

**A STUDY ON FACTORS INFLUENCING THE BRANDING STRATEGIES
AND ITS IMPLICATION ON OMANI PRODUCTS IN MUSCAT CITY**

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ABSTRACT

The study on factors influencing the branding strategies and its implication on Omani products is very essential in this scenario as the local brands were not so popular in the Muscat City. At this juncture the Omani branded companies or product need to be focused more as their sales has to be increased. The research design carried out in this study was descriptive analysis. The research philosophy adopted in this study was phenomenology as the topic takes the social issue of improving the branding strategies of Omani product. As far as the brand name is remembered in the market the product will have sales in the market. Many organizations can retain their market share only by investing money in building the brand name and to retain the brand image to survive in long run. The implications of branding strategies among the seller in the market are very vital one.

KEY WORDS: Brand, Brand Name, Branding Strategies, Omani Products.

INTRODUCTION:

Brand this five letter word has lot more to do in the field of marketing. As the entire human have name Brand name is the name for the products which gives proper recognition among the millions and millions of people. For the goods and services to get proper recognition in the market the brand name is very important. Brand name gives a brand image on the minds of the prospective customers and the consumers. Branding strategies help to create, to develop, to sustain, to sell, to survive, to innovate and to do lot more.

OBJECTIVE: The main objective of this study is to identify the factors influencing the implications of branding strategies for Omani product in Muscat city.

LITERATURE REVIEWS:

Veronique Pauwels Delassus (2012), their study titled, “Brand name substitution and brand equity transfer”, This study identifies five key influence factors that marketing managers can use to transfer brand equity in the case of brand name substitution, based on consumers' knowledge of the brand change, attitude toward brand change, perceived similarity between the old and new brands, degree of attachment to the initial brand, and recognition of the presence of an umbrella brand. Finally, the brand equity dimensions are interrelated, such that the transfer of perceived quality and brand image influences loyalty transfer, and brand quality transfer improves brand image transfer.

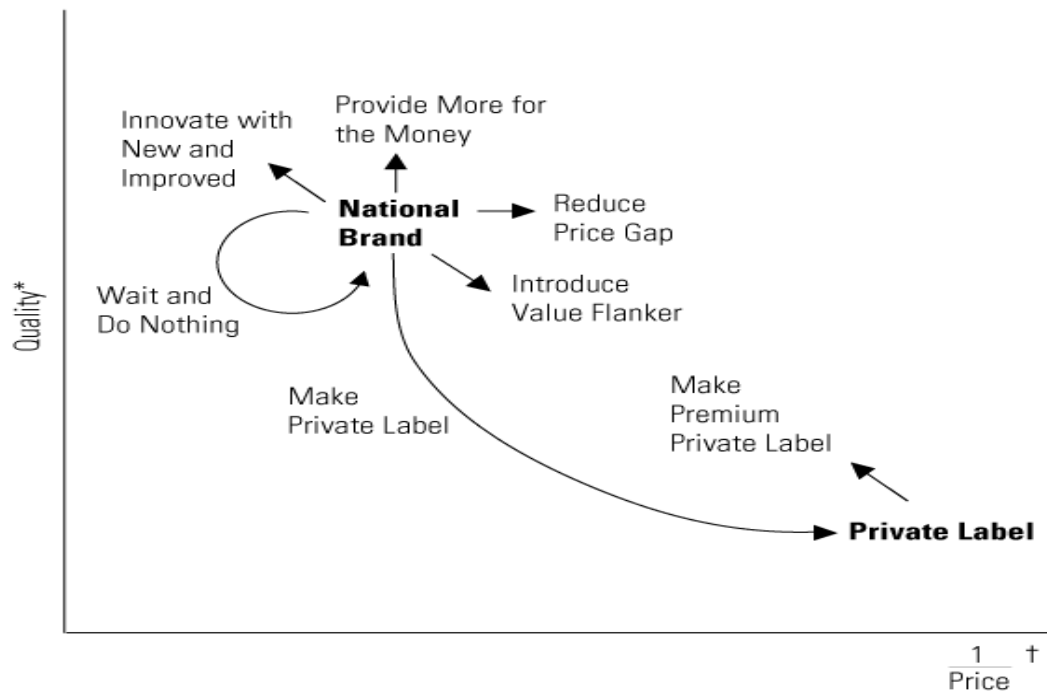
Drucken miller (2004), has given the following matrix related to external and internal factors why we need brand name and branding for our products.

