

Investigating the Influence of Musical Congruity in Advertising

Thesis submitted in accordance with the requirements of the University of
Liverpool for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy

by

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October 2017

To my mum and dad for their endless love, support,
and encouragement

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Abstract

This thesis investigates the influence of various musical congruity dimensions on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. It adopts a mixed methods approach in examining the effects following various data collection techniques including focus group, survey studies, YouTube Analytics, as well as netnography. Chapter 1 provides an introduction to music and advertising, highlighting contemporary research issues in this area and underlining research objectives and questions, as well as a rationale for the research. Chapter 2 provides a critical review of the academic literature on music in advertising, focussing on congruity as the overarching concept examined in the thesis, and identifying various dimensions of musical congruity. Chapter 3 provides the justification for the research methodology and the subsequent selection of a mixed methods approach. Chapter 4 (Study 1) presents the university advertising findings obtained through focus group, surveys, as well as the brief YouTube Analytics statistical data. Findings of Study 1 investigating the effects of musical congruity in the context of university advertising reveal that pop music produced the most positive responses in terms of consumers' perceived image of the university and their intention to enrol. Study 2 presented in Chapter 5 develops, refines, and redefines the concept of musical in/congruity and extends it to the context of advertising music in order to address the ongoing flaws in many of the existing music and advertising studies pertaining to the use of incongruent musical stimuli. Findings indicate how the deliberate crafting of musical incongruity can be used to engage and amuse consumers, proposing that resolving musical incongruity may enhance consumers' recall, ad attitude, perception of brand image and quality, as well as their purchase intent. Chapter 6 (Study 3) involves netnographic findings highlighting the effects of in/congruity on consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption in advertising. Findings relate to musical taste, indexical congruity, repetition congruity, and semantic congruity. The thesis concludes with Chapter 7 (Discussion) and Chapter 8 (Conclusion).

Acknowledgement

Firstly, I would like to express my special appreciation to my supervisors, Dr Steve Oakes and Dr Ming Lim, for their tremendous support, immense knowledge, guidance, and patience throughout my PhD and related research. I have been extremely lucky to have supervisors who cared so much about my research and provided invaluable, prompt responses to my queries. My sincere thanks also go to Professor Anahid Kassabian and Professor Elizabeth Parsons for providing brilliant comments and critical suggestions. I am also using this opportunity to express my gratitude to a number of individuals at the University of Liverpool Management School who provided extremely useful feedback and advice during the annual progress reviews and other informal meetings, Professor Steve Baron, Professor Anthony Patterson, Dr Philippa Hunter-Jones, Dr Chris Raddats, Dr Gary Brown, Dr Dilani Jayawarna, and Dr Ahmed Al-Abdin.

I would like to thank the members of my doctoral committee, Professor Roger Bennett, Professor Anthony Patterson, and Professor Douglas Brownlie for their input and valuable feedback on my research project.

I would also like to express my special thanks to my family. Words cannot express how grateful I am to my mother, father, and my brothers and sisters for all of the sacrifices they made on my behalf. I would also like to thank all my friends who provided considerable support in difficult times and incentivised me to strive towards my goal.

Finally, and most importantly, I would like to thank the love of my life, Elham, for standing beside me throughout my PhD. She has been my inspiration and motivation for continuing to improve my research. Through her never-ending support, patience, and care, I have been able to complete this thesis.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“Music, when used appropriately, is the catalyst of advertising. It augments pictures and colours words, and often adds a form of energy available through no other source.”

(Hecker, 1984, p.7)

Laboratory and field experiments in the past four decades have indicated varied impacts of “in-store” music on consumer perception, evaluation, attitude, and behaviour. Indeed, while areas such as cinematic scores and atmospherics have received extensive academic attention (e.g., Turley and Milliman, 2000; Donnelly, 2001; Kassabian, 2001; Garlin and Owens, 2006), research investigating the influence of background music in advertising is still relatively scant. Therefore, it is not yet possible to refer to consistent and systematic research in the area of advertising as there is a lack of up-to-date empirical knowledge about the use of music in advertising, the general frequency of music in advertising on TV, radio, and Internet, the use of various types of advertising music or the effects of musical fit or congruity on consumer response to advertisement (Ruth and Spangardt, 2017). Advertising agencies and client companies, however, continue to utilise music in advertisements despite the lack of clear and sufficient empirical evidence as they assume it holds powerful communicative capacity.

The present thesis intends to develop a clear understanding of the effects of “background” musical in/congruity on consumers’ affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. It draws upon a diverse range of academic literature in the process of investigating the effects of music upon a range of dependent variables. Through adopting a mixed methods research approach, it considers the lived experience of music in advertising from a consumer perspective. The current thesis starts with an introduction to the use of music in advertising, introducing contemporary research issues in this area, providing a rationale for the research, as well as identifying gaps in the literature and highlighting research questions. It then proposes a series of studies to address these questions.

Background

During the 1980s and 90s, there was great scholarly interest and momentum around the topic of music and advertising. However, music and advertising research has received less attention than it may deserve (Oakes, 2007). In the decades that followed, interest appeared to decline, perhaps partially

due to frequently contradictory findings that make it problematic for researchers to refine meaningful conclusions.

Unfortunately, there is no empirical evidence to support any particular theory for the apparent decline in research in advertising music. However, the observation of this decline encouraged me to contact some of the leading authors in the area of music and advertising (e.g., Kellaris, MacInnis, Areni, Klein, North, Hung, Huron) to aid understanding of the reasons for this decline, as well as the potential ways to revitalise research into consumers' cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses to advertising music. I sent an email (in July 2016) to James Kellaris. His reply was the following:

“Research topics come and go and come back again. The tapering off of a research topic does not necessarily indicate that the topic is irrelevant; rather, it can be an artifact of career stage of the researcher. I did a lot of music-related research pre-tenure. After tenure, I was not under any pressure to continue this stream of research, I got involved in other topics (primarily those of my PhD students), and other duties at the university.”

As evident in his email, Kellaris believes that the smaller number of publications in the area of advertising music does not necessarily mean that this topic is outdated, dying out, or is no longer in need of urgent research.

What was even more significant in his reply was this pronouncement:

“The old school (1990's) approach was similar to biology 101. We tried to "dissect" music, to identify its parts, its characteristics, and study their influence on ad-related outcomes... But currently there is more interest in the psychological processes that underlie music's influence on outcomes. Music can draw attention to an ad, but can interfere with message acquisition if it becomes the object of attention itself...”

In other words, Kellaris believes that there is no shortage of opportunities to fill the gaps of the extant literature:

“If I were to make a matrix identifying all the dependent and independent variables in the context of music and advertising, I would discover a lot of empty, un-studied cells, any of which could become a dissertation.”

However, Kellaris points out some of the important issues regarding background music, expectations, and the fit between music and brand. He highlights the importance of congruity and illuminates the path for me to design a research project to address the concept of musical in/congruity in a greater depth than previous studies in the context of music and advertising. Specifically, existing studies do not take the concept of musical fit or congruity into account in order to explain consumers’ reactions to advertising music. Indeed, various pieces of music may be liked or disliked by consumers, but their level of congruity may vary within each advertising context.

Similarly, David Huron, in an email conversation (in December 2016) offers his speculative conjecture on academic research in the area of music and advertising:

“Research in music in advertising declined at the same time when research in music cognition exploded. The past 30 years has been a golden era for research on the psychology of music. In the past decade there has been a similar explosion in the cognitive neuroscience of music.”

Huron’s quote is of great importance. Music in advertising research is an inter-disciplinary phenomenon with studies arising in established journals such as *Applied Cognitive Psychology* and relatively new journals such as *Psychology of Music* (e.g., Hargreaves and North, 1999; Zander; 2006; Yeoh and North, 2012). Furthermore, psychology and marketing academics have recently collaborated by identifying common theoretical strands that link the music in retailing with the music in advertising literature, for example, in ABS 4 star rated journals such as the *Journal of Retailing* (North et al., 2016). Countless billions of dollars are spent annually on music by advertising agencies and client companies (Oakes, 2007). Music is ubiquitous in television, radio and cinema advertising (Allan, 2008), thus underlining the need for increased academic research. Although research in the field may be niche, it is still incredibly important financially.

Music perception and cognition research activity is rising (Levitin, 2010), membership in the Society for Music Perception and Cognition (SMPC) is growing, and “after a long drought” (Ashley, 2010, p. 205), new introductory textbooks are emerging (e.g., Honing and Ladinig, 2009; Tan et al., 2010; Thompson, 2015). To date, the marketing literature on the effects of music in advertising has tended to focus on finding direct links between basic structural characteristics of music (such as tempo) and consumer response (Bruner, 1990; Allan, 2007; Kellaris, 2008). Craton et al. (2017) argue that this strategy falls short of explaining why specific musical responses occur, and particularly, why these responses vary in different contexts.

Indeed, music is complicated, and that complexity has encouraged researchers to focus more explicitly on basic phenomena such as auditory attention, musical memory, mental representation, social neuroscience, etc. (e.g., Brooker and Wheatley, 1994; Oakes and North, 2006; Fraser and Bradford, 2013). However, music is an essential part of the human experience, and this has been true since the history of time. It is not troubling that there is a temporary slowdown in research on music in advertising, since it will inevitably re-emerge as new areas of thinking are developed. Research topics are always addressed in some type of historical context, and advertising music is certainly not an exception. During the 1980s and 90s, there was a great deal of research aimed at understanding what executional elements in advertisements enhanced liking or persuasiveness of advertisements. However, research into the role of music in online content sharing is likely to rise. There is likely to be increased research into consumers’ emotional responses to music as companies such as Spotify let consumers listen to ambient music that taps into their specific feelings at a particular time. There is also likely to be a development of research into the role of music in connecting people to one another. The responses I received from these researchers addressed issues that I had already been thinking about and it was indeed fascinating to discover that top scholars in the field also believe there is still room for investigating the influence of musical in/congruity upon consumers’ cognitive, affective, and conative responses to advertisements. My interest in this topic sharpened when I saw the email from Kellaris and others. Flawed conceptual underpinnings, flawed experimental procedures, incomplete information, an exclusive focus on artificial lab experiments, and most importantly, the fact that there

is a lack of research in new contexts (new media) may be considered as the overriding issues with the existing music and advertising research.

What intrigued me was the fact that as research in music and advertising declined, research in music *cognition* exploded. Researchers' interest in human well-being motivated by the positive psychology movement has resulted in a rival interest in applied aspects of music psychology. Consequently, research in applied areas such as music therapy and music and advertising has languished, mostly because researchers do not feel they know enough about basic phenomena.

Indeed, existing laboratory experiments in the past four decades investigated the effects of various objective characteristics of music such as key (Kellaris and Kent 1992, 1993), tempo (Kellaris and Kent 1993; Milliman, 1982, 1986; Caldwell and Hibbert 2002; Oakes 2003), texture (Kellaris and Kent 1993), volume (Kellaris and Rice 1993; Morrison et al. 2011), and subjective characteristics of music such as liking (Hui et al., 1997; Caldwell and Hibbert 2002; Dube et al., 1995; Morin et al., 2007), familiarity (Bailey and Areni, 2006; Yalch and Spangenberg, 2000), arousal (Mattila and Wirtz 2001; Dube et al., 1995), complexity (North and Hargreaves 1998), and perceived mood (Alpert and Alpert 1990; Alpert et al., 2005) on consumers in various marketing contexts.

However, the current thesis attempts to achieve three distinct objectives surrounding examining the effects of musical congruity in advertising. These three main objectives and their associated research questions will be addressed through conducting a series of studies (Study 1, 2, and 3). The extant advertising music research has only examined the effects of music on consumers' responses to advertising in limited low-involvement settings (Abolhasani and Oakes, 2017). It is important to examine the effects of music in the case of advertising for high-involvement products where there exists a high level of risk and financial expenditure involved in consumers' decision making (Study 1). Furthermore, much of the research focuses on music that is aligned with the product being marketed (for example, Brazilian samba music for Brazilian coffee). Purposeful and artful musical incongruity may result in successfully locating the advertising musical stimuli within an interpretive zone capable of fostering metaphorical elaboration which may positively affect consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising. However, the categorisation of the incongruent musical

stimuli used in the existing advertising music literature (e.g., Kellaris et al., 1993; Kellaris and Mantel, 1996; Shen and Chen, 2006) demonstrates that many of the incongruent musical stimuli used as examples of incongruity fall short of the artful deviation characteristic of such incongruity because they fail to elicit meaningful interpretations and elaborations capable of reinforcing the advertising proposition (Study 2). Last but not least, in the existing music and advertising literature, the effects of background music are mainly measured using quantitative methods (Abolhasani et al., 2017). This is clearly evident in the literature review of music in advertising in the current thesis in which the highlighted research studies are almost exclusively from a positivist, managerial perspective. Goulding (2003) emphasised the need for more varied methods of consumer behaviour data collection to obtain a richer, deeper understanding of consumers. Therefore, the current thesis also investigates the effects of musical congruity in advertising through highlighting consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising (Study 3). Taken together, these gaps in the literature provide a compelling reason to undertake further research into the effects of background music on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising.

To address these questions, clarification about the dimensions of consumers' responses is obviously needed. Research in advertising has produced substantial evidence concerning consumer response to persuasive messages. These responses are broken down as cognitive, affective, and conative:

Cognitive: Advertising message receivers as active information-processors are expected to try and relate the incoming information to the beliefs, values, and feelings they already possess. Cognitive response postulates that the spontaneous thoughts elicited by exposure to the advertising message act as direct mediators of attitude formation or change. From this perspective, cognitive thoughts or responses are believed to be emitted during or perhaps immediately after being exposed to the advertisement. Therefore, consumers' cognitive responses to advertising generally involve the thoughts that occur to them while being exposed to advertisements. It can be argued that these thoughts may reflect consumers' cognitive processes and responses and help frame eventual acceptance or rejection of the advertising message. As Craton and Lantos (2011) point out, advertising music's cognitive effects have been underemphasized and reactions to music are usually

conceptualised as being emotional or affective. Research (Belch and Belch, 2003) depicts three categories of consumers' cognitive responses in the area of advertising: Product/message thoughts (thoughts directed at the product or the claims made in advertisements), source-oriented thoughts (thoughts about the source of the communication; the spokesperson or the organisation making the claim), and ad-execution thoughts (thoughts about the advertisement itself including reactions to ad-execution factors such as music). The present thesis investigates how favourable and unfavourable responses evoked as a result of using various in/congruent pieces of music may affect consumers' cognitive responses such as *ad/brand attitude*, *perceived brand image*, and *evaluation* of the advertised brand. It also examines how utilisation of various pieces of congruent and incongruent music influences consumers' *recall* of advertising information in different contexts.

Affective: In the context of the present research, the term “affect” is commonly used to encompass all feelings, emotions, and moods elicited by advertising. Advertising music can indirectly influence consumers' feelings (Clynes and Nettheim, 1982; Alpert and Alpert, 1990) and emotional responses such as their *happiness* or *satisfaction* with the advertising stimulus, *excitement* evoked by the stimulus, and the extent to which consumers are *swayed* or controlled by the advertising stimulus (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974; Mehrabian, 1976). Although literature in the context of music and advertising focuses upon desired cognitive response, it is also important to highlight the impact of affective response and explore how background music may be used to elicit desirable emotional responses in consumers. The intentional segregation of cognitive and affective response acknowledged inherent ambiguity by previous research (e.g., Zajonc, 1980), advocating that “feeling is not free of thought, nor is thought free of feeling” (p. 154). Indeed, studies in the context of music and advertising (e.g., Park and Young, 1986; MacInnis and Park, 1991; Bozman et al., 1994; Alpert et al., 2005) seem to suggest that affective response to advertising music is an antecedent of cognitive response. On the other hand, it may be argued that consumers' thoughts and cognitive processes and responses may be pre-requisite in shaping their emotional reactions. However, regardless of the ambiguity that exists with respect to the directionality between affect and cognition (which is not the

topic of the present thesis), advertising music may exert a great influence on consumers' affective response which can transfer directly to the advertisement and the brand itself.

Conative: Musical in/congruity may also be argued to have a great impact on consumers' behavioural response. Consumers' conative-behavioural response to advertising deals with the extent to which an advertisement is capable of inducing purchase intent in consumers. Studies show that there is often a link between consumers' attitude towards advertising and their behavioural responses (e.g., Karson et al., 2006). Therefore, apart from examining the effects of musical in/congruity in advertising on consumers' cognitive and affective response to advertising, the present thesis will also investigate how various pieces of congruent and incongruent advertising music influence consumers' *purchase intent* in various contexts.

1.1. Research rationale

To sum up the argument so far, musical congruity still remains a relatively undiscovered and complicated phenomenon as the existing literature on music and advertising has not clearly explored its impact on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. There is clearly a lack of coherent articulation of the theoretical underpinnings of musical congruity in the context of advertising which have resulted in contradictory findings in this particular area of research. For example, the effects of some of the objective musical characteristics such as tempo, loudness, or mode were examined in various studies but results were often contradictory (see Schramm and Spangardt, 2016). As far as the few existing studies on musical congruity in advertisements are concerned, the criteria upon which the effects of musical congruity have been explored are somewhat unclear and the boundaries between the application of the concepts and their link with particular responses from consumers are blurred. This clearly implies that there exists ambiguity in theorisation when applying congruity theories and models in the context of music and advertising. The oversimplification in measuring the dimensions of congruity may have resulted in unclear categorisations which do not entirely correspond to the different logical and possible conditions of musical in/congruity.

Furthermore, the concept of musical congruity still remains complicated as evident in the frequently contradictory findings of previous research. For example, in one of the most cited advertising music studies by Gorn (1982), it was demonstrated how liked music positively enhances consumers' product choice. However, a number of other researchers replicated his study (Pitt and Abratt, 1988; Kellaris and Cox, 1989; Blair and Shimp, 1992) and did not produce the same results. Moreover, other researchers (e.g., Allen and Madden, 1985; Park and Young, 1986) replicated Gorn's experiment and have not been able to produce the classical conditioning effects in their experiments. On the other hand, a recent study by Vermeulen and Beukeboom (2016) confirms Gorn's classical conditioning effects but suggests that single pairing of background music with an advertised product can only weakly and under specific circumstances affect choice behavior. The strong effects of Gorn's experiment may have originated in demand artifacts, which are a common issue in psychological research in classical conditioning (Kellaris and Cox, 1989).

Many of the existing research studies typically consider congruity between the advertising music and the perceived meaning/intent of the advertisement without considering personal relevance of the music for consumers. Various pieces of music may operate differently depending on listeners' tastes, preferences, expectancies, and the relationship of the music to the brand being advertised. The netnography research of the present thesis may be argued to be capable of addressing the limitations of almost exclusively quantitative research involving too many artificial lab experiments, as well as flawed experimental procedures in this context. Consequently, adopting mixed methods research and using qualitative data collection techniques such as netnography may have potential to refine the definition of musical congruity.

The literature clearly indicates important gaps in the area of research in advertising music as follows:

Firstly, the overwhelming majority of the existing literature on the effects of music on consumers' cognitive and behavioural response investigates the effects using low-involvement products involving little money and risk (e.g., MacInnis and Park, 1991; Olsen, 1997; Bozman et al., 1994; Hung, 2000; Mattila and Wirtz, 2001; Oakes and North, 2006; Yeoh and North, 2010). Secondly, there is a lack of investigation into the effects of the purposeful use of artfully *incongruent* music in the context of

advertising. Third, reviewing the extant literature in the area of music and advertising indicates that there is a general gap in terms of the lack of qualitative research in music and advertising. More specifically, there is a lack of research into the lived experience of music in advertising from a consumer perspective. Therefore, the present thesis attempts to address these gaps by determining a set of broad objectives to be addressed through conducting various studies.

1.2. Research aims and objectives

The present thesis seeks to examine the effects of various dimensions of musical congruity identified in the literature and provide empirical evidence for the effects of these congruity dimensions on consumers' responses to advertisements. These congruity dimensions and their relevant questions will be investigated via three distinct studies, each relating to a different aspect of the main research questions and objectives of the thesis. In other words, the six identified congruity dimensions act as the means by which three studies address the main three objectives of the thesis.

Study 1

Based on the research gaps described, the primary aim of the present thesis is to study the effects of musical in/congruity in a high-involvement setting. For this purpose, Study 1 will use the genre congruity dimension to examine how musical in/congruity affects consumers' responses to advertising. With reference to the Elaboration Likelihood Model of Persuasion (ELM), the current thesis will attempt to provide a counterargument to the existing belief reflected in the extant music and advertising literature that regards music as a peripheral cue which can only affect consumer responses in low-involvement conditions.

Oakes et al. (2013) examine the role of background music within different retail zones of a department store in forming consumers experiences and transforming perceptions of the retail environment and revealed how using background music that is congruous with other servicescape elements (e.g. light, air, colour, temperature) enhanced consumers' perception of the service environment attractiveness. Consumer research investigating the impact of congruity between the elements of the advertising (e.g. Bruner, 1990) reveals that congruent advertising elements may enhance consumers' advertising memory. For example, Houston et al. (1987) found that when the

picture and the text copy of an advertisement deliver the same message, recall is enhanced. Similarly, Childers and Houston (1984) reveal that consumer memory for a brand name is better when the pictorial element is integrated with words in advertisements. Memory has been represented as a network of nodes that links elements of thought through associative pathways along which a congruent stimulus can facilitate memory network linkages and enhance recall (Furnham et al., 2002). Therefore, it can be suggested that recall may not be improved through an incongruent stimulus as it may not activate related constructs along network linkages.

Study 2

Analysing the findings of the studies using non-musical stimuli, however, provide a theoretical counterargument supporting the use of incongruity in advertisements. Various studies (e.g., Miniard et al., 1991) reveal how information that is incongruent with prior expectations leads to more effortful and elaborate processing that increases the number of associative memory pathways. Similarly, Srull et al. (1985) report how incongruent information may lead message receivers to process the information with a higher level of cognitive efforts, resulting in stronger associations between new and existing information, consequently enhancing advertisement memory. Advertising practitioners have frequently used verbal and visual incongruity resolution to convey humour (Spotts et al., 1997) in order to enhance attitude towards the advertisement and encourage consumers to decode the communicative purpose of the humour (Oakes, 2007). For example, Heckler and Childers (1992) discuss an advertisement in which a famous rap singer sounded incongruously like a cabaret singer after drinking the wrong brand of cola, thus using musical incongruity to deposition a competitor product. Musical incongruity can be used to gain attention as well as complementing the advertising message through using creative incongruity. For advertisers seeking to attract attention to their advertisements using the novelty and surprise of incongruent music, this underlines the potential importance of the relative placement of the music. When incongruity is perceived in an advertising context, consumers are likely to think that there is an intentionally hidden communicative purpose for its presence, and hence, try to rationalise the purpose of *incongruity*. However, incongruent music simultaneously used during the exposition of the advertising message may simply distract consumers

from cognitive processing of advertising content by focussing their attention upon the music as much as the advertisement (Oakes, 2007). Therefore, a secondary aim is to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in advertising which will be done via Study 2 and through examining the effects of the purposeful use of incongruent music in advertising Study 2 will achieve this objective through introducing country of origin musical congruity dimension and how it interacts with genre congruity dimension in forming various in/congruity conditions.

Study 2 is conducted for the purpose of achieving the second broad objective of the thesis, i.e. to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in the context of advertising through examining the effects of purposeful, moderate musical incongruity. It is to be noted that the thesis used different contexts for different studies to address the main three objectives. This effectively means that neither university advertising nor restaurant advertising are the focal point of the thesis, but “musical congruity” remains as the overarching focus of the thesis. Different advertising contexts were selected in order to minimise the likelihood of exclusively context specific findings, and they were in fact used depending on how they could best serve different objectives and questions of the thesis. Each study context serves an objective of the thesis in a discrete manner. Since Study 2 (addressing the effects of mild musical incongruity) was involved with a relatively more complex procedure, involving and adapting the twin component congruity framework for the first time in the context of advertising music (expectancy and relevancy), in order to avoid ambiguity in the design of the study, a radio advertising context was used to help reduce complexity, as radio advertisements contain fewer executional elements compared to TV advertisements.

Study 3

Third, the thesis seeks to extend the methodological range of the existing literature by using a mixed-methods approach to addressing the research questions. Previous studies on music and advertising have almost exclusively used quantitative techniques in order to understand consumers’ responses. Goulding (2003) emphasises the need for a greater focus on using varied methods of consumer behaviour data collection to obtain a richer and deeper understanding of consumers. Consequently, in addition to conducting experimental studies in the form of quantitative surveys, focus groups and

netnographic research seek to uncover a broader scope of music in advertising themes where the agenda has been set by consumers rather than merely investigating effects based on the agenda set by advertising agencies and clients. While most music and advertising studies originate from a positivist perspective, typically analysing the effects of music chosen by the researchers, the present thesis also demonstrates the importance of analysing the phenomenological experiences of music highlighted by the participants. It attempts to address a general gap in terms of the lack of qualitative research in music and advertising, compounded by a more specific gap regarding netnographic research. This is reflected in the literature review of music in advertising by Oakes (2007) in which the highlighted studies are almost exclusively from a positivist, managerial perspective and the influence of music in advertising upon consumers lived experience of musical consumption is not addressed. Therefore, Study 3 will explore the influence of music in advertising upon consumers lived experience of musical consumption which was not addressed in previous research through identifying additional musical congruity dimensions including musical taste, semantic congruity, repetition congruity, and indexicality. Each of these four concepts emerged as the themes in the netnographic research are explained in-depth in the literature review chapter of the current thesis.

Therefore, the present thesis will aim at reimagining the subject area of music and advertising and attempt to make three novel contributions in this respect. These main three research objectives include:

- a) **To investigate the effects of musical in/congruity in a high-involvement condition:** To operationalise the research, a high-involvement setting has been carefully chosen to achieve the first aim of the thesis, that is, to investigate the effects in a setting including a high-involvement service. This is a British university – specifically, the University of Liverpool. Moogan (2011) finds that the concept of marketing has grown in importance for higher education institutions across the world. Higher education institutions, like any other organisation, engage in advertising, targeting potential students (Gibbs, 2007). As an increasing number of foreign students enter British universities in spite of rapidly escalating tuition fees, British universities have become marketplaces in their own right, using a range of sophisticated marketing communications tools

and impression management strategies to recruit students, attract high-quality faculty and stay at the top of highly competitive league tables (Bennett and Choudhury, 2009; Chapleo, 2010).

b) To develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in the context of advertising through examining the effects of purposeful, moderate musical incongruity:

In order to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity, a relevant framework for the research - Heckler and Childers' (1992) congruity theory - is employed to achieve this objective. This twin component congruity theory is arguably the most prominent congruity theory and was originally developed to explain picture/theme congruity in the context of print advertising. Heckler and Childers (1992) identified two salient components of congruity, namely relevancy and expectancy. Relevancy is defined as "material pertaining directly to the meaning of the theme and reflects how information contained in the stimulus contributes to or detracts from the clear identification of the theme", while expectancy refers to "the degree to which an item or piece of information falls into some predetermined pattern evoked by the theme" (Heckler and Childers, 1992, p. 477). They reveal that a mildly incongruent advertising stimulus is more effective in penetrating the perceptual screen of consumers to attract attention to an advertisement and suggest that an unexpected and relevant stimulus enhances identification of the primary theme of an advertisement. While Heckler and Childers' (1992) study investigates the effects of congruity in the context of print advertising, the present study attempts to redefine and refine the twin component distinction as the framework for congruity to examine the impacts of in/congruity between the advertising message and background music. The present thesis will therefore investigate how using moderate (mild) musical incongruity may result in enhancing consumers' responses to advertising through successful elaboration and resolution of the purposeful incongruity. This objective is achieved through undertaking a quantitative survey study in the context of restaurant advertising.

c) To investigate the effects of background music in advertising through exploring consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption:

The existing bulk of the music and advertising literature from an exclusively positivist approach refers to the identification of emotions rather than the authentic experience of them. One can argue that the purely positivist approach may

sometimes blur the difference between emotions represented and emotions felt. It is indeed important to consider the distinction between perceived emotions and felt emotions. As Juslin and Västfjäll (2008) mention, those emotions *induced* by music may be *felt* by us, whereas emotions *expressed* or *represented* by music are said to be *perceived* by us. In other words, a song may represent a particular emotion, but it does not necessarily induce the same type of emotion. Advertising research from a positivist perspective may sometimes blur the difference between emotions represented and emotions felt, highlighting findings referring to the identification of emotions rather than authentic experience of them. The present thesis will add to the scant qualitative literature through conducting focus groups and netnographic research and investigating the effects of background music through exploring consumers' everyday lived experience of musical consumption in the context of advertising. Netnographic research in the present thesis is intended to portray authentic consumer experience and sensitivity to music.

In the light of these research aims and objectives, the questions that drive this thesis include:

1. How does musical congruity affect consumers' responses to advertising in high-involvement conditions?
2. How does artful, purposeful, moderate musical incongruity enhance consumers' responses to advertising?
3. How does in/congruity affect consumers' everyday lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising?

These questions will be addressed through conducting three distinct studies (Study 1, 2, and 3) examining the effects of musical in/congruity in advertising.

1.3. YouTube as a novel platform to collect consumers' netnographic insights

The current research attempts to answer the aforementioned questions through designing a set of studies following a mixed methods approach. In addition to the focus group, survey experiments, and the YouTube Analytics statistical data, the present study uses a netnographic approach based on collecting and analysing online consumers' comments on video advertisements uploaded on YouTube.

YouTube is an online video-sharing website allowing individual users and corporations to upload videos as well as giving users the opportunity to post their comments on published videos. Established in 2005, YouTube has become one of the fastest growing websites and the 4th most accessed Internet site (Cheng et al., 2007). YouTube is an important source of advertising feedback since it can act as an interactive forum where users discuss the advertising videos they observe. The consumers' comments on YouTube videos are recorded in reverse chronological order providing their username, along with the date of posting the comments. YouTube can act as an interactive forum where users can discuss the videos they observe. Users have the opportunity to directly engage in discussions with each other by simply replying to the comments, which provides insight into the behaviour of consumers and their beliefs about a particular brand. As Pace (2008, p. 214) points out, "YouTube is a rich repository of information and insights regarding markets and consumption". Any person who has a basic account on YouTube is able to view and share videos online or even embed the videos in their websites or blogs. There is a large number of television advertisements uploaded on YouTube either by companies or by individual consumers. It is usually possible to find the majority of the advertisements broadcast on television by simply searching for them on YouTube. User participation is one of the most important features of YouTube, allowing consumers to post comments and rate the videos (Yang et al., 2010). The user comments facility has become a medium used for self-expression, sharing personal opinions, recalling past experiences, and providing emotional support (Madden et al., 2013).

1.3. Structure of the thesis

Following the Introduction chapter, Chapter Two provides an extensive and comprehensive literature review, focussing on the effects of background music in advertisements. Chapter Three presents a discussion of methodology, highlighting the research philosophy of the work and the philosophical reasoning underpinning the research project.

Chapters Four, Five, and Six include the Study chapters of the thesis (Study 1, 2, and 3 respectively). Chapter Four (Study 1) begins with an exploratory focus group research designed to identify themes to be examined in depth in the later experimental studies. The exploratory focus group study is

followed by a series of quantitative survey studies as well as presenting the YouTube Analytics statistical data which together explore the effects of musical in/congruity in the context of advertising for higher education institutions as a high-involvement product. Chapter 5 (Study 2) uses restaurant advertising as the research context investigating the effects of mild, purposeful musical incongruity in the context of advertising.

The netnography research in Chapter Six (Study 3) employs a unique and innovative approach in the area of music and advertising to analyse consumers' computer-mediated online postings on YouTube concerning background music used in advertisements for different goods and services.

Chapter Seven discusses the research findings. In this Discussion Chapter, the implications of the research are fully discussed, the thesis research questions are addressed, and the contributions made to the existing body of knowledge are highlighted.

Chapter Eight includes the conclusion that discusses the implications of the research as well as the avenues for future research.

1.5. Anticipated contributions

Advertising agencies and client companies spend sizeable fees for the background music they use in commercials. Such expenditure on a single transaction suggests that the annual fees paid for licensing music in advertising worldwide are likely to be worth billions of dollars, thus underlining the need for increased research in this area. Strategically chosen music permeates the commercial media system, binding the work of musicians to the world of brands (Meier, 2017). Furthermore, major stars are working with brands in the roles of 'creative director' (e.g., Justin Timberlake with Bud Light and Lady Gaga with Polaroid) and 'brand ambassador' (Beyoncé with Pepsi and Taylor Swift with Diet Coke) (Barker, 2013). In each of these advertising campaigns, music is used as a vehicle for achieving organisations' marketing and promotional goals. Participation of a wider array of companies and brands within music-related ventures has revealed new opportunities for musicians. This participation has also engendered profusely commercial understanding and beliefs regarding music and the role it plays in society.

Indeed, the music industry has grown increasingly reliant on the promotional industries – a dynamic that has affected the way record companies view recording artists and their music not only as commodities, but also as tools for promotion (Meier, 2017). In light of the huge investment by advertising agencies and client companies in utilising music in their promotional campaigns, it is crucial for them to be aware of the tremendous influence of music in order to make marketing communications activities more inviting and desirable. A brand's interest in music "is rooted in its perceived ability to overcome audience distraction, signify a type of cultural authenticity and credibility, and connect with listeners on an emotional level" (Meier, 2017, p. 6).

The thesis is intended to help advertising agencies and client companies utilise music more effectively in their marketing communications.

It is important that academic research in the area of music and advertising engages more directly with the concerns of industry as organisations try to find new ways of reaching and engaging increasingly fragmented consumers. Hence, the engagement between advertising music research and the concerns of industry may help in identifying important variables and examining how musical congruity may affect these variables that may ultimately influence brands' marketing performance.

Chapter 2

Reviewing the Literature on Musical Congruity in Advertising

2.1. Introduction

This chapter provides a review of the academic literature on music in advertising and uses the overarching concept of musical congruity in order to identify underlying patterns and enable more meaningful analysis of frequently disparate studies. It also draws upon studies outside of the scope of advertising that illuminate the musical congruity concept (e.g., regarding music in service settings). Music is considered as one of the most important executional cues in advertisements. It is a ubiquitous phenomenon in the context of television and radio advertising, with more than 94% of advertisements incorporating a certain type of music (Allan, 2008). A more recent study by Nielsen Media Research (2015) suggests that almost every television advertisement included music. In a slightly different context, Allan and Tryce (2016) conducted a content analysis of ten years of in-game Super Bowl commercials airing from 2005 to 2014 and found that more than a quarter of the commercials contained popular music. Music accounts for a significant commercial advantage in the context of advertising by producing favourable associations with the product/brand (Gorn, 1982), contributing to the message, enhancing the energy of the message and stimulating the audience (Hecker, 1984; Hung, 2000), and by attracting consumers' attention and enhancing message recall (Yalch, 1991; Allan, 2006).

As Hecker (1984, p.7) points out, one of the main reasons for the extensive use of music in advertising is that music is traditionally considered as a 'catalyst of advertising'. Music transports, underlines or amplifies the persuasive message of advertisements (Gleich, 2015; Schramm and Spangardt, 2016). It is commonly utilised as a background feature to create memorable commercials capable of altering consumers' attitudes and evaluations, which may in turn result in enhancing consumers' purchase intent (Lavack et al., 2008). Advertising agencies and client companies spend sizeable fees for the rights to use popular songs. For example, Naughton (1999) reveals how Microsoft paid \$3 million to use The Rolling Stones' song "Start Me Up" to be used in launching their advertising campaign (the lyrical association of "Start Me Up" with the Microsoft Windows boot procedure is an example of semantic congruity discussed later in this chapter). Such expenditure on a single transaction suggests that the annual fees paid for licensing music in advertising worldwide is

likely to be worth billions of dollars (Oakes, 2007), thus underlining the need for increased research in this area. Nowadays, music surrounds peoples' everyday lives both voluntarily and involuntarily. Approximately 40-50% of individuals' waking hours are spent either passively or actively listening to music (Sloboda et al., 2001; North et al., 2004a). Consequently, the omnipresence of music in people's everyday lives, especially through exposure to advertisements, has attracted marketing researchers' attention.

“Musical congruity” is a term that is used to replace alternative but equivalent authorial terms such as “musical fit” (e.g., MacInnis and Park, 1991). It is the extent to which a piece of music used in an advertisement conforms to or detracts from the main message of the advertisement and the brand. Perceived congruity between music and the brand is a vital aspect of music in advertising. MacInnis and Park (1991) point out that music that fits the advertisement, which is defined as the listeners' individual perception of its relevance and appropriateness towards the central advertising message and product, could also affect consumers in terms of their engagement with the advertisement. They suggest that when elements of a stimulus set correspond with other items in the set, the individual parts are not perceived as separable and may not compete with each other for cognitive resources, consequently creating emergent meaning (MacInnis and Park, 1991). Kellaris et al. (1993) point out that music is believed to have similar potential impact compared to visual elements, and it may account for more than 50% of the advertising effects. They suggested that high level congruity between music and advertising message enhanced brand name and message recall as opposed to low congruity. Moreover, Oakes (2007) argues that musical congruity may contribute to communication effectiveness through enhancing purchase intent, recall facilitation, and affective response compared to low-congruity and no-music conditions. These findings may indicate that a high level of music-brand congruity in advertising may generate a more positive attitude towards the advertisement and the brand.

Heckler and Childers (1992) propose a twin-component congruity framework, namely expectancy and relevancy. Expectancy refers to the degree to which a piece of information falls into some predetermined pattern or structure evoked by an advertisement, while relevancy is concerned with the

extent to which a piece of information contributes to the identification of the primary theme to be delivered by the advertisement. They reveal that recall varies between congruent and incongruent information as unexpected information produced better recall than expected information, while irrelevant information resulted in inferior recall compared to relevant information. Decoding unexpected information in advertisements depends on consumers' capability to resolve the incongruity. For example, in order for an incongruity in an advertisement to be effective, consumers must be able to successfully decode the implicit advertising message and make sense of the advertisement. As Berlyne (1971) points out, cognitive elaboration as a result of unexpected-relevant information may be rewarding when the cleverness of the incongruity with respect to the main advertising message is understood, while unexpected-irrelevant information may lead to frustration rather than incongruity resolution. However, there are various dimensions of congruity in the context of advertising music, each of them capable of influencing advertising effectiveness in their own distinctive manners.

Cinematic music is believed to be at least as important as other elements of a film such as narratives and visuals and it plays a significant role in establishing engagement between audience and the film (Kassabian, 2001). Congruous music is capable of creating extraneous sound providing a continuous flow between different scenes, directing viewers' attention to the important parts of the film, and inducing various types of moods that help in conveying characterisation and plot related messages (Cohen, 1999). Boltz et al. (1991) reveal how a piece of music accompanying an episode led to higher level of recall when the mood of music and scene were congruent with each other. Film music provides continuity between shots (Magliano et al., 1996), as well as directing attention to important features of the screen through structural congruity (Munsterberg, 1970). Similarly, these effects can be clearly evident in the context of advertising. For example, congruity of music with the context of advertisements may direct the viewers' attention towards the elements that the advertisers want to focus on (Alexomanolaki et al., 2007), therefore, producing more favourable responses in consumers.

Similar to the context of cinema, one of the most important purposes of the artistic combination of sound and image in advertising is to attract attention by complementing each other so that messages

can be communicated more effectively. If sound and image are incongruously matched, their combination may sometimes result in distraction and creation of a distorted or displeasing message (Coulter, 2010). For example, previous research investigated the effects of congruity between music and product and revealed that the congruity between the context-specific purchase occasion and the mood produced by music enhances purchase intention. In a study by Alpert et al. (2005), a number of black and white slides for various products including happy and sad greeting cards were shown to research participants. Participants were exposed to each of the slides for the period of 45 seconds. They were divided into four groups, all of which heard the neutral music at first. Two of the four groups were then exposed to the slide accompanied by sad music, while the other two groups watched the slides accompanied by happy music. In both happy and sad music conditions, half of the participants were asked to rate their purchase intents for the slides promoting greeting cards for a happy occasion (birthday), while the other half were asked to rate their purchase intents for the slides promoting greeting card for a sad occasion (ill friend), constituting four experimental conditions in total. Findings reveal that participants choosing the birthday greeting card (happy occasion) showed a greater intention to purchase when the slides were accompanied by happy music compared to those who watched it with sad music. On the other hand, participants choosing a greeting card for an ill friend (sad occasion) showed higher purchase intents when it was accompanied by sad music, compared to those who watched it with happy music. Thus, it is very important to pay attention to musical congruity in various audio visual contexts such as cinema and television advertisements, as well as retail environments where background music exists. Such congruity enhances perceptual clarity and produces a good combination of sound and image which typically leads to a positive association. However, there is a need for further research in the field of music and advertising as there are still many relatively undiscovered areas concerning various dimensions of musical congruity and incongruity and their effects on consumer' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising.

The present thesis aims at investigating the effects of musical congruity through identifying and examining six dimensions of congruity, namely; genre congruity, country of origin musical congruity, musical taste, semantic congruity, indexicality, and repetition congruity on consumers' affective,

cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. It adopts a mixed methods approach to address the methodological gap; the almost exclusively positivist method adopted by the existing research, and uses experiments as well as qualitative techniques such as focus groups and netnography to investigate the effects of these dimensions of congruity on consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, recall of information, perceptions, evaluation of the products, as well as their purchase intent.

Although the highly valuable effects of music in advertising are widely recognised by both practitioners and researchers, the concept of musical congruity still remains complicated as evident in the frequently contradictory findings of previous research. This thesis strives to understand and focus upon the musical congruity concept in greater detail as it is currently a relatively disputed phenomenon (Scott, 1990; Oakes, 2007; Kellaris, 2008). Thus, there is a need for consolidation and appraisal of the extant body of literature in the area of music and advertising to identify congruity dimensions and elements that are responsible for the effects and the routes through which these variables affect consumers. Furthermore, there has been lack of a clear articulation of the theoretical underpinnings of musical congruity which may have led to varied results that can create serious problems for the researchers in extracting meaningful conclusions.

This chapter begins with a broad overview of the literature on sound and music, the concept of voluntary and involuntary exposure to music, consumers' lived experience of musical consumption and personal relevance of music in the context of advertising. The chapter will discuss the effectiveness of various types of music in the context of advertising. It then provides more specific discussions underlining consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising music. The concept of musical congruity in advertising will then be developed through using relevant social cognition research and highlighting the application of the associative network concept in the context of music and advertising research.

The present literature review will then focus on the overarching scope of this thesis through critically analysing the extant body of literature in the area of music and advertising and identifying and categorising the findings based on different dimensions of musical congruity (six identified

dimensions). The literature review chapter will also dedicate a section to discuss musical familiarity/unfamiliarity and its effects in advertising. These discussions will then facilitate designing various research projects in order to tackle the problems identified in the critical analysis of the literature and fulfil the overall thesis aims which are investigating the ways various types of congruent and incongruent music affect consumers' recall of information, perceptions, attitude towards the advertising and the brand, evaluation of the products, as well as their purchase intent. The following section provides an overview of the concept of personal relevance and consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption.

2.2. Personal relevance and consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption

Consumers' lived experiences may serve as symbolic resources for self-construction (Elliott and Wattanasuwan, 1998). People are believed to internally construct their self-concept and externally shape their social world (Kerrigan et al., 2007). Consumers' lived experiences may have a strong value and carry a high level of importance for them. As mentioned earlier, in light of the vast technological developments and their impacts on musical consumption, consumers are more often exposed to various sources of music both voluntarily and involuntarily and in different offline or online platforms. Therefore, in the context of advertising, they are able to obtain personal knowledge about various types of advertising music through direct, first-hand engagement with various advertising platforms containing music. Indeed, consumers frequently get involved in various online platforms to express their thoughts, emotions, and experience of music they hear from various advertising sources.

Indeed, particular musical processing mechanisms may lead to individual differences in musical response in advertising (Craon et al., 2017). For example, although basic features and structural characteristics of music are perceived similarly by all listeners, some mechanisms depend a great deal on that person's listening biography- all of that person's previous exposure to, knowledge about, and experiences with music (Huron, 2006; Margulis, 2014). Furthermore, in the context of advertising music, an individual's liked music may just be considered a noise by another consumer. It is important to be aware of how consumers' personal life experiences may create value in the musical

experience in the context of advertising and how the personal relevance of various pieces of advertising music may play a vital role in determining their responses. It is important to know what certain types of music mean to them and to what extent these meanings shape their responses to advertising. In the context of advertising music research, concepts such as indexical congruity (discussed later in this chapter) involving the evocation of memories from past experiences through music lend themselves well to interpretive research, especially when consumers' personal and cultural factors and their past experiences shape their behaviours. Interpretive research in the context of advertising music may help in understanding consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption through explaining inner meanings and motivations associated with responses to certain types of background music in advertisements. Consumers are generally free to respond in their own words or via demonstrating their own behavioural responses.

In recent years, ethnographic consumer behaviour research has taken a twist, caused by the prominence of social networking websites or communities in consumers' everyday lives. Netnography adopts ethnographic tools and techniques to study the behaviour of online cultures and communities (Kozinets, 2002a). Vollmer and Precourt (2008) point out that consumers frequently use various types of social media and online communities in order to obtain the required information and make their purchase decisions. These communities help marketing researchers to enhance their knowledge of the needs, motivations and subsequent behaviour of consumers (Oakes et al., 2013). However, despite the invaluable opportunity that netnography offers, previous music and advertising research has focussed on following an almost exclusively positivist approach in investigating consumers' responses to advertising music.

Eckhardt and Bradshaw (2014), in one of the very few advertising music studies following a qualitative approach, investigated the use of popular music in advertising and the concept of industrialisation of culture. They turn to music and advertising industry insiders to investigate the convergence of music with advertising. One of the important limitations of this study, however, is that they record the practices of different economic actors within the music and advertising industry, rather than undertaking phenomenological, interpretive data analysis. They engaged in long interviews with

the gatekeepers and key industry players and did not privilege phenomenological readings of interpretive data, but instead, selected only a handful of professionals who worked in various advertising agencies. It is indeed important to investigate the effects of advertising music through hearing the voices of consumers instead of merely looking at it from an exclusively managerial perspective.

Oakes et al., (2013) carried out netnographic research to collect online data from consumers evaluating Miles Davis's *Kind of Blue* jazz album. It provided the opportunity for them to obtain a deeper understanding of the lived experience of jazz listeners (consumers) through conducting observational netnography, and as Langer and Beckman (2005) propose, this approach may enhance authenticity due to its unobtrusiveness. Furthermore, Langer and Beckman (2005) establish the benefits of conducting netnographic research without the need for participants consent to ensure that the involvement and intervention of the researchers does not contaminate the findings. However, Oakes et al.'s (2013) research was not directly related to the effects of background music in advertisements, and hence, there is a need for netnographic research in the area of advertising music (for a more in-depth analysis of the strengths of mixed methods research and the use of netnography please see methodology chapter).

2.3. Music in the context of advertising

Advertising is the means by which one party attempts to convince another to purchase a particular product or service (Huron, 1989). It is about delivering a persuasive message that can manipulate consumers' behavior or encourage them to make a decision, as well as facilitating brand identification. Advertisements normally contain information related to the product as well as background features such as music, colours, and humour (Gorn, 1982). Advertising agencies dedicate a considerable amount of resources to design effective advertisements for the purpose of leaving long-lasting, positive effects in the minds of consumers (Wedel and Pieters, 2000). A good blend of all the elements in a television or radio advertisement can attract consumers' attention.

Music is arguably one of the most important background features in advertisements that is responsible for elicitation of various feelings in consumers towards the advertisement and the brand which may lead to altering their consumption choices. Huge resources are devoted to the effective design of advertisements to create long-lasting effects on the attitude and memories of consumers (Wedel and Pieters, 2000). Advertisers use music in order to attract potential consumers' attention and create a positive brand image (Bruner, 1990). An advertisement's background music may play an important role in reinforcing the desired brand image to be communicated to customers. Consumers' initial feelings or their collective impressions towards a brand may help in establishing a distinct image of that brand. Studies regarding the use of background music in advertisements suggest that the inclusion of music will enhance advertising effectiveness (Stout et al., 1990).

The practice of licensing music refers to the "purchase of synchronization rights that grants permission to use existing music alongside moving images, such as for film or an advertisement" (Eckhardt and Bradshaw, 2014, p. 168). For example, in 2012 the TV show *Mad Men* paid \$250,000 for the rights to use The Beatles song *Tomorrow Never Knows*, becoming the first TV show to ever license a Beatles song. Similarly, the music and advertising industries seem to be in close cooperation with each other. The close partnership between music and advertising is believed to have mutual benefits for both industries. With the declining record sales and the increase in online streaming, musicians are looking for an effective way of introducing their compositions to the public as well as finding alternative revenue sources. In 2009, Lady Gaga famously received just £108 from 1million plays of *Poker Face* on Spotify (Brown, 2010). Licensing represents one of the best ways for contemporary musicians to generate revenue (Lieb, 2013). Stevens (2011) points out that in many cases, the musician/performer is featured as the commercial's 'protagonist'. These contracts seem attractive to the musicians/bands even though they initially promote products, "they have a dual function of publicizing the performers and their music" (Stevens, 2011, p. 41).

The affiliation of music with a famous brand can help to promote musicians (Graakjaer, 2014). As Oakes et al. (2013, p. 611) point out, 'successful musicians may be regarded as brand managers promoting themselves and their creative output in the competitive cultural sphere'. On the other hand,

brands constantly search for new ways of representing a distinctive image in order to gain competitive advantage over competitors in the market. They have long been using music celebrities as their brand agents through signing endorsement deals. The use of popular music in advertising gives the opportunity for companies to communicate a favourable brand image to their target customers, building a link between the music and advertised product. However, there has been growing concern from music fans, critics, and musicians about commercialisation of popular music. As Klein (2013) points out, most people do not like their favourite music to be used in advertisements for selling goods or services. In contrast, many would argue that featuring lesser-known musicians' work in advertisements could help them find a wider audience, hence justifying the use of music as a creative and artistic background feature for advertisements.

As the differences in opinions around the commercialised use of music suggest, the concept of authenticity of consumption is considered to be a contested phenomenon. In a netnography study, Corciolani (2014) reveals how bands' *transgressions* (e.g. participation in advertising campaigns) can be considered as a breach that may severely damage the reputation of bands and their relationship with their fans. Nevertheless, there are two dominant types of philosophies concerning authenticity and popular music. The first school of thought argues that a work of art should be created for more noble purposes than mere commercialisation and profit (e.g. Adorno and Horkheimer, 1997), and since popular music is often considered as an ordinary product to be sold for profit, it may not be conceived as authentic. Also, popular music is sometimes created as *muzak* that is background music composed and used for creating a more pleasing and comfortable environment for consumers in various service or retail contexts (e.g. supermarkets, malls, airports), in which music is considered as inauthentic and something to hear and not listen to (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2008). On the other hand, the second perspective conceives a popular music scene as a context for individuals' resistance to meanings that are being imposed from above (Hall and Jefferson, 1976) and an important part of individuals' lives and a means for satisfying their needs and forming and expressing identity (DeNora, 2000; Shankar et al., 2009). However, consumers seem to put a great deal of value and importance on musical authenticity, originality, and genuineness as well as being anti-commercial. Keightley (2001)

points out that rock fans, critics and musicians are inclined to constantly evaluate rock in terms of its honesty, sincerity, originality, or as being uncorrupted by commerce, which authentic rock music is expected to be, as opposed to pop which is perceived as being inauthentic. However, it is to be noted that the perception of authenticity, originality, or iconicity of a particular piece of music or a band may vary depending on different individuals' characteristics and beliefs.

Tom Petty, one of the artists who rejected licensing his music in advertisements said, *"I hate to see these Beatles songs selling sneakers and stuff, because the music always meant more to me"* (Klein, 2013, p. 35). This was considered by many as an unjust act that devalued the history and culture of the 1960's era, particularly in this case which the use of Beatles' music by Nike is believed to have violated the copyright as they were not authorised and did not obtain the approval of the artists. Many consumers thought John Lennon would have refused the commercialised use of their song. Indeed, George Harrison, a former Beatle commented on the Nike deal in 1987: *"If it's allowed to happen, every Beatles song ever recorded is going to be advertising women's underwear and sausages. We've got to put a stop to it in order to set a precedent. Otherwise it's going to be a free-for-all. It's one thing when you're dead, but we're still around! They don't have any respect for the fact that we wrote and recorded those songs, and it was our lives"* (Doyle, 2008). Paul McCartney disapproved of the use of "Revolution" in an interview in *Rolling Stone* and wasn't pleased with Nike's campaign: *"We were offered Disney, Coca-Cola, and the hugest deals in Christendom and beyond and we never took them, because we thought, 'Nah, kind of cheapens it.' It cheapens you to go on an advertisement, I think"* (Magiera, 1988, p. 55).

Nevertheless, the ultimate purpose of the advertisements is to sell. If the advertising message seems more appealing to the receivers, it will gain a greater level of audience attention which in turn leads to creating positive feelings, enhancing product evaluations, and facilitating message acceptance (Hahn and Hwang, 1999), resulting in positively affecting consumers' purchase intent. In this context, music is a relatively important background feature that is widely used in television and radio with the aim of enhancing the effectiveness and efficiency of advertisements (Hahn and Hwang 1999). Research revealed that more than 90% of television advertisements use music as one of the main background

features, indicating the great potential of music as a communication tool (Kellaris et al., 1993). Music helps advertisers in conveying the message more effectively and also helps in making it linger in the memory.

Indeed, there is a need for advertising practitioners to be wary of the potentially detrimental effects of music on consumers' affective, cognitive and behavioural responses to advertisements. Although music is capable of enhancing brand image, thus leading to better advertisement recall (Kellaris et al., 1993; Tavassoli and Lee, 2003), it can also play a distracting role in message processing, undermine the elaboration of the message being conveyed, and reduce message recall (Park and Young, 1986; Anand and Sternthal, 1990; Stewart et al., 1990; Olsen, 1995; Tavassoli and Lee, 2003). Thus, selecting the most appropriate background music for advertisements that is congruent with the type of the product and the context of advertising may play a vital role in facilitating the positioning of the goods or services, as well as preventing the adverse effects of utilising the wrong style of music.

2.4. Types of advertising music

There have been various approaches to the utilisation of music in advertising since the emergence of the artful use of sound in television and radio advertisements;

2.4.1. Advertising jingles

There were times when advertising jingles in the form of some maddeningly catchy tunes were being used for the purpose of enhancing brand-name recall. Jingles usually come along with a slogan and are normally short and easy to remember, for example "Give me a break" in Kit Kat advertisement (Appendix 1) in the 90s. Advertising jingles were used as the brands' signatures, but were gradually discarded and replaced by popular songs, which rather focus on associating the brand values of the music and the musicians with the advertised brand. The increasing trend of licensing popular songs coincided with the decline of advertising jingles.

2.4.2. Audio logos

Another technique is to use an audio logo, usually playing at the start or at the end of an advertisement. For example, Intel use a sonic logo (Appendix 2) which is a short three seconds piece accompanied by its visual logo at the end of television advertisements for its various products. This short sonic logo plays the role of an identifier for the brand and has the ability to grab consumers' attention in a way that makes them consciously watch the advertisement. The audio logo is a symbol and Intel has a symbol in sound that is just as powerful as their symbol in graphics (Jackson and Fulberg, 2003). The placement of an audio logo in an advertisement has been recognised as one of the most successful brand building exercises that encourages consumers to remember the brand for a longer time.

2.4.3. Popular music in advertisements

Popular songs used in advertisements are capable of illustrating the contents and helping in interpretations of the visual elements. Nike was the pioneer in establishing a new approach to advertising music by licensing a Beatles song 'Revolution' in 1987 (Weiner, 1991). Despite many criticisms regarding the use of popular songs and chart hits in advertisements explained earlier, this trend has become increasingly popular in that many songs are included in advertisements shortly after they break the charts. An example could be Sting, a British singer, who had shown an initial resistance towards allowing his song 'Don't Stand So Close to Me' to be used in a deodorant advertisement, but then his "Desert Rose" song has been used in one of the famous advertisements promoting the Jaguar car company (Appendix 3). The increasing use of popular music in advertisements demonstrates how advertisers and client companies aspire to associate their products with the success and popularity of famous musicians.

