

Factors Influencing Youth Brand Preference associated with Purchase of Laptop: Evidence from the University students of Karachi

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Abstract:

Buying preference of youth is the area which is in observation of marketers since considerable amount of time specially in last decade or so special emphasize has been placed upon the preference of youth as they are treated as the major market. Moreover they are also treated as most informed and technologically sound market. But most of the research work carried out related with their preference focused upon their preference regarding fast moving consumer goods and with mobile phone and its accessories, But there are very few researches which focused towards the preference of youth associated with luxurious goods like cars laptops etc. Specially there is a lack of research work in Pakistan's scenario which will determine the impact of youth preference associated with the luxurious goods. Therefore this research is systematically conducted in order to determine the preference of youth

associated with the laptop, i.e. the luxuries good which are treated as the one of most important tool for their social networking as well as for their studies and professional requirements. For this purpose e have collected data from the bachelor level students of reputed higher education institutes operating in Karachi and after the analysis of results through (Software Packs for Social Sciences) SPSS it has been found that the factors on which preference of youth of Karachi depends are somehow similar with the youth of any other location, but there are some factors like celebrity endorsement and brand image which have the different results in comparison to the research work conducted by taking reference of other product category and other geographical locations.

Index Terms: Youth & Buying Preference

I. INTRODUCTION

Initial research work conducted defined brand as "A trademark that conveys a promise". (Phillips, 1988) while the other research define brand as "The sum of all marketing mix elements" (Keller, 2002) or we can simply we can define brand as any characteristic or attribute which make one seller distinguished with respect to another. A brand can also be used as the well build and long term tool which is ideal for the purpose of differentiating company's offerings and also for building long lasting image in the customer's mind. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) Moreover brand is also used for the development of specific association in the minds of the target market. (Chimbozand & Mutandwa, 2007) While brand choice is the term we use to point out the preference of any brand. That means this term is used to evaluate the level of demand of any specific brand in competition with the other brands of the same category available in the market. (Khan & Rohi, 2013)

Activities from which consumers pass through during possessing, consuming and disposing of any offerings is known as consumer behavior but most of the times consumer behavior is influenced by various environmental and individual reasons. (Blackwell, Miniard & Engel, 2006) Research work carried out in Philippines in 2002 revealed that consumer preference related with mobile phones brands is largely influences by technological factors. (Liu, 2002) While the other research conducted in the year 2005 examined factors which influence consumer's intention to change their cellular phones & revealed that personal

factors are contributing most predominantly in selecting the mobile phone. But there are some other factors also which are responsible for influencing consumer behavior in selecting the mobile phone brand like brand, price, basic properties, technical problems, innovative services, basic properties and outside influence. (Karjaluoto et al., 2005)

Research work of 2011 emphasized on the value of youth and indicated that if youth is the major market segment for any company in the upcoming times then the company will became able to achieve more market share and high level of profit. (Torlak, Spillan & Harcar, 2011) While the research of 2012 indicated some of the demographics of the youth segment and according to the survey they have more knowledge about technology, they have more innovative nature and they prefer to perform online transactions & prefer social media over the others. (Lay-Yee, Kok-Siew & Yin-Fah, 2013)

Research Problem: It is indicated by the prior research work that consumer preferences are relying heavily on features of any brand. Therefore we can state that companies, must focus upon rationality associated with consumer preferences, rather than their origin (Novemsky, Dhar, Schwarz & Simonson, 2007) While youth is treated as the market which has the ability to provide intensive returns to the marketers. Moreover it has been also observed that the youth has more power to influence their key house hold decisions associated with purchase, therefore currently most of the firms are directing their marketing efforts towards this particular market. (Khan & Rohi, 2013)

