

# DETERMINANTS OF CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY ON BRAND IMAGE: THE MODERATING ROLE OF TOURISM MANAGEMENT AND ADVERTISEMENT

Wasib Bin Latif<sup>\*</sup>, Md. Nazrul Islam<sup>\*\*</sup>, Issa Ahammad<sup>\*\*\*</sup>,  
Md. Shak Forid<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup>, Priyanka Das Dona<sup>\*\*\*</sup>, Md. Mahedi Hasan<sup>\*\*\*\*\*</sup>

<sup>\*</sup> University Malaysia Perlis, Perlis, Malaysia

<sup>\*\*</sup> Corresponding author, Department of Business Administration, Prime University, Dhaka, Bangladesh  
Contact details: Department of Business Administration, Prime University, 114/116 Mazar Road, Mirpur-1, Dhaka, Bangladesh

<sup>\*\*\*</sup> Department of Business Administration, World University of Bangladesh (WUB), Dhaka, Bangladesh

<sup>\*\*\*\*</sup> School of Business, Ahsanullah University of Science and Technology, Dhaka, Bangladesh

<sup>\*\*\*\*\*</sup> Department of Business Administration, Prime University, Dhaka, Bangladesh



## Abstract

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The hotel industry needs a clearly defined brand image in order to thrive and survive in a rapidly changing global market (Chi, 2016). This study strives to refine the determinants of customer-based brand equity (CBBE) that impact brand image and identify the moderating effect of tourism management and advertisement on the determinants and brand image in the context of the Bangladesh tourism industry. Data were collected through structured questionnaires from the selected four- and five-star hotel customers in Bangladesh and analysed using SmartPLS 2.0. It found that brand awareness, brand association, brand superiority, brand resonance and corporate social responsibility (CSR) were significant factors influencing brand image. CSR was the most significant among these five determinants, followed by brand superiority, brand association, brand awareness, and brand resonance. It was also explored that tourism management has a mediation effect on the degree of relationship between brand superiority and brand image, and brand resonance and brand image. Alternatively, the degree of advertisement affects the extent of the relationship between brand awareness and brand image, brand association and brand image, CSR and brand image. The tourism industry can utilize the findings of this study to enhance its marketing and branding strategies.

**Keywords:** Brand Image, Customer-Based Brand Equity, Tourism Management, CSR, Advertisement, Hotel Industry, Bangladesh

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Businesses strive to create enduring brands having favorable equity and image. Brand equity development

actively involves brand image. How brand equity is developed, managed, and upheld is still unclear as of this point (Keller, 2003; Bishop, 2014; Park, 2009; Gordon, 2010). The service industry is one of the biggest

and fastest-growing industries across the globe. In fact, the hotel industry is growing steadily as a substantial part of the tourism industry and a key component of the service industry (Gordon, 2010; Bishop, 2014).

The offerings of hotel service companies in the tourism sector have generated intense competition in the market over the past two decades, starting in the 1990s and continuing into the 2000s. For instance, Americans choose hotels that offer value or benefit, convenience, usability, and healthier options. Doing business in the food and lodging service sector is now increasingly competitive than ever due to an increase in hotels, high client demand, and the economic downturn (Park, 2009).

Key benefits of the rising competition for the consumer include more options, better value for their money, and improved service (Cai et al., 2015; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). In contrast, hotels require reinventing, strengthening, or accentuating the image of their brands in today's competitive and dynamic market environment with a plethora of alternative brands to enable guests to distinguish the hotels from their rivals. The requirement for effective and efficient marketing tactics is therefore obvious given the brand's or company's increased competitiveness. According to this viewpoint, the hotel industry needs a clearly defined brand image in order to thrive and sustain in a rapidly changing global market (Chi, 2016).

In Bangladesh, managers lack an understanding of customers' behaviour about evaluating hotel brands. Therefore, hotels are unable to provide the services the customers desire, and as a result, they struggle to occupy a strong position in the competitive market. In view of the above context, this study will have a significant contribution to building a strong brand image and to what extent tourism management and advertisement moderate the determinants of customer-based brand equity (CBBE) and brand image.

Thus, the researchers identified the following research questions:

*RQ1: What are the drivers of CBBE that impact the brand image?*

*RQ2: Do tourism management and advertisement have any moderating effect on the relationship between the determinants and brand image?*

Against this backdrop, this research aims to refine the determinants of CBBE for creating the brand image of hotels in the tourism sector.

The theoretical framework is used to delineate the complex relationships between factors that contribute to CBBE — such as brand awareness, brand association, brand excellence, brand resonance, and corporate social responsibility (CSR) — and the mode of brand image formation in the unique context of the tourism sector of Bangladesh. Tourism management and advertisement appear as simultaneous moderating factors in this framework, and it is expected that they will have subtle effects on the nature and intensity of the correlations between the above determinants and brand image.

