

An Analysis of the Religion as a Culture Effect on the Consumers of the Telecommunication Market

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Abstract

The history of Quaker's businesses, Japanese business culture and Islamic based businesses has been explored in depth through review of published literature. An analysis of Hofstede's culture typology has been conducted to confirm the different dimensions of Pakistani culture. Both phenomenological and positivist approach has been utilised to collect data through semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and secondary data analysis. The research reveals the country's highly religious culture where the society is male dominated, women plays a submissive role in the society. The people of Pakistan feel negative to the advertisements and promotional techniques which are mainly due to their religious faith. Also it has been found that within family the decision power remain with the head of the family and therefore the communication network targeting the young generation is not a suitable technique. The results concluded that marketer shall thoroughly understand the local culture, identification of the target customers and value added service which is compatible to the local needs and wants.

Keywords: Consumer Behaviour, Culture, Hofstede's Typology, Religiosity and Pakistan.

The growth of telecommunications over the past one hundred years has had a major influence on the development of society. Telecommunications will continue to play increasingly important role in nearly every human endeavour in all nations on earth. Recently Pakistan has witnessed an explosion of new operations and users of cellular mobile industry have therefore become indisputable. This research focused on issues that are less taken into account while managing businesses in international perspective. The diversity in cultures and the image, which represents the telecom industry players, are making a gap between and the efforts made are not executed in a manner to furnish profitability. Thus in diagnosing the problem associated with cultural conflicts will play an important role making the management aware of the issues and thus will help improvement in telecom sector.

Many authors contend that almost every culture lives under some faith or belief and it would be noticed that how these faiths affect

businesses within a country. In the same way the Islamic based cultures have some beliefs which govern the values, habits, lifestyle and attitude of the individual living in the society. Comparing it to the other religions, Islam has fewer tendencies towards the liberalisation and moderation. Although there has been changes in people's behaviour due to import of foreign culture through various means of communication and globalisation but it is not to the extent of detection. Therefore the businesses are to be conducted in accordance with the philosophies of consumers so as to develop cohesion between the customer-company relations.

Pakistan is a highly collectivist country where the families are living in close bonds and often the communication is more emphasised on gestures than verbal way. The collectivist societies are very traditional and therefore remain loyal to their custom and rituals, and adaptation to changes is not apparently visible. This particular behaviour is not sufficiently understood by the mobile companies operating in Pakistan.

The population of the country is highly masculine which is supported by their religion and provided male a dominant role in the family and society. As well as the appearance of women in advertisements and modernisation is discouraged by the Islamic *Sharia* law.

In other words the religion of the country remained responsible for the creation of Pakistan and it has influenced almost every sector of social and economic life. The modernisation represented by the mobile companies in their campaigns does not match the needs and wants of the population living in culturally religious society. This affects the global telecommunication companies in two ways: firstly their customers do not remain loyal to the companies and secondly suffered losses due to the disapproval from the customers.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of the study are the following;

- To investigate the Pakistan's culture with the help of Hofstede's culture typology
- To analyse the telecom sector of Pakistan
- To scrutinize the impact of religion on telecom sector strategies

Literature Review

Human beings behave in a predictable manner, which makes the existence of social system possible. Our behaviour is controlled by a mental program in our mind, a "software of mind", which contributes to our sayings and deeds. This mental programming can be divided into three levels; Individual Level, Collective Level and Universal Level which distinguishes people from one another. At individual level every person living in a society behaves in a distinctive way i.e. everyone is

different from every other person. The Collective programming of mind is the individuals living in a particular society behave collectively as one unit, which make them different from people living in other societies. While at Universal level the resemblance in humans as whole humankind either biologically or in expression (laughing, weeping, and aggression) and differentiating them from other organisms.

In the essence of mental programming culture is defined by Hofstede (2001,) as “the collective programming of mind that distinguish the members of one group of people from another”. Cullen (1999) defines culture as it is omnipresent and individual living in a society share the norms, beliefs, values and symbols. Norms define what to do and what not to do, values tell us about the good and bad, belief is the mental acceptance of what is true underpinned by spirituality or emotions and cultural symbols may be physical or manmade ceremonies through which culture is passed to the next generation. Though culture is pervasive but to the foreign observer the back stage of culture may not be observable but understood by the individual practicing that culture. Therefore it could be concluded that front stage of culture is not only aspect of culture to be fairly understood but the back stage is also to be taken into account while managing in foreign cultures.

