MEASURING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF BRAND POSITIONING STRATEGIES PERCEIVED BY CONSUMERS

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ABSTRACT: *The role of brand positioning is vibrant and central in marketing and the consumers' perception is directly shaped by employing the suitable positioning strategy. Regardless the significance of positioning concept, there is scant study observed: how positioning substitutes contribute to build the consumer perception, which positioning strategy outperforms and how it can be measured effectively. The study mode is quantitative and relative effectiveness of positioning strategies (feature, direct benefit, indirect benefit) is measured empirically regarding consumer viewpoint. The multidimensional scale is used to measure the relative effectiveness. The measuring items comprise of four dimensions that are favorability, dissimilarity, uniqueness, and credibility. The total number of items that is associated with these dimensions is seventeen. The relative performance of positioning strategies is observed hypothetically. For this purpose, two print advertisements of real brands from cellular industry are selected. The statistical technique that applied in the study is ANCOVA by considering age and monthly income as covariates. Descriptive statistics is also incorporated to prove the study hypothesis. The results demonstrated that the selected positioning strategy for the study affects the positioning success of a brand. More specifically, direct benefit and indirect benefit positioning strategies received much higher and significant score against the three dimension of positioning effectiveness (i.e., favorability, dissimilarity and credibility) in comparison of feature positioning, so benefit 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. Moreover, some limitations are reported along with the associated directions for future research.*

Keywords: *Positioning Strategy, Feature Positioning, Direct Benefit Positioning, Indirect Benefit Positioning, Cellular, Pakistan.*

1. INTRODUCTION

There are insufficient evidences in literature regarding empirical study on positioning concept. The question "which positioning strategy is better than other" is under discussion and it is not given much importance in the past. For instance, either benefit positioning is better than user positioning or vice versa [1].

The present era is of massive communication. The large number of offers, bombardment of advertisements, and similarity in brands exist in the environment of local and global market. As a result of strong communication channel, the brands are becoming stronger and closer to each other i.e., similarity is increasing day by day [2]. The positioning is a major and no doubt is very essential tool in such competitive environment. In this cut throat competition, positioning is being considered as a principal tool [3]. Anderson and Carpenter [4] highlighted that the basis of branding is brand positioning i.e., brand positioning provides basis and foundation for branding. In short, brand positioning is an evidence for branding. Entire marketing plans, efforts, and programs are designed in such a way that it can achieve desired positioning of target brand.

Furthermore brand positioning strategies are the driving forces for marketing programs [1]. Positioning is defined as:

"The act of designing the company's offering and image to occupy a distinctive place in the mind of the target market. The end result of positioning is the successful creation of a customer-focused value proposition, a cogent reason why the target market should buy the product [5]."

A positioning strategy can be defined in several ways. According to Dillon, Domzal [6] positioning strategy is an effort to excel a brand to a specific position with respect to product available in a market place. Park, Jaworski [7] also explained the positioning strategy in a generic way. The core purpose of this strategy is to draw a clear line between offered brand and competitor brand to strengthen the brand image.

The company viewpoint is the most important aspect in brand positioning. The standard frame of reference is its company's brand for which the comparison is required from the other existing brands. Regarding company's perception the real soul of brand positioning is to convey a meaningful message about its brand in such a way that the competitor brand may not approach the same standards. The consequence of brand positioning is to obtain the maximum degree of supremacy form the competitor's brand. Each existing brand has its unique connotation at the consumer side. Such kind of connotations may be of any form like real time benefits, individual life style, physical characteristics of brand, event in which a consumer use the band, and consumer perception related to other ones [8]. So, the concept of positioning is different from what individual perceives. Difference in this sense is that positioning product is nothing itself in its nature, but it is the functionalities of the product in the mindset of customer [3] with respect to the competitors that is how consumer distinguish and consider a

brand in comparison to its rival in the market [3, 9]. The real magic of positioning is much more interesting than other marketing tactics. The positioning behavior plays with two identical and two dissimilar brands. As a result of positioning strategies, undistinguished products may look like distinguished ones and distinguished products may look like substitutes [10]. Such kind of differentiation in existing products happened by modifying the basic philosophies of brands [11].

