

## The Impact of Indulgence and Restrain cultural dimension on Brand equity

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### Abstract

Developing brand equity is becoming the most essential phenomena in contemporary brand management and marketing field, particularly in a culturally diversified society. Hofstede's cultural dimensions are widely known for identifying and explaining consumer behavior and cultural characteristics in various domains among which understanding customer's cultural orientations with respect to their buying decisions is one of them. Indulgence Vs. Restrained cultural dimension is less explored and researched dimension specifically in Pakistani business market.

This research paper aims to find the impact of indulgent and restrain culture dimension on brand equity with the mediation of brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image and perceived quality to find the impact of this dimension on brand equity and indirectly on consumer's decision making. As indulgence vs. restraint cultural dimension is less researched and explored areas, especially, in Pakistan. As consumers' buying decisions finally turn into brand equity, this research would contribute to the existing literature on determining brand equity with respect to cultural factor and its dimensions especially indulgence vs restrain cultural dimension.

This research is explanatory in nature and based on Hofstede culture dimension framework and Aaker model of brand equity. A sample size of 384 male and female customers aged between 16 to 55 years of different Pakistani apparel brands were approached at the time when they were actually shopping branded apparel. Data has been collected in Karachi from four different shopping malls located in prime locations in Karachi by using Mall Intercept technique.

**Key words:** Indulgence, Restraint cultural dimension, brand equity, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, and perceive quality.

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## 1. Introduction

Textile, and the Apparel industry of Pakistan constitutes 58.6% of total national exports and engages 40% labor force of the manufacturing sector. According to Economic Survey of Pakistan (2018) Pakistan shares 13% of global apparel exports mainly to European, North American and Middle Eastern market worth US\$ 3.47 billion in 2018-2019. The industry has potential to grow further many fold in the era of globalization as market is expanding and various societies are getting closer in national and international market. Locally or internationally, distinct culture has different preferences in their consumptions and they demand different branding strategy. Hence, development of brand equity is considered as one of the basic branding strategy for success of every business either in terms of acquiring higher profits or retaining customers in modern marketing environment (Talay, 2019) though it is a challenging task for entrepreneurs. The most challenging task for them is to understand the cultural values of different customers because of the fact that customers' preferences, choice of brands and buying decisions are influenced by their culture (Bao, 2003). In this context, Geert Hofstede a social scientist, international culture and management expert introduced five initial cultural dimensions applicable in organizational and social context. Hofstede's six dimension model is widely known to understand the social and individual behavior's aspects of consumer culture in marketing and management fields.

Various marketing professional has used Hofstede work to analyze the actual phenomena and stimuli of these cultural dimensions on consumer behavior and their decision making (Enkh-Amgalan, 2016). These six dimensions (cultural model) of Hofstede are as follows:

1. Power distance
2. Uncertainty avoidance,
3. Individualism/collectivism
4. Masculinity/femininity
5. Long-term/Short term orientation and
6. Indulgence vs. Restrain (IvR)

As explained the importance of the Textile, and Apparel industry of Pakistan at the beginning, it reflects that these industries are the back bone of the economy of Pakistan. Hence, it is immensely important to protect and promote these industries on the basis of scientific knowledge. Having in mind the paucity of research in Pakistan in this knowledge area and the cultural dimensions introduced by Hofstede, this study is based on the objectives to find out the impact of the sixth cultural dimension with reference to Pakistan, the impact of IvR on brand equity, the relationship between IvR and brand equity, relationship between IvR and brand equity with the mediation of brand loyalty, the relationship between IvR and brand equity with the mediation of brand image and to find out the relationship between IvR and brand equity with the mediation of perceived quality. For the purpose, to find the answers to the specific questions "how IvR cultural dimension impact on brand awareness on brand equity, on brand loyalty, on brand image and

perceived quality?” have been formulated. Further, on the basis, of relevant literature on IvR in the proceeding section, 12 hypotheses have been developed to test.

## 2. Literature Review

Indulgence vs. Restrain: indulgence and restrain culture dimension refer to people attempt to hold their desires and impulses or release them without taking second glance on preference of brand. Indulgence most of the time shows weak control on desires and it refers impulsive buying behavior. According to Hofstede cultural dimension index Pakistan is at the lowest score of “0” in indulgence that shows Pakistan’s culture is more toward restraint dimension and researchers haven’t explored this dimension in Pakistani market. Societies with weak score in this dimensions such as Pakistani society are considered as cynicism and pessimism. Because of the fact that in restraint societies, the importance of leisure time and free rules for all members are less emphasized (Wali, 2014). Some of the characteristics of both dimensions are mentioned below in Table 1.

**Table 1**

<b>Indulgence</b>	<b>Restraint</b>
Less control over desires and wants in decision making; lower interest in disciplines and restrictions.	Moderate in decision making; few desires and wants; define discipline for behaviors.
Higher optimism and trust; more positive evaluations of options.	More pessimism; less trust; more negative evaluations of options.
Thrift is not very important; more freedom in spending and purchase.	High importance of thrift; lower interest in spending and purchase.
Higher importance of leisure and pleasure. Higher interest in fun-oriented consumption.	Lower importance of leisure & pleasure in life. Lower interest in fun-oriented consumption.

