

# Brand Personality in Politics : Scale Development and Validation

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## Abstract

The ever increasing market dynamics and very tough competition has increased the role of brands to a supreme level. Researchers like Plummer (1985) and Aaker (1997) highlighted the critical role of brand personality in building loyalty and competitive advantage. This article focused on whether the concept of branding is applicable to political parties. It highlighted the problems associated with the managerial approach to branding in politics and advocated an alternative form of consumer learning perspective. This approach is used to describe the process and reasons to form brand personalities in politics. Important prior influences on the brand personality were highlighted, that is, events, advertising, endorsers, and prevalent users and their impact upon the learning of voters regarding brand personality of political parties. After conceptualizing political party brand personality, the paper examined whether the available scale of brand personality was suitable in context of Indian politics.

**Keywords :** brands, brand personality, partisanship, politics, political parties

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**B**rands have a great impact on the psychology of customers regarding evaluation of products and services. In one of the most popular experiments, consumers in a blind test (in which brands were not revealed to customers) favoured Pepsi over Coke. When the brands were told to the customers, Coke won over Pepsi by a huge margin (De Chernatony & McDonald, 2000). Such a brand effect can also be seen in politics. People may stop liking the policies when they find that policies are framed by a particular party. There is a close relationship between brand personality and brand equity via brand trust, brand attachment, and brand commitment (Ahmad & Thyagaraj, 2015).

Brand personality is one of the important components of brand Image (Keller, 1993) and wide research has been done on the construct. However, majority of the research has focused on commercial brands, and brand personality in case of politics has rarely been focused upon by researchers. This article, therefore, attempts to build an understanding of brand personality construct in politics. In the beginning, the theory of consumer learning is used to comprehend how voters gain knowledge about a particular party, personality, and politicians. Secondly, the research develops a conceptual understanding of the important sources of knowledge considered by voters to develop brand personality. At last, an amended scale of brand personality is developed for use for Indian political parties.

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## Are Political Parties Brands ?

To start with, it is very important to justify the usage of approach of a brand in party politics. No doubt, in marketing literature, there is acceptance that one of the most important assets of an organization is brand (Aaker, 1991, 1999 ; Keller, 1993; Kapferer, 2004). The applicability of marketing approach in non profit markets (Kotler & Levy, 1969) further broadened the application of branding in universities, government run organizations, etc. In fact, principles of branding are applied in all kinds of organizations where consumer choice is involved. So, it is unquestionable that political parties are organizations in which promises, ideas, thoughts are sold to get voter support. Hence, a series of research papers are there that accept politicians and political parties as brands (Kavanagh, 1995; Kotler & Kotler, 1999; Needham, 2005 ; Schweiger & Adami, 1999; White & de Chernatony, 2002).

There are concerns to use the concept of a brand in politics because of difference in commercial and political markets. For example, Lock and Harris (1996) concluded that there is much more complexity in the range of products offered by political parties than other brands ranging from promises on health, education, poverty, defense, etc. While voting, a voter is required to agree on none or all of a party's policies. In addition, the policies accepted at the time of voting are more liable to change than other products or services because political parties may compromise on them once elected to power (Butler & Collins, 1994).

Furthermore, there are worries about the detrimental outcome of creating brands on the democratic process. For getting advantage over rival political parties, branding strategies restrict the political agenda and even expand the political disconnection at the grass root level (Lilleker & Negrine, 2003; Needham, 2005 ; Scammell, 1999). Some of the researchers have the opinion that branding benefits a political party at the cost of the democratic process.

Although the negative view of branding is valid, but it is not complete. The branding role it supports is oriented towards the product, focused mainly on what a political party does to influence voters. Another approach to branding is consumer-oriented perspective followed by a huge branding literature which focuses on why and how customers learn about the brands. This literature is built with the assumption that customers have a natural urge to know about the brands so that they can wisely decide while purchasing and to deal effectively with an increasingly complex and cluttered market place. It is this view of branding that is taken into consideration in this paper.

## Review of Literature

**(1) Consumer Brand Knowledge :** Brands are not physical, but intangible (Keller, 1993). A brand is primarily concerned with knowledge and image of a particular product stored in the minds of the customers. Brand knowledge in the minds of customers is an outcome of separate bits of information termed as nodes that connect together in the minds of the customers to form alike networks (Collins & Loftus, 1975 ; Wyer & Srull, 1989). Knowledge is retrieved from the mind when a node gets some input or stimuli from others by a process called activation (De Groot, 1989). Thus, the stimulus of seeing any political leader on television can trigger from mind other associations such as the political party that a leader belongs to, initiatives taken by the leader or political party, and so on. Therefore, a political brand is a related network of interconnected information, mainly political, held in the memory and retrievable when some stimulus is used from the memory of a voter.

