IMPACT OF BRAND IMAGE ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR IN CLOTHING SECTOR: A COMPARATIVE STUDY BETWEEN MALES AND FEMALES OF CENTRAL PUNJAB (LAHORE) AND SOUTHERN PUNJAB (MULTAN)

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Abstract
Consumers give very importance to brands and relate their prestige with different brands. They see brands in different perspectives and expect better quality of brands. With the passage of time if brand satisfy the need have the customers then they become loyal with the brand and built long term relationship with that specific brand. The basic purpose of this study is to see the impact of brand image on consumer buying behavior in clothing sector. It is actually a comparative study between two cities which are Lahore and Multan. The main objective of this study is to know which city consumers have more clear concepts about brands and their usage about brand. Two independent variables (Brand Image & Consumer Awareness), one mediating variable (Consumer perception) and one dependent variable (Consumer Buying behavior) were selected for this study. For this study questionnaires were filled by the sample size of 155 and target audience was both males and females. Reliability of the data was checked through Chronbach's alpha value. Descriptive Statistics, Inferential Statistics (regression, correlation and Independent sample t-test) applied with the help of SPSS software. For the comparative study Independent sample T-test was applied after computing the variables. Empirical findings show that Alternative Hypothesis is accepted. Hence the result shows that males are more brand conscious than females.
Keywords: Brand Image, Consumer awareness, Consumer Perception, Consumer Buying behavior, Southern Punjab (Multan), Central Punjab (Lahore).

Introduction
For every organization customer's satisfaction is their main priority. Customers are those persons who buy product and a customer can be a consumer if he/she consumes that purchased product. Thus consumer can be defined as, "Any individual who buy products or services from a market for his/her personal usage". Consumer actually consumes all those goods and services which are available in the market to fulfill their needs and desires. Different consumers show different behaviors towards products and services. Therefore, the study of their behavior is another important task for producers and marketers. Behavior study includes the study of consumer buying behavior and a consumer play three types of roles while buying a product. Three roles of a consumer are buyer, payer and user. "Consumer Behavior is the study of individuals,

organizations and groups and also the study of all those processes which are related with the consumers and their choices about products, services, brand and their usage."If a consumer feel satisfaction with a brand then he/she show commitment with that brand and become loyal with that.Any business can attain the attraction of people through branding and can enjoy the competitive edge. The word brand is derived from the Old Norse word brand, which means "To Burn" (Keller Et Al., 2008).It actually provides a mean of simplification for customers product decision(Keller, Aperia& Georgeson,2008).The definition of brand as offered in the general of marketing manager by professor Peter Doyle of Warwick University: "A name,design,symbol,or some combination which can identifies the product of aparticular organization as having a substantial differentiated advantages" (O'MALLEY, 1991) .According to Kapferer (2004), Abrand name can actually give the value, identity and meaning to the product.Brand image can represent the identity of a person therefore it is important for fashion clothing (Keok,Kvveng Tam,2007).A brand is a set of mental associations and these associations should be exclusive, desirable and strong. It is very important to note that how a consumer perceives about brand? Hence perceived quality can be further divided into service quality & product quality.Service quality is judged by its Empathy, Responsiveness, competence, reliability & Tangibility.While product quality is perceived by its seven dimensions; Features, Performance, Durability, Reliability, Conformance with specification and Serviceability (Aaker 1991).Consumers give importance to all those factors which are related with their selected brands. If a consumer wants something on urgent basis and that product or brand does not exist in the market. Then the consumers become anxious and it may be possible that the consumer will switch off to some other brand. The anxiety faced by the consumers during their shopping is called Post Purchase Dissonance. Hence it is a responsibility of a marketer to save his consumer from anxiety. At present time business work is not only on price but customer satisfaction, attraction, relationship and loyalty matters a lot. Perception of consumers about brand depends on its advertisement. Because advertisement is the first image of a brand and it is a leading armament in all marketing tools due to its positive or negative impact on consumers buying behavior. Through proper marketing of a brand Consumer awareness increases. Thus all this things are related with each other.

