

Social-Marketing Activities to Augment Brands of Faith in Diversified Marketing in India

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Abstract The spiritual foundations in India have entered into retail marketing of Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG). They are competing with multi-brand companies such as Unilever, Colgate Palmolive, Dabur and Glaxosmithkline. In this context, this research sought to determine the following: (1) the social-marketing activities needed for diversity marketing and (2) the basis for segmenting customers in these markets to create “brands of faith.” The research was conducted among the customers of Isha products. The research concludes that cause-related marketing strategies are suitable for diversity marketing and that demographic segmentation should be done on the basis of occupation of the customers in emerging markets.

Keywords Brands of faith · Diversified market · Social-marketing deeds

1 The Challenging Factor

Indian retail markets are highly fragmented (Sengupta 2008). These fragmented markets in the retailing sector are dominated by regional unorganised marketers, community-based marketers, cooperative marketers, and diverse marketers. India’s diversity marketing involves acknowledging marketing activities toward diversified groups in the form of religion and a regional community-development centre for a social cause. India’s diversity markets are influenced by spiritual gurus. The spiritual leaders of Patanjali products, Sri Sri Ayurveda products, Bochanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha products, Sri Aurobindo Ashram products, and Isha Arogya products are aggressively expanding their existing businesses (Edelweiss Securities Report 2015). Indian diversity markets are no

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longer substitute agents but rather change agents in creating brands of faith. Organised retailing units are also selling products manufactured by diverse marketers. Guenther's research contended that the accelerating trends in diversity marketing are the challenging factor for the organised FMCG marketers (Guenther 1992). Due to competition among the manufacturers of diversified groups, spiritual leaders are using societal-marketing deeds to create brands of faith. Establishing a segmentation strategy as well as social-marketing activities currently are the challenging tasks facing diverse marketers (Raghavan 2008).

2 Knowledge Gap

Past research conducted by Hill et al. (2009) and Hittner and Pohle (2008) proved that social-marketing activities in the form of corporate social responsibility (CSR) strengthen brands of faith. Brand loyalty has been built up by CSR programmes (Pivato et al. 2008; Porter and Kramer 2006; Popoli 2011; Hillier's et al. 2005; Majumdar and Patel 2011). However, the trivial relationship between marketing activities, branding, and segmentation have not been considered in past research. The current research aimed to explore brands of faith created by social-marketing activities in a diversity market and to identify the basis of demographic segmentation.

3 Aim and Significance

The primary aim of this research is to identify the social-marketing strategies and segmentation strategies essential for diversity marketing to create "brands of faith." Hence, the study seeks answers to the following research questions:

- I. What type of social-marketing activity creates "brands of faith" in diversity marketing?
- II. What is the basis of segmenting customers in diversity marketing?

This research enables marketers to determine the integration strategy linking social-marketing activities with brand image in diverse markets.

4 Use of Key Terms for the Research

Diversity marketing is a marketing paradigm that refers to marketing as a way to connect with different individuals in the market who form a homogenous entity (Dahl, Stephan: Diversity Marketing, Thomson 2002). In this research, Isha foundation members are considered as the homogeneous entity.

The term **brands of faith** considers “faith” as a product and attempts to apply the principles of marketing in order to “sell” the product. “Faith” is the customer’s attitude toward Isha foundation. The term “brands of faith” has been substituted with the term “brand image” for the purpose of research.

Social-marketing activities considered for the research include cause-related marketing, green marketing, and social-group endorsement. “Social group” refers to the followers of the founder of Isha foundation.

5 The Isha Foundation

The research was carried out among the consumers of Isha products. The consumers of Isha products are the respondents. Isha Foundation is a non-profit spiritual organisation headquartered in Coimbatore in the southern part of India. Isha Foundation products are branded as “Isha” with an image. The foundation markets a variety of 524 products. Isha products are marketed by the Isha Foundation and targeted toward Isha Foundation community members.

Isha Business Private Limited (IBPL) was established by the Isha Foundation to raise the funds needed for social projects. For the purpose of this research, the social-marketing deeds of the IBPL are classified into three segments—such as green initiatives, cause-related activities, and social movements—to promote the common well-being of society. The brand values derived from the green initiatives, cause-related activities, and social movements to the Isha’s brands of faith are labelled as “green marketing,” “cause-related marketing,” and “social-group endorsements”.