Personality, according to Allen and Olson (1995), is the set of meanings developed by a person to depict the characteristics of another person. Aaker (1997) defined brand personality as the set of human characteristics associated with the brand. From the customer point of view, the political party personality is the outcome of an associative network of human characteristics related to that party stored in the mind and is retrieved when some stimuli is given to the voter. The sources for the development of brand personality are quite large in number.

**(2) Motivation of Consumers to Develop a Party Political Personality :** Highlighting the process that how a personality develops in mind does not throw light on the motivation behind development of related network of information about a particular political party. For a majority of the voters, collecting knowledge about a political party is costly because of the efforts involved in it against the motivation to do so (Downs, 1957). Majority of the Indian political parties offer almost the same kind of promises (Product) to the voters like welfare of under privileged, economic development, elimination of corruption, etc. but differ on the methods of doing it. So, to make a distinction between the parties, huge efforts are required. Encounter with increased cost of learning, voters tend to use informational shortcuts to decide their voting intentions (Popkin, Gorman, Phillips, & Smith, 1976). One of the such shortcuts is personality viewpoint of political parties. In one of the recent researches in England, it was found that leaders and party image had more influence in engaging voters than the policies a political party adopted (Ipsos - Mori, 2005). Brand image also has a direct and significant effect on progressive phases of loyalty (Jana & Chandra, 2016).

Voters can use the brand personality to lessen the danger of voting for dishonest parties. Politics is based on faith and credibility (Mahajan & Wind, 2002) and voters, while voting, do not know whether the policies promised by the political parties will be delivered or not. Faced with this uncertainty and also almost same policies, there is possibility that voters will choose the party that is most trusted to fulfill their promises.

**(3) Brand Personality of a Political Party :** Marketing literature highlights the advantages that an organization (political party) can get from a favorable brand personality. A set of unique and beneficial associations can be created with the help of distinctive brand personality (Keller, 1993 ; Phau & Lau, 2000). So, brand personality has a very important role to play in influencing consumer choice and preferences (Batra, Lehmann, & Singh, 1993 ; Biel, 1993). It is also true in politics where it has been observed that personality has an ability to influence the voting intentions (Newman, 1999). There are endless stimuli that can influence the personality of a political party. These are events and politicians/party actions/brand users and endorsers which influence the personality of a political party.

**(4) Personality of a Politician :** Personality of a particular person is created in the mind of another person by observing the behavior of that person. A person can be inferred as cruel if he/she is seen kicking an animal. The process of how brand personality is formed is same as of personality of a human being. Brand personification is done based on the observed behavior of a brand, allowing human characteristics to be drawn from the actions or planned action.

It has already been seen that politicians and political parties have distinguishable personalities (Skarzynska, 2004; Schneider, 2004). Specifically, a leader is more powerful than the party in personality terms, so it is very easy for the voters to gain knowledge about a leader's personality traits than the artificial entity, that is, a party.

It has been widely accepted that politics is all about apologue than policy implementation or it is more of an image rather than actual work. So, there is no difference between politicians and actors who perform in a pre defined way to achieve party political objectives which are predetermined (O'Shaughnessy, 2003). For example, recently, Aam Aadmi Party chief and Delhi chief minister Arvind Kejriwal travelled through metro train to reach the party office. Similarly, on a number of occasions, he and his ministers have been seen using their own normal cars rather than luxury official cars for their work. Similarly, Indian National Congress Vice President Rahul Gandhi, on a lot of occasions, has been seen living in backward class people's homes and eating with them. All this behavior is planned to make clear the personality traits which are important for the choice of a party or a leader.

Additionally, behavior and actions of a politician's physical appearance also influence the personality conclusion to be drawn. Thus, Mr. Rahul Gandhi being younger as compared to other opposite party leader Mr. Arvind Kejriwal may be perceived more contemporary than his predecessor Mrs. Sheela Dikshit.

**(5) Political Parties :** Although leaders have more direct influence on perception of personality, the role of a party cannot be overlooked. The party offers the umbrella of prediction, recognition, and cohesion like corporate brands (Singer, 2002). Its long life as compared to a politician's life signifies that it has a wide range of meanings attached with it. Thus, one of the important sources of personality traits will be the core party values or party ideology. For example, the Bharatiya Janata Party's commitment to decrease subsidies may reasonably be expected to influence its perception on “daring” and “original” traits of personality.

