

WOMEN'S PERCEPTIONS TOWARDS BRANDED CLOTHING IN PAKISTAN

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ABSTRACT—The purpose of this study was to explore the women's perceptions towards branded clothing in Pakistan. Survey methodology was used to collect the data and a total of 200 women from posh localities were interviewed for their perceptions towards brand clothing. Exploratory factor analyses were used to measure the results, four major factors were extracted, Status, Traditions, Quality and Values. The findings point to various marketing implications for managers and designers of branded clothing.

I. INTRODUCTION

This study examines female motives to pay money for the branded clothing such as quality; values; personal identity and traditions. It aims to explore how these elements help them to develop an emotional attachment to branded clothing and influences their purchasing pattern. The outcome of this research will provide a better look into the ladies mind-set towards branded clothing.

This paper mainly focuses on the women's perceptions toward branded clothing excluding men. The research is conducted in universities located in posh areas of Karachi as to the convenience. This study investigates their intentions to buy branded clothes. This research expands the understanding of female consumers buying causes related to Pakistani environment and highlights the elements that highly influence consumer involvement in branded clothing.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand name is a source of product for differentiation from its competitors. It is unique and can be easily discriminated from other names (Keller, 2004). Brand is a primary point of differentiation to attain competitive advantage on other competitors playing an imperative role in the success of companies (Elliot, 2007).

Literature suggest that quality is the most important branded product meaning across countries; identify-related and traditions-related meanings are more important in the U.S. than the emerging markets (Strizhakova, 2008). Self-monitoring is a significant mediator of meaning with regard to unbranded, but not branded, jeans (Elliot, 1998). Quality is an important factor taken into account by university students while purchasing any product. Their high level of involvement and overall satisfaction depends on perceived quality (Tsiotsou 2005).

In the U.S, consumers indicated the importance of values related to socially responsible actions whereas in developing countries, value may be linked to quality and price perceptions. Tradition was least important meaning of branded products. Consumers in developing countries have not had the time to establish ongoing traditions associated with specific brands (Coulter, 2008).

Perceived quality is related to a consumer's judgment of a product or a brand's overall superiority or excellence. Therefore firms have to genuinely increase the real quality of their brands then communicate this quality through their marketing actions in order to affect perceived quality in a

positive manner. High perceived quality allow for consumers to be convinced about buying the brand (Zeithaml, 1988).

Most of the shoppers of men's branded shirts were highly influenced by the factors such as durability, reference groups, wide variety of colors, price range, celebrity endorser and design attractiveness (Varathani, 2012).

Brand holds a great importance in consumer's life. Consumers choose brands and trust them the way they trust their friends and family members to avoid uncertainty and quality related issues (Becerra, 2013). There are significant differences in the children perception of someone with or without branded materials. They prefer trendy brands like Nike and Adidas and seem more brand conscious regarding cell phones (Omar, 2008). Emotion, quality, trust, image, timeless fashion and tradition are elements needed to love a brand consistently (Malin, 2012).

There is a relationship between fashion involvement and self-concept in terms of women's buying of Indian upper middle class (CSI Insights Flash of Mcknesy & Company, 2010). Brand is a reflection of self-image which is important to branded clothing (Wood, 2004). Brand status and brand attitude were found to have positive impact on consumer's willingness to pay a premium for a specific brand (Eric, 2008). People who are more fashion conscious and involved in fashion or branded clothing tend to spend more on clothing to show high level of brand attraction (Stephen, 2006). Self-concept has a positive relationship with consumer involvement in fashion clothing. Young people acquire relevant knowledge related to clothing in the market place through consumer socialization process. Of all sources of socialization, parental influences are the most persistent and essential (Chang, 2008). People purchase products to help them show a certain image of themselves to other people. Individuals use fashion related products to reflect their self-image and fashion related clothes to reflect their self-concept (Forney, 2005).

Individuals display wealth through expenses and achievement in order to express them, factor such as self-concept shows an interactive effect between consumer's self-image and product image becomes an essential factor influencing it (Piamphongsant, 2008). Self-construal is one of the key determinants of the level of an individual's self-determination and interdependence. The self-construal scale involves an individual's thoughts, feelings, behaviors which are separated from others thoughts (Shukla, 2010).

Male consumers who possess strong positive attitudes towards brands show high level of involvement in branded

clothing (Arora, 2012). Most women's purchase lawn fabrics predominantly because of the product's functional and emotional attributes as well as status symbol and self-image enhancement (Zafar, 2013).

