Emotional Branding and Countering the Doppelganger Brand Image

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ABSTRACT:*Emotional branding a highly influential brand management paradigm and a key to marketing success is not without drawbacks. The paper is an attempt to highlight the various risks that this strategy can pose and the various ways that can be used to counter its ill effects. When overlooked, this strategy can lead to the emergence of doppelganger brand images which can prove to be harmful to the brands equity and value. Doppelganger brand image, defined as a family of disparaging images and meanings about a dominant brand undermines the very essence of emotional branding. It thus, damages the very foundation of the targeted brand by questioning its authenticity. The paper discusses the causes that lead to the generation of Doppler images and also the counter steps that the managers can incorporate to stop the further diminishing of their brands value. This however, also forms the contribution of this paper to the already existing literature related to Emotional Branding and doppelganger brand image..*
KEYWORDS: *emotional branding, anti- branding, doppelganger brand image (DBI)*

I. INTRODUCTION

Leading brands for long have studied the minds of their target consumers to establish a long lasting consumer brand relationships. The outcome of the relationship so studied is found to be based on the strong bonds of emotions. Thus, enabling the firms' to gain competitive advantage and accelerate growth through fostering strong emotional connections. Branding literature too focuses on the role of emotions as a leveraging force in the attachment of consumers to brands (Yoo and MacInnis, 2005). Developing an appealing and a distinctive brand image has become an important marketing strategy of the companies. Developing a strong brand image which further develops the brand equity helps in differentiating their products from the other products available in the markets. The problem being faced by the firms is not how to attract the consumers to their products but the bigger question is How to retain the consumers and achieve a relationship that is ever growing and lasting. To attain this, the brands must go beyond the face value and tap the deep rooted, hidden core emotional values of the consumers and win the marketplace and to accomplish this, various branding strategies are being applied and the latest in the long list of these strategies is "Emotional Branding". Emotional branding has emerged as a highly influential brand management paradigm (Gobe 2001; Zaltman 2003). According to Roberts (2004) emotional branding is a consumer centric, story driven and relational approach aimed at forging strong, deep rooted and long lasting bond between the consumer and the brand. It is often heralded as the strategy guaranteeing marketing success as it very effectively uses the consumer brand relationships for market differentiation and sustainable competitiveness (Atkin 2004; Gobe 2001; Lindstrom 2005; Roberts 2004). The strategy is applied by the managers to develop an emotional bond between the brand and the consumer that affects the retention of the consumers in the long run and result into the formation of brand communities and using of the brand personalities for heightening the emotional connect. The relevance of this strategy can be deliberated from the fact that the even brand management paradigms originally premised on cognitive theories of consumer knowledge formation now incorporate many concepts and recommendations that are characteristic of the emotional-branding paradigm (Keller 2003a). Emotional branding in a way results into the coming together of the consumers as they feel emotionally connected and it has often been witnessed that in the process of their purchase of products the consumers not only develop relationships with their brands, but they also form relationships with other persons who have similar brand preferences i.e. forming brand communities.

Digital tools such as internet, smart phones, and 3D have revolutionized the world of marketing by shifting the balance of power from the firms to the consumers. Through the democratisation of the digital tools such as internet, blogs, twitter etc. a lot is being done to make the consumer aware of their rights and powers. These tools are being used to develop one's own version of a brand that you find offensive and repulsive. Not only this, anti brand movements emphasizing several issues such as gender inequality, workplace inequality, environmentalism and so on proliferate quickly because of internet (Hollenbeck and Zinkhan, 2006). Currently, there is a multitude of brand protest sites (for example, antibrand.net) advocating anticapitalism, environmental

protection or social responsibility (Mortimer, 2002). A seldom discussed risk of emotional branding is exposing of the brands and the firms to a particular type of cultural backlash, known as "doppelganger brand image". A doppelganger brand image (DBI) is a collection of disparaging images and stories about a brand which are circulated in popular culture by a fairly loosely organized network of anti-brand activists, bloggers and opinion leaders. This network is often formed by the consumers who form online communities not only in the support of their favourite companies' brands but also as a backlash to the growing corporate despotism and high handedness on their part. Many global brands are being opposed on grounds of corporate malpractices related to environment and human rights issues as Corporate Social Responsibility is being discussed loudly and clearly.