The behavior of a party in the past or its current policies also influence the perceived personality. For instance, real or promised work on corruption, fraud, crime, etc. can make a party to appear as soft or tough. For a voter, the personality of politicians and political party is not distinct but combined to construct related connections in the memory about the overall brand. Generally, company and product brands interact and create synergy to enforce each other in a positive way. In recent Indian general elections, it was seen that personality of a particular leader was utilized to reposition the parties which were not very well perceived.

**(6) Brand Users and Endorsers :** Brand users and endorsers are also recognized to have a possible impact on brand personality (Aaker, 1997). Members of a political party as common brand users can give powerful indications to the public at large about the overall party personality. The Aam Aadmi Party, for example, has been perceived by their membership as young and contemporary.

The celebrity who endorses a particular party is also considered one of the important sources of personality association. The power of celebrities in influencing the party political personality depends upon their trustworthiness, credibility, and attractiveness (Ohanian, 1991). These criteria are in harmony with Navjot Singh Sidhu (ex- cricketer) and Hema Malini (actress) who were the star campaigners of BJP in the 2014 general elections. Party strategists value celebrities because they acquire personality traits, which are very different from seasoned politicians. Those stated above are majorly related with personality traits such as trendy, professional, and being cool than the majority of the politicians. Interestingly, these associative meanings are able to transfer from the endorser to the political party even when they are in very different kinds of markets.

However, this is a risky strategy if the ideas of these endorsers are not implemented and turned into policies, and they utilize their position to criticize the political party (Branigan, 2006). So, involvement of an endorser can prove both positive and negative.

**(7) Events :** Both controllable and uncontrollable events greatly affect the perceptions about personality of a political party. Controllable events, if not handled properly, will have a negative effect on the brand personality of any party. Latest riot in Jatt Andolan is an example of an event which could have been controlled with the timely action of the government. But it was not handled properly, which led to negative image of the ruling government in Haryana.

The role of uncontrollable events in politics is more as compared to most other organizations. These uncontrollable events can have both positive and negative impact on the personality of a political party. For example, the decrease in international oil prices decreased inflation in 2015 in India, which led to a positive impact on BJP's personality to meet the promise of decrease in inflation rate. It is also very important how media covers all such events which influences how the personality of a particular party will be perceived by the voters. The right message needs to be communicated to the public through “unpaid” media to build or defend the party's image.

**(8) Advertising :** In the commercial organizations, marketing professionals have become more conscious of the importance of building a positive brand image through paid advertising (Yaverbaum, 2001).

However, political parties have limited capacity to afford a uniform personality driven campaign. Majority of the advertisements in politics, which are concentrated in the general elections campaign period, are outside the control of the Advertising Standard Authority, because of which majority of the political parties concentrate on

advertising, which is negative in nature and focuses on personality of opposition parties or their main leaders. Thus, the last Indian general elections were majorly focused on negative personality advertising of opposition parties. BJP majorly concentrated on the corruption, scams, and inflation during the INC party tenure. A recent research in India revealed that persuasive advertisement has a significant impact on the personality traits formation of brands, although there was variation of influence depending upon the treatment of persuasive advertisement and product type (Merabet & Benhabib, 2012).

**(9) Partisanship and Political Party Personality :** It is clear that everybody does not have the same level of interest in politics. Commercial organization's involvement with a brand affects how the information is processed and stored in the memory of customers (Petty, Cacioppo, & Schumann, 1983). More involvement leads to more looking for information and more in depth thinking, which is majorly issue based. In politics, it is particular candidate preference which affects the way the information about a party and its leaders is interpreted. Liking for a particular candidate leads to selective selection and interpretation of information. Dogmatic processing of information takes place if it is not consistent with the currently held views. For biased processing, various defense mechanisms are usually used such as development of counter arguments, selective selection, and distortion of information, and even avoidance of information (Klein & Ahluwalia, 2005).

Thus, negative information by liked leaders may be avoided if it appears in a newspaper or magazine which is supported by opposition parties. This clearly shows that voters will filter the negative information and process only positive information about the preferred leader or political party. Partisanship thus affects the way how information is processed in the memory. It means the more partisan a voter, the more positive perceptions he/she would have about the preferred party.