(Bathae, 2014)

Restrain cultural dimension focus on self-control and persistence. Previous researchers on consume behavior have found the concept of irresistible control among consumers. Rook (1987) explained intense impact of impulse under which consumer feel helpless to control or hold their desire of shopping. On contrary, indulgence represent the concept of happiness and wealth. Indulgence narrates the positivity of individual and pleasant emotions which consumer under indulgence feel and enjoy every moment of their lives.

The IvR dimension is quite new and few researches have been conducted up till now that’s why many underlying dimensions are not explored yet however some of the key differences on individuals holding indulgence and restrain pole and its effect of consumer behavior and consumption pattern have been reviewed (Hofstede, 2010). The higher level of indulgence and restrain has been explained by (Minkov, 2007; Hofstede, 2010) in which the intensity of either dimension is discussed for example intense level of restrain would affect individuals to go for moderate decision making with limited desires and wants to fulfill, or to prioritize the list of desires of buying. In restrain dimension individuals are prone to show less

interest on acquiring everything they want in their life. On contrary the higher level of indulgence is completely the other way round of restrain in which individuals are free to express their emotion and higher level of interest. Indulgence and restrain dimension has strong influence on consumer behavior because desire and interest are two factors which are present in almost all consumer behavior models and considered as main influencing factors in purchase decision (De Mooij, 2004 ; Hawkins, 2004).

Hofstede & Minkov, 2010 explain the impact of indulgent and restrained dimensions on consumer buying decisions through the influence of this dimension on society, like greater intensity of restrain could develop negative feelings in individuals because of the various social restrictions imposed on individual's free will on decision making. This characteristic of restrain society would influence consumer decision making power, because under this dimension individual may hold the purchase of branded products, limit him/ her from new options and compromise on his purchase and decrease his satisfaction level. Further Hofstede in his research define restrain dimension associated with thrift. Usually in other philosophies thrift is considered as one of the reason of poverty but according to (Hofstede et al., 2010), it is not necessary that thrift is a result of poverty but some time cultural dimension affect people's way of living i.e. higher interest in thrift shows lower interest in spending more. Restrain and indulgence dimension worked on oneself leisure time. In *indulgence* oriented culture most of the times fun loving individuals included, whereas in restrain society the concept of leisure and fun is less desirable, people behavior under restrain culture people are more task oriented and considering having entertainment as use less activities (Hofstede & Minkov, 2010). This characteristics of indulgence and restrain society of having pleasure out of leisure time added into shopping activities e.g. Luxury shopping considered as fun activities for indulgence oriented individuals. Variety seeking activities, innovativeness in quality and design, and switching behavior comes under indulgence and negatively correlate with restraint dimension. (Inglehart, 2003), through his analysis of cultural dimension introduced the concept of well-being versus survival, which reflect the main concept of restraint and indulgence society. As restrain reflect artificially curbed the natural desires and enjoyment in life because of the imposition of strict social norms, where the opposite pole is indulgence that has tendency to allow free gratification (Minkov, 2007). In other words both the dimensions are measuring the internal pleasures and happiness of individuals in the society.

## 2.1 Factors of Brand equity

Brands play a vital part for businesses in increasing an association with their Customers and improve their market performance and representation (Schau et al., 2009). Brand is non -physical concept which is connected with everyone's lives in almost every tangible way. Brand equity is basic marketing asset (Ambler, 2003; Davis, 2000), which create and maintain unique relationship and attachment with its customers. Brand equity has engaged the central place in consumer purchase decision, and help to develop and maintain positive image in the mind of customers. As well as the concept of brand equity helps to satisfy customers in such a way that that their negative perception reduces (if develop because of inconvenient experience faced by customer) at the time of when any familiar brand launch a new product line or brand, or new brand arrive. There are many other distinct concepts available for consumer's choice

evaluation and determining factors. In the end, impact on consumer mindset determining brand equity is among the most important concept (Alexandra, 2018). According to (Keller, 1993) brand equity reduces the chances of product failure. That is why fact that brand equity clutch many other dimensions and sub-dimensions all together including brand awareness, perceive quality, brand image, and brand loyalty are considered as the pillar of developing brand equity (Keller, 2011).

## **2.2 Brand awareness**

Brand awareness is the consumer's capability to recall and recognize brand in the presence of many substitutes available of the same category in the market. Brand awareness follow brand equity by simply explaining whether consumer know about brand or not (Keller, 2003). Brand awareness is generated by following brand knowledge which help customers in decision making at the time of purchase. Brand awareness refer to the recognition of brand name, logo, and offerings.

## **2.3 Brand loyalty**

Brand loyalty is the main factor that considered as essential criteria of creating brand equity (Keller, 2003). Brand loyalty displays steady purchases of a product by customers of any specific brand and respond favorable and shows resistance in switching to another competitor brands (Yoo et al., 2000; Romaniuk & Nancy-Thiel, 2001; Chen & Ann, 2016). Keller (2003) explained loyalty as a long lasting concept and develops from one generation to another generation and takes many years to develop because it is experiential and constantly providing good quality and service.

