Assessment of Brand Extension: A Scale Validation Exercise*

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Abstract

Brand extension is a strategy by which marketers use the established brand name to enter into a new product category. However, to assess the efficacy of brand extension, there is a need to develop appropriate scales as the scales developed in other countries are not necessarily appropriate for use in India. The purpose of this study is to develop such scale. Accordingly four brands namely; Dabur®, Reebok®, Rexona® and Samsung® have been selected. All these brands have extended into new categories. This research closely follows the procedure for developing better measure given by Churchill (1979). Drawing on previous literature a seven-item scale is constructed. Psychometrics of the scale are tested with the help of data collected in two rounds. The analytical tools used are Cronbach alpha, item to total correlation and exploratory factor analysis. This scale has the desirable reliability and validity properties. Thus, this scale could be used by the aspiring researchers.

Keywords: Brand Extension, Validity, Reliability

1.0 INTRODUCTION

One of the most valuable resources of a company is its historic presence in the market place. To a great extent, this resource is embedded in the consumer's impressions of and beliefs about a company's brand. Companies have realized that the well-established brand names are among the company's most valuable assets. This has prompted companies to go in for the strategy of brand extension.

According to Lynne and Dan (2003), brand extension is "the attachment of a specific label successful in one market to a new product line offered by the firm in its effort to enter a different market."

Aaker and Keller (1990), Smith and Park (1992), Aggarwal and Sikri (1996), Han (1998) and Volckner and Sattler (2006) have all pointed out the advantages of brand extension. Among other things, by using a well-known brand name, the costs of launching a new product can be reduced drastically through marketing and distribution efficiencies. Many marketers' interest in brand extension lies because of the ease with which they are able to gain success in new product categories, by using well-established brand name. Thus, brand extension is an attempt by marketers to capitalize on the information, related to their brands, which is stored in the minds of the consumer.

There are many motivators behind Brand Extension. The major drivers or motivators for the extensions vary widely. According to Ambler and Styles (1997), the first motivator of brand extension is consumer need, the second motivator is competition, the third motivator is technology and the remaining motivators include the desire to fully exploit an existing brand name and to utilize existing production capacity.

Pitta and Katsanis (1995), Grime *et al.* (2002) state that during the 1980s more than half of the new brands marketed were extensions of existing products, marketed under existing brand names. Lane and Jacobson (1995), estimate that as many as 95% of all new consumer product introductions are some types of brand extensions.

Notable brand extension activity has taken place in various product categories. For example, the famous 'Tata®' brand is to be found in many areas ranging from computer education to software development, to production of steel, to manufacturing of salt and even mobile telephone service. The famous 'Disney company®' which in the 1950's signified world class animation has extended into services like television, publishing, software, theme parks, hotels and cruises.
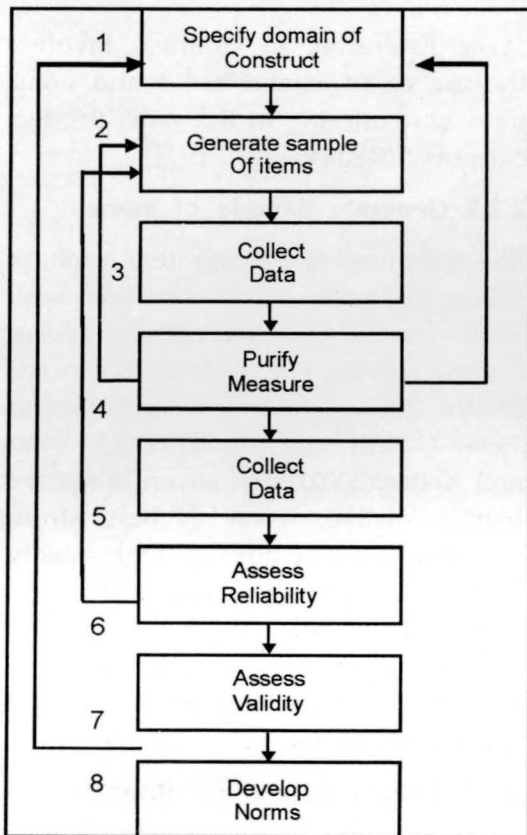
2.0 SCALE VALIDATION

2.1 Some Studies on Scale Validation

Many authors (Churchill, 1979; Peter, 1981 and Malhotra 2005) state that a multi-item scale should be evaluated for accuracy and applicability and emphasis should be on developing measures, which have desirable reliability and validity properties. According to the authors, the analyst working to develop a measure must follow the approaches used for assessing the reliability, which includes test -retest reliability, alternative – forms reliability, and internal consistency reliability as well as validity that can be assessed by examining content validity, criterion validity and construct validity.