Table 1.1

	Positives	Negatives
Internal Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Core competencies in key areas ✓ An acknowledged market leader ✓ Well constructed functional area strategies ✓ Proven management ✓ Cost management ✓ Better advertising campaigns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ No clear strategic direction ✓ Obsolete facilities ✓ Lack of management depth ✓ Weak market image ✓ Too narrow product line ✓ Low customer retention
External Factors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Ability to serve additional customers ✓ Expand product lines ✓ Falling trade barriers in attractive foreign markets ✓ Complacency among rival firms ✓ Ability to grow to due to increase in market demand 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Entry of lower cost foreign competitors ✓ Rising sales of substitute products ✓ Slower market growth ✓ Increase in tax rates ✓ Changing buyer demands

As per the Kapferer. 2003, the strategic option for the national brand were analysed as follows:

Figure 1 Strategic Options for the National Brand



* Actual quality measured on an objective physical scale.

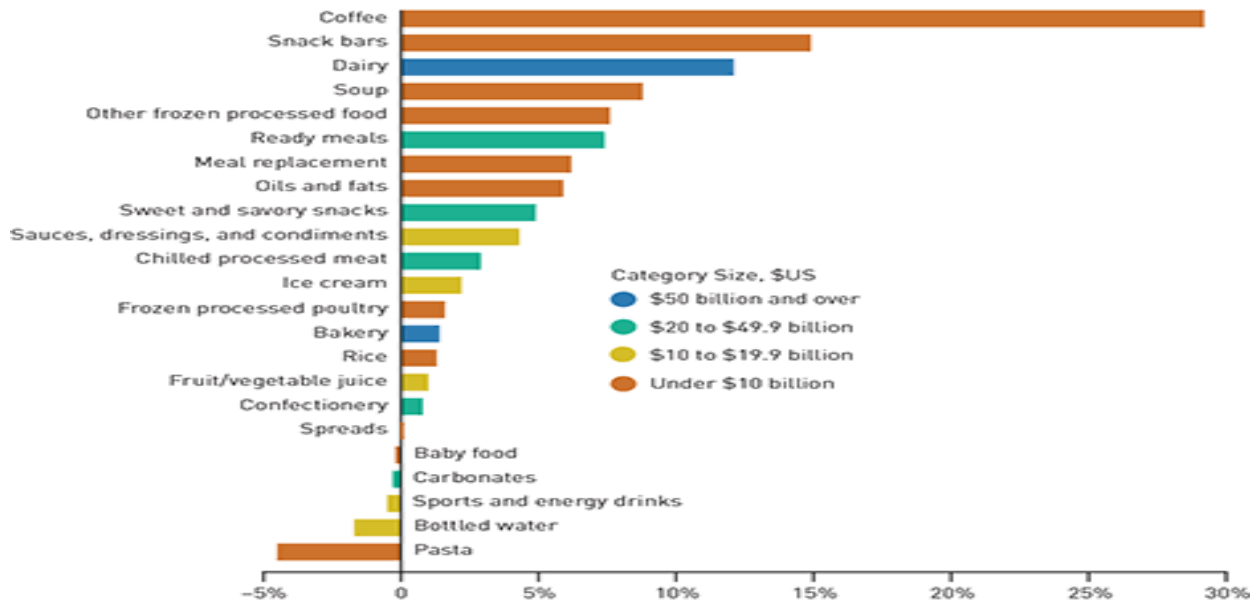
† The reciprocal of price. Products further to the right have lower, more attractive prices.

Note: This diagram ignores multiple national brands and the requirement of national brand competition to have a multidimensional view of quality.

Exhibit: Small Players Outperform

In most of the biggest food and beverage categories, small CPG firms are increasing their market share.

Three-Year Growth of Small Players Relative to Category



Notes: Ready-to-drink tea and frozen processed vegetables are not shown because those categories have no small players. Packaged food categories show 2012 data; beverage categories show 2011 data.