2.4.4. Instrumental versions of popular songs

Instrumental music (no lyrics) that is edited and re-composed to be exclusively used in an advertisement is another approach for using music in advertisements. For example, the song "Perfect Timing" by Orba Squara was used by Apple (Appendix 4) for promoting its iPhone in which the

positive feeling inherent in the music is intended to be transferred to the brand and the advertisement. Instrumental music can convey desired emotions without any distracting irrelevant lyrics. For example, Roehm (2001) reveals how the day-after verbal recall of lyrics containing the advertising brand message was greater with an instrumental version of a popular song, compared to the vocal version, for the respondents familiar with the original song. When the popular song is presented without its accompanying lyrics, it may be considered as incongruent with expectations, thus, respondents try to resolve this incongruity through singing the absent lyrics along the instrumental version of the song which results in enhancing recall.

However, advertisers may also use an original piece of music which was never heard before and was composed specifically to be used in advertisements and can be in the form of both instrumental and vocal music. An advertising stimulus includes the advertising message along with a number of interacting executional elements such as setting, characters, narrator, plot or storyline, as well as the music (Lantos and Craton, 2012). In order for an advertisement to be evaluated positively, it is best to select elements that demonstrate congruity with the music and brand message. Musical fit or misfit, which will be explained in depth later in this chapter, is a concept that deals with congruity or incongruity of music with the context of advertising and the brand (Alpert et al., 2005). The existence of an adequate fit between music and brand may contribute to communication effectiveness through reinforcing recall, enhancing brand attitude and eliciting positive affective and cognitive response (Oakes, 2007). Linking the right piece of music to a brand is important as consumers' impressions can be manipulated by musical congruity, causing brand image to shift (Brodsky, 2011). It is therefore important to be aware of the detrimental effects of using incongruent music in advertising. As North et al. (2004b) point out, the absence of music is better than using a type of music that is not congruent with the advertised brand.

2.5. Music and advertising effectiveness

Huron (1989) identifies six basic ways in which music can contribute to advertising effectiveness based on their chronological introduction as marketing strategies: 1) entertainment, 2) structure/continuity, 3) memorability, 4) lyrical language, 5) targeting, and 6) authority establishment,

each of which will be explained briefly. From an entertainment perspective, Huron points out that using appropriately entertaining music will contribute to creating a more effective advertisement which is able to attract attention. Although television or radio advertisements may be treated as a relatively undesired or unwanted intrusion, they can be more accepted and appealing when they are capable of entertaining the viewers. Research has examined the effects of presence and absence of music and how it can make an advertisement more appealing to viewers. Advertising music serves to attract consumers' attention, and if used effectively, it is capable of maintaining their attention (e.g., Stout and Leckenby, 1988).

The use of music helps in creating a logical and continuous flow in the advertisement. Huron states that music plays a mediator role between disjointed images through giving a clear structure to advertisements by connecting a sequence of visual images or episodes to each other. From a structure/continuity perspective, music can play various roles in advertisements. Alpert and Alpert (1991) propose that music can play a dominant role (foreground) which can carry lyrics and be a distinctive element in an advertisement. It can also take an entirely background role in the advertisement where the main message can be transferred through a voice-over or written information. In the context of film music, a stream of research highlights the role of music in creating structure and continuity (e.g., Boltz et al., 1991; Boltz, 2001; Vitouch, 2001).

Music can enhance memorability of the advertising message as well as other components of an advertisement. It serves as an element to help recall the brand messages and advertising information. The influence of music on recall of advertising information has been extensively studied by various researchers (e.g., Oakes and North, 2006; Fraser and Bradford, 2013, Guido et al., 2016). For example, Guido et al. (2016) demonstrated that background music that ends abruptly distracts consumers' attention, reducing memory for products and advertising messages compared to music with regular ending or fading-out ending.

Consumers usually prefer brands that are more familiar and recognisable to them. A piece of music which is associated with a brand will contribute to enhancing the recall of that particular brand or product. Researchers have suggested that the reason why music memory is preserved better than

verbal memory is because in contrast to language, music is not located in one particular area of the brain and is processed in various parts (Smith, 1985; Chan et al., 1998), hence, contributing to the process of enhancing message recall. The music and the promoted brand can become tightly linked in consumers' minds.

Music seems to be a perfect feature for transferring a message without viewers actually being aware of it in a conscious manner. It allows the message to be conveyed in a non-spoken way. As Huron argues, using a congruous combination of speech and song provides advertisers with opportunities for logical and factual appeals through utilising spoken and written language as well as emotive, poetic appeals by using music. Using background music accompanied by lyrics may help advertisements to seem more appealing for consumers. Chou and Lien (2010) argue that the lyrics' relevance to the advertised brand helps in delivering the advertising message. For instance, a Microsoft advertisement used The Rolling Stones' "Start Me Up" to launch its Windows 95 operating system. The Microsoft campaign was indeed one of the numerous examples of advertisements that benefitted from music in order to attract consumers' attention and interest through eliciting desirable feelings. However, advertising practitioners must be aware of the occasionally distracting effects of lyrics on consumers' message processing in the cases of inappropriate use of music or lyrics.

Music used in advertisements is also a great tool for targeting a particular segment of consumers, as various styles of music and different artists may be attributed to different groups with certain characteristics and lifestyles. Thus, music can play a significant role in reaching certain demographic segments and attracting their attention. For instance, a study by Mizell (2005) on musical preference in the U.S. demonstrates that the degree of preference for Rock/heavy metal music by men is significantly more than women, whilst Rap/hip hop music is significantly preferred by the younger generations. Thus, considering the musical preference of various demographic segments may help companies and advertising agencies make the most appropriate decisions in selecting the right type of music for the right segment of the market. Authority establishment and the use of music to enhance credibility of the advertisement is closely linked to the targeting function. As Huron (1989) points out, effective targeting may be the result of appropriate authority establishment. There are various ways to

establish authority such as using music as an effective nonverbal identifier and an element for association to a particular musician or actor. This is particularly relevant when considering familiar and previously recorded/heard music in advertisements where musicians' credibility may be transferred to the brand being advertised.

2.6. Cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses to advertising music

Over the past quarter of century, numerous studies examined the behavioural and cognitive responses to advertising music. Although some scholars indicated significant impacts of structural elements of music (tempo, mode, etc.) on consumers' responses to advertising music (e.g., Hahn and Hwang, 1999), various researchers did not succeed in demonstrating this (e.g., Stout and Leckenby, 1988; Brooker and Wheatley, 1994). Another stream of research examined the influence of advertising music within the framework of classical conditioning (Gorn, 1982), based on which, the association between a piece of music and a product may create positive attitudes towards that particular advertised product, when that specific piece of music is expected to produce positive response. Gorn's (1982) experiment showed that subjects were more likely to select a specific colour of pen if that pen had been paired with pleasant rather than unpleasant music. This study has been one of the influential studies in the area of music and advertising thus far which has been cited in around 940 journal articles. However, although Gorn's (1982) study revealed that if a piece of music is found pleasurable, it can have a significant effect on consumers' behavioural responses to advertisements, a number of other researchers have failed to demonstrate this and identified several limitations to Gorn's experiment (Pitt and Abratt, 1988; Kellaris and Cox, 1989; Blair and Shimp, 1992). Furthermore, researchers (e.g., Allen and Madden, 1985; Park and Young, 1986) replicated Gorn's experiment, but have been unable to find classical conditioning effects in similar experiments. In addition, some suggest that the strong effects obtained in Gorn's Study originated in demand artifacts, which is a recurring issue in psychological research on classical conditioning (Allen and Madden, 1985). Furthermore, certain aspects of Gorn's study might have resulted in subjects' awareness of the purpose of the study, resulting in elicitation of behaviours that are in agreement with inferred expectations.

Other researchers found a different explanation for the musical effects in advertising, that is, the power of music operates through generating moods that positively affect evaluation of products and message acceptance (Gardner, 1985; Alpert and Alpert, 1990). Alpert and Alpert (1989) studied the concept of music and affective response to advertising in more depth and proposed an alternative to classical conditioning. They contend that in the case of low-involvement and when the advertisement does not carry informational cues, liked advertising music can influence consumers' responses, affecting their evaluation of the product, brand and advertisement, regardless of the involvement of cognitive reactions. However, musical likability may not always be an appropriate proposal for explanation of the musical effects in advertising. Various scholars (e.g., Park and Young, 1986; Oakes, 2007; Lavack et al., 2008) argued that this approach does not take the concept of 'musical fit' or congruity into account in order to explain consumers' reactions to advertising music.

2.7. Conceptual development; congruity and its components

Marketing and consumer research has investigated the effects of in/congruity of the verbal and non-verbal information in the advertisements (e.g., Lutz and Lutz, 1977; Mitchell and Olson, 1981; Childers and Houston, 1984, Houston et al., 1987; Kellaris and Mantel, 1996). However, the researchers have used several terms such as congruent/incongruent, consistent/discrepant, and expected/unexpected in examining how presenting information that is congruent/incongruent with consumers' existing expectations or schemata could affect their processing of information.

For example, in an experiment by Houston et al. (1987), combining semantically *discrepant* pictures and words yielded a superior recall level compared to when semantically *consistent* pictures and words were combined. They conducted three experiments and concluded that presenting discrepant verbal information results in eliciting a higher level of elaborative processing, which in turn results in more extensive memory network for the advertisement. However, an important consideration would be to discover how the exposure conditions that allow elaborative processing or individual characteristics of consumers determining high/low involvement and personal significance could affect their cognitive responses to the advertisement. Furthermore, it is important to explore the effects of

music, as an important nonverbal stimuli, as another potential means for establishing expectations from which discrepant information can be presented.

On the other hand, Mandler (1982) points out that *schema incongruity* is an interruption of *expectations* and *predictions*. These interruptions may result in *Automatic Nervous System (ANS)* activity which in turn may cause the elicitation of intense emotions. The incongruent music in advertisements could also lead to different levels of arousal depending on the degree of incongruity. The degree of arousal depends on the level of incongruity and the difference in the meanings it elicits compared to other elements in the advertisement. Mandler (1982), in his theory of incongruity, proposes that incongruent music can be divided into mild incongruent and severe incongruent. The theory suggests that mild incongruent music evokes a moderate level of arousal and severe incongruent music produces an extreme degree of arousal, compared to congruent music which does not evoke arousal. Mandler suggests that individuals enjoy solving the incongruity, and that the process of achieving a solution to resolve incongruity may lead to positive evaluation. However, in the case of extreme incongruity, consumers are unable to resolve the incongruity, which is not a satisfying and enjoyable process/experience for them.

Meyers-Levy and Tybout (1981) test Mandler's theory and reveal some of the boundary conditions for the occurrence of moderate incongruity. They examine how the presentation of congruent versus incongruent information about soft drinks influence consumers' attitude towards those products. Their research supports Mandler's (1982) hypotheses that schema congruity affects consumers' evaluations and that moderate schema incongruity enhances evaluations. In a more recent study, Campbell and Goodstein (2001) investigate the impact of perceived risk of a particular product category and reveal that consumers prefer high congruity under high-risk conditions and moderate incongruity was effective only in the case of a low-risk product category. It can be seen that various studies surrounding congruity have produced apparently contradictory findings regarding different processing measures such as comprehension, evaluation of brand, attitude, and recall.

Indeed, Heckler and Childers (1992) provide a widely accepted definition of congruity. Heckler and Childers (1992) identify two salient components of congruity, namely relevancy and expectancy.

Relevancy is concerned with the extent to which the stimulus information or material contributes to or detracts from the advertising theme, while expectancy deals with the predetermined character of the stimulus and the extent to which the stimulus elements fall within an individual's expected structures evoked by the advertising theme or his/her prior knowledge structures associated with a particular theme. Including information that is congruent or incongruent with expectations of the audiences and their formerly developed schemata are two different approaches that are used in creative development of advertisements. Figure 2.1 demonstrates how an incongruously unexpected advertising image of a sliced tomato ketchup bottle can be perceived as relevant by the consumer who decodes its meaning as conveying the authentic freshness of real tomato ingredients, thus underlining the advertising effectiveness of incongruity resolution.

Figure 2.1: Incongruity Resolution



Source: Shimp, T. A. (2007). *Integrated Marketing Communication in Advertising and Promotion*, 8th edition, page 245, UK: South-Western Cengage Learning.

2.7.1. Congruity in the context of social cognition research

With regards to understanding and interpreting the results of previous studies on in/congruity effects in advertisements it is important that the conceptual bases for the in/congruities are precisely identified and established. It is highly beneficial to use the extensive social cognition research around information in/congruity and how it can be used to highlight the role of elaborative processing of

information and its effects on memory and perception. Incongruous information appears to develop a more complicated set of cognitive connections as consumers attempt to resolve the purpose of incongruous stimuli that they are exposed to. Unlike incongruous information, congruous information is easier to understand and integrate with our prior expectations, and therefore, the absence of incongruous information may result in little need to access memories and prior associations in the search for advertising meaning. This may have clear implications in developing the concept of congruity in the context of advertising.

2.7.2. The application of the associative network concept in advertising music research

Although the associative memory concept explained in the previous section is used to clarify encoding, storage, and retrieval for *visual image* perception (Heckler and Childers, 1992), it is also applicable in explaining consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising music. MacInnis and Park (1991, p. 162) define musical fit as "the consumer's subjective perception of the music's relevance or appropriateness to the central ad message". Using music that fits the brand being advertised, as well as the content and the purpose of the advertisement typically results in enhancing consumers' perception of the advertisement and brand. Although much is known about the effects of congruent information on memory and recall, there is a need to particularly explore the effects of incongruent background music on consumers' perceptions, attitude formation and evaluations, and to investigate whether a trade-off exists between the inclusion of various pieces of in/congruent background music and consumers' behavioural responses (e.g., the degree of persuasiveness of the advertisement and the effects on choice behaviour).

Heckler and Childers (1992) explore the effects of manipulating in/congruity through the picture component of print advertisements. Their study reveal that the advertisements containing both unexpected-relevant information have produced the more pronounced effort to understand the advertisements compared to expected-relevant information which was relatively easier to comprehend (e.g., the unexpected but relevant image in Figure 2.1). They also reveal that irrelevant information produces the most inferior results. In addition to investigating the effects of musical congruity and

incongruity in advertising, the present thesis may also examine the effects of various musical congruity levels through developing, refining, and redefining Heckler and Childers' (1992) congruity framework. It explores the effects of the two components of congruity (relevancy and expectancy) on consumers' cognitive and behavioural response to advertising music. Indeed, when music, as an important auditory stimulus, is congruent with other non-musical elements of advertising, it can help in attracting attention to non-musical aspects of advertisements. One of the objectives of the present research is to examine the effects of relevancy and expectancy as dimensions of congruity and investigate the impact on consumers' information acquisition, perception, and purchase behaviour. Therefore, an important contribution of the present thesis is to integrate the two components of congruity, namely relevancy and expectancy, within the context of cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising music in order to explore the ways consumers' process advertisements with respect to the use of various congruent and incongruent musical stimuli.

Park and Young (1986) examine the effects of music versus no-music conditions on attitude towards the advertisement and the brand as well as behavioural intentions and suggest that music acts as a persuasion cue, positively influencing consumers' attitude towards the advertisement, which leads to affecting brand attitude. However, it is not clear whether the music used in their experiment was congruent or incongruent with the brand. This, however, may lead to another question that is, what would be the effects on consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand if music-brand incongruent music is used in this context? Furthermore, it is important to examine the effects of musical incongruity in this context, with respect to the two dimensions of congruity (relevancy and expectancy) introduced by Heckler and Childers (1992) and investigate how various levels of cognitive processing required by the congruent and incongruent (expected/unexpected, relevant/irrelevant) music may play their role in terms of the effects they have upon different cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising.

Park and Young (1986) suggest investigating how the relationships between music and the advertising central message may influence the way the advertisement is processed. Although this idea was not pursued by them, it was later followed up by other researchers (e.g., Tom, 1990; MacInnis and Park,

1991; Lord et al., 1995) who demonstrate how a higher level of congruity between music and the main message of the advertisement results in greater memorisation of the advertising information (Tom, 1990) and induces positive feelings (MacInnis and Park, 1991; Lord et al., 1995). However, the findings of the study by MacInnis and Park (1991) need to be treated with care considering their operationalisation of music-message congruity as existing between two verbal domains, namely song lyrics and advertising copy. What was measured in these studies was only the linkage and connection between the song lyrics and the advertising message, and therefore, there is a need to investigate the effects through identifying and examining different dimensions of congruity that will be introduced later in this chapter.

On the other hand, Kellaris et al. (1993) propose a *music-message congruity* construct and investigate the effects of the fit between music and the advertising message as well as the attention gaining value of the music (high vs low). They showed how the concept of 'fit' or congruity can be helpful in illustrating the conflicting results on the topic of recall or memorization of information. Kellaris et al.'s (1993) research suggests that music-ad message congruity can moderate the effects of attention gaining music. In their research, subjects rated twelve pieces of music based on their attention gaining values and thoughts elicited while listening to them. They examined the effects on a number of dependent variables such as recall and recognition of brand names and message arguments. Their findings demonstrated that in the case of high congruity between music and advertising message, attention gaining music enhanced recall and recognition of brand names. In contrast, when the music was attention gaining, lack of congruity pulled listeners away from the message and made it difficult to process advertising messages and memorise brand names (negatively influenced recall). However, their study reveals that the no-music version of the advertisement performed as well or better than the musical versions in terms of recall and recognition.

Lavack et al. (2008) investigate the effects of brand in/congruent background music on consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand in the context of radio advertising, when accompanying verbal messages require different levels of cognitive processing. Their study presents radio advertising copy with varied depth of cognitive processing demanded (high-cognition vs low-

cognition), paired with music that was rated as congruent and incongruent with the brand. In their experiment, two brands of watch (Swatch and Rolex) were paired with two pieces of rock and classical music, as two disparate genres. These advertisements were then developed using both high- and low-cognition verbal messages. The high-cognition advertising version provided specific reasons for purchasing the brand, with promotional arguments based on rational grounds, while the low-cognition advertising copy attempted to induce positive feelings and emotions to convey brand image. Therefore, there were in total 4 versions of ad copy for each brand of watch (e.g., Rolex: high-cognition rock, low-cognition rock, high-cognition classical, low-cognition classical, and the same versions for Swatch), varying only in the brand name. No-music versions were also used as control conditions. They reveal how under the high-cognition condition, consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand were significantly more positive in the congruent music treatment compared to incongruent and no-music treatments. Their study demonstrates that pairing classical music with the Rolex brand may enhance the perception of quality and durability, whereas rock music paired with the Swatch brand may have enhanced its claims regarding style and fashion. However, under the low-cognition condition, neither the presence/absence of music, nor using congruent or incongruent music resulted in affirming advertisement claims or dis/liking the advertisement or the brand because the ad copy was general and did not offer specific facts or features of the brand.

Anand and Sternthal (1990) found that inclusion of background music in radio advertising may have distracting effects, although their study revealed that musical accompaniment positively affects brand evaluations compared to the spoken message. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate how using various congruent and incongruent pieces of music may affect consumers' message reception and processing as well as their brand attitudinal responses to advertising. In addition, advertising music research should also introduce additional factors of real world advertising exposure such as repetition as well as other distracting environmental factors in a more naturalistic data collection context in order to examine how these factors could alter the musical congruity effects on consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses.

2.8. Introducing different dimensions of congruity

Research examining the effects of in/congruity suggests that the nature of the manipulations regarding congruent or incongruent informational cues in advertisements can be more complicated than we think. Hence, the following section attempts to identify different variants of congruity in the context of advertising music in order to build a thorough understanding of various forms of congruity through summarising and classifying the findings of previous studies in the area of music and advertising.

Musical match or congruity is used as a unifying scheme to integrate allegedly diverse findings and identify various forms of musical in/congruity in advertising that have produced favourable or unfavourable effects in previous empirical studies. This categorisation of apparently disparate literature may then result in identifying prevalent themes such as musical familiarity and involvement, which will be discussed later in this literature review chapter. The following section includes a critical appraisal of the existing research in the area of music and advertising, categorizing the findings based on different elements of musical congruity and consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising music.

2.8.1. Genre congruity

Tzanetakis and Cook (2002, p. 293) define musical genres as “labels created and used by humans for categorising and describing the vast universe of music”. Studies on musical preferences suggest that individuals prefer musical environments that are in line with their attitudes and emotions and reflect their personalities (please see the study on the musical preferences in the U.S. in Appendix 5). As Widdess (2012) points out, ethnomusicologists believe that musical structures and meanings are culturally determined, and therefore, the meaning, function, or significance of a particular genre of music can only be understood in relation to its structural properties and specific cultural context.

2.8.1.1. Genre congruity in service settings

Musical genre congruity could have implications in both service/retail and advertising contexts. North et al. (2003) play classical, pop, and no music in a British restaurant and calculate the mean expenditure per person for each table for starters, main courses, desserts, various beverages, as well as

overall food bill and total expenditure. Findings indicate an overall significant difference between various musical genre conditions as classical music resulted in higher spending than both pop and no-music conditions. Similarly, Areni and Kim (1993) examine the effects of classical and top 40 music on consumers' shopping behaviour in a wine store and found that classical music resulted in customers purchasing more expensive wines. This could be due to classical music being associated with sophistication and prestige, and hence, customers were subconsciously encouraged to buy more expensive brands. In this context, classical music was congruous as it was expected and had relevant upmarket associations. However, the study by Areni and Kim (1993) did not examine whether classical music will increase the sales of any category of product, or only those brands where there is an established perceived fit for the consumers.

Baker et al. (1992) investigate the effects of two retail atmospheric cues, namely ambient cues (lighting and music) and social cues (number/friendliness of employees) on respondents' pleasure, arousal, and purchase intentions using videotapes and found that genre/lighting congruity increased willingness to buy through enhancing customer pleasure. Furthermore, Baker et al. (1994) use similar stimuli and report that classical music and soft lighting result in expectations of higher service and merchandise quality compared to pop music and bright lighting. In this context, the ambient elements of classical music led to assumptions that goods and service quality would be higher when compared to top 40 music.

North and Hargreaves (1998) conduct a study investigating the influence of music of different genres on perceived characteristics of service settings. They attempted to find out whether the type of music being played affects consumers' perceived image of the commercial environment. Their findings revealed that pop music portrayed a more "optimistic" and "confident", but not "peaceful" image for a cafeteria, whereas classical music promoted feelings of "elegance" and "high class". In the next three sections, the extant body of research around musical genre congruity in advertisements and its significance will be explored and critically analysed.

2.8.1.2. Genre congruity in advertising and its association with various meanings

Musical genre is one of the most important factors in retaining consumers' attention and determining consumers' responses to advertisements. As mentioned in the introductory chapter of the present thesis, consumers' style identification process is a really quick process which may take place after one second of exposure to an advertisement (Gjerdingen and Perrott, 2008; Plazak and Huron, 2011). This effectively means that advertisers and client companies have an extremely short window to hold audiences' attention through selecting a suitable musical style. Hence, selecting appropriate musical styles are considered as powerful techniques for retaining consumers' attention and creating a desirable mood in advertisements. Selecting an appropriate musical style in an advertisement may result in positively affecting consumers' degree of liking towards the background music which in turn affects audience retention and whether they are willing to keep on watching the advertisement. This section will review the existing literature surrounding musical genre congruity in advertisements.

Although in the research contexts genre might be regarded as an objective aspect of music, just as tempo or texture, it is to be noted that it could be considered to be a subjective judgement (Aucouturier and Pachet, 2003). The reason is that any two consumers listening to the same piece of music might classify it into varied genres or styles of music, depending on their distinctive interpretation of what makes a composition 'pop', 'classical', or 'jazz'. Furthermore, consumers typically combine a range of objective musical features into a categorisation of a song as 'light classical' versus 'instrumental jazz' (Rose and Wagner, 1995). However, when a piece of music is perceived as belonging to a particular genre, the cultural meanings associated with that category of music may become associated with the piece (Fiske, 1993). Moreover, it is believed that consumers do not make consumption choices merely based on products' features and utilities, but also based on their symbolic meanings (Douglas, 1982; Dittmar, 1992; Bourdieu, 2010). Therefore, it is important to utilise the symbolic meanings of various musical pieces used in advertisements in a manner that the meanings associated to each genre or style of music, along with the context of advertising, form an appropriate contextual congruity, resulting in producing a more desirable response in consumers.

The categories and classifications of musical genres are often too broad and not defined clearly. It may also be possible to refer to a piece of music as belonging to more than a single genre, thus making the assessment of the individual preferences somewhat loose and imprecise. However, it should be noted that although a piece of music representing a particular genre selected to be used in an advertisement might be categorised by some as being a sub-genre of a different genre, the most important point is that in the context of advertising music research, the researchers should verify the perceptions of composers and research participants that the compositions they use belong to specific genre categories. This is consistent with prior academic research in the area of musical effects in advertising and service environments.

Genre, as a distinctive characteristic of background music in advertisements, may influence consumers' product choice, their attitude and evaluations of the advertisement and the brand, and their perceived brand image. It can be proposed that different musical genres may be capable of reinforcing specific advertising messages in various advertising contexts. As Oakes and North (2011) point out, each musical genre may have a discrete form of relevance (utilitarian or hedonic) for the advertising message. They discuss that, for example, dance music is usually associated with hedonic messages, whilst classical music has association with functional or utilitarian messages of the advertisement. Selecting the appropriate musical genre is also important because research (Oakes, 2003) reveals that different genres (e.g., jazz and pop music) differ extensively based on their appeal to various demographic segments (e.g., age, gender, education).

On the other hand, research on the relationship between individuals' musical preferences and their personality and identity reveals that people prefer musical genres that underpin and reflect strands of their personal identities. For instance, Little and Zuckerman (1986) found that individuals high in sensation seeking favour stimulating and intense music (e.g. heavy metal, rock), while McCown et al. (1997) suggest that people with extravert personality prefer energetic party music (e.g. dance music), or individuals high in openness to experience prefer complex and sophisticated musical genres such as classical and jazz music (Rentfrow and Gosling, 2003). Therefore, advertising agencies may want to

consider these facts when selecting a particular musical genre that they want to be most suitable for their target market.

Furthermore, in the case of using popular music in advertisements, a specific modified version of the song used in an advertisement may be considerably different from the version known to listeners who have the experience of listening to the original song prior to their exposure to an advertisement, as a particular piece of music's most suggestive phrases may be dropped when used by the advertising agencies. As a result of omitting these parts, these excerpts used in advertisements may not entirely convey a complete meaning to an audience who are exposed to this version of music, and hence, the potential of music signification (representation of meaning) may be stimulated by the style and genre of that particular song rather than its opus. Thus, the genre of music may often play a pivotal role in musical signification, as it has been suggested that "the signification of commercial music has to do with the uses of fixed clichés" (Steiner-Hall, 1987, p. 56).

2.8.1.3. Genre congruity and consumers' responses to advertising

Reviewing the existing literature surrounding advertising music reveals how using various types of music may affect consumers' cognitive (e.g., brand attitude, evaluations, and recall) and conative or behavioural (e.g., purchase intent) responses to advertisements. The choice of the musical genre for an advertisement may help advertising agencies and product companies in their targeting and positioning of the brand. Oakes and North (2013) report how classical music used in advertising is associated with an image of upmarket sophistication, while dance music is associated with a hedonic image. The use of different genres of music in various advertising contexts may assist marketers in better positioning their products or brands, and may even be appealing to consumers who identify themselves with a particular genre of music or musician/band. In other words, consumers may connect with a particular piece of music as a result of being their favourite genre and subsequently be attracted to the advertised brand.

Hung (2001) investigates how background music in advertisements can influence consumers' perceptions by superimposing contrasting musical genres (classical and rock) over the advertisement.

In her research, participants (undergraduate students at a university in Hong Kong) who watched the classical music version provided more imagery of success when asked what images were evoked by the advertisement. In contrast, those who viewed the modern edge (rock) piece mostly produced imaginative imagery. Indeed, the congruent upmarket classical music has resulted in reinforcing the favourable up market brand image of the advertised shopping mall, and hence, the author concluded that similar to verbal captions, music can anchor the meanings viewers perceive in an advertisement. Furthermore, varied genres of music could in fact accentuate different visual images as well as different aspects of the same visual images and construe differential meanings for the advertisement and the brand. However, one limitation was that Hung (2001) examines the effects by looking exclusively at teaser advertisements which are highly visual advertisements, offering incomplete information, which mostly rely on lush visual elements to communicate the advertising message. In addition, Hung's research only used focus group data to explore the relationship between music and visual images. Gordon and Langmaid (1988) suggest that group processes may encourage unrealistic recounting of behaviour. Moreover, the dynamics of focus groups highly depend on the researcher's abilities and orientations (Wells, 1974). Based on the limitations mentioned above, Hung's (2001) research may include researcher's subjectivity as well as subjects' attempts to somehow rationalise their perceived meanings. Therefore, it is necessary that future research reflect on this research using more objective methods such as quantitative surveys through which reliability and validity of the measurements can be checked.

In the case of visual advertisements, music has the ability to maintain viewers' attention by smoothing out scene changes and binding together sequences of discrete visual images (Oakes, 2007). Previous research attempted to examine the effects of various musical genres on recall of information in visual advertising contexts. Research surrounding congruity reveals that musical cues tend to be more effective than verbal cues in eliciting recall of visual imagery (Stewart et al., 1990; Stewart, 1998) from an advertisement for a well-known car. In the study by Stewart et al. (1990), approximately three thousand household were contacted via phone over nine months. In the span of two weeks after starting the interviews with participants, a new advertisement for a car was broadcast. Participants in

the interview were asked to recall the visual elements of the advertisement with either a verbal cue such as brand name or a 10 second long piece of music that was used in the advertisement. They found that a considerably higher percentage of people (83%) were able to recognise the music, while only 62% of participants were able to recall the advertisement after hearing the verbal cue. It can be argued that as the hard rock music was intended to evoke the key features of the car (youthful and exciting to drive), the enhanced visual recall can be linked to the congruity between the musical genre and advertised brand.

Gorn et al. (1991) investigate the effectiveness of two different strategies (information-only and information-plus music) for elderly participants' recall and recognition of explicit product attributes and revealed that, although no musical genre was explicitly stated, the presence of music increased visual recall. However, their study did not examine whether the music used was congruent or incongruent with the brand being advertised. It can be argued that introducing higher musical congruity could have positively affected the informational message, enhancing consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand as well as their purchase intent. One of the objectives of the present thesis is to examine the effects on visual and verbal recall of advertising information using different genres, investigating how various genres of music that are perceived as congruent or incongruent influence consumers' responses to advertisements.

2.8.1.4. Genre congruity and original vs. famous background music in advertisements

Researchers who studied the impact of music upon message processing produced inconsistent results (Kellaris et al., 1993). Some of the studies revealed how music enhanced recall of the advertising message (e.g., Hoyer et al., 1984, Hunt, 1988; Wallace, 1991), while some others indicated that music had a negative or no effect on recall (e.g., Park and Young, 1986; Stout and Leckenby, 1988; Gorn, et al., 1991). Familiarity of music is considered as a factor that is expected to influence the amount of information load. Unfamiliar music may demand more resources to process compared to familiar music (Hahn, and Hwang, 1999). Therefore, using unfamiliar music in the advertisement may increase the possibility of information overload.

A number of studies have investigated the effects of using famous music by professional musicians on responses to advertising. For example, Hahn and Hwang (1999) examine the effects on memory in the context of television advertising. They discovered that famous music by professional musicians enhanced recall of information. However, one methodological limitation in this study was that subjects were exposed to the target ad three times, and therefore, it can be argued that subjects in the unfamiliar music condition may have become familiar with the music. Furthermore, their study did not examine whether the in/congruity between the music and the brand could be responsible for the results because they only used different excerpts of famous and original classical music for advertising a fictitious brand of soup.

In a more recent study, Chou and Lien (2014) reveal that song familiarity positively affects consumers' attitudes towards the product as well as their purchase intention. In other words, familiarity of the advertising music may result in generating positive affective responses that could be transferred to the advertised product/brand that consequently leads to enhancing advertising effectiveness. However, this study only investigated the effects of old songs and the influence of unfamiliar, original pieces of music was not examined. An important limitation of Chou and Lien's (2014) study was that the experiment focused solely on music-dominated advertisements for low-involvement products. It can be argued that in the case of advertising for high-involvement products, where advertisements contain more important verbal messages regarding the product where music is considered as a background element, consumers are more likely to attend to the product messages rather than the background music. Furthermore, consumers' advertisement processing is more likely to take place through the central route in the case of advertising for high-involvement products where music is usually considered as a peripheral cue and has a weaker influence on the attitude towards the advertisement and the brand (Jaworski and MacInnis, 1989). Furthermore, consumers exposed to advertisements with famous songs without their original lyrics (instrumental version) may consider this to be incongruent with their expectations. They may attempt to resolve the incongruity by singing the absent lyrics along with the song. This incongruity resolution process may ultimately result in enhancing the subsequent recall. In this context, the present thesis will also investigate the effects of

instrumental versions of famous songs in order to examine how this incongruity resolution could enhance recall of information.

2.8.2. Country of origin musical congruity

Research on musical congruity can be particularly interesting in light of developments in the psychology of arts during the 80s and 90s. Various studies carried out since the 1980s have revealed that individuals prefer artistic objects that are prototypical of the class in question (e.g., Whitfield and Slatter, 1979; Whitfield, 1983; Martindale and Moore, 1988; Hekkert and Van Wieringen, 1990). This suggests that typical exemplars of a certain category may be preferred to less typical exemplars. For instance, Georgian chair designs are perceived as more typical of the category “furniture”, and hence, preferred to more modern designs (Whitfield and Slatter, 1979). However, although the purpose of the preference-for-prototypes model is to explain preferences between aesthetic objects, it may be highly relevant to consumer research as it puts forward the role of knowledge activation in consumers’ response to music. This model contends that the human mind is composed of densely interconnected cognitive units in a way that a specific piece of music is capable of activating related knowledge structures. This theoretical framework may be parallel to Areni and Kim’s (1993) arguments around musical fit (genre congruity) and product choice which was discussed earlier in this chapter. Therefore, for example, music that is stereotypically Italian should activate related knowledge structures concerning Italy, which may in turn result in more positive cognitive and behavioural responses in consumers (e.g., enhanced recall and product choice). On the other hand, music that is stereotypically Chinese should activate related knowledge structures concerning China, which may prime the selection of Chinese products.

Music is viewed as a carrier of culture (see Albers-Miller and Gelb, 1996; Cheng and Schweitzer, 1996), and hence, the utilisation of music in advertising may involve the issue of congruity in cultural meanings. Certain styles of music can be associated with specific nations, so that music can be identified as “Chinese”, “Italian”, “French”, etc. even by listeners with otherwise limited knowledge of the corresponding culture (Folkestad, 2002; Boer et al., 2013). In the postmodern era where different styles proliferate and meanings change at an ever faster pace, advertisers and consumers

alike become active agents who substitute different meanings on to a consumption symbol (Hirschman et al., 1998). For example, particular types of music that were once a powerful expression of the culture of African-Americans (e.g., rap music) have become dominant in the mainstream popular culture, selling sneakers and soft drinks to young consumers around the world (Blair and Hatala, 1992). Furthermore, national music styles may evoke concepts and images congruent with cultural stereotypes of that country. For example, while German music might make consumers think of beer and bratwurst, French music might evoke images of wine and the Eiffel Tower (North et al., 1997; Tekman and Hortascu, 2002). Research on atmospheric cues in retail stores investigated the effects of the congruity of the country of origin of music and the product upon consumers' product choice. North et al. (1999) played French and German music on alternate days alongside French and German wines in the alcoholic beverages section of a supermarket. They examined the effects of stereotypically French and German background music on supermarket customers' selection of French and German wine and revealed that French music resulted in higher sales of French wine and German music resulted in selling more German wine. This study indicated how music can subconsciously prime relevant knowledge and the choice of certain products if they match that knowledge. It demonstrates that music has the capability to activate knowledge structures associated to a specific country which may in turn result in the selection of products that are congruent with those knowledge structures.

In a more recent study, North et al. (2016) investigate how the country of origin of music may affect consumers' product choice and recall in the context of a restaurant. Each group of participants were given a menu showing 30 main course food items (10 Chinese, 10 American, 10 Indian) when they enter a room. Each of the four rooms featured one of the three types of music playing on a continuous loop (Chinese, Indian, American), as well as a no-music condition. Participants were then asked to recall as many items as they could and choose one dish to order. Their findings indicated that individuals were more likely to select menu items associated with a given country when the music playing was from the same country compared to when it was from a different country. Also, the

number of recalled dishes from each country was higher when the music playing was associated with the same country compared to when it was from a different country.

Previous research has provided evidence that music primes semantically related concepts in an advertising setting (Oakes, 2007). However, very few studies have investigated the effects of the country of origin musical congruity in the context of advertising. Hung (2000) carried out research examining the influence of the congruity of country of music with visual stimuli upon consumers' evaluations of the advertisements. Hung (2000) reveals how a high level of congruity between music and advertising subject matter produced desired decoding of brand attitude. In her study, Hung (2000) used two existing commercials for coffee, *Brazil* and *Been to Cafe*, which were aired in Australia during the year 1991. These advertisements were both accompanied by instrumental pieces of music but involved no textual or verbal information. The *Brazil* advertisement was accompanied by a simple repetitive tune, resembling film music featuring faraway places, while *Been to Cafe* advertisement consisted of raspy avant-garde music. This study showed how the selection of Brazilian music to be incorporated in a Brazilian coffee advertisement reinforced perceptions of the natural authenticity of a Brazilian coffee brand and enhanced likelihood of purchase. It revealed that consumers may associate/generate meanings to or from different musical styles from various locations used in advertisements. When the natural video (*Brazil* advertisement containing rainforest scenes and Latin Americans working and drinking coffee in a wilderness setting) was accompanied by the supposedly Brazilian music containing reedy, primitive sounds, the outcome was the impression of authentic, natural Brazilian coffee, whereas, in the case of using avant-garde music, the coffee was perceived to be trendy. However, a potential flaw was that the *Been to Cafe* advertising version - featuring young men and women who appeared artistic and who socialised and drank coffee together in a sparsely decorated space - was in black-and-white, while the *Brazil* version was a colour advertisement. Furthermore, the lack of any sort of textual or verbal information may have affected the results, as it is common practice for advertisements to include information regarding the brand being advertised, whether it be a utilitarian product or a social identity/hedonic brand. Also, Hung's concern was to examine the effects of congruity between visual elements and music, rather than brand and music.

Nevertheless, in an advertising setting, music is clearly a component of the advertising stimulus that consumers pay attention to rather than an irrelevant background feature of the information processing environment. Furthermore, in the experiments conducted by North et al. (1999) and North et al. (2016) in service settings, as well as the study carried out by Hung (2000), the effects may be due to the variations between the stereotypical associations of different musical genres used in the experiments rather than the differences between the country of origin of music, because it is not clear whether the musical stimuli used in these studies were consistent in various conditions. Various genres of music differ based on their degree of complexity. For example, jazz and classical music are technically more complex than pop music (Gridley, 1984). In addition, different countries (e.g., China, India, Italy, France, Germany etc.) have their own classical, pop etc. music and thus it is important to explore the effects of musical congruity on consumers' purchase intent, recall, and attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, when the selected advertising genre remains constant for different treatments and the only manipulation is to select the music from different country of origins. It would indeed be interesting to examine the effects of congruity of country of origin of music with the brand and the advertising message on consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses in the context of radio advertising to see the impact of this type of congruity in the conditions where there is a lack of visual imagery.

2.8.3. Musical taste (dis/liking)

Musical liking may influence consumers' evaluation of service environments as well as their responses to advertising. Mehrabian and Russell (1974) propose that customers' approach behaviour in service environments can be a function of the emotional states of pleasure, arousal, and dominance and suggested that consumers tend to approach liked environments and avoid disliked environments. A stream of research surrounding the effects of music in service environments investigated the influence on consumer behaviours such as product choice, purchase intent, and evaluation of service. Andersson et al. (2012) examine the effects of presence and absence of music in a service store and found that consumers in the music condition spent more time and money in the store compared to those in the no-music condition. This confirms the findings of research by Turley and Milliman

(2000) which suggests that background music makes consumers feel better and hence, makes them spend more time and in turn spend more in the retail store. Research found that music in service settings may affect consumers' consumption behaviour/purchase decisions, product choice, and evaluation of service. In an experiment by Broekemier et al. (2008), subjects exposed to videos of an unfamiliar store accompanied by several musical treatments showed greater level of purchase intention when hearing happy and liked pieces of music. Similarly, Mattila and Wirtz (2001) reveal how liked music played in a retail environment positively influenced shopping intention of the customers. North and Hargreaves (1996) report that there is a positive correlation between liking the music and customers' willingness to return to a cafeteria. Conversely, using a disliked piece of music made them avoid it. At one point, even physical violence was threatened if cafeteria staff did not turn the music off. The degree of complexity of music is believed to be an influential element where less complex music produced higher level of acceptance on the part of consumers (North and Hargreaves, 1996). Likewise, Vaccaro et al. (2012) show how pleasant music enhanced consumers' prior-shopping experience, store visit frequency, and return intentions.

In the context of advertising, valence congruity arises when a liked piece of music supports advertising intention to trigger brand liking. In an experiment, Gorn (1982) found that consumers are less likely to choose products promoted in advertisements which are accompanied by disliked music. Similarly, Mittal (2015) confirms the classical conditioning effects of advertising music and found that viewing a pair of earrings accompanied by a liked piece of music enhanced the liking for the pair, while exposing the same pair of earrings with less-liked music negatively affected the liking for that pair. On the other hand, Oakes (2007) states that disliked background music may cause valence incongruity if the disliked piece of music undermines advertising plans to elicit positive brand attitude. Research also revealed that using disliked background music in advertisements will result in lowering the viewer's judgement of the credibility of the product or brand compared to a no-music treatment (Simpkins and Smith, 1974). Positive feelings created by liked advertising music can be transferred to the advertised brand (Hahn and Hwang, 1999). Conversely, disliked background music can play a disturbing role as it might not match the potential consumers' musical preferences or

because it may be perceived as boring, irritating, repetitive, and result in disrupting consumers' message processing. Craton et al. (2008) conducted a survey regarding the most disliked styles of music and revealed that respondents' negative attitudes toward disliked musical styles can be as intense as positive attitudes toward liked musical styles. Therefore, it is important to be wary of the negative effects of disliked background music in advertisements as they may be as strong as positive effects.

In an experiment by Simpkins and Smith (1974), three versions of a message were prepared and designed to promote a hypothetical message sponsor, American Association of Clothing Manufacturers; 1. verbal message only, 2. verbal message accompanied by country music, 3. a verbal message with rock music in the background. Their findings revealed how using a disliked musical genre in an advertisement resulted in lower brand evaluation compared to a liked musical genre or a no-music condition. Park and Young (1986) selected a number one chart hit as the epitome of positively valenced music and revealed how a liked chart hit enhanced brand attitude in a low-involvement condition. However, in the case of advertising for high-involvement products, consumers may be more skeptical as a result of higher level of perceived risk. In contrast, the positive effect on consumer brand attitude in low-involvement condition can be linked to musical liking as there is little need for further allocation of cognitive resources to evaluate different brands. Nevertheless, it is important to note that even a liked piece of music could be considered as incongruous in certain contexts which inevitably could diminish its positive values and effects (Oakes et al., 2013). Indeed, personal preferences and cultural attitudes towards a musical genre or subgenre may influence brand attitude, irrespective of whether the music is liked or disliked. However, it is important to investigate the effects of valence congruity and musical liking, as a subjective variable that may have complete personal relevance among consumers, in a context where it is possible to examine the effects on consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption. Netnography provides the opportunity for the researcher to collect data in both high- and low-involvement conditions where online postings on YouTube advertisement may reflect consumers' responses to various pieces of music they are familiar or unfamiliar with.

2.8.4. Semantic congruity

According to Murray and Murray (1996), song lyrics can have many functions in advertisements, such as developing empathy, gaining attention, communicating product attributes and benefit information, as well as conveying cultural values. Wallace (1994) argues that the interaction of musical lyrics and melodies in advertisements helps viewers retain lyrical information about the advertised brand in their long-term memory. In her experiment, Wallace (1994) asks participants to recall verses of a ballad that was either sung or spoken. Findings reveal how the sung version produced a significantly higher verbatim recall compared to the spoken words. Yalch (1991) points out that when a slogan is sung in a jingle, it may be remembered by consumers better compared to when it is merely spoken. Advertising music may contain lyrics that can help carrying the brand messages. However, when using popular music in advertising, the songs' release period and the lyrics' relevance (semantic congruity) to the product are two significant factors in determining consumers' response to advertisement. Yalch (1991) reveals how highly relevant lyrics enhances favourable ad execution-related thoughts which improves attitude towards the advertisement through eliciting good moods. MacInnis and Park (1991) found that high congruity between song lyrics in an advertisement and the advertising message resulted in more positive emotional response, thus enhancing the attitude towards the advertisement and the brand. A good example is the advertisement for the Mercedes car in which the vocal version of the song "Falling in Love Again" was used in order to establish an emotional connection through directing the attention of viewers to the voice of Marlene Dietrich singing that they can't help it and they 'fall in love' with Mercedes.

Advertising agencies frequently use famous songs that have highly relevant lyrics in order to enhance the process of delivering the advertising messages as a result of positive association with the product's brand attributes. This can be seen with the advent of using popular songs during the 1980s when using catchy tunes or jingles in advertisements gradually faded away. For example, Microsoft licensed The Rolling Stones' "Start Me Up" for Windows 95 and "Ray of Light" from Madonna for the Windows XP operating systems. Anisimova et al. (2014) investigate the integration of the lyrics in popular music and their interaction with other elements in advertisements by examining 96 Levi's television

advertisement and found a tight fit between the lyrics and the product/brand related messages. Their research reveals that lyrics can be influential in enhancing various reactions such as emotional responses and identification, as well as enhancing the product message. Olsen and Johnson (2002) reveal that the presence of meaningful lyrics in background music may have a significant influence on recall of product information through increased attention to the advertisement. Chou and Lien (2010) state that the congruity between the central advertising message and the advertising song lyrics can affect the advertising processing. Their findings reveal that lyrics' relevance has a great impact on brand attitudes. Another study by Chou and Lien (2014) reports that highly relevant lyrics positively affect attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand, as well as enhancing purchase intentions. Hence, highly relevant lyrics containing more information about the product lead to more favourable attitudinal responses as well as playing an important role in eliciting positive emotions and enhancing advertising effectiveness. However, although using semantically congruent popular songs in advertisements may result in enhancing consumers' attitude towards the ad/brand and their purchase intentions, using ineffective popular songs having incongruent lyrics may play a distracting role by confusing consumers as well as adversely affecting their purchase decisions.

In addition, semantic congruity can be closely linked with a highly sensitive issue for consumers in the context of using popular music in advertising, which is *commodification of music*. There has been a growing interest in using popular music in advertising during the last quarter of a century. Advertisers smartly and creatively use vocal versions of popular and well-known music to reinforce the brand message. Popular music, therefore, has become a big part of this branded and commodified practice. For example, while Bob Dylan's songs have been used as soundtracks for a range of social movements for social justice (Barbazon, 2011), mostly because of the highly relevant lyrics in those contexts, his songs have also been sold to advertise a range of products and companies, such as the use of 'Love Sick' and 'Sunday baby' in Victoria's Secret and Apple's iPod iTunes advertisement. Another good example could be the use of Janis Joplin's song 'Mercedes Benz'. This song was being used in Mercedes's advertising campaigns in the 1990's, although initially it was not the plan to license the music for the Mercedes advertising. Irrespective of whether the musical compositions and

the integration of songs and brands are done with initial planning, brands choose popular songs with relevant lyrics or even mention the brand name in the advertising music to capture listeners' attention through association, and enhance their attitude and purchase intent. However, in many cases, using popular music with lyrics that are aligned with the advertising message have created a serious backlash amongst music lovers. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, there have been many criticisms regarding the commodification of music as fine art. As we saw in the case of Nike's use of the song 'Revolution' in their advertising campaign, consumers may perceive this as a serious case of semantic incongruity, as they believe that the lyrics of the song 'Revolution' or any other pieces of music that can be considered as sacred pieces of art may be untouchable and cannot be linked with any commodity, even though the song might contain some relevant lyrics. This research, therefore, attempts to investigate and discover the effects of semantic in/congruity in various advertising contexts on consumers' attitude and purchase behaviour. As this is a relatively sensitive topic, acquiring unbiased information would be a challenge in this context, and thus, the present thesis offers a relatively innovative technique for data collection through collecting and analysing consumers' online comments in the context of YouTube (netnography), which will be discussed in more depth in the methodology chapter.

2.8.5. Repetition congruity

The human vulnerability towards music has helped advertising agencies and marketing executives in exploiting people's minds in order to achieve a high level of sales and profit, as Oakes et al. (2011, p.93) point out: "The advertising literature also regards music as a tool of persuasion through which consumers are exposed to sonic branding, earworms and jingles that can enhance brand attitudes, recall of key benefits, and subsequent purchase behaviour". Advertising music and various types of sonic logos are believed to have a deep positive influence on consumers' perception and evaluation of brands through designing and creating brand identity by means of sound (Kastner, 2013). However, the repetition of sound in the human brain may also sometimes lead to an undesirable experience. In other words, although the catchy tunes used in the advertisements could enhance the level of consumers' brand recall through association of particular pieces of music with specific brands,

sometimes the over-repetition (repetition incongruity) of the advertisements containing catchy music may result in producing negative effects in consumers rather than being a positive branding strategy. Musical repetition may be linked to the expectancy component of congruity, for example, when negative consumer responses to it are heightened by exceeding an expected threshold of repetitions. If the consumers are over-exposed to a particular advertisement, they may feel annoyed by the repetition of the music which might ultimately overshadow the benefits of musical association. As a result, the music used in the advertisement will no longer be desired by the listeners. It may be extremely harmful for the advertised brand if consumers are irritated by excessive repetition of an advertisement. This will not only damage the consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, but may also produce negative feelings towards background music as well as the artist. Furthermore, although musical repetition may provide security through its daily predictability, excessive musical repetition can trigger resistance to the homogenising routines of the market, resulting in disliking the music and advertising, as consumers are increasingly resistant to obtrusive persuasion attempts (Yeu et al., 2013).

Beaman and Williams (2010, p. 637) define an earworm as "the experience of an inability to dislodge a song and prevent it from repeating itself in one's head". This widely experienced involuntary cognition is also referred to as 'stuck song syndrome' (Levitin, 2011), 'brainworms' or 'sticky music' (Sacks, 2010), and 'involuntary musical imagery' (Liikkanen, 2008). It can be argued that earworms created as a result of excessive exposure to advertising can get very annoying if the level of cognitive processing or the amount of cognitive resources required for processing a piece of music is excessively high.

Kellaris (2003) refers to earworms as a *cognitive itch*, explaining the way these songs get stuck in our head. He points out that we tend to repeat these songs again and again in our minds because this is the only way to scratch a cognitive itch. Various studies investigated the impact of cognitive resource allocation on consumers' brand evaluation (e.g. Edell and Staelin, 1983; Shiv et al., 1997) and found that there seems to be a relationship between the cognitive resources required and cognitive resources available for processing the message. Many of the target listeners may not be consciously aware that

they are the target of various earworms everyday as it can be argued that the reception of sound is a naturally subliminal process and hence, the information is more likely to be processed through an emotional route and not at a conscious and rational level. Keller and Block (1997) argue that the match between the available and required cognitive resources may enhance persuasion in the context of advertising. A relatively recent study by Halpern and Bartlett (2011) suggest that the majority of people may consider earworms as a pleasant experience as only 15% of the participants in their study found it an unpleasant experience. Indeed, the influence of repetition in/congruity on consumers' cognitive, affective, and behavioural responses to advertising may vary depending on different factors such as likability and style. While repetition in/congruity may or may not have personal relevance for individual consumers, exceeding consumers' expected thresholds of repetition may result in producing heightened responses to advertising which can be better explored in a context where it is possible to collect netnographic findings from consumers' phenomenological experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising.

2.8.6. Indexical congruity

Oakes (2007) points out that consumers' past experience of being exposed to a particular piece of music can influence effective musical communication in advertisements. Oakes argues that although using widely known songs in advertisements may lead to higher attention gain and transferring positive effects, different consumers may have positive or negative memories of that particular piece of music. Music is considered as one of the most important background features of advertising with respect to its capability to create nostalgic feelings in consumers. According to Dowling and Harwood (1986), music can be *connected* with previous emotion-laden experiences, which is the 'Indexicality of Music'; the extent to which a music is able to stimulate emotion-laden memories (MacInnis and Park, 1991). Advertisements with popular background music which are well-known and highly relevant to individuals are capable of grabbing a greater level of attention as well as leading to greater memorability of the advertisement and brand information compared to those accompanied by less well-known songs (Allan, 2006).

In research by Kerrigan et al. (2014), it is observed that listening to certain music reminded participants of particular memories which were associated with their previous positive experiences. Advertising music associated with negative or sad memories of past times may negatively influence the brand evaluation of consumers (Blair and Shimp, 1992). Conversely, music associated with positive memories or experiences is likely to enhance brand attitude. However, in addition to eliciting positive emotions, nostalgia can also elicit some negative emotions related to feeling of loss, such as sadness and anxiety (Holak and Havlena, 1998). This is perhaps because although people recall the happiness of their past events in their lives, they will not be able to ever experience them again which makes them feel disappointed. Therefore, as Baker and Kennedy (1994) suggest, the positive emotions evoked by an old nostalgic song may be more or less connected with some negative feelings which result in producing a level of mixed/bittersweet emotions.

Nostalgia refers to a yearning for the past or a fondness for possessions and activities associated with the days gone by (Holbrook, 1993). It is “*a preference (general liking, positive attitude, or favourable affect) toward objects (people, places, or things) that were more common (popular, fashionable, or widely circulated) when one was younger (in early adulthood, in adolescence, in childhood, or even before birth)*” (Holbrook and Schindler, 1991, p. 330). Hence, as Davis (1979) points out, nostalgia is concerned with positively or sentimentally recalling the past events, generally associated with happy times or periods in life, and simultaneously involve negative feelings toward the present or the future. According to Marchegiani and Phau (2012), nostalgia is a concept that is connected with the past and is believed to affect consumer behaviour. Research revealed that a nostalgic advertisement produced more favourable responses (brand attitude and purchase intention) than a non-nostalgic advertisement, irrespective of consumers’ past association with the brand (Muehling et al., 2014).

Grayson and Martinec (2004) discuss the concept of indexical authenticity and the benefits of perceived connections with the past. If the consumers believe that they are exposed to something authentic, they feel that they are taken to the context to which the object or location is authentically linked, thus feeling a greater connection with the context. Authentic possessions help to ‘reproduce the past for the future’ (Weiner, 1992, p.9). When consumers are exposed to what they perceive as

genuinely authentic music, they have the opportunity to ‘travel back into the past’ (Walsh, 2001, p. 101), feeling that they witness an imagined past and vicariously experience this ‘past brought to life’ (Grayson and Martinec, 2004, p. 302). Although authentic music may allow consumers to believe they can experience what it felt like to live back then (e.g., imagining the rebellious counterculture movement of the 1960’s when listening to John Lennon’s ‘Revolution’), these consumers may not even have been born at the time.

In netnography research, Brown et al. (2003) investigate the rise of retro brands by reviewing the relevant literature on nostalgia. They defined retro brands as relaunched historical brands containing new features. Advertising agencies may use different elements in order to create nostalgic feelings in consumers (e.g. images from old advertisements, using characters from the past, using music associated with a particular period in the past or period-oriented music, and using popular songs). For example, in 1987, Mercedes Benz used Marlene Dietrich’s version of “Falling in love again” that was originally released in 1930 as their background music in an advertisement to portray the history of the company and what they achieved throughout the years (Braun-LaTour, 2007). Despite the increase in utilisation of the concept of nostalgia in marketing and advertising practices, only a small number of empirical studies investigated the effects of nostalgia within an advertising context.

