

Consumer Psyche and Positioning Strategies

Shrafat Ali Sair

Department of Management Sciences, Virtual University of Pakistan

E-mail: alivu.pk@gmail.com

Abstract

The significance of positioning is firm in marketing but there is scant research, how positioning (strategies) alternatives are important or substitute each other, which positioning strategy overlap and how it measures effectively. Sometimes brand managers waste their energies and company resources to build an image of brand with simultaneous positioning strategies, whereas purpose can be achieved by applying the one of them. Quantitative mode of study is applied herein the research. Relative effectiveness of positioning strategies is measure by using multidimensional scale. The scale is based on four dimensions i.e., favorability, dissimilarity, uniqueness, and credibility. The associated items are seventeen with these four dimensions. Two print advertisements from cellular industry that are representing the given positioning strategies showed to the 100 consumers using purposive sampling technique. The statistical technique, ANCOVA is applied herein the study. The results show that the surrogate positioning strategy and feature positioning are identical in term of favorability and credibility. Other two dimensions named dissimilarity and uniqueness counter balance each other.

Keywords: positioning, positioning strategy, surrogate positioning, feature positioning.

1. Introduction

Decision making for marketing executive is associated with the evaluation of positioning strategies. Positioning strategies are the major source to shape the consumer preferences toward a brand. It is essential to assess the consumer behavior and psyche how they perceive the offered brand by recalling the company's communications. Right positioning strategy at right time is required to build right image of a brand in the mind of consumer. questions "which positioning decision is better" and "which rationale positioning decision should be made" are still unclear" (Fuchs, 2008). So according to Fuchs (2008), there is a gap to conduct the current study. No doubt, few valuable researches have been conducted to analyze positioning. The efforts to measure the effectiveness of brand positioning are being made but on the limited scope. After acknowledging the significance of positioning effectiveness dimensions (favorability, dissimilarity, uniqueness, and credibility), brand managers take benefits of (a) depth understanding of brand positioning (b) developing refined positioning strategies and (c) motivating branding initiatives. Precisely, the judgment of consumer psyche regarding positioning dimensions, brand managers enable to distinguish the pros and cons of the effectiveness dimensions for instance, which dimension should focus to improve or which pair of dimension may decide to develop positioning strategies.

There is a positive relationship between the positioning related decision and the brand success that is the success of brand moves around the pivot of positioning decision (Pham & Muthukrishnan, 2002; Punj & Moon, 2002). Here it is necessary to answer a question “why positioning decision is major cause of brand success?” The answer of this important question is very simple but important one and based upon two variables which are perception and available choices for consumer. In short, positioning decisions are potential forces that interpret the selection behavior and consumer’s perception (D.A. Aaker & Shansby, 1982; Carpenter, Glazer, & Nakamoto, 1994). Of course, brand positioning is designed for potential customers as input which results in customer’s feedback. Feedback to positioning appears as output in different ways such as price consciousness. Brand positioning plays a very vital role to build the customer touch points for instance, brand equity that is driven from customer side, price negotiation (margin) and demand related elasticity (Boulding, Lee, & Staelin, 1994; Carpenter et al., 1994; Keller, 1993; Keller & Richey, 2003). Eventually, the brand which is positioned in a well-mannered way attracts the required segment of the customers by shaping brand loyalty, brand preferences, brand values, brand beliefs, brand attitudes, and brand behaviors. The brand positioning shapes searching behavior of customers in such a way that they are never satisfied until the required brand comes in their access (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010; Trommsdorff & Paulssen, 2005). There is a strong positive relationship between positioning and company financial health. If positioning is being done in a right direction then the financial position of a company will be healthy and vice versa (Day, 1990; Roth, 1992, 1995a, 1995b; Urban & Hauser, 1993). In a broad spectrum, positioning is a backbone of a company if being designed in right direction and in a purposive way, a dominated brand will be there in market place; conversely, if positioning is not being designed or done inefficiently then there will be serious consequences on brand life (Haig, 2011).

The basic research question that is being answered in the research is “which positioning strategy is more effective than the other i.e., surrogate positioning or feature positioning”?

2. Literature Background

The concept of positioning in marketing is not simple as it is considered. It is trickiest and most complex in nature (Bhat & Reddy, 1998). There is major cause behind this complexity of positioning concept that is no consensus regarding the meaning of this concept among the marketing scholars and specialist (Rigger, 1995). Further, there is lack of evidence about the generally accepted definition of positioning. In other words, the limit of positioning concept is not defined clearly. Marketers are still in discussion process with respect to this concept and related literature is unable to draw clear boundary around the positioning concept (Blankson & Kalafatis, 1999).

Many scholars explained that positioning is a managerial aspect. In this managerial activity managers are trying to create unique associations for consumer mindset with respect to rival. For instance, “Positioning refers to the set of strategies that firms develop and implement to ensure that these differences occupy a distinct and important position in the minds of customers” (Lilien & Rangaswamy, 2003). According to Solomon, Marshall, and Stuart (2006), in a wider sense, positioning covers all such kind of marketing efforts that possibly build or alter the association for the consumer mindset.