Purpose Statement

This research is conducted to see the impact of Brand image on Consumer buying behavior. The basic purpose of this study is to see the impact of brand image in Southern Punjab and Central Punjab and two major selected cities are Lahore and Multan. This study will enable to tell about those customers who use more branded clothes. The selected topic is very important because Consumers are very much conscious about brand and they thought that brand is an important part of their personality and class. Therefore, it is needed to see that consumers are much influenced through a brand or not and how they relate a brand with their personality?

Research Question

Does Brand Image affect the Consumer Buying behavior?

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this research are:

- To understand the importance of a Brand.
- To remove the deficiencies of the previous studies.
- To identify the impact of Brand Image on Consumer Buying Behavior.
- To find the relationship between Brand and Consumer Buying Decision.
- To identify the influence of consumers towards brand.

Significance of the study

But the next question rises, what is the significance of this study? So the answer of this question is that without knowing the importance of a brand how we can think that it is a part of consumer's personality. Although before this study many studies already done about brand and consumer relationship but still there are some point which were not covered by previous studies. Therefore this study is conducted.

- This research is conducting to provide the complete information about Brand Image and its impact on consumer buying decisions.
- In present era consumers rely much on brands and try to develop their personality according to the brands. Hence this study provides the information whether different classes have different brands or same brands for their usage?

Implication for Researchers and Marketers

Researchers are very much familiar about the impact of brand on consumers. But it is also important to know that only brand itself is nothing without essential parts of marketing which are, Advertisement, Packaging and Labeling etc. Thus after this study marketers will be able to know that for the success of their brand they firstly make sure the effective advertisement of brand and try to influence consumers through brand advertisement and its packaging. This study will help to realize the particular role of the advertisement, packaging and labeling in the perspective of the consumer buying behavior. Marketers may determine the strategies accordingly. The role of brand image is also considered as an important part of marketing so marketers will be able to know that exactly how long brand image will create the impact on consumer buying decisions while they are taking advertisement, labeling and packaging into consideration.

Limitations of the Study

This study has some limitations due to some limited resources. This study is conducted only in two cities of Punjab. The sample size which is selected for this study is smaller enough.

Literature Review

Consumer buying behavior

Schiffmanand Kanuk (2000) mentioned that consumer behavior is about how people make decisions on the basis of available resources i.e. money, effort and time.A holistic view provided by Gabbott and Hogg (1998) and Blackwell et al. (2006) on consumer behavior. They defined that consumer behavior are actually those processes and activities in which individuals or groups choose and consume products, experiences, ideas and services. Consumer behavior can affect the economy of a nation (Blackwell et al., 2006). Organizations make marketing strategies in response to fulfill consumer's needs (Blackwell et al., 2006).Blackwell et al. (2001) define that consumer behavior is a combination of purchase and consume products or services. Hence seven steps of consumer buying decision are "need recognition, search for information, pre-purchase, evaluation, purchase, consumption, post-consumption evaluation and divestment (Blackwell et al., 2006)".

The important roles of brand

Brand is a name which is present in every consumer's mind (Mooij, 1998) and it is categorized by a symbol or a name which can provide the importance and differentiate the goods and services from the rivals' (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1998). Hence brand is a combination of many

things which are related to packaging, advertisement, products, promotion and its overall presentation (Murphy, 1998). From the consumers' point of view, brand is a name of reliability and quality of products (Roman et al., 2005). Consumers would like to buy and use branded products to highlight their personality in different situations (Aaker, 1999; Fennis and Pruyn, 2006).Successful branding can make consumers aware about the brand and can increases the chances of profitability for an organization and this is possible by buying the company's products and services (Doyle, 1999).

The characteristics of successful brands
A brand can survive for long term if it maintains in a good manner that can satisfy consumers' needs continuously (Batchelor, 1998; Murphy, 1998). Successful brands can be totally different in nature but they share some common things, for examples consistent quality and well-priced products (Murphy, 1998).Quality can be further divided into service quality & product quality. Service quality is judged by its Empathy, Responsiveness, competence, reliability & Tangibility. While product quality is perceived by its seven dimensions; Features, Performance, Durability, Reliability, Conformance with specification and Serviceability (Aaker 1991).When consumer find all the above mentioned things in a brand then they show reliability with that brand. There are four elements for building a successful brand, namely tangible product, augmented brand, basic brand and potential brand as mentioned by Levitt (1983).

