Identifying the Consequences of Brand Coolness: A Brand Relationship Perspective

by

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A Brand Relationship Perspective

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Dedication

To, Dado.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

This is to certify that the research work presented in the dissertation, entitled **"Identifying the Consequences of Brand Coolness: A Brand Relationship Perspective"** was conducted under the supervision of **Dr. Lakhi Muhammad**. No part of this dissertation has been submitted anywhere else for any other degree. This dissertation is submitted to the **Department of Management Sciences, Capital University of Science and Technology** in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor in Philosophy in the field of **Management Sciences.** The open defence of the dissertation was conducted on **January 23, 2024.**

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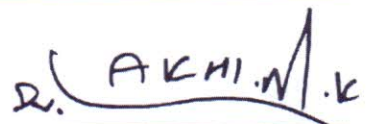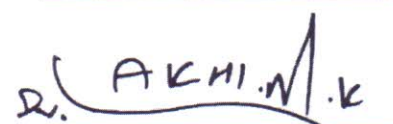**Supervisor Name :**   Dr. Lakhi Muhammad
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List of Publications

It is certified that following publication(s) have been made out of the research work that has been carried out for this dissertation:-

1. Butt, F. K., & Muhammad, L. (2023). Investigating The Determinants Of Brand Advocacy In The Tourism Sector, Customer Irrational Beliefs As A Moderator. *Journal of Positive School Psychology*, 7(5), 759-774.

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ix

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Abstract

The concept of brand coolness gained researchers' attention recently. Researchers and practitioners are keen to understand its consequences. This thesis, thus investigates the consequences of brand coolness. The study investigates how brand coolness shape brand advocacy, brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations, and brand beliefs. Further, this study also investigates the role of these brand relations as antecedents to brand advocacy. Furthermore, the thesis also investigates the transmittal role of brand coolness on brand advocacy via brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations, and brand beliefs by employing the SOR model and sensemaking theory. Moreover, customer irrational beliefs as moderator were investigated between brand associations, brand advocacy, and brand beliefs and brand advocacy respectively. A usable sample of 402 individual tourists was collected a single time for the purpose of data analysis. PLS-SEM 4 software was used to analyze the data. Results revealed that brand coolness positively influenced all the aforementioned brand consequences. Further, it successfully transmits its effect on brand advocacy through mediation.

The study mainly contributes to the literature of novel constructs like brand coolness, brand advocacy, and customers' irrational beliefs. Further, it contributes to brand familiarity, recognition, associations, and beliefs literature. Further, brand coolness contributes to the literature by identifying the factors that may be useful for marketers and researchers to determine what factors to focus on to shape behaviors. The thesis further adds to the tourism/ destination branding literature as it was the study's context. The research has implications for future researchers and practitioners.

The findings of the study have provided ideas for future research. Further, it has also suggested what managers can do to create cool places that can bring in tourists and make them brand advocates. It is also suggested to apply the framework in other industries.

Keywords: Brand Coolness, Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition, Brand Association, Brand Beliefs, Brand Advocacy, Tourism

Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Abbreviations

BA	Brand Association
BAd	Brand Advocacy
BB	Brand Belief
BC	Brand Coolness
BF	Brand Familiarity
BR	Brand Recognition
CIB	Customer Irrational Beliefs
SOR	Stimulus Organism Response

Chapter 1

Introduction

This chapter provides details regarding the background of the study. The study further elaborates on the theoretical and contextual gaps and explains the problem statement. Further sections of the chapter include the research questions and objectives. Finally, the chapter includes the discussion of the supporting theories and operationalized definition of the constructs.

1.1 Background

It has been established that brands are more than just products (Keller, 1993). The literature has marked the strategic and critical importance of a brand for the sustenance in competitive market systems and to make people have favorable responses (Supphellen, 2000). Both goods and service markets have different needs and strategies. However the service sector dominates the goods industry. Hospitality and tourism a sector is an important part of the service sector and this study has considered hospitality and tourism sector as the context of the study. Some brands are picked up in the market and services are chosen because they look attractive and sound cool. Therefore, for the long run survival brand coolness can be an important survival strategy. Brand coolness is defined as an autonomous, subjective, and socially constructed positive trait that makes consumers differentiate, make or break a brand (Warren, Batra, Loureiro, & Bagozzi, 2019). Jiménez-Barreto, Loureiro, Rubio, and Romero (2022) argued that brand coolness helps

determine the market share, and makes consumers divide the brands into cool and non-cool brands. This makes brand coolness an important concept and is recently under advanced scrutiny by researchers and practitioners (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022).