As discussed above positioning is a managerial activity which is showing one side of coin whereas the other side of coin is different. There is a second view of positioning that is consumer perspective. According to the initiator of positioning concept, positioning is concern with communication stuff that controls the consumer perception or opinion about certain products. The major focus of the positioning concept is towards consumer mind-set and preferences (Al & Jack, 1981; Ries, Trout, Sabin, & Hamerling, 1986). Ellson (2004) explained the positioning concept in a same way as Al and Jack (1981) demonstrated. For instance, “positioning is related with creating brand perceptions in the minds of consumers and with achieving differentiated images apart from competitors’ brands/offering and meeting customer needs/expectations” (Ghodeswar, 2008). Thus regarding the second view point the positioning is a consumer concern rather than managerial one. The current research is being conducted with respect to the consumer. The positioning strategy is being formulated for particular segment by using one “P” of marketing mix (i.e., promotion) whereas corporate strategy is applied to the overall organization (i.e., to improve the efficiency). Corporate strategy is beyond the scope of the study.

There exist unlimited dimensions through which managers position the brands (Hooley, Saunders, & Piercy, 2004). Current study measures the effectiveness of brand positioning by using cell phone ads. For instance, cell phone industry positions its brands in term of durability, smartness, style, user friendliness, shape, outlook, physical characteristics, usage, internet connection, social status (in expensive phones), particular usages (like mobile for ladies, water proof mobile etc.).

In the present study two positioning strategies are under discussion 1) Surrogate positioning strategy and 2) feature positioning strategy. Surrogate positioning strategy emphasizes on certain usage of the brand whereas feature positioning strategy emphasizes mainly on features of the brand. Relative effectiveness of positioning strategies (surrogate and feature) is measured empirically regarding consumer’s viewpoint.

2.1 Study Dimensions

Fuchs and Diamantopoulos (2012) have explained that conceptualization is foundation to develop instrument. This study is based on the three dimensions a) Favorability b) Differentiation and c) Credibility. Furthermore, differentiation dimension is divided into two sub-dimensions that are “dissimilarity” and “uniqueness”. Logically, there are four dimensions to measure the effectiveness of positioning strategies. The study model is presented in figure 1. Each dimension is being measured by the elements that the dimension has (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2012).

An association of a brand helps the consumers to understand the meaning of brand (Pullig, Netemeyer, & Biswas, 2006). Positive association of consumer with a brand is a significant factor either brand is positioned well or not. Favorability examines such kind of association which consumer attaches positively or negatively with brand. If positive association is there then brand is well-positioned otherwise not (David A Aaker, 1991; William R Dillon, Madden, Kirmani, & Mukherjee, 2001; Keller & Richey, 2003). To differentiate brands with the help of dissimilarity consumer tries to recall the cognitive clues (features or salient attributes) of brands (Creusen & Schoormans, 1997; Derbaix & Sjöberg, 1994; Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason, 1993). Keller, Parameswaran, and Jacob (2011)

have endorsed that uniqueness highlights that features of brand which were not touched by the competitors (i.e., brand shows distinct image). Uniqueness explains that the brand appears like a special object in its category (Franke & Schreier, 2008). Tybout and Sternthal (2005) further explain that identified gap between the focal and rival brand should be believable for consumers.

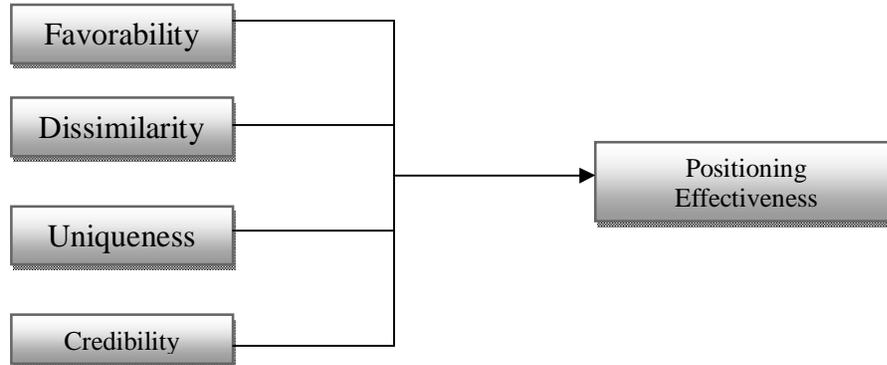


Figure 1: Study model to measuring the effectiveness of brand positioning strategies (Source: Fuchs, 2008)

2.2 Hypothesis

Well reputed, recognized and strong organizations avoid positioning their brands by communicating the features (attributes) and benefits but belief and values (Kotler & Armstrong, 2009). Surrogate strategies are more near to the consumers' requirement and values than to provide just the product information to the consumers (MacInnis & Jaworski, 1989). Actually, consumers do not get satisfied or convinced from the products' physical feature (characteristics) but their satisfaction level is associated with the fulfillment of product related particular purposes or objectives (Graeff, 1997). A particular form of surrogate position strategy is "usage" in which brand is positioned with respect to the certain usage in a particular situation e.g., cell phone designed for those consumers mostly working in water (Crawford, 1985). The basic working of surrogate positioning strategy is to shape or associate the consumers' favorability with his desire or self-image (Hong & Zinkhan, 1995; Lefkoff-Hagius & Mason, 1993; Sirgy, 1982). Eventually, surrogate positioning is more concerned with the self-relevance consumer need than only describing the features (Belk, 1988; Ennis, 1982). Another positive aspect of surrogate positioning strategy is no duplication or very difficult to copy in comparison to feature strategy (Ennis, 1982). Similar to the benefit positioning strategy, surrogate positioning strategy is superior to the benefit positioning. The reason behind the supremacy is information that is surrogate positioning is more informative as compared to the benefit (Pham & Muthukrishnan, 2002). In the light of above information it may be posited that:

- *H: Surrogate (user) positioning is more effective than feature positioning.*

Furthermore, the study hypothesis is sub-divided into four parts and each division is associated with different dimension. Separate discussion on every part of hypothesis is incorporated in "Results & Interpretation" section.

- *^aH: Surrogate (user) positioning is more effective than feature positioning with respect to favorability*
- *^bH: Surrogate (user) positioning is more effective than feature positioning with respect to dissimilarity*
- *^cH: Surrogate (user) positioning is more effective than feature positioning with respect to uniqueness*
- *^dH: Surrogate (user) positioning is more effective than feature positioning with respect to credibility*

3. Research Methodology

The descriptive technique is involved because study is required to describe the phenomena of brand positioning effectiveness. The recommended tool for descriptive study is questionnaire, so structured questionnaire is used herein the study. Non-contrived design for the research is suggested due to induction of the open (i.e., natural) environment (Malik, Ghafoor, & Naseer, 2011). Cell phone users have been selected for the study hence unit of analysis is “individual”. There is a strong evidence for the selection of individual as a unit of analysis that is Fuchs and Diamantopoulos (2012) have selected consumer for such kind of study. The time horizon for the study is cross-sectional because positioning is relative concept and is observed with respect to competitors. Sample is that subset of study population that the author used to collect data practically and after all author generalized the results for the target population and legitimately for the study population (Elston & Johnson, 2008; Kazerooni, 2001). The selected sample size for the study is 100 business graduates consumers (using purposive sampling technique) belong to the Lahore city of Punjab province. There are two justifications behind the selection of 100 as a sample size (1) purposive sampling technique allowed author to take the smart set of respondents (2) Fuchs and Diamantopoulos (2012) have taken 100 sample size for such sort of study. There is advantage of purposive sampling technique over a probability technique that is “*depth info*” from the respondents (Patton, 2005). Purposive sampling is appropriate technique for a study in specific culture (Tongco, 2007) and present study is conducted in Pakistan. Respondents that required for the study are educated one those have knowledge about the positioning concept. Purposive sampling gives permission to select such kind of respondents (Bernard, 2011; Lewis & Sheppard, 2006). Non-probability sampling (purposive sampling) is not against of the theory of probability, if it does not negate the probability theory hence it is not against the concept of generalizability (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2003). Primary data is gathered by visiting the respondents through survey. The questionnaire has been adopted from the Fuchs (2008). The questionnaire is comprised of seventeen items called elements. Each dimension is explained by four elements except credibility that is composed to five elements. Measuring items are presented in appendix A. Brand positioning is cultivated by marketing communications tool with advertising as a major tool, so it is stated that advertisement is chief source of positing for the consumers (W.R. Dillon, Domzal, & Madden, 1986; Seggev, 1982). Crawford (1985) has claimed that product positioning is explained by print advertisements maximum of 74%. Fuchs and Diamantopoulos (2012) have used the magazine (print) advertisements to evaluate the effectiveness of positioning strategies. Two print advertisements are selected after the content analysis. Both advertisements are

represented the positioning strategy. The first advertisement is delivers the “surrogate (user) positioning” whereas second one communicates the “feature positioning”. Before the distribution of questionnaire to the consumers, both advertisements are displayed with different orders. So, the questionnaire and print advertisements are complementary for each other in data collection. The consumers have evaluated the positioning strategies on the given four dimensions.

4. Results & Interpretation

4.1 Analysis Procedure

The statistical technique applied on the data set was analysis of covariance (ANCOVAs) by using SPSS. All basic assumptions of ANCOVA were confirmed in a pre-testing phase. After the satisfactory results regarding basic assumption ANCOVA test was performed. The ANCOVAs test applied on the four dimensions of positioning effectiveness with the pair of positioning strategy. The desired pair of positioning strategy is “surrogate vs. feature” that is required to investigate the relative effectiveness. Practically, analysis of covariance (ANCOVAs) applied by taking all four effective dimensions one by one with the pair “surrogate vs. feature” positioning strategy by considering age and monthly income as a covariates. Socio-demographic variables are very important elements in observing the consumers’ view point with respect to positioning concepts (Friedmann & Lessig, 1987; Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010; Munn, 1960; Williams & Drolet, 2005; Wolin, 2003). The socio-demographic data that addressed in this study are age, gender, marital status, education, monthly income and occupation.

4.2 Interpretation of Results

Findings and interpretation are based on the analysis procedure explained above. Further, statistics of every dimension is captured in a table and author interprets each table separately.

