Investigating the Factors Leading towards the Purchase of a Perfume Brand; An Empirical Study of Working Females in Karachi

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Abstract

Nowadays, in an increasingly more evident manner, perfumes assume the role of indications of individuality and ascetic orientation of those who wear them. In this regard, role of advertising is quite evident to persuade working females in choosing the best fragrance and at the same time, understanding number of factors is also a key consideration for marketers. Therefore, the purpose of this research paper is to examine the number of reasons a working women keeps in mind when purchasing a particular perfume brand. This is a quantitative research and based on a philosophy of post positivist, with a deductive research approach. Survey questionnaire has been used as an instrument to collect the data which was adopted from the literature. The sample size is 384 and probability random sampling technique has been used. Data was analyzed through SPSS software and applied both the descriptive and inferential statistics.

Index terms— purchase decision, perfume brand, advertisement.

1 Investigating the Factors Leading towards the Purchase of a Perfume Brand; An Empirical Study of Working Females in Karachi

Introduction ue to globalization and liberalization, it has been resulting in increased demand for cosmetic and fashionable products for women of all ages. Females set and followed fads, fashionable trends and style, which were more inclined towards perfumes to represent their unique image. The population of females aged above 23 has been considered as a potential market to use perfumes. (Borgave & J.S., 2010, pp. [1][2][3][4][5][6][7][8].

The female population of Taiwan was a part of a market segment, which had a high level of involvement respond to their purchasing behavior, there were certain similarities as well as differences in the consumption patterns of luxury products of female in Taiwan and UK. (Wu, Chen, & Nguy, Luxury brand purchases and the extended self, 2015, pp. 153 -173).

There were various factors that influence a female individual's fragrance decision. Moreover, there were certain factors that actually influence consumers buying behavior but psychological factors, social influence and the purchase situation were the factors due to which the purchasing behavior differs in US and French Cosmetic markets. **??**Markham & Cangelosi, 1999, pp. 387 -401) In today's market, the females were very particular about the things they wear and how they appear on special occasions like Valentine's Day, birthdays, Mothers Day, weddings, anniversaries etc. In comparison to other countries Pakistanis spent more money on perfumes than Indians due to high consumer spending habits. There were many factors that derive the consumer preference when they opt for particular perfume when heading out the door. Due to this consumer preference we aimed to focus our efforts and study how certain factors influenced consumer preference of working females of Karachi when they bought perfume brands. (Daily Times, 2015) II.

2 Research Objectives

1. Ascertain the relationship and impact of price, packaging, brand and fragrance towards purchase of perfume brand. 2. Determine the influences and relationship of quality, availability and peer recommendations towards purchase of a perfume brand.

3 Study the effect and relationship of budget, sales

technique, special offer and advertisement towards purchase of a perfume brand.

4 III.

5 Literature Review

The relationship of price knowledge with the economic scenarios suggests that consumers are more aware of economic knowledge and they expected the fair prices with respect to the economic conditions. (Kenning, Evanschitzky, Vogel, & Ahlert, 2007, pp. 97 -119) The consumers, who rely more on price knowledge, tend to get and perceive prices more accurately. (Rosa-Díaz, 2004, pp. 406 -428). It is the D self-accomplishment and satisfied visibility and symbolic values that consumers were even more satisfied with the counterfeit luxury brands as well. **??**Phau, Teah, & Lee, 2009, pp. 3 -15) Brands that existed within the same category are driven by the same motivations purchase decision involvement. Different levels of involvement occurred at category level rather than brand level. (McWilliam, 1997, pp. 60 -70) Successful branding strategy was required that used local names to develop national identity. (Ranchhodi, Gur u, & Marandi, 2011, pp. 353 -365) In order to build equity the core dimensions of brand image were looked upon and analyzed. (Toldos-Romero & Orozco-Gómez, 2015, pp. 462 -476) Price and brand had significant moderate effect on buyers' perception on quality. **??**Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991, pp. 307 -319) At each stage, various demands needed to be fulfilled as there are many factors influencing the final packaging of a product. (Rundh, 2009 **??**Rundh, , pp. 988 -1002)) Changing consumer behavior is one of the most important factor, which impacted packaging demand, and for this. (Rundh, 2013 **??**Rundh, , pp. 1547 **??**Rundh, -1563)) Colors, typography; graphical forms and images of alternative packaging were combined in different ways to convey a preferred perception of consumers' mind on the basis of seven product positioning strategies. (Vila, 2006, pp. 100 -112)Some consumers were very particular about their health and nutrition which allowed them to make a higher involvement decision on the basis of delivered label information considered it to be more credible, visual elements influence choice more in low involvement purchase decision. (Speece, 2004, pp. 607 -628).

