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ST.MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES

**THE EFFECTS OF BRAND IMAGE ON CUSTOMER BRAND
PERCEPTION: STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD. COMPANY**

BY
Getu Moges

JUN, 2020
Addis Ababa

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By: Getu Moges

ADVISOR: Zemenu Aynadis (Assistant Professor)

**ATHESIS SUBMITTED TO ST.MARY'S UNIVERSIY COLLEGE, SCHOOL OF
GRADUATE STUDIES IN PARTIAL FULFIIMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

JUNE, 2020

ST.MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
FACULTY OF BUSSINESS

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DECLARATION

I, Getu Moges, declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of Zemenu Aynadis (Assistant Professor). All source of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any degree.

Zemenu Aynadis (Assistant Professor)

St. Mary's university college, Addis Ababa

JUNE, 2020

ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's university college, school of graduate studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

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Advisor

signature and date

ST.MARY' S UNIVERSITY, ADDIS ABABA

JUNE, 2020

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ACRONYMS

BI.....	Brand identity
BP.....	Brand personality
BA.....	Brand association
BBA.....	Brand behavior and attitude
BCB.....	Brand competence and benefits
CBP.....	Community brand perception
SPSS.....	Statistical package for the social sciences
VIF.....	Variable inflation factor
ANOVA.....	Analysis of variance

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to provide a valuable insight in to the effects of brand image on community brand perception on the case of STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD. company this study focuses on brand image dimensions (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit). Explanatory research design was used and quantitative type of research approach. Convenience and random sampling technique was used in the study to take a sample from finite population. A qualitative research approach is chosen in this research In order to collect primary data self-administered questionnaire (40 questions) were developed and distributed to 381 customers. To analyze the collected data correlation are used. The findings also showed that the dimensions of brand image such as, brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit are positively correlated and significant relationship to brand image. Major recommendation was the company is advice work on brand association aspect of the company since Brand image plays an important role in the development of a brand, STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD recommended to strength brand behavior and attitude by devouring good communication with customers, by making the customers fell respected and well treated, LTD brand identity, brand personality and brand competence and benefit dimensions should be given due attention by the company because they are the dimensions which have a positive relationship. Finally the study subjected future area of study in other dimensions of brand image.

Key words: brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit, community brand perception.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to Doyle (1994) a successful brand is perceived by consumers as an effective product that has a well-defined identity and added values. The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines a brand as a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from other sellers. Christian Gronroos (2007) criticized AMA's definition of a brand as too simple and thereby meant that the definition lacks to consider the importance of services in its scope. Kotler (1997) defined brands in a similar way as AMA. His definition of a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol, or design or combination of them that is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or groups of sellers and differentiate them from those of competitors.

Marketers are very eager to learn about, organize, and facilitate brand communities. (McAlexander, 2002), which include a series of connections and relationships among people who admire a brand (Muniz & O'Guinn, 2001). The reasons behind such interest in brand communities include the advantages of learning customer perceptions of new product offerings and competitive actions; maximizing opportunities to attract and collaborate closely with highly loyal consumers of the brand (Franke & Shah, 2003; Mc Alexander *et al.*, 2002); influencing members' evaluations and actions (Muniz & Schau, 2005); rapidly disseminating information (Brown, Kozinets, & Sherry, 2003; Jin *et al.*, 2009); and most importantly gaining a holy grail of loyal customers (Mc Alexander *et al.*, 2002). Taking advantage of the capabilities of both brand community and social media, several companies are using social networking sites to support the creation and development of brand communities (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; Muniz & O' Guinn, 2001). Since these brand communities are becoming more important and prevalent, it is necessary for marketers and researchers to have more insights about them. Muniz and O' Guinn (2001) found evidence of brand communities in both face-to-face and computer-mediated environments. Their ethnographic study identified the presence of the three traditional markers of community (i.e., shared

consciousness, shared rituals and traditions, and obligations to society) within brand communities. In their meta-analysis, Schau, Muniz, and Arnould (2009) identified four groups of practices through which value is co-created in brand communities.

Brand image is an outcome of perceptions and association that a product/brand leave in consumer's mind because it involves all the beliefs that create value and consumer commitment (Alagoz et al., 2011). The consumer needs and wants provide information about the desired product/service that information act as brand perception which serves as competitive advantage. Marketing managers design their strategies based on brand perception but obtaining such precise information is a key challenge because after every purchase consumer experience and brand association has shown variation (Lipinski et al., 2011). The basic purpose of social communities is to share information among the members, thus organizations use brand communities for collecting valuable insights about desired product/service.

However, most of the studies were done in relation to branding focusing on external customers' level of commitment for a certain brand but some of the researchers tried to investigate the practice of brand image. some of the studies were Al,olyan&khaled(2011)investigated how community play a big role in communicating the brand meaning and brand values to customers, Kimpakorn and Tocquer (2009),explores the relationship between the brand image dimensions and community perception to support the brand, and Punjaisri, (2009) assess the relationship between brand image. And, as well as the relationships among their brand identification, brand commitment and brand loyalty. Even few studies have been done in Ethiopia regarding brand image,Tagay(2013). Therefore, this study was assess the effect of brand image (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior & attitude and brand competence & benefit) and their effect on community perception in the case of Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Comp.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Many researchers argue that if the communities are perceived to the brand they perform better and they was perceive success and failure of the brand as their own if they identify themselves with the brand and manage to live the brand (Gotsi&Shiu 2010). It is a challenging to make the communities live the brand, due to the fact that people can behave unpredictable and talk spontaneously. Therefore it is important to graft with brand communication to diminish that changeable behavior is not united with the principles of the organization.

Al Olayan (2013) studied how communities play a big role in communicating the brand meaning and brand values to customers. Based on the community's customer interaction, customers develop attitudes about the brand and thus decide to choose the company and remain loyal. Organizations today therefore seek to sequence communities to interact with customers, but often never specify how they want communities to provide the brand promise. The study sought to uncover how communities deliver the brand's values to customers. The findings of the study showed that communities believed they had significant influence on customers when it came to communicating the brand values to customers.

Kimpakom (2010) looked at the growing importance given to communities as fundamental to the making of the brand of the organization come animated. The study discovers the connection between the communities brand dimensions and communities perception to support the brand. The findings are that brand knowledge does not affect communities brand perception. On the other hand, Wilson, (2011) investigated at understanding the brand image process from the communities perspective. They try to empirically assess the companionship between brand image and communities provision of the brand promise, as well as the interactions among their brand identification, brand commitment and brand loyalty. The findings presented that brand image had a positive impact on attitudinal and behavioral aspects of communities in their provision of the brand promise.

Only few local studies have been done on the practice of brand image practice in the context of Ethiopia. Tagay (2013), the mediation role of communities brand perception in the relationship between communities brand awareness and brand citizenship behavior and the finding indicated

that communities brand perception has stronger conciliation role between communities brand awareness and their brand citizenship behavior.

Despite the fact most of the researchers focused their study on external customers' level of brand perception for a certain brand but it's not only enough attractive the heart of external customers but also motivating the internal customers the communities as well, because they are respected asset of the organization King(2006). As a result, communities are vital contributor of the brand and can be seen as brand builders, since their contribution is important to the organization and brand formation (Chernatony,2001). Nevertheless, few studies have attempted to explore the brands in the perceptiveness of communities Jayesh (2011). Therefore, this study focuses on the investigation of brand image i.e. (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior & attitude and brand competence & benefit) and its effect on communities brand perception in case of Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Company.

1.3 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1.3.1 GENERAL OBJECTIVE

The general objective of the study is to investigate the effect of brand image practices on community brand perception in case of Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Company.

1.3.2 SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

The specific objectives are:

- ❖ To examine the effects of brand identity on brand perception communities.
- ❖ To determine the effects of brand personality on brand perception communities.
- ❖ To investigate the effects of brand association on brand perception communities.
- ❖ To analyze the effects of brand behavior & attitude on brand perception communities.
- ❖ To assess the effects of brand competence & benefit on brand perception communities.

1.4. HYPOTHESIS

Based on the literature review linked with internal branding the researcher has formulated the following hypothesis.

- ❖ H1: Brand identity has a positive significant effect on brand perception communities.
- ❖ H2: Brand personality has a positive significant effect on brand perception communities.
- ❖ H3: Brand association has a positive significant effect on brand perception communities.
- ❖ H4: Brand behavior & attitude has a positive significant effect on brand perception communities.
- ❖ H5: Brand competence & benefit has a positive significant effect on brand perception communities.

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Any kind of research has something to add to the accumulated body of knowledge of mankind but it is also used to solve particular problem to the society. This study has a good deal of lesson because it is going to be conducted in case of Steely RMI private limited company brand image practice and its effect on brand perception of community's. The findings of the study will help policy makers in enhancing brand perception of communities of the company and it was help the companies and other productions to clearly understand the role of brand image and its effect on having brand community perception for the organization's success and strive for its implementation. The study will also be important for academicians who are interested to make further investigation on the topic and will use as review literature for future studies.

1.6. THE SCOPE AND LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This research was geographically limited on Addis Ababa and Bishoftu. In addition it was focused mainly on brand image and its effects of various aspects of brand image on brand perception of communities in Addis Ababa city which is from the stand point view of community perception in Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd.

With the limit of time, this research was not realistic to conduct interviews or administer questionnaires with a large number of the population so the sample groups were expected to represent the whole population. The questions in questionnaire were developed.

The findings of the research will more dynamic if it would be conducted broadly by including different organizations of the country. But, due to time, labor and money constraints it would be too tedious and not manageable .Thus, the study was delimit to focusing only Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Company.

1.7 DEFINITION OF OPERATIONAL TERMS

Brand: This can be referred to as the name sign or design that identifies a particular product and distinguishes it from its competitors or any other features that identifies a seller's good or service. Brand is one of the most valuable elements in an advertising theme, as it demonstrates what the brand owner is able to offer in the marketplace. (Solomon & Gary 2010).

Community: The word 'community' may have various meanings. It can mean a community of interest binding a group of people (Crowther and Cooper 2002). Community can mean a subdivision of a large city or a small town. Community, in this paper, refers to the city of a person's residence. The measurement of community identity and the outcomes of community identity, such as differences in perceived product quality, are observed in the two leading, and possibly competing, cities in one country. It is characterized by the perception of similarity with others, an acknowledged interdependence with others, a willingness to maintain this interdependence by giving to or doing for others what one expects from them, the feeling that one is part of a larger dependable and stable structure.

Perception: It is a process by which one become aware of changes through the senses of hearing sight and feeling, in marketing perception it is often described as a process by which a consumer can identifies, organizes, and interprets information to create meaning. A consumer was selectively perceiving what they were ultimately classify as their needs and wants. (Kotler,1980, 65)

Brand Community: When you love a brand so much that the brand looks like a person or a friend to you, you become a part of the Brand community. And yes, it is quite common to form a brand community. If a brand has existed since quite some time, and it wants to make use of its loyal customers, and it wants these loyal customers to meet each other, then such a brand makes efforts

to form brand communities. Such communities have become very common since the rise of internet as a medium. Initially, brand communities consisted of focus groups or localized groups which meet from time to time for the love of the brand.

Brand perception: also known as brand image plays a central part in a company's profitability. It refers to the collective consumer perception of what a company's product or services represents. Contrary to firm's understanding of what their brand stands for, brand perception is owned by consumers. With the democratization of brand perception through social media and personal blogs, customer opinions have become more influential in shaping brand view.

Brand image: is an outcome of perceptions and association that a product/brand leave in consumer's mind because it involves all the beliefs that create value and consumer commitment. The consumer needs and wants provide information about the desired product/service that information act as brand perception which serves as competitive advantage.

