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Media promoting brand culture: Audience preference and perception (A case study of Asian society)

This study aims to examine audience choices related to brand preference, the role of media in promoting brand culture, and the impact of brand culture on society using the theories of Uses and gratification and Reception analysis. To conduct the survey, a questionnaire with closed-ended and open-ended items was created and distributed via email, Facebook, and WhatsApp to respondents in India and Pakistan who were chosen using convenient and snowball sampling. According to the study, most of the respondents believed that brands use media to promote their products, with social media being the most popular platform in this regard due to its speed and low cost. The findings of the study state, respondents perceive brands as a symbol of social status, and they prefer foreign brands over local brands. Since branding promotes both local and foreign cultures, the foreign part has earned more space in society, and international brands also promote foreign culture, which leads to the distortion of local culture.

Keywords: advertising, brands, India, local culture, Pakistan
JEL Codes: D1, D8, E20, G4, M31, M37, Y90, Z10

A márkakultúrát népszerűsítő média: A közönség preferenciája és érzékelése (Esettanulmány az ázsiai társadalomról)

A tanulmány célja, a közönség márkapreferenciával kapcsolatos választásait, a média szerepét a márkakultúra népszerűsítésében, valamint a márkakultúra társadalomra gyakorolt hatását vizsgálja a használat-kielégülés, valamint a recepcióelemzés elméleteinek felhasználásával. A felmérés elvégzéséhez egy zárt és nyílt végű elemeket tartalmazó kérdőív készült, amelyet e-mailben, Facebookon és WhatsAppon keresztül terjesztettek az indiai és pakisztáni válaszadóknak, akiket az önkényes és a hólabda mintavételi módszerekkel választottak ki. A tanulmány alapján a válaszadók többsége úgy vélte, hogy a márkák a médiát használják termékeik népszerűsítésére, és közösségi médiát találták a legnépszerűbb platformnak ebben a tekintetben a gyorsasága és alacsony költsége miatt. A tanulmány továbbá megállapította, hogy a válaszadók a márkákat a társadalmi státusz szimbólumának tekintik, és a külföldi márkákat előnyben részesítik a helyi márkákkal szemben. Mivel a márkázás a helyi és a külföldi kultúrát egyaránt népszerűsíti, a külföldi rész nagyobb teret nyert a társadalomban, és a nemzetközi márkák is a külföldi kultúrát népszerűsítik, ami a helyi kultúra torzulásához vezet.

Kulcsszavak: hirdető, márkák, India, helyi kultúra, Pakisztán
JEL-kódok: D1, D8, E20, G4, M31, M37, Y90, Z10

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Introduction

Globalization is the dominant and most preferred ideology of brands and corporations worldwide. This concept has evolved into a central tenet of business policy and research, as well as scholarly discourse (Giddens, 1990). Globalization includes economic cooperation among countries, the gradual transformation of policies across borders, and the transfer of expertise to ensure cultural sustainability (Larsson, 2001). The intertwining of cultural and economic practices is a relatively new phenomenon. Globalization is credited with the emergence of a free society (Ohmae, 1990). Globalization has been increasing in the sense of global integration in cultural and economic life for decades which has also witnessed the evolution and transformation of the 'brand' concept.

The way brands interact with customers has evolved dramatically over time. Brands are now a prominent feature of modern life (Arvidsson, 2006). While brands have a long history as commercial institutions dating back to the 18th century, they have now evolved into an unavoidable tool for creating identity, social connections, and common interests. They have been transformed into the social fabric as a ubiquitous medium for the creation of a shared social world. These basic patterns can be expected to continue in the coming years. There will be more media outlets and brands competing for publicity. Clutter will increase, and customers will continue to filter out more brands than they take in. As a result, brands are reasonably expected to become more relevant, rather than less. Customers' preferences may become more important if they are given more options. Digital media has emerged not only as a brand marketing system, but also as a medium for developing brand value, personality, and, most importantly, brand loyalty (Singh, 2013). Almost every consumer brand has a social media presence, and marketers are eager to incorporate social media into their digital marketing campaigns. Paid display ads (paid media), brands participating in social networks as a brand persona, publishing branded content (owned media), and branded interaction opportunities for customer participation (earned media) are all examples of brand visibility on digital media (Ashley et al., 2015). Furthermore, consumers continue to seek out interactive content, and the digital age has altered the way customers think and behave, as well as the brand's approach to them. Furthermore, culture is the most important feature of branding in the current era because brands can become a part of the culture by more explicitly interacting with culture, thereby deepening their importance and interaction with the masses. Also, culture influences brand personality perceptions. Consumers in various cultural environments, associate with different culturally specific brand personality characteristics (Aguirre-Rodriguez, 2014). Consumers use brands to create their own identity (Hamouda-Gharbi, 2013; Healy-McDonagh, 2013; Schembri, 2009; Schroeder, 2009; Ahuvia, 2005; Schau-Gilly, 2003) and they also use brands to express symbolic value (Firat-Dholakia, 2006; Kozinets et al., 2004).

The primary focus of this study is the audience's preference for local or western brands, the role of media in promoting brand culture and the brand effect. Consumers in emerging markets have been given a preference between local and foreign brands. For example, if emerging markets, such as India, are under observation, one can see that consumers there are provided with completely local products and also branded ones. Thus, it is critical to understand the preferences of the Asian market, such as which brands they prefer to use, which media plays a better role in branding, the impact of brands on Asian society's local culture, and the role of the brand effect. Since brands are now an essential aspect for turning daily life into commercial benefits, this study is important for assessing consumers' perceptions of the brand culture created through media, its role, and acceptance. However, the increased importance of brands in social life is only one part of the equation. The other factor, which is frequently overlooked by academic research, mainstream debate on branding, and cultural studies, is its impact on local culture. In tandem with the growth of the brand as a social entity, as something that moderates

social life, there should be a strong understanding of the influence of brands on social life. It is also important to understand the audience's consumption level of local and foreign brands.

Research Question

RQ1: What is the perception and preference of the audience about brands in their daily life?

RQ2: Is there any role of media in promoting brand culture?

RQ3: What is the role of brand effect on our daily life?

