, homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices, and homogeneity of regression slopes). We did not find any abnormalities.

Study 2 used the same questionnaire and measuring instruments as in Study 1. We added the attitude toward the parent brand name after the launch of the new brand extension by using the same scale as for the initial brand attitude (three items, α=.914) to evaluate the spillover effect. The variables' factor structure and the items used in this second study were checked before further analysis was done. All constructs had adequate validity and reliability. Since respondents were assigned randomly to one of the experimental design conditions, we performed statistical analysis to ensure our samples were comparable. To this end, a chi-square test of independence was performed and revealed no significance between our six groups of respondents regarding age (χ^2=28.196; p=.299), job status (χ^2=23.379; p=.799), or level of education (χ^2=23.883; p=.777). We also checked that brand familiarity and product category fit, as well as initial brand evaluation (i.e., brand attitude, brand purchase intention, and brand gender perception), were not significantly different for the different groups of

respondents (Table 5). As for brand fit, the results show no significant difference between the different naming strategies as all three strategies use a variation of the initial name without introducing a completely new name.

- Insert Table 5 here -

3.3 Results of Study 2

To test H5 (a, b, and c**),** a one-way between-groups multivariate analysis (MANOVA) was performed to investigate brand naming differences' effects on the three branding outputs. Three dependent variables were used: brand attitude change, brand purchase intention change, and spillover effect. The independent variable was brand naming strategy. There was a statistically significant difference between the three brand naming strategies' effects on the combined dependent variables: $F(6,592)=5.756$, $p=.000$; Wilks' $\Lambda =.893$, $\eta^2=.055$. To test H5a, H5b, and H5c, the results of the dependent variables were considered separately.

3.3.1 Impact on brand attitude

To test H5a, we used a Holm–Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .016 to assess the impact of three different naming strategies (Name Surname Men, Name Men, and Initials Men) on participants' scores for attitude change across two time periods (before and after brand cross-gender extension). Brand attitude change reached statistical significance: $F(2,298)=16.398$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.099$. To confirm this result, a one-way between-groups analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) was conducted and provides similar findings: $F(2,297)=7.588$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.098$. There was a strong relationship between initial brand attitude and brand attitude after cross-gender extension, as indicated by $\eta^2=.633$: $F(1,297)=511.855$, $p=.000$. An inspection of the mean scores revealed (1) on the one hand, a reduction in brand attitude following the

extension for close and distant naming strategies (Name Surname + Men and Initials + Men) and, (2) on the other hand, an increase in brand attitude after the extension for the intermediate naming strategy (i.e., Name + Men). Follow-up was done with a t-test to further explore the naming strategy's impact on cross-gender attitude for each strategy. There was a statistically significant decrease in brand attitude for too close and too distant brand naming strategies. The magnitude of the decrease had a large effect and was higher for the distant strategy – i.e., Initials + Men (η^2=.259) – than for the close strategy – i.e., Name Surname + Men (η^2=.139). As for the intermediate distance of brand naming strategy, a paired sample t-test confirmed that the increase was significant and had a moderate effect size (η^2=.04). All findings were also replicated separately for each brand name and presented in Table 6. Therefore, H5a was confirmed.

3.3.2 Purchase intention

In order to test H5b and H5c, we followed the same procedure. Brand purchase intention change reached statistical significance when using a Holm–Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .05: $F(2,298)$=2.966, p=.053, η^2=.020. This was confirmed by a one-way between-groups ANCOVA finding: $F(2,297)$=3.413, p=.034, η^2=.022. There was a strong relationship between initial brand purchase intention and brand purchase intention after cross-gender extension: $F(1,297)$=299.181, p=.000, η^2=.568. Too distant (Initials + Men, η^2=.000) and too close (Name Surname + Men, η^2=.001) naming strategies revealed the purchase intention evaluation had a very small decrease that was not significant, whereas the intermediate brand naming strategy (Name + Men, η^2=.133) showed a significant high effect size increase in brand purchase intention after the extension (cf. Table 7). Therefore, H5b was confirmed.

3.3.3 Spillover effect

Regarding the spillover effect, there was a significant moderate-size effect between the three naming strategies and brand attitude change toward the parent brand using a Holm–Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .025: $F(2,298)=5.521$, $p=.004$, $\eta^2=.036$. This relationship was also confirmed by a one-way between-groups ANCOVA: $F(2,297)=5.093$, $p=.007$, $\eta^2=.033$. There was a strong relationship between the initial brand attitude before and after cross-gender extension: $F(1,297)=202.151$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.522$. The distant (Initials + Men, $\eta^2=.001$) and close (Name Surname + Men, $\eta^2=.002$) naming strategies revealed a small decrease in the spillover effect that was not significant, while the intermediate brand naming strategy (i.e., Name + Men, $\eta2=.005$) showed a significant moderate-size increase in brand attitude toward the initial brand name after the extension. Therefore, H5c was confirmed.

- Insert Tables 6 and 7 here -

The interaction effects for brand attitude, spillover effect, and purchase intention are presented in Figure 2.

- Insert Figure 2 here –

3.3.4. Effect of three different naming strategies on MBP and FBP

Since MBP and FBP are two dimensions of the same construct (i.e., brand gender), a one-way between-groups MANOVA was performed to investigate brand naming differences on the two dimensions of brand gender. Two dependent variables were used: MBP perception change and FBP perception change. Brand naming strategy was the independent variable. There was a statistically significant difference between the three brand naming strategies' effect on the combined dependent variables: $F(4,594)=4.657$, $p=.001$; Wilks' $\Lambda=.940$, $\eta^2=.030$. To test H6 and H7, the results of the dependent variables were considered separately.

Regarding H6, MBP perception change between the three naming strategies reached statistical significance, using a Holm–Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .025: $F(2,298)=9.448$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.060$. To confirm this result, a one-way between-groups ANCOVA was conducted, which reveals a similar finding: $F(2,297)=7.416$, $p=.001$, $\eta^2=.048$. There was a strong relationship between MBP_0 and MBP_1, as indicated by $\eta^2=.444$: $F(1,297)=237.099$, $p=.000$. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that (1) the most distant naming strategy (i.e., Initials + Men) showing a non-significant increase in MBP following the extension, (2) the close naming strategy (i.e., Name Surname + Men) showing no effect in MBP evolution, whereas (3) the intermediate distance of brand name strategy (i.e., Name + Men) showing a significant increase in MBP after the brand extension, the mean difference in MPB perception increase was .533 [95% CI: .354 to .712]. A follow-up test showed that the magnitude of the increase in MBP for the intermediate distance had a large effect size ($\eta^2=.165$). All findings were also replicated separately for each brand name and are presented in Table 8. H6 was confirmed on the aggregated overall sample and for each product category tested separately.