According to Loureiro, Jiménez-Barreto, and Romero (2020) the literature on brand coolness is still in its infancy. Despite the importance of coolness, the literature on brand coolness is scant. There can be multiple reasons behind this due to the recent conceptualization of the construct and due to the new measurement scale of the construct. First, according to Tiwari, Chakraborty, and Maity (2021) earlier studies on brand coolness were ambiguous, restrictive, and inadequate, providing a limited understanding of the concept. There can be multiple reasons behind this due to the recent conceptualization. Second, most studies measuring brand coolness used a narrow perspective (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022) and different dimensions (Attiq, Abdul Hamid, Khokhar, Shah, & Shahzad, 2022). Third, until the conceptualization of brand coolness by Warren et al. (2019) the concept was measured using different single-item scales and qualitative studies which didn't help in providing causal relationships and impact of brand coolness (Tiwari et al., 2021).

Fourth, Loureiro and Blanco (2023) mentioned one reason for the scant literature on brand coolness is due to focus on defining the construct rather than providing knowledge about brand coolness based on different nomological constructs which remains a huge gap. Warren et al. (2019) while conceptualizing the construct argued the need to identify the characteristics of cool brands, rather than further defining the concept, using different dimensions. Warren et al. (2019) further identified the consequence of brand coolness on other consumer-brand relationships.

Further, since the conceptualization, Researchers have argued the relationship of brand coolness with passionate desire (Loureiro et al., 2020), brand love (Tiwari et al., 2021) intention to revisit (Kock & Florian, 2021; Loureiro & Blanco, 2023) delight and customer psychological wellbeing (Attiq et al., 2022), brand loyalty (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022), word of mouth and intention to use (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022), willingness to pay premium (Guerreiro, Loureiro, Nascimento,

& Duarte, 2023; Koskie & Locander, 2023) and brand equity (Napalai & Khamwon, 2023) in different industries like technology industry (Attiq et al., 2022; Tiwari et al., 2021), fashion and luxury (Loureiro et al., 2020; Napalai & Khamwon, 2023), museum and destination (Kock & Florian, 2021; Loureiro & Blanco, 2023), restaurants and music festivals (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022), and branded product categories (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022; Guerreiro et al., 2023; Koskie & Locander, 2023). Further, it is due to the recent conceptualization of brand coolness, there exist many gaps in the literature regarding the antecedents and consequences of brand coolness. However, researchers (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022; Khamwon & Kularbkaew, 2021; Loureiro et al., 2020) stressed the need to further ponder on the positive consequences of brand coolness to assist practitioners in strategy formulation. Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2022) argued the potential influence of brand coolness on attitudes and behaviors, whereas many important behaviors and attitudes are missing in the literature of brand coolness that may be important to study to establish brand coolness as an important influencer. Additionally, Tiwari et al. (2021) asserted the need of research on brand coolness across different industries and cultures to expand the generalizability regarding the perception of coolness.

Furthermore, Koskie and Locander (2023) suggested that customers seek coolness in the market place which makes brand coolness an external observable phenomenon. Hence, brand coolness can be considered as an external stimulus. Based on this argument, the current thesis considers the Stimulus-Organism-Response (SOR) model, and considers brand coolness as an external psychological stimulus that can bring certain internal cognitive and affective changes in the tourists (Organism), they can include brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association and brand beliefs. At next point, those changes in the mental state of the tourists can bring out a response in the form of brand advocacy behavior. Considering to explain these particular brand relationships is important for both academia and practice and have justifiable reasons. Hence, this study opts to respond to the gaps in the literature by considering brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations, brand beliefs and brand advocacy as possible outcomes of brand coolness in the tourism sector. The gaps are elaborated ahead in next section.

1.2   Gap Analysis

There exist certain theoretical and contextual gaps in the literature regarding the constructs of the thesis. This section entails the theoretical and contextual gaps.

1.2.1   Theoretical Gaps

Following are the theoretical gaps that highlight the importance of the study.