While, the selection of laptops for this research is supported by several reasons say for example in laptop industry the level of differentiation among brands is decreasing continuously because of the intense level of competition & there is no single company which can claim the leadership because of its elite or special offerings, as the difference among the offerings of all the players of the industry is not significant, that means the features and functions of laptops are not treated as the single force which can influence the consumer behavior associated with it. Moreover the prices of laptops were higher than the desktop computers, which were affecting the sales of laptops. But with the passage of time, now companies are looking to provide laptops in much lesser consumer cost as compared to the past. Moreover as indicated earlier that most of the laptop producing companies are providing same features therefore, it is much easy for customer to compare these laptop brands on the basis of features and functionality, and will prefer the products on the basis of the value of brand name associated with them. That's why marketers must conduct research on consumer buying behavior associated with the purchase of laptops, by keeping in view all the elements rather focusing only upon the dimensions of the product. (Shah, 2012) Furthermore all the research work which was conducted on this topic under the territories of Pakistan was focusing upon the exploring the preference of youth in the selection of the mobile phones (Khan & Rohi, 2013 & Arif, Ahmed & Farrukh, 2015) and towards the factors influencing the selection of fast food restaurants. (Saeed, Javed & Lodhi, 2013)

While the importance of factors associated with the preference of youth in selecting laptops is still undercover and as mentioned earlier that users of laptops do not prefer them only

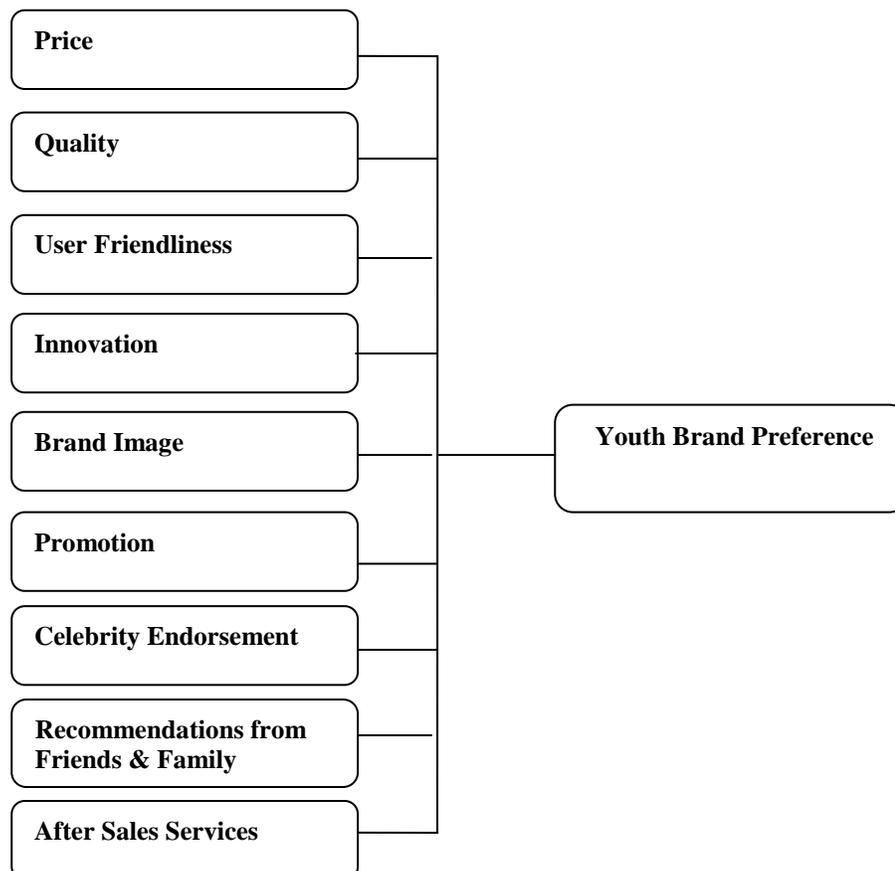
because of their features, and brand name associated with these products is also playing major role in the sales, which creates intense competition in the industry and provides a solid reason to researchers to conduct research on this regards. (Shah, 2012)

Research Question: “What are those factors which are significantly important in creating buying preference of Laptop’s for the youth of Karachi”?

