

Brand association
brand uniqueness
and brand experience



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ABSTRACT

Business environment has developed fast and fundamental amendments. Globalization has made the competition fierce and extends it beyond the country borders, socio-demographic data and hence consumers behaviours have also changed. Individual are well connected to each others sharing their feeling, experiences amongst through digital media and hence having strong influences on each other behaviours. Add to this the fact that the world is converging into one global marketplace, where brands from all over the world compete for the hearts of consumers, and it is no wonder that new books on branding keep popping up on the shelves of bookstores – all claiming to solve today's branding problems.

Organizations due to this undifferentiated and saturated market are force to think differently in marketing the product and converted them into brands or big brands. The focus before was on the traditional 4P marketing where marketers promote products' tangible benefits, and the focus now is at promoting a product that touches consumers' inner feelings. Emotional branding is a fairly new model of brand building. The strategic objective of emotional branding is to forge strong and meaningful affective bonds with consumers and through these bonds become part of their life stories, and memories and an important link in their social networks.

The concept of emotional branding is at a raise and playing a vital role in product differentiation and ensuring attachment of brand with the heart of the consumers and customers. Business environment is getting challenging and having a deep understanding of the concept of branding from emotional

perspective would help organizations and marketers to effectively utilize the concept to gain competitive and sustainable advantages over their competitors and hence can hold their customers for long term generation to generation. This research work would help researcher to get into the understanding of choice due to thorough knowledge in competitive market place because emotional branding is becoming a more popular branding strategy, therefore it is important to understand how to drive consumers to behave in a way that is mutually beneficial to both themselves and the firms promoting the brand.

INTRODUCTION

During last decades, business environment has developed fast and fundamental amendments. Globalization has made the competition fierce and extends it beyond the country borders, socio-demographic data and hence consumers' behaviours have also changed. Individual are well connected to each others sharing their feeling, experiences amongst through digital media and hence having strong influences on each other behaviours. The mergence of the internet as a place of building communities, sharing information and doing business has shaped the way we live our lives and the way we interact with brands – and naturally how brands should be built. Add to this the fact that the world is converging into one global marketplace, where brands from all over the world compete for the hearts of consumers, and it is no wonder that new books on branding keep popping up on the shelves of bookstores – all claiming to solve today's branding problems.

The innovation in industries are based on incremental improvement rather than radical changes and hence brought the products line at the verge that it <https://assignbuster.com/brand-association-brand-uniqueness-and-brand-experience/>

has become difficult for consumers and customers to differentiate them on the basis of rationale or functional attributes. This in turn leads to the higher demand of product varieties. Organizations due to this undifferentiated and saturated market are forced to think differently in marketing the product and converted them into brands or big brands. The focus before was on the traditional 4P marketing where marketers promote products' tangible benefits, and the focus now is at promoting a product that touches consumers' inner feelings. The consumer-brand relationship evolved from pure monetary transaction to emotional transaction. The value of a product is not only determined by its objective value, but also by the way consumers perceive this product (Dolan and Gourville, 2006).

Branding is a very important factor in today's highly competitive business environment in any given industry for company it's very important to invest in building strong brands rather than marketing products. Products is anything that can be offered to market for attention, acquisition, use, or consumption that might satisfy a need or want (Keller 1998). Branding helps organizations' to differentiate one product from another in a way that is relevant to the consumer (Farquah 1994).

Branding continues to be a topic of major interest for academics and companies alike. For companies, building a strong brand can be the source of major competitive advantage in the current market situation, but also something to leverage when the company expands to new markets. For academics, branding offers a topic that is constantly in motion – especially when it is rooted in the ever-changing consumer marketplace (Keller & Lehmann 2005). Emotional branding and rationale (functional) branding are <https://assignbuster.com/brand-association-brand-uniqueness-and-brand-experience/>

important aspects in branding, when an organization builds a brand, organization considers about emotional branding and functional branding, it's a brand manager's prime job to decide which branding approach should be given priority for detergent products after the recession time.

Emotional branding is a fairly new model of brand building. The strategic objective of emotional branding is to forge strong and meaningful affective bonds with consumers and through these bonds become part of their life stories, and memories and an "important link in their social networks" (Atkin 2004 via Thompson et al. 2006). Emotional branding urges brand managers to create emotional ties with the consumers, selling the brand as a desirable relationship partner for the consumer, and find or even create new touch points and design features to convey this emotiveness, especially through the senses (Gobe, 2001 & Lindstrom 2005). To Roberts (2004) emotional branding is a consumer centric, relational and story-driven approach to forging deep and enduring affective bonds between consumers and brands. Thompson et al. (2006) express that this storytelling aspect is the key focus for brand strategists in emotional branding. Morrison & Crane (2007) define emotional branding as "engaging consumers on the level of senses and emotions and forging a deep, lasting, intimate emotional connection to the brand that transcends material satisfaction."