## **2.4 Brand Image**

Brand image is the most inducing factor which change consumer approach toward particular product or an organization that is why it is called as "the heart of all promotional activities" (Michaelidou, 2015). Brand image is measured as the essential driven force of brand equity that directly put influence on consumer attitude and behavior through its quality and attributes feedbacks and reviews and enhance positive perception about any specific brand (Zhang, 2015).

## **2.5 Perceived Quality**

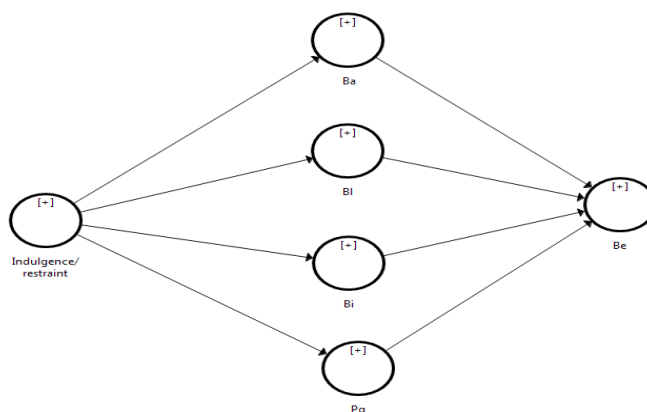
Zeithmal, (1988) explains perceived quality as consumer's verdicts about product's performance and excellence and the gap between probable and real quality of the product. Similarly it is a difficult task for the customers to judge the quality and superiority of the product or brand earlier to have its experience. Lichtenstein & Burton (1989) found feeble relationship between perceived and objected quality of product/ brand. Mostly, consumer considers prices as a gauge of quality by keeping the market situation in mind which says you get what you pay for (Gerstner 1985; Lichtenstein & Burton 1989; Monroe & Krishnan 1985). Prices of brands also consider as an indicator of perceive quality (Myung Soo Jo, 2007).

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework and Measurement Model

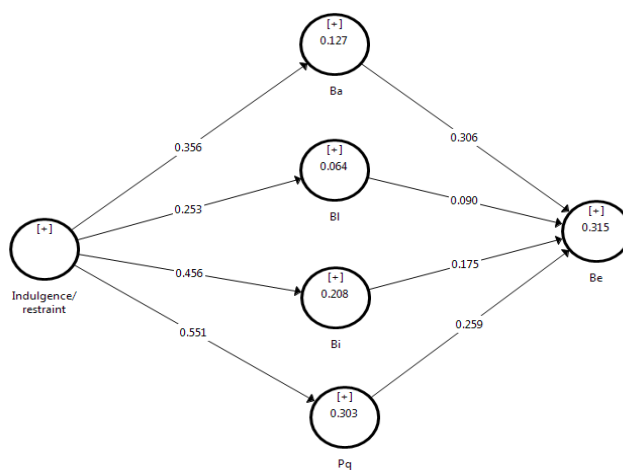
On the basis of the above literature review, following variables have been identified in table 2 and conceptual framework and measurement models have been developed accordingly as figure 1 and 2 as below.

### Variables

Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Mediating Variables
Indulgence vs Restrain Dimension (IvR)	Brand Equity	Brand Awareness Brand Loyalty Brand Image Perceived Quality



Conceptual Frame work Figure 1



Measurement Model Figure 2

## **2.7 Hypothesis Formulation**

### **2.8 Indulgence/restrain impact positively on Brand awareness**

Explaining indulgent vs. restrain dimension with the level of brand awareness previous researchers assesses that consumers in indulgent dimension are more optimistic and brand conscious than restraint culture consumers and due to this difference individuals belong to either indulgent or restrain cultural dimension react differently on same piece of information (Kong & Jogaratnam, 2007). Indulgent customers are prone to be more brand conscious that is why they put more efforts to be more brand aware about current company's offerings (Bhasin, 2019).

H1: Indulgence/restrain dimension positively impact on brand awareness.

### **2.9 Indulgence/restrain impact positively on brand loyalty**

The development of brand loyalty is not a matter of one or two time purchases rather it takes years to build the relationship of trust and fulfill promise with target customer. Mostly customers preplan their purchases and they decided earlier not to spend unnecessarily (Hirschman, 1990; Warneryd, 1999). Kotler (2010) define "butterflies" customers because of the fact that those particular customers are not loyal with one brand and show switching of their preferred brands frequently. Hofstede (2013) explain indulgent behavior as those customer who get easily involved into product and brand through marketing techniques. In contrast those who are not succumbed in products will not go into impulsive buying stimulus. Louro et al (2007) explained customers who were previous shopping restrain would consequently turn into indulgence. Mick & DeMoss (1990) support this narrative and explain that people who move toward indulgence think that they justify their switching behavior as "self- reward" themselves that motivate them to remain loyal with the same product or brand. From the above discussion we can hypothesized that:

H2: Indulgence/ restrain positively impact on brand loyalty

### **2.10 Indulgence/restrain impact positively on brand image**

Indulgent vs. restrain cultural dimension affect the mental orientation of an individual that is why customers under this dimension possess different perceptions, preferences and choices of brand (Gupta, pansari, & V.Kumar, 2018). Customers under this specific dimension would have distinct set of enjoyment, happiness and handling different situations that is why individuals under this cultural orientation would get different image from the same advertisement and message by brands. Tuvshinzaya (2008) outlines marketing strategies as pointers of cultural dimensions because these strategies develop customer perception and brand image in the mind of the customers. Because advertising strategies are considered as the tool to develop perception and image of a product and brand that is why frequent and unique advertisement continuously transmit value system of the target market (Enk-Amgalan, 2016). From the above discussion we can postulate that:

H3: Indulgence/ restrain positively impact on brand image

### **2.11 Indulgence/restrain and perceive quality**

Perceive quality embrace on functional and non-functional attributes of product and brands that make customer to take purchase decisions. Customers typically face series of purchase decisions just for temptation and previously developed perceived quality. Promotional coupons, discount offers and interactive bill boards create brand perception in customer's mind which in the end would create overall perceive quality Koc(2017). From the above discussion we can hypothesized that:

H4: Indulgence/ restrain positively impact on perceived quality.

### **2.12 Brand awareness and brand equity**

Brand awareness mentions the consumer's capability to recall and recognize brand in the existence of many other brands. Brand awareness follow brand equity which modestly explain whether consumer distinguish the particular brand (Keller, 2008). Brand awareness is generated through brand knowledge which support consumers in decision making at the time of purchase. Brand awareness is essential for advertisement purpose because it would be shaped through the strong recall capability. Brand awareness strongly impact consumer decision making where customers normally perceive it as customer's experiences and eventually the management of the company get promoted to develop customer based brand equity (Fuller, 2014)

H5: brand awareness is positively related to brand equity

### **2.13 Brand image and brand equity**

Brand image is the factor that change consumer approach toward particular product or brand that is why brand image is called as the heart of all promotional activities (Michaelidou, 2015). Brand image is measured as the key driver of brand equity which directly impact on consumer approach and behavior through perception about specific brand (Zhang, 2015). That consumer perception helps to develop connection between brand and its customer that at last turns into brand equity.

H6: brand image is positively related to brand equity.

### **2.14 Brand loyalty and brand equity**

Brand loyalty is another factor that is a building block of developing brand equity (Keller, 2003). Brand loyalty means steady but constant purchases of a product by customers of that brand and always shows resistance in switching to another competitor brands (Yoo et al., 2000; Romaniuk & Nancy-Thiel, 2013; Chen & Ann, 2016). In modern epoch where emergence of new brands turn into essential phenomena of every day's task, at this stage companies realize that long-term achievement of their brands lie in developing loyalty among their consumers- a massive task that need attaining brand loyal customers and constantly satisfying them (Oh & Fiorito, 2002).

H7: brand loyalty is positively related to brand equity.



### 2.15 Perceived quality and brand equity

Perceived quality is measured as consumers' subjective ruling on a particular brand or product (Zeithmal, 1988; Dodd et al, 1991; Aaker, 1991). In previous researches perceived quality is considered as a consumer a judgment quality and other supporting features as well as on the consistency of product description or an evaluation on added value provided with the basic product. According to (Garvin, 1983) perceived quality is explained on the basis of customer's familiarity and recognition with brand. The difference between perceived quality and physical appearance lie in that objectivity that has a pre-design standard to a product (Olshavsky, 1985; Zeithmal, 1988). Kan (2002) explained that physical quality evaluated when consumers keep using any particular brand after experiencing and getting knowledge about that brand which help them to evaluate overall product/brand benefit, functions, attributes, durability, technology and reliability at the time of final buying of that product or brand. Perceived quality is a consumer's judgment on the acquisitive product benefits and a subjective feeling on product quality that add value in brand equity (Zeithaml, 1988; Dodds et al., 1991).

H8: perceive quality is positively related with brand equity.

### 2.16 IVR impact on BA and BE

Establishing the impact of indulgence vs. restrain cultural dimension on brand awareness of an individual customer is a challenging task and can be explained through the identification of either indulgent or restrain behavior demonstrated by customer at the time of shopping of branded products. As indulgent customers behavior show pleasure and enjoy shopping and characterizes it as their leisure activity that is why sometime they end up with excess purchase of their preferred brand. This phenomena of considering shopping branded product as enjoyment of life is eventually stimulate customers to put gain more knowledge about brand. Complete awareness about brand's offerings, prices they charge, for what that specific brand stand for would positively add value into brand equity. Bhasin (2019) explain indulgent customers are more brand conscious that is why they remain stick with their preferred brand line. And because of this reason such customers are more aware about brand's quality and prices company charge to them.

H9: Indulgence/ Restrain positively impact on brand equity with the mediation of brand awareness.

### 2.17 IVR impact on BL and BE

Brand loyalty develop through favorable feedback from customers and some other psychological, social and societal factors are also considered as contributing factors (Jacoby, 1971). Jansen & Hansen (2011) explained status as an associated factor to brand loyalty. Lin (2010) explained that materialistic individuals are less price sensitive that is why they get easily indulged in purchasing of branded products. Troisi, Christopher & Marek (2006) explained indulgent customers do not seek diversity in their purchases rather they like excessive buying that's why they remain stick with one brand and stay loyal with their preferred brand. For this reason indulgent customers easily become captive of marketing techniques from brands and get indulged in buying their preferred brand

H10 indulgence/restrain impact on brand equity with the mediation of brand loyalty.