The doppelganger brand image works in contrast to the emotional branding strategies. It in essence opposes everything that emotional branding stands for thus, culturally competing with the brands that resonates emotional meanings that the firm attempts to instil through its marketing activities. This online opposition towards the companies has lead to the deliberate development of a negative or a "Doppler" brand image. This Doppler image is harmful and can prove drastic to the overall image of the company and may lead to its downfall if not timely checked and countered. Keeping in view the harmful and serious effects of the doppelganger brand image the following paper attempts to study the (1) various factors responsible for the development of the doppelganger image (2) enumerates the causes of the doppelganger image (3) and determine the various ways of countering the doppelganger effect.

In the pursuance of these objectives, we begin with the brief review of the tenets of emotional branding and the objectives behind developing of such an emotional bond between the consumer and the brand. Next we examine the pivotal role played by the internet and the anti branding sites in the framing and spreading of such Doppler images followed by the causes and the factors responsible for the development of the doppelganger brand images. In the end we discuss the managerial implications and the various ways of timely countering this Doppler threat.

II.   TENETS OF EMOTIONAL BRANDING AND DBI

Emotional branding refers to the attachment of a specific emotion to a brand and is fast becoming an important advertising strategy (Roberts, 2004; Rossiter and Bellman, 2005). The brands so developed using this strategy appeal directly to the consumers' ego, emotional state, needs and aspirations. It is a concept which keeps consumer as the pivot and through the use of emotions tries to bind the consumers with the products. Having emotional ties with the product becomes important because our economy in the recent times have gradually shifted from a production, need based and objective economy to a consumption, wants based and subjective economy. This can be ascertained from the fact that the consumers today make purchases based on how they feel about a company and its offers thus bringing the emotions into the picture. The ties that are resultantly developed are generally more profound and go beyond the convenience of price. Thus stating that the bonding may not always be rational in nature as Christie Barakat (2014), assistant professor of media and psychology in Florence, Italy, says that while traditionally the consumer decision-making models which are largely cognitive and sequential in nature are based on the theory of rational choices whereas, the emotional branding is irrational."

No matter how irrational the emotional bond between the consumer and the product may be there exist a strong and devoted relationship between the two that gives the brand a cutting edge over and above its competitors. Steve Goldner (2012), digital and social marketing executive consultant, too states that "emotional branding goes beyond loyalty." Antonio Damasio (1994), a renowned neuroscientist too based on his ground breaking discovery came to a conclusion that decision making is not logical but emotional, thus making emotion a necessary ingredient to all decisions. Therefore, the objectives behind developing such an emotional bond is-

EMOTIONAL BRANDING	OBJECTIVES
	TO CARVE OUT A NICHE
	TO DEVELOP COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE
	TO DEVELOP BRAND LOYALTY AND TRUST

FIGURE 1: Objectives of Emotional Branding.

An example of such a profound emotional bonding can be seen among the consumers of "Apple" mobile users and "Harley Davidson" bikers, who are loyal to their brand and have such a deep emotional attachment with their products that they carry their products like prized possessions.

Developing an emotional bond has several advantages and is being widely used in marketing and in associating with the people. Consumers usually buy for emotional reasons and then they try to legitimize their purchase by looking into its functional benefits. Emotional benefits acts as a source of adding richness and depth to the brand and heightens the experience of owning and using the brand (Aaker, 1991). Researches have shown that consumers buy a brand exclusively not only for the fulfilment of its functional needs but also for the brands' capacity to mirror their values and lifestyle needs (Czellar and Palazzo, 2004). The word authentic is a key in

forming any emotional branding strategy because Consumers are looking for authentic corporate values (Lafferty and Goldsmith, 1998) and not merely lip sympathies. The companies should keep their stories as real and genuine as possible. It should be remembered that emotional based strategies are long term based and they are the reason behind the formation of the overall image of the company. Authentic corporations as described by Champy (2009, p12) are the ones that remain true to themselves and whose values are reflected in their products, services, and actions. These companies are what they say they are and they seldom hide behind the created veil of ingenuity.