1.2.1.1   Consequences of Brand Coolness

Based on the capacity of brand coolness to capture the market, the research focus on the construct has increased. The literature is very limited due to the relative novelty of the construct. The researchers (see Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022; Khoi & Le, 2022; Tiwari et al., 2021; Warren et al., 2019) are keen to identify how brand coolness is shaping the consumer-brand relationships. Similarly, Bagozzi and Khoshnevis (2022) maintained to add to the literature by considering brand coolness. Further, (Tiwari et al., 2021) also mentioned identifying other consequences of brand coolness to add to the limited literature of the construct. According to Aleem, Loureiro, and Bilro (2022), brand coolness impacts a consumer's attitudes, and behaviors and helps in connecting with customers (Guerreiro et al., 2023). Hence, it is imperative to understand the beneficial outcomes of brand coolness (Khoi & Le, 2022). Thus, this thesis aims to contribute to the literature by filling the gaps in the literature by identifying the positive consequences of brand coolness.

1.2.1.2   Brand Coolness as an Antecedent to Brand Advocacy

Regarding the behavioral outcomes of brand coolness, there exist many gaps in the literature e.g. brand advocacy. Such considerations were also raised by (Guerreiro et al., 2023) where they considered willingness to recommend as an important behavior expected of brand coolness. Brand advocacy does not only recommend, but also speaks highly about the brand and refute any negative remarks related to the brand.

Brand advocacy is a consumer-brand relation that is the dream of managers to achieve as it significantly contributes to brand's success (Wilk, Sadeque, & Soutar, 2021). Brand advocacy effects the consumption decision and shows how powerful is the brand (Ballester, Ruiz-Mafé, & Rubio, 2023). Brand advocacy is basically a behavioral outcome of a brand's effort and brand coolness has been proven to affect the behaviors which can take form of advocacy if the places provide strong impression. Also, Loureiro and Blanco (2023) mention that customers have an urge to share their cool experiences online and offline. This study, thus, aims to investigate if brand coolness may act as one of the antecedent of brand advocacy. Brand advocacy considers voluntary recommendations, hence the literature lacks the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy. Bhati and Verma (2020) have also recommended identifying the consequences of brand advocacy. Hence, this thesis considers the gaps and contributes to the literature by investigating the impact of brand coolness on brand advocacy.

1.2.1.3 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent to Brand Familiarity

Brand familiarity is an important factor and creates a positive effect on brands (Md Husin, Aziz, & Bhatti, 2022). customers tend to engage and show positive behavior towards known brands (Yunpeng & Khan, 2021). Familiarity tends to improve brand knowledge and strengthen the consumer relationship with the brand (Zhu, Kim, & Choi, 2022). Junior Ladeira, Santiago, de Oliveira Santini, and Costa Pinto (2022) argued that 75% of customers prefer familiar brands. They (see Junior Ladeira et al., 2022) further argued that the Covid-19 pandemic has reinforced the importance of brand familiarity as familiar brands have provided 23% more revenue across industries. Brand familiarity is a vital aspect of the success of a brand (Ruiz-Equihua, Romero, & Casaló, 2020). Most of the brand familiarity antecedents are generalizable across contexts (Wymer & Casidy, 2019) however, there is a scarcity regarding direct antecedents of brand familiarity (Hati et al., 2022). When Warren et al. (2019) conceptualized the scale of brand coolness, they identified certain consequences including brand familiarity. Though it has been debated that brand coolness can be beneficial for familiarity, the literature is scant on whether brand coolness stimulates brand familiarity. Hence, to contribute

to the literature on the antecedents of brand familiarity, the thesis attempts to contribute to the literature to fill the gap on the antecedents of brand familiarity by considering brand coolness, an antecedent of familiarity.

1.2.1.4 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent Brand Recognition

Brand recognition is the confirmation of knowing a brand and is associated with awareness of the brand (Adjeng Mariana Febrianti, Kusriyantini, Safitri, & Roespinoedji, 2022). A brand needs to have unique identification in order to recognize it (Jarosławska-Sobór & Dulewski, 2018). Correspondingly, brand recognition is an asset for the brands (Van Trang, Nghiem, & Do, 2022). Though the specific literature on the antecedents of brand recognition is scant but brand coolness has opened avenues of identifying consequences. Therefore, the gap exists here, if brand coolness is supportive of brand recognition needs to be pondered. Hence, in this study we will consider it as an outcome of brand coolness. Therefore, this study attempts to fulfill this particular gap by investigating the impact of brand coolness on brand recognition.

