



INTERNSHIP REPORT

Impact of CSR on Brand Image of Fair & Lovely

Prepared For:

Ms. Asphia Habib

Lecturer, BRAC University

Prepared By:

Farzana Zafor Seema

ID: 10204099

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LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

To
Ms. Asphia Habib
Lecturer
BRAC University
December 9, 2014



Dear Ms. Habib

Enclosed is a copy of my internship report prepared as a prerequisite for the completion of my Bachelors Degree in Business Administration (BBA) at BRAC University, titled ***“Impact of CSR on the Brand Image of Fair & Lovely”***. This report has been prepared using information accumulated during my internship tenure at Unilever Bangladesh, extracted from both primary and secondary sources. Entailing the detailed documentation of the project assigned to me-Fair and Lovely Foundation Re-launch, 2015, the report also examines the impact of CSR activities of Fair & Lovely on the brand image

I earnestly hope the report has done adequate justice to your valuable guidance. For further clarification of any grey areas, I am available at your convenience.

Sincerely

Farzana Zafor Seema

ID: 10204099

BRAC Business School

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This report marks the conclusion of my bachelors program in Business Administration. During the course of the degree, I have had the opportunity to learn from some very knowledgeable instructors who imparted in me priceless lessons of the business arena. Hence, I would like to express my unadulterated gratefulness to all my teachers who made me enough resourceful to complete such a comprehensive report.

I feel immensely indebted to all those who facilitated the successful completion of this report. Firstly, I extend my gratefulness to Ms Asphia Habib, lecturer of BRAC Business School, to provide me with her continuous guidance on the format and ensuring the credibility of the content within.

Secondly, my sincere appreciation goes to Mr. Nurul Monowar, Senior Brand Manager of Fair & Lovely and my project supervisor, to trust me with the crucial project of Fair & Lovely Foundation re-launch. Working under him offered me a rare opportunity to practically witness the leadership qualities I had read about in books. Finally, I am obligated to Ms. Ankan Siddiquee, Brand Manager of Deodorants and Fair & Lovely, for her relentless support in providing me with all the information and valuable insights into the project and the organization as a whole.

Finally, I convey my acknowledgement to my family, friends and everybody else who have, directly or passively, contributed in facilitating my learning as a student.

ABSTRACT

This report entails the objective and outline of the project of the re-launch of the Fair & Lovely Foundation, categorized as CSR activity of the brand Fair & Lovely. Fair & Lovely Foundation is a social initiative that aims to fuel women empowerment in the field of education, career and entrepreneurship. In addition, the report examines the impact of such CSR activities on the brand image of Fair & Lovely.

Fair & Lovely aims to augment the brand equity with its endeavors in the form of the FAL Foundation activities. The foundation is also operating in India which is a close resemblance of the operations of the foundation in Bangladesh. FALF intends to serve as the vehicle to mobilize the women of the society to pursue their goals and attain economic autonomy before marriage. The activities of the foundation are housed under three pillars- Education, Career and Enterprise- and include scholarship program, vocational training and disbursement of seed capital for women entrepreneurs. Despite having a strong urge to become self dependent before marriage, the women of Bangladesh cannot often accomplish their career goals at the face of social bottlenecks and lack of resources. Fair & Lovely Foundation has been created to mitigate the bottlenecks that constrict the emergence of women as economically self reliant individuals.

In conjunction with the intended objectives of FAL Foundation and a succinct outline of the aforementioned project, this report also presents the findings of a study examining the impact of such CSR activities as FAL Foundation on the brand image. Besides fulfilling social responsibilities, Fair & Lovely intends to reinforce the brand equity of Fair & Lovely through actively participating in the advancement of women. Hence, the study helps evaluate the fulfilling of the preset objective.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The report titled “*Impact of CSR on the Brand Image of Fair & Lovely*” has been prepared by Farzana Zafor Seema as the prerequisite for the completion of the ‘Bachelors in Business Administration’ degree at BRAC University. The 12 week internship period is part of the university curriculum for the aforementioned program and is worth 4 credits. Assigned as an intern in the Brands department at Unilever Bangladesh Limited, the author has prepared this report sketching the project of Fair & Lovely Foundation that was handed over to her. The report aims to present the re-launch of Fair & Lovely Foundation in conjunction with a miniature scale study to demonstrate the impact of CSR activities on the brand image in context of Fair & Lovely.

1.2 Objective

The primary objective of the report is to give an in depth insight into the project of the re-launch of the social initiative of Fair & Lovely: the Fair & Lovely Foundation, Bangladesh. Contained in this report is the objective of Fair & Lovely behind the social initiative along with its pillars and past projects under each pillar. Secondly, the report analyzes the effect of such corporate social responsibilities through examining the association, if any, between the CSR and brand image for Fair & Lovely based on the findings of a survey.

1.3 Scope

This report addresses the following

- i. Organizational Overview: This includes the history of Unilever as a whole and Unilever Bangladesh Limited, its product offerings, organizational structure and vision and mission statements of the company.
- ii. Job Description: This segment entails the tasks assigned to the author, the nature of the job, the lessons learnt, the limitations faced and the observation made about attained corporate experience.
- iii. History of Fair & Lovely Foundation: Projects undertaken since inception and outcomes are summarized in the report.
- iv. Study on impact of CSR on brand image of Fair & Lovely: With the aid of a diminutive scale survey and descriptive analysis, the report attempts to study and analyze the potential effect of such CSR activities as those Fair & Lovely Foundation on the brand image of Fair & Lovely.
- v. Findings, Analysis, Conclusion and the author's Recommendations on the effectiveness of Fair & Lovely Foundation.

1.4 Methodology

The information used to prepare this report was derived from both primary and secondary sources. The detail of the project was obtained from a series of meetings and discussions with the project supervisors during the internship tenure of the author. The impact of Fair & Lovely Foundation activities on the brand image of Fair & Lovely has been determined based on a primary research with the research tool being a small-scale survey involving 30 respondents. The secondary sources include the web and record files of previous activations of Fair & Lovely Foundation.

1.5 Limitations

Owing to shortage of time and unavailability of diverse sources of respondents, the participants of the survey were few in number and fairly homogenous in demography, confining the scope of the research. The nature of the study required responses from respondents, some of whom lacked the insight to understand the questions and would respond irrelevantly. In addition, majority of the respondents were unaware about the existence and hence the activities of Fair & Lovely Foundation, making their responses based on assumptions. Following a stringent confidentiality policy, Unilever did not disclose any quantitative data to the author which resultantly made the report purely qualitative.

2.0 ORGANIZATION

2.1 Introduction

Unilever Bangladesh (UBL) is the leading Fast Moving Consumer Goods Company in Bangladesh with a heritage of 50 years and products that are present in 98% of Bangladeshi households.

UBL started its journey in Bangladesh with the production of soaps in its factory in Kalurghat, Chittagong. Over the years the company introduced many affordable brands which won the hearts of consumers across the country.

UBL is the market leader in 7 of the 8 categories it operates in, with 20 brands spanning across Home Care, Personal Care and Foods. Its operations provide employment to over 10,000 people directly and indirectly through its dedicated suppliers, distributors and service providers. 99.8% of UBL employees are locals with a large number of local UBL employees now working abroad in other Unilever companies as expatriates.

2.2 History

William Hesketh Lever founded Lever Brothers in 1885. Lever established soap factories around the world. In 1917, he began to diversify into foods, fish, ice cream and canned foods businesses. In the 1930s, Unilever introduced improved technology to the business. The business grew and new ventures were launched in Latin America. The entrepreneurial spirit of the founders and their caring approach to their employees and their communities remain at the heart of Unilever's business today.

Unilever was formed in 1930 when the Dutch margarine company Margarine Unie merged with British soap maker Lever Brothers. Both the companies were competing for the same raw materials, both were involved in large-scale marketing of household products and both used similar distribution channels. Between them, they had operations in over 40 countries. Margarine Unie grew through mergers with other margarine companies in the 1920s.

In a history that now crosses three centuries, Unilever's success has been influenced by the major events of the day – economic boom, depression, world wars, changing consumer lifestyles and advances in technology. And throughout they've created products that help people get more out of life – cutting the time spent on household chores, improving nutrition, enabling people to enjoy food and take care of their homes, their clothes and themselves.

Through their timeline one can easily see how UBL's brand portfolio has evolved. At the beginning of the 21st century, "Path to Growth" strategy focused on global high-potential brands and "Vitality" mission is taking them into a new phase of development now. Unilever's corporate vision – *Helping people to look good, feel good and get more out of life* – shows how clearly the business understands 21st century-consumers and their lives. But the spirit of this mission forms a thread that runs throughout their history.

Unilever Bangladesh Limited

Unilever Bangladesh Limited (UBL) is the leading Fast Moving Consumer Goods Company (FMCG) in Bangladesh with a heritage of 50 years and products that are present in 98% of Bangladeshi households. UBL is a Joint Venture of the Government of Bangladesh and Unilever, one of the world's leading suppliers of fast moving consumer goods with strong local roots in more than 100 countries across the globe.

Unilever holds 60.4% share in UBL. UBL started its journey in Bangladesh with the production of soaps in its factory in Kalurghat, Chittagong. Over the years the company introduced many affordable brands which won the hearts of Bangladeshis all across the country. UBL is the market leader in 7 of the 8 categories it operates in, with 20 brands spanning across home and personal care and foods.

Its operations provide employment to over 10,000 people directly and indirectly through its dedicated suppliers, distributors and service providers. 99.8% of UBL employees are locals with a large number of local UBL employees now working abroad in other Unilever companies as expatriates.

Unilever believes in ambitious growth of the business while at the same time fostering a sustainable environment. They believe the two must be related and hence sustainability is placed at the heart of everything they do. Their philosophy of “*Doing Well by Doing Good*” is captured in the Unilever Sustainable Living Plan (USLP).

