



The Impact of Sharia Compliant Logo on Product Quality Perceptions

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Abstract

Extrinsic cues displayed on the product packaging play an important role in the perception formation of consumer before the actual consumption. The logo showing the compliance of the products with Shariah laws in basically the Halal logo which is an important extrinsic cue. Among the extrinsic cues, Shariah compliant Logo is one the emerging concept in the field of consumer behavior. This study aims to analyze the moderating role of consumer knowledge on the nexus of Shariah compliant logo and perceived product quality. Using Mall intercept method, data has been collected from 504 respondents in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Data has been analyzed using Smart PLS. Finding shows a significant and positive relationship between Shariah compliant logo and perceived product quality. However, there is no moderating role of consumer knowledge in this nexus. It can be concluded that Shariah compliant logo is considered a quality measure among the sampled consumers. These results are helpful for policy makers in marketing to develop research based marketing strategies. The finding of the study also helps to understand and extend extrinsic cues as it improves the perception of consumer about product quality which was overlooked previously. This study extends the literature of Islamic Marketing by providing empirical evidence on Shariah compliant logo as a quality perception.

Keywords: *Shariah compliant Logo; Consumer Knowledge; Perceived Product Quality; Islamic Marketing; Food Packaging.*



Introduction

The area of consumer behavior is the zone of interest for researchers from long time yet it has taken new turns in popularity as the consumer is becoming intelligent (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2016). The impact of consumer behavior on perceived product quality has become an area of foremost interest due to the changing nature of the consumers. According to Sharma and Garg (2016) the food packaging cues are the extrinsic cues which have an effective power to predict the quality of the enclosed product. According to the findings of Randhawa and Saluja (2017), the food packaging cues help in reducing the time in shopping and aids in perceiving the quality of the product. According to (Mishra, Jain, & Motiani, 2017) the strong relationship which is held between food packaging cues and product quality motivates the consumer for rebuying. The Shariah compliant food market has a lot of potential for business growth development. Pakistan being a Muslim dominant country, holds a minor share in this multimillion industry. So far, the Shariah compliant food industry has not flourished in the country, but it holds lucrative opportunity in both national and international markets. In order to promote this business, the Pakistani Government developed a zone for the Shariah compliant food in the region of Punjab. According to Azam (2016) growing number of Muslims around the globe presents an opportunity to develop the Shariah compliant business.

Furthermore, based on the previous studies very few studies related to such concept happen to exist in the literature. There is no such clear comprehension which exists regarding Shariah compliant logo as an effective extrinsic cue (Jamal & Sharifuddin, 2015). There are large number Muslims which are all over the globe yet there is a less focus on this consumer segment. If we develop an argument that cultural and religious forces are shaping the nature of consumer behavior and their consumption patterns, it would be inappropriate to ignore the segment of Muslim consumers. Not only the philosophy of Shariah compliant logo as an extrinsic cues has been studied on weak basis, the theoretical aspect of the concept is also been studied very weakly (Ismail, Othman, Rahman, Kamarulzaman, & Rahman, 2018).

Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

An exhaustive literature has a vital for understanding and development of hypotheses. Since it is evident that the Shariah compliant labeled products are getting an increased attention by the consumers irrespectively yet comparative to conventional marketing concepts there are fewer efforts which are being directed towards it. The following sections provide a brief overview of the past studies related to the concepts under investigation.

Shariah compliant Logo

Shariah compliance is not only an Islamic term, but it is one of the most important faith in Islam. Shariah compliant consumption which is permissible for the sake of Allah is the part of parcel of every Muslim's Faith. The meanings of the Sharia compliant are permissible in Islam for the usage of a Muslim person. The Shariah compliant logo is the Halal logo which is displayed on the product packages for displaying its fitness for usage and consumption. According to Wahab et al. (2016) the increased number of Muslim community around the globe and also heightened level of awareness in the community makes it mandatory for the companies especially food companies to display Shariah compliant logo on their packages. Furthermore, Zurina (2004) argue that Shariah compliant logo may develop a perception that enclosed food product is free of any impermissible ingredient. The strictly prohibited ingredients include pork, blood and any of their derivatives in any form. The concept of Shariah compliant provides the Muslims with the path of life and a code of conduct. In the modern days the Shariah compliant labeled product is not only considered as Islamic compliant but also as the indicator of quality (Anam, Sany Sanuri, & Ismail, 2018). According to Shaari and Mohd Arifin (2009) the non-Muslim consumers are inclined towards the Shariah compliant labeled products because they perceive these products as superior in quality as compared to other packaged products.

