Brand Image Models of Non-Durable Products: An Exploratory Study

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Marketing managers throughout the world have reported constantly brand image measurement as a critical issue. Regardless of substantial empirical research, results on the relationship among constructs related to the brand image are often unpredictable. Many researchers, taking the clue from the discrepancy of results in this area, have suggested that a synthesis across the numerous empirical studies is desirable. Studies focusing on the brand image in the literature have relied on many surrogates like brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand personality, brand character, and so on. However, none of the models have singly attempted to capture all the aspects of a brand image from the users' perspective. The present study aimed at identifying the brand image models with special reference to chocolates and soaps. The data was collected from the consumers of chocolates and soaps. A three-tier model has been proposed by the authors to assess the brand image of each product. The study explores dimensions, factors, and attributes leading to brand image building for chocolates and soaps. The present research have implications for practitioners as well as policymakers.

Keywords: Brand Image, Brand Dimensions, Instrument Development, Non-Durable Products, Factor Analysis

1. Introduction

Arai et al. (2013) believed that brand image is the consumer perception about the brand reflected by a set of brand associations held in consumer's memory. Anselmsson et al. (2014) claimed that brand image is also an outcome of the associations and beliefs that the customer has regarding the brand. In the 1980s, attitude-based image research linked the brand image with the consumer behavior and marketing management (Zinkhan and Hirschheim, 1992). Several empirical studies have confirmed that a favorable image (i.e., brand, store/retail) may lead to loyalty (Kandampully and Suhartanto, 2000), brand equity (Hsiech, 2002 and Faircloth et al, 2001), purchase behavior (Hsieh et al, 2004 and Dolich, 1969) and brand performance (Roth, 1995).

From 1950 through the 1970s, brand image was defined as the sum of a customer's cognitive and affective perceptions along with a product's physical attributes (Gardner and Levy, 1955; Newman, 1957; Pohlman and Mudd, 1973). The emphasis was on goods and not on services. Consequently, product image was replaced for most of the definitions of brand image (Pohlman and Mudd, 1973). Few researchers used meanings (Levy and Glick, 1973), symbols (Grubb and Grathwohl, 1967; Pohlman and Mudd, 1973), and associations like attitudes, feelings, and beliefs to define a brand image. During the 1980s, brand image was defined, measured, and researched from the perspective of the symbolic meaning of products (Friedmann and Lessig, 1987). Researchers used messages (Swartz, 1983), meanings (Durgee and Stuart, 1987) and associations to depict abstract perceptions of their customers.

Aaker (1996) employed the concept of brand identity, which refers to "a unique set of associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain." Brand image is in the context of the sender's perspective. Keller (1993) initially defined brand image based on "associative network models of memory." This approach asserted the belief that customers' informational nodes were linked to brands in their memories. Belen et al. (2001) contended that brand image is the perception about a brand as reflected by the cluster of associations that consumers connect to the brand name in memory. Roy and Banerjee (2014) claimed that brand image is the perception of a brand that is formed in the process of decoding brand identity facets.

Conceptual Framework

Papadimitriou et al. (2016) studied the dimensions of the brand image of an international sports event and revealed five core brand image dimensions: competition, emotional, social, cultural, and organizational. A study was carried out by Burmann et al. (2008) on the influence of industry image on brand image formation, identified three factors that influence brand image formation, namely- industry factors, internal brand identity factors, and customers' buying motives coupled with experience (personal factors). Pich and Armannsdottir (2015) have done work on how to operationalize the external brand image of a political brand. The study described how to use political and non-political brands as a source to discover external brand image and compare its consistency with internal brand identity.

A significant advantage of the corporate brand image is an easy brand extension and trust development among the customers. Lin et al. (2013) studied that different brand images have a substantial impact on the assessment of brand extension. A study carried by Chinomona (2016), claimed that brand communication has a strong effect on brand image than on brand trust. However, brand image strongly influences brand trust. Sjodin and Torn (2006) found that corporate communication should be in line with the existing brand image, and any discrepancy between the two may negatively impact brand image and may reduce credibility. The current decade also the saw use of Lexicographic Analysis for measurement of

the brand image, which helped indistinct brand image measurement for retail store brands on multiple factors of brand image associations like their variety, wealth, strength, uniqueness, and differentiation (Cortazar and Vela, 2015).