Table 1: Statistical Results for Hypothesis (Favorability)

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Surrogate	2.62	1.22	97	46.56
Feature	2.56	1.20	97	46.88
Total	2.59	1.21	194	
Favorability	F-value = .133 p-value = .716 > α			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	$F^{2a} = .760$ & $F^{2a} p = .384 > \alpha$ $F^{2b} = 2.522$ & $F^{2b} p = .114 > \alpha$		

Table 1 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the favorability dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table (1) values predict that surrogate positioning strategy is more effective as compared to feature positioning strategy. It should not be ignored that the discussion is going on by taking the positioning dimension one by one. So, the superiority of surrogate positioning over the feature is with respect to the favorability dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of surrogate positioning strategy is 2.62 and it is little bit higher than the mean value of feature

positioning strategy that is 2.56. Hence, on the basis of discussion above and numerical values in a Table 1, it is concluded that surrogate positioning strategy outperforms the feature positioning strategy in term of favorability. Here, the conclusion is obvious that the results are consistent with the hypothesis (H).

Further, it is necessary to explain the significance of result presented in Table 1. No doubt, the Table values reveal that surrogate strategies leads over the feature positioning strategy with respect to the favorability. There is an important point in the interpretation of outputs in Table 1, the difference of means between the positioning strategies with respect to favorability is insignificant because $p\text{-value} > \alpha$ ($F = .133$ & $p = .716 > \alpha$).

Age and monthly income are the covariates in the current study and here producing insignificant effects on positioning effectiveness dimension that is favorability. The evidence of insignificance of these covariates is there in a form of statistical tests (repeated measures ANCOVA on favorability). The p-value of both age and monthly income is greater than alpha i.e., $p\text{-values} > \alpha$ and their respective F values are given here ($F^{2a} = .760$ & $F^{2a}p = .384 > \alpha$; $F^{2b} = 2.522$ & $F^{2b}p = .114 > \alpha$).

Last column of Table 1 is presenting the values of “coefficient of variation” CV. The percentage value of CVs against surrogate positioning strategy and feature positioning strategy is also ignorable because difference of mean is insignificance. In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that surrogate positioning provides no significance difference of performance as compared to the feature positioning strategy.

Table 2: Statistical Results for Hypothesis (Dissimilarity)

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Surrogate	5.42	1.44	97	26.56
Feature	4.88	1.44	97	29.51
Total	5.15	1.46	194	
Dissimilarity	F-value = 6.901 p-value = .009 < α			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	$D^{2a}F = .028$ & $D^{2a}p = .868 > \alpha$ $D^{2b}F = 2.882$ & $D^{2b}p = .091 > \alpha$		

Table 2 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the dissimilarity dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table (2) values predict that surrogate positioning strategy is more effective as compared to feature positioning strategy. It should not be ignored that the discussion is going on by taking the positioning dimension one by one. So, the superiority of surrogate positioning over the feature is with respect to the dissimilarity dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of surrogate positioning strategy is 5.42 and it is higher than the mean value of feature positioning strategy that is 4.88. Hence, on the basis of discussion above and numerical values in a Table 2, it is concluded that surrogate positioning strategy outperforms the feature positioning strategy in term of dissimilarity. Here, the conclusion is obvious that the results are consistent with the hypothesis (H)

Further, it is necessary to explain the significance of result presented in Table 2. No doubt, the Table values reveal that surrogate strategies leads over the feature positioning

strategy with respect to the dissimilarity. Moreover, the difference of means between the positioning strategies with respect to dissimilarity in Table 2 is significant because p-value $< \alpha$ ($F = 6.901$ & $p = .009 < \alpha$)

Age and monthly income are the covariates in the current study and here producing insignificant effects on positioning effectiveness dimension that is dissimilarity. The evidence of insignificance of these covariates is there in a form of statistical tests (repeated measures ANCOVA on dissimilarity). The p-value of both age and monthly income is greater than alpha i.e., p-values $> \alpha$ and their respective F values are given here ($D^{2a}F = .028$ & $D^{2a}p = .868 > \alpha$; $D^{2b}F = 2.882$ & $D^{2b}p = .091 > \alpha$).

Last column of Table 2 is presenting the values of “coefficient of variation” CV. The percentage value of CV against surrogate positioning strategy is 26.56%. This value in the CV column is lower than the other value (i.e., feature). In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that surrogate positioning provides more consistent performance as compared to the feature positioning strategy.

Table 3: Statistical Results for Hypothesis (Uniqueness)

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Surrogate	2.79	1.30	97	46.59
Feature	4.26	1.52	97	35.68
Total	3.52	1.59	194	
Uniqueness	F-value = 52.952 p-value = .000 $< \alpha$			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	$U^{2a}F = .022$ & $U^{2a}p = .883 > \alpha$ $U^{2b}F = 2.252$ & $U^{2b}p = .135 > \alpha$		

Table 3 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the uniqueness dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table 3 values predict that surrogate positioning strategy is less effective as compared to feature positioning strategy. It should not be ignored that the discussion is going on by taking the positioning dimension one by one. So, the superiority of feature positioning over the surrogate is with respect to the uniqueness dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of surrogate positioning strategy is 2.79 and is lower than the mean value of feature positioning strategy that is 4.26. Hence, on the basis of discussion above and numerical values in a Table 3, it is concluded that feature positioning strategy outperforms the feature positioning strategy in term of uniqueness. Here, the conclusion is obvious that the results are inconsistent with the hypothesis (H).

