

Impact of Advertising on Brand Awareness and Commitment in Female Apparel Industry

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DOI: 10.6007/IJARBSS/v6-i3/2041 URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v6-i3/2041>

Abstract

The aim of this study is to explore the effectiveness of advertisement on brand commitment with the moderating role of quality between brand awareness and commitment. While the role of brand awareness as a mediator will be explored with respect to the female apparel industry in Abbottabad. The study is quantitative in nature as 150 questionnaires were handout to females that belongs to the upper middle and the upper class. The empirical result indicates that how consumer's present and future commitment is affected by brand awareness. This research work is done in female apparel industry in Abbottabad which can help others or marketers to make the most worthy strategy in this sector. The research is carried out with minimum resources and not many respondents which were not enough to observe the inclination of the whole population towards brands.

Keywords: Advertisement, Brand Awareness, Quality and Brand Commitment.

INTRODUCTION

Brand commitment can be referred as the inner mind state that makes a customer connected to a certain brand (Raju et al., 2002). Brand commitment is a variation in customer behavior due to his personnel predilections or emotions. It is about choosing a single brand among many brands in same category again and again at any price. It can also be referred as brand slavery (Razi et al., 2013). Loyal customer goes for same brands they are attached regardless of convenience or price. Effective commitment shows the extent level of consumer's wish to be in touch with a brand on the basis of emotional vacuum or preferences towards the brand (Moore at el., 2012). Brand experience is set of sensation, emotions, behavioral responses is evoked by many stimuli and occurred when customer is directly or indirectly engaged with brand (Brakus et al., 2009). Brand commitment in contemplate as aftermath of brand knowledge and a result of organizational productivity and effectiveness (Fiorito et al., 2007).

Pakistani fashion mania is changing very fast. Consumers are going highly brand conscious. They want fashion items that are close to their culture. Especially it is observed in women through different studies (Saeed et al., 2013). Human beings are always in search of new and unique things. Female before awareness used to wear anything they found in cloth shop. But their emotions of being unique help marketers to maintain market share by providing unique brand elements (Ogachi, 2014). The term branded is not any new born concept in marketing but now it is on its boom especially in fashion industry (Keller & Lehman, 2006). Marketers had shifted their products from what they want to what their customers want (Brannon, 2005). There are many brands in market today. Firms are competing to get higher market share. In same industry with many similar attributes it's very difficult for a company to differentiate its product from those of competitors (Lievens & Highhouse, 2003). People are willing to buy clothes on higher price why is that? This is the brand name which quarry customer mind to do so (Zeb et al., 2011). Brand study was been studied briefly by marketers because of its worthiness and relation with customer (Wood & Lisa, 2004). Financial perspectives of a company is to focus on the brand's total value and to get reaction how successfully they serves the market (Hampf et al., 2011).

In this study we have used conceptual model that specifies the present and future relation among key variables. Effective brand awareness attracts customer's attention and peruses them to buy repetitively which cause increased sales for the company (Mckee, 2010). Brand awareness basically represent that percentage of customers those are aware of brand name (Bovee et al., 1995). A company can measure brand awareness by different ways including brand recall, brand recognition, top of the mind brand and dominant brand (Aaker, 1996). Brand awareness is important in decision making because it can be depicted into brand recall when any cue is given. It also help to choose the brand even in case of little attachment and change decisions by associating brand image (Keller, 1993). Earlier females also use expensive items but the branded concept was not so clear. These expensive clothes were considered the luxuries but the brand name was not important. Branded clothing became popular from past decade. The earlier women were not engaged to brands so much because of their mind set or prices. But now day's females are going brand slaves especially young women and working class. They seek for better quality and unique design. Women now –days are not price sensitive but are quality conscious. Consumer judge price according to quality of any product, which could be the main cause of satisfaction and dissatisfaction (Yoon et al., 2005). Women do a lot of research before they buy any brand. Quality is considered as key factor in achieving business success and a company need nothing else to grab a place in today's global market (Dean & Evans, 1994). As women are the shopping expert, they purchase for their own use and for their family. Women are most effective consumer market because of their direct purchase of about 80% of total product sold (Sundari, 2015). Bendall et al., (2002) stated that satisfaction in female consumer fade faster than male customer. According to Oderkerken et al., (2001) women provide more benefits to seller than men. Women are highly influenced by TV advertisement. The buying decision of a female is not only effected by its functional benefits but social status, affiliation, desire for newness and personality expression has also deep impact on decision making (Kim et al., 2002). According to Mademoisella Magazine: today's

