

# “What Should I wear, local or global? An Analysis of Consumers’ Perceptions of National Versus Foreign Brands in the Garment Industry”

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**Abstract:** The purpose of this study is to investigate customers’ evaluation and preference toward the use of garments manufactured in the local industries and then compare them to the ones manufactured in foreign developed countries. This is because the textile is the largest industry in India and Pakistan and cotton industry has received largest growth especially in the post-Covid-19 era, reflected in the sales of ready-made clothing. Data were collected through self-administered questionnaires in the two capital cities of Peshawar and Islamabad. Statistical analyses were performed on data to examine perceived differences and description of which is presented for each survey items. Survey results find that value of the product, brand image and country of origin do have a solid impact on building up customers’ buying decisions. The quality of local manufactured products has received equal perceived scores as compared of foreign international brands, however, because of status consciousness, people prefer global brands for uplifting their social identity and superiority over others. The research ends by providing conclusion and a note on limitations and future directions.

**Keywords:** local brands, global brands, garments, consumer perception, brand image

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## 1. Introduction

Perception is the process by which we draw a logical picture of the world. The process involves recognizing, organizing and interpreting stimuli. This phenomenon gained importance for marketing following the era of globalization. Globalization allowed entry into new markets across the globe. It became necessary for marketers and academicians alike to study customer perception across different cultures in order to help shape their

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marketing strategies. People from different cultures perceive differently, relative to their experience and knowledge. It is the customer perception that plays a primary role in shaping consumer buying behavior.

Josiassen and Harzing (2008) argued in their study that consumer perception toward countries, cultures and their products keeps changing over time. Several researchers have found that consumers from developed nations perceived local goods as grandeur and superior to foreign goods. (Damanpour, 1993; Jeong and Lee, 2021) while in developing nations the case is the opposite. (Karoui, &Khemakhem, 2019; Akturan, &Bozbay, 2018); Bow and Ford, 1993; Sklair, 1994; Wang and Chen, 2004). In developing nations, scholars have found that brands from a western country of origin were preferred to local brands not only because of a higher perceived quality but also because of a high status symbol(Bow and Ford, 1993).

Moreover especially in the post Covid-19 era, global brands have gained most favorable brand reputation built over a number of years to reach economies of scale and multinational expansion.

Studies conducted previously, comparing local brands to global brands, have taken those products into consideration where local brands are not comparable in terms of quality and brand image with global brands. There isn't any literature regarding developing countries where local brands are comparable in terms of quality, brand image and price to foreign brands. Would the same findings hold true in that situation too? Textile industry In Pakistan has been the prominent one in the industrial sector. Availability of superior quality raw material has led to a perennial progress in this industry. Big brands are seen to have emerged in the Ready-Made Garments sector of the textile industry in the previous decade. These brands have matched international standards in terms of quality and value. Their brands have acquired international recognition and fame. Based on the above conjectures, the researchers therefore highlight that Pakistani consumer generally differentiate between foreign and global garments for some reasons under investigation.

### **1.1. Purpose of study:**

The purpose of this study is to examine the different factors which impact customer assessment of local and global brands. Evaluate consumer perception and examine consumers' preference in the category of readymade garments in Pakistan. Moreover, to analyze whether or not the findings of previous literature can be generalized to Pakistani markets.

### **1.2. Research objectives:**

- Investigate the factors determining customer perception in the readymade garments industry.
- Assess the foreign and local brands against the defined factors.
- Observe if country of origin effect plays a role in buying readymade garments.
- Test if Pakistani customer prefers global brand to local brands in readymade garment.

### **1.3. Scope of the research:**

For the sake of a good comparison the research will take into account the renowned local brands and the available global brands. It will evaluate and compare consumer's perception and preference only and will not look into the actual sales of these brands. The study can be extended to other cities of Pakistan.

