A Study on Brand Consciousness of Consumers in Retailing Environment

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Abstract*: The impact of factors on brand consciousness is analyzed in this paper. The dependent variable is brand consciousness and independent variables are similarity avoidance, normative influence and public self-awareness. A structured questionnaire with fifteen items was used for primary data from 140 respondents. The findings of this study suggest that brand consciousness plays a vital role in consumer decision making process. The consumers are dependent on brand for making purchase decision especially household items.*
Keywords: *Brand, image, reputation, consciousness, consumer, branded products.*

I.   Introduction
The lifestyle of people had drastically changed in past four decades. The brand can be referred as name, logo, symbol, color and design which differentiate the product from competitive products or similar products. Consumers can identify the product easily with support of brand while shopping. The factors like price consciousness, novelty, social norms, personal norms and self-consciousness play a vital role in consumer decision making process from the perspective of branding (Lysonski & Durvasula, 2013). Consumer while shopping for household products consider brand both in online shopping environment and supermarkets. In this study the impact of similarity avoidance (SA), normative influence (NI), and public self-awareness (PS) on brand consciousness (BC) is described.

II.   Research Objectives
1. To understand the importance of branding in retailing sector.
2. To explain the influence of similarity avoidance, normative influence, public self-consciousness on brand consciousness.

III. Literature Review
Brand influences consumers' attitude in various stages of consumer decision making process. The customers' satisfaction is influenced by brand image of the product with moderating role of product involvement (Suh & Yi, 2006). The loyalty of consumers towards a product is influenced by brand attitude and corporate image. There is also significant relationship between corporate image and brand image of the products. The economic liberalization and globalization had given an opportunity to market their products in global markets. The brand supports organizations to develop awareness about the product in global markets. For example Apple Inc and Coca-Cola are multination brands and communicate about their products for customers in global markets. The shopping styles of consumers had drastically changed in recent years for example people used to shopping for meeting their household needs but modern consumers are also likely to demand recreation and pleasant environment while purchasing products.

The brands can be of different categories like private brands, national brands, local brands and global brands. The brand communicates quality and price of products and also enhances loyalty of consumers towards product and organization (Wulf, OdekerkenSchroder, Goedertier, & Ossel, 2005). Due to busy schedules people are likely to shop in quick time with support of brand awareness. Else it would be time consuming while shopping for various personal care products and household products. The brand also communicates credibility of product and organizations and makes easy for consumers to select the product while shopping (Baek, Kim, & Yu, 2010).

The retailers also play a vital role in creating awareness and positive attitude towards brand by consumers. The retailers also delist the brands if the company does not motivate them in different ways. The consumers also switch to other brand if the retailer delists the brands based in their stores (Sloot & Verhoef,

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2008). The brand is major driver in consumer decision making process (Granot, Greene, & Brashear, 2010). The gender of consumers also influences consumers for adopting fashion trends.

IV. Research Methodology

The sample size for this study is 140 and simple random sampling method had been used while collecting data from respondents. The secondary had been collected from journals and electronic sources. The primary data had been analyzed using SPSS version 20.0 software with statistical techniques like frequency analysis, descriptive statistics and regression analysis. The four construct similarity avoidance (SA), normative influence (NI), brand consciousness (BC) and public self-awareness (PS) with three items under each construct. The items under each construct have been procured from previously published scales in research articles and they are mentioned in Table 1. The demographic variables like gender, age and occupation are used in the questionnaire. The hypothesis H1, H2 and H3 are framed based on objectives of this study.

Table 1: Measurement Scale

Construct	Items	Source
1.		
2. Similarity avoidance	• I stop using products when they become popular with general public. • I dislike brands brought by everyone • When a particular brand becomes more popular I stop using it.	(Knight & Kim, 2007)
3. Normative influence	• It is important that other like the brands I buy. • When buying a product I select brands which are likely to be approved by others. • I like to know what brands make good impression on others.	(Yang, Kim, & Kim, 2017)
3. Brand Consciousness	• When shopping I pay attention to brands • The brand names gives some information about products • I am likely to pay more for branded products	(Nelson & McLeod, 2005)
4. Public self-consciousness	• I am concerned about my style of doing things • I am concerned about the way I present myself. • I am concerned about what other people think of me	Giovannini and Thomas (2015)

(Source: Developed by the researcher)

V. Data Analysis

The majority of the respondents belong to '29 to 38 Years' age group. Among the total 140 respondents 22 percent belong to '19-28 Years' age group, 14 percent belong to 'above 39 Years' age group and remaining 64 percent belong to '29 to 38 Years' age group. Out of total 140 respondents 63 percent are male and 37 percent are female. The majority of the respondents are employees who are 58 percent. Among the respondents 32 percent belong to 'others' category, 4 percent are students and remaining 6 percent are self-employed.

The mean value of brand consciousness (BC) is 4.40 with standard deviation (SD) of 0.21 which is shown in Table 2. The mean value of similarity avoidance (SA) is 3.75, mean value of normative influence (NI) is 3.97 and public self-consciousness is 3.77. The standard deviation for NI is high with value 0.93 shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

	SA	NI	BC	PS
N Valid	140	140	140	140
Mean	3.75	3.97	4.40	3.77
Std. Deviation	0.77	0.93	0.21	0.78

(Source: Output of primary data through SPSS)

H1: The similarity avoidance (SA) has an impact on brand consciousness (BC) of consumers. From table 3 it is evident that H1 is accepted because even though 'p' value is less than 0.05 the't' value is negative. Hence there is significant negative influence of similarity avoidance on brand consciousness of consumers.

H2: The normative influence (NI) has an impact on brand consciousness of consumers while shopping in retailing products. The 'p' value of NI in table is more than 0.05 therefore H2 is rejected. Therefore a normative influence (NI) does not have positive impact on brand consciousness of consumers in retail environment.

Table 3: Regression Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.950	0.451		17.631	0.000
	SA	-0.277	0.062	-0.301	-4.497	0.000

NI	-0.046	0.054	-0.061	-0.848	0.398
PS	-0.614	0.065	-0.673	-9.442	0.000

a. Dependent Variable: BC
(Source: Output from primary data through SPSS)

H3: The consumer with public self-consciousness (PC) is associated with brand consciousness (BC). The hypothesis 'H3' is accepted because 'p' value is less than 0.05. But public self-consciousness negatively influence brand consciousness in retailing environment during shopping.

VI. Discussion and Conclusion

The consumers while shopping for products consider brand in the present era. The brand consciousness is caused by various factors but from this research it is observed that similarity avoidance, normative influence and public self-awareness are not influencing brand consciousness. However the consumers are likely towards similarity avoidance and influenced by social norms. But at the same time the independent factors in this study is not having positive relationship with dependent variable 'brand consciousnesses. The normative influence can affect the consumers' attitude both positively and negatively according to the product.

VII.   Future Research

Brand is influenced by various others factors which have to be identified by future researchers. The impact of private brand on consumers' decision making should be studied by future researchers. The factors influencing consumers for adopting either national or private brand should be analyzed. The brand awareness towards specific products in various product categories should be researched in future. The impact of product price and income levels on selection of particular brand need to be studied.

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