

**FROM PERSONIFICATION TO PREFERENCE: THE IMPACT OF BRAND
HUMANIZATION ON CONSUMER EMOTIONAL ENGAGEMENT**

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Abstract

Brand humanization is involving the imbuing of desired FMCG brand with those of human-based traits and with emotions, therein significantly of the impacting consumers emotional engagement by also of fostering trust, of loyalty, and also of deeper sense of personal connection, ultimately leading to the increased brand preference. Brand humanization accords subtly therein a brand as a something more relatable, and authentic, inconsiderably a empathetic entity rather than just a faceless corporation. Emotional engagement in marketing is justifiably about the individuals feelings that a normal consumer has towards the requisite brand. Using the brand humanization methods like that of having a having of a relatable mascot, the user generated content (UGC), and therein of displaying expertise, of humanized brands therein become more relatable and can then stand out in a crowded brand market. This approach shifts focus from the constant selling to the providing out of value and understanding of customer needs, which then strengthens relationships and encourages repeat purchases and recommendations. This paper analyses the brand-humanization's aspect of relevance in prominent Indian FMCG brands. Brand personification for the prominent FMCG brands is a then critical marketing strategy that then assigns human-like traits, and personalities, and characteristics to the products to build a stronger connection and loyalty with consumers. Brand campaigns have seemingly been analyzed by using of SEM then to measure attributes of brand humanization attributes. The paper hence seeks to understand the base consumer response for each of the specified FMCG brands and their related humanization attributes.

Keywords: brand humanization, FMCG, attributes, Consumer

Introduction

Brand humanization conceptually is a process that makes the brand relatable and also authentic by imbuing the brand possessing it with human-like personality, the values, and emotions, rather than appearing also as a faceless corporation. This is inherently achieved through sustained strategies like of using a unique conversational tone, of the sharing of employee stories, and showing empathy, with being transparent, and then engaging directly with customers to foster stronger, more then meaningful relationships and with building of trust. Brand humanization hence presents the brand as more than of a faceless entity by then imbuing it with values, of personality, and emotion and achieved with its Authenticity in transparent and basic honest communication, with empathy in the understanding and of addressing customers pain points, relatability by the

Reflecting of shared values of cultures, or of experiences, of responsiveness through the active engaging with the customers and of adapting based on feedback and of consistency and maintaining the consistent voice and the personality across all platforms.

Consumers emotionally based engagement is purportedly the degree to which consumers feel an emotional connection therein and the involvement with a brand. This basic psychological individual bond, and driven by the feelings like of the passion, of trust, and of pride, which goes beyond the functional satisfaction and that is a powerful predictor of the brand loyalty, and positive word-of-mouth, and for long-term customer relationships. In the suitably competitive FMCG sector, this is then achieved through the tactics like that of using a reliable relatable brand mascot, who acts as a spokesperson, or then for creating a suitable distinct brand voice to and make the brand more perceptible and relatable and memorable. Effective individuals personification helps the brands to then differentiate themselves and also influences that of the consumer attitudes and loyalty by creating an emotional bond with the consumers.

Brand Anthropomorphism is therein a central concept where the human characteristics, the emotions, and the behaviors are so attributed to brands to then create a stronger connection with the consumers. Consumers basic brand relationships for the humanization activity is then a strategic approach to build of the lasting and rewarding relationships with customers, which is crucial for brand success and loyalty. Delgado-Balleste (2020) have then attributed brand anthropomorphism as being quite attractive to consumers and is a continuing process for the brand. Guido, G., & Peluso, A. M. (2015) have found that brand anthropomorphism has empirical validity based and is multi dimensional.

Consumer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) is conceptually humanizing a brand is that is linked to the building stronger of CBBE, with pertinent strategies often then focusing on creating an efficient emotional connection with the consumer. Creation of differentiation for specific brands in in a crowded marketplace, and humanization helps a brand stand out from the competitors by creating a unique identity and then appealing to consumers' desire for authenticity.

Hsieh, M (2021) have assessed the self-construal-based drives which enhance the brand strategies for greater social connection. Brand humanization is therein a growing research area in marketing, and focusing on how brands adopt human traits, with personalities, or behaviors to foster deeper emotional connections with consumers and then influence brand perception and loyalty. Several literature reviews and empirical studies have hence examined how the brand anthropomorphism and humanization shape the consumer-brand relationships.

