

**Does Religiosity influence Muslim consumer buying behavior? A qualitative study in
Pakistan to find out the behavior of consumers for the food products**

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ABSTRACT

Religiosity is the factor which have a strong influence on people because it is something which is the faith, pattern of life they believe of any human being which influence the human on maximum extent and when it comes to the consumption of food products and consumer behavior towards the product, so many factors stimulate consumers to buy the product. This study focused on the consumer behavior or Muslims towards western related imported products in Pakistan. The main purpose of the study is to find out that are religious principles and laws (religiosity) the main factor or consideration which influences consumer to purchase the product. Twenty-five (25) in-depth semi structured interview was conducted to find out the results, respondents are related to different occupations and consumed the western food products. Thematic analysis was used to analyzed the data, collected data has been divided into major themes in order to understand the main factors and consideration while the purchasing the western food items, especially in Islamic region. The findings of the study indicated that religiosity factor is highly important for the consumers and they get attracted from imported product because suitable alternative product is not available in domestic market and trust level towards domestic product is low due to quality aspect. This research will be beneficial for all those marketers who are concerned for consumer behavior how they can shift consumer from western to domestic products. In the end this should be stated that the purchase of consumer may get differ on religious consideration consumption, spending patterns, cultural patterns, country patterns and boundaries, values and norms, consumer cultural restrictions, family norms and consumers perceptions but it completely depends on the intensity of believes and priority.

Key words: Religiosity, purchasing considerations, Muslim consumer behavior, food products

1. Introduction

Culture as the most crucial and relevant factor and part to explain the consumer behavior of purchase and consumption defined by (Thompson & Tambyah, 1998), (Shaw & Clarke, 1998) and (Schouten & McAlexander, 1995) (Hasan Bukhari, et al 2019) that the culture impacts a consumer life to the extent where it influences the choices made by consumers and motivation and stimulation they get at the time of purchase defined (Chang & Chuang, 2005)(Hasan Bukhari, et al 2019). One of the important determinant in consumer behavior while shopping is religiosity (Mukhlis, 2020).

Measuring religiosity factor is becoming significant to find out the perception of Muslim consumers (Salam, Muhamad, & Leong, 2019).

Religion as a most crucial element of culture describes the practices and actions performed by one individual which explains that a person who have a strong believe and faiths on religions, definitely their preferences and choices will get effected by the faiths and believes they have also the intensity of the faiths will differ their choices from others. believes of religious promises and the commitments or religiosity is basically the intensity or extent on which the religious principles, laws and values are bounded and normally followed and performed by the individual in the religion, this way of viewing gives the huge exposure to this research by focusing on influence by the religious norms or religiosity on consumer purchase behavior at the same time if we see other side the purchase behavior or buying behavior provides and explain the cognitive believes and the consumer way of purchase and it is related with the personality characteristic, qualities and traits of consumer. Sociologist defines that the personality characteristic, qualities and traits are the most main and crucial and most worth to focus which impacts on the many human practices and actions (Kotler, 2000; Sproles & Sproles, 1990; Hasan Bukhari, et al 2019).

As it is mentioned above, when it comes Pakistan, it is an Islamic republic country and it is dominated largely by the Muslim population and is governed by Islamic rules and laws but the population have different believes within the religion comparatively with the western side population of the world. but after having strong Islamic religious beliefs , medium spending pattern of money and medium consumption level of food , the overall spending of money and over all consumption on western side products is increasing rapidly in Pakistan and it is the red alarming situation for the manufacturers of Pakistan that people who have this much strong religious believes are influenced by the western culture a lot which ultimately decreasing the consumption and spending of money on the domestic products of Pakistan said by (Hasan Bukhari, et al., 2019) in their exploratory research and also it is the main problem identified by them. Salman and Siddiqui (2011) it is very necessary to do such kind of research in the countries where Muslims are in majority or countries which are Islamic republics, well Pakistan is highly populated by Muslims and is an Islamic republic but there is very less awareness and knowledge of halal foods which are being imported from western countries as compare to other Islamic countries like Malaysia and Indonesia.