2.3 Vision and Mission Statement



Mission of UBL

Unilever's mission is *"To Add Vitality to Life"*. They meet everyday needs for nutrition; hygiene and personal care with brands that help people feel good, look good and get more out of life.

Vision of UBL

"To help people feel good, look good and get more out of life with brands and services that are good for them and good for others. We will inspire people to take small everyday actions that can add up to a big difference for the world. We will develop new ways of doing business that will allow us to double the size of our company while reducing our environmental impact."

2.4 Brand Portfolio

Unilever has a portfolio of about 400 brands globally. However many of these are region-specific that can only be found in certain countries. The number of UBL's existing brands is 19 which are categorized in different sections. In Bangladesh the company operates in four distinct product categories. These are outlined below:



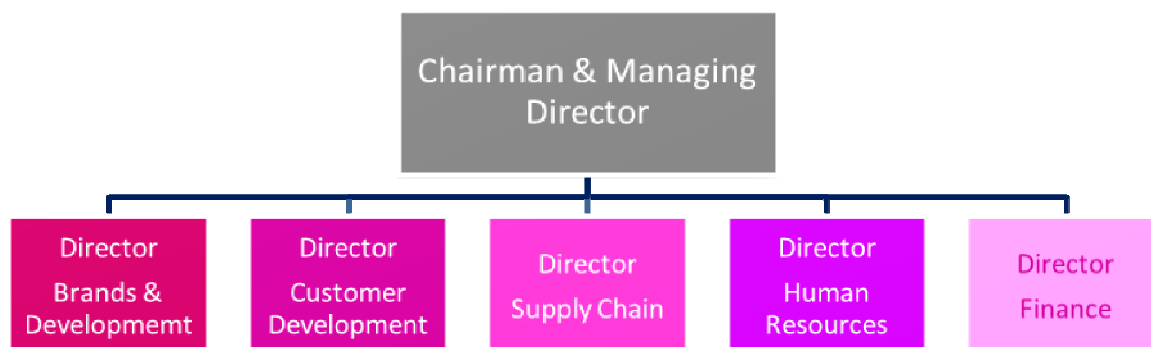
2.5 Operational Organogram

Unilever Bangladesh limited falls under the Southeast Asian region. The Chairman of Unilever Bangladesh Limited is known as the Managing Director. The organization is relatively flat in nature. The managers at various levels besides reporting to their immediate supervisor also directly report to the director.

The management in Bangladesh consists of six layers starting from junior managers to manager Grade V. Apart from management, other staffs and operatives also exist in the framework of the company, although those are not seen in the organogram.

Unilever Bangladesh Limited has five departments to carry out all the organizational functions. Respective director's head are head of all departments. These departments are:

1. Customer Development Department Headed by Customer Development Director (CDD)
2. Brands & Development Department headed by the Brands and Development Director(B&DD)
3. Supply Chain Department headed by the Supply Chain Director (SCD)
4. Finance Department headed by Finance Director (FD)
5. Human Resources Department headed by the Human Resources Director (HRD)



3.0 JOB

3.1 Nature of Job

The 3 month internship at Unilever Bangladesh Limited is a compensatory internship period. The nature of the job as an intern required the author to assist the project in charge prepare detailed and abridged documents, presentations in conjunction with generating ideas for the various campaigns to be undertaken surrounding the re-launch of Fair & Lovely Foundation.

3.2 Job Responsibilities

The job responsibilities of the intern included

- i. Studying and analyzing the activities of Fair & Lovely Foundation of India and the past projects of Fair & Lovely Foundation Bangladesh to ensure consistency between the projects of the two countries.
- ii. Generating ideas for the activities of the pillars of the foundation, designing the progression of the stages leading to the re-launch and laying out PR plans for escalation including writing article briefs, articles for press release, revising application forms and determining AV flow.
- iii. Preparing detailed and abridged presentations, documenting the generated ideas for the way forward for the re-launch event.
- iv. Assisting in the selection of NGO partners by preparing reports on the best suited profiles for the foundation.
- v. Interacting with current beneficiary trainees of Fair & Lovely Foundation to comprehend their perception about the program to get insights into their career plans.
- vi. Evaluating the recorded responses of a promotional campaign of Fair & Lovely Max Fairness and short-listing top respondents.

3.3 Aspects of Job Performance

Learnings

Exposure in such a dynamic organization has enabled me to experience corporate culture at its best. It has presented me with a unique opportunity to closely observe managers at work, getting to learn the importance of being resilient, proactive and multi-tasking.

Most importantly the experience has imparted in me the necessity to always be on the edge, to learn and grow continuously, something I observed even among the top level managers of Unilever, and that there is no room for ‘uncertainty’ or ‘dilemma’ in a corporate world for one needs to utilize his inductive reasoning to land on the best rational option.

Limitations at work

Owing to limited office space, Unilever allows its interns to be ‘agile workers’ letting them work from home. Resultantly, I could not spend enough time in the office environment and hence missed the opportunity to interact with managers of other brands which could have facilitated me to have a deeper look into the organization and its brands.

Secondly, being assigned in the Brands Development department confined my horizon of exploration of other departments such as Finance, HR, Supply Chain and Customer Development. Being a Finance-major, working on brand assignments made me feel ‘misfit’ at times.

The managers at Unilever are always on the run having meetings with line managers, visits outside office and strenuous work load for which it was often difficult for me to talk to them if I required any clarification of the tasks assigned to me.

3.4 Critical Observation & Recommendation

Critical Observation

- i. Unilever firmly believes in fulfilling its social responsibility as a corporation and acts upon it. The Fair & Lovely Foundation is indeed empowering women to pursue their career goals which not only establishes their deserved status in the society but also boosts the national economy as a whole. It runs various other projects under its Unilever Sustainable Living program (USLP).
- ii. As successful as it is in the FMCG industry, Unilever never ceases to continuously strive for improvement be it in its R&D or marketing mix. The brand managers are always vigilant of every minutest move of the competitor and respond accordingly.
- iii. The brand manager looks after the respective brand in and out- starting from the artwork of the pack, design of the billboard, promotional offers, activations to sales and costs- despite having different departmental counter parts to execute the planned action.
- iv. A project in its pre-seeding stage is revised several times with the line and category managers before being undertaken for execution. A manager of one brand often consults managers of other brands of the same category and hence there exists a symbiotic co existence – all directed towards a common goal of excelling performance.

Recommendations

- i. In order to fully capitalize on the internship opportunity, interns should have separate sitting area, if not desks, in the office. This will enable them to acclimatize to the office environment better and understand the appropriate way of doing things by observing the employees.
- ii. There should be an intermediate performance appraisal of the interns to encourage good performance and discuss discrepancies in the expected and actual performance.

- iii. To ensure uniformity, there should be a standard work load, to be given to all the interns.

4.0 PROJECT: FAIR & LOVELY FOUNDATION

4.1 Summary

Fair & Lovely Foundation, a social initiative fuelling women empowerment in Bangladesh, had its inception in 2003 and ever since then it has been funding several projects under the 3 pillars: Education, Career and Enterprise. However, approximately 10-15% of people are aware of these activities and hence the contribution of the brand to bring about a social change remains largely unknown. Secondly, the activities are done in a manner that lacks cohesion and therefore were not communicated to the people properly. This, for any business, is not only undesirable but a situation that demands an immediate corrective mechanism. Hence, Fair & Lovely has decided to re-launch the foundation in 2015 with a view to giving it a grand start with vast exposure on a scale deserved by such a foundation. The objective of the re-launch is not only to make consumers and non consumers aware of the activities of the foundation but also to give the foundation a fresh start and a chance to consolidate the activities that will eventually lead to successful escalation.

4.2 Description

Fair & Lovely Foundation has established 3 working areas for their operation as 3 pillars, namely Education, Career and Entrepreneurship.

Education: Under Education, it offers scholarships to female SSC and HSC students. In addition, beneficiary students are also provided with supplementary education and free IT courses and the programs are run in partnership with Faria Lara Foundation and Khan Foundation. The programs are intended to assist semi-urban female students to acquire spoken and written English and basic computer skills after their SSC and HSC examinations and help them compete with their urban peers.



Career: This pillar aims to reinforce women to pursue and continue their career by providing them the relevant vocational trainings and resources. The activities under career so far comprises of the following projects:



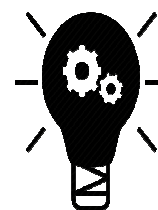
Entrepreneurship: This pillar caters for the emerging women entrepreneurs of the country, both urban and rural. To help equip the women entrepreneurs and their enterprises, the foundation offers trainings on how to effectively run an enterprise where trainees are given an in-depth understanding of various aspects of a business such as Finance, Accounting, Marketing, etc. The foundation does not stop here: Fair & Lovely Foundation disburses seed capital to the deserving entrepreneurs with ingenious business ideas.



FALF PROJECTS: 2003-2014



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Advisory Board

FAL Foundation appoints an advisory board run by renowned figures of the country. The key objectives for having the advisory board are:

- Create a face for the foundation.
- Guide the foundation in taking up specific activities that can help empower women.
- Provide help to the foundation from their area of expertise
- Counter negative PR regarding the brand or the foundation
- Select the beneficiaries from the applicants
- Be a voice for the foundation.
- Influence opinion and behavior of people towards FAL Foundation and hence FAL as a brand.

Objective of FAL Foundation

Fair & Lovely Foundation is a social initiative of the brand Fair & Lovely that strives to fuel economic empowerment of women in the society. The principle philosophy underlying such a philanthropic move- **“To help women enjoy ‘Fairness’ in their lives”**- is verily at par with that of the brand itself, “To help women get fairness in skin tone”. The objective of the foundation is to aid women re-script their destiny and pursue their career dreams before marriage. To achieve this, the foundation aims to serve as the catalyst to facilitate women showcase their true potential, breaking free of all definition of being a ‘Woman’.