Yang et al. (2011) found that there is a positive transfer effect of celebrity image on brand Image. It can be either way. Sulkunen (2012) has seen that brand image formation happens through familiarity, attitude, and knowledge of the consumer. A study on the country of origin, brand image perception, and brand image structure exposed that country of origin has a multi-dimensional influence on the brand image (Koubaa 2008). Bruwerand Johnson (2010) studied that wine brand building hinge on quality and region of production. The study established that consumers used regional branding cues, images, and information in their valuation of comparative wine labels. Nearly without exception, the adding of regional information on a wine label amplified consumer assurance in the quality of the product.

Beneke et al. (2014) claimed that brand involvement has a moderating effect on the impact of media richness and interactivity on brand image and brand attitude. The results highlighted that interactivity had a positive effect on brand attitude. Likewise, the brand attitude strongly connected to the brand image. Building a strong brand image requires to engage with customers on fan pages in regularly answering to their comments and permitting them to upload appropriate content. Online reviews, blogs on brand consumption experiences have more impact than oral communication to build a powerful brand image. Furthermore, reliable online reviews have more influence on hedonic brand image in the context of consumer electronics products in India (Chakraborty and Bhat, 2018).

Saxena and Dhar (2017) in a study observed that looking at the current market scenario where consumers are bombarded with the flood of choices to confuse them about the selection criteria, consumers are expected to look at something other than tangibles associated with the products, and that something is a brand image. When a brand is constituted, it is essential to get the essence first, which gets translated into benefits for the customers. It is the benefits attached to the product or the brand that induces the sense of attachment, which further gets deepened and strong, resulting in brand image formation.

The available literature suggests that there is a difference in understanding the dimensions, factors, and attributes responsible for brand image building in the Indian context. The brand image dimensions need to be further understood to provide any additional insight to marketers in building an effective and sustainable brand image. The three-tier models of brand image evolved through the present study for the brand image dimensions of chocolates, and soaps have been presented to facilitate the assimilation of new knowledge into the existing mass of literature. This study will also assist the practitioners and the academicians, in general, to undertaking the new area of research.

2. Scale Development

An exploratory study was carried out with a 'multi-stage randomized' design to understand the perception of users about the image of the products. The purpose of the study was to explore and propose a *Brand Image Model* for two non-durable products, i.e. chocolates and soaps. These models will help to distinguish their images and to create an understanding of how the brand image dimensions can help people to grasp the intricacies of brand purchase and use in a better manner.

Stage I:-The list of image attributes developed based on the review of relevant literature.

Stage II:-The revised list of image attributes was prepared after churning out of the initial list of image attributes by eliminating the synonyms and similar attributes.

Stage III: - The list of attributes prepared in stage II was presented to the 30 Judges (academicians and executives having work experience of at least ten years after obtaining the postgraduate education) with the request to identify the ones describing the brand image of the products like chocolates and soaps separately. A list of Image attributes, having 75% and above acceptance, was prepared. Thus, two separate psychometric tools evolved for the two products on the seven-point bipolar semantic differential scale. The tools were administered separately.

Stage IV: The item-total correlations of the attributes were computed at 0.05 level of significance with the total score.

Stage V: Factor Analysis was applied to the data generated by administering the scales to identify the factors for each product.

Stage V: Second-Order Factor Analysis was undertaken to cluster the factors for identifying the dimensions of the brand image for each product.

Through a simple random sampling method, initial data was collected from a sample of 268 respondents – 133 for chocolates and 135 for soaps. After screening, a final sample of 125 responses was retained for analysis in each product. The reliability of the instruments was calculated by the split-half method corrected for full length by applying the Spearman-Brown Prophecy formula. When an instrument is developed for a particular situation, the reliability index based on the reliability coefficient can be taken as equivalent to the validity of the scale.

