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Impact of Brand Anthropomorphism &Advertising Effectiveness on Consumer Brand Identity

D. Anandhi[1*] and M. Prakash[2]

[1]Department of Commerce Kaamadhenu College of Arts & Science Sathyamangalam – 638 503
Tamil Nadu, India Email: poojasri_2004@yahoo.co.in
[2]Department of Commerce (CA) Kaamadhenu College of Arts & Science Sathyamangalam– 638 503
Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

The primary purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of brand anthropomorphism on advertising effectiveness. This paper also investigates the impact of brand anthropomorphism and advertising effectiveness towards consumer brand identity. The research design enforced is descriptive research. Standardized scales are adopted to collect data. This article endeavors to measure the effectiveness of brand anthropomorphic characters usage in the Duracell Bunny advertising campaign. The sample units considered for this paper are the consumers of Duracell Alkaline Batteries. Sampling technique employed in this study is Convenience Sampling Technique. After reviewing and decimating double-barreled responses, 339 filled out questionnaires remained, which are used for further statistical analysis.The outcomes of Pearson's correlation coefficient between Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness ascertained to be positively significant. The results extend to the academic literature in the marketing domain. This paper also imparts to the conceptualizations of marketing practices.

KEYWORDS; Brand Anthropomorphism, Advertising Effectiveness, and Consumer Brand Identity

*Corresponding Author

D. Anandhi

Doctoral Scholar

Department of Commerce

Kaamadhenu College of Arts & Science

Sathyamangalam – 638 503 Tamil Nadu, India

Email: poojasri_2004@yahoo.co.in

INTRODUCTION

Anthropomorphic brand eccentrics are pervasive in brandmarking (Epley et al., 2008)[1]. The function of brand building lineaments to appeal customers, express the benefits, and build brand awareness demands aggressive mercantile constitution (Elliott, Percy, and Pervan, 2018)[2]. The symbolization of brand anthropomorphism in a fanciful nonhuman character is the perceptual experience of humanlike characteristics (Tuskej and Podnar, 2018)[3]. Such humanlike features may compound the advertising effectiveness through emotional charm, physical appearance, and psychological conditions (Gray, Gray, & Wegner, 2007)[4]. An imaginary anthropoidal fictional character can be anything that pretends with apparent independence (Hart and Royne, 2017)[5]. Shaffer (2014)[6] expounds brand anthropomorphic representations to be crucial determinants of advertising effectiveness.

Furthermore, examinations on consumer–brand relationships, brand communities, and acceptance behavior demonstrate that consumer brand identity plays a rudimentary function in branding (Swaminathan, Page, and Gurhan-Canli, 2007)[7]. Investigators have experienced the developing passion on brand identity among the consumers (Huber, Meyer, and Schmid, 2015)[8]. The classical role of advertising effectiveness and brand anthropomorphism on consumer brand identity legitimate the need for further investigation.

Problem Statement and Purpose of the Study

Humankind uses relatively naive cognitive executions to understand the universe that environs them (Murphy and Medin, 1985)[9]. Over the recent decades, brand anthropomorphism in advertising has earned attention (Holtzman, 2018)[10]. It is indispensable to examine the influence of brand anthropomorphism on advertising effectiveness in order to have an in-depth apprehension. However, usage of such brand anthropomorphic characters are found to be unexplored by investigators. Hence, these narrow margins in previous researches validate the need for further examination in this domain. It is also observed that there is utterly no exploration that highlight the antecedents of consumer brand identity using brand anthropomorphism and advertising effectiveness. Looking at the emphasis on the consumer brand identity, it is storming to acknowledge how very few researches have concentrated in these marketing attributes. Accordingly, this paper would elucidate these extremely influential but less researched constructs.In light of these aforesaid problem statement, the principal purpose of this paper is to examine the influence of brand anthropomorphism on advertising effectiveness. Moreover, this paper also investigates the impact of brand anthropomorphism and advertising effectiveness towards consumer brand identity in the South Asian context. Deliberating the fact that brand lineaments are not mere fluke, this paper confabulates the meticulous contrivance of branding through brand anthropomorphism using advertising

effectiveness and consumer brand identity among Indian consumers. This article shows how a nonhuman character has moved towards brand resonance.

Research Questions

a) What is the influence of Brand Anthropomorphism in ascertaining Advertising Effectiveness?

b) What is the role of Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness in determining Consumer Brand Identity?

Objectives

1) To examine the influence of Brand Anthropomorphism on Advertising Effectiveness.

