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## Philippine Customers' Attributes' Implications to Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Buying Habit and Product Usage of Selected Bath Soap Products: Structural Equation Model

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### ABSTRACT

The quantitative study aimed to imply relationship of bath soap customers' attributes such as age, gender and work to brand image, awareness, buying habits and product usage. Data were gathered through interview and treated in depth.

**Keywords:** Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Brand Usage, Buying Habits, Structural Equation Model

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### INTRODUCTION

Research studies allow a company to see their commercial value from the eyes of the clients or buyers. They are used to test the effectiveness of a company's image, brand or advertising campaign. By determining buyer perceptions toward the company brand, the way they perceive the company/brand (image), and how or how frequently they use the company/brand, the proponents can uncover motivations and drivers of usage. From this point of view, one can accentuate the positive and eliminate the negative, leading more consumers to your brand, product or service [dela Cruz, 2007].

Brand image is the impression in the consumers' mind of a brand's total personality. Brand images developed overtime through advertising campaigns with consisted theme, and is authenticated through the consumers' direct experience.[businessdictionary.com]

Brand awareness has a stronger impact on the subsequent purchasing choices, if the product once tried out fulfilled the consumer's expectations. [Maciej Koniewski]

Brand awareness and usage are critical tools for market researchers that help understand the effectiveness of current marketing campaigns, brand recognition, and even public image of a company. Brand image in market research is an underlying belief that a person has pertaining to a product or service. It is often an assertiveness about a product, the person may have positive or negative feelings that are commonly connected with a visual image referencing the product it recalls [Behrall, 2008].

When concerning approaches that consumers may have about a product, basic concerns are very important. These include: the perception of product quality, value of a product, and relating an image to a particular product. Measuring brand image and usage can be achieved through various survey methods ranging from "have you ever heard of brand Z" question types, to which brand comes to the "top of your mind" first. These surveys are critical in assessing how effective a company is at marketing their products by examining the brand image consumers have and the effect these may contain on considerations for product purchase or usage.

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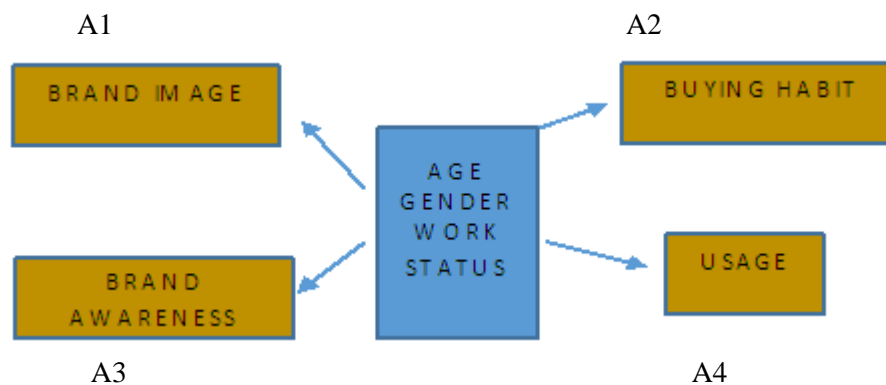
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The proponents decided to use this model to further explore possibilities of getting accurate and reliable conclusions for better implications and assessment of variables mentioned.

### DESIGN/SIMULACRUM



**Figure1.** Implications of Age, Gender and Work Status to Brand Image, Awareness, Usage and buying habits of Bath Soap Customers

### Assumptions of the Study

**A1:** Image of the bath soap product is influenced by age, gender and work status of bath soap customers

**A2:** Buying habits are influenced by age, gender and work status of bath soap customers

**A3:** Brand awareness is affected by the age, gender and work status of bath soap customers

**A4:** Brand usage affects age, gender and work status of bath soap customers

The proponents sought to answer the following questions:

1. Is there a relationship between brand image and brand awareness to age, gender and work status of bath soap customers
2. Is there a relationship between consumer buying habits and usage of the bath soap to age, gender and work status

The paper applied structural equation model to evaluate answers of respondents. The proponents assessed the relationship of brand image, awareness, buying habits and usage of body soap products to age, gender and work status of bath soap customers.

### Selection and Study Site

The proponents chose to interview and distributed the survey questionnaire to families of selected college students in gathering primary data for the research study. Five hundred copies of the survey were distributed and four hundred ten copies were returned with complete answers.

### Data Measure

Data gathered were tabulated and computed using SPSS and Amos software applications namely chi square, regression analysis and structural equation model respectively. [Lindenman 2008] Instrument used is composed of Likert scale applying open ended questions with 1 as highest rating and 5 as lowest rating. Survey questionnaire includes also several profile inquiries of the respondents.

