CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

The arena of brand personality study is rich with the studies ranging from theoretical conceptualization to empirical elucidation. Brand and consumer personality congruence involves interdisciplinary study, where the personality of both brands and their consumers are involved. Several researchers contributed to this field from different dimensions. The concept that brands can act as a tool of symbolic manifestation of its consumers’ personality, is studied by several researchers. Some studies are directed towards the formation of brand and consumer’s personality and the others contributed towards the categorization of the vast inventory of personality traits, under a few personality dimensions. Some studies also contributed to theoretical conceptualization and empirical evidence to the personality congruence between brands and their consumers. As a whole, personality congruence between brand and its consumer houses several opinions about its conceptualization, formation and in relation to the measurement of its impact.

2.1 Concept of Brand Personality

Brand Personality literature contains several definitions which could be studied through to get a clear picture about the concept of brand personality as stated by different researchers and marketing practitioners. Sentis and Markus, (1986), defined brand personality as the personality traits associated with brand. As personality traits are related to human nature, Jennifer Aaker (Aaker, 1997) defined brand personality as human characteristics associated with the brand. According to Plummer, Brand personality is introduced in marketing by practitioners from the advertising field. He also pointed out that brand personality is basically a metaphor, and it stems from the concept of human personality. Azoulay and Kapferer, (2003) defined brand personality as the set of human personality traits that are both relevant and applicable for brands. Similar to the Azoulay and Kapferer (2003) definition, Esomar defines brand personality as an expression of the relationship between the consumer and the brand and as an expression of the fundamental core values and characteristics of a brand, described and experienced as human personality traits. Fournier (1998) explained brand personality as a set of trait about the brands, which is constructed by the consumer and the inference of the consumers are based upon repeated observation of the behaviours of the brand. Brand personality, according to Kotler (1994), is a set of human
characteristics, which are attributed to a brand name. According to him, a brand personality is something to which the consumer can relate. Moreover, he also pointed out that an effective brand can increase its brand equity by having a consistent set of traits that a specific consumer segment enjoys. Sung and Tinkham, defined brand personality as a hypothetical construct developed by consumers and they claimed that it differs from human personality. They mentioned that individuals possess the human personality traits, which are composed of implicit (perceived) and actual (objective) components. Moreover, they have also stated that human personality traits are independent of the perceivers’ characterization. But in contrast, for brand personality, no objective personality traits exist for brands. All the personality traits of a brand are perceived. Business Dictionary defines brand personality as Human traits or characteristics associated with a specific brand name. According to them, brand personalities give consumers something with which they can relate. Moreover, brand personality effectively increase brand awareness and popularity. Kapferer (2008) defines brand identity as a brand's meaning as put forward by the firm. It is the way a company wants to present its brand to its target groups. Brand image, on the other hand, is the consumers' perception and interpretation of the brand's identity (De Pelsmacker, Geuens, & Van den Bergh, 2007). Academics typically conceptualize brand identity and image as multi-dimensional constructs of which brand personality is an important component. Keller (2008), for example, defines brand image as consisting of (1) user profiles, (2) purchase and usage situations, (3) personality and values, and (4) history, heritage and experiences. Managementstudyguide.com refers Brand personality as the way a brand speaks and behaves. It means assigning human personality traits/characteristics to a brand so as to achieve differentiation. When brand image or brand identity is expressed in terms of human traits, it is called brand personality.

So from the definitions and illustrations of brand personality as suggested by different researchers and market practitioners, it is evident that although brand personality is defined and illustrated in accordance to the directions of their research, their findings converge to provide some similar arguments. Every definition has pointed out that the genesis of brand personality lies in the need of explaining a brand using human personality traits. It can also be inferred from the definitions that the concept of brand personality is of high importance from the marketing point of view, because it helps a brand to get differentiated from other brands of that product category. Besides that, the definitions also mark that the importance of brand personality is also rooted inside the common practice of consumers which is revealed.
in their personality through usage of a brand. The definitions of brand personality points out certain intriguing issues also. The power of brand personality lies in its ability to manifest certain personality attributes. Researchers also claimed that the personality attributes of the brands are formed through a long time and enduring in nature. Thus formation of brand personality could be acknowledged as an important avenue of discussion.

