BRAND PERSONALITY SCALE: HOW DO INDIAN CONSUMERS INTERPRET THE PERSONALITY DIMENSIONS?

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ABSTRACT

With brands assuming an important and all-encompassing position in the marketplace today and with the excessive proliferation of me-too products, marketers have recognised the need to create a distinct personality for a brand so that it stands adequately differentiated in the market. This study tests the applicability of Jennifer Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale in the Indian context and identifies significant similarities and differences in brand personality perceptions. Focus groups were used to identify the product categories and brands to be used in the study. Thereafter, Primary Component Analysis was used to isolate the factors (personality dimensions) for each brand. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires. The study used just four product categories. Further studies could increase the number of product categories and brands to widen the scope of study.

Keywords: brand, brand personality, brand association, brand loyalty, brand equity

INTRODUCTION

Currently, there is increasing recognition of the importance of brands. Academics (Aaker, 1996) and practitioners (Stobart, 1994) have proposed various ways of effectively sustaining brands to ensure their profitability in the long run. Underlying such assumptions are recommendations about creating brand differentiation through the creation of brand personality. A brand image develops when the marketer breathes life into an inanimate product. This process, in effect, involves endowing the brand with a distinct personality and human characteristics in the eyes of the consumer. In the competitive marketplace, as it exists today, the profitable survival of a brand rests solely on its ability to differentiate itself and carve out a niche for itself in the consumer's mind such that it is the first one to enter the consideration set of the consumer. For decades, researchers have argued that brand personality is an important topic for study because it can help to differentiate brands (Crask & Laskey, 1990), be useful in

developing the emotional aspects of a brand (London, 1974) and also augment the personal meaning of a brand to the consumer (Levy, 1959).

A unique brand personality can help create a set of unique and favourable associations in the minds of consumers and thus build and enhance brand equity (Keller, 1993; Johnson, Soutar, & Sweeney, 2000; Phau & Lau, 2000). Practitioners also view brand as a common denominator that can be used to market a brand across cultures (Plummer, 1985). Consumers tend to describe brands by using adjectival descriptors of personality traits, and marketers often create or reinforce the perceptions of their brand positioning.

Hence, an important factor attributed to the success of a brand in terms of performance and choice is the personality of the brand (Batra, Donald, & Singh, 1993; Biel, 1993). Consumers develop strong emotional ties with brands that have strong and well-entrenched personalities, which leads to brand loyalty. Taking the imperative of brand personality into consideration and given that not many studies on understanding brand personality have been carried out in India, this study is an attempt to understand the ways in which the personality of a brand are understood by Indian consumers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Personality is defined by psychologists as the "systematic description of traits" (McCrae & Costa, 1987). Research on human personality has broadly casted five dimensions to comprehensively describe personality:

1. Extraversion (talkative, assertive, energetic)
2. Agreeableness (good-natured, cooperative, trustworthy)
3. Conscientiousness (orderly, responsible, dependable)
4. Emotional Stability vs. Neuroticism (calm, not easily upset)
5. Openness or Intellect (intellectual, imaginative, independent-minded)

(John & Srivastava, 1999)

The above five dimensions are a result of analyses of the natural language terms humans use to describe themselves and others (Goldberg, 1993). Cross-culturally, these five dimensions hold true, though the factors are not always identically labelled across cultures. Brown (1991) very adequately affirms that with respect to products and brands, humans feel a need to anthropomorphise objects to enhance interactions with the material world. Consumers also appear to experience no problems assigning human characteristics to brands (Aaker, 1997) or building a relationship with brands (Fournier, 1998). Thus, it appears that the five main factors of human personality also extend to brand personality. The