### **2.18 IVR impact on BI and BE**

Brand image of any particular brand depend upon its physical and non -physical attributes delivered to customers at the time of purchase. Physical attributes consist on brand design, outlook, quality, and functionality. Non- physical attributes include the feel and over all psychological comfort acquired from that particular brand. Furthermore, sensory, sensory and symbolic factors also play a vital role in development of brand image (Keller, 1993). It is normally assumed that customer buy products because of its functionality and psychological comfort they receive by acquiring that product but symbolic interaction theory confirm that consumers at the time of buying decisions are more conscious about their social and psychological image (Mocanu, R., 2013). Indulgence vs. restrain dimension impact on consumer to develop distinct brand image as customers always perceive branded products as self -reward to celebrate their success ( Mick & Four, 1998). This phenomena of self -prestige and superior brand choice build the higher end image in the mind of customers. And indulgent customers always perceive branded product as the most suitable buying for them. Hence we can hypothesized:

H11: indulgence vs. restrain impact on brand equity with the mediation of brand image.

### **2.19 IVR impact on PQ and BE**

Perceive quality is the combination of brand image communicated by brand companies and feedback customers receive from previous users of the same brand. Many subsequent factors play their part in developing consumer perception about product/brand. From previous literature it was established that perceive quality is not a one-dimensional concept rather many other factors such as store environment, product quality, brand stature etc. are some contributing factors (Dodd et al., 1991; Agarwal &Teas, 2001). As indulgent customers consider shopping as the most interesting and pleasant situation that is why possessing branded products sometimes decoded as supreme values, social status among reference groups and determination of oneself as branded product regular user make them feel superior to other customers. At this stage people desire to buy luxury branded products which served as symbolic satisfaction which these customers receive (Wiedmann, 2009). Indulgence vs. restrain cultural dimension affect consumer perception about the brand and thus perceive quality that (symbolically satisfy them) would distinctly develop. Customer's intrinsic values stimulate them to make buying decision of any specific brand and eventually add positive value in developing brand equity.

That is why from the above discussion we can hypothesized that

H12: Indulgence/ Restrain impact on brand equity with the mediation of perceive quality.

### 3. Methodology

This research study is following the philosophy of positivism as quantitative data was gathered analyzed and generalization is made that confirm the applicability of deductive approach. Structured questionnaire was adopted and data was collected from customers aged between 16 to above 55years. Respondents were approached at their actual settings of shopping branded cloths in different shopping malls located in Karachi. As Karachi is the metropolitan and largest city in Pakistan and immense immigrants which declare this city as largest ethno-linguistic populous city of Pakistan (Karachi population, 2019). That is why this research is conducted in Karachi.

#### 3.1 Research Population and Sampling

Population of this research is the population of Karachi i.e 16.051 million as per census conducted in 2016 (Population Census, 2017).

As this research is consumer based study under which social norms, and cultural traits are discussed in relation with brand equity that leads to unavailability of exact sampling frame that is why convenience sampling technique of non-probability sampling has been adopted. In order to minimize biases associated with non- probability sampling technique mall-intercept method is used to approach customers and get their responses. Mall–intercept technique was important to use as in consumer based researches, it is imperative to have a clear idea of consumer perception about under consideration phenomena as mentioned by Blankson et al. (2017) in his study.

Sample size has been taken in the light of previous researchers of the same subject as Kline (2014) explains 100-200 appropriate sample size for consumer based research, Tull & Hawkins (1987) 200-500 appropriate sample size. Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample 384of was considered appropriate as his population was > 50,000.

#### 3.2 Scales and Measure

Already developed scales has been used on the subject of Indulgence and restrain, brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, perceived quality and brand equity. Table 1 represent the sources of scales used.

Brand equity Construct	Main sources of scale items
Brand Equity	Vazquez, del Rio & Iglesias, 2002
Brand Awareness	Yoo and Donthu, 2001
Brand Loyalty	Yoo and Donthu, 2001
Brand image	Hsieh, 2001
Perceived Quality	Vigneron & Johnson, 2004
Indulgence vs. Restrain	Rentsenkh & Enk-Amgalan, 2016

#### 4. Results and Interpretations

**Table 1: Convergent validity**

	<b>Cronbach Alpha</b>	<b>composite reliability</b>	<b>Average. Variance</b>
Ba	0.695	0.818	0.539
Be	0.947	0.961	0.831
Bi	0.681	0.801	0.504
Bl	0.731	0.796	0.496
Indulgence/Restrain	0.827	0.876	0.545
Pq	0.666	0.791	0.61

The results suggested that brand equity (0.961) has the highest composite reliability and perceive quality has the lowest composite reliability that is on (0.791). Moreover, brand equity has the highest level of average variance that is on (0.831) and perceive quality is the lowest average variance that is on (0.486). As the values of composite reliability and average variance are greater than 0.7 and 0.7 respectively that is why we can conclude that variables have acceptable range of convergent validity

##### 4.1 Discriminant Validity

The results related to discriminant validity is presented in table 2

**Table 2**

	Ba	Be	Bi	Bl	Indul/res	pq
Ba	0.734					
Be	0.389	0.912				
Bi	0.113	0.379	0.71			
Bl	0.162	0.235	0.357	0.704		
Indul/res	0.356	0.566	0.456	0.253	0.738	
Pq	0.186	0.419	0.528	0.127	0.551	0.697

The results suggest that all variables are unique and distinct as their diagonal values are greater than the square of each pair or correlation.