As for H7, the FBP perception change between the three naming strategies failed to reach statistical significance, using a Holm–Bonferroni adjusted alpha level of .05: $F(2,298)=.041$, $p=.960$, $\eta^2=.000$. To confirm this result, a one-way between-groups ANCOVA was conducted and revealed a similar finding: $F(2,297)=.087$, $p=.917$, $\eta^2=.001$. There was a strong relationship between FBP_0 and FBP_1: $F(1,297)=84.141$, $p=.000$, $\eta^2=.221$. An inspection of the mean scores indicated that all brand naming strategies showed a significant decrease in FBP perception. The magnitude of the decrease was very high for all naming strategies: Name Surname + Men ($\eta^2=.295$), Name + Men ($\eta^2=.217$), and Initials + Men ($\eta^2=.246$). H7 was also confirmed on the aggregated overall sample and separately for each product category tested (see Table 8 and Figure 3).

- Insert Table 8 and Figure 3 here -

3.3.5 Men with a low or high level of femininity

In order to test H8, we used the classification resulting from the feminine dimension of the BSRI measure to generate two groups of respondents: men with a low level of femininity (n=153) and men with a high level of femininity (n=148). For each group of respondents, a one-way between-groups ANOVA with planned comparisons was conducted to compare brand attitude toward and purchase intention regarding the brand extension for each brand naming strategy. Since our aim was to compare the intermediate distancing of the brand name with the other strategies, the planned comparison was conducted at this level.

For male respondents with a low level of brand femininity, the contrast was significant for brand extension attitude 1.1956 [t(150)=3.728 p=.000] and purchase intention of brand extension .9680 [t(150)=2.291 p=.023]. For masculine and undifferentiated male respondents, an in-depth analysis confirmed that both brand attitude and purchase intentions are higher for the intermediate brand naming strategy ($M_{attitute}$=5.276, SD=.966; $M_{purchase\_intention}$=5.415, SD=1.036) than for the close or distant brand naming strategies ($M_{attitute}$=4.686, SD=.946; $M_{purchase\_intention}$=4.935, SD=1.336). The magnitude of the differences in the means is moderate ($\eta^2_{brand\ attitude}$=.084; $\eta^2_{purchase\_intention}$=.033). H8a and H8b are supported.

For male respondents with a high level of femininity, the contrast was not significant, neither for brand extension attitude .4236 [t(145)=1.110 p=.269] nor for purchase intention of brand extension .087 [t(145)=.193 p=.846]. There was no significant difference in terms of brand attitude and purchase intentions between the different brand naming strategies for feminine and androgynous men. H8c and H8d are supported.

Although not hypothesized, a follow-up analysis was conducted to compare brand attitude and purchase intention between male respondents with a high level of femininity and those with a

low level of femininity. After splitting the sample by brand naming strategy, an independent sample t-test was conducted. There was a significant difference in scores for each brand naming strategy. For all brand naming strategies, androgynous and feminine men reported higher scores on brand extension attitude and purchase intentions than masculine and undifferentiated men did, as shown in Figure 4. The magnitude of the differences in the means is large for both brand attitude and purchase intention (η^2 range from 0.103 to .305).

- Insert Figure 4 here -

3.3.6 Overall model

The conceptual model includes serial multiple mediators and a moderator hypothesis. Therefore, we first conducted an analysis of the whole model using Hayes's PROCESS macro (Model 6: Strategy → MBP perception change → brand attitude toward extension → brand extension purchase intention; Model 4: Strategy → MBP perception change → Spillover effect). Finally, we conducted a multigroup analysis by separating respondents with high and low levels of femininity from each other.

Our results confirm the significance of each of these direct paths and reveal a significant indirect effect of brand naming strategy on brand extension purchase intention through the two successive mediators: MBP perception change and attitude toward extension (coeff.=.0404, 95%CI=.0069, .0877), as well as a significant indirect effect of brand naming strategy on the spillover effect through the MBP perception change (coeff.=.0551, 95%CI=.0141,.1221). The multigroup analysis revealed that, for men with a low level of brand femininity (masculine and undifferentiated men), the MBP perception change had a significant and positive impact on the brand attitude regarding extension (coeff.=.2742, 95% CI=.1096, .4387). By contrast, for men with a high level of brand femininity (feminine and androgynous men), the MBP perception change did not leverage a significant impact on the

brand attitude regarding extension (coeff.=.1384, 95% CI=−.0577, .3345), which was in line with our previous findings.

3.3.7 Post hoc power analysis

Our findings showed medium to large size effects. Our post hoc power analysis indicated a 97% chance of detecting a medium effect size and a 99% chance of detecting a large effect size (as defined by Cohen, (1988, p. 22); as η^2 of .06 and .138, respectively) between the three groups of brand naming strategies as significant at the 5% level. As for the FBP perception change, the power analysis revealed that, in order for an effect of this size to be detected between the three brand naming strategies (80% chance) as significant at the 5% level, a sample of more than 9 million participants would be required. Therefore, it is highly unlikely that the lack of significance is due to a limited sample size (Smeets et al., 2009).

3.4 Discussion of Study 2

Study 2 adds depth to the findings of Study 1 by considering the linguistic distance from the initial female patronymic brand name generated through different brand naming strategies in the case of cross-gender brand extension. The results highlight an asymmetrical modification process of the two dimensions of brand gender: masculinity (MBP) and femininity (FBP). FBP was revealed to be malleable as each of the three naming strategies symmetrically decreases the level of brand femininity, whereas only the strategy of intermediate distancing from the female patronymic brand name makes it possible to enhance male respondents' MBP perception. Therefore, a linear relationship is shown for FBP perception change, whereas an inverted-U relationship is shown for MBP perception change. Consequently, along with higher masculinity, the intermediate strategy (Surname + Men) offers the highest attitude and purchase intention of cross-gender extension and, therefore, appears to be female patronymic

brands' best strategic option to target men. In addition, the intermediate strategy seems to be the best option regarding the cross-gender extension feedback effect on parent brand attitude, with a significant increase.

Overall, our findings are even more interesting when one looks closely at the different men's profiles, as their individual femininity level moderates the acceptance of cross-gender extensions. Indeed, masculine and undifferentiated men appear to have a significant preference for the intermediate strategy (Surname + Men) as far as attitude and purchase intentions are concerned. As this specific masculine target should be very resistant to the cross-gender extensions of feminine brands (Ulrich, 2013), which is further confirmed by the findings of Study 1, this last result is even more promising.

By contrast, feminine and androgynous men seem to appreciate the three strategies related to female patronymic brand names in equal measure (i.e., no significant difference in terms of brand attitude and purchase intentions of the new extension). In terms of the spillover effect, only the intermediate strategy had a significant and positive impact on the parent brand name. Therefore, even though feminine and androgynous men accept the three strategies to the same degree, only one strategy received positive feedback on the female patronymic brand. Thus, this study confirms that the intermediate naming strategy (i.e., Surname + Men) is the best strategic option for brand managers who consider extending their female patronymic brand to target male consumers.