2.2 Formation of Brand Personality

As brand personality is of such an importance in motivating consumers’ purchase decisions, marketing practitioners, who are always eager to achieve and maintain a differential position for their brands, are very much concerned about the formation of brand personality, so that they can design a suitable personality of their brands. Researchers in the arena of brand personality have identified several factors which forms brand personality. David Aaker (1996), tried to bring-out two major drivers, which create brand personality. These drivers are:

a. Product Related characteristics
b. Non-Product Related characteristics

He pointed out that four factors constitute Product Related characteristics, and they are:

i. Product Category
ii. Product Package
iii. Product Price
iv. Product Attributes

On the other hand, nine factors constitutes the Non-Product Related Characteristics, and they are:

i. Brand User imagery
ii. Brand Sponsorship
iii. Brand Symbol
iv. Brand Age
v. Ad Style
vi. Country of Origin of the Brand
vii. Company Image
viii. Image of the CEO and
ix. Brand Celebrity Endorser
All these nine factors, according to Aaker, create the Non-product related characteristics.

Besides Aaker, several other researchers also tried to list the factors, which create brand personality.

One of the popular theories related to the formation of brand personality is the Direct Association theory. According to McCracken (1989), who propounded the direct association theory of brand personality formation claimed that, brand personality is formed through direct association with the people associated with the brand. The personality of the people associated with the brand, get directly transferred to the brand. He also pointed out three direct association factors which create brand personality. These direct association factors are:

a. Image of the brand’s user  
b. Image of the company employees and  
c. Image of the celebrity endorsers.

According to McCracken, (1989) the images of these three groups, get directly transferred to the brands, to form the brand personality, and these three images are the direct association attributes. Moreover Levy (1959) claimed that demographic characteristics such as gender, age, class are also transferred directly to form the personality attributes of a brand.

On the other hand, Batra, Lehmann, and Singh, (1993) proposed the Indirect Association theory of brand personality formation. According to this theory, the personality traits associated with the brand, get indirectly transferred to the brand from different sources. They have identified three sources of indirect association, and the sources are:

a. Product related attributes  
b. Product-category association  
c. Brand name, symbol or logo, advertising style, price and distribution channel and so on.

While Product related attributes addresses the functional benefits offered by the basic product, Product category association deals with the relative position of the brand among the other competing brands and the impact of brand name, symbol or logo, advertising style, price and distribution channel and so on is related to the attractiveness and communication of the brand. According to Batra, Lehmann and Singh (1993), the basic product category of a brand, the relative position of a brand and the impact of attractiveness and communication, create the personality of a brand.
2.3 Dimensions of Brand Personality

Although the problem relating to the formation of brand personality is addressed by the Direct and Indirect Association attributes, another grey area associated with the categorization of brand personality traits, was left unanswered. All the personality traits used to define brands were taken from human personality inventory. But in case of human personality traits, a considerable amount of research in personality psychology has been devoted towards: conceptualization of human personality, identification of the personality dimensions, and exploration of the meaning of each dimension. But no such research has been conducted in consumer behavior on brand personality. Consequently, an understanding of the symbolic use of brands has been limited in the consumer behavior literature. J.L. Aaker was the pioneer researcher in this field to address this ambiguity. In her research, Aaker (1997) developed a theoretical framework of the brand personality construct by determining the number and nature of dimensions of brand personality. Moreover, she tried to measure the brand personality dimensions, and tried to create a reliable, valid, and generalizable brand personality measurement scale.

In her work, Aaker generated an initial item pool of 309 candidate adjectives by combining the existing Big Five personality inventories, the personality scales used by consumer researchers, and consumers’ opinions from free-association tasks between brands and related human characteristics. The 309 items were reduced to 114 based on consumers’ ratings regarding how descriptive the adjectives were in relation to brands. The 114 items were then put forward for consumer rating. Aaker included 37 brands for consumer rating and these brands were selected on the basis of two criteria. The first criterion was the inclusion of a variety of product categories. This criterion was to enable the scale to be applicable to various products. In order to meet this criterion, the FCB grid (Ratchford 1987) was used to ensure that both symbolic and utilitarian products were included. The second criterion was that the brands had to be well-known and salient so that the consumers were able to comment on the brands.

The factor analysis result retained forty-two adjectives and revealed a five dimension structure, namely, sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness. Aaker claimed that the dimensions of sincerity, excitement, and competence closely resembled the agreeableness, extraversion, and conscientiousness dimensions of the Big Five of human personality, but the structure of brand personality was somewhat different from that of human
personality. Even so, the brand personality scale has encouraged much research investigating different issues and applications of brand personality, such as cultural issues, impression formation, and brand personality effects.