Barrett et al. (2010) conduct an experiment to examine the extent to which randomly selected popular songs created nostalgic feelings and reveal that songs which are autobiographically salient, arousing, familiar, and elicit a higher level of positive, negative, and mixed emotions produce stronger nostalgic feelings. However, it can be argued that in their experiment, the effects may be moderated by individual differences such as nostalgic proneness and mood state. Chou and Lien (2010) suggest that songs from different periods in life may have varied degrees of nostalgia and a particular piece of music is often linked to certain events in individuals’ lives. In an experiment using undergraduate students between the age of 17 and 23, they demonstrate how popular, previously-heard songs enhance the effectiveness of the advertisement through evoking good moods in consumers or producing favourable nostalgia-related thoughts. Their findings also reveal that the older the music, the more nostalgic feelings are likely to be evoked. Chou and Lien (2010) point out that using an old

song in an advertisement can give a flavour of nostalgia to it, even though neither the particular advertised product, nor the advertisement theme contain inherently nostalgic components.

The effects may differ from person to person when considering the type of experience or memory associated with a particular piece of music, although advertisements containing nostalgic cues often tend to bring back pleasant memories rather than unpleasant or sad memories. Sujan et al. (1993) point out how autobiographical memories, emotions, and affect evoked by a nostalgic song are more likely to be positive. In a more recent study, Chou and Lien (2014) reveal that compared to new songs, old songs are capable of generating a higher level of nostalgia-related thoughts and that the higher proportion of these thoughts are positive. Furthermore, they found that song familiarity positively affects consumers' attitudes towards the product as well as their purchase intention. In other words, familiarity of the advertising music may result in generating positive affective responses that could be transferred to the advertised product/brand that consequently leads to enhancing advertising effectiveness.

Existing research on the impact of indexical congruity in advertising has mostly focused on comparing the effects of nostalgic and non-nostalgic advertisements (e.g., Pascal et al., 2002; Muehling et al., 2004). Therefore, there is a need to investigate how advertising elements such as music moderate or reinforce nostalgia related effects. Furthermore, previous research in this area represents a number of limitations. For example, in Chou and Lien's (2010; 2014) experiments, the samples were selected amongst undergraduate students only. It is suggested that consumers' responses to nostalgia may be different for varied age categories. As Reisenwitz et al. (2004) point out, nostalgic elements may produce stronger responses in older individuals. Therefore, it is highly important to explore the effects on consumers of varied demographic backgrounds. Secondly, their studies merely focus on the advertisements for low-involvement products in which music is dominant. However, a subsection of advertisements are the ones containing important verbal messages, promoting different types of high-involvement goods and services, in which music is considered to be more like a background element. It can be suggested that in the case of high-involvement products, consumers may pay more attention to product messages rather than music and their processing of advertisements

is more likely to be through the central route (see section 3.9.). Thus, an objective of the present research is to test the generalisability of the findings of the study by Chou and Lien (2010) through investigating the effects of different variables in high-involvement conditions. Last but not least, the studies by Chou and Lien (2010; 2014) are limited to exploring the effects using only pop music related to happiness and infatuation. Therefore, future studies need to investigate the influence on consumers' responses using various genres of music which are related to both happiness and sadness (composed in both major and minor modes).

There are varied opinions concerning the concept of proneness to nostalgia. Reisenwitz et al. (2004) suggest that there is a positive relationship between age and proneness to nostalgia, meaning that older individuals are more prone to nostalgic feelings, whereas, research by Holbrook and Schindler (1991) reveal that consumer responses are generally susceptible to nostalgic feelings starting at age 24.

2.9. Advertising stimuli, contexts, and advertising media used in the present thesis

The present section attempts to highlight the significance of the chosen advertising contexts such as university and restaurant advertising used in the experimental studies of the present thesis to address questions related to musical congruity. It provides the reasons to justify the selection of various tangible and intangible products to be used in different studies of the present thesis, briefly explains the role of involvement, and introduces different advertising media (e.g., radio and TV advertisements) used in the studies of the present thesis.

2.9.1. The role of product involvement; central vs. peripheral processing

Involvement can be defined as the extent to which a purchase decision has perceived personal importance, relevance, and consequences for the consumer (Petty et al., 1983; Greenwald and Leavitt, 1984). High-involvement products are believed to be very important in terms of their acquisition, ownership, and consumption. Consumers are willing to make significant pre-purchase commitments such as spending considerable time carrying out an extensive search for information about the brand, quality, and the price before they actually make the purchase in high-involvement conditions. On the

other hand, low-involvement products are those that are purchased more frequently, with minimal level of thought and effort, and are considered to be relatively insignificant in terms of the factors mentioned above (Gnepsa, 2012).

The Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM) of persuasion developed by Petty and Cacioppo (1986; 1996) has provided a comprehensive theoretical explanation for change and formation of attitude. Based on the ELM, the process of elaborating upon advertising information can take place via two different routes, namely the central and peripheral routes. The theory suggests that individuals may elaborate upon advertising data through the central route when the level of involvement is high. In this situation, persuasion may occur by means of the rational messages presented by the advertisement. On the other hand, in a low-involvement condition, the influence and the persuasion typically take place through simple decision criteria by means of cues such as celebrity endorsement, charisma, or the attractiveness of the sender of the message (Angst and Agarwal, 2009).

Previous studies in the area of advertising music almost exclusively focussed on investigating the effects of background music considering low-involvement goods (e.g. Gorn, 1982; Park and Young, 1986; Bozman et al., 1994; Olsen, 1997; Hung, 2000). Consequently, there is a need to investigate the effects of music in advertising in a high-involvement condition. Furthermore, the extant body of research on advertising music investigated the role of product involvement mostly in the conditions of presence and absence of music. For example, Park and Young (1986) investigate the impact of involvement and music (presence or absence of music) on brand attitude and reveal that music facilitated brand attitude and purchase intent in the low-involvement condition, but played a distracting role and interfered with brand attitude formation and purchase intent of consumers at the cognitive level.

It is proposed that high-involvement messages have more personal relevance or set up more personal connections than low-involvement messages (Sherif and Hovland, 1961; Krugman, 1965; Petty and Cacioppo, 1979; Engel and Blackwell, 1982). In contrast, under low-involvement conditions, musical liking seems to enhance brand attitude, as there would be limited need for cognitive processing. MacInnis and Park (1991) reveal how music significantly enhanced message processing for low-

involvement consumers. The present research provides the opportunity to examine the role of background music congruity in various advertising contexts, including advertising for different high- and low-involvement goods and services.

2.9.2. Higher Education advertising

Higher education institutions provide several public services, including student human capital development, basic and applied research, and economic development of surrounding communities (Fay and Zavattaro, 2016). It is vitally important for universities to understand the external perceptions of their brand (Watkins and Gonzenbach, 2013). The intense competition among Higher Education (HE) institutions, as well as their decreased budgets and funding have forced universities to emphasise branding activities (Mazzarol and Soutar, 1999; Mok, 1999; Anctil, 2008; Curtis, et al., 2009). The UK universities could hope to shore up their market by looking abroad before Brexit had taken place, but now foreign students may prefer to study in a country committed to the EU rather than one that has turned its back on their home countries (Doward and Ratcliffe, 2016). Nevertheless, Nick Hillman, director of the Higher Education Policy Institute, points out that there has been a big growth in the number of EU students coming to the UK (Doward and Ratcliffe, 2016). Monitoring the number of students in England entering university in the past decade or so reveals that in 2011, 50% of young people in England entered university, while this figure was 46.6% in 2013 when tuition fees were tripled to £9000 in 2012 (Doward and Ratcliffe, 2016). This indicates the importance of tuition fee levels and how it can affect prospective students' university enrolment. However, according to data by the United Kingdom Accreditation Service (UKAS) (December 2015), the decline in the number of young people in England entering university recovered as the statistics show that there was an increase of 3.1% including students from UK, EU, and Non-EU countries, compared to 2014. It is indeed interesting to see that the number of people applying for UK universities has recently fallen by more than 25,000 (4%) after the vote for Brexit. The number of EU students planning to study in the UK has fallen by 5% in 2017, compared to 2016 (Sellgren, 2017). Moreover, there have been reductions in applicants from all four countries in the UK since 2016. Perhaps factors such as the

increase in fees to £9,250 as well as the increase in interest rates for student loans in 2017 (rising from 4.6% to 6.1% from autumn 2017) play a significant role in this decline (Sellgren, 2017).

Therefore, rising competition in the HE market, the university budget constraints, increases in tuition fees and interest rates on tuition loans, as well as uncertainties as a result of Brexit have made HE branding exercises extremely important. Branding is a means for the management of the organisational reputation (Naidoo et al., 2014). Through their unique brands, universities can signal which market segments they target and establish a clear mission that fulfils a need within specific market segments or niches (Mampaey et al., 2015). In order to demonstrate that the product is worthy of attention and support, HE institutions strive to convey value and distinctiveness to potential customers through branding. Branding helps in establishing and communicating quality and legitimacy (Sargeant and Ford, 2006; Chapleo, 2011). A better understanding of students' reaction to various advertising activities and their interaction with a university brand may help managers in designing and developing effective marketing and advertising activities and communicating a more desirable brand image to potential customers. In order for universities to be able to differentiate themselves in today's competitive market and communicate a sense of brand distinctiveness, it is crucial for them to investigate their perceived brand identity and image by potential customers (students).

Although previous studies examined various elements influencing the effectiveness of music used in advertising, very few of them have investigated the effects in the context of university advertising and mostly examined the impact on profit in various business sectors and industries (e.g., Harris and De Chernatony, 2001; Schultz and De Chernatony, 2002; Balmer and Greyser, 2006; Hankinson, 2012; Hsiao and Chen, 2013). Therefore, more research is needed to examine the effects of various marketing and advertising activities on students' attitude and perception of the university brand image and identity. Watkins and Gonzenbach (2013) point out that brand recognition in the context of HE is believed to be more challenging compared to brand recognition in the corporate sector. HE institutions try to develop a brand image and identity and build the kind of reputation that meets students' needs. Indeed, Temple (2006) points out that it would be better to refer to branding in HE as reputation management or public relations. Part of the reputation of the university (whether it be the

academic excellence or the quality of nightlife) can be due to the positioning activities of the institutions and how they represent themselves in terms of brand image and identity. Yavas and Shemwell (1996) suggest that the brand image that a university represents may largely affect the public's attitude towards that institution. Pinar et al. (2011) point out that the brand identity of a higher education institution plays a crucial role in shaping consumer and stakeholder attitudes towards that institution. Furthermore, the image that a university portrays may affect students' intention and willingness to apply to that institution (Ivy, 2001). Hence, it is highly important for universities to develop a distinct image and differentiate themselves in order to achieve a competitive advantage over other institutions in this competitive market.

The present thesis investigates the effects of musical congruity on consumers' responses to advertising for higher education in the context of television advertising. Selecting television advertising as the research medium helps in conveying both hedonic and utilitarian messages regarding the advertised course and university. Television advertising is generally believed to be the most effective mass-market advertising format channel, which is reflected in amounts the client companies are charged by TV networks to broadcast their adverts. It has been suggested that, in general, television executives believe that most of the advertisers covet the 18-49 age demographic (Storey, 2006). Therefore, the use of television advertising to examine the advertising music effects on consumer behaviour is of high relevance when the research participants are university students. (Please see the methodology chapter of the present thesis for further information on preparing the advertising video to be used in the present thesis).

2.9.2.1. Perceived image, identity, and reputation in HE

While HE marketing research was previously considered as underdeveloped (Hankinson, 2004), more advanced branding concepts have been investigated within the sector, such as brand as image (Chapleo, 2007), brand identity (Lynch, 2006), brand image differentiation (Heslop and Nadeau, 2010), brand meaning (Salleh, 2011), brand consistency (Casey and Llewellyn, 2012), brand reputation (Finch et al., 2013; Suomi, 2014), along with various branding challenges in higher education (Chapleo, 2015).

Srivastava (2010) contends that brand identity exists before brand image, and brand image is a synthesis made by various brand messages. Kapferer (2004) identifies brand identity to be what the company presents to the customer. Similarly, Keller (2001) describes brand identity as ‘Who are you?’ or ‘How strategists want the brand to be perceived?’. Regardless of various definitions offered by various scholars, it is indeed important to acknowledge the challenges of establishing a desired brand image or identity for a higher education institution, and different elements that could be used in HE institutions marketing communications strategies that could facilitate transferring and communicating an intended favourable brand image to prospective students. At a micro level, individual universities are allocating more resources to enhancing their marketing communications to prospective students and other stakeholders and to developing their brands (Chapleo, 2010). This allocation of resources seems to be very effective, as university brands have already been recognised as a highly differentiating factor (Qian, 2009) in terms of recruitment and retention of the best students and staff members (Florea, 2011). Brands can play a key role in affecting perceptions, and especially those of a major stakeholder group, such as a higher education institution’s prospective and current students (Rutter et al., 2017). The student’s decision to enrol to a university is influenced by his or her perception of that university, and therefore strong brands have been argued to be positively linked to recruitment performance (Salleh, 2009), and therefore, HE branding is now considered a key factor for success (Rutter et al., 2016).

There has been a rapid change in the regulations, emerging technologies, diversity and demand of international markets and students in the HE sector (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006). Universities have been urged to develop their marketing activities in order to remain competitive in this turbulent market (Asaad, et al., 2013). In recent years, most UK universities have spent large amounts of money on adopting various techniques of branding (Chapleo, 2011). Most educational institutions now recognise the need to adopt marketing practices, especially branding (Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana, 2007; Maringe and Gibbs, 2008; Celly and Knepper, 2010; Chapleo, 2015). Indeed, the focal point of branding activities has shifted from the tangible elements such as logo and name to intangible aspects such as brand personality and emotional benefits (Aaker 1996; Keller, 2013). Hence, in the context of HE, how the students perceive the university image plays an important role in

determining the value and distinctiveness of the service offered by the university. As Keller mentions, 'the power of the brand lies in what resides in the minds of customers' (1998, p. 59). In other words, the knowledge and information that consumers hold about a brand may directly influence their perceived brand value. Universities try to promote a specific image and identity in order to affect students' perceptions and evaluations of their service. Nevertheless, HE institutions offering intangible service to students have a complex job in communicating their brand identity to the public. However, as Idris and Whitfield (2014) argue, branding in HE as a non-profit sector is still at its early stages of development. Despite recent strategic developments and focus on branding for UK universities (Rolfe, 2003), limited work has been undertaken in terms of academic research in order to address the issues related to HE advertising (Hemsley-Brown and Oplatka, 2006; Wæraas and Solbakk, 2009).

Barich and Kotler (1991) define institutional image as the overall impression created in the minds of consumers about an organisation which may be a function of different physical and behavioural features of the organisation. A university such as Oxford that enjoys a high academic reputation throughout the world may suggest that its brand equity is higher than many of the universities in the UK or even worldwide. The good reputation will help Oxford University to attract excellent staff and high-level students from all over the world. Additionally, Kennedy (1977) points out that institutional image consists of functional and emotional factors. He describes the functional component as tangible attributes of an organisation that can be easily measured, whereas the emotional component is related to psychological aspects that are evident in feelings and attitudes towards an institution. However, it is important to note that HE institutions may initiate appropriate marketing communications strategies in order to reinforce or alter the meanings that are projected from their brand image and identity, because as Allen (1984) suggests, organisational reputation is a final outcome of the collective processes of building institutional image.

2.9.2.2. Advertising music in the context of HE

Considering the significance of branding in the context of higher education, researchers assert that understanding institutional branding (Duesterhaus and Duesterhaus, 2014) and articulating that brand creates great value for universities (Hemsley-Brown and Goonawardana, 2007; Casidy and Wymer, 2016). However, there is scarce research on branding in higher education, especially surrounding university brand image (Melewar and Akel, 2005; Rauschnabel et al., 2016). The present research, therefore, aims at extending the theory on advertising music and consumer behaviour and exploring how musical in/congruity contributes to students' responses to HE advertisements.

An advertisement can convey hedonic, utilitarian, or a mixture of hedonic and utilitarian messages (Hill et al., 2004). Hedonic messages focus on pleasurable and enjoyable aspects which are aimed at transferring a feeling of engagement with the activities depicted in the advertisement (Wakefield and Barnes, 1996). In contrast, utilitarian messages focus on practical aspects such as quality of a product and durability. Similarly, a university advertisement may convey various messages to the prospective students and public. It can be comprised of pictures of happy students engaging in fun and exciting activities such as clubbing or sightseeing, thus conveying a hedonic image. Alternatively, it may emphasise utilitarian messages including quality of education, staff expertise, facilities and student support service, as well as future job opportunities. Wakefield and Inman (2003) argue that engaging and involving individuals through hedonic messages result in higher motivation to process information. Hill et al. (2004) point out that utilitarian messages rarely result in emotional involvement.

University is considered to be a high-involvement product as students require to spend a large amount of money and time engaging with the university education process. New media studies have analysed brand personality and identity communicated through written text online (Rutter et al., 2015). Also, other branding concepts such as identity traits conveyed by university logo (Alessandri et al., 2006; Watkins and Gonzenbach, 2013) or words used (Chapleo et al., 2011) have been explored within the HE sector. However, very few studies have specifically explored the impacts of background music in university advertisements on variables such as students' attitude towards the advertised university,

their perceived image of the university, and their intention to enrol. For example, Oakes and North (2011) investigate how perceived narrator age in radio advertising for universities can influence students' attitude towards the advertised university, advertising message recall, intention to enrol, and their perceived image of the university. Fram (1982, p. 10) points out that an "institution's actual quality is often less important than its prestige or reputation for quality". Fram suggests that establishing a positive brand image for an institution can serve as a distinctive marketing strategy for a long time. Nevertheless, it is to be noted that the opposite can be true as well which means that a negative image for an institution may have a long standing negative impact on its overall reputation. Therefore, it is important to investigate how musical congruity/incongruity in advertising for universities may affect the way institutions attempt to portray a desired intended image that helps them in enhancing prospective students' perceived image, evaluation of the service, recall, as well as their intention to enrol.

2.9.3. Restaurant advertising, music, and enhancing consumer response

Restaurant operators are constantly increasing the amount spent on advertising. Restaurant managers are continually striving to create a sustainable brand image in an increasingly competitive market environment (Hur and Alder, 2011). However, despite the considerable investment in advertising and promotional activities, the failure rate within the restaurant business remains high. Restaurants primarily compete on 'style' which is a broad term that may include service, price, decor, the appearance of the staff and customers and the combination of all of these factors which create the overall 'atmosphere' of the restaurant (Finkelstein, 1989). Heide and Gronhaug (2009) point out that positive atmosphere in consumption environments such as restaurants may attract and satisfy customers, as well as enhancing earnings. Therefore, portraying a desirable atmosphere of a restaurant through marketing communications may play a great role in its success. Restaurant owners attempt to differentiate their service through creating a good reputation for their restaurant by communicating a positive image of the various factors that matter to the customers. Finkelstein (1989) points out how atmosphere as a feature of dining out is of similar or even greater importance than the quality of food. Jang and Namkung (2009) suggest three factors as the main restaurant attributes influencing

consumers' perceived quality of dining experience, namely service quality, product quality, and atmospherics. Hence, an advertisement for a restaurant should be capable of transferring not only a positive image of the food quality, but also a favourable image of the quality of the service provided during the dining experience.

In the marketing literature, perceived quality is defined as a consumer's subjective judgement about the direct experience of a product or service (O'Neill and Palmer, 2003; Chen and Chen, 2014). If perceived service quality exceeds a customer's expectation, then a positive disconfirmation is created which implies that the customer is satisfied. But if perceived service quality falls below the customer's expectation, then a negative disconfirmation is created, which means that the customer is dissatisfied (Young and Jang, 2008; Torres, 2014). The importance of service quality and food quality in the context of restaurants and the significance of customers' perceptions of quality and the effects on their consumption behaviours have been repeatedly emphasised in various studies (e.g., Baker and Crompton, 2000; Olsen, 2002; Ryu and Han, 2010; Clemes et al., 2011; Cao and Kim, 2014; Josiam et al., 2014; Rashid et al., 2015; Wu and Mohi, 2015; Wu and Li, 2015). Previous research acknowledged that high quality employee service may lead to enhancing customer satisfaction which in turn results in improving consumption behaviours such as spreading positive word of mouth recommendation as well as revisiting the restaurant (e.g., Cronin et al., 2000; Chow et al., 2007). In addition, customers' dining experience and intention to revisit a restaurant can also be influenced by other factors which are known as atmospherics (e.g., music, lighting). Restaurant atmospherics are believed to influence customers' emotions and expectations about the quality of food and service (Reimer and Kuehn, 2005; Wall and Berry, 2007). Customers usually tend to have expectations regarding restaurants' food and service quality as well as atmospherics before even visiting the restaurant.

According to Bitner (1990), expectations of atmospherics, food, and service quality may affect customers' decision making and choice of restaurant to visit, as well as their dining behaviour and reactions to the actual foods and services in restaurants. Thus, it is vitally important for restaurant advertisers to be able to communicate a desirable brand image and create positive expectations and

perceptions of various important elements that may directly or indirectly affect consumers' attitudes and behaviour and the level of attention gain in order to better attract them. Customers may consider different attributes and apply various criteria in evaluating those attributes influencing their decision and choice of restaurant. It is important that a restaurant's advertisement observes these attributes and adopts the right strategies to reinforce the elicitation of favourable feelings and attitudes in consumers. Background music can indeed play a vital role in supporting the brand image to be communicated in advertisements. Saulpaugh et al. (2012) investigate the impact of music on consumers' perceptions of a product's image and found that using background music was more effective in creating a desirable image, compared with the no-music treatment. The ultimate purpose of advertising and promotional activities of restaurants is to communicate a favourable image of the product (food and service) and restaurant atmosphere in order to enhance profitability. Therefore, restaurant advertising is selected as another advertising stimulus to explore the effects of musical congruity, because this is a context that carries high level of importance particularly for the research samples in the present thesis' experiments who are university students.

2.9.4. Radio as an advertising research medium

Advertising-generated mental imagery may reconcile the ad-evoked feelings and attitudes elicited by advertising (Bone and Ellen, 1991). Thus, marketing managers need to establish effective strategies to evoke positive mental imagery in order to elicit positive emotions and desirable attitudes towards their advertisements and brands. In this context, radio advertising is of particular importance as it is a medium that is well-suited and highly relevant for imagery-evoking strategies such as sound effects, vivid verbal messages, and specific instructions to listeners to imagine (Russell and Lane, 1990). Research has indicated how music and other types of sound in radio advertising enhance imagery activity in audiences (Miller and Marks, 1992). It showed that when increased imagery activity is accompanied by the elicitation of positive feelings, it will enhance listeners' attitude towards the advertisement. Furthermore, it indicated that sound may have profound effects on consumers' imagery and affective response to radio advertisements as it directly activates memory structures that contain perceptual information.

Babin et al. (1992) argue that the type of advertised product may affect consumers' mental and imagery processing as well as involvement. For example, products that are considered as utilitarian may hinder consumers' visualisation process and the extent to which they rely on their perceptions of product features and qualities. In the context of the present thesis, since restaurants offer the type of product that is hedonic in nature, radio advertisements for restaurants are capable of evoking mental imagery in consumers, allowing them to visualise restaurants' atmosphere through quasi-perceptual experience generated by various features of the advertisement such as background music. Furthermore, the high level of source credibility and penetration rate, as well as the ability to generate mental images in audiences have made radio advertising an important medium for restaurant advertisers to influence consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses, which may in turn result in a greater level of persuasion.

Investigating consumers' responses to radio advertising is particularly important because there is no interference from visual activities associated with television advertising. Background music, as an important feature in radio advertising, plays an important role in determining the level of favourableness of an advertising message. Previous research attempted to investigate various elements and attributes in the context of radio advertising such as the impact of narrator age congruity (Oakes and North, 2011), the relationship between musical tempo and perceived duration (Oakes, 1999), effects of music and spokesperson on affective and cognitive response to radio advertising (Wheatley and Brooker, 1994; Martin-Santana et al., 2014), and the effects of humour on liking, attention, and recall (Cantor and Venus, 1980; Duncan and Nelson, 1985). Advertising agencies and client companies spend a considerable amount of money to use music as one of the crucial features in radio advertising. Páez and Veloso (2008) point out that more than 80% of radio advertisements in Spain contain music as an important background feature. Using background music in radio advertisements could result in a significant commercial advantage to advertisers by adding value and improving advertising effectiveness. Therefore, the present thesis uses the radio advertising medium as there seems to be a dearth of research directly addressing the influence of musical congruity on consumers'

responses in the context of radio advertising, as opposed to the higher number of research carried out in the context of television advertising.

2.10. Summary and research objectives

The present literature review chapter identified various dimensions of congruity through careful categorisation, appraisal and analyses of the extant bodies of empirical literature. It distinguished dimensions of congruity including genre congruity, country of origin musical congruity, musical taste, semantic congruity, repetition congruity, and indexicality. One of the main aims of the present thesis is therefore to investigate the effects of various dimensions of musical congruity identified in the present literature review chapter on consumers' responses to advertising.

According to Petty and Cacioppo (1986), an executional cue such as background music in advertisements has its prevalent effects on low-involvement consumers' attitude formation process. Based on this, in the case of a simple product having few attributes, persuasion may be more successful by using background features such as music or visual imagery (Kotler, 1974; Batra and Ray, 1983). Furthermore, visuals and other non-verbal features of an advertisement seem to fit in better under low-involvement conditions, as they are most effective in generating feelings and can be easily and more quickly processed than verbal stimuli (Paivio, 1971; Zajonc, 1980). On the other hand, it is suggested that under high-involvement conditions, consumers tend to ignore these peripheral cues in their attitude formation process and focus more on careful evaluation of the advertising message and how they react to it (Petty et al., 1983). It is believed that consumers may engage in more cognitive processing when a product is more important, has higher personal relevance, and a higher number of features. Although the ELM is a key framework for understanding and explaining the effects of advertisements on the attitude and behaviour of consumers (Chang, 2002; Chebat et al., 2003; Coulter, 2005; Livingstone and Helsper, 2006), there seems to be inconsistent beliefs regarding the effects of music in advertising for high- and low-involvement products. Reviewing the music and advertising literature reveals that the role of music in advertising for high-involvement products has been oversimplified and underestimated, because previous research

investigated the effects of advertising music almost exclusively through using low-involvement stimuli. Therefore, after conducting an exploratory focus group study, a quantitative survey investigates the musical ‘genre congruity’ dimension in the context of advertising for higher education (a high-involvement product) using original, unfamiliar pieces of music. The present literature review also highlighted the effects of famous, professional compositions in the context of advertising. An additional survey study will thus examine the effects of genre congruity on consumers’ responses using identical university advertising videos, this time accompanied by famous music by professional musicians. Therefore, one of the objectives of the present thesis is to investigate the effects of musical congruity through carrying out research in both high- and low-involvement advertising contexts.

Additionally, another survey study provides the opportunity to achieve the objective of building upon the conceptualisation of the twin congruity components of relevancy and expectancy and exploring their influence in the context of advertising music. In other words, this objective seeks to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in the context of advertising. This objective will be achieved by carrying out a study addressing the ‘country of origin musical congruity’ dimension, which investigates the effects of music from contrasting countries used in a radio advertisement for an Italian restaurant. In this study, *country of origin* and *genre* are used as two musical congruity dimensions that help in examining the effects of artful, purposeful incongruity in advertising and investigating how successful experience of resolving the mild incongruity may enhance consumers’ responses to advertising.

While different studies of the present thesis are designed to address the questions relating to genre congruity in the context of using original and famous compositions, as well as country of origin musical congruity, netnographic research is designed to address other congruity dimensions including musical taste, semantic congruity, indexicality, and repetition congruity. The qualitative approach allows the researcher to analyse the in-depth phenomenological experiences of music highlighted by the consumers. With the rapid development of technology, online communities have become an increasingly important marketing research resource (Kozinets, 2002a, 2006). Nowadays, it is common practice for Internet users all over the world to check and post reviews about different products or

brands they are exposed to in various online communities (Comley, 2008). These communities 'have a "real" existence for their participants' (Kozinets, 1998, p. 366), help marketing researchers to enhance their knowledge of the needs, motivations and subsequent behaviour of consumers (Oakes et al., 2013), and develop understanding of the ways in which consumers may achieve emancipation from the market (Kozinets, 2002b). Online or virtual communities constitute a growing category of social groups of consumption in which participants express and exchange their opinions and information about various goods or services.

Nevertheless, the growth and development of the virtual communication tools have largely changed the way consumers communicate amongst themselves in reviewing products, which ultimately affects the way they make their choices. Analysing user-generated content is becoming increasingly important for marketing purposes as companies can utilise the information in order to convey their advertising messages more effectively (Madden et al., 2013). Consumer postings and subsequent discursive interaction are also valuable for organisations in terms of monitoring and improving the effectiveness of advertising (Kozinets et al., 2010).

From a phenomenological perspective, the netnography study seeks to examine consumers' lived experiences of music and the role of music in helping to shape their responses to advertising. Existing research in the area of music and advertising typically considers congruity between the advertising music and the perceived meaning/intent of the advertisement without considering personal relevance of the music for consumers. The marketing literature's tacit assumption is that a consumer's musical response is essentially uniform at any given moment- a person either likes, dislikes, or feels neutral about a given piece of advertising music (Birkett, 2012; Verstreken, 2013). Although this assumption seems intuitively reasonable, exploring consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising may suggest otherwise. Because different response mechanisms and conditions under which the responses occur can affect musical response differently, an individual's musical response is multifaceted and often mixture of contrasting responses. For example, negative/unpleasant cognitive evaluations may transpire at the same time as positive emotional responses (e.g., guilty pleasures), and also there can be diverse range of mixed emotional

responses (e.g., bittersweet feelings, pleasurable sadness). Consequently, netnography research may be argued to have potential to refine the definition of congruity and how it affects consumers' responses to advertising music. Furthermore, advertising research from a positivist perspective may sometimes blur the difference between emotions represented and felt, highlighting findings referring to the identification of emotions rather than the authentic experience of them (Bode, 2006). However, the netnography study may facilitate portraying and demonstrating authentic experience and sensitivity to music. For example, indexical congruity highlights personal relevance involving the evocation of emotionally charged memories for the consumer exposed to music in an advertisement. Collecting netnographic data may provide the opportunity to demonstrate the intensity of this personal relevance in the context of advertising music. Through netnography, the present thesis demonstrates the importance of analysing the phenomenological experiences of music highlighted by the participants and therefore, another objective is to examine the effects of musical congruity/incongruity through investigating consumers' everyday lived experience of musical consumption in advertising.

Based on the discussions in this chapter, the present research investigates the impact of six identified musical congruity dimensions on consumers' responses to advertising and sets a number of broad objectives based on which various studies are designed. These broad research objectives are as follows:

1. To investigate the effects of musical in/congruity in a high-involvement condition
2. To develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in the context of advertising
3. To investigate the effects of background music in advertising through exploring consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1. Introduction

The previous chapter presented a literature review highlighting significant findings of the existing studies focusing on consumers' responses to advertising music. It involved critical analyses of the results of the extant research as well as identifying underlying patterns allowing appropriate categorisation of findings. The literature review chapter concerns the broad issues of the use of music in advertising, as well as providing a conceptual framework of studies which overlap with the empirical research of the present thesis and studies that are directly related to the investigation of consumer responses to advertising music examined in the current thesis. It also involves brief discussions of music as an important element of the servicescape that is capable of forming or altering the buying behaviour, consumption pattern, and overall response of consumers in the context of service and/or retail environments.

The findings from the extant body of literature demonstrate how various structural characteristics of music influence consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. However, as mentioned in the introductory chapter, reviewing the literature has raised questions regarding the effects of musical congruity on consumers' responses to advertising for high-involvement products. It has also identified the value of purposeful, artful musical incongruity through seeking to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in advertising, as well as exploring the effects of background music congruity through examining consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising. The current methodology chapter facilitates a greater understanding of the importance of the research methods used in the present thesis. The present chapter explains and justifies how the methodological approaches adopted in the present thesis may address the research gaps and objectives discussed in the earlier chapters of the thesis.

The research questions in the present thesis have multiple valences and dimensions, necessitating an innovative approach. The author of the present thesis has wrestled with this multi-dimensionality of the research questions and after a copious review of methods in the existing literature came to the conclusion that a mixed methods approach would be the most appropriate means of tackling these questions. Using a mixed methods approach may lead to greater validity through variation in data

collection. It also provides the opportunity to draw a more complete picture of the area of study and answer the questions from a number of perspectives (e.g., positivist/managerial perspective and interpretivist/consumer perspective). Various empirical studies in the thesis investigate the effects of musical congruity on a range of consumer responses such as perceived image of the advertised brand, ad/brand attitude, perceived product quality, price expectation, recall of advertising information, as well as purchase intents. As pointed out by Goulding (2003), there is a need for a greater focus on using varied methods of consumer behaviour data collection to obtain richer and deeper understanding of consumers' responses to advertising music and their personal experience of musical consumption in this particular context. The importance of examining the effects of different dimensions of musical congruity on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural response to advertising, the necessity to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of congruity in the context of music and advertising, as well as investigating the lived experience of music for consumers from a phenomenological perspective have urged the author of the present thesis to employ methodological pluralism to conduct more effective research. This methodological pluralism has provided the opportunity for the author to mix and match various study design elements that contribute to creating the best chance of addressing specific research questions in the area of music and advertising.

Structural outline of the chapter

The present chapter includes the justification for the research methodology of the thesis. It attempts to illustrate the steps required to design the study effectively and highlights various methods used for data collection and analysis. It also provides the rationale behind the selection of the research methodology.

This chapter firstly reviews the existing research paradigms and underpins the philosophy that justifies the approach taken with the research, highlighting the pragmatist stance to investigate the phenomenon under study and the subsequent selection of a mixed methods approach. It then involves justifications of methodology as well as the research design and strategy. It provides an overview of the data collection methods used in the present thesis, data analysis techniques, and ethical considerations regarding data gathering procedure.

3.2. Research philosophy and underlying paradigms

Researchers carry out their studies within the frameworks of scientific research paradigms. A paradigm or worldview is defined as “a set of linked assumptions about the world which is shared by a community of scientists investigating the world” (Deshpande, 1983, p. 101). It is a set of basic beliefs representing a worldview that guides the investigator and defines, for its holder, “the nature of the world, the individual place in it, and the range of possible relationships to that world and its parts” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 107). Individual researchers maintain different types of beliefs that will often result in embracing a qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods approach in their research (Creswell, 2013). A study by Healy and Perry (2000) which adapted the work of Guba and Lincoln (1994) represents four predominant research paradigms, namely, Positivism, Critical Theory, Constructivism, and Realism, while Creswell (2013) highlights four of the widely discussed worldviews researchers bring to inquiry which include Post-positivism, Constructivism, Transformative, and Pragmatism. Table 1 highlights the major elements of each worldview.

Table 1: Four widely discussed categories of paradigms*

<p>Postpositivism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determination • Reductionism • Empirical observation and measurement • Theory verification 	<p>Constructivism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding • Multiple participant meanings • Social and historical construction • Theory generation
<p>Transformative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political • Power and justice oriented • Collaborative • Change-oriented 	<p>Pragmatism</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consequences of actions • Problem-centered • Pluralistic • Real-world practice oriented

*Taken from Creswell (2013, p. 6)

Each of these paradigms contains elements of 1) Ontology, 2) Epistemology, and 3) Methodology (Healy and Perry, 2000). The responses to these three fundamental questions given by the advocates of any paradigm may summarise the basic beliefs that define inquiry paradigms (Guba and Lincoln, 1994). Ontological questions are concerned with the form and nature of reality and the very essence of the phenomenon under investigation. Ontology deals with questions such as whether the reality to be

investigated is external to the investigator or the result of individual consciousness (Hunt, 1991). Epistemology is the study of the nature, extent and justification of knowledge (Rosenberg, 2005) and concerns the nature of the relationship between the knower and what can be known, and what counts as knowledge. It is intimately related to ontological assumptions as the answer to the question of relationship between the knower and known is bound to the answer already given to the ontological question. Methodological techniques are then available to help the inquirer to go about finding out whatever he/she believes to be knowledge (Healy and Perry, 2000). However, the answer to the methodological questions is also constrained by answers given to ontological and epistemological questions; that is, “not just *any* methodology is appropriate” (Guba and Lincoln, 1994, p. 108).

Mason (2002) separates the concept of methodology from the method. While research methods refer to techniques, processes, and means of data collection, methodology has been defined as “the theoretical, political and philosophical backgrounds to social research and their implications for research practice and for the use of particular research methods” (Robson, 2002, p. 549). Thus, the foundation of methodology, essentially, is a philosophical stance with regards to the purpose of the research.

One important distinction that is often brought about regarding research philosophies is between positivism and interpretivism (Hughes and Sharrock, 1997; Travers, 2001; Bell and Bryman, 2007). There have always been disputes between the advocates of interpretivist and positivist research paradigms which led to the emergence of purists on both sides. These debates affect the way researchers view knowledge, what they are looking for, what they expect to discover, and how they are convinced that they are going to find and justify knowledge.

Purists of quantitative approaches (Ayer, 1959; Popper, 1959; Maxwell and Delaney, 2004) express assumptions that are consistent with what is generally known as positivist philosophy. Positivism articulates the view that “social research should adopt scientific method, that this method is exemplified in the work of modern physicists, and that it consists of rigorous testing of hypotheses by means of data that take the form of quantitative measurements” (Atkinson and Hammersley, 1994, p. 251). Quantitative purists, hence, treat social observations in much the same way that physical

scientists treat physical phenomena. Furthermore, they argue that the researchers are separate entities from the phenomena under study, and maintain the view that social science enquiry should be objective which makes time- and context-free generalisation desirable and possible (Nagel, 1986). This school of thought contends that the observers should disregard their biases and stay emotionally detached from the entities that are subject to observation and that they empirically examine or validate their declared hypotheses.

Nevertheless, there are criticisms of positivism. For example, Erickson (1986) notes that a certain behaviour may have different meanings in different contexts. He rejects the assumption of uniformity and contends that there is “variability between behavioural form and intended meaning” (Erickson, 1986, p. 132). On the other hand, unlike models of linear causality found in positivist approaches, qualitative research aims to explore non-linear correlational rather than causative phenomena. The positivist paradigm stands for the existence of universal causal laws that render consequential choices (Schrag, 1992). Furthermore, positivism tries to address rich and unpredictable human interactions and their complex nature by means of defining different variables which might curtail complicated human behaviour to simplified patterns.

However, although post-positivism addresses many of the widely acknowledged criticisms of the quantitative approach, it insists on quantitative methods. For example, the initial positivists assert that the research is carried out in an entirely objective, value-free environment, claiming that the observers’ values did not contaminate the way the research is conducted and the data is interpreted, whereas, post-positivists accept that their value systems play an important role in how they conduct their research and interpret their data (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009). A post-positivist paradigm holds a deterministic philosophy in which “causes (probably) determine effects or outcomes” (Creswell, 2013, p. 7). Post-positivists acquire knowledge through attentive and careful observation and assessment of the objective reality that already exists in the world. Thus, post-positivist researchers predominantly attempt to establish numeric measures of observations and investigate the behaviour of individuals. They start with proposing a theory, gathering data that either support or reject the theory, and then make required modifications and carry out further tests and analyses.

On the other hand, interpretivism, which is closely linked to constructivism in terms of epistemology and often combined with constructivism, is normally considered as an approach to qualitative research. While positivism is concerned with a single value-free and solid reality, interpretivism concerns multiple value-laden realities (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Healy and Perry, 2000). In an interpretivist approach, the objective of the research would be to build as much as possible upon participants' views and opinions about the phenomenon under investigation. Thus, an individual's subjectivity or phenomenological world establishes the basis for meaning orientation and development.

Qualitative researchers (interpretivists) reject what they refer to as positivism and look for "culturally derived and historically situated interpretations of the social life-world" (Crotty, 1998, p. 67). In other words, interpretivists recognise that their interpretation may be formed by their own personal, cultural, and historical experiences. Thus they attempt to make sense of the meanings others hold about the world through generating or inductively developing a theory or pattern of meaning rather than starting with a theory (Creswell, 2013). They contend that there exist multiple-constructed realities, and that time- and context-free generalisations are neither desirable nor possible (Lincoln and Guba, 2000). Thus, based on the interpretivist approach, observation is value-bound and it is impossible to detach causes and effects, and that knower and known cannot be separated as the subjective knower is the only source of reality (Guba, 1990). However, while quantitative research attempts to simply describe the subject of interest or look for significant relationships among groups and variables, qualitative methods are the techniques associated with collection, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of narrative information (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009).

While both positivists and interpretivists view their paradigms as most appropriate for research, advocating the *incompatibility thesis* (Howe, 1988), mixed methods research, as the third research paradigm, has moved beyond the argument of *qualitative versus quantitative* research and proposes that qualitative and quantitative research paradigms and their associated methods can indeed be mixed. A disturbing aspect of the paradigm wars has been the uncompromising focus on the differences between the two approaches, whereas mixed methods research does not aim at replacing

either of these approaches and attempts to draw from the strengths and minimise the weaknesses of both methods in research (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Mixed methods research can also help bridge the schism between quantitative and qualitative research (Onwuegbuzie and Leech, 2004). Therefore, the present thesis adopts a creative mixed methods approach that appropriately serves the purpose of the research through drawing upon the benefits of both quantitative and qualitative research techniques that help bridging the gaps identified in the literature.

3.3. Paradigm choice and justification of methodology

Since the present thesis offers an empirical setting to investigate the effects of advertising music with respect to theoretical and methodological gaps drawn from the literature and seeks to test hypotheses to answer predetermined research questions, it adopts a mixed methods approach. A pilot focus group as well as a number of quantitative surveys and YouTube Analytics statistical data may be considered as the best approach to address questions such as the impact of genre congruity in a high-involvement setting and examining how, for example, purposeful musical incongruity may be of value for advertising practitioners and client companies. While focus group and survey experiments provide the opportunity for the researcher to conduct face to face research, YouTube Analytics as a service of YouTube online video sharing website, offers inside statistics for users about their content accesses and audience behaviours.

Apart from the focus group study mentioned earlier, another qualitative approach provides the opportunity for the researcher to make use of a valuable source of data, the spontaneous comments provided by the consumers gathered as netnographic data. Netnography is a qualitative research methodology that “adapts ethnographic research techniques to the study of cultures and communities emerging through computer-mediated communications” (Kozinets, 2002a, p. 2). It is an adaptation of ethnography for the online world- for the events of online communities and online cultures and it is a tool to find out about those culture and communities where they actually exist and understanding them as social phenomena. Therefore, rather than understanding them as merely solitary contents, texts, or photographs that individuals post online, it is a way of seeing platforms such as facebook, Wikipedia, or YouTube as a living, breathing, and flourishing cultural communities, an online equivalent of a

family, village, or neighbourhood, that preserves the social part of it intact and comprehends it using methods that were set up for understanding social worlds. As a marketing research technique, “netnography uses the information publicly available in online forums to identify and understand the needs and decisions influences of relevant online consumer groups” (Kozinets, 2002a, p. 2). In the context of the present research, netnography may be used to highlight advertising music from the perspective of the consumer which has never been addressed in the extant music and advertising literature in which almost everything is viewed from the managerial perspective.

The paradigm adopted for this research is referred to as pragmatism. Pragmatism as a rationale for mixed methods research does not follow a particular method or method mix and does not exclude others (Feilzer, 2010). Pragmatism is a commitment to uncertainty, and acknowledgement that any knowledge “produced” through research is relative and not absolute, that even if there are causal relationships they are “transitory and hard to identify” (Teddlie and Tashakkori, 2009, p. 93). It “does not expect to find unvarying causal links or truths but aims to interrogate a particular question, theory, or phenomenon with the most appropriate research method” (Feilzer, 2010, p. 13). Pragmatism as a paradigm arises out of actions, situations, and consequences rather than antecedent conditions (Creswell, 2013). Pragmatic researchers focus on a research problem and use all of the available approaches to understand the problem, rather than focusing on methods (Rossman and Wilson, 1985).

Pragmatism is not committed to one specific system of philosophy and reality (Creswell, 2013). This is applicable to mixed methods research where researchers liberally conclude from both qualitative and quantitative assumptions when they carry out their research. A pragmatist researcher does not observe the world as a complete unity and hence, in the case of mixed methods research, the inquirer may have the freedom to use various approaches of data collection and analysis rather than endorsing a single method. Pragmatism is generally regarded as the philosophical partner for mixed methods research and provides a fusion of approaches. It brushes aside the quantitative/qualitative divide and ends the paradigm war by suggesting that the most important question is whether the research has helped to “find out what [the researcher] want[s] to know” (Hanson, 2008, p. 109).

Mixed methods research has rarely been adopted by the music and advertising literature and has received relatively little attention in the broader area of marketing, despite the evident movements in other areas of social science towards this research design. It is to be noted that the *Handbook of Mixed Methods Research* (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 2003) distinguishes *multi-method* from *mixed-method*, which are two of the most commonly used labels for mixing of methods in the marketing context. While multi-method refers to involving multiple forms of qualitative approaches (e.g. focus group and ethnography) or multiple forms of quantitative approaches (e.g. surveys and YouTube Analytics), mixed methods involve the blending of the two types of data (Morse, 2003). Hanson and Grimmer (2007) carried out a content analysis of published articles in three leading marketing journals between 1993 and 2002 and found that 173 articles used a mixed methods approach. Qualitative methods can positively complement quantitative research techniques and analyses (Hunt, 1994), and hence, it is essentially encouraged to mix qualitative and quantitative methods in the marketing discipline to enhance rigorous inquiry (Woodruff, 2003).

Bryman (2006) acknowledges various rationales for conducting mixed methods research. These rationales are listed and described in Table 2. Putting insights and procedures from both qualitative and quantitative approaches together may result in presenting a more practical solution and producing a superior product (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004). As pointed out previously, mixed methods research offered in the present thesis employs pragmatism as its system of philosophy, and is an expansive and creative form of inquiry that makes use of multiple approaches in addressing research questions in an inclusive, pluralistic, and complementary manner. The utilisation of both qualitative and quantitative approaches in the present thesis (e.g. face to face surveys, experiments, YouTube Analytics, focus groups, and netnography) has resulted in a more flexible and integrative investigative technique. Mixing qualitative and quantitative data can have several benefits such as providing the opportunity to use qualitative data to design questions to be included in a quantitative survey in order to answer the research questions more systematically, thus triangulating and explaining findings generated by one strand of data through employing the other set of data.

Table 2: Rationales for mixed methods research*

Rationale	Description
Triangulation (greater validity)	Combining quantitative and qualitative research to triangulate and corroborate findings
Offset	Combining quantitative and qualitative methods to offset their weaknesses and draw upon the strengths of both
Completeness	Researcher can bring together a more comprehensive account of the area of enquiry if both quantitative and qualitative methods are employed
Process	Quantitative research provides an account of structures in social life while qualitative research provides sense of process
Different research questions	Quantitative and qualitative research can each answer different research questions
Explanation	One method is used to explain findings generated by the other method
Unexpected results	Combining quantitative and qualitative research and employing one method to understand surprising results generated by other strand
Instrument development	Contexts where qualitative research is employed to develop questionnaire and scale items
Sampling	One approach is used to facilitate the sampling of respondents or cases
Credibility	Employing both approaches enhances the integrity of findings
Context	Qualitative research providing contextual understanding coupled with other generalisable, externally valid findings or broad relationships among variables uncovered through a survey
Illustration	Using qualitative data to illustrate quantitative findings (putting ‘meat on the bones’ of ‘dry’ quantitative findings)
Utility	In the cases of articles with an applied focus, combining the two approaches will be more useful to practitioners and others
Confirm and discover	Using qualitative data to generate hypotheses and using quantitative research to test them within a single project
Diversity of views	Combining researchers’ and participants perspectives through quantitative and qualitative research respectively, and uncovering relationships between variables through quantitative research while also revealing meanings among research participants through qualitative research
Enhancement	Building upon quantitative/qualitative findings- making more of or augmenting either quantitative or qualitative findings by gathering data using qualitative or quantitative research approach

*Adapted from Bryman (2006)

As the combination of qualitative and quantitative methods can boost scientific rigor and enhance validity of research findings (Robson, 2002; Bryman, 2004), the exploration of effects in the area of music and advertising through a pragmatist lens is admissible, appropriate, and useful.

3.4. Research design and strategies of inquiry

This section focuses on the research design adopted to address the objectives introduced earlier in the thesis. A research design is “an action plan for getting from here to there, where here may be defined as the initial set of questions to be answered, and there is some set of conclusions” (Yin, 2013, p. 20). The current thesis employs an experiential design, incorporating various quantitative and qualitative elements. However, it should be noted that both quantitative and qualitative data collection methods may have a range of merits and disadvantages. Considering merits, quantitative research is often regarded as being *objective* in the area of social science or where a human is involved. In quantitative studies, hypotheses or theories are tested through examining and analysing the relationships among different variables using statistical measures (Creswell, 1994). The statistical nature of quantitative research puts forward a numerical representation of issues and intends to tie the world up with definite statements (Hunt, 1994). Thus, quantitative data are hard and reliable data that are not abstract and measure tangible and countable features of the world (Boum et al., 1995). On the other hand, quantitative research may have limitations such as its inability to construct theory, being overly dependent on different variables, and neglecting meaning and context.

Conversely, qualitative research is considered as *subjective* and is mostly concerned with reporting in-depth views of participants and elicitation of meanings (Creswell, 1994). Using qualitative research in the present thesis is of high importance, particularly because there is a need for understanding and interpreting complex phenomena pertaining to marketing and advertising as well as providing comprehensive explanations for the findings. Since the merits of one approach may offset the limitations of the other and vice versa, the mixed methods design adopted in the present research focuses on the complementary nature of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Furthermore, one of the most common applications of triangulation in the present thesis is that it deliberately uses multiple sources of data such as surveys, focus groups, and netnography to obtain a more complete picture of the music and advertising phenomenon through appropriate reporting and comparing the results of both qualitative and quantitative studies. Triangulation is considered as a valuable means of enhancing the rigour of the research through limiting the ill-effects of any errors or biases in the

results that may occur, such as participant error, participant bias, researcher error, and researcher bias (Robson, 2002). The mixed methods approach is intended to establish a meaningful contribution to the present research, even though the lack of ‘genuine integration’ of qualitative and quantitative designs in social sciences has been frequently criticised (Greene et al., 1989; Bell and Bryman, 2007).

In the present thesis, the types of inquiry within both qualitative and quantitative approaches have been selected to implement a clear-cut direction for procedures of the research design. Chapter 4 (Study 1) includes a focus group study and two survey experiments as well as YouTube Analytics statistical data which, all carried out in the context of university advertising. Chapter 5 (Study 2) involves a survey experiment in the context of restaurant advertising, while Chapter 6 (Study 3) involves the netnographic findings.

The first experimental study in Chapter 4 of the thesis adopted an exploratory design in which the inquirer collected and analysed qualitative data by conducting a series of semi-structured, in-depth pilot focus groups and then built on the qualitative data for a number of quantitative follow-up studies carried out in the form of face to face surveys. These are designed to address the first objective of the thesis, which is to investigate the effects of musical congruity in a high-involvement condition. The pilot focus group (Study 1) was an initial exploration intended to help in identifying the types of questions to be asked in the survey study, as well as determining the variables, scales, and constructs to be examined. Through conducting pilot focus groups, qualitative findings are used to develop scale items and variables for subsequent quantitative surveys. In the first survey experiment of Study 1, genre congruity will be examined using original pieces of music. Then, YouTube Analytics statistical data will be presented concerning the identical advertising treatments used in the first experiment. The statistical data gathered through YouTube Analytics is used to test and investigate whether the findings from the quantitative survey are supported in a standardised procedure and context and by looking at consumers’ online viewing behaviour. In other words, these statistical data help the researcher to test the influence and adequacy of various genres of advertising music by gathering real-life data from prospective consumers (the viewers) through studying their viewing behaviour (for instance, average minutes watched per video), and comparing these results with the findings of other

quantitative and qualitative research. The second experiment of Study 1 then replicates the first experiment, this time using professional pieces of music in the university advertisement. A key difference between the first and second survey experiments is that while Experiment 1 uses music composed by postgraduate music students, advertising treatments in Experiment 2 are accompanied by music *created by professional musicians*.

Chapter 5 (Study 2) in the current thesis involves a quantitative survey experiments examining the effects of moderate musical incongruity on consumers' responses in the context of restaurant advertising. Study 2 draws upon the results of studies 1 and 2 through conducting another survey addressing the second objective of the thesis which is to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in the context of advertising using Heckler and Childers' (1982) twin component congruity model.

Chapter 6 (Study 3) involves a separate netnography that is designed to address the third major objective of the thesis which is to obtain a wider range of perspectives that not only explore consumers' responses to advertising music considering both high and low-involvement goods and services, but also to investigate the effects from a phenomenological perspective, highlighting the lived experience of advertising music for consumers. Table 3 demonstrates various study chapters of the present thesis.

Table 3: Study Chapters

<p>Chapter 4 (Study 1) (University Advertising)</p> <p>Objective 1: To investigate the effects of musical in/congruity in a high-involvement condition</p>	<p>Chapter 5 (Study 2) (Restaurant Advertising)</p> <p>Objective 2: To develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity in the context of advertising through examining the effects of purposeful, moderate musical incongruity</p>	<p>Chapter 6 Study 3 (Netnography)</p> <p>Objective 3: To investigate the effects of background music in advertising through exploring consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption</p>
<p>Focus Group</p> <p>Survey Experiment 1</p> <p>YouTube Analytics</p> <p>Survey Experiment 2</p>	<p>Survey Experiment</p>	<p>Netnographic Research</p>

3.5. Data collection methods

The primary data collection methods used are as follows:

3.5.1. Qualitative data (focus group and netnography)

The two types of qualitative data collection approaches that have been followed in the current thesis involve focus group study and netnography. As Saunders et al. (2012) point out, although following a quantitative approach can raise the scientific status of the marketing research, it may not be deemed as a sufficient approach. They point out that quantitative data collection methods may not be able to

achieve the appropriate level of scientific excellence without vivid awareness of their qualitative dependency, and that a combination of both approaches may add substantial synergy to research in marketing. This is in line with the argument of Van Manen (2015), stating that qualitative matters facilitate production of meaning and interpretation which are important requirements to attach significance to statistical data, counts, and classifications. Therefore, in addition to the quantitative surveys designed to examine the effects of some of the objective characteristics of background music in advertising such as genre congruity or country of origin musical congruity, netnography, as a novel method of data collection in this area of study, can hugely contribute to the extant body of knowledge through investigating the effects of these dimensions of musical congruity along with others such as repetition congruity and indexical congruity which might have personal relevance to individual consumers.

3.5.2. Quantitative data (face to face surveys and YouTube Analytics)

The quantitative survey studies of the present thesis benefited from the pilot focus groups carried out in Study 1, in terms of design, data collection, and analysis. Using survey questionnaires provided the researcher with a range of advantages. One of the most important merits of using a survey approach is that it helps the researcher to gather data in a standardised manner from a large number of respondents in a relatively short span of time (Robson, 2002). Survey questionnaires can measure specific characteristics and examine the relationships between variables through structured data collection procedures from a large representative sample in a way that the results can be attributed to the entire population (Davis, 2000). Survey studies in the present thesis help in acquiring precise information about a specific population in an efficient way. Conducting questionnaire surveys is relatively low cost, as well as being less time consuming, and allows researcher to make inferences about the overall population. Furthermore, conducting a survey may serve to protect the confidentiality of data and anonymity of participants. The quantitative research design highlights the deductive models that explain hypothesised relationships or effects of the relationships. In addition to conducting surveys, information was collected using the YouTube Analytics service involving statistical data such as

number of viewers, total minutes watched, viewers' geographical locations, and the average minutes watched per video.

Sections below illustrate the methodological process involving detailed discussions of study design, advertising stimuli, procedure, sampling, as well as ethical concerns related to various studies of the present thesis.

3.6. Focus group in Study 1

The present thesis contains a pilot focus group study examining consumers' responses to advertising music using different musical stimuli.

One of the main advantages of the focus group is the purposeful use of interaction with participants in order to generate data (Merton et al., 1990). The researcher usually plays the role of the moderator in focus group sessions "in order to collect information on the designated topic" (Carey, 1994, p. 226). The focus group sessions in Study 1 are aimed at obtaining a general understanding of the vocabulary of the field, discovering consumers' initial thoughts in order to provide an indication of the specific problems and research questions to be addressed, identifying the themes, as well as identifying constructs prior to conducting the quantitative studies. In the context of the current thesis, focus groups can be considered as an appropriate supplement for traditional one to one interviews, particularly because the topic is not sensitive and embarrassing. This type of study will also help stimulating recall and elaboration of ideas and opinions on the part of respondents. Wilkinson (1998) supports the notion of focus groups within the framework of phenomenology. Apart from participants' experiences, she includes their attitude, ideas, knowledge and beliefs as subsets of phenomenology, although Webb and Kevern (2001) question the compatibility of focus groups with phenomenological frameworks because the nature and context of a focus group does not allow the collection of data in an uncontaminated manner.

