

The Mediating Role of Brand Attitude for Purchase Intention: Empirical Evidence from Fast Food Industry in Pakistan

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Abstract

This study aimed to examine the role of brand attitude in mediating the relationship between advertising appeal and brand emotion on purchase intention in the fast-food industry of Hyderabad, Pakistan. Primary data was gathered from customers and adopted standard questionnaires from previous studies. The total number of respondents was 150, and for the analysis of data, various statistical tests such as SPSS and AMOS were used to assess the hypothesis, including the Reliability test, Confirmatory Analysis, and Structural equation modeling. The current study's findings indicated a partial mediation effect of brand attitude between advertising appeal and brand emotion for purchase intention. This study helps develop marketing strategies to identify convenience in this field of emotional marketing. They did this by developing a model that reflects on pre-purchase decisions and effects of emotional appeal, feeling, and attitude towards a brand, especially for fast food consumers. For improved market share in the future, marketing organizations in Hyderabad, Pakistan these factors are considered for future marketing strategies.

Keywords:

purchase intention, brand emotion, advertising appeal, brand attitude

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INTRODUCTION

Feelings are as persons' affective response to a message in a communication process, this response is not perceived to be an answer to what nature of message it is but it is always according to person's affective state of mind at the time of message exposure. Affective response is different from emotional responses as feelings are usually more general. Gentle and usually are not towards a specific object while emotions tend to be more specific, fierce, vigilant and are usually more directed towards a specific object or thing. (Petty et al., 2001; Schwarz and Clore 1996). This is same in case of advertisement evaluation as a person either perceives an advertisement a whole favorable or not. But in case of feelings positive and negative feelings build up a single construct, and thus they are bi-dimensional (Ito and Cacioppo 2001).

The result of studies shows that the variable such as product quality, brand advertisement, brand name had a significant impact on customer purchase intention (Akbariyeh et al., 2015). The finding of the research is that the social media advertising has a significant positive impact on the consumer purchase intention under the intermediate impact based on brand attitude so it is recommended that companies should use information that is more professional in social media advertisement to make their buyer willingness to buy their product. The result of the study showed that humor appeal has a most significant impact on purchase intention, whereas gender appeal also has a positive significant impact on purchase intention (He & Qu, 2018). Moreover, emotional and fear also have an impact less but significant on purchase intention. Furthermore, advertising attitude has a favorable big impact on purchase intention. (Lin, 2011). The study's findings revealed that the while consumer cognition has no substantial impact on buy intention. In addition, customer connection and attachment do have a large impact on repurchase intention and that brand awareness influences emotions and consumer purchase intention (Ekhveh & Darvishi, 2015). The study's findings revealed that there is a clear association between brand perception, feeling, and brand emotion on buy intention, as well as a substantial relationship between product feature and feelings during purchasing (Sadeghi and Tabrizi, 2011). Managers should also work to improve emotional appeals in advertisements and in the physical store. (Nkaabu et al., 2017).

Similar to these studies another study conducted in South Korea, in this study brand awareness and brand attitude have an impact on cosmetic product purchases. The findings revealed that cosmetically brand awareness has a big impact on brand attitude and that cosmetically brand attitude has a considerable impact on purchase (Kim and Kim, 2016). Social media advertising has a large impact on brand attitude and social media commercials appearing to be more effective than traditional ads. Brand attitude also has a strong positive impact on purchase intention (Abzari et al., 2014). The study's findings revealed that self-brand congruity, entertainment, and brand placement have a substantial impact on brand attitude and buy intention. In this regard, a favorable association between predicted brand memory, brand attitude, and purchase intention in advertisement (Adis & Jun, 2013).

Researchers have defined purchase intention into 3 main postulates. First, a purchase intention for fast food is derived by a basic need directed towards a brand with some

sentimental attachment towards it. Second, the purchase intention of the consumer is always affected by their feelings. Third, a purchase intention is to forecast an attitude that is directed towards a brand or a specific product like any fast food the most important elements for researchers these days is emotional marketing (Barahona et al., 2018). Consumer choices related to food have become a critical and complex decision these days because people these days are all very much taste conscious with so many choices to make related to food in their daily lives.