The factors that helped consumers in deciding which perfume to buy, were based on the recommendation of reference people and sample smelling test. **??**Yoh, 2006, pp. 396 -406) To increase fragrance sales, companies tilt towards a new marketing concept of unisex and same name fragrance. This led researchers to believe that the male-dominant products influenced females purchase decision. (Cangelosi, 1999, pp. 387 -401) Young girls start to use any form of fragrance from the age of 5 to 10. Eventually they bought perfumes on their friends' recommendation or simply by looking an advertisement. (Ali, 2011) Factors like, brand of the perfume, its packaging, and bottle design were the most important attributes that a consumer takes into consideration when making an informed purchase decision. **??**Raza, Nas, & Anwer, 2013, pp. 189 -204) Quality definition is related to 8 dimensions of product quality. It turned out that there was a significant link between 5 definitions of quality and the 8 dimensions of quality. Most quality managers defined quality that closely represented user-based definition. (Tamim, 2002, pp. 442 -453) There were 10 dimensions in total that consumers referred to when shaping expectations and perceptions about service. Moreover, there were 4 gaps that affected service quality perceived by the customer. (Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & L., 1985) To close the gap between perceived quality and value required marketer to view quality the same way as the consumer. Moreover, consumers intrinsic and extrinsic factors should be evaluated from the consumers' environment that triggered perceived quality. (Zeithaml, Consumer Perceptions of Price, Quality, and Value: A Means-End Model and Synthesis of Evidence, 1988, pp. **??** -22) In an attempt to maintain a reputation for high quality, firms were encouraged to focus their efforts to increase product quality in order to stand out more than its rivals. Market structures like oligopolistic markets can easily sustain a reputation for high quality. (Dana Jr. & Fong, 2011 **??** pp. 1059 **??**1076) Consumers tend to switch from one brand to another if they couldn't find what was required and they would also switch retail stores and never visit back. (Gruen, 2003, pp. 605 -617) Furthermore, in order to resolve the problem of stock out, training programs for retailers must be executed so that to understand the ordering of the products from the warehouse needed to be done before the stock ends and to improve the quality of orders. (Consulting, 1996).

Findings revealed that, the perceived quality, satisfaction, and brand trust had a positive direct relationship over recommendation. While on the other hand, brand image had a positive direct effect on recommendation. (Vigripat & Chan , 2007). According to the **??**Childers & Rao, 1992, pp. 198 -211) study, People who had high credibility and better knowledge of a particular product had more influence on the individual and the private luxury items tend to have higher peer influence because these products were important and discretionary purchased.

According to the (Soman, 2001, pp. 460 -474) study, Budget was one of the key factors while making purchase decision. Another research has found that customers who allocates certain budget to a particular product category, tends to limit themselves under the allocated budget. ??Heath & Soll, 1996, pp. 40 -52). Moreover according to the (Scheer, Shehryar, & Wood, 2010, pp. 225-232) study, the knowledge of budget gives a better understanding of an individual's purchase decision.

According to ??Brock, 1965, pp. 650 -654) study, a product's similarity was more important than an experienced sales person to persuade a consumer to buy a lower or high priced product. Moreover Evan's findings were based on the theory that the similarities produced by the attractiveness of the sales person and customer lead to positive outcome when making purchase decision. (Evans, 1963). Whereas the characteristics of sale person like power, attractiveness and credibility caused three types of influences on the Consumers usually made a decision to buy a product depending on how quick they will receive the reward from promotional activities. The quicker the reward, the more value perception and liability they have on purchasing the product. ??Zeithaml, 1988, pp. 2 -22).

The female consumers are more interested and usually plan, before going to purchase perfume than the male consumers in Malaysia. According to this study, advertising appeal is consisted of 3 main elements Recognizing, Rational and Emotional appeal. (Todd, 1990) study, the advertisement that used to appeal professional females should emphasize on the need for safety and self-sufficiency.

According to the (Williams & Slama, 1995, pp. 4 -21) study, there are many factors that come under consideration while making the final purchase decision. The past experience along with the selection of store plays an important part while making the purchase decision. ??Rao, 1969, pp. 321-329). Thai consumers take two main Components under consideration while making purchase decision; one was price and second was the brand. ??Thanasuta , 2015, pp. 102-121) IV.