2.3.1 Brand Personality across Cultures and Countries

In her seminal work on brand personality, Aaker (1997) referred to the limitation of cultural generalizability. She mentioned this limitation because she carried out the studies on American consumers only and thereby she questioned the stability of her described brand personality dimensions across cultures and product categories. In this context, Aaker et al. (2001) tested brand personality dimensions in the context of Japan’s and Spain’s culture. McCracken (1986) suggested that brands are consumption symbols which express a deeper meaning. This indicates that brands reflect beliefs, values and behavioral patterns of an individual. Also According to Schwartz & Bilsky (1990), Trompemaars & Hampden-Turner (1997), and Hofstede (2001), values and beliefs, being elements of culture, and they differ across countries. All of the above findings led to Aaker’s assumption that there may be a difference in brand personality dimensions across cultures. As a consequence, Aaker (1997) questioned the stability of brand personality dimensions across cultures and investigated whether brand personality dimensions convey universal meaning or culture specific meaning. In other words, she wished to find out whether brand personality dimensions are identical or different among countries. In their study, Aaker et al. (2001) selected two countries Japan and Spain. Japan represents the culture of East Asia and Spain denotes the Latin culture. Thus, brand personality dimensions were synthesized from the research in both cultures. Though all of the dimensions synthesized did not correspond to the brand personality dimensions identified in American context, four dimensions ‘Excitement’, ‘Competence’, ‘Sincerity’ and ‘Sophistication’ were common between Japan and the USA. The fifth American dimension ‘Ruggedness’ could not be confirmed for the culture of Japan. However, ‘Peacefulness’ in place of ‘Ruggedness’ could be confirmed as brand personality dimension specific to the culture of Japan. Furthermore, ‘Sincerity’, ‘Excitement’, and ‘Sophistication’ are the only dimensions which are shared both by USA and Spain. The fourth and fifth dimensions identified for Spain were ‘Peacefulness’ (similar to Japan) and ‘Passion’ respectively.

In addition to Aaker et al.’s (2001) research concerning international relevance of brand personality scale, Ferrandi et al. (2000) followed a similar approach and appraised Aaker’s (1997) brand personality scale in the context of France. Thereby, they synthesized a
five-dimensional-structure in which four dimensions of brand personality match with ‘Sincerity’, ‘Excitement’, ‘Sophistication’ and ‘Ruggedness’ dimensions of Aaker’s (1997) framework. The ‘Competence’ dimension did not correspond to the culture of France. Moreover, the brand personality scale developed for France comprised ‘Conviviality’ as a novel dimension. Similarly, Chu & Sung (2011) evaluated Aaker’s (1997) brand personality scale with Chinese perspective. Thereby, they identified six dimensions of Chinese brand personality viz. ‘Competence’, ‘Excitement’, and ‘Sophistication’ (consistent with Aaker’s brand personality scale), ‘Traditionalism’, ‘Joyfulness’, and Trendiness (specific to Chinese culture). Sung & Tinkham (2005) examined the brand personality structures in United States and Korea. The two countries shared six dimensions of brand personality while both cultures were found to have two factors unique to them. Sung & Tinkham (2005) identified ‘Ascendancy’ and ‘Passive Likeableness’ specific to Korean culture and ‘Androgyny’ and ‘White Collar’ for American culture. Six common factors are ‘Competence’, ‘Trendiness’, ‘Western, Ruggedness’, ‘Tradition’, and ‘Likeableness’. Rojas-Méndez et al. (2004) empirically measured the brand personality of Ford in Chile. Thereby, they developed a brand personality scale comprising four dimensions viz. ‘Excitement’, ‘Sincerity’, ‘Competence’, and ‘Sophistication’. Supphellen & Grønhaug (2003) examined Aaker’s dimensions of brand personality with Russian perspective. Thereby, they found that consumer perceptions of brand personality in Russia contain both similarities and differences with regard to America. Furthermore, consumer ethnocentrism moderates the brand personality dimensions’ effect on the attitude of western brands. In contrast to other researchers, Smit et al. (2003) developed a brand personality scale, completely different from Aaker’s scale, for the Netherlands. Although they followed a similar approach as of Aaker, they drew a somewhat dissimilar conclusion and identified a six-dimensional-structure. In the brand personality structure of Smit et al. (2003), ‘Excitement’, ‘Competence’, and ‘Ruggedness’ dimensions of brand personality correspond with framework of Aaker (1997) while three brand personality dimensions viz. ‘Gentle’, ‘Annoying’ and ‘Distinguishing’ were found to be Netherland-specific. In another study related to cross cultural applicability of Aaker’s brand personality dimensions, Austin et al. (2003) postulates that the use of aggregate data covering different categories of product can increase successful applicability of brand personality scale. The scale may, however, face major limitations in the examination of aggregate data covering a specific product category. Rojas-Méndez et al. (2013) studied the perceptions of Chinese consumers about the American brand personality. Thereby, they identified three main dimensions of US brand personality viz. ‘Amicableness’,
‘Resourcefulness’, and ‘Self-centeredness’. According to their study, the Chinese ascribe a polarized personality to the United States where two dimensions ‘Resourcefulness’ and ‘Amicableness’ apparently withstand ‘Self-centeredness’. Hieronimus (2003) conducted another significant validation study regarding brand personality whereby he reviewed Aaker’s brand personality structure with German perspective. For this purpose, Hieronimus (2003) merged dimensions of brand personality identified by Aaker (1997 with two additional dimensions of brand personality discovered by Aaker et al. (2003) while examining the brand personality dimensions with the perspective of Japan and Spain and finally conducted his research on the basis of a seven-dimensional scale. In order to better suit the German context, Hieronimus (2003) translated Aaker’s dimensions of brand personality by using the German translation as given by Esch (2009). Consequently, he concluded that none of the three brand personality structures identified in the context of USA, Japan and Spain can be applied to Germany which indicates the need to develop a new scale. In this perspective, Hieronimus deduced a two-dimensional brand personality scale applicable to German culture using exploratory factor analysis. Although his brand personality structure deviates from Aaker’s brand personality framework, yet it does not essentially contradict with Aaker’s dimensions of brand personality. In contrast, brand personality scale of Hieronimus consolidates Aaker’s framework. For example, ‘Sincerity’ and ‘Competence’ dimensions of Aaker’s framework are combined to form the ‘Trust and Security’ dimension of Hieronimus which reflects the rational part of a brand’s personality. On the contrary, ‘Temperament and Passion’ dimension represents the emotional facet of brand’s personality derived from the combination of ‘Excitement’ and ‘Passion’ dimensions of Aaker’s framework. Moreover, Hieronimus, for his identified dimensions of brand personality ascribes five extra facets, namely, successful, down-to-earth, honest, genuine and reliable for ‘Trust and Security’ and temperamental, imaginative, venturesome, passionate and cheerful for ‘Temperament and Passion’.

