



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



## Impact of distribution strategies and brand perception on consumer behavior in the Pakistani soft drink market

Anmol Ayesha \*, Kumail Abbas and Khizar Iqbal

*Department of Management Sciences and Engineering, University of Science and Technology Beijing.*

International Journal of Science and Research Archive, 2025, 16(02), 416-428

Publication history: Received on 29 June 2025; revised on 06 August 2025; accepted on 09 August 2025

Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.30574/ijrsra.2025.16.2.2328>

### Abstract

This research examines the interactive impact of distribution strategies, distribution channels, brand equity and brand authenticity on consumer purchasing behavior of convenient products (soft drinks) in the Pakistani market. With the growth in convenience focused consumption, it has become imperative to understand the ways in which these marketing factors affect purchasing choice amongst fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) brands. A quantitative research method was employed with a structured questionnaire given to 200 consumers in Faisalabad. Analysis of the data was done with SPSS, with chi-square tests and reliability test (Cronbach's Alpha) being conducted to study the relationships between the key variables. The findings indicate that there is a statistically significant connection between the distribution strategies (intensive and selective) and distribution channels (physical and direct) and the consumer buying preferences. Additionally, both brand equity and authenticity exhibited a significant effect on the customer loyalty, perceived value, and purchase intention. Consumers bore a more profound inclination to intensive distribution and directly accessible products when brand authenticity was perceived high. These results imply that firms that have convenient products must focus on easy distribution channels and should focus on authentic brand stories to encourage consumer loyalty and increase the level of purchasing. The study adds a local perspective on the effectiveness of marketing strategies in emerging economies and can be used by brand managers of beverage companies.

**Keywords:** Consumer behavior; Distribution strategy; Distribution channels; Brand equity; Brand authenticity; Soft drinks; FMCG; Pakistan

### 1. Introduction

Convenience has become an essential aspect in consumer behavior in the modern and highly competitive business world, especially in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) market segment [1]. Convenience products are products that are easily available, readily available and are generally persistently accessible like soft drinks [2]. Such products not only require a good brand visibility; it also requires easy accessibility that is promoted by effective distribution strategies [3] [4]. However, as the demands of consumers change, organizations need to take into consideration a set of variables, such as distribution strategies [5] and the type of the distribution channels combined with brand perception to affect the behavior of consumers making purchases [6] [7] [8] [9].

Intensive, selective, and exclusive distribution strategies are critical components of the process of product delivery to the target customers [10] [11]. The purpose of intensive strategies is to get the product into as many outlets as possible to increase the visibility and chances to buy impulsively [12] [13]. Selective strategies, on the contrary, focus more on efficiency and brand placement as it limits the availability of products to limited outlet [14] [15]. Exclusive strategies include a single distributor who can sell the product in a specific market or region. Likewise, the presence of direct (e.g., company-owned stores or e-commerce) and physical (e.g., retail outlets) channels of distribution also has significant

\* Corresponding author: Anmol Ayesha

influence on the consumer preferences [16]. Such strategic choices have a direct impact on the availability of products, convenience of consumers, and the perceived brand value [17] [18].

In parallel with distribution concerns, the enterprises of brand equity and brand authenticity became major psychological determining factors of consumer behavior [19] [20]. Brand equity captures all the consumer perceptions about the quality and loyalty of the brand and awareness [7] [8], and authenticity involves the consumers perceptions about the sincerity, visibility, and believability of brand [21] [22]. In conjunction, such brand attributes contribute to consumer trust, their emotional attachment, and readiness to repeat buying especially regarding low-involvement products that include soft drinks [23] [24]. Although each of these variables has been individually studied in the past, there is still a significant lack of insight into how they interact with one another (and contribute to consumer behavior) in the context of emerging economies like Pakistan [25] [26]. Existing literature has focused on these factors isolated or in Western retail environments, but the relation between the distribution strategies and brand perception (brand equity and brand authenticity) in consumer choice in South Asian region is poorly understood [27] [28]. The present research aims to fill this gap by examining the Pakistani industry of soft drinks, which provides a good example of studying convenience product dynamics in a developing country [29] [30].

In this study, Theory of reasoned action (TRA) is adopted as the theoretical framework, according Ajzen & Fishbein to which behavioral intention is considered as the main determinant of behavior, which in turn, depends on attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control [31] [32]. The distribution strategies and channels are viewed as structural enablers within this framework [33], whereas brand equity and authenticity are considered as perceptual influencers [34] [35]. Marketers seeking to improve on consumer-brand relationships and to enhance their sales performances in competitive markets and thus achieve their consumer based sales goals should find it beneficial to develop an understanding of the way in which these variables influence behavioral intentions [36].

This research is aimed at investigating the combined effect of distribution strategy, channel type, brand equity, and brand authenticity on consumer buying behavior with respect to convenient products [37]. This research has a theoretical and practical application in FMCG companies in competitive and convenience-based markets through a quantitative survey of 200 consumers in Faisalabad, Pakistan, using SPSS as a data analysis tool [38]. The current study both advances the scholarly insight into the topic of marketing strategy in emergent markets and contributes to the evidence-based suggestions to optimize the process of distribution and brand positioning [39].