We conducted a single-paper meta-analysis to assess the overall effect of the semantic distance created by brand naming strategies for cross-gender female patronymic brand names acceptance (SPM; Mcshane and Böckenholt, 2017). To this end, we used the two experimental studies developed previously on our two brands (Estée Lauder and Elizabeth Arden). Hence, four studies were included in this analysis: study 1 explored men's reactions to Estée Lauder's cross-gender brand extension (skin care); study 2 explored men's reaction

to Elisabeth Arden's cross-gender brand extension (perfumes); study 3 compared different brand naming strategies for Estée Lauder's skincare product with each other; study 4 compared the three brand naming strategies for Elisabeth Arden's perfume product with each other. This approach is highly recommended when multiple similar studies of a common phenomenon are published in a single paper (Mcshane & Böckenholt, 2017). Across all studies, we found that intermediate distancing from the original brand name is the best choice as this strategy scored higher on brand attitude and purchase intention ($SPM_{purchase\_intermediate}$=.295, SE=.082; $SPM_{attitude\_intermediate}$=.137, SE=.093) than both close ($SPM_{purchase\_close}$=.149, SE=.071; $SPM_{attitude\_close}$=−.265, SE=.065) and distant strategy ($SPM_{purchase\_distant}$=.034, SE=.093; $SPM_{attitude\_distant}$=−.3646, SE=.089). An SPM analysis also demonstrated that FBP decreased independently of the naming strategy, whereas MBP increased only in the intermediate distance condition. Estimates are presented in Appendix 3. Across all studies, we report a low to intermediate level of heterogeneity ($I2_{purchase} = 0\%$; $I2_{attitude}$=47.38%; $I2_{femininity}$=34.54%; $I2_{masculinity}$=31.13%). The width of the interval suggests that heterogeneity is not estimated with precision. This potentially medium heterogeneity is not uncommon as it has been reported in previous studies (high heterogeneity levels have also been reported in previous studies; Taylor, Noseworthy, Pancer, Mukhopadhyay, & Raghubir, 2019). This might be related to some differences among the studies, the manipulation (two distinct brand names), the product categories (skin care and perfumes), and the gender of the product categories selected (feminine and androgynous). Moreover, sample 2 reported older, more educated, and more retired people than sample 1.

4. General discussion

4.1 Theoretical implications

This paper contributes to theory at four distinct levels. First, the major contribution of this work lies in the non-intuitive role of brand name similarity in cross-gender brand extension evaluation. The research adds to the work of Myers-Levy et al. (1994) and Kronrod and Lowrey (2016) by showing an inverted-U-shaped relationship for the degree of similarity between a new brand name launch and an existing one. We demonstrate the same relationship pattern for brand name variations in the case of cross-gender extensions of patronymic brands: Too similar or too dissimilar brand name variations elicit a less positive evaluation than moderate variations do. An underlying explanation for this mechanism could be found in self-construal theory, which refers to a person's view of the self and the structure of self-schema (Cross, Morris, & Gore, 2002; Lee, Aaker, & Gardner, 2000; Markus & Kitayama, 1991). According to this theory, individuals with low or high interdependent self-construal differ in how they organize information. While interdependent self-construal is associated with relational processing (i.e., information is organized in terms of the different types of relationship), people with independent self-construal tend to hold a view of themselves that centers on taxonomic categories and, thus, on similarity (Li-Jun Ji et al., 2004; Ng and Houston, 2006). Literature has already shown that self-construal can influence the perceived fit of an extension (Lee et al., 2000) and how the consumer's level of interdependence is likely to enhance his or her acceptance of brand stretches (Ahluwalia, 2008). Research has also revealed that men have lower interdependent self-construal than women (Cross & Madson, 1997) and, consequently, tend to engage in taxonomic processing.

In the close naming strategy (e.g., Estée Lauder Men), we could expect men to directly classify the new cross-gender extension in the same category as the initial product – that is, a feminine brand for females, which is not an attractive proposition for them. By contrast, an

intermediate distance strategy (e.g., Lauder Men) may engage men to resolve the presented deviation (Meyers-Levy et al., 1994) and possibly generate a more favorable attitude toward the new extension. As the extension name moves farther away from the initial brand name with the dissimilar naming strategy (e.g., EL Men), it may become more difficult for men to identify a relationship between the extension brand name and the initial parent brand (in terms of ability, motivation, or both). When the extension can no longer be linked to the abstract subordinate category of the brand, men tend to reject it.

Second, this paper highlights the asymmetrical evaluation of masculine vs. feminine gendered dimensions of brands (Machado et al., 2019; Vacas de Carvalho et al., 2020) and uses an American context to replicate and confirm the findings of Jung and Lee (2006), Ulrich (2013), and Azar et al. (2018). This paper studies the elasticity of brand femininity and brand masculinity perception change in response to brand name change. It shows the malleability of the FBP and, conversely, the rigidity of the MBP, which adds to brand gender literature (Grohmann, 2009; Lieven et al., 2015). Moreover, the research reveals the mediating effect of the brand masculinity perception to explain male respondents' acceptance of cross-gender brand extensions, thus extending previous literature on two levels – patronymic brands and two distinct product categories (i.e., skin care and perfumes) – in comparison with Azar et al. (2018).

Third, the intermediate strategy appears to be the best strategic option regarding the cross-gender extension feedback effect on parent brand attitude. This result mirrors those we obtained in terms of attitudes and purchase intentions for the cross-gender extension of patronymic brand, in line with Jung & Lee (2006) and Ulrich (2013), and the results on cross-gender extensions. Moreover, this significant positive result and the negative feedback effect obtained with the close and intermediate strategies add depth to the literature examining the

spillover effects of brand extensions on the parent brand (Aaker & Keller, 1992; Ahluwalia & Gurhan-Canli, 2000; Balachander & Ghose, 2003; Czellar, 2003; Loken & John, 1993).

Fourth, another theoretical contribution of this work deals with the moderating role of consumer gender identity (Bem, 1981) in the evaluation of cross-gender brand extensions. This study shows that masculine and undifferentiated gendered men are more averse to the cross-gender brand extension of female patronymic brands than feminine or androgynous gendered men are, which adds to the work of Ulrich (2013) and Jung and Lee (2006). More broadly, the study adds to the body of literature that has shown the explanatory role of consumer gender identity in situations where gender is salient and activated (Ulrich & Tissier-Desbordes, 2013), such as preference for masculine or feminine brands (Grohmann, 2009; Worth et al., 1992), preference for highly masculine male models in advertising (Martin & Gnoth, 2009), or donations (Winterich, Mittal, & Ross Jr., 2009).

4.2 Managerial implications

This paper offers real insights for practitioners as it reveals the best naming strategy to use in the case of female patronymic cross-gender brand extensions. Study 1 clearly shows that, despite being the most common strategy used in the marketplace, the close naming strategy (adding the "Men" descriptor) is not effective for female patronymic brands. Therefore, we stress the need for female patronymic brand managers to consider other brand naming strategies to address the male segment. Study 2 demonstrates in two distinct product categories that the intermediate naming strategy (i.e., dropping the first name + "Men" descriptor) is clearly the best option to attract men – especially men with a low level of femininity (i.e., masculine and undifferentiated men). Moreover, the feedback effects on the parent brand should not be underestimated. The intermediate strategy also seems to be the

only option that increases the positive attitude toward the parent brand, whereas the other strategies may impact it negatively.