2.3.2 Brand Personality across Product Categories

Researchers have applied the brand personality scale of Aaker (1997) across different product categories. These studies, however, support the five-dimensional-structure given by Aaker. For example, Hayes (1999) examined Aaker’s dimensions of brand personality in connection with sunglasses and thereby they found that the factor analysis could not reproduce the five-dimensional-structure in general. In order to match the results of his
research, he consequently decreased the number of items from forty two to fourteen in his brand personality scale. Even though Hayes’ (1999) study failed to replicate the brand personality scale of Aaker yet he applied the basic structure of Aaker’s Framework thus could not fully validate Aaker’s brand personality scale but still followed its basic structure all over his study. Following a similar approach, Wysong (2000) tried to authenticate Aaker’s framework with regard to US-American beer brands but could not fully reproduce Aaker’s brand personality scale. Although Wysong (2000) conducted his study based on brand personality dimensions developed by Aaker (1997) yet he adjusted the scale in four cases so as to fit the research object. Wysong (2000) attributes this deviation in results to the choice of product and the specific product category. Similarly, Villegas et al. (2000) examined Aaker’s framework in the context of personal computer industry but their research could not replicate Aaker’s brand personality scale. However, they concluded that brand personality scale of Aaker[1] is quite useful to measure the personality of computer brands. Thus the studies conducted by Hayes (1999), Wysong (2000) and Villegas et al. (2000) produce similar results. Some other researchers also examined the validity of Aaker’s framework in other product categories. For example, Siguaw et al. (1999) conducted the validation study for Restaurant brands and Kim (2000) examined the Aaker’s scale for Apparel brands. Most of the studies albeit could not fully replicate the brand personality scale of Aaker (1997) yet they agree to the use of this framework in further studies of brand personality measurement with minor adjustments.

