



Impact of celebrity personality on brand personality in malted milk powder industry: empirical study using young consumers in Southern Province

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Abstract

Brand personality is one of the core dimensions of brand equity, which is concerned with how people attach a “pseudo” human personality to the brand itself. Brand personality has received considerable attention because it increases consumer preference and usage as well as levels of trust and loyalty. During last decade, Sri Lanka also has seen a tremendous growth in marketing expenditure, especially in the area of brand development. Endorser strategy is one of the most popular marketing practices used by these marketers in order to develop brand personality. However, at the same time there are many arguments into which how does the Celebrity Personality impacts Brand Personality. Thus, the objective of the research is to determine the Impact of Celebrity Personality on Brand Personality. The study was conducted as a survey where respondents were provided with a structured questionnaire, which comprises with statements for which respondents were allowed to provide their level of agreement. Questionnaire was based on Aaker's (1997), brand personality scale that was administered among a sample of 158. Data were analyzed using quantitative techniques where mean comparison and t-tests were used to test hypotheses. Research reveals that there is a strong relationship between Celebrity Personality on Brand Personality except in the areas of sincerity and tempting.

Keywords: Brand Personality; Celebrity Personality; Consumer Behavior

Introduction

Sri Lankan Marketing environment is changing rapidly. Companies use different strategies to overcome the competition as well as to become successful in the market place. One major area of concern is advertising management, during the process, organizations spend millions of money for their advertising campaigns to overcome the competition and improve brand Equity. According to Aker (1996), brand personality is one of the core dimensions of brand equity. Moreover, Keller (2007) has mentioned that a distinctive brand personality can help create a set of unique and favorable associations in consumer memory and thus build and enhance brand equity. Therefore, brand personality plays major role in brand building process at the same time using celebrities as there brand ambassadors in order to build brand personality has been observed as a common phenomenon by most of the organizations. According to, Agrawal and Kamakura (1995), 20% of all television advertisements

in the United States uses a famous person as an endorser. Companies pay millions of dollars each year for the endorsement of their products by celebrities. In 2003, Nike spent \$US 1.44 billion on celebrity endorsers, in 2004, Gillette signed an endorsement deal with soccer celebrity David Beckham worth around \$US 40 million. Despite the importance as far as author knowledge is concerned there have not been any study done in Sri Lankan context to find out whether there is a relationship between brand ambassador personality and brand personality. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to fill that gap by finding out whether there is a relationship between brand ambassador personality and brand personality using malted milk powder category in Sri Lanka. In Sri Lankan Malted milk industry, there are two main competitors. Both of companies advertise heavily using and both of companies use celebrities in their advertising campaigns. If there is any significant impact of Celebrity Personality on Brand Personality it will affect

for brand equity, and ultimately for organization objectives. According to authors, knowledge there has not been any study done in Sri Lankan context to find out whether there is a relationship between brand ambassador personality and brand personality in malted milk industry. There for it is important to fill that gap by finding out whether there is a relationship between brand ambassador personality and brand personality in malted milk power category in Sri Lanka. To find out whether brand ambassador personality has a significant impact over brand personality with special reference to the malted milk powder industry in Sri Lanka. In order to achieve the above objective research will test six hypotheses.

H1: There is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Sincerity and Brand Sincerity.

H2: There is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Excitement and Brand Excitement.

H3: There is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Competence and Brand Competence.

H4: There is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Sophistication and Brand Sophistication.

H5: There is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Ruggedness and Brand Ruggedness.

H6: There is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Tempting and Brand Tempting.

Litreature Review

“brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers”. (O'Guinn, et al., 2003). Brand could be described in terms of three different classes of characteristics: physical attributes, functional characteristics, and brand personality (Plummer, 2000). In recent years, there has been increased interest in the brand personality construct as its strategic importance has become more apparent. At the same time Brand, personality is defined as “the set of human characteristics associated with a brand” (Aaker, 1997). By using the brand, consumers are likely to create expectations about the features, performance and benefits of the brand. Beyond such expectations, consumers often connect brands' identities with human personality attributes, and this in turn leads to the symbolic use of the brand (Hawkins et al., 2001). According to Aker (1997), brand personality is one of the core dimensions of brand equity. It is concerned with how people attach a “pseudo” human personality to the brand itself, rather than to what the brand does (Keller, 1998). Further according to Sirgy (1982) brand personality has received considerable attention from marketing scholars, because brand personality does