Source: Euromonitor, Booz & Company analysis

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The research design adopted in this study was descriptive analysis. The research approach used in this study was inductive approach and among the inductive approach the grounded theory and Ethnography were the two strategies used in this study because the grounded theory strategy is used to do detail study in the form of literature review and as no hypothesis is framed and only a detail analysis is done to know the awareness among the people about the Omani brands and its need Ethnography is adopted. In this study simple Random sampling technique is used under probability sampling techniques with the sample size of 75 respondents from the sampling area as Oman and the sampling unit as Muscat City.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

TABLE 1.2

Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid 20 - 30	30	40.0	40.0	40.0
30 - 40	19	25.3	25.3	65.3
40 - 50	8	10.7	10.7	76.0
below 20	11	14.7	14.7	90.7
above 50	7	9.3	9.3	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Inference:

From the above table it is clearly analyzed that 40% of the respondents were in the category of 20 – 30 years of age and 25.3% of the respondents were in the age group of 30 – 40 years .

TABLE 1.3

Income

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid below 200 Ro	4	5.3	5.3	5.3
201 - 300 Ro	18	24.0	24.0	29.3
301 - 400 Ro	17	22.7	22.7	52.0
401 - 500Ro	29	38.7	38.7	90.7
Above 500 Ro	7	9.3	9.3	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Inference:

From the table it is analyzed that 38.7% of the respondents were getting their income under the category of 401 - 500 Ro.

TABLE 1.4

Educational Qualification

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Schooling	3	4.0	4.0	4.0
Under graduate	40	53.3	53.3	57.3
Post Graduate	24	32.0	32.0	89.3
Upper higher Degree	4	5.3	5.3	94.7
No Educational qualification	4	5.3	5.3	100.0
Total	75	100.0	100.0	

Inference:

From the above table it is understood that 53.3% of the respondents were qualified with under graduation. In overall analysis more than 90% of respondents were well educated.

Applying the Ordinal Regression using SPSS the following results have been obtained:

TABLE 1.5
Case Processing Summary

		N	Marginal Percentage
AGE	20 - 30	30	40.0%
	30 - 40	19	25.3%
	40 - 50	8	10.7%
	below 20	11	14.7%
	above 50	7	9.3%
FACTORS	Increase sales	10	13.3%
	Create brand image	22	29.3%
	Improved Services	10	13.3%
	Improved Taste	13	17.3%
	Attract Customers	6	8.0%
	Compete international brand	9	12.0%
	Increase Profit	5	6.7%
Valid		75	100.0%
Missing		0	
Total		75	

TABLE 1.6

Model Fitting Information

Model	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	178.281			
Final	134.093	44.188	7	.000

Link function: Logit.

The age as dependent variable and the factors were analyzed and it shows that the variables are highly significant at 5% level of significance.

TABLE 1.7

Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell	.445
Nagelkerke	.471
McFadden	.202

Link function: Logit.

TABLE 1.8

Parameter Estimates - b

	Estimate	Std. Error	Wald	df	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval		
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Threshold	[AGE = 1.00]	-1.733	1.188	2.129	1	.145	-4.062	.595
	[AGE = 2.00]	-.196	1.188	.027	1	.869	-2.524	2.131
	[AGE = 3.00]	.580	1.184	.240	1	.624	-1.740	2.901
	[AGE = 4.00]	2.070	1.192	3.019	1	.082	-.265	4.406
Location	EDUCATION	.442	.281	2.475	1	.116	-.109	.992
	[FACTORS=1]	-2.373	1.032	5.284	1	.022	-4.396	-.350
	[FACTORS=2]	-1.633	.926	3.113	1	.078	-3.448	.181
	[FACTORS=3]	-23.673	.000	.	1	.	-23.673	-23.673
	[FACTORS=4]	-.034	.985	.001	1	.973	-1.965	1.897
	[FACTORS=5]	-4.275	1.443	8.776	1	.003	-7.103	-1.446
	[FACTORS=6]	-2.537	1.064	5.684	1	.017	-4.622	-.451
	[FACTORS=7]	0a	.	.	0	.	.	.