In order to produce the finished products which are compliant to the Shariah compliant laws, the raw materials should also be Shariah compliant (Zurina, 2004). If these conditions are fully met by company then they are compatible to operate in Sharia compliant business. Consuming Shariah compliant food items is deemed as necessary for the Muslim faith. Using any non-Shariah compliant products is abided by the Islamic teachings. The Muslim consumers consider this as a spiritual need to use the Shariah complaint products for themselves. As the religion is one of the entities which shape up the consumer behavior largely and determines the patterns of life hence Islamic consumer behavior is also a necessary dimension of the field of consumer behavior for research. According to Ayyub (2015) the modern Muslim consumers confront a wide variety of the products in their daily lives. The certification of the compliance with the Shariah laws is necessary for manufacturers, suppliers as well as marketers in order to remove any ambiguities for the consumers irrespective of religion.

Coming to the scenario of Pakistan and its Shariah compliant market potential, there is no doubt in saying that it possesses a great business prospective in this field however its shareholding is very low with respect to its Muslim population. The

packaged food companies which are operating in this field are localized and no big evidences of Sharia compliant export could be reported.

The education regarding the Shariah compliant food consumption and applying the concept of Sharia compliant in every aspect of life needs to be taught to every Muslim from a very basic level. The awareness could also be spread by advertising means but providing awareness from very basic level could be advantageous. According to Schlegelmilch, Khan, and Hair (2016) concept of Shariah compliant has been previously studied on the dimensions of health, safety and Shariah compliance. The dimension of health and quality are mostly considered by the non-Muslim consumers however by the Muslim consumers Shariah compliance is the major dimension of concern. Even though there is no ambiguity in saying that the extrinsic cues are the effective marketing stimuli which help the consumers for perception development regarding enclosed products' quality and Shariah compliant logo which is being displayed on the food packages is also one of major extrinsic cue which has been displayed on the containers. It can be proposed that Shariah compliant logo being an extrinsic cue can evoke either negative or positive quality perceptions regarding the quality of the product (Khan & Khan, 2017).

Identical results have been reported by other scholars where is has been reported that the religious symbols which are being displayed on the packages could give rise to the positive or negative product quality perceptions (Rarick, Falk, Barczyk, & Feldman, 2012). As per the outcomes of Ambali and Bakar (2014) the Shariah compliant symbols which are present on the package minimize the ambiguity which in the minds of consumers. The superiority in terms of quality of the Shariah compliant labeled products has been argued by (Demirci, Soon, & Wallace, 2016). According to Hayeemad, Jaroenwanit, and Khamwon (2015) the food with Shariah compliant logo being displayed on it is aspiring as it provides a sense of superiority and quality.

According to the research conducted by Ab Talib and Johan (2012), the packaged food product bearing a Shariah compliant logo on it is considered to be cleaner, healthier and tastier as compared to other items of the same kind. Similar kind of outcomes have been resulted by Golnaz, Zainalabidin, Mad Nasir, and Eddie Chiew (2010) in which Shariah compliant symbol is considered as a quality mark for the non-Muslim consumers. The advancement is not only restricted to food products only, but it has expanded to Shariah compliant logistics, distribution and in almost every discipline of business. Several types of extrinsic cues should be studied in order to understand their impact on product quality perceptions. Taking in view of various arguments, it can be hypothesized that

H₁: Shariah compliant logo casts a significant impact on product quality perception.

Perceived Product Quality

The product quality can be consumers to perceive about the quality and attributes of the product. Due to ever increasing awareness level of the consumers they are becoming more conscious about the quality of the product. The products of the firms with good reputation and perception in the minds of consumers are considered as high quality products (Peters & Waterman, 2006). The need of the current time for the businesses and marketers has become to study the perceptions of the consumers regarding their product and its quality. The gap between the company and the perceptions of consumers can exist but the major task is to minimize this gap. The quality is not one single thing or word but it is the package of attributes and benefits which are extended towards the consumers (Snoj, Pisnik Korda, & Mumel, 2004). The product quality perceptions are the judgments that consumers develop regarding the quality of the product.