LITERATURE REVIEW:

preliminary literature review is defined as selection of available documents (both published and unpublished) which contain information, idea, data, and evidence from a particular stand point to fulfil certain aims or express views

on the nature of topic and how it is investigated by other authors or theorist (Hart C, 1998).

Given that a great deal of literature has been written on branding, some schools of thought have started to emerge as well. Brand researcher Douglas Holt argues in his book “ How Brands Become Icons” (2004) that there are four dominant branding models that account for nearly all the current branding strategies or disciplines: mind-share branding, emotional branding, viral branding and cultural branding (Holt, 2004). Mind-share remains the most dominant of the models, still taught in business schools worldwide and practiced by the majority of companies around the globe (Holt, 2004). But the other three models have also managed to gain a following and have had their share of success stories as well.

Given that these different branding models all try to solve problems in a marketplace which faces continuous changes, it is interesting to evaluate how they differ in their key concepts and what makes these models what they are. For example, the concept of “ consumer” might not be even remotely similar in viral and mind-share branding. Emotional branding and cultural branding might not see eye-to-eye on what a brand is and how it should be managed.

Holt (2004) also states that many companies look to incorporate hybrid branding strategies depending on the product category the brand is in. Especially in cases like these, it is paramount that managers know what kind of limitations and similarities the different branding strategies might offer in relation to each other. Also, this kind of analysis should not be just

conducted as a general comparison. Rather the models should be examined in more depth, dissecting how they differ in places where they are talking about the same things – using the same terms.

A brand is a symbol, logo, name that represents the consumer's experience with organization, product or services. That evokes feelings of belonging, love and affection of customers (CIM UK), when constructing strong brands its vital consider the brand characteristics which consist of two major types of attributes which are:

Functional branding (intrinsic attributes)

Emotional branding (extrinsic attributes)

Functional branding is related to the tangible, rationally assessed product performance and benefits that satisfies consumer's practical needs (Mowle & merrilees, 2005). Emotional branding is engaging the consumers on the level of senses and emotions; forging a deep, lasting, intimate emotional connection to the brand that transcends material satisfaction; it involves a creating a holistic (emotional) experience that drives an emotional fulfilment so that customer develops a special bond and unique trust in the brand (Kotler & Keller et al 2009).

Emotional branding can be referred has extrinsic branding, intangible branding, sensory branding and holistic branding.

Importance of branding

From customer perspective;

Identification of source of product – for consumers it's easy and convenient to identify a brand.

Risk reducer – brand can reduce the functional risk, physical risk, financial risk, social risk, psychological risk and time risk to consumers.

Search cost reducer – consumer can save time by choosing a brand.

Promise, bond, or pact with maker of product – brand offers a promise on product performance, creates a trust, creates bond emotionally and rationally to customers which makes life easy and convince.

Symbolic device – brands allow consumers to project their own self images by associating with specific brands (Keller 1998).

From manufacturer's perspective;

Means of legally protecting unique features – brand offers the firm legal protection for unique features or aspects of the product.

Source of competitive advantage – when organizations have strong brand name it's easy to differentiate brand from products which offers competitive advantage.

Source of financial returns – strong brand name give high financial returns to the company.

Attract shelf space- strong brands get prime location in super stores across UK (Keller, 1998).

Branding equity models

There are two leading brand equity models

David Aaker brand equity model

Keller consumer based brand equity model

Aaker defines brand equity as set of five categories of brand assets and liabilities linked to the brand, brand name, symbol, which will add or reduce the value provided by the product to the firm or its customers.

These categories of brand assets are;

Brand loyalty

Brand awareness

Perceived quality

Brand associations

Other property assets (trade mark, patents and channel relationships)

Sensory branding

More sense the message appeals more strong the message will be According to Lindstorm 2005) our entire understanding of the world is experience through our sense, our sense are linked memory and tap the emotions, humans five sense are; touch, see, feel, smell, taste and sixth sense is religion. In to day's context 99 percent of brand communication focused on

what we see and hear, 75 percent of human emotions are generated by what we smell.

The more number of sense and sensory touch points the company appeals more strong the message will be perceived, Singapore airlines Kellogg's and ford have created a totally sensory experience through touch, see, feel, taste and smell to there customers. Since there are no studies done on laundry detergent brands on sensory branding, how ever P&G and Unilever attractive colour packaging will attract customers, oval shape handy bottle will give good feeling when they touch the bottle and will attract customers, Ariel and Persil brands have good fragrance it will give good smell to users, by touching more sensory touch points P&G and Unilever can have more emotional bonding with customers.