behaviour undertaken by a brand is used by consumers to form trait inferences about the brand; these trait inferences then form the basis for consumers' evaluative conceptions of the brand. Research also focuses on the idea that a brand can be thought of as having a "personality". Because it creates personality for an inanimate object, a brand relates to consumer emotions (Kim & Kim, 2004). Consequently, it is envisaged that brand personality may be a salient reason for selecting one brand over another (Siguaw, Mittila, & Austin, 1999). At a time when consumers consider product quality as a given and there is a plethora of me-too products in the market, a strong brand identity and personality are invaluable to building brand equity. Van Rekom, Jacobs and Valegh (2006) and Plummer (1984) rightly argued that brand personality might be crucial to understanding brand choice. It is brand personality that provides depth, feelings and liking and thus provides that much-needed texture and depth to the relationship between brand and consumer. Therefore, brand personality is a tool used by marketers to target consumers and build relationships with them (Aaker, 1996). Aaker (1999) also argued that a brand is used for self-expression and to reflect self-concept. When expressed properly, brand personality positively affects a consumer's attitude towards the brand. Research also positively claims that the more self-expressive and distinct a brand personality is, the more it will appeal.

Aaker defines brand personality as the "set of human characteristics associated with a brand". Aaker (1997) attempted to develop a framework of brand personality dimensions and also developed a reliable, valid and generalisable scale to measure the dimensions. According to Aaker, consumers perceive brands as having five distinct personality dimensions: Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication and Ruggedness. Of the five dimensions identified by Aaker, three of them relate to the five main factors of human personality. Sincerity taps into the traits of Agreeableness and Conscientiousness. Excitement includes items such as sociability, energy and activity, as does Extraversion. The other two dimensions, Sophistication and Ruggedness, do not relate to any of the human personality dimensions. However, time and again, research has suggested that brand personality increases consumer preference (Sirgy, 1982), evokes emotions in consumers (Biel, 1993) and increases levels of trust and loyalty (Fournier, 1994).

Aaker loosely defined brand personality, which tends to embrace several other characteristics (such as age and gender) in addition to personality (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; Bosnjak, Bochmann, & Hufschmidt, 2007). Such a loose definition leaves researchers and practitioners uncertain of what they have actually measured: the perceived brand personality or perceived user characteristics. A strong criticism of Aaker's scale emerges in the domain of non-replicability of the five factors cross-culturally (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003). For

instance, Aaker, Benet-Martinez and Garolera (2001) found that only three of the five factors applied in Spain (Sincerity, Excitement and Sophistication). Peacefulness replaced Ruggedness, and Passion replaced Competence. Similarly, in Japan, four of the five factors emerged, with Peacefulness again replacing Ruggedness. This research led to some researchers creating country-specific brand scales. A study by Geuens, Weijters and De Wulf (2009) developed a new brand personality measure consisting of personality items only. This new scale consists of five factors; Activity, Responsibility, Aggressiveness, Simplicity and Emotionality.

Kapferer (2004) also differed with the widely accepted notions of measuring and assessing brand personality. He argued that Aaker's brand personality scale does not measure brand personality but rather merges together a number of dimensions of brand identity that he feels need to be kept separate both on theoretical grounds and for practical use. There is a school of thought that firmly believes that researchers and practitioners should adopt a stricter definition of the concept of brand personality; namely, "brand personality is the set of human personality traits that are both applicable to and relevant for brands". A study by Ekinci and Hosany (2006) on the applicability and relevance of personality traits in the context of tourism destinations using Aaker's Brand Personality Scale indicated that the personality traits may not fully represent the gamut of personality traits associated with the brand.

However, at a time in which consumers consider product quality as a given and competitors can easily copy product characteristics, a strong brand identity and personality are invaluable to building brand equity (Van Rekom, Jacobs, & Verlegh, 2006). Brand personality does have a positive influence on product evaluations, and consumers exposed to the personality of a brand have a significantly greater number of product evaluations resulting in positive consumer-based outcomes (Freling & Forbes, 2005). In another study that assessed the relative impact of brand personality and sales promotion on the formation of brand equity, a positive impact for brand personality and a negative impact for sales promotion intensity on brand equity at the aggregate level were found (Valette-Florence, Guizani, & Merunka, 2011).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Though the brand personality framework and its scale have been tested in the context of Western culture, the extent to which the brand personality dimensions are generalisable across Indian culture has yet to be ascertained. Though research has shown that the human personality dimensions remain robust across cultures (Paunonen, Douglas, Jerzy, & Friedrich, 1992), the same may not be true for

brand personality because of differences in the antecedents of the two constructs. This current research studies whether the prevailing personality dimensions in the brand personality scale as devised by Aaker are envisaged in the same manner by Indian consumers as their Western counterparts. This study will also attempt to understand what dimensions of brand personality are valued in Indian culture (Aaker & Durairaj, 1997). The research objectives can be further enumerated as follows:

1. To study whether the prevailing scale as devised by Aaker is envisaged and understood similarly by Indian customers as compared to their Western counterparts. This topic is being studied with respect to four major and widely used brands in the four categories of mobile phones, fast food, apparel and aerated drinks.