Max Weber (1864-1920), a German Sociologist, proposed his thesis on “*Protestant Work Ethics*” in which he pointed out the historical relationship between belief systems and businesses (Jeremy, 1998). Max Weber argued that, cited by Jeremy (1998), the uncertainty to the external life produces loneliness in individual therefore in order to achieve the love from God a person will strive to social accomplishment. Weber thesis based upon three schools of thoughts; Puritanism, Continental Reformers and Old Testaments.

Weber believed that the rise of capitalism or economic activities in the 16th and 17th century, was due to Protestant Ethics which has changed attitudes of organisations to work more and make more profits. Protestantism was induced on individual basis where an individual has to work hard, not to waste time, save the hard earned money, finding best way of doing things and being honest in life (Rayman & Turner (2007)). To the non-Christian religion such as Confucianism in China, Hinduism in India and Ancient Judaism, the lack of forces to break the strong traditionalism remain the reason of lack of capitalism in their respective societies.

Islamic Business Ethics:

In the same manner as Judaism and Christianity, Islam was originated from a businessman; Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H) was renowned for trustworthiness and truthfulness, which stood the basis of these ethics in business and other social activities. Islam put the purpose of mankind in a very different perspective. According to Islamic ideology ‘man’ was created by God as a superior being bestowed with ingenuity which was not given to the rest of creatures. Mankind was

given a choice through which they are allowed to chose their ways in fulfilling the day to day life activities (Al Quran Ch:2 Ver. 34).

Islamic business ethics are based on equality, disposition of rights, equal distribution of wealth and moral obligations towards the upheaval of poverty and other social problems. Islamic ideology explains that everything in world and universe belongs God and man being an agent (*khalifah*) has the responsibility to give some of the wealth he belongs to poor people. This is one of the five fundamental principal of Islam, which is called Zakat (Tax). The details of which is explained in Quran about how it will be calculated among the property such as Gold, Cash, Cattle, Grain and Fruits etc (Al Quran, Ch: 9 Ver.60). Poverty is considered misery in Islam therefore in addition to the prescribed law for Zakat morally it is being encouraged to engage in Sadaqa (donation).

Religious Culture in Pakistan and Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Human behaviour is strongly influenced by the aspects of culture they are living in and the manifestation is often less noticeable. The reason for this is the complex amalgamation of culture with various aspects of human existence (Terri and Wayne, 2006). History has a sound influence on culture, which settles down in people's minds, hearts and hands of the present generations (Hofstede, 2001).

Islam has been the cause of Pakistan's independence in 1947, which divided the British India into Muslim Pakistan and Hindu India. Quran, the holy book from God is considered absolute, eternal truth and cannot be changed. Though Islam has been the reason of Pakistan coming into being but it was not intended to establish Islamic model of Government. So far the *Sharia* law has affected the civil and commercial law but not the criminal laws (Guitard et al, 2003). Guitard et al believe (2003) that Islam widely influences the social life in Pakistan where religion, state and society remained conjoined and where religion is not a private matter but the responsibility of society and Government.

Geert Hofstede and Fons Trompenaars studied cross culture diversities, which took them, time span of around 10 years and formulated certain variables, which distinguished different cultures from each other (Hashmi, 2003). These variables are dimension of culture;

- Power Distance Indicator
- Long term Vs Short term orientation
- Uncertainty Avoidance
- Individualism/collectivism
- Masculinity/Femininity

Islamic Business in Pakistan

All sort of legislation provides guidance approval and limitations within business of social relation. In a communist and capitalist nation these are laws and politics while in Islamic economies such laws are

called “Sharia” law adopted from Quran. Although the Gulf nations are responsible for the rapid expansion of Islamic Banks it was Pakistan and Iran in 1970, which turns the “Sharia” law in banking for the first time in history (Dixon, 1992).

Presently in Pakistan there are 164 branches of Islamic banks operated by the numerous commercial banks, which provides “Halal” banking services. As earlier in this Chapter we have discussed that interest is not allowed by Islamic Sharia law therefore these banks work on profit sharing rather than a guaranteed predetermined rate of return in commercial banking.

Islam and Family Life

Quran exerts more emphasis on parental right than the right of children (Rizvi, 1980). Father is given the position of family head where wife and children are supposed to obey (Maududi, 1948). Islam provides priority to man within family, a passive role for wife while children and wife, as required by Islam, shall obey husband. This particular trait in the religious society like Pakistan is necessary to be noticed in order to specify their target customers.