Aesthetic and design

When consumer making the purchase decision aesthetic and design will influence the customer positively to make the brand purchase according to Nanda et al (2008) argues that aesthetic design, different colours and overlay patterns of black berry smart phones impact the emotional reaction of male customers. Consumers rate smart phones operations 22 percent, physical design 24 percent and features 20 percent according to study conducted by J. D power and associates, research indicates that better aesthetics (Design & shapes) lead to increased usability,

Aesthetically pleasing design will build a strong brand sense by influencing the most important sensory organ eyes and consequently increase the emotional attachment to the brand. Mobile phone different colours provide

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users with personalized options to devices which have transformed from functional tool to a fashion accessory. However there is no studies done on laundry detergent brands aesthetic and design but P&G and Unilever oval shaped 30c bottle will increase brand usability because bottle is well design and easy to squeeze the liquid to measurable cup and use, Ariel & Persil bottle is aesthetically pleasing design will increase the emotional attachment with customers.

Emotional branding offers sustainable advantage.

When companies branding products it will consider emotional & functional branding characteristics but if companies give priority to emotional branding it offers sustainable differentiation than functional branding values according to Mowel and merrilees (2005), have proved that brands require a blend of functional and emotional (symbolic) values in branding. Since wine is life style product it's more beneficial to embrace the concept of symbolic value that relates to consumers self expression needs. Symbolic values (emotional branding) are more sustainable in the form of differentiation than functional values, harder for competitors to replicate and offers brand consistency to customers. Care must be taken to ensure that both functional values and emotional values convey the similar concept to customers.

Marketers therefore promote their products by targeting consumers' emotional impulse and desire. This kind of branding strategy is called emotional branding. This is a customer-centric, empathetic, and cultural story driven strategy that captures customers' deep emotions, and it can therefore be widely applied to different product and service contexts

(Fenichell, 2002). Through the emotional appeals, consumers tend to give <https://assignbuster.com/brand-association-brand-uniqueness-and-brand-experience/>

their brands personalities (Aaker, 1997). Consumers also form communities around their brands. This enables the brands to achieve a unique market position, and the products no longer compete through their basic product attributes (Muniz and Schau, 2005; Algesheimer et al. 2005; Fournier, 1998). Pawle and Cooper (2006) demonstrate that most of the consumers are driven more by an emotional marketing strategy than a rational marketing strategy.

Over the last decade, emotional branding has become a popular branding strategy among the marketers for the reason of brand positioning. The strategy has been proven successful for brands such as Coca Cola, Marlboro, Harley Davidson etc (Thompson et al., 2006). This kind of branding strategy creates bonds between the brand and its consumers. The bonds are emotionally based and are more durable in the long term, because consumers are motivated intrinsically to devote themselves in this consumer-brand relationship.

One of the reasons that consumers want to bond with the brand is because they find the brands authentic and appealing. In other words, they believe their brands help them to fulfil their dreams and desires (Fournier, 1998). This then leads consumers to respond favourably towards the brand, and they even become more willing to purchase or recommend the brand to others (Bitner, 1995).

The cause-and-effect relationships between an emotional brand and its impacts on consumers are well researched by marketing academics such as Aaker (1995), Fournier (1998), and Holt (2004). They describe that a brand

can have its own personality, embed symbolic messages, or carry iconic myths that are personal and appealing to consumers. These intangible attributes in turn lead to the formation of affective consumer-brand relationship. Base on these theories, this thesis extends the concept by identifying the specific dimensions of an emotional branding strategy, and investigating empirically how each of these dimensions affects consumers' psychological responses towards a brand.

TITLE:

Concept analysis of emotional branding and the adoption of its Dimension, “
Brand association, Brand uniqueness and Brand experience

Objective:

To explore the dimensions of emotional branding and what effects do these dimensions have on consumers?

Research Questions:

In order to answer the problem statement, the following four research questions need to be addressed,

1. What is Branding?
2. What is emotional branding?
3. What are the main dimensions of emotional branding?
4. How do consumers respond to each of the dimensions of emotional branding?

5. What are the differential effects when these dimensions are added on a rationale

brand?