According to Mintel (2008), 20-24 and 25-34 age groups are of utmost importance to the marketers as women are less anxious about quality than style in their clothing. In terms of spending on clothing, age is stronger determinant of women's budget than their socio-economic status (Euromonitor, 2007). By the time children reach 12 years of age, they use brand names as an important conceptual cue in consumer judgments (John, 2003) and it is valid in Pakistan (Siddiqui & Ahmad, 2013a).

Cultural values and lifestyles of Pakistani university students have relationship with the brand meaning (Siddiqui & Ahmad, 2013b). This relationship shows that Pakistani university students prefer those brands which have relationship with their collectivist values and lifestyle and try to use all those brands which are useful for all the group members and avoid from those which are harmful for their collectivist values (Sarki, 2012).

After skimming through literature three generalization could be made; Firstly, various branding studies were conducted in Pakistan on different industry sectors like Fertilizer branding (Siddiqui, Ahmad, Manan, & Choudhary, 2013); Islamic branding (Jumani & Siddiqui, 2012) or on various branding aspects such as intergenerational influences on brand preferences (Siddiqui, Bashir, Sarki, Jaffari, & Abbas, 2012) or but there is no formal research has been done on branded clothing in Pakistan or in neighboring countries.

Secondly, the influence of brands on consumers buying behavior is very dynamic subject and is of great importance in Pakistan. Fashion industry includes clothing growing faster in Pakistan and people are strongly associated with fashion and style especially women's (Naz & Siddiqui, 2012).

Thirdly, literature is collected from the work done by numerous researchers put forward that branded clothing is the key focus in the modern world since the last decade. Lots of work has been done in this regard in the developed countries but in the third world country like Pakistan, the field is yet to be explored and results are to be formalized.

III. METHODOLOGY

Type of Research: The contents of this report are portrayed as exploratory research. The focus is to examine women's motives to pay money for the branded clothing and accurate exploration of the ingredients that influence their purchasing pattern in the research model.

Research Design: The research design used in this research paper consisted of (a) Survey (questionnaires) and (b) Secondary data studies

Research Instrument: We used questionnaire as our instrument for data collection. It consists of 32 close ended statements in order to collect particular information from the respondents regarding our research.

We selected close ended statements using Likert Scale for our research so that no biasness is involved and it is easy to analyze those statements with strongly agree, agree, neutral, strongly disagree and disagree. This helps us to measure

what actual motive lies behind branded clothes among women's such as quality, value, personality, group identity, status, family and national traditions.

Data Collection Methods: Secondary data is collected indirectly using the Internet. Google (search engine), Wikipedia (encyclopedia) and various online libraries were used. Most of the data was collected through the research articles and journals. The data gathered directly through questionnaires served as primary data.

Sampling: The sampling unit consisting of female students of age group 20-30 as they are more brand conscious than male students related to clothing sector in Pakistan. The sample size taken in this research is $N = 200$ whereas respondents are hundred students from each two universities located in posh areas of Karachi. A sample size of 200 women's university students was believed to be adequate for the current study (Siddiqui, 2013).

We conducted this research through quantitative approach to determine the motives behind branded clothing. We applied convenience sampling that is a non-probability sampling technique, as a sampling technique. The sample size and 100% response rate were considered sufficient to perform meaningful statistical analyses and develop appropriate rigor (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1995) and adopted in many earlier local perception studies (Siddiqui, K., 2013; Anjam, Siddiqui, Khan, 2013).

We have selected women's students from universities located in posh areas of Karachi where women's can afford branded clothing and ignores low class areas. We used this technique as students were easily available, convenient and this sample exactly matched our research. This sample exactly matched our research. This technique helped us to obtain data about the ladies reasons to go for branded clothes.

IV. ANALYSES

The major objective of this research is to identify the underlying structure of the perceptions towards branded clothing. Based on our close ended statements in the questionnaires, we attained the women's reasons for purchasing branded clothing easily. These items were considered for Factor analyses. KMO value is above 0.8 which indicates that data is adequate for EFA (Bearden, Netemeyer & Haws, 2011). For this research, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was considered appropriate based on three reasons; (a) EFA is used where there are no pre-conceived theories or expectations and (b) EFA uncovers the underlying structure of relatively large variables (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1995). (c) EFA was also adopted in many earlier local perception studies (Salman & Siddiqui, 2011; Siddiqui, & Gilal, 2012a; Siddiqui, & Gilal, 2012b; Khan & Siddiqui, 2013; Siddiqui & Anjam 2013); Siddiqui, Ahmad, & Choudhary, 2013; Fahim, Siddiqui, Anjam & Aziz, 2013); Siddiqui & Sibghatullah, 2014).