Literature

Branding influence emerges from deep, subliminal brain parts that were created centuries ago. In today's world, branding refers to how well these traditional and advanced cognitive systems function. Singh (2013) believes that brands and advertisers each have their own set of goals and target demographics to which they must respond and that this is entirely dependent on the design of each communication method. Advertisers, it is said, no longer have any experimental inhibitions. This is where advertisers and digital media owners collaborate to create a compelling user experience and ultimately win a larger slice of the attention pie for themselves. Companies are increasingly using digital media for marketing these days, recognizing that there is a vast marketing area out there and that it can help attract visitors as well as provide greater exposure for search engines. Text content is now an important part of digital branding. Similarly, Facebook and Google's rapid rise is due to their ability to market hyper-targeted ads. The simple process is to reach the audience of your choice using all the available advertisement and marketing technologies (Huddy, 2019).

Although digital communication has become the most convenient and sought-after mode of communication, the importance of traditional media cannot be underestimated. Furthermore, one of the most pressing issues for marketing executives has been the impact of culture on brand positioning on a global scale. Instead of local brand image strategies, commercial corporations employ generic brand image strategies with little clear evidence; specifically, they disregard cultural values in local markets while introducing a set of foreign promotional activities. Brand images in global markets should reflect the differences in cultural values that serve different market needs (Cheginia–Molanb–Kashanifarc, 2016).

Furthermore, all societies have structures related to appearance, ways to discuss position and reputation, and status symbols. Scholars believe that non-utilitarian characteristics such as symbolic acquisition and interaction of social distinctions, particularly status, are largely satisfied by the products and brands chosen by consumers (Douglas–Isherwood, 1979). In developing countries, where social interactions are of primary concern, presenting status becomes even more important (Ger–Belk–Lascu, 1993), and where income inequalities and status uncertainty are high due to financial change (Ger–Belk–Lascu, 1993; Kottak, 1990). Indeed, the proclivity to demand differentiated status through the brands one employs is heightened during times of reform and social mobility (Luckmann–Berger, 1964). Development economists, such as James (1993), proposed that periods of economic expansion increase the value of positional standards, which are directed toward noticeable usage and status show. Thus, in an increasingly competitive world, a brand has become an organization's most significant, competitive, and vital asset, generating significant global attention. A brand is one of the most important factors for advertisers to consider when attempting to overcome customer price resistance in a competitive market (Helmig–Huber–Leeflang, 2007). Consumers are willing to pay twice as much for a brand because it has an outstanding brand image that no competitor can match (Jacoby–Chestnut, 1978). As a result, brand managers are attempting to alleviate this concern by developing better products (Keller, 1993).

In addition, customer loyalty between businesses and consumers is a common tactic used to strengthen a brand. Brand confidence is an excellent prism through which to observe and analyze customer behavioral reactions (Kabadayi–Alan, 2012). Similarly, the brand effect on customers is an important factor in the business–customer relationship. The partnership is formed based on the brand’s influence (Berry–Parasuraman, 1991), and the brand effect generates brand equity, which is primarily seen as the purpose of customer repurchasing (Morgan–Hunt, 1994). Brand recognition influences consumer decision-making, market success, marketing mix, and brand equity. According to Keller (2008), brand recognition refers to whether customers can remember or identify a brand, or even whether they are aware of it. When it comes to cell phones, people are more likely to buy an iPhone or a Samsung than a lesser-known brand. When faced with a large product brand, it is natural that the higher the brand recognition, the easier it is to attract customers. Extensive research has been conducted on the two critical aspects of brand perception, brand recognition, and recall. Most researchers agree that brand awareness and recall are critical when customers make purchasing decisions (Thoma–Williams, 2013; Emma–Sharp, 2000) or evaluate product quality or user experience (Stach, 2019; Huang–Sarigoellue, 2012). Brand awareness and recall influence consumer perceptions and emotions (Wilson et al., 2015; Xu et al., 2015; Rossiter, 2014), as well as firm results Homburg et al., 2010; Grundey–Bakowska, 2008).

Theory

When it is about media consumption, audiences have a variety of options, whether it is broadcast media, the press, or the internet. As a result, the uses and gratification (U&G) theory emphasizes the fact that people can choose their media usage and ultimately satisfy their desires or needs. Elihu Katz was the first to propose the theory. Later, Jay Blumler and Michael Gurevitch (Katz–Blumler–Gurevitch, 1974) began to extend this U&G idea. At the time, this idea was regarded as futuristic because it challenged earlier perspectives or frameworks that considered mass media users to be passive. The U&G theory regards media users as active, implying that they actively seek out specific media and information to obtain such outcomes or satisfaction that meet their specific interests (Rossi, 2002). U&G represents people’s desire to consume using mass media. And that the amount of benefit (fulfillment) desired by an audience from a specific media or content will be weighed against the contribution they would make to achieve that benefit (West–Turner, 2007). According to the discussed statement that media users are active audiences who can play a role in understanding and incorporating media into their individual lives, U&G theory assumes that people can choose the best media to fulfill their desires.

The uses and gratification theory (U&G) is a useful and informative media usage theory that has been extended to situations ranging from radio to television and then to digital media (Roy, 2008). With its emphasis on active media usage and the potential to include both personal and social communication, U&G is regarded as an excellent framework for analyzing online usage (Morris–Ogan, 1996). Although the Internet’s value as an efficient communication platform is compelling, the Internet is much more than a collection of internet sites designed to advertise products and services (Grover–Pradipkumar, 1999; Palmer–Griffith, 1998). The Internet is rich in content (for example, advanced technology such as streaming video, interactive content, and so on can be implemented on websites), and as a result, it is an effective force in attracting and retaining web users’ attention (Rosenkrans, 2009). Touching the heart of these users may become even more important for marketers, advertisers, and webmasters for online advertising as customers are now flooded with an abundance of products (Lim–Ting, 2012). Thus, given the fundamental need an upward struggle of digital marketing to endorse various brands and products online, the analysis of why people want to buy the brand or other products

they see online has a high value in media usage literature (Wells–Chen, 1999; Korgaonkar–Wolin, 1999; Eighmey–McCord, 1998; Mukherji–Mukherji–Nicovich, 1998). In this study, the U&G theory is used to understand the gratification obtained by the audience with the use of a brand that they typically encounter through media consumption, particularly on the digital platform.

Reception theory is a subset of reader response literary theory that focuses on every other reader's acceptance or point of view in making sense of a literary work (Culler, 1997). In the study of communication models, the reception method is primarily attributed to audience reception. Stuart Hall, a cultural theorist, was a key proponent of reception theory, which he first articulated in his 1973 book (Hall, 1973). His model, dubbed the encoding/decoding model of communication, is a type of textual analysis that focuses on the recipient's context of "negotiation" and "opposition". This implies that a "text" – whether literature, film, or another art form – is not necessarily unconsciously embraced by the recipient, but that the audience evaluates the text's interpretations based on his/her cultural context and personal preferences. In simple terms, the essence of a text is not intrinsic inside the text itself but is generated both within correlation between the text and the recipient. Hall further devised a model of encoding and decoding, Hall's theory, which emphasizes the communication mechanisms at work in texts that are in the form of modern television. This theory is used in the study to understand the audience's perception of branding, which they typically find through various content or text in the mass media.