Objective of Fair & Lovely:

Much has been talked about the brand and many a time it has been associated with ‘racism’. These negative PR not only pose threat to the current consumers, by manipulating their psychology, but also have adverse effects on the potential consumers. A second concerning issue for the brand is its lack of emotional connection with its consumers. Since the last half a decade or so, the brand had invested its undivided attention in promoting only the functionality of the product- fairness. Resultantly, the brand has not been able to possess an emotional appeal to the general mass. As a remedy to the mentioned issues, Fair & Lovely Foundation intends to launch this social initiative.

Through FAL Foundation, Unilever wants to achieve two things. Firstly, it focuses to reinforce the existing positive image of Fair & Lovely by transforming current consumers from users to believers and instill in them the pride of being a user of Fair & Lovely as the product plays a vital role in the arena of women empowerment. Secondly, the foundation will also help mitigate the negative image of the brand among the non-users. Fair & Lovely does not intend to convert the non users to users with the activities of the foundation. However, it does aim to seamlessly intrigue the minds of the opponents of the brand to stop speaking against the brand. FAL Foundation will signal the critics that the brand has made a start to emerge out of the ‘fairness only’ attitude and are doing quite a lot for women empowerment.



5.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

5.1 Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of CSR originated in 1953 after the publication of Bowen's book *Social "Responsibilities of Businessmen"* (Valor, 2005). According to Kotler and Lee (2005), it is a difficult concept to pin down as it overlaps with other such concepts as sustainable business, corporate citizenship and business ethics (Moon, 2002). According to Mohr, Webb and Harris (2001), CSR is a company's effort and responsibility to reduce or avoid harmful effects and to maximize its long run positive and useful impact on society. In spirit CSR speaks of organization's reaction to social plans. Earlier Organizations were considered only as profit maximizing entities. However, with a change in the structure of business environment, the role of organizations has altered dramatically. Today, organizations are an essential part of social life (Karaibrahimoglu, 2010). CSR is basically a tool for organizations to carry out diverse activities to fund

and resolve social problems and to fulfill their commitment towards society. It also allows the organizations to generate and assign the resources in effective and efficient way (Petrick &

Quinn, 2001). So is one of the best tools to gain competitive advantage (Porter & Kramer, 2002). Due to this reason CSR is quickly gaining importance as more and more firms are realizing its value. CSR initiatives and actions are not only about charity but about transforming these ideas into useful business strategies. CSR driven efforts does not only relate to make a contribution by donating money but it speaks of incorporating societal and moral practices into business strategies that help the consumers in building a optimistic brand image. Research has shown that socially responsible activities of a firm enhance the brand image of the firms' goods as well as the general image of the firm.

5.2 Brand Image:

Brand image is an important concept in consumer behavior studies since the early 1950s (Li, Wang & Cai, 2011). Levy (1959) proposed the concept of brand image and suggested that merchandises have societal and emotional characteristics and consumers develop emotional connections with the brands. Brand image is the most vital part of brand equity as brand image comprises of all links in the mind of consumers interconnected to that brand. So if anything which has an influence on a business from consumer's point of view is brand image. The brand image of a popular brand is a valuable business asset as consumers identify products and services more easily through the respective brands. These perceptions which are grounded on connections between characteristics and the brand name are normally stated as the brand's image (Keller, 1993). So, brand image is basically a perception of a brand held in the memory of a customer and it reveals a customer's general impression. Nowadays a brand is not considered just as logo but it is more likely taken as a carefully scored experience which is supported by huge marketing budgets, action and cultured mindset. A positive brand image can be taken as a capability of a firm to hold its market position (Wu, 2011). A positive brand image helps to increase numerous outcomes such as customer's contentment, service superiority, loyalty and repurchasing intention (Lai, Griffin & Babin, 2009).

Therefore, much of the marketing struggle is focused on building up perceptions about the brand in the memory of a consumer. CSR could be a beneficial for building a positive brand image and

building consumers' positive attitudes so it is a key source of competitive advantage. Endorsing brand image with the help of CSR initiatives assures positive comments and eventually has a positive impact on the brand because a firm is crystal clear about its external communications as well as internal practices.

5.3 Fair & Lovely

Fair & Lovely, the largest selling skin whitening cream in the world, is clearly doing well. First launched in India in 1975, Fair & Lovely held a commanding 50-70% share of the skin whitening market in India in 2006, a market that is valued at over \$200M and growing at 10-15% per annum (Marketing Practice, 2006). Fair & Lovely was the second-fastest growing brand in HLL's portfolio of 63 brands, with a growth rate of 21.5% per year (HLL, 2002). Its two closest rival competitors, both produced by local Indian firms, CavinKare's brand Fairever and Godrej's FairGlow, only have a combined market share of 16%. Claiming to possess a customer base of 27 million Indian customers who use its product regularly, Fair & Lovely has successfully launched new product formulations from lotions to gels and soaps. Fair & Lovely is marketed by Unilever in 40 countries in Asia, Africa and the Middle East, with India being the largest single market. Fair & Lovely is certainly doing well financially.

Created by HLL's research laboratories, Fair & Lovely claims to offer dramatic whitening results in just six weeks. A package sold in Egypt displays one face six times, in an ever-whitening progression, and includes 'before' and 'after' photos of a woman who presumably used the product. On its website the company calls its product 'the miracle worker' which is 'proven to deliver one to three shades of change' (Leistokow, 2003).

5.4 Diversity in Perception of Fairness in Bangladesh

The Bangladeshi population can be roughly categorized into 3 distinct groups based on their 'expressed' perception of fairness. Fairness is the most sought physical trait for the low income groups characterized by lowest literacy. This segment largely comprises of garment workers, domestic maids and the like who have an eternal aspiration or urge to possess the fairest skin

tone. Among them, a fair skin tone is not only attractive but also prestigious and a an evidence to belong to the ‘elite’ group of people. Several social factors have molded such perception which remain out of the scope this study. Because of such perceptions, it is often seen that 90% of male of this demographic segment would look for fair brides. As incredible as it might seem to the western world, father selling properties to pay fat dowry in order to marry off his dark daughter is perhaps the most common rural, in some cases urban, scenario of Bangladesh. In a country that is so color-specific, these ignorant percentage of the population cannot help but run after “fairness”.

The second group ranges from the middle to higher income people who demonstrate much affinity for fairness but, owing to their better position socially and financially, their efforts to get fairer skin is much different from those of the lower class. This group uses the more expensive, and often, the foreign brands who promise the same attribute to their skin: Fairness. Moreover, women of this class is the most frequent clients of beauty salons for services like fair-polishing and bleaching only to look fairer.

The third group comprises of advocates of fairness creams being racist products, consisting of mainly feminist socialists and other such activists. A deeper incision into this group will reveal two distinct subdivisions: one that is composed of people ‘indifferent’ to skin color and the other promotes the notion ‘dark is beautiful’. However, this segment is the most vocal against fairness creams and produces negative PR about Fair & Lovely.

6.0 METHODOLOGY

6.1 Research Problem

This primary research aims to examine the impact, if any, of the CSR activities of fair & Lovely foundation on the brand image of Fair & Lovely among the consumers and non consumers of the product. The research has been designed to evaluate whether the objective of the foundation to

enhance the brand image of the Fair & Lovely has been achieved through the foundation activities.

There are two dimensions to this study: one is to examine whether the brand image has been enhanced among the current users of Fair & Lovely and secondly, whether the critics have a changed perception or image in the form of reduced negativity surrounding the product. Therefore, opinions were sought from general people to reveal the impact on the perception of both clusters. To ease reaching a conclusive statement, the hypothesis established is “***CSR is positively related with Brand Image of Fair & Lovely.***”

6.2 Methodology

This research paper has been conducted on a qualitative basis as the concept of brand image is far from being measured quantitatively. Qualitative research has multiple shaping factors of behaviors to observe and discuss. The central research goal to determine the brand image of Fair & Lovely as shaped or altered by its CSR activities rests on ‘sample generalizability’. Hence, the tool used for data collection was a survey method to allow data collection from a broad spectrum of individuals and educational settings. The choice of the method is at par with the objective of the research being developing a representative picture of the perceived image of a diverse population from a fairly small sample.

The survey questionnaire comprised of separate set of questions for users and non users of Fair & Lovely with some generic questions being common. Due to very limited time allowed by the respondents, the questions were kept closed-ended.

6.3 Sampling Unit

The sample unit comprises of the 30 respondents of the survey consisting of both users and non-users of Fair & Lovely. The respondents belong to different demographic segments and vary in age, socioeconomic status and profession. The sampling unit considers the age groups of 15-25 years, 26-35 years, 36- 45 years, 46 years and above. Income range for this sampling unit is BDT 10000- 20000, 20001- 30000, 30001- 4000, 40001 and above. Occupation for the sampling unit includes students, business, service holders, home-makers and others.

6.4 Sample Size

The survey was carried out on 30 respondents. Lack of time and resources prevented selection of a greater sample size.

6.5 Sampling Technique

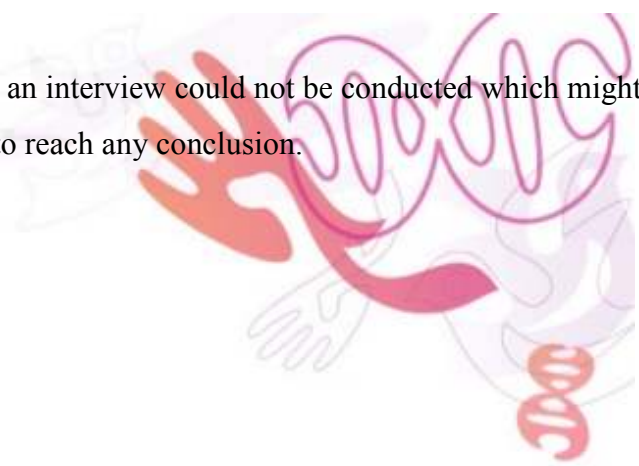
A convenience sampling technique was used to choose the sample for the survey. The unit mainly comprised of friends, family and acquaintances who were found within near proximity to save time and cost. Although convenient, the technique ensured that the chosen participants were enough representative of the population under study.