## Methodology

↳ **Brand Personality Scale in Indian Politics :** Aaker (1997) developed a brand personality scale by taking commercial brands because of which lot of research happened in accessing the brand personality of different products, services, and organizations (Aaker 1999 ; Bauer, Mader, & Keller, 2000 ; Diamantopolous, Smith, & Grime, 2005). Aaker (1997) developed a brand personality scale by taking 114 possible personality traits of a human being and then asked respondents which traits were relevant in describing specific brands. Both product and services brands were considered in the study, and the total number was 37, which included Visa credit card, news channel CNN, and some complex brands like Apple and IBM computers, and Mercedes automobiles, which required consumers to think and evaluate various alternatives before taking the decision. The final scale has 42 individual personality traits under five main dimensions. These dimensions are Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophisticated, and Ruggedness. Sincerity is made up of honesty, sincere, down to earth, and wholesome traits. Brand personality dimension Excitement is derived from exciting, up to date, daring, and imaginative traits. Brands are Competent if they have reliable, successful, and hard working personality traits ; whereas, Sophistication includes smooth, good looking, and upper class personality traits. Finally, a brand has Ruggedness if it is perceived as masculine, rugged, and tough.

Dass, Prakash, and Khattri (2012) accessed the brand personalities of cola brands (Coke, Pepsi, and Thums Up) by taking scale of brand personality developed by Aaker with the help of perceptual map using discriminant analysis and found that Coke is considered to be down to earth and successful ; whereas, Pepsi is up to date and charming and Thums up is honest and a tough brand.

A brand may not be considered by customers comprising of all the personality traits. For example, a rugged brand may find it difficult to be treated as a sophisticated brand. Primarily political parties will aspire to be perceived as honest, competent, and reliable. All these can affect the perceptions about trustworthiness of a political party.



This scale was applied without any alteration in the German political scenario by Schneider (2004). This scale was used by the author to access the stability and level of political brand knowledge, but the validity of the scale to measure the political party personality was not tested. Recent research, however, argues that there is a need to amend this scale before applying it to measure brand personality (Aaker, Benet-Martinez, & Garolera, 2001). As commercial brands are very different from political brands, it is not very certain whether the brand personality structure in case of Indian politics will be same as that of USA commercial brands.

To test this, the Aaker brand personality scale is used with Indian political parties to judge whether the same brand structure applies or not. To ensure high level of validity and reliability, we have followed the scale development procedure proposed by Churchill (1979), which is also in agreement with the findings of Anderson and Gerbing (1982) ; Bentler and Bonnet (1980) ; Bagozzi, Youjjae, and Lyne (1991) ; Nunnally and Bernstein (1994) ; and Hinkin (1995).

Before the questionnaire was finalized, it was pretested. “Expert” pretest was done with the help of 10 academicians having exhaustive knowledge of the subject area. The pretests showed that some traits, that is, Corporate, Glamorous, Charming, Western, Rough, Cool, Up-to-Date, Upper Class were seen as confusing or repetitive with the other mentioned traits in context of the Indian political parties, and hence, these items were not included in the questionnaire. The scale was modified and again feedback from the experts was sought. This time, the experts were fine with the scale, and they did not suggest any item to be deleted or modified. After that, the second pretest comprising of 50 respondents similar to the research group was conducted. To check the reliability, the Cronbach's Alpha was calculated and was found to be .756 (Table 1), which is more than the minimum acceptable limit (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). This shows that the consistency between the items was adequate and we could go ahead with the final data collection.

**Table 1. Reliability of the Scale**

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of items
.756	34

The questionnaire was then filled by 412 voters selected from 10 districts of Punjab in the month of December 2016 and January 2017 to measure their individual perceptions about the personality of five major political parties of Punjab, that is, Indian National Congress, Bharatiya Janata Party, Shiromani Akali Dal, Aam Aadmi Party, and Bahujan Samaj Party. Of the respondents, 114 were Indian National Congress supporters, 92 Bharatiya Janata Party supporters, 74 were Shiromani Akali Dal supporters, 82 were Aam Adami Party supporters, and 22 were Bahujan Samaj Party supporters. The remaining respondents were either sympathizers or non aligned.

## Analysis and Results

**(1) Exploratory Factor Analysis :** We conducted several iterative cycles of factor analysis on the data. The number of factors extracted and total variance explained were studied after each cycle. Items having low communalities and correlations were deleted to improve the factor structure and to get the matrix with much clear loadings. To

**Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.840
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	18205.53
	<i>Df</i>	496
	Sig.	.000

**Table 3. Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6
Reliable	.960					
Hardworking	.970					
Secure	.873					
Intelligent	.897					
Technical	.719					
Successful	.893					
Leader	.850					
Confident	.977					
Real		.877				
Wholesome		.942				
Original		.970				
Unique		.963				
Independent		.967				
Down to Earth			.930			
Honest			.939			
Sincere			.944			
Sentimental			.933			
Friendly			.870			
Trendy				.973		
Exciting				.933		
Young				.824		
Contemporary				.721		
Good Looking				.966		
Feminine					-.811	
Outdoorsy					.922	
Masculine					.952	
Tough					.810	
Cheerful						.834
Daring						.825
Spirited						.843
Imaginative						.832

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

analyze the data, principal component matrix with varimax rotation was used.