1.2.1.5 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent to Brand Association

Brand association is also an important factor as brand associations are significant for both marketers and consumers. It allows marketers to position the brand thoughtfully (Gordon, James, & Yoshida, 2016) and gain competitive edge over competition (Rai & Nayak, 2019). The scholars have mentioned over time that companies tend to focus on unique and stand out features of brand and try to give meaning to that in order to capture the attention of consumer and to make them create certain associations with the brands as the success of a brand is often dependent on positive brand associations (Zelenskaya & Elkanova, 2021). Further, considering the argument of Aleem et al. (2022) that brand coolness impacts the attitudes of customers. Among other attitudes, the literature considers brand associations as an attitude and the linkage between brand associations and brand coolness is missing in the literature. Therefore, to close this gap, the study considers brand coolness as an antecedent of brand associations.

1.2.1.6 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent to Brand Beliefs

Brand beliefs are crucial for brands as beliefs may be inferred rather explicitly planned (Batra, 2019). Beliefs are mostly personal and customers can develop brand beliefs using the most accessible information that coincides with their feelings and ideas (Tuten & Perotti, 2019). Further, brand beliefs as a consequence to brand coolness is a gap in the literature of brand coolness. Therefore, to fill the gap, this study considers brand beliefs as an outcome of brand coolness. Hence, this study aims on investigating the relationship between brand coolness and brand beliefs.

1.2.1.7 Antecedents of Brand Advocacy

Brand advocacy has proven to help in increasing sales, strengthening brand-consumer relationships, and long-term brand benefits. Brand advocacy is considered the most genuine and reliable communication of a brand's efforts as it is coming from external customers who are keen to influence the decisions of other consumers too (Wilk et al., 2021). According to Choi, Kroff, and Kim (2021), more than 90% of customers trust the recommendations of others instead of advertising which signifies the importance of brand advocacy. Given the importance that brand advocacy is an important brand behavior, whereas there are gaps in the literature as to what determines brand advocacy. Bhati and Verma (2020) have emphasized the investigation of antecedents of brand advocacy across industries.

Similarly, researchers (Ali, Turktarhan, Chen, & Ali, 2023; Saini & Arasanmi, 2021) are keen to investigate brand advocacy in the context of a place or destination and have mentioned the need for research on further determinants of brand advocacy. Because destinations require advocates to attract more tourists hence brand advocacy can play a major role in the longevity of the tourism business (Saini & Arasanmi, 2021). The current research on brand advocacy has considered the impact of brand experience and brand engagement (Kumar & Kaushik, 2020) trust (Tassawa & Banjongprasert, 2019) competitiveness and satisfaction (Saini & Arasanmi, 2021) ethnocentrism and brand image (Lever, Elliot, & Joppe, 2022),

and brand love (Ali et al., 2023) on brand advocacy. Thus, the current thesis also takes on identifying the antecedents of brand advocacy.

1.2.1.8 Brand Familiarity as an Antecedent to Brand Advocacy

Brand familiarity has a certain power of persuasion (Copeland & Bhaduri, 2020). It is due to the persuasion that brand familiarity lessens the cognitive burden of a consumer while making a brand choice (Bang & King, 2021) hence making it an important success factor for marketers (Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2020). Therefore, familiarity is expected to bring out positive future behavior from consumers that helps to build long-term relationships. Brand advocacy is a brand behavior and the extant literature lacks the relationship of brand advocacy with brand familiarity. Similarly, other researchers (see Vashisht, 2019; Vashisht, Mohan, Chauhan, & Vashisht, 2021) have also considered brand familiarity as an important factor that can impact brand advocacy and needs to be regarded.

1.2.1.9 Brand Recognition as an Antecedent of Brand Advocacy

The ability of a brand to get recognized easily increases its worth over competition (Hernández-Lobato, Solis-Radilla, Moliner-Tena, & Sánchez-García, 2006). The literature has the evidence of brand recognition predicting brand behaviors e.g. brand loyalty (Arani & Shafiizadeh, 2019) and behavioral intentions (Singh, Kathuria, Puri, & Kapoor, 2023). However, the literature is scant and requires more contribution on the behavioral impacts of brand recognition. Further, the impact of brand recognition on brand advocacy is still to be considered. Henceforth, to address the gap regarding the relationship between brand recognition and brand advocacy, this study considers the impact of brand recognition on brand advocacy.