6.6 Limitations of Methodology

The research was faced with considerable limitations in regard to time, information, selection of research tools and many more. Some major shortcomings of the study include:

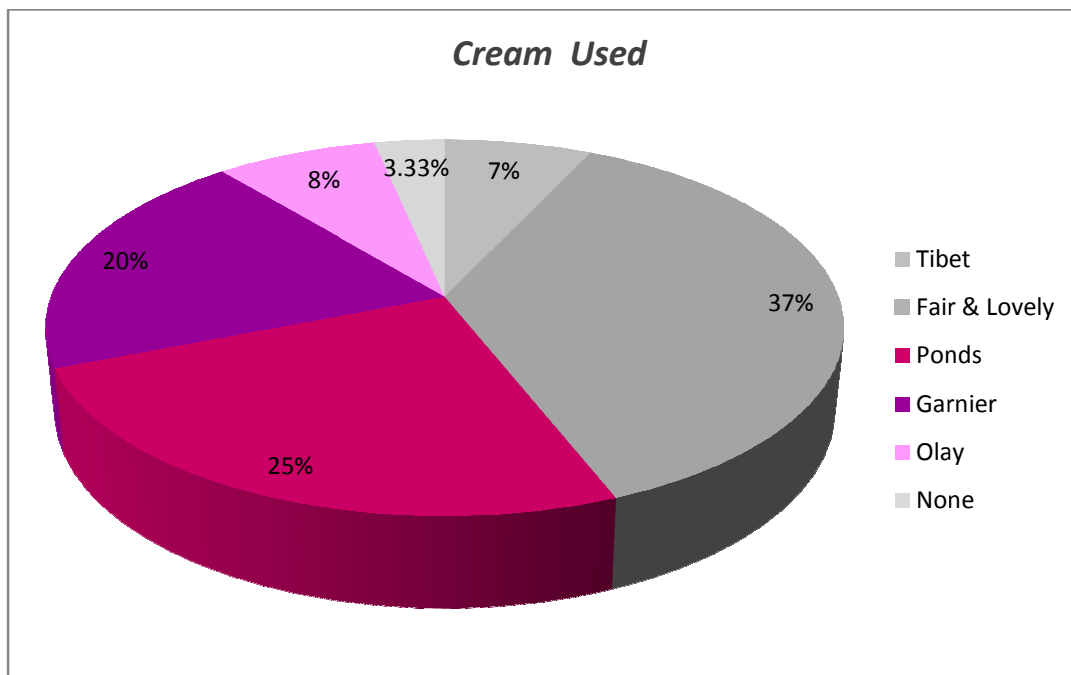
- i. Coverage of the population was inadequate due to a poor sampling frame.
- ii. The process of convenience sampling can result in sampling error- differences between the characteristics of the sample members and the population that arise due to chance

-
- iii. Majority of the respondents were unaware about Fair & Lovely Foundation and its activities
 - iv. Due to inability to match schedules, an interview could not be conducted which might be more insightful and informative to reach any conclusion.



7.0 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS

Which of the Creams do you use/prefer?

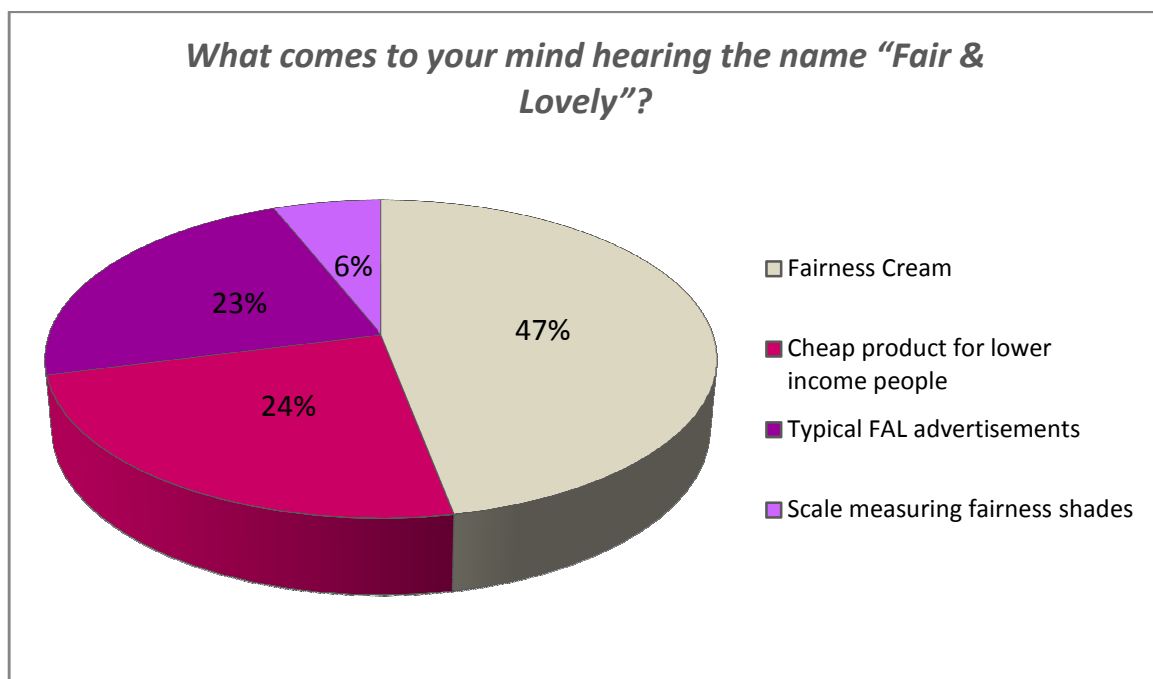


The first question of the survey enquired about the used or most preferred cream. Among the 30 respondents, majority-37%- uses Fair & Lovely which might be due to the win-win trade-off between its relatively lower cost and delivered promise. Most of the users of Fair & Lovely, as revealed by this survey, belong to LSM 0-4, signifying lower income groups with professions including RMG workers, house maids, and the like. However, a few middle to higher income class women were also found to use Fair & Lovely mainly because of the product efficacy with price playing insignificant role in their buying decision.

The product occupying the second highest consumption segment in the pie chart above is Ponds, reserving 25% of the whole and the users prefer this brand because of its premium brand image

coupled with the affordable price. Among the rest, 20% uses Garnier and 8% uses Olay due to the perceived high quality and premium brand image of the products. This population claims their brands to be 'safe' as they assume a positive correlation between high price and quality and safety of the products. Only 3% of the sampling unit claimed that they do not use any fairness creams.

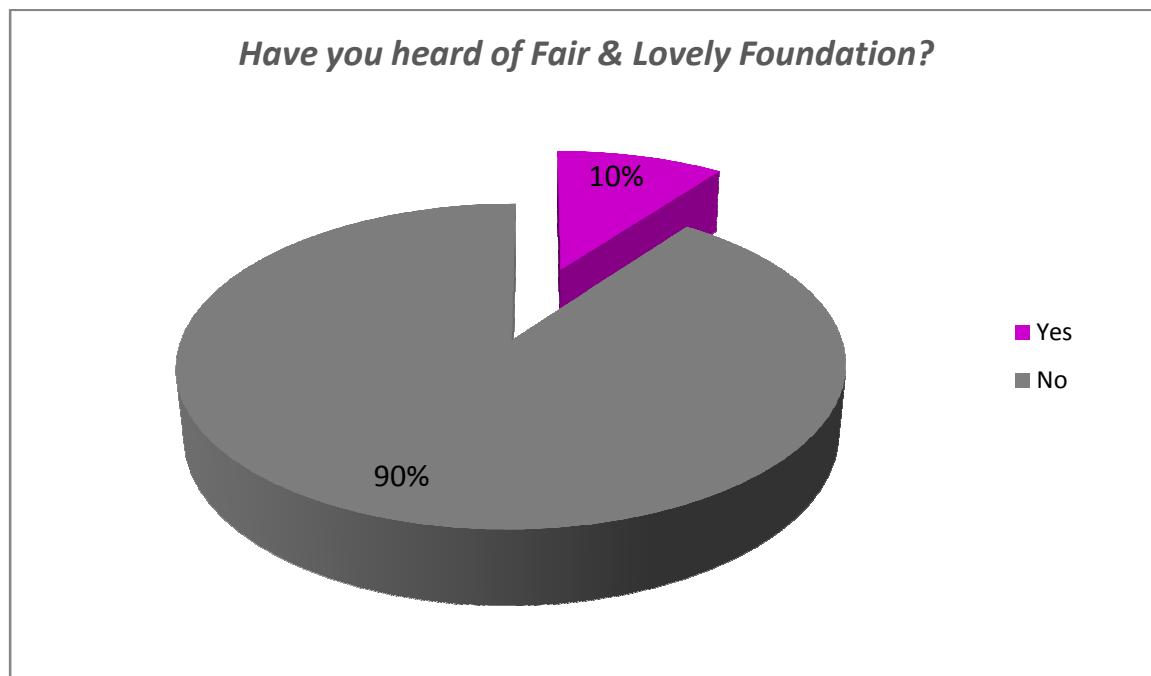
What comes to your mind hearing the name “Fair & Lovely”?



This question attempted to find out the existing generic perception of the people about Fair & Lovely and what they recall when they hear the name. Maximum number of respondents stated that they can only think of Fair & Lovely as a fairness cream and nothing beyond that. The next most common response, consuming 24% of the pie circumference, was that participants perceive Fair & Lovely to be a cheap product mostly used by relatively lower income people.