III.   ANTI BRANDING AND DBI-

Anti branding and anti- branding sites in a way act as a key and an aid in the development and creation of the Doppler images. These images are generally developed and generated from online sites and thus finds its way into the world of internet. Anti-branding movement is a globally charged movement against brands formed by large number of society members with the sole purpose of garnering support and demonstrate disapproval and dissatisfaction against the corporate actions (Holt, 2002, pp.70). Such activities are generally carried on online sites. Anti-brand web sites are specifically created online spaces that focus negative attention on a specific targeted brand (Bailey, 2004 and Harrison-Walker, 2001). Such sites use visual expression, memorable domain names, and critical language to create a negative online image for the targeted brand. Doppelganger brand images can also be found on the websites of such anti-brand activists. Spoof ads are developed and then as well are easily spread through the Internet and its vehicles (e.g., YouTube, Facebook, Daily Motion). Anti-branding covers different aspects of negativity. The activists may use various ways to spread this anti brand sentiments. Anti-consumption i.e. not buying or consuming the brand, word of hate against the brand, consumer rebellion, boycotts of the brand, and counter-cultural movements are just few areas which are present as a common purpose in the minds of activists (Cherrier, 2009). Increased awareness about the company social responsibility, environmental hazards and health concern may be cited as a few reasons for the increase in the anti- branding activities. This is the reason that Tobacco, alcohol, computer and clothing are some of the most spoofed up brands worldwide.

All this negative messages on social media has a direct or indirect influence on the consumers' attitude towards the brand (Kucuk, 2008). Such WOM can lead to the confusion between loyal customers. This negative WOM coupled with confusion in worst scenario can effect companies' market share as well as can produce necessity of direct competition (Kay, 2006, pp.745).

Anti-brand spoof ads act as hijack actions on official brand ads, mixing part of those ads' official materials (e.g., logo, slogan, picture, style) with new ones in an ironical or sarcastic way in order to make the original ad look ridiculous or distasteful. These ads can variedly range from inciting harmless fun or pun to malicious and spiteful jibes and jokes directed at some of the world's best known brands (Hollenbeck and Zinkhan, 2006; Bal et al., 2009). Apple Inc, Starbucks coffee, etc. are some of the brands that have been the victim of such online backlash. Negative parodies are becoming increasingly common on line (Bal et al., 2009;Krishnamurthy and Kucuk, 2009), especially for tobacco brands, which appear among the most spoofed and humoured brands worldwide along with alcohol, computer and clothing brands (Harvest Communications LLC, 2002).

IV.   DOPPELGANGER BRAND IMAGE (DBI)-

Though, emotional branding has enabled the marketers to develop a community of its loyal consumers, and in developing a favourable brand image, it has also resulted in the unleashing of a very dangerous phenomenon namely "Doppelganger brand image". The image so developed is the result of the various anti-brand activities, and brand spoofs designed by social activists or other dissatisfied consumers and circulated over the internet. These advertisements consists of making sarcastic jibes or malicious comments directed at some of the world's best known brands (Hollenbeck and Zinkhan, 2006; Bal et al., 2009). For example, Nike, a famous shoe brand has been criticised because of its unethical practices and its human rights violation such as indulging in child labour. Not only this, Brands may also be disliked because of their overt commercialism (Kozinets, 2002).

Thompson, Rindfleisch & Arsel (2006) state that the brand that manifests itself as an emotional brand tend to be more prone to parody and negative jibes. The doppelganger brand image is essentially a family of defamatory images and stories about a brand circulated locally by a network of consumers, anti-brand activists, bloggers etc. (Thompson, Rindfleisch, & Arsel 2006, p. 50). With the passage of time these criticisms join together and form a larger threat as they tend to influence the consumers beliefs and behavior, thus, wiping the brand image of its foundations. The "doppelganger brand image" is basically the effect of exposing the brand image to a cultural backlash and consumer's wrath.

The impact of Doppler brand image is such that it competes with the actual brand image both on the cultural and social front and goes out against the very basic meaning that the brand normally stands for. It

clouds over the actual meaning of the brand and gets the consumer confused. This tarnishes and hampers the long built image of the brand and poses a serious threat to its future.

It has been rightly observed that the brand names get spoofed not only by the online jibes and cultural backlashes but at times get destroyed or damaged by certain unrelated things that share their names with. A book store and a gift shop in Denver by the name ISIS got vandalized as it shared its name with a terrorist group ISIS.

Another brand name victim was the ISIS chocolate company from Belgium, which had inadvertently changed their name from Italo Suisse to ISIS in 2013. They apparently chose a established name from some of their popular products as the new company brand, only to horrifyingly see the name become plagued by the newly emerging terrorist group's acronym. It the wake of such happenings it is suggested that the brand should rename it and distance itself from it.