## **2. Literature review**

### **2.1. Local and global brands:**

The global brand consulting compiles its list of best global brands each year. The selection criterion is based on the value of the brand that includes both financial and psychological aspects of different brands. However, based on what factors is a global brand defined? Dimofte et al. (2008) conducted a qualitative and quantitative study among American students to define a global brand. A number of attributes of global brands were included in a questionnaire. On a Likert scale respondents were asked to what extent they agreed with a particular characteristic. Based on its findings and related documentation, global brands have the following characteristics. A brand is called global if it is available anywhere in the world. Mainly present in four different regions of the world with at least 5% generating sales outside the country of origin and a turnover of one billion (Kotzab and Teller, 2003). In addition, a growing brand in terms of status, esteem and equity as it goes global, leading to increase in the planned purchase and perceived quality (Johansson and Ronkainen, 2005). It has a global awareness, acceptance and demand (Özsomer and Altaras, 2008). The American Marketing Association defines local brand as one that caters to a particular regional or national market covering a peculiar geographic area usually a country or region. While others may define it as the brand which is created and manufactured in a country and is indigenous to the local people (Dumitrescu, & Vinerean, 2010).

### **2.2. Local to global brands in the context of developed countries:**

Consumer preference in global and local brands has been a topic of great interest to researchers, mainly because consumer preferences vary by country. The studies that have been conducted in developed countries show a trend of consumers prefer local brands on imported products. Unlike the case of developing countries, domestic products have a high perceived unless the product is rare and exotic and not manufactured locally, for example, crocodile skin quality (Damanpour, 1993; Akturan, & Bozbay, 2018). However, in general, local products are preferred. In addition ethnocentric consumers prefer local brands to foreign ones. (Shimp and Sharma, 1995). Schuiling and Moss (2004) in his exploratory study in four European countries; United Kingdom, France, Germany and Italy have found six advantages that have made more foreign best local brands. They were a high level of perceived quality of local products, greater reliability because they were manufactured locally, where a high level of reliability. Local brands are easily available and there was more awareness regarding trademarks. Local brands are more related to local traditions and culture and had a brand more. The prestige factor plays no role.

### **2.3. Local to global brands in a context of developing countries:**

The literature on developing countries have shown a tendency to consumption perceive the quality of global / foreign brands higher than local, mainly due to the campaign of the effect of origin. (Batra et al, 2000, Wang and Chen, 2000; Agbonifoh Elimimian and 1999)

A study was conducted in Ghana to assess the attitude of Ghanaian consumers of the middle class to the local and foreign brands in textile and rice. It was found that consumers do not take the label "made in Ghana" in high esteem at the time of purchase. Country served as an important factor and foreign brands have a better perceived quality. (Apoku and Okarli, 2009)

Another important factor that explains the inclination towards foreign brands among developing countries is the social status. Research by Wand and Chen (2004) in China found that the people of the middle and upper class showed preference for foreign brands because the brand has been associated with conspicuous consumption, superior quality and prestige. Batra et al. (2000) in his research on India noted that the non-local character of a mark is attractive to customers because it had a high social value signaling. Consumers have tried to copy the lifestyles of people in the West following their purchasing practices. This is especially true for products that could be presented to the public as clothing.

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Patriotism can affect consumer choice towards foreign brands. Iranian consumers prefer domestic products compared to products or turkey because of their negative feelings about the country from China. However, countries like the United Kingdom and the United States had a favorable image among Iranians and the country of origin and conspicuous consumption has led to a preference for foreign brands in these countries, despite the strong ethnocentrism. Imported from the United Kingdom and Italy clothes, he noted, have been associated with the image of the top brand, sophistication and superior quality. (Shimp and Sharma, 1995)

From the study of the literature on global brands against local four main factors have been identified that have an impact on the perceptions and attitudes of consumers.

- The country of origin effect
- The perceived quality and value
- Brand image (associated with both quality and prestige)

### **2.4. Country of origin effect:**

Country of origin effect means that consumers relate some countries with the best products. For example, Swiss watches and Italian sports cars. In an article in the Harvard Business Review, it was noted that although Venezuela was the highest exporter of best quality cocoa beans have its own brand of chocolates could not go global because consumers in the country of home are not willing to pay a high price for what would be their for Swiss chocolate. Therefore, the effect of COO becomes a challenge for brands that aspire to develop globally. (Nelson and Deshpande, 2013).

Several researchers have studied the effect of country of origin and arrived at different conclusions. Country of origin effect increased if the product came from countries with similar cultures (Watson and Wright, 2000) Studies by Jhaveri (2007) and Kiran et al. (2005) on the Indian consumers have shown that the effect of COO was high for technological and sustainable products.