1.2.1.10 Brand Associations as an Antecedent of Brand Advocacy

Brand association helps consumers in differentiating a brand from the competitors and aid in decision-making process (Karagiorgos, Lianopoulos, Alexandris, &

Kouthouris, 2023). Brand associations provide value to the customer, impacting their behaviors, lifestyles, habits, and approaches (Azzari & Pelissari, 2021; Valencia, Yawira, Wynda, Trisyandi, & Erwin, 2020). Further, brand associations tends to provide a competitive advantage (Rai & Nayak, 2019). Brand associations have been argued with brand advocacy by (Kemp & Childers, n.d.) using different proxies for brand associations. Therefore, the direct impact of brand associations on brand advocacy is yet to be considered. This study aims to fill this gap by examining the impact of brand associations on brand advocacy.

1.2.1.11 Brand Beliefs as an Antecedent of Brand Advocacy

Brand beliefs can range from positive to negative and rational to irrational (Rizvi & Oney, 2018). Brand belief plays an important role in creating any desired outcome by the consumer and predicting behaviors (Sukhu, Choi, Bujisic, & Bilgihan, 2019). Brand beliefs are influential and they are formed based on the perceptions fueled with information about the brand (Vogt & Andereck, 2003). Ultimately, brand beliefs impact the intentions and behaviors of the customers (Sukhu et al., 2019). However, research lacks the evidence of brand beliefs impacting brand advocacy, therefore this research considers to fill the gap in the literature by finding out the impact of brand beliefs on brand advocacy.

1.2.1.12 Mediation between Brand Coolness and Brand Advocacy

Brand coolness may be considered as a powerful brand trait which can impact the brands directly. However, it may be also important to note the mechanism through which brand coolness transmits its effect on behavioral variables through mediators. Warren et al. (2019) has also mentioned the importance of identifying mediation impact and suggested to investigate the role of familiarity as a mediator with brand coolness. Therefore, this study identifies the need to consider brand familiarity as a mediator between brand coolness and brand advocacy, which isn't present in the literature.

Similarly, brand recognition is considered as an important mediator but its usage is limited (Singh et al., 2023). Likewise, Tian, Tao, Hong, and Tsai (2022) mentioned

the importance of brand associations and brand beliefs as mediators. However, these mediators have not been tested with brand coolness and leaves the gaps in the literature to be fulfilled. Therefore, this study considers to fill these gaps by investigating brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations and brand beliefs as mediators in the current study to transmit the impact of brand coolness on brand advocacy.

1.2.1.13 Customer Irrational Beliefs as Moderator

The beliefs can be rational or irrational, the research has shown the impact of positive beliefs positively on behavior and vice versa. However, there are less evidence of research on negative beliefs and rarely on customer's irrational beliefs (Seger-Guttmann, 2019). Researchers have observed that the consumer biases effect their behavioral decisions. According to Seger-Guttmann (2019), it is important to consider customers irrational beliefs in future studies on communicative variables. Established places are multidimensional (Pike, 2005) and contain multiple activities where tourists interact with not only the scenic locations but also with the residents and service providers (Rop, 2022) and can behave differently. Hence, the customers' irrational beliefs may impact the brand advocacy that is based on brand associations and brand beliefs. To the best of knowledge based on literature there has been only one study related to customer irrational beliefs by (Seger-Guttmann, 2019). Henceforth, leaving huge gaps in the literature. This thesis then aims to fulfill a gap by investigate the moderating effect of customer irrational beliefs on brand advocacy.

1.2.2 Contextual Gaps

This study considers hospitality and tourism sector as the context of the study. There are numerous reasons behind selecting this context. First, tourism has seen immense growth in the last two decades and is one of the key sectors adding to the global economy (Srivastava, Madan, Dey, Qadir, & Mathew, 2022). According to the 2022 World Travel and Tourism Council report, the tourism sector has contributed 6.1% to the global gross domestic product (GDP) (WTTC, 2022)

Tourism is crucially important for economic growth in low and middle-level income countries too (Arshad, Iqbal, & Shahbaz, 2018). Tourism contributed 3% to GDP in Bangladesh, 5.89% in Pakistan and 7% in India for year 2021 (WTTC, 2022). Given the economic importance of the sector, tourism and travel is getting competitive and it has become very challenging to attract global and domestic tourists due to the number of options available (Saini & Arasanmi, 2021). As places are multi-dimensional and converting them into a brand is an intricate job (Tosun, Dedeoğlu, Çalışkan, & Karakuş, 2021). Therefore, destination branding is a crucial concept to create differentiation (Rather, Najar, & Jaziri, 2021). Consequently, to win over the competition, destination marketers are working on developing marketing and branding strategies for the places (Jain, Shroff, Merchant, & Bezbaruah, 2022). The utmost vision of destination managers is to create an emotional bond of tourists with the place so that they intend to revisit, talk about the place (Srivastava et al., 2022) and give positive reviews about the place.