### *Research Objectives*

The object of this research is to investigate how the interaction of distribution strategies, distribution channel, brand equity and brand authenticity influences consumer purchasing behavior of convenient products in Pakistani soft drink market. The specific objectives are:

- To assess the impact of distribution strategies (intensive vs. selective) on consumer buying behavior for convenience products.
- To evaluate how brand equity and brand authenticity influence consumer trust, purchase intention, and loyalty.
- To examine how distribution channels interact with brand perception to shape consumer decision-making behavior.

### *Research Questions*

- How do distribution strategies (intensive vs. selective) influence consumer buying behavior for convenience products?
- What is the effect of brand equity and brand authenticity on consumer purchase intention and loyalty?
- How do distribution channels (direct vs. physical) interact with brand perceptions to shape consumer decisions?

### *Research Hypotheses*

To test the relationships between key variables in this study, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H1: Distribution strategies (intensive vs. selective) have a significant impact on consumer buying behavior for convenience products.
- H2: Brand equity and brand authenticity significantly influence consumer trust, purchase intention, and brand loyalty.

- H3: Distribution channels (direct vs. physical) interact with brand perception to significantly shape consumer decision-making behavior.

---

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Distribution Strategies and Consumer Convenience

The distribution strategy is a core aspect of marketing logistics which has a direct impact on the accessibility and easy purchasing of the products. According to Kotler et al, strategic distribution defines the place of product as well as consumers perception of value by determining how it is available to them [41]. When considering convenience products, where involvement is lower and purchase more frequent, distribution choices may play an important role in determining the success of a brand [42]. Soft drinks and other goods of FMCG type are typically distributed intensively attempting to optimize product availability in a large number of channels [43] [38]. According to Duncan and Moriarty, distribution exceeds its logistical activity; it is also a communicative element that signals availability; brand accessibility, and consumer empowerment. Intensive distribution not only makes a brand more visible when it appears in more places but also spells ubiquitousness and relevancy in everyday life to consumers [20] [44]. Thus, distribution strategy is as much about positioning a brand as it is about the efficiency of the supply system [8].

Although intensive distribution will lead to visibility and impulse buying, it may lose the brand prestige when its management becomes careless [45]. Instead, selective distribution is focused on distinct, premium sale settings, which assist regulate the brand image and positioning [46] [47]. There are trade-offs in each of the strategies in terms of reach, efficiency, and perceived exclusivity [48]. These trade-offs are even more important in the emerging economies which possess a stronger logistical infrastructure, more cost constraints, and retailer power [49]. According to the research of Binh, the allocation of distribution intensity according to the preferences of consumers in relation to the channel is positively correlated with customer satisfaction and the emergence of a lasting engagement [50] [51]. Even though it is significant, there is less research with regard to the interactions between distribution strategy and perception of a brand and their influence on consumer behavior [52].

### 2.2. Distribution Channels: Direct vs. Physical

The distribution channels on which the products are sold [either direct (e.g. e-commerce, company-owned stores) or physical (e.g. retail shops, supermarkets) are the channel through which the products will reach the end user. Direct channels lack intermediaries and can result in improved margins and data feedback channels to the brands [53]. Physical channels, on the other hand, enable people to interact using their senses and get direct access to the products, which cannot be underestimated in most developing nations [54].

According to Thuy, Anh, and Binh, the emergence of online and hybrid distribution platforms adds a new element of flexibility, especially in urbanized environments where the use of digital solutions is more common than not [55]. But in smaller regions like in Pakistan, consumers can still prefer physical retail based on payment of choice, trust, and physical availability of products. Zhang, Chang, & Neslin argue that even in this age of digital payment systems, physical stores still have a role to play in influencing consumer trust and brand loyalty, particularly in areas where process to digitalize the payment system is either in its infancy or just developing [54]. The move to an online format has highlighted the significance of omnichannel capabilities in ensuring constant consumer connection with the brand through various points. Verhoef et al stress that the smooth online and offline distribution provide the customer with more experience as it provides flexibility, transparency, and decisions made in real-time [56]. In developing economies such as Pakistan, where the shift in consumer demands towards hybrid models of retailing is in progress, the procurement of omnichannel infrastructure can be viewed as a promising move.

Although the distribution channels are very important in marketing, literature that measures them together with brand equity or authenticity is unexplored. This study fills that gap through a combined analysis of both the behavioral effect of distribution channel type and brand perception as it offers a better-rounded picture of how each affect consumer behavior [57].

### 2.3. Brand Equity and Purchase Intention

Brand equity is the added value that the brand name brings to a product [7]. It covers four dimensions as follows; brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and brand loyalty. The great brand equity can increase the perceived value, price tolerance and consumer trust especially in highly saturated markets [8]. According to a study by Thuy, Anh, and Binh, brand equity constituted more than 50 percent of the decision-making process of consumers in the FMCG industry, making it one of the core components of consumer behavior in low-involvement products [55]. Also, the

purchases that are motivated by equity will more than likely lead to the recurrence of behavior and good word of mouth endorsement/ advocacy. When it comes to the convenience products brand equity can be a shorthand indicator of trust and familiarity. However, little empirical literature can be found to test its impact combined with operational factors such as distribution scope or channel design and that is what this contribution seeks to help in.

