Global Branding: A Literature Review

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Abstract: Purpose—Social media and digital technologies have carried out a lot of value additions for different stakeholders in both academics and industry. However, comprehensive literature reviews on different aspects of social media marketing are quite a few. Also, researchers working in this burgeoning area are eager to know the opinion of past researchers. The purpose of this study is to review scholarly articles on social media marketing and to highlight its current state, key research areas, and areas of further research. Design/methodology/approach—A systematic literature review of scholarly articles related to social media marketing has been done to collect, examine, and synthesize previous studies related to social media marketing. The articles were selected in three stages. Through the stages, articles were repeatedly checked and examined for their relevance with the main topic. Ultimately, 99 articles were utilized for this article. Findings—Through thorough analysis, all aspects of social media marketing were duly noted and the current emerging areas of research were classified into seven main areas. Originality/value—Literature review articles related to social media marketing are very limited and none of them had given a comprehensive view on different aspects of social media marketing. In such a regard, the value of this study lies in the critical and comprehensive review and systematization of social media marketing based scholarly articles.

Keywords: Global Branding, Culture, Consumers, Connectedness, Ethnocentrism, Advertising, Culture, Social Media, Technology. Paper type—Literature Review

1. INTRODUCTION

Literature on global branding is relatively a new phenomenon. Infact till 1980 the term “global brands” was relatively a new concept till 1980. It’s to be mentioned over here, that much before 1980 global or international brands had been existing for a long time in different forms(Dyer et al., 2004; Richardson, 2008). The basic step of global branding strategies of companies was to extend their domestic marketing strategies to international markets. With the expansion of the companies standardized branding gave birth to global branding. Further growth of MNCs gave birth to internationally unified brands. Still, as per experts, those brands were not fully global ones in the strictest sense of the term(Hudak, 1988; Pitta & Franzak, 2008). This is big factor due to which literary investigation on global brands did not take place till 1980s. With international restructuring a good number of companies scholars started expressing their interest with regard to global brands. A good number of companies starting from IBM, Microsoft, Intel, Xerox, HP, Ford Motors, General Motors, Suzuki started full- fledged globalization process in 1980s. With the publication of Levitt’s work (1983) academic research on global branding started. It gathered further momentum through a great work of Boddewyn, Soehl, & Picard (1986). These studies provided the momentum for further studies on global branding.

2. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

One of the factors considered for assessing success of a firm is how is it performing in international markets. Infact, MNCs give very close attention to international branding to build and maintain their competitive edge. For instance, FMCG giant Procter & Gamble used to operate with 10 brands in 1980s. Today, it has 100s of brands catering to different categories(Quelch & Hoff, 1986; Hudak, 1988; Aaker, 2003; Dyer, Dalzell, & Olegario, 2004). Companies like Ford Motors, General Motors, Suzuki, IBM, Microsoft, Intel, Xerox, HP, Unilever always take steps focusing towards the long terms global viability of their brands. Changes in the micro and macroeconomic landscapes are forcing companies towards going global or initiating steps in order to go global. Thus, international expansion of companies not only drives globalization but also leads to proliferation of several global brands (Douglas, Craig, & Nijssen, 2001). Though lesser in numbers than local brands, still strategic importance of global brands are much more than their local avatars. Understanding the importance of successful brand portfolio, for a long time MNCs have maintained successful brand portfolio of local, regional and global brands. All of the globally successful brands like Unilever, P&G, Nestle, Kraft, General Mills have adopted this strategy(Boze & Patton, 1995). As a result the competitive landscape of global brands is quite complex and multi-faceted. The increasing strategic importance of globalization and its operational standardization have given birth to global branding as the core focus of MNCs(cf. Yip, 2003) and to look at it from a holistic point of view (Mitchell, 2012; Edwards, 2011). Infact, efforts of MNCs in constantly enhancing their global branding portfolio, reducing the local ones have aroused scholarly interest towards global branding(Marketing, 2011; Kapferer, 2002). Thus scholars over the years have evaluated different aspects of global branding (Zhang & Khare, 2009; Dimofte, Johansson, & Bagozzi, 2010; O’zosomer, 2012) through scholarly reviews (Whitelock & Fastoso, 2007; O’zosomer & Altaras, 2008) of scholarly literature on global branding. Though good number of studies have been done on various aspects of global branding still there have been lesser studies on the gradual evolutionary development of knowledge base on global branding(Yadav, 2010). Therefore a comprehensive evaluation of global branding literature have become necessary. Just like other disciplines, knowledge...
development in the world of global branding have taken place gradually over time (Kuhn, 1996). Therefore the objective of this paper is to observe, evaluate and facilitate the further development of global branding literature. After this evaluation further areas of research on global branding have been also discussed over here.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out by following the footsteps of Alves, Fernandes, & Raposo, (2016), Petticrew & Roberts, (2006) and a Tranfield, Denyer, & Smart, (2003) Through the step by step approach of Sierra, Hyman, & Heiser, (2012), three stages were followed to carry out the study. First stage was undertaken through serach based on key words. At this stage around articles were selected. In the second stage more intensive research was carried out on the topic “Global Branding”. So, 41 articles were rejected in this phase. In the third and final stage 99 articles were utilized for this article.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