The basic research question that is being answered in this piece of research is "which positioning strategy is more effective than the other i.e., benefit positioning or feature positioning"?

2. LITERATURE BACKGROUND

STP (segmentation, targeting and positioning) model is playing a very basic and vital role in defining a potential market and this model is considered as an origin of all other marketing strategies. So, strategic part of marketing is purely based on the STP model [5]. Conventionally, the notion of brand positioning has been considered as part of STP model [12, 13]. Needs of the consumers are there in the market and needs cannot be created. The entire focus of marketing activities is to fulfill the demands and wants of consumers; therefore, designing of marketing mix (that is designing of promotion mix) is necessary according to the nature of products, services, or ideas. The process of such marketing activities initiated from the division of market on the basis of geographic, demographic, psychographic and behavioral factors. Further, subdivision of marketing is being targeted by valid marketing mixes. The logic of designing the different marketing mix for different segments is to differentiate (establish positioning) its offering from the rival or group of rivals. The strategic steam of STP model is as →mission statement →vision statement →divide whole market in subdivision→ select a slice of market which needs to be targeted →design a particular marketing mix for selected piece of market →finally establish positioning of desired market offer [14].The positioning of brand, product, or company is nothing separately, but it is considered valuable and effective when suitable strategies of segmentation are being applied [15].

Uggla [16] expresses the positioning concept in relation to the segmentation and targeting. He states that positioning is a technique to distinguish the focal brand from the rival offering. In order to create differentiation from the competitor, it is necessary to define "segment" carefully and select the most prospective segment for targeting. Further, he describes that positioning procedure should be at right track so that positioning objectives can be achieved. The three items (segmentation, targeting and positioning) are complement each other i.e., these marketing concepts are completely packed with each other. Without the existence of segment, marketer fails to target the relevant consumers. It is presumed that positioning strategy is developed by keeping the target audience in view. Hence, it is concluded that there is a strong relationship between the segmentation, targeting and positioning. In the absence of one of the three variables, triangle remains incomplete. Figure 1 shows the graphical representation of above discussion.
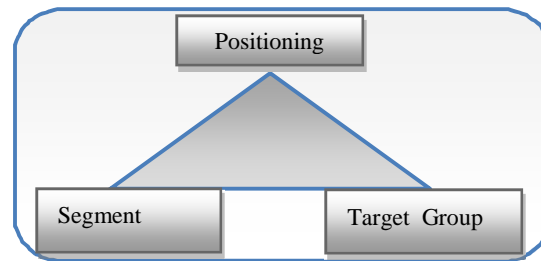

Figure 1: The relationship between segment, target group and positioning. **Source:** Adapted from Uggla (2006)

2.1 Philosophy of Positioning Strategy

According to Brooksbank [17] positioning strategy is formulated after the complete analysis of competitor(s). During the formulation phase strategy maker carefully observes the potential segment from target market and finalize the strategy with respect to competitor segment to take the competitive edge. The description of this definition depicts that scope of positioning strategy is limited and is applied to the specific brands, specific consumers and within a specific market. The confusion and discrepancy may occur in the understanding of positioning strategy and corporate strategy (or simply strategy). 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). The concept of positioning strategy is a sum of interconnected terms like:

1.   Target market or prospective consumer
2.   Competitors in the target market
3.   The resulting factor which is competitive edge

It is necessary in the formulation of positioning strategy to consider the above three sub parts. It means that there is need to think dynamically, creatively and innovatively while interrelate these sub components of positioning strategy. The scope of corporate strategy is broader than positioning strategy and beyond the scope of the study.

2.2 Discussion on Positioning Strategies

Fuchs and Diamantopoulos [18] have explained that positioning can be observed through two lenses; one is the company lens and second is the consumer lens. Company lens further split into intended positioning and actual positioning, whereas consumer lens basically expresses perceived positioning. So, it is deducted that positioning is not a game; played with a product but it is a planning for the perspective consumers. Hiroyuki and Roehl Thomas [19] highlighted the positioning concept in a different way and declared positioning as invisible assets for companies. It should not be forgotten that positioning concept was first time introduced by Ries and Trout. Positioning is not referred what is being done with product itself, but it treated in such a way that what is done with the product in the mind of consumer. They further explained that positioning is concerned with communication (i.e., it is communication a matter). Conclusively, positioning is done for the mindset of consumers with different ways.

