

Impact Of Positioning of Cloud Computing Service Provider on The People Working in Information Technology Across All Industry

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Abstract

This paper investigates the impact of cloud computing service brand positioning on employees' perceptions and its implications for overall brand strategy. It proposes a model to assess the influence of brand positioning strategies on IT employees and their perception of cloud service providers. The study aims to demonstrate the significance of brand positioning in achieving marketing objectives and sustaining growth in the cloud computing service market.

The findings suggest that cloud service brands effectively position themselves in employees' minds by emphasizing features, benefits, expert opinions, and guarantees of satisfaction, particularly in terms of cost, service quality, knowledge transfer, and innovation. The study identifies AWS as the leading cloud service provider, followed by Azure, Google, and IBM.

This paper discusses implications for increasing market share in the cloud computing service sector, highlighting the risks associated with failing to capture new market segments. It also highlights the social implication of heightened employee satisfaction with knowledge and technology in the cloud computing industry.

Furthermore, this paper underscores the importance of understanding how brand positioning affects employees and suggests strategies for cloud service providers to enhance their market share further.

Keywords: Cloud Computing Brand Positioning, Employee Perception, Employees Brand Image, Market Impact, Brand Strategy

1. Introduction

Over past few years it was observed that, adoption of cloud enabled product and services has a significant effect in expanding the market opportunities for the growth small, medium and large scale enterprises. The financial benefits has motivated the organization to opt for cloud computing technology. Cloud has become a basic foundational needs to enable businesses to transform, differentiate and gain competitive advantage. Many organizations are now focused on defining cloud adoption strategies to use cloud services across the various business entities. IT organization are looking into the six steps in building, implementing and maturing cloud strategies.

- Developing a cloud first and multi-cloud strategy
- Continuous workload assessment analysis
- Planning for cloud adoption maturity model
- Establishing cloud governance and management process
- Develop tooling strategy for multi-cloud environment
- Evaluating SaaS integration requirements in multi-cloud environment

Adoption of cloud computing service is a game changer in the IT infrastructure and cloud service marketing. The cloud market has grown into vast and complex ecosystem of technologies, products and services, giving rise to a multi-billion dollar cloud market where many cloud providers compete to capture a pie of their market share to expand their business. The professional cloud services market is very competitive because of the presence of major industry giants like Amazon Web Services, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud Platform and IBM Cloud. Outside of known industry giants, the cloud computing service market remains a mystery and unexplored. To capture the cloud computing service market, the service

providers has defined and identified the market segment, target market based on their products and categories of services. The cloud service companies has entered in the process of positioning their brands in the market place to capture increasing market share by formulating marketing strategies. The competition in the cloud computing market is intense as many new entrants are offering similar cheaper services to capture the market.

The positioning of brand can help to differentiate the products & services offered by the brand to boost the demand, even if similar service is offered by the competitors. Brand positioning usually forms the backbone of the brand strategy for any company. A wrong positioning strategy can make a good product or services fail. A strong bond can be created between customer and business by positioning and building brand images in customer mind set. It is like an influencing friend of the customer who will always stay in their subconscious mind and will help them to recall about the company whenever they hear about its product, feature services which makes it clear stand out from the crowd.

Design and implementation of various marketing programs, activities are conducted to build, measure and manage brand equity as a part of the strategic brand management (defined by Kevin Lane Keller) process. The process has four main steps:

- Identify & establish brand positioning and values
- Plan & implement marketing programs to boost brand
- Measure & interpret brand performance time to time
- Grow & maintain brand equity

The first bullet point of the above theoretical model (defined by Kevin Lane Keller) is considered to explore more to find out the idea of brand positioning in the limited mind space of the institutional consumer. Branding a product is necessary to identify the product by the consumers distinctly. This is done by giving it a name and use other elements to help consumers to identify the product or services. A successful brand are those brands that withstands in the test of time with its distinctive nature, and embodied in the brand proposition by creating a new age of brand identity. In order to develop positioning, it is always helpful to compare the image of other major competitor's brand in the same segment. Brand positioning means creating a mental structures in the consumers mind for helping in their decision making process by providing positive knowledge about the brand. Brand positioning is part of the brand identity and value proposition that is actively communicated to the target audience. That demonstrates the capability and advantages over competing brands in the market place. Organizations always try to manipulate the brand positions that is already occupied by their brands. They use different positioning strategies to capture new positions in buyers mind by generating an advantage by introducing added differentiators over their competitors.

The central problem in the thesis is to examine the positioning of four major cloud computing service brands in the mind of the employees, the strategy that was constructed to position the brand. There are few cloud computing service brands that are operating from past few years and have captured substantial amount of market share in the target market and became major player in the region. They have contributed in creating a clear defined market segment, and now they are expanding the market by creating distinctive image of service brand in the mind of the employees. There is a need for the study that needs to be conducted to understand what factors are influencing the consumer mind by creating a distinctive image of the brand in consumer's mind, which finally helping influencing the institutional customer ion making the purchasing decisions to go for a specific brand.

2. Literature Review

The brand positioning and image creation by the cloud computing service vendors in the customer mind-set are becoming more and more crucial for the companies to capture and sustained in the competitive market conditions. The cloud service providers have to focus on the target market and specific segment of the group of customer base. These companies have to come up with a clear positioning strategy, as more and more companies are entering into same market segment with the similar kind of products and services. A sound positioning strategy will differentiate the company's product and services in the target market from its competitors. The brand promise and benefits gained by the consumer plays an important role in creating the brand image in consumer's mind. M. Dressler et al. (2021) conducted a study to uncover brand positioning of wine industry transformation towards open innovation by creating brand image and identity. The study was conducted on the German winery brands and explored novel Netnographic methodology created by brand managers and consumer.

The study resulted in identifying nine prime factors used to describe brand identity and image. The conclusion resulting in improving the communication and pricing opportunities for wine brand identity and image. Dita Hommerová et al. (2020) studied the significance of branding for sustaining the education and research library by considering the image of a brand and the branding of non-profit organization. The study was conducted only on awareness and favourability of the brand. It was found that new visual style and rebranding shows positive response from the respondents. The marketing communication focuses on the latest trends has shown positive impact on the sustainability of the libraries. The research result has furnished that corrective measures can be taken on the adoption of selected libraries. Proper planning of the strategy is the key for the sustainability of the selected libraries. Tran Vinh et al. (2019) investigated the brand equity components and its effect on tourism destination "Hoi An" for the domestic tourists in Vietnam.

The study reveals that brand image, brand awareness, brand loyalty has positive influences on overall destination brand equity. An integrated model was developed for the study in the context of developing economy which contributes for the marketers on how to improve the brand equity in the tourism industry. Subhajit Bhattacharya et al. (2018) studied the selection of political brand and perception of Indian youth. RIDIT analysis was used to analyse the statistical data. The contribution of this research was on the political branding and marketing domain in Indian context. The beneficiaries are political parties and they can rip the benefit by minimizing the gaps in managing political branding initiatives for greater competitive advantage and equity. The factors identified are developmental agenda, ideological background, the personality of the leaders, and trustworthiness of the political party. These factors play a substantial influence in selecting the political brand. They projected that “culture”, “vision”, “honesty” and “commitments” play very important factors for choosing the political brands. Marcin Świtała et al. (2018) carried out to examine the influence of brand image, awareness on brand equity in the sector of logistics services.