The green-marketing values of the Isha Foundation are created through projects such as Green Hands, Vanashree Eco Center, and Isha Foods and Spices. The Green Hands project aims to create 10% additional green cover in the state of Tamil Nadu in southern India by planting 114 million trees. The Vanashree Eco Center was established to preserve the ecology and biodiversity of the Velliangiri Mountains in Tamil Nadu, South India. It also aims to educate youth about conservation and ecology through experiential programs. To maintain and broadcast the area’s precious environmental resources, the Vanashree Eco Centre conducted crowd tree-planting programs and maintenance campaigns, helped prevent poaching of national wildlife, and worked to safeguard the gene group of this mountain by propagating the inhabitant variety in the region. Isha Foods and Spices products are a nutritious collection of snacks, drinks, Tiffin mixes, and pickles that offer a tempting blend of taste, nutrition, and expediency. The products are organic and made from fresh, high-quality ingredients. The products represent the slogan of Sadhguru—“What kind of food you eat not only decides the physical aspect of your body, it also decides the very way you think and feel”.

Cause-related marketing values are created from Isha Craft. Isha Craft markets contemporary home decor, utility, and fashion products. The income generated from Isha Craft is used for mobile health clinics. Isha Craft products depict the

slogan: “a labor of love”. Rural artisans design the products. The products are made from locally sourced natural materials and are eco-friendly.

Social group–endorsement values of Isha products are created during Isha social-upliftment programs. The Isha projects based on social upliftment include the Action for Rural Rejuvenation, AIDS Awareness Āyush Health, Īsha-Vidhya, Rural Empowerment, and Gramotvasam programs. All of these programs are endorsed by Sadguru and artists such as Hariprasad Chaurasia, Shiv Kumar Sharma, Dr. Bala Muralikrishna, Sudha Raghunathan, Anuradha Sriram, Usha Uthup, Vani Jayaram, and Manish Vyas. Isha Foundation works actively with world bodies such as the United Nations through its various initiatives and events. Sadhguru often addresses in these endorsement programs the deterioration of human and social values and ecological degradation. Action for Rural Rejuvenation (ARR) is an outreach program whose primary objective is to improve the primary fitness and excellence of life of the rural meager. The project aims to benefit 70 million rural people in 54,000 villages in Tamil Nadu, South India. It will be implemented in two phases over a period of 15 years. AYUSH–Isha Organic Health Systems is a primary healthcare model with an enhanced focus on preventative aspects of medical care. It effectively combines Ayurveda, Siddha, naturopathy, essential allopathic treatments, yogic practices, and physical-fitness programs. Isha Vidhya is committed to raising the level of education and literacy in rural India and helping disadvantaged children realize their full potential. The development seeks to guarantee excellence of schooling for children in agricultural areas to create equal opportunities for all to participate in and benefit from India’s economic growth. Isha Vidhya presently operates 9 schools with 5200 students, 50% of whom are on scholarship. The respite of the students pays a nominal fee. Every school will maintain 1100 students. Isha has also adopted 31 government schools in 2012–2013 comprising 26,843 students who will benefit from vital interventions that will impressively improve the excellence of learning in these schools. Isha Foundation organizes Gramotsavam or “rural Olympics.” Gramotsavam is not only about sports, but it also provides an occasion to commemorate South India’s rural life and civilization. Every year, the event showcases customary rustic cookery and fine arts and crafts and events such as folk singing and dancing. Sadhguru offers the vast community an understanding of a communication, a question-and-answer gathering, as well as the unusual prospect of a guided meditation with a Realised Master. Sounds of Isha, Isha Foundation’s in-house music band, puts on a merry presentation that culminates in a stunning fireworks show. The yearly episode has hastily turned into one of the most admired events in Tamil Nadu with increasing crowds every year.

6 Methodology

The research was carried out among 1678 customers of Isha products between March 1 and April 1, 2016. The respondents were selected based on “snowball sampling.” Of 1678 responses, 1465 were validated after coding. Of these, 1126

Table 1 Data analysis: input-process output table

Stage	Purpose	Input	Process	Output
1	Grouping of brand-image variables to determine impressed customers	Primary data about brand image	Cluster analysis	Five clusters were created
2	Measuring variation between brand image and social-marketing values	Cluster analysis results and social-marketing values	Analysis of variance	There is significant variation
3	Measuring discriminant factors between social-marketing values and demographic variables	Social-marketing values and demographic variables	Discriminant analysis	Income and occupation are the discriminating factors
4	Measuring the association between brand image and demographic variables	Brand image and demographic variables	Chi-square analysis	There is a significant association
5	Integrating social-marketing values, brand image, and demographic variables	Results of the last three stages	Establishing trivial relationship and ROC analysis	Cause-related marketing establishes high brand image, and occupation is the fragmentation factor

responses were found to be reliable. The interview schedule consists of 25 structured questions formulated pertaining to demographic profile, social-responsibility values, and brand images. The perception of customers is measured using a five-point Likert scale. The internal consistency of the responses is measured in terms of Cronbach alpha. The Cronbach alpha associated with the response of 25 questions is 0.72. Social values are classified under the categories green marketing, cause-related marketing, and social-group endorsement. The data analysis is depicted in Table 1.