For Chocolates

Reliability Index = $\sqrt{0.838}$
(For Chocolates) = 0.915

For Soaps

Reliability Index = $\sqrt{0.889}$
(For Soaps) = 0.942

3. Results

The KMO and Bartlett's test was administered to evaluate the applicability of the factor analysis. The KMO value of .884 and .835was observed for chocolates and soaps, respectively, which indicate the adequacy of sample size for factor analysis.67 attributes of chocolates converged into 15 factors, and these factors into 5 dimensions. Similarly, 73 attributes of soaps converged into 17 factors and in turn, into 5 dimensions.

While naming the factors and dimensions, two points were taken into consideration. First, the contribution of each attribute to the factor in terms of the factor load and second, the overall meaning of all the elements combined.

Chocolates: Factors and Dimensions

Factors	Characteristics	Loading	Total Factor Load	Percentage of Variance
Attractive	Good-Looking	0.799	4.106	14.42
	Glamorous	0.712		
	Charming	0.681		
	Adorable	0.617		
	Upper Class	0.508		
	Feminine	0.416		
	Smooth	0.373		
Pleasant	Cheerful	0.827	3.621	5.88
	Exciting	0.727		
	Friendly	0.658		
	Sentimental	0.538		
	Humble	0.474		
	Sparkling	0.397		
Rewarding	Successful	0.785	3.172	5.33
	Leader	0.621		
	Humorous	0.525		
	Fun-Loving	0.454		
	Truthful	0.409		
	Jolly	0.378		
Vigorous	Energetic	0.775	2.732	4.27
	Dynamic	0.604		
	Outgoing	0.517		
	Smart	0.490		
	Day-Dreamer	0.346		
Decent	Honest	0.832	2.678	3.81
	Authentic	0.729		
	Decent	0.642		
	Real	0.532		
	Excitable	0.346		
Impressive	Unique	0.800	2.525	3.40
	Royal	0.694		
	Sensitive	0.592		
	Imaginative	0.440		
Viable	Down-to-earth	0.766	2.407	3.27
	Approachable	0.681		
	Enthusiastic	0.574		
	Fascinating	0.386		
Admired	Prestigious	0.771	2.400	3.20
	Elegant	0.676		

	Independent	0.539		
	Sophisticated	0.414		
Credible	Trustworthy	0.745	2.383	3.00
	Reliable	0.625		
	Loyal	0.596		
	Visionary	0.487		
Refreshing	Cool	0.719	2.381	2.79
	Young	0.638		
	Frank	0.537		
	Warm	0.487		
Genuine	Dependable	0.712	2.332	2.54
	Secure	0.673		
	Passionate	0.527		
	Bright	0.411		
Lovable	Kind	0.749	2.296	2.49
	Happy	0.685		
	Soft	0.529		
	Tender	0.383		
Amazing	Generous	0.788	2.118	2.45
	Polite	0.545		
	Emotional	0.416		
	Witty	0.368		
Superior	Perfectionist	0.784	1.990	2.24
	Appealing	0.671		
	Up-to-date	0.535		
Convenient	Responsive	0.800	1.709	2.19
	Spirited	0.694		
	Caring	0.436		

Dimensions	Factors	Loading	Total Factor Load	Percentage of Variance
Worthwhile	Viable	0.792	2.454	16.70
	Refreshing	0.691		
	Attractive	0.553		
	Decent	0.418		
Vivid	Vigorous	0.806	2.217	13.80
	Pleasant	0.582		
	Convenient	0.417		
	Rewarding	0.407		
Authentic	Credible	0.844	1.885	12.60
	Superior	0.573		
	Impressive	0.437		
Legitimate	Genuine	0.838	1.440	10.50
	Admired	0.602		
Opulent	Amazing	0.870	1.401	9.70
	Lovable	0.530		

