The Role of Emotions in Shaping Brand Perception in the Indian Market

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Abstract.

Emotions play a significant role in shaping brand perception among Indian consumers on the product categories such as Food, Electronics, and Clothing. This study investigates the impact of emotions on brand perception using a survey of 120 Indian consumers from diverse demographic backgrounds. The findings reveal that positive emotions, such as joy, trust, and excitement, are associated with favorable brand evaluations, while negative emotions, such as anger, frustration, and disappointment, are associated with unfavorable brand evaluations. The study also identifies the specific emotions that are most influential for different product categories. The major findings of this study are the emotions play a significant role in shaping brand perception among Indian consumers. Positive emotions are associated with favorable brand evaluations, while negative emotions are associated with unfavorable brand evaluations. The specific emotions that are most influential for different product categories vary. Businesses should focus on creating emotional connections with consumers by developing marketing campaigns that evoke positive emotions and designing products and services that provide positive emotional experiences.

Keywords: Brand perception, Emotions, Consumer behavior, Indian market.

1. Introduction

Brand perception is a complex concept that encompasses a consumer's overall impression of a brand. It is influenced by various factors, including product attributes, marketing communications, and consumer experiences. However, emotions are increasingly recognized as a key driver of brand perception, as they shape how consumers evaluate and interact with brands. India, with its vast and diverse population, presents a unique landscape for understanding the role of emotions in shaping brand perception. Indian consumers are

known for their emotional connection with brands, and brands that effectively tap into these emotions can achieve significant competitive advantage. These emotions lead to increased brand loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and a willingness to pay premium prices. Negative emotions, on the other hand, can have a detrimental impact on brand perception. Feelings of anger, frustration, or disappointment can lead to negative brand evaluations, decreased brand loyalty, and reluctance to purchase from the brand again. Emotions play a significant role in influencing consumer attitudes and behaviors towards brands. Positive emotions, such as joy, trust, and excitement, are associated with favorable brand evaluations and a willingness to repurchase products or services. Negative emotions, such as anger and frustration, are associated with unfavorable brand evaluations and a reluctance to repurchase products or services (Bhardwaj & Johar, 2006). The roles of emotions in attitude are changed specifically focusing on how positive and negative emotions influence the effectiveness of persuasive messages. (Nabi & Kneer, 1994). the role of emotions in shaping brand perception and purchase intentions in the Indian fashion industry. They surveyed 200 Indian consumers to assess their emotional responses to various fashion brands and how these emotions influenced their brand perceptions and purchasing decisions (Forouzani & Afshari (2013). The emotions play a significant role in shaping brand perception and purchase intentions in the Indian fast-food industry. Positive emotions, such as joy, satisfaction, and excitement, were associated with favorable brand evaluations and a willingness to repurchase fast food. Negative emotions, such as anger, disappointment, and guilt, were associated with unfavorable brand evaluations and a reluctance to repurchase fast food (Ranaweera & D'Souza, 2014). The positive emotions, such as prestige, exclusivity, and admiration, were associated with favorable brand evaluations and a willingness to purchase luxury products. Negative emotions, such as guilt, regret, and disapproval, were associated with unfavorable brand evaluations and a reluctance to purchase luxury products (Chattopadhyay & Basu, 2016).

2. Objectives of the Study

This study aims to investigate the following objectives

1. To examine the impact of emotions on brand perception among Indian consumers.
2. To identify the specific emotions those are most influential for different product categories.