A study by Wang and Yang (2008) studied the effect of COO of a new perspective by analyzing its relation with brand personality and purchase decision. On the other hand, some researchers hold the view that the effect of country of origin is now diluted by many factors. Country of origin impact is less that consumers participate in the extended when purchasing the product search. (Agarwal and Kamkura, 1999) "This is because in real consumers of the market situation does not rely solely on extrinsic evidence, but also the intrinsic evidence of a product."

The introduction of hybrid products on the market has also facilitated the effect of country of origin and production is now outsourced and carried out in various countries around the world (Lee, et al., 2018).

### **2.5. Perceived value and perceived quality:**

For the purposes of this research, it is important to have a clearer idea of the concepts of perceived quality and value to assess the property for the Pakistani consumer. Literature has shown that people in developing countries perceive the products developed as having better quality and higher value compared to local brands countries. Before determining the consumer's perception of quality and value, a clear understanding of the two terms is necessary.

Zeithaml (1988) stated: "The perceived quality is to stop the consumption of the overall excellence or superiority of a product" According to him, "does not even exist any objective quality since quality is perceived by a person "what the company considering the quality they offer is different from what consumers think they are getting. Morgan (1985) conducted a research study of General Electric where he highlighted the main differences between the way consumers, operators and retailers perceive the quality of devices. For administrators were essential components of quality processes, performance and form. Unlike consumers the quality aspect was the

ability to clean easily and duration.

Quality is a multidimensional subjective concept and it has a different meaning for different people. It also varies in different cultures. In a market quality varies by product. For fresh juice quality is purity (Zeithmal, 1988) for high-quality stereo speakers is the size, quality clothing is style (Olshavky 1985) Garvin (1987) reported eight dimensions of quality product. "Performance, features, reliability, conformance, durability, maintenance, aesthetics and perceived quality." Quality is a cognitive judgment of highest level. "(Lutz, 1986)

Evaluation clients in quality depends more on the intrinsic evidence if they can be evaluated at the time of purchase, if not, there is more reliance on extrinsic cues. Second, when the consumer has sufficient time to assess the intrinsic indices are then considered. (Zeithmal 1988)

Using the multidimensional approach to quality, we must be very clear in defining the quality of our clothing respondents. In addition, since the Pakistani consumers buy clothes in their leisure time, we can assume they will plenty of time for the evaluation of the intrinsic evidence that can be easily judged at the time of purchase.

The value is an abstract phenomenon. Some people take value as a "quality, affordable" or in simplistic terms that the consumer gets against price it pays. Perceived value is "global consumer's judgment of the usefulness of a product that is based on the perception consumer of what is received which is given to "(Zeithmal 1988).

What is given again is perceived differently by people. Some people take it as the price paid, others take as the effort put in. The value is an important decision because a product can have a high perceived quality, but if it is not affordable, then it holds less than value for the customer. In this case, the value becomes important.

According Farukh Shahzad to Pakistani consumers is therefore sensitive to the price of our research, we will measure the value and price for a given quality clothing.

## **2.6. Branding:**

Branding, as perceived quality and value, is a concept of perception. Branding is the design regarding a particular brand in the minds of consumers. The brand image depends on how the consumer would interpret a particular brand and that interpretation is supported by reason or emotion. In addition, to some extent, because it is intrinsically dependent on how the interpreter consumption, but in a greater extent, that is extrinsic interpretation is affected by consumer marketing activities.

"It is the perception of reality is more important than reality itself is a theme underlying most conceptualizations brand. Encapsulations like this theme, these general definitions are the happiest." (Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990)

Factors branding as more important for products that consumers can publicly display (Bearden and Etzel, 1982).

In societies where conspicuous consumption and propensity to be socially desirable is high, the brand can play an important role in the purchase. Most of the time, in a developing country, conspicuous consumption takes ethnocentrism and consumers buy foreign brands to showcase their wealth. The market is the conscious state and foreign brands therefore have high representative characteristics, they are recognized as marks of status (Eastman et al, 1999).

The purchase of foreign brands entering the luxury publicly visible particularly clothing was important for a customer hence Chinese public are found to prefer particular brands because of high brand image and quality in comparison to others(Wang and Chen, 2004).