This study adds to the field of knowledge in various ways. First, past research examined the impact of attitude on purchase intention of online shopping behavior (Al-Debei et al., 2015). In the past study, authors checked the direct impact of attitude on purchase intention. However, in the present, we have examined the effect of brand attitude as the mediator regarding purchase intention. Second, research scholars (Koenig-Lewis & Palmer, 2014; Song & Qu, 2019) suggested that fast food-related research should be conducted in the future because the research scholars in the past measured mostly online shopping behavior. In this context, in the present study, we have collected data from fast food consumers to verify the mediating effect of brand attitude and purchase intention from developing Pakistan. Third, the present study included both males and females as a respondent, but in past research, only females were taken as a sample to check both variables' attitudes and purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2014; Nicolini et al., 2017).

METHODS

The respondents were chosen using a convenience sample method, which is a non-probability sampling method due to the COVID-19 situation in the country. Respondents were informed that the data collection would be used just for academic purposes and that their profile information would be utilized solely for statistical analysis.

Different tests such as factor analysis, confirmatory analysis, reliability analyses, and SEM have been carried out for data analyses (Structural Equation Modeling). The goal of data collection and analysis is to test the hypotheses as mentioned above. The adopted questionnaire contributed to the collection of the primary research data. The questionnaire consisted of two parts: organized and closely related questions. Respondents were required to fill out a personal profile in the first part, and both dependent and independent variables were requested in the second part. This study used a five-point Likert scale spanning 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Purchase intention is adopted from the study of Chiu et al., (2012). Research items are “You probably buy products in fast-food restaurants, I would consider buying a product in fast-food restaurants if I need a product of this type & it is possible to buy a product in fast-food restaurants”.

Brand attitude is adopted from the study of Haws and Winterish (2013). Research items are “Eating the fast food would be pleasurable, I would enjoy eating the fast-food & If I eat a fast food, it would be satisfying for me”.

Brand emotion is adopted from the study of Bagozzi & Dholakia (2006). Research items are “If I can go to eat in fast-food restaurants the next month, I feel contentment,

If I can go to eat in fast-food restaurants the next month, I feel excited & If I can go to eat a hamburger in fast-food restaurants the next month, I feel proud”.

Advertising appeal is taken from the research kemps et al., (2014). Research items are “You think advertising of healthy food is aimed both men and women, you remember any healthy fast food advertising & you to go to a healthy fast food restaurant based only in its advertisement”.

The sample size is calculated using the rule of thumb formula proposed by Roscoe (1975), $12 \times 10 = 120$. The best sample size established for better responses as a results is 120. But the authors disseminated the printed questionnaire to 170 respondents in Hyderabad, Pakistan. However, some of the respondents completed the questionnaire right away and returned it. The data collection process from 170 respondents lasted for three weeks. Out of 170 copies, 150 were completed, returned, and analyzed. The overall response rate was 88.23%.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 shows the number of respondents, which are further categorized into 04 clusters Gender, age of respondents, level of education, and income. It shows that out of 150 respondents, the high portion that is 71.3% are male, and 28.7% are female. Most of the respondents are aged between 18-22 includes 45.3% of respondents from 23-27 constituted 25.3%, from 28-32 includes 8.0%, 38-42 constituted 8.7% and Above 42 includes 6.7%. Level of Education. The highest portion of Undergraduate 58.7%, Graduate 40%, and Postgraduate 14.7%. In Terms of Monthly Expenditure on Fast Food, Income below 2,000 includes 46.66%, from 3000-8000 40.0%, and Above 8,000 includes 13.4%.

Table 1. Respondent Profile

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	107	71.3
Female	43	28.7
Total	150	100.0
Age of Respondent		
18-22	68	45.3
23-27	38	25.3
28-32	12	8.0
33-37	9	6.0
38-42	13	8.7
Above 42	10	6.7
Total	150	100.0
Level of Education		
Undergraduate	88	58.7
Graduate	40	26.7
Postgraduate	22	14.7
Total	150	100.0
Monthly Expenditure on Fast Food		
Below 2,000	70	46.66
3000-8000	60	40.0
Above 8000	20	13.4
Total	150	100.00

Table 2 shows the internal consistency and convergent validity of the construct. Factor loading values are more than suggested for all independent variables and dependent variable items (0.35). Composite reliability and Cronbach alpha value are also greater than (0.70). Furthermore, the average variance extraction is more significant than the suggested value (0.50) for all studied variables. These results recommend internal consistency and convergent validity of construct in this study (Hair et al., 2018).