6   Research Methodology

The population for this study was working females residing in Karachi and aged 23-46 and above. The reason why we have chosen this sample size is because their responses for our research were more relevant due to which we received an authentic set of data. Keeping in view the nature of research, nonprobability convenience sampling has been employed, with 95% confidence level and 5% margin of error. Sample size for this research was 384 as per the sampling table ??Uma Sekaran, 2006). Explanatory and Quantitative research methodology was adapted to study several variables influencing buying. Moreover, the research approach was deductive and close-ended survey questionnaire was used which was further adapted from the base study. Furthermore, data had been collected on cross sectional basis and analyzed accordingly.

? Reliability was tested through pilot study from 50 participants

? Five points Likert scale was used in survey questionnaire The purpose of this study is to ascertain the relationship and impact of price, packaging, brand and fragrance towards purchase of perfume brand. Moreover, in order to determine the influences and relationship of quality, availability and peer recommendations towards purchase of a perfume brand we have conducted this research. Lastly, we have to study the effect and relationship of budget, sales technique, special offer and advertisement towards purchase of a perfume brand. As specified in figure ??.3, constructs of price, brand, packaging, fragrance, quality, availability, peer recommendations, budget and special offer, all the stated constructs have a mean above 3 which means that respondents are agreeing to all the statements in the constructs. However, the mean value of sales techniques and advertisement are 2 and below 3. This means that, respondents are not agreeing to all the statements in these constructs.

7   Cornbach Alpha Number of Items

. ??15 40 IX.

8   Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is completed to test the hypothesis of the relationship of independent variables (price, brand, packaging, fragrance, quality, availability, peer recommendations, budget, sales techniques, special offer, and advertisement) with the dependent variable purchase decision. Pearson Correlation test is used to analyze the relationship among the stated variables with purchase decision of a perfume brand. The results suggests that there is a significant and weak relationship exist between all the variables with purchase decision and significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) as shown in table ??0. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis stating that, price, brand, packaging, fragrance, quality, availability, peer recommendations, budget, sales techniques, special offer, and advertisement are significantly but weakly correlated with purchase decision. Moreover, price (? =.077; P>0.05) brand (? =.081; P>0.05) packaging (? =-.021; P>0.05) peer recommendation (? =.011; P>0.05) budget (? =.023; P>0.05) sales technique (? =.000; P>0.05) special offer (? =.038; P>0.05) and advertisement (? =.088; P>0.05) have no impact over purchase decision.

9   X.

10   Regression Analysis

In addition to that, table 11 also explains the value of R2. The Rvalue is .587 or 58.7%, which indicates that the model is a good fit. This shows that it is a good value to predict the dependent variable i.e. purchase decision. The R2 value tells us the variance in dependent variable explained by independent variables. In table 11, the independent variables explain .345 or 34.5% of variance in dependent variable. Moreover, adjusted R square value measure the impact of independent variables on dependent variable with a value of .324 or 32.4%.

11   XI.

12   Discussion

Data was collected from working females employed in different organizations like banks, call centers, telecom customer service centers, schools, universities and marketing agencies etc. Total 390 respondents were targeted from which response was received from 384respondents accounting for 98% response rate, which is quite good and reliable. Research findings indicates that, there is a positive impact of availability, fragrance, availabilty and quality when making a purchase decision for any perfume brand for the first time, on the other hand all the other variables have no impact on purchase decision.

As per the findings in the correlation table, fragrance was the only independent variable that had a positive relationship and impact towards the dependent variable of purchase decision of a particular perfume brand. On the other hand, the remaining three independent variables of price, packaging and brand had a weak relationship evident in Pearson correlation and no impact according to multiple regressions. The reason for this can be, that an individual may consider fragrance as the vital component of a perfume since most people consider fragrance as the major factor when buying any perfume brand.

As per our findings, price, packaging and brand are not as important as compared to fragrance. Reason being, since it's a luxurious and a high involvement product, consumers do consider price but they are not conscious when it comes to price decisions. With packaging, consumers consider this element as a secondary importance when buying perfumes. Consumers choose luxurious brands as they shape quality perception and the willingness to buy. Moreover, brand has no impact on the purchase decision when buying perfumes. Quality and availability seems to have a significant impact on the dependent variable of purchase decision while peer recommendation seems to have no impact on purchase decision. Therefore consumers consider quality as an important attribute when buying a perfume. Furthermore, availability is another variable that consumer take into account because they tend to switch from one brand to another if they are unable to find what they were looking for. On the other hand, peer recommendation is an unimportant factor.