Speaking in the context of marketing, the perceived product quality is a judgment-based approach of the consumers about the product. The actual quality of the product could differ widely from the quality perceptions of the products (Morgan & Vorhies, 2001). It is common life practice that the quality of the product is communicated through the extrinsic cues it possesses. The major cues which are evaluated by the consumers for judging the product quality is country of origin, price, logos and symbols etc. The shopping environment is also loaded with the signals which depict about the quality of the product. Each of the signals present in the shopping environment conveys certain message about the quality.

The process of selecting, organizing and interpreting the cues formulate the perceptions which in return form the meaning interpretations (Kotler & Caslione, 2009). Consumers form a meaningful idea regarding the product quality. The process of the perception formation starts from the very spot where the consumer starts to acquire the informational cues which are majorly extrinsic in nature. According to Kupiec and Revell (2001) the attributes of quality could be tangible or intangible in nature. Every cue which is presented to the consumer gives an impression to it regarding the product quality. The definition of quality presented by Maynes (1976) states that these are the characteristics of the products which the consumer is looking for and which is near to judgments of the consumers. When talking about the matter in the discipline of marketing, the perceived quality is termed as quality described by the consumer based on cues which they get from retail environment prior to the actual usage. For understanding the expectations regarding the product quality, it is mandatory for the manufacturers and marketers

to understand the perception making process of the consumers. The quality cues which are vague and non-figurative in nature are not appreciated by the consumers and do not capture the mindset. Comprehending the mindset of the consumers is not an easy job and it requires loads of research and efforts (Ergin, Akbay, & Ozsacmaci, 2014).

Consumer Knowledge

The construct of consumer knowledge has been adopted as a moderator in this study. According to Baron and Kenny (1986) argue that moderating variable can have an impact on strength of independent and dependent nexus. The moderator possesses the strength to empower or reduce the course of action between the variables. The effect could either be negative or positive or no impact. Consumer knowledge effects the perceptions of the consumers related to the product of usage however some regional differences can exist (Javeed, Mokhtar, bin Lebai Othman, & Khan). Due to the increasing level of education in Pakistan the consumer is becoming knowledgeable and they more likely to promote more healthful diets because more highly educated people access and process nutrition information more effectively (Latif, Sibghatullah, & Siddiqui, 2016). Although, the knowledge level of Pakistani consumers is increasing, the literature has a very minimal support on this regard. Investigating the relation of consumer knowledge as a moderator could yield some interesting insights regarding Pakistani consumers (Latif et al., 2016).

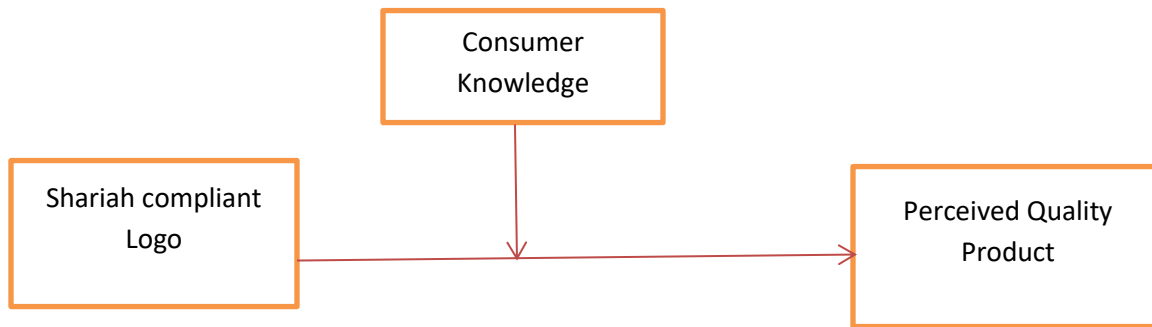
The moderators like consumer knowledge, consumer awareness, social status have been used on limited basis as moderators in the studies. Using such variables as moderators could yield important insights for literature (Qasem, Jansen, Hecking, & Hoppe, 2016). The usage of consumer knowledge as a moderator in the studies for examining the relationships regarding consumer perceptions could provide important understandings to the upcoming consumers. The consumers who are not well educated and possess less knowledge would not be able to perceive the quality of the products in a well manner. Even though there exists a theoretical link between the extrinsic cues, perceived product quality and consumer knowledge but not many studies have described this linkage in detail (Alba & Hutchinson, 2000; Veale, 2008).