Brand Image
Since 1950s, "Brand Image" becomes a significant concept for customer's behavior research. The brand image is a glass reflection of the brand personality.Keller's was proposed by Aaker who defined that "brand image is stated as a set of associations, which are organized in some meaningful way". Brand image is developed from consumer interpretation, whether emotional or logical. According to Hsieh, Pan, and Setiono (2004), "a successful brand image allows consumers to recognize the needs that the brand satisfies and to distinguish the brand from its competitors, and increases the probability that consumers will purchase the brand" (p. 252). A company's product or services can gain a better position in the market, sustainable competitive advantage, and increase market share (Park, Jaworski, &MacInnis, 1986).
Hence several empirical findings have confirmed that a favorable image will lead to brand equity (Faircloth, Capella, & Alford, 2001; Biel, 1992; Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993), loyalty (e.g. Koo, 2003; Kandampully&Suhartanto, 2000; Nguyen & LeBlanc, 1998), purchase behavior (Hsieh et al., 2004) and brand performance (Roth, 1995). Reynolds (1965) noted that "an image is the psychological concept established by the consumer on the basis of a few particular impressions among the total impressions; it comes into being through an innovative process in which these selected impressions are expanded, exaggerated, and systematic" (p. 69). Kotler (2001) defined image as "the set of impressions, beliefs and ideas that a person holds about an object" (p. 273). On the other hand, Keller (1993) considered brand image as "a set of perceptions related with brand associations in consumer's memory" (p. 3).
Aaker (1991) proposed a similar definition to Keller; brand image is referred to as "a set of associations which are generally systematized in some meaningful way" (p. 109). However Biel (1992) defined brand image as "a cluster of associations and attributes that consumers associate to the brand name" (p. 8). Past purchasing experiences and familiarity with the brand can generate consumer perception and can enhance their buying decision (Aaker, 1991). Brand

image plays an important role in customer's perception about overall quality of a product or service (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1998; Yasin, 2007).

Consumer Perception and Consumer awareness
Many studies have been done on consumer perception and awareness about brand. Keller (1993; 1998) described consumer perceptions about brands as brand knowledge, which consist on brand image and brand awareness. Hence according to Keller Brand awareness means recognition and recall of brand. Brand Image is defined as, "a perception about a brand which is reflected by the brand associations and it is held in consumer memory" (Keller). These associations are related with attitude towards brand and brand quality. Similarly, Aaker (1991, 1996) refers that brand associations are anything which are related to consumer's memory.Not only creating the brand image is important but also maintaining brand image is an essential part of a firm's marketing program (Roth, 1995) and branding strategy (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991).
Band image also related with the prestige and non-prestige of product K Amna& S Sood (1999). Wright and Lynch (1995) stated that the general knowledge of consumers about the product and their buying decision put great impact on brand image because brand image is directly related with the product and is very essential element of product also they said" image always define the reality of product". McFadden (1974) argued that a brand can sustain for a long time if its image help consumer in his buying decision for the first time.
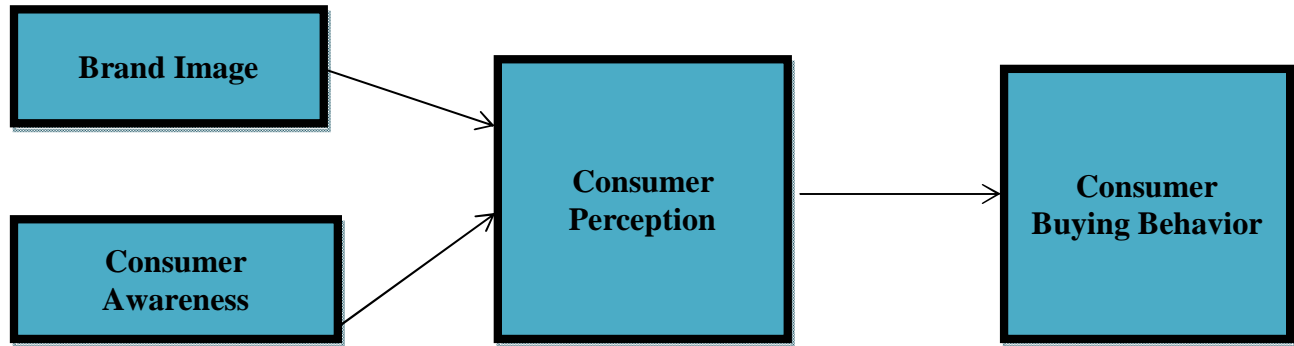 Brand image plays an important role in customer's perception about overall quality of a product or service (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1998; Yasin, 2007). Brand serves a fundamental role for differentiating goods and services from those of the competitors (Aaker, 1991; Murphy, 1998). The development of brand equity underlies the importance of brand in marketing strategies and hence provides clear understandings for managers and further research (Keller, 2003).