The most crucial thing in marketing to identify needs of a consumer and making particular strategies for consumer behavior according to the properties and characteristics of target market or consumers. well today in marketing the marketers / sellers normally focuses on the needs of all consumers and according to that they make a solution which is a product and plan marketing activities accordingly but these activities were getting fail because of religious differences of consumers , money spending patterns of consumers and consumption of consumers . So, when seller plans same marketing activities for the whole market having different religions and cultures they normally don't get the satisfied and desired results said by (Bailey & Sood, 1993; Hasan Bukhari, et al 2019). As Pakistan is Islamic republic country and it is dominated largely by the Muslim population and is governed by Islamic rules and laws but the population have different believes within the religion, if we compare it with the beliefs of western side population of the world but after having strong Islamic religious beliefs, medium spending pattern of money and medium consumption level of food , the overall spending of money and over all consumption of western side food products is increasing rapidly in Pakistan and it is the red alarming situation for the manufacturers of Pakistan that people who have this much strong religious believes are influenced by the western culture a lot which ultimately decreasing the consumption and spending of money on the domestic products of Pakistan. This particular problem gives a sense that may be focusing on a particular religion can influence the buying behavior of the consumer in a negative way. There can be a lot of factors which can influence the buying behavior and by focusing, studying and analyzing on other factors along with religion manufacturers or sellers can draw a suitable product for target market according to their perception and interest , well preference of western foods in Pakistan people and manufacturers are getting very concerned so there is a high need to analyze and study the different perception of people and need to find out how to cope up with such factors as a marketers (Hasan Bukhari, et al., 2019).

1.1 Research objectives

The core aim of the research is to find out the association between religiosity and purchasing behavior of the Muslim consumer for western food imported in Pakistan .The objective is to find out are there other factors which influences Muslim consumers behavior, the commitment of Muslim to their religion in consumption of western halal or haram food, it will give the huge exposure to design the marketing strategy according to the perception of people or consumer.

Following are the specific research objectives:

1. To find out relatability or association between Muslim consumers' purchasing behaviour for the food which is imported from western side in Pakistan.
2. To determine the religiosity influence Muslim consumer's behaviour for buying western side product in Pakistan.
3. To ascertain the influence of religiosity on Muslim consumer's behavior for buying western side product in Pakistan.
4. To find out any other factors which influence Muslim consumer's behavior for buying western side product in Pakistan.

1.2 Implications based on practical and social usability

The research will give a brief knowledge and understanding about religiosity and its impact and influence on buying behavior of Muslim consumers in Pakistan. It is beneficial for all those people and employees who are related at associated with Marketing of any organizations, it will give benefits to all future researcher and scholars on this topic, it will also help business industry, organizations, and firms. It will also beneficial for business society and students of business administration, It will provide some help to senior executive of marketing department to plan their strategies. This research will be beneficial to all those marketers, new entrants, new manufacturers, exporters and importers who are planning the marketing strategy and analyzing the characteristics of market, they can also consider this factor and plan according to the perception of people. It is also a contribution to society to gain knowledge; it will be beneficial for the manufacturers, research scholars, students of business management and administration (masters, bachelors) and employees as well. It will help them to understand the perception of their target market and ultimately it will improve the brand image, loyalty and preference of the product. It will give the proper identity to religious factors and other factor which influences Muslim consumers , it will give the huge scope to all the new manufacturer, seller entrants to know the perception, qualities, characteristics and buying behavior of the Muslim consumers, it will give the huge help and exposure to all the manufacturer of Islamic countries, it will be beneficial for the all Islamic republic countries in knowing the consumption, spending on food by Muslims, it will be beneficial for the consumers and give them exposure of halal and haram food consumption or western food consumption. It will give the help to all investors and manufacturers coming to Pakistan for business and also help other people who want to explore Pakistan, who want to know the buying behavior of Muslim consumer

in Pakistan. It will improve the way of living of people as they gain knowledge about western foods so they will have more opportunities and more options for eating healthy food. Lastly, it will give people the knowledge and sense of western products and will lead them to modernization. It will give consumers the sense and awareness of about halal and haram food.