1.8 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

This study was being organized in to five chapters and subtitles under each chapter. Chapter One was deals about the introductory part, background, statement of the problems, objective of the study, methodology, hypothesis, significance of the study, scope and limitation of the study and definition of key terms. Chapter Two presents the review of the related literature which includes review of related readings, related literature, related studies and conceptual frame work. Chapter Three deals with methodology, that includes research design, determination of sample size, sampling design, techniques, the subject, the research instruments, data gathering procedures and data analyzing method. Chapter Four was deals with results, analysis, and interpretation of the gathered data and chapter five was provides summary, conclusion and possible recommendation about the overall study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1.1 BRAND

American Marketing Association (AMA) defined a brand as "a name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors"(Kotler, 2000). This is similar to Aaker says that the brand is a name and/ or symbol that distinguishes (in the form of a logo or symbol, stamp or packaging) to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers (Aaker, 1996). Kotler (2000) mentioned that a good brand was come to boost the company's image. Brand is the front-liner of a product, an initial view that allows consumers to identify those products. In principle, brand is a promise of sellers or producers who continually brings a unit series of performance, benefits and service to buyer. In the perspective of brand communication, Wijaya (2011) defined brand as a mark left on the minds and hearts of consumers, which creates a specific sense of meaning and feeling. Thus, the brand is more than just a logo, name, symbol, trade mark, or the name attached to a product. Brand is a promise (Morel,2003). Brand is a relationship (McNally and Speak, 2004) -kind of relationship that involves trust. A brand is the sum of an entity, a psychic connection that creates a bond of loyalty with a buyer/ potential buyer, and it includes the perceived added value (Post, 2005). Nilson (1998) mentioned a number of criteria to describe the brand is not just a name: a brand must have clear value, the difference can be identified with other brands, attractive, and have a prominent identity.

2.1.2 BRANDING

Meanwhile, branding is the process of creation or legacy of certain trail signs in the minds and hearts of consumers through a variety of communication ways and strategies so that create specific meaning and feeling which affect consumers' lives (Wijaya,2011). So branding activity is the implementation of the brand communication strategy and is part of the brand development process. This paper aims to summarize, analyze and elaborate the dimensions of brand image to be drawn into the perspective of brand communications as an important field of study that is more appropriate to discuss the phenomenon of branding, which is much more 'dominated' by a

marketing management perspective. Thus, it would be found the dimensions of brand image are more in line with the scientific nature of branding, which is communication. Would be different if the study of brand image is placed on marketing management perspective where brand image is only considered as one of many tools to encourage consumers to buy a product. In the perspective of brand communication, brand image is one of the important elements in the process of brand development (see the discussion about hierarchy of branding in the next subtitle), because the brand image is not formed solely for the purpose of purchasing the product, but more than that, brand image also related to how consumers as a target audience of communication interpret (decode) brand messages and actualize it in their life and become part of how they construct their self-concepts and reality. Therefore, in addition to enrich the science of brand communication and branding which is the intersection of management and communication science, this study is also useful to help subsequent researchers to be more easily identify the critical dimensions that influence the formation of brand image and conceptualizing their research framework in corresponding on the actual nature of brand image. This study is also useful for practitioners and decision-makers associated branding strategy in determining the steps or what ideas can be developed in any element or dimension to establish and/ or strengthen their brand image.

2.1.3 COMMUNITY

Creating a customer base that is strongly committed to the brand may be the most important yet challenging task that marketers and managers must encounter. The primary challenge is that of the difficulty associated with fostering commitment to a brand when new competitors continually enter the market enticing consumers with highly competitive prices and increased convenience. However, tremendous opportunity lies in the fact that most people have a natural longing to be a part of some group, thereby fulfilling an objective set of human needs (Glynn 1981). Furthermore, consumers are becoming more reliant upon the consumption of various brands to serve as a means of self-expression. Brand-based community membership provides customers with an opportunity to be part of a psychological and/or social group that is relevant to and thereby supporting a desired self-image. A brand-based community may therefore also function as an inspirational group for current non-users of the brand as well as an information source for potential users. Such communities provide marketers with a customer base that is both highly involved with and highly committed to the brand (McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig2002; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001).

This dissertation attempts to explain how consumers come to feel a sense of community with other users of the brand, primarily through identification with the brand and other users, which leads to deep levels of brand commitment. In doing so, this research extends the existing bodies of knowledge on brand community, identification, and brand commitment. Consumption has become such an integral facet of contemporary American society that its influence often goes unnoticed. Consumers have become increasingly desensitized to the influence that products and brands exert in everyday life, yet the consumption of products and brands has a powerful influence on attitudes, thoughts, and behaviors on a daily basis (Fournier 1998). Individuals who are members of a prestigious country club and drive a Lexus are generally perceived as being higher class and often more successful than individuals who frequent the local public golf course and drive a Chevrolet. The fact that an individual can be successful and hold a preference for the local public course and Chevrolet was rarely be considered when initial perceptions are formed about an individual. This is because most consumers have been socialized such that the consumption of branded products serves as an important means of ordering, understanding, and categorizing oneself and others in a social environment.

2.1.4 BRAND IMAGE

Brand image could be defined as a brand that is brought to the consumer's mind by the brand association (Keller, 1993). Brand image can be also defined as consumer's thoughts and feelings about the brand (Roy & Banerjee, 2007). Aaker (1991) asserts that brand image could be a set of association which is significant to the consumers. Based on Bearden & Etzel (1982) as well as Park & Arinivasan (1994) arguments, brand image is closely related to the uniqueness of a particular product classification. According to Hsieh & Li (2008), strong brand image does create superior brand messages of a particular brand over the rivalry brand. Consequently, customer's behavior was be affected and determined by brand image (Burmam et al., 2008). Consumers employ a product's brand image in deriving overall perceptions of the specified product; a product with higher brand image may be inferred by consumers as product of superior quality and value (Richardson et al., 1994). Furthermore, Jacoby and etal (1971) conduct an experiment research and have discovered that consumers' perception of quality and value are significantly affected by brand image.

A brand image is how the consumers perceive the brand (Aaker 1996, 69). Aaker(1991,) explains that brand image is a set of associations which might not even reflect the objective reality. Arnold (1998,) says that brand image refers to the way in which certain groups decode all of the signals resonating from the product or service. An online writing (Brand image, www.asiamarketresearch.com/glossary/brandimage.htm) explains the concept of brand image as follows: Brand image can be reinforced by brand communications such as packaging, advertising, promotion, customer service, word-of-mouth and other aspects of the brand experience. Brand images are usually evoked by asking consumers the first words/images that come to their mind when a certain brand is mentioned (sometimes called "top of mind"). When responses are highly variable, non-forthcoming, or refer to non-image attributes such as cost, it is an indicator of a weak brand image

2.2 THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BRAND IMAGE AND BRAND IDENTITY

Brand identity provides direction, purpose and meaning for the brand. It is a set of associations just like brand image. (Aaker 1996).The difference between brand image and brand identity is that brand image is formed in the minds of customers/consumers but brand identity is assembled by the brand owner. Brand identity consists of two layers; core identity and extended identity (Brand Identity –A brand building concept 2010).brand

Brand Identity - A Brand Building Concept (2010) core and extended identity are explained; Core identity represents the timeless essence of a brand. It is more resistant to changes and time than the extended identity. Core identity is the reason why the brand exists and what the brand stands for. Extended identity provides texture and completeness for a brand. It means the additional details that pulls the brand together and makes it complete.

Aaker (1996.) explains that to ensure that the brand identity has enough depth and particles a firm should consider its brand as a product, organization, person and symbol.

2.2.1. BRAND AS A PRODUCT

Brand as a product deals with the brand associations attached to a product or service. It is closely linked to brand choice decisions and the experiences consumers have of its use. The core element is to recognize the product category the brand belongs to. The key idea is to connect the brand to the specific product group so that it is the first one the consumers recall when thinking of the group. The attributes that are related to brand as a product are quality, purpose of use, types of users and the origin of the product or service. (Aaker 1996).

2.2.2. BRAND AS AN ORGANIZATION

Brand as an organization concentrates less on the product or service itself but primarily on attributes of the organization. These attributes (for example innovation and quality) are created by the people, culture, values and programs of the company and are more resistant to competitive claims. This is because it is easy to copy a product and product features but duplicating an organization with unique people, values, and programs is almost impossible (Aaker 1996).

2.2.3. BRAND AS A PERSON

Brand as a person considers the brand as having human attributes such as fun, active, formal or youthful. A brand personality can improve the brand because a consumer could relate to it and express their own personality. In the same way as personalities influence human relationships, brand personality can be the basis of a relationship between the customer and the brand. Brand personality can also arbitrate certain images, functions and benefits of a product or service itself to a consumer. (Aaker1996.)

2.2.4. BRAND AS A SYMBOL

A strong symbol makes it easier for consumers to recognize and recall a brand. The absence of a symbol can be a real disadvantage to a brand. A symbol can be a visual imagery, metaphors and/or brand heritage that relates to a brand. The symbol is at its strongest when it relates to some extra value that the brand provides if purchased. (Aaker 1996.)

2.3 KELLER'S CBBE- MODEL

Keller (2008) presents a CBBE- model (Customer-Based Brand Equity), a four step program to build brands. He uses a CBBE pyramid to demonstrate the four steps and in order to gain significant brand equity the top of the pyramid must be reached.

The pyramid contains six “brand building blocks”. The ones on left represent more realistic brand building where as the ones on right represent emotional brand building. According to Keller (2008,)” most strong brands were built by going up both sides of the pyramid.”

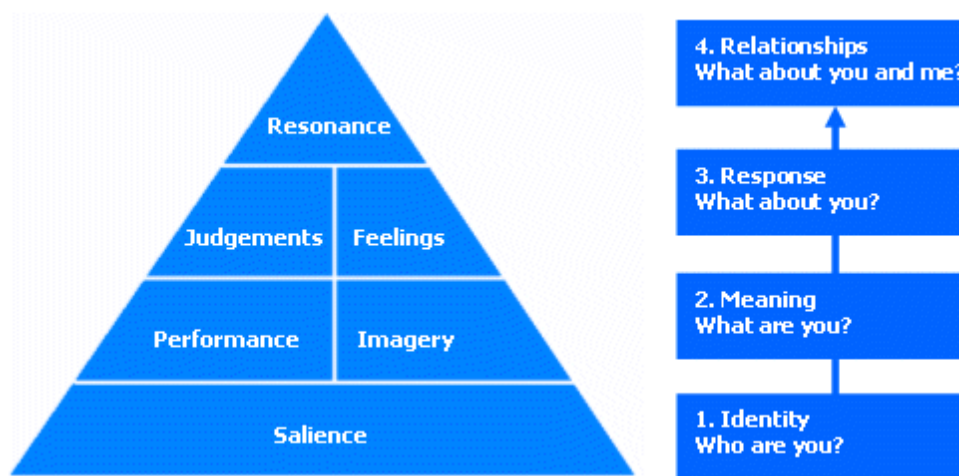


Figure 2.1 Customer-Based Brand Equity Pyramid, (Brand & Butter 2010), CBBE model.

Brand salience measures awareness of the brand, how well is the brand recalled and recognized, what things remind of the brand, can consumers link the brand with the right name, logo and symbol? Brand awareness helps consumers to understand which of their needs the particular brand is designed to satisfy. It also helps consumers to understand what is the category, where the brand’s products or services are competing in and what are the products and services that the brand offers. (Keller 2008.)

“Brand performance describes how well the product or service meets customers’ more functional needs” (Keller 2008). Brand performance is an important tool in differentiating its’ products.

Brand Imagery deals with the psychological and social needs of a customer. It tells the customer what to expect. Brand imagery tries to arbitrate associations, intangible aspects of a brand, to consumers and the success of a brand relies on how well consumers interpret these intentions.