It was found that there is a weak dependency between brand awareness, image and equity. The factors that impact the logistics market are satisfaction, loyalty and quality of services and these factors positively impact the corporate brand equity of third-party service providers. Mansour, F. et al. (2018) conducted study for developing a model for tourism destination branding in Oman by considering the potential international tourists and Omani tourism providers. The study considered the brand image of Oman in the international market how it is perceived. It was found that five important attributes have negative image and positive image in word of mouth, brand image, social media, and safety. Oman logo does not have any significance to international tourists. Limited strategy, cooperation and coordination among Omani planners, marketers, concerns on customer feedback and noise, on which one has to act upon to build the brand to create favourable brand message. Chaves, Eduardo. et al. (2017) conducted research work to understand the relationships between brand identity, positioning, brand image and brand equity in the retail market scenario.

A qualitative-quantitative research was conducted to describe the existing relation on market consumption and maximization of company's result. The observation found that brand positioning mostly influences the loyalty of the customer and brand image is the most effective and efficient tool. The conceptual and operational gaps from the management have been identified and presented. Aulina, Lendy et al. (2017) analyzes the influence of green brand positioning, knowledge and attitude to purchase personal care and cosmetics products of Body Shop. The results showed that green brand positioning does not influence attitude toward brand but people have knowledge which influence purchase intention. Based on the result companies can focus on marketing communication strategy to build the positioning on consumer mind. They should focus on customer engagement, educate customer on natural ingredients that is used to make the product to show case the importance of using environment friendly personal care and cosmetics. Yousaf, Anish et al. (2017) presented a modified model for developing and measuring the customer based brand equity of tourist destination as most of the study does not cover the holistic view of building sustainable customer centric brand equity. It was found that building strong brand equity starts with identification of destination followed by imagery, judgements, feelings and brand resonance. The framework gives a deep understanding of building brand equity destination, developing strong, emotional bonds with the tourists for the sustainability of the brand equity. Kariuki, M.N. et al. (2015) studied the impact of brand image on customer satisfaction in major supermarkets in Kenya by adopting convenience sampling technique. The study found that brand image creates the customer lifestyle, expectation, promises and good impression on other people. Also the study found that customers were satisfied with prices, location, products availability, timely information, freshness, loyalty programs, layout, quality and shorter time to payment of the purchases build the positive impression about the supermarket brand image.

The effective marketing strategies were established by identifying the brand image benefits on satisfaction by maintaining and strengthening the brand images and values. Abu-Shanab, Emad et al. (2014) explored the risks, and factors influencing adoption of cloud computing environment. The framework was proposed to prove the interrelation between intentions to use and cloud computing. The factors considered are “security”, “privacy”, “prior online experience”, “brand reputation”, “trust”, “brand equity”. It was found that the trust is the only factor that significantly impact the brand equity of the use of cloud service and build the brand reputation. Brännström, H. et al. (2013) contributed on purchase and recommendation of H&M brand extension in the area of perceived quality, brand trust, brand loyalty which corresponds to both female and males consumers. The population survey was conducted on women, men, teenagers and children. It was found that a particular factor is responsible on the purchase and recommendation decision of consumer. The factor perceived quality has significant effect on the consumer purchase decision making process and consistency leads to future success of the brand extension. Chen, T. Y et al. (2013) investigated the causal relationship among brand management, brand cognition, and brand associations in the area of personal computer market. A conceptual framework was built on global consumer culture, perceived global brand, brand investment, brand credibility, brand awareness, and brand associations. It was found that inclination to global consumer culture, influences the brand interconnection significantly through credibility of the brand.

The global brand influences the brand association through brand awareness. J. Bodin et al. (2008) aimed at organization's brand positioning strategy and brand personality on a research charity organization. The strategy was built on by considering the target market, target groups and differential advantage the company has from its competitors. The outcome of the thesis works captures that organization should have clear understanding on brand positioning on the target customer group and how they wanted to be perceived, what brand personality wanted to create. Organization should create brand personality and positioning, so that brand identity can be better understood by the customer. Olsson, A. et al. (2006) aimed to create position strategy and brand personality of Lulea University of Technology by identifying the target market and

differential advantage of the organization with its competitors and brand promises. A conceptual framework was proposed for positioning strategy and brand personality. The findings indicate that knowledge of brand identity is required to differentiate from its competitors. The brand positioning and brand personality perceived by the customer must be understood by the brand manager to be successful. Bornmark, Hanna et al. (2005) conducted a study to understand brand awareness affects the purchasing behaviour in an unfamiliar environment. Also what all products are recognized by the students most and what all products recognized by the students least. It was found that quality has a greater effect on choosing the brand than brand awareness. It was found that there was no difference in buying behaviour between the cultures of the students.

Brand Association

“Brand Association” can be defined as mental connection between brand concept, image, experience, interest, emotion and customer. Unique brand association helps the marketer to establish strong bonding in products, attributes, packaging, and advertising by building strategies (David A. Aker, 1991). The dimension includes retrieve information, differentiate, reason to buy, create positive attitude, basis for extension.

Brand Image

“Brand Image” can be defined as the perception of the brand based on their interaction in their mind, which includes beliefs, ideas, impression they are bearing (Kevin Lane Keller, 2013). The brand image correlates with customer satisfaction Davies et al. (2003). The dimension includes product attributes, consumer benefits, brand personality.

Brand Mantra

“Brand Mantra” can be defined as essential heart and soul of the brand. Organizations defines few word phases that captures spirit of the brand (Kevin Lane Keller, 2013). A good brand mantra should communicate, simplify and inspire the customer about the brand. Its purpose is to ensure all the stakeholders in the market place to understand what the brand is. The dimension includes emotional modifier, descriptive modifier, brand functions.

Points of Parity

“Points of Parity” can be defined as unique associations that are shared across other brands. It represents the qualities that the product or services have in order to be competitive with other (Kevin Lane Keller, 2013). The association can become more valuable when that creates points of parity to create unique brand association. The dimension includes “category points-of-parity”, “competitive points-of-parity”, “correlational points-of-parity”.

Points of Difference

“Points of Difference” can be defined as the characteristics of the product or services that can be distinguished from the competitors. It influences the customer to determine the choice of the product and brand (Kevin Lane Keller, 2013). The unique features or characteristics are the incentives that helps the customer to choose offerings over others. The dimension includes desirable, deliverable, differentiated.

Brand Awareness

“Brand Awareness” is related to consumer’s ability to identify various bands elements under various conditions. It is related to the strength of the brand in the memory of the consumer while choosing a specific brand under different conditions (Kevin Lane Keller, 2013). Choosing the right element organization creates brand awareness on the customer. Brand awareness plays an important role in consumer behaviour and category to bring success in the marketing program. The dimension includes the top of mind, brand recall, brand recognition.