1.3 Aims and concepts

It has been considered that the involvement of culture to make customer behavior and satisfaction high is the most prominent factor thus it aims at defining the behavior of consumption. There is a high degree of cultural and religious influence on people lives thus it could make an effect on the choices and motives at the purchasing time (Chang L. a., 2005).As conducted in the research by (Ott, 1989), it has been clarified by the researcher that religion and culture has been characterized by the knowledge, beliefs and values of the people that seems to be generated from past cohorts. It seems to encompass from various learning behavior, primary responses, usual practices and essential traditional practices that are important to be measured, evaluate and to implement (Shweder, 1991)(Hasan Bukhari, et al 2019). The concept of religiosity has been among the mutual attitude related to practices and principles that are followed in the daily routine life thus it also aim at encouraging the comprehension of a person related to the specific religion (Mukhtar A. a., 2012).It has been also demonstrated that religion is the primary part of culture that aims at determining the action of individual thus it also aim at portraying the individuals who have complete and strong faith on the religious thoughts. It could also make an influential impact on the choices of consumers (Kotler P. a., 2010)) Religion is a most crucial, healthy element, we can say that it provides the support or it is the pillar of society's growth and establishment, It influences and stimulate the overall way of thinking, personal characteristics and behavior of consumer individually and collectively both. When it comes to religiosity, it is combined and interconnected behavior or the attitude of laws and principles and the action and practices of things perform in daily routine and life, it motivates it motivates the feeling of one person's responsibility, relativity and relationship towards another person normally when people live in society or groups said (Mukhtar & Mohsin Butt, 2012).ISLAM the religion which is based on Quran and sunnah is now the world's second highest followers (about 1.8 billion followers) it is the 2nd largest religion of the world after Christianity. Islam considered as the world's fastest growing and emerging religion in the world. Now Muslims are about 24% of world's population. However the statistics are that by 2050 the Islam will be the most emergent and fastest growing religion with 2.76 billion followers

said by (Alkhasawneh, 2015). (Ramli & Mirza, 2010) In Islam consumers are highly guided by Islamic principles, rules, norms which give them a way to spend their daily lives and Muslim should practice these laws strictly. It also gives Muslim the sense of spending money that is why the consumption of food of Muslims are guided by Islamic norms and principals.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Religiosity and buying behaviour

It has been noted that over the past few years there has been various researches that has been highlighting the idea of association between religious values and consumer purchasing behavior. Although, religion has been among the godly and socio-cultural value that has obtained a considerable amount of attention from the consumer behavior research papers. It has been partially obtained that the real outcome by the authors clearly states the fact that there is a significant effect of religious belief on the consumer buying behavior. In addition, there are known philosophies which have approved that the procedure of consumption is directly associated with the religion and is also linked with the ethnic and social class (Jamaludin, 2013).

2.2 Outcome of Muslim religiosity on buying behaviour

With respect to the outcome regarding the effects of Muslim religiosity on buying behavior, the results displays that there is a strong relationship between the influence of religiosity in the Islamic countries on buying behavior of customers (Al-Hyari, 2012). Most probably, the Muslim buyers are usually much concerned on buying Halal things and are much focused to assess all halal attributes of the product before buying it. Those countries which have strict Islamic laws and Shariah to follow usually adhere those companies who sell products with unacceptable ingredients. Hence, in the multi-religious countries, it is become quite complex for the Muslim consumers as there are no sorted ingredients hence, it must be always important for the multinational companies to take care regarding the taste of multi ethnic cultures. The primary acceptance of spiritual and religious views could increase to captivate the Muslim customers (Baig, 2016)

2.3 Marketing & Islamic branding

Marketing has been considered as the primary activity and the set of process or institution that aims at communicating, creating, exchanging and delivering the offerings that will help in accomplishing the value of the clients, customers, partners and society (AMA, 2013). In addition, it has been

considered to be specific for the accomplishment of Islamic marketing that aims to target the Muslim consumer behavior thus the values and offers aims to be customized as per the idea and concept of religion. The Consumers could be distinct as per their religious point of view as compared to the users that are general. In addition, the Muslim consumers could utilize the specific resource, tool and skills to provide the customers with the alluring experience (Sandikci, 2011). This is the reason that the rise in the diversity in the religion and religious aspects has become one of the challenging factor for the companies. In order to empower the evolving buying behavior, it is important to focus on all the aspects and potential target market needs.