**(i) Validity and Reliability of the Instrument :** The results of Kaiser - Meyer - Olkin measure of sampling adequacy indicate that KMO is more than 0.6 (.840) and negligible significance level is shown by Bartlett's test of sphericity (Table 2). This result shows that the data were adequate for factor analysis.

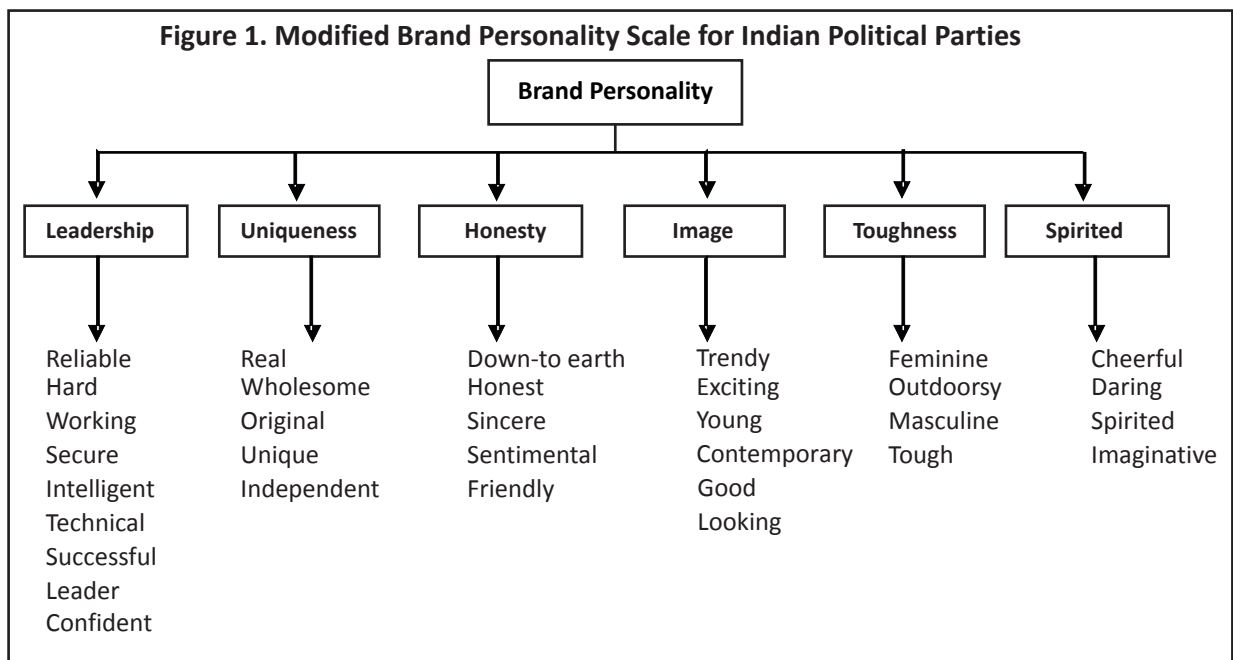
**(ii) Factor Structure :** Rotated component matrix was used to classify the items (Table 3).

The modified six factor structure is shown in the Figure 1. Even if some of the dimensions that came out are similar to Aaker's (1997) model, but the complete structure is significantly different (See Figure 2 for Aaker's Model). Majority of the personality traits have loaded in a different way to produce dimensions that are a combination of Aaker's original five dimensions. This required giving new names to all the dimensions (Table 4) to present in an effective way the brand personality structure in Indian Politics. The above differences (See Figure 1 and Figure 2) clearly support that the structure of brand personality is very unique and using Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale is inappropriate in this context.