2.1. Research Gap

The theoretical model (Fetscherin et al, 2021) and literature on brand positioning have seen significant expansion within marketing literature (Parris et al, 2023) with contribution from various researcher over the years (Saqib, 2020). Section 2 (Literature Review), indicates the available existing research works. Most of the existing research work focused on brand image creation in different domain (M. Dressler et al., 2021), positioning of the brand (Subhajit Bhattacharya et al., 2018), brand awareness on customer (Marcin Świtała et al., 2018), destination branding (Mansour, F. et al., 2018), the relationship between customers and brands (Chaves, Eduardo. et al., 2017), formulating the brand strategy in personal care products (Aulina, Lendy et al., 2017) and managing brand equity (Aaker, 1991). However, there remains a gap in the literature regarding the exploration of certain aspects in cloud computing space that are not yet adequately addressed are as below:

- There was not a single study conducted on the positioning of the cloud computing services on the employees of the organization.
- Perception of employees on positioning of cloud service providers brands.
- Positioning brand strategy and image building in the mind of employees.

Moreover, no other studies performed on the Exploring Brand Positioning Strategies in Cloud Computing and Implications for Employee Perception and Market Capture. Therefore, this study helps to fill the knowledge gaps.

This study introduces a new brand positioning model inspired by Kevin Lane Keller's theoretical framework and David A. Aaker's factors, tailored for investigation within the domain of cloud computing to explore their interrelationships. By adopting this revised model, the research offers a fresh perspective on organizational challenges. It examines the impact of employee perceptions and choices on vendor selection, focusing on six key factors that validate the positioning of cloud computing service brands in the institutional market. Professionals can leverage insights from this study to develop effective business strategies for positioning cloud computing service brands. Moreover, the research outcomes pave the way for future studies in information technology, particularly for researchers interested in exploring the complexities of expanding market share using Kevin Lane Keller's theory as a foundation.

3. Hypothesis Formulation

The purpose of the research is to ascertain how positioning strategies on employees impact on cloud computing services. In order to gain understanding of the deeper insights of cloud computing brands positioning following are the questions that are looking for answers in the study.

- Is positioning impacting the employee's perception about cloud computing service brand?
- Is cloud computing service brand are well positioned to create positive perception on the employees?
- Is positioning strategy cloud computing service brand influence employees in building brand image creation?

Kevin Lane Keller has mentioned in Strategic Brand Management book that theoretically brand image, awareness, points of parity, points of difference, brand associations are the factors of the first step in identifying & establishing brand positioning and values on the consumer.

Brand image influences employee's perception in brand positioning

Online consumer reviews primarily focused on analysing non-textual features for brand image and positioning (Alzate et al., 2022). Brand image influence on repurchase intention and green brand positioning emphasizing the importance of consumer perception and environmental product (Situmorang et al., 2021). The influence of brand loyalty and brand image on brand positioning enhance customer satisfaction and gain a competitive edge (Zia et al., 2021). Brand image with a segmentation strategy based on geographic, demographic, behavioral and psychographic factors leads to effective positioning of brand (Sukirno et al., 2024). E-commerce in Poland experiences rapid growth of sales through creation of brand image and positioning (Hrydziuszko et al., 2024). Thus, building on the Kevin Lane Keller's theory, the research proposes to examine:

H₀₁: Brand image in the cloud computing service brand has no impact on Brand positioning.

Brand awareness influences employee's perception in brand positioning

The cosmetics industry in Indonesia thrives, with brand awareness using public figures to influence consumers, as demonstrated by Dewi et al. (2020). Eslami (2020) delves into Iran's health insurance sector, how brand experience influences brand equity and loyalty through brand awareness. Mukherjee et al. (2023) focus on FMCG products, brand awareness influences purchase intention. Hameed et al. (2023) investigate brand awareness influences purchase intentions in digital communication. Prasojo et al. (2024) highlight the role of Instagram content marketing in enhancing brand awareness. Thus, building on the Kevin Lane Keller's theory, the research proposes to examine:

H₀₂: Brand awareness in the cloud computing service brand has no effect on Brand positioning.

Points-of-parity influences employee's perception in brand positioning

Previous research has explored the connections between brand parity (BP), brand image (BI), brand satisfaction (BS), and brand loyalty (BL), but they find that brand image and satisfaction positively impact brand loyalty, brand parity does not have a direct or moderating effect, indicating that consumers' decisions remain unaffected by brand parity in relation to brand image and satisfaction's impact on brand loyalty (Turunç et al., 2024). A brand's concept in advertising impacts consumers' purchase intentions for a new vertical line extension, finding that consistency with price/quality segments positively influences evaluation and brand parity (Pontes et al., 2024). Companies in organic food markets position on consumer the brand parity in health, highlighting a focus on product characteristics and personal benefits over environmental or emotional factors, thus enhancing understanding of brand positioning in the organic food supply chain (Stoica, 2023). The study explores managing brand image within the school context, analyses brand identity, brand parity, brand image, and the role of teachers in shaping school culture, highlights the importance of internal marketing in cultivating a desirable school culture and underscores the pivotal role of teachers in school branding (Jukić, 2023). Using a novel netnographic method, the study identifies key words shaping brand identity, parity and image, offering valuable insights for communication and pricing strategies, contributing to open brand innovation (Dressler et al., 2023). Thus, building on the Kevin Lane Keller's theory, the research proposes to examine:

H₀₃: Points of parity in the cloud computing service brand has no impact on Brand positioning.

Points-of-difference influences employee's perception in brand positioning

The Systems Thinking Approach for Retail Transformation (START) framework highlights points of differences between health promotion and grocery settings, offering guidance on addressing commercial interests and promoting healthier

options in grocery stores (Zorbas et al., 2024). The broader the range of intelligence required to identify feasibility of points of difference, points of parity with respect to engagement, differentiation, and access about the brand equity to understand how they influence brand resilience and growth opportunities amidst environmental challenges (Rego et al., 2022). Claygo, with Ajoy brand as part of its portfolio, refine its premium positioning and develop integrated marketing communication strategies to reach its target audience effectively determining the points-of-difference that potentially can be owned and emphasized (Rachmawati et al., 2022). Longgar Outfit, developed a suitable business strategy by creating a new value proposition canvas, point of difference, point of parity, marketing strategy, and organizational structure plan (Nuraini et al., 2020). The positioning of the newly established political party brings the awareness by positioning its dimensions, namely points of difference, points of parity that have an influence on brand awareness as measured by its level, unawareness, recognition, recall, and top of mind (Pramesthi et al., 2020). Thus, building on the Kevin Lane Keller's theory, the research proposes to examine:

H₀₄: Points of difference in the cloud computing service brand has no impact on Brand positioning.