2. To study what dimensions of brand personality in each of the four product categories are considered important and relevant by the consumer.

METHODOLOGY

Focus Group

To identify the product categories and brands to be used in the study, focus groups were used. The participants in the focus groups were mostly students and young working professionals in the age group ranging from 24–45 years. The aim of the three focus groups conducted was two-fold: to identify four product categories extensively used by the consumers in that age group and, within the four product categories, to identify brands that had the maximum usage and/or had the highest recall/recognition. What emerged from the focus group discussions was the four product categories most extensively used, mobile handsets, apparel (jeans), fast food restaurants and aerated drinks. The brands identified in each of the categories include Samsung for mobile handsets, Levi's for apparel (jeans), McDonalds for fast food restaurants and Coke for aerated drinks. Thus, these four brands were used in this study.

Sample and Data Collection

A sample of 140 respondents was taken for each brand. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to analyse the data. The brands used in the study were chosen based on what emerged from the focus group discussions. From the four product categories extensively used by the target audience, the brands in each category had the maximum usage and/or highest recall/recognition.

Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires. A questionnaire was administered for each brand, and all four questionnaires were identical. Data collectors administered the questionnaire to the sample audience, which consisted of males and females ranging in age from 24 years to 45 years. The respondents had to answer 15 questions for each brand, with the purpose of measuring the five dimensions of brand personality. Brand personality was further measured using a Likert scale with 1 as the most descriptive and 5 as the least descriptive.

Reliability of Measures

The Cronbach's Alpha results indicate a value of .761, which shows that the measures of the key variables are generally acceptable and reliable.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Brand Personality of Levi's

Two tests, the KMO statistic for sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity, as shown in Table 1, were undertaken to test whether factor analysis would be appropriate for this study. The KMO measure value is 0.629, which is greater than alpha value (level of significance) = 0.5, so there is relationship among variables. In addition, per the Bartlett's test of sphericity, the *p*-value is 0.000, which is less than the alpha of 0.001, again proving that there is a relationship among variables and the number of variables can be reduced to form factors/components.

Table 1
KMO and Bartlett's Test: Levi's

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.629
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	approx. chi-square	378.630
	df	105
	sig.	.000

Factor Analysis was performed on the data set to reduce the number of dimensions in order to identify the brand personality of the various brands that have been used in this study. The 15 statements were subjected to factor analysis using principal component analysis. Table 2 contains the initial eigenvalues and proportions of variance explained by each factor. Six factors have been extracted; those six factors explain 64.5% of the variance in the model. Because "1"was our factor for retention, the six factors having eigenvalues greater than 1 have been identified. Looking at the proportion of the variance, we can see that the bulk of the variance attributable to the retained factors is explained by the first factor

(19.9% of the 64.53%) in the initial solution, whereas the variance was more evenly distributed in the rotated solution (12.2%, 9.9%, 8.3%, 7.2% and 6.9%, respectively).

Table 2
Total variance explained: Levi's (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis)

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.991	19.937	19.937	2.991	19.937	19.937	2.087	13.911	13.911
2	1.830	12.202	32.139	1.830	12.202	32.139	1.994	13.291	27.202
3	1.488	9.918	42.058	1.488	9.918	42.058	1.523	10.155	37.357
4	1.245	8.302	50.360	1.245	8.302	50.360	1.433	9.553	46.910
5	1.089	7.263	57.623	1.089	7.263	57.623	1.359	9.061	55.971
6	1.036	6.909	64.532	1.036	6.909	64.532	1.284	8.561	64.532
7	.883	5.885	70.417						
8	.821	5.474	75.890						
9	.751	5.007	80.897						
10	.644	4.292	85.189						
11	.549	3.661	88.850						
12	.538	3.586	92.435						
13	.425	2.835	95.270						
14	.371	2.475	97.745						
15	.338	2.255	100.000						

Table 3 presents the results of the principal components factor analysis (rotated component matrix) using a varimax rotation on the 15 statements. The initial solutions were rotated using the varimax procedure, and factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were retained. There were 6 factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, and these factors were retained for further study. These factors collectively account for 64.5% of the variation in the data.