Methodology

This descriptive study is conducted to investigate audience choices in terms of brand usage concerning the role of media in promoting branding culture. This study is divided into three sections: first, how the public prefers brands and how they evaluate brands in general. Second, the study looks at the role of media in promoting brand culture, and finally, it evaluates the ethical implications of branding. To assess the perceptions and choices of brand users and non-users, a questionnaire was created with one open-ended and a few close-ended questions. Because the responses to open-ended questions were analyzed and combined into one theme, each survey form was coded with R1, R2, and R1000. More than 6000 forms were distributed physically and online via social media platforms such as WhatsApp, Gmail, and Facebook to collect data, and 5000 feedbacks were received in return (see *figure 1*). Data was collected from both male and female participants between the ages of 18 to 40. The author gave preference to the university students as participants, especially those who are continuing their study or who already graduated. Most of the respondents fall under the age between 19-28, some were 18, 30 and 35, whereas a few were over 35. Because the author used snowball sampling, it was much easier to have respondents of the same age group by having friends of friends as respondents. Lastly, two countries were chosen for the survey: Pakistan and India because few studies on Indian consumers have debated the use of foreign brands over local brands. As a result, it is necessary to assess the significance of brand usage in both neighboring countries. For the researcher it was somehow effortless to collect the data from Pakistan being from the same country while close contacts were needed to collect the data from the neighboring country.

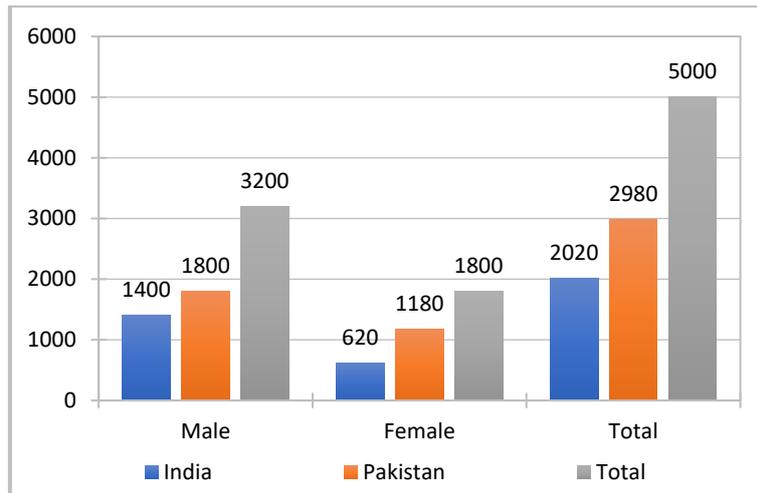


Figure 1: Respondents
Source: based on own research (2021)

Results

The following conclusions were drawn based on the survey:

Preference for Using Brands

Out of 5000 respondents, 62.3% percent showed a preference for using brands they agreed that they prefer to use brands, and 12.4% showed disagreement for brands usage, whereas 25.3% were neutral about using brands. If we see *figure 2*, Pakistani respondents have shown more preference than Indian respondents (out of 2020 Indians, 51.7% voted for brands usage, whereas in Pakistan out of 2980, 69.4% preferred brands), whereas their neutrality factor is also different (31.4% for India, 21.1% for Pakistan). If we just focus on the preference part, female participants in both countries have shown more desire for brands usage than male counterparts (33.9% male, 91.9% female-India & 62.2% male, 80.5% female-Pakistan). Overall ratio of females from India is higher than other respondents from both countries.

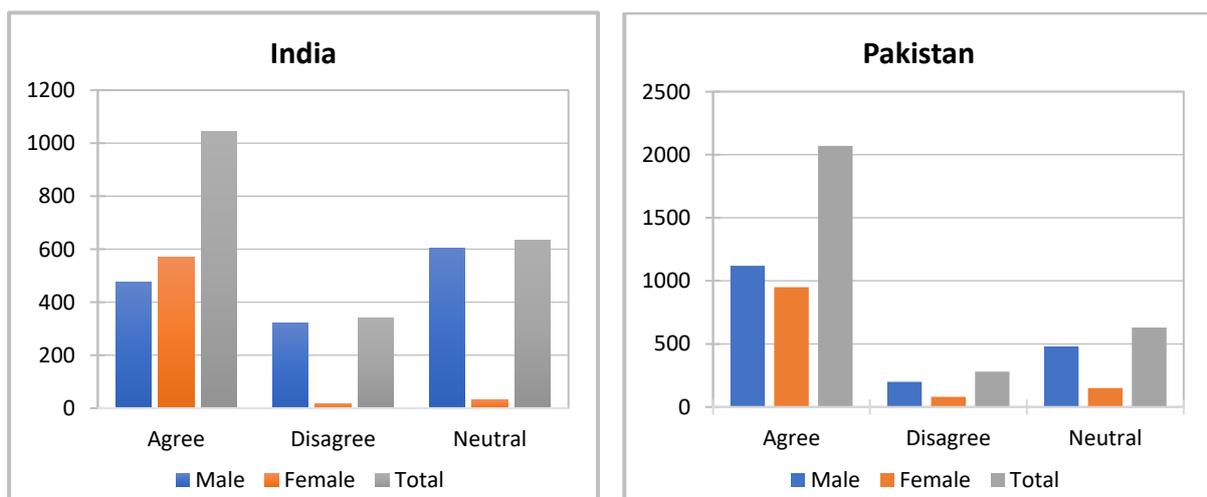


Figure 2: Brand Preference
Source: based on own research (2021)

Confidence on Brand Is Preferred More Than Market Value and Price of Brands

According to the findings, 66% of respondents agreed that brands are expensive simply because of their market value and name, however confidence in the brand is also an important factor. On the other hand 21% disagreed with the statement whereas 13% remained neutral.

The data in *figure 3* shows that Pakistani respondents have much more confidence on brands than Indian respondents as shown in the table (50.9% Indians, 76.1% Pakistanis) and this data supports the previous data based on brand preference. About disagreement and neutrality towards confidence on brand, Indian respondents (28.2% and 20.7%) were more in numbers than Pakistani respondents (16.1% and 7.71%). Overall, the ratio of Pakistani females (88.9%) is higher than other participants from both countries.