As a reminder, the previous literature has shown consumers in developing countries as giving preference to foreign brands due to conspicuous consumption, because they perceive foreign brands as superior quality and worth premium prices because global brands have grown firmer as the local picture. However, a gap identified in the literature is that these studies were conducted in countries where local brands were not available or they are not well established. And products considered in the study were those for which local products are not equal in terms of quality. However, in case of Pakistan, as it has been observed, the major brands have emerged in the category of readymade garments. The same conclusions remain true in this case or not? Or the perception and

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preferences of people have changed?

According to the literature review four factors that influence consumer perception regarding a brand are quality and value, brand image and country of origin of the effect. In this research these four factors will be assessed for consumers in Peshawar and Islamabad for both local and global brands in the category of ready-made garments. This particular research therefore undertakes customer perception as our main dependent variable while quality, brand image and country of origin have been taken as independent variables impacting consumers’ perception in the garment industry.

**3. Methodology**

From the literature review four variables identified for this research are perceived quality, perceived value, brand image and country of origin effect. Their relation has been shown in the diagram below.

**3.1. Analytical framework:**

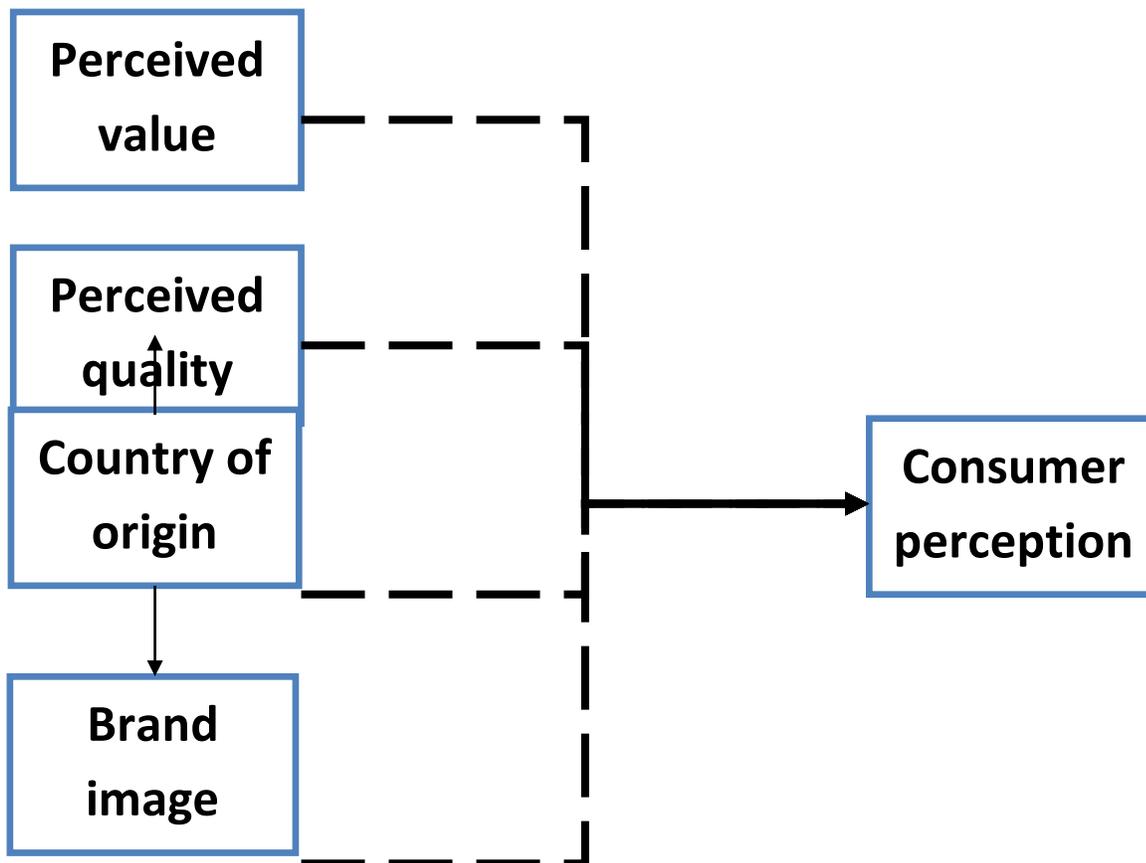


Figure 1 Analytical Framework

### 3.2. Development of hypotheses:

Perceived quality, perceived value, brand image and country of origin effect impact consumer perception directly. Country of origin effect also indirectly affect customer perception through shaping brand image and perceived quality.