2.4 Criticism to Aaker’s Brand Personality Dimensions

However, Aaker's scale has recently been criticized on several grounds. A first criticism pertains to the loose definition of brand personality, which embraces several other characteristics (such as age, gender, etc.), besides personality (Azoulay & Kapferer, 2003; Bosnjak, Bochmann, & Hufschmidt, 2007). This induces a construct validity problem and leaves researchers and practitioners uncertain of what they have actually measured: the perceived brand personality (a sender aspect) or perceived user characteristics (receiver aspects). A second criticism concerns the non-generalizability of the factor structure for analyses at the respondent level (for a specific brand or within a specific product category) (Austin, Siguaw, & Mattila, 2003). Because Aaker (1997) conducted all analyses on data aggregated across respondents (for between-brand comparisons), she actually removed all within-brand variance, which led to factor analysis results that are exclusively based on between-brand variance. As a result, the framework does not seem to generalize to situations
in which analyses are required at the individual brand level and/or situations in which consumers are an element of differentiation. Because the latter is the topic of a majority of practitioners' research, this is a serious boundary condition.

Although Aaker’s work received criticism for several reasons, and also prone to several limitations, it is the pioneer research in relation to brand personality dimensions. Besides that, several other researchers and marketing practitioners have used this research framework to conduct their study to brand personality. The limitations related to the universality of the dimensions across different countries and cultures are natural, as the value system, lifestyle and economies of countries are different from each other. Moreover, Aaker’s brand personality dimensions provide a guidance to categorize the huge inventory of personality traits under five distinctive categories, which helps both the researchers and marketing practitioners in theoretical conceptualization and practical implementation of brand personality.

2.5 Theoretical Background of the formation of Consumer Personality

As the following research deals with the topic which includes the personality of the consumers, a relevant survey of literature on the personality of the consumers and its components, is a mandatory field. Theories related to the formation of consumer personality traits owe their origin to the psychology literature. Gordon Allport, (1937) identified and mentioned human personality as the dynamic organization within the individual. He has also stated that personality determines an individual’s unique adjustment to his environment. Stephen P. Robbins, Timothy A. Judge, and Seema Sanghi, (2011) claimed that human personality could be perceived as the “sum total” of the ways in which an individual reacts to and interacts with others. Moreover, they also claimed that most often we describe these reactions to different situations, in terms of measurable traits, a person exhibits. Generally, human personality traits are defined as “tendencies to show consistent patterns of thoughts, feelings and actions” (Costa Jr. P.T. and McCrae R.R. ) (Barone D.F., Hersen N. M. and Van Hasselt V.B. 1998), and are understood as psychological cues that determine human action and experiences.

Myers-Briggs Type Indicators (MBIT) and Big Five Model, are the two most widely used personality-assessment instrument in the world. Myers-Briggs Type indicators, is a hundred questions personality test that asks people how they usually feel or act in particular situations. On the basis of their answers, individuals are classified as Extraverted or
Introverted, Sensing or Intuitive, Thinking or Feeling, Judging or Perceiving. These terms could be defined as follows:

i. **Extraverted v/s Introverted**: Extraverted individuals are outgoing, sociable and assertive and Introverted are quiet and shy.

ii. **Sensing v/s Intuitive**: Sensing types are practical and prefer routine and order, and focus on details, and Intuitive rely on unconscious processes and look at the big picture.

iii. **Thinking v/s Feeling**: Thinking types use reasons and logic to handle problems, and Feeling types rely on personal value and emotions.

iv. **Judging v/s Perceiving**: Judging types want control and prefer their world to be ordered and structured, and Perceiving types are flexible and spontaneous.


According to G.A. Landrum, (1993), these classification together describe sixteen personality types, and all of them are having unique dimensions and corresponding behavior. He has also cited certain examples of the combinations of these personality traits. According to him, INTJ, which stands for Introvert, Intuitive, Thinking, and Judging, are observed to be people who are visionaries, and they usually have original minds and great drive for their own ideal and purposes. They are skeptical, critical, independent, determined, and often stubborn. ESTJ is noted as Extraverted, Sensing, Thinking, and Judging. According to him, people of this group are seen to be organizers, and they are realistic, logical, analytical, and decisive, and have a natural head for business and mechanics. They like to organize and run activities. Although Myers-Briggs type indicator provides and illustrates the personality of human beings, certain problem exists in relation to grouping of individuals, to a particular type. But the biggest problem with Myers-Briggs Type Indicators is that, it forces a person either one type or another, i.e. either introverted or extraverted (for example), and there is no in between, though people can be both introverted or extraverted to some degree. (D.J. Pittenger, 2005), (L. Bess and R.J. Harvey, 2002), (R.N. Capraro and M.M. Capraro, 2002).