To create that image, agencies generally adopt different strategies like feature positioning strategy (emphasize

mainly on features of the brand), direct positioning strategy (emphasize mainly on functional advantages of the brand), indirect positioning strategy (emphasize mainly on non-functional advantages of the brand). In this paper, two positioning strategies are under discussion 1) benefit positioning and 2) feature positioning. Relative effectiveness of positioning strategies (direct benefit, indirect benefit and feature) is measured empirically from consumer's viewpoint.
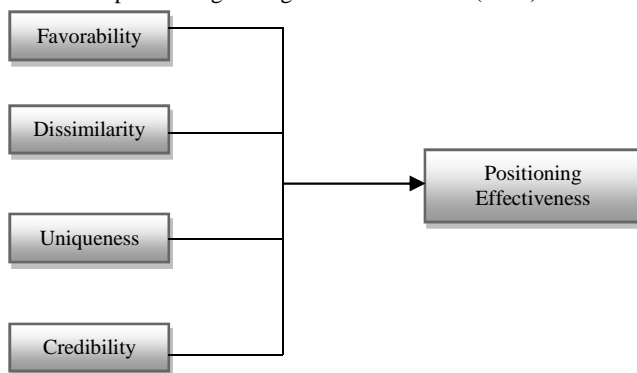
3. CONCEPTUAL/THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

3.1 Conceptualizing Positioning Effectiveness

The focus of the current study is to measure the effectiveness of positioning strategies with consumer lens. For this purpose, it is necessary to explain the conceptual framework of the present research. The conceptualization of positioning effectiveness is a composition of interrelated three dimensions. These dimensions are as follows:

1. Differentiation (dissimilarity and uniqueness)
2. Favorability
3. Credibility

On the basis of above dimensions, the conceptual definition of positioning effectiveness is "the extent to which a branded product is perceived to *occupy a differentiated (dissimilar and unique), favorable, and credible position in the minds of (target) customers.*" Differentiation is explained with the help of further two sub-dimensions i.e., dissimilarity and uniqueness. So, practically positioning effectiveness is measured by the four dimensions a) dissimilarity b) uniqueness c) favorability and d) credibility. Furthermore, each stated dimension has its own breakup called element. Measurement items are given in Appendix A. Consumer perception is measured by applying the model of positioning effectiveness and the model is based on multidimensional constructs. This conceptualization is a cornerstone for instrument that is used in this research [20]. Study model is presented herein figure 2.

Figure 2 Study model to measuring the effectiveness of brand positioning strategies **Source:** Fuchs (2008)

Differentiation is further divided in two sub-dimensions that are dissimilarity and uniqueness. Dissimilarity explains the consumer's perception, which is a set of associated expectations with focal brand that do not exist in competing brands. Consumers' expectation for a brand is based on the cognitive set of association (i.e., features base) which is representative within the product categories [21]. There is a clear line between the dissimilarity and uniqueness. The main difference is attribute base. Dissimilarity addresses the

associated attributes which are common in relation to competitors whereas uniqueness addresses the attributes which are common as well as attributes which are not common [22]. Favorability is most important and fundamental one in brand associations. Favorability dimension illustrations the tendencies, biases or inclinations toward a brand [23]. Keller, Sternthal [24] highlights the real strength of positioning via credibility is to create the points of variation regarding competing brands but in a more believable way.

