



LEGAL & ETHICAL BRANDING STRATEGIES AND CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR: MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND IMAGE

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Abstract

The aim of study to examined the impact of legal packaging, legal promotional activities and ethical celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behaviour with mediating role of brand image in Hyderabad, Pakistan. Total 300 female consumers who buy the cosmetic products are considered as the sample of this study. The collected data analysed with help of most preferable software SmartPLS version 3. Findings of this study confirmed all three branding strategies legal packaging, legal promotional activities and ethical celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behaviour. In addition, the partial mediation effect of brand image is also is also verified. This study revealed several marketing strategics such as ethical celebrate endorsements, legal promotional activities, and legal packaging on consumer buying behaviour in the cosmetic industry of Sindh, Pakistan. Therefore, the marketer should understand the dynamics of market and come up with these strategies for better and improved profitability for all shareholders in the future.

Keyword: *Brand image, Consumer buying behavior, Ethical celebrate endorsements, Legal promotional activities, Legal packaging*

INTRODUCTION

The competitive market is asking for retaining the customers in order to generate revenue (Denga et al., 2022). This can be achieved through various marketing strategies including promotional activities and celebrity endorsements. Most of time the popular people ask you to buy certain products which create positive image in the mind of customers (Panda & Dasgupta, 2022). Research clearly indicated that the firm's sales increase due to celebrities. In addition, promotional activities also play a vital role which may influence the consumer buying behavior. One of recent study also revealed that the positive and significant impact of promotional activities on consumer buying behavior (Othman et al., 2022). The packaging also a key factor to be considered by the consumers before buying goods from brands. The findings of recent study also revealed positive and significant impact of packaging of product on consumer buying behavior (Shukla et al., 2023).

In addition to these factors, it has been practically observed in the market the brand image plays a mediating role in regard of consumer buying behavior (Hien et al., 2020). There are various aspects of brand image in the mind of customers including customer service, product quality and brand association so on and recent study revealed that the brand image positively bring better



outcomes for the firms as compare to negative image in the mind of customers (Tan et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2020).

Men's grooming is a growing segment of the cosmetic industry in Pakistan, with more men becoming interested in personal care and grooming products. Brands are introducing specialized products for men, including skincare and hair care products. E-commerce is a rapidly growing channel for the cosmetic industry in Pakistan, with many brands offering their products online. Consumers are increasingly turning to online platforms for convenience and accessibility. Social media platforms such as Instagram and Facebook are playing an increasingly important role in the cosmetic industry in Pakistan. Brands are using social media to promote their products and engage with consumers, while influencers and beauty bloggers are driving consumer trends and preferences.

Despite the existing literature on the impact of celebrate endorsements, promotional activities, and packaging on consumer buying behavior in the cosmetic industry, there is a research gap regarding the mediating role of brand image in Pakistan's context (Chatzopoulou & Navashya, 2022). While some studies have examined the influence of these factors on consumer buying behavior, very few studies have explored the underlying mechanism by which brand image mediates the relationship between these factors and consumer buying behavior. Furthermore, the existing studies have mostly focused on developed countries, and there is a lack of research on this topic in the context of Pakistan. The cultural and socio-economic context of Pakistan may have a significant impact on consumer behavior, and thus, the findings from studies conducted in developed countries may not necessarily apply to Pakistan's context.

Therefore, this study aims to fill the research gap by examining the impact of celebrate endorsements, promotional activities, and packaging on consumer buying behavior in the cosmetic industry in Pakistan, with a specific focus on the mediating role of brand image. By doing so, this study will contribute to the understanding of the factors that influence consumer behavior in the Pakistani cosmetic industry and help businesses to develop effective marketing strategies that can enhance their brand image and attract and retain customers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The balance theory elaborate that the people develop attitudes and these attitudes will turn into relationship (Harvey, 1989). A person has positive image or attitude he or she will tend to buy goods and services from reputed brand. Similarly, this is vice versa people have negative attitude or brand image. This theory also explained that the positive image or attitude is determined through the external stimuli which are known as the marketing strategies. These marketing strategies are ranging from celebrity endorsement to promotional activities so on (Leventhal & Scherer 1987). Therefore, the marketer should develop certain strategies for creating a positive image in the mind of customers. To do so, they will get maximum market share into competitive market.

HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

ETHICAL CELEBRITY ENDORSEMENT

Researchers found that celebrity endorsement had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior for luxury goods, but not for non-luxury goods (Sharma, 2015). The study also found that perceived celebrity credibility and consumer trust in the celebrity played an important role in shaping consumer behavior. A researcher found that celebrity endorsement had a significant impact on consumer buying behavior, but that this effect was moderated by the celebrity's congruity with the product being endorsed (Nabil et al., 2022). In other words, the celebrity had to be seen as a



good fit for the product for their endorsement to be effective. A researchers found that celebrity endorsement had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior for both high-involvement and low-involvement products (Osei-Frimpong et al., 2019). The study also found that the celebrity's expertise and trustworthiness were important factors in shaping consumer behavior. Adam and Hussain (2017), research concluded that celebrity endorsed advertisements as compared to other advertisements grab more attention of females. To judge the behavior of female consumers in cosmetic industry, the author of this study considered three hundred people as respondents. Based on results, it is suggested celebrity endorsement and consumer buying behavior has significant relationship. Sultan and Mannan (2015), The basic research objective to discover the connection of celebrity appearance through television advertisement and consumer buying behavior towards that product. As celebrity's presence in add increase more interest of customers towards that product. The quantitative methodology is used in which sample size is 338 respondents from which 210 are male and 128 are females and to and for analysis regression and correlation are used. After collected data from respondents and analysis by use of statistical tools suggested that there is a strong relation of consumer's interest in a particular product and celebrity endorsement particularly this research was conducted in the industry of Pakistan. The consumers buying behavior get increased or not by celebrity's presence Ahmed et al., (2015). To examine data, the researcher has used quantitative method and has selected a sample size of 200 respondents. The data has been collected through distributing questionnaire and the results were analyzed through SPSS. They have targeted the university students and to find out their perception regarding the celebrity endorsement with consumers buying behavior. Conclusion drawn proved that the presence of celebrities in advertisement increases the faith of people on that particular product. Consumers get influenced more frequently by such advertisements. Therefore, the following hypothesis is recommended.

H_{1a}: There is a significant & positive impact of ethical celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behavior.

LEGAL PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

A researchers found that social media marketing had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior, and that this effect was mediated by perceived value and brand loyalty (Moslehpour et al., 2021). The study also found that the use of emotional appeals in social media marketing was particularly effective in shaping consumer behavior. A study by researchers found that email marketing had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior, and that this effect was stronger for personalized emails compared to generic emails (Kurdi et al., 2022). The study also found that email marketing was more effective for certain types of products, such as technology products and clothing. A study by found that experiential marketing had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior, and that this effect was mediated by consumer engagement and brand attitude (Chang, 2020). The study also found that the use of virtual reality technology in experiential marketing was particularly effective in shaping consumer behavior. Asha et al., (2017), This research focuses to determine the relationship between advertisement and sales promotion with consumer buying behavior towards western Fast-food restaurants. The data has been collected form 227 respondents who have visited western fast-food restaurants. Data collected was analyzed through Z-test, descriptive statistics, cluster analysis and correlation concluded that advertisements watched on television, billboards etc. add more interest of consumers in buying a particular product. The results concluded that advertisement and promotional tools increase the keen interest in buying a product of consumers. Therefore, the following hypothesis is recommended.

H_{2a}: There is a significant & positive impact of legal promotional activities on consumer buying behavior.



ETHICAL PACKAGING

A researchers found that sustainable packaging had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior, and that this effect was mediated by perceptions of product quality, environmental concern, and brand trustworthiness (Yeh et al., 2019). The study also found that the use of recycled materials in packaging was particularly effective in shaping consumer behavior. A study by researchers found that packaging design had a significant impact on consumer buying behavior, and that this effect was mediated by brand attitude and purchase intention. The study also found that packaging design was more effective for certain types of products, such as food and personal care products (Ketelsen et al., 2020). A by researchers found that the shape of packaging had a significant impact on consumer buying behavior, and that this effect was mediated by product personality and brand personality. The study also found that the use of innovative and unique packaging shapes was particularly effective in shaping consumer behavior. Oayaa, et al., (2017), The role of packaging is very important in changing consumer's lifestyle. Numbers of firms in the industry have set out some remarkable strategies to attract more market share and maximize the profit. While trying to attract more clients to buy their products, organizations have adopted various developments (packaging) schemes in order to compete with the other brands in the market. Pallav (2016), This research paper studies the impact of packaging and consumers purchasing behavior towards that product. For this reason, the research had been led with the assistance of both primary and secondary databases. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested.