The structure of this paper is as follows. Section 2 includes some relevant literature to find out previous research to identify the factors affecting CBBE to build brand image and presents the conceptual framework with pertinent hypotheses. Section 3 explains the methodology as to how the data were collected and analysed. Section 4

presents the research results, and Section 5 presents a discussion of the results. Finally, Section 6 presents the conclusions of the study and some recommendations for future research.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

According to Cheung et al. (2019), brand awareness enhances brand familiarity and recall performance and contributes to brand equity. Therefore, strong brand attributes stimulate brand awareness which stimulates brand image (Matikiti-Manyevera et al., 2021). Marketers use brand association to create positive attitudes and perceptions toward a brand. Indeed, brand association encompasses promising, robust, and sole associations of a brand (Jin et al., 2019). Amron (2018) states that brand association helps build a strong brand image. Customers' overall cognitive assessment of a particular brand is measured by Brand superiority. Cognitive evaluation is how customers differentiate the brands and instill a positive image in the customers' minds (Crolc et al., 2019). According to Kim et al. (2020), brand superiority created by differentiation and uniqueness is the indicator of brand image. According to Tanu et al. (2019), brand affection underlines strong emotional attachment that stimulates customer reaction to a brand. Gordon (2010) stated that brand affection encompasses strong emotions influencing customer response. Brand resonance helps customers create a good connection with a brand. As a result, brand resonance denotes to construct of brand image (Cheng et al., 2019). According to Lee (2014), CSR helps a company and its brands instill a strong perception in the hearts of customers. Jeon et al. (2020) signified that CSR has a positive impact on building brand image.

Tourism management takes the initiative to attract tourists to tourist destinations by taking awareness programs and enhancing the brand image of tourist destinations. Therefore, for developing brand image, the role of brand awareness may differ based on tourism management. According to Tran et al. (2020), brand superiority plays an imperative role in customers' cognitive evaluations. In the same way for developing brand image, brand superiority may be different with different levels of tourism management. Hence, tourism management intrigues various attractive activities that appeal to a tourist's feelings and generate affection for tourism products, whereas affection influences the positive image in the customers' minds (Hakim et al., 2018). Long-term relationships with tourists may be affected by tourism management (Valeri & Baggio, 2021). Long-term relationships are the final goal of brand resonance that strongly influences brand image. Hence, brand resonance may have a different influence on the brand image with the variation of tourism management, which links biodiversity and ecosystem. At the same time, tourism management links with biodiversity and ecosystems and provides different socio-cultural advantages for society (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018). Indeed, all these activities are a crucial part of CSR. So, for developing brand image, the role of CSR may vary with the variation of tourism management. Advertisement is an effective promotional tool that disseminates information about products. Advertisements are mainly designed to create a brand image and straightforwardly encourage customers to purchase the products of

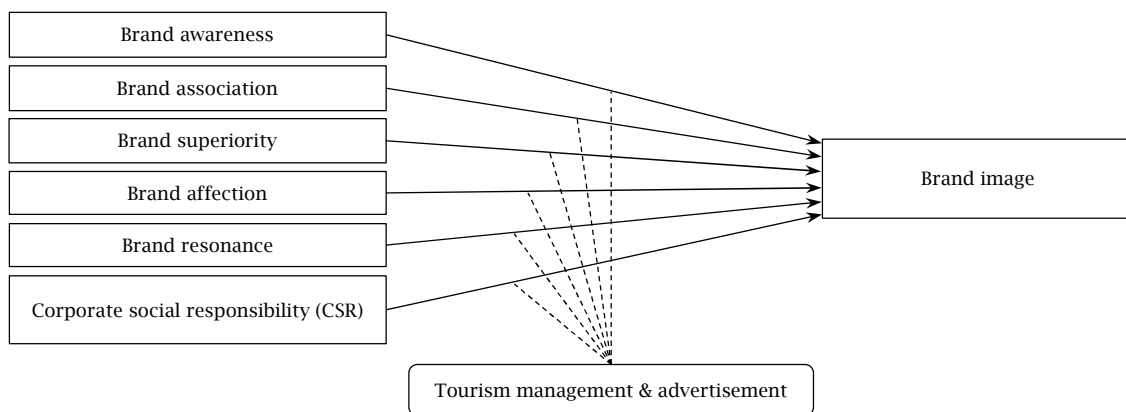
a particular brand (Shareef et al., 2019). Advertisement is expected to enhance the brand image by disseminating vital information regarding brand attributes and benefits in the hotel industry (Hao et al., 2020). Therefore, advertisements may greatly influence brand awareness to build brand image. Functional attributes of products are considered a brand association (Jin et al., 2019).

On the contrary, brand association can vastly impact the brand image (Dirsehan & Kurtulus, 2018). Using advertisements makes customers easily informed about a brand and its unique features (Bhakar et al., 2019). Hence, unique features of a particular product that create proper meaning and feelings in the customers' minds are considered brand superiority (Ali et al., 2018). On the other hand, brand superiority creates uniqueness and greatly influences the brand image (Sultan & Wong, 2019). So, the change in the degree of advertisement may affect brand superiority in establishing brand image. Consequently, customers' emotions, positive attitudes, and love for the products are considered brand affection (Harrigan et al., 2018). Positive brand affection means a higher degree of brand image (Wu & Chen, 2019). Through advertisement, marketers

establish powerful connections with customers (Sanne & Wiese, 2018). Subsequently, powerful connections with customers make brand resonance (Pawar & Lavuri, 2018). Then again, brand resonance largely affects brand image (Wong, 2019). As an outcome, Brand resonance may have a different role in creating a brand image with the different extent of advertisement. At present, organisations communicate product information and let customers know about their actions for society, the environment, and humanity with advertisements (Lloyd-Smith & An, 2019). Organisations operate these activities to protect the environment, society and humanity (Epperson et al., 2018). In a true sense, these activities are integral parts of CSR (Verčič & Čorić, 2018), and they help companies build positive insight into customers' minds (Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2019). For this reason, the role of CSR in the brand image may vary with the variation of advertisement.