Link function: Logit.

a. This parameter is set to zero because it is redundant.

b. Some or all bootstrap sample results are missing, so no bootstrap estimation has been performed for this table.

In comparing the above results it clearly depicts that factor 1, 5 and 6 were significant as their significance values were .022, .003 and .017 respectively. So it depicts that the customers says that brand name for Omani products were highly important which will increase the sales, to attract the customers and to compete with international brands in the market.

In the below Neural Networking analysis is done using the findings pertaining to this study:

TABLE 1.9

Network Information

Input Layer	Factors	1	FACTORS	
		1	AGE	
	Covariates	2	EDUCATION	
		3	INCOME	
	Number of Units ^a			10
	Rescaling Method for Covariates		Standardized	
	Number of Hidden Layers			1
Hidden Layer(s)	Number of Units in Hidden Layer 1 ^a			5
	Activation Function		Hyperbolic tangent	
		1	BRAND	
	Dependent Variables	2	IMAGE	
Output Layer		3	SALES	
	Number of Units			6
	Activation Function		Softmax	
	Error Function		Cross-entropy	

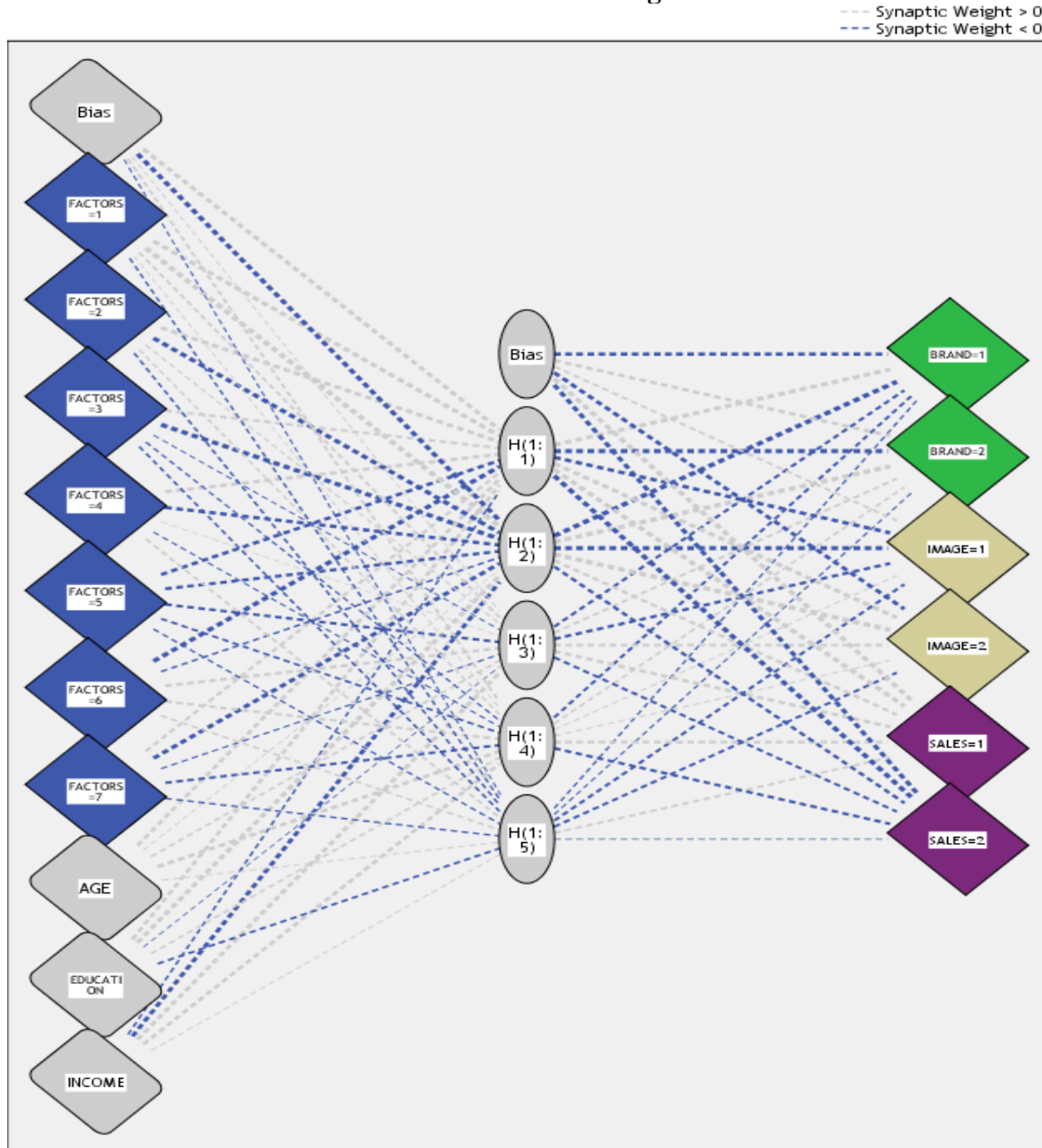
a. Excluding the bias unit

BRAND

Sample	Observed	Predicted		
		Need brand name for Omani Product	No need for brand name for Omani Products	Percent Correct
Training	Need brand name for Omani Product	42	1	97.7%
	No need for brand name for Omani Products	0	10	100.0%
	Overall Percent	79.2%	20.8%	98.1%
Testing	Need brand name for Omani Product	20	0	100.0%
	No need for brand name for Omani Products	1	1	50.0%

Overall Percent	95.5%	4.5%	95.5%
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TABLE 1.10
 FIGURE: 1.3
 Neural Network Diagram



Hidden layer activation function: Hyperbolic tangent

Output layer activation function: Softmax

The above network shows that this model is of good fit pertaining to the findings in comparison of the age, educational qualification, income as co variants and brand name, image and sales as the dependent variables. The hyperbolic tangent output layers – five layers were found such as brand name, increase sales, attract customers, compete international brands and brand image.

TABLE 1.10
IMAGE

Sample	Observed	Predicted		
		good	bad	Percent Correct
Training	good	45	0	100.0%
	bad	1	7	87.5%
	Overall Percent	86.8%	13.2%	98.1%
Testing	good	18	0	100.0%
	bad	1	3	75.0%