3.2 Hypothesis Discussion

Most of the brands are positioned by highlighting their features and creating confusion for consumers [20]. Consumers are more concerned with the brand benefits rather than brand features [25]. Practically, benefits of a brand are more significant and relevant than the tangible aspects e.g., physical features [26]. The nature of benefits of a brand is more inclined towards a problem solution in comparison of brand features. There is a serious concern of consumers with the feature strategy. Companies are focusing more on the brand features with the increasing frequency and give less importance to the benefits of a brand which is more significant, vital and essential to the consumers [27]. Now, brands are introduced by companies with similar and undistinguishable features. Intensity of brands is more in number in the present market with similar and undistinguishable features [3]. It may consider a difficult task to position a brand via feature positioning strategy even without caring the competitors [28]. Product class positioning by applying feature positioning strategy is a difficult task where performance is supposed to be too much similar [29, 30]. Consumers feel mental burden and get tired by observing bombardment of product features [31]. In a technological era, it is more difficult to differentiate the product by using feature positioning because the presented feature may not live longer i.e., every competitor have advance technology [32]. Feature positioning is not more effective because the nature of features is imitative i.e., easy to copy [33]. Generally, consumers perceive the feature positioning strategy as a "me-too" class [34]. The agreement among consumers is there regarding concrete features over intangible benefits that the physical features are more similar [35]. The reason of dominance of benefit positioning strategy over feature positioning strategy is its broader nature and expresses additional information [36]. Crawford [37] and Wind [15] have explained that benefit positioning is more effective than feature positioning. In the light of above discussion, the hypothesis is postulated as:

> **H:** *Benefit positioning is more effective than feature positioning.*

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Descriptive research is used for this study because of its nature. Lavrakas [38] explained the descriptive research in its own style. He highlighted that the descriptive research is highly organized method in which data is collected by using any data collection technique. The structured questionnaire is used to collect the data for this study because it is a suggested tool in a descriptive research. Descriptive design

supported the non-experimental design of investigation. Study is based on non-contrived setting with field study and it negated the experimental design. It is a practical study of measuring the positioning strategy in a natural environment. The real life advertisements of real brands and real life scenarios are the part of this study, so it is a practical study [39]. The "individual" is selected for the unit of analysis. Fuchs and Diamantopoulos [22] have selected consumers while measuring the brand positioning as a unit of analysis. Fuchs [39] has explained that the data collection for the positioning dimensions i.e., favorability, differentiation (dissimilarity and uniqueness) and credibility is based on cross-sectional context whereas data is collected for the positioning dimension sustainability in the longitudinal context. Hence, current study is cross-sectional one because it is grounded on the F (favorability), D (dissimilarity) U (uniqueness) and C (credibility). It is very important to define the target population carefully because it provided the basis for the sample [38]. The target population of the study is educated consumers of cell phone in Pakistan residing in Punjab province. Sample size of 100 consumers is taken through the purposive sampling technique. Purposive sampling allowed authors to select a smart sample (small one) from the bigger unit of population [40]. Primary data is collected by visiting the cell phone consumers through survey. The questionnaire is adopted from the Fuchs's study [39]. The questionnaire is constituted of four dimensions (i.e., Dissimilarity, Uniqueness, Favorability and Credibility). Three dimensions (Dissimilarity, Uniqueness and Favorability) composed of four items whereas credibility dimension composed of five items. The total number of measuring items are seventeen and are presented in appendix A. Advertising is a main source to position the brand in the mind of a consumer [6, 41]. Crawford [37] has analyzed the contents of magazines' advertisement (print advertisement class). He found that 74% positioning of products delivered through the print advertisements. Fuchs and Diamantopoulos [22] study is also a witness of using print advertisement to measure the positioning effectiveness. The data collection process for this study is not merely based on questionnaire but two print advertisements (related to taken positioning strategies) are worked and linked with the questionnaire at the back end. The print advertisements are showed to the purposive sampling of 100 consumers of different demographics. The order effect is minimized by rotating the advertisements randomly [42]. It means that self-administration is required during data collection. So, self-administrated questionnaire has been used in this study. Actually, the effectiveness of positioning strategies is needed to evaluate. For this purpose, two print advertisements of different models are utilized.

5. RESULTS & INTERPRETATION

5.1 Analysis Procedure
The statistical technique that applied on the data set is analysis of covariance (ANCOVAs). The ANCOVAs test applied on the four dimensions of positioning effectiveness with the pair of positioning strategy. The desired pair of positioning strategy is "benefit vs. feature" that is required to

investigate the relative effectiveness. Practically, analysis of covariance (ANCOVAs) applied by taking all four dimensions one by one with the pair "benefit 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 [18, 43-46]. The socio-demographic data that addressed in this study are age, gender, marital status, education, monthly income and occupation.