Islam and Advertisements

The foundation of Islamic and Christian ethic is to study marketing as if it contains dishonesty, deception and whether it is truthful or not. Both these ideologies consider people in the society as neighbours and therefore believe that marketer should put the price of product in such a way that it should bring benefits to both parties; the seller and the buyer (Elegits, (2003) Aquinas (II-II, 77.1) cited by Gibbs et al, 2007).

The survey carried out by Gibbs et al (2007) reveals that Muslims and Christians students gives a negative attitude towards liberalisation advertising of objectionable images and that Muslim students are more sensitive toward ethical issues than the Christian students.

Many authors (Sorenson & Weichmann, 1975, Quelch and Hoff, 1986, Wind, 1986) cited by Fam and Grohs (2007) believe that advertisement strategy is constructed under the light of the cultural, political and economic conditions of the countries.

Al Olayan and Karande (2000) cited by Fam and Grohs (2007) found that comparing the advertising contents in countries like US and Arab the Arab magazines have photographs of fewer people than the US magazines and in which women wear mostly long dresses.

Standardised advertisements have developed controversies because of the non-compatible advertisements appeared in TV and print media. In North West province the billboard depicting women images has been removed because the people believed that such a display is against the tenets of Islam and spread vulgarity (Shah, 2008). In Multan

the protester show the same reaction to the advertising boards, by doing so they believe that the people living in society will be secured from obscenity (BBC, 2003).

As a whole and relating to the telecom industry RabiaGharib expresses her feeling that presently the mobile companies are pushing harder to providing loud noise of music and dance which has little to do with brands as well as there is no emotional attachment created to the brand campaigns.

Overview of Pakistan’s Mobile Industry

Until 1990 the tele-density of Pakistan remained 2.5% i.e. 25 users in every 1000. In order to provide consumer best services, lower prices and compete with the world development in information technology and exchange, the liberalization of telecom policies initiated (Haroon, 2003). The deregulation attracted private investment and telecom customer increased by 56% making Pakistan the fastest growing cellular country. The entry of Telenor (a Norwegian company), the issuance of 200 licences fixed and mobile services and 50 international long distance calling companies are the evidence of such policies.

The mobile industry consists of presently six networks and has a total of more than 89 million subscribers. Mobilink being the oldest enjoys the position of market leader and originally an Egyptian based company. PTCL (Pakistan Tele communication Limited) is the parent company of Ufone which was then privatised and now has major shares of Etisalat, a Dubai based company. Zong is merged company of Chinese mobile network with Paktel, and Telenor and Warid started their services in 2005 and basically a Norwegian and Dubai based companies. The following are the statistics of their subscriber and their growth rate.

Table 1. Statistical Data of Telecom Companies in Pakistan

	Mobilink	Ufone	Zong	Instaphone	Telenor	Warid	Growth Rate
2000	114,272		80,221	112,000			15.39
2001	309,272	116,711	96,623	220,000			142.29
2002	800,000	350,000	218,536	330,000			128.73
2003	1,115,000	550,000	319,400	420,000			41.56
2004	3,215,989	801,160	470,021	535,738			108.90
2005	7,469,085	2,579,103	924,486	454,147	835,727	508,655	154.26
2006	17,205,555	7,487,005	1,040,503	336,696	3,573,660	4,863,138	170.2
2007	26,466,451	14,014,044	1,024,563	333,081	10,701,332	10,620,386	80.70
2008	32,032,363	18,100,440	3,950,758	351,135*	18,125,189	15,489,858	39.4
July-	32,056,336	18,368,074	4,446,024	351,135	18,329,428	15,774,299	

Research Methodology

For the sake of this project phenomenological philosophy is considered more suitable because it relates to values, beliefs and attitude in a highly religious society therefore the reality is in the hearts and minds of people living in society.

Data and Data Sources

Dealing with this research, as a case study and with the inclusion of both phenomenological and positivist approach, envelops numerous techniques of collecting primary and secondary.

Abrahamson (1983) cited by Easterby-Smith (2002) contended that the variety of techniques are used for the collection of data and each method has its limitations therefore the use of multi-method will compensate the shortcomings. The use of multiple and independent method is termed as triangulation. Therefore based on triangulation, both qualitative (secondary data) and quantitative (primary data) techniques of collecting data are used to ensure the validity of the results obtained.