7 Brand Image

Brand is a sensible impression that creates personal experience and satisfies expectations based on a set of attitudes. Firms initiated brand image in the mindsets of customers by satisfying psychological and social needs. Brand communications

reinforce the image through word-of-mouth advertising and by establishing logos/pictures. Through social well-being measures, firms are re-injecting brand-image values. Companies aim to integrate the customer experience with their expectations to create a brand image (Paul 2002).

We use a mechanism to scale down the brand-image values among the respondents. Brand image is measured through the customer-rating method (Driesener and Romaniuk 2006). Cluster analysis is employed to classify the respondents according to their ratings based on brand-image values. Hence, 16 sets of variables that describe the similarity between objects in terms of brand image were selected to formulate clusters. The attitudinal variables were measured on a five-point Likert scale. The attitudinal variables used for measuring the brand image were reverence, honour, down to earth, honesty, daring, charming, spirited, up-to-date, reliable, successful, upper class, cheerful, “outdoorsy,” ruggedness, pleasant memories, and stand-by. The number of clusters was created based on the AIC criterion. A cluster centroid was used to differentiate the clusters, and a five-cluster solution was developed.

Cluster 1 had relatively high values on all variables, and it was labelled “impressive.” Cluster 2 had second-degree high mean values among all the variables, and it was labelled “stirring.” Cluster 3 had third-degree high mean values among all variables, and it was labelled “Striking.” Cluster 4 had fourth-degree high values among all the variables, and it was labelled “Modest.” Cluster 5 had the least value among the all the variables, and it was labelled “Unimpressive” (Table 2).

The cluster analysis revealed that 56% (both impressive and stirring) of the respondents in the sample were highly conscious toward their brands’ image. Based on cluster analysis, we conclude that 672 customers have impressive values toward the brand image of Isha. Hence, these customers are considered to have “brands of faith”.

Table 2 Cluster group of respondents

Cluster	Label	No. of respondents	Pie chart
I	Impressive cluster	278	
II	Stirring cluster	394	
III	Striking cluster	101	
IV	Modest cluster	125	
V	Unimpressive cluster	228	
	Total	1126	

8 Societal-Marketing Values

Because cause-related marketing, green marketing, and social-endorsement groups are practiced/utilised by the Isha Foundation, we decided to include these social-marketing deeds.

8.1 Cause-Related Marketing

We defined cause related marketing as a type of marketing activity involving contributing a part of income to a social cause. Michael’s research proved that cause-related marketing activities influence customer choice and create social currency. We employed analysis of variance to determine the relationship between cause-related marketing and brand image. The independent variable is the preference toward cause-related marketing. This was measured on a five-point rating scale. The dependent variable is the centroid variable of the clusters that were created based on brand-image variables. The null hypothesis, i.e., that “there is no variation between the means of the cluster centroid values and preference toward cause-related marketing,” was established. The result is interpreted with the associate ‘*F*’ probability value of 0.00 and a level of significance of 0.05. The results are tabulated in Table 3.

The calculated *F* value is greater than the table value. Hence, it can be interpreted that brand image has a significant relationship with cause-related marketing. The relative magnitudes of the means for the five categories indicate that a high level of cause-related marketing efforts leads to create a superior brand image.

Respondents who prefer cause-related marketing were segmented on the basis of age, income, education, and occupation. Stepwise-multiple discriminant functions were formulated to identify the demographic discriminant factor that differentiates the cause-related marketing variables among the demographic factors. Based on the equality of group means, two functions were formulated. The results are displayed in Table 4.