The most important brand judgments are quality, credibility, consideration, and superiority. Brand judgments are customers' opinions and perceptions of a certain brand which they form by evaluating the brand's performance and imagery associations. Brand feelings are the emotional responses of consumers towards a brand. Brand feelings only work favorably if the consumers' possess positive images of a brand. Brand resonance is the "ultimate relationship and level of identification that the customer has with the brand" (Keller 2008).

According to Aaker's *Managing Brand Equity* (1991) brand associations are "anything linked in memory to a brand." He refers to feelings, product characteristics, symbols, life-style, certain object and he also explains that associations create value to both firms and customers by helping to process and retrieve information; set of facts and specifications that otherwise would be difficult for the customer to process and access, and expensive for the company to communicate. Associations help to separate one brand from another by differentiating the product/service and positioning it. "A differentiating association can be a key competitive advantage." Associations represent bases for purchase decisions and for brand loyalty. In support of Aaker's thinking Arnold (1998) writes:

The need met by a product is vital for understanding the critical success factors facing a company, but brand differentiation is more usually driven by positioning to meet consumer wants. In particular, the intangible or emotional wants of consumers are the source of loyalty to a brand. He concludes that customer loyalty and preference is a key to success. Brand associations also give a reason to buy. Some associations involve product attributes or benefits that give a consumer a specific reason to use that brand. The associations can also deal with the feelings of credibility and confidence in the brand. (Arnold 1991), Brand associations can create and link positive feelings and attitudes to a brand. These feelings can either be created during the use experience but also likable symbols can trigger those feelings for example. (Arnold 1991),

"An association can provide the basis for an extension by, creating a sense of fit between the brand name and a new product, or by providing a reason to buy the extension" (Aaker 1991). Favorable associations of a brand lower the step to try a new product of that same brand.

2.4 IMPORTANCE OF BRAND MANAGEMENT

One of the main importance's of branding lies in helping consumers to identify one organization's goods and services from the goods and services of another. That is branding in it's simplest form and how branding was used in the beginning. Today brands are built with a special kind of consumer in mind, because consumption of brands defines their consumers, how they are, how they wish to be or how they wish to be seen (Kay, 1995; Simoes and Dibb, 2001).

Consumer research has shown that strong brands create meaningful images in the consumers' minds (Keller, 1993). It is therefore important to actively build and create the associations connected in the consumer's mind to the brand, in order to affect and manage the favorability of the associations. The reason marketers have invested in branding, is that the brand image and the strength and favorability of associations connected to brands, enhance and differentiate a brand's reputation and can positively influence buying behavior when consumers choose between competing offers (DeChernatony and McEnally, 1992).

According to Abratt and Bick (2003) brands simplify shopping for customers, aid in the information process of the product and make consumers confident in their purchase decisions. Increasingly managers have become aware of the fact that a company's brand is one of it's most important assets and that focus is indeed needed on creating brand equity.

The conventional viewpoint of brand image is that companies have great impact on brand image by the way they communicate their marketing messages, however in more recent times some have pointed out that the image of a brand is also shaped by the consumer's memory and experience (Keller, 1993) stated that the brand image in a consumer's mind is echoed by brand associations held in the consumer's memory and therefore, individual differences shape how a brand is perceived, and thereby its image. This individual image of brands in minds of consumers depends on and is affected by linkages to the brand in the consumer's memory (Aaker, 1996). For this reason, it can be concluded that image is not a singular concept, but rather a set of images. These images are rooted in the individual consumer's memory, shape his current perception of a brand, and thereby affect the way he reacts to a company's marketing communication (Brown et al, 2006).

2.5 BRAND COMMUNICATIONS AND RELATIONSHIP MARKETING

It takes no little time to build a brand that is really strong. Kapferer (2008) mentioned two routes or models in brand development, namely: the brand evolved from product development, communication focused on the functional benefits of the product, and then move toward emotional benefit that is intangible values, or otherwise, of the values and mission of products that are usually not tangible to the development of (features/ attributes) products that is more tangible. Brand development starts from focus on product by developing its ingredients, features and attributes, advantages or product benefit, then creates product/ brand personality, and then shaped with brand mission and values so the product has intangible added values for the consumer. The example for the first model is commodity product that is packaged afterward with a certain brand and naturally communicated with the course of time and then becomes famous, until finally the brand is managed in a professional manner. The second model starts from concept or idea. Examples for this are brands that since the beginning are selling lifestyle (perfume, branded fashion, cigarettes, etc.), fame of a name (Harry Potter, Disney, etc.) or were born from a deep understanding, especially on psychological side of consumers through consumer insights that tend to offer emotional benefits. As time goes by, these brands develop their features and functional benefits so as to provide tangible added values for consumers. Meanwhile, in the perspective of brand communication, branding process and its effects have certain levels that also indicate to which extent the brand development in relation to proximity to the consumer. This level is called the hierarchy of branding.

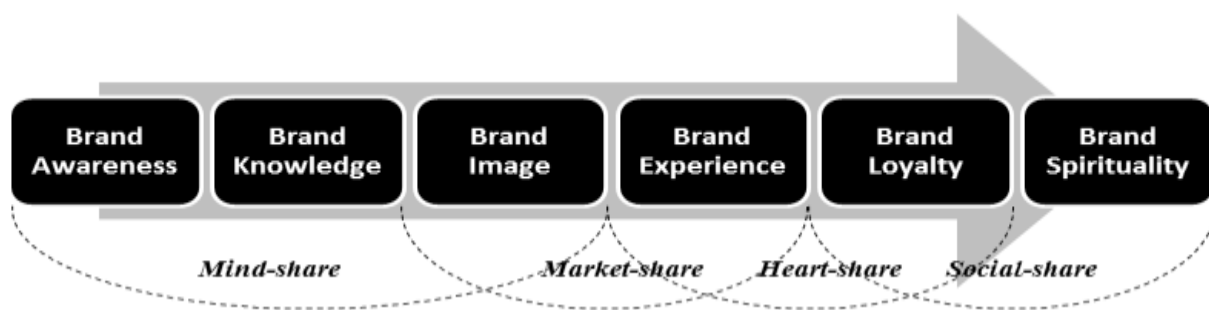


Figure 3.2 Hierarchy of Branding (source: Wijaya, 2011)

When a brand firstly launched, the brand is still in the stage of knocking consumer awareness, making it more likely consumers just merely know or know a little about the brand. This stage is

called brand awareness. Increasingly recognized, the more the attribute and benefits of the brand known by consumers, so consumers no longer just merely know or recognize the brand, but also learn more and know much about the brand or the product. This stage is called brand knowledge. As time went on and intensively communication, the consumer then has a certain perception or something to associate to form a certain image about the brand in the consumers' mind (that is called brand image). As time went on and incessant communication as well, consumers would have tried the products or direct contact with the brand, so that consumers have specific experience related to the brand that form new meanings and feelings associated with the brand as well as strengthening the image of the brand. This stage is called brand experience. The combination of a positive image and exciting experiences that give good meaning and special feeling ultimately strengthen the position of the brand in the minds and hearts of consumers, so that the brand has good equity and tend to be favored by consumers. A brand that is favored and has good equity tends to bind the consumer's loyalty so that the consumer is not easy to switch to another brand. This stage is called brand loyalty. At the end, the consumers are not only loyal to a brand, but also have a strong sense of belonging to the brand, pervasive and be part of their life values, influence their perspective on life. At this stage, the spiritual happiness and the life values that their obtain related to the beloved brand then they try to share and broadcast to other consumers, so other consumers can also feel and experience as they did, be part of their life in the wider environment, and together get the mutual happiness within a strong community. This is the crowning achievement of a brand in the hearts of consumers, where a brand becomes the answer for the spiritual needs or become part of the consumer's life values and culture, namely brand spirituality. Stages from Brand Awareness to Brand Image are the stage to gain mind-share, while Brand Experience is the stage to gain market-share, Brand Loyalty is the stage for heart-share, and Brand Spirituality is to achieve social-share.

During the brand journey from the stage of Brand Loyalty to Brand Spirituality is the ultimate journey for brand owners or shareholders, because at that stage the brand has already a high value. Brand value represents what the brand provides or contributes to the achievement of corporate goals (Srivastava, et al. in Raggio, et al., 2007), and it depends on the ability of the owner of the brand to enhance brand equity, while the value of the brand certainly affects shareholder value (Raggio, et al., 2007). Thus, it can be said that the development of the brand gives a significant

advantage to the owner of the brand, because the brand that has a high value contributed immensely to the progress of the company.

Research in the field of marketing has increasingly begun to emphasize the importance of relationship marketing, or building and maintaining relationships with consumers (e.g., Dwyer, Schurr, and Oh 1987; Ganesan 1994; Morgan and Hunt 1994).

Morgan and Hunt (1994) describe relationship marketing as, “all marketing activities directed toward establishing, developing, and maintaining successful relational exchanges”. Furthermore, relationship marketing and brand building appear to go hand in hand. Relationship marketing stresses the importance of knowing and understanding the target market, which is critical in building a brand to which consumers can and was be able to relate. Marketing managers recognize the importance of building brand-based relationships with consumers. Jed Mole, head of marketing and consulting for Axiom, contends, “the best brand building in the world can be undone by lousy customer relations, inappropriate targeting or even a misunderstanding in recruitment or staff training departments.

Although marketers have widely acknowledged the importance of studying relationship marketing, most research has focused on business-to-business relationships rather than business-to-consumer relationships. Attempting to create a sense of community among product users is very common among marketers choosing to focus on relationship marketing (e.g., Harley Owners Group and Camp Jeep), yet not all brand based communities are marketer-driven. For example, the Internet is filled with websites that are not affiliated with the focal brand, yet dedicated to providing a forum for brand users and enthusiasts to share information about the brand and participate in discussions with other users and enthusiasts. Brand-based community is an important topic of interest because brand community has been found to have a positive influence on brand loyalty and commitment, as well as brand commitment-related behaviors (McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002; Muniz and O’Guinn 2001).

However, the existing body of knowledge surrounding brand community is in its infancy and the psychological and social processes that lead to the formation of brand communities have been relatively ignored.

2.6 FUNCTIONS AND ROLES OF BRAND IMAGE

Boush and Jones (in Kahle & Kim, 2006) explains that brand image has multiple functions, such as market entry, source for added value of products, value storage for the company, and can be a force in the distribution of products (channel power). Related to the function of market entry, brand image plays an important role in pioneering the advantage of the product, brand extension and brand alliance. Pioneer product in a category that has a strong brand image was benefit because follower products are usually overshadowed by the pioneer product. In case of Indonesia, for example is Aqua1 mineral water. Though many other brands of mineral water are popping up on the market, Aqua still exist and be a market leader in Indonesia today. For the follower was certainly require high costs to shift the pioneer product that has strong brand image. This is the advantage of pioneer products that have a strong brand image compared to pioneer products that have a weak brand image or even non-branded commodity products.

Brand image also allows the company to develop a brand of products from one market to another market segment through brand extension (Tauber, 1988; Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boush & Loken, 1991). Brand extension strategy has become increasingly attractive as a way to reduce the tremendous cost of new product introductions. Research by Suharyanti (2011) revealed the influence of the parent brand image on the sub-brand occurs in the transfer of attributes and fix perception as well the credibility of the brand's parent company.

Another popular strategy to enhance the brand image is through brand alliances. A brand alliance can be described as short- or long-term relationship, or a combination of tangible and intangible attributes associated with brand partners (Rao & Ruekert, 1994). One of the most popular types of brand alliances is co-brand partnerships. Co-branding can be defined as placing two brand names on a single product or package (Shocker, 1995; McDaniel, et al., 2011).