Churchill (1979) suggested a procedure for developing better measures. Figure 1 presents the sequence of steps that should be followed for developing better measures.

The process suggested is applicable to multi-item measures and works well in producing measures with desirable psychometric properties.

2.2 PRESENT STUDY

The present article is organized in sections that match the steps of scale construction recommended by Churchill.

2.2.1 Specify Domain of Construct

FIGURE 1: Suggested Procedure for Developing Better Measures

The oldest and most often quoted definition of brand is the one given by American Management Association (AMA, 1960), "A name, term, sign, symbol or design or combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers to differentiate them from those of competitors."

According to Kim and Lavack (1996), "brand concept refers to the image of a particular brand, as it is commonly understood by consumers". The management of brand concept is an activity that is strategically undertaken by firms in order to strengthen and build equity in brands, and to achieve long-run competitive advantage.

Thus, brand is a recognizable and trustworthy badge of origin and also a promise of performance. Brands are very important in today's scenario because they act as the communication tool between increasingly globally separated businesses and consumers.

Source: Churchill,.G.A, *A Paradigm for developing Better Measures of Marketing Constructs,* (Journal of Marketing Research, Vol XVI, February, 1979).

Authors have given many definitions and classifications of the concept of brand extension and related aspects. The important definitions of brand extension are given below

According to Lynne and Dan (2003), brand extension is "the attachment of a specific label successful in one market to a new product line offered by the firm in its effort to enter a different market."

Kotler's (1991) definition of the brand extension strategy is all encompassing. "A brand extension strategy is any effort to extend a successful brand name to launch new or modified products or lines."

Tauber's (1981) used the following definitions: "Brand extensions involve the use of an established brand name to enter a new product category".

Tauber (1981) categorises a firm's growth opportunities using two

FIGURE 2: Tauber's (1981) Growth Matrix

PRODUCT CATEGORY

		New	Existing
BRAND NAME	**New**	NEW BRAND	FLANKER
	Existing	BRAND EXTENSION	LINE EXTENSION

Source: Ambler Tim and Styles Chris, Brand development versus New product development; toward a process model of extension decision, (Journal of Product and Brand Management, Vol 6 No 4, 1997), pg 223.

dimensions: product category, and brand name used. The resultant matrix is shown in figure 2.

The key distinction in the matrix is between brand extension and line extension. According to the author, academic literature reveals that each concept has been given a variety of definitions and the terms are often used interchangeably.

"Line Extension, in contrast, involves the use of an established brand name for a new offering in the same product category."(Reddy *et.al*, 1994)

2.2.2 Generate Sample of Items

The scale used is a seven-item semantic differential scale. The items of the scale were framed/selected after reading various articles. (Chao, 1993; Dacin and Smith, 1994; Mukherjee and Ghosh, 1996; Gerald and Elrod, 1999; Desai and Keller, 2002). The seven items are: like ... dislike, worst ... best, strong .... weak, poor quality ..... high quality, bad .... good, appealing ... unappealing, not willing to purchase ... willing to purchase. Appendix 1 contains the scale as applied to one of the brands in the scope of the study.

2.2.3 Collect Data (First Round)

The salient aspects of this stage of the study are given below.

The Geographic Scope covered the area in and around a prominent city of

North West India viz. Chandigarh i.e. Chandigarh, Mohali, and Panchkula. Judgement and convenience guided the choice of geographic scope. According to Indian Market Demographics report (2002), published by National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER), the union territory of Chandigarh has the highest average household income of Rs. 1,69,000/ per annum. It is thus an important market of the country.

Respondents for this study are 'youth'. Data were collected from students of various educational institutions. There are several reasons for this decision. A prominent segment of the Indian market is youth. The youth are important in the Indian market not only because of their numerical dominance but also because of their power they wield in Indian families. According to Business World (2005) in their Marketing Whitebook, youth constitutes 54% of Indian population. The predominant position of youth in Indian society and their power to influence purchase decisions is amply brought out by Ramaswamy and Nanakumari (1998).