Soaps: Factors and Dimensions

Factors	Characteristics	Loading	Total Factor Load	Percentage of Variance
Safe	Reliable	0.822	4.540	18.20
	Honest	0.814		
	Loyal	0.660		
	Truthful	0.654		
	Dependable	0.584		
	Authentic	0.522		
	Sensitive	0.483		
Alluring	Good Looking	0.894	3.628	5.65
	Glamorous	0.740		
	Elegant	0.635		
	Upper Class	0.512		
	Royal	0.457		
	Smooth	0.391		
Persuasive	Energetic	0.763	2.992	4.42
	Outgoing	0.648		
	Outdoorsy	0.591		
	Smart	0.535		
	Dynamic	0.462		
Charming	Kind	0.737	2.916	4.06
	Polite	0.668		
	Caring	0.532		
	Soft	0.503		
	Tender	0.484		
Commanding	Leader	0.731	2.752	3.87
	Successful	0.644		
	Responsive	0.542		
	Glorious	0.409		
	Splendid	0.378		
Effervescent	Cheerful	0.742	2.701	3.77
	Humble	0.624		
	Passionate	0.513		
	Humorous	0.427		
	Family Oriented	0.395		
Impressive	Masculine	0.869	2.629	3.37
	Rigid	0.739		
	Hardworking	0.641		
	Persevering	0.416		
Vivacious	Spirited	0.826	2.545	3.17
	Cool	0.716		
	Real	0.568		
	Young	0.436		
Superior	Dominant	0.698	2.001	3.11
	Sophisticated	0.508		
	Decent	0.443		
	Mild	0.389		
	Fascinating	0.352		

Dimension	Factors	Loading	Total Factor Load	Percentage of Variance
Vivid	Bright	0.710	2.350	2.90
	Sparkling	0.632		
	Shinny	0.548		
	Enthusiastic	0.460		
Enjoyable	Jolly	0.783	2.345	2.85
	Happy	0.650		
	Fun-Loving	0.529		
	Frank	0.383		
Fulfilling	Perfectionist	0.780	2.169	2.65
	Thoughtful	0.532		
	Unique	0.471		
	Secure	0.386		
Legitimate	Down-to-earth	0.825	1.914	2.58
	Original	0.670		
	Contemporary	0.419		
Satisfying	Generous	0.767	1.665	2.49
	Confident	0.542		
	Persistent	0.357		
Gorgeous	Day-Dreamer	0.675	1.618	2.26
	Emotional	0.589		
	Exciting	0.354		
Avid	Competitive	0.819	1.653	2.20
	Independent	0.447		
	Visionary	0.387		
Assuring	Committed	0.584	1.417	2.18
	Friendly	0.466		
	Charming	0.368		

Dimensions	Factors	Loading	Total Factor Load	Percentage of Variance
Credible	Persuasive	0.833	3.145	16.30
	Alluring	0.713		
	Commanding	0.598		
	Effervescent	0.518		
	Avid	0.483		
Pure	Legitimate	0.880	2.515	14.20
	Vivacious	0.698		
	Superior	0.529		
	Fulfilling	0.406		
Delightful	Satisfying	0.870	1.806	13.80
	Enjoyable	0.610		
	Gorgeous	0.325		
Lovable	Charming	0.819	1.755	12.20
	Vivid	0.617		
	Impressive	0.317		
Harmless	Safe	0.797	1.125	10.90
	Assuring	0.328		

Brand Image Models for Chocolates and Soaps
Based on the above analysis, three-tier models to assess the brand image of chocolates and soapswere proposed, respectively.

The model captures the brand image at 3 different levels of granularity, namely, attributes, factors, and dimensions. The three-tier factorial constitution of the Brand Image of Chocolates has Worthwhile, Vivid, Authentic, Legitimate, and Opulent dimensions at the top of the pyramid. These dimensions have a composition of factors like Attractive, Impressive, Refreshing, and Lovable, to name some of them. Further, the bottom of the pyramid has attributes like Adorable, Charming, Happy, Real, Sparkling, Tender, and others, as shown in Figure 1.
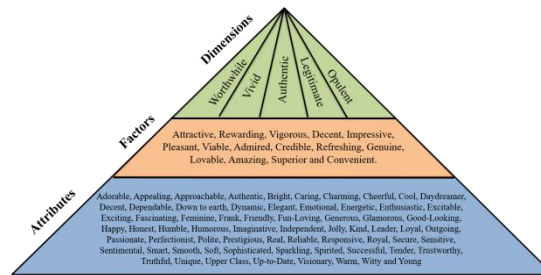
Fig 1: Showing Three Tier Brand Image Model of Chocolates