	Overall Percent	86.4%	13.6%	95.5%

TABLE 1.11
SALES

Sample	Observed	Predicted		
		Required brand name	Not Required brand name	Percent Correct
Training	Required brand name	48	1	98.0%
	Not Required brand name	1	3	75.0%
	Overall Percent	92.5%	7.5%	96.2%
Testing	Required brand name	20	0	100.0%
	Not Required brand name	1	1	50.0%
	Overall Percent	95.5%	4.5%	95.5%

TABLE 1.12
Overall Percent Correct

Sample	Overall Percent Correct
Training	97.5%
Testing	95.5%

The above neural network framed with the classification of brand, sales and image show a good fit for this study.

FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 40% of the respondents were under the category of 20 – 30 years of age.
- 38.7% of the respondents were under the category of 401 – 500 Ro income.
- 53.3% of the respondents were under graduates in their educational qualification.
- 29.3% of the respondents feel that brand name creates brand image.
- The factors such as increase the sales, attract customers and to compete with international brands were the significant reasons to have brand name for the Omani product at Muscat city.
- The neural network diagram was drawn based on the data obtained through the questionnaires using SPSS, where 5 hidden layers of the study were found as brand name, increase sales, attract customers, compete international brands and brand image.
- The factors of the study says that the brand name for Omani product is highly essential as in Muscat city International brands were more popular than Omani product. Pizza hut is very famous than Pizza Muscat. So I recommend that definitely there should be a brand name for the Omani product so that the minds of the customers were captured so that majority of the market can be captured by the sellers of Omani Product.

CONCLUSION:

Brand name is very important for all the products and services in the market. Stronger brand will have a positive power in the minds of customers. A good brand will be in the market for a long period. To compete with the international brands in the market as well as to have a good market share branding and brand name is very important. Finally to conclude the branding strategies will create a good implication to attract the customers so the Omani products should also have a good brand name to sustain in the market for years to years.

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