Anthropomorphism and Brand Loyalty

Extensive literature research and reviews show that brands that therein utilize humanization strategies, such as spoken characters or strong brand personalities, achieve heightened brand

loyalty and preference. These inherent strategies enable consumers to identify with the brand, integrating its image into their self-concept and fostering then with personal connections. Jones & Runyan (2013) and of Sutikno (2011) found that with repeated positive experiences and of identification with humanized brands lead to strong attachment and increased loyalty.

Consumer Engagement and Emotional Attachment

Anthropomorphized FMCG brands seemingly then encourage the consumers to interact and as if that they were engaging with the other people. Visual and verbal cues—such as those humanlike features or of emotional storytelling—trigger strong emotional responses, positively influencing engagement and prosocial behavior. For instance, cause-related marketing strategies are more effective when brand messages are humanized, resulting in deeper long-term customer attachment and enhanced corporate reputation (Guido & Peluso, 2015; Kessous & Chandon, 2015; Huang et al., 2020).

Dimensions of Brand Humanization

Contemporary theoretical models unpack brand humanization into several dimensions, including transmission of values, of emotional resonance, the interaction frequency, and narrative building. These elements collectively contribute to brand intimacy and authenticity, especially in new digital environments such as the metaverse, where interactive avatars and personalities further reinforce human-like brand experiences.

Brand humanization Model

Akner (1997) represents the brand as human and the human attributes like of Sincerity, and excitement, with competence, of sophistication and of ruggedness. This model therein helps connect these base human attributes with of the brand creating a deeper fostered emotional connection with consumers. This model facilitates marketers to then tailor communication and brand experiences ensuring it resonates with target consumers and giving them different experiences.

Research Problem

Brand humanization is the company's evolving strategy which most of the focussed marketers are associating with the brands for promoting consumer-based brand equity and purchase behaviour by increasing the emotional engagement, of trust and of connect with memories of the audiences. Including the strategies used like of mascots, and story-telling, of empathetic messaging. This research herein highlights the impact of brand humanization on then consumer-based equity and of purchase behaviour. Machine learning could then help in predicting the outcomes of humanization strategies through multimodal digital data.

Research Approach

Survey through questionnaire through google forms which visualizes the Indian FMCG

advertisements which have used brand humanization and of Anthropomorphism.

Statistical Tools: AMOS for SEM model, Python

Hypothesis:

1. Brand Humanization has a positive effect on Brand Trust.
2. Brand Engagement has a positive effect on Purchase Intention.
3. Brand Humanization improves Brand Engagement, which subsequently enhances Brand Trust, increasing Purchase Intention.

Brand Humanization: Marketing Campaigns

1. Human attribution : Amul

Brand humanization through usage of mascots is the use of a personified characteristics (human, animal, or object) to therein represent a brand's personality, of values, and voice, creating a more relatable and emotionally connected experience for consumers. Mascots subtly serve a symbolic, human-like spokesperson for them that enhances the brand recognition, its differentiation, and trust overall, and used across digital and other traditional platforms to build deeper connections.

Brand Anthropomorphism with mascots

Mascots create understated emotional connections by giving the brand a face, of personality, and of human-like characteristics, and mascots make it easier for consumers to form emotional bonds, which can then lead to stronger brand loyalty. They have enhance brands recognition as a then having a unique character created can be more memorable than just a logo alone, of cutting through the noise of a crowded marketplace and of increasing brand recall. It differentiates from competitors as a distinct mascot can help a brand thus stand out and establishing a unique identity in competitive landscapes. Communicating brand values happens as a specific mascot can embody and communicate a brand's personality and values in a more engaging way than just a simple tagline. Fostering of trust occurs as mascots can act as a trusted spokespersons, especially for companies that have the "behind-the-scenes" service or a complex product, making the brand then feel more genuine and approachable. Adapting to new created platforms as mascots are evolving beyond just traditional media to appear in digital spaces like social media stories, chatbots, and even as voices in then AI assistants, making them more interactive and current.



Amul after Women World cup championship

Amul was one of the initial pioneers for the brand humanization since previous decades. Landwehr, J. R. (2011) states a positive emotional appeal for a product Amul brand humanization is achieved through the iconic Amul Girl mascot, who acts as a very relatable, and witty commentator on current events, and emotional campaigns that connect the brand to Indian life, national identity, and community spirit. This strategy then positions brand Amul as a positive force therein, rather than of just a food product, by fostering emotional trust and of cultural relevance.