Table 4 contains the coefficients to express the standardised variables in terms of the factors. From the table, it is evident that Factor 1 is loaded with 3 of the 15 variables (i.e., the absolute value of the factor loading is greater than 0.5). These variables include upper class, with a coefficient of 0.748; charming, with a coefficient of 0.706; and outgoing, with a coefficient of 0.585. Likewise, Factor 2 is loaded with four variables, including honest, with a coefficient of 0.729; cheerful, with a coefficient of 0.576; original, with a coefficient of 0.597; and reliable, with a coefficient of 0.691. Factor 3 is correlated with the factor tough,

with a coefficient of 0.897. Though Factor 3 has a loading of just one variable, it has a very large coefficient of 0.879. Because the factor very strongly identifies with tough, Factor 3 can be taken into consideration to explain the personality of Levi's. Of all the six factors, Factors 1, 2 and 3 together explain 42.05% of the variance in the model, and it is these three factors that describe the personality of the brand. Factor 1, which is correlated with variables like upper class, charming and outgoing, reflects the Sophistication dimension of personality. Factor 2, with variables like honest, cheerful, original and reliable having large coefficients, reflects the Sincerity dimension of personality. Factor 3 represents the Ruggedness dimension of personality (Table 4). From this, it is evident that the Indian consumer perceives Levi's jeans to be a sophisticated, sincere and rugged brand.

Table 3

Rotated component matrix: Levi's (Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis)

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Down-to-earth	−.053	.002	.129	.045	.097	.801
Honest	−.272	.729	.172	−.057	−.051	.175
Original	.184	.597	−.014	.114	.100	.101
Cheerful	.004	.576	−.098	.175	.499	.052
Daring	−.037	.123	.094	.009	.802	.228
Spirited	.295	−.106	.299	.103	.416	−.381
Imaginative	.062	−.116	−.189	.809	.094	−.107
Up-to-date	.129	.207	.370	.724	−.016	.093
Reliable	.358	.691	.131	−.180	.061	−.227
Intelligent	.479	.359	−.315	.347	−.085	.092
Successful	.329	.250	−.087	−.146	.293	.525
Upper-class	.748	.100	−.074	.142	.179	−.147
Charming	.706	−.003	.222	.036	−.326	.128
Outgoing	.585	.044	.495	.001	.165	.072
Tough	.040	.103	.879	−.001	.032	.051

Table 4
Brand personality: Levi's

Factor 1 (Sophistication)	Factor 2 (Sincerity)	Factor 3 (Rugged)
Upper-class = .748	Honest = .729	Tough = .829
Charming = .706	Cheerful = .576	
Outgoing = .585	Reliable = .691	
	Original = .597	
Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Imaginative = .809	Daring = .802	Down to earth = .801
Up-to-date = .801		Successful = .525

Brand Personality of Samsung

For the study of Samsung mobile phones, the KMO value is 0.598 (Table 5), which is greater than the alpha value (level of significance) of .05.

Table 5
KMO and Bartlett's test: Samsung

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.598
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	approx. chi-square	273.953
	df	105
	sig.	.000

Table 6 contains the initial eigenvalues and proportions of variance explained by each factor. Factors that were retained for further study had a value of at least 1. Six factors with initial eigenvalues greater than 1 were identified. These six factors together explain 61.1% of the total variance in the model. The first factor explains 17.2% of the variance, and the other factors explain 11.2%, 9.23%, 8.46%, 7.65% and 7.37% of the variance in the rotated solution.

Table 6 presents the principal component analysis using a varimax rotation, and all factors with eigenvalues greater than 1 were retained. This resulted in the identification of six factors, which accounted for 61.1% of the total variance. Table 7 is the rotated component matrix, which indicates the coefficients of each of the variables for each factor.