Rationale of Research:

My research motivation for this topic is personal reason since branding is an important component of marketing and is playing vital role in converting products into an identity as a personality of the product. The concept of emotional branding is at a raise and playing a vital role in product differentiation and ensuring attachment of brand with the heart of the consumers and customers. Business environment is getting challenging and having a deep understanding of the concept of branding from emotional perspective would help organizations and marketers to effectively utilize the concept to gain competitive and sustainable advantages over their competitors and hence can hold their customers for long term generation to generation. This research work would help researcher to get into the understanding of choice due to thorough knowledge in competitive market place because emotional branding is becoming a more popular branding strategy, therefore it is important to understand how to drive consumers to behave in a way that is mutually beneficial to both themselves and the firms promoting the brand.

RESEARCH GAP

Most of the research and theoretical frameworks on emotional branding have been aimed at promoting the advantages of the adoption of such a branding strategy over the traditional branding strategy. However, most of the studies

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have been missing with exploring the dimensions of emotional branding. Hence it is not yet known what attributes caused consumers to react positively towards a brand when emotional branding strategies are used.

This study will contribute academically by providing answers to this research gap. The practical contribution of this research proposal would be to help managers to gain an understanding of the potential effects of emotional branding strategy on consumers' psychological responses towards the brand. Therefore managers will be able to craft a branding strategy that will hopefully differentiate their brands from the others, and achieve a competitive advantage.

DISSERTATION STRUCTURE

Initially, academic literature on branding will be examined and reviewed to have an opening understanding about this title. This shall provide an impression concerning why it is significant for products to be converted into brands. Subsequently the title emotional branding will be discussed and introduced. This chapter shall attempt to conceptualize emotional branding, by arguing the related disadvantages and advantages, and the dimensions of emotional branding.

In the following chapter 2, extensive literature review on the topic and pertaining to the potential dimensions and hence getting the answers of research questions.

Chapter 3 would present the methodological perspectives of this research. The strategies adopted in this research are discussed in greater detail. The

issues of how to develop the research questionnaire, how to conduct the questionnaire survey.

Chapter 4 presents the findings of the research on the basis of tools used for obtaining information from literature review, quantitative research.

Chapter 5 presents a brief summary of the research and the main conclusions with respect to the new knowledge derived from this research.

The limitations of the research and issues

Research Methodology

The function of research design is to attach the questions to data. Design to be seated amongst the two; firstly, presentation how the research questions are to be connected to the data, secondly, the tools and measures to are used in getting them answered. Research design is to be followed from the questions and match them with data. The research design is the fundamental plan for a piece of observational research, and includes key thoughts like as strategy, sample, tools and measures to be used for collecting and analyzing experimental data (Punch, 2000).

Exploratory method of research would be use to carry out the conceive project because exploratory research provide an opportunity to utilized both qualitative and quantitative methods including a document review, structured telephone survey, and focus groups to gather data. The use of multiple methodologies would permit researcher in triangulation of the data to improve the validity of the findings, and enabled greater inferences from the results.

The research method that is being used is the mixed-model which combines quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques and analysis procedures. Additionally, qualitative and quantitative approaches will be used for the generation of questions for questionnaires. Particularly, for this research, the qualitative data collected will be quantified converting it into numerical codes that can be analyzed statistically. In this study analytic surveys specifically acknowledge their intermediate position and their connection with the logic of deductive inquiry by their emphasis on reliability in data collection and statistical control of variables achieved with the use of statistical techniques (Robson, 2002). On the other hand, interviews would help to obtain feedback from respondents to improve the pilot survey for the final questionnaire. It is very important to mention how triangulation or multimethods where different data collection methods will be used in order to validate data collected through cross verification from two or more sources, for this research, interviews, survey, and case study will increase the research credibility of this project research validating the results and conclusions obtained.

Data collection methods in this research fall under 2 groups; quantitative that would cover the structured surveys from companies and customers and qualitative research from focus individual from pharmaceutical companies and prescribing doctors. Qualitative and quantitative market research methods each provide different insights into the topic. Research results would be more useful when the two methods would be combined, although they are often conducted separately.

Qualitative research aim is gain an understanding of how or why things are as they are. This discussion shall cover how the individual think and visualize the scenario of the topic and what is their understanding. This method would help researcher in gaining:

- Systematically uses a predefined set of procedures to answer the question
- Collects evidence
- Produces findings that were not determined in advance
- Produces findings that are applicable beyond the immediate boundaries of the study

In qualitative research the discussion between the researcher and the respondent would largely be determined by the respondent's own thoughts and feelings. The interview tends to be longer and in depth than a quantitative interview and fewer interviews is conducted.

Qualitative research would be done by face to face meetings or conducting focus group discussion. It is because of the strength of qualitative research, it would provide complex textural descriptions of how individual experience a given research issue.