For this study, the age group selected ranged from 14-24 years. While the upper boundary was the same as that given by Newman and Newman (1999), the lower boundary was two years higher. It was felt that given the

Indian social system and the protective attitude towards children, raising the lower boundary was justified. In addition, this demarcation of age was closer to the categorization of the age followed by the census of India. Census of India used age category of 15-19 years and 20-24 years.

While choosing products for this study, it was decided to select products, which are either used by youth individually, or along with their families.

While selecting brands it was decided to select well-advertised brands. This was to ensure brand familiarity and also to reduce the level of non-response. At this stage, the brands included in this study were Godrej®, Rexona®, Samsung®, and Wills®.

The questionnaire was prepared in English. It was a structured questionnaire for evaluation of brand. There were eight questions - one question for each of the four original brands viz, Godrej Refrigerator, Rexona Soap, Samsung TV, Wills Cigarette, and one each for the four brand extensions viz. Godrej Furniture, Rexona Deodorants, Samsung Mobile Handsets, and Wills Clothes.

Data were collected from 141 students selected through judgement sampling from three educational institutes - one school and one institution offering

Table 1: Profile of the Total Sample for 1st Round and 2nd Round.

	1st Round		2nd Round	
Gender	n	P	n	p
Male	46	32.6	222	39.43
Female	95	67.4	341	60.57
Total*	141	100.0	563	100.00
Age(in yrs)	N	p	N	P
14	15	10.7	64	11.37
15-19	75	53.6	277	49.2
20-24	50	35.7	221	39.43
Total	140	100.0	562	100.00
Mean age	18.53		18.23	
Standard deviation	3.08		2.86	
Education (in yrs)**	N	p	n	p
10	23	15.6	120	21.31
11-12	41	27.7	149	26.46
13-15	36	31.1	165	29.30
16-19	38	25.6	129	22.91
Total	138	100.0	563	100.00
Mean years education	13.29		13.25	
Standard deviation	2.62		2.49	
Income	N	p	n	p
Upto Rs 3,500	4	3.0	13	2.34
Rs 3,501- Rs7,000	8	5.9	35	6.29
Rs 7,001-Rs 10,500	22	16.0	60	10.79
Rs10,501-Rs 14,000	29	21.1	101	18.17
Rs 14,001- Rs 25,000	42	30.6	158	28.42
Rs 25,001- Rs 50,000	23	16.8	133	23.92
More than Rs 50,000	9	6.6	56	10.07
Total	137	100.0	556	100.00

* *Some totals on the table differ from the values in this row because of some non-response.*

** *Class 1 being 1st year of education*

graduation classes, and one offering post graduation classes. This would include the entire range of age covered in this research. It was decided to select one institution from each city- Chandigarh , Panchkula and Mohali. One class was chosen from each institution and data were collected from all the students of that class. Table 1 gives the profile of the sample for first and second round of data collection

As can be seen in Table 1 the sample had youth of both genders, of different income levels and of different educational levels.

2.2.4 Purify Measure

The scale was administered eight times to each respondent (four for original brands and four for brand extension). Thus a total of 1128 (141 X 8) cases should have been there, but a total of 1056 cases are reported because of item nonresponse.

Table 2 titled 'Scale Validation of scale on Brand Evaluation – 1st Round' contains the results obtained on testing the psychometrics of the scale of Brand evaluation at the first round. Table 2 exhibits the results of Cronbach alpha , t test, item to total correlation and exploratory factor analysis of the items comprising the ' brand evaluation' scale.

As can be seen from Table 2, coefficient alpha obtained for the scale was .8880.

According to Churchill (1979), the recommended measure of the internal consistency of a set of items is provided by Coefficient alpha. According to Malhotra (2005) the coefficient alpha is the average of all possible spilt-half coefficients resulting from different ways of splitting the scale items. This coefficient alpha varies from 0 to 1, and a value of 0.6 or less generally indicates unsatisfactory internal consistency reliability. An important property of coefficient alpha is that its value tends to increase with an increase in the number of scale items. According to the authors, if alpha is low, it suggests that some items do not share equally in the common core and should be eliminated. The results obtained in the present study are satisfactory.