Factors were named after the items that had their largest loadings on that factor (Table 8). Factor 1 reflects the Sophistication dimension of personality because it is loaded with variables like upper-class (coefficient = .716), charming (coefficient = .731), and intelligent (coefficient = .635). Factor 2 indicates an Exciting dimension to the brand personality, which is further qualified by the brand being daring (coefficient = .672), imaginative (coefficient = .0.528), up-to-

date (coefficient = .595) and successful (coefficient = .732). Factors 1 and 2 reflect the personality of Samsung because they have the largest loadings of variables. All of the variables have large coefficients, and both of the factors together explain 28.4% of the variability in the model. Hence, Samsung, based on the perceptions of the Indian customer, may be considered a sophisticated and exciting brand.

Table 6
Total variance explained: Samsung (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis)

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.591	17.275	17.275	2.591	17.275	17.275	1.921	12.804	12.804
2	1.668	11.121	28.397	1.668	11.121	28.397	1.773	11.819	24.623
3	1.385	9.235	37.631	1.385	9.235	37.631	1.465	9.769	34.392
4	1.270	8.465	46.097	1.270	8.465	46.097	1.391	9.275	43.667
5	1.145	7.633	53.729	1.145	7.633	53.729	1.319	8.791	52.457
6	1.106	7.374	61.104	1.106	7.374	61.104	1.297	8.646	61.104
7	.963	6.417	67.521						
8	.833	5.555	73.076						
9	.804	5.357	78.433						
10	.688	4.587	83.020						
11	.643	4.286	87.307						
12	.611	4.076	91.383						
13	.451	3.004	94.386						
14	.442	2.947	97.333						
15	.400	2.667	100.000						

Table 7
Rotated component matrix: Samsung (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis)

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Down to earth	−.128	.048	.692	−.061	.040	−.233
Honest	−.039	−.059	−.011	−.136	.716	.126
Original	−.167	−.069	−.315	.424	.334	.468
Cheerful	.439	.273	−.019	.095	.462	−.144
Daring	.102	.672	.070	.199	−.037	.224
Spirited	.074	−.006	.049	.679	−.032	−.281
Imaginative	−.108	.528	.210	.288	.414	.103
Up-to-date	.305	.595	−.271	.118	−.348	.126
Reliable	.142	.093	.000	−.161	.048	.789
Intelligent	.635	−.091	−.242	.048	.382	−.248
Successful	.011	.732	.106	−.239	.072	−.229
Upper-class	.716	.176	.169	.006	−.116	.138
Charming	.731	.002	.028	.320	−.098	.175
Outgoing	.221	.127	−.026	.624	−.071	.083
Tough	.208	.060	.814	.081	−.044	.195

Table 8
Brand personality: Samsung

Factor 1 (Sophistication)	Factor 2 (Exciting)	Factor 3
Upper-class = .716	Daring = .672	Down to earth = .692
Charming = .731	Imaginative = .528	Tough = .814
Intelligent = .635	Up to date = .595	
	Successful = .732	
Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Spirited = .679	Honest = .716	Reliable = .789

Brand Personality of Coke

Table 9 indicates the results of two tests–the KMO Statistic for sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity.

Table 9
KMO and Bartlett's test: Coke

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.685
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	approx. Chi-Square	448.337
	df	105
	sig.	.000

The KMO measure is 0.685, which is greater than alpha (level of significance is 0.005).

Table 10
Total variance explained (Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis)

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	3.299	21.995	21.995	3.299	21.995	21.995	2.494	16.625	16.625
2	2.060	13.735	35.730	2.060	13.735	35.730	1.919	12.795	29.420
3	1.375	9.169	44.899	1.375	9.169	44.899	1.659	11.062	40.482
4	1.218	8.123	53.022	1.218	8.123	53.022	1.527	10.177	50.659
5	1.038	6.918	59.940	1.038	6.918	59.940	1.392	9.281	59.940
6	.998	6.652	66.592						
7	.844	5.624	72.216						
8	.761	5.071	77.287						
9	.679	4.528	81.816						
10	.619	4.125	85.941						
11	.560	3.735	89.676						
12	.450	2.997	92.673						
13	.422	2.812	95.485						
14	.384	2.560	98.044						
15	.293	1.956	100.000						