women are aware of what they want before they go for shopping (Parks & Liz, 1997; Rauch, 2002; Saundri, 2015). Searching information regarding brands is key to consumer's decision consist of internal or external information (Shaheen, 2008). Internal information is gathered through past experience or advertisement. External information is collected through peers family and market place (chi Lin & Chia, 2003). TV advertisement is a very strong medium to create brand awareness with the help of audio and visual messages (Sonkusare, 2013). These TV commercial create awareness by giving messages like, the name of innovation quality and reliability (Gul Ahmad), Souilly East (J.), sing to your own time (Al Karam) represent these brands as a unique style outlook with freedom. Advertisement replaces our perception with their ideas (Chait, 1). We are now aware or have little personal awareness about the features that is not shown by advertisement (John, 1988) Advertisement has huge impact on how we look at a brand. A report from TV Bauru revealed that 37% of TV viewers make purchases of highly advertised products. TV commercials create brand perception actually as they want the consumer to think about the product. Advertisement directly affect consumer awareness which effect consumer loyalty by formulating the strong brand association through the different perceptions attached to the brand in customer mind, Specially in fashion industry. Like in other industries products has different physical characteristics perceived differently by different consumers they compare and contrast different product to select the best (North et al., 2003). Customer's preference for apparels depends on joint influence of price and product attributes such as quality brand and style. Quality has direct and positive effect on customer satisfaction. Any inverse effect is not found. Quality is distinguished feature a brand possesses. As consumer choose a brand because of its attributes like price style quality. Consumer will go for brands where they perceived high quality they will not switch to any brand at any cost, but if they perceive low quality engagement they will switch to any other brand sooner or later. Quality can be referred as actual performance that can be measured and observed (Monroe & Krishnan, 1985). It is the general accepted range of product from " bad to good" whether consumer judge quality as a product's performance and superiority (Tsiotsou, 2005).

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- Can advertising create brand awareness?
- What are the factors that makes female brand conscious? If quality has a strong role in purchasing a brand?

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Advertising and Brand Commitment

It is a form of communication marketing which pursue customer to adapt or continue some action with the help of paid content through print or electronic media (East, 2013). Advertising specially mass media advertising has a huge role for companies to meet their communication and marketing objectives (Poh & Adam, 2007). There must be three components in advertising Ad content attention and persuasion (Teixeira, 2014). Any medium could be used for advertising some of these mediums are;

TV: Fastest telecommunication medium for transmitting and receiving moving multi colored

images regularly seen by many people (Sonkusare, 2013)

Social media: Now a days most concerned medium where marketers are targeting their customers but expect that their customer will influence their families and friends by posting links on social sites (Corcoran, 2009).

Magazines: Magazine advertisement influence decision making as magazines are well read and the reader is receptive to magazine and made a relationship to it (Consterdine, 2009).

Outdoor Advertising: Anything that can be used to advertise like bill boards, posters, banners brochures etc. are called outdoor advertising, it's in written form or just a picture telling whole story its effective because the viewer cannot switch away from it and it is very economical relevant to many advertising media (Lichtenthal et al., 2006).

Brand commitment is a customer's valued relationship with a brand (Lacy, 2007; Moorman et al., 1992). Researchers had defined different type of commitment (Allen and Meyer 1990; Bansal et al. 2004).