The following hypotheses have been developed.

### 3.3. Hypotheses:

#### 3.3.1. Hypothesis 1

“H<sub>0</sub>= people perceive local brands of readymade garments equivalent in terms of quality and value to global brands.

H<sub>1</sub>= people do not perceive local brands of readymade garments equivalent in terms of quality and value to global brands.”

#### 3.3.2. Hypothesis 2

“H<sub>0</sub>=brand image of local brands of readymade garments is as established as that of global brands

H<sub>1</sub>=brand image of local brands of readymade garments is not as established as that of global brands”

#### 3.3.3. Hypothesis 3

“H<sub>0</sub>=people do not consider country of origin of a brand while purchasing readymade garments

H<sub>1</sub>=people consider country of origin of a brand while purchasing readymade garments”

#### 3.3.4. Hypothesis 4

“H<sub>0</sub>= people give preference to local brands over global brands while purchasing readymade garments.

H<sub>1</sub>=people do not give preference to local brands over global brands while purchasing readymade garments.”

### 3.4. Research Design

A descriptive research methodology was used for this study. Survey was administered to a sample from a specific population. Survey is a type of research methodology designed to collect data from a specific population, or a sample from that population, and that uses an interview or a questionnaire as the instrument (Robson, 1993). Sample surveys are widely accepted as an important tool for collecting and analyzing data from individuals. They are regarded as one of the basic tools for collecting and applying social science research methodology. (Dey, 1997).

### 3.5. Data Collection:

Secondary data was collected from online journals, books and magazines.

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Primary data was collected through a self-administered structured questionnaire.

### **3.6. Population:**

A population is defined as all elements (individuals, objects and events) that meet the sample criteria for inclusion in a study (Burns and Grover, 1993). Population selected for this study was the upper- and middle-class consumers of Peshawar and Islamabad. This is because of three reasons:

1. The two cities are selected because they represent the two most important commercial hubs i.e. national capital and provincial capital of KPK.
2. The people are brand conscious and have the buying power
3. There is general awareness among them regarding the global brands available on the market.

### **3.7. Sample:**

Klopper (2008) defines a sample as elements selected with the intention of finding out something about the total population from which they are taken. The sample, to which the questionnaire was distributed, was three hundred respondents above 21 years of age which included male and female respondents both.

### **3.8. Sampling technique:**

Convenience sampling was used for this research. A convenient sample consists of subjects included in the study because they happen to be in the right place at the right time (Polit & Hungler, 1993)

### **3.9. Instrument:**

A self-administered structured questionnaire was used as data collection instrument. “A questionnaire is a printed self-report form designed to elicit information that can be obtained through the written responses of the subjects. The information obtained through a questionnaire is similar to that obtained by an interview, but the questions tend to have less depth” (Burns & Grove, 1993).

Use of questionnaires was decided for the following reasons.

1. They required less time and energy to administer.
2. It consisted of closed ended questions which made it easier to compare the responses.

Questionnaires were distributed among 300 respondents. The questionnaire had information about demographics and which contained 12 questionnaire items obtained through Likert scale indexed from “strongly agree” to “strongly disagree” and two questions using categorical scale. The Questionnaire can be found at the end of the report in ‘Appendix A’.

#### 4. Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed with the use of SPSS Software. The major findings are shown below:

##### 4.1. Demographics

Age, gender, and income were analyzed through frequencies given in the table below.

##### 4.1.1. Gender:

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Male	63	63.0	63.0	63.0
	Female	37	37.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 1 Gender**

A higher number of male respondents are observed.

##### 4.1.2. Age

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	21-30	77	77.0	77.0	77.0
	31-40	15	15.0	15.0	92.0
	40 & above	8	8.0	8.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

**Table 2 Age**

77% of respondents fell in the age group of 21-30 which means most respondents were between youth and adulthood.

##### 4.1.3. Comparison of Age with Income

Age		Monthly Income or Pocket Money			
		2500-10,000	11,000-50,000	51,000-100,000	100,000 and above
	21-30	20	53	2	2
	31-40	0	2	12	1
	40 and above	0	0	2	6

**Table 3 Comparing Age with Income**

Age was compared with income to assess buying power.