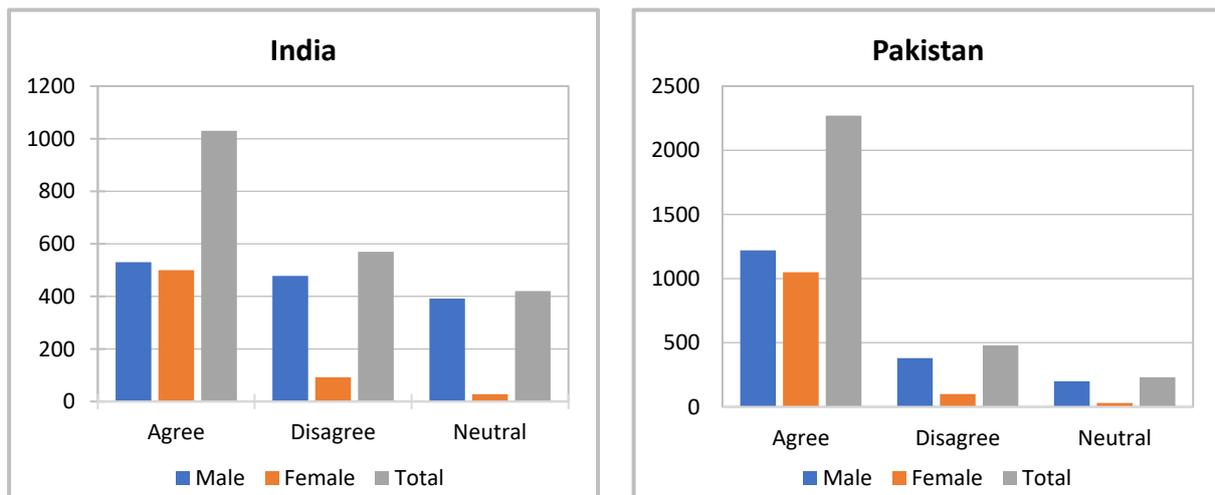


Figure 3: Brand Confidence
Source: based on own research (2021)

Foreign and Local Brands Are Promoted Equally

In a question to culture promotion through branding, 62% of respondents agreed that both foreign and local brands promote their culture on equal grounds, while 20.5% and 17.5% gave disagreement and neutral responses respectively. In *figure 4*, the average of Indian respondents is higher than that of Pakistani respondents (71.2% and 55.7%, respectively).

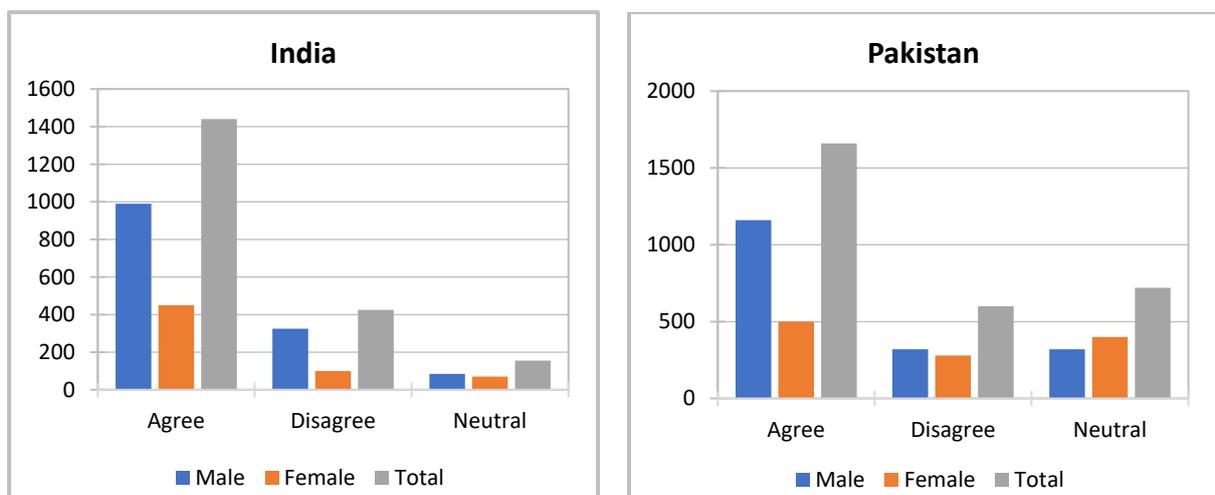


Figure 4: Brands Promotion
Source: based on own research (2021)

However, the ratio of both male and female Indian respondents is almost equal (72.5% and 70.7%, respectively). Besides, participants from Pakistan showed much more neutrality than Indian counterparts (24.1% and 7.6%, respectively) while their disagreement scale is almost similar (21% India and 20.1% Pakistan).

Foreign Brands Are Prioritized Over Local

When asked which branded market they would prefer to follow, 60 percent preferred foreign brands over local brands, 21 percent disagreed with foreign brands, and 19 percent were neutral. If we see *figure 5*, Indian respondents showed more preference for foreign brands over local (69.3%) in which male and female both had equal liking (69.2% and 69.3%, respectively) whereas more participants from Pakistan expressed neutral response (25.3%). However, the average disagreement by both countries was similar 21%.

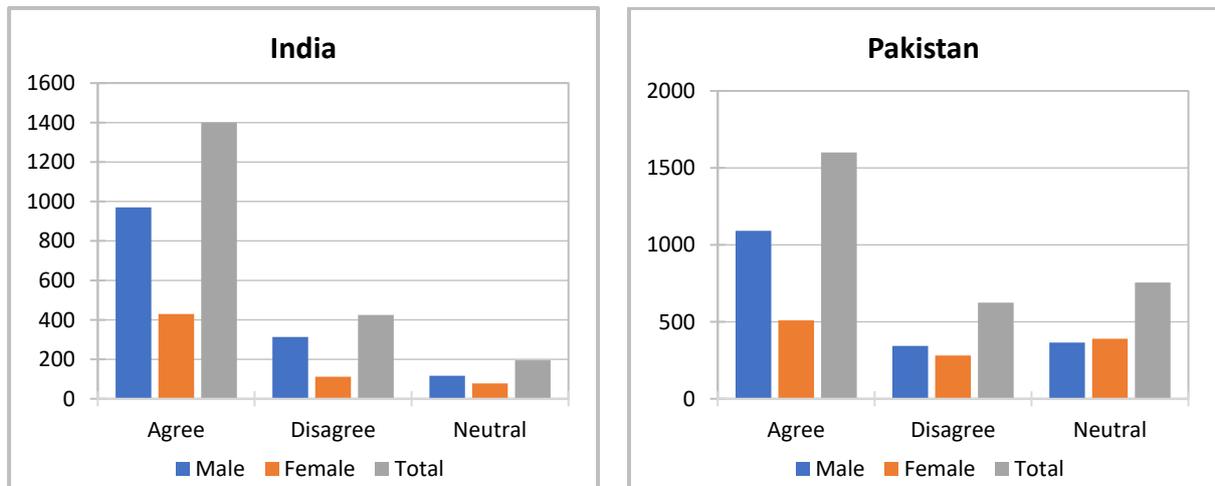


Figure 5: Priority for foreign brands
Source: based on own research (2021)

Brands Provide Social Status

Overall, 79% of respondents believe that brands are used for social status while 8% and 13% disagreed and gave neutral responses respectively.