Research Objectives: Objectives for this research are as under

- a) To explore the effect of price of laptops on the buying preference of youth
- b) To identify the impact of quality of laptops on the buying preference of youth
- c) To determine the resultant of user-friendliness of laptop on the buying preference of youth
- d) To judge the consequence of display of laptops on the buying preference of youth
- e) To identify the outcome of innovation in laptops on the buying preference of youth
- f) To measure the upshot of rand image of laptops on the buying preference of youth
- g) To view the end result of celebrity endorsements associated with laptops on the buying preference of youth
- h) To analyze the conclusion of recommendations from friends and family on the buying preference of youth
- i) To conclude the answer of after sales services of laptop on the buying preference of youth

The Research Model: Research:



Factors Affecting Research work conducted in early nineties indicated that enormous attention has been paid in analyzing the comparative impact of various factors which are responsible for influencing consumer's choice associated with the purchase of particular brand. (Meyer & Kahn, 1991) While it has also been also indicated that there are several factors, which force consumer to prefer any particular brand. (Mokhlis & Yaakop, 2012) This phenomenon was also indicated by the prior research work that choice of any particular brand has been influences by several factors (Tornatzky & Katherine, 1982, Mason, 1990, Rogers, 1995 & Charlotte, 1999) & these factors includes Price, Perceived risk, Compatibility, Trial ability, Comparative Advantage, Complexity, Brand Image and Observe ability. (Khan & Rohi, 2013)

- a) **Price:** This variable has a significant impact on consumer buying behavior and because of its importance we can easily state that price is treated as single and most critical factor which can cause determinant on consumer decision making and hence can significantly impacts the entire purchase process. Similarly, for youth, price might be treated as the most impactful factor. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) Moreover marketers might vary prices by considering economic situation prevailing in the location and might also consider perception of the target market, as it might result in change in the determination of customer perceived value and this change in perception is always critically important in the consumer's purchase decision. (Nilson, 1998 & Kotler & Armstrong, 1989) research conducted in order to examine the preference of youth found that the price has no association with the purchase preference of youth & they mostly pay preference to factors and young consumers are not reluctant in paying more for the enhanced quality and features. (Osman, Talib, Sanusi, Shiang & Alwi, 2012)

But the research of 2014 provides conclusive evidence which proves that price is the significant factor for youth and definitely affects the buying preferences as they have limited resources and major source of their income is the pocket money given by their parents. Moreover the research also proves that companies which adapt low pricing strategies without compromising on quality of their offerings became able to create positive influence on the buying behavior of youth (Awan & Fatima, 2014)

- b) **Quality:** Product Quality indicates the extent to which product is carrying out its desired work & this is treated as an important factor which influence the brand choice. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) Quality can also be defined as the difference customer observes in actual level of performance in comparison to the perceived level of performance. (Kang, 2006) Research conducted in India indicated that unbranded products vary significantly in their quality dimensions therefore people perceive something as a brand only because of its better quality.

Moreover research also indicated that aesthetics and quality of product are the two main components which differentiate successful brand from unsuccessful brand. (Sardar, 2012) While according to research work of 2013 brand quality is an element which influences the purchase behavior of customer and it is essential to make a brand comprehensive one as compared to the competing brands, especially when it faces competition from well known brands of the world. (Arif, Ahmed & Farrukh, 2015) (Piktumiene, 2013)

Moreover consumer also holds perception associated with quality and safety which also affect their buying decision, but both quality and safety are treated as those variables which are very hard to define and consumers are force to evaluate quality as well as safety of the products on the basis of other signals associated with products whether intrinsic, like product appearance or external like its label and associations. (Nelson, 1970)

Research work conducted in the year 2014 proves that youth is treated as the part of Generation Y therefore they always preferred those products which are technologically sound and the major reason behind their preference is that they have innovative nature and therefore always inclined towards those products which will provide better incident. While the other research work indicated that quality of product results in formation of durable and satisfactory relationship with the company. Furthermore research conducted in 2014 also emphasized upon the requirements of quality in order to create the desired impact of youth of Pakistan. (Awan & Faima, 2014)