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**4.2. Analysis of questions**

Questions were analyzed using chi-square method and some were cross-tabulated in order to compare with each other and find the associations between them. The test statistics for all the questions are given below.

**4.2.1. Test statistics**

	Chi-Square	Df	Asymp.Sig
You wear branded readymade garments.	77.500 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
What according to you is most important dimension in assessing quality of garments?	18.160 <sup>b</sup>	3	.000
Pakistani brands of garments can compete with foreign brands in terms of quality.	60.800 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
At least on a national level Pakistani brands of garments are as well established as foreign brands.	49.800 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Pakistani brands carry out enough marketing activities to raise their brand image.	31.300 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Brand image associates you with a certain social class.	62.300 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Wearing a foreign brand would make you feel more prestigious than a Pakistani brand.	9.600 <sup>a</sup>	4	.048
Pakistani brands of garments can understand and cater to the needs and demands of home market better than foreign brands.	21.680 <sup>b</sup>	3	.000
Pakistani brand is an excellent value for money as compared to foreign brands.	11.120 <sup>b</sup>	3	.011
Keeping price constant you will go for Pakistani brand as opposed to foreign brand while purchasing garments.	23.500 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Country of origin plays a role in enhancing quality perceptions.	77.700 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
Country of origin plays a role in enhancing brand image.	88.500 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
You consider the country of origin of a brand while purchasing ready-made garments.	36.100 <sup>a</sup>	4	.000
What is your top priority while buying garments?	82.800 <sup>b</sup>	3	.000

**Table 4 Test Statistics**

From above table it can be seen that all the questions are significant.

**4.2.2. Do you wear branded readymade garments?**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
very often	15	20.0	-5.0
rather often	52	20.0	32.0
Sometimes	24	20.0	4.0
Rather seldom	6	20.0	-14.0
Never	3	20.0	-17.0
Total	10		

**Table 5 Wearing query**

Most of the respondents i.e. 52% wore branded readymade garments rather often, which is a justifiable figure for this study.

**4.2.3. What according to you is most important dimension in assessing quality of garments?**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Quality of Fabric	36	25.0	11.0
Fashionability (style&colours)	35	25.0	10.0
Durability	12	25.0	-13.0
Excellent fit	17	25.0	-8.0
Total	100		

**Table 6 Dimension of quality**

Quality was assessed against four dimensions i.e. quality of fabric, fashionability, durability and excellent fit. Quality of fabric and fashionability seemed to be the dominating dimensions in assessing quality. In order to see how quality perceptions varied across different ages, age was cross tabulated with quality dimensions.

**4.2.4. Comparison of age with quality dimension**

<b>What according to you is most important dimension in assessing quality of garments?</b>				
Age	Quality of Fabric	fashionability (style&colours)	Durability	Excellent fit
21-30	28	30	7	12
31-40	7	4	1	3
40 and above	1	1	4	2

**Table 7 Age quality comparison**

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Fashionability seems to be the important dimension of quality for youngsters. With age, quality of fabric and durability become the important dimensions.

**4.2.5. Pakistani brands can compete with foreign brands of readymade garments in terms of quality.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly agree	18	20.0	-2.0
Agree	49	20.0	29.0
Neutral	19	20.0	-1.0
Disagree	11	20.0	-9.0
Strongly Disagree	3	20.0	-17.0
Total	100		

**Table 8 Pak brands vs. foreign brands in quality**

Almost 49% of respondents have agreed that Pakistani brands are comparable in terms of quality to foreign brands. Thus, the findings of previous literature are negated in this situation.

**4.2.6. At least, on a national level Pakistani brands of readymade garments are as well established at foreign brands.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	20	20.0	.0
Agree	43	20.0	23.0
Neutral	25	20.0	5.0
Disagree	11	20.0	-9.0
Strongly Disagree	1	20.0	-19.0
Total	100		

A majority of respondents i.e. 43% again agreed that at least on a national level Pakistani brands were as well established as the foreign brands which show that Pakistani brands have built a strong brand image and favorable perception in the eyes of customers.

**4.2.7. Pakistani brands carry out enough marketing activities to raise their brand image.**

To support the above question respondents were asked if Pakistani brands carried out enough marketing activities to raise their brand image. Majority again agreed on it.