Brand association influences employee's perception in brand positioning

There is a causal link between brand authenticity, image, preference and association has significant influence on consumer behaviour (Ligaraba et al., 2024). The study reveals that Instagram has no significant effect on brand image, association while price strongly influences online purchasing decisions, for hijab fashion SME consumers in Indonesia (Bahri et al., 2023). Social Media Marketing positively impacts brand awareness, association, perceived quality, and loyalty, offering insights for marketing strategies and competitive advantage in the beauty sector (Warbung et al., 2023). Shopee should focus on enhancing brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty as its impact purchasing decisions to drive online sales (Supiyandi et al., 2022). The study reveals that there is a significant positive effects of brand perceived quality, product brand image, brand association, confidence of place on unique value propositions on customer loyalty (Yulistiana et al., 2021). Thus, building on the Kevin Lane Keller's theory, the research proposes to examine:

H₀₅: Brand association in the cloud computing service brand has no impact on Brand positioning

Brand mantra influences employee's perception in brand positioning

The study sets up brand mantra by exploring the brand consciousness and distinctiveness on customer purchase decisions, particularly in the context of luxury beauty products (Jaravaza et al., 2024). This study explores Mixue's marketing strategies in China's milk tea industry unveils use of product innovation, branding, pricing, distribution, and promotion, particularly leveraging social media for consumer engagement and brand differentiation by setting up brand mantra (Lu et al., 2024). The research provides brand managers with accurate insights for effective marketing strategies by understanding brand positioning, brand mantra and analysing consumer feedback from e-commerce platforms using opinion mining and sentiment analysis (Yilmaz et al., 2023). This article addresses the need for innovation in brand communication by reviewing brand management strategies, brand mantra, proposing a futuristic model that integrates creativity more effectively to enhance brand communication and management practices (Yagnik et al., 2020). In the market economy, brands play a central role, symbolizing a company's image and products, influencing consumer decisions in competitive environments by creating brand mantra and positioning (Kusá et al., 2023). Thus, building on the Kevin Lane Keller's theory, the research proposes to examine:

H₀₆: Brand mantra in the cloud computing service brand has no impact on Brand positioning.

The theoretical model for this study, which is shown in below section, is based on the on the Kevin Lane Keller's theory defined in the book Strategic Brand Management and the framework of the brand positioning, theoretical discussion, empirical data from prior research, and the proposed hypotheses mentioned above.

3.1. Theoretical Model

In order to understand the impact of brand positioning and the effect of various factors that are considered for the analysis are chosen from the theoretical study captured by Kevin Lane Keller and Philip Kotler in their books. This model was primarily developed by Kevin Lane Keller & Philip Kotler. The same theoretical model is used to find out the interrelationships between the various factors that influence brand positioning in creating brand image in the mind of the employees working in IT. Below Figure 1 represents the research model that contributes to derive the final model. This model is used to study the brand positioning dimensions on employees.

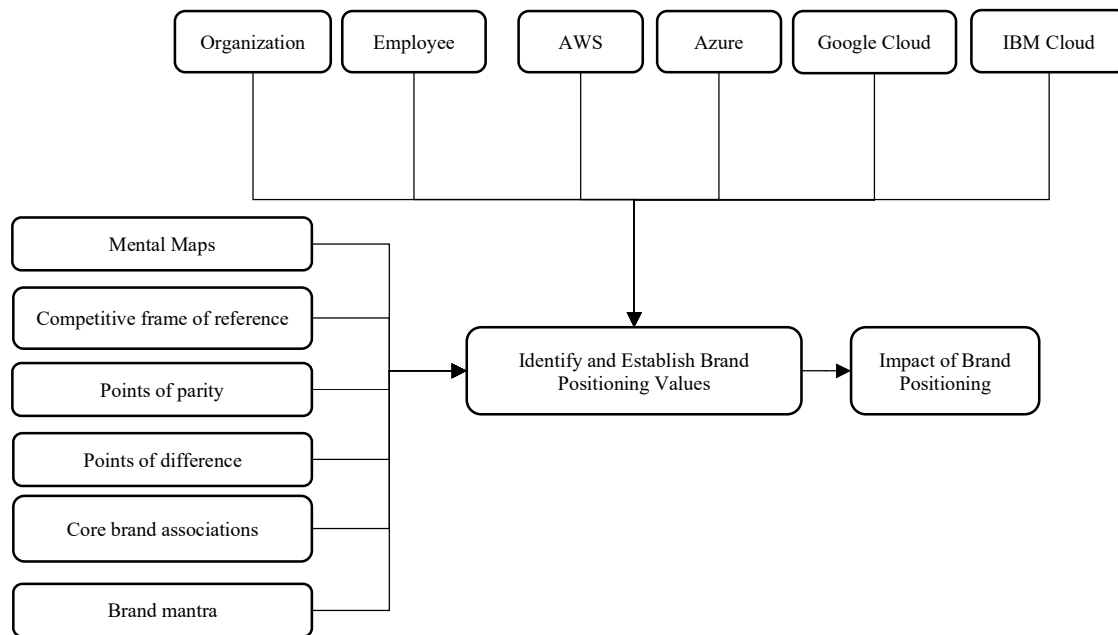


Figure 1 Conceptual Model

3.2. Conceptual Research Model

The below Figure 2 model was developed to study further by going through various research papers to figure out the impact of cloud services positioning on the employees.

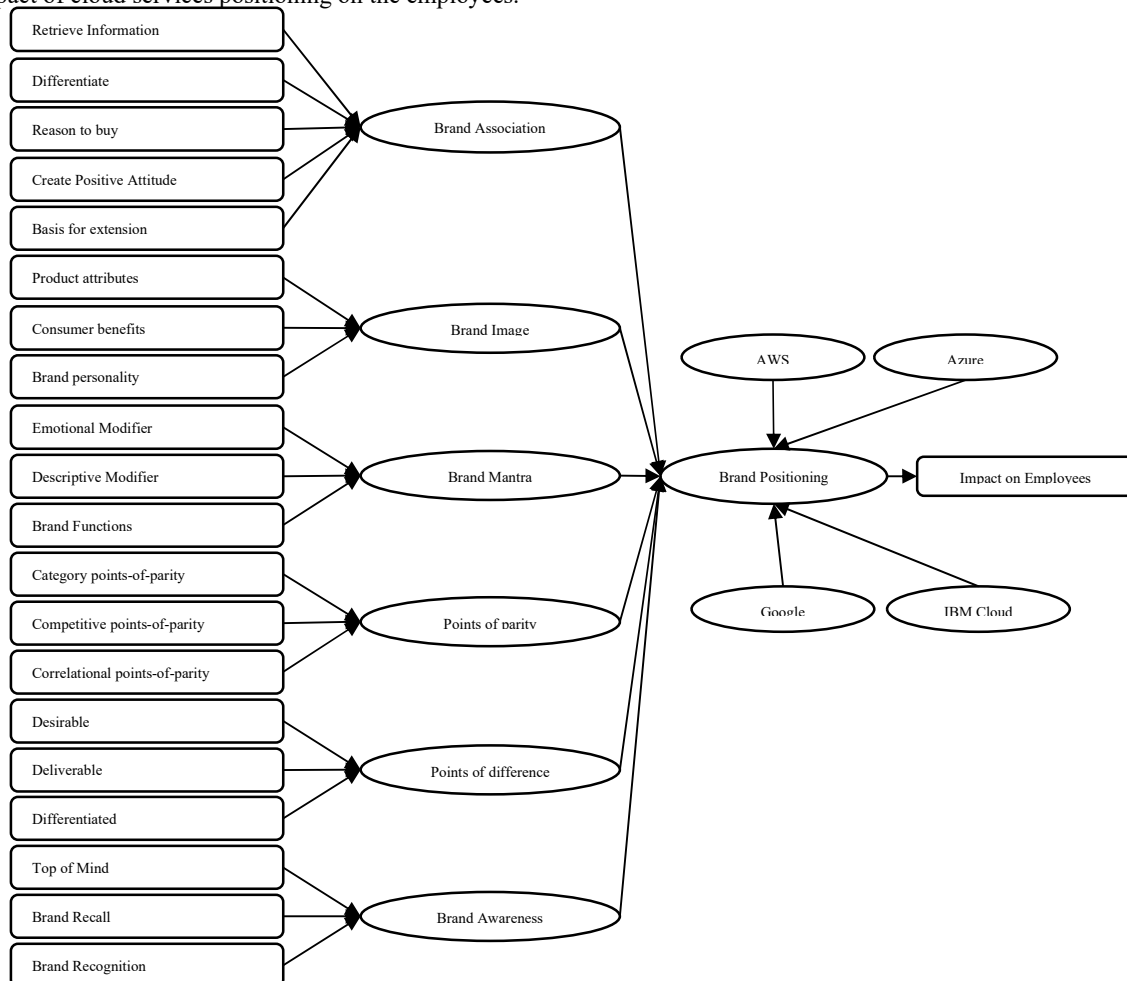
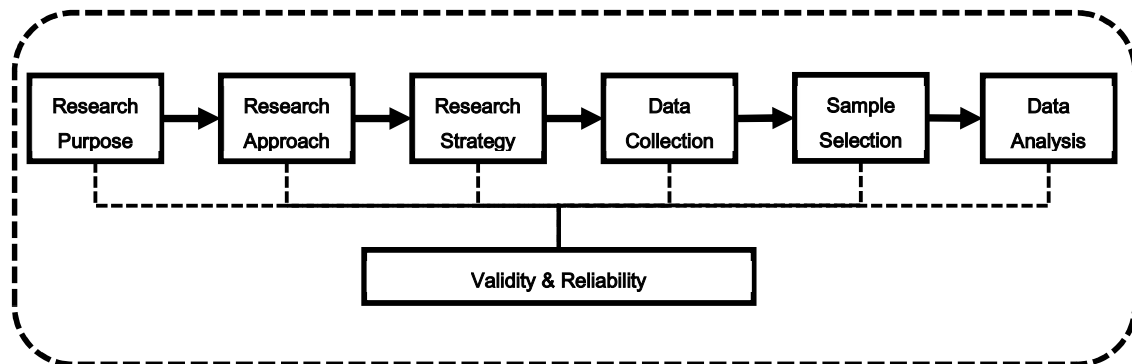