In addition, it has been noted that it is not really a surprise that there has been recent bloom in various religions and especially Islam and the religious aspect has main and primary focus on gaining high priority to focus on the factor of religiosity and to gain high demands of the people of all the religions inside Islam and outside Islam (Alserhan, 2010). It is also one of the unique phenomenon that this is the highest focal point for the marketers when making discussion on the marketing aspects in the academic and professional world (Wilson, 2010). With respect to Islam, it is clear that there is a high preference and priority of the halal brands rather than the haram brands especially in the countries where there is high ratio of Muslims. The marketers must keep major focus on Sharia by keeping in mind the primary goal of Muslims. The essential element to be focused for the Muslim customers involves the compliance with Sharia. This could be implied on different factors including the character of the brand, interchanges and conducts (Alserhan, 2010). The idea of following ISLAMIC branding in the Muslim country must be the primary potential for the marketer and every Muslim customer want to consume the products and services that are aligned with the Islamic forums and laws (Jumani, 2012). For the consumers who are Muslim, the implication of the Islamic principle is the major guideline to be followed and this could help in the development of the demanded product (Minkus-McKenna, 2007).

2.4 Religiosity

The study has made a focal concern on the matter of religiosity however, it has been referring as the primary and important concern for all the human being in the social and personal life however, it needs the most vital attention and has been considered as the important dimension of culture that could affect the customer behavior (Delener, 1990). In addition, religiosity has been considered as the primary belief of an individual and the strong commitment that aims to make actions as per the believed principles that has been set by God (Weaver, 2002).

Aziz, Baker, Zaaba and Hassan (2019) found out in their study conducted in Malaysian region that while purchasing food (halal) at restaurant, the purchase intention of Muslims and Non-Muslims is affected by attitude and religion factor. As per the research, researchers believe of religious promises and the commitments or religiosity is basically the intensity or extent on which the religious principles, laws and values are bounded and normally followed and performed by the individual in the religion, this way of viewing gives the huge exposure to this research by focusing on influence by the religious norms or religiosity on consumer purchase behavior. Well if we see other side the purchase behavior or buying behavior provides and explain the cognitive believes and the consumer way of purchase and it is related with the personality characteristic, qualities and traits of consumer (Hunter, 2012).

2.5 Value consciousness

There is also an idea of value consciousness in the factor of religiosity however, the focus on the conventional theory has been considered as the best aspect to be focused. In addition, the use of conventional theory aims to believe that consumer behavior has been considered as the thought of making maximum utilization of the product or the service (Thaler, 1983). In other aspect, the idea of maximizing the utility when the customers do not evaluate the goods and service value available and compare them with the competitor product price makes the perception of the consumer. Moreover, the use of ingredients in the product is also one of the primary factors that affects the consumer behavior any way (Lichtenstein, 1990). The marketers must focus on the theory to catch the consumer behavior which believes that the customers make up a conventional perspective on some product that looks good and have high quality thus quality is all about religiosity (Adnan, 2011).

3. Research Method:

This is an exploratory qualitative research study to find out the influence of religion as matter of consideration in purchasing western (imported) products. The data has been collected by using Semi structured in- depth interview to gain the pertinent insight because face to face interview will be more helpful and expressive and this method is comprehensive (Mangan et al, 2004; Bukhari et al, 2019). The purpose of the study was to observe the live experience what respondents actually think regarding the subject matter for the suitable technique and for this reason observation and in-depth interview were held after conducting the pilot study and validated by the field experts (Saunder et

al, 2009). The sampling technique used in this research was heterogeneous to see the variations and similar patterns among the respondents and the number of sample size was 25 from the major cities of Pakistan including Karachi, Lahore, Islamabad, Faisalabad comparatively the sample size is small from the quantitative research but if the purpose the study and point of saturation met small sample size would be justified enough and there will be no need for a larger sample size (Couch & Mc Kenzie, 2006; Glaser & Strauss, 2017), before conducting the interviewer researchers have made the interview protocols among the respondents mostly were graduate and belong to the diverse field having age from 26 to 55 years old respondents. All the interviews have been recorded through transcript and have been used as the proof. All these 25 participants have belonged from Muslim religion. These consumers have been related from urban cities and are residents of Pakistan. These participants have chosen from different occupations because we want the people from different mindsets and thinking to get relevant findings related to main considerations. The interviews have been conducted in a peaceful and smooth manner moreover the purpose the of the study is to investigate very important yet diligent concept so in entire session researcher tried to encourage the participants and probe them in constructive manner (Saunders et al, 2009). All the confidential information, recordings have been saved to ensure their privacy as it is researcher's ethical responsibility. Thematic analysis has applied for data analysis and to find the results and researcher has shown the clear and true findings (Bukhari et al, 2019).

4. Results:

This section contained the findings taken from interview session and narrations of respondents that will collectively helpful to reach some conclusion and important practical implications.