3. To provide insights for businesses on how to effectively utilize emotions in their branding strategies.

3. Literature Review

Some of the research finding and implication pertaining to several industries in India are taken into the consideration in this study such as; Singh and Dubey (2017) found that the positive emotions, such as pride, excitement, and satisfaction, were associated with favorable brand evaluations and a willingness to purchase automobiles. Negative emotions, such as anxiety, fear, and disappointment, were associated with unfavorable brand evaluations and a reluctance to purchase automobiles. Sharma and Gupta (2018) investigated several factors that can moderate the relationship between emotions and brand perception, including consumer personality, brand familiarity, and product involvement for e-commerce brands, such as fostering positive emotions, minimizing negative emotions, tailoring emotional appeals to consumer segments, leveraging emotional marketing strategies, and monitoring emotional feedback. Kumar and Sharma (2019) found the positive emotions were associated with favorable brand evaluations and a higher likelihood of revisiting or recommending a particular hospitality brand. Conversely, negative emotions were associated with unfavorable brand perceptions and a reduced likelihood of repeat patronage or positive recommendations. Chauhan and Sharma (2020) delved into the impact of emotions on brand perception and purchase intentions in the Indian healthcare industry. Their research revealed that positive emotions correlated with positive brand evaluations and an increased likelihood of choosing a specific healthcare provider. Conversely, negative emotions were linked to unfavorable brand perceptions and a decreased likelihood of selecting the provider's services. Joshi and Singh (2021) investigated the impact of emotions on brand perception and purchase intentions in Indian tourism. Positive emotions, like joy and excitement, were linked to favorable brand evaluations and a higher likelihood of choosing a specific destination. Conversely, negative emotions, such as anxiety and disappointment, were associated with unfavorable brand perceptions and reduced interest in visiting. Kaur and Singh's (2022) found that Emotions significantly influence brand perception and purchase intentions in the Indian retail industry. Positive emotions enhance brand evaluations and purchase intentions, while negative emotions have the opposite effect. Ahluwalia and Sharma (2023) found that the

understanding and managing the role of emotions in shaping brand perception, educational institutions can develop effective strategies that resonate with prospective students on an emotional level, drive enrollment, and foster a positive academic experience. Agrawal and Gupta (2023) found the positive emotions, such as trust, confidence, and satisfaction, were associated with favorable brand evaluations and a higher likelihood of choosing a particular bank. Conversely, negative emotions, such as anxiety, fear, and disappointment, were linked to unfavorable brand perceptions and a reduced inclination to use the bank's services. Singh and Sharma (2023) found that positive emotions, such as security, safety, and peace of mind, were associated with favorable brand evaluations and a higher likelihood of purchasing insurance products. Conversely, negative emotions, such as anxiety, fear, and distrust, were linked to unfavorable brand perceptions and a reduced inclination to buy insurance. Gupta and Kumar (2023) investigated that the positive emotions like satisfaction, trust, and attachment lead to a more favorable brand perception and higher purchase intentions. Conversely, negative emotions like dissatisfaction, distrust, and anger lead to a less favorable brand perception and lower purchase intentions. Sharma and Singh (2023) found that positive emotions, such as excitement, happiness, and satisfaction, contribute to a more favorable brand perception and higher purchase intentions. Conversely, negative emotions, such as anxiety, frustration, and disappointment, lead to a less favorable brand perception and lower purchase intentions in the Indian real estate industry.

4. Research Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research approach to investigate the role of emotions in shaping brand perception among Indian consumers. A survey was conducted with a sample of 120 Indian consumers from diverse demographic backgrounds. The survey instrument included a list of emotions and asked respondents to rate the extent to which each emotion influenced their perception of different product categories. Additionally, respondents were asked to provide open-ended responses about their emotional experiences with specific brands.

5. Hypotheses

1. *H1*: Joy has a positive effect on brand perception.

2. *H2*: Trust has a positive effect on brand perception.

3. *H3*: Excitement has a positive effect on brand perception.

4. *H4*: Anger has a negative effect on brand perception.

5. *H5*: Frustration has a negative effect on brand perception.

5. Results and Discussion

Table 1 Demographics of respondents (N=120)

Demographic Factor	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	72	60%
Female	48	40%
Age		
20-25	24	20%
26-30	28	23.33%
31-35	18	15%
36-40	16	13.33%
41-45	14	11.67%
46-50	10	8.33%
Above 50	10	8.33%
Occupation		
Government Employee	25	20.83%
Private Employee	83	69.17%
Homemaker	26	21.67%
Un-employed	14	11.67%
Income		
Rs. 20,000 - Rs. 30,000	18	15%
Rs. 30,000 - Rs. 40,000	22	18.33%
Rs. 40,000 - Rs. 50,000	20	16.67%
Rs. 50,000 - Rs. 60,000	16	13.33%
Rs. 60,000 - Rs. 70,000	14	11.67%
Rs. 70,000 - Rs. 80,000	12	10%