#### 2.4. Brand Authenticity and Consumer Trust

The authenticity of brands has since emerged as a major factor in achieving emotional connection with customers, especially within the young and values-based consumer base. According to Beverland and Farrelly, authenticity is determined by the extent to which a brand is deemed as being genuine, transparent, and true to itself [21]. Napoli et al, also state that authentic brands create higher levels of trust, and thus more purchase intention and brand loyalty [22]. The authenticity of the brand is an effective differentiator in emerging markets where customers tend to be distrustful of fake or otherwise low quality products [58]. Authenticity for consumers implies reliability, ethical behavior and communal affiliation, which ascends product preference even in cases where a product is as desirable in terms of price and convenience. According to Morhart et al, authenticity works on the basis of four pillars, i.e., continuity, credibility, integrity, and symbolism. These dimensions aid in differentiating brands that are truly authentic, to those that are only trying to pass off as authentic thereby influencing long term consumer loyalty [59].

In convenience stores such as soft drinks where functional differentiation is less, the perceived authenticity of a given brand will serve as a critical determinant of preference. Brand authenticity is less examined in the context of such logistic elements as distribution, although it has a strong conceptual ground. This paper will fill that gap by analyzing whether the attitude perceived sincerity of a brand increases or moderates the influence of its distribution model on consumer behavior. Although prior studies present useful information regarding the individual impacts of distribution strategies, channels, and perceptions of a brand, this body of knowledge is not comprehensive since there are no studies that fully demonstrate how these factors combine to influence the consumer behavior of purchase-especially in an under-researched market such as Pakistan. This study is expected to fill this gap by empirically testing the combined effects of distribution strategy, channel type, brand equity, authenticity on the buying decision of convenience products.

---

### 3. Theoretical Framework

The research is based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA), formulated by Ajzen and Fishbein that states that the intention of the behavior of an individual is defined by their attitude towards this behavior as well as by subjective norms [60]. TRAs have been significantly applied in consumer behavior studies in an attempt to provide answers on how perceptions and beliefs find their way into real-life purchases. The behavioral modeling can be further refined using the Reasoned Action Approach (RAA) of Fishbein and Ajzen that evaluates how people behave basing on their beliefs about outcomes, beliefs about normative expectations, and behavioral intentions [60]. Unlike TRA, RAA adds in perceived behavioral control, which increases the explanatory variables of consumer choice models. This can be very handy in situations where there is a digital channel and a digital distribution process that can drive consumer behaviour greatly due to factors such as convenience and accessibility.

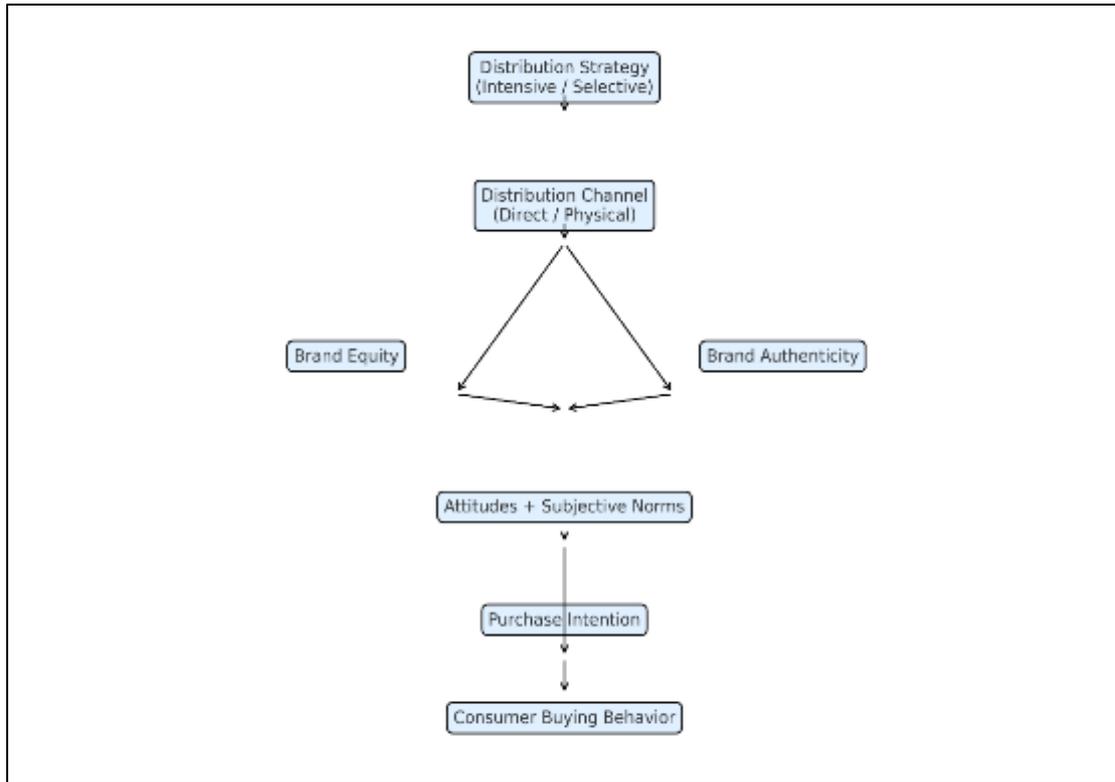
According to TRA, the intention to perform a behavior (e.g., purchasing a product) is determined by:

- Attitude toward the behavior: the individual's positive or negative evaluation of performing the behavior.
- Subjective norms: the perceived social pressure to perform or not perform the behavior.