Table no 1: Demographic profile

Serial	Gender	Age	Occupation	Qualification	Religion
1	Male	25	Software house	Bachelors	Islam
2	Male	34	Manager at K Electric	Master	Islam
3	Male	55	Government employee(manager)	Masters	Islam
4	Female	38	Teacher	Masters	Islam

5	Female	30	FMCG	Masters	Islam
6	Female	37	Entrepreneur	Masters	Islam
7	Female	28	House wife	Bachelors	Islam
8	Female	31	House wife	Bachelors	Islam
9	Male	34	Office job	Bachelors	Islam
10	Male	30	Banker	Masters	Islam
11	Female	28	Banker	Masters	Islam
12	Female	29	Housewife	Bachelors	Islam
13	Female	34	Housewife	Bachelors	Islam
14	Female	27	Teacher	Bachelors	Islam
15	Female	31	Educationist	Masters	Islam
16	Male	31	FMCG	Bachelors	Islam
17	Male	39	Banker	Masters	Islam
18	Male	29	Education	Bachelors	Islam
19	Female	27	Housewife	Bachelors	Islam
20	Female	29	Doctor	Masters	Islam
21	Female	28	Teacher	Bachelors	Islam
22	Female	30	Banker	Bachelors	Islam
23	Female	34	Consultancy	Masters	Islam
24	Female	35	Auditing	Bachelors	Islam
25	Female	26	Housewife	Bachelors	Islam

(Source: Developed by the authors from findings)

The table no 1 is showing the demographical profile of the respondents. The interview session was conducted from array of people who have two things are in common that is religion and consumption of western food products, All of them are related to reputable jobs and good qualifications mostly are masters and their age ranges are between 25 till 50, majority of respondents

are married and settled and consumers of western imported products. Some of them practice religion at medium intensity and some of them are high intensity believer of Islam.

Table no 2: Western imported foods we took as Categories

1. *Chocolates*
2. *Candies*
3. *Honey*
4. *Vegetable oil(olive oil, almond and coconut oil)*
5. *Dairy products(cheese , condensed milk etc)*
6. *Juices*
7. *Sauces*
8. *Chips*
9. *Meats (chicken frozen foods , tuna , fishes etc)*

The table no 2 is showing the categories of food product we have taken for western imported products .which includes chocolates, candies , oil , dairy products, juices , chips meat etc .these products are basically chosen because of high consumption and spending patterns. These products are daily routine products that is why usage of these products are high.

Table no 3: Coding of the responses

<i>Codes</i>	<i>Responses</i>
001	<i>There is a concept of halal and haram in Islam. it is inherited in me by birth</i>
002	<i>the quality of international products is good by 100 %</i>
003	<i>I believe that the aspect of religious norms must be always in the consideration buy any product</i>
004	<i>Logo, packaging and ingredients, halal logo of the products are best source convey the message of company whether halal or haram. Ingredients and h logo are the main communication by company.</i>

- 005 *I believe that the aspect of price must be always in the consideration to buy western product because they are normally high in prices but best in quality*
- 006 *I have heard that there are some of the ingredients in Lays that are Haram and that time, I partially switched to another brand but not completely”*
- 007 *It’s a sad reality but I don’t find authenticity and confidence in the domestic product neither they provide me a good social class.*
- 008 *Being a Muslim I will give first priority to halal product if I know there is some source of ingredient in the product which is not halal.*
- 009 *Need is my very first priority whether product is western imported or domestic*
- 010 *In food product I will never ever compromise on health at any cost, I rather choose to quit that product which is not good in quality and taste.*
- 011 *now a days people buy product based on cost, quality, and attractive features, the manufacturing food product from domestic manufacturer should consider the above factor*
- 012 *There is a high need of strict rules and regulation and food authorities who should investigate and do proper check and balance.*
- 013 *Halal logo is the authentication that we are in trusted hands.*
- 014 *In my perspective religiosity as a Muslim and being a citizen of Islamic republic have not so strong image in our spending I agree that there is some impact and effect but it’s not necessary that product should be designed according to religious*
- 015 *I think that western authorities for food inspection are very strong they do not compromise on health that why I am very sure that western products are healthy and safe in terms of our considerations for health.*
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The table no 3 is showing the coding researcher did for the same answers and responses that has been collected from the interview sessions.