Further, it is necessary to explain the significance of result presented in Table 3. No doubt, the Table values reveal that feature strategies leads over the surrogate positioning strategy with respect to the uniqueness. Moreover, the difference of means between the positioning strategies with respect to uniqueness in Table 3 is significant because p-value $< \alpha$ ($F = 52.952$ & $p = .000 < \alpha$)

Age and monthly income are the covariates in the current study and here producing insignificant effects on positioning effectiveness dimension that is uniqueness. The

evidence of insignificance of these covariates is there in a form of statistical tests (repeated measures ANCOVA on uniqueness). The p-value of both age and monthly income is greater than alpha i.e., p-values $> \alpha$ and their respective F values are given here ($^{U2a}F = .022$ & $^{U2a}p = .883 > \alpha$; $^{U2b}F = 2.252$ & $^{U2b}p = .135 > \alpha$).

Last column of Table 3 is presenting the values of “coefficient of variation” CV. The percentage value of CV against feature positioning strategy is 35.68%. This value in the CV column is lower than the other value (i.e., surrogate). In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that feature positioning provides more consistent performance as compared to the surrogate positioning strategy.

Table 4: Statistical Results for Hypothesis (Credibility)

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Surrogate	3.08	1.31	97	42.53
Feature	2.94	1.17	97	39.80
Total	3.01	1.24	194	
Credibility	F-value = .590 p-value = .444 $> \alpha$			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	$^{C2a}F = .788$ & $^{C2a}p = .376 > \alpha$ $^{C2b}F = 3.947$ & $^{C2b}p = .068 > \alpha$		

Table 4 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the credibility dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table 4 values predict that surrogate positioning strategy is more effective as compared to feature positioning strategy. It should not be ignored that the discussion is going on by taking the positioning dimension one by one. So, the superiority of surrogate positioning over the feature is with respect to the credibility dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of surrogate positioning strategy is 3.08 and it is higher than the mean value of feature positioning strategy that is 2.94. Hence, on the basis of discussion above and numerical values in a Table 4, it is concluded that surrogate positioning strategy outperforms the feature positioning strategy in term of credibility. Here, the conclusion is obvious that the results are consistent with the hypothesis (H)

Further, it is necessary to explain the significance of result presented in Table 4. No doubt, the Table values reveal that surrogate strategies leads over the feature positioning strategy with respect to the credibility. There is an important point in the interpretation of outputs in Table 4, the difference of means between the positioning strategies with respect to credibility is insignificant because p-value $> \alpha$ ($F = .590$ & $p = .444 > \alpha$).

Age and monthly income are the covariates in the current study and here producing insignificant effects on positioning effectiveness dimension that is credibility. The evidence of insignificance of these covariates is there in a form of statistical tests (repeated measures ANCOVA on credibility). The p-value of both age and monthly income is greater than alpha i.e., p-values $> \alpha$ and their respective F values are given here ($^{C2a}F = .788$ & $^{C2a}p = .376 > \alpha$; $^{C2b}F = 3.947$ & $^{C2b}p = .068 > \alpha$).

Last column of Table 4 is presenting the values of “coefficient of variation” CV. The percentage value of CVs against surrogate positioning strategy and feature positioning strategy is also ignorable because difference of mean is insignificance. In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that surrogate positioning provides no significance difference of performance as compared to the feature positioning strategies.

5. Discussion

5.1 Discussion Related to Hypothesis

There are four layers to support hypothesis (H). Each layer contains one positioning effectiveness dimension. If majority of dimensions are in favor of H then overall it harmonizes with our expectations. Table 1 clearly predicts that surrogate positioning strategy outperforms feature strategy. Further, the value of coefficient of variation is consistent with the expectation. The coefficient of variation against the surrogate position shows the lower value as compared to feature. So, inference can also be drawn that surrogate positioning strategies give consistent performance as compared to feature positioning strategy. There is problem of significance regarding the favorability dimension. As Table 1 predicts that the p-value is greater than alpha (α) so, the difference between the two strategies (i.e., feature and surrogate) is insignificance. Moreover, apparently value of mean and coefficient of variation is much closer to each other and communicates no difference between the surrogate and feature. Hence, favorability dimension of positioning effectiveness does not support hypothesis that surrogate positioning strategy and feature positioning appear to be identical.

5.1.1 Corollary 1

Eventually, it is stated on the basis of facts and figures in Table 1 and subsequent discussion that surrogate positioning strategy and feature positioning appear to be identical in their superiority, performance, effectiveness, and consistency and unable to differentiate the brand at least in the market of cellular category with respect to *favorability* dimension of positioning effectiveness.