Another important personality-assessment instrument is The Big Five Personality Model or the Big Five as popularly called. This instrument encompasses five basic dimensions that underlie all others and encompass most of the significant variation in human
personality. Big five personality model encompasses the different attributes of human personality under five dimensions. It states that the level of The big five factors are:

a. **Extraversion**: it captures ones comfort level with relationship.

b. **Agreeableness**: Refers to an individual’s personality to differ to others.

c. **Conscientiousness**: Is a measure of reliability.

d. **Emotional Stability**: Taps a person’s ability to withstand stress.

e. **Openness to Experience**: Addresses ones range of interests and fascination with novelty.


The Big Five Factors are manifested as follows:

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<th>The Big Five factors</th>
<th>High</th>
<th>Average</th>
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<td>Extraversion:</td>
<td>Extraverted, gregarious, outgoing, active, assertive, and high-spirited. Prefer to be around people most of the time.</td>
<td>Moderate in activity and enthusiasm. Enjoy the company of others but also value privacy.</td>
<td>Introverted, reserved, timid and serious. Prefer to be alone or with a few close friends.</td>
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<td>Agreeableness:</td>
<td>Compassionate, good-natured, and eager to cooperate and to avoid conflict. Are warm and trusting.</td>
<td>Generally warm, trusting, and agreeable, but can sometimes be stubborn, and competitive.</td>
<td>Hard-headed, skeptical, proud, competitive, cold, disagreeable and antagonistic.</td>
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<td>Conscientiousness:</td>
<td>Conscientious, well-organized, dependable, and persistent. Have high standards and always strive to achieve goals.</td>
<td>Dependable and moderately well organized. Generally have clear goals, but are able to set the work aside.</td>
<td>Easy-going, not very well-organized, and sometimes careless and unreliable. Prefer not to make plans.</td>
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<td>Emotional Stability:</td>
<td>Emotionally stable, tend to be calm, confident and secure.</td>
<td>Generally calm and able to deal with stress, but sometimes experience feeling of guilt, anger, or sadness.</td>
<td>Nervous, anxious, depressed, and insecure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Openness to Experience:</td>
<td>Creative, curious, and artistically sensitive. Have broad interests and are very imaginative.</td>
<td>Practical but willing to consider new ways of doing things. Seek a balance between the old and the new.</td>
<td>Down-to-earth, practical, and traditional: find comfort in the familiar</td>
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Researchers further explained different behavioral manifestation of these dimensions. They have provided examples which characterize and exemplify the personality types of human beings. According to M. Tamir and M.D. Robinson (2004), People, who score high on emotional stability, are happier than those who score low. People low on emotional stability is hyper-vigilant. Compared to introverts, according to R.J. Foti and M.A. Hauenstein, (2007), extraverts tend to be happier in their jobs and in their lives as a whole. They experience more positive emotions than do introverts, and they more freely express these feelings. Individuals who score high on openness to experience, according to J.A. LePine, J.A. Colquitt, and A. Erez, (2000), are more creative in science and in art than those who score low. Open people are more likely to be leaders, and they are more comfortable with ambiguity and change than people who scored low on this trait.

From the aforesaid studies, we can find out that researchers in field of human personality have directed their effort to categorize human beings under certain dimensions. The aim was to group human beings in such a way, so that by following their nature and observing their activities and reactions to a particular situation, they could be grouped under a particular category.

Like the experts in the field of human personality, marketers also tried to categorize and characterize the human beings by treating them as consumers. As market is a big place, designing products and / or services and marketing communications could always not be customized. To find out the requirement of the market, to produce and manage product, to create marketing communication, to deliver the product to target consumers and so on, marketers are in need to know their consumers. Marketers are required to know the nature of their consumers and their reactions to particular marketing stimuli and moreover they are required to create certain groups in accordance to some common characteristics, so that the target group could be identified and reached. For doing so, marketers tried to create some segments and their tools to group their consumers are demographic attributes, psychographic attributes, and behavioural attributes and so on. Researchers and marketing practitioners have not only segmented consumers in this regard, they have also observed their reactions to different marketing stimuli and different market driven phenomenon. Mittal and Kamakura, (2001) have found that the relationship between satisfaction and customer behavior (repurchase intention and retention) is moderated by demographic characteristics. According to Zeithaml, (1985) income is another important characteristics and it is assumed to have a strong impact on choice decisions. Recent study of Awad (2011) about the impact of age,
income, and education of consumers, has found these variables helpful in defining the consumer characteristics. According to Park (1986), perceptions of human personality traits are inferred on the basis of an individual's behaviour, physical characteristics, attitudes and beliefs, and demographic characteristics. Thus it is evident from the studies that demographic and psychographic traits have significant impact on creating the consumers’ personality.