- c) **User Friendliness:** Most of the time the term user friendliness indicates *Easy to use & understand*. We can also say that this term is used for those devices and software's which are not difficult in use. As in the current situation each and every industry is facing intense level competition, that's why therefore development of user friendly products is beneficial. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) According to research usability is a critical factors associated with development of positive belief or negative belief of the product in consumers mind. (Jordan, 1998 & Demir, Desmet & Hekler, 2008)
- d) **Innovation:** One of the basic method company uses to differentiate its offerings with respect to competitors is known as *Innovation*, Using Innovation also help company is matching its offering with the recent requirements of their customers. Therefore it is feasible to state that innovation is not only helps company in surviving during intense competition but also helps in developing unique position and image in against of competing ones. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) As the research conducted in 2015 highlighted that prefer those smart phones which have advanced features and on their purchase decision is heavily dependent upon these additional features (Kushwaha, 2015) Findings of research also indicated that innovation influences the

process of research associated with marketing & marketing researcher and they also tried to find out the process of adoption of these products. (Saaksjarvi, 2003) Moreover research findings also indicated that for student's the most important factors is innovative features and this can significantly influence their buying behavior. (Liu, 2002 & Karjaluoto et al., 2005) While the research work of 2012 also emphasized on the importance of innovation and showed that innovation is one of the most influential factor for future use of smart phones and it is contributing up to 34% in the preference of consumers for future use. (Enterprise News, 2012)

- e) **Brand Image:** Research work conducted in the year 2010 explored the association between brand image and customer loyalty by taking reference of customers of Toyota Car and found that there is a significant relationship between brand image & loyalty. While the research conducted in 2013 selected one hundred and fifty youngsters as the respondent indicated that there is a significant impact of brand image on brand loyalty. (Saeed, Javed & Lodhi, 2013) While the other research of the same year explored the relationship between the brand image and purchase intentions of youngsters by taking the reference of Fast Moving Consumer Goods and also found positive results in this regards. (Tariq et al., 2013) While the prior research work conducted in Gujranwala city 2012 also tried to explore the relationship among the customer satisfaction and brand image on brand loyalty by taking sample of 200 youngsters and found positive results for both of their major objectives. (Durrani, Godil., Baig & Sajid, 2015) According to other researchers proposed that brand image is the variable which can enhance the level of performance of business as better brand image always results in positive behavior of customer towards the particular brand. (Malik et al., 2013) Moreover it has been also indicated by the research male customers have strong relationship with their preferred brands as compared to the female customers. (Khan et al., 2012)
- f) **Promotions:** Any method through which information is communicated to buyer in order to create profile of the brand or its values is known as promotion. (McCarthy & Pereault, 1984) It includes various methods used for promotion like advertisements, sales promotion techniques, word of mouth referrals etc. Each and every type of promotional technique is used to develop long term & stronger brand identity and also to make customer remind about their various offerings. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) While this is also indicated by the research work conducted in Kota city of India that 30% of the youth & their decision making is influenced by advertising. (Upadhyay & Joshi, 2014)
- g) **Celebrity Endorsement:** Currently it's a common thing to use celebrities as a spokes person in the marketing campaigns of various brands. As it is believe that

celebrities have special characteristics and can make significant affect on the decision making of consumers. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) Research conducted in 2003 proves that use of celebrities affect customer response and purchase intention more effective in comparison to the use of non celebrity endorsement. (Byrne et al., 2003) It has been also concluded by the research that use of celebrity endorsement adds glamour and excitement to the brand that's why it has high preference in the eyes of advertisers. (Smita, 2006)