The second layer of hypothesis belongs to the second dimension of positioning effectiveness that is dissimilarity. Table 2 clearly specifies that surrogate positioning strategy outperforms the feature positioning. The difference of means among the positioning strategies is also significant. The significance reflects in p-value. The coefficient of variation against the surrogate strategy shows the lower value than feature. So, inference can also be drawn that surrogate positioning strategies give consistent performance as compared to feature positioning strategy. Dissimilarity dimension of positioning effectiveness supports hypothesis that surrogate positioning strategy is superior to feature.

5.1.2 Corollary 2

Finally, it is stated on the basis of facts in Table 2 and subsequent discussion that surrogate positioning strategy is superior, outperform, effective, consistent and leads to position the brand in a better way at least in the market of cellular category with respect to *dissimilarity* dimension of positioning effectiveness as compared to feature positioning.

The third layer of hypothesis is described by considering the third dimension of positioning effectiveness that is uniqueness. The outputs in Table 3 are reverse of the

study expectation and do not fulfill the requirements of hypothesis. The uniqueness dimension is not consistent, supportive and congruent with hypothesis. The results in Table 3 are obvious and predict that feature positioning strategy outperforms the surrogate positioning strategies. The difference between the surrogate and feature positioning strategy is also significance in term of uniqueness but in revers of hypothesis ideology. The p-value is evidence of a significance results. The coefficient of variation against the feature positioning shows the lower value as compared to surrogate positioning. So, inference can also be drawn that feature positioning strategy gives consistent performance as compared to surrogate positioning strategy. Uniqueness dimension of positioning effectiveness does not support hypothesis that surrogate positioning strategy is superior to feature.

5.1.3 Corollary 3

Eventually, it is stated on the basis of facts and figures in Table 3 and subsequent discussion that feature positioning strategy is superior, outperform, effective, consistent and leads to position the brand in a better way at least in the market of cellular category with respect to *uniqueness* dimension of positioning effectiveness as compared to surrogate positioning.

The fourth layer of hypothesis is described by taking the fourth dimension in to account of positioning effectiveness that is credibility. Table 4 clearly predicts that surrogate positioning strategy out preforms feature strategy. Further, the value of coefficient of variation is consistent with the expectation. The coefficient of variation against the feature position shows the lower value as compared to surrogate. So, inference can also be drawn that feature positioning strategies give consistent performance as compared to surrogate positioning strategy. There is problem of significance regarding the credibility dimension. As Table 4 predicts that the p-value is greater than alpha (α) so, the difference between the two strategies (i.e., feature and surrogate) is insignificance. Hence, credibility dimension of positioning effectiveness does not support hypothesis that surrogate positioning strategy is superior to feature. Surrogate and feature positioning appear to be identical.

5.1.4 Corollary 4

Eventually, it is stated on the basis of facts and figures in Table 4 and subsequent discussion that surrogate positioning strategy and feature positioning appear to be identical in their superiority, performance, effectiveness, and consistency and unable to differentiate the brand at least in the market of cellular category with respect to *credibility* dimension of positioning effectiveness.

6. Conclusion

As projected by hypothesis, the corollary “2” is fully in favor of hypothesis; the surrogate benefit positioning strategy yields significantly greater value against the dissimilarity positioning effectiveness dimensions as compared to feature positioning. Conversely, corollary “3” is not supporting the hypothesis. It explains that the feature positioning strategy attains significantly higher value against the uniqueness effectiveness dimension as compared to surrogate positioning. It is obvious in corollary “1” that there is no difference between the surrogate and feature positioning strategy regarding favorability dimension. It means that there is no effect of favorability dimension on hypothesis. This

shows that surrogate and feature are identical in nature by consumer view point. Consumers consider both the strategies similar to each other. The difference between the strategies may not be considered because of cultural difference or different back ground of the respondent. Similarly, corollary “4” also not contribute in hypothesis. It provides detail that consumers are unable to differentiate the surrogate and feature positioning regarding credibility dimension of positioning effectiveness. Herein this study it is stated that the strategies are different regarding dissimilarity and uniqueness but dissimilarity favor surrogate over feature whereas uniqueness favor feature over surrogate. Overall, on the basis of corollary 2 & 3 author is unable to decide which one is better. On the other hand corollary 1 & 4 are not explaining the difference between the strategies regarding favorability and credibility. Thus, the direction is not clear among the four positioning effectiveness. Corollary 2 & 3 balance each other and corollary 1 & 4 are neutral response.

Here, the conclusion is obvious that the results are inconsistent with the hypothesis that the surrogate positioning strategy and feature positioning are identical in term of favorability and credibility. Other two dimensions named dissimilarity and uniqueness counter balance each other. Hence, the study analysis, finding, interpretation, description and discussion are not inclined towards the acceptance of hypothesis in favor of Ho. At the end author is extracted the result that Ho is accepted in favor of hypothesis.