The importance of Shariah compliant logo is under investigation in the modern research arena. The Shariah compliant logo is considered to an important product attribute which is actively sought by the consumer in addition to other attributes like prices and nutritional labels (Wilson & Liu, 2010). By understanding of the perception of the consumers regarding these attributes will help the marketers and manufacturers to advertise and provide the Shariah compliant certification on the

products which will maximize the acceptance level. To analyze the role of the consumer knowledge as a moderator it can be hypothesized that

H₂: The relationship of Shariah compliant logo with perceived quality of product is moderated by the consumer knowledge.

Theoretical Framework



Our theoretical framework has been constructed in accordance with the previous literature. The framework provides a clear sense of the phenomenon under investigation. The presence of Shariah compliant logo as an extrinsic cue on the food packages gives rise to the perceptions regarding the quality of the product. The consumers with higher degree of knowledge are more likely to interpret these informational extrinsic cues easily whereas on other hand it is highly probable that the one with lesser knowledge would not interpret the cue (Anam et al., 2018). It is hypothesized that the Sharia compliant logo casts a significant impact on perceived product quality and secondly either this relationship is moderated by consumer knowledge.

Research Design and Methodology

The theories are being tested by using the relationships in the quantitative studies. In quantitative mode of study, the research starts with the development of theory, establishment of hypothesis and then finally testing the relationships. A survey has been conducted using the mall intercept method. A questionnaire has been used in this survey method as it is preferable for hypothesis testing (Zikmund, D'Alessandro, Winzar, Lowe, & Babin, 2014). Such methods accommodate a larger sample easily (Uma & Roger, 2003). Table 1 shows the total population of Rawalpindi and Islamabad which are the target cities of study.

Table 1: Total Population of Islamabad and Rawalpindi

Region	Population
Islamabad	1.43 million
Rawalpindi	3.0 million
Total Population	4.43 million

Source: world population review (2016)

For a population of more than one million, a sample of 384 is considered appropriate. City wise sample proportions were selected from the malls of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. The malls were selected based on fame, geographical location and high customer turnout. The strategy of mall intercept was used for sampling the respondents. In systematic random sampling every nth respondent coming out from the mall was selected from the population. The mall intercept method is an effective technique and at the same time it is used on rare basis in the previous studies of similar nature. Taking into study the context of Pakistan, usage of mall intercept method is one of the initial attempts of data collection.

Research Instrument

When the questionnaire is being adapted exceptional care is taken to simplify the language and sentences in order to make it easier to understand. No abbreviations should be used so that respondent gets the clear meaning of what they are trying answer. The sentences which are ambiguous and unclear in nature should be avoided. The data collection instruments should be developed in manner that its questions are mutually exhaustive and exclusive in nature. The alignment of the instrument with the literature is another most important aspect. For this study, only reliable items were selected from past studies. The questionnaire was constructed in a closed structural manner on 5-point Likert scale. Demographic questions were intentionally asked in the end of the questionnaire.

Data analysis Strategy

The analysis for the study was conducted by using a combination of descriptive as well as inferential analysis. The respondent profiling and summarizing of data was also done by using SPSS. The inferential analysis was done by using variance-based technique called structural equation modelling (Qasem et al.) using Smart PLS. SEM has numerous benefits and it possesses strength to analyse models without any assumptions. The profile of respondents who have participated for the survey is shows in the Table 2.

According to the results shown by descriptive analysis, the percentage of the female respondents is 59.6% however, 40.4 of the participants were males. The female respondents were larger in percentage as compared to the male respondents. As the female consumers are majorly concerned for doing the grocery of house in Pakistani hence it was highly likely that more female consumers would be encountered while data collection.

Respondent Profile

Table 2: Respondent Profile

Demography	Indicator	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	193	40.4
	Female	285	59.6
Education	High school	206	43.1
	Bachelor	167	34.9
	Masters	71	24.5
	Doctorate	34	7.1
Age Group	18-25	160	33.5
	26-33	167	34.9
	34-41	117	24.5
	41-above	34	7.1

Furthermore, the participants who possess high school certification are 43.1% and those who possess bachelor degrees are 34.5%. It can be argued that the sample is well educated to answer the questions asked in this study and answer those in line with research purposes. Such as, 68% of respondent falls between the age of 18 and 33 years. The demographics of the age show that respondents were young as the young people have a changing life style and they are adapting to modernization and undergoing urbanization.