Multiple criteria applied to optimize the solution. (a) The minimum eigenvalues are greater than 1.0. (b) The total variance explained is greater than 50%. (c) There are at least 3 items loaded on a single factor. (d) Each item must have individual factor loading greater than 0.3.

The resultant four-factor solution was finalized (Table 1). First factor was named as ‘*Status*’ with an eigenvalue of 9.11 and variance explained 28%. Example item of first factor is ‘I use branded clothing to communicate my social status. Second factor was named as ‘*Traditions*’ with an eigenvalue of 3.44 and variance explained 39%. Example item of this factor is ‘I choose branded clothing because they are part of

national traditions.’ Third factor was named as ‘*Quality*’ with an eigenvalue of 2.45 and variance explained 47%. Example item of this factor is ‘I choose branded clothing because of the quality they represent.’ Fourth factor was named as ‘*Values*’ with an eigenvalue of 1.68 and variance explained 52%. Example item of this factor ‘I buy branded clothes that are consistent with my values.’

Table 1: Exploratory Factor Analysis for women’s perceptions towards branded clothing

	Factors				
		Status	Traditions	Quality	Values
	Eigenvalues	9.11	3.44	2.45	1.68
	% Variance Explained	28.4	39.22	46.90	52.1
My choice of branded clothing says about the people I like to associate with.		.783			
I feel a bond with people who use branded clothing as I do.		.743			
By choosing certain branded clothing, I choose who I want to associate with.		.743			
I use branded clothing to communicate my social status.		.695			
I buy branded clothing to be able to associate with specific people and groups.		.643			
Using branded clothes help me connect with other people and social groups.		.631			
I avoid choosing branded clothing that does not reflect my social status.		.606			
I choose branded clothing that are associated with the social class I belong to.		.606			
I communicate my achievements through the branded clothing I own and use.		.588			
The branded clothing I use reflects my social status.		.545			
I prefer branded clothing associated with my national heritage.			.818		
I choose branded clothing because they are part of national traditions.			.775		
I use branded clothing that reflects my national heritage			.755		
I buy branded clothing that my parents buy/have bought.			.721		
I avoid branded clothing that does not fit with my national heritage.			.674		
I use branded clothing that reminds me of my family.			.659		
I buy branded clothing in order to continue my family traditions.			.652		
I use branded clothing that my family uses or have used.			.629		
I buy branded clothing as they are important tradition in my household.			.586		
I choose branded clothing because of the quality they represent.				.801	
A brand name tells me a great deal about the quality of clothes.				.737	
I use brand names as a sign of quality for purchasing clothes.				.727	
Brand is the source of information about the durability and reliability of clothes.				.663	
I choose branded clothing that bring out my personality.				.440	
My choice of branded clothing says something about me as a person.				.424	
I can tell a lot about clothes quality from the brand name.				.409	
I choose branded clothing that help to impress my identity to others.					.760
I buy branded clothes that are consistent with my values.					.721
My choice of branded clothing is based on the company's value.					.667
I use different branded clothing to express different aspects of my personality.					.615
The branded clothing I use communicates information about the type of person I am.					.507
I choose branded clothing because I support the values they stand for.					.495

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The study finds that women’s students who possess strong positive attitudes towards brands show high level of involvement in fashion clothing, along with national and family traditions as the most imperative aspect which women’s s use towards branded clothing that manipulates with the cultural change.

Through Factor Analysis we were able to summarize the women’s perceptions towards branded costing in Pakistan. Resultant four factors comprehensively summarize the perceptions and form the basic pillars of branded clothing in Pakistan.

For marketing managers and designers of branded clothing there are meaningful insights in these results. This had provided a better look into the ladies mind-set towards

branded clothing. It has discovered that national and family traditions help them to develop an emotional attachment to branded clothing and influences their purchasing pattern.

VI. LIMITATIONS

The research is limited to only two main universities located in posh areas of Karachi where women’s s can afford branded clothing and ignores universities situated in low class areas due to the convenience, shortage of time and resources. This paper is only focuses on women’s s excluding males. The perception of an individual varies from place to place. This study will provide a better look into the ladies mind-set towards branded clothing.

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