In this study's context:

- Distribution strategies and channels affect the *attitude* toward the behavior by influencing perceived ease, accessibility, and convenience.
- Brand equity and brand authenticity shape both *attitude* and *subjective norms* by influencing trust, social validation, and brand loyalty.

Therefore, TRA is appropriate to model the behavioral outcome of consumer buying behavior for convenience products, where both structural (distribution) and psychological (brand) factors interplay to form intention.



**Figure 1** Conceptual Framework Based on the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

## 4. Material and Methods

### 4.1. Research Design

The study adopted quantitative cross-sectional survey study design to investigate the effects of the combination of distribution strategy, type of distribution channel, brand equity, and brand authenticity on the buying behavior of consumers towards the convenient products. Primary data was obtained using a structured questionnaire to the consumers in Faisalabad region of Pakistan. This methodology was chosen because it is appropriate in hypothesis testing and describing the behavior factors and their levels of occurrence after varying different independent variables.

### 4.2. Population and Sampling

The focus group was the consumers of soft drinks, which belong to the category of the convenience good. The sample of 200 respondents was chosen through non-probability judgmental sampling whereby respondents were identified in terms of availability and willingness to respond to the interview questions. The sample population was the consumers found in the educational institutions and also the business areas, which represent the demographically diverse group in age, gender and the education level. The authorship considered the sample to be adequate in terms of conducting a chi-square analysis and testing reliability since the study is exploratory and the resources are limited.

#### 4.2.1. Research Variables

The study considered the following key variables:

Independent Variables:

- *Distribution Strategy*: Intensive and Selective
- *Distribution Channel*: Physical and Direct
- *Brand Reputation*: Brand Equity and Brand Authenticity

Dependent Variable:

- *Consumer Buying Behavior* toward convenience products (soft drinks)

The measurement of all the independent variables were based on previously validated items of published works. Likert-type items measuring behavioral intention, brand preference choice, and purchase consistency were operationalized to represent the dependent variable.

#### 4.3. Instrument Design

The research instrument had six sections, the first was a demographical section, and the other five were based on the variables. Measurement was based on five-point Likert scales (strongly disagree through strongly agree), frequency scale related to particular constructs, and importance scale related to particular constructs. The questionnaire was created in English and was revised according to clarity and relevance to Pakistani context. Some of the sources on scale adaptation referred to are by Aaker, Napoli et al., and Zhang, Chang, & Neslin [7] [22] [54].

#### 4.4. Data Collection Procedure

Data were gathered through self-administered printed questionnaires, also distributed face-to-face to the educational institutions in Faisalabad. Informed consent information was given to respondents and their anonymity was guaranteed. A total 200 valid responses were collected and coded to carry out analysis.

#### 4.5. Reliability, and Validity

To guarantee the reliability of the measurement, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated per construct. The internal consistency proved to be acceptable to excellent at values greater than 0.78 across all variables:

**Table 1** Reliability of the measurements used

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha
Intensive Strategy	0.970
Selective Strategy	0.840
Physical Distribution Channel	0.784
Direct Distribution Channel	0.791
Brand Equity	0.920
Brand Authenticity	0.806

The validity of content was addressed by seeking the opinion of experts as well as piloting the instrument with a sample of respondents (n=15) before full administration.

#### 4.6. Data Analysis Techniques

The data were analyzed with the use of SPSS version 29.0.2.0. The following statistical processing steps were taken:

- Descriptive statistics for demographical profiling
- Reliability analysis (Cronbach's Alpha) of internal consistency
- Tests of hypotheses with chi-square values to test the independence of variables

The statistical significance probability was put at  $p < 0.05$ . Because the variables are categorical, chi-square analysis was chosen as the main inferential tool.

## 5. Results

The following section reports the findings of the survey data organized in accordance with the three main hypotheses of the study. Descriptive statistics, chi square tests and the reliability results have been interpreted to measure how the

distribution strategies, channel, brand equity and authenticity influences the behavior among consumers over convenience products.

### 5.1. Respondent Descriptive Profile

The study involved 200 respondents. Most of them were females (59.9%) aged 18-24 (59.7%) and were undertaking a bachelor's degree (53.7%). These demographics represent youth/educated consumers as seen in other urban FMCG market segments in Pakistan.

**Table 2** Sample Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage	Total
Gender			
Male	79	39.1%	
Female	121	59.9%	200
Age			
18-24	120	59.7%	
25-34	60	30.3%	
35-44	17	8.5%	200
45-54	3	1.5%	
55 and above	0	0%	
Education Sector			
High School or below	27	13.9%	
Bachelor's	108	53.7%	
Master's	57	28.4%	200
Doctorate or Higher	8	4%	

### 5.2. Hypothesis 1: Impact of Distribution Strategies

H1: Distribution strategies significantly influence consumer buying behavior for convenient products.

Respondents indicated a strong choice when it came to strategies of distribution Intensive distribution was most common amongst 50 percent of the sample with the remainder using selective distribution strategies. Chi-square analysis showed that there were meaningful interactions between distribution strategy and consumer-behaviors:

The respondents who were exposed to products via aggressive distribution made impulse purchases more frequently ( $p < 0.001$ ).