Interviews

Interview takes on both of the research philosophies for the collection of data carried out either in person, through telephone or by conferencing. Positivistic approach favours structured interviews, which are the preparation of closed-ended questions beforehand and mostly, aimed for market research survey. Phenomenological approach support unstructured or semi-structured interviews in which questions are not designed in advance and or their order are changed during interviews for the exploration of the issues (Hussey and Hussey 1997).

As this research is aimed towards Pakistan but conducted in United Kingdom therefore interviews were conducted on the telephone to save time and travel expenses.

Questionnaires

Questionnaires are carefully designed set of questions intended to a group of people to find out their feelings and thinking about a particular research problem. Questionnaires are famous techniques of collecting data, which, on the researcher point of view, are economical, and less time consuming (Hussey and Hussey, 1997).

There are numerous methods of distribution of questionnaire, of which the researchers used Postal, internet, telephone and face to face means of distribution.

Data Archives

Hussey and Hussey (1997) define secondary data as the data, which already exist in a form of books, document, Internet and the official site of government and business organisations. For the sake of

this study the researchers used Books, Journals, Reports, Internet and Magazines for obtaining secondary data in all almost all the sections of this project:

Data Analysis

For the purpose of this study the data received was analysed through MS Excel spread sheet and presented in Chapter 4 in tabular and graphical form.

Data Sampling

The two major approaches of sampling techniques are identified by Seale (2001) i.e. (a) Random sampling (b) Non-Random sampling. For the purpose of this study and as recognized by Seale (2001), cluster sampling technique is used because of the population in observation stay widely apart from the researcher and the resources required to travel were limited.

Data collection techniques

Both qualitative (secondary data) and quantitative (primary data) techniques of collecting data are used to ensure the validity of the results obtained.

Primary Research Findings

The research questionnaire was build up through extensive study of Hofstede's culture typology, along with the previous research undertaken on multiculturalism and consumer behaviour in religious societies.

The culture of Pakistan is not homogeneous in nature. Geographically the country is divided into four provinces, which are Khyber Pukhtunkhwa (former NWFP), Balochistan, Sindh and Punjab. Keeping this point in mind, the questionnaires were scattered in all the provinces in order to get a more general picture of the culture of Pakistan. A total of 166 responses were received among the 260 expected. The response rate by mailing was very poor while emailing questionnaires were the most effective means, which have been heavily, supported the members of forum of which the author was a register member, of providing answers to questionnaires.

The characteristics of culture were targeted in the questionnaire which will provide a vision about people perception, belief and orientation.

Religiosity

Most researchers have found out that the people of Pakistan are very religious and our empirical study is the evidence of it. Out of 19 questions 7 questions were asked from different dimension regarding the involvement of religion in their social life. From the survey conducted it has revealed that 74.1% of Pakistanis are strongly

religious, 18.6% are moderately concerned with religion and 7.3% people regarded themselves as irreligious.

Masculinity

The masculine gender role is highly obvious in the social life of the individuals living in Pakistan. There is a variation of masculinity between the regions within the boundary of the country and also the factor of different ethnicities within the national cultures. Also there is a high difference in masculinity between the urban and rural areas, keeping in mind the participants involved were living in urban and semi urban areas.

The primary data reveals that 33% of people living in Pakistan agree to the point of view that education and job is irrelevant to gender differences. 8% of the respondent believes that women could be allowed to engage in shopping daily needs but 58% of the participants totally disagree to gender equality. Here this point is to be noted that considerable numbers of participants were well educated.

Collectivism

Family system in Pakistan is highly collective. Three questions were asked regarding buying decision, respect to elders and the power of approval and disapprove in a family. The primary data shows that 92.2% people are living collectively or in nucleus families while 7.8% of people believe in individualism.

Long Term orientation

One question was posted to see the attitude of people toward long/short term orientation of future. The primary data shows that 86.4% of the population is looking to future on short-term basis. This is another evidence of religiosity and traditionalism within the society.

Perception towards Advertisements:

Now as a Muslim country it was important to see how people feel toward advertisements on Television, Internet and Mobiles. According to our survey, 68% of people believe that modern advertisements are highly irreligious, 20% of the respondent believe that modern adverts are moderately irreligious. While 12% of the participants believe that there is no problem with the modern advertising techniques in print media, electronic media and billboards.