Descriptive Analysis

In this section of the study, we have performed descriptive analysis for the data set. The analysis is basically carried out by explaining mean, standard deviation and variance (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010).

Table 3: Descriptive Analysis

Construct	N	Min	Max	Mean	Standard Deviation
Shariah compliant logo	478	1	5	4.0827	0.6368
Consumer knowledge	478	1	5	4.106	0.7077
Perceived quality	478	1	5	4.0553	0.6787

Reliability

According to Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2011) the internal consistency of the items is measured by reliability tests. By taking into view the suggestions of Uma and Roger (2003), We have used the Cronbach alpha test in order to measure the instrument's reliability. The coefficients of the test are shown in table 4.

Table 4: Cronbach alpha test

Serial No	Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Items	Alpha if item is deleted
1.	Shariah compliant logo	0.903	11	HL1	0.899
				HL2	0.897
				HL3	0.888
				HL4	0.901
				HL5	0.890
				HL6	0.900
				HL7	0.894
				HL8	0.891
				HL9	0.894
				HL10	0.893
				HL11	0.894
2.	Consumer knowledge	0.911	10	CK1	0.912
				CK2	0.900
				CK3	0.902
				CK4	0.898
				CK5	0.903
				CK6	0.902
				CK7	0.897

Serial No	Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items	Items	Alpha if item is deleted
3.	Perceived quality	0.851	9	CK8	0.903
				CK9	0.904
				CK10	0.904
				PQ1	0.874
				PQ2	0.872
				PQ3	0.867
				PQ4	0.870
				PQ5	0.862
				PQ6	0.863
				PQ7	0.860
				PQ8	0.869
				PQ9	0.875

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses have been tested by using PLS-SEM. The direct relationship and moderation impact has also been tested. The results show that Shariah compliant logo casts a positively significant impact on perceived quality of the product. On the other hand, the moderating variable shows no moderation impact over the relationship. The explanation has been provided below:

The outcome of bootstrapping shows that the Shariah compliant logo has a positive and significant impact on perceived product quality ($\beta = 0.261$, $t = 2.056$, $p = 0.040$). Hence the first hypothesis of the study is accepted. Moving on further, the variable which interacts with the predictor variable to elucidate the criterion variable is called as moderator variable. The interaction takes place is called moderator where independent variable impact on dependent fluctuates with another variable's level (Baron & Kenny, 1986; Edwards & Lambert, 2007).

Table 5: Interaction Results

Interaction Effect	B	T-value	P-value	Decision
HL×CK	0.073	0.850	0.396	Not Accepted

The second hypothesis under discussion of the study is jotted down as consumer knowledge insignificantly interacts in the relationship. Analysis has shown in table 5 that such an interaction effect does not exist.

As per the outcomes of the analysis, the Shariah compliant label shows a substantial effect hence supporting the relationship. Additionally, the Shariah

compliant labeled products are religious defiance and also supposed as quality products (Mathew, 2014). According to Rahman, Singhry, Hanafiah, and Abdul (2017) the role of extrinsic cues specifically between Sharia compliant logo as an effective indicator of quality is not well established. According to Shariff and Lah (2014), the consumers who have a belief in the quality of Shariah compliant labeled food products prefer to consumer the products with this logo on the package. Hence it is deemed important for the marketers and practitioners to use Shariah compliant logo as extrinsic cue on food packages. A possible reason towards the explanation of this result is that Sharia compliant logo signifies that the enclosed product has its wholesomeness in it as the Islam preaches to eat wholesome foods which are free of any non-Sharia compliant ingredients. Hence, the consumers show an inclination towards Shariah compliant labelled packaged foods while choosing.

More work regarding this field has been carried out in Malaysia specifically. The results of this particular stud coincide with the outcomes of (Khan & Khan, 2017; Othman, Md. Shaarani, & Bahron, 2017). Among the few attempts which are done in Pakistan regarding Shariah compliant logo, Hussain, Rahman, Zaheer, and Saleem (2016) reveals that Pakistani consumers' quality perceptions are influenced by the presence of Shariah compliant logo on the food packages. The results show that Shariah compliant logo a positive influence on the perceptions of quality, it is suggested that more efforts should be carried out in Pakistan by marketers as well as researchers to strengthen this extrinsic cue not only in nationally but internationally. It is evident that this Shariah compliant logo is emerging as a strong extrinsic cue which shows a significant and positive relationship perceived quality of products.