increases consumer preference and usage as well as levels of trust and loyalty (Aaker, 1997). In theoretical terms, product/brand personality evokes emotional links between brands and consumers (Landon, 1974), in the most comprehensive study to date, Aaker (1997) identified the “Big Five” dimensions of brand personality: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. Further brands can be characterized by personality descriptors, such as youthful, energetic, extrovert, or sophisticated (Keller 1998). A distinctive brand personality can help create a set of unique and favorable associations in consumer memory and thus build and enhance brand equity (Keller, 1993; Johnson et al., 2000). As a result, brand personality is considered an important factor for the success of a brand in terms of preference and choice (Batra et al., 1993). Moreover brand personality creates stronger emotional ties to the brand and greater trust and loyalty (Johnson, et al., 2000), thus providing an enduring basis for differentiation (Aaker and Fournier, 1995) which is difficult to copy (Aaker, 1996). From a managerial perspective, brand personality enables firms to communicate with their customers about the brand more effectively and plays a major role in advertising and promotional efforts (Plummer, 1985). These circumstances have made, marketing practitioners become increasingly aware of the importance of building “a clear and distinctive brand personality” (Yaverbaum, 2001). Further, out of the variables in the marketing mix, marketing communication has often been regarded as the most influential in the process of creating a brand personality (Anderson and Rubin, 1986). In this case personalities are particularly useful for the creation of brand associations. Brand associations influence the “evaluation of alternatives” when it comes to the consumer decision-making stage. The most commonly used method for personality creation is by means of using celebrity endorsers. McCracken (1989) defines celebrity endorser as any individual who enjoys public recognition and who uses this recognition on behalf of a consumer good by appearing with it in an advertisement. Further, according to the same writer, Process of endorsement may involve any one of a number of different endorser roles and endorsement types, including the celebrity as an expert, as a spokesperson associated with a product in a long-term capacity, or as an aspirational figure with no particular knowledge of, or relationship with, the product. A successful endorser strategy can increase the level of consumers' recall toward product information

(Friedman and Friedman, 1979), strengthen consumers' recognition of brands (Kamins, 1989), and even increase consumers' purchase intention and preference toward brand (Bower and Landreth, 2001). When looking at the history of celebrity endorsements, study notices that personalities from the entertainment industry were used for the first time by Murad Cigarettes in the year 1905 (Clark and Horstmann, 2003). Adidas popularized use of sports celebrities in the 1950s when its communication campaigns featured celebrities like Franz Beckenbauer. Researchers like Agrawal and Kamakura (1995) have cited sources that claim that around 20 per cent of all commercials aired on television feature celebrities, the emphasis being on soft drinks and athletic shoes.

Methodology

Survey method was used for the study. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires given to the undergraduates at university premises. Population includes all undergraduates in the University of Ruhuna. Here 158 students were selected randomly, by administering a questionnaire to the third student for every five students who entered the two main student canteens. Questionnaire was based on Aaker (1997) "Big Five" dimensions of brand

personality: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness, at the same time extra dimension called "tempting" added using the information collected through qualitative interviews to increase the adaptability of the questionnaire. At the same time certain variables were drop from the questionnaire due to the poor results recorded in the initial phase of testing the questionnaire, which took place among a sample of 15 respondents. The research selected Nestomalt and Viva as the respective malted milk brands under study and for the research, Chathurika Petris, Surandra Perera, and Pradeep Rangana were considered as celebrities for Nestomalt and Kumar sangakkara was selected as the Celebrity for Viva. Nestomalt Actigan E campaign and Vivas 'Mama Kumara" commercials selected as advertisements for our research. Figure 01 shows the conceptual model and the table 01 shows the operationalization of variables. Questionnaire carried scale type questions where respondents were provided with statements which they can Strongly Agree, Agree, Slightly Agree, Neither Agree nor Disagree, Slightly Disagree, Disagree and Strongly Disagree; scores of 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1 were assigned respectively for above mentioned categories. Mean comparison, t-test and f-test were used to test hypotheses.