**4.2.8. Brand image associates you with a certain social class.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	20	20.0	.0
Agree	48	20.0	28.0
Neutral	22	20.0	2.0
Disagree	7	20.0	-13.0
Strongly Disagree	3	20.0	-17.0
Total	100		

Table 10 Brand image association with social class

Majority agreed that brand image associates them with a certain social class. This supports the views of Eastman (1999) and Mason (1992) that in developing countries customers are status conscious.

**4.2.9. Wearing a foreign brand would make you feel more prestigious than a Pakistani brand**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	14	20.0	-6.0
Agree	29	20.0	9.0
Neutral	25	20.0	5.0
Disagree	19	20.0	-1.0
Strongly Disagree	13	20.0	-7.0
Total	100		

Table 11 Foreign brand prestige vs. Pak brand prestige

Most respondents agreed that wearing a foreign brand would make them feel more prestigious. This supports the views of conspicuous consumption in apparel category of Batra et al. (2000).

**4.2.10. Pakistani brands of garments can understand and cater to the needs and demands of home market better than the foreign brands.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	16	25.0	-9.0
Agree	41	25.0	16.0
Neutral	31	25.0	6.0
Disagree	12	25.0	-13.0
Total	100		

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**Table 12 Pak brands in terms of catering needs**

41% of respondents agreed that Pakistani brands better catered to needs and demands of home market.

**4.2.11. Pakistani brand is an excellent value for money as compared to the foreign brands.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	14	25.0	-11.0
Agree	37	25.0	12.0
Neutral	27	25.0	2.0
Disagree	22	25.0	-3.0
Total	100		

**Table 13 Pak brands excellent value for money**

Out of them all, 37% agreed that Pakistani brands are excellent value for money which points to a high perceived value of Pakistani brands.

**4.2.12. Keeping price constant you will go for Pakistani brand as opposed to foreign brand while purchasing garments.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	11	20.0	-9.0
Agree	30	20.0	10.0
Neutral	19	20.0	-1.0
Disagree	32	20.0	12.0
Strongly Disagree	8	20.0	-12.0

To observe if the higher perceived value will lead to a customer purchase intention, respondents were asked if keeping price constant they would prefer Pakistani brands to foreign ones. It was seen that 32% majority disagreed that they wouldn't and 30% agreed that they would which are very close figures.

In order to know the reason we cross-tabulated the above question with prestige factor.

**4.2.13. Chi square cross tabulation of purchase intention with prestige.**

Keeping price constant you will go for Pakistani brands as opposed to foreign brands while purchasing garments.						
Wearing a foreign brand would make you feel more prestigious than Pakistani brand.		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
	Strongly Agree	1	3	1	7	2
	Agree	2	9	7	10	1
	Neutral	4	4	4	11	2
	Disagree	1	8	5	3	2
	Strongly Disagree	3	6	2	1	1

**Table 15 Purchase intention vs. Prestige**

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	Df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	45.521 <sup>a</sup>	16	.000
Likelihood Ratio	31.383	16	.012
Linear-by-Linear Association	11.548	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	100		

The chi-square value shows that the association is significant. Although respondents agreed that Pakistani brands were excellent value for money however they did not show an inclination towards purchase. The prestige factor here plays a role in influencing purchase intention.

**4.2.14. Country of origin plays a role in enhancing quality perceptions.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	18	20.0	-2.0
Agree	54	20.0	34.0
Neutral	15	20.0	-5.0
Disagree	8	20.0	-12.0
Strongly Disagree	5	20.0	-15.0
Total	100		

**Table 16 Country of origin role in quality enhancement**

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**4.2.15. Country of origin plays a role in enhancing brand image.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	12	20.0	-8.0
Agree	56	20.0	36.0
Neutral	20	20.0	.0
Disagree	9	20.0	-11.0
St. Agree	3	20.0	-17.0
Total	100		

**Table 17 Country of origin role in image enhancement**

Majority agreed that country of origin enhances quality perceptions and brand image.

**4.2.16. You consider country of origin of a brand while purchasing readymade garments.**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Strongly Agree	9	20.0	-11.0
Agree	24	20.0	4.0
Neutral	30	20.0	10.0
Disagree	34	20.0	14.0
Strongly disagree	3	20.0	-17.0

**Table 18 Country of origin impact on purchase decision**

Although country of origin is seen to influence perception of the brand, majority do not rely on it as an important extrinsic cue while purchase.