Findings

The finding shows that the presence of Shariah compliant logo on food packages influence perceived product quality positively. The results could be explained otherwise that the perceptions of quality can be influenced by the Shariah compliant logo. Shariah compliant logo is considered to be an ultimate sign of quality as well as Islamic compliance. In the literature of Islamic marketing, according to Rahman et al. (2017) the establishment of Shariah compliant logo as quality indicating and an extrinsic cue is in infancy. Even though this concept is in infancy, yet it possesses an enormous potential for wider research. Thus, it is essential for the marketers and practitioner to provide with an evident Shariah compliant logo on the packages, as well as provide them with much more awareness towards it. A probable reason towards the explanation of this result is that Shariah compliant logo signifies that the enclosed product has its wholesomeness in it as the Islam preaches to eat wholesome foods which are free of any non-Sharia compliant ingredients. Hence,

the consumers show an inclination towards Shariah compliant labelled packaged foods while choosing.

More work on Islamic marketing and Shariah compliant logo is being done in Malaysia however in other Muslim dominant societies like Pakistan, India, and Bangladesh, research in this regard is comparatively very less. The results have explained that the consumers of packaged foods in Pakistan are influenced by the package containing Shariah compliant logo on it. It suggests that more efforts should be carried out in Pakistan by marketers as well as researchers in order to strengthen this cue not only nationally but internationally.

In the past studies, consumer knowledge has been used as a moderator and being recognized as an important moderator. According to [Chiou \(2003\)](#), the consumers with knowledge are much more confident in the formation of perceptions. Knowledgeable consumers receive and process the cues in the shopping environment much more confidently as compared to other consumers. The consumers are not experts by themselves but they majorly rely on the informational cues present in the shopping environment ([Jover, Montes, & Fuentes, 2004](#)). The consumers who do not possess the knowledge possibly lack the intelligence to comprehend the informational cues. Although, the Shariah compliant logo has been accepted as an extrinsic cue in Pakistani consumer market, but the relationship is not moderated by the variable of consumer knowledge.

Implications

It has been established that Shariah compliant logo is one of the most important extrinsic cue which is being considered by the packaged food consumers of Pakistan. The food packaging cues are a dependable source of marketing communication. The consumers perceive the quality information by looking at the cues available on the packages of products. This study presents important theoretical, managerial and practical contributions.

Theoretical Contributions

The previous studies conducted in consumer behaviour are focused on heuristic perspective but there are fewer studies which are focused on the extrinsic food packaging cues. The studies of consumer behaviour with a major focus on the extrinsic food packaging cues are yet to catch up ([Argo & White, 2012](#)). Previous extrinsic cues which have studied are country of origin, price, brand name and shopping environment however researcher's this study is considered among few initial research which has attempted to establish Shariah compliant logo not only as an extrinsic cue but also as a quality indicator. Another significant contribution of

this study is to use the combination of nutritional label, precautionary label and Shariah compliant logo in combination with country of origin and price including the moderating effect of consumer knowledge.

Methodological Contribution

This study not only presents theoretical contributions but also methodological contributions. Systematic random sampling method has been applied in this which is an effective methodological contribution to the literature. This sampling technique has been used on rare basis in the studies and it is one the primary attempts in Pakistani consumer market. The sampling was further considered in terms of time and gate sampling which is a further step ahead. Adoption/adaption of reliable measurement sources provides the researchers with a valid data collection instrument. Also, the usage of mall intercept method for data collection is a major contribution which is being presented by this study.

Managerial Implications

The perceptions of quality formed by the consumers are given a special attention by marketers and practitioners. The cross-cultural differences exist between the consumer behaviors of different societies. This particular attempt of study provides an understanding about the nature of Pakistani consumers and their perceptions pertaining to Shariah compliant logo and product quality. It would be beneficial for the practitioners to recognize this consumer segment. The Pakistani consumers demand a higher quality packaged food product with Shariah compliant logo on it with best value for money and they make quality assessments of the products by extrinsic cues.

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