Figure 2 Research Model

4. Research Methodology

This quantitative study was designed to use a brand positioning model to investigate employee's preferences of cloud computing service brand in large, medium and small scale industries in India. This section provides the methods and techniques used for collecting the data for the study. The focus is to discuss the purpose of the research, approach, strategy, data collection, sample selection and data analysis as mentioned in below Figure 3.



Source: Adapted from Foster 1998, p.81.

Figure 3 Research Methodology Flow

4.1. Data Collection Process

The most common sources of data that can be used when collecting information are literature, scientific articles and reports. Different techniques for collecting data could be documents, diaries, interviews and questionnaires, attitude formularies and observations. The rules that were followed for formulating the questionnaire are

- Use of simple, easy and clear words
- Clear aims of the research
- Avoid lengthy questions
- Sequence of question
- Non sensitive questions that might not affect the responder
- Avoid hidden alternatives in the questions
- Avoid included presumptions
- Avoid double-faced questions

The research questionnaire were formulated by applying the above rules and structured, close format questions were formulated.

4.2. Sample Selection

The sampling technique that was used for the sample selection from the population mean is called judgemental sampling. The below step will explain how the respondents to the questionnaires were chosen for the study to focus on.

- Choice of Organization

The purpose of this thesis was to gain a better understanding for brand positioning within the information technology organization. The organization was selected from major cities in India randomly.

- Choice of Respondents

The choice of respondents based on the knowledge that they have something special to contribute with to the investigated area. The respondents were chosen through a judgemental sample selection, due to the nature of the study and the kind of response is expected from the responded is very much technical in nature, keeping in mind that the respondents had to have knowledge in the area.

4.3. Population Sample

The general research population was made out of the Indian employees with experience of using cloud environment as a part of their daily activity, while the survey unit was represented by the employees working on those organization.

5. Data Interpretation & Analysis

5.1. Demography Data

This section covers the demographic data and cross section of Brand Association, Brand Image, Brand Mantra, Points of Parity, Points of Difference and Brand Awareness to the demographic factors among professional in India.

Table I indicates that most of the responder chosen falls under the 100k to 200k income range having age range 31 to 40 years and most of them are Male.

Table I Socio demographic frequency distribution table

Variable		Frequency	Percentage
Organization Size	Small(10-49)	17	32.7
	Medium (50-249)	12	23.1
	Large(>250)	23	44.2
City	Bangalore	15	28.8
	Bhubaneswar	5	9.6
	Chennai	5	9.6
	Delhi	3	5.8
	Hyderabad	6	11.5
	Kolkata	12	23.1
	Pune	6	11.5
	20 to 30	10	19.2
	31 to 40	25	48.1
Age Range	41 to 50	16	30.8
	51 to 60	1	1.9
Gender	Female	7	13.5
	Male	45	86.5
Income Range	<20,000	0	0
	20,000 to 50,000	14	26.9
	50,001 to 1,00,000	14	26.9
	1,00,001 to 2,00,000	16	30.8
	2,00,001 to 5,00,000	6	11.5
	>5,00,000	2	3.8
Job Role	Architect	6	11.5
	Consultant	7	13.5
	Developer	8	15.4
	Director	6	11.5
	Executive	7	13.5
	Manager	8	15.4
	Support Specialist	6	11.5
	System Analyst	4	7.7

5.2. Preferred Feature List

It is observed from Figure 4 that most of the responder chosen Availability, Economical and Security as mostly preferred feature.

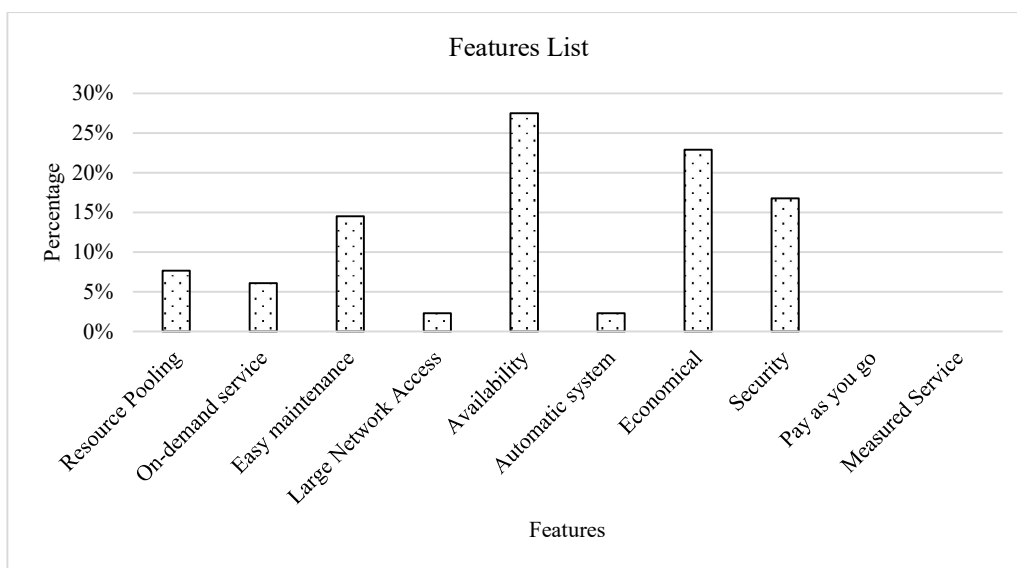


Figure 4 Preferred Feature List

5.3. Unknown Cloud Service Provider

It is observed from Figure 5 that most of the responder chosen Tencent, Salesforce, SAP, Rackspace, VMWare as most unknown cloud service provider.