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 5.1
Statistical Results for H w.r.t Favorability

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Feature	2.56	1.21	97	47.27
Direct Benefit	2.75	1.18	97	42.91
Indirect Benefit	3.20	1.43	97	44.69
Total	2.86	1.30	291	
Favorability	F-value = 6.455 p-value = .002 < α			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	^{F1a}F = 1.233 & ^{F1a}p = .268 > α ^{F1b}F = .794 & ^{F1b}p = .374 > α		

Table 5.1 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the favorability dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table (5.1) values predict that direct and indirect benefit positioning strategy is more effective in comparison of 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 direct and indirect benefit positioning over the feature is with respect to the favorability dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of direct benefit positioning strategy is 2.75 and the numerical value (mean) of indirect benefit positioning strategy is 3.20 and it is higher than the mean value of feature positioning strategy that is 2.56. Hence, on the basis of discussion above and numerical values in Table 5.1, it is concluded that benefit positioning strategies outperform 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 results presented in Table 5.1. No doubt, the Table values reveal that direct and indirect benefit strategies lead over the feature positioning strategy with respect to the favorability. Moreover, the difference of means among the positioning strategies with respect to favorability in Table 5.1 is significant because p-value < α (F = 6.455 & p = .002 < α)

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-values > α and their respective F

values are given here ($^{F1a}F = 1.233$ & $^{F1a}p = .268 > \alpha$; $^{F1b}F = .794$ & $^{F1b}p = .374 > \alpha$).

Last column of Table 5.1 is presenting the values of "coefficient of variation" CV. The percentage value of CV against direct benefit positioning strategy is 42.91%. This value in the CV column is lower than the other two values (i.e., feature and indirect benefit). In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that direct benefit positioning provides more consistent performance as compared to the feature and indirect benefit positioning strategies.

Table 5.2

Statistical Results for H w.r.t Dissimilarity

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Feature	4.88	1.44	97	29.51
Direct Benefit	4.52	1.55	97	34.29
Indirect Benefit	5.32	1.36	97	25.56
Total	4.91	1.48	291	
Dissimilarity	F-value = 7.401 p-value = .001< α			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	$^{D1a}F = .669$ & $^{D1a}p = .414 > \alpha$ $^{D1b}F = 1.175$ & $^{D1b}p = .279 > \alpha$		

Table 5.2 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the dissimilarity dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table (5.2) values predict that indirect benefit positioning strategy is more effective in comparison of 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 indirect benefit positioning over the feature is with respect to the dissimilarity dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of indirect benefit positioning strategy is 5.32 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 5.2, it is concluded that benefit 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 5.2. No doubt, the Table values reveal that indirect benefit strategy leads over the feature positioning strategy with respect to the dissimilarity. Moreover, the difference of means among the positioning strategies with respect to dissimilarity in Table 5.2 is significant because p-value < α (F = 7.401 & p = .001 < α).

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 > α and their respective F values are given here ($^{D1a}F = .669$ & $^{D1a}p = .414 > \alpha$; $^{D1b}F = 1.175$ & $^{D1b}p = .279 > \alpha$).

Last column of Table 5.2 is presenting the values of "coefficient of variation" CV. The percentage value of CV

against indirect benefit positioning strategy is 25.56%. This value in the CV column is lower than the other two values (i.e., feature and direct benefit). In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that indirect benefit positioning provides more consistent performance as compared to the feature and direct benefit positioning strategies.

Table 5.3

Statistical Results for H w.r.t Uniqueness

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Feature	4.26	1.52	97	35.68
Direct Benefit	3.95	1.47	97	37.22
Indirect Benefit	3.32	1.46	97	43.98
Total	3.84	1.53	291	
Uniqueness	F-value = 10.069 p-value = .000 < α			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	$^{U1a}F = .009$ & $^{U1a}p = .925 > \alpha$ $^{U1b}F = 3.373$ & $^{U1b}p = .067 > \alpha$		

Table 5.3 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the uniqueness dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table (5.3) values predict that feature positioning strategy is more effective in comparison of direct and indirect benefit 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 strategy over the direct and indirect benefit positioning is with respect to the uniqueness dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of direct benefit positioning strategy is 3.95 and the numerical value (mean) of indirect benefit positioning strategy is 3.32 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 5.3, it is concluded that feature positioning strategy outperforms the benefit positioning strategies in term of uniqueness. Here, the conclusion is obvious that the results are not consistent with the hypothesis (H).