The next function of brand image is as a source of added value products. In this context, many marketers recognize that brand image does not just encapsulate the consumer experience towards the product, but also can change the experience. For example, in consumer taste tests proved that the food or drink from their favorite brand has taste better than the competitors when tested in un-blinded compared to a blinded taste test (Allison & Uhl, 1964). Thus, it can be said that the image

of the brand has a much more powerful role in adding to the value of the product by changing the experience and perception towards the product (Puto & Wells, 1984; Aaker & Stayman, 1992).

Another function of brand image is as a repository of value for the company. The brand name is a corporate storage of values as the investment result from advertising costs and the increase of accumulated product quality. Company can use the stored values as 'capital' to convert strategic marketing ideas into long-term competitive advantage. In addition, a brand name with strong image can also work in creating power in the distribution channel. This means that the brand does not only play an important role horizontally, in facing their competitors, but also vertically, in the acquisition of distribution channels, to have more control and bargaining power on the requirements made distributor (Aaker, 1991).

2.7 STIMULUS OF BRAND IMAGE AND BRAND COMMUNITY

The brand image is the result of construction that formed in the mind of the consumer audience. There are many things that become stimulus element of the brand image. Walters (1974) refers to personal and environmental elements are very important in the formation of brand image, because these elements are very dominant in influencing one's perception. Environment that is meant here is the technical attributes that exist on a product in which it can be controlled by brand owner, while the personal element associated with consumer audiences' experience towards the stimuli are deliberately created by brand owner. This includes brand attitudes and behaviors when communicating and interacting with consumers, because these factors also have the potential to form the brand image (Wijaya, 2012). Socio-cultural factors are also important factors that influence personal perception of consumers. Mental readiness of consumers in the process of forming perceptions, consumer experience itself, mood, needs and motivations of consumers are the things that helped shape the individual's consumer perception. The image is an end 'product' of the accumulation of knowledge and attitudes are formed through a dynamic process through stimulus repetition (Arnould et al., 2005).

According to Runyon (1980), brand image is formed from the stimulus presented by a product, which pose a particular response to consumer audiences themselves. Stimulus that appeared in the brand image is not limited to a physical stimulus, but also includes psychological stimulus. There are at least three stimuli that can shape brand image, which is a physical stimulus, such as the

technical attributes of the product, and psychological stimulus, such as brand name, and stimulus that includes both properties, such as product packaging or product advertising. The presence of stimulus raises the response from consumers.

Response that affects a person's mind and establishing brand image includes rational response (assessment of the actual performance of the brand associated with the product price) and emotional response (a tendency of feeling arising from the brand).

Meanwhile, Timmerman (in Noble, 1999) states that brand image is often regarded as a collection of all associations related to the brand. Brand image consists of: physical factors are namely the physical characteristics of the brand, such as packaging design, logo, brand name, product functionality and usability, and psychological factors that are shaped by emotions, beliefs, values, personality which by consumers are considered to represent the product of the brand. Due to the brand image is closely associated with what people think and feel to a brand, then in the formation of brand image, psychological factors contribute more than physical factors.

Brand community is a concept that has been referred to, yet only briefly discussed within the field of marketing for over half a century (c.f., McAlexander, Schouten, and Koenig 2002; Muniz and O'Guinn 2001). In many instances, the idea of building a brand community has been mentioned in passing, as something that marketers should strive for in order to make their brand more successful. Although prior to Muniz and O'Guinn(2001) no formal definitions of brand community were offered when the topic was included in marketing discussions, the term has been applied to a variety of contexts and product categories. Commonly, brand community had been assumed to refer to the uniting or coming together of a group of consumers on the basis of the common usage of a brand (e.g., Hill and Rifkin 1999; Steinberg 1999). The primary benefit associated with such a relationship among consumers is a heightened level of commitment to the brand. Thus, it has been common practice to urge marketers and brand managers alike to place emphasis on developing a sense of community for consumers within the primary target markets of a brand. However, it is very difficult to assume that various authors have been referring to the same concept when no formal definition of a brand community had been proposed.

2.8 ELEMENTS OF BRAND IMAGE

Hogan (2005) in his paper titled *Employees and Image: Bringing Brand Image to Life* noted that brand image is an associate entity of all available information regarding products, services and brands of the company. This information is obtained by the consumer through: first, direct experience that implicates on functional and emotional satisfaction. Brand is not only designed to work optimally and achieve the good result, but also must be able to understand, carrying the desired values and meet the personal needs of the consumer, which in turn positively contribute to the establishment of a relationship with the brand. Secondly, through the perception deliberately created by the brand owner's company in various forms of communication, such as advertising, brand campaigns, public relations, logo, contact-point-communications (CPC) at the points of purchase, the attitude of employees in servicing customers, and overall performance of services provided by the company. For most brands, media and the environment in which the brand offered to consumers can communicate different attributes. Each imaging medium has a role in fostering a positive relationship with the consumer. For maximum results for the success of brand development, it is important that all of these factors go synergistically to form a total picture of the brand. The picture is called brand image, and the image can be either positive or negative image, or even both.

According to Arnould, et al. (2005), attribute that shapes brand image consists of objective or intrinsic attributes such as Packaging and basic benefits offered, as well as the beliefs, feelings and associations related to the brand of the product. Brand image represents the main thing of all impressions about a brand that lives in the minds of consumers, among them are the impression regarding the physical appearance of the product, the impression regarding the functional benefits of product, the impression regarding the product user, emotions and associations related to the product, imagination and symbolic meanings that are formed in the mind of consumers, including the imagination which is a metaphor of human characteristics.

Image on a brand reflects the image of consumer-generated perspective from the promise made by brand. Brand image included consumer perception towards product advantages and personal characteristics that captured by consumers from that brand. Davis(2000) described the elements forming brand image consist of brand association, that is the characteristic of the product or

service that associated with the brand by consumers, including the resulting perception of the brand promises, positive and negative, as well as the expectations regarding the brand attempts in maintaining customer satisfaction. Another element according to Davis is the personality of the brand, refers to the various human characteristics on brand that metaphorically formed by consumers, such as personality traits, preferences, gender, size, shape, ethnicity, intelligence, socioeconomic class, and education. This makes the brand as if living things, enables consumers to describe, as well as determining whether the consumer wants to be associated with that brand or not. Personality and character of the brand helps marketers to understand deeper about the advantages and disadvantages of the brand, as well as how to position the brand properly. Brand personality also explains why consumers prefer certain brand over another brand when there is no physical or functional attribute differences between the two. David Ogilvy (in Biel, 1999) in his phenomenal speech in front of the American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1955 stated that the brand image "is the picture people carry around in their heads of a brand, it is the intangible sum of a product's attributes: its name, packaging, and price, its history, its reputation, and the way it's advertised". Plummer (1985) in his research revealed that one of the components of brand image is the personality or character of the brand itself. Plummer summarized his research by showing that the brand can be characterized by personality descriptions such as "Youthful", "colorful", and "gentle". Aaker (1991) associated the brand image with the brand personality as one component of brand equity, and defined a brand as a set of human characteristics associated with a brand. According to Aaker (1997), brand personality dimensions consist of five dimensions, namely competence, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness. Meanwhile, Chang, et al. (2001) said that consumers exhibit a favorable feelings toward the brand when the brand personality congruent with their self-image. Thus, the congruence between brand personality and self-image was improve positive attitude, especially for consumers who have a high hedonic attitude and are very concerned with symbolic values in their consumption patterns and lifestyle.

Keller (1993) in his paper titled 'Conceptualizing, Measuring, and Managing Customer-Based Equity' described brand image as perceptions about a brand that reflects a growing association in the minds of consumers. Brand image is formed from the elements of attributes which are the description of the features possessed a product (goods) or service. Attributes consist of product-related attributes, the features that make the product functions work, related the physical

composition or the form of service. Another attribute is non-product-related attributes which constitute the external aspects of a product, related the messages and the forms of communication, including price information, packaging and product design, information of users, community or celebrity who use the product, as well as information on how and where the product can be used or purchased.

The next element according to Keller is the benefit, namely the personal value that is (by consumers) being associated with the attributes inherent on the product. Product benefit consists of functional benefits that refer to the fulfillment of basic needs such as physical needs or solving problems, experiential benefits that refer to the feeling that is present when using a product, and the last is symbolic benefits that refer to the need for social recognition and personal expression related self-esteem. Consumer audiences usually concern on the values of prestige, exclusivity and fashion styles from a brand because these matters relate to their self-concept. Meanwhile, Wijaya (2012) revealed 4 (four) types of benefits and values that are commonly offered by brand or product, namely: functional benefits (benefits that address the physical needs of the consumer), emotional benefits (benefits that address the affective needs of the consumer like feeling secured, self-confidence, love, etc.), symbolic benefits (benefits that address the illusive needs of consumers in actualizing, expressing and showing the meaning of themselves and their lives to the surrounding environment for the sake of self-existence, such as symbolic lifestyle, prestige, masculinity, power, etc.) and social benefits (benefits that address the spiritual needs of the consumer in self-reflection and appreciation of life through positive contribution to the surrounding environment, such as: concern for education, life environment, health, local cultural values,

The final element that forms brand image in the viewpoint of Keller is brand attitude, that is described as an overall evaluation towards a brand, the certain beliefs that consumers have about a brand, and evaluative judgments on the beliefs --the good or bad of product related to attributes and benefits offered. However, this Keller's explanation is more reflecting the explanation that refers to the 'attitude toward the brand' and not the attitude of the brand (brand attitude). Therefore, Wijaya (2012) defined brand attitude or brand behavior as attitudes, manners and

behaviors that brand and all its attributes indicate when communicating and interacting with consumers which in turn influencing consumers' perceptions and judgments toward the brand.

In addition, the image of a brand can be the differentiator that shows a brand is more superior to other brands in one product category. Recognition of the superiority, one way constructed through the establishment of brand image that represented by the people who use the brand, for example through the use of a celebrity or public figure as endorser in advertisements and other communications activities (Tybout& Calkins, 2005).

2.9 DIMENSIONS OF BRAND IMAGE

Summarizing the results of various studies on literatures and relevant previous research, then it can be concluded that the main dimensions that influence and shape the image of a brand,

2.9.1, BRAND IDENTITY

The first dimension is brand identity. Brand identity refers to physical or tangible identities related to the brand or product that makes consumers easily identify and differentiate with other brands or products, such as logo, colors, sounds, smells, packaging, location, corporate identities, slogan, and others.

2.9.2. BRAND PERSONALITY

The second dimension is brand personality. Brand personality is the distinctive character of a brand that makes up certain

personalities as human being, so that consumer audiences can easily distinguish with other brands in the same category, such as assertive character, stiff, dignified, noble, friendly, warm, compassionate, sociable, dynamic, creative, independent, and so on. As explained earlier, Aaker (1997) mentioned several dimensions of brand personality as competence, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness, while Plummer (1985) illustrated the brand personality with tones of character such as 'youthful', 'colorful' and 'gentle'.

2.9.3. BRAND ASSOCIATION

The third dimension is brand associations. Brand association is specific things that deserve or always associated with a brand, can arise from a unique offering of a product, recurring and consistent activities for example in terms of sponsorship or social responsibility activities, issues that are very strong related to a brand, or, person, owner, and the certain symbols and meanings that are very strong attached to a brand.