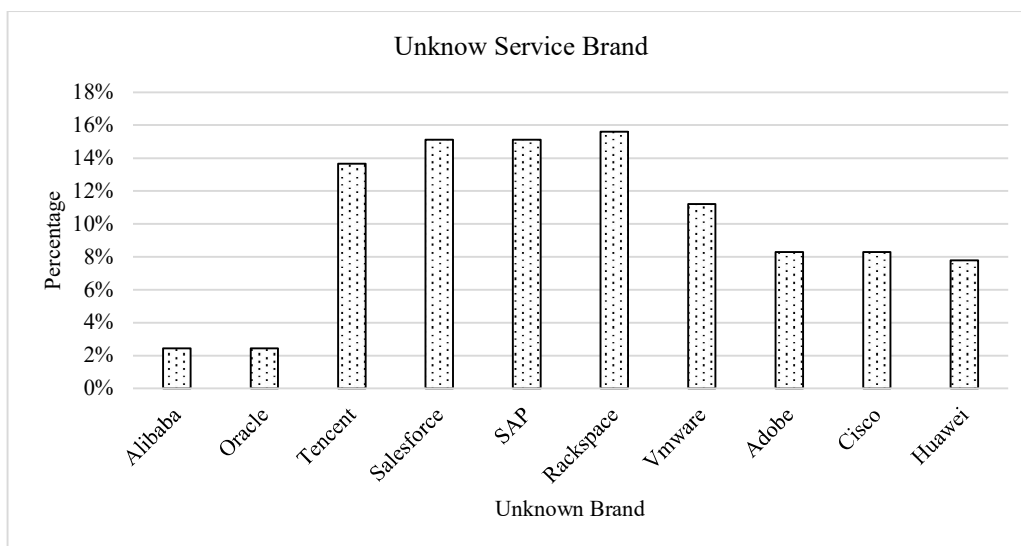


Figure 5 Unknown Cloud Service Provider

5.4. Descriptive Statistics

A test was conducted on the sample data to measure the descriptive statistic to figure out normality of each of the difference scores. Normality is defined as per the standard data captured and published by different statistician. Having skew $\leq \pm 2.00$ and kurtosis $\leq \pm 7.00$ is statistically proven to be good to establish that collected data is within the range of normal curve. Among the difference in scores, skew obtained from the sample data is ranged from -0.403 to -0.423 refer Table II, which is meeting and satisfying the assumption. Kurtosis derived from the sample data is ranged from -0.655 to -0.737 refer Table II, also meeting the assumption. Therefore the conclusion is can be drawn that normality is met for all the six different scores.

Table II Descriptive statistics for expected, perceived and difference table

N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error	Kurtosis	Std. Error
Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic

Brand Image	494	3.00	21.00	15.08	4.480	-.423	.11	-.655	.219
Brand Awareness	494	3.00	21.00	15.09	4.489	-.405	.11	-.704	.219
Points Of Parity	494	3.00	21.00	15.14	4.474	-.403	.11	-.743	.219
Points Of Difference	494	3.00	21.00	15.12	4.475	-.408	.11	-.737	.219
Brand Association	494	5.00	35.00	25.21	7.444	-.407	.11	-.735	.219
Brand Mantra	494	3.00	21.00	15.12	4.470	-.410	.11	-.716	.219

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests were conducted to determine the factors considered for the analysis of Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Points of Parity, Points of Difference, Brand Association and Brand Mantra are normally distributed. The results shows in Table III indicates that the data is normally distributed ($p < 0.05$).

Table III Normality measurement table

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Brand Image	.175	494	.000	.924	494	.000
Brand Awareness	.182	494	.000	.921	494	.000
Points Of Parity	.188	494	.000	.920	494	.000
Points Of Difference	.185	494	.000	.920	494	.000
Brand Association	.183	494	.000	.920	494	.000
Brand Mantra	.181	494	.000	.920	494	.000

5.5. Measuring validity of the instrument

Validity was measured by testing convergent validity and discriminant validity. The convergence validity test was conducted by factor analysis, average variance extraction (AVE), and composite reliability (CR). The below Table IV shows the fact that the factor loadings are above 0.7 indicates that the factor loading was optimal. All of the AVE ratings were above 0.5, which means that errors are less. CR ratings for the factors above 0.7 shows that factors are valid.

Table IV Construct validity table

Factor	Item	Factor Loading	α	Composite Reliability	AVE
Brand Association	BA1	.92	.954	.981	.911
	BA2	.94			
	BA3	.96			
	BA4	.98			
	BA5	.97			
Brand Image	BI1	.85	.857	.892	.734
	BI2	.87			
	BI3	.85			
Brand Mantra	BM1	.98	.97	.98	.941
	BM2	.97			
	BM3	.96			
Points Of Parity	PP1	.83	.871	.904	.759
	PP2	.85			
	PP3	.93			
Points Of Difference	PD1	.83	.864	.898	.747
	PD2	.84			
	PD3	.92			
Brand Awareness	BAW1	.96	.947	.963	.897
	BAW2	.96			
	BAW3	.92			

The Table V below illustrates that all diagonal values exceed their corresponding horizontal and vertical values, indicating high reliability and validity as the results are close to 1.0.

Table V Discriminant validity table

	Brand Association	Brand Image	Brand Mantra	Points Parity	OfPoints Difference	OfBrand Awareness
Brand Association	0.954					
Brand Image	0.9467	0.857				
Brand Mantra	0.9397	0.8461	0.97			
Points Of Parity	0.9298	0.8371	0.969	0.871		
Points Of Difference	0.9036	0.8209	0.8129	0.8041	0.864	
Brand Awareness	0.8985	0.8188	0.79	0.78	0.728	0.947

5.6. Reliability of the measuring instrument

The internal consistency of the survey form was measured by measuring the dependableness of reliability instrument i.e. by using the Cronbach alpha test. The Cronbach alpha result shows in below Table VI, an excellent alpha value (.881). This means that the reliability of the measuring instrument is statistically proven.

Table VI Reliability measurement table

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.881	.881	6

6. Results & Discussion

To examine research question and the six hypotheses that was constructed for the study, the structural equation modelling a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted in SPSS and AMOS, to examine the six factors on brand positioning. The impact of brand association, brand image, brand mantra, points of parity, points of difference, brand awareness on brand positioning has been analysed. Standardized path weights from the model were examined for significance using a t test. These paths were represented by the strength of factor loading perceived by the employees represented by different scores calculated using SEM. If measured item under consideration varies significantly in comparison with the standard value, then the null hypothesis will be rejected and alternate hypothesis will be accepted.