For this research, the following research model has been developed and proposed based on the comprehensive review of pertinent marketing and branding literature.

**Figure 1.** Conceptual framework



According to Cheung et al. (2019), brand awareness enhances brand recognition and recall performance that incorporates brand equity whose key objective is to accomplish a strong brand image. Therefore, strong brand attributes stimulate strong brand awareness which stimulates brand image (Matikiti-Manyeverere et al., 2021). Therefore, in this study the first hypothesis is as follows:

*H1: Brand image is positively influenced by brand awareness.*

For creating positive attitudes and perceptions towards a brand marketers use brand association. Sanny et al. (2020), elucidated that brand association is formed by benefits. These benefits build a position in a customer's mind (Tanu et al., 2018). Thus, other hypotheses we may form are:

*H2: Brand image is positively influenced by brand association.*

*H3: Brand image is positively influenced by brand superiority.*

Hence, brand affection plays an imperative role in building a strong brand image. Brand affection as related to emotional attachment bears a strong influence on brand image. As such, we hypothesise:

*H4: Brand image is positively influenced by brand affection.*

Brand resonance helps customers create a good connection with a brand. As a result, brand resonance denotes to construction of brand image (Cheng et al., 2019). Active brand attachment standpoints for brand resonance for which brand image is increased by brand resonance (Keller, 2020). Thus, it is hypothesized that:

*H5: Brand image is positively affected by brand resonance.*

CSR can be explained by the possible contribution to society (for the sensible development of mankind) without much expense regarding its financial activities (Han et al., 2019). According to Lee (2014), through CSR a company and its brands create a strong position in the customers' minds. Indeed, brand image can be influenced by CSR (Salehzadeh et al., 2018). Jeon et al. (2020) signified that CSR has a positive impact on building brand image. Therefore, it is hypothesized that:

*H6: Brand image is positively influenced by corporate social responsibility.*

Thus, the role of tourism management is to decorate destination brands for tourists through awareness programs and create a positive image in the minds of tourists (Pierdicca et al., 2019).

Definitely, brand awareness supports tourists to make decisions about a tourist destination. Therefore, for developing brand image, brand awareness may differ based on the tourism management. Tourism is a combination of destination, accommodation and transportation (Getz, 2000). On the other hand, these facilities are the foremost components of brand association. Tourism makes the relationship between resident tourists and non-resident tourists. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

*H7: The relationship between brand awareness and brand image is positively moderated by tourism management.*

*H8: The relationship between brand association and brand image is positively moderated by tourism management.*

*H9: The relationship between brand superiority and brand image is positively moderated by tourism management.*

*H10: The relationship between brand affection and brand image is positively moderated by tourism management.*

*H11: The relationship between brand resonance and brand image is positively moderated by tourism management.*

*H12: The relationship between corporate social responsibility and brand image is positively moderated by tourism management.*

Advertisement not only provides customers with information but also pursues and reminds customers of purchasing products (Altberg et al., 2018). Advertisement helps customers build sound awareness that influences customers to develop a positive image inside their minds (Maria et al., 2019). At present, the internet is one of the significant and revolutionary techniques of advertisement (Anwar et al., 2019). Consumers may readily learn about a brand's distinctive qualities (Bhakar et al., 2019). Therefore, distinctive qualities of a certain product that instill the right meaning and emotions in the minds of consumers are regarded as brand superiority (Ali et al., 2018) and brand superiority generates distinctiveness that significantly affects brand image (Sultan & Wong, 2019). So, the roles of brand superiority for the brand image may vary as the level of advertisement changes.

Thus, brand affection is defined as consumers' feelings, favorable opinions, and adoration for the items (Harrigan et al., 2018). A higher degree of brand image is correlated with positive brand affection (Wu & Chen, 2019). Marketers build strong relationships with consumers through advertising (Sanne & Wiese, 2018). Brand resonance is subsequently created by strong consumer interactions (Pawar & Lavuri, 2018). However, brand image is heavily influenced by brand resonance (Wong, 2019). Consequently, depending on the degree of advertising, brand resonance could play a varying role in developing a brand image. Currently, businesses use advertisements to inform consumers about their products as well as their social, environmental, and humanitarian initiatives (Lloyd-Smith & An, 2019). These initiatives are being carried out by organizations to safeguard society, the environment, and humankind (Epperson et al., 2018). These are in fact essential components of CSR (Verčič & Čorić, 2018). CSR aids businesses in developing favorable perceptions in the eyes of their clientele (Cuesta-Valiño et al., 2019). Because of this, the significance

of CSR in a brand's image might change depending on the level of advertisement. In this way, it is hypothesized that:

*H13: The relationship between brand awareness and brand image is positively moderated by advertising.*

*H14: The relationship between brand association and brand image is positively moderated by advertising.*

*H15: The relationship between brand superiority and brand image is positively moderated by advertising.*

*H16: The relationship between brand affection and brand image is positively moderated by advertising.*

*H17: The relationship between brand resonance and brand image is significantly moderated by advertising.*

*H18: The relationship between CSR and brand image is significantly moderated by advertising.*

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research model supports the study to hypothesize the relationship between tourism management and advertising with six free factors (*brand awareness, brand association, brand superiority, brand affection, brand resonance, CSR*), and *brand image*. In the proposed research, the factors influencing brand image are considered as independent variables, while *tourism management* and *advertisement* are considered as moderating variables, and *brand image* is the dependent variable. Simultaneously, *advertisement* and *tourism management* are expected to influence moderating relationships among these six independent variables and *brand image*.