6.1 Limitations and Associated Opportunities for Future Research

Following are the limitations of the present study and associated future directions:

1. Four dimensions i.e., dissimilarity, favorability, uniqueness, and credibility of positioning can be assessed in a cross-sectional context. There is a fifth dimension that is sustainability and it explains the position of brand which is difficult to attack from the rival. It is hard to evaluate brand positioning on the basis the four dimensions because these dimensions does not explain the future challenges of brand. Moreover, longitudinal data is required for sustainability dimension. Hence, by adding the fifth dimension (sustainability) in a model a researcher can cop the future concern of brand positioning to get the differential advantage.
2. As it is mentioned in the chapter 4 (methodology section) the nature of study is non-contrived and does not fulfill the criteria of experiment. The natural environment is given to the study and that’s why cross-sectional or one-shot is time horizon for study. Real advertisements of existing bards are incorporated in the study. The actual and classical positioning strategies are used in print advertisement so, internal validity issue is resolved. The future studies may be conducted by considering the experimental design rather non-contrived. However, the internal validity may offset with external validity (Winer, 1999).

REFERENCES

- Aaker, D. A. (1991). *Managing brand equity: Capitalising on the value of a brand name*. New York, Free Press.
- Aaker, D. A., & Shansby, J. G. (1982). Positioning your product. *Business Horizons*, 25(3), 56-62.

- Al, R., & Jack, T. (1981). *Positioning: The battle for your mind*. New York: Warner Books.
- Belk, R. W. (1988). Possessions and the extended self. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 15(2), 139-168.
- Bernard, H. R. (2011). *Research methods in anthropology: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*: Altamira press.
- Bhat, S., & Reddy, S. K. (1998). Symbolic and functional positioning of brands. *Journal of consumer marketing*, 15(1), 32-43.
- Blankson, C., & Kalafatis, S. P. (1999). Issues and challenges in the positioning of service brands: a review. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 8(2), 106-118.
- Boulding, W., Lee, E., & Staelin, R. (1994). Mastering the mix: Do advertising, promotion, and sales force activities lead to differentiation? *Journal of Marketing Research*, 31(2), 159-172.
- Carpenter, G. S., Glazer, R., & Nakamoto, K. (1994). Meaningful brands from meaningless differentiation: The dependence on irrelevant attributes. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 31(3), 339-350.
- Crawford, C. M. (1985). A new positioning topology. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 2(4), 243-253.
- Creusen, M. E., & Schoormans, J. P. (1997). The nature of differences between similarity and preference judgements: a replication with extension. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 14(1), 81-87.
- Day, G. S. (1990). *Market driven strategy* (Vol. 163). New York: The Free Press.
- Derbaix, C., & Sjöberg, L. (1994). Movie stars in space: A comparison of preference and similarity judgments. *International Journal of Research in Marketing*, 11(3), 261-274.
- Dillon, W. R., Domzal, T., & Madden, T. J. (1986). Evaluating alternative product positioning strategies. *Journal of advertising research*, 26(4), 29-35.
- Dillon, W. R., Madden, T. J., Kirmani, A., & Mukherjee, S. (2001). Understanding what's in a brand rating: A model for assessing brand and attribute effects and their relationship to brand equity. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 38(4), 415-429.
- Ellson, T. (2004). *Culture and positioning as determinants of strategy*: Palgrave Macmillan Basingstoke.
- Elston, R. C., & Johnson, W. D. (2008). *Basic Biostatistics for Geneticists and Epidemiologists: A Practical Approach*. John Wiley and Sons.
- Ennis, F. B. (1982). Positioning revisited. *Advertising Age*, 15, 43-46.
- Franke, N., & Schreier, M. (2008). Product uniqueness as a driver of customer utility in mass customization. *Marketing Letters*, 19(2), 93-107.
- Friedmann, R., & Lessig, V. P. (1987). Psychological meaning of products and product positioning. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 4(4), 265-273.
- Fuchs, C. (2008). *Brand positioning through the consumers' lens*. [Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation] University Wien, Vienna, Austria.

- Fuchs, C., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2010). Evaluating the effectiveness of brand-positioning strategies from a consumer perspective. *European Journal of Marketing*, 44(11/12), 1763-1786.
- Fuchs, C., & Diamantopoulos, A. (2012). Customer-Perceived Positioning Effectiveness: Conceptualization, Operationalization, and Implications for New Product Managers. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 29(2), 229-244.
- Ghodeswar, B. M. (2008). Building brand identity in competitive markets: a conceptual model. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 17(1), 4-12.
- Graeff, T. R. (1997). Comprehending product attributes and benefits: The role of product knowledge and means-end chain inferences. *Psychology & Marketing*, 14(2), 163-183.
- Haig, M. (2011). *Brand failures: the truth about the 100 biggest branding mistakes of all time*: Kogan Page Limited.
- Hong, J. W., & Zinkhan, G. M. (1995). Self-concept and advertising effectiveness: The influence of congruency, conspicuousness, and response mode. *Psychology & Marketing*, 12(1), 53-77.
- Hooley, G. J., Saunders, J. A., & Piercy, N. (2004). *Marketing Strategy and Competitive Positioning* (3rd Ed.). London: Prentice Hall.
- Kazerooni, E. A. (2001). Population and sample. *American Journal of Roentgenology*, 177(5), 993-999.
- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *The Journal of Marketing*, 57(January), 1-22.
- Keller, K. L., Parameswaran, M., & Jacob, I. (2011). *Strategic brand management: Building, measuring, and managing brand equity*: Pearson Education India.
- Keller, K. L., & Richey, K. (2003). *Strategic Brand Management: Instructor's Manual* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Kotler, P., & Armstrong, G. (2009). *Principles of marketing*: Pearson Education.
- Lefkoff-Hagius, R., & Mason, C. H. (1993). Characteristic, beneficial, and image attributes in consumer judgments of similarity and preference. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 20(1), 100-110.
- Lewis, J. L., & Sheppard, S. R. (2006). Culture and communication: can landscape visualization improve forest management consultation with indigenous communities? *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 77(3), 291-313.
- Lilien, G. L., & Rangaswamy, A. (2003). *Marketing Engineering* (2nd ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- MacInnis, D. J., & Jaworski, B. J. (1989). Information processing from advertisements: Toward an integrative framework. *The Journal of Marketing*, 53(October), 1-23.
- Malik, M. E., Ghafoor, M. M., & Naseer, S. (2011). organizational Effectiveness: A case study of telecommunication and banking sector of Pakistan. *Far east journal of psychology and business*, 2(1), 37-38.
- Munn, H. L. (1960). Brand perception as related to age, income, and education. *The Journal of Marketing*, 24(1), 29-34.