This research helps managers to understand that they need to create some perceived distance from the initial brand in the cross-gender extension name without going too far. In other words, to attract men, the female patronymic brand needs to reduce its initial feminine personality, which men find repellent, without losing its affiliation with the abstract superordinate category of the brand and without losing the brand's DNA. Thus, it is a question of finding a delicate balance between disruption and continuity.

4.3 Limitations and further research

First, the results were obtained separately from additional influences such as product attributes, logo design, and a competitive brand environment, which have a major influence on brand extension perception (Milberg, Sinn, & Goodstein, 2006). Second, the name of the cross-gender extension was evaluated in experimental conditions immediately after it was announced in a scenario: This approach may have affected the respondents' answers to the questions. Third, the research takes into account only the three main naming strategies used by managers in cross-gender extensions of patronymic brands. If there are other variations of brand names, they were not studied. Fourth, the spillover effect on the parent brand attitude was only measured on men in this paper: It could also be assessed on women who are the primary customers of those patronymic brands. Furthermore, to extend the generalizability of the results, the study could be replicated with other product categories (as only two of them were examined) or in other countries, as gender perceptions vary across cultures. The potential influence of consumer self-construal on these cross-gender extensions also has to be confirmed, to fully understand the underlying mechanism behind our results. Finally, further research could explore the influence of specific consumer profiles on this evaluation. For

instance, exploring holistic vs. analytic thinkers could be relevant as Monga and John (2010) show that, in the case of functional brands, holistic thinkers provide more favorable responses to distant extensions than analytic thinkers do.

In conclusion, this paper shows that female patronymic brands, even if they have been weary of extending to men or less successful in the past, can potentially attract men using an appropriate brand naming strategy. However, managing this strategy appears to be quite a challenge, as the brand masculinity has to be enhanced to a level that is attractive for men without weakening the strength of the initial brand. Only an intermediate distancing from the initial brand – dropping the first name (e.g., Arden Men) – may be successful.

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List of Tables

Table 1: Examples of female patronymic brands and male patronymic brands

Product Categories	Female Patronymic Brands	Male Patronymic Brands
Fashion	Nina Ricci, Carolina Herrera, Tory Burch, Donna Karan, Stella Mac Cartney, Agnès B, Sonia Rykiel, Ines de la Fressange	Ralph Lauren, Hugo Boss, Giorgio Armani, Yves Saint-Laurent, Lacoste
Perfumes	Estée Lauder, Elizabeth Arden, Carolina Herrera, Nina Ricci, Lolita Lempicka, etc.	Hugo Boss, Loris Azzaro, Paco Rabanne, Christian Dior, etc.
Cosmetics	Estée Lauder, Helena Rubinstein, Mary Kay, Elizabeth Arden, Mary Cohr, Barbara Gould, Maria Galland	Yves Rocher, Napoleon Perdis
Hair care	Leonor Greyl	Jean-Louis David, Jacques Dessange
Lingerie, Underwear	Chantal Thomass, Dora Larsen, Simone Pérèle, Lise Charmel	Calvin Klein
Tobacco	Virginia Slims	Philip Morris
Food	Betty Crocker	Charles Gervais, Giovanni Rana
Alcoholic Beverages	Marie Brizard, Veuve Cliquot	Johnny Walker, Laurent Perrier, Jack Daniel's

Table 2: Examples of naming strategies for cross-gender brand extensions targeting men

Product Categories	Branded House	Sub-Brand With Full Name	Sub-Brand With Family Name Only	Sub-Brand With Initials
	Master brand for both genders	Full brand name + Men descriptor	Family Name + Men descriptor	Initials + Men descriptor
Fashion Brands				
Non-Patronymic	Zara	H&M Man, Mango men	-	-
Patronymic	Stella McCartney	Agnès B Homme	Rykiel Homme	DKNY Men
Perfume Brands				
Non-Patronymic	-	Hypnose Homme	-	-
Patronymic	-	Lolita Lempicka au Masculin	Ricci for Men	CH Men
Cosmetics Brands				
Non-Patronymic	-	Nivea Men	Payot Homme	-
Patronymic	-	Mary Cohr Homme	-	MK Men

Table 3: Manipulation check

Variable Name	Estée Lauder Men (60 respondents)	Elizabeth Arden Men (55 respondents)	Statistical Significance
Brand Familiarity	3.008 (1.209)	3.327 (1.411)	$t(113)=-1.296$, $p=.198$
Product Category Fit	5.550 (1.159)	5.272 (1.488)	$t(113)=1.120$, $p=.265$
Brand Fit	5.316 (1.207)	5.363 (1.441)	$t(113)=-.190$, $p=.850$
Initial Brand Attitude	5.716 (.942)	5.660 (1.083)	$t(113)=.294$, $p=.767$
Initial Brand Purchase Intention	5.416 (1.429)	5.418 (1.637)	$t(113)=-.005$, $p=.996$

Table 4: Similarity levels between different brand naming strategies and the parent brand name

Patronymic Brand Name Tested	Mean	Brand Naming Strategy			Post Hoc Analysis Significant Differences
		Name Surname Men (1)	Surname Men (2)	Initials Men (3)	
Elizabeth Arden	5.474 (2.586)	4.522 (2.642) close	5.508 (2.562) intermediate	6.350 (2.234) distant	1–2** 1–3*** 2–3**
Estée Lauder	5.359 (2.559)	4.487 (2.688) close	5.337 (2.409) intermediate	6.245 (5.359) distant	1–2* 1–3*** 2–3**
Overall Sample	5.416 (2.571)	4.504 (2.660) close	5.424 (2.483) intermediate	6.298 (2.253) distant	1–2*** 1–3*** 1–4**

Notes: *Significance level 5%; ** significance level 1%; *** significance level less than 1%

Table 5 – Manipulation check

Brand Naming Strategy	Brand Familiarity	Product Category Fit	Initial Brand Attitude	Initial FBP	Initial MBP	Initial Brand Purchase Intention
Estée Lauder Men (56)	2.964 (1.151)	5.517 (1.168)	5.708 (.957)	5.511 (.852)	5.095 (1.046)	5.491 (1.305)
Lauder Men (59)	3.016 (1.177)	5.807 (.828)	5.678 (1.070)	5.468 (.954)	4.774 (1.307)	5.258 (1.358)
EL Men (58)	2.715 (1.084)	5.419 (1.216)	5.373 (1.016)	5.186 (.950)	4.827 (.957)	5.258 (1.358)
Elizabeth Arden Men (45)	3.266 (1.367)	5.163 (1.167)	5.540 (1.037)	5.388 (.955)	5.074 (.988)	5.177 (1.679)
Arden Men (42)	2.952 (1.214)	5.420 (.916)	5.174 (1.072)	5.463 (.889)	4.769 (.984)	5.416 (1.253)
EA Men (41)	3.243 (1.189)	5.593 (1.167)	5.674 (.938)	5.031 (.992)	5.154 (1.084)	5.524 (1.274)
Statistical Significance	$F(5,295)=.1.434$ $p=.212$	$F(5,295)=1.848$ $p=.103$	$F(5,295)=2.058$ $p=.071$	$F(5,295)=2.000$ $p=.079$	$F(5,295)=1.316$ $p=.257$	$F(5,295)=.466$ $p=.802$