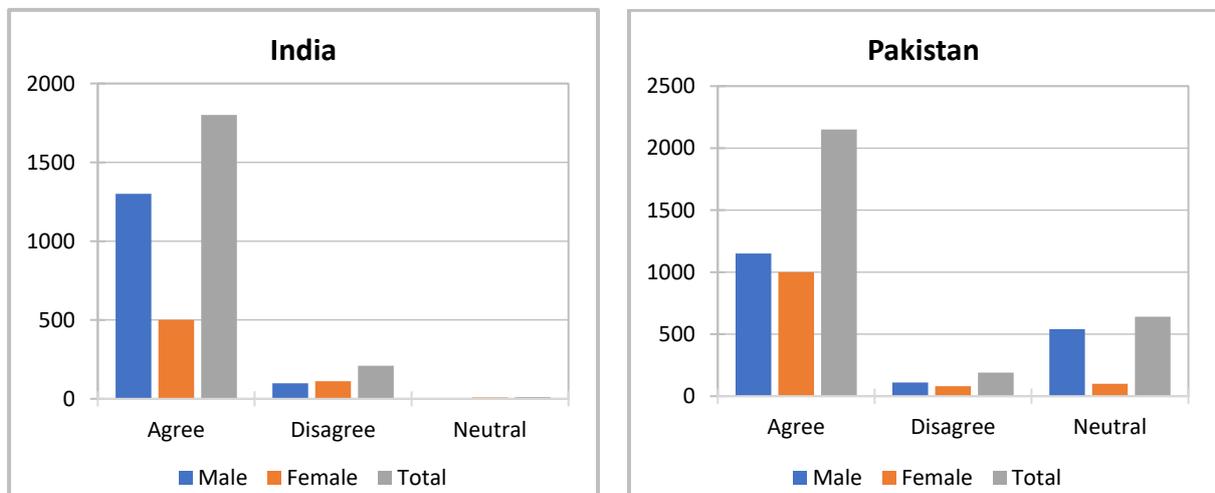


Figure 6: Brands as social system
Source: based on own research (2021)

According to *figure 6*, Indian respondents (89.15 %) were more in number than Pakistani respondents (72.1%) believing in brands as a symbol of social status, whereas 92.8% male respondents from India and 84.7% female respondents from Pakistan led the ratio. Pakistani participants (21.47%) also expressed neutral response about this factor.

Media Promotes Branding Culture

Overall, 92.9% of respondents agreed that media has been promoting brands and branding culture while 3.5% of respondents disagree other 3.6% are neutral. As mentioned in *figure 7*, Both Indian and Pakistani respondents expressed their equal opinion about the role of media promoting brand culture with 94% and 92.1%, respectively, whereas neutral response by respondents from both countries was also somehow similar. Overall, Pakistani male participants (96.94%) and Indian female respondents (96.77%) were more in opinion about media promoting brand culture.

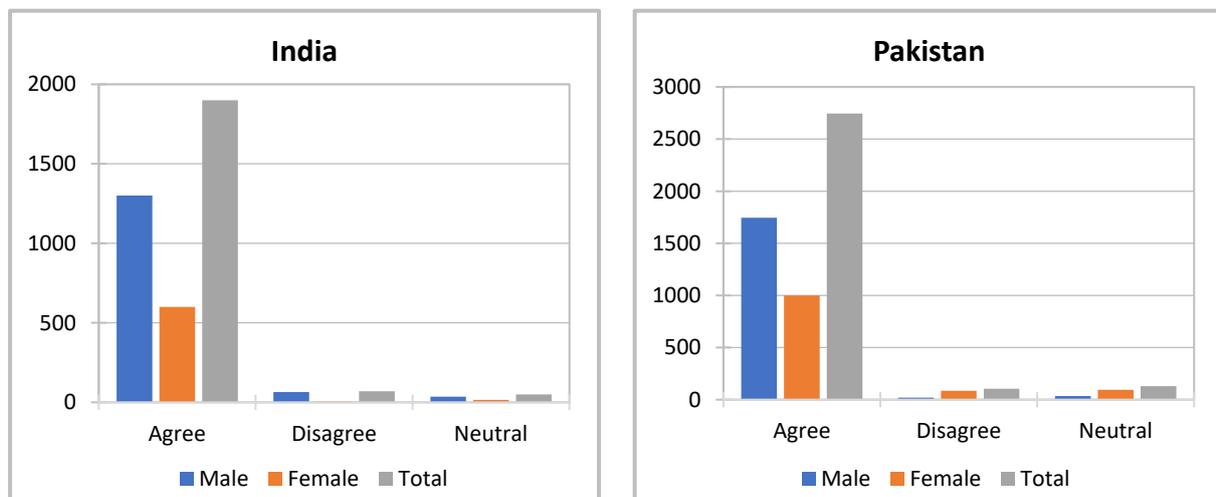


Figure 7: Brand culture through media
Source: based on own research (2021)

Digital Media Is the Most Preferred Platform for Branding

In a question to promoting brand culture through media, 83.5% of respondents agreed that digital media is the most preferred podium for promoting brands, 5% disagreed with this statement and 11.5% were neutral responses.