2) To analyze the impact of Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness towards Consumer Brand Identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Anthropomorphism

Ambroise and Valette-Florence (2010)[11] examined the groundings of the personality concept in marketing and studied the influence of the product category on brand personality metaphor. The authors supported that differences in perceived brand personality using brand anthropomorphism were established more on the brand itself than on its product category.Aggarwal and McGill (2012)[12] investigated the automatic behavioral consequences of priming brands on brand anthropomorphism. It was derived that primed contrastive behavior bestowed to towards servant brands and disliked partner brands. Rauschnabel and Ahuvia (2014)[13] examined the role of brand anthropomorphism in the context of defensive marketing among German internet users. The findings observed that brand anthropomorphism's predictive power differed between relationship-specific attributes and category-level evaluation. Avis and Aitken (2015)[14] explored the impact of brand anthropomorphism in the development of the concepts of brand relationships. The authors found that brand anthropomorphism was articulated as a research 'gimmick' which provided the cornerstones for the evolution of the brand relationship concepts.Soni and Jain (2017)[15] observed the need for punctilious sculpting of strong brand associations to construct a strong brand. The determinations revealed that an impregnable consumer-character brand relationship as the key behind big success of brand anthropomorphism.

Advertising Effectiveness

Brettel and Spilker-Attig (2010)[16] analyzed the influence of consumer behavior towards advertising effectiveness. The authors pointed out that expenditure and efforts in the various advertising channels reflect better effectiveness. Teeni-Harari (2013)[17] demonstrated the effects of advertising involvement and product involvement on advertising effectiveness using a quantitative

study. It was found that peer and parent influence, subjective product knowledge, and age were the significant endogenous variables towards advertising effectiveness. Mansour and Diab (2016)[18] attempted to ascertain the mediating role of religionism on attitudes towards celebrity-endorsed advertising. The results disclosed that likeability and attractiveness had positive impact on attitude and buying behavior. Acar and Temiz (2017)[19] examined the relationship between advertising expenses and accounting measures of income and profitability. The findings confirmed a significant association between advertising expenditures and performance.

Consumer Brand Identity

Ambroise and Valette-Florence (2010)[20] observed the lack of theoretical foundations and ontological legitimacy and reflected the affiliation of personality beyond the brand itself. The outcomes substantiated the existence of a stable consumer brand identity. Swimberghe, Astakhova, and Wooldridge (2014)[21] incorporated consumer brand identity theory and elaborated the definition of brand passion. The authors suggested that the conceptualization of consumer brand identity to be much more composite than previously proposed. Marticotte, Arcand, and Baudry (2016)[22] studied brand evangelism by examining the role of brand community identification, brand loyalty, and self-brand connection. The findings established a strong association between the desire to harm the rival brand and participation in trash-talking.Orth and Rose (2017)[23] incorporated the social identity complexity theory with the brand symbolism literature and hypothesized to influence the adoption of new brands. The results demonstrated that high brand identity complexity consumers were more prospective to adopt a new brand that put forward a unique social self.

Conceptual Framework

The review of extant literature leads to the following conceptual model (Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model):
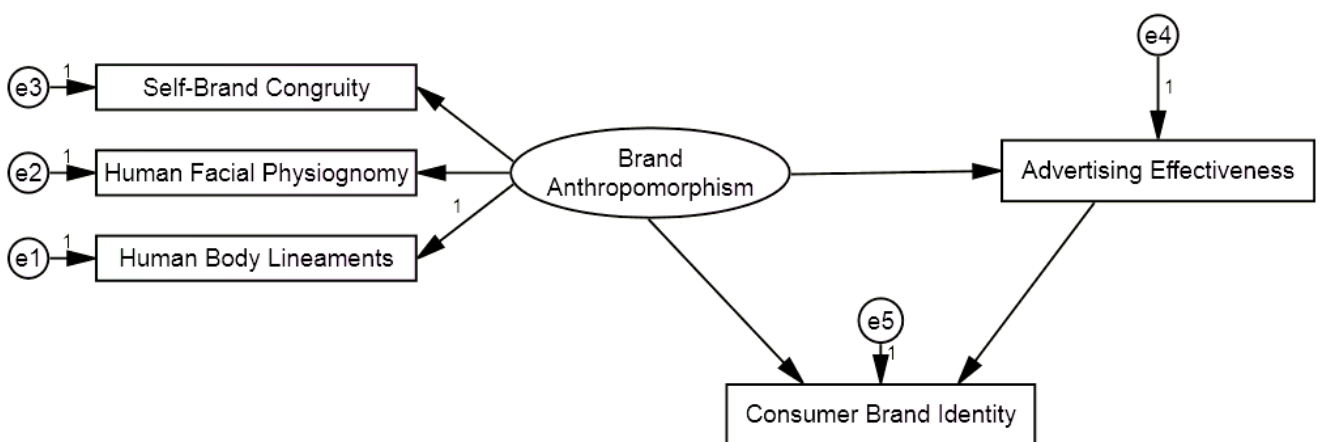
Figure 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework–Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model