Table 10 contains the initial eigenvalues and proportions of variance explained by each factor. The factors retained for further study had a value of more than 1. This resulted in an extraction of five factors. These five factors together explain 59.9% of the variance in the model. Among the five factors, the first factor explains 21.9% of the total variance. Thus, the bulk of the total variance may be attributed to the first factor (21.9% of 51.9%) in the initial solution. The variance is more evenly distributed in the rotated solution, with variances of 16.6%, 12.7%, 11.06%, 10.1% and 9.2%, respectively.

Table 11
Rotated component matrix: Coke (Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis)

	Component				
	1	2	3	4	5
Down-to-earth	.031	.691	.110	.130	.400
Honest	−.067	−.141	.272	.605	−.091
Original	−.067	.721	.143	2.922E-5	−.004
Cheerful	.377	.033	.063	.429	.507
Daring	.624	.168	.357	−.339	.264
Spirited	.048	.280	.643	.054	−.009
Imaginative	.411	−.482	−.046	.097	.232
Up-to-date	−.035	−.064	.815	−.013	.143
Reliable	.267	.112	−.148	.716	.054
Intelligent	.278	−.572	.290	.311	.089
Successful	−.027	.011	.098	−.056	.776
Upper-class	.663	−.428	−.075	.073	−.016
Charming	.629	−.179	−.107	.403	−.027
Outgoing	.815	−.051	.099	.114	−.076
Tough	.363	−.037	.447	.196	−.450

From the rotated component matrix (Table 11) and from Table 12, it is evident that the factors that can be used to describe Coke include Factors 1, 2 and 3 because these three factors together explain 44.8% of the variance in the model. Factor 1 includes variables like upper class (coefficient = 0.663), charming (0.629) and outgoing (coefficient = 0.815), which describe the sophistication dimension of personality. The other personality dimension that describes Coke is Factor 2. It has a loading of 2 variables, with both of the variables corresponding to the personality dimension of sincerity. Both of the variables have fairly large coefficients, with down-to-earth having a coefficient of 0.691 and original having a coefficient of 0.721. Factor 3 has a loading of two variables, spirited, with a coefficient of 0.643, and up to date, with a coefficient of 0.815. Altogether, Coke can be described as an exciting brand.

From the above analysis, it is evident that the brand personality of Coke as perceived by Indian consumers is sophisticated, sincere and exciting.

Brand Personality of McDonalds

The results of the two tests, the KMO Statistic and Bartlett's test, are shown in Table 13. Both tests indicate that there is a definite relationship among the

variables and that factor analysis may be further conducted to identify the factors/components. The KMO measure is 0.643, which is greater than the alpha value (level of significance). The Bartlett's test results show that the *p* value is 0.000, which is again less than the alpha value (0.001). Both tests adequately prove that there is a relationship among the variables and that they can be further reduced to form factors/components.

Table 12
Brand personality: Coke

Factor 1 (Sophisticated)	Factor 2 (Sincerity)	Factor 3 (Exciting)
Daring = .624	Down to earth = .691	Up-to-date = .815
Upper-class = .663	Original = .721	Spirited = .643
Charming = .629		
Outgoing = .815		
Factor 4	Factor 5	
Reliable = .716	Cheerful = .507	
	Successful = .776	

Table 13
KMO and Bartlett's Test: McDonalds

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		.643
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	approx. chi-Square	339.026
	df	105
	sig.	.000

The initial eigenvalues (see Table 14) indicate the proportion of variance explained by each factor. There are a total of six factors with an initial eigenvalue greater than 1. These six factors were retained for further study. These six factors together account for 63.84% of the variance in the model. Of this, 19.12% of the variance is explained by Factor 1, which forms the bulk of the variance. Factors 2, 3, 4, 5 and 6 explain 11.9%, 9.8%, 8.4%, 7.7% and 6.8% of the variance, as indicated in the rotated solution.