Occupation and income are the two discriminating functions identified by the model. The eigenvalue associated with the first function (occupation) is 0.24. The canonical correlation associated with this function is 0.180. Of the variance in the cause-related marketing variable, 72.2% is explained by this model. The eigenvalue associated with the second function (income) is 0.018. The canonical correlation

Table 3 Cause-related marketing and brand image ANOVA

Variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	<i>F</i> -value	Significance
Between groups	218.40	4	54.600	24.92	0.00
Within groups	2456.84	1121	2.191		
Total	2675.24				

Table 4 Discriminant analysis of cause-related marketing: tests of equality of group means

Variables	Wilks' lambda	F	Significance
Age	0.846	2.427	0.03
Income	0.923	4.234	0.00
Education	0.912	1.321	0.53
Occupation	0.981	4.980	0.00

associated with this function is 0.086. Of the variance in the cause-related marketing variable, 27.8 percent is explained by this model. The value of Wilks' lambda is 0.946. This transforms to a chi-square of 40.24, with 8 degrees of freedom, which is significant at the 0.05 level. Thus, two functions together significantly discriminate among the demographic variables. However, when the first function is removed, the Wilk's lambda associated with the second function is 0.891, which is not significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the second function (income) does not contribute significantly to group differences.

We concluded that cause-related marketing significantly influences brand image. Occupation is the predominant demographic variable that discriminates customers toward cause-related marketing.

8.2 Green Marketing

There is a dire need to protect the natural environment. Green marketing was intended to satisfy customers with minimal detrimental effect on the natural environment (Polonsky 1995). Peter Knight's research found that 70% of consumers link marketers' social responsibility to their environmental behaviour (Peter 2008). Green marketing not only involves greening products but also making the organization greener (Aseem 2002).

In diversity marketing, eco-friendly values are created by various forms of projects. Project GreenHands (PGH) is a grassroots ecological initiative established under the aegis of Isha Foundation in 2004. It seeks to restore ecological balance and maintain proper environmental health in Tamil Nadu. PGH was felicitated by the government of India in June 2010 with the Indira Gandhi Paryavaran Puraskar Award.

We wish to determine whether or not there is any significant relationship between green-marketing efforts and brand image. One-way analysis of variance was employed to determine the variation within and between brand-image centroid values of the clusters and preference toward green marketing. The null hypothesis, i.e., that "there is no variation between the means of brand image cluster variables and preference towards green marketing," was established. The result is interpreted with an associate ' F ' probability value of 0.00 and the level of significance of 0.05. The results are tabulated in Table 5.

The calculated a value of F less than the critical value of F with 4 and 1121 degrees of freedom, resulting in a probability of zero at 95% confidence level.

Table 5 Green marketing versus brand image ANOVA

Variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
Between groups	23.524	4	5.881	2.787	0.68
Within groups	2253.411	1121	2.110		
Total	2276.935				

The null hypothesis is accepted. Hence, it may be concluded that brand image does not depend on green marketing.

8.3 Social-Group Endorsements

In the diversity marketing system, endorsements are made with the help of regional-level cultural programmes. Isha Gramotsavam is a program organised by the Isha Yoga foundation. Isha Gramotsavam enjoys and encourages the living spirit of the villagers in the Coimbatore region. To promote the program to a great success, >600 teams having >7500 players participated in the events and sports conducted by Isha Gramotsavam. The main events are Khabbadi and Cricket. It is obvious that Khabbadi is one of the traditional games of the South Indians. Some other sports have also been organised including Vazhuku-maram, Uri-Adi, and Silambhattam. Traditional concerts and pageants have also been organised as a part of the program to entertain the audience. The winners of the team will be uplifted and motivated with the Isha Rejuvenation Cup 2015.

One-way analysis of variance was carried out to identify the significant variation among and between brand image and social-endorsement activities. The null hypothesis. i.e., that “there is no variation among the means of brand image cluster variables and preference toward social endorsement,” was established. The result is interpreted with the associate ‘F’ probability value of 0.00 at the level of significance of 0.05. The results are tabulated in Table 6.

The calculated value of F is greater than the critical value of ‘F’ with 4 and 1121 degrees of freedom resulting in a probability of 0.00 at the 95% confidence level. The null hypothesis was rejected. Hence, we conclude that brand image does have significant variation with social-group endorsement. The relative magnitudes of the means of clusters suggest that there is a linear relationship between social-group endorsement and brand image.