The Amul Girl mascot

As a voice for the nation the mascot of the Amul Girl is herein a humorous and relevant commentator on everything from the politics to the pop culture, making the brand an active participant in cultural conversations.

Moment marketing: Instead of relying on the traditional celebrity endorsements, Amul uses the girl to create timely, topical ads that are then highly memorable and cost-effective.

Emotional connection: Her consistent presence and the witty personality create a strong emotional connection with consumers, particularly making the brand more relatable to children and families.

Emotional and cultural campaigns

National identity: Campaigns like the "Amul Doodh Peeta Hai India" have just linked the brand to national health and strength, making it a symbol of the Indian life.

Community and self-reliance: The brand's origin as the cooperative movement is central to its story therein, positioning Amul as a strong testament to collective effort and empowerment for the dairy farmers.

Festivals and events: Amul then runs campaigns that then coincide with festivals, of national events, and the societal milestones, reinforcing its place in the fabric of everyday Indian life.

Hindustan Unilever with its Bru Gold coffee ran a very memorable, and half-page advertising campaign in TOI- Times of India that infused the newspaper with the aroma of coffee, surprising and allowing readers to "literally just wake up , open the paper and smell the coffee" through a unique scent-spreading innovation. This groundbreaking basic advertising tactic was a new approach then compared to many of the older "scratch-and-sniff" methods used.

Product and brand: The advertisement was for the Bru Gold coffee, a product of the company Hindustan Unilever. Instead of using of a typical scratch-and-sniff patch, the TOI's entire newspaper was found infused with the coffee-like aroma. Execution was done for the scent as a aroma product recall and was spread across the entire half-page ad, providing a more immersive experience for the reader.

Microencapsulation: This is the basis core technology which involves the trapping of aromatic oils in the microscopic plastic bubbles, which are with millions of bubbles on every single square inch of paper and the entire newspaper was thus infused with the fragrance of coffee. During the direct printing the micro-fragrance based capsules were applied then directly to the ad during the printing process.

Benefits for advertisers

Increased engagement is observed for the scented ads are more likely to grab a reader's attention and get them to interact with the ad compared to a standard print ad. There is enhanced recall with scent is a powerful memory trigger and then repeated exposure to a scent than can create a stronger, more lasting impression of a brand or product. Emotional connection with the aroma and scent can evoke the emotions and memories, leading to then stronger emotional connection between the consumer and the product.

3. Humanized the brand: Dove Real Beauty campaign

By the using real women instead of the professional models and for addressing of the social issues like for body image anxiety, Dove connected with consumers on with an emotional level, shifting from a simple personal care brand to then a purpose-driven one that fosters brand loyalty. This humanization was then achieved through authentic, and long-term commitment to its message, driving both for social impact and business success.



Challenging of industry norms and the campaign responded to research showing that the few women saw then themselves as beautiful, then directly confronting the beauty industry's often narrow and unrealistic portrayals. The use of the authentic representation and instead of the professional models, Dove featured the real women with the diverse body types, ages, and ethnicities, which then resonated deeply with consumers and created an emotional connection. The campaign then embraced for a social purpose that the campaign evolved beyond advertising to advocates for social change. The fostering of public dialogue on Dove moved the conversation about beauty and self-worth from the private matter to a public one, initiating a global dialogue through its campaigns and through online platforms. The maintenance of a long-term commitment for brand and the campaign's therein humanizing effect which wasn't factored as a one-off tactic, but a sustained effort is observed. Dove has then continued to then innovate by addressing issues like the impact of filters and of toxic beauty culture, solidifying its brand identity over time.

4. Humanization with User generated Content: Coca Cola

User-generated content or (UGC) is then any form of content, such as the text, images, and videos, that is then created and shared by users, customers, or fans rather than by the brand itself. This can include the reviews, social media posts, and the testimonials, and it serves as a powerful marketing tool by the providing authentic, trustworthy social proof that can influence purchase decisions.





2025: Maha Kumbh:

Digital and personalized experiences

Coca-Cola India humanizes its and then brand through the emotional, and then localized, and with personal campaigns that focus on the cultural relevance and community connection. This is then achieved through the initiatives like of localized packaging (e.g., Hindi language labels), using of user-generated content (UGC) and of storytelling to build the emotional ownership, and the creating mascots and of campaigns that reflect Indian festivals and relationships.