For this research, necessary data were collected through structured questionnaires from the top hotels of Dhaka and Cox's Bazar (Bangladesh). The respondents were chosen from the customers of some of those hotels. A sample of 600 respondents was selected through a multi-stage sampling method. A total of 299 filled-in questionnaires came up with valid responses. Thus, the response rate of 49.83% is adequate for such a study. Partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse the data using intelligent software SmartPLS 2.0. Reliability and validity of the data were determined based on the measurement model, and hypothesis testing was carried out by obtaining results based on the structural model.

### 4. RESULTS

#### 4.1. Demographic information

The male respondents include 271 (90.6%), and female respondents are only 28 (9.4%). The age range of respondents: 36-45 years old — 148 people (49.5%); 26-35 years old — 118 (36.5%), 46-55 years old — 22 (7.4%); however, only 3.7% of respondents are over 56 years old. Out of the total respondents, 108 (36.1%) are Bangladeshi nationals and the remaining 191 (63.9%) respondents are foreigners. Education status of the respondents: 8 (2.6%) had a diploma degree, 271 (90.6%) had a bachelor's degree (undergraduates), 19 (6.3%) had a graduate degree, and one participant (0.34%) had completed a diploma below level (others) degree. Respondents' employment status includes 106 (35.45%) as government employees, and the rest of the 193 participants (64.5%) are

private-sector employees. The profession of the responders includes 90 (30.1%) from technical jobs, and the remaining 209 (69.9%) are from non-technical jobs. In addition, 277 (92.6%) stayed in the branded hotel when they travelled, and 22 (7.4%) did not stay in the branded hotel. As far as customer loyalty is concerned, most of the participants, 256 (85.62%) replied that they chose the same hotel during their vacation, and only 44 (14.38%) respondents chose different hotels during their travel.

#### 4.2. Descriptive analysis

Responses were collected using a five-point Likert scale, with one (1) representing “strongly disagree” and five (5) representing “strongly agree”. Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1 as follows.

**Table 1.** Descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	SD	Max	Min
Brand awareness	4.010	0.658	5	2
Brand association	3.816	0.689	5	1
Brand superiority	3.658	0.796	5	1
Brand affection	4.195	0.422	5	1
Brand resonance	4.210	0.483	5	1
CSR	4.102	0.641	5	2
Advertisement	4.010	0.505	5	1
Tourism management	3.863	0.463	5	2
Brand image	4.052	0.442	5	2

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Table 1 shows that all the means are above and close to 4; that means respondents, in general, agree with the statements. On the other hand, standard deviations of data are close to the mean value. The standard deviation for each variable is smaller than one.

#### 4.3. PLS-SEM analysis results

The PLS measurement model provides the values of the reliability test, validity test, path coefficient, and coefficient of determination in the analysis of PLS-SEM. In this model, variables are normally linked in a figure that illustrates the route of the relationship (path coefficient) between endogenous and exogenous variables. Table 2 shows three different types of values — path coefficient, item loadings, and coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) — in the PLS measurement model. This study defines *brand association*, *brand awareness*, *brand superiority*, *brand resonance*, *brand affection*, and *CSR* as exogenous variables and *brand image* as endogenous variables. Table 2 below demonstrates the hypothesised model created using SmartPLS is 3.2.8. The Cronbach's alpha values and the composite reliability are used to conduct the reliability test. Furthermore, PLS-SEM analysis computes two types of validity. The reliability and validity testing criteria are detailed in the following sections.

##### 4.3.1. Reliability test

The reliability and validity of several constructs in the measurement model (outer model) are first examined. Using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values, the reliability of constructs is tested. Cronbach's alpha values and the composite reliability values of all constructs should be higher than 0.70 to make them reliable (Hair et al., 2012; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). As shown in Table 2, all Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceed 0.70, indicating strong internal data consistency (Hair et al., 2012). As a result, the current research meets the reliability of all constructs.

**Table 2.** Construct measurement properties (Part 1)

Construct	Item	Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha	$R^2$	$Q^2$
Brand awareness	BAWR1	0.847	0.707	0.906	0.862		
	BAWR2	0.852					
	BAWR3	0.831					
	BAWR4	0.832					
Brand association	BASS1	0.800	0.566	0.866	0.808		
	BASS2	0.764					
	BASS3	0.766					
	BASS4	0.657					
	BASS5	0.766					
Brand superiority	BSPR1	0.864	0.777	0.933	0.904		
	BSPR2	0.896					
	BSPR3	0.865					
	BSPR4	0.898					
Brand affection	BAFF1	0.806	0.608	0.885	0.836		
	BAFF2	0.841					
	BAFF3	0.784					
	BAFF4	0.811					
	BAFF5	0.640					
Brand resonance	BRES1	0.740	0.536	0.852	0.784		
	BRES2	0.759					
	BRES3	0.717					
	BRES4	0.732					
	BRES5	0.709					
CSR	CSR1	0.824	0.690	0.899	0.850		
	CSR2	0.844					
	CSR3	0.815					
	CSR4	0.838					

**Table 2.** Construct measurement properties (Part 2)

Construct	Item	Loadings	AVE	CR	Cronbach's alpha	R <sup>2</sup>	Q <sup>2</sup>
Advertisement	ADVR1	0.764	0.579	0.873	0.818		
	ADVR2	0.746					
	ADVR3	0.740					
	ADVR4	0.791					
	ADVR5	0.761					
Tourism management	TMNG1	0.795	0.536	0.852	0.785		
	TMNG2	0.739					
	TMNG3	0.680					
	TMNG4	0.729					
	TMNG5	0.711					
Brand image	BIMG1	0.776	0.518	0.865	0.813	0.745	0.405
	BIMG2	0.772					
	BIMG3	0.766					
	BIMG4	0.640					
	BIMG5	0.803					
	BIMG6	0.819					
	BIMG7	0.721					

Note: AVE — Average variance extracted, CR — Composite reliability.  
Source: Authors' elaboration.