Selective distribution was seen as more effective in fulfilling the demands of the customers and developing trust ( $p < 0.001$ ).

**Table 3** Chi-Square Results for Hypothesis 1: Distribution Strategies

Item/Question Pair	$\chi^2$ Value	df	p-Value	Significance
Preference for convenient products $\times$ Intensive strategy advantages	106.80	10	<0.001	Significant
Impulse buying due to product visibility (intensive)	114.61	10	<0.001	Significant
Selective strategy targeting large market segments	107.99	10	<0.001	Significant
Trust enhancement through selective strategy	104.47	10	<0.001	Significant

These results confirm that distribution strategy plays a pivotal role in determining purchasing behaviors. Intensive channel implementation is associated with the low-involvement, habitual purchases as it enhances product exposure, whereas selective resonates with quality-seeking consumers and needs curated product representation.

**5.3. Hypothesis 2: Impact of Distribution Channels**

H2: Distribution channels (physical vs. direct) significantly influence consumer buying behavior.

The results of the Chi-square indicates that there were significant correlations between channel type and dimensions of consumer behavior:

According to the respondents, the direct distribution (e.g., brand-owned stores, online portals) enhanced accessibility, eliminated middlemen expenses, and amplified feedback channels (p < 0.001).

Physical channel received high values based on variety of products it offers, convenient location and personal service (p < 0.001).

**Table 4** Chi-Square Results for Hypothesis 2: Distribution Channels

Item/Question Pair	$\chi^2$ Value	df	p-Value	Significance
Direct distribution improves access	74.15	10	<0.001	Significant
Direct reduces cost via middlemen	74.66	10	<0.001	Significant
Price comparison across distributors	118.07	10	<0.001	Significant
Physical distribution offers product variety	54.58	10	<0.001	Significant
Physical channels ensure product availability	69.79	10	<0.001	Significant

These findings imply that direct channels will attract digitally savvy consumers who want control and efficiency, whereas physical channels will satisfy sensory communication and the desire to get immediate satisfaction. Both channels are useful in the Faisalabad context, and where possible, brands should have an omnichannel approach.

**5.4. Hypothesis 3: Role of Brand Equity and Authenticity**

H3: Brand equity and authenticity significantly influence consumer buying behavior for convenience products.

The Chi-square tests showed that there were significant measures of correlations existing between the brand reputation variables and decision of consumers:

The brand equity created an impact on the repeat purchase intentions, satisfaction and preference to the soft drinks (p < 0.001).

Brand authenticity was a hugely important predictor of consumer perceptions of trust, credibility, and the long-term brand loyalty. (p < 0.001).

**Table 5** Chi-Square Results for Hypothesis 3: Brand Equity and Authenticity

Item/Question Pair	$\chi^2$ Value	df	p-Value	Significance
Brand name recall × loyalty	104.70	10	<0.001	Significant
Brand satisfaction × intention to repurchase	102.14	10	<0.001	Significant
Authenticity influences trust	114.57	10	<0.001	Significant
Authenticity drives credibility and long-term loyalty	105.64	10	<0.001	Significant

When consumers believed that a brand was recognizable and authentic, they became more likely to stay loyal and make repeat purchases. These outcomes concur with Aaker (1991) and Napoli et al. (2016) who point to the fact that in saturated consumer goods market, emotional connection and brand meaning become more and more crucial.

---

## 6. Integrated Discussion

The synergistic results show that strategic distribution and brand perception are confined factors, but contribute to consumer behavior in relation to each other. In the case of soft drink brands in Pakistan especially targeting the youth, the best strategy is:

- Widespread distribution using intense distribution services
- Improved message of authenticity in branding
- Proper distribution of physical and digital channels based on market segmentation

This combined perceptual view justifies the use of the Theory of Reasoned Action in the study, indicating that both distribution and branding work to influence the behavioral intention by creating the appropriate attitude and social norms of the consumers.

This research focused on the effect of the combination of distribution channels, distribution strategies, brand equity and brand authenticity on the consumer purchase behavior in Pakistan soft drink market. The results of the survey on 200 respondents, the statistical analysis of the results (chi-square tests) and all four variables were found to have statistically significant influence over the consumer behavior towards convenience products.

Direct and intensive distribution policies improved the visibility and availability of products contributing to impulse buys and repetitive cycles. At the same time, brand equity and perceived authenticity influenced the level of consumer trust, satisfaction and loyalty immensely. The results serve to strengthen the notion that both logistics and perceptual issues are major factors in the promotion of convenience goods.

The study deepens the combined effects of distribution design and brand perception on consumer decision-making, especially in developing countries where infrastructural and brand trusted factors are different, compared to developed economies. The study helps close the existing research gap by integrating both structural (distribution strategies and channels) and perceptual (brand equity and authenticity) variables and providing both empirical and strategic implications that the research adds to the current literature surrounding consumer behavior in the convenience goods industry.

### 6.1. Managerial Implications

The results suggest a number of actionable points to the marketers and brand strategists working within the FMCG-oriented industry:

**Focus on Accessibility:** Since intensive distribution has been highly valued, the brands are to make sure that they have wide accessibility within the retail stores or convenience stores, vending machines, or even online.