23% respondents recalled typical Fair & Lovely advertisements displaying fairer girls getting better opportunities in life. Yet another cluster of 6% mentioned they visualize the scale of fairness shades seen both in the TVCs and the product packs.

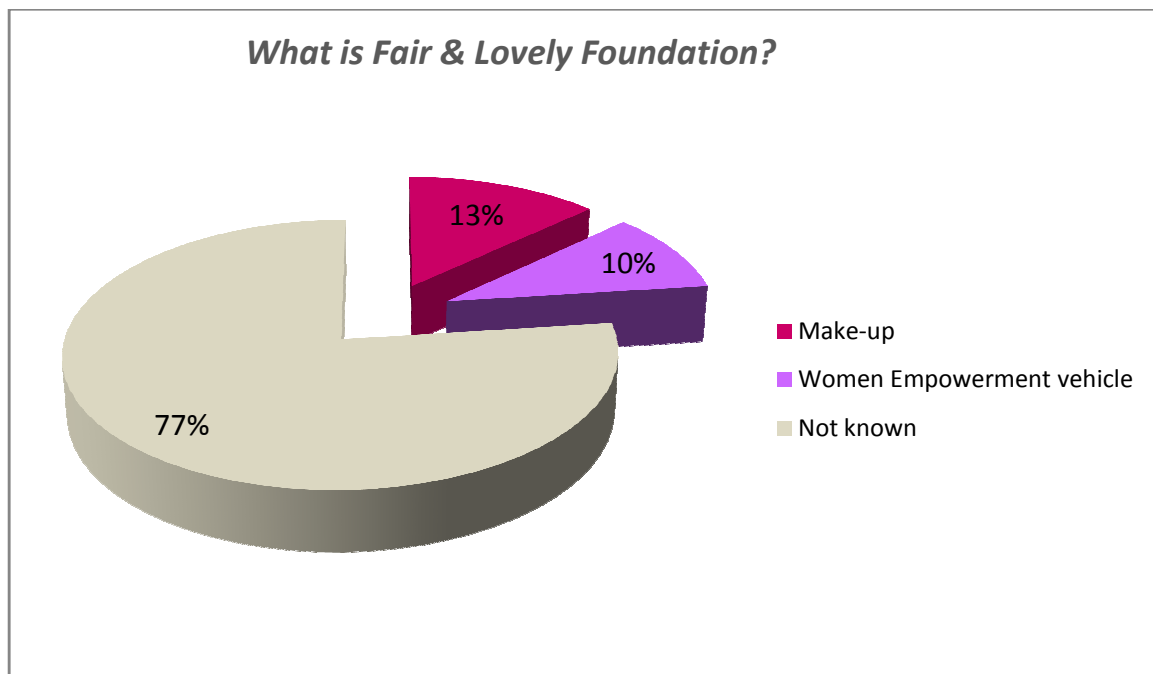
Have you heard of Fair & Lovely Foundation?



Among the respondents, only 10% women have heard about Fair & Lovely Foundation and that too only recently from Indian channels airing advertisements of the Indian foundation. Only 3% sample-one respondent- has heard about the activities carried out under the Bangladeshi Foundation owing to her coincident involvement with one of the trainings of the Fair & Lovely Foundation. The other 70% have no idea, whatsoever, about the foundation and some even confused the name with that of a product of Unilever. This finding sheds light on the fact that the activities of the foundation , and the existence of the foundation itself, remains largely unknown , pointing to lack of proper communication and consolidation. This finding is particularly

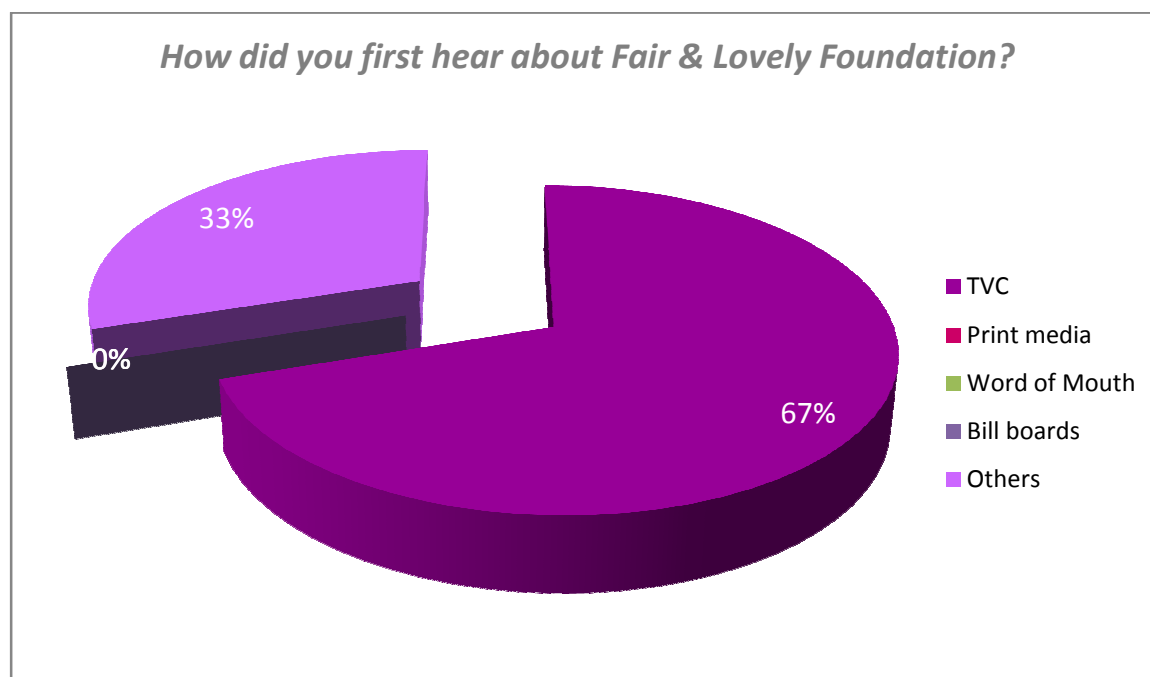
intriguing as the foundation has been providing thousands of women with means of economic autonomy since 2003.

What is Fair & Lovely Foundation?



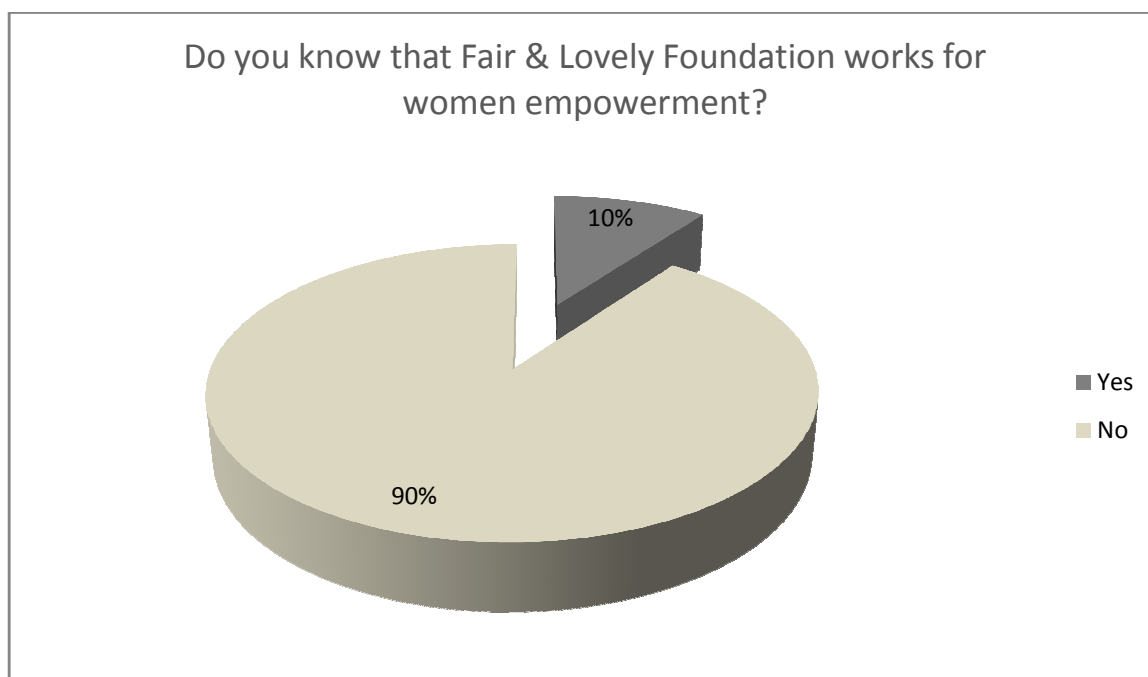
This question enquired whether people know what Fair & Lovely Foundation is. Surprisingly, a significant percentage, 77%, of the respondents was unaware of what the foundation is. However, 13% of the sampling unit wrongly answered the foundation to be a make-up product used by women and only 10% correctly knew that Fair & Lovely Foundation is actually a social initiative working on women empowerment.

How did you first hear about Fair & Lovely Foundation?