#### 4.3.2. Convergent validity

Table 2 reveals that all AVE data are greater than 0.50 which denotes the constructs' convergent validity supports the current research. The item's ultimate standard outer loadings are higher than 0.50. Loadings greater than 0.5 can be acceptable if additional factors are in the block for comparison. However, Bagozzi and Yi (1988) proposed that 0.60 should be the minimum item loading. All of the item loadings in this investigation had values more than 0.60, indicating that the convergent validity is at

the indicator level, as shown in Table 2. As a result, AVE values of 0.50 and higher for all constructs and item loadings of 0.60 and above signify construct-convergent validity.

#### 4.3.3. Discriminant validity

Table 3 indicates that the square root of the AVEs has the strongest correlation with the other constructs, confirming the discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981) of the constructs in this study in yet another aspect.

**Table 3.** Correlations of constructs and discriminant validity assessment

Construct	ADV	B.AFF	B.ASS	B.AWR	B.IMG	B.RES	B.SPR	CSR	T.MNG
Advertisement (ADV)	0.760								
Brand affection (B.AFF)	0.235	0.779							
Brand association (B.ASS)	0.255	0.224	0.752						
Brand awareness (B.AWR)	0.303	0.530	0.394	0.840					
Brand image (B.IMG)	0.287	0.448	0.419	0.606	0.758				
Brand resonance (B.RES)	0.264	0.380	0.243	0.546	0.477	0.732			
Brand superiority (B.SPR)	-0.104	0.07	0.055	0.395	0.424	0.071	0.877		
CSR	0.262	0.407	0.382	0.569	0.530	0.432	0.391	0.830	
Tourism management (T.MNG)	0.382	0.197	0.269	0.286	0.340	0.184	-0.109	0.248	0.732

Source: Authors' elaboration.

#### 4.3.4. Predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>)

Under predictive relevance (Q<sup>2</sup>), PLS is used to evaluate the predictive validity of a large complex model generated blindfolded. Q<sup>2</sup> demonstrates how well the empirically acquired data can be recreated using the given model and the PLS parameters. Q<sup>2</sup> > 0 means the model contains predictive relevance, whereas Q<sup>2</sup> < 0 means a lack of predictive relevance. This study has achieved a Q<sup>2</sup> value of 0.405 for the *brand image* variable, which is greater than zero and implies the predictive relevance of the model. Hence, the Q<sup>2</sup> value of this study indicates that the model used in the investigation is adequate to explain the *brand image* of the hotel industry.

#### 4.3.5. Coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>)

The coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) indicates the variation in the endogenous variable produced by exogenous variables. The present study has achieved an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.745, which implies the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable by 74.50%. It is a generally accepted rule

that R<sup>2</sup> values of 0.25, 0.50, and 0.75 for endogenous latent variables may be weak, moderate, and substantial (Hair et al., 2011). The current study has achieved an R<sup>2</sup> value of 0.745, which is close to a substantial effect. As a result, the six independent variables employed in this study, namely *brand awareness*, *brand resonance*, *brand association*, *brand affection*, *brand superiority*, and *CSR*, had a substantial impact on *brand image*.

#### 4.3.6. Multicollinearity

In the study variance inflation factor (VIF) and tolerance values for exogenous variables were evaluated to detect multicollinearity. Typically, VIF values of 5 or less and tolerance levels of 0.20 or higher are required to avoid collinearity problems (Hair et al., 2011). In this study, the VIF values for all exogenous variables were below five and the tolerance values for all variables were above 0.20. This indicates that there are no multicollinearity problems in the data (Hair et al., 2013).

#### 4.4. Structural model

The study considers path coefficients, p-values, t-statistics, and errors. A hypothesis is considered valid if it is significant at a 5% level of significance (t-value > 1.96 or p < 0.05) (Henseler & Fassott, 2010). The results of the structural model for hypotheses testing are shown in Table 4.

The path coefficient is estimated to test the proposed hypotheses in the study. After a PLS model has been conducted, the path coefficients are estimated to indicate the hypothesized correlations

connecting the latent constructs. To test the hypotheses, the researcher opted for the bootstrap approach to evaluate how important the hypothesized relationships are in the path model. Approximately 1000 resamples were used for bootstrapping. The number of bootstrap cases is similar to the original number of observations to determine standard errors and find t-statistics (Hair et al., 2013). Acceptance of the hypothesis must be significant at the 5% level (p < 0.05) level or the t-statistics must be higher than 1.96.

**Table 4.** The structural estimates (Main effect)

Relationship	Path coefficients ( $\beta$ )	Std. error	t-statistics	p-values	Result
H1: Brand awareness $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.216	0.133	2.646***	0.004	Supported
H2: Brand association $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.107	0.033	2.976***	0.001	Supported
H3: Brand superiority $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.126	0.040	3.207***	0.000	Supported
H4: Brand affection $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.004	0.041	0.116	0.453	Not supported
H5: Brand resonance $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.100	0.049	2.086**	0.018	Supported
H6: CSR $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.506	0.137	3.830***	0.000	Supported

Note: \*\* p < 0.05 (significant at 5% level); \*\*\* p < 0.01 (significant at 1% level).