Table 2. Construct Reliably and Convergent Validity

Factor	Items	Factor Loading	Composite Reliably	Cronbach Alpha Value	Average Variance Extraction
Advertisement Appeal	AP1	0.81	0.84	0.84	0.60
	AP2	0.81			
	AP3	0.76			
Brand Emotion	BE1	0.82	0.86	0.86	0.67
	BE2	0.84			
	BE3	0.79			
Brand Attitude	BA1	0.78	0.87	0.78	0.68
	BA2	0.84			
	BA3	0.86			
Purchase Intention	PI1	0.87	0.87	0.88	0.69
	PI2	0.88			
	PI3	0.73			

Confirmatory factor analysis is a technique used to identify the potential of variables while demonstrating relative factors. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a technique used to analyze data quantitatively; it refers to structural equation modeling methods and techniques. CFA is also called a covariance structure. CFA is these examining process here. The examiner clarifies the total quantity of factors and the design of indicators factor loading. The examiner will compel variables for loading only on specific construct related to them and examine their model fitness. The examiner signifies that the identified variable is the exponent to that fellow variable through CFA. This technique helps to approve or disapprove of any specific menstruation theory.

Table 3 displays a detailed summary of the confirmatory factor analysis. It is widespread to represent the CFA model in route diagrams, where the square represents variables under observation and circles represent latent variables. Moreover, the single-headed arrow indicated supposed causative impact; the double-headed arrows signify covariance between two latent variables (Al-bright, 2008). Here are four latent factors: AA, PI, BA, and BE. Here AA1-AA3 PI1-PI3, BA1-B13, and BE1-BE3 show measured indicator variables. At the same time, the e1-e10 shows errors related to very considered items. Here the arched arrows between the factors indicate the linkage among them, signifying correlation ships occurred after the application of CFA. The factors show high factor loading scores with better reliability. The errors related to every item are encircled and marked as e3-e1 for (AA) advertising Appeal, e6-e4 for (PI) Purchase invention, e9-e7(BA) brand attitude, and e11-e10 for (BE) Brand-emotion. In the factor analysis process, the weight age less than 0.25 is eliminated, but this research shows weight age more than that, and thus they all

are approved. Table 3 displays the value of CMIN, which is 62.620, this value is lower than the independence Model, whose value is 400.946, and thus the value is acceptable. Also, that the CMIN/DF value is 1.648 (CMIN= 62.620/DF= 400.946). This value is lower than 5.0, and thus it indicates the fitness of this model.

Figure 1. Confirmatory Factor Analysis

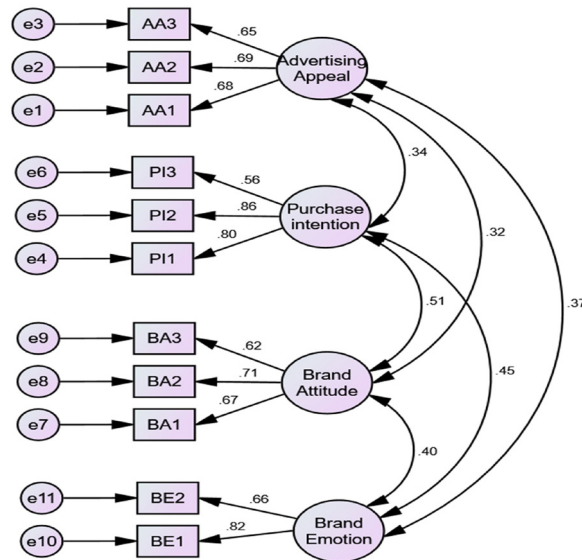


Table 4 shows that all the direct and indirect relationships are significantly related between purchase intention, advertising appeal, and brand attitude mediation. The total effect value of purchase intention and advertising appeal is 0.216, with the R (square) value of 0.09 and a significant P-value of 0.00. At the same time, the direct effect relation among purchase intention and advertising appeal is 0.30, with an R-square value of 0.091 and a P-value of 0.00, showing significance. The indirect relationship effect among purchase intention and advertising appeal shows the value of 0.216 with an R-square value of 0.221 and a significance value of 0.020, showing a significant positive relationship. Here, the R (square) value represents model effectiveness and indicates acceptance of a hypothesis. The SEM models represent partial mediation among the variables.

Table 3. Model Fit Analysis

Model	NPAR	CMIN	DF	P	CMIN/DF
Default model	28	62.620	38	.007	1.648
Saturated model	66	.000	0		
Independence model	11	400.946	55	.000	7.290

Table 5 represents that all the direct and indirect effects are positively related between purchase intention and brand emotion and the mediation effect of brand attitude. This model shows a partial mediating effect of Brand Attitude. The total effect value

of purchase intention and Brand emotion is 0.266, along with the R (square) value of 0.243, and has a significant P-value of 0.01. At the same time, the direct effect relation among purchase intension and Brand emotion is 0.364, with an R-square value of 0.133 and P-value of 0.00 showing significance. Indirect relationship effect among purchase intension and Brand emotion shows the value of 0.266 with R (square) value of 0.243 and a significance value of 0.003 showing the significant positive relationship. Here the R (square) value represents model effectiveness and indicates acceptance of a hypothesis.