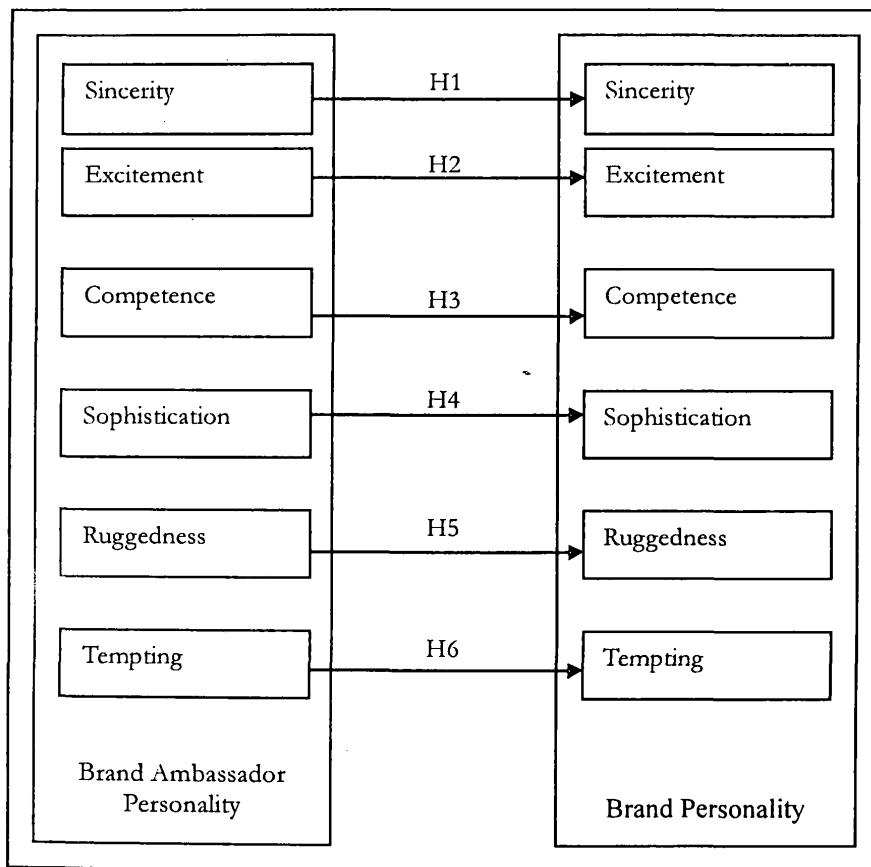


Figure 01: Conceptual Framework

Table 01. Operationalization of Variables

Personality	Sincerity	S1	Down to Earth
		S2	Family Oriented
		S3	Honest
		S4	Real
		S5	Wholesome
		S6	Cheerful
		S7	Friendly
	Excitement	E1	Daring
		E2	Trendy
		E3	Exciting
		E4	Cool
		E5	Young
		E6	Unique
		E7	Up to Date
		E8	Independent
		E9	Reliable
	Competence	C1	Secure
		C2	Intelligent
		C3	Technical
		C4	Successful
		C5	Corporative
		C6	Leader
	Sophistication	So1	Upper Class
		So2	Glamorous
		So3	Good Looking
		So4	Charming
		So5	Delicate
		So6	Smooth
So7		Feminine	
Ruggedness	R1	Masculine	
	R2	Western	
	R3	Tough	
	R4	Ruggedness	
Tempting	T1	Sexy	
	T2	Arousing	
	T3	Tempting	
	T4	Erotic	

Analysis and Discussion

Overall, the scale had a reliability Alpha value of 0.7763. First, the researchers analyze the type of personality shared by both the brand as well as the celebrity in order to gain understanding about the perceived personality dimensions. Personality was analyzed using six main dimensions, which had 31 sub variables.

According to the mean comparison Nestomalt is a more sincere brand compared to viva. When it comes to Excitement research identifies Nestomalt is more exciting brand compared with viva. (Mean score = 4.11 & 3.98 respectively). However, under the element of competence Viva is perceived to be more competent brand compared to Nestomalt (Mean score = 4.2269 & 4.1313 respectively). More over research identifies that Nestomalt is more sophisticated brand compared to the Viva. (Mean score = 4.0991 & 3.7101 respectively). Under the element of Ruggedness Viva is more Rugged brand comparing with Nestomalt. (Mean score = 3.9412 & 3.8790 respectively). In addition, research identifies that Nestomalt is more tempting brand compared with Viva. (Mean score = 3.7137 & 3.2868 respectively). See Table 02 for more details. According to the mean comparison Surandra perera is more sincere celebrate compared with Chathurika Peris, Kumar Sangakkara, Pradeep Rangana. (Mean score = 4.5000, 4.1607, 4.3195, 3.9643 respectively). Under the element of excitement Surandra perera is more exciting celebrity compared to Chathurika Peris, Kumar Sangakkara, Pradeep Rangana (Mean score = 4.78, 4.19, 4.59, 3.80 respectively).