Table 6 – Brand attitude change toward cross extension and spillover effect for the different naming strategies tested before and after brand extension

Brand Naming Strategy	Brand Attitude Before	Brand Attitude After	Mean Difference	Brand Attitude Before	Spillover Effect After	Mean Difference
Name Surname Men (101)	5.633 (.992)	5.333 (1.208)	−.300 (.750); t=−4.021; p=.000	5.633 (.992)	5.501 (1.213)	−.132 (.864); t=−1.535; p=.128
Estée Lauder Men (56)	5.708 (.957)	5.535 (1.09)	−.172 (.504); t=−2.561; p=.013	5.708 (.957)	5.833 (.923)	.125 (.577); t=1.620; p=.111
Elizabeth Arden Men (45)	5.540 (1.037)	5.081 (1.308)	−.459 (.956); t=−3.220; p=.002	5.540 (1.037)	5.088 (1.402)	−.451 (1.044); t=−2.901; p=.006
Surname Men (101)	5.468 (1.094)	5.613 (1.038)	.145 (.695); t=2.100; p=.038	5.468 (1.094)	5.693 (1.110)	.224 (.899); t=2.507; p=.014
Lauder Men (59)	5.678 (1.070)	5.694 (1.004)	.0169 (.607); t=.214; p=.831	5.678 (1.070)	5.932 (.999)	.254 (.537); t=3.635; p=.001
Arden Men (42)	5.174 (1.072)	5.500 (1.087)	.325 (.773); t=2.725; p=.009	5.174 (1.072)	5.357 (1.181)	.182 (1.249); t=.947; p=.349
Initials Men (99)	5.498 (.991)	5.124 (1.126)	−.373 (.634); t=−5.865; p=.000	5.498 (.991)	5.427 (1.092)	−.070 (.655); t=−1.074; p=.286
EL Men (58)	5.373 (1.016)	4.942 (1.120)	−.431 (.654); t=−5.013; p=.000	5.373 (1.016)	5.258 (1.163)	−.114 (.734); t=−1.191; p=.239
EA Men (41)	5.674 (.938)	5.382 (1.096)	−.292 (.601); t=−3.114; p=.003	5.674 (.938)	5.666 (.945)	−.008 (.524); t=−.099; p=.921

Table 7 – Purchase intention toward cross extension for the different naming strategies tested before and after brand extension

Brand Naming Strategy	Brand Purchase Intention Before	Brand Purchase Intention After	Mean Difference
Name Surname Men (101)	5.351 (1.484)	5.480 (1.450)	.128 (1.055); t=1.226; p=.223
Estée Lauder Men (56)	5.491 (1.305)	5.660 (1.239)	.169 (.964); t=1.317; p=.193
Elizabeth Arden Men (45)	5.177 (1.679)	5.255 (1.663)	.077 (1.167); t=−.447; p=.657
Surname Men (101)	5.336 (1.423)	5.683 (1.193)	.346 (.888); t=3.921; p=.000
Lauder Men (59)	5.279 (1.540)	5.737 (1.130)	.457 (1.001); t=3.511; p=.001
Arden Men (42)	5.416 (1.253)	5.607 (1.285)	.190 (.680); t=1.814; p=.077
Initials Men (99)	5.368 (1.324)	5.388 (1.333)	.020 (.947); t=.212; p=.832
EL Men (58)	5.258 (1.358)	5.232 (1.448)	−.025 (1.036); t=−.190; p=.850
EA Men (41)	5.524 (1.274)	5.609 (1.131)	.085 (.813); t=.672, p=.505

Table 8: Brand gender perception change toward cross extension for the different naming strategies tested before and after brand extension

Brand Naming Strategy	Masculinity Before	Masculinity After	Mean Difference	Femininity Before	Femininity After	Mean Difference
Name Surname Men (101)	5.085 (1.016)	5.085 (1.265)	.000 (.950); t=0; p=1.000	5.457 (.897)	4.737 (1.285)	.719 (1.116); t=6.479; p=.000
Estée Lauder Men (56)	5.095 (1.046)	5.247 (1.065)	−.151 (.876); t=−1.296; p=.200	5.511 (.852)	4.601 (1.277)	.910 (1.210); t=5.631; p=.000
Elizabeth Arden Men (45)	5.074 (.988)	4.885 (1.465)	.1888 (1.013); t=1.250; p=.218	5.388 (.955)	4.907 (1.288)	.481; t=3.413; p=.001
Surname Men (101)	4.772 (1.178)	5.305 (1.034)	−5.33 (.845); t=−6.337; p=.000	5.287 (.989)	4.5677 (1.255)	.719 (1.183); t=6.109; p=.000
Lauder Men (59)	4.774 (1.307)	5.313 (1.055)	−.539 (.930); t=−4.453; p=.000	5.468 (.954)	4.644 (1.26)	.824 (1.202); t=5.268; p=.000
Arden Men (42)	4.769 (.984)	5.293 (1.016)	−.523 (.719); t=−4.721; p=.000	5.031 (.992)	4.460 (1.242)	.571 (1.154); t=3.209; p=.003
Initials Men (99)	4.963 (1.019)	5.084 (1.148)	−.121 (.940); t=−1.283, p=203	5.301 (.931)	4.622 (1.232)	.678 (1.191); t=5.66; p=.000
EL Men (58)	4.827 (.957)	4.948 (1.218)	−.120 (.911); t=−1.00; p=.317	5.186 (.950)	4.422 (1.100)	.764 (1.071); t=5.435; p=.000
EA Men (41)	5.154 (1.084)	5.276 (1.025)	−.121 (.990); t=−.788; p=.435	5.463 (.889)	4.906 (1.361)	.556 (1.348); t=2.645; p=.012