The three-tier factorial constitution of the Brand Image of Soaps has Credible, Pure, Delightful, Lovable, and Harmless dimensions at the apex of the pyramid. These dimensions have a composition of the factors like Safe, Effervescent, Enjoyable, Gorgeous, and Vivid, to name a few of them. Further, the base of the pyramid has attributes like Bright, Caring, Daydreamer, Glamorous, Secure, Young, and others, as shown in Figure 2
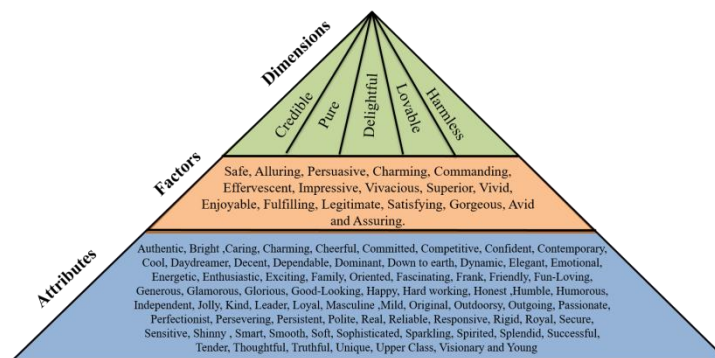

Fig 2: Showing Three Tier Brand Image Model of Soaps

Comparison of Common Factors and Dimensions
In the study, 2 factors emerged as common among brands of chocolates and soaps, resulting inthe formation of 2 null hypotheses. To test these hypotheses, "z" tests were conducted.
$H_{0.1}$: *There is no significant difference in the perception of customers on the Superior factor of the brand image of chocolates and soaps.*
$H_{0.2}$: *There is no significant difference in the perception of customers on the Impressive factor of the brand image of chocolates and soaps.*

Factors	Chocolates		Soaps		z value	Hypothesis	Interpretation
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.			
Superior	18.320	1.619	30.192	2.755	41.530	Rejected	Customers of soaps give higher weight age to the *Superior* factor as compared to the customers of chocolates
Impressive	24.248	2.601	20.720	3.633	8.826	Rejected	Customers of chocolates give higher weight age to the *Impressive* factor as compared to the customers of soaps

4. Discussion

Attractive, Rewarding and Vigorous
Brand induces the feeling of being *attractive* in terms of look and feel. For chocolate brands, aroma, taste, and seductive attitude lead to the impression of being attractive to the users. The emergence of *rewarding* as a factor of brand image can be attributed to the brands which have consistently over-delivered in terms of value to the users may be perceived as being valuable towards the audience. Also, if this value reaches the users at a minimum possible cost, the perception will be reinforced, and users may view the brand as being unselfish in its intent, thus construed as being rewarding. The emergence of *vigorous* as a factor of brand image is the result of the users' perception of the brands being characterized by active

strength in their appearance and performance. This factor resembles the energetic factor of the brand personality of soaps (Mishra, 2002). *Decent* as a factor of brand image is the reflection of customers' perception of the brand being honest, authentic, and decent in its construct and dealings. Users view these brands as real and excitable. Those brands, which can create an impression of excellence and being a class apart from others, were perceived as *impressive* by the users.

Friendly attitude, feeling of happiness in the usage of the brand, excitement in discussing the brand, emotional attachment, and politeness of the brand lead to the feeling of the brand being *pleasant*. The emergence of *viable* as a factor of brand image can be attributed to the practical approach towards the customers. Viable factor is correlated to the affordability factor of the brand image of stores (Kremer and Viot, 2012). *Admired* as a factor of the brand image reflects the brands' ability to create the value proposition as honorable and distinguished from their competitors. The emergence of *credible* as a factor of brand image can be attributed to the brands' consistency in their promise and performance. This factor is in line with the trustworthy factor of the brand character of insurance (Johari, 2005). Chocolate brands are perceived as *refreshing* as they rejoice the customers' mood by their cool taste, aroma, and energizing effect. Consuming chocolate gives a feeling of being young and cool to the users. *Genuine,* as a factor of the brand image reflects the fact that brands are sensitive to the needs of the users and understand the importance of being ethical in their dealings to create a positive impact on the users. The *Genuine* factor is like a good deal factor of the brand image of stores (Kremer and Viot, 2012).