Table 6 Social-group endorsement versus brand image ANOVA

Variance	Sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Significance
Between groups	32.566	4	8.141	9.444	0.00
Within groups	967.211	1121	0.862		
Total	999.777				

Table 7 Discriminant analysis of social-group endorsements: tests of equality of group means

Variables	Wilks' lambda	F	Significance
Age	0.982	7.218	0.00
Income	0.978	0.678	0.21
Education	0.992	1.788	0.13
Occupation	0.872	12.234	0.00

Multiple discriminant analysis was employed to determine the demographic variables that discriminate the social group–endorsement countenances. Two functions (occupation and age) were formulated on the basis of the equality of means. The results are presented in Table 7.

The eigenvalue associated with the first function (occupation) is 0.248. The canonical correlation associated with this function is 0.448. Of the variance in the social group–endorsement variable, 95.4% is explained by this model. The eigenvalue associated with the second function (age) is 0.018. The canonical correlation associated with this function is 0.108, and 4.6% of the variance is explained by this model. The value of Wilks' lambda is 0.724. This transforms to a chi-square value of 3228.612, with 4 degrees of freedom, significant at the 0.05 level. Thus, the functions together significantly discriminate among the social-group variables. However, when the first function is removed, the Wilk's lambda associated with the second function is 0.982, which is not significant at the 0.05 level. Therefore, the second function does not contribute significantly to group differences. Hence, it can be inferred that occupation is the first major demographic variable that discriminates the social group–endorsement variables.

Based on the previous empirical results, we conclude that social group–endorsement activities influence brand image and that occupation is the predominant variable that creates heterogeneity among the social-group endorsements.

9 Associations with Brand Image

The research of Chien-Hsiung identified a positive association between brand image and demographic variables (Chien-Hsiung 2011). Research by Anderson established a social-stratification model that increases brand-building efforts based on socio-psychological variables (Anderson and Cunningham 1972). To construct a relationship among brand image and demographic factors, we employed Chi-square test. The null hypothesis, i.e., that “the brand-image clusters are independent of demographic variables” was established. The results are presented in Table 8 at 95% confidence limits.

The null hypothesis was rejected at a significance level of 0.05 for demographic variables such as age, education, and occupation. Hence, brand image is significantly associated with the age, education, and occupation of the respondents. Because the value of phi, contingency coefficient, and Crammer's 'V' are <0.5 for

Table 8 Chi-square analysis: brand image

Variables	Chi-square value	Df	Significance	Phi value	Contingency coefficient	Crammer's V	Lambda coefficient
Age	84.5	16	Significant	0.21	0.20	0.14	0.08
Income	31.6	16	Insignificant				
Education	78.8	12	Significant	0.32	0.28	0.23	0.12
Occupation	242.6	16	Significant	0.69	0.62	0.60	0.57

the variables age and education, association is not very strong. There is a strong association between brand-image variables and occupation. Hence, stratification can be done based on customer occupation.

10 Diagnostic Test

Cause-related marketing and social- group endorsement activities of firms tend to create a brand image. To determine which of the previously mentioned activities highly influence brand image, ROC analysis was carried out. Realistic-operating characteristic (ROC) curves were drawn to assess brand-image centroid values with social-group endorsement and cause-related marketing variables. ROC curves were used to explore the precision of diagnostic tests as well as determine the best “cut-off” value for impressive and unimpressive cluster test results. The graphical representation of this trade-off is presented in Fig. 1. Setting a low cut-off will yield a very high sensitivity but at the expense of specificity. Setting a high cut-off will yield high specificity at the expense of sensitivity. Table 9 shows the asymptotic significance of ROC analysis.

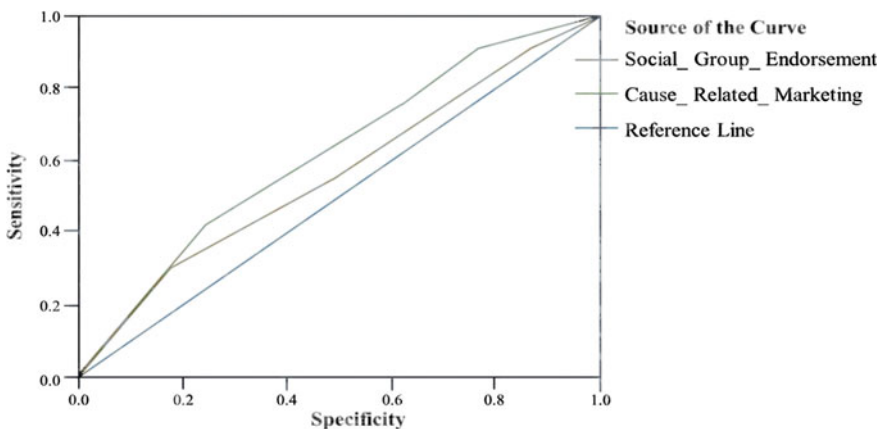


Fig. 1 Brand-image ROC curve

Table 9 Brand-image ROC analysis

Test result variable(s)	Area	SE ^a	Asymptotic significance ^b	Asymptotic 95% confidence interval	
				Lower bound	Upper bound
Social-group endorsement	0.560	0.018	0.001	0.526	0.595
Cause-related marketing	0.612	0.017	0.000	0.578	0.647