2.9.4. BRAND BEHAVIOR AND ATTITUDE

The fourth dimension is brand behavior and attitude. Brand behavior and attitude are the behavior and attitude of a brand when communicating and interacting with consumers in order to offer benefits-benefits and values that it has. In other words, brand attitude and behavior are attitudes, manners and behaviors that brand and all its attributes indicates when communicating and interacting with consumers which in turn influences consumers' perceptions and judgments toward the brand (Wijaya, 2012). Often a brand in ways that are not appropriate and rather violating ethics in communication, or delivering the poor service so that affects public perceptions of the attitudes and behavior of the brand, or conversely, attitudes and behaviors sympathetic ,honest, consistent between promise and reality, good service, and concern for the environment and the wider community was potentially be shaping good perceptions of the attitudes and behavior of the brand. So brand attitude and behavior includes communication attitudes and behaviors, activities and attributes attached to the brand when dealing with consumer audiences (Keller, 1993), as well as employee and/ or brand owners' behaviors (Brexendorf & Kernstock, 2007).

2.9.5 BRAND COMPETENCE AND BENEFIT

The fifth dimension is brand competence and benefit. Brand competence and benefit are the values, advantages and distinctive competencies offered by a brand in solving consumer problems, which enable consumers to get benefit because their needs, desires, dreams and obsessions manifested by what it has to offer. Values and benefits here can be functional (Keller, 1993), emotional, symbolic or social (Wijaya, 2012), such as product brand of a clothes detergent with benefits and competences are being able to clean clothes to be cleaner (functional benefit/ value), make the wearer is more confident and feel comfortable(emotional benefit/ value), be a symbol of a clean lifestyle of modern society (symbolic benefit/ value), and inspire greater community to care about a healthy lifestyle and environmental preservation (social benefit/ value).

Benefits, advantages and distinctive competencies of a brand was affect the brand image of the product, individual or institution and company.

2.9.6 CONCEPTUAL FRAME WORK OF THE STUDY

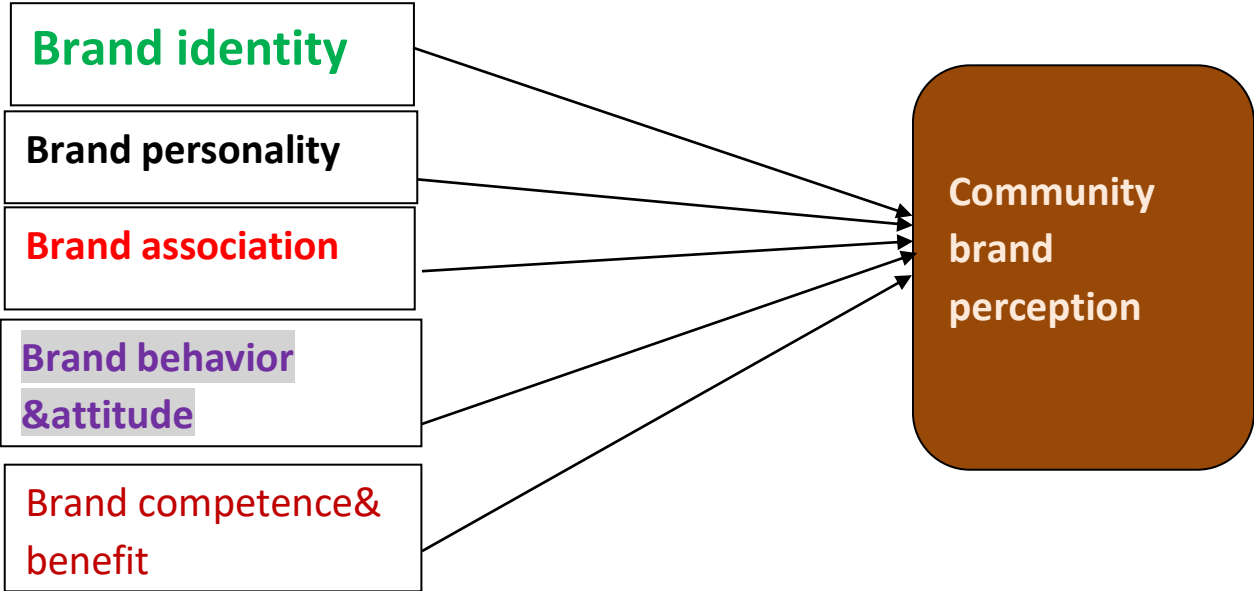


Figure 2.4 Conceptual Framework of the Study
Source: primary data (2020)

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 DESCRIPTION OF THE STUDY AREA

BACKGROUND OF THE ORGANIZATION

Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Company was established in October 2004 in response to the booming construction sector and the associated huge demand of construction materials in Ethiopia. So the Company owners had taken a strategic decision to invest in this sector. As a fast growing country economy the domestic market, especially in the construction sector, can absorb more production capacity. By using this advantage, the Company has been profitable for the last fifteen (15) years

The factory is located east of Addis Ababa in Oromia National Regional State, particularly Bishoufitu town, which is around 45 kilo meters away from Addis Ababa. Its head office is located in Addis Ababa, Century Mall. The factory has well-built compound with an area of 178,000m. Squares, with open areas for scraps, and finished goods storage. In addition, it has spaces used for green area, guest staffs, stores, staff clubs, clinic and offices. Its initial asset was USD 38million. Hence, in 2011 Steely RMI further expanded its capacity to more than 500,000 ton per annum and its total asset of Company has reached USD 110 Million. The company creates job opportunities for more than 2000 direct workers and 30 Megawatt electricity power consumption.

The factory installed advanced technology like, electric furnace, PLC, CCM, TMT, modern physical test machine, etc. to produce quality product at competitive price. Its products quality is certified with appropriate conformity assessment agency. **APOLLO**, brand name for STEELY's products, is well known among its customers and end users. The factory uses local scrap and imported steel billets as raw material for production.

The Company is mainly engaged in manufacturing and selling of steel products. Its main products are:

- a) Reinforcement bar of G60 and G75. Its main features are high strength, superior bending properties, better elongation, excellent corrosion and fire resistance. Their sizes are 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20, and 24 dimensions.
- b) Steel wire rod for further industrial process or direct use in the construction sector. Its size is 5.5- to- 12mm dimensions.

The strong management system, the state of art technology and the world class imported raw material together with well-organized quality testing laboratory abetted Steely RMI Pvt. Ltd to stand upright year-to-year in the midst of stiff competition in the market with growing customers' expectation for better service in **quality, price and time**.

Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd is applying Kaizen implementation since 2015 encompasses all the areas that are related to **quality, productivity, cost, delivery, customer satisfaction and safety** whose simultaneous improvements are essential in achieving customer satisfaction and success of the organisation. Programs are replaced by the structure, leadership, coaching & ownership that encourage & sustain ongoing improvements.

KAIZEN, as undertaken by Steely RMI organisation, involves continual, dynamic and self-disciplined practice in the quest of improvement towards ever higher quality and productivity.

Hence, all these successful journeys of Steely RMI inferred as it would never stop before attaining its far reaching vision of being the leading steel manufacturer in Africa by the year 2025.

The Company Statement of Mission, Vision and Value

Our Mission:-To support the development of construction and manufacturing sectors by supplying quality steel products with competitive price through energetic employee & modern technology.

Our Vision:-To be one of the leading, dynamic and competitive steel manufacturer in Africa by 2025.

Motto:-Strong partner for construction& manufacturing Sector

Core Values

Values are traits or qualities that are considered worthwhile; they represent an individual's highest priorities and deeply held driving forces. Value statements are statements about how the organization will value customers, suppliers, and the internal community. Value statements

describe actions which are the living enactment of the fundamental values held by most individuals within the organization.

These Steely RMI core values are defined as follows:

❖ **Customer first**

- Steely RMI emphasizes and expects employees to give priority and address their interest for their external customers in their day to day activities Steely RMI gives due emphasis to employees with respect to doing the right thing consistently every day, in tasks, that fulfills the mission& vision of the Company.

❖ **Quality product and service**

- To maintain the quality of Company products and services, Steely RMI understands what customers need and will aim to be consistently upgraded and delivered to them.

❖ **Integrity**

- Steely RMI emphasizes and expects employees to be trustful and to display competent and skillful behavior in alignment with their assignments. Along with good corporate governance, ethical behavior is an integral part of everything that professionals do when working in Steely RMI.

❖ **Responsiveness**

- Steely RMI expects employees to give timely services and to deliver their performance results based on work standards set by the Company.

❖ **Teamwork**

- Smooth and constructive work relationships with Company staffs and key Stakeholders are required to fulfill Steely RMI's roles and responsibilities. Internally, Steely RMI promotes consistent, fair, and effective communications and interactions at all levels to carry out its work.

❖ **Safety first**

- Steely RMI gives due attention to safety and has defined a strategy for preventing injury and dealing with illness to employees in the workplace.

- ❖ **Environmental friendliness** – even though, by its nature steel manufacturing is less linked to environmental pollution. Steely RMI gives great attention to environmental protection, while it manufactures steel products and carries out other related activities

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

The researcher used as use qualitative research approach because quantitative research is used when a large amount of numeric data is collected, and the results are assumed to be measurable and presentable in form of numbers and statistics. The aim is to make generalizations based on the processed results of the investigation. Quantitative research emphasizes quantification when gathering and analyzing data (Bryman & Bell, 2011). Therefore it enables to make generalizations about the practice of brand image and community brand perception for the organization and was help to collect large amount of numerical data.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

The study used explanatory research design because the major purpose of explanatory research is to investigate the study in a detailed manner. Explanatory Studies establish causal relationships between variables that pertain to the research problem. The emphasis here is on studying a situation or a problem in order to explain the relationships between variables. This survey study mainly focuses on community brand perception. The study used as use questionnaire as the main method of data collection. Surveys attempt to answer the question “What exists?”(Sekaran, 2000).

3.4. POPULATION, SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE

3.4.1 POPULATION OF THE STUDY

The study investigated the practice of brand image and its effect on community brand perception in the case of Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Company. The target populations of the study were as being selected from internal and external customers (community), the total numbers of these populations are 8206. From these total populations 2000 amount are internal customers (the company’s employees) and 6204 are external customers this external customers are namely, government organizations, wholesalers, retailers and real estate developers.

3.4.2. SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND SAMPLE SIZE

In conducting a study, it is not possible and sometimes expensive to gather data by considering entire population. Therefore, smaller chunks of a unit sample are chosen to represent the relevant attributes of the whole of the units (Guilinan and Madden, 1997). But for the purpose of this study only the community (internal and external customers) of the company was considered as a sample. Therefore according to the nature of the population, the researcher stratified the whole population both customers and administrative staff in to five stratum in all areas. Because in stratified sampling the population of N unites is sub divided in to k sub population, called strata. The sub population should be non-overlapping so that they comprise the whole population such that $N_1+N_2+\dots+N_k=N$. Where N_i represents the unit in the i th a sample is drawn each stratum independently the sample size within i th stratum being n ($i=1, 2 \dots k$) such than $n_1+n_2+\dots+n_k = n$. the procedure of taking samples in this way is called stratified sampling. If the sample is taken randomly from each stratum the procedure is known as a stratified random sampling. While stratifying heterogeneous population should be sub divided in to strata each of which is homogeneous within itself, so that a relatively smaller sample were representative and one of the method of having suitable sample size from each stratum is known as proportional allocation. In proportional allocation the size of the samples from different strata are proportional to the size of strata (Creswell, 1994). Therefore the researcher used stratified random sampling because of the nature of the research.