H_{3b}: There is a significant & positive impact of ethical packing on consumer buying behavior.

MEDIATING ROLE BRAND IMAGE

A recent study by researchers found that brand image mediated the relationship between social media marketing and consumer buying behavior. The study found that social media marketing had a positive impact on brand image, which in turn had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior (Khan et al., 2019). Another study found that brand image partially mediated the relationship between sustainable packaging and consumer buying behavior. The study found that sustainable packaging had a direct positive impact on consumer buying behavior, but that this effect was partially mediated by the perception of the brand as environmentally responsible (Waqas et al., 2020). A study by researchers in found that brand image mediated the relationship between product quality and consumer buying behavior. The study found that product quality had a positive impact on brand image, which in turn had a positive impact on consumer buying behavior (Ramesh et al., 2019). Tekin et al., (2016), Branding is one of the powerful Criteria to attract more customers to buy particular product in the luxury market. Brand image plays a vital role in enhancing the interest of customers and to grab the attention of consumers. Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested.

H_{1b}: The brand image mediates the relationship between legal celebrity endorsement and consumer buying behavior.

H_{2b}: The brand image mediates the relationship between ethical promotional activities and consumer buying behavior

H_{3b}: The brand image mediates the relationship between legal packing and consumer buying behavior.

METHODOLOGY OF RESEARCH

The research design for this study is a quantitative research design. The study aims to explore the impact of celebrate endorsements, promotional activities, and packaging on consumer buying behavior in the cosmetic industry, with a focus on the mediating role of brand image. The study will use a convenience sampling method to select 300 female consumers of cosmetic products

in Hyderabad, Pakistan. Convenience sampling is a non-probability sampling technique where participants are selected based on their availability and accessibility. The researchers will approach female consumers of cosmetic products in various shopping malls and beauty stores in Hyderabad. The data will be collected using a structured questionnaire.

The ethical consideration taken into to the account, the respondents were informed about purpose of research is as an academic research (Kreuter et al., 2020). The participants will be assured of confidentiality, and their responses will be kept anonymous. SmartPLS is a powerful software tool used for structural equation modeling (SEM) (Rajput et al., 2022). It is used to analyze the relationships between latent constructs and their observed indicators. In this study, SmartPLS will be used to test the hypotheses and examine the mediating role of brand image in the relationship between celebrate endorsements, promotional activities, packaging, and consumer buying behavior in the cosmetic industry in Pakistan.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Table 1: Validity and Reliability Analysis

Name of variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extraction
Consumer Buying Behavior	0.724	0.814	0.593
Brand Image	0.932	0.952	0.832
Ethical Celebrate Endorsement	0.854	0.900	0.693
Legal Promotional Activities	0.878	0.916	0.732
Legal Packaging	0.756	0.860	0.672

Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability are both measures of the internal consistency reliability of a scale or a set of items in a questionnaire. They are commonly used to assess the extent to which the items in a scale measure a single underlying construct. The generally accepted rule of thumb is that both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability should be greater than 0.70 for a scale or a set of items to be considered reliable. For present study all variable has more than 0.70 both values Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. The generally accepted rule of thumb is that the AVE should be greater than 0.50 to demonstrate adequate convergent validity. This means that at least 50% of the variance in the indicators of a construct should be explained by the construct itself, rather than by other sources of variance such as measurement error or other constructs. In this study all values of average variance extraction are also greater than 0.50. See the Table 1.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