Budget, sales technique, special offer and advertisement can be analyzed that none of these variables have a significant impact and relationship on the dependent variable. Also the respondents do not agree to all the statements stated in the questionnaire appearing under sales technique and advertisement. Sales technique employed by sales people does not influence the decision of consumers. When considering special offer, it is of secondary importance. When it comes to perfumes, advertisement is not the driving factor since it disseminates knowledge, introduces the product into the market, but it does not have a physical presence therefore it does not help the consumer make the final decision.

13   XII.

14   Conclusion

The in-depth insights of the responses collected from the questionnaires concluded which core factors related to perfume brands had a greater impact and relationship on the dependent variable. According to the multiple regression analysis that we conducted for our study, fragrance with P Value 0.004, quality with P value 0 and availability with P value 0.002 and advertisement with P value 0.05 had a stronger impact while making a purchase decision of perfume brand. However, the rest of the independent variables that are price, brand, packaging, peer recommendation, budget, sales technique and special offer had no impact on the dependent variable.

A person may take into account fragrance as the most important component of a perfume since most people consider fragrance as the vital factor when buying any perfume brand. One of the key purposes of a perfume is to disseminate fragrance around an individual's environment that they consider as a key attribute. When buying perfumes consumers smell the fragrance before making an informed decision. Furthermore, fragrances' role is to form an identity, image and develop an individual's personality.\Finally, advertisement is a marketing tool that engages the customer to purchase a product through various mediums like television, newspaper, magazines and social media. When it comes to perfumes, advertisement is not the influential factor since it disseminates knowledge, introduces the product into the market, but it does not have a physical presence therefore it does not help the consumer make the final purchase decision. Additionally, availability is another attribute that consumer take into consideration because they incline to switch from one brand to another if they are unable to find what they were searching for. Consumers take into account quality as a vital factor when purchasing a perfume since it is one of the driving factors when making any informed purchase decision. Finally, when it comes to

perfumes, advertisement which is a marketing tool that engages the customer to purchase a product through various mediums like television, newspaper, magazines and social media, it is also the influential factor since it disseminates knowledge and introduces the product into the market; therefore it does not help the consumer make the final purchase decision.

Alternatively, peer recommendation is an insignificant factor because perfume is merchandise that individuals prefer as per their own taste and choice, it is not something that can be bought on the basis of others' recommendations. Budget, sales technique and special offer are of secondary importance in minds of the consumers. Also the respondents do not agree to all the statements specified in the questionnaire falling under sales technique and advertisement as specified in descriptive analysis. When it comes to personal care budget, perfume is merchandise that is not bought everyday as it is known as a luxurious product. Conversely, sales technique used by sales people does not impact the decision of consumers because they do not purchase perfumes based on other peoples input. Rather, the sales people sometimes complicate the customer' decision thereby slowing their decision process hence they choose to make their own decisions. When taking into account special offer or promotion, it is a promotional tool that some consumers consider but in our research it is of secondary importance because stall activities and gift pack promotions do not determine the customers purchasing pattern.

This research helped us to identify the important variables that consumer take into consideration when purchasing a particular perfume brand for the first time and it is a value addition in the literature of purchase decision and other marketing factors.

15 XIII.

16 Recommendations

? Marketers should focus more on conducting test sampling of fragrance.

? The brand custodians of the perfumes should ensure that their products are available at every possible retail outlet.

? The brand custodians' responsibility should be to focus their efforts on the quality of their product by promoting the long lasting attribute of the perfume and its overall reliability.

? Retailers should focus on the authenticity of a perfume brand to build trust and maintain a longterm relationship to retain a first time consumers.

? Marketers can have a better understanding of working females purchase behavior so that they can determine and execute the right and effective marketing strategies for future reference.

XIV.

17 Areas of Further Research

Study can be conducted on metropolitan cities of Pakistan like, Islamabad, Lahore, Rawalpindi, Faisalabad, etc. Research can be done on the basis of comparative analysis, region wise and an analysis of two to more cities. For further research different occupations can be targeted like housewives, bankers, entrepreneurs, students etc. Later on this study could also be conducted on psychological factors like lifestyle, status, consumer perception, etc. Lastly, consumer experiences along with marketers experience can also be gauged through qualitative analysis.