Thereafter, the varimax procedure, which minimises the number of variables with large loadings on a factor, was used. The rotated component matrix, when summarised, indicates that four out of six factors have maximum loadings (see Table 15).

Table 14
Total variance explained: McDonalds (Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis)

Component	Initial eigenvalues			Extraction sums of squared loadings			Rotation sums of squared loadings		
	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of variance	Cumulative %
1	2.869	19.127	19.127	2.869	19.127	19.127	2.020	13.469	13.469
2	1.786	11.904	31.032	1.786	11.904	31.032	1.890	12.601	26.071
3	1.476	9.842	40.874	1.476	9.842	40.874	1.524	10.158	36.229
4	1.263	8.423	49.297	1.263	8.423	49.297	1.514	10.097	46.325
5	1.159	7.728	57.025	1.159	7.728	57.025	1.435	9.566	55.891
6	1.024	6.824	63.849	1.024	6.824	63.849	1.194	7.958	63.849
7	.929	6.194	70.043						
8	.781	5.206	75.249						
9	.705	4.698	79.947						
10	.598	3.988	83.934						
11	.577	3.848	87.783						
12	.559	3.728	91.511						
13	.471	3.139	94.650						
14	.429	2.861	97.511						
15	.373	2.489	100.000						

From Table 15, it is apparent that Factors 1, 2, and 3 together explain 40.82% of 63.84% of the variance in the model. Table 16 indicates that these three factors had variables with large coefficients and hence best explain the personality of McDonalds. However, the variables corresponding to each of the factors do not necessarily allude to a single personality dimension as defined in Aaker's scale. Thus, to attribute a personality dimension to each factor, the variable that has the largest coefficient in each factor is taken into consideration because it strongly represents the factor. Factor 1 can be described as exciting because it is best represented by daring, with a larger coefficient of 0.745. Factor 2 indicates that McDonalds is a sincere brand because the variables that describe Factor 2 include honest (coefficient = 0.827) and original (coefficient = 0.783). The study also indicates that McDonalds is a sophisticated brand. Factor 3 is described most strongly by charming, with a coefficient of 0.746. Hence, Indian consumers perceive McDonalds as an exciting, sincere and sophisticated brand.

Table 15
Rotated component matrix: McDonalds (Extraction method: Principal Component Analysis)

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Down-to-earth	.044	.176	.155	.152	−.781	.192
Honest	−.023	.827	−.065	.132	.006	−.014
Original	.054	.783	.271	−.041	−.098	−.001
Cheerful	.690	−.252	.027	.124	−.093	−.049
Daring	.745	.211	−.082	.014	.104	.055
Spirited	.294	−.006	−.032	.690	−.019	.013
Imaginative	.457	.237	.239	.377	−.300	−.045
Up-to-date	.441	.094	.604	−.285	.050	−.080
Reliable	−.104	.094	.112	.746	.060	−.034
Intelligent	.442	.229	.279	.000	.109	−.553
Successful	.102	.398	−.151	.300	−.138	−.560
Upper-class	−.034	.136	.280	.195	.648	.264
Charming	−.103	.058	.855	.235	.072	.001
Outgoing	.423	−.038	.260	.078	.491	.158
Tough	.293	.380	−.024	.109	.049	.654

Note: Rotation method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalisation; Rotation converged in 9 iterations

Table 16
Brand Personality: McDonalds

Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3
Cheerful = 0.690	Honest = 0.827	Up-to-date = 0.604
Daring = 0.745	Original = 0.783	Charming = 0.855
Factor 4	Factor 5	Factor 6
Spirited = 0.690	Upper Class = 0.648	Tough = 0.654
Reliable = 0.746	Down to earth = 0.781	Successful = 0.560
		Intelligent = 0.553

ANALYSIS

Factor analysis conducted on all four brands reveals the personality dimensions of the brands and the variables used to describe each of them. The scale as devised by Aaker cannot be totally generalised in the Indian context. The way each personality dimension is described may vary from one brand to another.