IV.1 AN ANALYSIS OF THE VARIOUS EXAMPLES OF DOPPELGANGER BRAND IMAGES

The terrain of DBI is not restricted to the products and services alone but goes beyond. Social media platform is widely being used to post disruptive comments, messages and pictures that not only denounce but also disrupt the significant meanings that the brand resonates and has generated over the time. Some of the world famous Ad campaigns of various brands have witnessed the brunt of social media wrath and trolling.

- The "Joe Chemo" campaign criticized the product message of Camel cigarettes, and emphasized the harmful effects of smoking, by depicting the company's camel mascot as severely sick thus wishing that he'd never smoked cigarettes. The rise in the awareness among the general public about the health hazards of smoking and an increased social responsibility encouraged this.
- In 2015, a designer reinterpreted the Pepsi logo to represent a fat man. The intention was to accentuate the direct relation between consumption of sweetened soft drinks and obesity. There are several online efforts being made by the social enthusiasts to make the public aware about the ill effects of junk foods and aerated drinks and how these destroy the physical health of a person.
- Witty and Humorous images were developed and distributed by customers of "Maggi" instant noodles and later mainstream media ruthlessly criticising it when the product was banned in India.
- After the launch of General Motors Hummer H2 in the mid-2000s, a creative viral Internet campaign called "FUH2" began. This campaign criticized not only the brand, but also its owners who were portrayed as savages who cared more about style than the environment.
- Cadbury 5 Star, chocolate bar brand from Cadbury, triggered a wave of anger when it launched its 'Inki condition serious hai' campaign with a TVC. The ad portrayed the bar as a cure for seriousness. This theme didn't go well with the viewer's as they were angered at the brand showing mothers in a bad light thus resulting into the filing of complaints with ad watchdog Advertising Standards Council of India ASCI. Another shining example of a brand being compelled to take down its ad, following consumer outrage.
- During Donald Trump's 2016 presidential campaign, comedian John Oliver satirised Trump's "Make America Great Again" slogan with the parody "Make Donald Drumpf Again", thus referring to Trump's ancestral surname. This shows that DBI has also made its way into the politics by way of humouring the politicians.

- A similar case was experienced during the Indian elections where Congress candidate Rahul Gandhi was targeted with a doppelganger brand image of "Novice Prince" which when used in a derogatory sense, it could mean "naive" or "dumb" and it also refers to duffer as quoted by First Post Newspaper.
- Nike's logo and slogan ("Just do it") appear in several images either altered or adjusted, often highlighting the company's use of sweat shop labour. The company has been time and again rebuked and criticized for its alleged practice of child labour.
- Though the phenomenal rise of the star bucks café can be attributed to the emotional branding and successful brand positioning, a web search reveals a large number of anti star bucks websites that criticizes it extensively for its business practices. The anti star bucks activists use humour and satire to assail this brand for many perceived misdeeds, such as for crushing local competition, degrading environment, increasing consumerism and exploiting the third world workers. Its iconic mermaid logo is disparaged and altered to show resentment.

FIGURE 2: DBI IMAGES OF VARIOUS BRANDS

A parody of intel inside logo   A seriously ill camel mascot of a cigarette brand
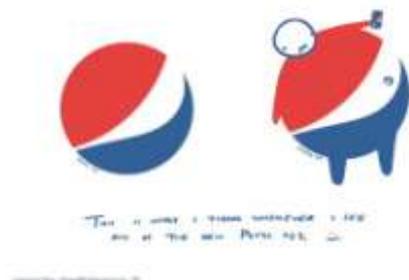
Pepsi's "fat man"   showing the ill effects of junk food

IV.2 CAUSES FOR DBI
The analysis of the various examples of doppelganger brand image leads to the generation of following reasons that can be identified as a **cause** for doppelganger brand image:

- Clearly if the company indulges into unethical practices and human rights violations it exposes itself to the negative comments and jibes of the various online consumers' communities thus, harming its brands equity and value. In the end, this spoofed up image leads to brand avoidance (Thompson et al., 2006), change in consumers' attitudes and behaviours and a drop in brand value (Krishnamurthy & Kucuk, 2009).