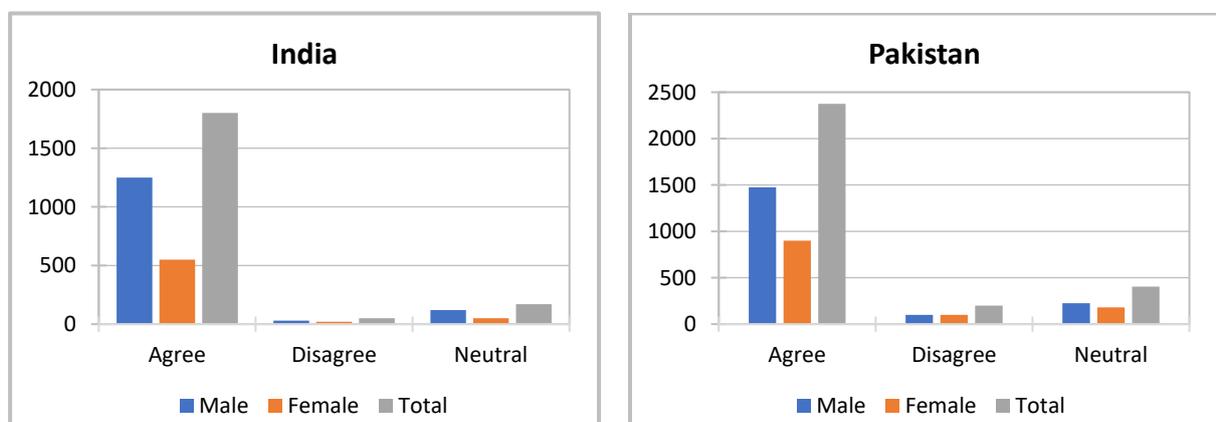


Figure 8: Digital media preference
Source: based on own research (2021)

The *figure 8* shows that 89.1% Indian respondents believe in digital media promoting brands while the ratio of Pakistani respondents was slightly lower than their neighboring counterpart with 79.6%. However, Indian male respondents (89.28) were higher in number than other respondents from both countries. Overall, neutral and negative responses by Pakistani and Indian respondents were 13.5%, 6.71% and 8.41%, 2.47%, respectively.

Morning Shows and Entertainment Programs Promote Branding in Electronic Media

About the role of electronic media as mentioned in *figure 9*, 72.5% of participants showed agreement that morning shows and entertainment programs are the main platform for branding. However, the disagreement and the neutral response are given as 13.7% and 13.8%, respectively. Besides, Pakistani respondents (83.89%) were much more in number than Indian respondents (55.69%) to express their positive opinion about this theme, whereas Indian female respondents (91%) were more in number among all participants.

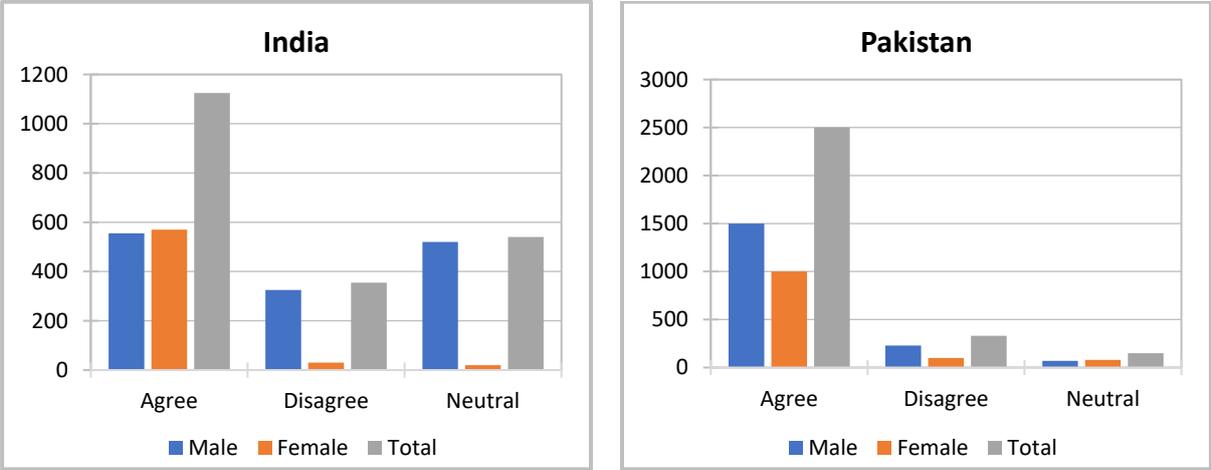


Figure 9: Electronic media promoting brand
Source: based on own research (2021)

Brands Advertisement Is Vulnerable to Advertisement Culture

Overall, 70.3% of replies were generated in favor of the statement that brands expose vulgarity and sexuality in society such as females are endorsed in male brands for objectification.

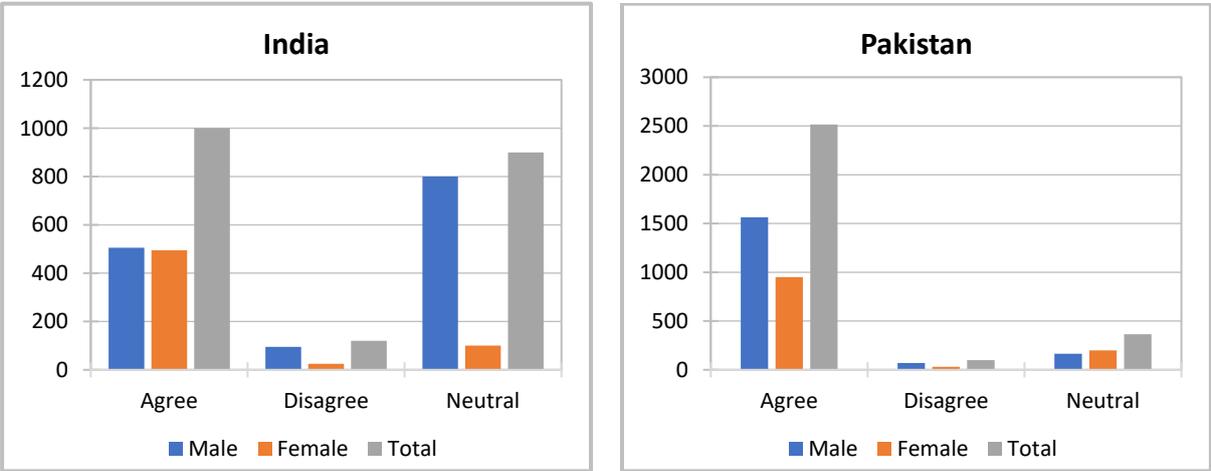


Figure 10: Vulnerability to advertisement culture
Source: based on own research (2021)

However, 4.4% and 25.3% replied with disagreement and neutral responses, respectively. If we see *figure 10*, over all 84.39% Pakistani respondents believed in advertisement vulnerability which is much higher score than their Indian counterparts. Indian respondents have mixed views about the brand exposure with 49.5% and 44.5% positive and neutral responses, respectively. Among all participants, Male respondents from Pakistan showed agreement to this factor of the study with 86.94%.