User-generated content (UGC) then by leveraging UGC, Coca-Cola created a sense of the “emotional ownership,” making the brand feel more personal as consumers share their own stories and moments of connection.

Digital platforms like Coca-Cola uses the digital platforms and of social media to amplify the reach of its campaigns and create authentic, human-driven content.

Personalization based initiatives like the Maha Kumbh 2025 and #MagicWaaliDiwali campaign allowed consumers to create therein personalized, AI-generated greeting cards, further strengthening the personal connection to the brand.

Emotional resonance for the brand consistently connects with the emotions by centering of the advertisements around themes of joy, sharing, and celebration.

Social media and online engagement

Coca-Cola India strategically encouraged visitors to share their experiences on the social media, with the activations designed to be visually appealing and shareable.

Specific campaigns likely the prompted users to post the photos and videos from "selfie zones" and other interactive installations at the event.

The brand promoted as a hashtag to unify the content, making it therein easy to track and engage with user-generated posts related to the event.

Interactive and photogenic experiences

Special edition packaging included for the event was Coca-Cola released special Maha Kumbh-themed packaging, which then served as a physical keepsake and encouraged users to take photos

of the bottles as souvenirs.

Immersive activations for the company created immersive experiences, including 3D displays and "selfie zones," specifically designed to be as the focal point for visitor photos and videos.

Iconic 100-door Cooler Wall was then this unique and massive installation was designed to be highly photogenic, for encouraging visitors to take photos of and with it.

Criticality of brand humanization

The need therein for brand humanization stems from the desire to build a stronger, more than authentic connections with customers by then giving a brand a relatable, personable, and authentic personality. This approach is then crucial for the increasing of trust, driving customer loyalty, and then differentiating a brand in a crowded market, as people increasingly prefer to do business with other than of people and crave genuine interactions beyond automated responses.

Brand humanization enhances then with increased trust and credibility and by showcasing the real people behind the brand, like of employees and of founders, a business becomes then more trustworthy and credible, as then people inherently trust people more than institutions.

Stronger customer loyalty is then when customers feel seen and heard, and the brand demonstrates empathy and of transparency, it fosters a then deeper connection that leads to increased loyalty and of repeat business.

Improved brand differentiation is in a market saturated with similar products, human traits like personality, of humor, and of a unique voice help a brand stand out and from competitors and make it more memorable.

Higher customer base engagement and of content with a personal or emotional touch is more likely to be shared, of being commented on, and then remembered, leading to greater based engagement with the brand.

Positive brand perception is then for humanizing a brand helps for then to create a more positive perception, often referred to as brand sentiment, which is then vital for long-term success and can then even lead to positive word-of-mouth.

Meeting customer expectations are in for a digital world, customers are then actively looking for authentic connections and when want to see a human side beyond just seen as a faceless business. Enhanced conversion rates are an empathetic and personalized approach can then lead to higher conversion rates because the customers feel a stronger connection and then a greater sense of comfort with the brand.