Table 3.1 Table 1 Total population of the company internal and external customers (community)

No	Steely RMI customers(community)	Number of population	Percentage share
1	Steely RMI Production and administrative staff	2000	24.37
2	government organizations	1808	22
3	Wholesalers	1992	24.27
4	Retailers	1549	18.87
5	real estate developers	857	10.44
Total		8206	100

Source: Steely RMI PLC , 2019 annual report

By considering this total population the researcher determined the sample size as follow. Yamane (1967) provides a simplified formula to calculate sample sizes. A 95% confidence level and $P = 0.05$ are assumed. $n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$ Where n is the sample size; N is the population size, and e level of precision (sampling error) and degree of variability. So based on this, the sample size of employ was determined: with the use of Top man formula as presented below

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{8206}{1 + 8206(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{8206}{1 + 20.515}$$

$$n = \frac{8206}{21.515}$$

$$\mathbf{n = 381}$$

Generally 381 sample sizes were taken from the total population and calculated the proportion of each stratum using the following formula which is developed by (Creswell, 1994).

In the same manner, Yamane (1967) describes from the total population 8206 population the sample respondents are only 381 using formula which is 4.643% of the total population. Thus proportional Stratified sample size determination for internal and external customers (community) proportionally.

Table 3.2 Determination for internal and external respondents

No	Steely RMI customers(community)	Total Population	Proportional %	respondents
1	Steely RMI Production and administrative staff	2000	4.643	93
2	government organizations	1808	4.643	84
3	Wholesalers	1992	4.643	92
4	Retailers	1549	4.643	72
5	real estate developers	857	4.643	40
Total		8206	-	381

Where n_i is proportional sample size of strata, N_i is total population of strata, N is total population of the study and n is total sample size of the study. From those calculated proportional sample sizes of each stratum were taken randomly.

3.5. SOURCES OF DATA

The study used both primary and secondary data sources in order to gather relevant information for the study. Primary data Sources was customers of Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Company through self-administered structured questionnaire and the study was cross-sectional, where respondents are contacted once to collect primary evidences. Secondary sources of data were gathered from books, magazines, and news, paper and research documents of Steely R. M. I. Pvt. Ltd. Company.

3.6. METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

The data were analyzed through categorizing, summarizing and edited for analysis purpose. Every study shall have a general framework for how the data is analyzed. The analyses were as be based on the frame work developed from theory. This frame work used to test the respondent's answer and check if they are agreeing with theory or are presenting something new or doing something differently than theory explains it. Once the usable responses through the questionnaires are collected, the data were screened and coded using SPSS (20.0) software. The data-processing was carried out by using the SPSS after each respondent category data was checked, coded, and cleaned carefully to ensure the accuracy and validity of the research. Then descriptive statistic

(frequency distribution) was utilized to summarize data related to demographic characteristics of the respondents and responses of attitudinal questions. From the inferential statistics, correlation was used to check the validity of the study and multiple linear regressions was be used to test the hypotheses.

Reliability and validity Plan here

3.6.1 RELIABILITY TEST

Reliability is the degree to which the measure of a construct is consistent or dependable. There are many ways of estimating reliability, of which internal consistency reliability is one. Internal consistency reliability is a measure of consistency between different items of the same construct. If a multiple-item construct measure is administered to respondents, the extent to which respondents rate those items in a similar manner is a reflection of internal consistency. This reliability measure can be estimated more commonly in terms of Cronbach's alpha (Anol, 2012). Therefore the Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to check the scale reliability of the instruments.

3.6.2. VALIDITY TEST

Validity can be assessed using theoretical or empirical approaches. Theoretical assessment of validity focuses on how well the idea of a theoretical construct is translated into or represented in an operational measure (Anol, 2012). In this regard the validity of the current study addressed through the review of literature and adapting instruments used in previous research.

Empirical assessment of validity examines how well a given measure relates to one or more external criterion, based on empirical observations. It examines whether a given measure behaves the way it should, given the theory of that construct. This assessment is based on quantitative analysis of observed data using statistical techniques such as correlation analysis (Anol, 2012). Thus, the validity of the instrument in this regard was tested using correlation analysis. The researcher used the Spearman correlation coefficient between community brand perception and the fifth dimensions of brand image.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Questionnaires were successfully delivered to 381 stratified random sampling selected customers of STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD. company with in a period of seventeen days. A total of 340 valid responses with 39 missing questionnaires were returned back and 2 questionnaires were invalid with 89.7% response rate. The questionnaires were personally handed to the respondents with close follow up and guide in filling the questioners.

The data collected are presented by frequency tables and to analyze the results Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) vision 20 was used. Linear regression analysis was used to test the hypothesis and appropriate analysis and interpretations were made in accordance with the results of the testing. Hence, the research results that were collected through the survey

questionnaires were analyzed using descriptive statistics and linear regression statistics with the help of SPSS software and the results are presented and discussed in the following sections.

4.1 GENERAL INFORMATION

The general information is organized in the following areas: gender, age, level of education, period of service in the company, income per month. The purpose of the general information was to find out the characteristics of the respondents and to show the distribution of the population in the study.

Table 4.1 General Information

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	231	67.9
	Female	109	32.1
	Total	340	100
Age	25-30	78	22.9
	30-39	170	50.0
	above 40	92	27.1
	Total	340	100
Educational Level	Certificate	18	5.3
	Degree	197	57.9
	Diploma	109	32.1
	Masters and Above	16	4.7
Period of Service in this company	Less than 1 year	12	3.5
	1-3years	114	33.5
	3- 7 years	101	29.7
	above 7	113	33.3
	Total		100.0
Income per month	1000-2000	18	5.3
	2000-4000	54	15.9
	4000-7000	18	5.3
	7000-10470	88	25.9
	>10470	162	47.6
	Total	340	100.0

Source: analysis of survey data 2020, own survey,2020

The above table shows that distribution of respondent's gender as 67.9 % of the respondents were male, while 32.1 % of the respondents were female. This implies that majority of the participants in the research were male. In terms of age, 22.9 % of the respondents are 25-30 years, 50.0 % between 31 and 39 years, and 27.1 % were above 40 years, the majority of them are between 30- 39 years of age. The education qualifications of respondents are shown in table 4.1 as it indicated in the table, 57.9% holds a first degree, 32.1% were college diploma holders, while 5.3% have certificate and 4.7% of the respondents achieved masters or PHD.

The results of respondent's income per month are indicated in table 4.1 the table demonstrates that 5.3% of the respondents income were between 1000-2000, 15.9% monthly income were 2000-4000, 5.3% between 4000 to 7000, 25.9% respondents income were between 7000-10470 and 47.6 % indicated that their monthly income were above 10470. The result from the table 4.1 shows that 3.5% of the respondent's period of service in the company less than 1 year, 33.5 % of the respondents worked on the company 1-3 years, 29,7% worked in the company between 3 to 7 years , the rest of the respondents responded they worked in the company more than seven years holding 33.3%

4.2 DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Table 4.2 descriptive analysis

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean
Brand Identity	340	1.00	4.20	1.5676
Brand Personality	340	1.00	4.00	1.6253
Brand Association	340	1.00	4.17	1.6784
Brand Behaviour and Attitude	340	1.00	4.40	1.6735
Brand Competence and Benefit	340	1.00	4.20	1.7959
Community brand perception	340	1.00	3.78	1.7163
Valid N (listwise)	340			

Source: analysis of survey data 2020, own survey, 2020

The above table demonstrates in detail about the mean and the standard deviation of the customer response, the interpretation is depended on the table proposed by (Andrich and David, 1978)

Rating scale		
Mean Range	Interpretation	Response Made
1.0 - 1.7	strongly disagree	Very low
1.8 - 2.5	Disagree	Low
2.6 - 3.3	Not Sure	Neutral
3.4 - 4.1	Agree	High
4.2 - 5.0	Strongly Agree	Very High

The result of the descriptive table 4.2 shows that the mean of brand identity is 1.56 the perception of customer brand identity towards the company is very low. The perception of customer towards brand personality making of the company is very low having a mean score of 1.62. Brand association mean of customer responses 1.67 meaning the respondent disagree on the method and practice of brand association technique of the company (STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD) for instance safety and security, providing enough resource to trade, easy to work with. brand behavior and attitude similarly the response is very low having a mean score of 1.67 meaning the customer think the company communication technique are poor and they don't fell respected while communicating and if there is other similar companies as good as STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD they might prefer other brand. Brand competence and benefit of the respondent get vey low rating by disagreeing on the location, fair benefit and disagreeing on speedy and efficient problem solving ability they get from STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD having a mean score of 1.7. Finally the respondent answers community brand perception testing questions by disagreeing on most of the question having a mean score of 1.7.

4.3 CORRELATION ANALYSIS

Different authors suggest different interpretations; however, (Cohen, 1988) suggests the following guidelines for interpreting correlation coefficients:-

Small = .10 to .29

Medium = .30 to .49

Large = .50 to 1.0

These guidelines apply whether or not there is a negative sign out the front of your r value.

Table 4.3 correlation result between the dependent and independent variable

		<i>Customer Brand Perception</i>
<i>Spearman's rho</i>	<i>Brand Identity</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i> .631**
		<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> .000
		<i>N</i> 340
	<i>Brand Personality</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i> .532**
		<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> .000
		<i>N</i> 340
	<i>Brand Assosiation</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i> .637**
		<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> .000
		<i>N</i> 340
	<i>Brand Behavior and Attitude</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i> .581**
		<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> .000
		<i>N</i> 340
<i>Brand Competence and Benefit</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i> .510**	
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> .000	
	<i>N</i> 340	
<i>Customer Brand Perception</i>	<i>Correlation Coefficient</i> 1.000	
	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i> .	
	<i>N</i> 340	

Source: analysis of survey data 2020, own survey, 2020.

The above table 4.3 shows, the relationship between the independent variables which is brand image (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit) and the dependent variable Community brand perception was investigated using Spearman correlation coefficient. The results of correlation analysis in the table 4.3, shows that all the independent variables were positively and significantly correlated with the dependent variable. The correlation coefficient between brand identity and Community brand perception is 0.631 with $p < .05$. This means if the company focus on brand identity, the company's

Community brand perception was improved. Therefore, brand identity has power to determine the Community brand perception.

Based on the correlation result as it is shown in the table 4.3 brand personalities have large/ high relationship with Community brand perception having 0.532. This means that if the company work on elements of brand personality such as competence, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness the Community brand perception was be improved. Therefore, brand personality has power to determine the customer's brand perception.

Based on the table 4.3 of correlation results, brand association has a positive correlation with Community brand perception with 63.7% in other words if the bank improve it's the element customer associate with the brand, the customer was have positive brand perception towards the company. As a result; the company should be able to improve its issues that are very strong related to a brand, or, person, owner, and the certain symbols and meanings that are very strong attached to a brand, to establish strong association with the brand. Therefore, brand association has power to determine the brand perception of customers.

Brand behavior and attitude is another dimension of brand image that is taken into account to explain customer's brand perception. Based on the correlation result from table 4.3 shown by Spearman correlation test, brand behavior and attitude is positively and largely correlated with customer's brand perception. The correlation coefficient between brand behavior and attitude and customers' brand perception is 0.581. This shows that brand behavior and attitude dimension is a major determinant of customers' brand perception and customer's brand perception is highly influenced by the company's brand behavior and attitude to serve the customer better.

The other factor that is included as dimension of brand image is brand competence and benefit; it has positive and large relationship with Community brand perception having 0.510. Brand competence and benefit is one the important tools to create good perception towards the brand. because Brand competence and benefit are the values, advantages and distinctive competencies offered by a brand in solving consumer problems, which enable consumers to get benefit because their needs, desires, dreams and obsessions manifested by what it has to offer. The company

should be able to improve the brand association with competence and benefit of customer since it has a positive relationship with Community brand perception.

4.4 REGRESSION ANALYSIS

The multiple regression analysis was conducted. Multiple regression is an extension of simple linear regression. It is used when we want to predict the value of dependent variable based on the value of two or more independent variables. It is conducted to investigate the influence of independent variable on the dependent variable and identify the relative significant influence of the independent variable (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit) to the dependent variable Community brand perception.