**Hypothesis H1:** This hypothesis is substantially supported since the path coefficient value is 0.216, whereas the t-statistics is 2.646 (p < 0.01), implying a 1% significance level.

**Hypothesis H2:** The path coefficient value is 0.107, which is significant at the 1% (t-statistics is 2.976; p < 0.01) level.

**Hypothesis H3:** This study finds that *brand image* is positively influenced by *brand superiority*. For this variable, the path coefficient and the t-statistic are 0.126 and 3.207 (p < 0.01).

**Hypothesis H4:** Table 4 shows that the path coefficient value of *brand affection* equals 0.004 while the t-statistics equals 0.116, which is not satisfactory (p > 0.05). Therefore, H4 is not confirmed.

**Hypothesis H5:** This hypothesis is proved in this study since the path coefficient has achieved a positive value of 0.100 and the value of equivalent t-statistics is 2.086, which is acceptable at the 5% level.

**Hypothesis H6:** This hypothesis is substantiated in this study since the path coefficient value equals 0.506, and such value is acceptable at a 1% level (t-statistics is 3.830; p < 0.01).

#### 4.5. Moderation analysis

The product indicator approach has been applied in this study to evaluate the moderating effect of *tourism management* as well as *advertisement* on

the correlation between determinants and *brand image*. This approach involves developing product terms using the static independent variable and the static moderator variable indicators. In the structural model, these product terms play the roles of the indicators of the interaction term. If the interaction variable's path coefficient is significant in statistical terms (t-value > 1.96 or p < 0.05), the moderating effect is supported (Henseler & Fassott, 2010). The present study has two moderators, and therefore the moderating effect is calculated in two models, which have been discussed below.

##### 4.5.1. Moderating effect of tourism management

First, the moderating effect of *tourism management* is tested based on the correlation between the six previously identified independent variables and *brand image*. Table 5 demonstrates the observations of the moderating role.

*Tourism management* is tested for its moderating effect on the correlation between *brand association*, *brand awareness*, *brand superiority*, *brand resonance*, *brand affection*, *CSR*, and *brand image*. The observations of this moderating effect test are given in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Moderating effect test findings (*Tourism management*)

Relationship	Path coefficients ( $\beta$ )	t-statistics	p-values	Result
H7: Brand awareness * <i>Tourism management</i> $\rightarrow$ Brand image	1.144	0.751	0.453	Not supported
H8: Brand association * <i>Tourism management</i> $\rightarrow$ Brand image	-0.141	0.559	0.748	Not supported
H9: Brand superiority * <i>Tourism management</i> $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.944	2.586***	0.005	Supported
H10: Brand affection * <i>Tourism management</i> $\rightarrow$ Brand image	0.055	0.068	0.473	Not supported
H11: Brand resonance * <i>Tourism management</i> $\rightarrow$ Brand image	1.591	1.935**	0.026	Supported
H12: CSR * <i>Tourism management</i> $\rightarrow$ Brand image	-0.455	0.331	0.370	Not supported

Note: \*\* p < 0.05 (significant at 5% level); \*\*\* p < 0.01 (significant at 1% level).

**Hypothesis H7:** It is found that *brand awareness* is correlated with the *brand image* with the moderating role of *tourism management*. The interaction effect of *brand awareness* on *tourism management* is shown in the model to evaluate such a moderation effect. The value of the path coefficient of

the interaction effect is 1.144 (Table 5), whereas the t-value is 0.751, which indicates it is not significant (p > 0.05). Thus, H7 is not supported.

**Hypothesis H8:** *Tourism management* is suggested to moderate the correlation between *brand image* and *brand association*. Table 5 shows that the path

coefficient of the interaction effect of *tourism management* and *brand association* on *brand image* is -0.141, with a value of 0.559. As the path coefficient is negative and the value is not satisfactory ( $p > 0.05$ ), *tourism management* does not have a moderating role in the correlation between *brand image* and *brand association*. Therefore, *H8* is not confirmed either.

*Hypothesis H9*: Table 5 demonstrates the path coefficient is 0.944 while the *t*-value found is 2.586; that is significant at the 1% level ( $p = 0.005$ ). It indicates that *tourism management* moderates the correlation between *brand image* and *brand superiority*. Thus, *H9* is vindicated.

*Hypothesis H10*: *Tourism management* is suggested to moderate the correlation between *brand affection* and *brand image*. The interaction terms, such as *brand affection* and *tourism management*, are added to the model to evaluate this moderation effect. The path coefficient is 0.055, and the *t*-value is 0.068, insignificant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, *H10* is not confirmed.

*Hypothesis H11*: The path coefficient of the interaction effect of *brand resonance* and *tourism management* on *brand image* is 1.591, and the *t*-value is 1.935. Such a value is momentous at the 5% level ( $p = 0.026$ ). Therefore, *H11* is confirmed.

*Hypothesis H12*: The interaction term (*CRS \* Tourism management*) is introduced to the model to evaluate this moderating effect. The interaction term "*CRS \* Tourism management*" has obtained a path coefficient value of -0.455 and a *t*-value of 0.331, which negates the hypothesis ( $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, *H12* is not supported.