Research conducted on youngsters in Malaysia indicated that there is definite impact of celebrity endorsement on the purchase intentions; in fact celebrities have higher level of influence as compared to the parents. (Lay-Yee, Kok-Siew & Yin-Fah, 2013) Use of celebrities is treated as one of the most preferred practice used by marketers, in order to improve the level of brand recognition. (Petty et al., 1983) moreover it is also useful in decreasing the untidiness from message and also for the increase credibility and effectiveness of their advertising campaign. (Bailey, 2007) It might also result in stimulation of positive attitudes of consumer (Kamins, 1989) and therefore it is feasible to state that it also helps in increase of sales and profitability. (Erdogan, 1999, Choi et al., 2005 & Pringle & Binet, 2005)

It has been also observed those consumers are found to be lesser suspicious due to the use of celebrity endorsement as compared to all the other types of commercial messages. But we must remember that for the purpose of proper use of this strategy we must carefully examine and apply this strategy, by selecting the appropriate celebrity for the marketing campaign. As celebrity endorsers have vital role in that process and they will make this process appreciate able through the use of their popularity, attraction, life style and personality. As inappropriate selection of celebrity will result in loss of millions of dollars only, therefore it is seems to be appropriate that we must determine those factors which are significantly important in this regards. (Yurdakul-Sahin & Atik, 2013)

Negative effect of celebrity endorsement also include the effect where use of celebrities overshadowed the brand for which celebrities are used & therefore so many companies are not using well known celebrities for endorsement of their brands. This phenomenon can be best explained by the disassociation of Pepsi Company with famous celebrities as are extending their contract with famous singers like Beyonce Knowles & Britney Spears, as they make viewers to pay more attention on the celebrities rather than the brand which is endorsed. (Ghani & KakaKhel, 2011)

According to research one of most important model in explaining the effect of celebrity endorsement is source credibility model & it explained that effectiveness of message is based upon perceived level of credibility and trustworthiness. (Hovland et al., 1953, Dholakia & Sterntha, 1977, Sternthal et al., 1978)

The model claims that message will affect customer's beliefs, attitudes and behaviors only if it is accepted and also linked with value and belief system of individuals. Therefore it is right to assume that acceptance of message is based upon perceived level of credibility and trustworthiness. (Yurdakul-Sahin & Atik, 2013) While on the other side source

attractiveness model stresses that consumers attitudes and behaviors are actually influenced by different form of attractiveness celebrity have. (Cohen & Golden, 1972, Friedman et al., 1976 & Baker & Churchill, 1977)

According to this model receiver wants to be like the endorser, and that why receiver accept the message more quickly from attractive celebrities. (Cohen and Golden, 1972 and Erdogan, 1999) Prior research work indicated that source familiarity, source likability and level of similarity between the receiver and the source are those variables which contributed significantly towards the attractiveness and hence also towards the appropriate level of persuasion of messages. (McGuire, 1985) Furthermore improper selection of celebrities which do not match with the product might fail to create the effect of attractiveness of celebrity on message persuasion. (Baker Churchill, 1977 & McCracken, 1989)

h) Recommendations from family and friends:

Recommendations from family and friends is also treated as the factors which now becomes significantly important in creating impact on brand choice and purchase decision. (Khan & Rohi, 2013) Research work carried out in early seventies proves that presence of family & friends create enormous impact on the brand choice, when they are with the consumer at the time of purchase. (Asch, 1951 & Venkatesen, 1973) Furthermore research conducted in late nineties also indicated that liking of friends is a factor which can affect the selection of brand. (Schiffman & Kanuk, 1997) Research work conducted in 2013 also pointed out the importance of social influence on the level of dependency of students and shows that they are highly dependent upon it in case of smart phones. (Suki & Suki, 2013) While research conducted in Kota city of India also supported the findings of Suki & Suki and indicated that 36 % of youth is influenced by their friends and made their purchase decision according to it (Upadhyay & Joshi, 2014)

i) Post Purchase Services: These types of services are also referred as After Sales Services. Therefore we must include all services which seller must render towards customers after the purchase of any particular offering. This is treated as a significant tool for the development of brand loyalty, as it helps in developing customer's satisfaction and thus results in repeat of purchase of particular offerings. The necessary part of the after sales services is package offered to customers in the form of warranty or guarantee of the purchase item. (Khan & Rohi, 2013)