Furthermore, dynamic interaction among participants and between the researcher and participants may positively influence the provision of information sought (Kitzinger, 1995). Also, as Carey (1994)

points out, focus groups can provide major insights into participants' attitude, beliefs, and ideas. They help in providing rich understanding of participants' knowledge of the phenomenon under research.

3.6.1. Justification for focus groups, moderation, diversity of views, and representability

Research using focus groups is one of the most widely utilised research methods in advertising research as well as many other disciplines, and has a long history with deep roots in the social sciences (Slurzberg and Rettinger, 1994; Morgan, 1997; GreenBook, 2014; Stewart and Shamdasani, 2014). Advertising researchers, advertising agencies, and other marketing organisations have long employed focus groups to develop insights into and enhance their awareness of customer's purchase behaviour (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2017). The focus group, as an interpretive research method, seeks to build theory as a result of empirical insights so the theory building phase of the research project is given explicit and careful attention (Carson et al., 2001; Ghauri and Gronhaug, 2010). Focus groups are usually conducted before the fielding of a larger sample survey, however, depending on the research objective, focus groups can be conducted alone or in conjunction with other methods. The focus group study of the current thesis is aimed at achieving substantive understanding in relation to the phenomenon under study i.e., the effects of musical in/congruity in advertising. In the context of the present research, focus groups are conducted in order to generate and select theoretical ideas and hypotheses to be verified through conducting quantitative surveys (Calder, 1977). Conducting focus groups provides the researcher with valuable insights into how people think, as well as providing a deeper understanding of the advertising music phenomenon.

Researchers are increasingly recognising the advantages of combining qualitative and quantitative research methods (Freitas et al., 1998), resulting in a methodological mix that may strengthen the design of the research. In this context, focus groups can precede a quantitative research method, be used at the same time as a quantitative research method, or can follow a quantitative research method (Morgan, 1996; Greenbaum, 1998; Krueger and Casey, 2014). In the context of the present research, a series of semi-structured focus groups is designed to get participants' thoughts concentrated on the topic of the investigation, stimulate new ideas and concepts regarding musical in/congruity in advertising for both researcher and participants, learn about the initial impressions of participants

regarding various types of background music used in advertising, generate new hypotheses to be examined in future research projects, and to help develop solid quantitative surveys that follow in the thesis.

The exploratory focus groups of the present thesis provide the researcher with first-hand experience and knowledge of the consumers that may help to inform understanding of the language, tone, and emotions associated with various types of music used in advertisements, and may aid design of the content of the advertising message to be used in the stimulus (Stewart and Shamdasani, 2017). They are useful in obtaining participants' views, beliefs, values, and perceptions on why they think and feel the way they do (Litosseliti, 2007). Students participating in the focus group may indeed be engaged in the cocreation of following research projects, advertising messages and stimuli to be used in those research projects, and other materials through eliciting new outlooks and ideas and stimulating responses to ideas and thoughts. Despite some of the limitations of the focus group studies in general, and specifically focus groups conducted in the current thesis, such as its exploratory nature, employing small convenience samples, and the effects of contextual cues of the group dynamic (Iacobucci and Churchill, 2015), they play an important role in the present research project through providing an efficient, systematic, and eloquent means for generating consumer insights that illuminate responses to advertising music, facilitate creativity and innovation and generate ideas for the design of the following quantitative surveys of the thesis.

Guidelines on the conduct of focus groups (Heritage, 1984; Antaki, 2000; Puchta and Potter, 2004) contend that there should be a moderator who may have several main functions. Based on these guidelines, the researcher, as the moderator in the current research created informality in order to loosen the situation and facilitate more open communication, as well as managing the interaction in order to ensure that all participants are able to effectively contribute, which may consequently result in eliciting useful and diverse opinions. The moderator played a neutral role and did not disclose agreement or disagreement with any of the remarks made by the participants. The moderator confirms the receipt of opinions from participants with nods and through neutral words (Antaki, 2000). At the same time, focus group moderator tries not to seem too detached and unresponsive in order to encourage openness and revelation (Sobreperez, 2008). The researcher, as the focus group moderator,

may therefore attempt to manage the interactions among group members to lessen, arguments and immaterial narratives, as well as directing the group to stay on topic and discuss chosen objects and opinions. Managing the interaction is done through ensuring that the participants in the focus groups do not feel that their opinions are being evaluated, and that they are able to make controversial or unpopular remarks about the advertisement they are exposed to and its contents without censure or accountability. Furthermore, the focus group moderator may use indirect questions which encourage further discussion and responses and use follow-up questions to illuminate opinions. It is also important to ensure that no particular issue or participant dominates the discussion and that all the participants have the opportunity to express their thoughts. Although there is often less time for each group member to contribute to the discussion surrounding the phenomenon under study compared to interviews, the synergy of the group facilitates eliciting a rich account of particular incidents as a result of the conflicts of opinion. Therefore, focus groups were chosen over individual interviews keeping in mind that “the dynamic interaction afforded by focus groups enables the eliciting of a diversity of views from participants and the immediate clarification of issues that affect this diversity” (Hollis et al., 2002, p. 4). The studies of the current thesis, thus, commence using a qualitative approach using focus groups to offer the student participants an interactive forum to air their thoughts, facilitating understanding students’ perceptions and interpretations of the use of various types of background music in advertisements.

The focus group study of the current thesis involves conducting four sessions. Guest et al., (2017) argue that as few as three to six focus groups are likely to identify 90% of the themes. The number of participants in focus group studies is also of great importance. Saunders et al. (2012) point out that focus groups typically involve between four and twelve participants in the group. However, as it is proposed that the more complex the subject is, the number of participants in each session should be less, in the context of the current thesis, each focus group session involves eight students, because of the moderate level of complexity of the topic of music and advertising. Generally spoken, scientific approaches have to fulfil two quality criteria, namely reliability and validity (Riege, 2007; Steinke, 2007). However, the question whether and to what extent the findings of focus groups can be generalised is still unanswered. Especially in the cases such as the exploratory focus groups of the

present thesis, general validity is not looked for, but a more extensive and in-depth view on a particular topic is needed. Therefore, the representability of focus groups is a controversial topic and only a small number of studies have been undertaken to verify the representativeness of focus groups (e.g., Ward et al., 1991). On the one hand, it is suggested that focus groups are confined to the generation of hypotheses that have to be confirmed by quantitative research such as surveys (e.g., Friedrichs, 1990), and on the other hand, focus groups are directly employed as a method of data collection (e.g., Morgan, 1997). Focus groups of the current thesis help to explore, develop, and refine initial research questions through offering a collective set of values, opinions, experiences, and observations of participants (Lopez and Whitehead, 2013), that are interpreted in the context of music and advertising. Indeed, the strength of qualitative methods such as focus groups is their ability to explore the depth and complexity of phenomena (Carlsen and Glenton, 2011). Therefore, as Sandelowski (1995) emphasises in his discussion of sample size in qualitative research, both too many and too few groups can lower the quality of focus group studies. In the focus groups undertaken in the present thesis, quantity is attempted to be balanced against quality, depth, and richness of data that the researcher is able to extract from participants' responses.

3.6.2. Advertising stimuli

A talking heads promotional video was recorded with the help of the university's Marketing and Recruitment department to promote a business-related MSc course. The talking heads video features the MSc Director of Studies, a previous graduate of the course, as well as a current student on the course who explain the benefits of taking the course. It also features footage of the department and its learning environment.

Two pieces of music were instructed to be composed by postgraduates at the School of Music within the university for each of the three different genres of music used in the background of the promotional video, namely; classical, pop, and jazz. Therefore, six university advertisements (musical) were created along with a no-music treatment; in total seven treatments. The composers were briefed to ensure that the duration of each piece would match the length of the promotional video for the advertised university (3:20). The compositions were all original, instrumental pieces of

music that had never been heard before by the research participants. The originality of the music avoids the potential effects of musical familiarity that may affect consumers' message processing and their verbal recall of information (Hahn and Hwang, 1999; Roehm, 2001). Furthermore, instrumental pieces of music were used to avoid confounding treatments with prior associations involving lyrics and past exposure. Analysis of the marketing implications of these discrete musical genres has a long established track record in the applied psychology literature as well as the marketing literature (e.g., North et al., 2003; Oakes and North, 2013). Furthermore, these three genres of music were selected as they have been frequently used by advertisers to appeal to discrete demographic segments such as age group or sociocultural background (Oakes, 2003). A Professor of Music ensured that the compositions were suitable exemplars of their respective genres.

Furthermore, pre-tests indicated the extent to which each piece of music used in the university advertisement was identified to be a suitable exemplar of its corresponding genre by a group of participants. In the pre-test, a group of 35 undergraduate students watched the six musical treatments and were asked to produce their responses regarding the identification of the musical genre, as well as the extent to which each piece of music fits the advertised brand image. The undergraduate students participating in the pre-test watched all six versions of the advertisement (2x classical, 2x jazz, 2x pop) randomly and in no particular order. The six pieces of original music used in the pre-test were named Classical 1, Classical 2, Jazz 1, Jazz 2, Pop 1, and Pop 2. Students were asked to fill out a very brief survey questionnaire containing two questions, after watching each of the six treatments. The first question contained in the questionnaire was; "Please specify the genre of music used in the advertisement you have just heard" for which students had to tick among a range of genre choices including 1) Indie 2) Classical 3) Blues 4) Jazz 5) Hip hop 6) Pop 7) Rock 8) Not sure. The second question examined the extent to which the background music is perceived to be a good fit for the advertised brand; "To what extent does the music fit the advertised brand image?" to which the available options were; 1) It does not fit the advertised brand image at all 2) It does little to fit the advertised brand image 3) Unsure 4) It fits the advertised brand image 5) It strongly fits the advertised brand image.

The results of the pre-test are as follows:

Classical Music:

A total number of 31 students (88.57%) watching **Classical 1** treatment identified the pieces as Classical music, 1 student (2.85%) identified it as Jazz, 1 student (2.85%) identified it as Blues, and 2 students (5.71%) specified that they were not sure about the genre of the background music they heard in the advertisement. 27 students (77.14%) who watched **Classical 2** treatment identified it as Classical music, 3 students (8.57%) identified it as Jazz, 2 students (5.71%) identified it as Blues, and 3 students (8.57%) were not sure about the genre of music.

Regarding the second question, in the case of **Classical 1** treatment, 6 students (17.14%) thought that the music does not fit the advertised brand image, 14 students (40%) believed that the music does little to fit the advertised brand, 9 students (25.71%) thought that the music fits the advertised brand image, 2 students (5.71%) believed that it strongly fits the advertised brand image, and 4 students (11.42%) were not sure about it. In the case of **Classical 2** treatment, 10 students (28.57%) who watched the advertisement thought that the music does not fit the advertised brand image, 13 students (37.14%) thought that the music does little to fit the advertised brand image, 6 students (17.14%) believed that the music fits the advertised brand image, and 6 students (17.14%) were not sure about it.

Jazz:

A total number of 23 students (65.71%) who watched **Jazz 1** treatment identified it as Jazz, 4 students (11.42%) identified it as Classical, 2 students (5.71%) identified it as Blues, 1 (2.85%) student identified it as Pop music, and 5 students (14.28%) were not sure about the genre of music. 27 students (77.14%) watching **Jazz 2** treatment identified the piece as Jazz, 3 students (8.57%) identified it as Classical, 1 student (2.85%) identified it as Blues, and 4 students (11.42%) were not sure about the genre of the background music they heard in the advertisement.

Considering the second question, in the case of **Jazz 1** treatment, 10 students (28.57%) thought that the music does not fit the advertised brand image, 15 students (42.85%) believed that the music does

little to fit the advertised brand, 3 students (8.57%) believed that it fits the advertised brand image, and 7 students (20%) were not sure about it. In the case of *Jazz 2* treatment, 11 students (31.42%) who watched the advertisement thought that the music does not fit the advertised brand image, 14 students (40%) thought that the music does little to fit the advertised brand image, 3 students (8.57%) believed that the music fits the advertised brand image, 1 (2.85) student thought that the music strongly fits the advertised brand image, and 6 students (17.14%) were not sure about it.

Pop:

A total number of 33 students (94.28%) watching *Pop 1* treatment identified the piece as Pop music, 1 student (2.85%) identified it as Rock, and 1 student (2.85%) specified that they were not sure about the genre of the background music they heard in the advertisement. 28 students (80%) who watched *Pop 2* treatment identified it as Pop music, 3 students (8.57%) identified it as Rock, and 4 students (11.42%) were not sure about the genre of music.

Regarding the second question, in the case of *Pop 1* treatment, 2 students (5.71%) thought that the music does not fit the advertised brand image, 3 students (8.57%) believed that the music does little to fit the advertised brand, 15 students (42.85%) thought that the music fits the advertised brand image, 12 students (34.28%) believed that it strongly fits the advertised brand image, and 3 students (8.57%) were not sure about it. In the case of *Pop 2* treatment, 3 students (8.57%) who watched the advertisement thought that the music does not fit the advertised brand image, 8 students (22.85%) thought that the music does little to fit the advertised brand image, 10 students (28.57%) believed that the music fits the advertised brand image, 9 (25.71%) students thought that the music strongly fits the advertised brand image, and 5 students (14.28%) were not sure about it.

The purpose of these pre-tests was to identify the best exemplars of each genre based on students' responses to the initial 6 musical versions of the university advertisement that were then going to be used in the focus group study. Therefore, Classical 1, Jazz 2, and Pop 1 were selected to represent the three genres in the focus groups as well as Experiment 1 of Study 1. Therefore, a total of four versions

of the promotional video; musical versions accompanied by classical, pop, or jazz music and one version with no music were prepared to be used in these studies.

3.6.3. Procedure for focus group study

A portion of the empirical components of the qualitative data were produced from the focus group study. This focus group study involves conducting four separate focus group sessions. The primary purpose of the exploratory focus group study is to examine participants' initial impression of the advertising videos and the type of music used in each particular version.

The focus group study conducted in this thesis is semi-structured in nature. Questions have a probing nature in a way that they can be followed by spontaneous follow-up questions in order to clarify respondents' responses and thoughts on specific issues that may arise during the focus group session. For example, participants have been asked about "the extent to which they think the background music suits the advertising video", followed by an inquiry into their idea of an ideal musical match for the promotional video. The focus group questions were designed based on theoretical discourse on the subject of music and advertising after reviewing the extant literature in the relevant context.

The underlying purpose of conducting the focus group study was to discuss students' beliefs on concepts such as perceived university image, perceived quality, elicitation of feelings, intention to enrol for a course at the school, change and formation of attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, and perceived attractiveness of the learning environment. To achieve this, participants were asked to further elaborate their opinions in detail.

Each focus group watched one version of the university promotional video. After watching the video, students were asked to respond to a range of questions that followed. An important strength of qualitative research is the ability to provide complex textual descriptions of a research problem and note how people experience it. The focus group studies provide the opportunity for asking open-ended questions, sharing ideas and perceptions, and probing. The participants (students) will be able to further describe their ideas in their own words and explain the phenomenon in order to best address the questions, thus providing rich data. The researcher could also ask follow up questions to clarify an

issue or answer specific participant questions. The dynamic nature of the focus group sessions provides the opportunity for the researcher to carry out an in-depth discussion, as well as facilitating better understanding of students' responses to advertisements.

All of the focus group sessions were audio recorded using a high quality voice recorder. The sessions were then transcribed by the researcher and manual thematic analysis was carried out in organising and producing a rich description of the data set. As Rice and Ezzy (2000) point out, thematic analysis involves identification of themes through "careful reading and re-reading of the data" (p. 258). The analysis of the data was done through careful line by line examination of the students' responses. Thematic analysis helped in allowing categories to emerge from the data set, thus enabling the construction of meanings from the data.

3.6.4. Participant recruitment

The focus group study followed a convenience sampling method where student participants who were at undergraduate level participated in four focus group studies. The procedure for recruiting the research participants involved advertising through a formal invitation in the form of a flyer (Appendix 6) within the university campus and prominent places such as the university libraries. The flyer was also uploaded on the university Facebook page to reach a wider range of undergraduate students. The flyer contains a brief explanation about the subject, purpose, and the length of the study, as well as the contact number of the researcher and the venue in which the study takes place. There was no direct benefit and monetary reward for the student participants. Students who showed interest in taking part in the study were placed in 4 groups of 8. They were given a date, venue, and time to attend the focus group study sessions. They were informed about the overall purpose of the study as an investigation into students' responses to university promotional videos.

The focus group study helps the researcher to develop question-wordings that correspond to the participants own approach to the topic of advertising music. It is indeed important to ensure that focus group participants' own thoughts and theories about the use of music in advertising receive fair value compared to theories and hypotheses evolved from previous research. In the context of the present

thesis where the focus group study is used in conjunction with other survey studies, proper attention to the pilot focus groups enhances the data it provides to the following quantitative survey, as well as potentially producing valuable information in its own right.

As mentioned earlier in the thesis, despite potential advantages of conducting qualitative research in the context of music and advertising, very few studies have adopted this approach in exploring consumer response to advertising music. In an experiment integrating features of qualitative and quantitative methods, Hung (2000) shows how semantic congruity between background music and advertising subject matter enhanced brand attitude. There is a need to focus more on other formal aspects and structural characteristics of music such as genre and investigate how it affects consumers' perceptions and attitudes. Another research by Hung (2001) reveals how using music from different countries alters consumers' brand attitude.

However, in addition to the theoretical limitations of Hung's studies discussed earlier in this thesis, her studies relied merely on focus group data to illustrate the relationships between music and visual images, which may have involved researcher's subjectivity as well as subjects attempting to rationalise their perceived meanings. Therefore, it is necessary that subsequent quantitative research could reflect on the focus group study through which the reliability and validity of the measurements can be assessed.

3.7. Background music in university advertising

Two quantitative survey experiments designed in Study 1 helped in ensuring "objectivity, generalisability and reliability" (Weinreich, 2006). Obtaining information regarding the reactions of a population to a particular research phenomenon using samples is considered as an efficient technique (Williams, 1978). These studies ensure sampling in an unbiased manner and use standardised questionnaires and statistical methods to examine predetermined research questions and hypotheses through discovering the relationships between different variables.

One of the merits of adopting quantitative survey data collection approaches is that they generate quantifiable and reliable data that can often be inferred to a larger population. These data when

combined with the rich, in-depth qualitative data acquired through conducting focus group and netnography are intended to help in offering further depth and clarity, as well as developing effective communications via presenting a wide range of data.

In addition to the pilot focus group, Study 1 involves two survey experiments as well as YouTube Analytics statistical data, addressing the first objective of the present thesis which is to investigate the effects of musical in/congruity in a high-involvement condition. Study 1 is conducted in the context of advertising for a university as a high-involvement service and investigates the effects of genre congruity as one of the most important congruity dimensions identified in the literature review chapter. It uses original compositions by postgraduate music students and well-known compositions by famous professional musicians via two separate survey experiments as well as additional YouTube Analytics data.

3.7.1. Hypotheses development

Expectancy and meaningful relevance constitute key dimensions of advertising congruity (Oakes, 2007). The current study suggests that the pop music treatment is more expected than classical and jazz treatments as it has been regularly used in advertisements promoting UK universities. However, it can be proposed that different genres may be relevant in distinct manners. While pop music is associated with the “club scene” and the enjoyment of social life, classical music may represent a more aspirational and sophisticated image for the university. Advertising campaigns promoting various universities typically transfer the exciting experience of social life in addition to emphasis on quality of teaching and research.

Research suggests that various properties of music are capable of communicating different meanings. For example, in a case study, Sanchez-Porras and Rodrigo (2017) discuss how Coca-Cola audio-visual advertising produces emotional benefits to the public because it aroused positive feelings that lead to happiness through manipulating and selecting the most suitable rhythm and melody, as the aim of the brand is to persuade the consumer that they will be happier if they drink its product. They point out that, for instance, music with medium tempo transmits the widest variety of feelings, including

feelings of joy and humour. Similarly, musical genres may be considered to have their own identity. For example, dance music is believed to be hedonic, trendy and exciting, whereas classical music is considered to be up-market, sophisticated, and high quality (North and Hargreaves, 1998). If the musical genre is congruous with the advertising message, communication effectiveness is likely to be enhanced. Hung (2000) examined the congruity of music to the visuals in TV advertisements and found that consumers could draw music-evoked meanings and images from the advertisement. She found that advertisements accompanied by music incongruent with the visuals made viewers uncomfortable and resulted in a negative product image. Although Hung's study was concerned with visual elements and music, rather than brand and music, the underlying logic suggests that musical congruity and different associated identities of various musical genres assist transference of different meaning and images. Although the existing research studies have discussed the importance of matching music to image in retailing context (Kotler, 1973; Yalch and Spangenberg, 1990; Herrington and Capella, 1994; North et al., 2016) and service situations (Ramos, 1993), the in/congruity of music with brand image is an area that has not explicitly been investigated. Background music style or genre must combine positively and synergistically with advertised brand characteristics as well as other elements contained in the advertisement. Specifically, musical genre must be congruent with the brand's identity in order to facilitate conveying a uniform message regarding the advertised product. Furthermore, music in advertising became an interpretive cue in a study revealing that upscale, high quality brand image of an advertised shopping mall was enhanced through congruously sophisticated, classical music (Hung, 2001). Rock music paired with the Swatch brand in radio advertisements enhanced perceptions of elegant, classy and fashionable styles, whereas classical music paired with the Rolex brand intensified perceptions of sophistication and quality, proposing that consumers make inferences based on musical cues that have prior associations (Lavack et al., 2008). Consequently, it is proposed that the relevant, stereotypical associations of various congruous and incongruous musical genres used in university advertising may influence the perceived identity of the university:

H1: Perceived identity of the university will be a function of the stereotypical identity of the musical genres used in the promotional video.

Research findings suggest that university fee is one of the obstacles to prospective students to take up university places (McGivney, 1993; Callender, 2003). The cost of a degree is an important factor in determining prospective students' decision to enrol to a particular university. There have been notable changes in the level of tuition fee in the UK in recent years, and thus, it is vitally important for universities to be aware of the factors that can potentially moderate the effects of increased tuition fees on student enrolment. Sá (2014) investigated the effects of fees on the demand for higher education, university attendance, and course choice through focussing on the removal of upfront fees in Scotland since 2001 and the increase in fees in England in 2012. The results revealed that 2001 reform in Scotland increased applications while 2012 reform in England reduced applications. Dearden et al. (2011) utilise data on university enrolment from the UK Labour Force Survey from 1992 to 2007 for the UK universities and find that fees have a significantly adverse effect on university participation. Stange (2015) investigates a policy in which 142 universities increased the fees for individual programmes, revealing that a rise in tuition fees reduced demand. Furthermore, similar results were found in the report by UCAS (2012), as well as the report of the independent Commission on Fees (ICOF, 2012). Similarly, studies conducted in non-UK universities also confirm that the increase in tuition fees adversely affects enrolment. Deming and Dynarski (2009) review the literature on university fee and enrolment for US students and find that most studies provide evidence that a decrease in college costs may increase college entry. The evidence for other countries such as Canada, Germany, Italy and Denmark also suggests a negative effect of tuition fees on enrolment (e.g., Neill, 2009; Nielsen et al., 2010; Garibaldi et al., 2012; Hübner, 2012). Anticipated cost of a service may also have an effect on consumers' behavioural responses. Therefore, it is important to explore how various types of background music used in advertisements for a university course affect prospective students' anticipated tuition fee level.

Areni and Kim (1993) investigate the effects of various musical genres in retail environments and reveal that customers purchased more expensive wines when classical music rather than pop music was played in the background, thus associating the consumption of wine with prestige and sophistication. Classical music, in turn, may elicit perceptions of a more sophisticated environment,

indicating that only expensive merchandise may be considered for purchase, therefore underpinning the effectiveness of classical music in transferring a highly prestigious and high-quality image justifying the higher costs. In the case of advertising a university course, it is proposed that undergraduate students may associate the prestige and complexity of classical music with high quality and excellence which leads to expectations of a high level of tuition fees for the advertised postgraduate course. Consequently, the current study intends to investigate whether stereotypical identities of various genres with varied associations would affect students' anticipated cost of enrolling for the advertised course.

H2: The anticipated level of university fees will be a function of the stereotypical identity of the musical genres used in the promotional video.

The two most important approaches used in advertising to influence consumer behavior are described as value-expressive (image) or symbolic appeal and utilitarian (functional) appeal (Park et al., 1986; Snyder and DeBono, 1985). These appeals may influence advertising persuasion via two different psychological processes, namely self-congruity and functional congruity (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). While self-congruity is defined as the match between the product's value-expressive attributes (product-user image) and the consumer's self-concept (Myers, 1976; Johnson, 1984; Sirgy et al., 2000), functional congruity deals with the match between the beliefs of the product's utilitarian or performance-related attributes and the consumer's referent (e.g., ideal) attributes (Johar and Sirgy, 1991). Greater congruity between consumers' utilitarian beliefs about the actual brand and the referent beliefs may lead to greater persuasion (Grether and Wilde, 1984; Shimp and Kavas; 1984). However, consumers often involve their self-images in their evaluation of a brand and are more likely to pay attention to and choose the one with image characteristics that they perceive to be the most suitable for the brand (Koo et al., 2014). Since self-congruity focuses on product cues, it can be regarded as a peripheral route to persuasion (Petty and Cacioppo, 1981; Johar and Sirgy, 1991). While the relationship between self-congruity and brand personality is an extensively studied aspect of self-congruity theory (Klipfel et al., 2014), the current research investigates the effects of musical-congruity and advertising messages reflecting brand personality. Background music, as a peripheral

cue encompassing hedonic attributes in advertisements, may affect consumers' behavioural responses (e.g., purchase intent) through eliciting value-expressive advertising appeals, as it is capable of eliciting various types of images that may be perceived as congruent/incongruent by consumers and their self-images. Consumers tend "to express themselves by purchasing or consuming particular brands, for instance, the extent to which customers' self-concept closely matches the store image" (Kang et al., 2015, p. 106). Congruent or incongruent background music in an advertisement may conform to or detract from the image that potential consumers prefer to be portrayed from a particular brand. Therefore, it is important to explore how these congruent and incongruent pieces of music affect consumers' behavioural responses to the advertisements.

Martin-Santana et al. (2015) analyse the influence of background music and its congruity with advertising message on advertising effectiveness and argue how congruent music attracts consumers' attention and results in enhancing advertising effectiveness and credibility. Congruity between the context-specific purchase occasion and the mood produced by music enhances purchase intention (Alpert et al., 2005). Furthermore, Alpert and Alpert (1990) investigate the effects of mood congruity and reveal how using sad music to promote a greeting card for an ill friend produced higher purchase intent compared to happy music and silence. In this context, congruity between the context-specific purchase occasion and the mood produced by the music enhances purchase intention. Although advertising for higher education contains a mixture of utilitarian and hedonic messages, it can be proposed that perceived musical congruity may influence students' intention to enrol for the advertised course in the context of university advertising:

H3: Perceived congruity between music and advertising message will enhance intention to enrol.

Several studies have shown that the style of music associated with a product may affect consumer attitude towards the advertisement and the brand as well as their purchase intentions. For example, Sullivan (1990) investigated the performance of radio advertising to determine whether using various styles of music can affect the persuasive effect of advertisements for low-involvement products. The results revealed that adult contemporary music produced the most favourable effects regarding ad and

brand attitude and purchase intention, compared to easy listening music. Pop music is clearly the dominant genre in advertising for the late teenage consumer. However, various universities may choose different musical genres to be used in their advertisements depending on factors such as the identity they want to portray and the reputation of the university and city. Similar to what has been discussed for H3, it can be argued that the stereotypically hedonic identity of pop music may enhance intention to enroll through eliciting value-expressive or symbolic appeal route. North and Hargreaves (1999) reveal that individuals have normative beliefs about characteristics of fans of different musical genres (i.e., classical, pop). For example, pop music fans were regarded as physically attractive, conventional, and enthusiastic, while classical music fans were regarded as intellectual, traditional, and religious. Similarly, the work by Rentfrow and Gosling (2007) confirm the existence of genre-stereotypes amongst fans. Fans of various genres are stereotyped with qualities associated with specific genres, because, indeed, each genre portrays specific types of image or identity. Hargreaves et al. (2002, p. 14) suggest that stereotypical identities of various types of music might be based on “generic distinctions between broad categories of musical activity, as well as on specific distinctions which cut across these categories, in particular instruments and genres”. For example, North and Hargreaves (1998) suggest that pop music can be considered as stereotypically hedonic, while classical music is regarded as an upscale and sophisticated genre. As Cook (1998, p. 5) points out, “In today’s world, deciding what music to listen to is a significant part of deciding and announcing to people not just who you want to be... but who you are. Music is a very small word to encompass something that takes as many forms as there are cultural or sub-cultural identities”. Just as different individuals can use different musical genres as means of associating with, and portraying and developing various identities, the identities associated to varied musical genres can also be transferred to the advertised product. Therefore, as hedonic qualities associated with pop music may produce positive responses in potential consumers through eliciting a favourable image of the university environment, it is suggested that the stereotypically hedonic identity of pop music will encourage enrolment:

H4: Intention to enrol will be a function of the stereotypically hedonic identity of the pop music genre used in the promotional video.

Various studies have examined music and recall (e.g., Fraser and Bradford, 2013; Gorn et al., 1991). For example, North et al. (2004) reveal that people are more able to memorise advertising messages when background music is congruent with the perceived images of the advertised products compared to when such congruity is absent. However, recall studies have mainly investigated musical effects in the context of advertising where the degree of involvement is relatively low (e.g., Oakes and North, 2006; Olsen, 1997). In contrast, the present research investigates the influence of the stereotypical identities of various musical genres in the context of advertising a university as a high-involvement service. In the context of the present study, consumers (students) may find the pop music genre and its associated qualities as the genre that best matches the advertised brand. In a high-involvement advertising context such as a university, music-message incongruity may inhibit recall of advertising information. Because the level of cognitive effort demanded by the advertisement is high, cognitive resources are likely to be fully extended in such a case (Lavack et al., 2008), and may be unable to cope with the extra load and burden imposed by the incongruity between background music and advertising message. Therefore, considering the hedonic nature and identity associated with pop music (North and Hargreaves, (1998), and considering the study by North et al. (2004) mentioned above, it is proposed that the more stereotypically hedonic pop music genre will enhance recall of visual and verbal information:

H5: Visual and verbal recall of information will be a function of the stereotypically hedonic identity of the pop music genre used in the promotional video.

3.7.2. Development of survey questionnaire for Study 1

Discussion with the team in the University's Marketing and Recruitment department involved in creating the advertisement clarified different factors that are influential in determining a student's choice of university. The university marketing executives' opinions are of great importance as they are the people "who direct and control institutions' promotional budgets and campaigns, who

influence vice-chancellors and other senior academics with regard to branding matters, who determine the contents and characters of university's advertisements and other marketing communications and who, therefore, play a critical role in student recruitment" (Ali-Choudhury, Bennett, and Savani, p. 12, 2009). University marketing and recruitment executives and managers are considered as significant decision makers regarding branding issues, and once the decision has been made regarding an institution's brand identity, they protect and defend the chosen brand. It is, therefore, extremely important to "understand marketing directors and managers' interpretations of the nature and components of a university brand and their opinions of what the brand means to prospective students, as these opinions will drive an institution's marketing activities" (Ali-Choudhury, Bennett, and Savani, p. 13, 2009). Three members of the university's marketing communications team were involved in the discussions, having successful track records in university marketing and considerable experience in brand-building, producing print materials, promoting academic programmes as well as research activity, advertising events, and producing advertisements for various courses offered by the university.

Existing literature highlights various factors in determining prospective students' choice of university, including variables such as university's general status and reputation (Hussey and Duncombe, 1999; Palacio et al., 2002), quality of education and recognition of qualifications (Lee, 2014), the attractiveness of the geographical location (Moogan et al., 2001), the institution's learning environment (Gutman and Miaoulis, 2003), cost of education (Joseph and Joseph, 2000; Ahmad and Buchanan, 2016), educational facilities and price and quality (LeBlanc and Nguyen, 1996, 1997), faculty qualifications (Gray et al., 2003), perceived image of the institution (Bennett, 2007), as well as environmental cues and educational facilities (James-MacEachern et al., 2017). Furthermore, Ali-Choudhury, Bennett, and Savani (2009) identified a number of items that constitute main elements of a university brand from the point of view of HE communications directors and managers, including the university's educational identity, institution's location, employability, visual imagery, as well as reputation, sports and social facilities, and learning environment. A comparison between factors highlighted in the extant body of literature and the items underlined by the university's marketing

communications managers used in the present study revealed that the university's perceived image, anticipated cost, recall of advertising information, and the effectiveness of advertisement on intention to enrol are among variables that can be used in exploring how background music affects students' responses to university advertising.

The discussion with the university marketing communications team revealed that six key items are significant in investigating the effects on the perception of the university brand. The survey examines students' perceptions about the university advertising effectiveness. In order to allow participants a neutral ('don't know') option, responses for perceived university image were measured using six 5-point semantic differential scales bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from 'unpleasant' (1) to 'pleasant' (5), 'boring' (1) to 'stimulating' (5), 'stressful' (1) to 'relaxing' (5), 'gloomy' (1) to 'cheerful' (5), 'modern' (1) to 'traditional' (5), and 'trendy' (1) to 'old-fashioned' (5). Students' anticipated tuition fee levels, perceived effectiveness of the video on their intention to enrol, and their perceived music/advertising match were measured using four 5-point semantic differential scales bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from 'much lower than average' (1) to 'much higher than average' (5), 'very ineffective' (1) to 'very effective' (5), and 'very poor match' (1) to 'very good match' (5) respectively. Furthermore, two additional questions examined students' visual and verbal recall of information. In order to measure recall of visual information, students were asked to write down the webpage address and phone number provided in the video. The data collection procedure for examining visual recall was that students would score 1 for every correct input (webpage address and phone number), hence each student could score 0, 1, or 2. They were also asked to choose five relevant sentences that were mentioned in the video orally as the benefits of studying at the advertised university. A choice of nine sentences was provided in the questionnaire to measure their verbal recall of information. They would score 1 for every correct choice regarding the recall of verbal information, meaning that they could score anything from 0-5.

3.7.3. Study 1, Survey Experiment 1: genre congruity and original compositions

3.7.3.1. Advertising Stimuli for Experiment 1

The promotional video used in both survey experiments of Study 1 was identical to the one used in the focus groups. As mentioned earlier, a talking heads promotional video was recorded with the help of the university's Marketing and Recruitment department to promote a business-related MSc course. The talking heads video features the MSc Director of Studies, a previous graduate of the course, as well as a current student on the course who all explain the benefits of taking the course. It also features footage of the department and its learning environment. In Experiment 1, each version of the video was accompanied by a specific piece of music including instrumental classical and jazz recordings as well as an instrumental piece of pop music. These original/unfamiliar pieces of music were created by the postgraduate student composers at the University's School of Music. The three musical versions of the university promotional video along with a no-music treatment were used to measure cognitive and behavioural response to the advertisements. The volume level was adjusted in a way that the narrators' voices were louder than the background music in the music versions of the advertisement.

3.7.3.2. Sample and procedure for Experiment 1

In the field of marketing, researchers often use non-random sampling methods such as convenience sampling, in which individuals who fit certain practical criteria such as easy accessibility, geographical proximity, availability at a given time, or the willingness to participate are included for the purpose of study (Miles and Huberman, 1994). This type of convenience sampling is accepted practice in PhD theses. Convenience samples are sometime referred to as accidental samples because they just happen to be situated, spatially or administratively, near to where the researcher is conducting the data collection. Dornyei (2007) points out that captive participants such as students in the researcher's own institution are typical examples of convenience sampling. Using a student sample has been the norm for many previous music and advertising studies involving experimental designs, as indicated by Oakes (2007, p39): "Many studies highlighted in the following review used

student participants in an artificial environment in which they were instructed to focus their attention actively upon the advertising stimulus”.

In the context of the university advertising in the current thesis (Study 1), convenience sampling was used to recruit subjects using the existing undergraduate students. It may be argued that recruiting potential new students would have been more justified and could have lessened the issue of bias. However, there were a number of ethical, practical and logistical challenges involved in recruiting potential new students in the sample.

Firstly, from the ethical issues point of view, the researcher was required to go through all the ethical requirements set by the university’s ethics committee for this study. It would have been problematic to go through the ethics application process and obtain the approval from the committee to use students from outside the University of Liverpool. This is particularly important considering that this research was undertaken in collaboration with the University’s Marketing and Recruitment Department who set a specified time frame for completion of the project using the most appropriate advertisement promoting the postgraduate course to be put online. Moreover, in the discussion with Marketing and Recruitment department staff during the design stage of the study, it was also highlighted that it is important to explore the effects on the existing students and how university promotional videos containing various background musical genres influence the existing undergraduate students to further their studies by undertaking a postgraduate degree at the University. This is a particularly significant issue as retaining existing customers (students) is highly important as service providers such as universities are dealing with increased competition within their sectors.

A research flyer was designed to simplify the process of recruiting participants. It was put up in prominent places such as academic departments, libraries, student halls, and Facebook pages. Recruited participants were third year undergraduate students interested in undertaking a postgraduate degree in a business-related subject in the future. This ensured that the promotional video message carried personal significance for them, resulting in a high level of consumer involvement. Pre-tests were conducted on undergraduate marketing students who were tasked with answering a number of questions designed to measure their level of involvement. Although the musical pieces representing

classical, jazz, and pop music used in Experiment 1 were all unfamiliar and original compositions created specifically to be used in this research, pre-tests examined whether participants were familiar with these compositions to which the answer was negative. Pre-tests also ensured that these musical compositions were perceived to be suitable exemplars of their respective genres. A total of 100 students (53 male and 47 female) participated in Experiment 1 and were divided into four different groups. Each group watched a different version of the promotional video. The mean age of participants was 20.98 (SD = 1.53) years. Students were told they would be watching a university advertisement and would be asked to complete a short questionnaire about it. Participation in the study was voluntary and the research participants were informed about the confidentiality and anonymity of their responses.

3.7.4. Study 2, Experiment 2: genre congruity and professional compositions

While in Experiment 1, the advertising videos made to promote the university were accompanied by original pieces of music that were never heard before and composed by non-professional postgraduate music students studying at the University's School of Music, Experiment 2 involves professional recordings of the identical selected genres (jazz, pop, and classical music) composed by famous, professional musicians.

3.7.4.1. Advertising stimuli for Experiment 2

Six songs (two from each of the three musical genres) were initially selected after consulting a professor of music to represent jazz, classical, and pop. Various pieces of music used in different advertising treatments were also pre-tested to ensure that they are suitable exemplars of their respective genres. At this stage, a pre-test was conducted to choose the final three pieces of professional music to be used in Experiment 2, similar to the pre-test conducted to select the final three versions to be used in the focus group and Experiment 1. A total number of 32 students participated in the pre-test, following the procedure similar to the pre-test conducted for selecting the original pieces of music to be used in focus groups and Experiment 1. The six pieces of music were named as Classical 1, Classical 2, Jazz 1, Jazz, 2, Pop 1, and Pop 2. Classical 2 was selected to

represent classical genre, scoring the highest in terms of participants' identification of genre (93%). Jazz 1 was chosen to represent jazz genre, scoring the highest in terms of participants' identification of genre (78%), while Pop 1 was selected to represent pop genre, scoring the highest percentage in terms of participants' identification of genre (81%). Furthermore, as in the survey Experiment 1, a professor of music ensured that the compositions were suitable exemplars of their respective genres. Also, it was ensured that music store (e.g., HMV) classifications categorise the artists used in this survey study as being associated with those specific musical genres. Based on the results of the pre-test, three musical versions of the university advertisement along with a no-music treatment were used to measure participants' responses to the university advertisements via the survey. These final three versions used the following songs representing the three contrasting musical genres:

- *I want it that way* by *Back Street Boys* representing the pop genre
- *Salomo* by *George Frideric Handel* representing the classical music genre
- *Sandu* by *Clifford Brown* representing jazz music

These three versions of the university advertisement along with a no-music treatment were used to measure students' response to the advertisements.

3.7.4.2. Sampling and procedure for Experiment 2

Survey questionnaires were administered to undergraduate students (Appendix 7) attending tutorial sessions for a Marketing Communications module who agreed to participate for course credit. A total of 102 students participated in four different groups. Participants included 55 males and 47 females, 97 of which were in the age group of 21 and under and 5 of them were between 22 and 34 years old. These students were divided into four different groups allocated to see one version of the advertisement. Each group watched a different version of the advertisement:

- Pop music version (25 participants)
- Classical music version (28 participants)
- Jazz music (24 participants)
- No music (25 participants)

The students were told that they will be watching an advertisement for a postgraduate course at the university and then they would be asked to complete a short survey questionnaire reflecting their

attitude towards the advertised course and school as well as their perceived image of the learning environment. Similar to survey Experiment 1, the volume level was adjusted in a way that the narrators' voice was louder than the background music in all four versions of the advertisement. No change had been made to the advertisement video except for the background music.

3.7.5. YouTube Analytics statistical data

YouTube is the world's largest video sharing platform that allows individuals to upload videos to the YouTube channels. YouTube Analytics provides the opportunity for the researcher to retrieve viewing statistics, popularity metrics and demographic information of the online viewers (Reuter and Scholl, 2014). Its powerful analytics tool makes it possible for individuals to track the amount of views received, level of engagement with the video, information such as abandonment (when the viewers drop out), total minutes watched, average minutes watched per viewer, as well as viewer's demographic. The present thesis used this novel approach of data collection to complement the survey Experiment 1 of Study 1 and to investigate whether musical genre congruity or incongruity affects consumers' online viewing behaviour. YouTube Analytics was used as a robust and refreshing platform to examine consumers' responses to advertisements accompanied with different types of music when they voluntarily play the advertising video that they may have found either on YouTube by searching the university or the course name, or on the university website (the advertised course's webpage).

Consumers may watch advertisements on YouTube to obtain more information about products' features. This provides the opportunity for marketing and advertising researchers as well as client companies to obtain important data about the impact of the advertisements and how they are capable of holding viewers' attention. In the context of the present research, such insights can be used to measure the extent to which a specific piece of music used in an advertisement may be capable of retaining viewers and whether these statistical results match the findings of the survey study.

The procedure for collecting the YouTube Analytics data was discussed in depth and confirmed with the individuals at the University's Marketing and Recruitment department. In survey Experiment 1 of

Study 1, there were a total of four advertising treatments accompanied by three different genres of [original] music (pop, jazz, classical, and no-music treatments). Therefore, the statistical YouTube Analytics data was planned to be obtained for each of these university advertising treatments. As the researcher set a deadline for conducting this particular research project, the time allowed for each version of the advertising video to remain online was decided to be 70 days. It was agreed that the researcher would obtain the YouTube Analytics statistical data after each run (70 days) for each version of the video directly from the Marketing and Recruitment department of the University. The researcher then used those parts of the statistical data that are relevant to the study and can benefit the overall objective of the study. This additional variable concerns the extent to which each advertising treatment accompanied by various musical genres is capable of retaining viewers' attention through presenting the statistical data pertaining to the average view duration for ad treatments. It then provides an opportunity for the researcher to compare the findings of Experiment 1 in Study 1 with the statistical data from YouTube Analytics and establish whether the negative/positive musical congruity effects on variables such as perceived image of the brand could be reflected in the extent to which the advertisement can hold the attention of individuals and make them keep watching the advertisement.

3.8. Study 2: Musical in/congruity in restaurant advertising

Study 2 seeks to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical in/congruity in the context of advertising through investigating the effects of country of origin musical congruity and developing Heckler and Childers' (1982) twin component congruity model. This survey study was conducted in the context of radio advertising for restaurants.

This study seeks to examine the impact of musical in/congruity in conditions where there is a lack of visual imagery and to assess how musical congruity/incongruity works in the context of radio advertising. Four musical treatments of a radio advertisement promoting a fictitious authentic Italian restaurant were created to manipulate the independent variables which are country of origin of music and genre of music. Advertising-generated mental imagery may reconcile the ad-evoked feelings and attitudes elicited by advertising (Bone and Ellen, 1991). In this context, radio advertising is of

particular importance as it is a medium that is well-suited and highly relevant for imagery-evoking strategies, music, vivid verbal messages, and specific instructions to listeners to imagine (Russell and Lane, 1990).

Consumer choices may be driven by utilitarian and hedonic considerations in purchase contexts. University or higher education (as the research context used in previous studies of the present thesis) can be considered as both a hedonic and a utilitarian product. While features such as the quality of nightlife may be regarded as the hedonic aspect of choosing a university, quality of education, the value of the degree, and the job prospects may be regarded as important utilitarian attributes for selecting a university. However, Babin et al. (1992) argued that the type of advertised product may affect consumers' mental and imagery processing. For example, products that are considered as utilitarian may hinder consumers' visualisation processes. Thus, in the context of radio advertising research, a type of product such as higher education with a low-imagery evoking ability may not generate the elaborative processing necessary for mental imagery to be effective.

In addition, based on the concept of *resource matching* discussed in the literature review chapter of the present thesis, using incongruent information in advertisements may lead to consuming more cognitive resources that may in turn result in inhibiting processing of the ad, thus negatively affecting consumers' attitudes and recall. This process is more expected when the advertisement demands a high level of cognitive processing effort, as "cognitive resources are likely to be fully extended in such a case, and may be unable to cope with the extra burden imposed by music-message incongruity" (Lavack et al., 2008, p. 556). Consequently, a restaurant is chosen as the context of the current study since it offers the type of product that is relatively low-involvement and completely hedonic in nature. Radio advertisements for restaurants are capable of evoking mental imagery in consumers, allowing them to visualise restaurants' atmosphere through quasi-perceptual experience generated by various features of the advertisement such as background music. Therefore, restaurant advertising is used to investigate the effects of musical congruity in the context of radio advertising where there is a lack of visual imagery.

3.8.1. Hypotheses development

Although congruent background music may be well integrated with other elements of the advertisement, the artful use of mildly incongruent background music that establishes coherent integration with the advertising message may also be of great importance. However, the categorisation of the incongruent musical stimuli used in the previous studies (e.g., Kellaris et al., 1993; Kellaris and Mantel, 1996; Shen and Chen, 2006) shows that many of the incongruent musical stimuli used as examples of incongruity fall short of the artful deviation characteristic of such incongruity because they do not set out to elicit interpretations capable of reinforcing the advertising proposition (Oakes, 2007). Purposeful and artful musical incongruity may result in locating the musical stimuli within an interpretive zone capable of fostering metaphorical elaboration which may enhance consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising.

Although the existing research studies examine the effects of background music on recall (e.g., Hoyer et al., 1984; Park and Young, 1986; Houston et al., 1987; Stout and Leckenby, 1988; Hunt, 1988; Anand and Sternthal, 1990; Stewart et al., 1990; Tom 1990; Boltz et al., 1991; Gorn et al., 1991; Wallace, 1991; Yalch, 1991; Kellaris et al., 1993; Olsen, 1995; Stewart, 1998; Stewart and Punj, 1998; Roehm, 2001; Olsen and Johnson, 2002; North et al., 2004; Allan, 2006; Oakes and North, 2006; Fraser and Bradford, 2013; Chung, Torres-Baumgarten, and Zeno, 2016; Guido et al., 2016; North et al., 2016), they have not addressed the question using unexpected/relevant music. The twin component congruity theory was adopted by Heckler and Childers from studies conducted by schema theorists on memory effects (Friedman, 1979; Goodman, 1980; Hastie, 1980; Srull, 1981). Heckler and Childers (1992) study the effects of congruity between picture and advertising theme for multiple products such as shoes and calculators and found that advertisements with unexpected information produced better recall than advertisements with expected information. Unexpected information presents a diversion from the norm and attracts viewers' attention more than expected information (Haberland and Dacin, 1992). On the other hand, advertisements with irrelevant information may result in inferior recall compared to advertisements with relevant information. Therefore, it can be proposed that:

H1. Unexpected/relevant music in advertising will enhance consumers' recall of information.

Consumers' attitudes towards the advertisement represent individuals' internal evaluations of the overall advertising stimulus (Mitchell and Olson, 1981). Resource matching notions (Anand and Sternthal, 1989; Meyers-Levy and Peracchio, 1995) seem to provide a valuable perspective regarding the complex relationship between music-message congruity, cognitive processing, and attitudes. This framework suggests that music incongruent with an advertising message may consume cognitive resources, thus inhibiting processing which may lead to adversely affecting consumer attitudes towards the advertisement. However, in the case using moderate incongruity, using an unexpected but relevant piece of music, the purposeful musical incongruity may be resolved through allocation of the cognitive resources, thus enhancing attitude through a pleasurable resolution of the detected musical incongruity in the advertisement. Extant research argues that predictable music is rated as more pleasant (Koelsch et al., 2008), more liked (Craton et al., 2016), and more positive (Egermann et al., 2013). However, Lee and Mason (1999) investigated incongruity between textual and pictorial information for computer advertisements and found that advertisements with unexpected/relevant information evoked more favourable attitudes than advertisements with expected/relevant information. Also, advertisements with unexpected/irrelevant information elicited less favourable attitudes than advertisements with expected/irrelevant information. Craton and Lantos (2011) reveal that a positive attitude towards the background music used in advertisements may result in enhancing attitude towards the advertisement itself. It can be suggested that a moderate, playful creativity and distinctiveness as a result of using unexpected/relevant background music may elicit a positive hedonic response in consumers that could positively affect their attitude towards the advertisement. It is therefore interesting to explore whether an unexpected but relevant musical stimulus produces the most favourable attitude towards the advertisement. Thus, it can be proposed that:

H2. Unexpected/relevant music in advertising will produce the most favourable attitudes towards the advertisement.

Brand image concerns the meanings consumers create and attach to services (Camelis, 2009), and therefore, there is a need for a customer-oriented approach that focuses on the consumption

(customer's perspective) rather than the production of services (manager's perspective) in order to understand brand image (Thuy and Thao, 2017). Consumers' perception of a restaurant's brand image may play a crucial role in determining their approach/avoidance or the overall purchase behaviour.

Aaker (1997) pointed out that brands can have their own distinctive personality traits, just like humans. Saulpaugh et al. (2012) investigated the impact of music on consumers' perceptions of a product's image and found that using background music was more effective in creating a desirable image, compared with the no-music treatment. It is believed that various pieces of music may portray different meaning and images. For example, classical music is considered to be sophisticated, upscale, prestigious, and high quality, whereas dance music may be considered to be hedonic, exciting and trendy (North and Hargreaves, 1998). Various genres of music associate different genre-related qualities or attributes to the brand image. Qualities or attributes of various pieces of music used in a restaurant advertisement may be transferred to the restaurant brand, forming a distinctive image for the advertised restaurant.

It is proposed that musical expectancy influences attention, depth of processing, and the image suggested (Craton et al., 2017). One can argue that if the background music in an advertisement violates consumers' expectations to a moderate degree, it may prompt attention and foster greater depth of information processing. In contrast, if music entirely fails to violate musical expectations, it may lose listeners' attention and stimulate shallow processing. However, extreme violation of musical expectations may demand a high level of attention that could make the music the centre of attention, compete for cognitive resources that would otherwise be used for processing the advertising information, as well as creating an image of weirdness which could be distasteful and off-putting. Therefore, there is a need for a more in-depth examination of the effects of the twin component congruity framework in the context of advertising music in investigating how country of origin musical congruity and genre congruity as two distinct dimensions of musical congruity can be used to determine various expectancy and relevancy levels (highlighting in/congruity quadrants) that could affect cognitive responses such as perceived brand image. The mildly incongruent treatment

(unexpected/relevant) may reinforce the most positive brand images as a result of the successful incongruity resolution that takes place in the minds of consumers. Therefore, it can be proposed that:

H3. Unexpected/relevant music in advertising will enhance consumers' perceived image of the restaurant.

Customers evaluate their restaurant experience from a holistic manner (Lin and Mattila, 2010); any restaurant that provides poor service quality holds back the general perception of the whole brand (Cao and Kim, 2015). Service quality is regarded as one of the focal features in consumers' perception of restaurants, and a short path to enhance customer satisfaction (Yasin and Yavas, 2001; Wong and Fong, 2010). Perceived service, as the judgement of an organisation's overall excellence or superiority in quality of food and service, is of great importance because of the intangible, inseparable, and multifaceted nature of the service. Managing service quality requires a restaurant to meet the expectations of customers and to do so consistently across service encounters. Similarly, food quality is one of the most important and fundamental components when assessing overall customer experience and satisfaction in the restaurant industry (Kivela et al., 1999; Raajpoot, 2002; Namkung and Jang, 2007, 2008; Kim et al., 2010; Mohi, 2012), that can influence customers' evaluation of the brand (Selnes, 1993).

Previous research reveals how using congruent music in retail stores may enhance consumers' evaluation of the environment and the brand quality (Meyers-Levy et al., 1994). The existing literature has investigated the influence of background music on a range of restaurant patrons' behaviour such as flavour pleasantness and overall impression of food (Fiegel et al., 2014) and consumer spending (North et al., 2003), but the researcher is unaware of any previous studies investigating the effects of background music in advertisements on expectations of food and service quality. While the Mehrabian-Russel model (Mehrabian and Russel, 1974) proposes that individuals respond emotionally to environmental stimuli such as background music, leading to an approach-avoidance behaviour, background music in advertisements may also affect consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertisements. Although existing research revealed that using severely incongruent music may lead to inability to resolve the incongruity which in turn results

in negative evaluation of the brand quality, the extant research has not investigated the effects of using artfully incongruent music (mild incongruity) in great depth. Therefore, it is important to examine the value of mild musical incongruity and how the process of successful incongruity resolution on the part of consumers may enhance their brand evaluation and perceived brand quality. Thus, it is proposed that:

H4. Unexpected/relevant music will enhance consumers' expectation of food and service quality.

The lack of relevance of music to the advertising subject matter may have detrimental effects on consumers' buying decisions as musical irrelevancy may not be successfully resolved through allocating more cognitive resources and thus leads to negative attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand that may ultimately result in eliciting lower purchase intent. However, as we have seen in the tomato ketchup example discussed earlier in the present thesis, although the picture of a sliced tomato ketchup bottle was unexpected, this unexpected but relevant picture was designed to encourage more purchases through enhancing the expectation of using authentic tomato ingredients. Such elaborative decoding can positively affect consumers' purchase intent. Therefore, the current research will also explore how using unexpected but relevant music may affect consumers' purchase behaviour. Drewniany and Jewler (2013) point out that the three basic principles of creativity in advertising include expectancy, relevancy, and persuasiveness. Many advertisements involve unexpected information or incorporate and extend lucid concepts or ideas so that they become more twisted and complicated.

Creative advertising are the ones which are unexpected. As demonstrated in the review of the literature in the present thesis, the influence of using the creative strategy of unexpected/relevant information on consumers' attitude and purchase intent has been explored in some depth in the context of print advertising (e.g., Lee and Mason, 1999). However, there is a lack of effort in adapting and extending this research agenda to the context of advertising music, testing relevant in/congruity frameworks, and exploring how the moderate incongruity as a result of using unexpected/relevant music could affect purchase intent.

Research has revealed that using classical music in a wine store encouraged the purchase of more expensive wines, in contrast to playing top-forty music (Areni and Kim, 1993). This suggests that classical music may be associated with prestige, class, and elegance, all of which qualities can be linked to consumption of expensive wines, and therefore, this particular type of music encourages purchasing expensive wines. However, although previous research as well as the previous studies in the current thesis demonstrated how selecting a congruously perceived genre of music enhances consumers' purchase intent, the mild incongruity as a result of selecting an unexpected/relevant musical genre may be resolved by the consumers in a successful manner. This fruitful incongruity resolution may be a reinforcing element in enhancing purchase intent, especially in the context of restaurant advertising which can be considered as an entirely hedonic purchase. It can therefore be proposed that:

H5. Unexpected/relevant music will enhance consumers' purchase intent.