Theoretical Framework
Theoretical frame-work describes the relationship between the dependent, independent and mediating variables. The difference between dependent and independent variables is as significant in a comparative study as in a regression analysis. Dependent variables are those which directly or indirectly depend on independent variables while independent variables are used to predict dependent variables.
        A theoretical framework is a diagrammatic illustration of the variables which are selected to conduct a study. The following diagram represents the theoretical framework of this research.

Theoretical Framework

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┌──────────────────┐
│   Brand Image    │ ─────┐
└──────────────────┘      │
                          ▼
                   ┌────────────────┐        ┌──────────────────┐
                   │    Consumer    │        │     Consumer     │
                   │   Perception   │ ─────▶ │  Buying Behavior │
┌──────────────────┐      ▲          └────────────────┘        └──────────────────┘
│    Consumer      │ ─────┘
│    Awareness     │
└──────────────────┘
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Research Methodology

A scientific and systematic effort to collect information for the knowledge enhancement is research (Redman & Moray).Methodology includes the following things which I'll use in my study;

- Paradigm
- Research Approach
- Research Design
- Site of data collection
- Population
- Sample size/Respondents
- Sampling Techniques
- Data collection Method

In my research I'll use first paradigm which is Positivism. "Positivism assumes that true knowledge is based on experiences of senses can be obtained by observation and experiment." Positivism is also called Scientific Method, Empirical Science, Post Positivism and Quantitative Research. Positivistic thinkers adopt scientific methods as a mean to generate knowledge. In it we not generate theory but verify the already existing theory. Then I'll use first research approach which is Quantitative Approach. "A formal, objective and systematic process in which Numerical data is utilized to obtain the information about the world is known as Quantitative approach". I'll use a proper research design for my study. "Research design means form a proper structure to conduct the research".I'll choose the population from where I'll collect my data. But "basically, the universe of the units from which the sample is to be selected is called Population". So it is very difficult to collect the data from the whole population. Therefore I'll select Sample Size/ Respondents. "Sample means the segment of the population that is selected for the investigation". In simple words it is a subset of the population. So my selected sample size/

respondents are males and females and my site of data collection is Central Punjab (Lahore) and Southern Punjab (Multan). For Quantitative methods I'll use Survey strategy. "Survey is a quantitative research strategy that involves the structured collection of data from a pre-determined sample". It involves three methods from which I'll choose only one method which is Questionnaire. "Questionnaire is a pre-formulated written set of questions to which respondents record their answers". It is a self-explanatory, read and answered by respondents by themselves. Questionnaire is further divided in to three type's form which again I'll choose only one type which is Self-administered questionnaires. "Those type of questionnaires in which interviewee answer the question by him". In it we can establish a report and motivate the respondent.

Analysis is done through SPSS software. In which "Demographic Profile of respondents, Descriptive Statistics and Inferential Statistics (regression, correlation and Independent sample t-test) are applied." To see the impact regression is applied while for comparison independent sample t- test is applied.