##### 4.2 Hypothesis Testing

The study applied structural equation modelling using the Smart PLS software to test the hypothesis. We have propose 8 direct hypothesis which discuss the direct relationships and four indirect hypothesis, which are presented in table 6 and 7. The structural and measurement models are presented in figure 2, and 3 respectively. The results of the hypothesis of direct relationship are presented in table 3.

### 4.3 Direct relationships

**Table 3**

	Mean	Std. Dev.	T-stat	P-value	Results
Ba->Be	0.306	0.041	7.542	0.000	Accepted
Bi-> Be	0.175	0.049	3.564	0.000	Accepted
Bl->Be	0.09	0.044	2.055	0.042	Accepted
Indulge/rest-> Ba	0.356	0.042	8.473	0.000	Accepted
Indulge/rest->Bi	0.456	0.043	10.649	0.000	Accepted
Indulge/rest->Bl	0.253	0.043	5.865	0.000	Accepted
Indulge/rest->Pq	0.551	0.031	17.786	0.000	Accepted
Pq->Be	0.259	0.047	5.525	0.000	Accepted

The statistical results of the SEM suggest that we found support of all the hypothesis containing direct relationship. H1, H2, H3, H4, H5, H6, H7, H8.

## 5. Results and conclusion

### 5.1 Brand awareness and brand equity (H1) (Accepted)

The first hypothesis is examining the direct relationship between brand awareness and brand equity. The hypothesis was supported by results as ( $P < 0.05$ ). As brand awareness is one of the most important constituent of brand equity. Brand awareness further decomposed into two wide sub dimensions 1) brand recognition and 2) brand recall. Brand awareness refers to the likelihood that enable customers to recall the product and specific brand name click in the mind of customers. Benefits which customer received from the product plays role to make customer recall even after the exposure of many years (Keller, 1993).

### 5.2 Brand Image and Brand Equity (H2) (Accepted)

The second hypothesis examining the relationship of brand image on brand equity. The results of the hypothesis suggest significant as ( $P < 0.05$ ). As brand is considered as more than a product and which is more than a satisfaction level (Aaker, 1991) explains brand as a set various distinct association in consumer's memory network model. That is why brand image is developed more from the perception of brand in mind of customers (Keller, 1998). According to (Lee, Lee & Wu, 2009) explain brand image as a subsequent factor that reflect consumer perception about any particular brand.

### 5.3 BI and BE (H3) (Accepted)

The 3<sup>rd</sup> hypothesis is explaining the relationship of brand loyalty on brand equity. The results of hypothesis are significant as ( $p < 0.05$ ) and suggested the positive relationship in between loyalty and brand equity. As brand loyalty is defined as consumer's knowingly purchases of one brand repeatedly which represent the level of commitment between buyer and seller (Oliver, 1999). Another aspect of positive relation between these two variables is that consumer evaluate product through subjective evaluation and

experiential evaluation of product which by adding up together build emotional attachment with the product or brand and that's how consumer completely got involved in that specific brand (Oliver, 1997). (Yoo & Donthu, 2001) describe brand loyalty as consumer intention to buy any particular brand and remain stick with it.

#### **5.4 PQ and BE (H4) (Accepted)**

The 4<sup>th</sup> hypothesis is examining the positive relationship between perceive quality and brand equity. The results of the hypothesis suggested positive relationship as ( $P < 0.05$ ). Many previous researchers have worked on the concept of perceive quality and liked it with memory network model. Perceive quality is a subjective evaluation of product/ brand. (Aaker, 1997) describe perceive quality is a core component of brand equity that add value into actual worth of brand.

#### **5.5 Indulgence/restrain and Brand awareness (H5) (Accepted)**

The fifth hypothesis is explaining the impact of indulgence and restrain cultural dimension on brand awareness. The results of the hypothesis suggest significant relationship. Brand awareness as per previous researches is attained through the combination of brand recognition and brand recall capabilities (Keller, 2008). Whereas indulgence and restrain cultural dimension refer to the weak and strong control over their desires and impulses. Weak control on desire represent indulgent behavior and impulse buying behavior. Under this specific dimension it is not necessary for consumers to know about the brand rather consumer under this dimension cannot control their impulses. On the other hand restrained customers have strong control over their desires and impulse buying behavior that is why the purchases made by restraint members of the society would be made by complete knowledge about brand.

#### **5.6 Indulgence/restrain and brand image (H6) (Accepted)**

The sixth hypothesis is explaining the relationship of indulgence/restrain cultural dimension and brand image. The results of the hypothesis suggested significant relationship as ( $p < 0.05$ ). Brand image is considered as subsequent factor which develop through consumer perception (Keller, 1993). Positive and favorable association attached with specific brand would develop a distinct image of product/brand in the mind of the customer (Del Rio et al., 2001; Keller, 1993). The indulgence and restrain cultural dimension impact consumer behavior differently. As indulgent consumers can get caught with marketing techniques easily as compare to restrain customer who control their desire even after get aware from brand offerings.