**Figure 1: Conceptual model of study 2**
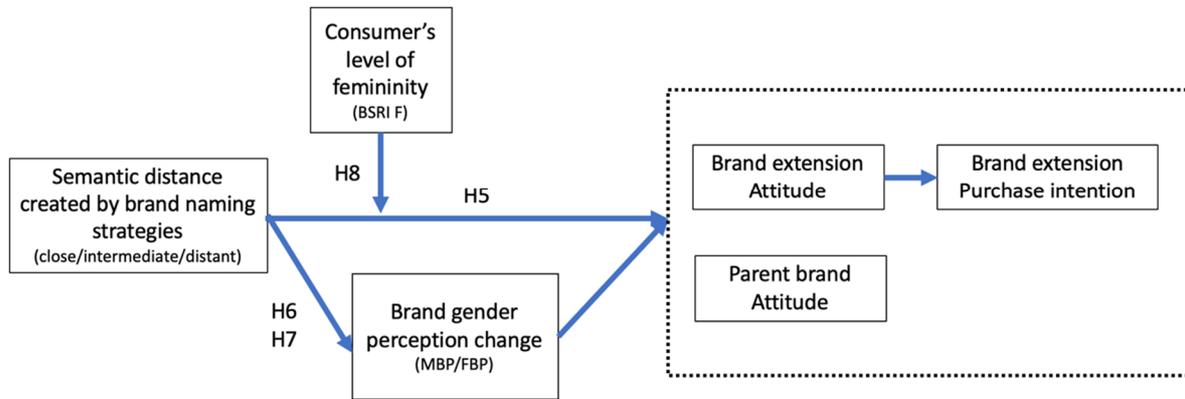
Figure 2 – Interaction effects on brand attitude, spillover effect, and purchase intention (H5)

Etimated Marginal Means of
Brand attitude toward extension

Etimated Marginal Means of
Spillover effect

Etimated Marginal Means of
Brand extension purchase intentions
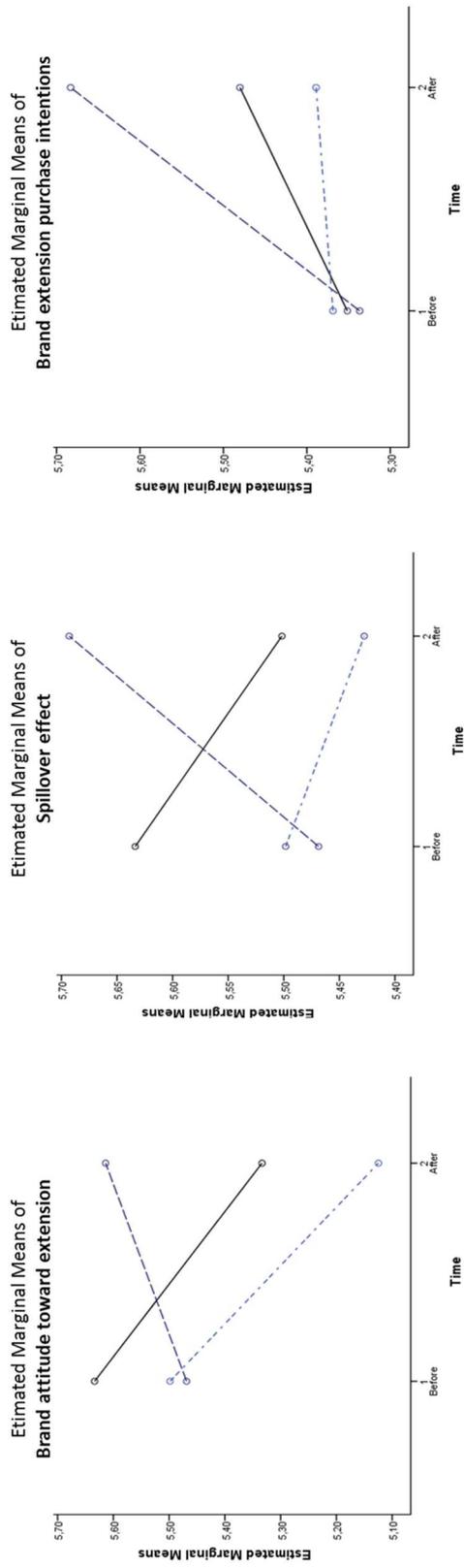
BRAND NAMING STRATEGIES

—— SURNAME NAME + Men descriptor (Close)   — — SURNAME + Men descriptor (Intermediate)   — · — Initials + Men descriptor (Distant)