Table 4. Advertising Appeal (Mediation- SEM)

Purchase Intention-> AA	β	Significant Value	R ²
Total Effect	0.216	***	0.09
Direct Effect	0.30	***	0.091
Indirect Effect	0.216	0.020	0.221

Another aspect influencing consumer choice when making a purchasing decision is advertising attractiveness. This study looked at many appealing forms, including emotional, humorous, gender, and fair appeals. Furthermore, they tend to have a long-term impact on client purchasing intentions. The study result shows a significant relationship between advertising appeal and purchase intention, especially humor appeal. "Other than this, another study has been conducted by Long Yi Ling in (2011) on the effect of advertising appeal and advertising spoke person on advertising attitude and purchase intention. A study was conducted in the cell phone industry of Taiwan. This study also proved to have a positive and significant impact of advertising appeal on advertising attitude and thus on purchase intention. This study shows a significant indirect impact of advertising appeal on purchase intention.

Table 5. Brand Emotions (Mediation- SEM)

Purchase Intention->BE	β	Significant Value	R ²
Total Effect	0.266	0.01	0.243
Direct Effect	0.364	***	0.133
Indirect Effect	0.266	0.003	0.243

Furthermore, in the past various studies recommended that the attitude positively influences intention to buy (Hwang et al., 2011). Similarly, other authors also confirmed the context of eating behavior's positive and negative results (Ghoochani et al., 2018). The mixed findings were revealed in these past studies. With this information, the present study's authors can say that the attitude has an indirect effect regarding fast food purchase intention, and results are aligned with study Lang & Lemmerer (2019). The study conducted by Zhang et al. (2014) also confirmed the relationship between attitude and purchase intention. Similarly, Jahn et al. (2019) suggested that the attitude for goods and services is directly affected regarding the intention to purchase with the understanding of problem and sustainability.

Emotions are starting point of consumer intention, and these emotions explain the evaluation of any brand before buying it or intending to purchase it. Moreover, advertising may help emotions through physiological changes in an individual (Small & Verrochi, 2009). There is also the role of individual culture on emotions to suggest the intention to buy, and positive emotions lead to customer satisfaction (Wen et al., 2018; Lo, 2017).

This result has been proved to have a significant impact on Purchase intention by several studies also done in the past, just like one done by (Sadeghi & Tabrizi, 2011), in their research study of the correlation between brand perception their impact on purchase intention in fragrance industry of Iran. The study proves that there are a direct relationship in-between feelings, brand and purchase intention showing the significant value of P". Lastly, the study that supports the stated theory from Nkabbu et al. (2017), who investigated the impact of emotional experience on purchase intentions SEM model on social and hedonic value in Kenya's retail business. This study also provided a substantial value by demonstrating the mediating impact on emotional experience and purchase intention and their direct impact on each other. Based on all of these studies and results, it is now determined that in the fast-food sector, emotional connection, feelings, and emotional branding play a critical role in influencing customer purchasing behavior and, in particular, purchase intention.

CONCLUSION

The key objectives of this study were to examine the mediating role of brand attitude between advertising appeal and brand emotions for purchase intention for the fast-food industry of Hyderabad, Pakistan. In the present study, partial mediation was revealed for both variables advertising appeal and brand emotions for purchase intention in brand attitude. However, brand emotions confirmed more significant purchase intention than advertising appeal regarding the fast industry of Sindh, Pakistan.

There are some managerial implications of this study. First, Managers of fast-food restaurants should have to focus on findings that the attitude leads to purchase intention. Second, brand emotions are highly anticipated for purchase intention in the presence of mediator brand attitude compared to advertising appeal in Hyderabad, Pakistan. The managers should study the various emotions, including excitement and contentment, to have better consumer satisfaction in the context of fast-food restaurants.

In the present study, there are contributions and some limitations, which will help the future researcher, fill these gaps. First, incorporating more variables not limited to advertising appeal and brand emotions can test a more complex model. Second, this study is limited to Hyderabad, Pakistan, in the fast-food industry. Lastly, the moderation effect of age and gender can also be studied in the context of the fast-food industry.

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