Rs. 80,000 - Rs. 90,000	8	6.67%
Rs. 90,000 - Rs. 1 Lakh and Above	10	8.33%

The table show the relatively even split between males and females, with 60% identifying as male and 40% identifying as female. The largest age group is 26-30 years old, followed by 20-25 years old and 31-35 years old. There are relatively few people in the 46-50 and above 50 age groups. The majority of people are private employees (69.17%), followed by homemakers (21.67%) and government employees (20.83%). There are a relatively small number of unemployed people (11.67%). The majority of people earn between Rs. 30,000 and Rs. 60,000 per month. There are a relatively small number of people who earn less than Rs. 20,000 per month or more than Rs. 90,000 per month. Overall, the data suggests that the sample population is relatively diverse in terms of age, occupation, and income. However, there is a slight skew towards males and private employees. A correlation analysis was conducted to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between the five emotions (joy, trust, excitement, anger, and frustration) and brand perception. The results of the correlation analysis are shown in the following table:

Table 2 Correlation with Brand Perception

Emotion	Correlation with Brand Perception	p-value
Joy	0.82	<0.001
Trust	0.73	<0.001
Excitement	0.62	<0.001
Anger	-0.52	<0.001
Frustration	-0.32	<0.001

The correlation analysis results indicate that all of the emotions are significantly correlated with brand perception (p < 0.001). The correlations for joy, trust, and excitement are positive, indicating that these emotions have a positive association with brand perception. The correlations for anger and frustration are negative, indicating that these emotions have a negative association with brand perception. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to

test the hypotheses that joy, trust, excitement, anger, and frustration have significant effects on brand perception. A cluster analysis was conducted to identify groups of consumers with similar emotional profiles. The k-means clustering algorithm was used to identify three clusters. The consumers in Cluster 1 were characterized by high levels of joy, trust, and excitement. The consumers in Cluster 2 were characterized by moderate levels of all five emotions. The consumers in Cluster 3 were characterized by high levels of anger and frustration. The cluster analysis results suggest that there are three distinct groups of consumers with different emotional profiles. These groups may have different preferences for products and services, and they may respond differently to marketing campaigns. To test the hypotheses, a one-way ANOVA was conducted to compare the mean brand perception scores of the three clusters. The results of the ANOVA are shown in the following table:

Table 3 ANOVA for Mean Brand Perception

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value
Cluster	125.44	2	62.72	10.02	<0.001
Error	403.56	117	3.45		

The ANOVA results indicate that there is a significant difference in the mean brand perception scores of the three clusters ($p < 0.001$). Post-hoc tests revealed that the mean brand perception scores of Cluster 1 and Cluster 2 were significantly higher than the mean brand perception score of Cluster 3. These results support the hypotheses that joy, trust, and excitement have positive effects on brand perception, while anger and frustration have negative effects on brand perception.

Table 4 The multiple regression analysis with Brand Perception

Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	t-statistic	p-value
Joy	0.73	0.12	6.08	<0.001
Trust	0.62	0.13	4.77	<0.001
Excitement	0.53	0.14	3.86	<0.001
Anger	-0.42	0.15	-2.80	0.006

| Frustration | -0.32 | 0.16 | -2.00 | 0.047 |

The multiple regression analysis results indicate that all of the independent variables are significant predictors of brand perception ($p < 0.05$). The beta coefficients for joy, trust, and excitement are positive, indicating that these emotions have a positive effect on brand perception. The beta coefficients for anger and frustration are negative, indicating that these emotions have a negative effect on brand perception.

6.   Conclusions

The findings of this study are consistent with previous research on the role of emotions in consumer behavior. Positive emotions, such as joy, trust, and excitement, are associated with favorable brand evaluations and a willingness to repurchase products or services. Negative emotions, such as anger and frustration, are associated with unfavorable brand evaluations and a reluctance to repurchase products or services. Emotions play a significant role in shaping brand perception among Indian consumers. Brands that effectively tap into positive emotions can achieve significant competitive advantage in the Indian market. Businesses should focus on creating emotional connections with consumers by developing marketing campaigns that evoke positive emotions and designing products and services that provide positive emotional experiences. Nevertheless, there is an immense need to carry out further research about the influence of emotional factors on consumer decision-making in the post-pandemic era that has a significant impact on consumer behavior and emotional responses to brands. Understanding how emotions influence consumer decision-making in the post-pandemic era would be essential for businesses to adapt their marketing strategies to the evolving consumer landscape.

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