3.8.2. Method and design

3.8.2.1. Stimulus development

An advertisement copy was recorded to promote a fictitious authentic Italian restaurant called "*Pasta Masters Restaurant*". The narration for the restaurant advertisement for all treatments was identical, except for their accompanying music. The advertisement contained 100 words as follows:

"For pasta dishes, pizzas, and the very best in Italian cuisine, a warm welcome is waiting for you at Pasta Masters Restaurant. Soak up the atmosphere of an authentic Italian restaurant and choose from our extensive menu that is freshly prepared for your delight. We offer ample and convenient parking and service that is second to none. Large parties are always welcome, but please book early to avoid disappointment. For further details or to make a reservation, contact us on 0800-080-808 between 11:00 am and 10:00 pm from Monday to Saturday. Pasta Masters Restaurant - menus to please every palate."

The narrative was read by a postgraduate drama student and lasted 53 seconds. The advertisement for the restaurant was recorded in the university Drama department recording studio, using professional

recording facilities. Brief excerpts of vocal pieces of music were used in advertisement copies. Although it is argued that using vocal music pieces may have confounding effects with prior associations involving lyrics and past exposure (Kellaris and Mantel, 1996), this is not an issue in the context of the present study because the selected pieces of music to be used in various treatments will not contain English lyrics. As the lyrics of the songs are in foreign languages, participants will not understand them and the meanings of the words will not influence their interpretations and associations. However, they will be able to identify and recognise the country of origin of the pieces of music. Before conducting the manipulation checks and the following main survey study, the advertising stimuli were created using 8 different pieces of music. They were tested to ensure the appropriate level of volume in order to facilitate a comfortable listening experience. The researcher also made sure that the background music used in various treatments did not impede the narratives. This was tested particularly in the actual room where the sound facility was used to play the advertisement for the participants prior to data collection. Furthermore, the tests helped in selecting the appropriate timing for the study. However, the limitation of lack of further evaluation for validity and reliability is acknowledged.

Participants were not familiar with the radio advertisement and the restaurant before taking part in the study as the study used an advertisement for a fictitious Italian restaurant. Thus, they did not have any pre-established perception of the quality and image of the restaurant.

3.8.2.2. Manipulation checks

Stimulus congruity will be manipulated in a pre-test involving eight treatments through within-subjects design in which all the participants in the manipulation checks will be exposed to every treatment. Within-subjects design is used at this stage as participants will be asked music-related questions (they will be asked to rate the relevancy and expectancy of each piece of music used in the radio advertisement). This will establish the efficacy of the musical manipulations representing the different treatment conditions of *relevancy* and *expectancy* (four for each). Musical treatments will be placed in the pre-test survey in a way that treatments with music from the same country of origin will

not be played back to back. An objective of conducting the manipulation test is to choose the four musical treatments for relevancy/expectancy quadrants to be used in the final study.

As all the hypotheses of the present study relate to musical relevancy and expectancy, two separate questions will therefore assess the extent to which various treatments are perceived as relevant/irrelevant and expected/unexpected, in order to determine how different treatments will fall within varied musical in/congruity quadrants. Musical relevancy and expectancy will be assessed using different measures. The item to measure musical relevancy will be: “To what extent does the music suggest that the restaurant offers authentic Italian food?”, using a five-point semantic differential scale bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from “The music suggests that the restaurant offers very inauthentic Italian food” (1) to “The music suggests that the restaurant offers very authentic Italian food” (5). Musical expectancy will be measured using a five-point semantic differential scale answering the question; “To what extent does the music identify the country of origin of the restaurant?”, bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from “it strongly identifies the country of origin of the restaurant” (1) to “it does not identify the country of origin of the restaurant at all” (5). These questions will help in selecting the appropriate treatments that represent the four congruity quadrants to be used in the main survey study.

Manipulation checks will also check the sample’s knowledge and recognition of the country of origin of various pieces of music used in different treatments, as well as testing their identification of the musical genres in each treatment. Participants will be asked: “Please specify the country of origin of the music used in this advertisement” and the options will be 1) France 2) Italy 3) Spain 4) Caribbean 5) America. Also, a question will assess participants’ recognition of the musical genre used in the advertisement: “Please specify the genre of music used in the advertisement you have just heard”, and the options will include: 1) Reggae 2) Flamenco 3) Pop 4) Opera 5) If other, please specify.

Considering the definitions of the musical congruity components offered in the current study (namely relevancy and expectancy), 8 congruity quadrants were operationalised through pairing different pieces of music that vary based on their country of origin and genre. Since relevancy deals with the extent to which the genre of music conforms to or detracts from the advertising message and the brand

image, advertisement treatments with classical music (opera) in the background represent the relevant condition, as this genre of music conforms to the restaurant's advertising message and its brand image of authentic Italian food and a sophisticated, quality experience. Previous research revealed that classical music may be deemed as stereotypically upscale, sophisticated, and high quality (North and Hargreaves, 1998). The distinction between classical music and opera is acknowledged, but for the purposes of the current research, they are considered to be comparable exemplars of western art music.

Conversely, reggae music used for advertising an Italian restaurant may be regarded as having no relevance in terms of communicating authentic Italian food and a sophisticated, quality experience. However, reggae may suggest a fun experience. From Prince Buster to Burning Spear, Bob Marley to Shabba Ranks, reggae music is one of the most entertaining, dynamic, and powerful musical forms of the twentieth century (Bradley, 2001). Ferguson et al., (2016) argue that this fun/hedonistic element of reggae may allow it to travel easily across different cultures and communities. On the other hand, since expectancy deals with the extent to which the background music falls within the predetermined or expected country of origin, Italian pieces of music can be considered as being expected in this context. However, it is proposed that a mashup fusion of disparate genres in a single piece of music in the advertisement may be regarded as an unexpected experience by the listener (a mashup is a composition created by blending two or more pre-recorded songs, often by overlaying the vocal track of one song over a different instrumental track or genre). This violation of the genre conventions of musical categories may result in creating humorous effects. The mild musical incongruity may demand listeners' cognitive resources for the purpose of elaborating and resolving the incongruity. The successful experience of incongruity resolution may positively affect consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to the advertisement. In this context, the fusion of meanings of opera and reggae or opera and dance in the advertisement may be decoded as relevant in terms of communicating authentic Italian food and a fun Italian dining experience.

Another quadrant to be examined in the present study is the severe incongruity treatment in which the background music is regarded as being both irrelevant and unexpected. For this purpose, Caribbean

reggae music was selected to represent this treatment as it is unexpected and has no relevance without the reference point of Italian country of origin music.

Because various advertising treatments were created specifically for this research, an expert panel discussion was conducted initially to evaluate the suitability of advertising treatments accompanied with different pieces of music that were going to be used in the pre-test. Therefore, in addition to consulting with the research advisor, the researcher asked three postgraduate music students as well as a semi-professional musician to participate in the panel discussion to ensure that the most appropriate stimuli are selected to be used in the pre-test and subsequently in the main survey study. The main objective of the expert panel was to obtain insights into the characteristics and features of various musical genres and specifically how they can be used to represent various musical in/congruity quadrants in the pre-test.

Therefore, based on the above discussions, the researcher selected various pieces of music to be used in the study. Table 4 demonstrates various musical treatments selected to be used to constitute different congruity quadrants. Thus, various excerpts of the vocal pieces of music demonstrated in Table 4 will be superimposed over the radio advertisement to create eight different advertising treatments to be used in the manipulation test.

Table 4. Musical manipulations for restaurant advertising study

Expectancy	Relevancy		
		<i>Relevant</i>	<i>Irrelevant</i>
	<i>Expected</i>	Italian opera 1. La dona e mobile (Luciano Pavarotti) 2. Sole Mio (Luciano Pavarotti)	Italian reggae 1. Italian Brothers Reggae (Roberto Ferri) 2. Reggae A Roma (Villa Ada Posse)
<i>Unexpected</i>	Italian opera/reggae or dubstep mashup 1. Pasta Grooves (Opera/reggae mashup remix by Puccini Verdi feat Donizetti Rossini) 2. Nessun Dorma (Pavarotti opera/dubstep remix by BudPets)	Caribbean reggae 1. Pa' la Camara (El Chacal) 2. Forever (Jacob)	

3.8.2.3. Procedure and sample for the manipulation checks

A total of 40 first year undergraduate students (N = 40) from the University of Liverpool participated in the pre-test. There was no financial or non-financial incentive involved in the participation in the pre-test. The gender distribution of the sample was 58% male and 42% female. The average age of the participants was 18.9 years (M = 18.9). At the time of recruitment, subjects were informed that their participation in the study would involve listening to a number of advertisements and filling out brief survey questionnaires. The researcher did not disclose the purpose of the study.

Eight versions of the radio advertisement were prepared to represent four different in/congruity quadrants (two for each quadrant). The researcher directed the participants and explained the procedure of the study orally, as well as giving them a written instruction to read before the actual survey starts. The researcher placed 8 pre-test questionnaires in front of each participant and asked them to fill out one questionnaire after hearing each version of the radio advertisement. The researcher played the advertising treatments and after each treatment participants were given two minutes to complete the brief pre-test questionnaire containing four questions. Therefore, participants listened to the first radio advertisement treatment, then they were given two minutes to complete the questionnaire which was collected by the researcher. They then listened to the second version of the advertisement and were asked to complete the same pre-test questionnaire for the second treatment as soon as they listened to it, and this process went on until participants heard all eight versions of the radio advertisement and completed the same pre-test questions for all of the advertising treatments. The entire process of the pre-test took about 35 minutes.

The results of the pre-test helped in identifying four of the most appropriate treatments to be used in the main survey study, based on participants' responses to the four questions (Appendix 8) involving 1) the extent to which the music identifies the country of origin of the restaurant 2) the extent to which participants were able to specify the country of origin of the music used in the advertisement 3) the extent to which participants were able to specify the genre of music used in the advertisement and 4) the extent to which the music suggests that the restaurant offers authentic Italian food. Based on this, the following four treatments were selected to represent four different musical in/congruity quadrants in the main survey study which are as follows:

- 1) Expected/Irrelevant: Italian Reggae, Roberto Ferri "Italian Brothers Reggae"
- 2) Expected/Relevant: Italian Opera, Pavarotti "La Dona e Mobile"
- 3) Unexpected/Irrelevant: Caribbean Reggae, El Chacal "Pa' la Camara"
- 4) Unexpected/Relevant: Opera Reggae Mashup, Puccini Verdi feat Donizetti Rossini "Pasta Grooves"

3.8.3. Development of survey measures for Study 2 (restaurant advertising)

The first question of the survey collects participants' ethnicity in order to screen out any native Italian participants.

Participants will receive a recall test. They will be asked to recall the brand name, the slogan, and claims made in the advertisement. To measure the recall of the brand name, participants will be asked "Please tick the brand name mentioned in the radio advertising you have just heard" to choose one among the available options including 1) Fellini's Pizza, 2) The Italian Club, 3) Pasta Masters Restaurant, 4) Casa Italia, and 5) Pizzeria. Recall of slogan will be measured by the question "Please tick the advertising slogan mentioned in the radio advertisement you have just heard" and giving the participants the options to choose one including 1) Life tastes better with us, 2) Menus to please every palate, 3) Feast on 4) Devotion towards cuisine, and 5) Feel the Italian taste. An additional question will examine recall of advertising claims by presenting 10 options, 5 of which were identified in the advertisement as benefits and values the restaurant would offer (claims). Participants will be asked to choose 5 options based on what they remember from the advertisement and hence, they would score 1 for every correct option selected, meaning that they could score anything from 0 to 5. The above question will address hypothesis 1 of the present study which investigates how various in/congruity treatments affect recall.

The present study adopts the scales developed by Crites et al. (1994) and MacInnis and Park (1991) to measure research participants' attitude towards the advertisement involving two 5-point semantic differential scales bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from "enjoyable (1) to "not enjoyable" (5)", and "not entertaining (1) to entertaining (5)". This question is designed to address hypothesis 2, investigating the effects on consumers' attitude towards the advertisement.

The perceived image of the restaurant will be measured using five 5-point semantic differential scales bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from "dull" (1) to "exciting" (5), "pleasant" (1) to "unpleasant" (5), "tense" (1) to "relaxing" (5), "uncool" (1) to "cool" (5), and "appealing" (1) to "unappealing" (5) in order to allow participants a neutral ('don't know') option. The items to measure

perceived image were selected after a discussion with the participants in the pre-test on the key elements of a restaurant brand image. This question is designed to address hypothesis 3 and establish how various musical congruity quadrants may determine perceived image of the brand.

Also, two separate questions will assess participants' expected quality of food and service. The question to assess the expected quality of food will be: "Please specify your expectation of food quality at the advertised restaurant" and the question to assess the expected quality of service will be: "Please specify your expectation of service quality at the advertised restaurant". Two 5-point semantic differential scales bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from "very low quality" (1) to "very high quality" (5) will collect participants' responses for these two questions. These two questions will address hypothesis 4 of the present study, investigating how various musical congruity quadrants affect consumers' expected quality of food and service at the advertised restaurant.

Furthermore, a question was designed to measure purchase intent: "Please specify how likely you would be to visit the advertised restaurant", which used a semantic differential scale bounded at each end by bipolar adjectives ranging from "extremely likely" (1) to "extremely unlikely" (5). This question will address hypothesis 5 of the present study and examines how various types of in/congruent music affect consumers' purchase intent.

3.8.4. Pilot study

Prior to the actual data collection for the present study, a pilot test was carried out to ensure that the entire survey experiment process was free from significant technical shortcomings. The main objectives of conducting the pilot study therefore were to test the experiment procedure and discern any possible flaw, to ascertain the success of the manipulations, and to ensure that the participants are able to comprehend the questions included in the main survey study. A total number of 20 students participated in the pilot study, 5 participants per group. The outcome of this pilot study did not suggest any shortcomings concerning the execution of the survey experiments except for minor suggestions regarding the time required to fill out the questionnaire and understanding of some the

questions. Subsequently, the data collection phase for the final survey studies was carried out as the pilot study did not show any major flaw with the survey procedure and its intended manipulations.

3.8.5. Procedure and sample for Study 2

Having established the final four musical treatments, a between-subjects design was initiated through which each group of participants will be exposed to only one advertisement treatment and will be asked to answer a set of questions (Appendix 9). The between-subjects design is used to avoid the carryover effects that can plague within-subject design. In other words, participation in one condition or treatment may affect responses in other conditions, for example, the repeated practice of hearing various versions of the advertisement may enhance their recall of information as well as making them aware of the purpose of the study.

A total number of 141 first year undergraduate students participated in the survey experiment of Study 2; 33 in the “Expected/Irrelevant”, 35 in the “Expected/Relevant”, 37 in the “Unexpected/Irrelevant”, and 36 in the “Unexpected/Relevant” treatments. The mean age of participants was 18.9 ($M = 18.9$), and the genre distribution was 62% male and 38% female. The sample was recruited by the researcher through handing out an invitation in one of the University’s Halls of Residence accommodating around 1300 first year undergraduate students. The invitation to participate contained a brief description of the study, what was expected from participants, the procedure of data collection, duration of the study, as well as explanation of the confidentiality and anonymity of data and participants. However, the actual purpose of the research was not disclosed and the student participants were simply informed that their feedback was needed for a particular advertisement.

The present study was carried out in accordance with the ethical guidelines highlighted by the University of Liverpool Ethics Committee. Consequently, student participants were clearly informed about the procedure of involvement in the study, the anonymity of subjects as well as confidentiality of the data provided. They were also informed that they have the right to withdraw from the study at any stage they wish to.

3.9. Quantitative data analysis

A statistical analysis software package (SPSS) is used to analyse quantitative data collected via survey questionnaires. Based on the objectives of each research project in the present thesis, various dependent variables were established as factors that the researcher intends to explain through employing different independent variables that may contribute to the explanation in the variation or evolution of the dependant variables (Janssens et al., 2008). For instance, in the restaurant advertising study, expectation of *food quality* was defined as a dependent variable while *musical liking* was taken as an independent variable. Various statistical tests and analyses were used to examine the effects of background music on a range of dependent variables and to test the hypotheses, depending on the type of variables. For example, the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to determine whether there are any statistically significant differences between various treatments using different musical genres in terms of consumers' perceived image of the brand. Tukey tests were also conducted as a post hoc multiple comparison test on ANOVA to determine the means that are significantly different from each other among groups. Pearson's Correlation test was used to measure the strength of a linear association between two ordinal variables. Descriptive statistics were also utilised to determine various frequency measures such as mean, standard deviation, variance, minimum, etc.

3.10. Further insights into pre-tests

It is important to control various external factors in the context of the empirical studies of the present thesis. As pointed out earlier, consumers' memory, attitude, evaluation of an advertisement etc. may simply be affected by other factors such as the advertising content, environmental factors and psychological status (see Schiffman and Kanuk, 2002). For example, if different versions of an advertisement have different characters, images, colours, texts, and brand names, there are likely to be subsequent differences in consumer responses if such elements are not controlled appropriately. This is why the advertising stimuli in Study 1 were designed to be identical apart from the variations in music. Therefore, in the experimental survey studies of the present thesis, participants are exposed to advertisements that are specifically manipulated to minimise the confounding effects for testing the

hypotheses, whether it is a TV advertisement specifically made to promote a real university or a radio advertisement promoting a fictitious restaurant.

Prior to carrying out the focus group and survey studies (Studies 1 and 2) of the present thesis, the researcher conducted various pre-tests to determine the appropriateness and relevance of the questions to be asked in the focus group study as well as the surveys, and to test how respondents interpret and react to questions. These pre-tests were carried out to test various items of survey studies for readability, comprehension, wording, order effects, and response variation (Frey and Fontana, 1991). Most importantly, it allowed the researcher to determine participants' opinion about the various elements of the research stimuli such as the quality of picture and sound, as well as selecting the most appropriate musical pieces to be used in the background of the advertisements.

Although the image and sound quality in the TV advertisement for a university and the restaurant advertisement remained constant throughout conducting each individual study, the researcher also included questions regarding participants' impression of the visual and sound quality of the advertisements and ensured that the high quality videos obtained using *Final Cut Pro* editing software and the clarity of sound meets the standard requirements of conducting advertising research in both TV and radio contexts.

3.11. Study 3: Netnography

Another qualitative approach used in the present thesis involves gathering netnographic findings (presented in Chapter 6). Netnography is a qualitative research method that has been used in the field of consumer behaviour and marketing since the late 1990s, particularly as a result of the developments in computer and internet technology and the subsequent shifts in approaches used for acquiring information about consumers' consumption experiences. It involves collecting and analysing consumer-generated online comments. It has been used as a tool for adopting anthropological methods in the context of marketing research. Netnography was developed by Robert Kozinets and is defined as a "qualitative, interpretive research methodology that adapts the traditional, in-person ethnographic research techniques of anthropology to the study of online cultures and

communities formed through computer-mediated communications” (Jupp, 2006, p. 193). Using techniques of netnography helps enhance researchers’ understanding of consumption and social meanings in various online consumer cultures around the world.

Some of the benefits of adopting netnographic techniques include simplicity, instant access, wide accessibility, and lower cost. Moreover, the data acquired through netnography is more naturalistic, unobtrusive and authentic than other means of qualitative data collection such as focus groups or interviews (Kozinets, 2006). Netnography provides the opportunity for the researcher to have access to a broader cohort of participants around the globe, removing geographical barriers. As a qualitative research method, it can offer significant insight into the virtual space in relation to consumers’ needs and wants, choices, as well as symbolic meanings (Xun and Reynolds, 2010). Although, there have been huge developments in the forms of online communities as a result of advancements in computer and internet technology, the guiding principles of netnography have remained exactly the same in terms of fundamental questions of focus, data collection, immersion, participation, data analysis, and presentation, whether in the context of an online forum, bulletin board, blog, twitter, facebook, or YouTube (Kozinets, 2014).

Unlike traditional qualitative research methods such as in-depth interviews where there is a need for the researcher to interact with the informants in a real physical setting (Taylor and Bogdan, 1984), gathering data using netnographic technique does not require this interaction. Netnography may ensure a higher level of openness on the part of consumers as evidence to show that they tend to be more open in an online context compared to real life (Reid, 1996; Childress and Asamen, 1998). It provides information about consumers’ tastes, their impressions and experiences of consumption, perceptions of brand positions, specific brand meanings, attributes sets, and preferences (Kozinets, 2006). However, there are challenges in using netnography as a research approach such as handling the overwhelmingly increasing amount of data in online contexts and selecting the relevant data available. Furthermore, netnographic data lacks much of the richness embraced in in-person communication such as tonal shifts, pauses, eye movements and body language (Kozinets, 2006).

Although it is believed that covert netnography is more desirable than overt in terms of gathering pure, uncontaminated data (Langer and Beckman, 2005), it is to be noted that neglecting ethnographic insight may turn netnography into a “coding exercise” (Kozinets, 2006, p. 282). Thus, it is critically important that a netnography involves an in-depth understanding and interpretation of the data. Netnography carried out in the present thesis followed a covert approach in which the inquirer did not participate in the production of online content, thus reducing the inquirer effects.

3.11.1. Netnographic data collection procedure

Whilst previous studies on responses to music in advertising have mainly used quantitative techniques, Goulding (2003) emphasised the need for more varied methods of consumer behaviour data collection to obtain a richer, deeper understanding of consumers. Therefore, the current netnographic research discovers a broader scope of music in advertising from the consumer perspective, rather than merely focusing upon narrowly specified advertising issues where the research agenda has been set by advertising agency and client.

Following preliminary discussions about television advertisements well known for using music, the advertisements for various selected goods and services posted on YouTube were examined. In order for an advertisement to be used in this research, posted comments needed to be related to the topic of music in advertising, and substantial enough to “have a critical mass of communicators” (Kozinets, 2015, p. 168). Consequently, advertisements with a minimum of five relevant postings concerning music were selected to be included in the research. After exploring the selected consumer postings on YouTube, a total of 472 relevant comments were chosen for analysis. The YouTube comments chosen to be used in the current research were posted by consumers between the years 2006 and 2014.

YouTube postings provide a platform for witty repartee, social commentary, self-promotion, and many other activities (Kozinets, 2016). Through storytelling and disclosure of personal, cathartic experiences, consumers “not only refine their self-identities but also gain recognition from others” (Leigh et al., 2006, p. 487). Whilst consumers’ online postings may involve exaggeration for humour or shock effect rather than talking more earnestly as in a focus group (Abolhasani et al., 2017), the

anonymity of YouTube may make individuals who participated in generating the online postings feel “less inhibited about expressing their ideas and feelings on the online platforms” (Schiele and Venkatesh, 2016, p. 9). Such frank exposition may “flourish in the anonymous confines of online discussion groups” (Oakes et al., 2013, p. 620) and the openness, anonymity and decontextualisation of an online environment such as YouTube may inspire more silent and reserved consumers to share their thoughts (Cooke, 2008).

Netnographic research in the current study followed a purely observational procedure and involved no communicative interaction between the researcher and YouTube viewers during the process of identifying, reviewing, and analysing the online postings. Langer and Beckman (2005) discuss how the observational role of the researchers and lack of interaction with web forum users should be standard procedure for this type of research, as observational netnography allows researchers to carry out research without the need to obtain participants’ consent which might contaminate the findings (Oakes et al., 2013). Viewers’ YouTube names and user ID were deleted when using their postings in order to ensure complete anonymity.

Discrete thematic categories emerged from the data through careful re-reading of postings, after which the researcher decided on the specific key themes for in-depth analysis. Although the utilisation of qualitative data analysis software packages such as ATLAS.ti and NVivo can be beneficial in coding and classifying a large data set, a manual thematic approach in analysing the data was followed in the current research as software packages “inevitably involve trading off symbolic richness for construct clarity” (Kozinets, 2002a, p. 64).

Kozinets (2015, p. 140) suggests that “the collection and analysis of archived messages does not officially constitute human subjects” social research’ and it has been argued that comments posted in a public setting “should be considered to be in the public domain” (Clegg Smith, 2004, p. 232). Just as a book author’s permission is not required prior to citation, there is no reason to believe that subjects consider their “online social interactions are private’, especially when no faces or identities are revealed and there is no probability of harm to individuals or groups” (Kozinets, 2015, p. 141). Where no login is required in an online public space, previous netnographic research has proposed that “no

informed consent is required” for interaction observation provided that researchers maintain subject anonymity (Bertilsson, 2015, p. 453).

3.12. Qualitative data analysis

Although it is highly important how the data is gathered, the analysis and interpretation of the collected data stand out as the “Achilles heel” (Gummesson, 2005, p. 311), and thus, should be given necessary attention. Holloway and Todres (2003, p. 347) identified “thematising meaning” as one of the few shared generic skills across qualitative analysis. It can be considered as a specific tool that can be utilised in different methods and not a single method. Manual thematic analysis is employed to analyse the data produced in both the semi-structured focus groups as well as the netnography carried out in the present research. The rationale for choosing manual thematic analysis emanates from the fact that it is a flexible and useful means of data analysis which can potentially provide a rich, detailed, and yet complex account of data (Braun and Clarke, 2006).

In the context of the focus group study, group interaction can be used as an important element that can help in generating data as well as a source of data for analysis (Goldman and McDonald, 1987). Thematic analysis can help in preserving the interactive quality of the focus group data (Braun and Wilkinson, 2005). The data are coded for the purpose of assisting researchers for further analysis and interpretation. The manual coding is carried out after transcribing the full focus group sessions. The next step was to work through the complete transcribed focus group sessions in order to identify different themes and categorise various discussions in focus group sessions. Specific data sets were selected to be analysed out of all the data collected for the focus group project (data corpus) throughout various focus group sessions, based on the relevance of particular discussions to the main theme of the phenomenon under study.

The researcher identifies, analyses and reports patterns or themes within the data and interprets various aspects of each portion of the data considering its relevance to the research topic (Boyatzis, 1998). Manual thematic analysis allowed the researcher to identify several themes that emerged during the analysis. Thus, in the context of the present thesis, the researcher plays an active role in

identifying/discovering patterns and themes, choosing the ones that may be of interest to the research project and reporting them to the readers, rather than playing a passive role in identifying and classifying the themes and patterns (Taylor and Ussher, 2001).

A theme may “capture an important message about the data in relation to the research question, and represents some level of pattern response or meaning within the data set” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, p. 10). The researcher identifies the themes usually through highlighting them when they have been given considerable space in some specific parts of the data set. Theme identification depends upon the personal judgement of the researcher as well as the extent to which they are related to the central theme of the study.

The phases employed for thematic analysis of the data acquired in focus group and netnography are similar. Data analysis involved recurrent checking of the entire data set and the coded quotations. The actual writing in the process of data analysis begins with noticing ideas and identifying potential coding schemes, and goes on through the entire process of analysis (Braun and Clarke, 2006). The data analysis in the focus group study as well as in the netnography involve engaging with the literature in order to enhance the analysis through increasing “sensitivity to subtle nuances in data” (Strauss and Corbin, 1998, p. 49). Table 5 demonstrates the stages adopted in data analysis of the qualitative studies carried out in the present thesis, identified by Braun and Clarke (2006).

Table 5: Phases of thematic analysis*

Phase	Description of the process
1. Familiarising with data:	Transcribing data, reading and re-reading the data, noting down initial ideas
2. Generating initial codes:	Coding interesting features of the data in a systematic fashion across the entire data set, collating data relevant to each code
3. Searching for themes:	Collating codes into potential themes, gathering all data relevant to each potential theme
4. Reviewing themes:	Checking if the themes work in relation to the coded extracts and the entire data set, generating a thematic map of the analysis
5. Defining and naming themes:	Ongoing analysis to refine the specifics of each theme, and the overall story the analysis tells, generating clear definitions and names for each theme
6. Producing the report:	Final analysis involving selection of clear, compelling extract examples, final analysis of selected extracts, relating back of the analysis to the research question and literature, producing a scholarly report of the analysis.

*Adapted from Braun and Clarke (2006)

The first phase involves familiarising with all aspects of the data, taking notes and establishing ideas for initial coding. In the case of focus group studies, the verbal data will be transcribed into written format to be ready for thematic analysis. Transcribed data then will be checked for its accuracy in terms of grammar and spelling, as well as appropriate punctuation used. The process of data transcription is also useful for developing further understanding of the data.

In the second phase of data analysis, the researcher started to perform initial coding. These codes involve the segments of the raw data that is interesting for the researcher, and can be analysed, evaluated and assessed in a meaningful manner. As Miles and Huberman (1994) point out, the process of coding is an important stage in analysis, where the data is organised into meaningful categories (Tuckett, 2005). Producing various themes from the data set then begins through interpretive analysis of the broader coded data produced in the previous stage. As the coding process may vary depending on whether the themes are more ‘data driven’ or ‘theory driven’, different qualitative studies in the present thesis adopted varied coding strategies (Braun and Clarke, 2006). For example, in the

netnographic research of the present thesis, the coding process is more data driven as the emergence of music/advertising related themes mostly depends on the data acquired, while in the case of focus group studies, the researcher approached the data having particular questions regarding the effects of advertising music in mind.

After initial coding and collation of the entire data set, phase three of data analysis begins with categorising the identified codes into potential themes and gathering all the relevant extracts from the data set within the identified themes. This is the stage where the codes are being analysed and the researcher starts to combine various relevant codes in order to formulate the underlying themes. In this phase, an overall thematic map with relation to the emerging themes helps develop different levels of main themes and sub-themes, as well as deciding on disposing of some.

Phase four of data analysis begins when all the potential themes have been already discovered and arranged and then the researcher begins with refinement and polishing of those themes. This is the stage to decide whether there are sufficient data to support the prospective themes. In fact, if there is not enough data to support a particular theme, it cannot be considered as a theme. On the other hand, it is important that the themes can be clearly identifiable and distinguished from one another. Thus, there is a need to review all the coded extracts within each specific theme to ensure their consistency and relevance. Furthermore, the validity of each specific theme and its accuracy in reflecting the meaning with respect to the data set will be evaluated in this phase. It is also possible to re-code some of the data in this phase in order to identify new themes, as coding is considered as an ongoing process throughout the data analysis.

At the start of phase five, the researcher will have a clear idea of the different identified themes. This phase involves naming, defining and further refining various themes as well as detailed analysis of the data within each individual theme and establishing specific stories that each theme offers. These individual stories offered in each theme are presented in a way that they closely fit the overall story that each focus group or netnography has got to offer. The last phase of the data analysis involves a concluding analysis and writing up of the report. This final analysis intends to convey the complex story presented by the data in each individual study in a coherent and logical manner, and ensures that

the readers are convinced about the outcome, advantages and validity of the data analysis. The concluding analysis for each focus group and netnography is written up in a way that ensures provision of adequate evidence of the themes in terms of volume and content within the data. Different phases of the data analysis for the qualitative studies are intended to help in understanding complicated phenomena relevant to music and advertising and assist the researcher in developing themes emerging from the respondents' perspective (Kozinets, 2001, 2002).

3.13. Ethical considerations

The researcher has been granted ethical approval before conducting the research projects and starting to collect data in the present thesis. However, after consulting with the research ethics committee, it was confirmed that there is no need to obtain ethical approval to conduct the netnography. In conducting the experimental studies of the present thesis, the researcher has undertaken all the required measures to ensure the confidentiality of data, anonymity and integrity of research participants. The researcher was required to complete an *Application for Approval of Project Involving Human Participants, Human Data, or Human Material* form and submit it to the Committee on Research Ethics prior to each study. This is to ensure that the data collection procedures meet the university requirements.

The students were briefly informed of the issues such as confidentiality of the data, anonymity of the participants, and issues such as informed consent, researcher's contact details, as well as participants' right to withdraw from the study at any time they wish. All the research participants were provided with an *Information Sheet* (Appendix 10) prior to taking part in the study, containing all the necessary information about the research project. Furthermore, the researcher obtained a signed research *Consent Form* (Appendix 11) containing further information about the details of the research they are taking part in. The questionnaires are designed in a manner that the participants are not required to reveal their personal information at any stage of the empirical studies that would make them identifiable. Focus group participants were also informed about the voice recording of the entire focus group study and they were told that all the information provided by them would remain with the

researcher and be used only for research purposes in a confidential manner and without being linked to their names in any way.

In summary, this chapter explained the research philosophy and underlying paradigms and provided the justifications for the selection of pragmatism as a paradigm highlighting the benefits of the mixed methods approach adopted in the context of the present thesis. It then involved a detailed discussion of the research design, explaining various phases for data gathering and strategies of inquiry through both qualitative and quantitative data collection methods, as well as a discussion of the ethical considerations related to the studies. Therefore, considering the rationale stated earlier, this chapter has sought to establish firmly why a mixed methods approach is the most appropriate method to investigate musical congruity in the context of advertising. Having established the methodological paradigm adopted for the present thesis, the next three chapters (Chapters 4, 5, and 6) constitute the findings of the various studies through which different research questions established in the introductory and literature review chapters will be answered and the objectives of the thesis will be achieved.

Chapter 4

Study 1

Musical congruity in university advertising

Overview of the chapter

Having established the methodological paradigm in the previous chapter, findings presented in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 will address the research questions and address research objectives through conducting a number of qualitative and quantitative studies. As seen in the literature review chapter of the present thesis, six different dimensions of musical congruity have been identified, which include musical genre congruity, country of origin musical congruity, musical taste, semantic congruity, indexical congruity, and repetition congruity. The present thesis will therefore attempt to address the broad research questions and objectives of the research through incorporating and investigating the effects of these congruity dimensions in different qualitative and quantitative studies to be presented in three study chapters. The current chapter (Chapter 4) includes the focus group, two survey experiments and YouTube Analytics statistical data, addressing the first objective of the thesis of the thesis. Chapter 5 will then present the restaurant advertising study (Study 2) addressing the second objective of the thesis, while Chapter 6 (Study 3) presents netnographic findings of the research addressing the third main objective of the thesis.

Considering the first objective of the thesis, the effects of musical genre congruity as one of the most important congruity dimensions will be examined in the context of advertising for a high-involvement product (i.e., higher education). As mentioned in the literature review chapter, the extant body of literature on the area of music and advertising almost exclusively focussed on exploring the effects of background music considering low-involvement goods (e.g., Gorn, 1982; Park and Young, 1986; Bozman et al., 1994; Olsen; 1997; Hung; 2000). Therefore, one of the questions to be addressed in the present research is how musical in/congruity affects consumers' responses to advertising in high-involvement conditions.

Chapter 4 (Study 1) begins with presenting the findings of a pilot focus group study investigating the effects of musical genre congruity in the context of university advertising. It then involves quantitative research that concerns two survey experiments as well as YouTube Analytics statistical data. While survey Experiment 1 of Study 1 investigates the effects using unfamiliar and original pieces of music of different genres, it also presents YouTube Analytics statistical data to complement

this survey experiment which will be explained further in this chapter. Survey Experiment 2 attempts to replicate the first survey experiment, this time using famous pieces of music performed and composed by professional musicians.

Study 2 of this chapter involves a survey experiment in the context of restaurant advertising and attempts to address the objective of developing, refining, and redefining the concept of congruity through addressing the question related to the value of purposeful use of artful musical incongruity in the context of advertising and to investigate how mild incongruity may affect consumers' responses to advertising. This study adopts one of the most prominent congruity theories which is the twin component congruity model developed by Heckler and Childers (1982) in order to achieve this objective. While Heckler and Childers (1982) examined the effects of congruity in the context of print advertising, this survey study will develop this model into the context of advertising music and investigate how moderate, purposeful musical incongruity that can be resolved by consumers may affect their responses to advertising. This survey study is carried out in the context of advertising for a fictitious restaurant and examines the effects of musical in/congruity through exploring musical relevancy and expectancy components that are respectively linked with two of the congruity dimensions, namely country of origin musical congruity and genre congruity in order to represent various musical in/congruity quadrants.

4.1. A focus group study on background music in university advertising

4.1.1. Introduction

The current pilot focus group study examines the impact of various types of background music on students' perceived image of the advertised university, perceived quality of education, perceived difficulty of the course, attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, and perceived music/advertising match. This focus group study is designed to unpick the research questions, help gain a better understanding of the vocabulary of the field, and to discover consumers' initial thoughts in order to provide an indication of the specific research questions and problems to be addressed in the following research projects of the present thesis. It is designed to aid identification and understanding of the important issues in the area of music and advertising.

The focus group study of the present thesis offers the opportunity to observe participants engaging in interactive discussions concentrated on the use of various types of music in advertising, and to obtain an initial understanding of how various pieces of music may affect their responses to advertising, and address the likely factors or drivers behind the elicitation of these responses. This exploratory method is adopted because conducting a focus group in the area of music and advertising provides the chance to observe participants' responses and their interactions regarding their attitude and experiences towards the use of background music in advertising. The data produced informs the subsequent design of quantitative survey experiments in a sequential manner.

The present research contributes to the literature on the topic of advertising and music through demonstrating that qualitative and quantitative methods are not antithetical but may be wedded to provide synergy in the data analysis process.

Focus groups are designed in which participants are exposed to an advertisement promoting a postgraduate degree at a university. Focus group sessions seek to generate new ideas with respect to the areas of importance in the context of music and advertising, to search for independent variables to be explored in future research projects of the thesis, and to be familiar with the initial perceptions of the research participants. There are four versions of the advertisement, incorporating instrumental versions of pop, jazz, and classical music, as well as a no-music treatment. The present study involves manipulating the genre of background music used in an HE advertisement in order to investigate participants' responses to the advertisement. The genre of background music may be considered as a meta-variable that naturally contains other variables (e.g., timbre, tempo, etc.). However, previous research in the area of music and advertising (e.g., North et al., 2003; Oakes and North, 2013) has dealt with musical genre as a discrete variable as it is virtually impractical to manipulate musical genre without affecting other variables. For example, although the musical genres used in the present study vary based on variables such as tempo (the pop music treatment has a faster tempo than the classical music and jazz treatments) and timbre (the pop music treatment uses electronic instruments rather than orchestral classical music instruments), they can still be considered as suitable exemplars of their respective genres.

The current focus group study examines the effects of various styles of music upon television advertising for a real HE institution using participants who are in fact consumers of the advertised product (university education). Therefore, this study investigates the importance of various types of music on consumers' responses within a context likely to show a high level of involvement because of its personal relevance to the research participants. Furthermore, investigating the HE context is particularly important because of the increase in the tuition fee levels from September 2012.

It can be observed in the literature review chapter of the present thesis that various musical genres may have different associations. For example, dance music may be considered stereotypically hedonic, trendy and exciting, while classical music may be regarded stereotypically as upscale, sophisticated, and high quality (North and Hargreaves, 1998). Advertisers typically use background music with the purpose of transferring desired attributes associated with a particular style of music to the advertised brand. The present focus group study will therefore investigate the initial impressions of students towards various styles of music used in a higher education advertisement and examine how they react to different congruent and incongruent pieces of music used in the advertisement.

4.1.2. Research questions

The present focus group study uses instrumental versions of original and unfamiliar pieces of music to be used exclusively in the background of the university advertisement. As mentioned earlier, various genres of music are capable of producing different feelings about the advertised product. In order to transfer positive feelings produced by music to the advertised product, it is important to know what feelings can be produced by various genres of music and what qualities a specific genre of music can be attributed to. Various genres of music may communicate different levels of perceived quality. For example, classical music may be associated with prestige and quality more than pop music. On the other hand, pop music may represent attributes such as excitement as well as being less sophisticated compared to classical music.

Although dance music would be more expected than classical or jazz music as dance music regularly has been used in HE advertisements in the United Kingdom, each genre of music may have a

meaningful relevance in discrete ways in this context. For example, dance music may be more associated with the club scene and the enjoyment of social life, while classical music may offer a more aspirational image of the university. Using up-market classical music for advertising a product may produce a more up-market brand image, communicating a higher level of prestige and quality. It can be argued that the role played by advertising music may vary depending on the image to be communicated and the advertising message. Balmer (1995, p. 26) defined Corporate Visual Identity (CVI) as the “way in which an organisation uses logos, type styles, nomenclature, architecture and interior design etc. in order to communicate its corporate philosophy and personality.” However, music as one of the most important elements in advertising can be argued to be capable of forming a different aspect of an organisation’s identity and image which can be called its *Aural Identity*. In addition to emphasis on educational attributes and research quality, university marketing managers typically attempt to communicate the exciting experience of student life. Thus, selecting the most suitable type of music which best suits an educational institution in conveying its social and academic attractiveness can be crucial. In addition to investigating students’ evaluation of the university advertisement from the utilitarian perspective, the social attractiveness of the university will also be examined in order to study the effects on advertising music from a hedonic perspective.

Simpkins and Smith (1974) reveal that disliked musical genres diminished consumers’ brand evaluation compared to liked or no-music treatments. Furthermore, negative emotions produced as a result of the incongruity between the music and the advertised brand could negatively affect consumers’ evaluation of the brand (Lavack et al., 2008). It is important to examine these effects in the context of university advertising and investigate the influence of different musical genres’ congruity as well as students’ evaluation of the brand’s perceived image and their intention to enrol for a course.

Consumers’ purchase intention may also be affected by the music used in advertisements. Various scholars (e.g., Alpert and Alpert, 1990; North and Hargreaves, 1998; North et al., 2004b; Oakes, 2007; Broekemier et al., 2008) have explored the effects of music on purchase intent in different contexts. North and Hargreaves (1998) reveal how classical music produced an up-market image for

the service environment. However, while information such as university ranking in league tables for research and teaching quality may be communicated in various sources, advertising may focus on communicating the exciting experience of student social life more superficially. This can be observed in the more common choice of pop music by successive advertising campaigns by different HE institutions. Therefore, it can be proposed that various styles of music may have implications for the university image which may consequently affect student recruitment.

The extant marketing literature addressed the role of attitude towards the advertisement in forming consumers' brand attitude and purchase intent (Wright, 1973; Shimp, 1981; Lutz et al., 1983; MacKenzie and Lutz, 1989, MacKenzie et al., 1986; Brown and Stayman, 1992). Attitudes are a popular research topic in marketing and advertising studies as they are useful in predicting consumer behaviour (Mitchel and Olson, 1981; Ajzen, 2001). Brand attitude and purchase intent are routinely used in various advertising domains, including copy tests, tracking studies, brand evaluations, and brand extensions (Boush and Loken, 1991; Keller and Aaker, 1992; Morwitz et al., 1993; Broniarczyk and Alba, 1994). Mitchel and Olson (1981, p. 318) define attitude toward the brand as an "individual's internal evaluation of the brand", while purchase intentions are personal action tendencies relating to the brand and defined by (Spears and Singh, 2004, p. 56) as an "individual's conscious plan to make an effort to purchase a brand". While attitude and purchase intention may be considered as two distinct variables, they are indeed correlated (Spears and Singh, 2004), as attitude can influence behaviour through intention (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975; Rezai et al., 2013). Furthermore, brand attitude and purchase intention is positively associated with actual purchase (Ismail Mokhtar, 2016), although an enhanced purchase intent might not always lead to actual purchase. Since attitude towards a product is influenced by the cognitive constructs and also different emotions (Mihaela-Roxana and Yoon, 2010), and because background music in advertising is capable of producing both affective and cognitive responses, therefore, it is vitally important to explore the role of musical in/congruity on attitudes. It can be suggested that the match between musical genre and advertisement enhances consumers' attitude towards the ad, which may in turn positively affect brand attitude. In the context of the present study, it can be suggested that jazz music (and classical

music to some extent) will be regarded as incongruent with the advertisement as it is a musical genre that has not been utilised in advertisements for HE institutions in the United Kingdom. Instead, advertisements for U.K. universities (e.g., Salford) use pop music for the purpose of targeting and attracting young prospective students. The current study investigates the effects of background music congruity on the attitude towards the Management School brand. In other words, it investigates the extent to which various genres of music create a good fit and how the fit/misfit influences decoding of the message conveyed by the advertisement.

Below are the findings from four different focus group sessions. As explained in the methodology chapter, in each focus group, participants were exposed to one advertising treatment (jazz/classical/pop/no-music). The background music used in the musical versions of the promotional video were instrumental pieces specifically composed to be used in this advertisement by postgraduate music students at the University's School of Music.

4.1.3. Focus group findings

Nyamathi and Shuler (1990, p. 1284) point out that “typically focus groups have high face validity, due to the credibility of comments from participants”. However, it is indeed important to acknowledge the limitations of the thematic analysis used in analysing the focus group data. Despite some criticisms of thematic analysis, this approach is often considered to be simpler than other qualitative data analysis techniques. This method particularly attracts less experienced researchers because of the high level of flexibility and simplicity of analysis. In the context of the present thesis, the focus group study, as an exploratory study, was conducted to obtain a better understanding of the topic of music and advertising as well as participants' general impressions of the advertising stimulus, to unpick the research questions, get familiar with the vocabulary of the field, and to produce themes to be explored in the following studies of the thesis. Therefore, the semi-structured exploratory focus group study, with all the limitations that are acknowledged, may simply be regarded as a tool to explore how a group of participants perceive a problem, as well as identifying the areas requiring further investigation and to help design surveys to address questions related to these areas. The three main stages in analysing focus group data involved chunking the data into small units, grouping the

codes into categories, and developing themes that express the content of each of the groups (Strauss and Corbin, 1998). Similar to the constant comparison analysis technique, the thematic analysis approach facilitates analysing multiple focus groups within the same study to assess if the themes that emerged from one group also emerged from other groups (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009). Therefore, in the case of the current exploratory focus group research, various themes including musical genre, perceived image, music's effects on ad/brand attitude, background music and purchase intent (intention to enrol), music and perception of quality, music and expectation of cost, country of origin of music and musical familiarity all emerged through careful categorisation of the data.

4.1.3.1. Musical genre and perceived image

While quality of education is considered by participants as an important element, there are other factors that may carry a higher level of importance in selecting a school at this point in their lives. In other words, there is more to the university experience than classes, assignments, and exams, and a single minded emphasis on academic issues negates one of the most influential factors in shaping university experience which is social life, as many students attest:

'Liverpool is such an incredible city with a buzzing atmosphere. When you think of Liverpool, you can imagine the wide variety of pubs and bars and clubs. There is always something for everyone.. and of course it is relatively a cheap place to live in.. Although this video tried to mention things about the vibrant atmosphere of the city etc., to me it did not work as the background music of the video was kind of less cheerful and stimulating!'

Although participants thought that classical music reflects a prestigious image of the university brand and enhanced their expected quality of the course, they suggested that classical music made the university look dull as they believed this type of music did not possess the fun element capable of drawing students' attention through making it seem more exciting. Some students thought that classical music makes the advertisement less interesting.

'I mean although being focussed on studies is very important, which is kind of suggested by the type of music used in this video, the overall feeling you get from the advertisement does

not suggest that the university and the city offer exciting things to fill up one year of education.'

Participants thought that the music should match the vibrant and diverse character of the city and the university. Musical mismatch may result in negatively affecting communication effectiveness which may in turn diminish perceived image, recall and purchase intent (Oakes, 2007). Those who watched the classical music treatment could not relate the music to the advertisement content.

'I think that kind of music is what I would expect when I would see an advert for Oxford or Cambridge. I would associate it more with that kind of university that is a proper traditional, rather than modern university, because I got from the message that it was supposed to be vibrant and innovative and the music didn't really suggest that.'

The above comment highlights that classical music may indeed be suitable for promoting universities such as Cambridge or Oxford, both of which according to Rutter et al., (2017) are majorly characterised by qualities such as robust university experience, demanding, and sophisticated. However, pop music represented a more easy-going image of the course as students believed that it looked like a very relaxed learning environment where the course is very interactive and interesting:

'... It doesn't sound like a difficult course. It reflects a relaxed learning environment, but not too relaxed. It still looks like a professional course but relaxed at the same time. It looks like a place to work on your studies and have fun at the same time.'

The above comment emphasises the importance of portraying a balanced image of the university where quality of education and social life are equally important factors for students in terms of how they portray a favourable image of the advertised institution.

4.1.3.2. Music's effects on ad/brand attitude

Participants who watched the pop version associated that with happy and positive feelings. They thought that using pop music is motivational, empowering and highly engaging for them:

'It makes you feel happy, like it's a nice place. So it makes you feel that everyone is enjoying themselves and you want to be there. It makes it look like a welcoming place. It makes me feel relaxed and like care-free. It produces a very positive feeling in me.'

The above comment reveals how in the context of university advertising, hedonic factors are of significant importance in attracting students' attention and producing positive feelings towards the university and the course. Fundamentally, prospective students evaluate the value of the product taking all its tangible and intangible features into account. The customer value concept relates to the trade-off between the benefits the product offers to the customer, and the sacrifices (including monetary and non-monetary costs) a customer has to make to obtain it (Griffin and Hauser, 1993; Gale, 1994; Best, 2000). Time, energy, effort, money and all other costs the higher education institution incur should match the variety of features they expect from the product, such as high quality educational and recreational facilities, staff reputation, and customer service. Students' comments demonstrate how the perception of a good "social life" and the fun aspect of selecting a university can affect the overall perception of the university image:

'Obviously you don't want the university to get stereotyped having an environment where students party every night, drink to excess, and are mostly laid-back and are just after getting a rubbish degree and that's it, but it is also important that this ad with the pop music in the background is kind of lively and does not transfer an excessively serious, boring and sophisticated image of the learning environment...'

Lack of music in the background can seriously damage consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand. Background music, if used appropriately and effectively, may serve to attract and maintain consumers' attention as well as enhancing consumers' attitude towards the advertisement (Stout and Leckenby, 1988):

'... Commercials usually have background music! This silence creates a negative impact in my mind. The advertisement was quite unappealing and therefore I think it makes it easier to forget its messages... I wouldn't pay to study in a school like this as I find it very unpleasant and not likeable.'

Responses to the video with no music in the background suggest that the silent background and the talking heads video made it very difficult for student participants to follow the advertisement and it made them lose interest in watching the ad. It formed a poor match that made it utterly boring:

'I don't think lack of music in the background is a good idea, as it becomes boring and you will lose concentration, and I don't think it gets the points across without the music. It feels like there is too much information but there is nothing to break it up. All there is, is talking!'

It can therefore be suggested that the lack of music in the background may have a negative influence on the attitude towards the brand as well as recall of information. Students may have lost interest in following the video and the message being conveyed as a result of the boredom, which in turn may adversely affect perceived university image. Lack of background music made them consistently express a sense of anxiety about the course.

'This seems too stressful to me! Starting a postgraduate course can be stressful itself and this advert surely makes you more anxious about how to study effectively and pass your subjects, make new friends and all the other things. Can you actually learn anything in this tough environment?'

The video with no music in the background is likely to elicit negative feelings such as anxiety, perhaps because it seemed too academic with no musical distraction. Lack of music made the video somehow boring and did not stimulate any positive feeling:

'The video was quite boring and very dry. I struggled to actually follow it, I was trying to pay attention but I couldn't concentrate. I don't know why I couldn't hold my attention; it was strange, like something was missing.'

Participants who heard jazz music believed that the course wouldn't be up to date, exciting, and innovative. Students thought that jazz produced a negative feeling towards the brand. They believed that this type of music does not represent the multicultural learning environment of the university. This leads to music/message incongruity which adversely influences their evaluation of the brand. As one of the students mentioned:

'I think it will remove the vibrant and diverse culture that the university tries to promote.'

'... This was an odd song choice! The tone was so depressing.. Jazz just doesn't work here!'

'This is not how I think of the city of Liverpool! This music does not match with whatever this city has to offer. I do not understand the motive for using jazz music in an advert for Liverpool University and I am really confused now!'

These comments clearly demonstrate how musical genre incongruity and lack of positive association between the stereotypical qualities of jazz with the advertised product and the message it attempts to convey may result in diminishing consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand.

4.1.3.3. Background music and purchase intent (intention to enrol)

The positive and friendly image created as a result of using pop music may also affect prospective students' intention to enrol for the course.

'I think I would consider this course if I decide to do a masters degree. I always wanted to specialise in marketing. This looks like a stimulating course with a relatively relaxed educational environment.. so why not?!'

'I think most of the lectures for this course will be really interesting, and the lecturers would always be willing to help with issues the students may face. I feel like this is a pleasant school with a welcoming atmosphere that encourages learning. I also think that the university and the city do hold a great social life, shopping and other extracurricular activities.'

The positive image produced by pop music which resulted in an enjoyable image of the course was not seen in the case of jazz music as such. Although students thought that jazz music made the course look like a 'chilled' course, they are not sure if this influence is necessarily in a positive way. In fact, respondents found jazz highly incongruent with the advertising context and it is possible that this mismatch may adversely affect their evaluation of the course and make them think that the programme is not up to their expectations. The musical incongruity also played an important role in distracting them from the advertising message. Students who watched the video accompanied by jazz

music thought that it made them lose concentration rather than keeping them focused on the advertising message. Below comments show the adverse effects of using a highly incongruent genre of music in an advertisement and the fact that an incongruent piece of music may produce more negative effects than using no music at all (North et al., 2004b):

'I would prefer if there was no music at all! I mean it was clearly the wrong genre of music for an ad to promote this particular university! The whole time I was thinking why jazz should be used for a Liverpool University advert and this distracted me from concentrating on the message. And yes, I am kind of put off hearing this. Not that I don't like jazz.. but it's just awfully mismatched!'

As seen in the context of print advertising, in order for incongruity to be elaborated positively and be resolved in an effective way, consumers must be able to successfully decode the incongruity or mismatch. This appears to hold true in the context of advertising music as well. However, it seems that severe incongruity might result in frustration and distraction and lead to negative cognitive and behavioural response on the part of consumers. The musical mismatch or incongruity may negatively affect students' intention to enrol for the course:

'I personally don't like jazz. I think it is really gloomy and boring.. and besides, I did not expect to hear it in an advertisement for this university at all! Hearing it in an advert that tries to convince me to enrol for a postgraduate course would definitely make me think twice, though I always wanted to do my masters here...'

The presence of music may result in spending more time and money in a service store compared to a no music condition (Andersson et al., 2012). It can be argued that in the context of advertising, background music attracts consumers' attention and makes them feel better about a brand, while lack of music may put off the potential consumers:

'This definitely influenced my decision to study a postgrad degree at the Management School... Probably in a bad way. I did not expect such an unpleasant and boring image. The advertisement was not exciting at all!'

'I'm looking at universities and seriously considering doing a masters degree, figured this advert should help me decide not to stay here for another year! I mean this just looks too lifeless and not inspiring at all!'

Consumers may consider lack of music in the advertisements as an unusual omission which may directly affect their evaluation of the product and the brand, as well as their purchase intent.

4.1.3.4. Music and perception of quality

Students' responses to the advertisement may sometimes vary, depending on the personal characteristics of the participant. For example, for some of the students, quality of education plays the most important role. Classical music can be argued to have reinforced the high quality and sophisticated image of the institution:

'I'm so happy to be attending this university! I am a senior student and to me quality of teaching comes first. This video suggests that the school is a high quality and prestigious learning environment and this postgraduate course is really interesting in terms of how it seems to be able to develop students' skills and enhancing their educational experience, learning and success..'

Furthermore, although classical music suggested an upmarket image of the school, the use of classical music in this university advertisement is perceived to be irrelevant by participants:

'The music does not make it look like a typical university like most of the other universities with pop, rock, or dance music in the background, although it makes it look more reputable offering cutting edge high quality education. I did not expect to hear classical music in an advertisement for Liverpool University!'

As expressed by the comment above, although classical music creates a more reputable image for the university reflecting a high education quality, students may think that this type of music may be incongruent with their perceived image of the city of Liverpool. Both historically and contemporarily "there are strong links between music and senses of place and identities, both of people and places"

(Hudson, 2006, p. 626). Liverpool is perceived as a city which is highly associated to pop and rock music. In fact, in 2001, the Guinness Book of Records declared Liverpool ‘City of Pop’ due to the many number one records emerged from the city. This indicates that in the case of advertising a service such as higher education, the context in which the service is offered is significantly important, as university education is not merely about academic qualities and other utilitarian factors. Students’ comments indicate that hedonic factors such as social life and the extent to which an advertisement reinforces and reflects a favourable image of the advertised university related to these factors may influence their attitudes and evaluation of the brand.

4.1.3.5. Music and expectation of cost

Participants who watched the video with classical music in the background indicated that it produced calm and relaxing feelings. However, classical music made them feel that staff are more knowledgeable and experienced. The perception of high quality level affected their perceived cost of the advertised course:

‘It definitely suggests that it is a good investment. The video makes the course seem like a high quality and sophisticated course which enhances its perceived reputation. This somehow conveys that it should be an expensive course as well.’