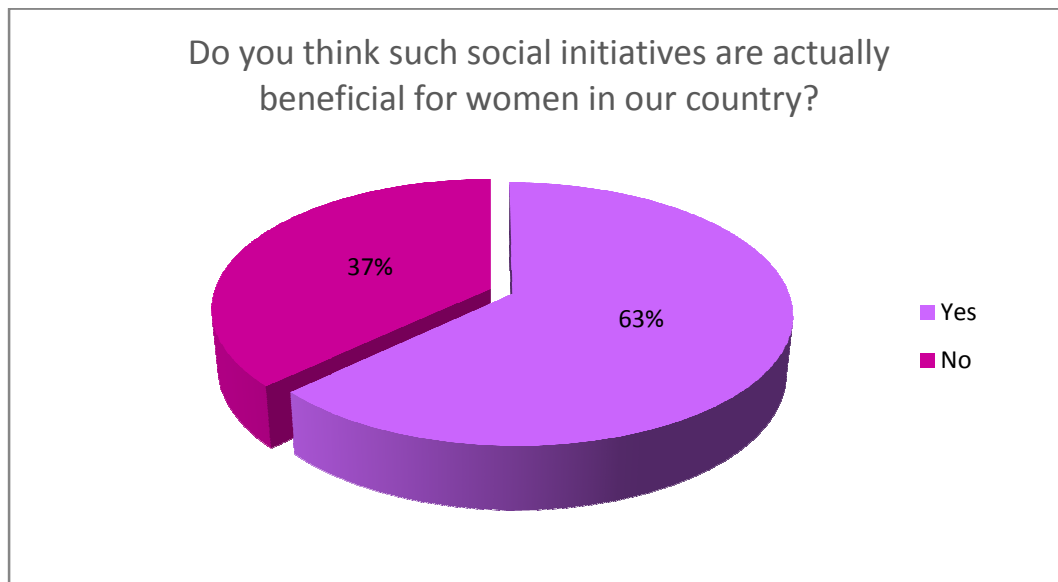
7% of the sample, constituting 67% of the survey participants who claimed knowing about Fair & Lovely, informed that they learnt about the foundation from the TVCs on Indian Fair & Lovely Foundation telecast on Indian channels. Their knowledge is limited to the content shown in the advertisements and the idea is essentially opaque in their minds. However, only 3%, occupying 33% (1 respondent) of the participants who have heard of Fair & Lovely Foundation, informed she knows about Fair & Lovely Foundation Bangladesh but only through her coincidental involvement with one of the programs run under the foundation.

Do you know that Fair & Lovely Foundation works for women empowerment?



When asked this question, 10% of the participants responded that they know that the foundation strives to empower women, leaving the rest of the 90% unaware about the objective of the foundation which is obvious because they've not heard about the foundation before this survey.

Do you think such social initiatives are actually beneficial for women in our country?

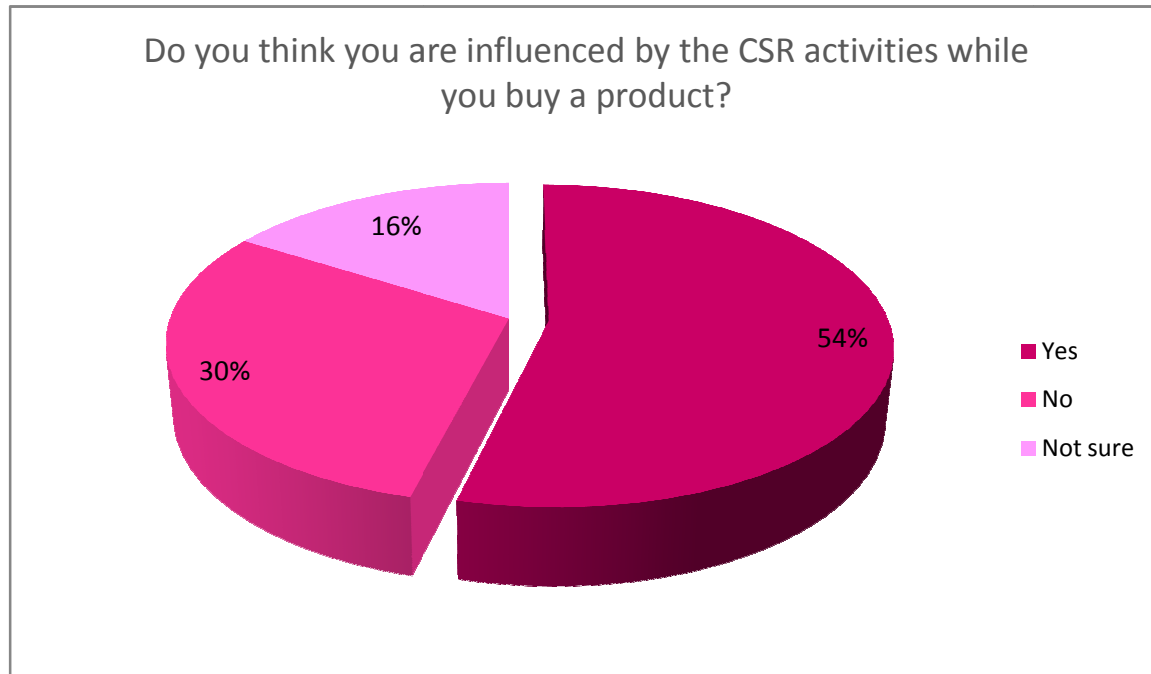


63% respondents answered assertively when asked about the beneficial aspects of such social initiatives as Fair & Lovely Foundation. They believe the activities are actually contributing significantly to change the women empowerment situation in Bangladesh. When asked to explain their response, the respondents further elaborated their observation on Bangladeshi women having immense dormant potential and that they suffer from lack of resource endowment, be it education, money, equipments or training. They expressed their optimism that supplied with proper aid and resources, women of Bangladesh have the potential and perseverance to mark their identities in whichever field they pursue.

The rest of the respondents, constituting 37% of the sample unit, expressed their doubts about the disguised intention of the brands behind such apparent social initiatives is to toy around with consumers' emotions only with an attempt to promote the brand and increase sales. Although they admit that some activities, indeed, help women become socially and economically independent, these respondents are pessimistic about the intended objective of the brands and

feel that the benefits occur only by chance in the way for the greater cause of promoting the product.

Do you think you are influenced by the CSR activities while you buy a product?

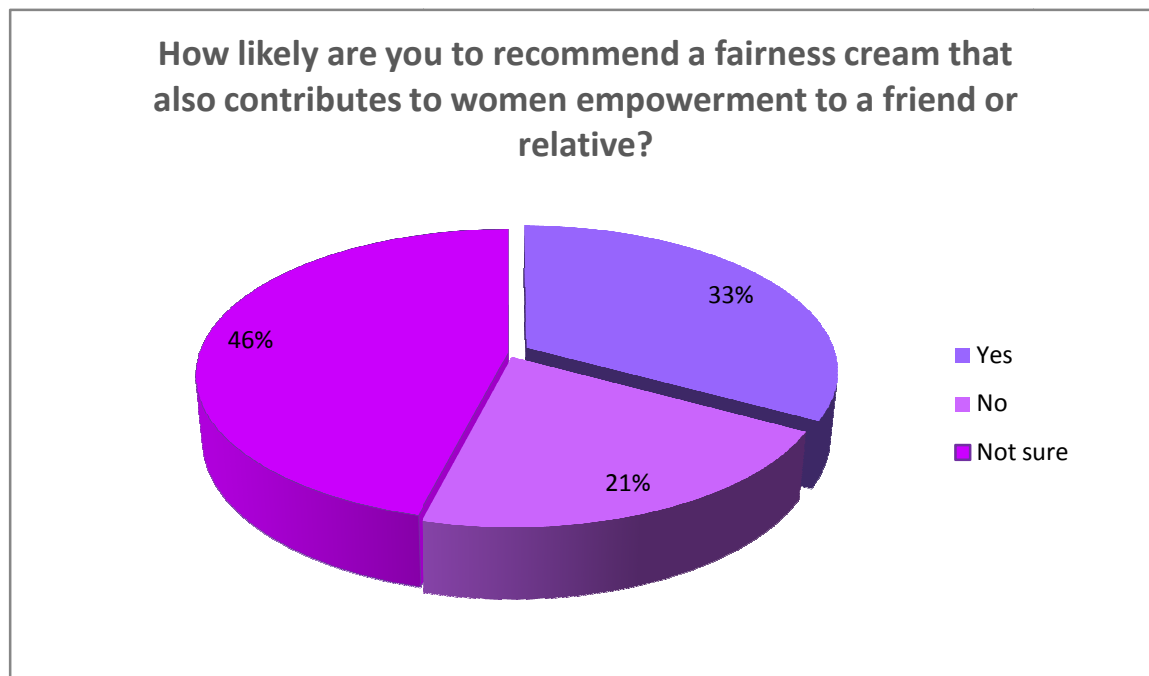


Majority of the respondents, 54%, informed that they are more likely to buy a product involved with CSR activities as opposed to another who is not. They attributed this consideration to their will to encourage organizations to continue their social ventures. Also, they feel they become a part of the noble cause, although passively, by buying a product that works to bring about social changes.

This group prioritizes the product efficacy more than any other variable in making a purchase decision. The second group, occupying 30% of the sample unit confirmed their consideration of social activities of the brand they buy. This group prioritizes the product efficacy more than any other variable in making a purchase decision.

A third and relatively minor segment expressed that they are not sure whether they are influenced by any discrete factors before they buy a product. They may very well be categorized as the impulsive buyers who are guided by instantaneous stimulus to buy a certain product.

How likely are you to recommend a fairness cream that also contributes to women empowerment to a friend or relative?