**Figure 3 – MBP and FBP perception change per brand naming strategy after cross-gender extension**
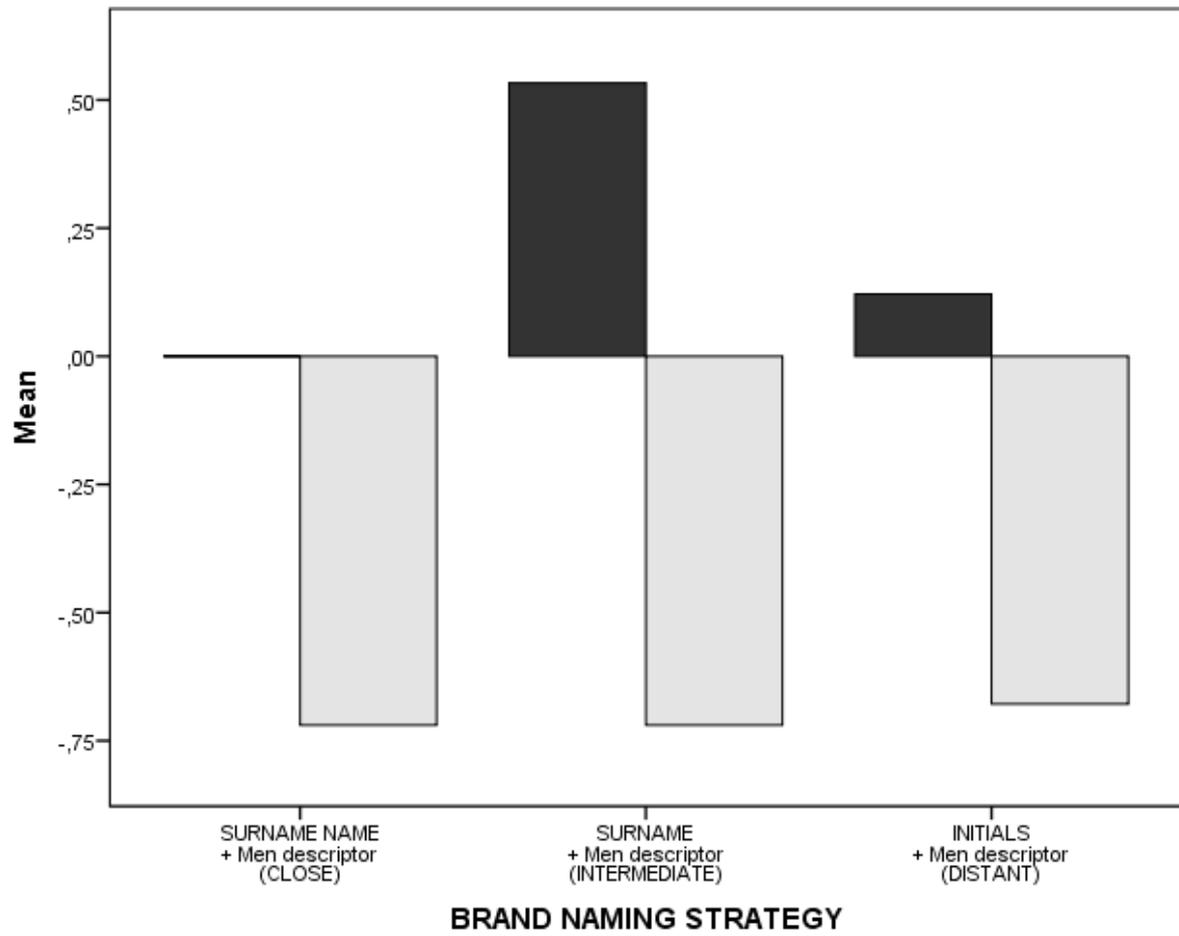
Figure 4 – BSRI moderation effect on brand attitude and purchase intentions per brand naming strategy
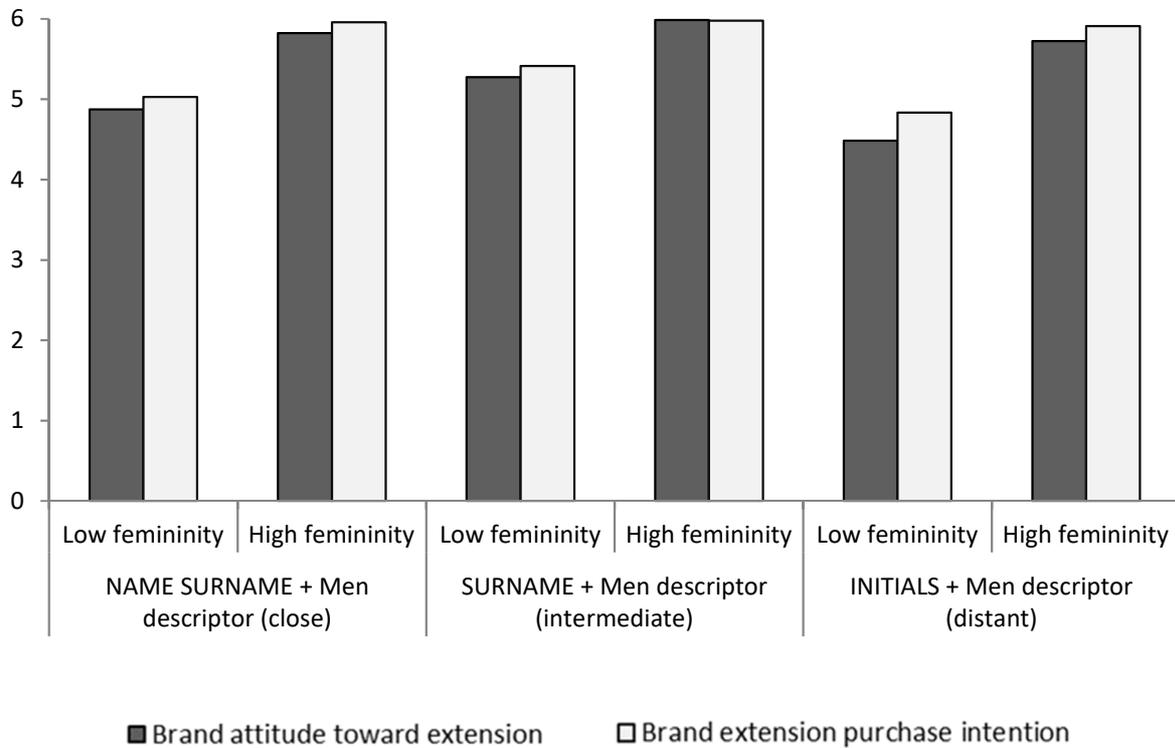
Appendix 1: Sample demographics and characteristics

Variable Name	Characteristics	Study 1 Number of Respondents	Study 2 Number of Respondents
Age	25–34	21	68
	35–44	34	87
	45–54	29	45
	55–64	19	51
	65–74	11	38
	75–84	1	12
Job Status	Employed full-time	77	182
	Employed part-time	17	40
	Retired	16	62
	Student	1	3
	Unemployed	4	14
Education	Less than high school	1	3
	High school graduate	17	49
	Some college	28	62
	Two-year degree	17	28
	Four-year degree	32	105
	Professional degree	16	41
	Doctorate	4	13
Use of Product Category Tested	Sometimes	27	88
	Often	43	120
	Very often	45	93
Overall Sample Size		115	301

Appendix 2: Testing for non-response bias

Variable Name	Study 1			Study 2		
	Early respondents	**Late respondents**	**Statistical significance**	**Early respondents**	**Late respondents**	**Statistical significance**
Brand Familiarity						
Estée Lauder Men	3.15 (1.28)	2.86 (1.12)		2.80 (1.04)	3.12 (1.24)	
Lauder Men	---	---		2.86 (1.29)	3.16 (1.05)	
EL Men	---	---	F=.318, p=.574	2.53 (.962)	2.89 (1.18)	F=1.806, p=.112
Elisabeth Arden Men	3.61 (1.36)	3.05 (1.42)		3.34 (1.36)	3.18 (1.40)	
Arden Men	---	---		3.33 (1.31)	2.57 (1.25)	
EA Men	---	---		3.45 (1.29)	3.04 (1.07)	
Initial brand attitude						
Estée Lauder Men	5.87 (.976)	5.55 (.894)		5.63 (1.01)	5.78 (.903)	
Lauder Men	---	---		5.50 (1.03)	5.84 (1.09)	
EL Men	---	---	F=.006, p=.938	5.42 (1.02)	5.32 (1.01)	F=.619, p=.685
Elisabeth Arden Men	5.83 (1.08)	5.48 (1.07)		5.60 (1.10)	5.46 (.979)	
Arden Men	---	---		5.26 (1.12)	5.07 (1.03)	
EA Men	---	---		5.78 (1.00)	5.57 (.882)	
Initial brand purchase intention						
Estée Lauder Men	5.71 (1.33)	5.11 (1.48)		5.41 (1.55)	5.57 (1.02)	
Lauder Men	---	---		4.89 (1.78)	5.65 (1.17)	
EL Men	---	---	F=.018, p=.894	5.25 (1.36)	5.25 (1.37)	F=.742, p=.593
Elisabeth Arden Men	5.68 (1.63)	5.16 (1.62)		5.23 (1.78)	5.11 (1.60)	
Arden Men	---	---		5.33 (1.51)	5.50 (.948)	
EA Men	---	---		5.60 (1.53)	5.45 (.998)	
Initial MBP						
Estée Lauder Men	4.97 (1.16)	5.07 (1.04)		4.73 (1.04)	5.45 (.936)	
Lauder Men	---	---		4.88 (1.01)	4.66 (1.54)	
EL Men	---	---	F=.847, p=.359	4.86 (.904)	4.78 (1.02)	F=1.823, p=.108
Elisabeth Arden Men	5.44 (1.13)	5.16 (1.04)		5.10 (.988)	5.03 (1.01)	
Arden Men	---	---		4.87 (1.02)	4.66 (.955)	
EA Men	---	---		5.38 (1.06)	4.93 (1.08)	
Initial FBP						
Estée Lauder Men	5.46 (.93)	5.48 (.90)		5.27 (.829)	5.74 (.824)	
Lauder Men	---	---		5.47 (.782)	5.46 (1.10)	
EL Men	---	---	F=.405, p=.526	5.23 (.845)	5.13 (1.05)	F=.951, p=.448
Elisabeth Arden Men	5.67 (1.02)	5.46 (.93)		5.38 (1.01)	5.39 (.917)	
Arden Men	---	---		5.18 (1.12)	4.88 (.843)	
EA Men	---	---		5.50 (.970)	5.42 (.827)	
MBP perception change						
Estée Lauder Men	.155 (.955)	.272 (.949)		.297 (.854)	.011 (.891)	
Lauder Men	---	---		.362 (.695)	.711 (1.09)	
EL Men	---	---	F=.994, p=.321	.149 (.917)	.092 (.920)	F=1.356, p=.241
Elisabeth Arden Men	.006 (.944)	−.238 (1.02)		−.289 (1.07)	−.083 (.957)	
Arden Men	---	---		.492 (.779)	.555 (.671)	
EA Men	---	---		−.166 (1.11)	.396 (.791)	
FBP perception change				.		
Estée Lauder Men	−1.02 (1.09)	−.755 (1.30)		−1.06 1.18)	−.756 (1.23)	
Lauder Men	---	---		−879 (1.14)	−772 (1.27)	
EL Men	---	---	F=3,618, p=.060	−.683 (.893)	−.844 (1.23)	F=.734, p=.599
Elisabeth Arden Men	−.314 (.916)	−.833 (1.05)		−413 (1.04)	−.553 (.855)	
Arden Men	---	---		−.634 (1.24)	.492 (.779)	
EA Men	---	---		−.297 (.934)	−.809 (1.63)	