In the case of Levi's, based on the loading of variables on each factor, it can be described as a sophisticated and sincere brand. Levi's is considered sophisticated because it is upper class, charming and outgoing. Its sincerity is based on the fact that it is honest, cheerful and reliable. Samsung is regarded as sophisticated and exciting. It is considered sophisticated by the Indian consumers because it is upper class, charming and intelligent. It is exciting because it is daring, imaginative, up-to-date and successful. Coke is a sophisticated and sincere brand. Coke is sophisticated because it is upper class, charming and outgoing, and it is sincere because it is down to earth and original. The McDonalds brand is perceived as a sincere (honest and original), exciting (cheerful and daring) and sophisticated brand (up to date and charming)

From the above, it is evident that Jennifer Aaker's scale is largely applicable to Indian brands. However, it cannot be overlooked that the Indian consumer's perception of a sophisticated durable consumer brand may include intelligent and outgoing as personality dimensions for sophistication. Thus, the Indian consumer's perception of a brand personality may not correspond completely with the scale as devised by Aaker. Another interesting pattern that emerges is that all the brands in the study are perceived to be sophisticated brands by Indian consumers. It may be thus assumed that the Indian consumer perceives a global brand as sophisticated. This cannot be conclusively claimed because this assertion would require a study involving a larger number of brands across a wider spectrum of product categories. To summarise, Jennifer Aaker's original scale and the scale as it emerges from the study on Indian consumers are depicted in Table 17.

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

From a practical standpoint, the findings offer important implications for the development of branding strategies. In today's competitive climate, creating and managing an appropriate brand personality has become vital for effective positioning and differentiation. In addition, brand personality has a strong effect on brand attitude, brand preference, brand loyalty and brand relationship strength. An understanding of brand personality in the Indian context may provide additional insight to marketers as to how the construct can function for utilitarian

products, symbolic products and a broader class of products that are both symbolic and utilitarian in nature.

Table 17
A comparative brand personality chart

	Personality dimension	Jennifer Aaker's scale	As in the Indian context
1.	Sincerity	Down to earth Honest Cheerful Wholesome	Down to earth Honest Reliable Original
2.	Excitement	Daring Imaginative Up-to-date Spirited	Daring Imaginative Up-to-date Successful
3.	Sophistication	Upper class Charming	Upper class Charming Intelligent Outgoing
4.	Rugged	Tough Outdoorsy	Tough

FUTURE RESEARCH

An avenue for future research may be to investigate the antecedents and consequences of the different brand personality dimensions. There also exists substantial scope to conduct further research in the Indian context. Research could focus on using Aaker's Brand Personality Scale to investigate the impact of brand extensions on the existing brand personalities of a mother brand. Further studies could also aim to understand the relationship between a brand and the Indian consumer by identifying the brand preferences of consumers based on personality types.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATION OF STUDY

It is widely suggested that a variety of marketing variables help create the personality of a brand (Batra et al., 1993; Levy, 1959; Plummer, 1985). This study identifies what constitutes the personality of a brand in different product categories. These brand personalities can help in developing the emotional aspects of these brands for consumers by providing depth, feelings and liking and thus provide that much-needed texture and depth to the relationship between brand and consumer (London, 1974). In addition, brand personalities augment the

personal meaning of a brand to the consumer (Levy, 1959). Brand personalities can definitely be used as a tool by marketers to target consumers and build relationships with them (Aaker, 1996), and when expressed properly through marketing communication, brand personality positively affects a consumer's attitude towards a brand. It can increase word of mouth by consumers and indirectly affects brand loyalty. Using these traits of brand personality as antecedents in the form of user imagery, advertising, packaging, etc. (Batra et al., 1993; Levy, 1959; Plummer, 1985), will help in increasing consumer preference (Sirgy, 1982), evoke emotions in consumers (Biel, 1993) and thereby increase levels of trust and loyalty (Fournier, 1994). This study reflects the personality dimensions as perceived by Indian consumers. Thus, a global marketer strategising for the Indian market could well take Jennifer Aaker's scale and customise it, taking Indian sensibilities into consideration to humanise a brand and bring it closer to the customer.

A major limitation of this study was that it was conducted in New Delhi and its neighbouring areas. Although it is cosmopolitan and large, the area does not sufficiently represent the large and diverse population of India. The number of product categories and brands considered for study could be increased to attain a more comprehensive picture.

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