Further, it is necessary to explain the significance of result presented in Table 5.3. No doubt, the Table values reveal that feature positioning strategy leads over the direct and indirect benefit strategies with respect to the uniqueness. Moreover, the difference of means among the positioning strategies with respect to uniqueness in Table 5.3 is significant because p-value < α (F = 10.069 & p = .000 < α).

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 > α and their respective F values are given here ($^{U1a}F = .009$ & $^{U1a}p = .925 > \alpha$; $^{U1b}F = 3.373$ & $^{U1b}p = .067 > \alpha$).

Last column of Table 5.3 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 two values (i.e., direct and indirect benefit). In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that feature benefit positioning provides more consistent performance as compared to the direct and indirect benefit positioning strategies.

Table 5.4

Statistical Results for H w.r.t Credibility

Position Strategy	Mean	Std. Deviation	N	Coefficient of Variation (CV) %
Feature	2.94	1.16	97	39.46
Direct Benefit	3.01	1.10	97	36.54
Indirect Benefit	3.39	1.36	97	40.11
Total	3.12	1.23	291	
Credibility	F-value = 3.774 p-value = .024 < α			
Covariates	Age & Monthly Income	[C1a]F = .420 & [C1a]p = .518 > α [C1b]F = .026 & [C1b]p = .872 > α		

Table 5.4 opens the door of discussion for the hypothesis by considering the credibility dimension of positioning effectiveness. The Table (5.4) values predict that direct and indirect benefit positioning strategy is more effective in comparison of 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 direct and indirect benefit positioning over the feature is with respect to the credibility dimension. Statistically, the numeric value (mean) of direct benefit positioning strategy is 3.01 and the numerical value (mean) of indirect benefit positioning strategy is 3.39 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 5.4, it is concluded that benefit positioning strategies outperform 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 5.4. No doubt, the Table values reveal that direct and indirect benefit strategies lead over the feature positioning strategy with respect to the credibility. Moreover, the difference of means among the positioning strategies with respect to credibility in Table 5.4 is significant because p-value < α (F = 3.774 & p = .024 < α)

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 > α and their respective F values are given here ([C1a]F = .420 & [C1a]p = .518 > α; [C1b]F = .026 & [C1b]p = .872 > α).

Last column of Table 5.4 is presenting the values of "coefficient of variation" CV. The percentage value of CV against direct benefit positioning strategy is 36.54%. This value in the CV column is lower than the other two values (i.e., feature and indirect benefit). In the light of these values in the Table, author concludes that direct benefit positioning provides more consistent performance as

compared to the feature and indirect benefit positioning strategies.

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

6.1 Discussion

There are four layers to support the hypothesis (H). Each layer contains one positioning dimension. If majority of dimensions are in favor of hypothesis then overall it harmonizes with our expectations. Table 5.1 clearly indicates that direct and indirect benefit positioning strategies out preform feature strategy. Further, the value of coefficient of variation is consistent with the expectation. The coefficient of variation against the direct benefit shows lower value among the three positioning strategies (i.e., feature, direct and indirect). So, inference can also be drawn that benefit positioning strategies give consistent performance in comparison of feature positioning strategy. Favorability dimension of positioning effectiveness supports hypothesis that benefit positioning strategy is superior to feature.

Corollary 1: Eventually, it is stated on the basis of facts and figures in Table 5.1 and subsequent discussion that benefit 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 *favorability* dimension of positioning effectiveness in comparison of feature positioning.

The second layer of hypothesis (H) belongs to the second dimension of positioning effectiveness that is dissimilarity. Table 5.2 clearly specifies that indirect benefit 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 indirect benefit shows the lower value among the three positioning strategies (i.e., feature, direct and indirect). So, inference can also be drawn that benefit positioning strategies give consistent performance in comparison of feature positioning strategy. Dissimilarity dimension of positioning effectiveness supports hypothesis that benefit positioning strategy is superior to feature.

Corollary 2: Finally, it is stated on the basis of facts and figures in Table 5.2 and subsequent discussion that benefit 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 in comparison of feature positioning.