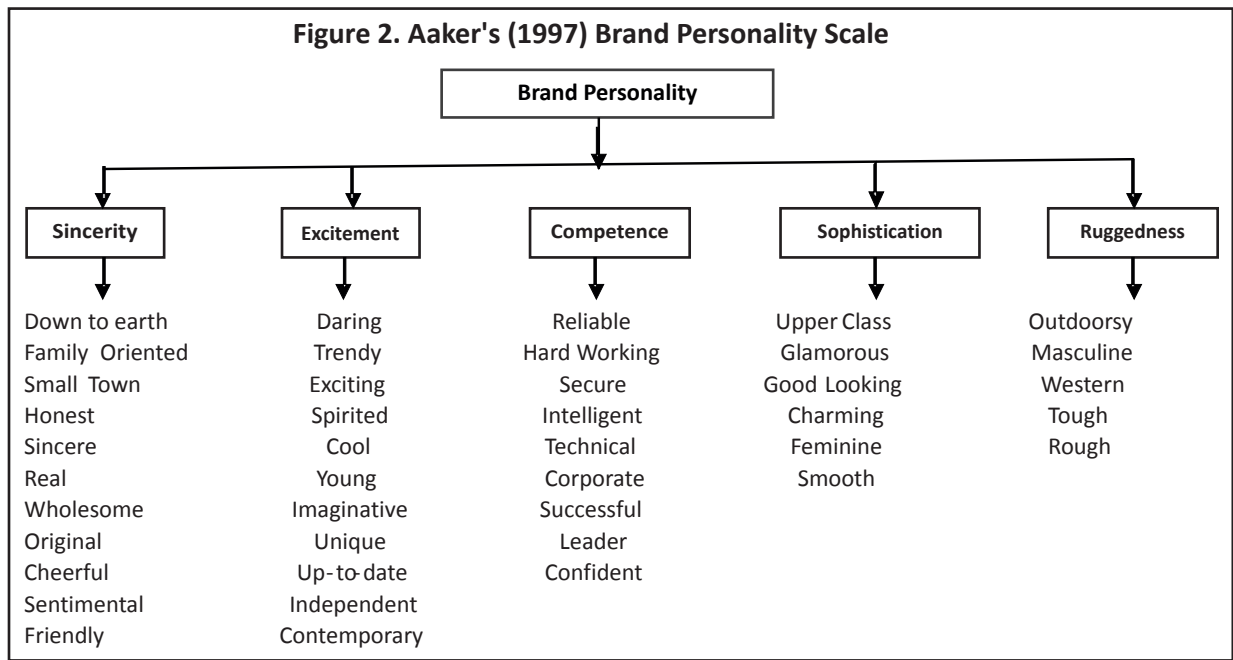
**(2) Confirmatory Factor Analysis :** Confirmatory factor analysis is a special case of SEM (Joreskog & Sorbom, 2004). The confirmatory factor analysis was applied using SPSS Amos 22.0 to the six factors extracted in factor analysis. The model indices are chi square = 902.51,  $CMIN/DF = 2.15$ ,  $GFI = .821$ ,  $RMR = .321$ ,  $CFI = .85$ , and  $RMSEA = .048$ . Careful scrutiny of the results show that some indicators are below the threshold level. After the inspection of modification indices, covariance, and standardized residue covariance, two items were deleted and again, the analysis was run. The final indices : chi square = 816.76,  $CMIN/DF = 2.45$ ,  $GFI = .878$ ,  $RMR = .027$ ,  $CFI = .97$ , and  $RMSEA = .059$  are all in the acceptable limits.

**Table 4. Personality Dimensions**

Personality Dimension	Factor	Variance Explained	Eigen value
Leadership	1	20.35%	6.80
Uniqueness	2	14.30%	5.45
Honesty	3	13.56%	3.99
Image	4	13.15%	3.94
Toughness	5	9.83%	3.00
Spirited	6	9.18%	2.52