**Focus on Hybrid Channel Strategy:** A physical channel attracts another segment of people, and a direct channel also has a segment in its favor. Physical stores provide the opportunity to consume instantly and engage directly with customer, whereas direct channels are more cost-effective and allow better understanding of customers. Different preferences require brands to embrace an omnichannel approach.

**Strengthen Brand Equity:** Consistent communications, quality control and marketing campaigns are required to increase the sense of awareness and perceived value that are directly proportional to the increase in loyalty and repeat buying.

**Emphasis on Authenticity:** The present-day consumers are pursuing brands that are authentic and socially responsible. Explicitly focusing on the aspects of transparency, ethical sourcing, and brand narration can increase the emotional connections and create a distinction between products in a saturated marketplace.

### 6.2. Future Research Directions

Although the present study has great insights, there are some areas that still can be explored with future researches:

**Geographically:** In this research paper, a single city (Faisalabad) was targeted. Location of other regions and urban centers should also be incorporated in future studies to verify the results on a larger demographic.

**Comparative Product Categories:** Future research can investigate the extent to which these results extend to the other convenience products, packaged snacks, hygiene products, or ready-to-eat foods.

**Longitudinal Analysis:** A longitudinal analysis may be able to capture the dynamics in relation to consumer preferences, which may change with the changes in digital adoption, an increase or a decrease in income level or a change in the brand innovation.

**Advanced Modeling Techniques:** The next studies could use structural equation modeling (SEM) or regression-based mediation analyses and investigate causality and interaction effect more formally.

**Technology-Driven Distribution:** The future of consumer trust and purchasing behavior can be tracked via potentially incorporating new technologies-e.g. drone delivery, utilize QR codes at a vendor location, and apply AI-driven recommendation solutions.

---

## Compliance with ethical standards

### *Disclosure of conflict of interest*

There is no conflict of interest.

### *Funding*

No funding was received.

---

## References

- [1] Kotler P, Keller KL. Marketing Management. 15th ed. Pearson; 2016.
- [2] Gutta SS, Kumar TK. Factors influencing on buying behaviour of soft drink products: A perceptual study. Int J Latest Eng Res Appl. 2017;2(12):93–8.
- [3] Christopher M. Logistics and Supply Chain Management: Creating Value-Adding Networks. 4th ed. Pearson; 2011.
- [4] Gadde L-E, Hakansson H, Persson G. Supply network strategies. 2nd ed. Chichester: Wiley; 2011.
- [5] Shirin E, Hima Bindu ES, Swetha K, Devarapalli RK. The impact of store environment on consumer behavior. Int J Curr Microbiol Appl Sci. 2021;10(2):1739–44. doi:10.20546/ijcmas.2021.1002.205.
- [6] Yao P, Osman S, Sabri MF, Zainudin N. Consumer behavior in online-to-offline (O2O) commerce: A thematic review. Sustainability. 2022;14(13):7842. doi:10.3390/su14137842.
- [7] Aaker DA. Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name. New York: Free Press; 1991.
- [8] Keller KL. Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. J Mark. 1993;57(1):1–22. doi:10.1177/002224299305700101.
- [9] Hoyer WD, et al. Consumer behaviour. Cengage AU; 2020.
- [10] Coughlan AT, Anderson E, Stern LW, El-Ansary AI. Marketing Channels. 7th ed. Pearson Education; 2006.
- [11] Stern LW, El-Ansary AI, Coughlan AT. Marketing Channels. Pearson; 2016.
- [12] Schmitt B, Zarantonello L. Consumer experience and experiential marketing: A critical review. Rev Mark Res. 2013;10:25–61.
- [13] Agrawal R, Gaur S, Narayanan A. Determining customer loyalty: Review and model. Mark Rev. 2012;12(3). doi:10.1362/146934712X13420906885430.
- [14] Keller KL. Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring, and Managing Brand Equity. 2nd ed. Prentice Hall; 2003.