#### **5.7 Indulgence/restrain and brand loyalty (H7) (Accepted)**

The seventh hypothesis is explaining the relationship of indulgence/restrain cultural dimension with brand loyalty. The results of the hypothesis suggested significant relationship as ( $p < 0.05$ ). Brand loyalty represent the degree of attachment of customers with specific brand (Aaker, 1991; Podoshen, 2008). On contrary indulgence and restrain cultural dimensions represent the degree to which customer shown his her magnitude and interest to purchase that specific brand (Rook, 1987). As indulgence refer to easily

captured by advertisement that is why such type of customers are more impulsive and according to (Keller, 2011) lie under the category of butterfly's type of customers. Conversely, restraint customers are more skeptical toward their purchases that is why their purchase decision is made by getting through knowledge about brand. As brand loyalty is a psychological process rather it is considered as subjective evaluation that is why indulgence vs. restrained both dimensions would impact brand loyalty differently.

### 5.8 Indulgence/restrain and perceived quality (H8) (Accepted)

The 8<sup>th</sup> hypothesis explains the relationship between indulgences and restrain cultural dimension and perceived quality. The results of the hypothesis suggested significant impact of indulgence and restrain dimension on perceive quality as ( $P < 0.05$ ). Perceive quality is evaluated through consumer behavior toward product and consumer perception about product (Farquhar, 1989; Mahajan et al., 1991). Whereas indulgence and restrain cultural dimensions directly linked with customer's inner feeling of how he/she perceive pleasure and satisfaction from shopping. We can consider indulgent individuals are can satisfy themselves by purchasing habitually whereas restrain customers can feel pleasure by developing the image of the brand first then go for final purchase.

**The results of the hypothesis carrying indirect relationship are mentioned in table 4**  
**Indirect relationships**

**Table 4**

	Mean	Std.Dev	T-static	P-Value	Results
Indulge/rest→Pq →Be	0.42	0.028	5.029	0	Accepted
indulge/rest→Bl →Be	0.023	0.012	1.862	0.063	Rejected
indulge/rest→Bi→Be	0.08	0.026	3.109	0.002	Accepted
Indulge/rest→Ba→Be	0.109	0.021	5.111	0	Accepted

### 5.9 Indulgence/restrain -> Perceived Quality -> Brand Equity (H9) (Accepted)

The 9<sup>th</sup> hypothesis explain the indirect impact of indulgence and restrain cultural dimension on perceive quality and then impact brand equity. The results of this hypothesis suggested significant impact as ( $P < 0.05$ ). The reason of this significant impact of Indulgence and restrain culture dimension on brand equity is the intrinsic happiness of customers. As customers belong to different back grounds feel satisfied with different purchase situations that's why perceive quality would directly impact on their behavior of making final purchases. This decision making process of making final purchase decision is derived by either customer belong to indulgent or restrain culture (which easily can be checked by consumer behavior if there are buying impulsively or just do window shopping).

### 5.10 Indulgence/retrain, brand loyalty and brand equity (H10) (rejected)

The 10<sup>th</sup> hypothesis is explaining the indirect relationship of indulgence vs. restrain cultural dimension on brand loyalty and then brand equity is affected. The result of this indirect relationship suggest insignificant as ( $P > 0.05$ ). This hypothesis is rejected even though direct relationship is significant. The

reason of rejection of this indirect relationship is the concept of brand loyalty which represent the repeated purchase by the customers (Keller, 2011). In addition brand loyalty comprise on attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. Both types of loyalty would achieve through constant and repeated purchase by the customers. That is why in both types of consumer behavior “indulgent” and “restraint” would not impact brand equity with the mediation of brand loyalty.

#### **5.11 Indulgence/restrain, brand image and brand equity (H11) (Accepted)**

The 11<sup>th</sup> hypothesis is explaining the indirect relationship between indulge /restrain cultural dimensions on brand image and brand equity. The results of this indirect relationship suggest significant relationship and hypothesis is approved as ( $P < 0.05$ ). Brand image is the factor that develops with the help of many physical and non- physical factors just like perception and physical attributes a brand possess. Individuals who belong to indulgent dimension would look for different attributes in a product like economical, easily availability is possible etc. people from indulgent dimension feel fulfilled, satisfied and get pleasure from their purchasing. Conversely, in restrain culture individuals prefer to hold their desires and don't feel happy by shopping. In both dimension the concept of shopping and pleasure they receive from shopping is too different that's why their perception about brand is quite different in each dimension.

#### **5.12 Indulgence/restrain brand awareness and brand equity (H12) (Accepted)**

The 12<sup>th</sup> hypothesis is explaining the relationship of indulgence and restrain cultural dimension on brand equity with the mediation of brand awareness. The results of the hypothesis suggested significant as ( $P < 0.05$ ). Previous researches evident that brand awareness is a combination of customer's recall and recognition capabilities of product and brand (Keller, 2011). This elaboration of brand awareness narrate that customers and providers collective efforts are required to stay in the mind of the customers. Whereas indulgent and restrain cultural dimension refer consumer impulsive buying behavior or restrict themselves for make purchases. In either case brand awareness plays a vital role. If customer belong to indulgent behavior then through brand awareness he/ she unconsciously make wise decision because of his prior awareness of brand. Conversely, if customer belong to restrain behavior then regardless of their frequency of purchase of brand their level of awareness of product or brand is remain the same. That is why we can be infer that indulgent and restrain behavior put significant impact on brand awareness and so brand equity develop.