Traditionalism Vs Modernity and Belief in Religion:

In the survey carried out it became apparent that, not depending on whether educated or not, 55% of the participants believe that, presently we believe too much on science while not giving much importance to religious ideas. 21% believe that reasonable importance shall be given to both science and faith while 24% decline to answer to these questions. Along with that 81 % believe that if sufficient privilege

is given to “Sharia” present social and economical problem could be solved. On the other hand 7% believe that to combat such problems modern and scientific planning is the solution to the problems. 7% of the respondents denied answer to such questions.

Interpretation of the results from Interviews:

Interviews are the best source of gaining in depth information about the tactic of the telecommunication networks in order to sell their products and services. The main points of our discussion with telecom professional were revolved around the understanding of the population in country and their plans to attract and sustain their customers. It was also in agenda to see that, how well they understand the likes and dislikes of the customer and the realization of what is good and bad to them and not withstanding to the truth and reality.

Interviewee 1: Sales Manager ORASCOM (Duration 30 Minutes)

Mobilink is the oldest among the major mobile networks and thus holding the largest market share. Initially keeping a mobile phone service was a status symbol and therefore fell into the hands of elite class therefore the company stressed upon the post paid service. The post paid service is beneficial for the company in terms of long term revenue generation but was limited due to affordability to end users. But since the liberalisation policies and the relaxation of taxes in the telecom sector make the companies able to provide the service to common man. Keeping in mind the mind-set of the majority of population, the company started prepaid subscriptions. All the companies agree to the short-term contract with their subscribers. This remains the prime factor for the price war between the companies in the telecom industry while switching from one service provider to the other requires only a photographic identity. The minimal restriction is the evidence of the population attitude towards the agreements with the subscription they are holding.

The company has made itself more cohesive with the culture and society of the people they are living in. The organisation is mixing all the culture backgrounds of the country in their exposure and interaction with the population of the country. The organisation believe that their logo is confirmation of this notion which is “*we speak your language*”

Keeping in mind the social background and the expansion of the mobile subscription into the rural areas, the company was the first in starting short messaging service (SMS) in the national language. As most of the communications between subscribers were voice based and due to the low literacy rate, the messaging service in the local language has provided on one hand an increase in revenue while on the other hand it had kept a positive impression on the people by the organisation.

Also the interactions with the customers are different in the various means of communication namely electronic, print and Internet.

Here on this point Mr Sheikh argued that the standard of advertisements are changed from region to region and from one type of media to the other. The national television channels are giving a more sober picture while on the cable channels the picture may vary. He further added that due to the controversy of appearance of women in the billboards and adverts due to high sensitivity towards these issues, special provision has been given the northwest and southwest regions and in central Punjab.

Interviewee 2: Marketing Manager Telenor (Duration 20 Minutes)

Telenor is a Norwegian company, launched in 2005, which claims to deliver the highest quality service with countrywide coverage.

Telenor has entirely different approach since their launch and adopted a unique way in entering the market, for attracting customers. They target customer's dissatisfaction from other networks and then the possible solution to the problem conveyed to their target market. They introduced "*smart call*" which targeted the young generation along with colourful campaigns western music and targeted youth and teenage. The facts described below are the reasons to appeal to juvenile as a trend setter.

- Younger generation is a major portion of country's population
- Higher tendency of growth among the individuals in society
- Social Culture Permeability

Interview clearly indicates that the management approach is tending to the idea that people approach toward foreign media has a sound influence on the people values and beliefs. Their unique approach towards appealing young generation will provide leverage towards their brand establishment. With changing values in the country and the approach of population to the foreign media, communication their approach of targeting trendsetters will provide leverage towards their brand establishments. Unlike Ufone and Warid, Telenor is more emphasising on contractual subscription which i.e. post paid subscriptions.

Interviewee 3: Manager Products & Services Peshawar Warid Telecom (Duration 30 Minutes)

Asking the question that why Warid has chosen Pakistan for their business, then Mr Kashif Raheem replied that Abu Dhabi has already invested in many businesses in Pakistan therefore the population is having less alienation towards their brand. Also the Abu Dhabi based companies are already in one or other form in telecom industry such as "*Etisalat*" and "*Wateen*" telecom. Particularly Wateen has sponsored our organisation in long distance international calling and in wireless local loop. One other reason is that the country has a large population and low teledensity, which is an opportunity of success for the company with the provision of affordable and quality service.