RESEARCH METHODS

Research in social science characters a systematic process that focuses on collecting a concourse of data for analysis (Love, 2012)[24]. The research design enforced in this paper is descriptive research. In this paper, standardized scales are adopted from previous researches to collect data. The Brand Anthropomorphism scale is adopted from 12-item Brand Anthropomorphism scale developed by Guido and Peluso (2015)[25]. The Advertising Effectiveness scale is adopted from Advertising Effectiveness instrument developed by Kumar (2018)[26]. The Consumer Brand Identity scale is adopted from Brand Value Scale developed by Gaus et al. (2015)[27]. This article endeavors to measure the effectiveness of brand anthropomorphic characters usage in the Duracell Bunny advertising campaign. The sample units considered for this paper are the consumers of Duracell Alkaline Batteries.

The area of this study refers to Coimbatore and Bangalore. The reason for selecting South India is the researchers' awareness and convenience. The data collection process is executed for a period of six year, from April to September 2018.Sampling technique employed in this study is Convenience Sampling Technique.After reviewing and decimating double-barreled responses, 339 filled out questionnaires remained (72.15% response rate), which are used for further statistical analysis.Correlation and Regression Analyses are used to test the formulated hypotheses using IBM SPSS statistical software package. Furthermore, the proposed model is analyzed using Structural Equation Modelling in IBM AMOS software package.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The influence of Brand Anthropomorphism on Advertising Effectivenessis examined using Pearson's correlation coefficient. The sub-scales of Brand Anthropomorphism are Human Body Lineaments, Human Facial Physiognomy, and Self-Brand Congruity.

H₁: Brand Anthropomorphism will positively influence Advertising Effectiveness

Table 1 – Correlations

Correlations		Human Body Lineaments	Human Facial Physiognomy	Self-Brand Congruity	Advertising Effectiveness
Human Body Lineaments	Pearson Correlation	1	.283**	.294**	.441**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	339	339	339	339
Human Facial Physiognomy	Pearson Correlation	.283**	1	.393**	.249**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000
	N	339	339	339	339
Self-Brand Congruity	Pearson Correlation	.294**	.393**	1	.272**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	339	339	339	339
Advertising Effectiveness	Pearson Correlation	.441**	.249**	.272**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
	N	339	339	339	339

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The outcomes of correlation between Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness are summarized in Table 1. It can be ascertained from the results that all the Brand Anthropomorphism sub-scales are positively significant with Advertising Effectiveness. Hence, the proposed hypothesis H$_1$ is accepted. Therefore, it can be generalized that Brand Anthropomorphic characters substantially contribute Advertising Effectiveness.Further to the disclosure of moderate-positive correlation between Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness, it can be observed from the 'r' values that the higher degree of correlation is noticed between Human Body Lineaments and Advertising Effectiveness at 44.1%, followed by Human Facial Physiognomy at 27.2%, and Self-Brand Congruity at 24.9%. From this analysis, it can be inferred that Brand Anthropomorphic substantially heightens the Advertising Effectiveness among the consumers of Duracell Alkaline Batteries.

The impact of Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness towards Consumer Brand Identity is assessed using regression analysis. In this regard, Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness are considered as independent variables and Consumer Brand Identity is considered as dependent variable.The proposed hypotheses to measure this relationship are:

H$_2$: Brand Anthropomorphismwill positively influence Consumer Brand Identity

H$_3$: Advertising Effectiveness will positively influence Consumer Brand Identity

Table 2 – Linear Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.915[a]	.837	.836	.23073

a. Predictors: (Constant), Advertising Effectiveness, Brand Anthropomorphism

It can be determined from Table 2 that the regression value 'R' is at 91.5%, the R Square value is at 83.7%, and the adjusted R Square value is at 83.6%. It can be interpreted from the R Square value that the weighted aggregation of the predictor variables explains 83.7% of the difference in Consumer Brand Identity. Thus, it can be inferred that 83.7% variance in Consumer Brand Identity is reported by Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectiveness. The Coefficient values in Table 3 reveal that both Brand Anthropomorphism and Advertising Effectivenessare significant with Consumer Brand Identity. Hence, H_2 and H_3 are accepted.