Brand attitude change						
Estée Lauder Men	−.277 (.619)	−.222 (.754)		−.273 (.454)	−.071 (.539)	
Lauder Men	---	---	F=.197,	.069 (.674)	−.033 (.542)	
EL Men	---	---	p=.658	−.528 (.721)	−.333 (.577)	F=.700,
Elisabeth Arden Men	−.407 (.971)	−.214 (.948)		−.623 (1.10)	−.287 (.764)	p=.624
Arden Men	---	---		.238 (.882)	.412 (.657)	
EA Men	---	---		−.283 (.486)	−.301 (.706)	
Brand purchase intention change						
Estée Lauder Men	.016 (.932)	.400 (1.19)		−.035 (.859)	.375 (1.03)	
Lauder Men	---	---	F=.030,	.603 (1.13)	.316 (.845)	
EL Men	---	---	p=.864	−172 (1.31)	.120 (.649)	F=2.174,
Elisabeth Arden Men	−.148 (.704)	.303 (1.30)		−.369 (.828)	.545 (1.29)	p=.057
Arden Men	---	---		.095 (.490)	.285 (.830)	
EA Men	---	---		.025 (.734)	.142 (.896)	

Appendix 3: Effect estimates of (a) MBP perception change and (b) FBP perception change

a)
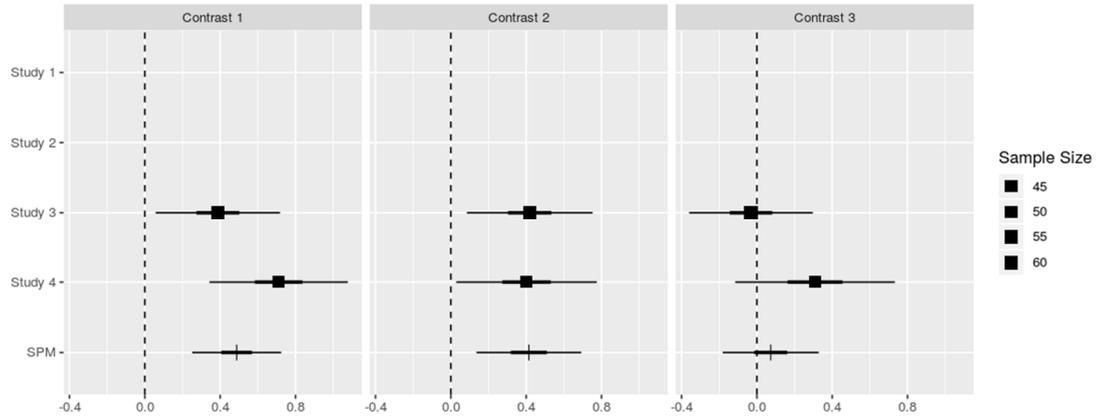
b)
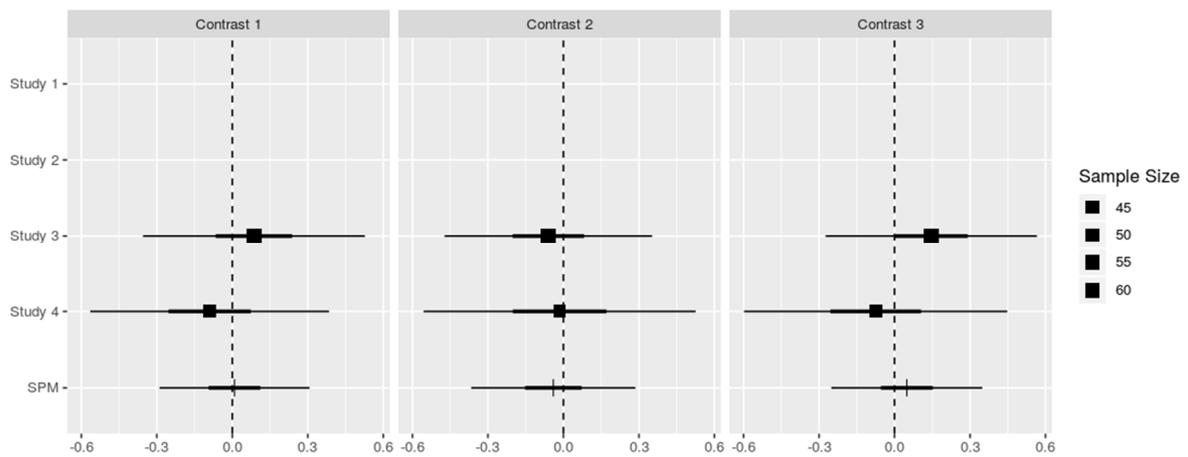
NOTE: Effect estimates are depicted with squares for single-study estimates and vertical bars for SPM estimates, and the 50% and 95% intervals are depicted with thick and thin lines, respectively. The average sample size per condition in each study is indicated by the size of the squares. The SPM estimates are much more precise, which gives greater support to the authors' conclusions.

Contrast 1: Intermediate vs close
Contrast 2: Intermediate vs distant
Contrast 3: Distant vs close

Graphical Abstract