The organisation entry into market was in entirely different way and unlike other companies their advertisement campaigns remained very simple and delicate. The organisation promotion campaigns are more inclined towards country's historical events such as the independence, sport-winning events etc. As a sporting society the organisation is promoting sports nationally such as cricket, hockey, golf and polo. Warid telecom is promoting pay as you go service and special economical package between family and friends.

Analysis & Discussion

The detail analysis and discussion have been discussed in the following sub heading.

Belief and Businesses

It is confirmed from our empirical investigation that 74% of the participant perform their religious activities regularly and that 55% of the participant conceive religion as a solution to the present social and economical problems in Pakistan.

The combinations of these results verify people's religiousness and more importantly their perception of religion being a problem solving to the present situations in the country. Referring to Chapter 2, Weberian thesis offers explanation to the modern economic development and states that it is because of the protestant work ethics. Protestant work ethics are derived from Puritanism, Continental Reformer and old testaments advocate hard work, saving time and money and honesty in life. Such ethics have changed the approach of individual and organisations and their collective efforts participated in growth of capitalism and modern development.

In the same way Quakers beliefs has a huge contribution in the development of Britain. Quaker morals were mostly based on Christian Catholicism, and their honesty and social reformation has provide a major success in their businesses. Quakers believe that religions shall not be confined to Sundays but shall prevail in business and social dealing. These ideals have remained the main source of inspiration for British people and which had done extremely well in expanding Quaker business across Britain and abroad.

It could be argued that belief required some source of inspiration and such inspiration could either be religion or individual personal belief. In the discussion above it is evident that religion was the source of inspiration. And it could be concluded that consistency between the belief of organisations and people have played a collective role in modernisation of West and industrialisation of Britain respectively but conversely in Pakistan there is a miss-match between the image of telecommunication companies and the belief and faith of the individual in the society.

Pakistan has established many businesses, which runs under the Islamic principles. These businesses are launched as a reaction to the people beliefs i.e. due to the religious strength in the attitude and behaviour of the people of Pakistan. This is converse to Quakers in Britain where the people trusted and flourished these business organisations because of their religious beliefs. Comparing these two scenarios it could be argued that it were the religious belief which has excelled the business in Britain and Japan while due to the same religious beliefs many businesses initiated in Pakistan. Therefore there is a strong need of understanding the phenomena in Pakistani culture and equalising the culture of the organisation and population will on one side thrive businesses while on the other hand there will be an attachment and loyalty from the customer of telecom industry.

Modernity and Pakistani Culture:

It is obvious from the empirical investigation that the people of Pakistan a more inclined to religion in practice and belief. Many researchers agree to the notion that Pakistan is highly religious where the majority of the people attend the religious services quite frequently and that Islam has adequate influence on the social life of people living in it (Guitard et al, 2003), (Ali, 2006)(Qasim, Unknown).

The relation between culture and religion could be underlined by the fact that it has a philosophical influence over the culture of society, individual's attitude, value, habits and life style. These aspects jointly influence the decision behaviour of the individual living in the society (Delner, 1994). Many researchers agree to the point of view that religion provides means of doing things i.e. social behaviour and the encouragement or discouragement of choices (Hawkins et al 1980, Schiffman& Petersen, 1980). Kale, (2004) cited by Cornwell et al, (2005) believe that "...spirituality and religion have been integral to economic activities."

Now in the light of above literature and comparing it with empirical investigation and interviews, there seems to be inconsistency in the theoretical knowledge and the results and primary research data. As a whole the telecom companies have been criticised by many critics declaring that the picture these companies are presenting are not in line with the local culture. RabiaGharib, editor in chief Netexpress, argue that "Mobilink is communicating the picture of modernity and newness" She further added that due to the entry of Ufone in 2001 Mobilink utilised "*jazz girl*" which is blindly and equivalently followed by the rest of the companies. Following "*jazz*" Ufone also launches a colourful campaign with new logo aiming teenagers and youngsters and relied upon catchy jingles and funky colours. Though applying modernity to their campaign such strategies were futile for Ufone to establish any valuable brand. Telenor also never left herself behind, giving an

impression of “something exciting” in their prelaunch advertising “smart call” with a heavy support of western hard rock music.