- Patton, M. Q. (2005). *Qualitative research and Evaluation Methods*. Sage Publications Inc.
- Pham, M. T., & Muthukrishnan, A. V. (2002). Search and alignment in judgment revision: Implications for brand positioning. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 39(1), 18-30.
- Pullig, C., Netemeyer, R. G., & Biswas, A. (2006). Attitude basis, certainty, and challenge alignment: A case of negative brand publicity. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34(4), 528-542.
- Punj, G., & Moon, J. (2002). Positioning options for achieving brand association: a psychological categorization framework. *Journal of Business Research*, 55(4), 275-283.
- Ries, A., Trout, J., Sabin, W., & Hamerling, M. (1986). *Positioning: The battle for your mind* (1st Ed.): McGraw-Hill New York.
- Rigger, W. (1995). *Positioning in theory and practice: towards a research agenda*. 24th EMAC Conference Proceedings, 1, 16-19.
- Roth, M. S. (1992). Depth versus breadth strategies for global brand image management. *Journal of Advertising*, 21(2), 25-36.
- Roth, M. S. (1995a). The effects of culture and socioeconomics on the performance of global brand image strategies. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 32(2), 163-175.
- Roth, M. S. (1995b). Effects of global market conditions on brand image customization and brand performance. *Journal of Advertising*, 24(4), 55-75.
- Schiffman, L., & Kanuk, L. (2010). *Consumer behavior: Pearson Global Edition* (9th Ed.). New Delhi: Pearson Education.
- Seggev, E. (1982). Testing persuasion by strategic positioning. *Journal of advertising research*, 22(1), 37-42.
- Sirgy, M. J. (1982). Self-concept in consumer behavior: A critical review. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 9(3), 287-300.
- Solomon, M. R., Marshall, G. W., & Stuart, E. W. (2006). *Marketing: Real People, Real Choices* (4th Ed.). New Jersey: Pearson Education.
- Teddle, C., & Tashakkori, A. (2003). *Handbook of mixed methods in social & behavioral research*: Sage Publications Inc.
- Tongco, M. D. C. (2007). Purposive sampling as a tool for informant selection. *Ethnobotany Research and Applications*, 5, 147-158.
- Trommsdorff, V., & Paulssen, M. (2005). Messung und Gestaltung der Markenpositionierung [Measurement and design of brand positioning]. *Moderne Markenführung: Grundlagen, innovative Ansätze, praktische Umsetzungen [Modern branding: Principles, innovative approaches, practical implementations]*(4th Rev. Ed., pp. 1363-1379). Wiesbaden: Gabler.
- Tybout, A. M., & Sternthal, B. (2005). Brand positioning. In A. Tybout and T. Calkins (Eds.) *Kellogg on Branding* (pp.11-26). New York: John Wiley and Sons.
- Urban, G. L., & Hauser, J. R. (1993). *Design and Marketing of New Products* (2nd Ed.). Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Williams, P., & Drolet, A. (2005). Age-Related Differences in Responses to Emotional Advertisements. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 32(3), 343-354.

Wolin, L. D. (2003). Gender issues in advertising-An oversight synthesis of research: 1970-2002. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 43(1), 111-129.

Appendix A: Measures for Variables

Measurement Items	
<p><i>Compared to competing strategies, this strategy is:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identical/Distinct 2. Similar/Dissimilar 3. Does not set itself apart /Sets itself apart 4. Same/Different 	<i>(Dissimilarity)</i>
<p><i>What is your opinion regarding the strategy?</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Good/Bad 2. Like/Dislike 3. Positive/Negative 4. Appealing/Not appealing 	<i>(Favorability)</i>
<p><i>Compared to competing strategies, this strategy is:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unique/Not unique 2. Extraordinary/Ordinary 3. Atypical/Typical 4. Special/Standard 	<i>(Uniqueness)</i>
<p><i>The differences between this strategy and competing one is:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Believable/Not believable 2. Plausible/Implausible 3. Convincing/Not convincing 4. Trustworthy/Untrustworthy 5. Realistic/Unrealistic 	<i>(Credibility)</i>

Source: Adopted from Fuchs (2008)