Data

 This is a Quantitative Study for which questionnaire is structured to collect the data. The questionnaire which is used in this study covers demographic variables as well as dependent, mediating and independent variables. This questionnaire includes 20 questions which are divided into four parts. 10 questions are designed for independent variables which are Brand image and consumer awareness, 5 questions are designed for mediating variable which is Consumer Perception and finally 5 questions are designed for dependent variable which is Consumer Buying Behavior. Data is collected from both males and females of Southern Punjab and Central Punjab. Multan and Lahore are selected from Southern and Central Punjab. These questionnaires are filled by working males and females as well as college and university students and also from house wives.

Sufficient statistical power can be achieved through sample size (McQuitty, 2004). Normality of data and estimation of method require minimum sample size (Schreiber et al. 2006). I distributed 200 questionnaires from which 155 were returned to me.

Empirical findings

Demographic Profile

Table # 6.1

Respondents Demographics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender (N=155)		
➢ **Male**	72	46.5
➢ **Female**	83	53.5
Age (N=155)		
➢ **Less than 25**	71	45.8
➢ **25-35**	42	27.1
➢ **36-45**	33	21.3
➢ **Above 45**	9	5.8

Interpretation

Table 6.1 shows that the data is collected from 155 respondents in which 72 males and 83 females are included. Most of the questionnaires were filled by that class which is less than 25years in age.

Table # 6.2

Reliability

Constructs	Valid N	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Brand Image	155	5	0.71
Consumer Awareness	155	5	0.68
Consumer Perception	155	5	0.74
Consumer Buying Behavior	155	5	0.69

Interpretation

Reliability of the data can be checked through Chronbach's Alpha value. The above table shows that the data is reliable because all the values of Chronbach's Alpha are 7.

Independent Sample T-test

Now we apply T-test to do comparison between respondent cities which are Lahore and Multan.

Table # 6.3

Group Statistics

	city of respondents	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Compute Variable of BI	Lahore	79	4.1392	.56578	.06366
	Multan	76	4.2039	.44104	.05059
Compute Variable of CA	Lahore	79	4.4958	.14611	.01644
	Multan	76	4.5000	.13053	.01497
Compute Variable of CP	Lahore	79	4.4962	.24570	.02764
	Multan	76	4.4737	.20615	.02365
Compute Variable of CBB	Lahore	79	4.7848	.18052	.02031
	Multan	76	4.7316	.16183	.01856

Interpretation

Table 6.3 shows the mean of Lahore and Multan. Compute Variable of Brand Image shows that people of Multan has 4.20 mean and people of Lahore has 4.13. This shows that people of Multan are more brand conscious than people of Lahore. Similarly people of Multan and people of Lahore have equal level of Consumer Awareness because they have equal mean which is 4.50. People of Lahore and Multan have equal level of knowledge about Consumer Perception because their means are 4.5.But people of Lahore have more knowledge about buying behavior that people of Multan because mean of Lahore is 4.8 while mean of Multan is 4.7. Thus the above table shows that people of Lahore and Multan lies almost at equal level.

Table # 6.4

Independent Samples T-Test

		Levine's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means		Gender	Mean
		F	Sig. Value	t	Sig.(2-tailed)		
Brand Image	**Equal variances assumed**	1.034	0.000	-0.186	0.000	Male Female	3.0083 2.9614
Consumer Awareness	**Equal variances assumed**	0.51	0.000	-0.19	0.000	Male Female	3.5556 3.5398
Consumer perception	**Equal variances assumed**	0.237	0.000	-0.049	0.000	Male Female	3.6361 3.4867
Consumer Buying Behavior	**Equal variances assumed**	0.799	0.000	-0.012	0.000	Male Female	3.5306 3.5012

Interpretation

The main purpose of this study is to compare the perception of Males & Females about branded Clothes. So for this purpose an independent sample t-test is used to identify the differences. Table 6.4 describes independent, mediating and dependent variables. First independent variable which is described in the table is Brand Image. Significance value of Levene's Test for Equal variance assumed is less than 0.05 which is 0.000. It means that there is difference between the perceptions of Males & Females about branded Clothes. So in this case we will accept H_1 and reject H_0. Here H_1 means alternative hypothesis while H_0 means null hypothesis. The significance value of 2-tailed tests is less than 0.05 which also shows that there is difference between the perception of Lahore and Multan's customers about branded Clothes. T-test value is -0.186.