2.6 Studies Directed towards the Relationship between Product Image and Brand Image and their congruity

Although much is said about the formation of brand and consumers’ personality, their dimensions and their importance, the purchase decision of a brand is said to be highly dependent on the congruence between the brand and consumers’ personality. Several researchers have explored the relation to self-image and product image. In literature, Levy (1959) was among the first to mention the relation between self-image and product image. He focused his research upon what image different products had. What he found is that, consumers buy not only for the utility of the product, but also for what it means, what it symbolizes for us. He presumed that consumers preferred goods with a perceived image that matched theirs. This indicates the seed to the thought related to the personality congruence. As this topic became more and more popular in the academic environment, more research shed light upon the matter. Birdwell (1968) was the first one to actually try and prove these arguments (up until this point academics only hypothesized). Having chosen to analyze car brands, he selected a sample of 100 car owners and divided them into four groups, corresponding to four car brands. Respondents were given a questionnaire containing 22 bipolar semantic differential scales (e.g. sophisticated-unsophisticated, exciting-dull etc.). He found there are significant differences in each ownership group’s perception of cars and that there is a high degree of congruity of how respondents perceive their cars and themselves. Other researchers (Grubb and Hupp, 1968) tried to replicate the study. They chose Volkswagen car owners and Pontiac car owners (they assumed the projected images for these two brands are significantly different) and asked them to rate themselves and the two different brands according to 16 bipolar scales. The findings were similar to that of Birdwell (1968): consumers of the two different brands of autos perceived themselves significantly different one from another and they had specific stereotype perceptions of the owners of each brand. Also, they perceived themselves to be like others who owned the same make car and quite different from owners of competing brands.
Researchers have tried to identify the trace of the element of congruence between brand and its consumers’ personality or their self. In this context, Sirgy (1981a, 1982a and 1982b) developed Self-image product-image congruity theory. According to him, product cues involving images usually activate self-schema involving the self-images. A specific value laden self-image belief interacts with a corresponding value laden product image perception, and this, according to him, creates four types of congruity:

a. Positive Self Congruity: Comparison between positive product image perception and a positive self-image belief.

b. Positive self-incongruity: Comparison between positive product image perception and a negative self-image belief.

c. Negative Self Congruity: Comparison between negative product image perception and a negative self-image belief.

d. Negative Self-Incongruity: Comparison between negative product image perception and a positive self-image belief.

Sirgy claimed that these different self-image product-image congruity states will influence purchase motivation differently. Positive Self Congruity will determine the strongest level of purchase motivation, followed by Positive self-incongruity, Negative Self-Congruity, Negative Self-Incongruity.

Plenty of empirical researches were also conducted by several researchers in the arena of brand and consumers’ image congruence and personality congruence. Dolich (1969) tested the relationship on a sample of 200 students and found that preferred brands of products were perceived to be more similar to self-concepts than least preferred product brands. Graeff’s research (1996) has very similar findings: the greater the degree of congruence between brand image and self-image, the more favorable were subjects’ brand evaluations. Kressmann et al. (2006) researched brand loyalty by asking 600 respondents to complete a questionnaire with respect to their car, by choosing from the 15 brand personality facets (honest, down to earth etc.) that were appropriate for them. He found a direct positive effect of self-congruence on brand loyalty. Li, Wang and Yang (2011) studied the effects of self-image congruence on purchase intention. Their sample was made of 477 respondents from four major cities in China. They found that the more congruent an individual’s self-image is with corporate-brand image, the higher the purchase intention tends to be. Usakli and Baloglu (2011) analyzed
tourist destinations instead of regular consumer products and used another research instrument. While most of the research in the 80’s employed semantic differential, this one uses a 5-point Likert scale with 29 items. They found that self-congruity has a positive impact on tourists’ behavioral intentions, intention to return and to recommend. Hosany and Martin (2012) also analyzed a service, not a consumption good, to see if the assumptions still hold. Their sample was mode of the passengers of a cruise. The research employed a 7-point scale to rate cruisers' self-concept, experiences, satisfaction, and intention to recommend. Their findings confirm the general accepted ideas: higher congruity between customers’ self-concept and perceived images of other tourists taking the same cruise contribute to overall favorable experiences. Choi and Rifen (2012) focused their attention on goods that were endorsed by celebrities. They analyzed how the consumers’ self-image related to that celebrity can influence the individual’s attitude. Respondents had to watch an ad where a celebrity endorsed a product. Then they completed a questionnaire about the advertisements. Findings suggest that congruence between consumer’s self-image and celebrity image plays an important role in endorsement process. More than that, the positive attitude towards the ad was higher when the celebrity’s image was more congruent to the product image.