Following are the summary of respondents opinion according the main and sub themes which actually highlighted essence of main findings; these themes actually addressed the research questions, each theme explored and identified the purchasing pattern along with some factors which are sub consciously considered among some buyers, along with thematic analysis discussion further elaborated the concept and factor of religion and its importance:

Theme no 01: Concept of halal and haram and effect of the ingredients and halal logo on consumer purchase stimulation and intentions:

“If we go on the aspect of our religious belief of Islam so there is a concept of halal and haram in Islam there is a restriction for haram and Islam allow the Halal.it is inherited in me by birth). (Respondent’s opinion)”

“As per my religious aspect the term Halal means that is lawful and anything that is permissible to eat while Haram is any ingredient or food that is forbidden for them in the religion. My parents always taught me the difference between Haram and Halal and I always follow it to encourage my faith” (Respondent’s opinion)”

“{It has indulge in me from the time i was born. And that is why i am very aware about the concept of halal and haram. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“We only prefer halal food ,Halal Meat etc Haram food is not allowed for us as we are believers of Islam ,as per my knowledge haram food are those which we are not allowed eat according to shariah law of Islam . (Respondent’s opinion)”

1.1 Ingredients:

“Logo, packaging and ingredients, halal logo of the products are best source to convey the message of company whether halal or haram. Ingredients and halal logo is the main communication by company (Respondent’s opinion).”

“Packaging, ingredient of imported product really matter for me because they show prescribed detailed of product but most of the people doesn’t care about that (Respondent’s opinion).”

“Ingredients on back of packaging really matters to me because it allows me to check the amount of spices, calories, energy. It allows me to check some ingredients which are allergic to me. It does affect my purchasing decisions for western products (Respondent’s opinion)”

“Packaging, logo, ingredients are the basic factors and attributes to know the product. We can’t trust the product which don’t have logo, good packaging and ingredients. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“Logo, Packaging and ingredients are helpful for consumer for choosing halal product and they satisfy customers about the product. (Respondent’s opinion)”

1.2 Halal logo as an important factor:

“Halal logo is the authentication that we are in trusted hands. (Respondent’s opinion).”

“Logo is a sign which helps me to recall and recognize the company .it shows that in case of any issue we call identify country and company for claim. (Respondent’s opinion)”

Theme no 2: Impact of Islamic laws and principles or religiosity on Muslim consumers at the of purchase food products:

“I believe that the aspect of religious norms must be always in the consideration to buy any product (Respondent’s opinion)”

“Islamic principles are one of the basic reasons whenever we are buying meat or anything. Islam allows Muslims to only have Halal food and drinks and not haram. So we consider these rules before buying any product. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“Religiosity matters a lot, at the time we buy product, being a Muslim people must consider these religious faith and norms and now a days due to our strong belief, different impacts of culture, and different believes and shariah laws fluctuate our buying decisions. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“In my perspective religiosity as a Muslim and being a citizen of Islamic republic have not so strong image in our spending i agree that there is some impact and effect but it’s not necessary that product should be designed according to religion. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“there is some need of designing product according to the religious and cultural need of a Muslim consumer on different levels of class it may differ but as a middle class person and as a medium intensity of believer of Islam i can say my behavior is partial because religiosity is not only the factor which needs to look after many other factors can make huge differences like quality, price, taste etc. (Respondent’s opinion)”

Theme no 3: Religiosity and other factors which are in consideration of Muslim consumers

3.1 regulatory bodies for food inspection:

“There is a high need of strict rules and regulation and food authorities who will investigate and do proper check and balance for domestic products. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“I think that western authorities for food inspection are very strong they do not compromise on health that why I am very sure that western products are healthy and safe in terms of our considerations for health. (Respondent’s opinion) “

“The criteria of inspection in regulatory body should be upgraded. The proper training is necessary for domestic manufacturers for quality management. This is how they can get more customers who are currently buying western products. (Respondent’s opinion)”

3.2 Health as a factor:

“I think that western authorities for food inspection are very strong they do not compromise on health that why I am very sure that western products are healthy and safe in terms of our considerations for health (Respondent’s opinion)”

“It’s not about western products are healthier or not or religion is the only matter I focus. It’s about providing quality, and whoever provides quality will have me as a consumer, but I have a little partial behavior for the quality for western products. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“Religion is my priority but many times in food products I will never ever compromise on health at any cost, I rather choose to quit that product which is not good in quality and taste. (Respondent’s opinion)”