Table 3 – Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.559	.106		5.259	.000
	Brand Anthropomorphism	.272	.026	.258	10.577	.000
	Advertising Effectiveness	.609	.019	.774	31.766	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Brand Identity

Model Fit Test based on 'Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model':

Structural Equation Modeling is one of the widely applied econometric techniques for simulating models of effects among three or more constructs (Stankov and Raykov, 1995)[28]. Apart from linear regression, SEM appropriates for the unambiguous modeling of many measures, like: residual variances of the endogenous variables, measurement error, and covariances among predictors in both the exogenous and endogenous variables.The results of the proposed Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model are exhibited in Figure 2.Accordingly, Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model is analyzed using SEM in IBM AMOS. The proposed Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model's Chi-Square value is found to be significant (p = 0.000).The CMIN/DF value of the proposed Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model is 2.688 establishing an acceptable fit. The GFI value of this proposed Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model is 0.932 demonstrating a satisfactory fit. The AGFI value of this proposed Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model is 0.998 establishing a marginal fit. The RMR and CFI values of this proposed Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model are 0.952 and 0.948 manifesting good fit.Considering the SEM fit indices, it can be inferred that the proposed Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model has a good degree of fitness (Lee and Hershberger, 1990)[29].
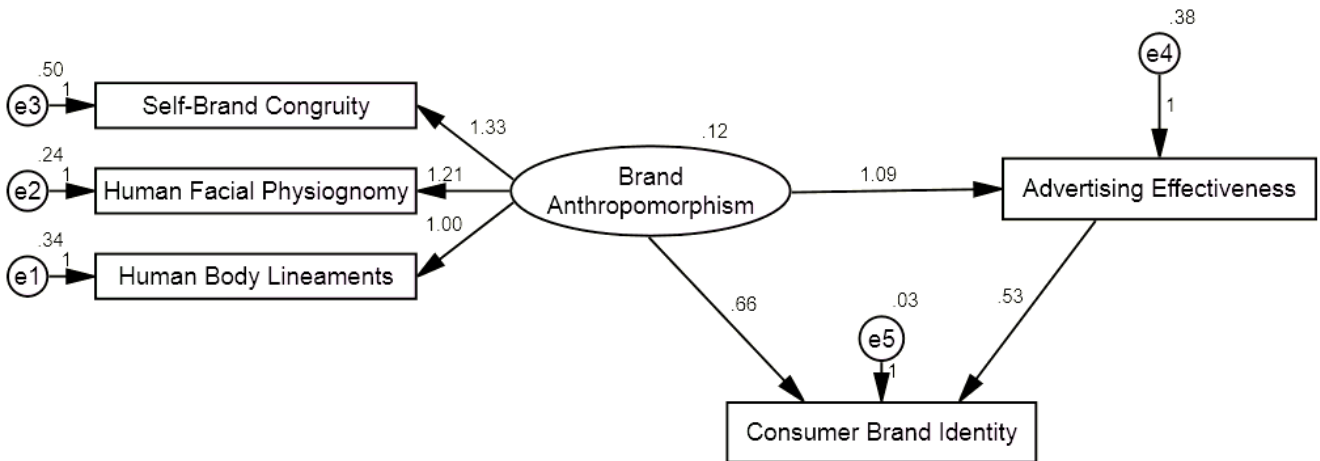
Figure 2: Structural Equation Modeling – Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model

CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

Understanding of consumers decision making process has been vastly exceeded by scientific apprehension of human beings gestating nonhuman agents for every bit in life. It is indispensable to empathize how consumers associate trivial nonhuman components as a source for brand identity, and the link between these associations are authenticated in this paper. Global organizations assign significant percentages of marketing funds towards advertising. Increasing demand for marketing accountability demands managers to forfeit importance to the efficiency of marketing initiatives. By empathizing brand anthropomorphism, apparently this paper renders insights into the advertising effectiveness variable. The results of this article serve as touchstones for interpreting the antecedents of consumer brand identity.The proposed conceptual framework, "Anandhi Anthropomorphic Identity Model" that incorporates the influenced variables is examined using SEM.A substantial managerial implication of the findings is that brand anthropomorphism is essential to enhance advertising effectiveness. Empathizing how consumers envisage about relatively nonhuman agents can have potentially crucial range of managerial implications.By designing a conceptual model, this paper provides authoritative insights into primal antecedents of consumer brand identity.

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