While according to the research conducted in 1999 there are six activities which are treated as the integral part of after sales services namely **a) Normal Maintenance b) Installation c)**

Supply of Parts d) Training e) Emergency Repair & f) Providing Software services (Wilson et al., 1999) Research work conducted in early eighties also indicates towards the importance of after sales services and according to the study the perception of customers regarding the quality can also be optimized through the use of after sales services. (Levitt, 1983)

While providing the reference of Pakistan scenario we want to code the reference of research conducted in 2013 by taking reference of youth studied in universities of Peshawar and indicated that all the factors are critical for companies including after sales services if they want to create the desired impact on buying behavior of youth. (Khan & Rohi, 2013)

II. METHODOLOGY

Research was done by using Causal, investigation technique, through the help of deterministic research model. While the unit of analysis selected for research was Individual and we have used structured questionnaire with seventeen closed ended questions developed through category scale of data collection. The time horizon for the research was cross sectional and researcher's interference was moderate in nature. While research population of research includes entire youth of Karachi as according to the research conducted on Youth preference indicated that from the age of 18 years till the age of 24 years is the Y Generation and this generation is treated as Youth (Lay-Yee, Kok-Siew & Yin-Fah, 2013) Moreover research conducted in Peshawar Pakistan also referred university going students a the youth. (Khan & Rohi, 2013)

While the observed population of research was the students of well known higher education institutes operating in Karachi, while the sample of the research is of 650 respondents and the data is collected through Non Probability sampling and the method of sampling used was Convenience Sampling.

Statistical testing and Evaluation:

In order to check the result of our research hypotheses we have used SPSS initially we have checked the reliability of data in order to analyze the effect of each and variable on the preference of laptops and according to the calculation from software (SPSS) is found to be 70.5 % which is adequate enough to implement statistical tools and evaluation of results.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
dimension1	.705 ^a	.497	.486	.70506

Therefore we have used Multiple Regression on the collected data in order to check he resultant of each and every variable on consumer preference of laptops and results of these statistical testing is as under.

Coefficients

Model	Un standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.568	.236		2.409	.017
Price	.128	.050	.125	2.545	.011
Quality	.257	.045	.343	5.691	.000
User Friendliness	.056	.057	.056	.984	.326
Innovation	.063	.051	.061	1.251	.212
Brand Image	.181	.067	.146	2.711	.007
Promotion	.086	.061	.076	1.419	.157
Celebrity Endorsement	.593	.061	.593	9.759	.000
Recommendations	.056	.057	.056	.984	.326
After Sales	.059	.064	.055	.930	.349

III. EVALUATIONS

After implementing Multiple Regression Analysis we found that Price, Quality, Brand Image and Celebrity endorsement have positive and significant impact on the purchase of laptops by youth while the other remaining variables like User-Friendliness, Innovation, Promotion, Recommendations from Friends and Family members and After sales services do not have any impact on the purchase of youth as far as laptops are concerned.

IV. CONCLUSION

After the detailed statistical testing through SPSS it has been concluded the marketers must focus on Price, Quality Brand Image and Celebrity endorsement in order to attract prospects from youth. But use of un necessary promotional campaigns which require heavy budgets, un necessary innovation which might create some doubts related with the use of devices and efforts towards making device user friendly are not worthwhile for laptops in the boundaries of Karachi. As youth of Karachi believe in the philosophy of simple living and high thinking that's why they focused on Price, Quality, Brand Image and Celebrity Endorsement in order to make themselves prominent and adorable but do not focusing on User Friendliness, Innovation, After sales services & also upon Recommendations from friends and family while purchasing new products specially laptops.

Area for Future Research: Further research work can be done on factors like preference of youth gender on the preference of the laptop and affect of aesthetics of laptops on its purchase preferences by youth, as according to us no extensive work has been done on these two, points and conducting research on this topic will shed deep light on the subject and will be beneficial for researchers and marketers in assessing the value of these mentioned points on the buying preferences of the youth.

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