The t-test was conducted to find out the discriminating ability of each item of the scale. Malhotra (2005) explains that the most popular parametric test is the t-test, conducted for examining hypotheses about means. It provides inferences for making statements about the means of parent populations. Table 2, gives the mean of low scores, mean of high scores, mean of all respondents and the significance level for each item. All t- values were significant at .05 level of significance. Thus, each statement is able to discriminate between high scores and low scores.

Table 2:   Scale Validation of Scale on Brand Evaluation - 1st Round

Coefficient Alpha. 8880 Items	Mean of all respond-ents No. of Cases = 1056	Mean of low scores No. of Cases= 237	Mean of high scores No. of Cases= 275	P value	Item to total correlation	KMO → 897 Significance of Barlett's test of sphericity; .000 Total % variance explained : →54.580 Number of factors → 1
1 Like ... dislike	4.94	2.44	6.73	.000	.781	Factor Loadings .717
2. Worst ... Best	4.75	2.61	6.48	.000	.818	.795
3. Strong ....Weak	4.83	2.95	6.49	.000	.792	.753
4. Poor quality.. High quality	4.83	2.80	6.41	.000	.819	.813
5. Bad .... Good	4.93	2.84	6.55	.000	.830	.827
6. Appealing Unappealing	4.57	3.31	6.17	.000	.633	.537
7. Not willing to purchase ... Willing to purchase	4.69	2.56	6.53	.000	.756	.689
					Range .633-.830	

An item to total correlation was conducted. Singh (1998) explains that correlational techniques have been frequently employed as the measures of the index of item discrimination. In such situations each item is correlated against the internal criterion of the total score, that is, each item is validated against the internal criterion of the total

score. This is called item-total correlation. When the correlation between the total score and the individual item score is computed as a measure of the discriminating power of the item, it shows how well the item is measuring that function which the test itself is measuring. Item-total score correlation is regarded by most

of the experts as the best index of discrimination. Churchill (1979), states that items which produce a substantial or sudden drop in the item- to-total correlations should be deleted. Malhotra (2005) states that all correlations above .6 are desirable. As can be seen from the Table 2 all correlations are above 0.63.

Then exploratory factor analysis was conducted. According to Churchill (1979), factor analysis can be used to confirm whether the number of dimensions conceptualized can be verified empirically. The exploratory factor analysis was conducted using principal axis factoring method. The key statistics associated with factor analysis are being explained briefly. Bartlett's test of sphericity is a test statistic used to examine the hypotheses that the variables are uncorrelated in the population. In other words, the population correlation matrix is an identity matrix. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy is an index used to examine the appropriateness of factor analysis. High values (between 0.5 and 1.0) indicate that factor analysis is an appropriate analysis. Values below 0.5 imply that factor analysis may not be appropriate. Factor loadings are simple correlations between the variables and the factors. The percentage of variance is the percentage of the total variance attributed to each factor and ideally the factors extracted should account for at least 60 percent of the total variance.

Table 2 gives the important results of factor analysis. K.M.O is acceptable at .903. Bartlett test of sphericity is significant. The percentage of variance explained is approx 54%. The factor loadings are also high and range between .537 to .827.

As nearly all the results were acceptable, it was decided to use the same scale in the second round of data collection as well.

2.2.5 Collect Data (Second Round)

Data collected in the first round revealed low familiarity with Godrej ®and Wills®. These brands were therefore replaced. The replacements were decided on the basis of responses obtained from 37 students who were interviewed for this purpose. Reebok® and Dabur® were the two new brands brought into the study.

The various brands and products selected in this study are as below:

1) Dabur® - the original product is Dabur® chawanprash and the brand extension is. Dabur® juice.

2) Reebok® - the original product is Reebok® shoes and the brand extension is Reebok® clothes.

3) Rexona® - the original product is Rexona® soap and the brand extension is Rexona® deodorant.

4) Samsung® - the original product is Samsung® television and the brand extension is Samsung® mobile handset.

Geographic scope was the same as in the first round of data collection. The focus on youth was retained even in this round of data collection.

Data were collected through multi stage random sampling. As a first step for each of three regions i.e Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali separate lists were made of schools offering classes 9th to 12th, institutions offering graduation courses and institutions offering postgraduation courses.