The sophisticated and high quality image created as a result of using classical music may also suggest that the course is high quality and expensive:

‘Classical background music has made the course look more sophisticated.. It also gives you the impression that it is a high quality expensive course. I mean I feel like the tuition fees for this course would be higher than my expectation. As a foreign national student who is self-funded, I don’t think this is necessarily a good thing! Again, it is good to transfer a high quality image of the course, but other aspects are also important. The financial aspect of choosing the university and the fact that it has to be affordable for the students...’

As seen earlier in this thesis, the results of the study by Areni and Kim (1993) suggest that using classical music in a retail store resulted in purchasing more expensive wines. Furthermore, Lavack et

al. (2008) show how pairing classical music and a Rolex watch enhanced the perception of quality and durability. Comments indicate how students associate a complicated piece of classical music with quality and sophistication.

'I feel like the postgraduate learning environment at this school is very serious. Because I think it's just very traditional. Having a classical piece of music in the background makes me feel it's a sophisticated place.'

The above comments confirms previous findings regarding the effects of various musical genres on the perceived image of the advertised product. It shows how the sophistication quality of classical music can be transferred to the advertised course at the university.

4.1.3.6. Country of origin of background music and musical familiarity

However, some suggested that the background music should be able to remind you of the country of the brand; in this case where the university is located:

"The advertisement tries to promote a British university but I doubt the background music specifically relates to this part of the world. It could at least be a song that can be associated to Britain more... This is what I expected to hear anyway, something that reminds me of Great Britain."

Some prefer to hear the background music they are familiar with:

'Although it is quite an interesting tune but I have never heard this song before. I think it may have had a more positive influence on me if there was a familiar piece of music involved which I also like. If the advert contained a song that I like, I could pay more attention to the ad and even like the advert more.'

The present focus group study indicated the importance of using an appropriate genre of music that matches the context of the advertisement and the message. Student participants' initial responses to various advertisement treatments showed how selecting an appropriate musical genre can affect various dependent variables such as intention to enrol, ad/brand attitude, perceived image, expectation of the cost, as well as how various treatments help or distract from processing the advertisement

information and subsequently recall. Students' cognitive and behavioural responses to the university advertisement used in the focus group study emphasised the importance of musical match (congruity). This focus group study paved the way for the researcher to understand the important issues raised by the participants in terms of various dependent and independent variables involved in this area of research (e.g., independent variables such as genre congruity, country of origin congruity, familiarity and dependent variables including recall, purchase intent, perceived image, ad/brand attitude, expectation of cost, and perceived quality). The present thesis will therefore incorporate quantitative studies to address the effects of various independent variables on consumers' responses to advertising. The next section will contain a quantitative survey study which investigates how musical genre in/congruity in the context of university advertising affects prospective students' responses to advertising.

4.2. Investigating genre congruity in the context of advertising for higher education institutions

The existing literature on music and advertising as well as the findings of the previous focus group study emphasise the importance of genre as one of the objective characteristics of background music in advertisements. It was observed how important it is for a higher education institution, as an organisation offering a high-involvement product, to understand consumers' perceptions of its brand as a result of the intense competition among universities. Hence, it is highly important for universities to develop a distinct image in order to achieve a competitive advantage over other institutions in this competitive market. Nevertheless, HE institutions offering intangible service to students have a complex job in communicating their brand identity to the public. Music has always been considered as an effective tool for communicating nonverbally (Bruner, 1990). Therefore, selection of a congruent background music for a university advertisement may help them to build the desired brand image, as well as enhancing prospective students' attitude towards the advertisement and positively affecting their intention to enrol.

University education is considered to be a high-involvement product as students are required to spend a large amount of money and time engaging with the university education process. However, very few studies have specifically explored the impact of background music in university advertisements on

variables such as students' perceived image of the university, expectation of cost, recall of information, and their intention to enrol. Oakes and North (2013) investigated the effects of classical and dance music on perceived image, purchase intent, and anticipated cost. However, there is a need to investigate the effects using other genres of music that might be perceived as incongruent with the advertised brand. Furthermore, the study by Oakes and North (2013) used several famous compositions. In contrast, since the current study focuses on musical genre effects, it is important to investigate the effects using original pieces of music that were never heard before by the participants, as well as professional compositions that might convey an already established meaning or be associated with an influential memory in the minds of participants.

Therefore, Study 1 exploring the impact of genre congruity in university advertising also involves two survey experiments. In Experiment 1, a survey study is conducted to explore the effects of genre congruity in the context of university advertising using original pieces of music. In addition to collecting data through survey study, all of the four advertising treatments were uploaded to the university YouTube channel as well as the advertised course webpage in order to monitor the real life viewing behaviour of the prospective students from around the world through collecting YouTube Analytics statistical data (please see methodology chapter). In Experiment 2, this study is replicated using the identical promotional video, this time accompanied by various genres of professional, popular compositions.

4.2.1. Experiment 1 findings and discussion

This survey was designed to test the effects of musical genre congruity on a range of dependent variables including perceived image or identity of the brand, anticipated cost (price), purchase intent (intention to enrol), and recall of advertising information.

Musical genre and perceived image

One way ANOVA results revealed a statistically significant difference between treatments in terms of the stereotypical influence of various musical genres on the perceived university image (identity) for

five of the categories, thus supporting *H1*, indicating that *perceived identity of the university will be a function of the stereotypical identity of the musical genres used in the promotional video*:

- Unpleasant / Pleasant ($F(3, 96) = 3.17; p < 0.05$)
- Boring/Stimulating ($F(3, 96) = 12.32; p < 0.001$)
- Gloomy/Cheerful ($F(3, 96) = 5.09; p < 0.005$)
- Modern/Traditional ($F(3, 96) = 5.93; p < 0.005$)
- Trendy/Old-fashioned ($F(3, 96) = 8.27; p < 0.001$)

ANOVA results did not show a statistically significant difference between treatments for producing a stressful or relaxing image for the university ($F(3, 96) = 0.18$; n.s.). Tukey tests revealed that classical music ($M = 4.08, SD = 0.81$) produced a significantly more pleasant image compared to jazz ($M = 3.45, SD = 0.95$). There was no significant difference in pleasantness between pop music ($M = 3.95, SD = 0.81$) and no-music ($M = 3.64, SD = 0.70$) or between any other combination of treatments. Tests revealed that jazz ($M = 2.00, SD = 1.00$) created a significantly less stimulating image compared to pop ($M = 3.81, SD = 0.87$), classical ($M = 3.16, SD = 1.28$), and no-music ($M = 3.04, SD = 1.10$) treatments. There was no significant difference in stimulation between any other combination of treatments. Tests showed how pop music ($M = 3.81, SD = 1.12$) produced an image for the university that was significantly more cheerful than jazz ($M = 2.79, SD = 0.82$). There was no significant difference in cheerfulness between classical ($M = 3.20, SD = 1.08$) and no-music ($M = 3.36, SD = 0.64$) or between any other combination of treatments. Tukey tests revealed that pop music ($M = 2.52, SD = 1.03$) produced a significantly more modern image for the university compared to jazz ($M = 3.62, SD = 0.82$), classical ($M = 3.60, SD = 1.26$), and no-music ($M = 3.44, SD = 0.92$) treatments. There was no significant difference in modernity between any other combination of treatments. Furthermore, results also showed that pop music ($M = 2.52, SD = 0.98$) created an image for the university that was significantly more trendy than jazz ($M = 3.90, SD = 1.08$), no-music ($M = 3.60, SD = 0.82$), and classical music ($M = 3.48, SD = 1.05$) treatments. There was no significant difference in trendiness between any other combination of treatments.

Musical genre and anticipated cost

ANOVA results rejected **H2** concerning whether *the anticipated level of university fees will be a function of the stereotypical identity of the musical genres used in the promotional video*. However, although the test did not suggest a statistically significant difference between various musical treatments in terms of students' anticipated tuition fee levels ($F(3, 96) = 2.01$, n.s.), results indicate that classical music created the highest expectation of fee level, which is consistent with the findings of previous research in which classical music was associated with prestige, sophistication, and quality.

Musical genre and intention to enrol

A Pearson correlation test suggested a significant positive relationship between perceived musical congruity and intention to enrol ($r(100) = 0.62$, $p < 0.001$), also supporting **H3**, indicating that *perceived congruity between music and advertising will enhance intention to enrol*. Similarly, a one-way ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference between the stereotypical association of various treatments in terms of influencing students' intention to enrol ($F(3, 96) = 5.98$, $p < 0.005$), thus supporting **H4**, indicating that *intention to enrol will be a function of the stereotypically hedonic identity of the pop music genre in the promotional video*. Tukey tests revealed that jazz ($M = 2.45$, $SD = 0.83$) produced a significantly lower level of intention to enrol compared to pop ($M = 3.57$, $SD = 1.08$) and classical music ($M = 3.28$, $SD = 1.10$) treatments.

Musical genre and recall

A one-way ANOVA test did not produce a statistically significant result in terms of the relationship between various musical genres and students' verbal ($F(3, 96) = 2.19$, n.s.) and visual ($F(3, 96) = 1.95$, n.s.) recall of advertising information, thus rejecting **H5**, concerning whether *visual and verbal recall of information will be a function of the stereotypically hedonic identity of the pop music genre used in the promotional video*. Although the results were not statistically significant in terms of recall of advertising information for different treatments, mean comparisons suggest that musical genre that is perceived as congruent with the context of advertising and the message produced a higher verbal recall.

The present survey offered some original contributions to this particular area of study. It investigated perceived musical congruity and found that pop music was the best match for advertising the university in this particular context. Pop music produced a significantly more modern and trendy image for the university compared to all other treatments. Jazz created a significantly less pleasant university image compared to classical, a significantly less cheerful image compared to pop, and a significantly less stimulating image compared to all treatments.

It also showed how more liked pop music resulted in a better perceived music/advertising match and a higher intention to enrol. Findings demonstrating that musical congruity may increase purchase intention are consistent with the study by Alpert and Alpert (1990), who revealed how congruously sad music produced a higher level of purchase intent in greeting cards for an ill friend. Although findings did not show a statistically significant difference in terms of the effects of musical genre on recall, rejecting H5, results revealed some differences between treatments in terms of recall of verbal information. This confirms the results of a study by Kellaris et al. (1993) that revealed how attention gaining music enhanced recall of information in the case of high music-message congruity. However, there is a need to replicate this study using professional, popular compositions created by well-known musicians to compare and contrast the results.

4.2.2. YouTube Analytics findings

Statistical information obtained through the YouTube Analytics service suggested that the advertisement video was watched by viewers from a wide range of geographical locations in different continents. However, it indicated that most of the viewers were from the United Kingdom (Appendix 12). After calculating 'number of views' and 'estimated minutes watched' for the statistical data retrieved from YouTube and producing the final 'average view duration', it can be seen that the pop music treatment produced the best results in terms of audience retention. The 'average view duration' for different treatments suggests that the pop music version was able to hold viewers' attention for 104 seconds, whereas this figure was 97.5 seconds for jazz and 96.6 seconds for classical music. The figures also indicated that the no-music treatment produced the lowest level of audience retention with the 'average view duration' of 82 seconds.

4.2.3. Experiment 2 findings and discussion

As seen in the findings of the previous survey experiment, two of the hypotheses (*H3* and *H5*) concerning the effects of genre congruity were not supported, contrary to the existing theories and findings relevant to the effects of background music in advertising. The present survey study replicates the quantitative survey in the first experiment using the identical advertising video to promote an MSc course at a university, this time accompanied by instrumental music performed by famous professional musicians from various genres. In other words, while in the first experiment the background pieces of music used were composed by postgraduate student composers at the university's School of Music, in the second phase, the advertisements are accompanied by famous music performed and composed by professional musicians.

It is believed that using popular music in advertising may help in focusing consumer attention on a brand by conjuring up the good feelings consumers have for a popular song (Sherrid, 1993). Furthermore, it is suggested that more favourable purchase behaviour is linked with consumers' musical preference. Hee Park et al., (2014) found that familiarity of background music in advertising is likely to influence attitudes towards advertisement, brand attitude and purchase intentions in the low-involvement condition. Consumers' favourable attitudes or positive feelings about a particular song are expected to enhance buying behaviour, while their negative feelings about a piece of music are believed to inhibit their purchase intent.

Holbrook and Schindler (1991) show that individuals are more nostalgic about songs that were popular in their late adolescence and early adulthood. As seen in the review of the literature regarding musical genres in retail contexts, classical music in particular received the greatest level of attention in previous studies (e.g. Baker et al., 1992; Areni and Kim, 1993; North and Hargreaves, 1998; Grewal et al., 2003; North et al., 2003). However, as North et al. (2016) pointed out, there is a difference between the way advertising music and atmospheric music in retail settings function. Advertising music is directly instilled in the advertised brand information and expected to attract viewers' attention. However, it is important to investigate the effects of professional and popular compositions upon consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses in the context of

advertising for a service (in this case, university advertising), as well as exploring the effects of the stereotypical associations of different musical genres.

Bahn (2015) revealed that consumers do not like the lyrics of a popular song to be altered for use in an advertisement. They suggested that advertisers should use popular music that matches the product to be advertised if they want to use the vocal version of the song. Alternatively, they could opt for the instrumental versions of popular songs to be used in advertisements. It is believed that advertisers will be able to encode more information related to a product to customers' memory if the viewers are familiar with the selected background music, as they tend to generate and recall the missing words from the memory (Heaton and Paris, 2006). Research suggests that information generating a higher level of cognitive processing is expected to be remembered for a longer time (Roehm, 2001). Therefore, the present survey study utilises instrumental versions of popular compositions of different genres (jazz, classical, and pop) to examine the effects on consumers' responses to advertising.

Students were asked to rate the advertised university image in terms of being pleasant/unpleasant, boring/stimulating, stressful/relaxing, gloomy/cheerful/, modern/traditional, and trendy/old-fashioned on a scale of 1 to 5. These perceptual variables are exactly the same as the ones in the previous survey, because the aim was to test the same variables using popular/professional background music. In addition, questions were asked to measure perception of fee levels, musical genre congruity and its effects in encouraging students to apply for the course, as well as their visual and verbal recall of information. Therefore, the present survey used the same questionnaire as the previous survey and attempts to test the same five hypotheses used in Experiment 1.

Musical genre and perceived image

Analysing the results of the six measures for investigating perceived image revealed a statistically significant difference between various advertisement versions for five of the measures, supporting **H1**. A one-way ANOVA test showed that the results were statistically significant for:

- Boring / Stimulating ($F(3,98) = 9.70; p < 0.001$)
- Stressful / Relaxing ($F(3,98) = 5.13; p < 0.005$)

- Gloomy / Cheerful ($F(3,98) = 7.15; p < 0.001$)
- Modern / Traditional ($F(3,98) = 11.07; p < 0.001$)
- Trendy / Old-fashioned ($F(3,98) = 16.55; p < 0.001$)

There was no statistically significant difference between various treatments in terms of being pleasant or unpleasant ($F(3, 98) = 2.62$, n.s.). However, mean comparison indicates that in Experiment 1, jazz music produced the least pleasant image, whereas in Experiment 2 it was the no-music treatment that produced the least pleasant image for the university. The reason may be the degree of professionalism of the compositions where, although jazz music may not be their preferred genre of music, if it is a highly professional piece of music, it will still be preferred over having no music in the background, hence creating a more pleasant image for the university.

Tukey tests revealed that pop music produced an image for the university that was significantly more stimulating ($M = 3.68$; $SD = 0.69$) compared to classical ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.00$) jazz ($M = 2.79$, $SD = 0.72$), and no-music ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.96$) treatments. There was no significant difference in stimulation between any other combination of treatments. The no-music treatment produced a significantly more stressful image for the university ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 1.00$) compared to jazz ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 1.11$), classical ($M = 3.43$, $SD = 0.92$), and pop music ($M = 3.44$, $SD = 0.58$) treatments. There was no significant difference in stress between any other combination of treatments. A further Tukey test indicated that the pop music treatment was considered significantly more cheerful ($M = 3.84$, $SD = 0.62$) than jazz ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.04$), classical ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.86$), and no-music ($M = 2.84$, $SD = 0.75$) treatments. There was no significant difference in cheerfulness between any other combination of treatments. Results revealed that pop music produced an image for the university which was significantly more modern ($M = 2.48$; $SD = 1.05$) compared to classical ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.85$), jazz ($M = 3.46$, $SD = 0.88$), and no-music ($M = 3.32$, $SD = 0.75$) treatments. There was no significant difference in modernity between any other combination of treatments. On the other hand, classical music ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 0.71$) created an image for the university that was significantly more old-fashioned compared to pop music ($M = 2.44$, $SD = 0.77$). There was no significant difference

between jazz ($M = 3.25$, $SD = 0.74$) and no-music ($M = 3.00$, $SD = 0.76$) or between any other combination of treatments.

Musical genre and anticipated cost

A one-way ANOVA test indicated a statistically significant difference between various treatments in terms of students' anticipated fee level for the advertised course ($F(3,98) = 11.22$; $p < 0.001$), thus supporting **H2**. A Tukey test identified that classical music ($M = 3.86$; $SD = 0.71$) produced a significantly higher level of anticipated tuition fee compared to jazz ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.62$), pop ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 0.68$), and no-music ($M = 3.16$, $SD = 0.62$) treatments, inconsistent with results of Experiment 1. There was no significant difference in anticipated fee levels between any other combination of treatments.

Musical genre and intention to enrol

Pearson correlation results indicated a statistically significant and positive association between students' perceived music/advertising match and their intention to enrol ($r(102) = 0.63$, $p < 0.001$), thus supporting **H3**.

A one-way ANOVA also revealed a statistically significant difference between various treatments in terms of influencing intention to enrol ($F(3,98) = 5.10$; $p < 0.005$), supporting **H4**. A Tukey test indicated that pop music produced a significantly higher intention to enrol ($M = 3.32$; $SD = 0.99$) compared to jazz ($M = 2.50$; $SD = 0.78$) and no-music ($M = 2.56$, $SD = 0.77$) treatments. There was no significant difference between pop and classical music ($M = 2.71$, $SD = 0.76$) or between any other combination of treatments.

Musical genre and recall

The results of a one-way ANOVA test did not identify any significant relationship between various musical genres and *recall of visual information* ($F(3, 97) = 0.51$, n.s.). Also, Pearson correlation results found no statistically significant association between perceived music/advertising match and *recall of visual information* ($r(102) = -0.08$, n.s.). However, a one-way ANOVA test indicated a

statistically significant difference between various treatments regarding *recall of verbal information* ($F(3,97) = 3.59; p < 0.05$), thus partially supporting **H5**. A Tukey test revealed that pop music produced a significantly higher recall of verbal information ($M = 4.38; SD = 0.71$) than jazz ($M = 3.67; SD = 0.96$) and no-music ($M = 3.76, SD = 0.78$) treatments. There was no significant difference between pop and classical music ($M = 3.96, SD = 0.79$) or between any other combination of treatments. Consequently, the findings of the Experiment 2 survey supported hypotheses 1 to 4 defined in the present study, while **H5** was partially rejected as no statistically significant result was produced regarding the influence of the stereotypical association of musical genres and recall of visual information.

The findings of Experiment 2 confirmed the results of Experiment 1 in terms of the influence of various musical genres on consumers' perception of the university image. It revealed that pop music produced the most stimulating, cheerful, modern, and trendy image for the university. However, the results were not statistically significant for the unpleasant/unpleasant measure, perhaps due to the degree of professionalism of the compositions used in Experiment 2 as opposed to Experiment 1 which used original music composed by postgraduate music students at the University's School of Music.

Unlike Experiment 1, Experiment 2 showed significant findings regarding the effects of music on students' expectation of tuition fee levels. It indicated that classical music produced the highest expectation of tuition fee levels for the advertised MSc course. This was in contrast to Experiment 1 where the result was insignificant. The reason could be the difference between participants' level of information about the courses offered by the university in these study contexts. In Experiment 1, participants were selected among third year business students which meant they could have had prior knowledge about tuition fee levels, as opposed to Experiment 2 where participants were first year business students. The findings of Experiment 2 also revealed how students perceived the pop music treatment as the best match for this particular advertisement. It showed that pop music was capable of exerting a more positive impact on students' intention to enrol, consistent with the results of Experiment 1.

The findings of Experiment 2 revealed a statistically significant difference between treatments in terms of the recall of verbal information in contrast to the Experiment 1, perhaps because in the case of using a professional and familiar pop song that was originally composed with lyrics, the absence of lyrics encouraged the audience to try to recall and sing the missing lyrics which produced a higher level of cognitive processing, ultimately resulting in a higher level of verbal recall of the advertisement content. The findings of Experiment 2 regarding recall of information also confirm the results of the study by Kellaris et al. (1993) that revealed how in the case of high music-message congruity, attention gaining music enhanced recall of information.

These findings have practical implications for advertising agencies as well as client companies, and have particular resonance for HE marketing. Organisations can use these findings to introduce and utilise effective marketing communications to achieve marketing objectives. The findings can help senior managers and directors in enhancing the institutional image of the university and students' intention to enrol by carefully selecting the most suitable musical genre to be used in the advertisement. Existing literature investigates student choice and the complex nature of choosing to enrol at a HE institution (e.g., Soutar and Turner, 2002; Briggs, 2006; Szekeres, 2010). Many HE institutions regard students as customers or the main decision makers because of the increased competition in education industry. Education is considered as service, and the intangible nature and high costs in terms of both time and money often means that the decision process to enrol to a university becomes more complicated. In other words, students increasingly demand better value for the money they are going to spend and become more selective in choosing the university. Intangibility is believed to have a profound effect on the marketing of a service (Lovelock, 1991). Greater awareness of the influence of music in this context is particularly important as the intangibility characteristics of higher education could make it more difficult for potential consumers to evaluate the credibility and quality of the advertised service. Hence, the present study explores how research participants in the focus group think about the different genres of music and the way they communicate perceived value and credibility for the university brand. The findings of this research

may also have implications for advertising other services such as airlines, hotels, and home and car insurance.

Indeed, it is highly important to further investigate the effects of successful incongruity resolution in greater detail. As mentioned in the introduction chapter, many of the incongruent music stimuli used as examples of incongruity fall short of the artful deviation characteristics of mild (moderate) musical incongruity that could be successfully elaborated and resolved by consumers, because they fail to elicit meaningful interpretations and elaborations capable of reinforcing the advertising proposition. Therefore, the next study (Study 2) attempts to investigate how moderate musical incongruity may result in enhancing consumers' responses to advertising through successful elaboration and resolution of the artful, purposeful incongruity.

4.2.4. Summary of the chapter

Study 1 deals with investigating the effects of genre congruity as one of the most important congruity dimensions in advertisements. The influence of musical genre congruity on consumers' responses to university advertising is examined through both qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Participants' responses in the focus group study reveal that using congruent music in the context of university advertising could positively affect variables such as intention to enrol, perceived image of the brand, and expectation of cost, while using incongruent music may exert a negative influence on these variables.

Survey experiments of Study 1 tested certain hypotheses regarding musical genre congruity in the context of university advertising. While, in the case of using original pieces of music (Experiment 1), pop music produced the most desirable perception of image of the advertised course as well as producing the highest level of intention to enrol for the course, results of the tests for expectation of cost and recall of advertising information were not statistically significant which were contradictory to the extant body of literature in the context of service environments. Interestingly, brief YouTube Analytics statistical data gathered to monitor real-life consumers' reactions to watching the promotional video accompanied by various congruent and incongruent musical genres indicated that

the congruent version (pop music treatment) was more successful in terms of retaining consumers' attention, showing the highest average duration watched compared to other incongruent versions. Experiment 2 of Study 1, however, replicated the first experiment, this time using popular and professional compositions of jazz, pop, and classical music. Findings suggest that in addition to supporting the hypotheses that were supported in Experiment 1, it was also found that classical music produced the higher expectation of cost and pop music enhanced recall, confirming the results of previous experiments which were carried out either in the context of service, or advertising for low-involvement products.

Chapter 5

Study 2

Musical incongruity resolution in restaurant advertising

5.1. Introduction

As explained earlier in the present thesis, although using congruent pieces of music may be well integrated with other elements of the advertisement, the artful use of mildly incongruent background music that is capable of establishing coherent integration with the advertising message may also be of great importance. The categorisation of the incongruent musical stimuli used in the previous studies (e.g., Kellaris et al., 1993; Kellaris and Mantel, 1996; Shen and Chen, 2006) shows that many of the incongruent musical stimuli used as examples of incongruity fall short of the artful deviation characteristic of such incongruity because they do not set out to elicit interpretations capable of reinforcing the advertising proposition (Oakes, 2007). Purposeful and artful musical incongruity may result in locating the musical stimuli within an interpretive zone capable of fostering metaphorical elaboration which may enhance consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising. Therefore, the present study attempts to address the second research question that is to examine the effects of artful musical incongruity (mild incongruity) on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising.

As highlighted in previous study, classical music and pop music differ in the sense that one is more associated with sophistication and prestige while the other one is more exciting and fun. Study 1 of the present thesis suggested that pop music was significantly more cheerful and stimulating than classical music. Furthermore, it can be argued that various genres of music may be considered as being congruent or incongruent depending on the context of advertising. The present study introduces country of origin musical congruity as another dimension of musical congruity that helps in achieving another objective of the present thesis that is developing, refining, and redefining the concept of congruity in the context of music and advertising.

As seen earlier in the present thesis, Heckler and Childers (1992) propose a general framework for congruity that postulates two components; *relevancy* and *expectancy*. Relevancy is defined as “material pertaining directly to the meaning of the theme and reflects how information contained in the stimulus contributes to or detracts from the clear identification of the theme”, while expectancy refers to “the degree to which an item or piece of information falls into some predetermined pattern

evoked by the theme” (Heckler and Childers, 1992, p. 477). In the current study, country of origin musical congruity along with the genre congruity dimension will be defined as elements that are associated with the expectancy and relevancy components of music respectively. The objective of Study 2 is therefore to integrate *country of origin musical congruity* and *genre congruity* in a single congruity framework through focusing more closely upon the twin components of congruity (relevancy and expectancy) and to examine how various quadrants of musical congruity in the context of print advertising defined by Heckler and Childers (1992) including relevant/unexpected, relevant/unexpected, irrelevant/expected, and irrelevant/unexpected affect consumers’ cognitive and behavioural responses in the context of music and advertising research. It seeks to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of congruity by exploring and expanding the application of Heckler and Childers’s (1992) congruity framework in the advertising music context.

In investigating the effects of relevancy and expectancy as distinct components of congruity, Heckler and Childers (1992) reported that elaborative processing efforts were highest with unexpected and relevant information. They reveal that a mildly incongruent advertising stimulus is more effective in penetrating the perceptual screen of consumers to attract attention to an advertisement and suggested that an unexpected and relevant stimulus enhances identification of the primary theme of an advertisement. They suggest that the relevance of the stimulus elements allows the formation of associative linkages that enhance the probability of successful advertising content retrieval. Indeed, it is possible that unexpected advertising elements associated with an incongruent schema can also result in better memory of the advertisement (Heckler and Childers, 1992).

While Heckler and Childers’ (1992) study investigates the effects of congruity in the context of print advertising, the present study attempts to redefine and refine the twin component distinction as the framework for congruity to examine the impacts of in/congruity between the advertising message and background music. One such schema of congruity is the congruity of advertising music’s country of origin. Research suggests that typical exemplars of a certain category may be preferred to less typical exemplars (Whitfield and Slatter, 1979). As explained in the literature review chapter, the concept of preference-for-prototype may be highly relevant to the context of consumer research and consumers’

responses to advertising music. The preference-for-prototype model explains how the human mind is composed of densely interconnected cognitive units in a way that a specific piece of music is capable of activating related knowledge structures. This may be parallel to the arguments surrounding musical fit and product choice (Areni and Kim, 1993) discussed earlier in this thesis. For instance, stereotypically Italian music should activate related knowledge structures concerning Italy, which may positively affect consumers' responses and prime the selection of Italian products.

In the postmodern era where different styles proliferate and meanings change at an ever faster pace, advertisers and consumers alike become active agents who substitute different meanings on to a consumption symbol (Hirschman et al., 1998). Similarly, music from various countries may be associated with different meanings. It is suggested that national music styles may evoke concepts and images congruent with cultural stereotypes of that country. Studies in the context of atmospheric cues in retail stores examined the effects of the congruity between the country of origin of the music and the product upon consumers' product choice and revealed that music can subconsciously prime relevant knowledge and the choice of certain products if they match the knowledge (e.g., Areni and Kim, 1993; North et al., 2016). Background music in advertisements may have extensive effects on consumers' recall, attitude formation process, purchase intent, as well as their image perceptions (Mitchell, 1986; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986). However, it seems that very few studies have investigated the effects of country of origin musical congruity in the context of advertising. The present study attempts to investigate the link between country of origin musical congruity and consumers' responses to advertising in terms of attitudes, perceptions, liking, recall, and purchase intent. It attempts to modify, customise, and edit the original congruity concepts and definitions developed by Heckler and Childers (1992) for use in the current study's musical congruity context.

5.2. Conceptual framework

In keeping with the thesis objective of developing, refining, and redefining the concept of musical congruity, the present study attempts to modify the components of congruity, instead of using the original relevancy/expectancy concepts developed to explain picture/theme congruity in print advertisements (Fig. 1) which may not be completely appropriate in the context of musical congruity.

As Heckler and Childers' previously discussed definitions of relevancy ("material pertaining directly to the meaning of the theme") and expectancy ("a predetermined pattern evoked by the theme") (1992, p. 477) entail, a refining of the concept of congruity in a musical context acknowledges that the word "theme" has existing meanings linked to "music". For example, most television programmes have their own "theme music" that is played when the programme starts. Therefore, in the context of the present study, the word "theme" will be edited and the term "advertising message" will be used in the definitions of relevancy and expectancy to ensure that there will be no confusion about the congruity concepts in the context of advertising music. Various pieces of music will be carefully selected after the required pre-tests and manipulation checks (please see methodology chapter), to represent different conditions of congruent and incongruent background music. Based on Heckler and Childers's (1992) twin component congruity framework, there is only one quadrant that can be considered as the congruent condition (relevant/expected), and the remaining three quadrants (relevant/unexpected, irrelevant/expected, and irrelevant/unexpected) may be regarded as incongruent. However, the incongruent quadrants themselves may be segregated as severely incongruent (irrelevant/unexpected) and partially incongruent (relevant/unexpected and irrelevant/expected).

Figure. 5.1. Relevancy and Expectancy Quadrants, Heckler and Childers (1992)

EXPECTANCY	RELEVANCY		
		<i>RELEVANT</i>	<i>IRRELEVANT</i>
	<i>EXPECTED</i>	Relevant/Expected (Congruity)	Irrelevant/Expected (Mild Incongruity)
	<i>UNEXPECTED</i>	Relevant/Unexpected (Mild Incongruity)	Irrelevant/Unexpected (Severe Incongruity)

Although previous studies investigated various types of congruity, controlled studies examining the effects of symbolic meanings represented by musical stimuli in advertisements are few (Hung, 2000), and hence, there is limited understanding regarding how musical congruity and incongruity affect consumers' responses to advertisements. Most importantly, investigating the existing studies related to the effects of the twin component congruity theory developed by Heckler and Childers (1992) suggests that there is no existing critical assessment of the distinction between *relevancy* and *expectancy*. The current study proposes that there are difficulties and ambiguity in distinguishing between the two components of congruity, particularly in the context of music and advertising. For example, something may be regarded an example of relevancy, but could also be interpreted as an example of expectancy. Consequently, one of the objectives of this thesis is to develop, refine, and redefine the concept of musical congruity by exploring and expanding the application of Heckler and Childers's (1992) congruity framework in the advertising music context so that the customised

congruity components are sufficiently vivid and there is no ambiguity regarding these components and their definitions.

Defining-attribute theories acknowledge that things form themselves into categories because they have certain attributes in common. In other words, a certain concept is characterised by a list of features that are necessary to determine if an object is a member of the category. In identifying relevancy and expectancy (Heckler and Childers, 1992) as defining-attributes of congruity, such theories suggest that both attributes would be necessary for a stimulus to be categorised as congruent. However, differentiation between the two components in the context of music and advertising is somewhat ambiguous. For example, as mentioned earlier, the word “theme” in conceptual definitions may result in ambiguity as it can be linked with music. Also, examining the effects of musical congruity through investigating the impacts of all four possible quadrants of congruity (relevant/expected, relevant/unexpected, irrelevant/expected, and irrelevant/unexpected) may not be possible when the boundary between the definitions of relevancy and expectancy is blurred. Therefore, it is important to note that in order to explore the effects of various in/congruity conditions in the context of advertising music, the concepts of country of origin and genre need to be analysed in their various congruity quadrants.

As the defining-attribute theories suggest, all members of a category are equally important and there should be clear-cut boundaries between the categories, and that membership of a category is absolute rather than a matter of degree (Eysenck and Keane, 2015). However, in the context of music, it is possible that congruity may actually be better measured on a continuous rather than a nominal scale. Indeed, such a congruity continuum is more in keeping with prototype theories which argue that category boundaries are defined less clearly (Eysenck and Keane, 2015). If relevancy and expectancy concepts are perceived to be in any way ambiguous, it would lend support for prototype theories that identify unfixed category boundaries.

As far as the few existing studies on musical congruity in advertisements are concerned, the criteria based on which the effects of the twin components have been explored are somewhat unclear and the boundaries between the application of the two concepts and their link with particular responses from

consumers are blurred. This may be due to the existing ambiguity in theorisation when applying and refining Heckler and Childers' (1992) congruity model in the context of music and advertising. For example, in the study by Kellaris and Mantel (1996), two examples of Chinese and two examples of western classical music were selected by an expert to represent congruent and incongruent music used for advertising Chinese and British-American restaurants. In their study, high stimulus congruity was operationalised by pairing the Chinese music with the advertising copy for the Chinese restaurant, while low stimulus congruity was operationalised by mismatching Chinese music with the British-American restaurant. However, the success and independence of their operationalisations are not clear, as their oversimplified and unclear post-test manipulation checks and the questions used to measure congruity did not specify how each of them would relate to each of the congruity components (relevancy and expectancy). This oversimplification in measuring the relevancy and expectancy dimensions of congruity may have resulted in an unclear categorisation of different quadrants which do not entirely correspond to the different logical and possible conditions of musical in/congruity. The present study, however, attempts to carefully examine the effects of musical congruity using country of origin musical congruity and genre congruity in order to precisely determine and form different congruity quadrants in an interrelated manner.

As the conceptual definitions of relevancy and expectancy suggest, in the context of musical congruity, the two components can sometimes hardly be distinguished, that is, a piece of music which is relevant to the main message of the advertisement may also be considered as expected. However, from a marketing communications perspective, it may be more effective to select a piece of music that is considered as unexpected, yet deemed as relevant by the listeners as they resolve the initially perceived incongruity. Therefore, the present study offers alternative definitions for the congruity components to suit the music and advertising context. Based on the discussions above, musical congruity in the context of advertising may be investigated through a modified congruity framework including *relevancy* and *expectancy* components. Therefore, *relevancy* may be defined as the extent to which a piece of music contributes to or detracts from the identification and recognition of the advertising message, while *expectancy* may be referred to the degree to which a piece of music

conforms to the predetermined pattern or structure evoked by the advertising message. Consequently, in the context of the present study, the *relevancy* component will be addressed through manipulating the *genre congruity* dimension, while the *expectancy* component will be represented by the *country of origin musical congruity* dimension. In other words, relevancy is linked to the genre of music and its relevance for reinforcing the advertising message and brand image, while expectancy will be linked to the country of origin of the music and the extent to which it matches the predetermined or expected pattern elicited by the advertising message. Based on the revised definitions of relevancy and expectancy, the present study investigates the effects of these congruity components through careful categorisation of background music pieces into various congruity quadrants in the context of advertising for an authentic Italian restaurant. Therefore, the relevancy component of music refers to the extent to which the genre of music reinforces the message to be communicated by an advertisement for an authentic Italian restaurant, while expectancy deals with the extent to which various pieces of music from different countries of origin fall within the predetermined pattern in terms of being expected to be heard in an advertisement for an Italian restaurant. The effects of these in/congruity quadrants on consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to the advertisement will then be examined in the present study.

5.3. Study 2 findings

The findings presented in this section illustrate how purposeful use of unexpected/relevant music representing an artful musical incongruity may positively affect consumers' responses to advertising through examining the impacts on a range of dependent variables including recall of information, attitude towards the advertisement, perceived image of the brand, perceived quality, as well as purchase intent.

Mild (moderate) musical incongruity and its effects on recall of advertising information

H1 of the present study tests whether ***unexpected/relevant music in advertising will enhance consumers' recall of information***. The recall of advertising information in various in/congruity quadrants was examined through three different measures.

The first measure to examine recall was the extent to which participants exposed to various quadrants were able to recall the restaurant *brand name*. For this purpose, a frequency test was conducted which revealed that a higher percentage of participants listening to the unexpected/relevant treatment (91.7%) recalled the brand name correctly, while this figure was 85.7% for expected/relevant, 78.8% for expected/irrelevant, and 73% for unexpected/irrelevant treatments.

The second measure to examine recall of information was the extent to which participants were able to recall the *advertising slogan*. A frequency test showed that the unexpected/relevant quadrant produced the highest level for recall of advertising slogan (86.1%), while this figure was 77.1% for expected/relevant, 75.8% for expected/irrelevant, and 75.7% for unexpected/irrelevant quadrants.

Furthermore, an ANOVA test revealed a statistically significant difference between in/congruity quadrants in recalling the *advertising claims*, thus supporting **H1**:

- Recall of advertising claims ($F(3, 137) = 5.08; p < 0.01$)

A Tukey test revealed that the unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.92, SD = 0.97$) quadrant produced a significantly higher level of recall of advertising claims compared to expected/irrelevant ($M = 3.21, SD = 1.05$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 3.14, SD = 1.00$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in recalling advertising claims between unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.92, SD = 0.97$) and expected/relevant ($M = 3.66, SD = 0.91$) or between any other combination of quadrants.

Effects of unexpected/relevant music on consumers' ad attitude

ANOVA test results revealed a statistically significant difference between treatments in terms of the influence of various in/congruity quadrants on the attitude towards the advertisement, partially supporting **H2** revealing that ***unexpected/relevant music in advertising will produce the most favourable attitudes towards the advertisement***:

- Enjoyable/Not enjoyable ($F(3, 137) = 8.06; p < 0.001$)
- Not entertaining/Entertaining ($F(3, 137) = 5.25; p < 0.01$)

Tukey tests reveals that the expected/relevant ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.91$) quadrant produced a significantly more enjoyable attitude towards the advertisement compared to expected/irrelevant ($M = 3.21$, $SD = 1.08$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 3.49$, $SD = 0.96$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in enjoyability of the advertisement between expected/relevant ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.91$) and unexpected/relevant ($M = 2.58$, $SD = 1.32$) or between any other combination of quadrants.

Tests also indicated that participants watching the unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.08$) quadrant thought that the advertisement was significantly more entertaining compared to expected/irrelevant ($M = 2.76$, $SD = 0.87$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.97$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in level of entertainment between unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.50$, $SD = 1.08$) and expected/relevant ($M = 3.03$, $SD = 0.86$) quadrants or between any other combination of quadrants. The results on the effects of various in/congruity quadrants on consumers' attitude towards the advertisement suggest that participants perceived the unexpected/relevant quadrant as being the most entertaining treatment, while in terms of being enjoyable or not enjoyable, the expected/relevant quadrant produced the most enjoyable attitude towards the advertisement, although there was no significant difference between expected/relevant and unexpected/relevant quadrants. Thus, it can be confirmed that **H2** is partially supported.

Mild musical incongruity and its impact on perceived image of the brand

One way ANOVA results demonstrated a statistically significant difference between in/congruity quadrants in terms of the influence on the perceived restaurant image for all of the items, thus supporting **H3** revealing that ***unexpected/relevant music in advertising will enhance consumers' perceived image of the restaurant:***

- Dull/Exciting ($F(3, 137) = 26.79$; $p < 0.001$)
- Pleasant/Unpleasant ($F(3, 137) = 31.35$; $p < 0.001$)
- Tense/Relaxing ($F(3, 137) = 44.65$; $p < 0.001$)
- Uncool/Cool ($F(3, 137) = 32.45$; $p < 0.001$)
- Appealing/Unappealing ($F(3, 137) = 25.12$; $p < 0.001$)

Tukey tests revealed that the unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.86$, $SD = 1.13$) quadrant produced a significantly more exciting image compared to expected/relevant ($M = 3.37$, $SD = 0.94$), expected/irrelevant ($M = 2.82$, $SD = 0.85$), and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 1.89$, $SD = 0.99$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in excitement between any other combination of quadrants. Tests showed that the unexpected/relevant ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 0.99$) quadrant produced an image that was significantly more pleasant than expected/irrelevant ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.90$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 4$, $SD = 1.00$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in pleasantness between unexpected/relevant ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 0.99$) and expected/relevant ($M = 2.46$, $SD = 0.98$) or between any other combination of treatments. A Tukey test revealed that expected/relevant ($M = 4.20$, $SD = 0.90$) and unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.78$, $SD = 0.87$) quadrants produced a significantly more relaxing image compared to expected/irrelevant ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.12$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 2.11$, $SD = 0.97$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in terms of producing a tense or relaxing image between any other combination of quadrants. Further tests revealed that unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 1.18$) and expected/relevant ($M = 3.40$, $SD = 0.95$) quadrants produced an image that was significantly cooler than expected/irrelevant ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 1.06$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 1.86$, $SD = 0.92$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in terms of producing an uncool/cool image between any other combination of treatments. A Tukey test also showed that the unexpected/relevant ($M = 2.00$, $SD = 1.10$) quadrant produced a significantly more appealing image compared to the unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 3.92$, $SD = 0.95$) quadrant. There was no significant difference in appeal between expected/relevant ($M = 2.63$, $SD = 0.88$) and expected/irrelevant ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 0.95$) or between any other combination of quadrants. Therefore, considering the above results, it can be confirmed that except for one of the measures (tense/relaxing) for which the expected/relevant quadrant produced the most positive result, the unexpected/relevant quadrant produced the most positive image perceptions.

Impact of mild incongruity on expectation of food and service quality

ANOVA tests revealed a statistically significant difference between in/congruity quadrants in perception of food and service quality, partially supporting **H4** indicating that ***unexpected/relevant music will enhance consumers' expectation of food quality***:

- Food quality ($F(3, 137) = 12.77, p < 0.001$)
- Service quality ($F(3, 137) = 5.95, p < 0.01$)

Tukey tests demonstrated that the unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.92, SD = 0.94$) quadrant produced a significantly higher expectation of food quality compared to expected/irrelevant ($M = 2.76, SD = 1.00$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 2.62, SD = 1.11$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in expectation of food quality between unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.92, SD = 0.94$) and expected/relevant ($M = 3.34, SD = 0.91$) quadrants or between any other combination of quadrants.

However, a Tukey test revealed that the expected/relevant ($M = 3.63, SD = 0.78$) quadrant produced a significantly higher perception of service quality compared to expected/irrelevant ($M = 2.91, SD = 0.84$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 2.89, SD = 1.10$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in perception of service quality between expected/relevant ($M = 3.63, SD = 0.78$) and unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.47, SD = 0.94$) quadrants or between any other combination of quadrants.

The results concerning the effects of various in/congruity quadrants on consumers' expectation of food quality revealed that the unexpected/relevant quadrant produced the highest expectation food quality. However, although expected/relevant quadrant produced the highest expectation of service quality, there was no significant difference between this quadrant and the unexpected/relevant quadrant.

The effects of mild musical incongruity on consumers' purchase intent

An ANOVA test revealed a statistically significant difference between different in/congruity quadrants in terms of consumers' purchase intention, thus supporting **H5** revealing that ***unexpected/relevant music will enhance consumers' purchase intent***:

- Purchase intention ($F(3, 137) = 19.88$), $p < 0.01$)

A Tukey test revealed that the unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.96$) quadrant produced a significantly higher intention to visit the restaurant amongst participants compared to expected/irrelevant ($M = 2.70$, $SD = 0.98$) and unexpected/irrelevant ($M = 2.51$, $SD = 1.02$) quadrants. There was no significant difference in purchase intent between unexpected/relevant ($M = 3.39$, $SD = 0.96$) and expected/relevant ($M = 3.17$, $SD = 0.92$) quadrants or between any other in/congruity quadrants.

5.4. Summary of the chapter

Study 2 addressed the flawed methods used in the extant literature to investigate the concept of musical congruity. It acknowledged the merits of artful, purposeful incongruity established in the context of print advertising (Heckler and Childers, 1992), and extends it to the context of musical congruity. The findings of Study 2 revealed how using moderately incongruent music (unexpected/relevant music) that is used artfully and with purpose to trigger consumers to allocate more cognitive resources to resolve this mild musical incongruity results in enhanced recall, favourable ad attitude, more positive perception of image of the brand, highest expectation of food quality, as well as greater purchase intent. Country of origin musical congruity and genre congruity were two congruity dimensions explored in this particular study.

The findings of Study 2 revealed how successful decoding and elaboration of unexpected music in advertisements results in resolving the mild incongruity. This cognitive elaboration as a result of resolving unexpected/relevant information may be rewarded by enhanced attitude towards the advertisement, more positive perceived image of the brand and higher perception of food and service quality, higher level of advertising information recall, as well as higher purchase intent.

However, while the experimental studies of the present thesis investigated the effects of musical in/congruity from a positivist, managerial perspective, the next chapter (Study 3) involves netnographic findings exploring the effects of advertising music from a phenomenological perspective and through understanding consumers' real-life lived experiences of musical consumption in

advertising. The netnography findings will discuss another four musical congruity dimensions (musical taste, semantic congruity, repetition congruity, indexical congruity) that emerged as themes via exploring consumers' online postings about advertisements posted on YouTube.

Chapter 6

Study 3

Netnography

ss Introduction

As discussed in previous chapters, a third main objective of this research is to investigate the effects of background music in advertising on consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption. The extant literature on the effects of advertising music on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising has been, to date, from an exclusively positivist approach, looking at the concept of advertising music from a managerial perspective which was indeed of great value for this area of research. However, the present chapter investigates the influence of musical in/congruity through exploring consumers' in-depth, phenomenological discussions in an online context that adds further perspectives to this area of research. Therefore, the present netnography attempts to find the answer to the question of how in/congruity affects consumers' everyday lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising.

In the previous chapter, data from focus groups, surveys, as well as YouTube Analytics statistical data were presented to investigate the effects of various musical in/congruity dimensions in advertising. While musical genre congruity was examined in the context of university advertising, country of origin musical congruity was investigated in the context of advertising for restaurants. In chapter four, it has been observed how musical genre congruity can exert a great influence on consumers' perceptions, recall, and purchase intent. Findings of the previous chapter reveal how musical congruity may enhance communications effectiveness. It was found that although using classical music in university advertising may enhance the perception of quality and sophistication of the institution, transmitting an overly erudite image of the university may have detrimental effects on prospective consumers' intention to enrol. The positive effects of using congruent pop music emphasises the significance of the hedonic factors involved in the higher education experience. Furthermore, the previous studies reveal the value of artful, moderate incongruity and demonstrates how successful resolution of purposeful musical incongruity may positively influence consumers' attitudes, perceptions, recall, and purchase intent. The current findings chapter, however, presents the most thrilling instalment of the thesis.

This chapter uses a qualitative approach based on conducting netnographic research highlighting and analysing consumers' YouTube postings regarding the effects of music in advertising. As Kozinets (2010, p.1) points out; "Our social worlds are going digital". Hence, it is inevitable for social scientists to follow people's social activities and their interactions in the online context in order to enhance understanding of society. Kim et al. (2008) suggest that online communities have several important implications for marketing strategists. For example, the communities that are created and based upon consumption related topics can be considered as significant sources of information for marketing research. With the help of these virtual communities, companies are able to access more concrete, multidimensional, and individual information from their prospective consumers allocating minimal costs for this purpose (Kozinets, 1999). Netnography is a novel platform to refine the definition of musical congruity and address the general gap identified in the literature (i.e., the almost exclusively quantitative approach to music in advertising research) through examining consumers' authentic lived experiences of music and the role of music in shaping their responses to advertising. Although online communities are known as 'virtual communities' (Rheingold, 1993), Jones (1995) argues that using the term 'virtual' might play a misleading role, as it may convey the meaning that these communities are not as 'real' as physical communities. These communities certainly "have a 'real' existence for their participants" (Kozinets, 1998, p. 366), help marketing researchers to enhance their knowledge of the needs, motivations and subsequent behaviour of consumers (Oakes et al., 2013), and develop understanding of the ways in which consumers may achieve emancipation from the market (Kozinets, 2002b). Consumer postings and subsequent discursive interaction are also valuable for organisations in terms of monitoring and improving the effectiveness of advertising (Kozinets et al., 2010).

The current study is designed to contribute to the evolving netnographic literature by analysing and categorising a comprehensive compilation of consumer comments regarding the use of various types of music in advertisements for different goods and services. As the netnographic research of the present thesis is designed to address the third main objective of the thesis, that is, *to investigate the effects of background music in advertising through exploring consumers' lived experiences of musical*

consumption, consumers' netnographic insights posted on various advertisements uploaded on YouTube are collected to demonstrate the range of effects of various congruity dimensions on consumer responses to advertising. This indeed helps in revealing the intensity of the profound negative/positive effects of musical in/congruity. Although, generalising claims are not usually an expected attribute and are less explicit in qualitative research (Denzin, 1983; Marshall and Rossman, 1989; Denzin and Lincoln, 1995), qualitative research can produce an intermediate type of generalisation (Payne and Williams, 2005), as in the case of the current netnographic research through analysing consumer narratives and demonstrating the extent to which the effects of musical congruity dimensions can be seen in advertisements for various products. Furthermore, the criteria to select the advertisements from which the netnographic data is to be retrieved is mainly based on the degree to which the chosen advertisements are well known for their background music, as well as the availability of the consumer comments posted on those advertisements uploaded on YouTube, as posted comments needed to be related to the topic of music in advertising, and substantial enough to "have a critical mass of communicators" (Kozinets, 2015, p. 168). The netnographic data gathered from YouTube are therefore categorised to form four different congruity themes formulating musical congruity dimensions including musical taste, indexical congruity, repetition congruity, and semantic congruity. The present chapter examines selected advertisements on YouTube involving high- and low-involvement goods and services that were selected in order to provide a balance of different types of products.

Considering the third broad objective of the present thesis, this netnographic research will address the effects of musical congruity in advertising through investigating consumers' lived experience of musical consumption in the context of advertising. In the present study, YouTube acts as an interactive forum within which users discuss music in the advertising videos to which they are exposed (often actively seeking out the music and advertisement), thus providing an important source of advertising feedback.

The current netnography analyses consumer postings related to advertisements uploaded on YouTube concerning various categories of goods and services. Such postings can be of great value for

organisations as they may be used to improve the effectiveness of future marketing communications (Kozinets et al., 2010). Analysing user-generated content is becoming increasingly important for marketing purposes as companies can utilise the information in order to convey their advertising messages more effectively (Madden et al., 2013). According to research, 26% of Internet users reported that they contribute in the generation of these contents, while 61% of them believe that this information is valuable and trustworthy (Amblee and Tung, 2008). Hence, online discourse on forums, blogs, discussion boards, and YouTube channels provide a great source of pre-purchase information for consumers. There may be various motivations for posting online comments. While the need for escapism and life documentation is mentioned by Huang et al. (2007) as an important motivation, Leung (2003) believes that some are motivated to post online comments for the purpose of impressing other users through self-presentation of social identity. On the other hand, Nardi et al. (2004) point out that factors such as self-improvement, community belonging, and emotion management may also be considered as motivations to post online comments.

6.2. Netnographic findings

The credibility in quantitative research depends on instrument construction, whereas in qualitative research, “the researcher is the instrument” (Patton, 2002, p. 14). Therefore, when quantitative researchers discuss research validity and reliability, they are usually referring to research that is credible, while the credibility of a qualitative study depends on the capability and effort of the researcher. Appropriate qualitative research can help us “understand a situation that would otherwise be enigmatic or confusing” (Eisner, 1991, p. 58). While concepts such as reliability and quality in quantitative research evaluate with a “purpose of explaining”, these concepts in qualitative research have the purpose of “generating understanding” (Stenbacka, 2001, p. 551). Perhaps the difference in purpose of evaluating the quality of studies in qualitative and quantitative research is considered as a reason for the irrelevancy of the concept of reliability in the context of qualitative research (Golafshani, 2003). As Stenbacka (2001, p. 552) points out, “the concept of reliability is even misleading in qualitative research. If a qualitative study is discussed with reliability as a criterion, the consequence is rather that the study is no good”. However, while the terms reliability and validity are

regarded as crucial in determining quality in quantitative research, Lincoln and Guba (1985, p. 300) use the term “dependability” in qualitative research which closely corresponds to reliability in quantitative studies. Although some scholars (e.g., Clont, 1992; Campbell, 1996; Seale, 1999) advocate the concept of dependability as consistency of the data in qualitative research which can be achieved by step by step analysis of the data, Stenbacka (2001) argues that since reliability issues involve measurements, it has no relevance in qualitative research, and hence, reliability may not be used as a tool for the judgement of quality of qualitative research. Similarly, some qualitative researchers have argued that the concept of validity is not applicable to qualitative research, and there is a need for substituting it with a new term to reflect the interpretivist approach (Seale, 1999).

The following sections discuss the findings with reference to musical taste, indexical congruity, repetition congruity, and semantic congruity. The categorisation of consumers’ online postings has led to emerging themes related to musical congruity. Musical taste and knowledge “have the potential to communicate distinctiveness, status and class” (Bourdieu, 2010, p. 10). Indexicality of music, however, deals with the extent to which background music in advertisements can trigger past memories. While, repetition is concerned with the extent to which consumers’ exposure to repeated advertising music influences their response, semantic congruity deals with lyrics’ relevance to the message transmitted by the advertisement.

6.2.1. Musical taste

Advertisers consider it important that the music they employ should be liked by consumers and harmoniously matched with the advertised brand and message. Liked music may create positive feelings, whereas disliked music can be a disturbing element in advertisements and may lead to negative feelings in listeners. Disliked background music in advertisements may lower the consumer’s evaluation of the credibility of the brand message (Simpkins and Smith, 1974). Hahn and Hwang (1999) suggest that positive feelings created by liked advertising music can be transferred to the advertised brand. However, it is important to note that even a liked piece of music could be considered as incongruous in certain contexts which could diminish its positive effect on brand perceptions. Music that is distractingly mismatched with the advertising message may also prevent the

consumer from focusing on important information. Although music is capable of enhancing brand image, thus leading to better advertisement memory (Kellaris et al., 1993), its incongruous usage can play a distracting role in message processing (Stewart et al., 1990).

As mentioned in the methodology chapter of the present thesis, 472 consumers' online postings on a number of selected advertisements uploaded on YouTube were collected and categorised to form various congruity themes. The first musical congruity dimension to emerge as a theme is musical taste. A large number of consumer comments on the advertisements uploaded on YouTube suggested the benefits of using liked music. Investigating the consumer postings on high-involvement cars demonstrates the importance of using a likable song and the influence it can have on consumers.

I don't even like the Kia Soul but the song and this commercial makes me want to go out and buy one! (2013)

The above comment demonstrates how a song may influence consumers' purchase intention, even though the car brand is not one of their favourites. As this comment states, liking the advertising music may sometimes overshadow liking the product. Therefore, the role of advertising music in driving consumption is of great importance for advertising practitioners and client companies.

One of the best commercials ever! The song is great! I did not hear this song for a long time until it appeared in this TV commercial! The GM brand is not doing well today! I hope they come back strong in the next few years! (2009)

The above comment regarding a GM advertisement indicates how liking a piece of music may enhance consumers' attitude towards a car advertisement. Such consumer postings indicate that the effects of a liked piece of music are not confined to low-involvement products. Music can affect brand attitude for both low-involvement (e.g., Park and Young, 1986; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; MacInnis and Park, 1991) and high-involvement products.

I love man of La Mancha and I listen to it all the time and I love Honda Accord and I hope I will own one... One day. (2013)

I like this commercial because of the song. (2012)

Furthermore, the consumer postings above on a Honda advertisement show how love of the music leads to love of the advertisement and the car brand. Indeed, likeable music may even be the only reason for some to like an advertisement.