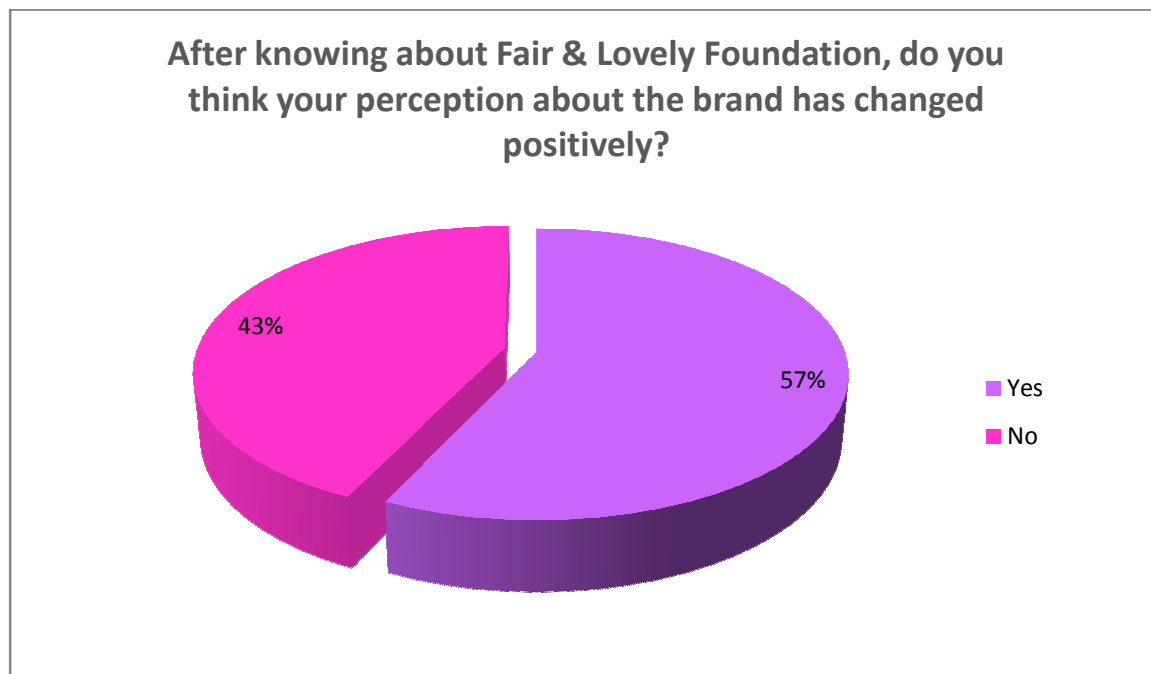
33% respondents answered affirmatively to this question, expressing the fact that they will recommend a product to others that carries out CSR activities. 21% think that they will not recommend someone a product based on its social activities; they are more likely to recommend others based on product attributes.

However, majority of the respondents -46%- were not sure whether they would recommend to others or not. According to them, the decision will depend on whether the product offers a balance

between product attribute and its undertaken social projects to a satisfactory level, meaning that they might not recommend a product solely based on its social CSR.

The following questions followed a brief outline of the activities of Fair & Lovely Foundation.

After knowing about Fair & Lovely Foundation, do you think your perception about the brand has changed positively?

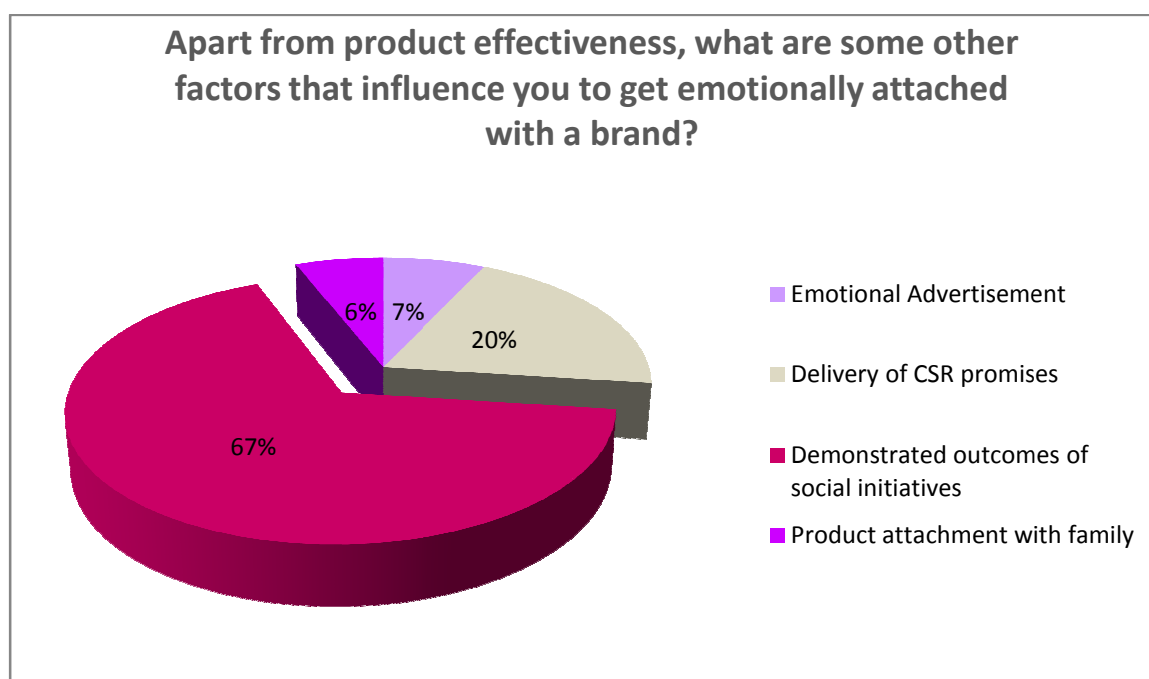


This question was intended to comprehend the changes, if any, in the perception of the general people's minds due to the CR initiatives of Fair & Lovely. 57% responded. They were confident about the product functionally but now that they have come to know about socially responsible initiative in helping women re-scripting their destiny, they are more likely to be connected with the brand emotionally as well.

17% of the participants told that knowing about the activities of Fair & Lovely Foundation is still not enough to change their emotional attachment with the brand as they feel skeptical about the

actual skepticism saying that had the foundation done so much for women empowerment, there would be a lot talked about them which, unfortunately, has not happened leading them to think that such social promises are spoken of more loudly than they are ever acted upon.

Apart from product effectiveness, what are some other factors that influence you to get emotionally attached with a brand?



This question intended to know what causes consumers to get emotionally attached with a brand apart from functionality attributes. A significant fraction of 67% answered that only demonstrated visible or tangible outcomes of the social initiatives over a sustained period can intrigue an emotional bonding with the brand.

Another 20% stated that consumers should be able to feel the honesty of the efforts through the execution of the pledged initiatives for them to connect with the brands on an emotional level.

Yet other groups suggested that they moved by emotional advertisements and product attachment with family make emotionally attached with the products, occupying 6% and 7% respectively.

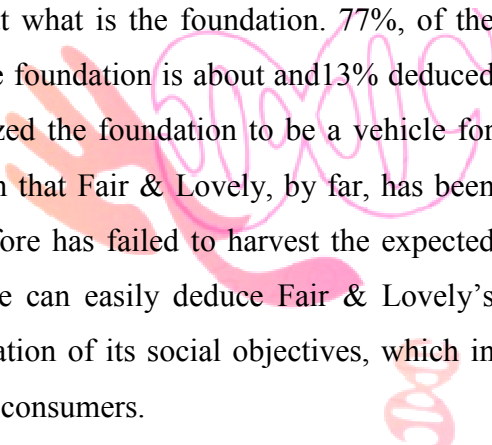
8.0 FINDINGS & INTERPRETATION

From the *basic descriptive analysis* involving direct percentages coming from the questionnaire responses, some crucial findings are obtained which provides a scope for detailed discussion.

The main purpose of the project was to examine the effect of the social initiatives of Fair & Lovely Foundation on the brand image or equity of Fair & Lovely. The questions employed can be categorized into 2 discrete divisions: one enquiring the existing perception of consumers about Fair & Lovely and another group of questions diagnosing the change, if any, in their emotional attachment with the brand post to knowing about its corporate social programs.

The obtained responses to the first cluster of questions, by and large, provide evidence to the fact that Fair & Lovely is successful in establishing itself as possessing effective functionality in the consumers' view as 37% of the respondents use Fair & Lovely, rationalizing their preference to stem mainly from product efficacy. This finding is further confirmed as 47% of the regards it to a fairness cream before considering it anything else. The potential reason for people to recall Fair & Lovely only as a fairness cream could be due to its extensive and undivided concentration in promoting the product attribute and functionality across all their communication. Moreover, the advertisements are devoid of any message that centers on emotional ground. Summing up, it can inferred that Fair & Lovely's performance in terms of product functionality is commendable.

However, when enquired about the Fair & Lovely Foundation, only 10% of the respondents responded positively with the rest of the 90% still in darkness about the existence of any such foundation. These findings point out a major shortcoming of the foundation: lack of proper communication of the undertaken projects and are therefore not salient to the general public. At



par with this outcome, is the response to the query about what is the foundation. 77%, of the survey participants mentioned they did not know what the foundation is about and 13% deduced it to be a make-up product. Only 10% correctly recognized the foundation to be a vehicle for women empowerment. This finding enables the deduction that Fair & Lovely, by far, has been unsuccessful in amplifying their activities that and therefore has failed to harvest the expected level of emotional equity for the brand. Resultantly, one can easily deduce Fair & Lovely's unsatisfactory performance in regard with the communication of its social objectives, which in turn disables the brand to harvest the emotional support of consumers.

The intermediate section of the questionnaire focused to determine the generic insights of consumers about the CSR activities of organizations. Among the respondents, 63% expressed their belief that such attempts, as those of Fair & Lovely Foundation's, do have practical benefits and implications in our society. Other questions revealed that 54% respondents gets influenced by CSR activities before making a purchase decision and that 33% said they are also more likely to recommend others a product that engages itself with social works.

The second classified cluster of questions was aimed to decipher the change in people's angle of vision towards the brand, in terms of emotions, after they came to know about Fair & Lovely Foundation through this survey. The embedded objective of this question was to determine if the positivity surrounding the Fair & Lovely brand had augmented from what it was prior this survey or remained constant. In this regard, 57% had shown a positive mental transformation in favor of the brand after they learnt about the initiatives of Fair & Lovely Foundation through this survey. However, the rest were stuck to their original opinion or degree of emotional attachment with the brand. The cumulative responses indicate that there lies ample room for the brand to shift people's psychological attitude from a state of neutrality to being positive.