Table 02. Mean Comparison for Personality Dimensions for the Brand

Malted Milk		Sincerity	Excitement	Competence	Sophistication	Ruggedness	Tempting
Nestomalt	Mean	4.5956	4.1145	4.1313	4.0991	3.8790	3.7137
	N	124	124	124	124	124	124
	SD	2.2338	.9635	.9302	1.2774	1.0832	1.4376
Viva	Mean	3.9244	3.9824	4.2269	3.7101	3.9412	3.2868
	N	34	34	34	34	34	34
	SD	1.1718	.8646	1.7017	.9433	.9575	.8283
Total	Mean	4.4512	4.0861	4.1519	4.0154	3.8924	3.6218
	N	158	158	158	158	158	158
	SD	2.0675	.9420	1.1349	1.2211	1.0548	1.3395

Table 03. Mean comparison for Personality Dimensions for the Celebrity

Celebrity	Sincerity	Excitement	Competence	Sophistication	Ruggedness	Tempting	
Chathurika Peris	Mean	4.1607	4.1904	4.1291	4.8695	3.8558	5.7885
	N	104	104	104	104	104	104
	SD	.9169	.7903	1.0069	1.0380	.9684	12.4772
Kumar Sangakkara	Mean	4.3195	4.5632	5.0677	3.6729	4.4276	3.4671
	N	38	38	38	38	38	38
	SD	1.0352	.5984	1.0144	.7045	.8259	1.2670
Surendra Perera	Mean	4.5000	4.7875	4.3036	4.1607	4.5000	5.0000
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8
	SD	.2415	1.0776	.8654	.4481	.7676	1.1877
Pradeep Rangana	Mean	3.9643	3.8000	4.6786	3.6071	3.7500	3.0625
	N	8	8	8	8	8	8
	SD	.4993	.3464	.5440	.3799	.8018	1.3279

Moreover research identifies that Kumara Sangakkara is more competent celebrity comparing with Chathurika Peris, Pradeep Rangana, Surandra perera (Mean score = 5.0677, 4.1291, 4.6786, 4.3036 respectively) But under the element of Sophistication Chathurika Peris is more sophisticated celebrity Compared with Pradeep Rangana, Surandra perera, Kumar Sangakkara (Mean score = 4.8695, 3.6071, 4.1607, 3.6729 respectively). When it comes to the Ruggedness Surendra Perera is celebrity that is more

rugged. Moreover research identifies that chathurika Peris is more tempting celebrity Compared with others (Mean score = 5.7885). Table 03 provides more details. Research could not find any significant relationship between Brand Sincerity and Celebrity Sincerity, though there were few variables, which were having significant relationships. With these results, research rejected the first hypotheses, which states that there is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Sincerity and Brand Sincerity. See Table 04.

Table 04. Correlations among Brand Sincerity and Celebrity Sincerity

		Celebrity Sincerity							Sincerity	
		S1	S2	S3	S4	S5	S6	S7		
Brand Sincerity	S1	Pearson Correlation	-.026	.091	-.139	-.102	.008	.099	.169	.029
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.750	.254	.081	.203	.922	.217	.034	.717
	S2	Pearson Correlation	.021	.190	-.019	.085	.097	.017	.064	.105
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.798	.017	.810	.291	.226	.833	.426	.188
	S3	Pearson Correlation	.126	.137	.160	.178	.203	.188	.199	.265
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.115	.086	.044	.025	.011	.018	.012	.001
	S4	Pearson Correlation	.036	.267	.132	.241	.087	.137	.134	.230
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.650	.001	.099	.002	.280	.085	.095	.004
	S5	Pearson Correlation	.060	.269	.070	.042	.161	.219	.242	.245
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.455	.001	.381	.598	.043	.006	.002	.002
	S6	Pearson Correlation	-.017	.055	-.149	.250	.023	.014	.169	.070
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.835	.494	.061	.002	.775	.863	.035	.379
	S7	Pearson Correlation	-.045	-.008	-.181	.252	-.018	-.006	.139	.021
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.575	.919	.023	.001	.823	.944	.082	.797
Sincerity	Pearson Correlation	-.003	.125	-.122	.266	.063	.078	.224	.136	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.966	.117	.125	.001	.430	.332	.005	.089	