- If there exist an Incompatibility between company's brand image and the image that the consumer exhibits the result may be the Doppler images. If the authenticity lacks in the companies campaign and is not found to be real in its core values, it may lead to development of the doppelganger brand image. Thus, when the emotional branding story authenticity is doubted upon, and the identity value that the brand offers to consumers is also greatly reduced (Holt, 2002).
- Competition between the rival companies is also seen as a cause of the "Doppler effect" as companies may recruit others or may indulge itself in value destruction of the competing company.
- Rise of a proactive class of consumers that act as a watchdog over the companies thus ensuring that the companies follow ethical and moral practices. Nike, Starbucks and Coca Cola are some examples of corporate brands that have experienced a DBI. Through negative User Generated Content, the loss of control is so substantial that consumers may damage the brand's value (Christodoulides, 2009).
- Ideological concerns surrounding a person may also inspire anti brand activists to spread parodies and trolls thus highlighting the candidates' deficits in terms of political acumen and experience. There is often an attitude of "go with the herd" when it comes to making political decisions. Thus, doppelganger images are easily developed and proliferated.

IV.3 FACTORS OF DBI

A careful analysis of the literature of emotional branding and the doppelganger brand image leads to the enumeration of the following **factors** of doppelganger brand image:

1. Relationship between age of the brand and emotional branding:

      Brand's longevity to a great extent is influenced by the consumer age of association with the brand. It is observed that older the brand is and the more distinguished it is, greater would be the threat of developing its DBI. The presence of a doppelganger is a testament to how strong your brand has become as stated by Susan Fournier (1998)

2. Brands should stay relevant through time:

      A brand must stay relevant and adapt itself to the changing consumer trends or it will lose its importance and finally perish. The relevance principle instructs managers to update continuously their brand's user/usage imagery, brand personalities, types of relationships, and promotional themes to keep a brand image fresh, energized, and contemporary (Aaker 2004; Keller 2003a). By applying the emotional branding strategy and revising it time and again the marketer must ensure and maintain its significance at all stages so as to survive the damages of the "doppelganger brand image".

3. Safeguarding premium positioning:

      The marketers need to ensure that "doppelganger brand image" is not able to hamper the premium image of the brand as it could lead to serious brand destruction. It is not easy to maintain premium position for long terms. Therefore, innovative ways should be found out to maintain a relationship between price premium and longevity. Starbucks coffee shop is a very good example in this regard. Starbuck aims at doing two basic things for its emotional brand building strategy, one is it aims at providing its customers an authentic coffee shop experience and second, to develop a connection based on warmth between the customer and the coffee shop owners. However due to the "doppelganger brand image" effect being easily available as a substitute for local coffee shop owners it is working in the favor of the competitors as they simulate a similar kind of an environment, and being a part of the local culture are able to blend in more easily thus, harming the Starbucks strategy of emotional branding (Thompson, Rindfleisch & Arsel (2006).

The various causes and factors of the doppelganger brand image can be summarized and tabulated as below:
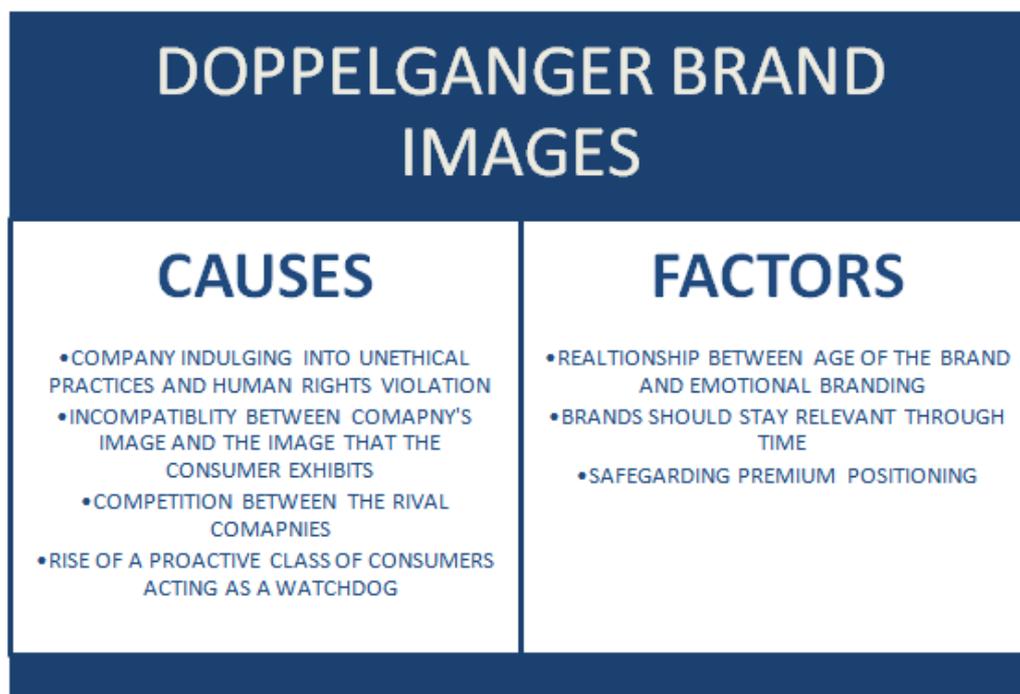
FIGURE 3: Causes and Factors of the Doppelganger Brand Image