Branding of Foreign Culture Distorts the Local Culture

Among all respondents, 82.2% agreed that promoting foreign style brands lead to the distortion of local culture; whereas 9.6% and 8.6% showed disagreement and neutral responses, respectively. In particular as cited in *figure 11*, 81.68% Indian respondents believed in culture distortion alongwith their Pakistani counterparts with 82.55%. Among all participants, Pakistani female respondents were much higher in score with 86.44%.

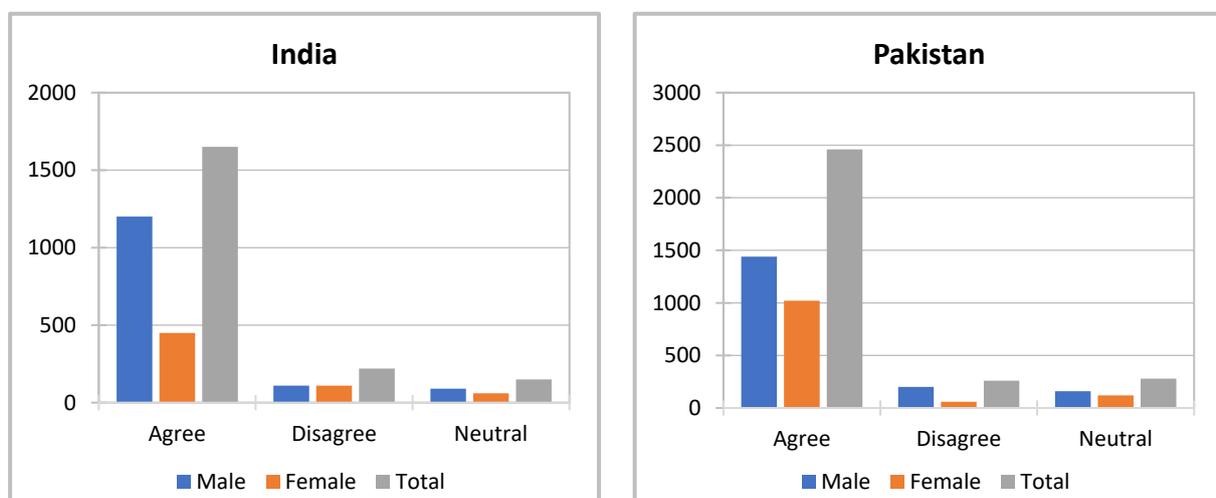


Figure 11: Distortion of local culture

Source: based on own research (2021)

Brand's Effect on Our Daily Life

In response to the brand effect, participants expressed a variety of viewpoints. In theory, commercials are intended to sell a product and raise awareness. Branding is what distinguishes a company's product from the competition. "However, things are not as simple as they appear. Ads are used to deceive viewers, so do not take advertisements at face value," R1 stated. It was also pointed out that many good products do not have advertisements. "My advice would be to make it clear what you are going to buy, what your desire is, decide what you can afford to pay, and recognize the brand. Just do not get too excited about a brand because there are a lot of brand ads", R15 added. Respondents thought branded products were good because they had a positive or safer experience with brands in general. They frequently do not strive to buy the best brand and appear to be content. If they find a brand that is compatible with their preferences, they will eliminate their search costs by committing to the brand. According to R320, "customers should stick with the brand they consider acceptable for them and should not be overly distracted by other brands' appealing advertisements." Because brands typically retain their level of quality, one develops a preference for repeat shopping for the brand, and purchasing the brand becomes a habit over time, which is known as brand loyalty. "No good brand can be deceptive. If a brand deceives its customers, it will undoubtedly fail within a short period.

Branding reveals the marketer's devotion", R650 stated. Furthermore, it is not always conclusive that the brand is a high-quality product. Due to perceived efficiency, it may not be at the same standard for everyone. Since perception is formed because of several demographic factors.

Findings

Under the statement of the first research question about the perception and preference of the audience regarding brands, it was discovered that participants prefer branded products over local ones because brands provide them social status. This answer refers to one of the needs discussed in uses and gratification theory that is 'personal identity needs' which is related to personal stability, respect, confidence, and status which people prefer while opting for any brand. However, both local and foreign brands promote themselves equally, but respondents were more accepting towards foreign brands than local ones, which satisfies their „personal identity needs” because people use foreign brands to gain credibility and raise their social status. Along with their preference for brands, they considered brands for the trust they have in them more than their market value and price. This demonstrates that society has shifted towards brand acceptance, even though local products can provide greater confidence; people are more concerned with the brands' name and social status. Hence, the role of media is likely to be significant in promoting a brand culture. The answer to the first research question relates to the assumption of the U&G theory that individuals' choices are influenced by the media, as there is a level of satisfaction that they expect based on the promotions of a brand appearing in a particular medium. In the light of U&G theory, Kasirye (2021) also mentioned in his study that people buy expensive products which they see in the advertisements only to satisfy their status symbol in the society.

Answering the second research question, the study found that media is promoting brand culture, and digital media plays a vital role in this regard. The second most popular medium is the electronic media which endorses brand culture through morning shows and entertainment programs. These findings relate to the 'cognitive needs' of people about getting information and knowledge through media and about exploring and understanding social surroundings. However, the impact of brand culture on Asian societies is likely to be negative. The study found that the advertisement of brands is vulnerable to Asian society because of the vulgar content displayed in these advertisements and the placement of foreign brands in the local market is a risk to local culture because it is proposed by the reception theory that audience actively participates in finding meaning to the advertisements while every social group interpret advertisements' messages differently.

In response to the third research question, it was discovered that advertising actively promotes a brand or brand culture. However, some better products or brands do not follow advertisements to stand out in a competitive market. And if someone discovers a better brand that meets their needs, they should stick with it. In today's global market of competition, it can be tiresome to keep looking for better qualities within a brand every other day. To maintain their market value, brands must deliver successful products that are at least as good as many others. As a result, brand loyalty and effect are determined by one's personal experiences and preferences. Again, it depends on ones 'personal identity' needs which are very important to people. However, these needs can be further swayed by 'cognitive needs' and 'social interaction and integration needs' in which an individual makes decision based on information gained through social surroundings.