#### 4.5.2. Moderating role of advertisement

The current study is also intended to examine the effect of moderating the role of an *advertisement* on the relationships between the six previously identified independent variables and *brand image*. The findings of this moderating effect are given in Table 6.

*Hypothesis H13*: Table 6 demonstrates that 1.972 is the value of the path coefficient of the interaction effect of *advertisement* and *brand awareness*, whereas 2.653 is the *t*-value, and such value is momentous at the 1% level ( $p = 0.004$ ). Thus, *H13* is confirmed.

*Hypothesis H14*: The path coefficient of this interaction (*Brand association \* Advertisement*) effect is 0.643, and the *t*-value is 2.879; therefore, it is momentous at the 1% level ( $p = 0.002$ ). Thus, *H14* is confirmed.

Table 6. Findings of moderating effect test (*Advertisement*)

Relationship	Path coefficients ( $\beta$ )	t-statistics	p-values	Result
H13: Brand awareness * Advertisement → Brand image	1.972	2.653***	0.004	Supported
H14: Brand association * Advertisement → Brand image	0.643	2.879***	0.002	Supported
H15: Brand superiority * Advertisement → Brand image	-0.342	1.102	0.135	Not supported
H16: Brand affection * Advertisement → Brand image	0.600	0.854	0.196	Not supported
H17: Brand resonance * Advertisement → Brand image	-0.484	0.582	0.280	Not supported
H18: CSR * Advertisement → Brand image	1.553	2.217**	0.013	Supported

Note: \*\*  $p < 0.05$  (significant at 5% level); \*\*\*  $p < 0.01$  (significant at 1% level).

*Hypothesis H15*: The value of the path coefficient of the interaction effect of *brand superiority* and *advertisement* on *brand image* is negative (-0.342), and such value is not significant ( $t = 1.102$ ;  $p = 0.135$ ). Thus, *H15* is not confirmed.

*Hypothesis H16*: The value of the path coefficient of the interaction effect (*Brand affection \* Advertisement*) is 0.600, and the *t*-value is 0.854; that means it is not significant ( $p > 0.05$ ). Thus, *H16* is not confirmed.

*Hypothesis H17*: This study confirms that the path coefficient of the interaction effect (*Brand resonance \* Advertisement*) on *brand image* is negative (-0.484), and the *t*-value is 0.582; that is, it is not important ( $p > 0.05$ ). Therefore, *H17* is not confirmed.

*Hypothesis H18*: The path coefficient of the interaction effect of *advertisement* and *CSR* on *brand image* is 1.553, and the *t*-value is 2.217, which means the value is significant at the 5% level ( $p = 0.013$ ). Therefore, *H18* is confirmed.

## 5. DISCUSSION

From the findings, we can conclude brand awareness has a significant influence on brand image in the hotel industry. Our findings can also be evident from the previous studies (Frank, 2013; Chi, 2016). Besides, brand association is also closely related to brand image. In marketing and branding literature, the brand association includes a bundle of benefits

that generate positive feelings in customers' minds about a brand. In the tourism sector, the brand association of a hotel comprises its external look, brand symbol (or logo), star rating, history, reputation, competitive price, country of origin, location, and user image (Severi & Ling, 2013). Our study also identifies that providing an appealing benefit to customers can create a strong brand image (Severi & Ling, 2013; Chi, 2016).

In pursuit of the determinants of brand image for branded hotels, the present study explored brand superiority as an important factor. Therefore, marketing practitioners especially in the tourism sector may emphasise brand superiority for creating a brand image. However, brand affection is not a major predictor of the brand image of the hotel industry, especially for branded hotels although emotions play a significant role in customer reactions and are central to the consumer behavior literature (Ahuvia et al., 2014; Kumar et al., 2015). Such an observation is not consistent with previous observations in which researchers have studied the important correlation between brand attachment and brand image (Ahuvia et al., 2014; Kumar et al., 2015), whereas brand resonance can be a powerful element in creating a long-term relationship between a customer and brand, as seen in previous literature (Huang & Sarigöllü, 2014).

In addition, the hospitality sector cannot ignore CSR activities because it can be one of the important tools among other determinants of brand image.



Considering the direct effect, we can conclude that tourism management moderates the correlation between brand resonance and brand image in a positive and significant way. This means that with better tourism management an organization can afford may make a powerful correlation between brand resonance and brand image. If an organization's tourism management is better and if it can maintain customer relationships, it can help to develop a strong brand image. Tourism management requires improving the image of destination brands and inculcating a positive perception among tourists (Pike et al., 2010; Alamu, 2016). While tourism management moderates the correlation between brand superiority and brand resonance with brand image, no moderating effect of tourism management was found on brand association, brand awareness, brand affection, and CSR with brand image. Statistics show that brand image does not increase while tourism management interacts with brand association, brand awareness, brand affection and CSR. The respondents were aware of the attributes and benefits of the particular hotels where they used to stay; they responded positively regarding the brand attributes of those hotels. They might not have had the chance to visit all the tourist' spots; rather, they interacted with a minor portion of tourism products and responded accordingly. For this reason, the respondents might have different experiences of overall tourism management at specific hotels.