IV.4. COUNTERING THE DBI EFFECTS-

1. A continuous monitoring of the online sites that supposedly indulge in spreading negative views and news of a dominant brand can help in mitigating the harmful effects of DBI by timely intervention. Brand critics need to be identified and tracked down and qualitative techniques should be employed to find out the reasons behind such regressive actions.

2. Brand managers should monitor and keep track of the internet sites on which their brands appear to gauge the context in which their brands are used. Chat rooms, blogs, twitter etc. be closely monitored and technology should also be wisely administered.

3. Netnography Techniques (Kozinets, 2002) can be used to see when the emotional branding techniques start to lose its relevance and begin to inspire parodies, jibes and other critical comments.

4. By keeping the brand update and relevant throughout the time and developing and testing a new emotional branding story is another way by which the DBI effect can be countered. In other words, emotional branding strategy should be updated timely to ensure that it remains relevant throughout the time. Authenticity is valued by the consumer, therefore, the story and tagline surrounding their brand or projecting their brand should be true and valid to the core beliefs and not merely lame words.

5. One of the ways of countering such images remains by not fighting or ignoring these DB Images but by using and embracing these parodies and jibes to one's own advantage. As per, Craig Thompson (2006) by monitoring these studies one can determine what aspect of the brand image resonates with the people and where the problems lies and then taking corrective actions. The point of origin of these images should be effectively used as "the point of correction".

From the overall discussion about the three key elements namely; Emotional branding, Anti branding and doppelganger brand images we can summarize their relationship and impact on one another with the help of the following generated diagram:
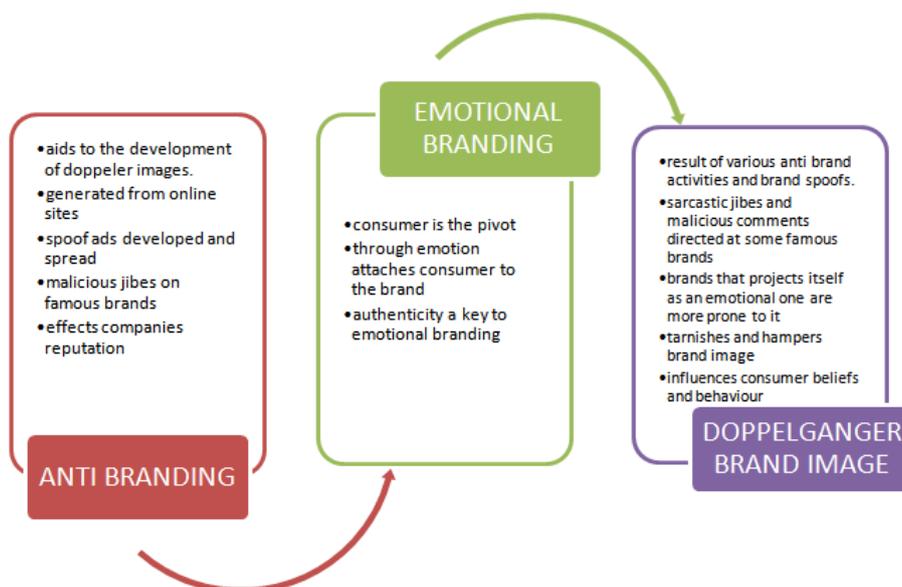
FIGURE 4: Demonstrates that Anti branding activities against the emotionally manifested brand leads to the generation of the doppelganger brand images.

V. MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS-

Emotional branding comes across as a strategy that is very different and a class apart from the orthodox branding strategies. Its literature comprises of the various ways by which the managers are rewarded with loyal customers, heightened sales, and a competitive advantage over its close rivals. These advantages however, tends to disguise the potential risks that are associated with the strategy. A mere application of this strategy does not ensure an astounding success. History has time and again shown that various big dominant brands has fallen from heights of success and have found it difficult to regain its past glory. Disney, McDonald's, AT&T, Levi's, Kodak, and Coca-Cola are just a few examples of market-driven brands that suddenly fell from the paragons of marketing excellence and lost ground to the competitors (Haig 2003; Holt 2002; Stewart 2002). However, despite all these dangers and drawbacks the concept should not be altogether seen as taboo, but as a warning of the probable danger lurking to strike. The managers can take cognizance from the concept and use it fruitfully for their benefit by timely updating their strategies regarding the marketing of their products and livening up of their brands in the hearts of their consumers thus maintaining the essence of "emotional branding". The following strategies can be followed by the managers to timely counter the forming of the doppelganger brand images :

1. **AUTHENTICITY SHOULD BE MAINTAINED**: Storytelling has become an important aspect of advertising today. More and more brands are comprehending the power of stories to make their presence felt and to transform their identities. Iconic brands such as Apple, Coca Cola, and Disney have for long realised the importance of storytelling to build a connection with their audience. Story telling helps to develop Trust with the consumers. However, it becomes important that the managers should keep their emotional branding story updated and revitalised through the times to ensure that their story remains authentic and valid. The stories so developed should not be done to fool the consumers. Wrong or fabricated stories don't go well with the consumers. On the contrary it acts as a target for the so called brand activists to go heart and soul after the brand and thus, lead to the development of the doppelganger images. The story generated should be fit and in tandem with the prevailing cultural conditions so as to avoid any cultural jamming and cultural backlash. The managers should understand that the story development should not only be simple but should also portray the reason of its existence. The story should be such that it connects with your customers. One such story that fully utilises this is the Dabur Vatika Brave and Beautiful advertisement. The ad is a tribute to the women fighting with cancer. The managers being realistic should realise that the stories should be such that the consumers should buy a part of the story and not just the product. The story shouldn't create a trap but act as a catalyst in developing a bond with the consumer.

2. **CLOSE MONITORING OF THE SOURCES**: The same medium that facilitates the rapid spread of the doppelganger brand image should be closely monitored (i.e. internet) by the managers. Chat rooms, blogs,

and web based media should be timely gauged to avoid the spread of anti brand sentiments. By routinely monitoring this hub of gossip diffusion the managers can well gauge the extent to which their product and its marketing campaigns are being accepted and the buzz that surrounds it. The negative or the positive comments regarding their campaigns can be highlighted and the managers can thus able to get an idea of their campaigns acceptance or rejection beforehand thus, enabling them to take corrective actions and the avoidance of consequent losses. These sources can prove to be a goldmine of information for the managers as their viewpoints by various qualitative methods such as in depth interviews, quick surveys and even focus groups can be used to assess as to which Doppelganger brand images and meanings are resonating with consumers and thus plumb the effect of the identity benefits they thus get from this negative imagery. An example of the Doppler effect which was seen on the internet service provided by the IDEA INTERNET NETWORK (IIN) which was facing the social media wrath and backlash in the form of various types of jokes that were being circulated on the IIN concept over the internet and other social networking sites like whatsapp, face book and also in the form of other humorous tweets by the so called TWITTERATI. This brought a need to timely counter these social media initiated malicious jibes and comments to prevent it from having a snowball effect and becoming a bigger contingency for the company. The very point of problem should be looked into and timely action should be initiated by the managers.

3. **IDENTIFICATION OF THE TARGETS**: Thirdly, where the celebrities or people of importance are being trolled on the net or funny, malicious jibes are being targeted at them. In such cases, the public relations managers should start with the identification of the people for whom such doppelganger messages and images are being developed and spread across the net. This step is necessary in order to identify the ideological concerns that inspire the activists to create and spread such doppelganger brand images. These concerns should be closely studied to know their genuineness and authenticity and then accordingly developing the measures to counter them effectively. The countering of these malicious and often rigged messages at the earliest is a must as any delay with this regard may lead to serious damage to the public image and reputation of the person concerned. Latest example that can be cited is of a bollywood celebrity who was at the receiving end of social media thanks to her dumb and foolish appearance on a high rated T.V.talk show. The social media went berserk over her mindless responses and poor display of G.K. and internet soon got flooded with jokes, gigs and memes depicting her dumbness and reactions to various real life situations.