As explained in Table 05, research did find a significant relationship between Brand Excitement and Celebrity Excitement (Pearson Correlation = 0.417, sig= 0.000). Therefore, research accepted the second hypotheses, which stated that there is a relationship

between Brand Ambassador Excitement and Brand Excitement.

When it comes to Competency research again finds a significant relationship between Brand Competency and Celebrity Competency (Pearson Correlation = 0.243, sig= 0.002). With these results, research accepts

the third hypothesis, which stated that there is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Competence and Brand Competence. Table 06 provides the detail picture. Moreover, according to the data presented in table 07, research found evidence to accept the fourth hypothesis as well. See table 07 for more information.

Table 08 illustrates the relationship between Brand Ruggedness and Celebrity Ruggedness, here again the research found out a significant relationship (Pearson

Correlation = 0.198, sig = 0.013). Therefore, research accepted the fifth hypotheses, which states that there is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Ruggedness and Brand Ruggedness.

Research could not find any significant relationship between Brand Tempting and Celebrity Tempting dimensions of personality. Thus, research rejects the sixth and the final hypothesis, which states that there is a relationship between Brand Ambassador Tempting and Brand Tempting.

Table 05. Correlations between Brand Excitement and Celebrity Excitement

		Celebrity Excitement									Excitement	
		E1	E2	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8	E9		
Brand Excitement	E1	Pearson Correlation	.083	.021	.031	.047	.059	.094	.093	-.122	.034	.079
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.302	.797	.702	.555	.463	.238	.244	.127	.670	.323
	E2	Pearson Correlation	.062	.320	.252	.200	.091	.173	.275	-.071	.197	.327
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.442	.000	.001	.012	.258	.029	.000	.374	.013	.000
	E3	Pearson Correlation	.089	.248	.317	.149	.241	.172	.302	.036	.198	.359
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.268	.002	.000	.061	.002	.031	.000	.651	.012	.000
	E4	Pearson Correlation	.250	-.040	-.095	.185	-.063	.028	-.016	-.053	.031	.077
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.620	.236	.020	.429	.725	.840	.506	.703	.334
	E5	Pearson Correlation	-.043	.421	.164	-.014	.244	.133	.290	.032	.150	.273
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.589	.000	.039	.863	.002	.095	.000	.689	.061	.001
	E6	Pearson Correlation	.004	.135	.068	.038	.137	.175	.284	-.015	-.101	.144
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.958	.092	.396	.640	.087	.028	.000	.854	.209	.070
	E7	Pearson Correlation	.084	.091	.046	-.058	.330	.250	.508	.058	.089	.287
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.294	.257	.563	.469	.000	.002	.000	.472	.265	.000
	E8	Pearson Correlation	.152	.194	-.074	.036	.258	.312	.342	.071	.260	.312
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.056	.015	.356	.649	.001	.000	.000	.378	.001	.000
	E9	Pearson Correlation	.052	.166	-.060	-.016	.321	.164	.278	.086	.178	.229
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.514	.037	.452	.845	.000	.039	.000	.285	.025	.004
Excite ment	Pearson Correlation	.148	.284	.162	.167	.286	.295	.416	-.007	.195	.417	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.063	.000	.042	.036	.000	.000	.000	.927	.014	.000	