Alternatively, the present study also used advertisement as a moderator on the relationships between brand association, brand awareness, brand superiority, brand resonance, brand affection, CSR, and brand image. The brand image enhancement in the hotel industry is connected to the actual customers' direct experience gathered from service performance and indirect experience gathered from advertisement. Consequently, brand awareness is stimulated by advertisement, which bestows both search and experiential brand image (Gehrels & de Looij, 2012). The advertising endeavours of specially branded hotels are also reflected by advertising on the internet due to the fact that the websites of the tour service providers communicate both tangible and intangible information about the hotel brands and their services (Henry, 2016). Customers receive information about hotel brands from both outward and inward searches (Wright et al., 2017) that work together to form customers' general brand choice and brand equity judgment (Kashkuli et al., 2014).

This study has investigated whether advertisements can influence brand image by interacting with the determinants of brand image. The researchers concluded that advertisement positively and significantly influences the degree of relationship between brand awareness and brand image. Therefore, the influence of brand awareness in the creation of the brand image is stronger when organisations use advertising to promote their products. This fact is supported by Kashkuli et al. (2014), who suggested that advertisement factors do a great job of improving hotel brands. All these advertisement factors inform customers about hotel brands and create a positive image among the customers. Hence, the present study confirms that advertisement strengthens the relationship

between brand awareness and brand image in the hospitality industry, especially for hotels.

Again, the hypothesis testing reveals that the correlation between brand association and brand image is advertisement moderated by advertisement. The observations reveal that when an advertisement performs a moderating role, the influence of brand association in building brand image becomes much higher. These associations build a positive image among the audience (Kashkuli et al., 2014). Yameen (2013) stated that advertisement campaigns play a significant role in promoting hotel brands in the hotel industry. The observations of this study also provide strong support that advertisements interacting with the tangible and intangible benefits of the hotels might influence customers to form positive feelings regarding a particular hotel brand. Hence, advertisement is a significant moderator in reinforcing the correlation between brand association and brand image.

The present study also reveals that advertisement has a significant moderating effect on the correlation between CSR and brand image. While companies are doing CSR practices, different types of advertising media are communicating the messages to the public. In this way, people grow a positive perception in their minds regarding a particular brand. Therefore, a good blending of CSR practices and communication media might play a crucial part in transmitting consistent and impressive messages to prospective customers, thus building a strong brand image. From the present study, it is obvious to state that with the interactive effect of CSR and advertisement a hotel's brand image can be accelerated (Park et al., 2008). From the customers' perspective, advertisement highly contributes to hotel brand equity, a composition of brand association, brand awareness, brand superiority, brand resonance, brand affection, and CSR in the hotel industry (Šerić et al., 2014).

While the advertisement is found to moderate the relationships between brand awareness and brand image; brand association and brand image; and CSR and brand image, there is no moderating effect of advertisement in the relations between brand affection, brand resonance, brand superiority and brand image. This study hypothesised advertisement moderates the relationship between brand affection and brand image; nevertheless, statistical findings generated from the raw data did not support this hypothesis. Hence, the brand image does not increase significantly even though there is a combined effect of brand affection and advertisement. Similarly, the advertisement could not influence the relation between brand superiority and brand image, and the relation between brand resonance and brand image.

## 6. CONCLUSION

The current research makes methodological contributions in various ways. Firstly, it adds value to hospitality and marketing literature by developing a brand image influencer that includes factors such as brand awareness, brand association, brand superiority, brand affection, brand resonance, CSR, tourism management, and advertisement. This scale will be useful for evaluating and examining hotel brand image accurately and consistently, thereby facilitating researchers in the food and accommodation

service industry to detect the influencing role and significance brand image can exert on brand equity. Additionally, this study validates the adapted measures of hotel brand image through empirical testing.

Secondly, this research employs PLS-SEM to identify the factors affecting hotel brand image. The study calculates the composite reliability, Cronbach's alpha reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity of latent constructs, which were found to be above the suggested minimum thresholds. The AVE value for each latent construct was examined to assess convergent validity, while discriminant validity was determined by comparing the correlations among latent constructs with the square roots of AVE. Cross-loading matrix results supported the discriminant validity of the conceptual framework. Therefore, this study successfully applies a robust approach (PLS path modeling) in examining the psychometric properties of latent constructs and testing the predictive power of the tool.

Finally, this study also contributes methodologically by developing and validating some items for advertisement, which future researchers can use. However, by gaining a deeper comprehension of the factors that influence brand image, managers can develop a brand management roadmap. Quality services are a critical aspect of hotel brand management, as they enable guests to find a better hotel brand among the alternatives. The present study evaluates brand attributes that relate to the company's tangible and intangible elements,

which in turn assess consumers' socio-psychological needs. Consequently, the study's results will allow hotel companies to establish a robust brand image by meeting guests' socio-psychological priorities while staying at a hotel.

The study's drawbacks include the use of a cross-sectional methodology, which may restrict the detection of causal inferences, and the inclusion of only guests from specific hotel brands in two cities. Both of these factors decrease the generalizability of the study findings. Future studies should use a longitudinal approach to examine causal linkages and a more varied sample of hotels from throughout the nation.

The most significant assets for hotel businesses are the brand image and customers' perceptions of the brand. If the companies can build a powerful brand with a great image, they can enjoy numerous marketing and revenue advantages. An improved understanding of the determinants of the brand image will enable managers to develop specific guidelines for tactical brand management. Since the current study's findings are generated from the responses of actual customers of the branded hotels in Bangladesh, it can help this country's tourism industry develop its products to build a better brand image. For the development and management of the hotel industry, policymakers might also consider the findings of this study to develop this industry by upholding a strong brand image of this sector. In addition, this empirical study will contribute theoretically and practically to the existing marketing and branding literature.

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