Discussion

In marketing theory, a brand is the mental image that customers have of a product, service, or company. The organization uses its media communications to try to shape the brand concept that people have in their heads. Sometimes brands leave a positive impression, and other times brands fail. A brand is evaluated based on our prior experiences, which include our previous use of the brand, suggestions from others, advertisements, and so on. Those brands are chosen by people that they have heard good things about and that have performed well in the past when they have had the opportunity to experience them.

The study focuses on people's preference to buy brands while ignoring their cultural values, as the majority expressed a preference for using foreign brands while also believing that brand culture has an impact on local culture. But why is brand preference prioritized over cultural values? As Roll (2009) discussed, cultural values are a major factor influencing the acceptance or rejection of a brand, but when brands enter different cultures, it is critical that they carefully follow the standardization-customization continuum. They not only manage to maintain the intrinsic brand image, which is the reason for their success across markets, but they also use branding strategies (images, advertisements, media, and other platforms) to cater to consumers' local needs and preferences. In addition, Rajgopal (2010) identified some key indicators for effective brand strategic positioning, one of which is cultural values. He also mentions that brand attributes can be related to consumer preferences for the brand and, because of the symbolic significance and emotional bond they create, can last longer than functional aspects. Many researchers have also investigated the impact of cultural values on brand recognition, concluding that values have a significant impact on brand awareness (Paasovaara–Luomala, Pohjanheimo–Sandell, 2012; Gammoh–Koh–Okoroafo, 2011; Park–Rabolt, 2009; Casidy–Tsarenko–Anderson, 2009). Another reason for preferring foreign brands over local is that consumers in developing economies are generally less wealthy than those in developed economies, which can, quite simply, create a sense of desperation and inferiority (Kottak, 1990; Singh, 1982). As a result, customers in developing countries frequently imitate the seemingly trendy habits and lifestyles of foreign consumption and purchase the products that appeal to them (Batra–Ramaswamy–Aden–Steenkamp–Ramachander, 2000). Furthermore, Venkatesh and Swamy (1994) argued that today's consumers in developing countries want to be a part of global consumerism, participating in this "imagined world" (Appadurai, 1990) in some way through access to goods from around the world.

Because the study discovered that brands provide social status, this finding is consistent with what (Batley) stated. Brands represent transparency, emotional support, continuity, status, and, most importantly, participation in a confusing environment based on a competitive quest, in which rational decision-making appears to be nearly impossible. A brand is something that helps people defining themselves better in real life. Brands foster a sense of self. Since the study discovered that people prefer to buy brands because they trust in them, regardless of their market value or price. Thus, it is related to a study that found that more than one-third of customers listed brand confidence as one of the major factors that inspired their purchasing decision, even above price (Llorente, 2019). Furthermore, people do not choose brands solely because they have developed a liking for them or because they have performed well for them. People form associations with a group of brands to profit from the value that they and their brands bring to their lives. In terms of brand preference, these concepts may be more practical and functional, or even psychosocial and relational (Lokusdesign, 2018).

Since the study concluded that digital media is the most preferred medium for branding, it raises concerns about the usability of TV media, such as how it has become boring or time-consuming. According to Arris (Source, 2014), 84 percent of participants wanted to move quickly through the television advertisements they were watching, while 60 percent were streaming or recording shows not to miss advertisements. Another study (2015) found that

viewers who focused solely on the TV screen were able to recall 2.43 brands out of every three brands listed, whereas mobile and tablet users only managed to recall 1.62 brands on average while watching TV. Furthermore, TV advertising is losing its position as a source of information: According to the study of Mindshare (2015), between 2005 and 2014, the proportion of people who like TV advertisements that make them happy fell from 74% to 62%. Furthermore, networking capability is a significant distinguishing feature of social media in comparison to other media, and it is also one of its most capitalized advantages. Consumers have some influence on how content is created and disseminated (Okazaki et al., 2013). This networking ability has significant implications for determining the source of social media brand contact. Social media creates an atmosphere in which anyone can say anything about anything (Van et al., 2016).

This study considers two factors when it comes to brand effect. To begin, in some cases, the associations, emotions, and expectations that a brand (such as perfume) evokes in the explicit or implicit mind of a customer shape a significant portion of what they choose – and what they spend money on. Because brands are carefully crafted to appeal to specific market segments, one brand may have significant positive associations for some consumers while another may have favorable or even negative associations. As customers, it is not as simple as attempting to ignore branding and purchasing based on a conceptual measure of ‘intrinsic quality of product,’ because the latter is always extremely subjective and can be dependent on the connections borrowed by the brand – because they are incompatible, people absorb the brand and its ads alongside the product! They do not simply buy Zara clothing to keep warm. Even as a relatively unlucky customer, it is difficult to ignore the meta-messages that these brand choices represent because they all exist in the same sea of having to attain and convey elements of prestige to ourselves, our peer groups, and to attach to our respective brand. That being said, understanding what a brand is attempting to do increases your intensity of choice about whether you purchase into the placement or even the function that is being performed. If that is what you are looking for, a ‘no-logo identity’ is still a convenient way to brand yourself.

Secondly, while branding is frequently what consumers have in mind when purchasing a product, such as perfume, this is not always the case. On the one hand, to cater to individual clients and customers, every product or service is well advertised, and advertising is becoming increasingly important in this regard. For example, in perfume advertisements, people frequently see photos of ideal love, intimate appeals, friendships, sports, and so on, and after choosing to wear those perfumes, they rarely (if ever) have them. Nonetheless, persuasion strategy is the driving force behind them. Advertisements in all forms (Internet, TV, radio, print sources, and others) are effective if they remind people of the product or service, and their brand is the first step towards achieving the necessary recognition, before its subsequent acquisition.

Conclusion

According to the findings of the study, respondents prefer to use brands because brands represent social status. They trust brands not only because of the high quality of their products but also because they represent a higher social standing. The media, through various content, plays an important role in promoting branding culture. However, foreign culture is valued over local culture, causing local culture to be distorted. Digital media is the most widely used medium for promoting branding culture. While electronic media has found a place in promoting both domestic and international brands. However, branding has created a culture of vulgarity and sexuality in Asian societies such as India and Pakistan. About the brand effect it was discovered that brands have varying and dissimilar effects on everyone based on their experiences with the brand. To compete in the market, brands must struggle to demonstrate their uniqueness.

Limitations

The study has a few limitations as well. First and foremost, because Asian society was discussed, the sample was limited to two countries: Pakistan and India. The sample size of respondents is relatively small. The results of the analysis may not be generalizable to a larger population group. Because the survey was also conducted via online platforms, there is a chance that the correct answers were not provided by the participants.

Furthermore, a comparison of brand usage and brand culture adoption between the two countries is possible.

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