The *Lovable* factor of the brand image reflects the brands' capability of generating intense feeling amongst their users. This factor seems to be comparable with the Eysenck's dimension of an emotionally stable introvert. The emergence of *amazing* as a factor of the brand image signifies the brands' capability to differentiate itself due to the unique attributes like generousness, emotional bonding, politeness, and witty nature. This factor is supported by the chocolate affinity factor that is resulting in the purchase of chocolate (Patwardhan et al., 2010). *Superior* as a factor of brand image is the outcome of the brands' aptitude to comprehend the needs of the customers. These brands are perceived as interesting, engaging, and quick in understanding their explicit and inexplicit needs. The emergence of *convenient* as a factor of the brand image signifies that the brands are readily available in all price bands and variants and keep the customers' interest in mind. This factor appears to be closer to the convenience and sustainability factor of the brand image of stores (Kremer and Viot, 2012).

Safe, Alluring and Persuasive

Safe as a factor of the brand image signifies the brands' success in making the users believe that they are reliable, truthful, and trustworthy. These brands deliver their promises with honesty and gain customer loyalty. Users see these brands as dependable, authentic, and sensitive towards them and their needs. The emergence of *alluring* as a factor of the brand image of soaps is because of the charm and glamour the brand creates through different components of the architecture. Communication, packaging, colour, and fragrance all combine to create a soothing aura in the consumers' minds. This factor resembles the enchanting factor of the brand personality of soaps (Mishra, 2002). *Persuasive* as a factor of brand image is the result of the convincing and compelling attitude that a brand creates in the customers' minds through different elements of the architecture.

Charming as a factor of the brand image signifies the warmth and responsiveness of the brand towards the users' needs and wants through their form and performance. The *Charming* factor can be compared to the benevolent factor of the brand character of insurance (Johari, 2005) and the brand personality of soaps (Mishra, 2002). *Commanding* as a factor of the brand image of soaps reflects their leadership and success in the users' minds. These brands also gain this status by virtue of being responsive in their nature and glorious in their attitude. The emergence of *effervescent* as a factor of brand image can be attributed to the brands' capability in generating cheerful, impressive, and humorous feelings amongst their users. Brands that can create an impression of their masculine and rigid attitude, and being a class apart from other brands, are perceived as *impressive* by the users. Such perceptions can be seen as an outcome of hard work and perseverance.

The emergence of *vivacious* as a factor of the brand image reflects the appearance and communication elements of the brand being fun and frolic. These brands tickle the heart of the users and are viewed as vivacious. The emergence of *superior* as a factor of brand image is perceived as the brands' ability to understand the requirement of customers. Customers tend to depend more on those brands which they perceive as appealing, focused, and intelligent in understanding their overt and latent needs. Brands having the radiance of beauty, brightness, sparkling, and shiny attitude in their design is reinforced through their performance, and other interactions amongst the users are perceived as *vivid*. These brands are enthusiastic about their users. The brands which choose to make humor as an emotional content in communication and appearance are perceived as *enjoyable*. Such stature is achieved through tangible and intangible elements of the brand, such as packaging and communication.

Soap brands are seen as *fulfilling* due to elements like fragrance, ingredients, and all skin type variants. The emergence of *legitimate* as a factor of the brand image signifies the brands' ability to create the feeling of attachment with a person through continuous use. *Satisfying as a* factor of the brand image signifies that the brands have consistently and generously over-delivered in terms of value to the users. The emergence of *gorgeous* as a factor of brand image is attributed to the fact that soaps require a high degree of trust to be vested in them while users make their selection for keeping them to look beautiful. *Avid* brands show consistent determination and firmness in their efforts to serve their customers. Their competitive, independent, and visionary elements lead to the perception of the brand being avid. *Assuring, as a* factor of the brand image, reflects that the brands are committed towards customers' interests. Their friendly approach towards the customers is another reason for this perception.

