

A Study to Analyze Teenagers' Perception's of, and Practices Regarding Branded Clothing

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ABSTRACT

Wearing clothes with prestigious brand name is a very significant factor in every adolescent's life. Teenagers today, are keener than ever to be accepted. Girls' brand sensitivity is at its peak in their adolescent years. Branded clothing provides them an adequate platform to fulfil all their needs and desires. This study evaluates the female teenage perception of "Brands" and the factors that hinge their buying decisions in Pakistan. It tries to better understand the interest of teenager's in brand names, their perceptions, shopping frequency, expenditure, information sources, purchase motivation, store selection criteria and their religious beliefs about the wearable. The study consists of descriptive research with a sample of 311 female teenage consumers A questionnaire was designed and self-administered to collect the data. Peers represent the most important predicator in their consumer's socializing. As the age proceeds the shopping frequency raises. Certain criteria such as quality, price, sizes availability and store display carried more weight when making a store selection. Celebrities are found to be a reason behind the purchase. Brand loyalties among the respondents were seem to be very low. Educational and marketing implications are recommended. By analysing these factors a brand can be made more precision and profitable.

Keywords: Brands, Teenagers, Brand perception

1. INTRODUCTION

Social mobility is at its hype, these days. People are getting brand conscious day by day (Verma, and Tiwari, 2011). Branded eatables, wearable such as footwear, outfit and electronic gadgets all are becoming an obsession. People have become self – conscious in regards of their clothing. (ME Goldberg, Gorn, Peracchio 2003, Business insider Oct 7, 2014) They are observed to spend more on their apparel than their basic necessities; this factor is largely contributed due to brand race common in the society. Teens are the torch bearers and the most affected part of every society. They feel branded clothing as the open sesame to fit into any situation rather it be social contacts, business or home.

Branded clothing tends to grab their attention and as a result brands have created a new dimension altogether. This research is written keeping in mind to identify and analyze different perceptions about a brand's values, personality, and heritage. It is important to keep in mind that perception is not only what is physically in front of our eyes (or other Senses) but what the brain does with this information. All factors into consumer sentiment toward a brand, for instance we can say signature wear attract attention and raise the confidence level. The quality, comfort, and style engage the mind and become a major motivational force for getting designer stuff to give a greater boost to personal ego (Rajput and Kesharwani, (2012). The environment of the store spells the magic, triggers the emotion and changes the concept of peoples' thought. (IJM, 2013) But if we move to another aspect, social pressure is also a major factor for choosing branded clothing. Even some say, brand helps the consumer to become style icon'. In a research (Shim and Koh) found that teens that interact more with peers exhibit a more brand oriented decision making style.

Advertisements for the brands are carefully made imposing false beauty standards which create the perception in a teenager's life that adopting a certain brand or style changes the public's attitude to a person (Owen & Laurel-Seller, 2000). The research highlights the importance that a teen pays to its social status. Clothing forms the fundamental pavement to a status quo, which catapults careful selection of clothing and accessories on behalf of a teen.

The research further elucidates that the current era teenagers are better resourced, more financially capable and more liberal when it comes to making their own choices regarding their apparel. As a result, the strategy of advertisements of target consumers has shifted from parents to teens in the past two decades.

By conducting the research on "A Study to Analyze Teenagers' perceptions of and Practices Regarding Branded

Clothing”, shall enable the marketers to draw conclusions as to identify the important factors of branded clothing adoption in Pakistan and how important the branded products are to the teens of Pakistan and also how to educate them about the different attributes and perspectives of branded clothing.

The objectives of the research are following:

To study teenager’ perceptions regarding branded apparel.

To explore teenager’s practices regarding brands.

2. METHODOLOGY

This is a Descriptive study in which “Quantitative study design was used. The focus group consists of 311 female teenager students (age ranging 13-19 years) from various schools and colleges residing in district South and district East of Karachi, Pakistan. The data is collected through self-administered questionnaire on convenience sampling method. The questionnaire was formed, keeping in mind the objectives, age and the residence of the respondents. As all the respondents were studying in different schools and colleges, a simple questionnaire with a minimum number of questions was formulated. The questionnaire was based on 4 variables. Out of them two were independent variables: Age (13 – 19 years) three age categories were made (as 13, 14 and 15 as Juniors, 16-17 as middle agers and 18-19 as seniors and income (less than 25, 000 as low income, 2500 to 50,000 as low middle income, 50.000 to 100,000 as medium high and > 100,000 as high income group. Two dependent variables were “Perception”, and “Practices”. Questionnaire has two parts, first part is demographic which have questions like age, qualification, school/ college name, family income and the second part is based on our questions which are directly related to the research. In second part we took our independent and dependent variables to make questions and made four questions for each variable

After making the questionnaire we translate it in Urdu to get it filled from the respondents who do not understand English well. After translation, it is again translated into English to find any error in translation. Then, the questionnaire is filled from fifteen respondents (five in Urdu and ten in English) and checked the reliability of questionnaire. SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) version 17.0 was used to check the statistical analysis of the data and Excel 2007 was used in making the figures. Frequency and percentages were used for Descriptive statistics and chi square with a significance level $\alpha = 0.05$ for inferential statistics was used to analyse the data.