Xie et al. (2015) based on Chinese consumers proposed a conceptual model at an augmented level with the intention of explaining preference of consumers for international brands viz a viz emerging market brands. Their model added factors positive affect, high trust and brand-identity matrix for better effects. The final results showed reflections of previous studies that prestige and brand quality acts as important connections between perceived globalness and localness of a brand. Infant both of them can increase expressiveness of a brand’s identity. Thus, the results proved the mediation effects of perceived brand globalness and localness with behavioural intentions of consumers. Along with the greater influence of affect, trusts and brand prestige than perceived brand localness (PBG). Dimofte et al. (2008) found the contradictions of US consumers with regard to global brands, their features, standardization, availability and recognition in different markets. Infant according to them, US consumers associate globality of a brand with high quality and thus brand quality directly affects their perception. The initial results of their study showed that brand strength directly affects quality perception. Further studies showed that brand globality has an association with positive affect and this affect exists to customers who are for or against global brands. The final conclusion drawn by the authors was that global brands are driven less by cognition and more by affect. Guo & Hong (2018) in their paper intended to study how brands from emerging economies are perceived by consumers of developed countries. Based on identity theory and globalization they aimed to introspect consumer attitude with relation to emerging global brands. For this, the authors used both non-student surveys and laboratory experiments. The final results converged from four studies of the above experiments. The final results showed that with regard to identity, consumers from developed regions show more favourable attitude towards emerging economy brands. This effect exists when consumers perceive compatibility between global and local cultures and vice versa. According to Pecotich & Ward (2007) the simultaneous rise of globalization along with nationalism have given rise to combined interaction of global brands with other factors like the country of origin (COO) of services and products. Thus, in their paper the authors intended to study the decision making procedures of novices and experts with regard to quality, COO and global brand names. The final results extracted through quantitative studies, ANOVA and experimental design supported the direct relation between COO and products. The results found that highly knowledgeable consumers definitely associate COO with brand name and product quality. On the other hand, novices in both global and emerging economy brands use COO as a halo effects irrespective of physical quality and brand name. Due to the commitment of international marketing in taking an universal and technical approach towards solution for managerial problems researchers have been compelled to take an ethnocentric approach towards branding. This approach becomes more problematic with the development of global marketplaces. That’s why the authors, Cayla & Arnould (2008) argued marketing scholars will have to revise some key foundations and premises to meet the methodological and theoretical challenges of global branding. According to the authors, branding research also need to be grounded historically and contextually, polycentric orientated and perfectly tuned to the symbolic aspects of all types of brands. The paper concluded with conceptual ideas. The authors offer some conceptual foundations for a contextually sensitive and culturally relative world of branding. All throughout the world consumers are choosing and comparing between global and local brands. The authors Strizhakova & Coulter (2015) in their paper used the theories of global consumer culture and consumer choice with the objective of proposing a historical and socio-cultural aspect of global and local brands. Their framework focused on factors like global connectedness, ethnocentrism and local-global brand comparison. The study was conducted based on around 3000 consumer data and 7 country level data. The final results showed that purchase of local brands in comparison to global ones depend on consumer values mediated by identity perceptions and moderated by symbolism of product category and a country’s level of economic development. Based on three experiments, Leclerc et al. (1994) examined the assumption that mentioning a foreign brand in a place leads to cultural stereotyping and also leads to an influence product related attitude and perception. The authors worked on French brands for experimentation. The final results showed the direct relation of pronunciation of French brands and perceived hedonism, attitude towards brand and brand name, congruency with regard to country of origin and lastly consumer perception of products. Townsend et al. (2009) worked on the evolution of brand expansion in international markets. According to them, brand globalization takes an evolutionary path considering firm level and environmental factors. That’s why in their study the authors developed a framework considering the above factors, experiential learning and mimetic behaviour. The hypotheses were created based on the global automotive industry and time varying covariates. From an overall point of view the study concluded that by considering the above factors companies can create successful global brands and thus leading to productive expansions. Chalaby (2008) studied on international advertising especially how companies are advertising internationally to build up a global brand. At first,
European channels didn’t face much success due less interest of companies in carrying out international advertising. But afterwards their fortune improved with the start of pan European advertising campaigns. Thus with the advent of globalization and pan European advertisements, brands started accessing foreign shores. In another study by Torres et al. (2012), argued that corporate social responsibility towards different stakeholders play a great role building global brand equity. Also policies aimed towards satisfying community interests lead to emphasis on social responsibilities with other stakeholders also. Testing was carried out on data of 57 global brands from 10 countries during the period 2002-2008. Their findings also confirmed direct relation between CSR of companies and global brand equity. This also lead to significant value additions for customers. Ozsomer&Altaras(2008) build a model to study purchase likelihood and global brand attitude based on three theories namely – associative network memory,signalling and consumer culture. Through the integration of these theories and based on conceptual framework the authors attempted to explain attitude of consumers towards liking and purchasing global brands considering factors like global brand credibility, perceived brand globalness and authenticity, cultural capital, prestige,relative price. Lastly, the authors also introduced cosmopolitanism and self construct as the two moderators of the model. Matanda&Ewing(2012) studied on the organizational attendant processes within the purview of standardization-adaptation. Thus, the authors studied on the global branding strategies of Kimberly-Clark based on case study method through the collection of required information by interviewing senior and global marketing managers of the company. Global branding at KC takes place best sharing practices, global brand planning, assigning responsibilities and implementing effective brand strategies. The overall aim of global branding at KC is to keep and maintain brand cohesiveness. The study of Chabowski(2013) attempted to study the citations of scholarly articles in global branding literature(GBL) and evaluate the development of knowledge structure in this regard. Bibliometric analysis was carried out on 120 articles in this regard based on multi dimensional scaling to assess the different intellectual influences on global branding literature. Knowledge foundation on global branding literature was unearthed through co-citation analysis. For the study, the conceptual framework emphasized on five areas i.e. brand performance, brand concept-image, brand/country origin, brand positioning and international branding strategies. Based on the five knowledge areas agenda for future research was proposed for filling existing gaps and facilitating further studies. Palazzo et al.