Before interpreting the regression data result we have to check whether assumption of Multicollinearity and normality assumptions are violated or not.

Multicollinearity assumption

Multicollinearity is a situation where independent variables in multiple regression are linearly correlated. Here we are measuring degree not kind because correlation among independent variables may appear but the degree must not be strong or above 0.80. Result from the table in appendix III shows that there is no high correlation between the independent variables (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit) since the correlation result is between 0.519 to the minimum and to the maximum 0.789.

The other way to check Multicollinearity assumption is using VIF and tolerance. Tolerance is an indicator of how much of the variability of the specified independent variable is not explained by the other independent variables in the model and is calculated using the formula $1 - R^2$ for each variable. If this value is very small (less than .10) it indicates that the multiple correlation with other variables is high, suggesting the possibility of Multicollinearity. The other value given is the VIF (Variance inflation factor), which is just the inverse of the Tolerance value ($1 / \text{Tolerance}$). VIF values above 10 would be a concern here, indicating Multicollinearity. The result from table in appendix III shows the VIF is below ten and the tolerance result didn't exceed 0.10. Hence, we have not violated the multicollinearity assumption.

Normality assumption

Normality can be checked by histogram and p-plot. In the Normal P-P Plot, you are hoping that your points were lying in a reasonably straight diagonal line from bottom left to top right. This would suggest no major deviations from normality. As we can see from the histogram and p-plot graph in the above diagram we can say the variables are normally distributed.

Table 4.4 model summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.802 ^a	.643	.638	.36251

a. Predictors: Brand Competence and Benefit, Brand Personality, Brand Identity, Brand Behavior and Attitude, Brand Association

b. Dependent Variable: Community brand perception

Source: analysis of survey data 2020, own survey, 2020

The result summary table 4.4 shows that value of R=0.802 and R Square 0.643 which means that the 64.3% of the variance Square in the dependent variable (Community brand perception) has been significantly explained by the independent variables (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit) consequently, we can say that the remaining 35.7% represent other variable which is not explained but may have effect on Community brand perception.

Table 4.5 ANOVA

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	79.170	5	15.834	120.487	.000 ^b
	Residual	43.893	334	.131		
	Total	123.062	339			
a. Dependent Variable: Customer Brand Perception						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Competence and Benefit, Brand Personality, Brand Identity, Brand Behaviour and Attitude, Brand Association						

Source: analysis of survey data 2020, own survey, 2020

ANOVA result of the model shows, the F-test is in this table tests whether the overall regression model is good fit for the data or not.

As we see from the above ANOVA table 4.5 the P value is 0.00 which is less than the level of significance or 0.05. Thus, the combination of the variables significantly predicts the dependent variable (F=79.170; $p < 0.05$). Therefore, the overall regression model is significant.

Table 4.6 Coefficients

Coefficients ^a							
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	.369	.061		6.002	.000		
1							
Brand Identity	.174	.064	.173	2.709	.007	.261	3.833
Brand Personality	.043	.061	.045	.709	.000	.261	3.834
Brand Association	.190	.063	.220	3.009	.003	.199	5.021
Brand Behavior and Attitude	.346	.056	.373	6.239	.000	.298	3.352
Brand Competence and Benefit	.059	.041	.069	1.435	.002	.458	2.186

a. Dependent Variable: Customer Brand Perception

Source: analysis of survey data 2020, own survey, 2020

The above table shows that the standardized Beta Coefficients that present the contributions of each variable to the model. The results of regression analysis of each predictor show the individual effect of brand image dimensions on Community brand perception. According to the data, brand identity ($\beta = 0.174$, $p < 0.05$), brand personality ($\beta = 0.043$, $p < 0.05$), brand association ($\beta = 0.190$, $p < 0.05$), brand behavior and attitude ($\beta = 0.346$, $p < 0.01$), and brand competence and benefit ($\beta = 0.059$, $p < 0.05$).

The linear regression equation

$$CBP = a + (B1) BI + (B2) BP + (B3) BA + (B4) BB + (B5) BC$$

Where, CBP= Community brand perception

- BI= Brand identity
- BP= Brand personality
- BA= Brand association
- BB= Brand behavior and attitude
- BC= Brand competence and benefit
- a= Constant and
- B1, B2, B3, B4, B5= beta coefficients.

$$CBP = 0.174 BI + 0.043 BP + 0.19 BA + 0.346 BBA + 0.059 BCB$$

Hypothesis testing is based on standardized coefficients beta and P-value to test whether the hypotheses are rejected or not.

4.5 HYPOTHESIS TEST

The above coefficients table 4.6 illustrates that the influence of brand image on Community brand perception of the company. At this point using this multiple regression coefficient results, the proposed hypotheses for this study were tested as follows:-

H1: Brand identity has a positive effect on Community brand perception.

As show in coefficients table 4.6 indicate that brand identity on the organization has a positive influence on Community brand perception having a beta value of ($\beta=0.174$) this shows that there is a positive and significant effect on customer loyalty with 95% confidence interval.

H2: Brand personality has a positive effect on Community brand perception.

Based on regression analysis result in the above table 4.6 illustrates that brand personality has significant influence on Community brand perception the value of beta is 0.043 this shows that there is a positive and significance influence of brand personality of STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD on customer's brand perception with 95% confidence interval. Therefore, the above proposed hypothesis is accepted.

H3: Brand association has a positive effect on Community brand perception.

The result of multiple regression analysis in the above table 4.6 clearly indicates that brand association has a positive and significant influence on Community brand perception the value of beta is ($\beta=0.190$) with 95% confidence interval this shows there is a significance influence of brand association on Community brand perception. Therefore, the above proposed hypothesis is accepted.

H4: Brand behavior & attitude has a positive effect on Community brand perception.

The result of multiple regression analysis in the above table 4.6 clearly indicates that brand behavior and attitude has a positive and significant influence on Community brand perception the value of beta is ($\beta=0.346$) with 95% confidence interval this shows there is a significance influence of brand behavior and attitude on Community brand perception. Therefore, the above proposed hypothesis is accepted.

H5: Brand competence & benefit has a positive effect on Community brand perception.

The results of regression analysis show in the above table 4.6 it can be inferred that brand competence and benefit has a significant influence on Community brand perception the value of beta is ($\beta= 0.059$) this shows that there is a positive and significance influence of brand competence and benefit on Community brand perception with 95% confidence interval. Consequently, the above proposed hypothesis is accepted.

Moreover, from the finding of this study, the researcher found out that all the five brand image dimensions (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit) have positive effects on community brand perception. The findings of this study indicated that brand behavior and attitude was the most important factor to have positive and significant effect on community brand perception followed by brand association, brand identity, brand competence and benefit and brand personality respectively.

Hypothesis summary

Table 4.7 hypothesis summary

Number	Hypothesis	Accepted / not accepted
H1	Brand identity has a positive effect on Community brand perception.	Accepted
H2	Brand personality has a positive effect on Community brand perception.	Accepted
H3	Brand association has a positive effect on Community brand perception.	Accepted
H4	Brand behavior & attitude has a positive effect on Community brand perception.	Accepted
H5	Brand competence & benefit has a positive effect on Community brand perception.	Accepted

Source: summary made from result of SPSS, 2020

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY OF FINDING

The main purpose of the study was to examine the effect of brand image on Community brand perception in manufacturing industry, particularly in STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD. The major goal of brand image is to create long-lasting brand perception in customers mind. Brand image appears in the mind of the consumer through perceptions of brand that emerge by means of the brand associations kept in memory. The brand image dimensions that were included in this research are brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit.

As the findings of this study indicated in table 4.2 the descriptive statistics of the respondents shows that disagreed with the five dimensions of brand image. Moreover, the respondents disagreed with the five dimensions of brand image by giving the lowest rate scale to brand identity, followed by brand personality; brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit are with average mean of 1.56, 1.62, 1.67, 1.67, 1.7, and 1.7 respectively.

With regard to the Spearman correlation analysis, it can be clearly seen as that the five brand image dimensions namely brand identity, brand personality; brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit are positively related to Community brand perception in STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD. The relationship looks like the following:-

- brand identity dimension and Community brand perception have moderate relationship $r=0.631$ and $P<5$
- brand personality dimension and Community brand perception have high relationship $r=0.532$ and $P<5$
- brand association handling and Community brand perception have high relationship $r=0.637$ and $P<5$
- brand behavior and attitude and community brand perception have moderate relationship $r=0.581$ and $P<5$

- brand competence and benefit and customers brand perception have moderate relationship $r=0.510$ and $P<5$

Multiple linear regression analysis was applied to evaluate the extent to which relationship brand image i.e. brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit have effect on Community brand perception

The regression analysis clearly shows that 64.3 % of variance in Community brand perception is explained by brand image dimensions (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit). And the remaining 35.7% could be explained by other unexplored variables.

5.2 CONCLUSION

Brand image is an outcome of perceptions and association that a product/brand leave in consumer's mind because it involves all the beliefs that create value and consumer commitment. The consumer needs and wants provide information about the desired product/service that information act as brand perception which serves as competitive advantage.

This study has investigated the extent to which these brand image dimensions have effects on building Community brand perception by taking STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD as a case study. The study, as presented in above summary, found that brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit effect on customer loyalty. Trust, communication and commitment have also a significant effect.

Based on the findings of the study, it is very important that STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD should understand the brand image dimensions (brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit) are very importance to build Community brand perception.

Therefore it is reasonable to conclude that Community brand perception can be created, reinforced and retained by marketing plans aimed at building brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude and brand competence and benefit and developing strong bonds between STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD and its customers.

Finally, this study concludes that brand image dimensions are contributing to community brand perception. Manufacturing companies like STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD need to implement well designed brand image enhancing strategies and structure.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

This study raised a number hypotheses was designed related to the study variables. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of brand image on Community brand perception in case of STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD. The study applied an explanatory study on STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD besides tried to infer the findings through testing the hypotheses. And based on the conclusions drawn above the following recommendations are forwarded for the concerned bodies:

- STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD is advice work on brand association aspect of the company since Brand image plays an important role in the development of a brand because the brand image associated with the reputation and credibility of the brand which later become the ‘guideline’ for the consumer audience to try and use a product or service then creating a particular experience.
- STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD recommended to strength brand behavior and attitude by devouring good communication with customers, by making the customers fell respected and well treated, by delivering what the company promised and by assigning specific person to handle the complains of the customer.
- STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD brand identity, brand personality and brand competence and benefit dimensions should be given due attention by the company because they are the dimensions which have a positive relationship was benefit the company since these dimensions was have a huge effect on community brand perception. The company needs to look into different dimensions of brand image that pose this positive relationship that in turn brings about Community brand perception. The brand image dimensions such as brand identity, brand personality, brand association, brand behavior and attitude, brand competence and benefit to build Community brand perception.
- Future research advised test these relationships in other manufacturing sectors other than steel manufacturing sector Moreover; future research in this area can introduce some other brand image dimensions such as brand loyalty, brand attribute, brand awareness, brand

trust and brand differentiation. By examining these effects, this future study was adding value to the present knowledge in this area, by pushing back the frontier of knowledge in the field.

5.4 LIMITATION OF THE RESEARCH

Despite the useful findings of the study, this study has several limitations that need to be acknowledged. The limitation of this research is it only focuses on one sector the manufacturing sector particularly in STEELY R. M. I. PVT. LTD. Focusing only on five brand image dimensions' future researches, therefore, may consider more factors which can influence community brand perception.

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**ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

Dear respondents, I am a postgraduate student of the above mentioned institution and currently undertaking a research on “**THE EFFECTS OF BRAND IMAGE ON COMMUNITY BRAND PERCEPTION: STEELY R.M.I PVT.LTD.COMPANY**”.Your participation in the study is completely voluntary. The purpose of the questionnaire is to obtain information, based on your personal view, on the effect of brand image on community brand perception.