Summarising the ongoing situation of war between mobile networks, RabiaGharib cited by Naeem (2008) declares that media has become too noisy due to the struggle of achieving and retaining customers but it has nothing to do with brand personality, emotional attachments of the customers or any functional attributes. Ms F. Mirza (2007) adheres to the same notion, noticing media war among the mobile companies she expressed in such words. “Are *dancing and such orgy dancing our culture?* She further added, what so ever the local mobile networks are representing is not the culture of Pakistan and that they don’t have to show us alien culture as our culture and sell their products on us.

The Effects of Collectivism

Our results from questionnaire apparently have shown that 90% of the people are collectivist. The combine family system present in Pakistan is the cultural factor came from historical reason of united India where Hindus live in a joint family system. Therefore within family Islam provides dominancy for the male partner and the rest of the tree is supposed to obey and respect the head of the family. Lee and Beatty (2002) argue that within nuclear families it is the ability of the extent to which a family partner provides the discharge of their daily needs gives that partner the power of decision making.

The strong bond between the family members in a collectivist society provides a longer list of families and friends. Looking to this perspectives the mobile networks are delivering special subscription and facilitation on economical grounds between the family members. This is a very positive step from the management of telecommunication networks. On the other hand the concept of “trend setter” which often used in the west for involving younger generation in their advertising campaigns may not be feasible for the target market. The youngsters in Pakistani society are having less brand awareness and required to respect and obey their parents and elders therefore the their promotional campaigns are to be in line with the family structure of the country and the foreign or global standards may not be likeable for the population.

Short Term Orientation:

It has been found in the interviews conducted with the management of mobile networks that they advertise prepaid connections more than the long-term contracts and switching brand is an easy and less fussy task of subscribers. From the questionnaire it has become evident that people perception toward future planning is very little. The primary data is very well supported by the literature review where the long-term orientation of Pakistan is zero (Hofstede, 2001 cited by Islam 2004). This observation is the manifestation of religiosity and

traditionalism where people remember their past, live in present but have no plans for the future.

Perception to Adverts

The results from questionnaires have revealed that majority of people sees modern advertisements religiously unsuitable while 20% of them find that they have no problem with it. These primary results are supported by Gibbs et al (2007); he argues that Muslim societies are more sensitive to ethically objectionable adverts, images or showing off liberal attitude. Also in section 1 of this chapter we have discussed that how the marketers and advertisers present their products and services into the market. Biel and Bridgewater, 1990 cited by Fam and Grohs (2007), argues that compatibility of adverts to the local culture has a influential affect on the consumer and they are feeling attracted to it, that is to say that if the advertisement is liked then people are more inclined to that brand.

Women and Advertisement

Our research reveals that 58% of the people do not agree to gender equality, which is reported in Culture Consequences by Hofstede (2001). Generally the south Asian culture and particularly in Pakistan, the society is divided distinctively into male and female gender. Women are having less autonomy and authority in family and social level.

From the results of questionnaires it is evident that 33% of the participants believe in delivering women active role in the society by allowing them Jobs and education. Here it is to be noted that education and employment provides indirect autonomy, and little could be done, if gender consciousness and equality is not supported or promoted by the religion.

Conclusions

The research relates to the investigation of religious cultures in Pakistan and how does it affect the behaviour of the individual living in the society. It has been found out in our research that there have been inconsistencies among the population religious and cultural background and the image representing the telecommunication networks of Pakistan. In this research Hofstede's cultural dimension, such as collectivism, masculinity, short-term orientation, uncertainty avoidance and high power distance, has been confirmed and correlated with our research.

The results of our research suggest that the people living in societies are highly religious – and their spiritual sentiments abhor modernity. The society believe that what appears on their TV sets, such as dance, music and pop culture, is not what they are looking for and consider these such performance religiously immoral. Such views have been achieved investigated in multidimensional perspectives in our

primary research, where the population believes that the social and economical problems could be solved by the application of “Sharia law”. This research has confirmed the individual’s negative attitude towards the western style of advertisements emerge in their promotions.

This research has revealed that social structure of the society is highly collective. Within family father is regarded as the superior role and therefore act as a decision maker within the family. This particular behaviour reflects the traditionalism and roots to religiosity where the society’s religion grants segregation among the members of a family. This observable fact contradicts with the marketer of telecom industry symbolizing young generation (girl friends and boyfriends, college boys and girls) for their promotional campaigns.

Finally the results of this research confirm that religion has been responsible for the provision of female submissive role in the society and that the population agrees that women shall contribute to home activities only.