**Table 5. Reliability Analysis**

Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.722	28

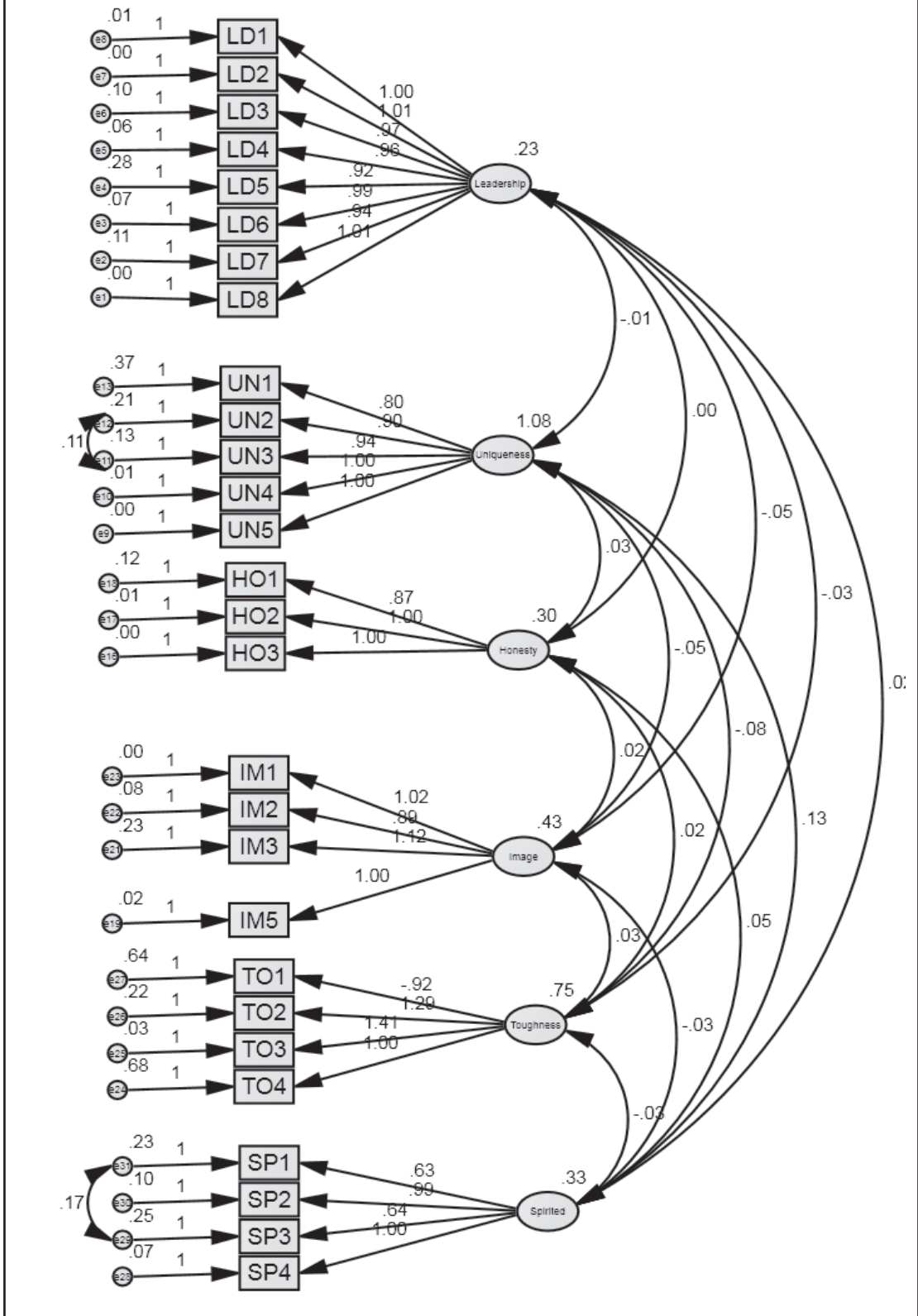
The Figure 3 gives a comprehensive view of confirmatory factor analysis and the Table 6 presents the factors extracted after confirmatory factor analysis. The final items were again checked for internal consistency and Cronbach's alpha was calculated using SPSS. The value of Cronbach's alpha is .722 (Table 5), which indicates high degree of internal consistency.

To check the construct validity, the composite reliability of all the factors was calculated, which is in the satisfactory range of .686 to .756 (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995). Also, the average variance of the six factors extracted ranges from .518 to .641, which is also in the acceptable limits. So, these values indicate the construct validity of the scale. Factorial loading and reliability measures also support the construct validity of the scale.

## Discussion and Managerial Implications

The paper has explored the importance of brand personality of a political party in influencing the voting intentions of the voters. It has also pointed out that politics as a brand keeps on changing and is largely based on trust. So, it is not like other commercial brands. Now, we are in a better position to extend the differences between commercial brands and political brands by taking the proof from the findings that a political party's personality is very much different from other commercial brands. To be very specific, 14 out of 42 (approximately 33%) original variables are found to be very confusing as far as politics is concerned or do not add significantly to the explanatory power of the scale and so are removed. Also, factor analysis exhibits a brand's personality structure in politics, which is very much different from the existing brand personality structure of commercial brands (Table 6). Presumptive personality dimensions in case of politics (i.e., uniqueness, image, and leadership) are exhibited in the modified personality structure that becomes evident from the analysis.