The quality of the result of this research is based on the accuracy of the information you provided. The research work is for academic purpose only. Thus, the research was assure the information provide is going to be reported and communicated in collective data only with no personally identifiable. Any information obtained in connection with this study was remain strictly confidential nothing was be tied back to any individual names.

In order for your responses to be useful, all responses to the items contained in this questionnaire must accurately reflect your true opinions. Please take a few minutes to provide your honest opinion about each statement. Your honest opinion is very valuable to the success of this study.

Note

- You are not required to write your name.
- Put in the box provided a Tick symbol.
- Question related to your opinion please write shortly and precisely on the space provided.
- Your response was be confidential and it was be used only for research purpose.
- If any ambiguity contact by:- Phone 0911215534 or g-mail getumoges2006@gmail.com

Thank you in advance for your cooperation!

You have been very helpful!!

APPENDIX I

Instruction: Please mark your answer with a tick (✓) in the space provided.

I. Demographic Information

1. Age :- 25-30yrs 30-39yrs 40 yrs and Above
2. Gender:- male female
3. Educational Level:- Certificate Diploma Degree Masters and Above
4. Period of Service in this company:- Less than 1 year 3years 3- 7 years above 7
5. Income per month :- 1000-2000 2000-4000 4000-7000 7000-10470 >10470

II. Opinion based responses Please use tick (✓) mark in the answer boxes that reflect your rating

1.Brand identity

		Strongly agree	agree	neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Q 1	I Considering any recent experience, I am satisfied					
Q 2	I am fully satisfied in Steely RMI PLC					
Q 3	I consider myself trust worth on the Steely RMI PLC					
Q 4	I would really not lucky if I was not employed here					
Q 5	I would recommend this organization to other people					

2.Brand personality

Q 6	This organization has been giving me a feeling of fun					
Q 7	I have gotten this organization as I expected before my employment					
Q 8	I think this organization is tough					
Q 9	I believe that Steely RMI PLC is sophisticated and upper class k					

Q 10	I believe that Steely RMI PLC tolerated me fairly and friendly					
3.Brand association						
Q 11	My job is easy to work					
Q 12	The brand provides enough resources to my work/trade.					
Q 13	The brand takes care for my safety and security					
Q 14	My work/trade is safe and healthy					
Q 15	I am getting fair salary/profit to my work load					
Q 16	I am working in attractive working environment.					
4.Brand behavior and attitude						
Q 17	If there is other similar companies as good as Steely RMI PLC, I still prefer to this brand					
Q 18	I have good communication with the co-workers of this organization					
Q 19	This organization has been giving me a feeling of self-respect.					
Q 20	I have warmth communication with the administrators of this brand					
Q 21	The representatives of this organization fulfilled to me what they promised.					
5.Brand competence and benefits						
Q 22	I am getting fair bonus and benefits					
Q 23	I am getting full and qualified facilities like transportation, uniform, etc.					
Q 24	I am feeling happy on its location to me.					
Q 25	I am enjoyed in the provide career development by the brand					
Q 26	I am happy on the speedy and efficiently problem solving ability of brand administrators					
6.Cutomer brand perception						
Q 27	I am very committed on membership of customer brand of Steely RMI PLC					
Q 28	My maximum effort to continue with this customers brand of Steely RMI PLC					
Q 29	I really care about this customer brand of Steely RMI PLC					

Q 30	Being a member of this community brand of Steely RMI PLC is very much like being family					
Q 31	Being a member of this customer brand of Steely RMI PLC is very important to me					
Q 32	My motive is increasing by being a customer of this company					
Q 33	I have never experience such kind of smart internal and external customers(community) brand of steely RMI company					
Q 34	Being a membership in this brand of Steely RMI PLC is something I intend to maintain for ever					
Q 35	Being committed to the brand with Steely RMI PLC					

Thank you for voluntariness

APPENDEX II

የዚህ መጠይቅ አላማ ለሁለተኛ ድግሪ መሟያ የሚሆን ጥናት መስራት ሲሆን የጥናቱ ትኩረትም የስቲሊ አርኬም አይ ሰራተኞችና የድርጅቱ ዋና ዋና ባለድርሻ አካላት በመሆናቸው በ-----ያለችሁን እውነተኛ ሃሳብና አስተያየት በተዘጋጀው መጠይቅ እንድትገልጹልኝ በትህትና እየጠየቅሁ ለምታደርጉልኝ ትብብር በቅድሚያ አመሰግናለሁ።

መመሪያ አንድ፡ ከቀረቡት ምርጫዎች መካከል በምላሽዎ ትይዩ ባለው ሳጥን ውስጥ የራዎት ምልክት ያድርጉ።

I. አጠቃላይ መረጃ

6. እድሜ ፡-25-30 30-39 40 እና በላይ

7. ጾታ፡- ወንድ ሴት

8. የትምህርት ደረጃ፡- ሰርቲፊኬት ዲፕሎማ ዲግ
ሁለተኛ ዲግሪ እና በላይ

9. በድርጅቱ ያለዎት የአገልግሎት ዘመን ፡- ከ1 አመት በታች 1-3 አመት 3- 7አመት
ከ7 አመት በላይ

10. ወርሃዊ ገቢ፡-1000-2000 2000-4000 4000-7000 7000-1000 10000

II. ከዚህ በታች የቀረቡትን ጥያቄዎች በማንበብ የርሰዎ ምላሽ በሆነው የመልስ መስጫ ሳጥን ውስጥ የህምልክት ያድርጉ

1. የብራንዱ ማንነት						
		በጣም እስማማለሁ	እስማማለሁ	ሃሳብ የለኝም	አልስማማም	በጣም አልስማማም
1	በቅርብ ጊዜ ከድርጅቱ ጋር ባለኝ ሁሉም ግንኙነት እርካታን አግኝቻለሁ					
2	በስቲሊ አርኬም አይ ምርትና አገልግሎት ሙሉ በሙሉ እርካታን አግኝቻለሁ					
3	በድርጅቱ ላይ እምነት እንዳለኝ አምናለሁ					
4	በእርግጥም የድርጅቱ ደንበኛ ባልሆን ኖሮ እድለኛ እንዳልሆንኩ ይሰማኝ ነበር።					

5	ለሌሎች ሰዎች ድርጅቱን እንዲመርጡት አስተያየትና ሃሳብ በመስጠት አስተዋውቃለሁ።					
2. የብራንዱ መገለጫዎች						
6	ይህ ድርጅት የእርካታ ስሜት እንዲሰማኝ አድርገኛል					
7	ድርጅቱን ያገኘሁት ደንበኛ ከመሆኔ በፊት እንደጠበቁት ነው					
8	ይህ ድርጅት ለግንባታ ዘርፉ ትልቅ አጋር ነው ብዬ አስባለሁ					
9	እንደ አኔ እምነት እስቲሊ አርኤም አይ በገበያው ውስጥ መሪ እና በጣም ተመራጭ ድርጅት ነው ።					
10	እስቲሊ አር ኤም አይ ደንበኞቹን የሚያከብርና ተገቢውን ትኩረት በመስጠት አሳማኝ አገልግሎት የሚሰጥ ድርጅት ነው ብዬ አምናለሁ።					
3. የብራንዱ መስተጋብር						
11	ስራዎ ቀላል ነው					
12	ብራንዱ(ድርጅቱ) ወቅታዊ መረጃ ያዘጋጃል					
13	ድርጅቱ ለጤናዎ እና ደህንነቴ ጥንቃቄ ያደርግልኛል					
14	የድርጅቱ ምርት ከፍተኛ ጥራት ያለው ነው					
15	የድርጅቱ የምርት መሸጫ ዋጋ ተወዳዳሪ እና ሚዛናዊ ነው።					
16	የድርጅቱ የሽያጭ ቢሮዎች ለአገልግሎት ተደራሽ እና ምቹ ናቸው።					
4. የብራንዱ ባህሪ እና ደረጃ						
17	ሌሎች እንደ እስቲሊ አር ኤም አይ በገበያው ውስጥ ተመራጭ የሆኑ ድርጅቶች በኖሩ እንኳ ይህ ምርጫ ግን እስቲሊ አር ኤም አይ ነው።					
18	ከድርጅቱ ጋር ጥሩ ተግባሮች እና ግንኙነት አለኝ					
19	ድርጅቱ ለራሴ ያለኝን የክብር ስሜት ይጨምርልኛል።					
20	ከድርጅቱ ሃላፊዎች ጋር ጠንካራ ተግባሮች(ቀረቤታ) አለኝ					
21	የድርጅቱ ተወካዮች ቃል የገቡልኝን በሙሉ ያሟሉልኛል					
5. የብራንዱ ጥንካሬ እና ጠቀሜታ						
22	ድርጅቱ የዱቤ እና የዋጋ ቅኝ ለአገልግሎት ስርአት አለው					
23	ከድርጅቱ ጥራት ያለው አገልግሎት እና የማዳዳዥ አገልግሎት አገኛለሁ።					
24	በድርጅቱ የሽያጭ ቢሮዎች እና የፋብሪካ መገኛ ቦታዎች ተደራሽነት ደስተኛ ነኝ					
25	በድርጅቱ የካፍቴሪያ አገልግሎት፣ የስራ ቦታና አካባቢ					

	ተስማሚነት ደስተኛ ነኝ					
26	በድርጅቱ ሰራተኞች ፈጣን እና ውጤታማ የችግር አፈታት ችሎታ ደስተኛ ነኝ					
6. የማህበረሰቡ አረዳድ						
27	እስቲሊ አር ኤም አይ ለሁሉን አቀፍ ማህበራዊ አገልግሎት ሃላፊነት በመወሰድ የሚሰራ ታማኝ ድርጅት ነው					
28	ከዚህ ድርጅት ጋር ለመቀጠል ጠንካራ ጥረት አደርጋለሁ					
29	ለድርጅቱ ማህበረሰብ ከፍተኛ እገዛና እንክብካቤ አደርጋለሁ					
30	ከዚህ የድርጅት ማህበረሰብ ጋር መሆኔን ልክ ከቤተሰቤ ጋር እንዳለሁ አድርጌ የምቆጥረው ነው					
31	ከድርጅቱ ማህበረሰብ ጋር መሆኔ ለእኔ በጣም ጠቃሚ ነው					
32	ከድርጅቱ ማህበረሰብ አንዱ በመሆኔ ያለኝ ስሜት በየጊዜው እየጨመረ መጥቷል።					
33	በህይወት ዘመኔ እንደዚህ ያለ ማራኪ ስብስብ አጋጥሞኝ አያውቅም					
34	የዚህ ድርጅት አባል መሆን ማለት ልክ አንድን ነገር ለዘላለም የራስ ለማድረግ እንደማለም ያለ ትርጉም አለው ።					
35	በስቲሊ አር.ኤም.አይ. ምርት እተማመናለሁ።					

		Brand Identity	Brand Personality	Brand Association	Brand Behavior and Attitude	Brand Competence and Benefit
Brand Identity	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	340				
Brand Personality	Pearson Correlation	.789**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
	N	340	340			
Brand Association	Pearson Correlation	.637**	.519**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
	N	340	340	340		
Brand Behavior and Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.738**	.776**	.779**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
	N	340	340	340	340	
Brand Competence and Benefit	Pearson Correlation	.620**	.620**	.698**	.691**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	340	340	340	340	340
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

APPENDIX III

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
	BrandIdentity	.261	3.833
	BrandPersonality	.261	3.834
	BrandAssociation	.199	5.021
	BrandBehaviorandAttitude	.298	3.352
	BrandCompetenceandBenefit	.458	2.186