At school level: five schools were selected randomly from Chandigarh, two schools were selected from Mohali, and two selected from Panchkula. *At graduation level*: three educational institutions were selected from Chandigarh, one from Mohali, and one from Panchkula. *At post graduation level*: two institutes were selected from Chandigarh, one from Mohali, and one from Panchkula. From each of the selected schools and colleges / institutions one class was selected randomly. Different number of institutions were selected from Chandigarh and the two other cities

because of difference in population size between them.

Data were collected from 583 respondents, and the period of collection was January-April 2006.

Profile of Sample for the second round can be seen in Table 1. It is a heterogeneous sample of youth.

2.2.6 Assess Reliability and Validity

After collecting data for the second round the psychographics of the scale were tested once again.

The readers will recall that the sample size in this round of data collection was 563. The scale was administered eight times to each respondent (four for original brands and four for brand extension). Thus, a total of 4504 (563 X 8) cases were there.

Table 3 titled 'Scale Validation of scale on Brand Evaluation – second round' contains the results obtained on testing the psychometrics of the scale of Brand evaluation at the second round. Table 3 exhibits the results of Cronbach alpha , t test, item to total correlation and exploratory factor analysis of the items comprising the ' brand evaluation' scale.

As can be seen from Table 3, coefficient alpha obtained for the scale was .8943.

Table 3: Scale Validation of Scale on Brand Evaluation - 2nd Round

Coefficient	Mean of all respondents No. of Cases = 4504	Mean of low scores No. of Cases = 1082	Mean of high scores No. of Cases = 1137	P value	Item to total correlation	KMO →.903 Significance of Barlett's test of sphericity; →.000 Total % variance explained : →56.158 Number of factors → 1
alpha. 8943 Items						
						Factor Loadings
1 Like ... dislike	5.43	3.40	6.86	.000	.786	.733
2. Worst ... Best	5.20	3.42	6.68	.000	.810	.788
3. Strong .... Weak	5.26	3.42	6.75	.000	.814	.783
4. Poor quality.. High quality	5.27	3.53	6.70	.000	.824	.817
5. Bad .... Good	5.37	3.66	6.78	.000	.824	.812
6. Appealing Unappealing	5.00	3.50	6.66	.000	.698	.608
7. Not willing to purchase ... Willing to purchase	5.06	3.20	6.78	.000	.750	.680
					Range .698-.824	

T- Test was conducted to find out the discriminating ability of each item of the scale. Table 3, gives for each item the mean of low scores, mean of high scores, mean of all respondents and the significance level. All t- values were significant at .05 level of significance. Thus, each statement is able to discriminate between high scores and low scores.

An item to total correlation was conducted. As can be seen from the Table 3 all the correlations are above .69.

Then an exploratory factor analysis was conducted. Table 3 gives the important results of factor analysis. K.M.O is acceptable, Bartlett test of sphericity is significant. The percentage of variance explained is 56%. The factor loadings are high and range between .608 to .817.

The analysis shows that the value of coefficient alpha is acceptable, the results of t- test are significant, and all the item-to-total correlation are high. There is an acceptable percentage of variance explained and factor loadings of all items are above .5.

The validity of the proposed new scale was assessed by using the method of nomological validity. Nomological validity involves ensuring that the measure correlates in the theoretically predicted way with measures of different but related constructs.

The variables chosen for estimating the validity of the scale under discussion are information seeking, involvement level and recall memory. All these variables are central to 'information processing' which is an important part of perception. It was reasoned that assessment of brand extension relies on perception hence these variables are appropriate for the task at hand.

2.2.7 Information Seeking

According to Tellis and Garth (1990) and Moorman (1998), people seek information to use in a rational process of choice. Consumers have large amounts of information available to them from many different sources like experience, retailers, word of mouth, advertising, observation, press comments and experience. Most of the stimuli to which individuals are exposed are "self- selected." Generally, individuals seek information that they think will help them achieve their goals. According to Tidwell and Sias, (2005), consumers when confronted with uncertainty seek information for its reduction. And when consumers are certain they will not seek information.

There is nothing in literature to suggest that information seeking is related to evaluation of brand extension. It was therefore hypothesized that information seeking is not related to brand extension

2.2.8 Involvement Level

Mukherjee and Ghosh (1996) explain that an individual processes information on an issue depending upon his or her own involvement with it. Individuals highly involved with an issue will have a definite opinion about it and will accept few alternative opinions and hence in terms of brand choice, they could be expected to have small-evoked set. According to Blackwell *et.al* (2003), the degree of personal involvement is a key factor in shaping the type of decision process that consumer's follow. Authors (Hawkins *et.al*, 2002; Solomon *et.al*, 2004 and Loudon and Bitta, 2006) have provided a list of the many other factors on which involvement level is dependent.