Peng, Wong and Wan (2012) made an attempt to compare genuine and counterfeit products. They measured brand attitude, self-image and product’s image to test for possible differences. Results show that the greater the congruence level between brand image and self image, the more favorable were subjects’ product evaluations. Findings refer to both genuine and counterfeit products. Wu (2011) studied the effect of self-image congruence as a moderating variable between brand evaluation and brand crisis (e.g. Nike’s brand crisis). Wu found that self-image congruence is a moderating variable in brand crisis. Consumers with high self-image congruence tend to be less influenced by the negative information available, and still hold preference to that brand. As can be seen from literature review, there is a significant amount of evidence for self-image congruence’s impact on brand preference, brand attitude, brand evaluation and brand personality not only on consumer goods, but on services as well.

To measure the product image, some researchers used semantic differential type of methodology, (Munson and Spivey 1981; Ross 1971; Samli and Sirgy 1981; Sirgy and Danes 1982). Munson and Spivey (1981) tried to investigate the relation of social class to product and brand-user stereotyping. The data base included over 200 females evaluating 48 brands in 8 product categories. As hypothesized by the researchers, significant differences between
upper, middle and lower social classes were observed for both product and brand-user stereotypess. Samli and Sirgy (1981) tried to introduce a model which posits that store loyalty is primarily determined by store-image evaluation and shopping-complex loyalty. Store image-evaluation, in turn, is hypothesized to be determined, to a major extent, by self-image/store-image congruity, and shopping-complex loyalty by area loyalty and socioeconomic status. The model was tested using a path analytic procedure and the results were consistent with the model. A replication study was attempted and the results reinforced the validity of the proposed model.

Researchers tried to conceptualize and measure the extent to which a product is related to the consumers’ self-concepts (actual self-concept, ideal self-concept and so on) by using a product anchored Q-methodology (Blech and Landon, 1977; Greeno, 1973; Landon, 1974; Martin, 1973; Sommers, 1964).

Belch and Landon (1977) studied a wide range of fast-moving consumer products, including coffee, lotion, wine, etc. and found that self-congruence increased with experience. If the respondents owned the brands, there was more congruence between the images of themselves and of the brands. It was a clear linear relationship. Greeno et al. (1973) were among the first researchers to relate personality to self-identity. They used thirty-eight products to reflect actual self because they believed that products carried the symbolic meanings that were used to facilitate the performance of the self (p.64). For this reason, if consumers ranked a certain group of products highly, the high score was interpreted as showing how significant a role those products played in the consumers’ life. This conceptualization was established quite early, and was premature. Although self-identity theory supported the conceptualization, the discovery of a relationship between personality traits and the ranking of the products did not explain its occurrence. By using Q-Sort technique, Sommers (1964) established that individuals were generally successful in using products to describe two different social strata.

2.7 Studies directed to measure Brand and Consumer Personality Congruence

Several empirical researches were also directed towards measuring the brand personality and also to measure the congruence between human and brand personality. Although Evans (1959) unsuccessfully tried to classify Ford and Chevrolet owners by difference in personality variables, Tucker and Painter (1961) showed some correlation of personality variables with product usage. Congruence between self concept and brand of beer
was found by Grubb (1965). The process of developing a scale for measuring self, person and product constructs by using semantic differential scale, was designed by Malhotra (1981). Researchers readily used human personality traits’ inventory to explain the personality attributes of the brands. But the methodology of selecting the personality traits was not explained.

Although the field of brand personality study addresses all the important avenues, such as the symbolic use of brands, formation of brand personality, the importance of personality congruence and also categorizes the huge inventory of personality attributes into certain dimensions, certain avenues still require more clarifications and practical rigor. Research in the field of brand personality are done into parts and so far none of the research works have provided any theoretical and conceptual framework to brand and consumer’s personality congruence. The formation of brand personality is only addressed theoretically without any empirical validation. Moreover, the methods to measure the personality congruence are also vaguely designed. Several methods are proposed and used, but they are not retested to the brands of other product categories, to prove their validity and reliability.