Affective commitment: It consists of desire to maintain the perceived value of any brand (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Continuance commitment: It emerges from cost based calculations and result in commitment when no other substitute is available or the switching cost is high (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

Consumer's choice towards any brand is highly affected by liking and disliking of its advertisement (Smith et al, 2002). Consumer behavior towards a brand is only dependent on advertisement leaving quality and product features apart (Gorn, 1982). Some critics blame advertising for negative effects on society (Philips, 1997). Likeability for any product created by advertisement later becomes solid reason for a customer to buy (Smit et al, 2006).

Above references show that advertising could have good or bad effects on a brand image the main thing in an advertisement is to convey the actual message which brand needs and also grabbing customer attention. Advertisement can create awareness about product attributes that create likeability or dislike ability towards a brand that further result in purchasing or avoiding a brand. Thus we hypothesize:

H1: Advertisement has positive relation with Brand Commitment.

Brand awareness as a mediator

Customer cannot buy a thing unless brand awareness is created (Percy & Rossiter, 1987). It is prerequisite dimension of whole knowledge system in customer mind that tell how potential customer is to identify brand under different conditions, how much they like a brand and how easy does the brand name comes to their mind (Keller, 1993). Brand awareness is a customer's ability to recall, or remember brands information (Irshad & Waseem, 2012). Brand awareness is a factor by which the purchasing attitude of consumer changes about any good or service (Shabbir et al., 2010). It help customer to help making purchase where highly competitive markets exist (Radder & Haung, 2008). For making better use of brand awareness companies adapt many marketing strategies to create brand awareness among the customers (Esch et al., 2006). Brand awareness is consisted upon brand recall (aided awareness) and brand

recognition (top of the mind awareness). Brand awareness has two aspects brand depth and width, depth recommend how to made customer to recall a brand and width express the result when customer make purchase intension brand name come to its mind (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002). If a product has depth and width at same time that is the brand having greater awareness and consumer will always prefer that brand while purchasing, brand name also play important role in creating awareness (Davis et al., 2008)

Aided awareness: Customer look at any product category and then specific brand name came to their mind.

Top of the mind awareness: means customer can identify a brand when any signal is given (Chi et al., 2009).

When companies develop new product or market, their highly concerned strategy should be creating awareness among customers to achieve the great result as brand awareness creates positive brand loyalty (Peng, 2006). Brand loyalty is customer past affection and psychological attachment to any brand (Lin, 2010). And it can be measured through repurchasing the same brand again and again (Chi et al., 2009). In order to create and maintain one's brand companies must understand the growing importance of aided and unaided awareness in customers and make strategies according to it, market communication should be made with special concern on advertising and public relation management (Moisescu, 2009). Awareness can be created through advertising like TVC, Radio, Social media etc.

Purchase intension of customer depends upon brand awareness and loyalty. Purchase intension of brand consists on problem arousal, searching information (advertising media), comparing alternatives (awareness), purchase and post purchase behavior (brand commitment) (Engel et al., 1995).

Customer's intension to purchase anything depends upon how much awareness she has about that specific brand. Marketers promote product through many promotional activities to create awareness. Once customer is aware of any brand and use it then this personal experience turned into brand loyalty and brand association. That result in repurchasing products in case of good experience which lead to brand commitment. Thus we hypothesize:

H2: Brand awareness has a mediating role between advertisement and brand commitment.

Quality as a moderator

Measurement or signal of scope is quality, such as the use ability of good or services to fulfill specific needs through exchange at certain time and place (Injac, 1998). Quality is defined as the overall performance of a brand comparing to its rivals (Aaker, 1996). It can also be describes as the total features does have a product which are able to stated or implied needs (Kotler et al., 2002). It is the evidence of the promised features in a product that create satisfaction or dissatisfaction among users (Agbor, 2011). Quality is consumers' experience and judgment of a product on the basis of functionality, durability, reliability, technology and benefits (Kan, 2002). Brand awareness has positive and significant relationship with quality (Chi et al., 2009).many researchers found that higher brand awareness results in higher perceived quality (Monore, 1990; Lo, 2002; Lin, 2006).