### **6. Discussion**

Geert Hofstede cultural frame work is the most competent and widely applicable frame work holding cultural dimension at national, organizational and individual level. Hofstede cultural frame work primarily identified five cultural dimensions which were widely applied in different contexts globally. Minkov (2008) explored “Indulgence and Restrain” cultural dimension that later on added into Hofstede cultural framework. Restrain cultural dimension mainly focused on more work oriented environment because spending time on leisure activities and fun culture is not desirable under this dimension. The presence of these dimension



effect on consumer behavior and they make differentiated buying decisions under the influence of these dimensions. The major outcome that can be drawn from this research study is the prevalence of Indulgent and restraint dimension would affect the consumer decision making and that's how he and she would make differentiated decisions at the time of purchase. Study presented 12 hypothesis in which 8 possess direct relation-ship between indulgences and restrain culture dimension and antecedents of brand equity, and among determinants of brand equity in which partial effect of each antecedent of brand equity is also checked. And four indirect relationship which shows the relationship between indulgent and restrain culture dimension on brand equity with the mediation of brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image and perceived quality. Previous researches on indulgence and restrain dimension by holding the concept of brand equity and its preceding factors are also align with the results of this research. Farraro et al. (2009) also contributed in this regard as brand awareness create positive values in brand equity. Furthermore, Radder & Huang (2007) categorize brand awareness as high and low involvement brand and confirmed that the greater the level of awareness the positive will be brand equity. In addition Lee Lee & Woo (2009) confirm the influentially of brand image in his research which is aligned with this research study. In addition Grace O Cass (2005) explain brand image as multidimensional concept and positively add value into brand equity. Quester & Pappu (2016) explained brand loyalty as important factor of determining brand equity and confirm the positive relationship between them. Erenkol & Duygun (2010) contributed and confirm the positive relationship of perceive quality and brand equity as perceive quality is the subjective evaluation of brand and hold multidimensional concept in it.

The results of overall study mention significant and positive relationship among variables other than indirect relationship of indulgence vs. restrain cultural dimension on brand equity with the mediation of brand loyalty is insignificant.

Previous researchers consider brand awareness as brand consciousness and confirm the positive impact of IVR on indulgent customers (Bhasin, 2019). Bhasin (2019) explained the more brand conscious customer put greater efforts to know about their preferred brand that make them more brand aware about its quality and functionality. Hypothesis about indirect relationship between IVR brand loyalty and brand equity is rejected and not aligned with the previous research presented by (Zhang & Shrum, 2009). The reason of insignificance of this hypothesis availability of many substitute brands in all brand category which essentially would not let customer to stay stagnant withy one brand. Hypothesis about the indirect relationship between IVR, brand loyalty and brand image is significant and aligned with the results of the previous research conducted by (Del Rio et al., 2001). Hypothesis about IVR impact on perceive quality and brand equity are also significant and supported by previous literature on this relation. Wiedmann (2009) explained perceive quality as symbolic, psychological and subjective evaluation of product , whereas indulgent customers consider pleasure and self-reward symbolically to reward themselves that is why customer under this dimension perceive brand distinctively.

As previously researched, that consumer behavior is the compiled presentation of values, norms, attitudes and reactions on any specific situation. That is why consumer behavior role in determining the actual purchasing pattern of consumer is crucial. Consumer cognition, perception, vibes and likes and dislikes heavily dependent upon the environment and cultural back ground under which that individual grown up.

### 6.1 Managerial Implications

This research study has many implications for managers and companies of different brands. For example this study has found a strong relationship between BA, BL, BI and PQ which highlight the importance of brand equity and these factors at the time of launching new brand or retaining existing customers. Secondly this research study provide insight of indulgence vs. restrain cultural dimension and customers who possess these characteristics. The indirect relationship between IVR and brand equity with the mediation of BA, BI, BI and PQ provide the basic and essential information to brand managers to develop branding strategy by keeping in mind the mental and cultural orientation of their target customers. From this research study some probable relationship of IVR and BE are identified and tested and results of this research would be beneficial for academias well to further explore IVR dimension in different marketing situations and concepts.

### 6.2 Limitations Way Forward

This research study is finding the impact of less explored Hofstede model 6<sup>th</sup> dimension" indulgence and restrain". As indulge cultural dimension is narrating consumer impulse buying behavior on the other hand restrain culture dimension shows holding control over desires and greater importance of thrift and less desire for purchasing. These characteristics impact consumer behavior at the time of final decision making regarding their buying of brand. Result of this research further study open up venues for further research on the application of indulgence and restrain cultural dimension. As indulgence vs. restrain cultural dimension is comparatively newly inducted dimension in Hofstede's cultural frame work this dimension need to be checked in marketing, consumer behavior, decision making process and branding context.

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