6.1. Hypothesis Testing

The below Table VII depicts the hypothesis that was tested with 6 factors. Brand image significantly impacts brand positioning and has a significant value less than 0.050 and reveals that the hypothesis is supported. Then, brand awareness significantly impacts brand positioning and was analysed with a significant value less than 0.050 and revealed that the hypothesis is supported. Also, points of parity significantly impacts brand positioning and was analysed with a significant value less than 0.050 revealing that the hypothesis is supported. Also, points of difference significantly impacts brand positioning was analysed with a significant value less than 0.050 and revealed that the hypothesis is supported. Brand association significantly impacts brand positioning was analysed with a significant value less than 0.050 and revealed that the hypothesis is supported. Finally, brand mantra impacts brand positioning was analysed with a significant value less than 0.050 and reveals that the hypothesis is supported.

Table VII Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Significant value	Support/Reject	Result of Research Hypothesis	Hypothesis number
0.000	Accept	There is an impact of Brand Image on cloud computing Brand Positioning.	H ₀₁
0.000	Accept	There is an impact of Brand Awareness on cloud computing Brand Positioning.	H ₀₂
0.000	Accept	There is an impact of Points of parity on cloud computing Brand Positioning.	H ₀₃
0.000	Accept	There is an impact of Points of difference on cloud computing Brand Positioning.	H ₀₄
0.000	Accept	There is an impact of Brand Association on cloud computing Brand positioning.	H ₀₅
0.000	Accept	There is an impact of Brand Mantra on cloud computing Brand Positioning.	H ₀₆

6.2. CFA Analysis

Table VIII Parameter Estimates CFA Model

Variable	Unstandardized estimate	Standard error	Standardized estimate	<i>p</i>
Brand Association	1.000		.883	
Points of Difference	0.614	0.020	.892	< .001
Points of Parity	0.601	0.025	.873	< .001
Brand Awareness	0.601	0.036	.836	< .001
Brand Image	0.598	0.032	.847	< .001
Brand Mantra	0.585	0.031	.851	<.001

Table IX Model Fit Statistics

Model Name	χ^2	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Original Model	61.659	9	.001	.95	.91	.367

CFA Model

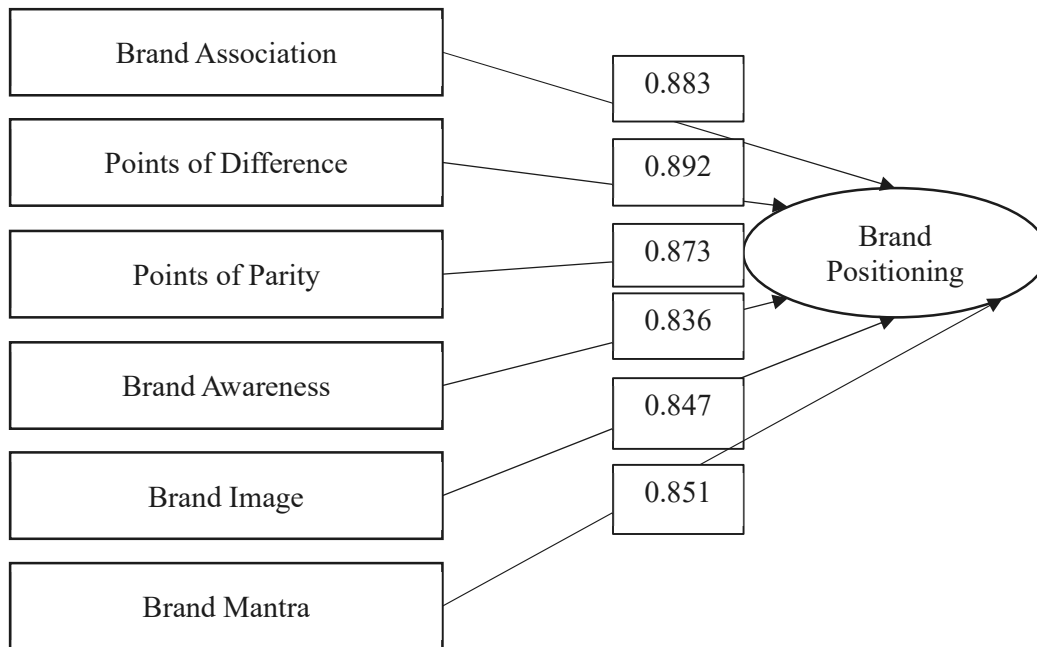


Figure 6 SEM Final Output Brand Positioning

Table VIII displays that the errors are well within the limit and Table IX represents the model fit values. In order to discuss the research hypotheses 1 to 6 defined in earlier section, the structural equation modelling i.e. CFA was conducted to measure Brand Association, Brand Image, Brand Mantra, Points of Parity, Points of Difference, Brand Awareness are loaded on brand positioning latent construct. The collected data was entered into AMOS for the analysis of SEM. A good model fit was defined by the researcher and statistician is that having a CFI & TLI ≥ 0.90 and RMSEA ≤ 0.10 . Figure 6 shows the results of the collected sample used to test the CFA concludes to good model fit for the data where, $\chi^2 (9) = 61.659$, $p < 0.001$, CMIN/DF = 2.926, NFI = 0.95, RFI = 0.91, IFI = 0.95, TLI = 0.91, CFI = 0.95, RMSEA = 0.367.

Due to the above result data is within the boundaries of statistically proven data, the model can be contemplate for the good fit model for the study to use. The individual factor loadings for each of the variables was examined carefully to address the findings. The factor loadings of the each standardized estimates were also examined to determine the

significance of each indicator that was considered as measurement under study. The results also shows that all the indicator variables were taken for the analysis has a p value which is less than .001, thus measuring significant. Because of the significance found for each of the variables, the result of null hypotheses 1 to 6 test defined in above section, is rejected and favoured the alternative hypotheses.

6.3. Theoretical implications

The study utilized Kevin Lane Keller's theory and model to examine how brand image, brand awareness, points-of-parity, points-of-difference, brand association, and brand mantra impact brand positioning, leading to employee preferences and organizational satisfaction in implementing cloud computing with preferred service providers. The results affirmed the model's applicability, emphasizing the need for real-world application among various stakeholders in different IT departments.

A unique aspect of this study is its focus on positioning cloud computing services for employees. The analysis revealed a positive impact of all six factors on positioning these services, with brand image, awareness, association, and mantra creation leaving a lasting impression on employees, ultimately benefiting revenue generation. Additionally, the study guides cloud service providers in taking timely actions on stakeholders to foster image creation, assisting organizations in achieving sustainability goals.

The study's theoretical contribution lies in demonstrating the model's effectiveness in positioning cloud services for employees. When implemented effectively, brand image, awareness, and associated attributes significantly influence the positioning of cloud computing services in the real world. Furthermore, it underscores the critical role of brand image in successful positioning strategies for market creation and sustainability in competitive environments. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of fostering market creation and favorable employee environments to fulfill brand promises in delivering cloud services, especially in challenging market scenarios.