4. **PROACTIVE APPROACH: A** proactive approach should be followed by the managers to challenge the emergence of the DBI. The emotional branding story should be revitalized and tested among the consumers even when the targets are being accomplished so as to remain afresh and avoid its devaluation over the time. The marketing environment being dynamic and competitive necessitates that the manager should be practically ahead of the cultural curve and has emotional stories that are more invigorated and resonant than their competitors. This is necessary because it has been witnessed that when confronted with declining sales coupled with outdated and stale emotional branding stories the manager may easily fall into a crisis management panic mode. Under such conditions, in order to get a quick fix solution to their problems they may consult outside branding consultant , thus worsening the matters as it could be easily felt by the consumers that the brand has no genuine self inspired stories and identity other than those dictated by the whims and fancies of the supposedly market driven trends. However, it is suggested that in its attempt to develop and redevelop an emotional branding story, the manager should maintain a sense of continuity as otherwise the story will be perceived as inauthentic. A cultural analysis of DBI offers valuable insights as to how an invigorated new emotional branding story can be developed from the threads of an already existing one thus, helping in maintaining historical continuity and authenticity.

5. **BOTTOM TO TOP APPROACH-** This approach can be termed as the essence of the various ways for countering the DBI effect. The management by following this approach can be in direct contact of the ultimate consumers. By eliminating the gap between them the management should aim at building a bond that boasts of trust and thus enhancing and strengthening the relationship across the value chain. The suggestions and grievances, if any, from the consumers end can be directly communicated to the management with an assurance that corrective action will be taken.

VI. CONCLUSION AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Thus, we can conclude that doppelganger brand image is basically the spoofed up image of the product brand in the minds' of the consumers. These images are generally developed by the social activists and enthusiasts who act as social watchdogs, thus making the general public aware of the company's malpractices and other negative aspects of the products. The spoofing communication is developed to address their dissent

thus discouraging its consumption. At times, the negative ads become so popular among the consumers that they over-ride and hijack the original ad, thus making it ineffective. Also, since the internet has today empowered the consumers, anyone with a sense of inventiveness can easily create and develop a negative parody and upload it, thus hampering and denting the image of the product (Bal et al., 2009; Krishnamurthy and Kucuk, 2009). Although some of these ads are developed to have fun and may seem harmless and undisruptive initially but if the companies don't take due action at the right time by developing counter strategies, there is every likelihood that the companies may suffer losses in the shape of dipping sales and losing their valuable assets in the form of their consumers. Ignoring doppelganger images is a poor strategy, but being too aggressive may also be just as destructive. The impact that the Doppler image can have on the sales cannot and should not be taken lightly by the marketing managers. It is an imminent danger lurking, ready to attack the sales of the company anytime when the company loses its control and vision. However, despite the wrongs of the doppelganger brand image, DBI gives a forewarning to the brand managers about the loop holes in their marketing strategy regarding the emotional branding thus necessitating its early rectification. It in a way acts as a diagnostic tool that reveals the hidden brand image problems and requires immediate action before it becomes a full blown brand image crisis. Thus, an early detection of rise in the DBI can save the firms heavy losses and avoid any loss in the market shares.

The paper has made an attempt to enlist (1) the various causes and factors that lead to the generation of doppelganger brand image. (2) An analysis of the various examples of DBI shows that products, services and even personalities are affected by the vicious and sometimes even prejudiced campaigns of anti brand enthusiasts. Timely intervention by the strategic brand managers in developing and redeveloping emotional branding strategies however, helps in maintaining the brands competitiveness and relevance. Iconic and popular brands have to be very cautious and proactive than less iconic brands which are less known and thus escape the wrath of anti brand activists. There still remains a great scope and margin for future research in the fields of emotional branding and the generation of the doppelganger brand image as it is a relatively newer concept but its repercussions and effects on the image and sales of the brands remains highly fatal. In the view of the various drawbacks and dangers of the disturbing and often malicious jibes of the DBI, the crux remains that the managers should remain realistic and be conscious of the various cultural and personal needs of the consumers' while framing the emotional stories regarding their brand. The stories should be realistic as far as possible and also be relevant with the changing times.

VII.   REFERENCES:

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