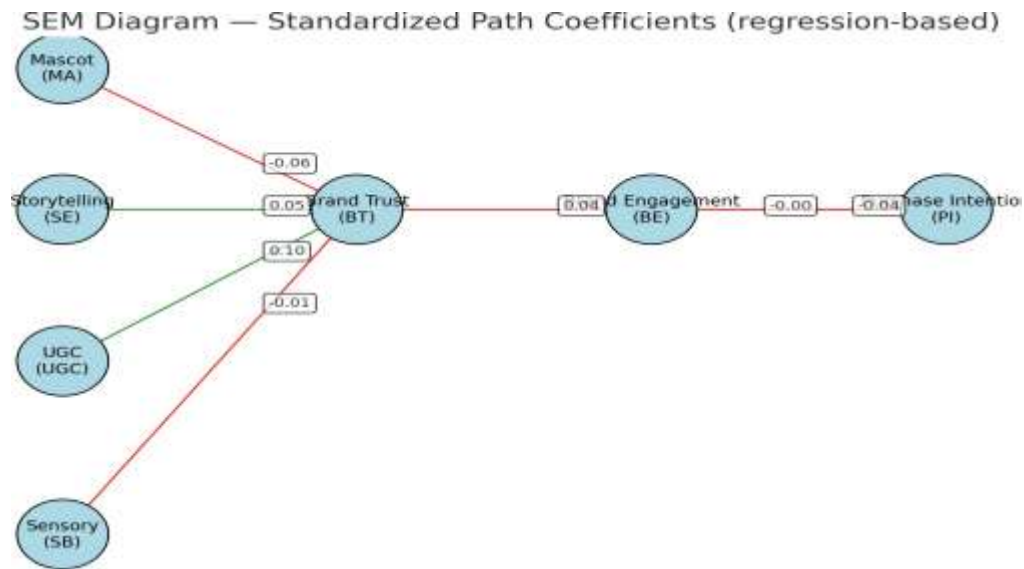
Analysis and Findings

Reliability

Construct	Cronbach_alpha	Composite_Reliability_CR	AVE	N_items
MA	-0.129	0.038	0.346	3
SE	-0.005	0.155	0.338	3
UGC	-0.125	0.071	0.36	3
SB	-0.15	0.012	0.355	3
BT	-0.271	0.015	0.559	2
BE	-0.005	0.466	0.5	2
PI	0.078	0.467	0.275	4

Summary of Factors: Brand Trust, Brand Engagement and Purchase Intentions

Model	R_squared	F_stat	df_model	df_resid
BT_model	0.0181	1.579	4	342
BE_model	0.0016	0.559	1	345
PI_model	0.0017	0.297	2	344



Standardized path coefficients (regression on standardized composites):

- MA → BT: **-0.062**
- SE → BT: **+0.050**
- UGC → BT: **+0.102** (*largest positive predictor of Brand Trust*)
- SB → BT: **-0.007**
- BT → BE: **+0.040**
- BT → PI: **-0.001**

- BE → PI: **-0.041**

R² (variance):

- Brand Trust model (MA, SE, UGC, SB → BT): **R² = 0.018** (1.8%)
- Brand Engagement model (BT → BE): **R² = 0.0016** (0.16%)
- Purchase Intention model (BT, BE → PI): **R² = 0.0017** (0.17%)

Findings

1. UGC is the strongest positive predictor of Brand Trust.

The largest standardized coefficient in the trust model is for User-Generated Content ($\beta = +0.102$), indicating that, among the humanization strategies measured, authentic user stories and UGC are the most effective at increasing perceived brand trust in this dataset. This aligns with theoretical expectations that UGC confers authenticity and social proof.

2. Storytelling shows a small positive effect on trust.

Storytelling & Empathy ($\beta = +0.050$) has a positive but modest association with Brand Trust. Emotional narratives contribute to trust-building, but in this sample their effect size is modest relative to UGC.

3. Mascot anthropomorphism and sensory branding show negligible or slightly negative associations with trust.

Interestingly, MA ($\beta = -0.062$) and SB ($\beta = -0.007$) do not positively predict Brand Trust in this dataset; MA shows a small negative coefficient. Possible explanations include: (a) the sample's greater responsiveness to authentic human stories over mascots; (b) measurement issues (insufficient variance or poorly worded items); or (c) contextual/cultural factors where mascots may not increase trust for certain categories.

4. Low explanatory power for engagement and purchase intention.

The models for Brand Engagement and Purchase Intention explain a very small portion of variance ($R^2 < 0.02$). The path from Brand Trust to Engagement ($\beta = +0.040$) is positive but very small. Engagement and Purchase Intention were not strongly determined by the measured trust and engagement composites in this dataset.

5. Practical implications.

- **Emphasize UGC:** For the practitioners, investing in the UGC campaigns (customer stories, reviews, participatory campaigns) is then likely to yield stronger gains in

perceived the trust than mascot-based or purely sensory campaigns.

- **Review measurement & sampling:** The low R^2 suggests that the other variables (price, product quality, prior than brand familiarity, of distribution, of promotional intensity, demographic moderators) are then likely important determinants of engagement and the purchase intention and should then be included in future models.
- **Context matters:** Mascots like the Amul Girl may then drive brand recognition and recall rather than trust per se; consider measuring separate constructs (recall, likability, humor appreciation) that mascots might affect.

Conclusion

The study demonstrates that the brand humanization positively then shapes consumer responses by fostering of the higher levels of trust and engagement. Although the direct impact on purchase intention is modest, the findings highlight that trust and engagement act as meaningful mediators that strengthen the overall influence of humanized brand communication. These results emphasize the importance of creating relatable, authentic, and emotionally resonant brand interactions to enhance consumer–brand relationships and encourage favorable behavioral outcomes.

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