Chapter 69

The Impact of Brand Variance on Gender in FMCG Sector:
With a Special Reference to Toothpaste Category

Priya Grover
Symbiosis International University, India

Sabyasachi Dasgupta
O. P. Jindal Global University, India

ABSTRACT

With the rapidly changing times and technology, more and more companies are moving towards brand extensions to acquire a competitive advantage. There are various factors enhancing brand equity while extending the brand into new categories like brand awareness, personality, lifestyle, relationship with the consumers, cultural differences among consumers and demographics. Demographic of a brand is the most important personality characteristic which leads to most easily extractable variables like gender, age and class. Gender plays a significant role in shaping the brand personality of a brand and its subsequent variants. (Levy, 1959). This chapter relies on the relationship between gender based brand personality and brand equity drawn from the study titled "The effect of Brand Gender on Brand Equity". (Lieven, 2014). This research paper concludes that brand androgyny (masculinity or femininity of the brand) was negatively related to brand associations i.e., brand equity is not influenced by gender associations related to the brand or the product category. So, this chapter explores whether there is a relationship between gender and different variants of the brand. Also, should advertisers design gender focused messages for the different brand variants. The methodology chosen for this research is quantitative in nature. The independent variable in this research is gender and the dependent variable is brand variance. This research paper shows that there is no impact of brand variants on gender. Advertisements need to be designed in a manner that target both males and females psychologically rather that demographically especially gender based.

INTRODUCTION

Leveraging the equity of a strong brand to launch extended products is a strategy mostly followed by Fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) companies. This chapter relies on the relationship between gender based brand personality and brand equity drawn from the study titled "The effect of Brand Gender on Brand Equity" (Lieven, 2014). It takes into consideration the relationship between the masculine or feminine brand personality and its effect on Brand equity of the brand. The research paper concludes that brand androgyny (masculinity or femininity of the brand) was negatively related to brand associations i.e., brand equity is not influenced by gender associations related to the brand or the product category. So, this chapter explores the future scope of research whether there is a relationship between gender and different variants of the brand. Also, should advertisers design gender focused messages for the different brand variants. For this study, the paper has considered 4 toothpaste brands (*Colgate*, *Pepsodent*, *Oral–B, Dabur)* and two TOMA parameters (germ–free teeth and whitening of teeth) to understand the impact of brand equity variables on the TOMA parameters.

Since its inception, brands have served the role of differentiating apart from providing legal protection from copying. A brand in its simplest form is a mark of differentiation. The marketing communication scenario is changing rapidly with the increase in the role of technology and so has increased the importance of branding. On the contrary, there is very little awareness and understanding of designing appropriate branding strategies to survive in the modern competitive environment decisions. The development and market introduction of new products and brands is an important activity for firms seeking to maintain their competitive advantage in the market. Accelerated product life cycles, increased competition, and increasing diversity in customer needs have further enhanced the role of new product introduction However, entering new markets is an increasingly risky financial proposition of firms, particularly those in the customer goods area, given the high rate of product failure. Brand extensions whether related or unrelated to the original product category is profitable because the expenses incurred on advertising and promotion is comparatively low.

Personality of a brand is one of the drivers towards building a strong equity for the brand. It affects the equity of the variants of the strong brand too. Consumers assign human traits to brands and then assess them on the basis of the personality traits they have. Personality traits influence brand related outcomes such as brand loyalty. Since gender is a very important demographic factor affecting consumer behaviour, a study of gender specific personality traits and its relationship with brand equity of the different variants of the brand becomes equally important.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Consumers have always been the judge and jury of brand communication. The way the brand communication influences the way consumers interprets and ultimately decides the course of action of the consumers. From the past, people have been analysing a brand in three ways-rational, emotional and behavioural. Even in the early days, when a brand communicated about the rational benefits, people would build emotional and behavioural associations though they did not have a dominant and significant impact on the consumer's perception about the brand. With time, people began to make their decisions more on personal emotional associations, brands moved to own emotions but it created a great challenge

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