There is nothing in literature to suggest that involvement level is related to evaluation of brand extension. It was therefore hypothesized that involvement level is not related to brand extension.

2.2.9 Recall Memory

According to Solomon (2004), marketers pay so much money to place their messages in front of consumers; they are naturally concerned that people will actually remember these messages at a later point. According to the authors Schiffman and Kanuk (2003) and Solomon (2004), memory for product information can be measured through either recognition or recall techniques.

Table 4: Correlation of Brand Extension with Information Seeking, Involvement Level, Recall Memory and Need for Cognition Variables.

Variables Brand Extension	Information Seeking	Involvement Level	Recall Memory
Dabur Juices	r=.036 Sig = .426	r=.091 Sig = .045	r=.005 Sig = .917
Reebok Clothes	r= -.025 Sig = .589	r= .065 Sig = .162	r= .040 Sig = .390
Rexona Deodrants	r=.045 Sig = .398	r=.048 Sig = .359	r=.-113 Sig = .032
Samsung Mobile Handsets	r=.081 Sig = .075	r=.051 Sig = .260	r=.046 Sig = .314

There is an ongoing debate about the comparative effectiveness of recall and recognition as tests of memory (Rollinson, 1998; Hawkins *et.al,* 2002; Blackwell *et.al,* 2003; Loudon and Bitta, 2006).

There is nothing in literature to suggest that recall memory is related to evaluation of brand extension. It was therefore hypothesized that recall memory is not related to brand extension.

Table 4 depicts the correlation values of Brand Extension with Information seeking, Involvement level and Recall memory.

As can be seen in Table 4 the results are as hypothesized. None of the four correlations, of the scale being validated, with information seeking is significant. Three out of the four correlations with involvement level and recall are not significant. Thus the validity of the scale has been successfully estimated.

3.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR PRACTITIONERS

There is a shortage of Marketing scales whose psychometrics have been tested in India. This research is a modest attempt to fill this lacuna in existing literature. Practitioners are expected to from this research effort. The scale developed in this research can be used to assess the efficacy of brand

extension and to track it over time. Owing to the growing popularity of brand extension as a marketing strategy, the number of users of this scale is expected to grow.

Besides, the succeeding generation of researchers working on brand extension will have a validated scale at their disposal. They will not have to develop a scale from scratch. This very scale can be used to investigate different aspects of brand extension including those suggested at the end of this paper.

4.0 LIMITATIONS

This research was done in a small part of the country and that too only in the urban area. As respondents were contacted through the educational institutions, this study left out those youth in the age group of 14 to 24 years who do not attend any educational institution. , The questionnaire was made in English only; all the school and college going students who are not proficient in English may have faced difficulty while answering the questions.

Two of the brands used in the first round of data collection (Godrej and Wills) had to be replaced in the second round of data collection because all the respondents were not familiar with them. Perhaps, better exploratory research would have resulted in a

sound initial selection of brands for inclusion in this study.

5.0 SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This research can also be extended to a different sample profile like working women, children or adults. The products /brands selected could be changed depending upon the sample. It is recommended that this scale be tested in other parts of country, in rural areas by preparing a questionnaire in Hindi and other regional languages. Future research should use confirmatory factor analysis also.

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APPENDIX 1:

Scale and Its Items

I would like to know your evaluation of some brands. Answer the questions by ticking the appropriate number/box. The meaning of the numbers is explained below. Do remember that it is possible to have an opinion about a brand that one has not used.

1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Strongly agree with the option on the left	Moderately agree with the option on the left	Slightly agree with the option on the left	Neutral to either option	Slightly agree with the option on the right	Moderately agree with the option n the oright	Strongly agree with the option on the right

A). What is your evaluation of Dabur chawanprash?

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	
A1	Like the brand								Dislike the brand
A2	Worst brand								Best brand
A3	Strong brand								Weak brand
A4	Very poor quality brand								Very high quality brand
A5	Bad brand								Good brand
A6	Appealing brand								Unappealing brand
A7	Would not be willing to purchase the brand.								Would be willing to purchase the brand