Results of this research are of great importance for the marketers in a way that every culture has their own sets of beliefs, norms and values. The taken for granted marketing strategies of liberal societies does not fit in traditional and highly religious societies.

Recommendations

The rapid expansion of interpersonal communication and the continuous technological development vis-à-vis cellular phone is apparently global. As well as it has become an individual personal need rather than a status symbol in the past. Pakistan, a developing country having 67% of her population in the rural areas, offers a lucrative market for foreign investors in the telecom industry. On the other hand the traditionalism and religiosity of the demography remained a major issue in the past and present and requires better understanding. Craig and Douglas (2006) discuss the need of adopting a broader perspective on cross culture research and offer the conceptual and methodological issues and its implication of meaningfulness for marketers. These issues are discussed below:

Conceptual Issue:

As it become obvious in this research that people perception towards modernisation is negative which mainly due to their culture and religious practices. Craig and Douglas (2006) argued that values and beliefs are not identical across the countries but they are not stagnant as well because of the cultural dynamics, which are diffused through communication, media and travel. The impact of foreign culture through cultural interpenetration, contamination, pluralism and hybridisation is to be examined systematically to discover changes in values and belief, which will be beneficial for marketers.

Methodological Issues:

The role of culture:

It is important to understand the way in which a particular phenomenon affects the role of culture. Therefore for market researchers it is required to describe different level of cultures (global, regional, national and sub national) within the boundary of the country and how does it influence the behaviour of the people living in it.

Identifying the unit of analysis:

The interconnectivity with in national boundary has increased and therefore national culture could not be taken as a unit of analysis. National culture has a complex influence of amalgamation from global, regional, cross-national or sub national cultures. This point out to the sub national cultures existed in Pakistan, which situated in four provinces. Therefore for better understanding the analysis of sub culture should be taken into account by marketer on research on consumer behaviour.

Isolating confounding influence:

Confounding influence issue relates to the research design, which arises due to the participants of the survey who lived in different cultures or access to foreign media and Internet. This will give rise to the contamination of results and therefore the respondent's share of contact with other cultures shall be taken into account.

Expanding the range of context:

Most of the researches are conducted in the West and particularly in United States and Britain. The results of these researches have component, which are universal, but some elements are specific to a particular culture. Therefore there is a critical need of understanding such differences for example, East being collectivist and West being individualist.

The strategy adopted by the telecom network of Pakistan does not comply with the expectation of the population. Pakistan has a greater potential of accommodating foreign investment in the telecom sector and for this purpose the telecom networks should understand the religious value, which plays a major role in decision making of the customer.

Effective Advertising Strategies:

Fam et al (2004, p. 538) cited by Fam and Grohs (2007) argued that:

"...religion defines the ideals of life, which in turn reflected in the values and attitude of societies and individuals. Such values and attitudes shape the behaviour and practices of institutions and members of cultures."

Likeable Attributes:

As we have discussed earlier that Pakistan is a collectivist country and as identified by Fam and Grohs (2007) that in a collectivist country the mode of communication is less verbal and emphasis is on

gestures. Therefore the advertisements should be exciting, interesting and funny or they should have element of happiness, affection, appreciation and warmth. Instead of dancing boys and girls with hard rock Western music these adjectives will have convincing influence in a collective society like Pakistan.

In addition to above the picture of urban and rural life could be mixed with their promotions, which will eradicate alienation and enhance attachment between the customers and the service providers.

Identifying Target Customer:

Organisations are making heavy investment in order to attract their target customers. But as we have noticed that the mobile companies are targeting younger generation. Other than the primary needs, the younger generation is submitted to their elders in, therefore representation of youngsters may not be effective attainment techniques.

The country's masculinity ratio is very high. Due to the conservative nature of the society people fear to empower feminine gender and women appearance in advertisements have caused controversies. In this respect women appearance shall be minimised and/or the condition required for such appearance shall be maintained.

Finally the message conveyed in their commercials must comply with population expectations in such a way that it is effective in term of catching the attention of their customers while on the other hand it will not contradict with local values and traditions.

Value added services

As from our research it became evident that 74.1% of our population is highly religious and therefore attend religious services. In Islam, Muslim attend religious services 5 times a day therefore Haddad (2006) argued that service which reminds the local praying times, Islamic Hijri Calendar and direction finder for Ka'aba (where Muslims face while praying) has a potential of gaining profits in telecommunication services.

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