Second independent variable is Consumer Awareness and its significance value of Levene's Test for Equal variance assumed is less than 0.05 which is 0.000. It means that there is difference between the perceptions of Males & Females customers about branded Clothes. So in this case we will accept H_1 and reject H_0. Here H_1 means alternative hypothesis while H_0 means null hypothesis. The significance value of 2-tailed tests is less than 0.05 which also shows that there is difference between the perception of Lahore and Multan's customers about branded Clothes. T-test value is -0.19.

Third variable is mediating variable which is Consumer perception. Significance value of Levene's Test for Equal variance assumed is less than 0.05 which is 0.000. It means that there is difference between the perceptions of Males & Females customers about branded Clothes. So in this case we will accept H_1 and reject H_0. Here H_1 means alternative hypothesis while H_0 means null hypothesis. The significance value of 2-tailed tests is less than 0.05 which also shows that there is difference between the perception of Lahore and Multan's customers about branded Clothes. T-test value is -0.049.

Hence dependent variable is Consumer Buying Behavior and its significance value of Levene's Test for Equal variance assumed is less than 0.05 which is 0.000. It means that there is difference between the perceptions of Males & Females customers about branded Clothes. So in this case

we will accept H_1 and reject H_0. Here H_1 means alternative hypothesis while H_0 means null hypothesis. The significance value of 2-tailed tests is less than 0.05 which also shows that there is difference between the perception of Lahore and Multan's customers about branded Clothes. T-test value is -0.012.

H_1: There is difference between the perception of Lahore and Multan's customers about branded clothes.

H_0: There is no difference between the perception of Lahore and Multan's customers about branded clothes.

Correlation

Table # 6.5

	CP	CA	CBB	BI
CP	1	0.341 0.000	0.367 0.000	0.468 0.000
CA		1	0.133 0.000	0.325 0.000
CBB			1	0.328 0.000
BI				1

Interpretation

Hence correlation table shows that all the variables are correlated with each other and has significant value less than 0.05.

Regression

Table # 6.6

	Independent	Dependent Variables	
	Variables	CP	CBB
Adjusted R2	BI	0.202*	
	CA	0.361*	
	CP		0.40*
	BI		0.067*
	CA		0.176*

(*) shows sig. value.

Interpretation

Table 6.6 shows that to deal with mediating variable multiple regression is applied through SPSS. The above table shows that 20% change occur in Consumer Perception due to Brand Image while 36% change occurs due to Consumer Awareness. Consumer Perception is actually playing a role of mediating variable. Similarly 6% change in Consumer Buying behavior occurs due to Brand Image while 17% change occurs due to Consumer Awareness. CBB is dependent

variable. Consumer perception has the major effect in the change of consumer buying behavior because 40% change occurs in Consumer buying Behavior due to Consumer Perception.

Conclusion and Recommendations
Hence the above discussions and results of analysis show that there is difference between the perceptions of both cities customers about branded clothes. Almost same questionnaires are filled from both cities and their results are also same. Result shows that males are more brand conscious rather than females. Hence Consumer Perception has more influence on Consumer Buying Behavior instead of Brand Image and Consumer Awareness. Researchers can do more study with more variables to know the influence of variables. Similarly marketers can work to build strong perception of consumers about their brands by using multiple ways i.e. advertisement, quality, availability etc.

Future Implications
From the above conclusion it should be recommended that the researchers can apply more tests on this study. They can use more sample size and add more cities rather than these two cities. If they can't obtain main difference then they can apply their study on other things which are related to brand and customers e.g. Brand Equity, Advertisement etc.

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