Customer may not judge quality as manufacturer understands (Brucks et al., 2000). But individual customer determined the quality (Cole et al., 2009). Brand quality is the parameter to measure brand excellence (Lee et al., 2011). Different people see differently to same product, in rating a product their own values, attitudes and experiences are involved and their attitude is the key to measure quality, investigation should be made within consumer population to check quality of brand (Blesic et al., 2011).

Total quality management is a key factor for organizations looking for competitive edge in market among liberalized, globalized and knowledgeable consumers (Sureshchandar et al., 2001). Miller (1987) predicted that in future there will be two kinds of organizations, one those who adapt TQM and the other that is out of business. Companies now a day whether they are manufacturing or service providers, big or small are adapting quality strategies (Dow, Swanson & Ford, 1999).

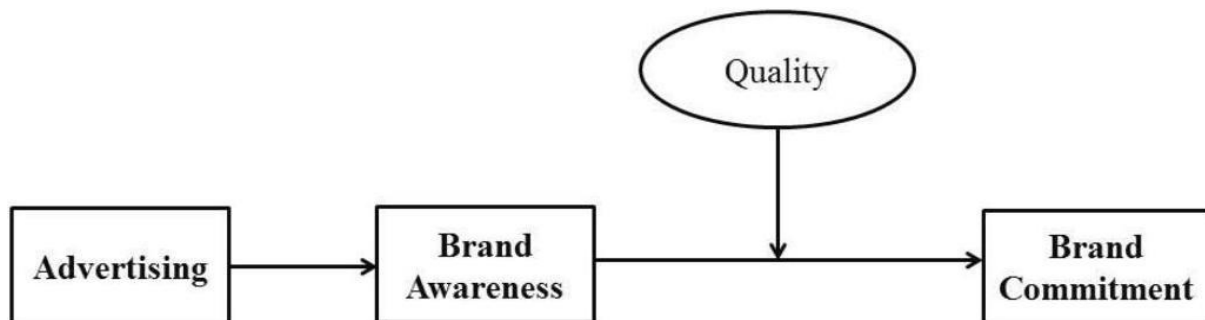
Anderson and Sullivan (1993) and De Ruyter et al., (1997) stated that Service Quality is directly related to repurchase intentions and willingness to recommend. It is the perception of how much a product meet or exceed to his/ her expectations (Zeithemal et al., 2006). Measuring service quality as a difference between perception and expectations can help marketers to fill the gap by looking at what they are offering to market (Parasuraman, 1988). Product Quality is essential element in purchasing decision it depend on customer understanding product performance etc. (Maeyer & Estelami, 2011). Aaker, 1996 stated that Perceived Quality create brand association that helps in creating brand awareness, Brand association is known as a sign of commitment.

The level of perceived quality is related to emotional value literally (Babin et al., 1994). Perceived quality make customer willing to buy and pay price for some brand (Cole et al., 2009). Perceived quality is road map to brand loyalty (Gurbuz, 2008).

The above study shows that customer will not buy a product until she is cognizant of its attributes or any past experience. Past experience could be cause to purchase only if it was judged by customer as a quality product. A quality product will attract customer leaving other things apart, thus we hypothesize:

H3: Quality moderates the relationship between brand commitment and brand awareness.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



METHODOLOGY

Sample and Data Collection

Before collecting the final data a pilot testing was conducted in which 53 females were invited to fill questionnaires to test the reliability of scales we used. Pilot testing was self-administrated and was assured that the respondents were clear minded about questionnaires before they respond. This pilot testing gave confidence that the questionnaire item we used is reliable and capable for this research. Further in this research we used the non-probability convenience sampling. That helps to collect large amount of data fast and in limited cost. It also help us to find that which brand is more preferable by customer's and why. Total 150 questionnaires were distributed from which 137 questionnaires were properly full. Response rate was 91%. About 6 questionnaires were lost due to uncertain circumstances. Respondents were guided by researcher to understand the questions and also before giving them questionnaire the purpose of this research was made clear to them. Keeping confidential the information they gave was make sure to them so that they can give the accurate response with no hesitation. The selected population was students, working women and house wives. These respondents have two main qualities first is that they are educated and secondly they make purchases of different brands. So they were helpful to find out our research variables.