“It’s true. I don’t know why I find it quite safe and healthy to have western products. Maybe some catastrophic incidents have changed my perception badly” (Respondent’s opinion)

“All kinds of food products which are imported from different countries should be manufactured on a domestic level with proper hygienic levels and healthier. The companies pay off their 100% in making products safer and healthier they should use all proper safety standards in industries for making products safer with good quality. Along with the consideration of religious concerns of consumers (Respondent’s opinion)”

3.3 Incident or case you went through related to haram product and health:

“I have heard that there are some of the ingredients in Lays that are Haram and at that time, I partially switched to another brand but not completely may be my religious concern was compromised” (Respondent’s opinion)”

“I became much aware when there was a case occurrence of Frito Lays which is a highly consumed snack. I have heard that there are some of the ingredients in Lays that are Haram and we should stop having it as a snack. At that time, for a little time period I switched towards buying domestic products” (Respondent’s opinion)”

3.4 Quality as a factor:

“Yes as we all know that the imported product are know just because of their reliability and quality and in Pakistan mostly people have a perception in mind to buy imported one and have a poor perception of local one just because to show their lifestyle in social class.(Respondent’s opinion)”

“As we saw imported product, the first thing which clicks on my mind is it’s so expensive but although it is more good in quality and hygienic that’s way is build a kind of confidence and satisfaction as compare to domestic ones and the matter of fact is whatever our religious concerns are we look for best quality always along with religion boundaries (Respondent’s opinion)”

“Personally, the quality of international products is good but some of the products are doubted to have Haram ingredients. This is the reason I believe to have domestic product with good quality” (Respondent’s opinion)”

“Now a day’s people buy product based on cost, quality, and attractive features, and cultural boundaries like religion, way of life so the manufacturing food product from domestic manufacturer should consider all the above factors. (Respondent’s opinion)”

There are number of things that can be improved against the prices we are paying for them.

- i. Increase product’s quantity against the value they are demanding.*
- ii. Increase product’s quality against the value being paid.*
- iii. Products should come with best before with dates, in foreign we get to see them even on eggs.*
- iv. Products should consider about their packaging for the value they are getting. (respondent 8)*

Our food manufacturers must focus on providing processed foods and must make the scale of processing at high level with good quality and taste” (Respondent’s opinion)”

The concept of halal haram is very clear in the consumers and as per their opinion it was planted in them from their birth and gradually the part of their upbringing. Their family, friend circle, belongings remind and make their faith strong on halal and haram concept. Well comparison to other researchers (Hasan Bukhari, et al 2019) said that Muslim consumers in Pakistan are generally very aware about the concept of the halal and haram. As this can be seen very clearly in the finding respondents said that halal logo is the authentication for the consumers that they are using safe and healthy product. Halal logo plays a role of sign of authenticity plus it gives the people recall and recognition of product. Halal logo also shows that company is very responsible towards the health of the consumers and this generates the high trust of consumers on company which ultimately results in strong consumer purchase behavior and loyalty said by Giusti (2008) (Hasan et al 2019)

when it comes to the religiosity we can say that it is a factor which do influence people to some extent, and Muslim consumers who are medium believers normally don't consider the religious factor but those who has a strong faith on Islam and very much involved in their religion so their religion will 100% differ and make impact depends on the involvement of consumer and their intensity of following their religion (Al-Hyari, 2012). Hasan et al (2019) mentioned in their work as long as quality is well we will not care about anything. They can compromise on other things like price and all but will not compromise for quality and health. Some of respondents said that they have a perception that if some product belongs to any western country it must be very good in quality no matter what the price is. Somehow when we discuss about the factors some of the researcher like discussed that along with the religious factor health, safety, quality of the product do matters a lot. At some extent price and value also matters (Giusti et al. 2008; Hasan et al 2019) as far as religiosity is concern we can say that people believe on the western products a lot that is why they don't consider religiosity and they don't bother to see the ingredients on the back of the pack. They trust a lot on the brand image of companies and products.