Table 06. Correlations between Brand Competency and Celebrity Competency

		Celebrity Competency						Competence	
		C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	C6		
Brand Compete ncy	C1	Pearson Correlation	.125	.103	.157	.192	.034	.158	.157
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.116	.197	.049	.015	.668	.048	.048
	C2	Pearson Correlation	.205	.249	.353	.331	.210	.361	.387
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.010	.002	.000	.000	.008	.000	.000
	C3	Pearson Correlation	.081	.023	.062	.157	.144	.171	.150
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.313	.777	.435	.049	.071	.032	.059
	C4	Pearson Correlation	-.009	.066	-.001	.215	.149	.075	.106
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.914	.408	.992	.007	.062	.348	.186
	C5	Pearson Correlation	.134	.105	.064	.134	.030	-.048	.110
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.094	.191	.427	.092	.705	.553	.169
	C6	Pearson Correlation	-.035	-.017	.139	.007	.118	.142	.071
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.661	.835	.082	.928	.141	.076	.378
Competence	Pearson Correlation	.145	.080	.165	.272	.177	.227	.243	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.069	.315	.038	.001	.026	.004	.002	

Table 07. Correlations between Brand Sophistication and Celebrity Sophistication

		Celebrity Sophistication							Sophistication	
		So1	So2	So3	So4	So5	So6	So7		
Brand Sophistication	So1	Pearson Correlation	.188	.098	-.021	-.137	-.152	-.207	-.141	-.096
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.018	.222	.798	.086	.056	.009	.077	.232
	So2	Pearson Correlation	.048	.166	.226	.096	.110	-.060	.056	.146
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.546	.038	.004	.230	.170	.456	.483	.067
	So3	Pearson Correlation	.262	.199	.283	.071	.088	.023	-.062	.189
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.012	.000	.377	.271	.773	.435	.017
	So4	Pearson Correlation	.331	.089	.278	.177	.127	.056	.150	.280
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.264	.000	.026	.111	.487	.060	.000
	So5	Pearson Correlation	.169	.147	.103	.105	.289	.181	.281	.312
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.034	.066	.196	.191	.000	.023	.000	.000
	So6	Pearson Correlation	.062	.017	.006	.006	.097	.115	.052	.087
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.438	.829	.935	.936	.224	.150	.517	.277
	So7	Pearson Correlation	.062	.165	.066	.064	.117	.058	.239	.191
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.441	.038	.409	.424	.143	.467	.002	.016
Sophistication	Pearson Correlation	.245	.185	.188	.076	.172	.079	.135	.254	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.020	.018	.340	.031	.322	.091	.001	

Table 08. Correlations between Brand Ruggedness and Celebrity Ruggedness

		Celebrity Ruggedness				Ruggedness	
		R1	R2	R3	R4		
Brand Ruggedness	R1	Pearson Correlation	.193	-.123	.146	.127	.169
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.123	.067	.112	.034
	R2	Pearson Correlation	-.060	.187	.206	.030	.129
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.452	.019	.009	.712	.106
	R3	Pearson Correlation	-.128	.140	.181	.205	.136
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.109	.080	.023	.010	.089
	R4	Pearson Correlation	-.056	.058	.175	.078	.090
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.485	.470	.027	.330	.263
	Ruggedness	Pearson Correlation	-.009	.088	.263	.168	.198
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.910	.273	.001	.035	.013

Table 09. Correlations between Brand Tempting and Celebrity Tempting

		Celebrity Tempting				Tempting	
		T1	T2	T3	T4		
Brand Tempting	T1	Pearson Correlation	.416	-.007	.222	.374	.038
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.932	.005	.000	.636
	T2	Pearson Correlation	.423	.094	.350	.315	.140
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.241	.000	.000	.080
	T3	Pearson Correlation	.257	.050	.329	.263	.087
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.530	.000	.001	.280
	T4	Pearson Correlation	.317	.036	.276	.211	.070
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.658	.000	.008	.382
	Tempting	Pearson Correlation	.464	.055	.383	.382	.108
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.495	.000	.000	.178

Conclusion

Objective of this research was to find out whether there is a relationship between brand ambassador personality and brand personality. In order to collect data 158 students were selected randomly, by administering a questionnaire to the third student for every five students who entered the two main student canteens. Questionnaire was based on Aaker (1997) "Big Five" dimensions of brand personality: sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness, at the same time extra dimension called "tempting" added using the information collected through qualitative interviews to increase the adaptability of the questionnaire. Research found out that excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness dimensions of celebrity personality is having a strong relationship with same personality dimensions of that brand. Research could not find evidence to support remaining two dimensional relationships. With the findings researcher would like to conclude that it is important for marketers to select the proper celebrity to endorse their products.

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