6.4. Practical implications

Organizations are increasingly prioritizing the adoption and formulation of cloud service strategies to remain competitive in the technology-driven business landscape. Cloud computing service providers must strategically position their brands to capture and expand market share, facilitating collaboration among stakeholders to address business challenges such as security, regulation, and compliance. This study underscores the importance of influencing user preferences in selecting specific cloud service brands, as it directly impacts brand positioning within organizations.

Therefore, the study highlights the significance of brand positioning and employee preferences in selecting cloud service brands within their organizations. Cloud computing service brands must develop comprehensive strategies to position their services effectively and capture market share. The study's findings provide guidance to cloud service providers for positioning their services and encourage the development of strategies to influence employees in the organization to remain competitive in the marketplace. Thus, creation of multidimensional model that includes brand Image, brand Awareness, points-of-parity, points-of-difference, brand association, brand mantra is essential will help the service provide to position the cloud computing services.

6.5. Regression Analysis

Table X Model Summary

Model R	R Square	Adjusted Square	R Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics	R Change	Square F Change	df1	df2	Sig. Change	F
1	.995 ^a	.990	.990	1.50919	.990	7930.013	6	487	0.000	

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Points Of Parity, Points Of Difference, Brand Association, Brand Mantra

b. Dependent Variable: Brand Positioning

The Table X represents R^2 value for the overall model is 99% and value for Adjusted R^2 is 99%, a high size effect is reported by the model.

Table XI ANOVA Table

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1083.71169	6	180.61861	79.30013	.000 ^b
	Residual	110.9220	487	2.278		
	Total	1094.80389	493			

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Positioning

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Awareness, Points Of Parity, Points Of Difference, Brand Association, Brand Mantra

The Table XI represents model as a whole is noteworthy to predict the perceived service quality: $F(6, 487) = 79.300$, $p < 0.05$ as shown by ANNOVA table. As the $p < 0.05$, we conclude that there is significant model fit brand image, brand awareness, points of parity, points of difference, brand association and brand mantra towards brand positioning. The R^2 for the overall model was 99% with an adjusted R^2 of 99%, a high size effect is reported by the model of variations in the perceived brand positioning is gauged by the linear combination of predictor variables.

Table XII Coefficients of dependent variables

Model	B	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	95.0% Confidence Interval for B		Correlations		Collinearity Statistics	
		Std. Error	Beta			Lower Bound	Upper Bound	Zero-order	Partial	Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	.203	.241		.843	.399	.270	.676				
Brand Image	1.717	.169	.516	10.177	.000	1.386	2.049	.993	.419	.046	123.732
Brand Awareness	1.019	.156	.307	6.539	.000	.713	1.325	.991	.284	.030	105.882
Points Of Parity	1.014	.200	.304	5.073	.000	1.407	.621	.985	.224	.023	173.114
Points Of Difference	1.210	.303	.363	3.997	.000	.615	1.805	.989	.178	.018	397.331
Brand Association	.590	.193	.295	3.049	.002	.970	.210	.989	.137	.014	448.650
Brand Mantra	1.365	.199	.409	6.843	.000	.973	1.757	.988	.296	.031	172.073

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Positioning

The Table XII represents the coefficients of the dependent variables. In the final model, all the independent variable were statistically significant with brand image ($t=10.177$, $p<0.000$, $\beta=0.516$), brand awareness ($t=6.539$, $p<0.000$, $\beta=0.307$), points of parity ($t=5.073$, $p<0.000$, $\beta=0.304$), points of difference ($t=3.997$, $p<0.000$, $\beta=0.363$), brand association ($t=3.049$, $p<0.002$, $\beta=0.295$), brand mantra ($t=6.843$, $p<0.000$, $\beta=0.409$).

The final predictive equation is

Positioning = $.203 + 1.717(\text{Brand Image}) + 1.019(\text{Brand Awareness}) + 1.014(\text{Points of Parity}) + 1.210(\text{Points of Difference}) + 0.590(\text{Brand Association}) + 1.365(\text{Brand Mantra})$

Overall Brand Positioning

The positive slope for “Brand Image” (1.717) as predictor of “Brand Positioning” indicates that there is around 1.717 increase in “Brand Positioning” for each 1 point increase in Image. In other way it can be said that, “Brand Positioning” increases as “Brand Image” component increases. Squared semi-partial coefficient (sr^2) estimated how much variance in “Brand Positioning” was uniquely predictable from Awareness was 1.019, indicates that 10% of variance in “Brand Positioning” is uniquely reckon for Brand Image when Brand Awareness, Points of Parity, Points of Difference, Brand Association and Brand Mantra are controlled.

7. Conclusion & Further Extendibility

7.1. Conclusion

The analysis shows that cloud service providers are positioning the service offerings by features, comparing with other brand, passing various benefits to the consumer which includes product, price, place, promotion, providing expert opinion,

guarantees full satisfaction, promising as leader in the market, community service and filled with various promises about the product and services.

The result shows that cloud service providers are creating a positive impact in the mind of the employees by creating brand image, awareness, points of parity, points of difference, association and mantra. The study indicates that AWS cloud service provider is the most prominent cloud computing service brand followed by Azure, Google and IBM.

The positioning of cloud service providers dictates the technological competencies required from IT professionals. IT professionals are increasingly in demand of obtaining specific certifications related to the dominant cloud service providers in their organizations. Cloud service providers has transformed traditional IT roles, with a notable shift from hardware and network management to roles focused on cloud architecture, DevOps, and cloud security.

IT professionals working with well-positioned, innovative cloud service providers reports higher job satisfaction due to exposure to cutting-edge technologies and a forward-thinking work culture. The positioning of a cloud service provider influence the wage levels of IT professionals. Cloud service providers that position themselves as innovators tend to foster a culture of innovation within IT teams. This creates a positive impact in the mind of the employees which further helps the cloud computing service brand to capture the market share by favouring the brand when comes to selecting or taking decision on any cloud service provider.

7.2. Future scope of work

There are several avenues for future research to further understand and expand on the impact of cloud service provider positioning. Future research could conduct a comparative analysis of the impacts of different major cloud providers (such as AWS, Microsoft Azure, Google Cloud, IBM Cloud, and others) on IT professionals. Investigate how the market positioning strategies of cloud providers, including their focus on specific industries or technologies (e.g., AI, IoT, big data), influence the demand for certain skill sets among IT professionals and how this varies across different regions and industries. Investigate how the positioning of cloud providers impacts IT professionals in different geographical regions, considering local market dynamics, regulatory environments, and cultural attitudes towards technology adoption. Examine how cloud-based collaboration tools and remote work environments influence social dynamics, team cohesion, and communication patterns among IT professionals. Research how cloud technologies enable more IT professionals to engage in freelance work, and analyse the economic implications of this shift for both individuals and organizations. Explore how the regulatory environment, including data privacy laws and compliance requirements, affects the roles and responsibilities of IT professionals working with different cloud providers. Study how the choice of cloud provider influences the innovation ecosystem within an organization, including the ability of IT professionals to experiment with new technologies and methodologies.

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