I ended up buying two boxes of this because of this ad. Dubstep is epic and I ran around the house shouting; "DUBSTEP ON TV!" (2013)

A number of postings suggested that allegiance to a musical genre and associated subculture triggers purchase intent as exemplified above. This consumer says that “dubstep is epic”! The loyalty to his/her musical taste and the level of enthusiasm evident in the comment resulted in actual purchase of the product.

*Weetabix tastes like S***, but it's got Dubstep in the commercial. So, you'll buy it anyway. (2013)*

Some consumers claim that they dislike the product, but cannot resist buying it because they like the genre of the music used in the advertisement.

Love this song but it's out of place in this commercial...makes me want to buy the Kia Soul Less because I don't want people associating me with these strange commercials. (2014)

If the music is perceived as incongruous because its values are believed to be undermined by the advertisement, it may pose an indirect identity or authenticity threat, resulting in avoidance of the advertisement and product. The above comment clearly demonstrates that consumers may refrain from buying the product because they do not want to be associated with the unusual incongruity evident in the advertisement.

I saw the commercial and I couldn't stop humming the song, and then I went to old navy and bought one of the sweaters and I just started singing the song more. (2007)

The comment above posted on an advertisement made for the Old Navy advertisement identifies further low-involvement purchase implications, consistent with the results of the existing research as well as the findings of studies in the previous chapter. Furthermore, “humming” the background

music in an advertisement may also help in recalling advertising information as well as the brand itself.

Worst ad ever + worst browser ever! Anyone who likes this song clearly has no idea what good music is. (2012)

Exploring the consumer postings on a wide range of high and low-involvement goods and services advertisements uploaded on YouTube demonstrated how a disliked piece of music could damage consumers' perception of the advertisement and the brand. Furthermore, several consumers present themselves as arbiters of good taste and authenticity, exemplified by the comment above.

Came on here to find the song off this advert and it's in the top viewed. 31,000 other people with good taste in music... nice guys (2010)

The comment above was made on a John Lewis advertisement. YouTube consumers demonstrate conspicuous musical consumption by communicating their personal musical tastes to other readers. Some consumers attempt to validate their 'good' taste in music by quantifying the number of people with similar taste, using their perceived shared experiences to reinforce their own authenticity.

I could write an essay on how this video is ideal for breaking down paradigms of OLDSKOOL vs new age / establishment vs niche, etc. (2012)

The style of music used in advertisements frequently appeals to consumer segments that are happy to demonstrate their musical knowledge and taste. The posting above implies that the consumer is well grounded through musical knowledge and creates the impression of having achieved a more authentic state through the wisdom of seeing beyond tribal paradigms.

What the Beatles made was art, not just a product, like today's pop stars. (2013)

In the above posting, the consumer's superior musical taste and enhanced and deep appreciation of musical authenticity is justified through categorising background music used in an advertisement as art. It is also a clear example of demonstration of attaining a more meaningful life through a critique of commodification.

Klasse! The piece of course in and of itself is Mozart's genius! But even if a premier airline uses it to depict the grandeur and elegance of what it has to offer...I think it's well served.
(2013)

*This is possibly the MOST beautiful commercial in years-- Mozart and Air France...
Exquisite!!!* (2012)

The consumer postings above exemplify a number of consumer postings about an Air France advertisement that reveal how incorporating a congruous, sophisticated piece of classical music (Mozart's Concerto No. 23) creates associations between the advertised service and characteristics such as elegance and class. Shankar et al. (2009, p. 89) discuss how our relative social position is reinforced by 'narratives of socialization' (the stories and expectations through which we are socialised). In this context, perception of leading an authentically meaningful life through membership of an aspirational social class is demonstrated through overseas air travel usage and a refined understanding of the music of a great classical composer. The consumers are displaying their cultural capital in implying the sophistication and superiority of their own musical taste and judgement.

Someday you'll hear Mozart's Concerto No. 23 and without realizing why, you'll be reminded of Air France. I pity your lack of imagination. (2012)

Meanwhile, some consumers become involved in online disputes if they consider that their good taste, identity, and search for an authentically meaningful life are threatened because an advertisement containing liked music is criticised online. An extract from such a dispute is included above.

From the data presented so far, it is observed that the love of music drives consumption while music incongruent with one's taste may negatively affect their consumption behaviour and purchase intent. It is revealed how consumers show an extraordinary level of enthusiasm towards the advertisements when hearing their liked music in ads. Findings also demonstrate that musical subcultures may emerge as a result of dissatisfaction with mainstream musical tastes. The next section further clarifies

the emotional effects of music, this time through presenting the data on the effects of indexical congruity on consumers' response to advertising.

6.2.2. Music and indexical congruity

Previous research indicates that music has a memory-triggering element capable of stimulating nostalgia for past events (Holbrook and Schindler, 2003; Kerrigan et al., 2014). MacInnis and Park (1991, p. 162) define musical indexicality "as the extent to which music arouses emotion-laden memories", discussing how musical indexicality in advertisements may make associations with consumers' past emotional experiences. If consumers associate a piece of music with a meaningful earlier episode in their lives, upon hearing the music again, memories and emotions tied to the original episode may be evoked (Dowling and Harwood, 1986). In this context, musical meaning is context-specific and referential (Sawyer, 2005). Music may retrieve favourable or unfavourable emotions from memory, thus influencing "consumers' feelings and attitudes" (MacInnis and Park, 1991, p. 162).

Using an old song as background music in an advertisement evokes nostalgic emotions and more positive nostalgia-based thoughts, even if the advertised product and other elements in the advertisement are not related to nostalgic themes (Chou and Lien, 2014).

Zander et al. (2010) stated that songs evoking pleasant memories may produce more positive reactions that enhance the attitude towards the advertisement and the brand.

I don't know why, but this song reminds me of winter time. Anyways, I love Old Navy. (2008)

The above comment reveals how music's association with a past experience may result in enhanced attitude towards the advertised brand. As consumers age, their nostalgic yearnings grow, making them more receptive to positive memories from the past (Hirsch, 1992). While science is still struggling to unravel the neuro-dynamics of nostalgia, the present study identified the effects of nostalgic cues and revealed how music from the past is capable of creating favourable brand attitude in advertisements.

I still remember seeing this commercial when I was just a kid and being completely enthralled by the whole thing. The melody of this song has been playing in the back of my mind all these years. (2011)

Music with autobiographical resonance may enable the temporary retrieval of consumers' former identities, for example, through deliberately revisiting an old, beloved record collection acting as a symbolic representation of past selves (Shankar et al., 2009). The comment above emphasises the power of music combined with the advertisement to retrieve childhood experience, enhancing the memorability of the advertisement in the process.

This song and commercial bring back such a flood of memories from my youth: driving on a hot summer night with full moon and myriad of stars with good friends. (2011)

Rarely do I get sentimental with commercials, but this one takes me back to the time when I was dating my wife and when we were first married. We used to take drives like this in the mountains and I remember looking at her beautiful face in the moonlight. The music is perfect. The sentiment is perfect. (2009)

Memories aroused by music can have a powerful cognitive effect, even if they do not elicit emotions. Consumers' memories might have connotations suggesting an image for the music, which can then become associated with the brand (Craton et al., 2017). A pop tune reminding a consumer of a vacation might suggest relaxation, Woodstock music can propound peaceful rebellion, and a high school hit song can evoke one's coming-of-age period in life. The memories aroused by music can also evoke emotions and emotional memories (Janata et al., 2007; Juslin et al., 2014, 2015). The above consumer postings provide examples of indexicality in showing how music combined with the advertisement can be used for retrieving memories, enabling the past to come alive.

I'm so glad I saw this commercial when it first came out. Now, when I go kayaking, I remember the first scene and this song comes to mind. (2012)

Conversely, exciting experiences can also trigger memories of the advertising music. Above is a comment on a Nissan advertisement. It is astonishing to see that sometimes an experience in life may

remind consumers of an advertisement which demonstrates the power of musical indexicality and its association with past memories.

More than an advert. The music brings me back my young years full of outstanding memories.

Hope to bring them back again... (2008)

The comment above was made about an advertisement for the Vodafone mobile network and clearly demonstrates how a liked, nostalgia-inducing song combined with the advertisement can bring back good memories and conjure up a rejuvenated, more authentic future identity, which in turn can lead to creating a positive attitude towards the advertisement and the brand. Nostalgia can make consumers feel that not so much time has passed between a particular past experience and their present life, making them feel younger again and that they still have a long way to go and have enough time to make the experiences happen again. This whole emotional process may have an incredibly positive influence on their attitude towards the advertisement and the brand. Although nostalgic music can also elicit a few negative emotions related to a sense of loss, such as sadness and anxiety (Holak and Havlena, 1998) as consumers may feel disappointed that *the days are gone*, postings demonstrate that these bittersweet emotions may not generally have a negative influence on their responses to advertisements.

It reminds me of driving with the top down, in a good mood, driving down the Pacific coast.

Every time I see this commercial or hear this song, a happy memory comes to mind. I guess it's time to buy a convertible to feel that again. (2010)

The above online posting demonstrates how Nick Drake's memorable 'Pink Moon' recording combined with the advertisement enables personalised reconstruction of a previous identity, arousing memories of carefree happiness and making the consumer think about future purchasing of the product. Therefore, it is indicated that musical indexicality may not only influence consumers' affective and cognitive responses, it may also exert a great influence on their purchase intent.

My reaction is that it's a depressing ad and doesn't make me want to shop at JL (anymore than I already do). Bad memories. (2010)

However, the above posting indicates that if a piece of music brings back unpleasant memories, it may have an adverse effect on their evaluation of the brand and purchase behaviour, even if it is a well-known popular song liked by many people.

6.2.3. Repetition congruity

The consumer comments in the previous section clearly indicate that while music capable of evoking positive nostalgic feelings produces positive responses in consumers, the adverse effects of bringing back unpleasant memories may have severe implications for advertisers and client companies. In this section, the netnographic data will present further evidence of negative responses to incongruity through investigating the effects of repetition in/congruity.

Despite consumers' best efforts to prevent it, music may infiltrate the mind, repeat itself continuously, and become extremely difficult to dislodge. This widely experienced involuntary cognition is comparable to cognitive itch in need of scratching and has been referred to as 'brainworms' or 'sticky music' (Sacks, 2011). Kellaris (2003) reported that simple songs, advertising jingles, or the theme music for TV shows seem to get stuck more often or to exert influence on a larger number of people compared to more complex songs. Many listeners may not be consciously aware that they are the target of sonic branding everyday as it can be argued that the reception of sound is a naturally subliminal process and hence, the information is more likely to be processed through an emotional route and not at a conscious and rational level. However, the use of extremely addictive and repetitive types of music in advertisements may have positive and negative effects on consumers' response to advertisements. The invasion of earworms does not seem to be a new phenomenon as consumers have been the target of these catchy tunes since the early 1920's with the start of the popularity of radio broadcasting. With the invention of TV and the Internet, the concept of the earworm has turned out to be a fascinating area of research in the context of music and advertising. The present research will study the effects through investigating consumers' online postings related to the advertising tunes that turn to earworms through involuntary repetition in our heads. The unexpected repetition of advertising music, if not perceived as being relevant, may result in repetition incongruity which may have detrimental effects on consumers' attitudinal and behavioural responses to advertising.

I love this advert, you can't get it out of your head once you've heard it. I keep on randomly singing it! (2010)

I lovvvvveeeeeeee this old commercial!!! This song stayed in my head forever! (2013)

This music is genius, catches my family's attention every time. Very upbeat, catchy and gets stuck in my head every time!!! (2013)

The comments above indicate how continual repetition of songs in people's minds may positively influence attitudes to the advertisement.

OMG! I love this advert, it is now stuck in my head. I'm always singing it now. (2010)

Some of the postings clearly show how a catchy tune could attract consumers' attention and even make them sing the advertising song randomly throughout the day which automatically results in enhancing the brand recall.

Sacks (2011, p. 100) describes how a repeated sound in our head can reach the point of annoyance: "This endless repetition and the fact that the music in question may be irrelevant or trivial, not to one's taste, or even hateful, suggest a coercive process, that the music has entered and subverted a part of the brain, forcing it to fire repetitively and autonomously".

In other words, although the catchy tunes used in the advertisements could enhance the level of consumers' brand recall through association of particular pieces of music with specific brands, sometimes the over-repetition of the advertisements containing catchy music may result in producing negative effects in consumers rather than being a positive branding strategy.

There were also many examples of negative responses to musical repetition arousing strong emotions.

Looks like I'm not the only one seeing this commercial EVERY TWO SECONDS. This song can get REALLY annoying sometimes. (2011)

I hate this stupid jingle. It must have played 100 times yesterday alone. I felt like shooting the TV just because of the abuse. I would never buy a Honda. (2011)

Above are examples of comments made about a Honda advertisement that reveal consumer frustration with repetition.

Aww this song is amazing but drove me mad!! I work at a cinema and had to listen to it every 15mins!! On the televisions in the foyer!! (2009)

The above online posting perfectly demonstrates the extent to which an over-repeated advertisement might negatively influence the viewers' attitude, even though the consumer thinks that the song is 'amazing'.

That tune is becoming like a worm eating its way through my brain. Make it stop! (2011)

However, exploring the viewers' online postings on the advertisements with 'sticky' music in the background suggests that although in the majority of cases, the advertising songs stuck in their minds reinforced musical memory and brand recall, the involuntary and repetitive exposure to a piece of music may lead to displeasure and distraction on the part of the advertisement viewers. The above comment reveals the extent to which repetition may lead to exasperation and annoyance.

Netnographic data presented in this section demonstrated how excessive repetition of music in advertisements may polarise opinion, producing positive and negative effects. The next section will offer findings related to semantic in/congruity and the commodification of music in advertisements as one of the most controversial concepts in this context.

6.2.4. Semantic congruity

In the literature review, it was observed that although using semantically congruent popular songs in advertisements may result in enhancing consumers' attitude towards the ad/brand and their purchase intentions, using songs having incongruent lyrics may play a distracting role by confusing consumers as well as adversely affecting their purchase decisions. In the context of the present research, this semantic congruity can be closely linked with a highly sensitive issue for consumers that is commodification of music.

The use of popular music in advertising gives companies the opportunity to communicate a favourable brand image to their target customers, building a link between the music and the advertised brand. Nevertheless, there has been growing concern from music fans and musicians about such commercialisation. Critics prefer their music to “remain genuine and original by refusing to allow it to be used in advertisements, arguing against its commoditisation and detachment from its social and cultural origins” (Abolhasani et al., 2017, p. 11).

Advertising agencies are increasingly using popular music to facilitate promotional and branding activities. However, there has been growing concern from music fans, critics, and musicians about the commercialisation of popular music. As Klein (2013) points out, most people do not like their favourite music to be used in advertisements for selling goods or services. In contrast, many would argue that featuring lesser-known musicians’ work in advertisements could help them find a wider audience, hence justifying the use of music as a creative and artistic background feature for advertisements. However, although there has been a growing interest in using popular music in advertising and advertisers use vocal versions of popular songs to reinforce brand message, this may be a problematic practice when semantic incongruity arises as a result of the backlash created among consumers towards the commodification of sacred art and establishment of an incongruent linkage between the lyrics of a song (that was originally composed to reflect a social movement) and a pair of sneakers (e.g., The Beatles’ Revolution and Nike). The netnographic data provide a novel platform to investigate consumers’ responses to this type of musical in/congruity.

Fans prefer their music to remain authentic by declining to allow it to be used in advertisements, disputing its commoditisation and separation from its social and cultural roots. Some postings condemn the use of revered songs in advertisements. They consider “musical authenticity to be compromised in the process because musicians such as Brandi Carlile wrote and recorded their songs as artists, not simply to advertise any product” (Abolhasani et al., 2017, p. 11).

It's a shame how they used Brandi's song for a car commercial, it's such a beautiful song.
(2009)

The above comment was made on a GM advertisement using 'I was made for you' by Brandi Carlile. Klein (2013, p. 9) argues that the use of popular music in advertising has engaged with the arguments relating to the "status of popular music as art, the status of art as commodity, and the existing tensions between artistic and commercial use of popular music". Such musical authenticity debates reflect the tension "between cultural forms aspiring to creative integrity and those seeking commercial success" (Holbrook, 2005, p. 22). Therefore, consumers may get annoyed when they see that the music they like is commodified in this manner.

Oh not again! So many adverts using Edward Sharpe songs. Stop spoiling good music! (2014)

In the above Peugeot car advertisement example, the posting suggests that consumers may passionately oppose liked music being used in advertisements. They may feel that the car commercial may totally ruin the music they like.

Songs like Revolution don't mean a pair of sneakers, they mean Revolution. (2009)

Popular music has frequently been regarded as a context for individuals' resistance to meanings that are being imposed on them from the dominant hegemony, resistance to the market and an important means for satisfying consumer needs and expressing identity (Shankar et al., 2009). Inappropriate use of music in advertising underlines "concerns that culture is degraded by marketers as a means of social control" (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2008, p. 25), thus undermining the aesthetic qualities of music. In this context, use of The Beatles' song 'Revolution' in a Nike advertisement was considered controversial in the above posting.

This is disgusting. Shame on Nike for exploiting priceless art. I will never buy another Nike shoe again. (2008)

Exploitation of John Lennon's lyrics to sell shoes is a perfect example of semantic incongruity which makes existing Nike users angry enough to boycott the brand because of the degrading of one of their favourite songs, as indicated by the above posting. Beatles' music has always been considered as untouchable, sacred fine art, so the use of their song 'Revolution' in a Nike advertisement was controversial. Exploring the YouTube viewers' online postings reveals that opinions vary on specific

uses of popular songs in advertisements. Some of the comments on the Nike advertisement's use of the song 'Revolution' suggest that it would seriously degrade the value of the music as such songs carry serious social and political messages and are not created to sell goods.

Now there's a big disconnect. You'd better change yourself instead. John didn't mean change the brand of your trainers! (2011)

Many consumers are concerned that “advertising dilutes the aesthetic credentials of the music it uses” (Abolhasani et al., 2017, p. 11). When the authenticity of favourite bands is indirectly questioned by association with the advertising of mundane products (evident in the above comment), the consumer's own present or former identity is also threatened through concern about “the character he was trying to be – the ineffective reproduction of a desired identity” (Shankar et al., 2009, p. 83).

I love Ingrid Michaelson. Have loved her long before this commercial came out. I hate Old Navy though for putting a cheesy commercial with her song. (2008)

The comment above refers to an Old Navy advertisement using Ingrid Michaelson's 'The Way I Am'. Consistent with the previous example, the above posting indicates how consumers protect their musical identity from disruptions and assaults. In turn, their musical identity also defends them “from other people and also from own fears and insecurities” by proclaiming their specialness (Gabriel, 2015, p. 29).

It's because of this commercial that I know vampire weekend so I have to thank it. (2011)

As shown in the above consumer posting, advertisements are sometimes the medium through which people become familiar with a particular musician or band, sometimes involving relatively unknown songs or musicians. Advertisements are an important source of exposure for some artists:

I think it's ok that a TV ad gets folks interested in the music of an artist that those folks may not otherwise have ever heard of. Easy for me to say since I liked Nick Drake for years but the hell with that. If TV ads give someone's back catalogue a shot in the arm then I say go for it. (2012)

The above posting demonstrates how some consumers find this a pleasing incident to come across the music they find interesting through advertisements.

There are many other people with similar experiences who discovered Nick Drake thanks to VW. (2011)

If consumers subsequently become fans, then the bands that they adopt reflect an identity choice, symbolising social groups they wish to identify with and rejecting those to which they do not wish to belong (Bourdieu, 2010). Nick Drake's 'Pink Moon' was used in a television advertisement for the Volkswagen Cabrio. It resulted in a CD that was available on Volkswagen's website and could be purchased for \$10. The title of the CD was 'Street Mix: Music from Volkswagen Commercials' containing 10 songs that became popular from VW commercials (Taylor, 2012, p. 213). Indeed, many people became Nick Drake fans because of the use of 'Pink Moon' in Volkswagen advertisements, as indicated in the above comment.

I don't know why this commercial literally brought tears to my eyes. It made me so emotional that I began crying uncontrollably. It is the power of music combined with the beautiful cinematography and evocative imagery, I suppose. Like most of you, I love America and I love American culture. Our automotive heritage is part of our culture and we must treasure it. (2009)

Furthermore, postings revealed how music associated with a particular country evoked strong feelings of national identity. Above is a comment on a GM car advertisement and it shows how music may evoke positive feelings linked with a sense of national identity.

This actually makes me wanna buy an American car! Go USA! (2012)

In some cases, music associated with national identity increased the likelihood of purchase intent due to country of origin effects, similar to the results of Study 3 in the present thesis. While the results of Study 3 of the present thesis revealed how country of origin musical congruity enhanced consumers' cognitive and behavioural responses to advertising, netnographic findings demonstrate the country of

origin musical congruity effects through an emotional route and show how the evocation of a sense of national identity may lead to love of the country and the advertised brand in an interrelated manner.

A song from an American musical based on a Spanish book sung for a Japanese company's commercial. Do you feel it? Do you feel the multiculturalism? (2011)

Occasional postings conveyed a sense of irony regarding advertising music and the influence of multiculturalism upon a changing sense of national identity. Above is a comment on a Honda car advertisement.

They so got this so very right, a very holly-wood feel but in the right way!...It makes so much sense, a great song done by one of the best...rest in peace Andy. I want that house with the hot tub. (2013)

Nick Drake's music FINALLY got the wide recognition it so richly deserved. Watch the commercial again, note the artistry, and best of all the message of individual freedom. I'm not one easily marketed to, but I do love this commercial. (2010)

The above comments reveal how for one consumer, the song was associated with material possessions, while for another consumer, Nick Drake's song combined with the advertisement demonstrated awareness of market manipulation, showing "how consumers willingly become complicit in their own seduction by marketplace narratives" (Arnould and Thompson, 2005, p. 875).

This may sound flip, but this ad, the Nick Drake track, inspired me to leave my cr!p job in Montreal and move back west to live in the mountains again. (2010)

For some, Nick Drake's song was associated with positive, life-affirming feelings. Indeed, some music and advertisements were alleged to have triggered a more meaningfully authentic life in very concrete terms.

Netnographic postings related to semantic congruity demonstrated how the perfect marriage of sound and image in advertisements may positively influence consumers' responses. On the other hand, data also reveal how the inherent tensions regarding musical authenticity are akin to the tension "between

cultural forms aspiring to creative integrity and those seeking commercial success” (Holbrook, 2005, p. 22). The use of inauthentic background music supports “concerns that culture is degraded by marketers as a means of social control” (Bradshaw and Holbrook, 2008, p. 25).

6.3. Chapter summary

The current netnography builds upon and extends the findings of previous studies of the present thesis as well as the existing reviews of the music in advertising literature (e.g., Oakes, 2007) by revealing contrasting perspectives. It provides a refreshing platform to investigate consumers’ everyday lived experiences of musical consumption in advertising from a phenomenological perspective. Studies concerning advertising music explore this area purely from a positivist, managerial perspective. However, this study explores consumers’ online postings on a range of advertisements uploaded on YouTube and reveals musical congruity themes that emerged from consumers’ online postings. It demonstrates how music affects consumers’ ad/brand attitudes and their potential purchase intent, as well as revealing consumers’ critical awareness and frequent resistance to the use of music in advertising (Abolhasani et al., 2017). The netnographic insights reveal that although musical liking positively affects ad/brand attitude, commodification of liked music and attempting to create a link between the lyrics of revered pieces of music and advertisements selling mundane products may cause semantic incongruity. Such semantic incongruity may threaten bands’ or musicians’ authenticity, which may in turn result in negative consumer responses towards the advertised product. Furthermore, although repetition could result in enhancing recall of advertising information, excessive, unexpected repetition may be deemed as incongruent, adversely affecting consumers’ attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, as well as reducing their purchase intent. Netnographic insights regarding indexicality demonstrate how emotional responses to advertising music may be caused by triggering autobiographical memories, therefore making such responses unpredictable and difficult to control for advertisers as a result of the individualised nature of the memories (Abolhasani et al., 2017). Data in the current study links indexicality with personalised reconstruction of past identities, revealing how music may serve as an aide-memoire that allows consumers to relive their meaningful

past experiences and reflect upon them thoughtfully and emotionally (Abolhasani et al., 2017). In the next chapter, a fuller discussion of the implications of these findings shall be presented.

Chapter 7

Discussion

To evoke in oneself a feeling one has experienced, and having evoked it in oneself, then by means of movement, lines, sounds, or forms expressed in words so to transmit that feeling that others experience the same feeling

- Tomas, 1969, p. 20

7.1. Introduction

According to the definition of art by Tolstoy, cited in Vincent Tomas's work above, an advertisement can be considered as an art form because it uses artistic and creative methods and techniques to accomplish an effect or a shift in consumer behaviour. The accomplishment of such effects may be considered as artful. Advertising is capable of nurturing interest, however superficial, in new movements in arts and design, bringing these to the attention of consumers. Feelings and fine arts are closely intertwined, and as Feasley (1984, p.9) points out, "If art is enrichment and an intensification of life, as well as a reflection of our lives, then television commercials fit that niche". The perfect marriage of sound and image in an advertisement may go straight to consumers' hearts.

The present thesis began with an introduction to the effects of musical congruity in advertising by highlighting key issues related to this area of study. The present research is particularly significant in terms of contribution to theory and method and its aims and objectives address important gaps in the existing literature. It identifies flawed conceptual underpinnings, flawed experimental procedures, incomplete information, exclusive focus on quantitative methods and artificial laboratory experiments, as well as a lack of research in new media using innovative technological advancements. Chapter 2 (the literature review chapter) provided critical and in-depth analysis of a comprehensive compilation of the available literature on music and advertising, highlighting the existing gaps identified in this area of research. Chapter 3 (the methodology chapter) then presented the justifications for the use of mixed methods research as the methodological foundation, design of various studies to address the research questions, description of the stimulus materials, as well as samples and the procedure for selecting them. The findings were presented in 3 study chapters. Chapter 4 (Study 1) presented the results obtained through focus group, surveys, and YouTube

Analytics statistical data in the context of university advertising, while Chapter 5 (Study 2) presented the findings pertaining to survey experiment carried out in the context of restaurant advertising. Furthermore, netnographic findings were presented in Chapter 6 (Study 2). The findings of the present thesis have produced new knowledge in the area of musical congruity in advertising through contributing new angles to existing research from both theoretical and methodological perspectives.

The current chapter analyses the research findings related to the experimental studies as well as the netnographic research. It then discusses the theoretical, methodological, and managerial contributions of the present research.

7.2. Discussion of research findings

7.2.1. Genre congruity in the context of university advertising

As noted in previous chapters, current literature on the effects of music in advertising provide valuable insights into the vast and complex nature of music by analysing its different characteristics such as tempo (e.g., Kellaris and Kent, 1993; Kellaris and Rice, 1993; Brooker and Wheatley, 1994; Oakes and North, 2006), melody (e.g., Wallace, 1994), and attention (e.g., Kellaris et al., 1993). In the process, one or two direct impacts such as attitude (see Lantos and Craton, 2012) and memory (e.g., Kellaris et al., 1993; Shen and Chen, 2006; Yeoh and North, 2010) are discussed. However, the existing research is still unclear in terms of the effects of music on consumers' responses to advertising. In some cases, for example, music was generally believed to exert positive effects (e.g., Park and Young, 1986; MacInnis and Park, 1991; North et al., 2004b; Yeoh and North, 2010, 2011) while it is considered as a distracting element in some other cases (Anand and Sternthal, 1990; Brooker and Wheatley, 1994; Olsen, 1995; Sharma, 2011).

At the stimulus level, musical congruity in a given message context deals with how closely the music and message stimuli are related to each other. When consumers perceive such stimuli as related to one another, it will act as a unified unit bringing in complementary effects (MacInnis and Park, 1991). However, consumers may begin processing the advertising stimuli separately, resulting in competing for the cognitive resources available for processing the message, should this *relatedness* be disrupted.

This may in turn negatively affect consumers' affective, cognitive, and conative responses to advertising. The main characteristic considered in the first two studies of the current thesis is musical genre congruity considering the music as a whole, without regard for other structural characteristics of the music. Therefore, there are a number of unanswered questions in the existing literature regarding the effects of musical genre congruity in the context of advertising for high-involvement services. How do consumers respond to genre congruity/incongruity in advertising in terms of their perceived image of the brand as well as price expectations? Can musical genre congruity or incongruity affect consumers' purchase intent for a high-involvement service? What are the effects of genre congruity on recall of advertising information?

Although consumer involvement in the context of advertising has been substantially investigated, it is largely considered from the perspective of individuals' involvement with the background music used in the advertisement (e.g., Park and Young, 1986; MacInnis and Park, 1991). In terms of the level of involvement a particular product may hold (please see literature review chapter), there is a gap in the literature with regards to investigating the effects of musical congruity for advertisements promoting high-involvement products involving a high level of risk and expenditure. Study 1 of the present thesis has therefore explored the effects of genre congruity in an advertisement promoting a university course (an MSc course) as a high-involvement product involving a considerable amount of risk and financial expenditure which requires considerable research prior to decision making.

The present research examining the effects of musical genre congruity investigates various musical genres' ability to elicit imagery that could be congruent with a particular product or brand and how genre congruity may prime associated memory compared to incongruent music or not using any type of music in advertisements. In many of the cases in the existing music and advertising literature, the researchers neglect the most significant message stimulus in advertisements and instead focus on either personal characteristics (e.g., Park and Young, 1986) or contextual characteristics such as viewing context (e.g., Shen and Chen, 2006), rather than the music itself. This omission resulted in failing to produce significant insight into the way musical genre congruity affects responses to various complicated messages in advertisements. In addition, another major weakness in the extant body of

research is that it neglected the psychological effects of musical congruity/incongruity on consumers' responses such as perceptions and evaluations, memory, and purchase intent.

Existing research investigating the impacts of genre congruity in advertising explored this area from a number of perspectives. Lavack et al. (2008) investigated the effects from the perspective of high- and low-cognition processing and found that congruent music produced a more positive ad/brand attitude under a high-cognition condition, compared to incongruent and no music treatments. In another study by Stewart et al. (1990), a congruent musical genre enhanced recall of advertising information. However, in addition to the flawed experimental procedures in examining the effects of musical in/congruity evident in the existing research that were highlighted in the literature review chapter of the present thesis, there is a gap in addressing the congruity question in the context of advertising for high-involvement services.

The findings of the present thesis concerning the effects of musical genre congruity in advertising take the existing research a step further and develop the existing literature by exploring the effects in a high-involvement advertising context, showing new dimensions of the impact of musical genre in/congruity on consumers' responses to advertising, and testing a number of new hypothesised relationships between musical in/congruity and dependent variables such as perception of cost, perceived brand image, recall, and purchase intent. Consistent with the findings of the focus group study of the present thesis, both survey experiments in Study 1 suggest that perceived image or identity of the advertised university may be a function of the stereotypical identity of the musical genres used in the advertisement. Literature suggests that expectancy and meaningful relevance comprise key dimensions of advertising congruity (Heckler and Childers, 1992; Oakes, 2007). The present study shows that although classical music has been occasionally used in university advertising, pop music would be more expected as it has been regularly used in university advertising in the United Kingdom.

Accordingly, the findings revealed that background music is capable of generating various image perceptions for the advertised product/brand. Findings reveal that pop music produced the most positive responses in terms of consumers' perceived image of the product in both cases of using

original compositions and professional background music for the university ad. However, in the case of using original music (Experiment 1, Study 1) composed by postgraduate music students, jazz produced the most unfavourable perceived images, whereas when using professionally produced pieces of music (Experiment 2, Study 1), the no-music treatment evoked the most unfavourable perceived images. The negative perceived image scores for jazz in the Experiment 1 may be partially explained because the University of Liverpool music department (whose postgraduate students composed the music) specialises in classical and pop music, but not jazz. Hence, this may explain why jazz gets better perceived image scores when using compositions by professional jazz musicians, compared to the no-music treatment. Findings confirm the claim by North et al. (2004b) as well as the focus group study of the present thesis stating that an inappropriate piece of music may produce more negative effects than using no music at all.

Findings of the current research, however, demonstrate that if music and brand are incongruously matched, their combination may sometimes result in the creation of a distorted and displeasing perceived image, as well as negatively affecting consumers' purchase intent (here, intention to enrol for the advertised course). Findings demonstrate how congruent pop music produced the highest intention to enrol for the advertised course, compared to other incongruent genres of music and the no-music treatment. This is interesting considering the fact that classical music also has been previously used in many university advertisements (e.g., Oxford and Cambridge universities), but nevertheless in the context of the present research, pop music is considered as being more congruous with the brand compared to classical music and jazz. As seen in the focus group study of the present thesis, student participants suggest that there may be a more fruitful association between classical music and a university like Oxford, rather than Liverpool University. In other words, musical genre used in the university advertising should be able to fit the already established image of the city in which the university is located. Otherwise, incongruent genres such as classical and jazz may generate dissonance characterised by psychological discomfort when it is incongruent with the brand or loosely coupled with the advertising message.

In another study, North and Hargreaves (1999) show that fans of classical music were viewed as being less interested in having fun compared to pop music fans. Findings of the present thesis reveal how communicating a highly erudite image of the university may not necessarily produce a positive response on the part of prospective students. Although qualities such as sophistication and intelligence may well be a desired image for a HE institution, the university's senior managers may not be willing to communicate these images in television or radio advertisements as they are aware of the potentially detrimental effects of showing an overly erudite image of the learning environment on students' intention to enrol in the institution. This risk is confirmed by the findings of the present research, where although classical music is capable of transferring a more prestigious, more expensive and high quality image of the advertised university, it did not produce the highest level of intention to enrol. This emphasises the importance of highlighting the hedonic benefits that the university offers to the prospective students, rather than overly focussing on mostly utilitarian messages such as the education quality and staff expertise.

Findings of the present research concerning the psychological discomfort produced by the incongruent background music can also be linked to the concept of *resource matching*. Here, the resource matching notion (see Anand and Sternthal, 1989; Meyers-Levy and Peracchio, 1995) explains the complex relationship between musical in/congruity and consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. This notion suggests that using incongruent information in an advertisement may result in consuming more cognitive resources that may in turn inhibit processing of the ad, consequently influencing consumers' attitude, perceptions and evaluations of the brand.

The psychological discomfort state in consumers created by incongruent music may result in demanding more cognitive resources increasing cognitive load. In the case of incongruent music, additional cognitive resources allocated to resolve this incongruity may sway consumers' attention from focussing on advertising information as well as their perception of the brand, hence, leading to negative effects on consumers' recall of information. This confirms the findings of Study 1 indicating that jazz music produced the lowest level of recall of advertising information, while the

stereotypically hedonic identity of the congruent pop music genre produced the highest level of recall. In other words, the congruent pop music genre brings in Gestalt effects and attenuates cognitive resources pressure, resulting in positive consumer responses to advertising.

A study by Roehm (2001) revealed that verbal recall of lyrics of the song was greater in the case of instrumental (no lyrics) rather than vocal versions when participants were familiar with the song. Similarly, in the case of the instrumental version of the pop music used in Experiment 2 of Study 1, because a familiar song presented without its normal lyrics may be regarded as incongruent with expectations, participants may have strived to resolve this incongruity through actively producing the absent lyrics. This successful incongruity resolution as a result of allocating more cognitive resources perhaps also helped in enhancing the recall of advertising information, compared to other advertising treatments.

The results of Study 1 in the present thesis demonstrate that the role of *background music* in changing attitudes and perceptions in the context of advertising for high-involvement products has been underestimated in previous research. The existing research in the area of music and advertising seem to be merely focussing on the effects of background music on consumers' responses to advertising in the context of low-involvement products, where advertisements do not carry important utilitarian, informational cues (e.g., Gorn, 1982; Alpert and Alpert, 1989; Hung, 2000; Chou and Lien, 2010, 2014). However, findings in Study 1 of the present thesis indicate that musical genre congruity in the context of advertising a university as a high-involvement product may exert a great influence on consumers' responses to advertising in terms of their brand image and cost perception, purchase intent, as well as their recall of advertising information. These original findings challenge the already established beliefs concerning the peripheral role of background music in advertising. The investigation of the effects of musical genre congruity in the present research reveal that consumers may elaborate upon advertising data through the peripheral route even in the case of advertising for high-involvement products, contrary to the previous research which contend that consumers may elaborate upon advertising data through the central route (by means of rational messages) only, in the context of high-involvement (Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; 1996). The findings of the present thesis,

however, add to the existing literature concerning the effects of advertising music adopting the Elaboration Likelihood Model (ELM), and suggest that in the case of high-involvement products, the effects and persuasion can indeed take place through both central and peripheral routes, in this case by means of a powerful background feature such as music.

Empirical evidence from the previous music and advertising studies as well as the findings of Study 1 of the present thesis suggest that increased music/advertising congruity may contribute to communication effectiveness in terms of consumers' attitude and perceptions, recall, and purchase intent. It has been observed that these findings can be supported by theoretical psychological evidence, specifically with respect to the effects of musical in/congruity on recall. For example, memory has been considered as networks of nodes linking elements of thought through associative pathways along which a congruous stimulus can encourage memory network linkages and enhance recall (Furnham et al., 2002). This proposes that consumers' recall of advertising information would not be enhanced through an incongruent stimulus, as it would not activate related constructs along network linkages (Oakes, 2007). When consumers perceive incongruity in an advertisement, they are likely to conclude that there is an intentional, hidden communicative purpose for its existence. However, if the attempts made by cognitive processing to establish linkages through memory in order to rationalise the purpose of the incongruity are futile, the incongruent stimulus may result in distracting consumers' attention from the advertising message.

However, advertisers may be able to use the novelty, surprise, or unexpectedness of incongruent music in order to enhance consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. Findings from existing studies using non-musical stimuli provide a theoretical counterargument underpinning the benefits of using incongruity in advertising (e.g., Miniard et al., 1991; Heckler and Childers, 1992). These studies reveal how using information that is incongruent with prior expectations may lead to more effortful and complicated processing, enhancing associative memory pathways. In this context, using an unexpected and relevant (mildly incongruent) stimulus may be more effective in penetrating the perceptual screen of an audience to attract attention to the advertisement and enhancing the identification of the primary theme and message of the

advertisement (Heckler and Childers, 1992). Therefore, Study 2 of the present thesis develops, refines, and redefines the concept of musical incongruity and extends it to the context of advertising music. It addresses the ongoing flaw in many of the existing music and advertising studies pertaining to the use of incongruent musical stimuli that are both irrelevant and unexpected and lack the artful deviation characteristics of mild musical incongruity.

7.2.2. Music in advertising and incongruity resolution

It can be argued that a moderate dose of unexpectedness may be perceived as interesting, thus evaluated more positively compared to a lower level of unexpectedness. In other words, moderate musical incongruity in advertisements can be resolved through assimilation and consequently produce a positive arousal which may in turn lead to more positive responses. Therefore, consumers may interpret arousal created by the mild musical incongruity with the advertisement schema as a pleasing and positive experience, as long as the level of musical incongruity and unexpectedness of music does not lead to extreme levels of arousal. Therefore, Study 2 of the present thesis addresses the second gap identified in the literature through answering the second research question, thus addressing the value of purposeful, artful, and clever musical incongruity aimed at enhancing consumers' responses to advertising through a successful process of incongruity resolution. Study 2 developed, refined, and redefined the concept of musical congruity in advertising through adapting Heckler and Childers' (1992) congruity model. It offered new definitions for *expectancy* and *relevancy* as two dimensions of congruity, and introduced four quadrants of musical in/congruity, namely; expected/relevant, unexpected/relevant, expected/irrelevant, and unexpected/irrelevant.

As mentioned earlier in the thesis, many of the incongruent music stimuli used as examples of incongruity in the extant literature fall short of the artful deviation characteristic of mild musical incongruity that could lead to successful resolution and elaboration by consumers which may in turn result in positive affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising. In other words, because the incongruent music used in the existing research failed to elicit meaningful interpretations and elaborations that were capable of reinforcing the advertising proposition, the higher level of cognitive resources allocated to processing the incongruity by consumers failed to resolve the

incongruity in a successful manner. This failure may have led to the exclusively negative effects of musical incongruity in the extant body of research. Study 2, however, provides new insights by investigating the effects of mild or moderate musical incongruity through carefully selecting different background music capable of representing the four in/congruity quadrants derived from Heckler and Childers' (1992) congruity framework.

The findings of Study 2 of the present thesis regarding the effects of musical incongruity in advertising a restaurant confirm the results of the study by Heckler and Childers (1992) regarding the effects of using incongruent stimuli in the context of print advertising. Findings indicate how the deliberate crafting of musical incongruity can be used to engage and amuse consumers, and advocate a hypothetical continuum of artful, deliberate deviation of musical incongruity proposing that resolving such musical incongruity may enhance consumers' responses such as recall, ad attitude, perception of brand image and quality, as well as their purchase intent.

Study 2 findings suggest that using unexpected/relevant music enhanced recall of information. The recall test in this study consists of three components: brand name, advertising slogan, and advertising claims. Separate data analysis regarding the three components of recall has provided some valuable insights into observed memory behaviour of consumers. The findings of the present thesis suggested that the unexpected/relevant incongruity quadrant represented by Italian opera/reggae mashup produced the highest level of recall for all three recall components. Findings emphasise the importance of contextual incongruity to the aesthetic and indicate how the unexpected combining of two songs from contrasting genres (opera and reggae) may often create humorous effects capable of generating more cognitive resources to resolve the incongruity.

At the time of conducting Study 2 of the present thesis examining the effects of incongruity, it was striking how many participants reacted with smiles while hearing a mashup as the background music for a restaurant radio advertisement. The surprising unexpectedness and incongruity in the music mashup is not only due to combining two individually pre-existing songs that are moved from their original contexts; it is also due to the disruption of social conventions (Brøvig-Hanssen and Harkins, 2012). Music mashups often mix samples from what might be perceived as resolute categories, such

as serious and fun, black and white, opera and reggae. It is acknowledged that the interpretation of the incongruity of a music mashup in the advertisement as purposeful humour may depend upon different factors such as the individual perspective of the participant, specific contextual setting, as well as knowledge of music. However, the findings of the current research reveal that this humorous amusement created by the mild musical incongruity may have been resolved through allocating a higher amount of cognitive resources in a successful manner, resulting in enhancing memory. On the other hand, findings indicate that severe musical incongruity created as a result of using unexpected/irrelevant music (Caribbean reggae) strongly damages consumers' recall of advertising information. In other words, recall is improved or impaired depending upon whether the abundant cognitive resources generated could help in resolving the incongruity or not respectively. However, although the research by Srull et al. (1985) reveals how incongruent information may cause message receivers to process the information with a higher level of cognitive effort that results in enhancing advertising memory, the present research reveals that only purposeful, artful, mild incongruity can be fruitful in terms of recall of advertising information.

However, the positive results of selective use of creative and purposeful musical incongruity in advertising are not confined to the impact on recall. The artful blend of opera and reggae are set out to induce interpretations capable of reinforcing the advertising proposition. The use of purposefully artful deviation situates the musical stimulus within an area of interpretive ambiguity capable of fostering symbolic elaboration. Findings of the current research indicate that the successful symbolic elaboration and resolution of moderate musical incongruity may also lead to enhancing consumers' attitudes and perceptions, which is completely original and has not been explored in the extant body of literature. The results of the ANOVA test in Study 3 reveal a statistically significant difference between treatments in terms of the influence of various in/congruity quadrants on consumers' attitude towards the advertisement. Findings confirm that the psychological discomfort generated through severe dissonance may result in unfavourable attitude towards the advertisement. As the findings suggest, the musical unexpectedness in the mild incongruity condition (unexpected/relevant) may have resulted in enhancing the *entertainment* characteristic of the advertisement. A consumer may

initially get interested in an advertisement for its entertainment value and this entertainment value of the ad may cause the consumer to remember it.

The underlying humour caused by the artful use of music mashup in the radio advertisement in Study 2 is likely to satisfy participants' curiosity and need for entertainment, thus enhancing their attitude towards the advertisement. However, the expected/relevant musical congruity quadrant (highly congruent) made the advertisement slightly more enjoyable than the unexpected/relevant quadrant, although there was no statistically significant difference between the two. This may be due to the use of purely relaxing Italian opera representing the expected/relevant quadrant which makes the advertisement sound somewhat more enjoyable.

Similar to the university advertising study of the current thesis, the findings of Study 2 suggest that perceived image of the advertised brand may significantly differ in various congruity conditions. Study 2 reveals that the unexpected/relevant musical quadrant was responsible for producing the most favourable images of the brand (more exciting, pleasant, cool, and appealing). The expected/relevant quadrant produced the better response only in one of the image perception items (tense/relaxing). Considering the findings related to the ad attitude mentioned earlier, as the expected/relevant musical quadrant produced a slightly more favourable attitude towards the ad in terms of being more enjoyable, this has resulted in transferring a more relaxing perceived image for the restaurant when Italian opera was used in the advertisement. Placed in the right context, the highly congruent Italian opera resulted in enhancing the underlying relaxing image for the advertised Italian restaurant.

Findings of Study 2 regarding the effects of musical in/congruity on consumers' responses to advertising may not fully support the preference-for-prototype model explained earlier in the thesis. The preference-for-prototype model explains preferences between aesthetic objects and indicates how the human mind is composed of densely interconnected cognitive units in a way that a specific piece of music is capable of activating related knowledge structures. This is in line with the results of the existing research that reveal how, for example, musical congruity positively affects product choice (e.g., Areni and Kim, 1993). However, the application of the concept of country of origin musical congruity may explain how using the unexpected mixture of reggae and Italian opera creates a

moderate level of incongruity with the expected or predetermined pattern or structure that is elicited by the advertising message. While the advertisement intends to transfer a message about an authentic Italian restaurant, the unexpected/relevant musical incongruity quadrant offers a purposeful surprise by presenting the advertisement with a mixture of Italian opera and reggae music, which is obviously from a contrasting country of origin (Caribbean). Therefore, instead of using a stereotypically Italian music that is prototypical of the class in question and capable of activating the related knowledge structures concerning Italy, the application of this partially unexpected music (reggae) may be rewarded by allocation of more cognitive resources, and creating positive thoughts through the enjoyable experience of incongruity resolution. In other words, while the highly relevant Italian opera musical genre reinforces the advertising message and brand image, naturally transmitting and supporting an authentic impression of the Italian restaurant, the unexpected reggae style mixed with the opera has a deliberately underlying communicative purpose for its presence which is humour. This humorous deviation from expectation may then be followed by a resolution in which the congruity is comprehended. Findings of Study 2 indicate that the successful resolution of incongruity may not only lead to positively affecting consumers' perceptions of brand image compared to severe incongruity quadrants (expected/irrelevant and unexpected/irrelevant quadrants), it may indeed result in a better perception of quality of food, which also positively affected participants' purchase intent. In contrast, the unexpected/irrelevant incongruity quadrant associated with Caribbean reggae results in severe incongruity without resolution that may leave listeners confused and frustrated because they may not be able to *get the purpose*.

Drawing on Mandler's schema incongruity theory (1982), study three of the current thesis depicts resolution strategies for incongruity related to different changes in schema structure. The findings reveal that the internal processing activities consumers embrace in an attempt to resolve varying levels of incongruity may have evident consequences for their cognitive and affective (reflected in perceptions, recall, attitude formation, and persuasion) responses to advertising. This confirms the argument made by schema incongruity theory that moderate schema-stimulus discrepancies can be successfully resolved, resulting in more positive subsequent responses through a psychological reward

mechanism (Mandler, 1982; Meyers-Levy and Tybout, 1989). In contrast, in the condition where the severity of musical incongruity is too extreme to be assimilated into existing schemas (unexpected/irrelevant music), consumers may ascertain that they need a wholly fresh schema that may contradict existing schemas, for the purpose of accommodating and possibly successfully resolving such intense musical incongruity. Accommodating and resolving a severe musical incongruity in the advertisement (figuring out the purpose behind using Caribbean reggae for an Italian restaurant) may take enormous effort on the part of consumers, both cognitively and emotionally, and demands considerable skills in utilising psychological resources. Therefore, the severely incongruent music used in the advertisement causes consumers' failure to resolve the extremely intensive incongruity even after they try to make significant changes to the present schema structure.

It has been observed that the existing research around the use of incongruity in advertisements does not produce conclusive findings (Halkias and Kokkinaki, 2014; Segev et al., 2014). For instance, Torn and Dahlen (2007) reveal how the discrepancy between the advertisement and brand schema may result in increasing attention, better recall, and a more positive ad attitude, compared to congruent advertisements. On the other hand, Dahlen et al. (2008) demonstrate that the incongruity between advertisement and the brand may reduce the credibility of the ad and lead to lower ad attitude, compared to congruity. The review of literature, however, shows that these the existing studies implement a dichotomous operationalisation of incongruity that solely discerns what is congruent and what is not, neglecting the differences in the level of incongruity (Jhang et al., 2012; Han et al., 2013). The current research addressed this flaw in the context of musical incongruity in advertising, demonstrating how mild musical incongruity in advertising enables consumers to focus their attention and allows them to muster accessible cognitive resources for an intentional exploration of the incongruent event, resulting in enhancing consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising through resolving the incongruity. Study 2 indicates that in the case of moderate musical incongruity (Italian opera/reggae mashup representing the unexpected/relevant quadrant), participants tend to invest further processing time to review schematic knowledge and initiate new

associative pathways or links that harmonise the meanings communicated by musical genre and country of origin with the existing product/brand knowledge. The process of discovering a meaningful linkage between the mildly incongruent music and the intended advertising message strengthens the associative network between stimulus and memory information that results in enhancing recall. However, as the level of mismatch becomes extreme (Caribbean reggae representing the unexpected/irrelevant quadrant), participants may regard the advertisement as nondiagnostic, and hence, consider any effort in processing the advertisement to be in vain. This, as seen in the findings of Study 2, may lead to diminished information processing and inability to establish meaningful associations between the message to be transferred by the background music and the restaurant image, which may in turn inhibit recall of advertising information for advertisements using severely incongruent music. Findings of the current research also demonstrate how failure to come up with a satisfactory interpretation of the advertisement may lead to negatively affecting consumers' perceptions, attitudes, and purchase intent.

7.2.3. Congruity and consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption

As seen earlier in the thesis, there is a general gap in terms of the lack of qualitative research in music and advertising, compounded by a more specific gap regarding netnographic research. This is reflected in the literature review of music in advertising by Oakes (2007) in which the highlighted studies are almost exclusively from a positivist, managerial perspective and the phenomenological experience of musical consumption in advertising is not addressed. The current netnography provides an original angle in examining musical congruity in advertising.

Study 3 of the present thesis (netnography) addresses the third research question, which is to investigate how musical in/congruity affects consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising. The netnography of the present thesis addresses this gap through exploring authentic experiences of consumers such as their attitudes and emotions rather than examining their responses from an exclusively positivist approach. The categorisation of a comprehensive compilation of consumer postings on various advertisements uploaded on YouTube identifies four musical congruity dimensions, namely musical taste, semantic congruity, repetition, and indexical congruity.

The current netnographic research builds upon and extends the findings of the existing advertising music literature (e.g., Oakes, 2007) through revealing contrasting perspectives. On the one hand, it demonstrates how the four congruity dimensions mentioned above affect consumers' attitudes towards the advertisement and the brand, as well as their purchase intent. On another level, it reveals consumers' critical awareness and frequent resistance to the use of music in advertising.

The results of previous studies have confirmed the benefits of the fit between musical genre and advertisement. For example, Taylor (2012) argues that advertising agencies tend to pick classical music when they require a sense of prestige and legitimacy that classical music is capable of creating. Another study reveals how playing classical music had a positive relationship with purchasing more expensive wines by customers as classical music is associated with prestige and sophistication (Areni and Kim, 1993). Similarly, the selection of Brazilian music to be incorporated in a Brazilian coffee advertisement enhanced perceived authenticity of the Brazilian coffee beans and likelihood of purchase (Hung, 2000). However, Individual differences may exert a great influence on their degree of liking or disliking a song and subsequently its effects on attitude towards advertisements. In other words, musical taste or liking involves subjectivity and personal relevance. While liked music can create positive feelings that can be transferred to the advertised brand, disliked background music can play a disturbing role because it may be boring, irritating, repetitive, or it may even disrupt consumers' message processing. The netnographic findings of the current thesis suggest that musical taste may involve consumer subjectivity and personal relevance. Findings reveal that liking the background music may positively affect consumers' attitudes, evaluations, and purchase intent. Interestingly, in some low-involvement cases, it is observed that if the background music is liked by consumers, they may opt to purchase the product, even if they dislike the brand. This is an important finding regarding the effects of musical liking or taste on persuasion in the conditions where the purchase occasion carries a low level of risk and expenditure.

Musical subcultures emerge due to dissatisfaction with mainstream musical tastes. Subcultures have been theorised as rebelliously political due to "their ritualistic resistance to capitalist incorporation" (Weinzierl and Muggleton, 2006, p. 8). Subcultural music "may evoke correspondingly rebellious

images and ideals that are markedly different from those evoked by more commercially mainstream music” (Abolhasani et al., 2017, p. 6). However, “musical taste, as with music itself, is both a multi-faceted and distinctly fluid form of expression” (Bennett, 1999, p. 611) as distinctions between subcultural and mainstream classifications have become blurred. For example, the musical subculture dubstep has recently gained wider recognition through endorsement by mainstream music stars (e.g., Rihanna and Taylor Swift), “as well as mainstream advertising by brands such as Apple, Samsung, Heineken, Skoda and BMW” that tap into subcultural authenticity by using dubstep (Hietanen and Rokka, 2015, p. 1565). Nevertheless, individuals still strive to use subcultural capital to define their taste as authentic and to accrue ‘cool’ status that is valuable through its exclusivity (Abolhasani et al., 2017). The distinctiveness of subcultural capital is defended through construction of a “mainstream ‘Other’ as a symbolic marker against which to define one’s own tastes as authentic” (Weinzierl and Muggleton, 2006, p. 10). The netnographic findings of the present thesis suggest that consumers demonstrate allegiance to musical subcultures through expressions of musical taste and they sometimes demonstrate resistance to perceived commodification of those beloved musical subcultures. From the advertisers’ perspective, observed consumer devotion to minority musical genres suggests the potential benefits of positioning brands to appeal to niche subcultures displaying passionate musical allegiance (e.g., fans of electronic dance music genre dubstep). Netnographic findings suggest that “listeners are not passive consumers, but active partners in a cultural process who use music to fulfil different functions according to different social contexts” (Hargreaves et al., 2002, p. 13).

Individuals’ preference for specific musical genres and subgenres may exhibit identity through signposting membership of reference groups and excluding others who belong to separate groups, frequently enabling segregation of consumers according to a range of demographic variables such as age, gender, ethnicity and social class (Abolhasani et al., 2017). Musical taste and knowledge “have the potential to communicate distinctiveness, status and class” (Bourdieu, 2010, p. 10). Musical taste can indeed be part of status battles to demonstrate an individual’s superior emotional sensitivity to music (Hesmondhalgh, 2008). Similarly, netnographic findings reveal that consumers may achieve a

more authentically meaningful life and higher social status through claiming to be capable of distinguishing between good and bad taste in music and advertisements.

Arsel and Thompson (2011, p. 795) discuss how, through media representation, hipsters are denuded “of any connotations of social protest”. Similarly, the current netnographic findings reveal the relationship between musical taste and the search for an authentic identity. Findings demonstrate that consumers strive to prevent the erosion of their countercultural identities by criticising the Nike relationship with John Lennon’s idealistic social protest song Revolution. This indicates resistance to the way “cultural symbols are co-opted by the mainstream’ for the purpose of advancing corporatised versions of counterculture, as a result undermining the rebellious connotations through the commodification process (Schiele and Venkatesh, 2016, p. 4).

Baumgartner (1992) argues that advertising music triggering emotionally charged autobiographical memories may influence attitude to the advertisement and brand. Netnographic findings regarding indexicality demonstrate how emotional responses to advertising music may be due to the triggering of autobiographical memories, thus making such responses unpredictable and difficult to control for advertisers due to the individualised nature of the memories. Netnographic data in the current thesis associates indexicality with personalised reconstruction of previous identities, demonstrating how music may serve as an aide-memoire that allows consumers to relive experiences from their past and reflect upon them (Nowak, 2016). When a consumer associates a particular music used in an advertisement with a pleasant memory in his or her past life, indexical congruity results in eliciting positive reactions and enhancing attitudes. However, such memories are not always pleasant, and even a happy piece of music may evoke a sad memory, thus lowering consumers’ evaluation of the advertised brand (Blair and Shimp, 1992). Consequently, there is unpredictability from a marketing perspective since the effects may differ from person to person when considering the type of experience or memory associated with a particular piece of music. Netnographic findings reveal how indexical incongruity caused by associating advertising music with an unpleasant experience or memory in the past may lower attitudes, as well as negatively affecting their future purchase intentions.