ETHICAL CELEBRATE ENDORSEMENT

Based on the information provided, it appears that the study found evidence to support the alternative hypothesis (H1a) that there is a positive and significant impact of ethical celebrate endorsement on consumer buying behavior. The null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that there is likely a relationship between ethical celebrate endorsement and consumer buying behavior. The

significant beta value of 0.476 and T-value of 9.440 suggest that the ethical celebrity endorsement and buying behavior. Therefore, the H1a is supported. In addition, the partial mediation effect means that the direct effect of ethical celebrity endorsement on consumer buying behavior is reduced in the presence of the mediator (brand image), from 0.476 to 0.295 but it is still statistically significant. Therefore, brand image only explains part of the relationship between ethical celebrity endorsement and consumer buying behavior. Overall, understanding the mediating effect of brand image between ethical celebrity endorsement and consumer buying behavior can help marketers develop more effective strategies to leverage ethical celebrity endorsement and create a favorable brand image that resonates with their target audience. Thus, the H1b is also supported. See the Table 2.

Table 2 Ethical Celebrity endorsement (Mediation Effect)

Effect	Value of Beta	T-Value	Remarks
Direct Effect	0.476	9.440	Accepted
Mediating Effect	0.295	8.767	Accepted

LEGAL PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES

Based on the information provided, it appears that the study found evidence to support the alternative hypothesis (H2a) that there is a positive and significant impact of legal promotional activities on consumer buying behavior. The null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that there is likely a relationship between legal promotional activities and consumer buying behavior. The significant beta value of 0.219 and T-value of 3.671 suggest that the legal promotional activities and consumer buying behavior. Therefore, the H2a is supported. In addition, the partial mediation effect means that the direct effect of legal promotional activities on consumer buying behavior is reduced in the presence of the mediator (brand image), from 0.219 to 0.136 but it is still statistically significant. Therefore, brand image only explains part of the relationship between legal promotional activities and consumer buying behavior. Overall, understanding the mediating effect of brand image between legal promotional activities and consumer buying behavior can help marketers develop more effective strategies to leverage legal promotional activities and create a favorable brand image that resonates with their target audience. Thus, the H2b is also supported. See the Table 3.

Table 3 legal Promotional activities (Mediation Effect)

Effect	Value of Beta	T-Value	Remarks
Direct Effect	0.219	3.671	Accepted
Mediating Effect	0.136	3.481	Accepted

LEGAL PACKAGING

Based on the information provided, it appears that the study found evidence to support the alternative hypothesis (H3a) that there is a positive and significant impact of legal packaging on consumer buying behavior. The null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that there is likely a relationship between legal packaging and consumer buying behavior. The significant beta value of 0.115 and T-value of 2.978 suggest that the legal packaging and consumer buying behavior. Therefore, the H3a is supported. In addition, the partial mediation effect means that the direct effect of legal packaging on consumer buying behavior is reduced in the presence of the mediator

(brand image), but it is still statistically significant. Therefore, brand image only explains part of the relationship between legal packaging and consumer buying behavior. Overall, understanding the mediating effect of brand image between legal packaging and consumer buying behavior can help marketers develop more effective strategies to leverage legal packaging and create a favorable brand image that resonates with their target audience. Thus, the H3b is also supported. See the Table 4.

Table 4 Legal Packaging (Mediation Effect)

Effect	Value of Beta	T-Value	Remarks
Direct Effect	0.115	2.978	Accepted
Mediating Effect	0.071	2.981	Accepted

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCH


The results of this study will provide insights into the impact of ethical celebrate endorsements, legal promotional activities, and legal packaging on consumer buying behavior in the cosmetic industry, with a specific focus on the mediating role of brand image. This study revealed several marketing strategies such as ethical celebrate endorsements, legal promotional activities, and legal packaging on consumer buying behavior in the cosmetic industry of Sindh, Pakistan. Therefore, the marketer should understand the dynamics of market and come up with these strategies for better and improved profitability for all shareholders in the future.

FUTURE RESEARCH

With, contribution there a few limitations as well, which can be addressed by the future researchers. First, only female consumer of Hyderabad, Sindh Pakistan taken as a sample. In future both gender to be considered in order to verify the existing findings. Second, in the present study convince sample method used by authors for the data collection. In future probability sampling techniques to be considered. Lastly, mixed method to be applied in the future researches.

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