- [15] Solomon MR, Dann S, Dann S, Russell-Bennett R. *Consumer behaviour: Buying, having, being*. Frenchs Forest, NSW: Pearson Education; 2002.
- [16] Harris LC, Goode MMH. Online servicescapes, trust, and purchase intentions. *J Serv Mark*. 2010;24(3):230–43.
- [17] Baker WE, Sinkula JM. The complementary effects of market orientation and entrepreneurial orientation on profitability in small businesses. *J Small Bus Manag*. 2009;47(4):443–64.
- [18] Verhoef PC, Kannan PK, Inman JJ. From multi-channel retailing to omni-channel retailing: Introduction to the special issue on multi-channel retailing. *J Retail*. 2015;91(2):174–81.
- [19] Longwell GJ. *Managing brand equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name*: David A. Aaker, The Free Press, New York (1991). *J Bus Res*. 1994;29:247–8.
- [20] Schmitt B, Zarantonello L, Brakus JJ. From experiential psychology to consumer experience. *J Consum Psychol*. 2015;25(1):166–71. doi:10.1016/j.jcps.2014.09.001.
- [21] Beverland MB, Farrelly FJ. The Quest for Authenticity in Consumption: Consumers' Purposive Choice of Authentic Cues to Shape Experienced Outcomes. *J Consum Res*. 2010;36(5):838–56. doi:10.1086/615047.
- [22] Napoli J, Dickinson-Delaporte S, Beverland MB. The brand authenticity continuum: strategic approaches for building value. *J Mark Manag*. 2016;32(13–14):1201–29. doi:10.1080/0267257X.2016.1145722.
- [23] Chaudhuri A, Holbrook MB. The Chain of Effects from Brand Trust and Brand Affect to Brand Performance: The Role of Brand Loyalty. *J Mark*. 2001;65(2):81–93. doi:10.1509/jmkg.65.2.81.18255.
- [24] Iglesias O, Singh JJ, Batista-Foguet JM. The role of brand experience and affective commitment in determining brand loyalty. *J Brand Manag*. 2011;18(8):570–82. doi:10.1057/bm.2010.58.
- [25] Mamidi T. The impact of digital marketing on consumer behavior in emerging markets. 2025 May. doi:10.13140/RG.2.2.26697.25441.
- [26] Arslan M, Zaman R. Impact of brand image and service quality on consumer purchase intention: A study of retail store in Pakistan. *Res Humanit Soc Sci*. 2014;4(22):98–105.
- [27] Heinberg M, Ozkaya HE, Taube M. The influence of global and local iconic brand positioning on advertising persuasion in an emerging market setting. *J Int Bus Stud*. 2017;doi:10.1057/s41267-017-0071-2.
- [28] Tyagi V, Tyagi AK, Pandey V. A case study on consumer buying behavior towards selected FMCG products. 2019 Apr. doi:10.13140/RG.2.2.16421.96485.
- [29] Mallaiah G, Ramana DV. Consumer attitude and behaviour towards soft drinks. *Int J Emerg Res Manag Technol*. 2018;7(1):86–7. doi:10.23956/ijermt.v7i1.27.
- [30] Yab MA, Ilyas M, Rehman CA. Customer based brand equity: Evidence from the soft drink industry in Pakistan. *Int J Manag Inf Technol*. 2014;9(2):1637–47. doi:10.24297/ijmit.v9i2.2888.
- [31] Ajzen I, Fishbein M. *Understanding attitudes and predicting social behavior*. Prentice-Hall; 1980.
- [32] Ajzen I. The theory of planned behavior. *Organ Behav Hum Decis Process*. 1991;50(2):179–211. doi:10.1016/0749-5978(91)90020-T.
- [33] Teng S, Khong KW, Goh WW. Examining the antecedents of persuasive eWOM messages in social media. *Online Inf Rev*. 2014;38(6):746–68. doi:10.1108/OIR-04-2014-0089.
- [34] Dube L, Morgan RM. Capturing the dynamics of customer–firm relationships: The role of customer trust and brand authenticity. *J Consum Psychol*. 2009;19(3):357–66. doi:10.1016/j.jcps.2009.05.001.
- [35] Morhart FM, Malär L. Authenticity in luxury branding. In: *Business 2020 Handbook*. 2020 Apr 2. p. 190–207. doi:10.4337/9781786436351.00023.
- [36] Rust RT, Lemon KN, Zeithaml VA. Return on marketing: Using customer equity to focus marketing strategy. *J Mark*. 2004;68(1):109–27. doi:10.1509/jmkg.68.1.109.24030.
- [37] Bhattacharya CB, Sen S. Consumer–company identification: A framework for understanding consumers' relationships with companies. *J Mark*. 2003;67(2):76–88. doi:10.1509/jmkg.67.2.76.18609.
- [38] Sweeney JC, Danaher TS, McColl-Kennedy JR. Customer effort in value cocreation activities. *J Serv Res*. 2015;18(3):318–35. doi:10.1177/1094670515572128.