3. RESULTS

The results were interpreted as follows:

More than 50% of the respondents irrespective of their age group have a clear concept what the term “brand” stands for. They don’t confuse it with manufacturer’s name or seller name, have a clear cut image. Though, the seniors’ responses are clearer than the juniors. It may be the reason as during adolescence, peers are seen as the main source of socialization and learning. Social media also plays a major role in educating the young minds. Teenagers are incredibly fussy about what they wear. The data shows a consistency that teenagers of all the income groups wanted the brand for aesthetics. They wanted to look good and different. 44% female in high income group were seen to use brands to maintain their status. Passion or psychological attachments with brand were seen in a low ratio among all the family income groups.

In all income groups the preference of branded clothing is high. There is a very little difference in middle high income with an income range of 50,000 to 100,000. On the basis of below data it can be said that the highest consumption of branded clothing were in high and middle high income group. Although, we can see there were a large number of female who occasionally wear brands. The result is not significant at $p < 0.05$.

According to data it can be seen that there were very few respondents who purchase abundantly. Occasional buying was very common among the female teenage buyers. Data shows that the seniors were not the abundant purchasers but they were frequent purchasers. In middle age (17-18) very few respondents bought rarely, most of them are abundant purchasers. The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

Table 1. Frequency of Age groups and knowledge about brand (N=311).

SN	Age	Knowledge of term "Brand"							
		Manufacturer		Designer		Seller		Total	
		F	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	Juniors	44	51.16	28	32.55	14	16.27	86	27-65
2	Middle ager	51	56.04	30	32.96	11	12.08	91	29.26
3	Seniors	80	59.70	16	11.94	38	28.35	134	43.08
	Total	175	56.27	74	23.79	63	20.25	311	100

Table 2. Frequency of Age groups and knowledge about brand (N=311).

SN	FAMILY INCOME	Reason of the preference									
		Aesthetic		Passion		Outlook		Status		Total	
		F	%	f	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
1	Low	42	62.68	8	11.94	12	17.91	5	7.46	67	21.54
2	Low Middle	21	42.85	7	14.28	11	22.44	10	20.40	49	15.75
3	Middle High	31	38.27	13	16.04	21	25.92	16	19.75	81	26.04
4	High	30	26.08	15	13.04	19	16.52	51	44.34	115	36.97
	Total	124	39.87	43	13.82	63	20.25	82	26.36	311	100

Table 3. Association between family income group and consumption of branded clothing. (N=311).

SN	FAMILY INCOME	Consumption of branded clothing								p- value
		Never		Occasional		Always		Total		
		f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%	
1	Low	11	16.41	37	55.22	19	28.35	67	21.54	0.2414
2	Low middle	6	12.24	30	61.22	13	26.53	49	15.75	
3	Middle high	7	8.64	35	43.20	39	48.14	81	26.04	
4	High	9	7.82	50	43.47	56	48.69	115	36.97	
	Total	33	10.61	152	48.87	127	40.83	311	100	

Table 4. Association between Age and shopping frequency. (N=311).

SN	Age	Shopping frequency								Total	P- Value	
		abundant		Frequent		Occasional		Rare				
		f	%	f	%	f	%	F	%			
1	Juniors	15	17.44	10	11.62	42	48.83	19	22.09	86	27-65	.00001
2	Middle age	39	42.85	30	32.96	15	16.48	7	7.69	91	29.26	
3	Seniors	28	20.89	59	44.02	33	24.62	14	10.44	134	43.08	
	Total	82	26.36	99	31.83	90	28.93	40	12.86	311	100	

4. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

A child is easily influenced by peers, striving to make an identity. Teenagers are often thought to be in a paradox with themselves; looking for social acceptance while simultaneously wanting to be noticed as a unique individual. As a part of the journey on discovery to themselves, they chisel out values, customs and norms as per their ideologies for themselves. Thought to be an art, a form of expression- an integral part of self-identity is clothing.

The aim of the recent study is to trace out the preferences and practices in relation to brands in teenagers. Teenagers are the developing age with intense total spending. Bakewell et al. (2006) maintain that teens "have unprecedented purchasing power of which two-thirds goes on branded clothing". Taylor and Cosenza (2002) highlight that this large and growing segment has an impact on business as they "love to shop", especially for clothing.

The result shows a significant association between the age group and shopping frequency of clothing. A similar study of this kind confirms that as the age advances 83% claimed themselves as Brand cognizance (Rajput, Kesharwani, & Khanna, 2012). It is also evident from the data above that in a similar research it is reported that girls want clothing to express their beauty and looks (Twigg 2007). Brands gives a feeling of confidence, role fulfillment, prestige and act as a status symbol for the wearer (Piacentini, 2004). Social media also plays a large role these days in teaching the young minds about the logo and the hidden message behind the term brand.

Most of the female teenager consumers were familiar with term. As the age advances the knowledge becomes clearer. In a research (Shim and Koh 1997) found that teens that interact more with peers about consumer matters exhibit a more brand oriented knowledge.

On the basis of the study it is recommended to conduct such research on larger bases. A large sample size representing all the population within city and within country can be taken to promote new brands in the market. This Research will help in the context of manufacturers to find that why consumers switch from one brand to another and what are the things that influence the purchasing behavior of the customer. By analyzing these factors a brand can be formulated with more precision which will be profitable for our country.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that they have no competing interests.

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