The third layer of hypothesis (H) is described by considering the third dimension of positioning effectiveness that is uniqueness. The outputs in Table 5.3 are reverse of the study expectation and do not fulfill the requirements of H. The uniqueness dimension is not consistent, supportive and congruent with hypothesis. The results in Table 5.3 are obvious and predict that feature positioning strategy outperforms the benefit positioning strategies. The difference between the benefit and feature positioning strategy is also significant in term of uniqueness but in revers of hypothesis ideology. The p-value reflects the results are significant. The coefficient of variation against

the feature positioning shows the lower value among the three positioning strategies (i.e., feature, direct and indirect). So, inference can also be drawn that feature positioning strategy gives consistent performance in comparison of benefit positioning strategy. Uniqueness dimension of positioning effectiveness does not support hypothesis that benefit positioning strategies are superior to feature.

Corollary 3: Eventually, it is stated on the basis of facts and figures in Table 5.3 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 in comparison of benefit positioning.

The fourth layer of hypothesis (H) describes by taking the fourth dimension in to account of positioning effectiveness that is credibility. The outputs in Table 5.4 moves parallel to the study expectation and fulfill the requirements of hypothesis. The credibility dimension is consistent, supportive and congruent with hypothesis. The results in Table 5.4 are obvious and predict that benefit positioning strategy outperforms the feature positioning strategies. The difference of means among the positioning strategies is also significant. The significance of result reflects in p-value. The coefficient of variation against the direct positioning shows the lower values among the three positioning strategies (i.e., feature, direct and indirect). So, inference can also be drawn that benefit positioning strategies give consistent performance in comparison of feature positioning strategy. Credibility dimension of positioning effectiveness supports the mechanism in hypothesis that benefit positioning strategy is superior to feature.

Corollary 4: Ultimately, it is stated on the basis of facts and figures in Table 5.4 and subsequent discussion that benefit 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 *credibility* dimension of positioning effectiveness in comparison of feature positioning.

6.2 Conclusion

As projected in hypothesis, the corollaries 1 & 4 are fully in favor of hypothesis; the direct benefit positioning strategy yields significantly greater value against the two effectiveness dimensions (i.e., favorability and credibility) as compared to feature positioning. Similarly, indirect benefit positioning strategy also attains significantly higher value against the two effectiveness dimensions (i.e., favorability and credibility) as compared to feature positioning. Corollary 2 also endorse the results in corollary 1 & 4; indirect benefit positioning achieves the much better score against the dissimilarity dimension of positioning effectiveness in comparison of feature positioning. After combining the results of corollary 1, 2 & 4 it is stated that direct benefit and indirect benefit positioning strategies received much higher and significant score against the three dimensions of positioning effectiveness (i.e., favorability, dissimilarity and credibility) in comparison of feature positioning.

Here, the conclusion is obvious that the results are consistent with the hypothesis (H) that the benefit positioning strategy outperforms the feature positioning in term of favorability, dissimilarity and credibility. Hence, the study analysis, finding, interpretation, description and discussion are inclined towards the acceptance of H in favor of Ho.

6.3 Limitations and Associated Opportunities for Future Research

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

1. As it is mentioned in the 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 [47].

2. The current study is limited regarding the limited no. of positioning strategies. The solution is very simple and may resolve this issue by taking/considering the adding existing positioning strategies while conducting the research in future.

Appendix A: Measures for Variables
Measurement Items

Compared to competing strategies, this strategy is:	*(Dissimilarity)*
1. Identical/Distinct 2. Similar/Dissimilar 3. Does not set itself apart /Sets itself apart 4. Same/Different	
What is your opinion regarding the strategy?	*(Favorability)*
1. Good/Bad 2. Like/Dislike 3. Positive/Negative 4. Appealing/Not appealing	
Compared to competing strategies, this strategy is:	*(Uniqueness)*
1. Unique/Not unique 2. Extraordinary/Ordinary 3. Atypical/Typical 4. Special/Standard	
The differences between this strategy and competing one is:	*(Credibility)*
1. Believable/Not believable 2. Plausible/Implausible 3. Convincing/Not convincing 4. Trustworthy/Untrustworthy 5. Realistic/Unrealistic	

Source: Adopted from Fuchs (2008).

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