Functioning as an aesthetic marker, music may represent a narrative, enabling recall of significant passages in life. Furthermore, netnographic insights demonstrate the gradual evolution of a shifting sense of national identity within the context of increased multiculturalism. Conversely, data also reveal how the recall of critical occasions in consumers' lives may promote a unified sense of individual identity over time through memory evocation (e.g., when a particular piece of background music takes the consumer back to their young years).

The ultimate objectives of advertising are to attract consumers' attention to what a particular company has got to offer to the market and persuade them to purchase the offerings. Hence, the reliability of information and source attractiveness (e.g., using popular music) are crucial elements in communicating a desirable brand image in order to create a positive attitude and reinforce positive associations that may ultimately lead to an increase in sales. According to Taylor (2012, p. 202), the driving forces behind the increase in the music licensing trend were "memorability, positive associations with the original song, and affection for the music". A graph on the front page of *Marketing through Music* in July 1988 containing Eric Clapton for Michelob, Linda Ronstadt for Coke, Michael Jackson for Pepsi, Bon Jovi for Coors, and U2 for Kodak demonstrated the success of advertisements using popular music. As Demkowych (1986) points out, this graph indicated how advertisements containing popular music produced more positive reactions than negative.

However, the commercialisation of authentic music may also have adverse effects on fans' attitude towards the singer, band, as well as the advertisement. Corciolani (2014) reveals how fans criticised *Afterhours'* (an Italian alternative rock band) decision to attend a music festival (SMF) which they deemed to be an extremely commercialised operation and as a result, they thought the band had sold out. Fans seeking authenticity may perceive the commercialisation of music as an attempt to obtain an *illegitimate* audience, thus making them reject their favourite musicians/bands and search for other bands that have not been compromised (Corciolani, 2014). In the present thesis, netnographic insights demonstrate how semantic incongruity is linked with a highly sensitive issue for consumers regarding commodification of music. Netnographic data reveal how incongruent linkage between the lyrics of a revered song and a pair of sneakers, for example, could result in a serious backlash among consumers.

Consumers consider musical authenticity to be compromised in the process as they believe that musicians such as Brandi Carlile and John Lennon wrote their songs as artists and not simply to sell products (Abolhasani et al., 2017). Using these semantically incongruent songs makes the music less authentic through commodification, and thus, consumers may feel that their own identity is threatened. Furthermore, data show that consumers resist advertisements that are perceived to undermine the musical authenticity of favourite bands through excessive commercialisation.

Consumers assert that commodification of music degrades fine art and ruins the experience and memories of many people, highlighting “antagonisms between music and advertising” (Eckhardt and Bradshaw, 2014, p. 169). Exploring online postings on YouTube advertisements reveals that some consumers are extremely sensitive towards the semantic incongruity caused by using music that is composed and sung by popular musicians to transmit social and political messages, which is then used for the purpose of selling products. This indicates that “music is not simply regarded as an instrumental commodity that may influence intent to purchase advertised products, but is frequently considered as a sacred product in its own right” (Abolhasani et al., 2017, p. 14).

Differences in opinion regarding the commercialised use of music suggest that “the concept of authenticity in consumption is considered to be a contested phenomenon” (Abolhasani et al., p. 10). Adorno and Horkheimer (1997) point out that a work of art should be created for higher motives than mere commercialisation and profit. They regard the popular music concept as commercial and inauthentic. Although the use of popular music in advertising provides the opportunity for companies to transmit a positive and favourable brand image and establish a link between the music and the advertised brand, there has been increased concern from musicians and music fans about such commercialisation and commodification of music (Abolhasani et al., 2017). In this context, as discussed earlier, Corciolani (2014) reveals how bands’ participation in advertising campaigns has been regarded as a violation of authenticity that may critically damage their reputation and their relationship with their fans.

However, the close partnership between music and advertising frequently has mutual benefits for both industries, since featuring less well-known musicians’ work in advertisements could help them find a

wider audience through affiliation of their music with a famous brand. As seen in the netnographic findings of the present thesis, the emergence of the mutual benefit for both advertisers and musicians may sometime overshadow the negative effects of the commodification of music, especially when the advertisement does justice to the music: “I think it's OK that a TV ad gets folks interested in the music of an artist that those folks may not otherwise have ever heard of. Easy for me to say since I liked Nick Drake for years but the hell with that. If TV ads give someone's back catalogue a shot in the arm then I say go for it” (in netnographic findings).As Oakes et al. (2013, p. 611) point out, “successful musicians may be regarded as brand managers promoting themselves and their creative output in the competitive cultural sphere”. The partnership with advertising agencies provides musicians with an alternative source of revenue and exposure. However, it is possible that unsuccessful advertising campaigns may exert negative effects on the success of the musicians and their professional reputation.

Netnographic findings demonstrate how unexpected repetition of advertising music may sometimes result in repetition incongruity that produces negative responses to advertising. Findings of the current research suggest how over-repetition of advertising music for consumers may result in generating negative moods such as anxiety and extreme dissatisfaction. Although previous research (e.g., Anand and Sternthal, 1990) suggest that repetition of music during an advertising campaign may always enhance brand attitudes and recall, netnographic insights of the present thesis provide strong evidence against it. For example, one of the consumer postings states: “I hate this stupid jingle. It must have played 100 times yesterday alone. I felt like shooting the TV just because of the abuse. I would never buy a Honda” (in netnographic findings).Repetition may be linked to the expectancy component of congruity. Netnographic findings reveal how consumer responses are heightened in the case of exceeding an expected threshold of repetitions. These findings demonstrate that consumers that are over-exposed to a particular advertisement may get extremely annoyed by the excessive repetition of background music, consequently overshadowing the benefits of musical association.

Sacks (2011, p. 100) describes how a repeated sound in our head can reach the point of annoyance: “This endless repetition and the fact that the music in question may be irrelevant or trivial, not to

one's taste, or even hateful, suggest a coercive process, that the music has entered and subverted a part of the brain, forcing it to fire repetitively and autonomously". As seen in the literature review chapter of the current thesis, excessive repetition may result in creation of *earworms*. As explained in the literature review chapter of the current thesis, as a result of experiencing earworms, consumers may not be able to dislodge a song and prevent it from repeating itself in their heads. This involuntary cognition caused by the excessive exposure to advertising music may get extremely annoying. Although musical repetition in the context of advertising may provide security through its daily predictability, netnographic findings suggest that consumers who become victims of earworms may not always react in a positive way. This is in spite of the result of an earworm study in a non-advertising context that suggests that the majority of people may consider earworms as a pleasant experience (Halpern and Bartlett, 2011). Consumers' online postings demonstrate how the excessive repetition (repetition incongruity) may lead to such a level of annoyance that they decide to even boycott the advertised product. If the consumers are over-exposed to a particular advertisement, they may feel annoyed by the repetition of the music which might ultimately overshadow the benefits of musical association. As a result, the music used in the advertisement will no longer be desired by the listeners. It may be extremely harmful for the advertised brand if consumers are irritated by excessive repetition of an advertisement. This will not only damage the consumers' attitude towards the advertisement and the brand, but may also produce negative feelings towards the background music as well as the artist.

Furthermore, netnographic findings also reveal how consumers resist advertisements that seek to control their behaviour, including attempting to impose "normative social identity" (Rumbo, 2002, p. 130) through musical repetition. Unfavourable moods such as those associated with musical repetition can activate resistance to the homogenising routine of the market, highlighting a critique of market manipulation, and the desire and potential for a more authentic experience (Abolhasani et al., 2017). Retention of individual and collective identity through music may assist "consumers in their quest for existential meanings" as well as providing a form of 'resistance to and emancipation from oppression' (Ulusoy, 2016, p. 252) evident in excessive musical repetition and authenticity threats.

7.3. Contributions to theory and method

The theoretical contribution of the present research can be identified mainly in three areas. Firstly, the current thesis identified six musical congruity dimensions (genre congruity, country of origin musical congruity, musical taste, semantic congruity, indexicality, and repetition congruity) to describe the effects on consumers' affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising, some of which (e.g., country of origin and repetition congruity) have not been investigated in sufficient depth before. The previous literature in the area of music in advertising has focussed mostly on particular characteristics of music such as tempo, timbre and volume and their direct effects on memory or attitude (Kellaris et al., 1993; Hahn and Hwang, 1999; North et al., 2004b), without capturing the *congruity* aspect in sufficient detail. The present thesis thus offers a conceptual innovation in explaining musical congruity in advertising as a notion that may involve several dimensions, all of which affect consumers' responses in a distinctive way.

Secondly, the present thesis has addressed the question regarding the effects of the artful use of musical incongruity in advertising in a new way. The review of the extant literature indicates that despite the growing use of music in advertisements and the colossal amount of money spent on it (Oakes and North, 2006), little was known about the actual cognitive, affective, and behavioural effects of musical incongruity in advertisements. Specifically, from the perspective that an advertisement is a bundle of stimulus elements, the extant literature has not investigated in-depth the way incongruity resolution affects consumers' responses to advertising. Therefore, the present research adapted Heckler and Childers' (1992) twin component congruity framework which was originally designed in the context of print advertising to examine the effects of purposeful, artful musical incongruity in the context of advertising.

The present thesis provides a comprehensive model to highlight the importance of moderate incongruity through developing, refining, and redefining Heckler and Childers' (1992) congruity framework and extending it to the context of music and advertising. Studies involving congruity were predominantly in print advertising and did not explain the effects in the context of advertising music. Consequently, the current research provides a useful, original contribution to understanding the

positive impact of using moderately congruous music in advertising. Findings in the present thesis illustrate how mild musical incongruity can lead to successful resolution of cognitive dissonance, resulting in incongruity resolution which can positively affect consumers' responses to advertising. The present thesis contributes to existing music and advertising literature by investigating different levels of musical in/congruity through carefully designing various in/congruity quadrants in a study. Importantly, findings offer the first empirical evidence for the process underlying affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to the use of purposeful, moderately incongruent music in advertising, which was never investigated in the context of advertising music research. The second gap mentioned in the introduction chapter of the current thesis is therefore addressed by providing new and innovative insights in investigating the effects of in/congruity and through introducing country of origin musical congruity as a novel congruity dimension in the present thesis.

A third principal contribution of the thesis focusses on investigating the effects of the other four dimensions of musical congruity (musical taste, repetition, semantic congruity, and indexical congruity) through evaluating consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising. There was a general gap in terms of the lack of qualitative research in music and advertising compounded by a more specific gap regarding exploring consumers' responses to advertising from a phenomenological perspective through netnography (Abolhasani et al., 2017). The review of literature by Oakes (2007) as well as the current thesis indicate that the highlighted studies are almost exclusively from a positivist, managerial perspective and the effects of background music in advertising on consumers' phenomenological experience of musical consumption is not addressed. Therefore, netnography, as a qualitative approach, allows the researcher to analyse the in-depth phenomenological experiences of music highlighted by the consumers.

Furthermore, this thesis has extended the context for studying the effects of music on advertising by delving into a high-involvement university setting. The extant body of literature investigating the effects of music in advertising explored this area using low-involvement products only (e.g., Simpkins and Smith, 1974; Gorn, 1982; Park and Young, 1986; Petty and Cacioppo, 1986; MacInnis and Park, 1991; Olsen, 1997; Bozman et al., 1994; Hung, 2000; Mattila and Wirtz, 2001; Oakes and North,

2006; Yeoh and North, 2010). Consumers are willing to make significant pre-purchase commitments such as spending considerable time carrying out an extensive search for information about the brand, quality, and the price before they actually make the purchase in high-involvement conditions. On the other hand, low-involvement products are those that are purchased more frequently, with minimal level of thought and effort, and are considered to be relatively insignificant in terms of the factors mentioned above (Gnepa, 2012). Based on the ELM explained earlier in the thesis, the process of elaborating upon advertising information can take place via two different routes, namely the central and peripheral routes.

The extant literature regarded music as a merely a peripheral cue in advertisements that is mostly effective in low-involvement conditions, as in the case of advertising high-involvement products, the effects occur through rational messages rather than background features such as music. Contrary to the existing research, the findings of the present thesis revitalised the role of music in advertising by clearly demonstrating the effects in both high- and low-involvement conditions, thus addressing the first gap identified in the introduction chapter of the current thesis.

The present thesis also makes methodological contributions in several ways. First, it has highlighted the importance of investigating consumers' everyday lived experiences of musical consumption through gathering their authentic responses in a more naturalistic environment. Netnography provides a methodological innovation and a refreshing platform, identifying consumers' true feelings and responses experienced by them in the real world (Kozinets, 1998) that helps in expanding the theoretical boundaries of advertising music research. In addition to the methodological innovation, the present research also contributes to marketing theory by interpreting consumers' responses to music and advertisements in an online environment through identifying a number of remarkable congruity themes explained from a phenomenological perspective rather than an exclusively positivist, managerial point of view, thus addressing the third gap highlighted in the introduction chapter of the thesis.

Whilst some of the effects of music in advertising on consumers are addressed in various existing quantitative studies, the current thesis provides an original angle in examining the effects and

addressing the gaps through following a mixed methods approach. Using a positivist approach in the area of music and advertising has almost shaped an intellectual hegemony for many years. Positivism, as an approach to study consumer behaviour, ignores the proactive role of human ideas and actions by viewing consumers as passively reacting to their external environments (Marsden and Littler, 1999). Positivism considers the consumer behaviour concept in isolation from the material world and detached from the general context of things (Arndt, 1985). It views consumer behaviour to be merely the sum of its component parts; whilst the parts of the whole are believed to possess fewer properties than the whole (Alvesson, 1994). This can be observed in the tradition of breaking apart consumer “attitudes” into affective, cognitive, and conative parts. The artificial construction of boundaries and isolating one or some of these elements from each other at any time may result in simplifying the interconnections and losing the qualitative nature of their sum.

Although a positivist approach did lead the early developments in marketing research and knowledge, this kind of reasoning has also observed consumer behaviour in isolation, separated from the entire interconnection of things, resulting in a rather narrow-minded understanding of consumer behaviour in various contexts. As a result, the theoretical and empirical body of knowledge in various marketing contexts, and particularly in music and advertising research, is often too descriptive, rather than providing an in-depth explanation of the consumers’ behaviours and responses. For example, in the context of advertising music research, listing independent variables such as musical liking or nostalgic music associated with a particular response from an individual consumer may not offer the best way to build theory. Musical taste (liking) and indexical congruity (nostalgic music and the evocation of memories from past experiences in life) in the context of music and advertising research inevitably have personal relevance for different consumers, and therefore, merely using a positivist approach may not be very effective in understanding consumers’ thought processes and their meanings, or the significance people attach to different variables shaping their responses.

Some scholars contend that different paradigms and worldviews have rigid boundaries and therefore cannot be mixed with each other. For example, Holmes (2006, p. 5) questions: “Can we really have one part of the research which takes a certain view about reality nested alongside another which takes

a contradictory view? How would we reconcile, or even work with, competing discourses within a single project?” This is described as the purist standpoint and has been referred to as the “incompatibility thesis” (Howe, 2004), which has been discussed in the mixed methods literature as mixing viewpoints (Johnson et al., 2007). The purist view holds the logic that mixed methods cannot be justified as methods were linked to paradigms, and hence, the researcher was mixing different paradigms when using mixed methods research. Researchers that adhered to this viewpoint see paradigms as having discrete or rather sealed boundaries, with explicit boxes and lines around the alternative inquiry paradigms in the literature (see Table 7).

Table 6: Creswell’s table of worldviews*

Tend to or Typically ...	Qualitative Approaches	Quantitative Approaches	Mixed Methods Approaches
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use these philosophical assumptions • Employ these strategies of inquiry 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constructivist/ transformative knowledge claims • Phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, case study, and narrative 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Postpositivist knowledge claims • Surveys and experiments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pragmatic knowledge claims • Sequential, concurrent, and transformative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employ these methods 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open-ended questions, emerging approaches, text or image data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Closed-ended questions, predetermined approaches, numeric data 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both open- and closed-ended questions, both emerging and predetermined approaches, and both quantitative and qualitative data and analysis
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use these practices of research as the researcher 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positions him- or herself • Collects participant meanings • Focuses on a single concept or phenomenon • Brings personal values into the study • Studies the context or setting of participants • Validates the accuracy of findings • Makes interpretations of the data • Creates an agenda for change or reform • Collaborates with the participants 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tests or verifies theories or explanations • Identifies variables to study • Relates variables in questions or hypotheses • Uses standards of validity and reliability • Observes and measures information numerically • Uses unbiased approaches • Employs statistical procedures 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collects both quantitative and qualitative data • Develops a rationale for mixing • Integrates the data at different stages of inquiry • Presents visual pictures of the procedures in the study • Employs the practices of both qualitative and quantitative research

*Source: Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage publications.

However, Guba and Lincoln (2005) had taken down the artificial boundaries by asserting that elements of paradigms might be fused together in a study. Mixed methods researchers have now taken different viewpoints on incorporating paradigms into mixed methods. For example, multiple paradigms may be used in mixed methods studies, provided that each individual paradigm was honoured and the blended use of the varied paradigms should contribute to healthy tensions as well as achieving new insights to the phenomenon under question. The present thesis takes a similar stance, but suggests that different paradigms (positivist and interpretivist/constructivist) will be related to various phases of the research design (see Creswell and Clark, 2007, 2011) therefore associating paradigms to research designs. For example, the current thesis offering a mixed methods approach begins with a qualitative focus group study phase as exploratory research to gain insights into consumers' views, experiences and understanding of the use of music in advertising. It then involves multiple quantitative surveys reflecting the positivist perspective of the phenomenon in addressing research questions. The thesis also contains substantial netnographic research providing the opportunity to hear the voice of consumers and investigating the topic through the consumer lens rather than from a managerial perspective.

Pragmatism emphasises the importance of the research questions, the value of the experiences and practical consequences, action, and understanding of real-world phenomena (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). While the limitations of positivist research on music and advertising contribute to a predominantly one-dimensional perspective on music and advertising in the current literature, interpretivist research may help in extracting consumers' thoughts and emotions and allow the researcher to obtain consumers' own words and feelings regarding the use of music in advertisements. For example, the netnography study of the present thesis facilitates the investigation of consumers' thoughts and responses to various pieces of advertising music from a phenomenological perspective, exploring consumers' behaviour in its totality in order to understand their lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising.

The mixed methods approach adopted by the present thesis may provide the opportunity to draw upon the benefits of both quantitative and qualitative methodological perspectives. It seeks to make a bridge

between the qualitative and quantitative paradigms in the thesis, ensuring increased validity through its capability to triangulate the data. In addition to conducting quantitative survey studies, the present thesis complements existing research through collecting consumers' verbatim responses to advertisements containing music. Together, integrating quantitative and qualitative methods may provide a richer and more informed approach to investigate the advertising music phenomenon and a better way to achieve various research objectives.

7.4. Contributions to practice

The current thesis provides some valuable insights into the impact of musical congruity through examining various congruity dimensions, and illustrates how musical in/congruity under various conditions enhances communication effectiveness in advertising. Famous and popular music is regarded as one of the most expensive stimuli in an advertisement due to the large royalties involved in its use (Oakes and North, 2006). Indeed, various advertising experiments in the present thesis identify differing responses to famous and popular music compared to unfamiliar, original pieces of music.

Various congruity properties of music identified and examined in the present research define the choice of musical stimuli as a whole in different advertisements, and thus, advertising agencies and client companies should be aware that the congruity of the salient stimuli in advertisements may play a vital role in determining consumers' reactions to the ads. Congruent music may get consumers to allocate more cognitive resources for processing the advertisement message, therefore, enhancing communication effectiveness, compared to incongruent music. Congruent music may trigger processing of more product/brand related information, which consequently results in providing the opportunity to communicate more favourable information to achieve certain advertising goals. Indeed, the appropriate selection of music enables advertisers to present more product/brand information without significantly diminishing its effectiveness. Advertisers should be aware of the negative effects of using incongruent music on consumers' minds. Severely incongruent music used in an advertisement may cause psychological discomfort that will adversely affect consumers' attitudes and perceptions, evaluations of products and ads, as well as their purchase intent.

Further, advertisers and client companies should also be aware of the value of moderate or mild musical incongruity in advertisements. If the mild, purposeful incongruity can be successfully resolved by consumers, its effects can be more positive than highly congruent music. Moderate musical incongruity may be rewarded through inducing a process-based influence, relevant to some sense of psychological compensation, which may enhance the favourability of subsequent responses through satisfaction generated by successfully carrying out a more cognitively demanding task and resolving the incongruity. Furthermore, netnographic findings of the current thesis suggest that the value and authenticity of music as a revered art form may be an overarching framework that binds together analysis of musical taste, semantic congruity, indexicality, and repetition congruity. However, findings indicate that these dimensions of congruity involve subjectivity and personal relevance for individual consumers that make it a difficult task for advertisers to control. Indeed, investigating consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of music and advertising may provide advertisers and client companies with the opportunity to obtain consumers' authentic emotional responses in their own voice, highlighting perspectives that have high level of credibility. For example, advertisers should be wary of the adverse effects of undermining musical authenticity in the case of using pieces of music that are considered by the public as sacred pieces of art. Netnographic findings of the current thesis help advertisers to attain consumers' genuine reactions to various dimensions of musical in/congruity discussed above, providing a deeper understanding of the phenomenon that contributes to enhancing the effectiveness of advertising.

7.5. Chapter summary

The present thesis began by following sets of original questions that are highly significant and have not been investigated in the extant body of research:

1. How does musical congruity affect consumers' responses to advertising in high-involvement conditions?
2. How does artful, purposeful, moderate musical incongruity enhance consumers' responses to advertising?

3. How does in/congruity affect consumers' everyday lived experiences of musical consumption in the context of advertising?

In response to question (1), findings of the present thesis revealed that musical congruity affects prospective students' perceptions of brand image, expectation of cost (tuition fees), purchase intent (intention to enrol), as well as recall of information using both original compositions as well as music composed by professional musicians. One significant theoretical contribution of the current research is that in contrast to the theory of ELM (please see literature review chapter) and the existing research where it was believed that in the case of advertising in a high-involvement setting, influence and persuasion may only occur by means of rational messages presented by the advertisement, the present findings provide strong evidence supporting that music may have powerful impact through central route processing (not just peripheral) on consumers' responses to advertising in both high- and low-involvement conditions. This was evident in data collected through survey studies as well as the netnographic research highlighting the effects of various musical congruity dimensions.

More specifically, findings related to the effects of musical congruity in university advertising contribute to the wider consumer behaviour literature through revealing a contrasting perspective in relation to factors influencing consumers' evaluations of the product and purchase intent. Interestingly, findings of the present thesis regarding the effects of musical genre congruity in advertising a university as a high-involvement service suggest that communicating an excessively erudite image focussing on utilitarian qualities of the university may hinder prospective students' purchase intent. One of the most important elements determining consumers' purchase intent is perceived quality. Perceived quality is believed to both directly (Carman, 1990; Boulding et al., 1993; Zeithamlet al., 1996) and indirectly (Cronin and Taylor, 1992; Sweeny et al., 1999) affect consumer purchase intent. While classical music is the genre that communicates the most sophisticated and high quality image for the advertised university, it was observed in the present findings that pop music produced the highest intention to enrol. Therefore, it can be suggested that the influence of perceived quality on purchase intent may vary depending on the type and nature of the advertised product. Findings reveal that in the case of advertising for a university as an intangible service, hedonic

elements may play a vital role in determining students' conative responses to advertising. Furthermore, the divergence between participants' perception of product quality and purchase intent may be due to the incongruity between musical genre and the intended advertising message. In other words, and as highlighted by the participants in the focus group study of the present thesis, it may be possible that various musical genres are perceived as congruent or incongruent in advertising different universities, based on factors such as the already established university brand image, reputation of the university and the city, university social life, etc. As seen earlier in the thesis, various musical genres used in advertisements may have different associations. For example, dance or pop music may be considered stereotypically hedonic, trendy, and exciting, whereas classical music may be regarded as upscale, sophisticated, and high quality (North and Hargreaves, 1998). Therefore, it is important that the advertising agencies and product companies use background music with the aim of transmitting favourable attributes linked with a particular genre to the advertised brand.

In response to question (2), findings of the present research revealed how using artful, purposeful, moderate musical incongruity may be evaluated more positively as a result of the successful experience of resolving the incongruity through knowledge available from related schemas, compared to extreme incongruity and extreme congruity conditions. The current research gave special emphasis to the effects of moderate musical incongruity in advertisements through adopting genre congruity and country of origin musical congruity in the context of restaurant advertising. Findings demonstrated negative effects in the case of extreme musical incongruity. Findings also showed how extreme musical incongruity leads to generating a dissonance state experienced as psychological discomfort that may ultimately consume consumers' available cognitive resources for advertisement processing that eventually exert negative effects on their responses such as recall of advertising information, perceptions, attitudes and evaluations. The current research addressing the question of mild musical incongruity resolution adds to the existing musical congruity and advertising literature by carefully selecting various congruity quadrants capable of presenting artful deviation characteristic of mild incongruity, in contrast to the existing studies which had failed in theorisation with respect to examining the effects of moderate, purposeful musical incongruity in advertising. The new insights

provided by the present research have developed, refined, and redefined the concept of congruity and extended it to the context of musical congruity in advertising through adapting Heckler and Childers' (1992) twin component congruity framework.

With reference to question (3), the effects of musical congruity on consumers' authentic, everyday lived experiences of musical consumption are highlighted in consumers' responses to the four themes that emerged from the netnographic findings. The netnographic research revealed original findings through key themes related to musical taste, semantic congruity, indexicality, and repetition congruity. Consumer postings revealed how music conveys individual taste which may be linked with personal [positive or negative] memories, affecting their attitudes and evaluations of the advertisement and the brand. Findings demonstrated that the excessive repetition of music (repetition incongruity) that exceeds consumers' expected repetition threshold may result in producing anxiety leading to critically reflective resistance. Similarly, semantic incongruity devalues the authenticity of iconic pieces of music which may in turn result in consumers' resistance towards such authenticity transgressions that negatively affects their affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising.

Netnography contributed to the existing music and advertising literature through adopting an innovative research platform that was used for the first time to address the questions related to consumers' authentic, phenomenological experiences of musical consumption. Although advertising research has certainly developed and become ever more technologically sophisticated in the twenty-first century, it is important to note that even with big data, neuroscience, eye tracking, online and face to face surveys, and other advanced, complex techniques, advertising research is still nowhere near being able to clearly demonstrate just how advertising affects our consumption behaviour, especially at the level of the individual advertisement and the individual consumer (Belk, 2017). This is especially evident in reviewing the literature surrounding music and advertising research. Therefore, the present thesis adopted netnography as a ground-breaking music and advertising research tool to demonstrate how qualitative research can bring us closer to such understanding and enable us to evaluate the effectiveness of music and its congruity in advertisements before, during,

and after consumers are exposed to the ads. The netnographic findings of the present thesis add to the existing music and advertising literature through answering the questions such as how and why consumers relate to the background music used in an advertisement and the ways in which they project themselves into the advertisement, as well as why they behave as they are in relation to being exposed to a particular piece of music in an ad.

The next chapter concludes the thesis by offering a brief summary of the findings, as well as identifying limitations, emerging gaps, and directions for future research in the area of music and advertising.

Chapter 8

Conclusion

As discussed in the previous chapter, findings from the current research may have extensive implications for theoretical and methodological knowledge. Furthermore, the present thesis identified specific practical relevance for advertising agencies and client companies striving towards optimum utilisation of musical stimuli in their advertising campaigns.

This chapter summarises the findings and underlines research responses to the research aims and objectives posed in this thesis.

8.1. Summary of the research findings and addressing the existing gaps

The findings reported in Study 1 consistently indicated that pop music (both original and professional/famous compositions) created the most favourable brand images for the advertised university. However, it was interesting to see that in the case of using original compositions, the jazz treatment produced the most negative brand images for the advertised university. In contrast, the no-music treatment was responsible for producing the most negative images when famous, professionally composed music was used. The negative perceived image scores for jazz in the case of original compositions may be partially explained because the University of Liverpool music department (whose postgraduate students composed the music) specialises in classical and pop music, but not jazz. Hence, this may explain why jazz gets better perceived image scores when using famous pieces by professional jazz musicians. This effectively means that using a professional composition, even if it is a highly incongruent genre in relation to the advertised product and the message, may produce a better result than not using any music at all.

Findings also revealed that stereotypically different musical genres may influence the expectation of cost. Results showed how classical music produced an expectation that the advertised course was more expensive compared to other treatments. Furthermore, recall of information was lowest in the case of using extremely incongruent music that drew cognitive resources from processing the advertising content. Fruitless attempts made by participants to resolve the musical genre incongruity may have resulted in occupying cognitive resources normally employed to process the advertising contents. Findings also revealed that genre congruity may positively influence consumers' purchase intent (in this case, intention to enrol for the advertised course). The present research also made use of

an innovative data collection method to examine the effects of genre in/congruity on audience retention. This was a technique through which YouTube Analytics statistical data revealed how a congruent musical genre in an advertisement is capable of holding consumers' attention for a longer duration. Therefore, Study 1 using focus group, surveys, and YouTube Analytics statistical data addressed one of the remarkable gaps pertaining to the effects of musical congruity in the context of advertising for high-involvement products.

Study 2 builds upon the findings of Study 1 regarding the effects of musical in/congruity in advertisements. This study was specifically designed to assess the impact of various congruity quadrants using different musical stimuli that differed in their level of expectancy and relevancy to the ad message. Study 2 in Chapter Five developed, refined, and redefined the concept of congruity in advertisements through carefully examining the effects of artful, purposeful musical incongruity and revealed how a successful experience of resolving the mild musical incongruity enhanced consumers' responses to advertising. Findings revealed that the successful resolution of the mild musical incongruity involving a surprising element (unexpected/relevant music) and the ease of resolution helps consumers to respond positively. Such positive affect is believed to result from increased feelings of control and self-efficacy accompanying the "I get it" response (Bandura, 1977). Positive feelings and emotions combined with a continued cognitive appreciation of resolution are then likely to enhance attitudes, perceptions, and evaluations of the advertisement and the brand. Moreover, allocation of more cognitive resources to resolve the incongruity may also enhance consumers' recall of advertising information. Consequently, positive effects of resolving the mild musical incongruity on consumers' affective and cognitive responses to advertising may also enhance consumers' purchase intent. Study 2, therefore, adds to the existing congruity literature and addresses the existing gap regarding the effects of artful, purposeful incongruity by revealing how moderate musical incongruity containing surprise or inconsistency that demands allocation of more cognitive resources for processing by the consumer, leads to successful interpretation and elaboration of the message.

Study 3 (netnography) contributes to the existing music and advertising literature by adapting a novel platform exploring the effects of musical in/congruity on consumers' authentic lived experiences of

musical consumption. This study presents innovative findings in the area of music and advertising using an innovative method that has never been used in this particular area of research. Therefore, rather than focusing upon dictating advertising issues where the research agenda has been set by the researcher, advertising agency, or by the client, the netnographic research enabled disclosure of a broader scope of music in advertising themes from the consumer perspective. YouTube acts as an interactive forum within which users discuss music in the advertising videos to which they are exposed (through voluntarily and actively seeking out the advertisements and their music), thus providing an important source of advertising feedback. In the process, the relationship between music and consumers' responses to advertising is brought into heightened focus. The netnographic research, therefore, helped in addressing the gap related to the influence of music in advertising upon consumers' lived experiences of musical consumption.

8.2. Mixed methods research as a novel platform for advertising music research

The overwhelming majority of studies in this field have used quantitative data exclusively, while the rest have used qualitative data exclusively. Mixed methods research using a pragmatic approach does not align itself with a single system or philosophy, for example, interpretivist ontology assuming the existence of multiple realities constructed to understand behaviour rather than predicting it (Creswell et al., 2003). A mixed methods approach makes use of pragmatism as a system of philosophy (Harrison and Reilly, 2011). The logic of pragmatic enquiry includes using various means of connecting and generating ideas involving induction (discovering patterns), deduction (testing and evaluating theories and hypotheses), and abduction (uncovering and relying on the best explanations to understand the findings) (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Morgan, 2007). Although investigating the effects of music in advertising using a positivist approach provides the opportunity for the researcher to obtain objective information used to make scientific assumptions in a rather structured manner, which is of course of great value to advertisers and client companies, this approach may disregard consumers' emotional responses and behaviours to the background music used in advertisements. Therefore, in addition to addressing questions from a positivist, managerial perspective using quantitative research, the interpretivist approach adopted in the present thesis helped

to develop an in-depth understanding and insight into how consumers think and feel. In the context of the present research, detailed understanding of consumers' attitude, evaluation and behaviour may be used to guide decisions regarding the selection of background music. Using a focus group as an exploratory tool also helped to establish questions to be posed for participants in the subsequent survey studies.

Qualitative methods are defined in terms of the information gained from subjective, in-depth understanding of the consumer, and the nature or structure of consumers' attitudes, feelings, and motivations (Calder, 1977; Goldman and McDonald, 1987). However, although qualitative techniques have been frequently used to seek consumers' thoughts, e.g., attitude, beliefs, opinions, and purchase intentions (Bristol and Fern, 1993), this method had been rarely used to explore music and advertising, and therefore, it was necessary to use interpretive approaches in order to explain and understand issues that have always been confined within the artificial boundaries of quantitative and positivist research. Netnography facilitated gaining insight into consumer reaction to advertising music, their attitude, perceptions, and evaluation of the advertisement, through allowing consumers to provide in-depth responses in a relatively risk-free environment where the observational nature of the research (observation of consumers' online postings) may prevent contamination of the findings. In the context of music and advertising, the netnographic findings uncovered what consumers think or how they feel about advertisements and the music used in the background, achieving greater depth and detail of responses, and resulting in close-up explanations that better address the subjective nature of some of the phenomena under study (e.g., indexical congruity addressing the effects of music evoking memories from past experiences in life from the perspective of individual consumers). It facilitated portraying and demonstrating authentic experience and sensitivity to music in response to the interplay between the song and the advertisement. For example, indexical congruity highlights personal relevance involving the evocation of emotionally charged memories for the consumer exposed to music in an advertisement. Collecting netnographic data provided the opportunity to demonstrate the intensity of this personal relevance in the context of advertising music. Similarly, previous research surrounding the effects of liked music had ignored the concept of musical

taste and personal relevance of various types of music for consumers. Considering repetition congruity, while repetitive music may or may not have personal relevance for the consumer, responses to it may be heightened by exceeding an expectancy threshold of repetitions. This was demonstrated in a more in-depth manner through investigating consumers' responses to musical repetition in the form of online postings. This was a limitation for many music and advertising studies that originate from a positivist perspective, typically analysing the effects of music chosen by the researchers. In contrast, using mixed methods research and conducting qualitative research such as netnography in the present thesis demonstrated the importance of analysing the phenomenological experiences of music highlighted by the consumers.

7.3. Limitations, emerging gaps, and future research directions

A number of limitations related to various stages of the research have been identified that may offer avenues for future research. First of all, the focus group study and survey experiments (studies 1 and 2) carried out in the present thesis all used university students as research participants, which might initially indicate a limitation of the research and raise a concern regarding the generalisability of the findings. Future studies could use non-student participants to examine the effects of music in a wider range of high- and low-involvement service advertising contexts to enhance the generalisability of the findings. Various levels of personal significance that individuals attribute to different brand features may determine their level of involvement in a particular advertisement. Hence, it is important to investigate the effects of musical congruity in different advertising contexts with various levels of consumer involvement in order to better understand the effects.

Another limitation relates to the musical stimuli. The original instrumental pieces of music used in the focus group and survey experiment 1 of Study 1 investigating the effects of genre congruity in university advertising were composed by the postgraduate music students at the School of Music of the University. Although pre-tests ensured that the selected pieces of music are suitable exemplars of their respective genres, the degree of the professionalism of the original compositions may still affect consumers' reactions. Future research could study the potential and implications of allocating

substantial budgets to the employment of professional musicians to compose original pieces of music representing various genres to be used in research projects.

In addition, further gaps have been apparent based on the findings of the present thesis that the author of the present thesis was not aware of before embarking upon the research. Consumers' actual behaviour might sometimes be different from their reported attitudes and concerns. For example, in a different context related to foods and health risks, many consumers express concerns about food safety, yet relatively few appear to be changing their food purchase behaviour in view of their concern (Lane and Bruhn, 1991). Therefore, there is a distinction between *purchase intent* and *actual purchase*, and variables that affect consumers' *actual purchase* may be different from those affecting their purchase intent. This was indeed an important limitation that was developed from the findings of the present thesis. The findings throughout the present thesis may reveal the effects of musical in/congruity on consumers' purchase intent, but the link between purchase intent and actual purchase behaviour remains untested.

Although purchase intent is usually directly correlated with purchasing, the magnitude of the correlation may vary considerably in various contexts. Therefore, the effects of various pieces of music used in advertisements on consumers' purchase intent may not accurately reflect their actual purchase behaviour.

Current research does not provide a mechanism to investigate the effects of various musical congruity dimensions on consumers' *actual purchase*. In the context of the survey studies of the present thesis, this was mainly due to the confidentiality of data and anonymity of participants, especially in the case of promoting a postgraduate degree at the advertised university. Therefore, it was impossible for the researcher to track individual responses and explore the link between their responses regarding the effects on purchase intent (intention to enrol) and whether they actually enrol on the course.

Furthermore, there is a key limitation associated with being an observer in netnographic research. As an observer, the researcher may know what consumers say about their purchase intent in relation to the advertisements they watch on YouTube, but she or he cannot go any further as an anonymous,

covert researcher. In other words, although conducting observational netnography enables the researcher to gain deep insights into consumers' opinions, motives, and concerns in an unobtrusive and covert manner, the non-interactive nature of the covert netnography within online communities of consumers may hinder the possibility for the researcher to explore the consequences in terms of the impact on consumers' actual purchase behaviour. This barrier has become apparent as a limitation of non-interactive netnography, identifying an emerging gap in research in the area of music and advertising. As mentioned by Costello et al. (2017), although nonparticipatory netnography is claimed to be naturalistic and bias-free, which may be tenable in some environments, it also removes the opportunity for cocreation in online communities and social media spaces. Therefore, an overt future netnographic study without transgressing ethical guidelines regarding anonymity and confidentiality of data may provide the opportunity to interact with consumers and observe what individuals actually did over time in relation to their responses to particular advertisements. This effectively means that future interactive netnographic research in the form of some sort of a longitudinal study may help in identifying how purchase intent develops over a period of time with the same participants. This interactive netnography to be carried out possibly in the context of online forums may then find out whether consumers followed up on what they said about their purchase intent. Did they increase their purchases? Did they actually stop buying a particular product? Did intent become reality?

Future netnographic research may build upon the findings of the netnography of the current thesis and investigate consumers' experience of the interplay between music, visuals and words in specific advertisement in order to "analyse rhetorical and imagistic qualities that contribute to advertising resonance" (Arnould and Thompson, 2005, p. 875) and "interpret music as part of an overall rhetorical intention" (Scott, 1990, p. 223), thus leading to enriching the analysis of themes that emerge.

In addition, although it can be argued that individuals' music listening (which is an active process) may be different compared with passively hearing the music played in the background of the advertisements, it is also worth noting that technological advances, sophisticated smart phones, and the wide variety of music recognition applications such as Shazam and SoundHound may change the

advertising music listening behaviours of consumers. Nonetheless, the technological developments may provide the opportunity for researchers to gain an in-depth understanding of consumers' musical consumption behaviours in the context of advertising through allowing them to speak and voice their opinion. It would allow them to have an invaluable insight into consumers' motivations, thought processes, and preferences by obtaining more authentic data acquired through voluntary engagement of consumers with advertising music in different online platforms.

Therefore, future research could also investigate the effects of the change in consumers' advertising music consumption/listening behaviour (as a result of using various song identification apps) on their attitude towards the advertisement and the brand as well as message reception, processing and recall of advertising information. Therefore, there is a need for acquiring valid statistical data on the volume and frequency of the use of such applications by consumers while they are exposed to advertisements, the total number of tracks consumers search for and what percentage of these are advertising music listening occasions. For example, it was reported that 0.3% of viewers in the United States have used Shazam during the ad in the first two weeks of Old Navy's 2010 Super Bowl campaign (Peoples, 2011). Further development in the usage of such apps while watching advertisements worldwide may have significant implications for advertising practitioners as specific background music may influence the extent to which consumers passively or actively engage with the advertisement, which consequently determines the influence on their affective, cognitive, and behavioural responses to advertising.

Considering the above discussion, there is considerable scope to develop the findings of the current thesis in this vibrant area of study that is continually developing. Consequently, the present thesis may be considered a stepping stone, opening the doors to future research in the evolving area of musical in/congruity in advertising.

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Appendices:

Appendix 1: Kit Kat advertisement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DlJgyr-g3Ck>

Appendix 2: Intel sonic logo

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRLyMjvug1M>

Appendix 3: Jaguar advertisement

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EAJp6fZ6m8A>

Appendix 4: Apple iPhone advertisement

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XrcsQvZz06g>

Appendix 5: Study on the musical preferences in the U.S.

<http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED511715.pdf>

Appendix 6: Focus group study flyer



In this research project, we investigate how students respond to different versions of promotional videos for universities. In particular, we want to find out which feelings and attitudes towards the advertised university brand are elicited.

Purpose of the study:

To analyze the effectiveness of the videos.

What happens during the study?

The study lasts for **30 minutes** during which you

- Watch a short promotional video (University Advertisement)
- Discuss your feelings, emotions and attitudes towards the advertising video and its effects.

To take part in this research study or for more information, please contact the researcher on 0744 794 7281, or Email: morty@liv.ac.uk. Your help is much appreciated.

The student researcher for this study is Morteza Abolhasani, PhD researcher at the University of Liverpool Management School. The principal investigator is Dr. Steve Oakes, University of Liverpool (s.b.oakes@liverpool.ac.uk).

Please note that the confidentiality of information you provide and the anonymity of all participants is ensured. You have the right to withdraw from the research at any time you wish. If you have any further questions regarding the research please do not hesitate to contact the researcher or the student investigator.



Appendix 7: University advertising survey questionnaire

Age:

Gender:

Nationality:

Date:

In questions 1 to 5 please circle your responses.

1. How do you anticipate the fee levels for the MSc Consumer Marketing course at the University of Liverpool?

Much higher than average 1 2 3 4 5 Much lower than average

2. To what extent do you like this particular style of music?

Much disliked 1 2 3 4 5 Much liked

3. What do you think about the effectiveness of this promotional video in encouraging you or other potential students to apply to the university and this particular course?

Very effective 1 2 3 4 5 Very ineffective

4. How far does the music used in the background of the video match the advertising message?

Very poor match 1 2 3 4 5 Very good match

5. How do you think this video affects your perceived image of the university?

Unpleasant	1	2	3	4	5	Pleasant
Boring	1	2	3	4	5	Stimulating
Stressful	1	2	3	4	5	Relaxing
Gloomy	1	2	3	4	5	Cheerful
Modern	1	2	3	4	5	Traditional
Trendy	1	2	3	4	5	Old-fashioned

6. Can you recall the webpage address of the Consumer Marketing course and the contact number provided in the video?

Webpage address:

Contact Number:

7. Five of the following benefits were identified in the video. Please circle the five benefits that you think were identified.

A. Studying in a diverse learning environment

- B. Scholarship opportunities
- C. The university research and education programmes covers all the management disciplines
- D. Students will be provided with practical application of the knowledge
- E. Experienced and high quality teachers
- F. Studying in a top-ranked management school in UK
- G. Studying in a culturally rich and vibrant city
- H. Offering a wide variety of online programmes
- I. Diverse facilities and distinct location

Appendix 8: Manipulation checks questionnaire

1. To what extent does the music identify the country of origin of the restaurant?

- a) It does not identify the country of origin of the restaurant at all
- b) It does little to identify the country of origin of the restaurant
- c) Unsure
- d) It identifies the country of origin of the restaurant
- e) It strongly identifies the country of origin of the restaurant

2. Please specify the country of origin of the music used in this advertisement?

- a) France
- b) Italy
- c) Spain
- d) Caribbean
- e) America

3. Please specify the genre of music used in the advertisement you have just heard?

- a) Reggae
- b) Flamenco
- c) Pop
- d) Opera
- e) If other, please specify

4. To what extent does the music suggest that the restaurant offers authentic Italian food?

- a) The music suggests that the restaurant offers very inauthentic Italian food
- b) The music suggests that the restaurant offers fairly inauthentic Italian food
- c) Unsure
- d) The music suggests that the restaurant offers authentic Italian food
- e) The music suggests that the restaurant offers very authentic Italian food

Appendix 9: Restaurant advertising survey questionnaire

Questionnaire

1. Please specify your nationality:

2. Please highlight your perceptions of the image of the restaurant.

Dull	1	2	3	4	5	Exciting	
Pleasant		1	2	3	4	5	Unpleasant
Tense		1	2	3	4	5	Relaxing
Uncool		1	2	3	4	5	Cool
Appealing		1	2	3	4	5	Unappealing

3. Please highlight your perceptions of the radio advertisement you have just heard.

Enjoyable		1	2	3	4	5	Not enjoyable
Not entertaining		1	2	3	4	5	Entertaining

4. Please specify your expectation of food quality at the advertised restaurant:

a) Very low quality b) Low quality c) Neutral d) High quality e) Very high quality

5. Please specify your expectation of service quality at the advertised restaurant:

a) Very low quality b) Low quality c) Neutral d) High quality e) Very high quality

6. Please specify how likely you would be to visit the advertised restaurant:

a) Very unlikely b) Unlikely c) Neutral d) Likely e) Very likely

7. Please tick the brand name mentioned in the radio advertising you have just heard:

a) Fellini's Pizza b) The Italian Club c) Pasta Masters d) Casa Italia e) Pizzeria

8. Please tick the advertising slogan mentioned in the radio advertisement you have just heard:

- a) Life tastes better with us
- b) Menus to please every palate
- c) Feast on
- d) Devotion towards cuisine
- e) Feel the Italian taste

9. Five out of the ten claims below were mentioned in the radio advertisement you have just heard. Please specify them by circling around them:

- a) Affordable food
- b) Authentic Italian restaurant
- c) Family friendly atmosphere
- d) Menu that is freshly prepared
- e) Convenient parking
- f) Free delivery
- g) Large parties are welcome
- h) New offers for food and drinks
- i) Ample and convenient service
- j) Open 24/7

Appendix 10: Participant information sheet



Title of study: Music and Advertising

Version: 23 September 2012

Participant Information Sheet

I would like to invite you to take part in a research study. Before you decide whether or not to take part, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve. Please take some time to read the following information carefully and discuss it with your friends and others if you wish and feel free to ask us if there is anything that is not clear or if you need more information. Please note that you do not have to accept this invitation, so take your time to decide whether or not to take part. Thank you.

Purpose of the study:

The research is going to investigate the influence of promotional videos made for universities upon students' perception of the university image and their attitude towards the advertisement. This study will be undertaken in the form of quantitative surveys.

Why have I been chosen to take part?

This promotional video is created to promote an MSc course offered by the University of Liverpool Management School. The reason why you have been asked to take part in this study is that because you are a third year undergraduate student, studying a business-related subject at the ULMS and hence, this advertisement may carry a high level of personal significance for you, as a potential masters student. As an undergraduate student, you can help us by participating in this study through filling out a survey questionnaire.

Do I have to take part?

No. It is absolutely optional to participate in this study. It is important to know that you are free to withdraw from the study at anytime and you do not need to provide any explanation or any reason.

What will happen if I take part?

The survey study will be conducted in the Management School, University of Liverpool. First, the promotional video will be played for you. Then you will be required to fill out a brief questionnaire involving of number of close-ended questions.

Expenses and/or payments

None

Are there any risks in taking part?

There will not be any type of physical or emotional risk for the participants. Also, all the information provided are going to be kept confidential and will not be revealed anywhere and to any party. The information obtained in this study will be kept till the end of my PhD course.

Are there any benefits in taking part?

No direct benefit

What if I am unhappy or if there is a problem?

If you are unhappy with the process or any other issue and you have any complaint, you can discuss the problem with my PhD supervisor (Dr. Steve Oakes) by contacting him via the email and phone number provided below. It is important to note that you are free to withdraw from the study anytime you wish. If you remain unhappy or have a complaint which you feel you cannot come to us with then you should contact the Research Governance Officer on 0151 794 8290 (ethics@liv.ac.uk). When contacting the Research Governance Officer, please provide details of the name or description of the study (so that it can be identified), the researcher(s) involved, and the details of the complaint you wish to make.”

PhD supervisor: Dr. Steve Oakes

Dept: ULMS

Email: soakes@liverpool.ac.uk

Contact Number: +44 (0)151 795 3010

Will my participation be kept confidential?

The data collected may be used for further research throughout the PhD study. The data will be kept till the end of the PhD course. Your participation in this study will be kept confidential.

Will my taking part be covered by an insurance scheme?

Participants taking part in a University of Liverpool ethically approved study will have cover.

What will happen to the results of the study?

No participant will be identifiable and their name and other personal information will not be appeared in any paper if the research is going to be published. Hence, no name and other personal information will be used in any stage of data analysis and/or in the paper in case the research is getting published in a journal.

Who can I contact if I have further questions?

You can contact my PhD supervisor using the email address and phone number below:

Dr. Steve Oakes

Dept: ULMS

Email: soakes@liverpool.ac.uk

Contact Number: +44 (0)151 795 3010

Appendix 11: Participant consent form



PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

Title of research Project: Advertising

Researcher(s): Dr Steve Oakes, Morteza Abolhasani

- 1. I have read and understood the information sheet for the study on 'Advertising'. I have had time to think about the information, ask questions and have had those questions answered.
- 2. I understand that the study means that I will fill out a quantitative survey questionnaire after watching a promotional video for the university.
- 3. I understand that I can decide for myself whether to take part in the study and that I can leave the study at any time without giving any reason.
- 4. I understand that my responses will not be linked to my name and that I do not need to write my name on a questionnaire that I will be asked to complete at the end of the session.
- 5. I agree to take part in the study.

.....
Participant Name Date Signature

.....
Researcher Date Signature

The contact details of the Lead Researcher are:

Dr Steve Oakes, Senior Lecturer in Marketing

University of Liverpool Management School, Chatham Street, Liverpool L69 7ZH

Tel: 0151 795 3010

Email: soakes@liverpool.ac.uk

Appendix 12: YouTube Analytics statistical data

a) Pop music treatment

GEOGRAPHY	VIEWS ↓	ESTIMATED MINUTES WATCHED	AVERAGE VIEW DURATION
United Kingdom	69 (72.6%)	114 (69.4%)	1:39
Italy	3 (3.2%)	5 (3.0%)	1:39
Canada	3 (3.2%)	7 (4.0%)	2:11
United States	2 (2.1%)	7 (4.0%)	3:15
Bahrain	2 (2.1%)	6 (3.7%)	3:01
Mexico	2 (2.1%)	5 (2.9%)	2:24
Germany	2 (2.1%)	7 (4.2%)	3:29
France	1 (1.1%)	0 (0.1%)	0:14
Jordan	1 (1.1%)	0 (0.2%)	0:16
Saudi Arabia	1 (1.1%)	3 (1.6%)	2:36
Denmark	1 (1.1%)	3 (2.0%)	3:15
Kuwait	1 (1.1%)	3 (2.0%)	3:16
Malaysia	1 (1.1%)	0 (0.2%)	0:19
Australia	1 (1.1%)	1 (0.6%)	0:58
Bulgaria	1 (1.1%)	1 (0.4%)	0:42
Ethiopia	1 (1.1%)	1 (0.4%)	0:39
Latvia	1 (1.1%)	1 (0.8%)	1:16
Morocco	1 (1.1%)	0 (0.2%)	0:16
Taiwan	1 (1.1%)	1 (0.4%)	0:35
Romania	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0:00
Austria	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0:00
India	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0:00

⏪ ⏩ 1-22 of 22 ⏪ ⏩

b) Classical music treatment

Geography	Views ↓ [?]	Estimated minutes watched [?]	Average view duration [?]
United Kingdom	45 (55%)	63 (47%)	1:23
United States	6 (7.3%)	7 (5.5%)	1:13
Saudi Arabia	3 (3.7%)	4 (3.1%)	1:23
France	3 (3.7%)	6 (4.5%)	2:01
Unknown region [?]	3 (3.7%)	3 (2.3%)	1:02
Mexico	3 (3.7%)	9 (6.7%)	2:59
Thailand	3 (3.7%)	4 (2.8%)	1:15
Spain	2 (2.4%)	4 (3.0%)	1:59
India	2 (2.4%)	8 (6.3%)	4:14
Canada	2 (2.4%)	4 (2.8%)	1:52
Kuwait	1 (1.2%)	3 (2.3%)	3:03
Russia	1 (1.2%)	3 (2.4%)	3:15
Colombia	1 (1.2%)	2 (1.5%)	2:01
Vietnam	1 (1.2%)	0 (0.2%)	0:15
United Arab Emirates	1 (1.2%)	2 (1.1%)	1:30
Netherlands	1 (1.2%)	3 (2.4%)	3:15
Azerbaijan	1 (1.2%)	0 (0.3%)	0:24
Hungary	1 (1.2%)	3 (2.4%)	3:14
Nigeria	1 (1.2%)	3 (2.4%)	3:16
Greece	1 (1.2%)	1 (0.4%)	0:33

⏪ ⏩ 1–20 of 20 ⏪ ⏩

c) Jazz treatment

Geography	Views ↓	Estimated minutes watched	Average view duration
United Kingdom	37 (66%)	49 (53%)	1:18
India	4 (7.1%)	10 (11%)	2:32
France	3 (5.4%)	7 (7.5%)	2:18
Taiwan	2 (3.6%)	7 (7.1%)	3:15
Colombia	1 (1.8%)	4 (4.7%)	4:18
Turkey	1 (1.8%)	3 (3.5%)	3:15
Japan	1 (1.8%)	2 (2.0%)	1:51
Canada	1 (1.8%)	2 (2.0%)	1:52
Brazil	1 (1.8%)	2 (1.9%)	1:44
Germany	1 (1.8%)	3 (3.4%)	3:09
Kazakhstan	1 (1.8%)	1 (0.7%)	0:38
United States	1 (1.8%)	0 (0.3%)	0:18
Malaysia	1 (1.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0:00
Australia	1 (1.8%)	1 (1.2%)	1:04

⏪ ⏩ 1-14 of 14 ⏪ ⏩

d) No-music treatment

Geography	Views ↓	Estimated minutes watched	Average view duration
United Kingdom	83 (65%)	101 (56%)	1:12
Taiwan	4 (3.1%)	11 (5.9%)	2:38
Brazil	3 (2.4%)	1 (0.6%)	0:21
United Arab Emirates	3 (2.4%)	5 (2.7%)	1:37
Saudi Arabia	3 (2.4%)	7 (3.8%)	2:15
Thailand	3 (2.4%)	6 (3.4%)	2:01
Malaysia	2 (1.6%)	4 (2.5%)	2:12
Mexico	2 (1.6%)	7 (3.7%)	3:20
Greece	2 (1.6%)	2 (1.4%)	1:14
Poland	2 (1.6%)	2 (1.4%)	1:13
Italy	2 (1.6%)	2 (1.0%)	0:55
Chile	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.2%)	0:23
India	1 (0.8%)	2 (1.3%)	2:19
Jersey	1 (0.8%)	3 (1.4%)	2:32
Cyprus	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.3%)	0:27
United States	1 (0.8%)	3 (1.9%)	3:20
Sri Lanka	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.2%)	0:25
Belarus	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.6%)	1:02
Bulgaria	1 (0.8%)	3 (1.9%)	3:20
Slovenia	1 (0.8%)	2 (1.1%)	1:57
Hong Kong	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.4%)	0:47
Ireland	1 (0.8%)	3 (1.9%)	3:20
Venezuela	1 (0.8%)	2 (1.0%)	1:51
Kazakhstan	1 (0.8%)	1 (0.5%)	0:56
Mongolia	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	0:00

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