- [39] Moran G, Muzellec L, Nolan E. Consumer moments of truth in the digital context: How 'search' and 'mobile' influence purchase decisions in emerging markets. *J Strategic Mark.* 2014;22(7):594–611. doi:10.1080/0965254X.2014.914073.
- [40] Sheth JN. Impact of emerging markets on marketing: Rethinking existing perspectives and practices. *J Mark.* 2011;75(4):166–82. doi:10.1509/jmkg.75.4.166.
- [41] Kotler P, Keller KL, Ang SH, Leong SM, Tan CT. *Marketing Management: An Asian Perspective*. 6th ed. Pearson Education; 2009.
- [42] Vargo SL, Lusch RF. Evolving to a new dominant logic for marketing. *J Mark.* 2004;68(1):1–17. doi:10.1509/jmkg.68.1.1.24036.
- [43] Suartina IWW, Wimba IGA, Astrama IM, Sujana IK. The role of brand love in mediating the effect of intensive distribution and social media promotion on brand loyalty and e-WOM. *Int J Data Netw Sci.* 2022;6:336–44. doi:10.5267/j.ijdns.2022.1.004.
- [44] Duncan T, Moriarty SE. *Driving brand value: Using integrated marketing to manage profitable stakeholder relationships*. McGraw-Hill; 1997.
- [45] Husnain M, Waheed AM. Impact of branding on impulse buying behavior: Evidence from FMCG's sector Pakistan. *Int J Bus Adm.* 2016;7(1):8749–49. doi:10.5430/ijba.v7n1p59.
- [46] Mohsen A, Yousif RI, Yasser I. The effect of distribution channels' strategies and types on consumers' buying behavior of convenience products. *MSA Manag Sci J.* 2023;2(2):2023. doi:10.21608/msamsj.2023.201931.1011.
- [47] Mark T, Lemon KN, Vandenbosch M, Maruotti A. Capturing the evolution of customer–firm relationships: How customers become more (or less) valuable over time. *J Retail.* 2013;89(3):231–45. doi:10.1016/j.jretai.2013.04.001.
- [48] Baker WE, Sinkula JM. The complementary effects of market orientation and entrepreneurial orientation on profitability in small businesses. *J Small Bus Manag.* 2009;47(4):443–64. doi:10.1111/j.1540-627X.2009.00278.x.
- [49] Zaman K, Arshad A, Shahzad A. Customer loyalty in FMCG sector of Pakistan. *Inf Manag Bus Rev.* 2012;4(1):41–8. doi:10.22610/imbr.v4i1.962.
- [50] Binh NT. The impact of distribution intensity on brand preference and brand loyalty. *Int J Mark Stud.* 2011;3(3):56–67. doi:10.5539/ijms.v3n3p56.
- [51] Shirin E, Hima Bindu ES, Swetha K, Devarapalli RK. The impact of store environment on consumer behavior. *Int J Curr Microbiol Appl Sci.* 2021;10(2):1739–44. doi:10.20546/ijcmas.2021.1002.205.
- [52] Khan MM, Jalees T, Rahman M. Preference Determinants for Soft Drinks Brands: An Empirical Study of Karachi Market through Mall Intercepts Method. *Glob Manag J Acad Corp Stud.* 2016;6(2):49–60.
- [53] Jerath K, Kim SH, Swinney R. Product quality in a distribution channel with inventory risk. *Mark Sci.* 2017;36(5):747–61. doi:10.1287/mksc.2017.1041.
- [54] Zhang JZ, Chang CW, Neslin SA. EXPRESS: How physical stores enhance customer value: The importance of product inspection depth. *J Mark.* 2021;86(1):1–17. doi:10.1177/00222429211012106.
- [55] Thuy NV, Anh NTN, Binh NTX. Impact of brand equity on consumer purchase decision: A case study of mobile retailer in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam. *J East Eur Cent Asian Res.* 2022;9(2):229–39. doi:10.15549/jeecar.v9i2.762.
- [56] Verhoef PC, Kannan PK, Inman JJ. From multi-channel retailing to omni-channel retailing: Introduction to the special issue on multi-channel retailing. *J Retail.* 2015;91(2):174–81. doi:10.1016/j.jretai.2015.02.005.
- [57] Keller KL. Brand equity management in a multichannel, multimedia retail environment. *J Interact Mark.* 2010;24(2):58–70. doi:10.1016/j.intmar.2010.03.001.
- [58] Safeer AA, Yuanqiong H, Abrar M, Shabbir R. Role of brand experience in predicting consumer loyalty. *Mark Intell Plan.* 2021;39(8):1042–57. doi:10.1108/MIP-11-2020-0471.
- [59] Morhart FM, Malär L, Guèvremont A, Girardin F, Grohmann B. Brand authenticity: An integrative framework and measurement scale. *J Consum Psychol.* 2015;25(2):200–18. doi:10.1016/j.jcps.2014.11.006.

[60] Fishbein M, Ajzen I. Predicting and changing behavior: The reasoned action approach. New York: Psychology Press; 2010.

**Short Profiles of Each Author**

	<p>I am <b>Anmol Ayesha</b>: I am a committed researcher and academically well versed in business and engineering management. I got my degree in Bachelor of Business Administration with Human Resource Management as my major from Government College Women University Faisalabad where I was given a Gold Medal award in academic excellence performance. I am the presently studying in the University of Science and Technology Beijing as a student of Master of Management Sciences and Engineering. Current focus areas of my research include: Supply Chain Management; Closed-Loop Supply Chains; Smart Remanufacturing; and, Environmental, Social, and Governance (ESG) integration. This interdisciplinary degree has taught me an exclusive insight into how sustainable innovation will transform the world supply networks. I like working in lively academic settings and maintain interests in pursuing research that combines efficiency, accountability, and technologies of the future.</p>
	<p>I am <b>Kumail Abbas</b>, an ambitious and multi-disciplinary researcher whose background lies between finance, management and technology. I graduated with a major in Finance and Bachelor of Business Administration degree in The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan. Afterwards, I undertook a Masters in Management Sciences and Engineering in the University of Science and Technology Beijing and my research interest at the moment is in the overlap of E-Commerce and Artificial Intelligence. This one of a kind academic experience has enabled me to both think differently with a strategic mindset grounded in financial analysis as well as technological innovation. I am especially keen to learn how smart systems are transforming online new commerce and consumer behavior. I am a analytical and adaptive person who believes in teamwork, cross cultural interaction and practical research work.</p>
	<p>My name is <b>Khizar Iqbal</b>, and I am an interdisciplinary researcher with a solid background in quantitative analysis and engineering management. I have an undergraduate degree in Mathematics of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan, Pakistan, which forms the foundation of my analytical and problem-solving capabilities. At this moment, I am a Master in Management Sciences and Engineering student in the University of Science and Technology Beijing. In my studies, I focus on the topic of Traffic Management and similar disciplines and work on the constructs of intelligent systems, optimization models, and data-driven solutions that can be implemented in urban mobility and urban infrastructure. I present an analytical thinking, enthusiasm in systems advancement, and dedication towards effective research, one which solves practical transportation issues.</p>