Worthwhile and Credible

The emergence of *worthwhile* as a dimension of brand image signals the brand being modest in its claims and generous in performance and value addition to the users. By consistently doing so, the brands have shown the potential of earning the users' respect because they succeeded in creating an impression of an image under promises and over-delivers. Those brands which can generate a powerful and clear image in the consumers' minds are perceived as *vivid*. The mere presence or thought of such brands generate a vibrant feeling, and positive emotions in the users and they feel pleasant and rewarded for using these brands.

Brands that are capable of satisfying the needs and offering better value to customers successfully are perceived as *satisfying*. Aroma, taste, hygiene, and quality are few elements that build trust among the users and they perceive the brands as proficient and exclusive. *Legitimate* as a dimension of the brand image of chocolates reflects that customers view brands as genuine in their quality content. The brands are also viewed as dependable as they cater to the customers' interests. Customers believe that the legitimate dimension of brand image is an indicator of not compromising on the quality of ingredients used. Brands that can amaze the customers and create an impression of joy, love, and charm are perceived as *opulent*. Such perception can be seen as an outcome of the brands' appearance, their happy go luck attributes, and also the comfort and elegance in their form.

The emergence of *credible* as a dimension of the brand image of soaps can be attributed to their persuasive, alluring, commanding, effervescent, and vivid characteristics. The brands are strong in their communication with their customers on the credibility front. This also helps customers to make a faster and easier decision for purchase. The emergence of *pure* as a dimension of the brand image of soaps can be attributed to their legitimate, vivacious, superior ad fulfilling nature. The brands are characterized by relative perfection in their constitution. In the case of soap brands, health is the primary concern, and brands perceived as pure are seen as constituted of un-harmful elements.

Those brands which can generate satisfying and enjoyable feelings through their association with users were perceived as *delightful*. Such perception can be seen as an outcome of the brands' persistent efforts in delighting the customers by catering to their smallest needs. *Lovable* brands make all efforts in the form of advertising campaigns, loyalty programs, packaging, punch lines, and all brand exercises in communicating the benevolence, charming, vivid, and impressive image of the brand. Brands are perceived as *harmless* when they keep the benefit of the customer in mind and present themselves as safe, friendly, and honest. This is explicitly applicable to soap brands as they have to give an assurance to the customers that soap will be gentle and mild on their skin.

Implications and Scope for Future Research

The brand image psychometric instruments developed in this study can be useful for further exploration concerning developmental issues and processes of brand management. Research on the brand image can be done by comparing the brand image of all brands in a particular product category. This exercise can be replicated for several product categories in the FMGC industry, which will fuel the development of a framework of brand image. The policymakers can use the results of the present study in establishing product benchmark on these factors and dimensions in the Indian market and may help the customers in getting a decent, honest, and valuable product. At the same time, these dimensions may be useful for judicial authorities or consumer forums in judging the legal cases related to the functional performance of chocolates and soaps.

The present study on the brand image can further be explained in the context of various demographic variables like age, gender, education, and income. Marital status like unmarried and married users, and divorcees or sole survivors may be taken as a variable for assessing the brand image of a product or service. There is a probability that customer perception changes regarding the brand image due to the difference in the economic scenario (Saxena and Dhar, 2017). A study can be conducted to compare the perception of customers residing in various metropolitan and other major cities in India. The present study can be expanded to the cross-cultural domains to explore the influences of the cultural dissimilarities on brand image construct and secondly, to explore whether brand image dimensions are consistent across cultures or not?.

5. Conclusions

The brands or products are bought to satisfy a particular set of needs, so it becomes essential to understand how an individual is relating his need fulfillment with the brand. Especially in the customer-driven economy while choosing a brand, customers prefer brands that are ethical in their dealings and comply with the social norms. Thus, in this light, the emergence of a multilevel three-tier model of the brand image can be seen as an outcome of the need fulfillment process. Bem and Funder (1978) and Snyder et al. (1986), in their respective studies, had confirmed that inanimate objects such as brands could be associated with a set of human characteristics.

6. References

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