[1] [2] [3]

Figure 1: E

Figure 2:

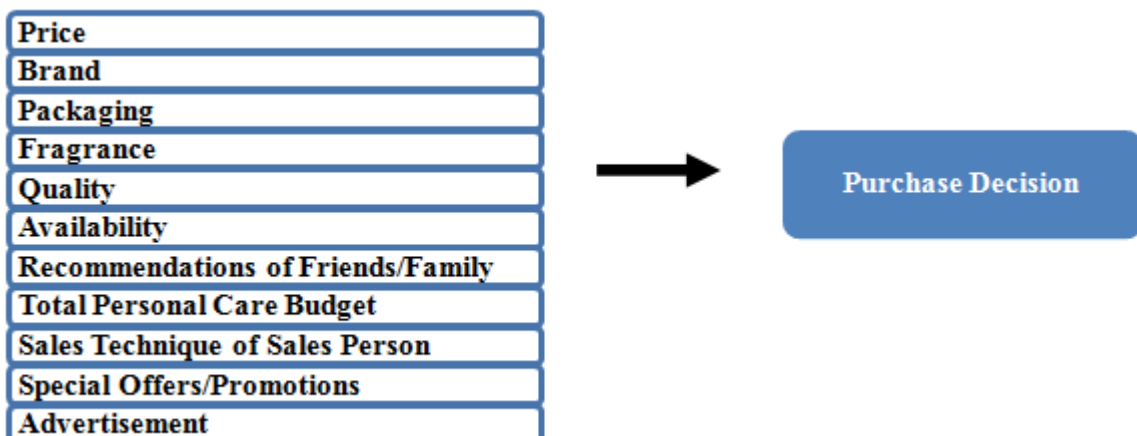|		price1	Brand1	Packaging1	Fragrance1	Quality1	Availability1	PeerRecommendation1	Budget1	SalesTechniques1	SpecialOffer1	Advertisement1	PurchaseDecison1
price1	Pearson Correlation	1	.449**	.248**	.419**	.418**	.207**	.209**	.443**	.124*	.196**	.162**	.362**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.015	.000	.002	.000
	N	383	381	380	377	383	381	383	382	383	381	381	383
Brand1	Pearson Correlation	.449**	1	.434**	.204**	.244**	.264**	.325**	.304**	.197**	.329**	.303**	.307**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	381	382	379	376	382	379	382	381	382	380	380	382
Packaging1	Pearson Correlation	.248**	.434**	1	.144**	.118*	.302**	.274**	.335**	.322**	.387**	.387**	.207**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.005	.021	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	380	379	381	375	381	378	381	380	381	379	379	381
Fragrance1	Pearson Correlation	.419**	.204**	.144**	1	.570**	.177**	.300**	.373**	.068	.164**	.081	.419**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.005		.000	.001	.000	.000	.189	.001	.119	.000
	N	377	376	375	378	378	375	378	377	378	376	376	378
Quality1	Pearson Correlation	.418**	.244**	.118*	.570**	1	.213**	.296**	.389**	.045	.189**	.074	.480**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.021	.000		.000	.000	.000	.376	.000	.150	.000
	N	383	382	381	378	384	381	384	383	384	382	382	384
Availability1	Pearson Correlation	.207**	.264**	.302**	.177**	.213**	1	.388**	.296**	.336**	.377**	.304**	.339**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	381	379	378	375	381	381	381	381	381	379	379	381
PeerRecommendation1	Pearson Correlation	.209**	.325**	.274**	.300**	.296**	.388**	1	.370**	.334**	.355**	.300**	.294**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	383	382	381	378	384	381	384	383	384	382	382	384
Budget1	Pearson Correlation	.443**	.304**	.335**	.373**	.389**	.296**	.370**	1	.259**	.479**	.264**	.342**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	382	381	380	377	383	381	383	383	383	381	381	383
SalesTechniques1	Pearson Correlation	.124*	.197**	.322**	.068	.045	.336**	.334**	.259**	1	.498**	.341**	.167**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.015	.000	.000	.189	.376	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000	.001
	N	383	382	381	378	384	381	384	383	384	382	382	384
SpecialOffer1	Pearson Correlation	.196**	.329**	.387**	.164**	.189**	.377**	.355**	.479**	.498**	1	.437**	.281**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	381	380	379	376	382	379	382	381	382	382	380	382
Advertisement1	Pearson Correlation	.162**	.303**	.387**	.081	.074	.304**	.300**	.264**	.341**	.437**	1	.258**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.000	.119	.150	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	381	380	379	376	382	379	382	381	382	380	382	382
PurchaseDecison1	Pearson Correlation	.362**	.307**	.207**	.419**	.480**	.339**	.294**	.342**	.167**	.281**	.258**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.001	.000	.000	
	N	383	382	381	378	384	381	384	383	384	382	382	384

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

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Figure 3: (

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