**4.2.17. What is your top priority while buying readymade garments?**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual
Quality	62	25.0	37.0
brand Image	23	25.0	-2.0
Value	14	25.0	-11.0
Country of origin	1	25.0	-24.0
Total	100		

**Table 19 Priority while purchase of garments**

The top priority for majority was the quality of garments.

From the analysis our first three hypotheses are proven to be valid i.e.

“H<sub>0</sub>= people perceive local brands of readymade garments equivalent in terms of quality and value to global brands.

H<sub>0</sub>=brand image of local brands of readymade garments is as established as that of global brands

H<sub>0</sub>=people do not consider country of origin of a brand while purchasing readymade garments”

However our fourth hypothesis was rejected and we accepted

“H<sub>1</sub>= people do not give preference to local brands over global brands while purchasing readymade garments.”

## 5. Discussion & Conclusion

From the above methodological analyses, the following points are presented for literary discussion.

- In terms of quality and brand image, the Pakistani customer equates local brands to global brands in the category of ready-made garments
- They find local brands a better value for money when compared to global brands.
- Although majority agreed that country of origin effect did enhance brand and quality perception yet they did not fully rely on it as an extrinsic cue during purchase. Hence, supporting the views of Agarwal (2003) that in real market situation country of origin effect was reduced as people relied more on intrinsic cues. Moreover, while purchasing ready-made garments a full assessment of quality can be done on spot hence one does not have to consider extrinsic cues.
- However the final preference during purchase was seen in favor of global brands. This could be attributed to the prestige factor noted by Batra et al. (2000) that influences the purchase decision. It also supports views of Wang and Chen (2004) who said, “While wearing branded apparel global brands were preferred as it could be a sign of social status and it enhanced your public image.”

### 5.1. Conclusion:

Perception is the process through which the brain interprets the stimuli to which it is exposed. Previous literature on consumer perception of foreign brands in developing countries show that they perceive it to be of better quality than local brands and hence a better value for money and they associate its brand image with prestige and sophistication. The country of origin effect also had an impact on customer perception. Products from developed country of origin were associated with high quality and value. Hence, the perception of local products was positively co-related with the economic advancement in a country. However, the previous literature in developing country setting was based on those products where local brands were not well established and the findings were generalized across all developing countries. In Pakistan, the ready-made garments industry has seen a major boom in previous decade. Big brands have emerged in this category and they have attained global recognition. The rise is mainly attributed to no compromise on quality. Hence, customer perceptions have changed and they perceive Pakistani brands at

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par with global brands in terms of quality, value and brand image. Country of origin effect is minimized and that can be related to the rise of hybrid products and brands marketing their brand name globally rather than their made in label. For example, people buy Zara because it is Zara and not because it is Spanish. The study however was confined to perception only and it did not focus on the actual sales. Further research is required in that area to compare buying patterns in a real market situation. Evaluating the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made.

### 5.2. Recommendations:

1. No compromise on quality. It is good to see that Pakistani brands are keeping up with the fashion trends but quality should never be compromised upon because a slight variation can change perceptions.
2. Pakistani brands should incorporate a global marketing strategy. The big brands should take their operations abroad and open outlets in big shopping malls. Going global will make them more prestigious in the minds of Pakistani customers.
3. Innovation is required. To go global brands have to be innovative in a way that they remain distinct and their cultural trends remain intact.
4. It is good to see Pakistani designers holding fashion shows in fashion hubs like Paris. Such efforts should be continued and they should establish themselves in the main fashion hubs so that the garments industry receives a world-wide recognition.
5. Brands should try to focus on garments for kids and infants too. That is another big sector in the market where they yet have to establish themselves locally and globally.

### 5.3 Significance of research:

This study will not only add to the existing literature but also it will help Pakistani brands assess where they stand in the eyes of Pakistani consumer. Grey areas will be identified that will help them revisit their marketing strategies.

### 5.4 Limitations and Future directions:

- Due to monetary and time constraints the research was limited to the area of Peshawar and Islamabad cities only. However, future researchers should propagate the study to other similar contexts and cities such as India and Bangladesh
- Biased response of the respondents might affect actual findings but future researchers are advised to avoid the use of any potential selection and omitted variable biases that might have affected our results to some extent.

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