**Figure 3. Confirmatory Factor Analysis Model**



**Table 6.Extracted Factors**

<b>Variable Code</b>	<b>Variable Description</b>	<b>Factor Name</b>
LD1	Reliable	
LD2	Hard Working	
LD3	Secure	
LD4	Intelligent	<b>Leadership</b>
LD5	Technical	
LD6	Successful	
LD7	Leader	
LD8	Confident	
UN1	Real	
UN2	Wholesome	
UN3	Original	<b>Uniqueness</b>
UN4	Unique	
UN5	Independent	
HO1	Down-to Earth	<b>Honesty</b>
HO2	Honest	
HO3	Sincere	
IM1	Trendy	<b>Image</b>
IM2	Exciting	
IM3	Young	
IM5	Good Looking	
TO1	Feminine	<b>Toughness</b>
TO2	Outdoorsy	
TO3	Masculine	
TO4	Tough	
SP1	Cheerful	<b>Spirited</b>
SP2	Daring	
SP3	Spirited	
SP4	Imaginative	

In place of just explaining every element of the new structure in relation to politics, what is more important is how the noticed differences in brand personality scale in relation to politics may be traceable to those exclusive differences that make up a political market place.

A major distinction between the commercial and political markets is attaching greater importance to leadership in politics, that is, prominent leaders affect the personality of their political parties. Commercial brands (with some exceptions like Apple's Steve Jobs, Tata's Ratan Tata, and Patanjali's Baba Ramdev) usually do not have such leaders who are very popular and known and from whom the personality of a brand may be judged. Majority of the commercial organizations have to depend upon the celebrities or other endorsers to build brand personality ; whereas, the personality of a political party may be obtained directly from the personality of prominent politicians belonging to that party. It is worth mentioning that both image and leadership dimensions here are defined more by

items that are a reflection of a person (intelligent, reliable, confident, hard working, and young) than a product (technical, corporate) and that is why it is different from the personality of a commercial brand.

The appearance of the uniqueness dimension in the brand personality scale at first sight is an unanticipated one. To attain success in politics, it is critical to be an across-the-board party (Kirchheimer, 1966) which has created larger policies, similarities, or less differences between the main political parties. Because of this, it may be expected that uniqueness is not important as a measure of brand personality. On observation, however, the main political parties strive to remain in power for ages, and differences tend to become more fixed with the passage of time, for example, Reebok and Nike & Pepsi and Coke. In case of commercial markets, negative advertisement is rarely used, and brands are positioned far from the competition. In politics, although policies are more or less the same; the aggressive political parties attack on their rival parties and aggressive communication regarding work on different policies creates the impression of difference between them, and this intensity is somehow missing in case of commercial brands. In addition to this, it must not be forgotten that even if the policies are same, there are many other means to be seen as unique and distinctive. People have already witnessed the exemplification of political parties in the appearance of their well accepted and favored leaders that enables personality differences among political parties to be identified by voters.

Another major difference between the commercial markets and politics is greater importance attached with honesty in case of politics. Although there are instances when commercial brands' honesty was in question (e.g. Volkswagen, Nestle), but these are very rare and brands cannot exist for long if they are seen to be not honest, that is, promising features, benefits, etc. which they cannot deliver. So while describing the brand personality in commercial markets, honesty is likely to be less important. On the other hand, in politics, promises made by political parties are on a very large scale than the commercial brands. In case of politics, media and opposite political parties regularly raise a question about the honesty of a political party and integrity of leaders in power. Such circumstances provide justification for its appearance as an important dimension in the modified scale of brand personality.

Although the main differences explained above between the brand personality scale of political and commercial brands are logical, but still, they are speculative. Hence, it can be said with certainty that whatever may be the actual reasons for different structures of brand personality for political brands, differences prevail. The findings highlight the viewpoint that given the differences between the commercial sector and politics, a cautious approach is required while applying marketing methods, tools, ideas, and specifically, different scales to politics.

## **Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research**

Conceptual and empirical findings reported in this study have a number of possible limitations. Although brand personality dimensions in politics have been determined, capability to comment on the relative importance of these dimensions on the voting behaviour has not been verified. For example, does leadership have a great impact on party choice than uniqueness or honesty? The complete field of ideal personalities is a very critical area for future research. Does ideal personality differ between voter segments needs to be examined.

The empirical research reported in this paper pointed out that Aaker's (1997) scale of brand personality is not suitable to be used in politics. However, the new six dimension scale developed also requires to be used with prudence, as its generalization to the broader Indian voter scene is yet to be proven. Furthermore, a modified personality scale developed in this study should not be used unchanged in other countries as research on commercial brands indicates that differences in political cultures usually produce different results.

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