### Data Collection Procedure

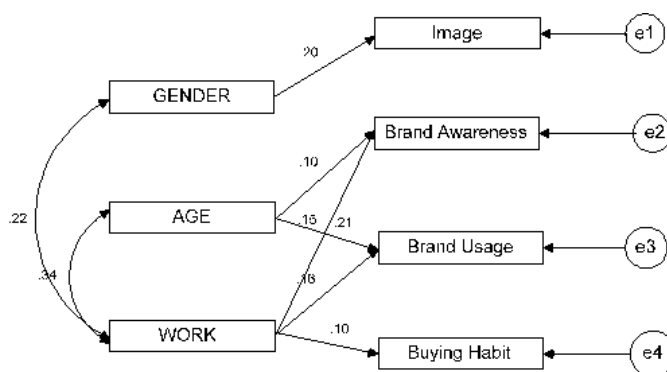
Survey questionnaire forms were distributed to college students. Personal interview was also utilized to gather information. Likewise, email addresses were also used to collect the answers to the interview questions formulated by the proponents.

### FINDINGS OF THE RESEARCH

The figure below presents the structural equation model of the relationship of Gender, Age and Work to Image, Brand Awareness, Brand Usage and Buying Habit of bath soap users:

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**Table1.** Structural Equation Model



Chi-square=12.707, df=13, p=.471  
 RMSEA=.000  
 GFI=.991  
 CFI=1.000  
 NFI=.903

The model shows the significant relationships of customer attributes as to Gender, Age and Work to variables such as image, brand awareness, brand usage and buying habit.

Estimates (Group number 1 - Default model)

Scalar Estimates (Group number 1 - Default model)

Maximum Likelihood Estimates

Regression Weights: (Group number 1 - Default model)

**Table2.** Regression Model

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Image	<---	GENDER	.227	.054	4.208	***
BrandAwareness	<---	AGE	.248	.127	1.959	.050
BrandUsage	<---	AGE	.096	.023	4.087	***
BrandAwareness	<---	WORK	1.080	.374	2.888	.004
BrandUsage	<---	WORK	.218	.069	3.151	.002
BuyingHabit	<---	WORK	.168	.084	2.013	.044

Likewise, from the regression model presented, there is a significant relationship of independent variables such as gender, age and work to image, brand awareness, brand usage and buying habits of bath soap users.

**Table3.** Covariances of Variables

**Standardized Regression Weights:** (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate
Image	<---	GENDER	.204
BrandAwareness	<---	AGE	.102
BrandUsage	<---	AGE	.210
BrandAwareness	<---	WORK	.150
BrandUsage	<---	WORK	.162
BuyingHabit	<---	WORK	.099

**Covariances:** (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
AGE	<-->	WORK	.255	.038	-6.635	***
GENDER	<-->	WORK	.055	.012	4.622	***

**Table 4.** *Correlations of Variables*

**Correlations:** (Group number 1 - Default model)

			Estimate
AGE	<-->	WORK2	.339
GENDER	<-->	WORK2	.221

## DISCUSSION

Studies of brand awareness, attitudes, and usage (AAU) enable marketers to quantify levels and trends in customer knowledge, perceptions, beliefs, intentions, and behaviors. [Moos 2012] In most companies, the results of these studies are called "tracking" data because they are used to track long-term changes in customer awareness, attitudes, and behaviors. [Kidder 2003]

This paper allows statistical cross checks by gender, age, and work status among others. In those cases where similar studies from previous years exist, it allows comparisons in order to track trends over time. [Roberts, 2010] Factors such as age and work status relatively affect brand image as presented in Table 1. Remarkably noted that all variables in Table 2 has significant relationship to bath soap brand image. This explains why brand image is a very imperative feature to be deliberated by manufacturers of bath soap.

Likewise, buying habit has relationship with gender of bath soap users. [Sipkoff 2008]. It is hereby endorsed by the researchers to use other aspects such as brand equity and advertising factors in determining percentage of brand users. Brand awareness does not positively affect brand usage among customers [Domingo, et al 2015].

## CONCLUSION/RECOMMENDATIONS

The researchers determined based on the findings that the following are recommendations:

Age is an encouraging factor that must be attended to by soap manufacturing companies. Each type of bath soap adheres to specific age bracket. Meantime, gender is likely a favorable factor that must be also prioritized in determining characteristics of bath soap for such group. In addition to age and gender, work is also another important factor that must be taken into consideration.

Image to gender has been the highest regression value analysis computed. From the dependent variables included in the study, image should be focused as priority to catch the attention of bath soap customers.

Companies should therefore, concentrate on improving the image of the product and review advertising plan to target right market for advertisements. The proponents recommend that there will be further studies pragmatic to using conjoint analysis of the variables mentioned in the study to better help companies involved in their management decisions.

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