Furthermore, the participants shed more light onto their view when the majority of them agreed upon '*demonstrated outcomes of social initiatives*' as opposed to '*escalated promises*' to be the prime factor enabling their emotional connection with a brand. In addition to this, 20% said that delivery of CSR promises, regardless of outcome, fuels their bond with the brand and yet groups-

comprising of 6% and 7% respectively, responded that product attachment with family and emotional advertisements makes them emotional towards a brand.

9.0 HYPOTHESIS ASSESSMENT

H₁: CSR is positively related with Fair & Lovely's Brand Image

Currently, the brand image of Fair & Lovely revolves around its functional differentiation. However, the perceived brand image in terms of emotionality is not as strong as it ought to be for a brand like Fair & lovely. This is consistent with the fact that Fair & Lovely Foundation, although running numerous programs for women empowerment since 2003, has been unsuccessful in effectively promoting the activities, resulting in majority of the people being unaware of even the existence of such a noble foundation.

However, when the same question about their perception of the image of Fair & Lovely was repeated to the sample unit after they were informed about the initiatives of the foundation through the survey, majority expressed their enhanced view and emotional attachment with the brand. Therefore, assuming the communication was effective and people knew about Fair & Lovely Foundation, there would surely be an upgrading of the image of the brand compared to what it is now. So, in this regard, the findings of this study are at par with the established hypothesis: *CSR is positively related with Fair & Lovely's Brand Image.*

10.0 RECOMMENDATION

The scope of corporate social responsibility is so extensive, that the role of active organization in improving and enlarging it cannot be over emphasized. Moreover a society that is made of vigilant, watchful and proactive citizens is a sine qua non for any civilized community. I think that Fair & Lovely has come a long way to run business by fully practicing CR and keeping their market position. Thus Unilever as an active organization can be instrumental in improving CSR of the brand Fair & Lovely in the following ways:

Consolidation of Initiatives: Although originally the foundation was intended to focus on 3 distinct pillars of *Education*, *Career* and *Enterprise*, the executed projects were sporadic and, at times, irrelevant with the predetermined pillars. Consequently, the activities were unconsolidated to the point of losing the absolute cohesion mandatory for the activities to evolve as one entity.

In this regard, it can be recommended that Fair & Lovely Foundation should build a bridge among the undertaken projects with the three interconnected pillars being the three nodes, keeping the foundation in place. Secondly, the projects for the different pillars can be made to amalgamate obtrusively not only in terms of execution but also in the communication phase.

Emphasizing Escalation: Since 2003, Fair & Lovely Foundation has run several successful projects, creating a beneficiary base of around 3000 women. Ironically, even today a very insignificant number of approximately 10% people know about the existence of any such foundation, let alone its activities, as revealed by this study. The prime reason that can explain



the finding could be attributed to the lack of proper communication. For a brand trying to augment its brand equity through CR activities, disseminating the initiatives to the general mass through effective communication across a wide array of media becomes secondary to no other strategy.

Therefore, Fair & Lovely should pay special attention and resources in designing a 360 degree communication campaign so as to intensively publicize the social projects undertaken by the foundation, creating an emotional appeal to the general consumers. In doing so, Fair & Lovely Foundation should keenly consider the communication media to assess the medium popularity in ensuring maximum spread of the message. In this regard, media such as radio and internet can be prioritized over television, which can be utilized with careful selection of peak telecast time and stressing of timing of TVC rather than the frequency. Moreover, thematic social business competitions can be arranged engaging the youth of the society with women empowerment and providing the foundation with a platform to be discussed. Other tools of communication could be introducing annual award shows to recognize the invincible and successful women in different arenas of profession to impart the empathy with which the foundation works.

Proper Documentation: Other than planning the project, documentation is probably the most important single part of managing a project. Proper documentation protects the interests of the project's stakeholders, ensuring that the project scope is completed and that everyone is kept properly appraised of all phases of the project's progress. While trying to extract historical data on the past projects of the foundation, it was revealed that there was no compiled record of the projects. Therefore, Fair & Lovely Foundation ought to ensure detailed documentation of the upcoming projects to facilitate tracing back at any point in time.

Creative use of Digital Media: As revealed by the background study phase of this study, there has been minimal, if not none, use of digital media in promoting and popularizing the



projects of Fair & Lovely Foundation. Digital platforms, such as Facebook and Google ads, have recently emerged as the hub of modern promotional activities, be it through viral statuses on Facebook, pop-up links to videos or Google banners. Following the trend, Fair & Lovely should creatively engage in more medium such as those discussed above with a view to making the intended message ‘hyped’ across the most popular media of today.

Employee Engagement: Since, Unilever is a big house of 19 brands, Fair & Lovely Foundation can take advantage of the employee base of UBL and design campaigns under the banner of Fair & Lovely Foundation to foster awareness about its projects among UBL employees. This will then have a multiplied effect when the message gets disseminated to the families of the employees within a very short time. Activities could include anything from arranging a Fair & Lovely Foundation Day for employees to engage in foundation-relevant activities to encouraging them to share the initiatives in their social network accounts. Such activities ensure faster amplification incurring minimum cost.

Establishing Control Mechanism: The various projects of Fair & Lovely Foundation, under the three established pillars, were administered with little monitoring mechanism to ensure the control phase. Consequently, the initiatives- despite being functionally effective- had no way to be tracked down to detect any discrepancies between the target and actual performance, resulting in loss of credibility. For instance, the career progress of beneficiaries obtaining vocational trainings were not monitored post training so as to be able to gauge the actual difference the initiative was able to make in their lives. Had these been monitored, there would not only be more information available serving as better promotional materials but it would also help the foundation take corrective actions should any discrepancy arise. Furthermore, monitoring would also allow the projects to be sustainable and not just a one-time campaign.

Hence, Fair & Lovely Foundation needs to re-engineer the process to install a controlling mechanism. It can delegate its PR partners and NGO partners to monitor and control the progress



of each project and report them at intervals to ensure sustainability and enable the desired corrective actions to be designed.

11.0 CONCLUSION

From the analysis done above, it can be deduced that CR, if communicated through to consumers, does enhance the brand image. Fair & Lovely can proudly claim itself to be the market leader in terms of its product offerings but, unfortunately, although attempting to construct an emotional bond with the consumers since 2003, it has not been able to harvest the desired equity surrounding the brand due to inadequate communication.

However, owing to the re-launch of Fair & Lovely foundation in 2015, the foundation will get a fresh start, present ample opportunity for Fair & Lovely to compensate for the past mistakes. Provided the new beginning is characterized with consolidation of all the pillar activities, extensive promotion of the social projects and a controlling mechanism, Fair & Lovely Foundation is sure to meet its objective. All things in place, Consumers who use currently use Fair & Lovely only for its product efficacy, will ascend the hierarchy from ‘only-user’ to ‘proud user’ and those with hearts filled with negativity for the brand may start to perceive the brand with mitigated negativity when they see the brand performing a crucial role of a catalyst in the field of women empowerment and helping women chase their dreams before marriage closes the window of opportunity for them.

No other brand in Bangladesh has ever attempted to do what Fair & Lovely has done through Fair & Lovely Foundation. From 2003 to 2014, the foundation has given wings to over 3000 women; with a grand re-launch in 2015, Fair & Foundation aims to give flight to 1500 by 2018. Pioneering such an exemplary CR initiative in Bangladesh, Fair & Lovely deserves to win the hearts of both consumers and critics for truly living up to the promise of not only fighting the unfairness in skin tone but also fighting the unfairness in a woman’s life.

12.0 APPENDIX

Survey Questionnaire

Please tick the appropriate box

Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Age

- ☐ 15-25 years
- ☐ 26-35 years
- ☐ 36- 45 years
- ☐ 45+ years

Profession

- ☐ Student
- ☐ Service
- ☐ Business
- ☐ Home maker
- ☐ Other [please specify]

Monthly Income

- ☐ Below 10,000 BDT
- ☐ 10,001-20,000 BDT
- ☐ 20,001-30,000 BDT
- ☐ 30,001-40,000 BDT
- ☐ 40,001 BDT or above

Which of the Fairness Creams do you use/prefer?

- ☐ Fair & Lovely
- ☐ Ponds
- ☐ Olay
- ☐ L'oreal
- ☐ Nivea

- ☐ Tibet

- ☐ Others [please specify]
- ☐ I do not use any fairness cream

What comes to your mind hearin about Fair & Lovely?

Have you heard of Fair & Lovely Foundation?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

How did you first hear about Fair & Lovely Foundation?

- ☐ TVC
- ☐ Newspapers or magazines
- ☐ Word of mouth
- ☐ Billboards
- ☐

What is Fair & Lovely Foundation?

- ☐ Make-up
- ☐ Woman Empowerment vehicle
- ☐ Do not know

Do you know that Fair & Lovely Foundation works for women empowerment?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

Do you think such social initiatives are actually beneficial for women in our country?

- ☐ Yes, I think it actually plays a part in empowering the women of our society
- ☐ No, I think it is just another way of marketing the product with minimal contribution to social welfare.

Do you think you are influenced by the CSR activities while you buy a product?

- ☐ Yes, I am more likely to buy a product that is involved with social welfare activities
- ☐ No, I do not buy products based on its social activities

How likely are you to recommend a fairness cream that also contributes to women empowerment to a friend or relative?

- ☐ Very likely
- ☐ Not likely
- ☐ Not sure

Fair & Lovely Foundation provides education scholarships, vocational trainings and business capital for women entrepreneurs.

After knowing about Fair & Lovely Foundation, do you think your perception about the brand has changed positively?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ It is still the same

Apart from product effectiveness, what are some other factors that influence you to buy the product?

- ☐ Interesting advertisement
- ☐ Promotional offers
- ☐ Social activities of the brand
- ☐ Peer pressure
- ☐ Others [please specify]

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