5. Discussion:

In this study three themes have been generated on the basis of responses which are concept of halal and haram and effect of the ingredients and halal logo on consumer purchase stimulation and intentions religiosity and other factors which are in consideration of Muslim consumers, impact of Islamic laws and principles or religiosity on Muslim consumers at the of purchase food products. . It is found out that imported products that consumers do get attract from imported products but they buys the product because of no alternative available in domestic products related to quality. When consumer buys domestic product they must aware about haram logo signs and check all the ingredients with packaging. According to consumers domestic products are mostly halal but in international products they may have to check in a proper way with all reading on packaging. their believes are very strong about halal products because they believes that A Muslim cannot compromise on Haram product which indicates that people who have strong religious believers and strong faiths will never compromise. Religiosity is highly important for them confirmed by (Mokhlis, 2010) and Muslim consumers will also choose the product which are favourable for them and also they look for Islamic characteristics of the product as a Muslim consumer. The study of (Mukhtar et al 2012) also confirms that Muslim consider the product attributes with respect to Islamic laws and principals. As per the other responses, it is clear that people are not much towards

the domestic product and do not have much trust on the processing and manufacturing of the domestic products. They don't consider religiosity and religious principals very much when it comes to buy the product. It also depends on the involvement of consumers into religion. Their cultural differences , countries , life style , way of living , social class and family restrictions Hence, the manufacturers must focus on the suggestions of improving their effectiveness in manufacturing to enhance brand recognition and to captivate the consumers towards domestic brand this was also claim by (Essoo, 2004) in his study. Our study also finds that the purchasing decision and consumer behavior of Muslims it depends on how much and on how much extent the consumer is dedicated to their religion and its principals and laws this thing was also proposed by Mokhlis et al (2010) about the degree of involvement of the consumer and dedication towards religion while the study of Nickerson & Nandialath (2019) shows that religious aspect in promotional strategy among Muslim consumers leads to higher purchase intention. In comparison with the other literature and findings it can be said people of Pakistan are pretty much aware about the halal and haram concept and it depends on the intensity of their involvement into their religion. When the intensity level is high they will definitely look for ingredients, halal logo, quality, religious concerns, and health factors for buying. But when they are medium or less involved they will simply trust the manufacturer and go for the product with taking the above factors and religiosity in consideration confirmed by the study of (Mokhlis et al 2010) however as per the findings of the study it can be said that people who are less involved feels easy and looks these things very lightly (free with their religion laws) and it may be confirms them to use any type of product this was also said by (Essoo & Dibb, 2004) in his study. In the end this should be stated that the purchase of consumer may get differ on religious consideration, consumption , spending patterns, cultural patterns, country patterns and boundaries , cultural values and norms, consumer cultural restrictions, family norms and consumers perceptions but it completely depend on the intensity of believes and priority. Many Muslim consumer with low involvement or high involvement in religion will always look for quality and health and safety concerns.

6. Conclusion:

It has been known that religiosity has been considered as an important factor that could create strong effect on the people however, the report clearly illustrates that the religious factor is something that creates pattern of life, faith and could help the people to believe thus it aims to influence the person at high extent. This research mainly focuses on the consideration of religious factor on the food

products hence, it reflects that when there is a focus on the consumption of food, Muslims have high consideration on consuming Halal and Haram products. In addition, it has been noted that there are major factors which could stimulate the behavior of the customers to purchase the product. The most important consideration is the inclusion of Halal ingredient. The focal point of this study is to evaluate the Muslims or consumer behavior towards the idea of western related products in Pakistan and to explore the religious principles and laws that could influence the customer behavior and purchasing intention of the product. Hence, it could also help in exploring the semi structured interview that has been done in this study to obtain their viewpoint.

From the perception of the consumer, the research identified the fact that the religiosity factor could have an influence thus it is the key factor which could shapeup the mindset of the customer any way. As per the findings of research, there has been a well-known incident which depicts that there must be boycott on the imported goods. The research also depicts that the study might also support the western exporters of food to evaluate the risk of making the public sentiments offended. In a nutshell, it is important to understand the diversity and wellbeing of the behavior thus it could be possible by making up an utmost policy to be followed by clear understanding of the society trends and determinants of food choice.

7. Recommendations

With respect to the recommendations, the companies must aim at enhancing the food quality by focusing on the religious aspects of the Muslims and to not hurt the intentions of religious factors. The idea of western food in the Muslim country could be also improved if they focus on bringing cultural diversity as it could also make the under developed country into developed. The food manufacturers either western must study the behavior of the Pakistani consumers to gravitate the western imported food. The Pakistani local food must aim to gain high value of information and to improve the product. Awareness about the religious factors to prompt the customers in buying western imported foods could help in encouraging religiosity factor in the food range.

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