(2017) intended to study and assess the existing knowledgebase in relation toattitude of consumers towards global brands and to evaluate whether this attitude can be used for market segmentation. At the first stage their paper delved into different consumer perceptions on global brands.During the second stage, cross-country analysis was carried out to understand cultural and national aspects of consumers and related brand equity. At the third and final stage based on cluster and multiple correspondence analysis, fresh and distinct groups of consumers were identified to understand existing market trends. According to Douglas et al.(2001), brands play a great role in the establishment of a firm’s viability and international positioning. Building of a coherent brand architecture at a global level is one of the firm’s core international marketing strategies, as it helps in leveraging of stronger brands in other markets, assimilation of acquired brands and lastly integration of strategy across markets.Their study was carried out based on observations of authors regarding how international brand architecture is built up by different companies. Good numbers of studies have been conducted already on fake branding, intention of consumers in purchasing fake brands and their ability to differentiate between fake brands. That’s why the article of Sonmez et al.(2012) based on experience of 128 MNC managers in China attempted to study the relation between fake branding and consumers. They mainly emphasized on the views of managers regarding customer’s ability in understanding and differentiating between fake brands and how are they fighting against counterfeiting. The results showed nil impact of consumer discrimination on anti-counterfeiting. Rather it interacts with branding to decrease brand image. Rather branding based on reliability carries a positive influence. Yip(1997) in his paper discussed on the determinants and patterns of globalmarketing, through a contingency framework considering factors like parent company features, organizational factors, company strategy and position, globalization drivers of industry. These determinants and patterns were testedbased on a sample of 64 business of MNCs hailing from US, Europe and Japan. The study found that the MNCs from sample used more of global packaging and global branding in marketing mix and lesser of global uniformity. Also other factors other factors related to organization, company position, parent company characteristicsand nationality play an important role in global marketing. Due to globalization efforts of firms, restructuring has taken place in big manner in international brand portfolios resulting into the elimination of several local brands. The study of Schuiling&Kapferer (2004) attempted to understand the differences and competitive advantages of local brands in comparison to global brands. The study was conducted on 744 European companies taken from Brand Asset Valuator database of Young & Rubicam. These days most of the brands attempt to create a personal connection with customers. Several studies concluded that through “rituals” brands could achieve a sacred or legendary status.However, companies till now has limited knowledge on rituals are to be performed and their influence of consumers.Due to still competition from local brands, MNCs must know the different aspects of rituals. Based on theoretical understanding and conceptual framework Sharma et al.(2017) delved into the interrelation between brand awareness and rituals for MNCs. In their study they also proposed that brand recall is led by internal ritualization whereas external ritualization results into brand recognition. According to the authors, factors like customer personality, marketing budget, competition,culture play a big role in the relationship between firm and customers. That’s why various research propositions were introduced in the study by authors. The study concluded with the fact that during development of global branding firm managers must incorporate ritualized behaviour of customers. Though social media has become an integral part of today’s modern life but, very few studies have been carried out on social media strategies to be taken by an international brand to...
build closer relation with local customers. The study of Gao et al. (2018) attempted to study social media strategies of an international brand based on three features namely: rarity, inimitability, and value. Rarity and inimitability are the core focus areas of an international brand. On the other hand, value acts as the initial basis. Based on two theoretical frameworks, the data was collected through interview of brand managers and observations on social media pages of brands within culture based market positioning of an international brand in a local market. The study ended with conclusion that social media strategies and incentives must be carried out depending on the relationships shared between brand and users. Over the last decade the financial services market had witnessed a sea change due to great developments in technology and distribution channels leading to great developments in consumer attitude towards financial services industry. That's why Wright (2002) worked on how technology is working as an integral part of global branding efforts of financial services industry. According to him, the above factors have removed barriers like cost and geography related to the industry providing key benefits to customers. Thus studying of branding initiatives by financial services industry through technology has attained great importance. Altshuler & Tarnovskaya (2010) worked on the branding capabilities of technology bronglobals. In other words they studied branding strategies taken by young rapidly globalizing small and medium firms through scarce resources. According to them, branding strategies not only include steps taken by the firm but brand value components especially in technology B2B markets. Based on study on a Danish firm they found that brand vision of the founder superb technologies were the key enablers for building an international brand. Whereas in case of B2C brand focused marketing and technological leaderships are key catalysts. The study concluded with the fact that an international tech brand can be built up only through technological superiority without the requirement of any costly marketing budgets. Recent studies have delved into the significance of culture in the process of global marketing, branding and advertising. Most of these studies emphasized on culture to be considered in global branding activities of companies. Several models are used in this regard of which the Hofstede model is the widely used one. The article of Mooij & Hofstede (2010) concentrated on the different elements of this model relevant for marketing and advertising, and carried out review on studies which used the model for analysis of global branding and advertising by companies. Global brand consumers have become seekers of variety. They are always looking for something new to satisfy their growing need for satisfaction. In this scenario, global brands must take strategies to establish loyalty among customers as brand loyalty and consumer attachment are closely related. But three factors according to Tsal (2014), namely social exclusion, anxious uncertainty and absurdity sense act as threats for attachment between global consumers and their loyalty towards brands. This finding is applicable for global brand consumers dealing with products and services across luxury or non-luxury brands. One of the challenges faced by MNCs in today's world is how to keep perfect balance between local customization and global standardization. Through global branding corporates can derive benefits like consistency and scale economies. However, they also face issues at local levels like different legal conditions, competitive scenarios and customer opinions. Harish (2008) in his paper explored this global versus local dilemma faced by international brands by focusing on four brands namely BMW/Volkswagen (Audi), Pantene shampoo, Smirnoff and McDonald's. These brands were considered as they achieved their global status by taking the local route. On the other hand Lin et al. (2008) studied on the socio linguistic dimensions of global brands operating in China based on three variables as given below:

a. Phonetic versus Ideographic language of the brand.
b. Individualistic versus collectivist nature of the market culture.
c. Developed versus Developing nature of the markets.

Again, the paper of Ramsay (2003) discussed on global branding and it's future with relation to food manufacturing. This was done based on few questions raised in the paper. According to the author food brands brands in order to go global must change based on the evolving environment in food market.

Lastly, good number of studies were also conducted on myriad topics related to global branding like

b. Aaker & Joachimsthaler (1999) carried out their study on the four principles of global branding through stimulating of the sharing of insights and best practices across regions, supporting a common process of global brand planning, assigning managerial responsibilities for brand related synergies and execution of superb branding strategies.
c. Ozsomer et al. (2012) worked on creating a roadmap for global brand management.

5. CONCLUSION AND FURTHER STUDIES ON GLOBAL BRANDING

Global branding literature till now is being carried out from the point of view of customers. But it should focus more on the global branding strategies of companies. Also global branding must focus on two specific issues. First, integration of competition in global branding process. Second, yielding of sustainable advantages under competition. Time series analysis can help in a big manner in studying the global branding trends across markets and categories and providing key insights. Some issues which can be further studied in this regard are different competitor reaction functions of global brands in comparison to local brands, functions of sales response and insulation mechanism of global brands. Most studies on global branding concentrate on multinational corporations. But these days through proper utilization of technology within short time global brands can be created. That is possible even for startups. Examples in this regard can be taken of Google, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Flipkart, Alibaba. In the future further studies can be done on the global branding processes of successful startups. In today's world social media play a big role in branding process of corporates. Through social media consumers in a joint manner interact on brands give feedback using several platforms. Thus, the connection between social media and global branding can be studied further.
6. REFERENCE