In this research we used 4 variables that are Brand Commitment (dependent variable), advertising (independent variable), Brand Awareness (moderator) and Quality (mediator). Items used for Brand commitment has two dimensions we used Continuance commitment was measured through four items developed by Gerbing & Anderson (1988). Affective commitment was measured according to three items selected from the Allen & Meyer (1990) effective scale. Brand Awareness was measured through the items took from Atilgan et al., (2005) and Yoo et al., (2000) three items of advertising were selected from Kirmani & Wright (1989). Quality was measured through 3 items taken from Buchanan et al., (1999) and Chandrasekaran (2004). Items were measured using five points Likert Scale ranging from 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree. Statistical analysis on the data was carried out in SPSS-20.

RESULTS

Table 1: Demographics

Description		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	137	100.0
Age	20-25	97	70.8
	26-30	12	8.8
	31-35	15	10.9
	36-40	12	8.8
	40+	1	.7
User of	Charizma	20	14.6
	Gul Ahmad	41	29.9
	Nishat	23	16.8
	J.	7	5.1
	Warda	36	26.3
	Other	10	7.3
Marital Status	Single	102	74.5
	Married	35	25.5
Employment Status	Employed	39	28.5
	Unemployed	8	5.8
	Student	89	65.0
	Others	1	.7
Qualification	Matric	1	.7
	Intermediate	6	4.4
	Bachelors	72	52.6
	Masters	55	40.1
	MS/M.Phil	3	2.2

Table 2: Reliability

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Quality	-.371	3
Brand Awareness	.560	5
Brand Commitment	.688	7
Advertising	.423	3

Table 3: Correlation

Variables	Quality	BA	BC	Advertising
Quality	1			
BA	.185*	1		
BC	.231**	.508**	1	
Advertising	.090	.324**	.389**	1

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4: Regression

i) Impact of Advertising on Brand Awareness

Variable	β	R ²	ΔR^2	Sig.
Advertising	.285	.105	.098	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BA
 Source: Field Data N= 137
 Model: R= .324, F= 15.794, t= 3.974

ii) Impact of Advertising on Brand Commitment

Variable	β	R ²	ΔR^2	Sig.
Advertising	.326	.151	.145	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC
 Source: Field Data N= 137
 Model: R= .389, F= 24.044, t= 4.904

iii) Impact of Brand Awareness on Brand Commitment

Variable	β	R ²	ΔR^2	Sig.
BA	.482	.258	.252	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC
 Source: Field Data N= 137
 Model: R= .508, F= 46.895, t= 6.848

Table 5: Moderated Regression

i) Impact of Quality as a Moderator between Brand Awareness & Brand Commitment

Variable	β	R ²	ΔR^2	Sig.
QBA	.046	.279	.268	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC
 Source: Field Data N= 137
 Model: R= .528, F= 25.894, t= 1.972

Table 6: Mediated Regression

i) Impact of Advertising on Brand Commitment through Brand Awareness

Variable	β	R ²	ΔR^2	Sig.
Advertising	.210	.314	.304	.000
BA	.405			

a. Dependent Variable: BC
 Source: Field Data N= 137
 Model: R= .560, F= 302.683, t= 4.479

DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the demographics of the respondents that females of age 20–25 are most addicted to branded apparels then others giving the percentage of 70.8% mostly single and students. The age group 31-35 use branded clothes mostly married and working class giving percentage of 10.9%. Table 2 shows the reliability of scales we used to measure our variables. Quality which is used as moderator contains 3 items give cronbach’s alpha 37% showing poor reliability. The second one is brand awareness including 5 items has cronbach’s Alpha of 56% which shows moderate reliability of the scale. The third scale is brand commitment having 7

items gives cronbach's alpha of 69% shows good and the last one is advertising scale having 3 items shows cronbach's alpha of 42% shows average reliability. Table 3 shows that how significant is the relationship among variables first it shows the relationship between quality and brand awareness which shows correlation of 19% which is significant as level of significance is 0.05. Secondly it shows the relation of brand commitment with brand awareness is 51% and quality is 23%. Also there is significant relation of advertising with brand awareness is 32% and brand commitment is 39%. And also there is insignificant relation of advertising with quality of 9% at 0.01 level of significance. Table 4 shows how much variation a variable brings in other constraints. The impact of advertising on brand awareness shows positive relation as $\beta=29\%$ and 10% variation advertising brings in brand awareness. Advertising and brand commitment also show positive relationship through $\beta=33\%$ and 15% variation advertising can bring in brand commitment. And, also there is positive relation between brand awareness and brand commitment as $\beta=48\%$ and depicts 25% change Brand awareness can bring in brand commitment. Table 5 shows the moderating role of quality between brand awareness and brand commitment depicting positive relation through $\beta=5\%$. Table 6 shows the mediating role of brand awareness between advertising and brand commitment show $\beta=21\%$ for advertising and $\beta=41\%$ for brand awareness.

CONCLUSION

This study analyzes and evaluates factors that affect female's perception before they purchase any brand for their use. Advertisement makes affirmative effects on brand commitment advertising is the medium that directly affect the perception of customer before making any purchase. Brand awareness is the further result of advertisement that remind of the brand as customer go for purchase and if the customer is satisfied with the quality of the product after using it then the result will be brand commitment .understanding that brand commitment is not only gained through Brand awareness created by advertisements but brand quality is also an important factor determining commitment towards the brand. Hence brand awareness has mediating role between advertisement and brand commitment and quality is a moderating agent between brand awareness and brand commitment. Thus, respondents of our study stated that the focal point is quality of the fabric and uniqueness of design which compel them to purchase these brands.

LIMITATIONS

Precedent study shows that Advertisement has very forceful role in creating Awareness among customers that further result Commitment if customer is satisfied by the quality that brand give. But for creating Commitment Advertising and quality are not the only factors. There are many other factors that create commitment to a brand like Price, Promotions, ease of availability and higher switching costs. So this study is not helpful in determining these factors to affect Commitment. For a marketing manager or other researchers it is directed to study all above mentioned things to get full understanding of brand commitment. The study is done only in Abbottabad in very limited area with lean resources so it cannot be applicable to the other area in Abbottabad. Other researchers are requested to go to different areas with huge

resources to get comprehensive results and the marketing managers could also go beyond Abbottabad to get in depth understanding of topic. The research is done only in female apparel so it could not be applied to male apparels. Only students and working women was targeted in this study the results could be different to housewives. It could be applicable in fashion accessories such as footwear and cosmetics but not in other sectors like FMCGs. Reliability of the Quality scale we found was -.371 that is negative where the original was .78. so we can say that this quality scale has negative reliability in Abbottabad's females.. The study is conducted in the main area of Abbottabad so not applied in the urban area and the females targeted belong to upper middle and upper class so the results are not applicable to the females of lower class.

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Acknowledgement

Above all, utmost appreciation to the Almighty ALLAH for the divine intervention in this academic endeavor.

Sincere gratitude is hereby extended to the following that never ceased in helping until this study is structured.

The Marketing Instructor, Afaq Ahmed Khan, the study's advisor, for the unwavering step by step guidance, the expertise that indeed contributed positively in the analysis and interpretation of data.

The members of the defense panel, Afaq Ahmed Khan for sharing their precious time and positive insights that helped complete this study.

For the unwavering moral, and emotional support of Afaq Ahmed Khan instructor of Government College of Management Sciences, Abbottabad, Saneela Jadoon and Naqash Ahmed Khan Tareen, students of Government College of Management Sciences, Abbottabad and all those who voluntarily participated in data collection.

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