The curve of social-group endorsement occupies a minimum level over the cut-off line, whereas cause related-marketing curve overlaps the reference level with a high degree of variation. The cause-related marketing curve occupies a maximum level over the cut-off line. It is also significant at the 95% confidence interval. Hence, it is determined that cause-related marketing techniques can be applied to improve brand image more so than those of social-group endorsements.

11 Establishing a Trivial Relationship

The previous discussions apparently proved that brand of faith depends on cause-related marketing and social group–endorsement activities. Cause-related marketing creates brand image in a leveraged manner compared with social-group endorsements. “Occupation: is the demographic variable that discriminates cause-related marketing. “Occupation” is also associated with brand image. The trivial relationship is shown in Fig. 2.

Hence, we conclude that if societal-marketing activities related to cause-related marketing are stratified based on customer occupation, they will build “brands of faith.” Segmentation based on consumer occupation is the foremost discriminant variable. Hence, customer occupation can be used to segment customers as to diverse marketing strategies.

12 Conclusion

Creating brands of faith through societal-marketing activities is a complicated endeavour. Only if the philanthropic values attached to such activities have been recognised by the society as measure of social well-being will spiritual leaders are able to enhance their brands of faith. Social-media communication about cause-related marketing is able to create trust among the society. In contrast, societal-marketing activities cannot target the entire society; hence, they must be stratified. While stratifying, the players of diversity markets must target a particular group based on the values generated by the stakeholders in the foundation.

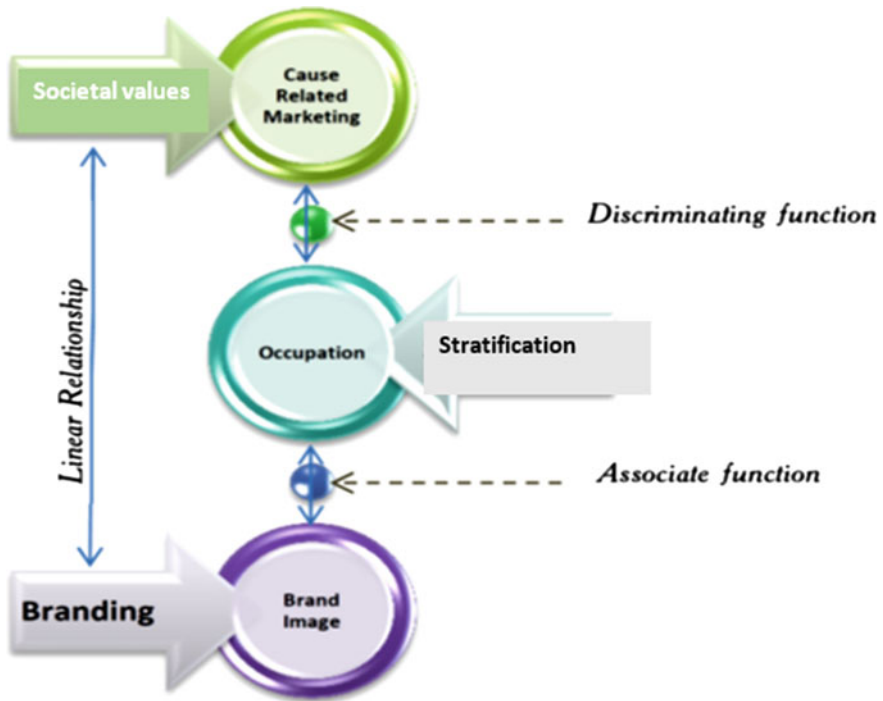


Fig. 2 Trivial relationship

To conclude, segmenting social-marketing activities is essential in fulfilling the social promise made to customers by leaders regarding diversity marketing, and this will yield social currency in the form of “brands of faith.” Geo-demographic segmentation is the basis for segmenting, whereas to position the products, cause-related marketing strategies are needed to augment “brands of faith”.

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