Secondly, researchers (see Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022; Tiwari et al., 2021) raised the need of investigating the role of brand coolness across different industries other than goods and products. Corroborating to their argument, Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2022) pointed out that most of brand coolness research is based on goods and products that may restrict the scope of the construct, hence, the construct needs to be investigated in the service sector. Additionally, (Khoi & Le, 2022) highlighted the importance of coolness for hospitality and tourism service sector and mentioned the gaps that exist in the hospitality and tourism sector to investigate the implications of brand coolness for desirable outcomes and need to be catered. Further, when the visitors or tourists are consumers of place and destination services. They seek cool experiences; therefore, the brand coolness of a place can be a key element to influence the traveling decisions and attract the tourists (Loureiro & Blanco, 2023). Likewise, Kock and Florian (2021) suggested the importance of coolness in impacting tourist behavior in the tourism context but lack of understating of the tourism managers due to scarcity of research in tourism industry regarding brand coolness. Thirdly, researchers Ali, Turktarhan, Chen, and Ali (2022); Saini and Arasanmi (2021) are keen to investigate brand advocacy in the context of a place or destination and have emphasized on the need

for research on further determinants of brand advocacy in the tourism setting. As Saini and Arasanmi (2021) suggest that it is important to attract tourist by using brand advocacy rather communication strategies, hence brand advocacy can play a major role in the longevity of the tourism business.

1.3 Tourism Industry in Pakistan

The tourism industry of Pakistan is full of potential; according to World economic forum report, it has moved to 83rd number in tourism development in 2021 from 88th in 2019, improving by 6 ranks (WEF, 2022). The tourism and travel industry is part of the service sector of Pakistan which contributes 58% of the local GDP. Tourism and travel accounted for 3.7% of the GDP of the country in 2021 while it is in the recovery phase after the Pandemic in 2019. 5.1% of total jobs in Pakistan are generated in the tourism sector. Such numbers make the tourism industry of Pakistan one of the most dynamic and emerging economic contributor. Hence, making it an interesting area to study.

The tourism industry of Pakistan is often considered a hidden gem because of global unawareness and lack of potential realization. However, in recent years public and private institutions have started working on promoting Pakistan and federal and provincial authorities have been established. The Pakistan Trade Development Corporation (PTDC) is responsible for the projection of Pakistan as a tourist destination. PTDC closely works with all the provincial tourism authorities and works on private-public partnerships as well to enhance the sector.

Pakistan's tourism industry has the potential to attract different types of tourists based on its diverse tourism profile. Pakistan can offer multiple types of tourism. Adventure tourism is considered the most profitable and promoted type of tourism. Pakistan has magnificent natural beauty and a generous mountain range including the 2nd highest mountain range of the world. Most domestic and international tourism earnings in Pakistan come from adventure tourism. However, the desert jeep rallies can also be promoted internationally as adventure tourism which can also attract tourists in the colder seasons.

Pakistan has many religiously sacred places for different religions in the world. Pakistan has shrines of saints, historical temples of Hindu deities, Sikh Gurudwaras, and Buddhist temples. Pakistan has the potential to promote religious tourism and create enhanced religious experiences for the followers of different religions. According to the World Population Review, there are almost 507 million Buddhists, 26 million Sikhs, and 1.2 billion Hindus who can visit Pakistan to explore and experience religious tourism. Further, Pakistan is a country of multiple cultures and different cultural festivals take place i.e. Kalash festival, Shandur festival, that showcase the different cultures and can attract a number of tourists. Furthermore, Pakistan has thick heritage sites including cultural heritage and civilization's heritage. Many sites in Pakistan are named World Heritage sites by UNESCO. Pakistan housed the Indus civilization and the Gandhara civilization. The civilization heritage sites can be important to different religions and also generally to the world. Mohenjodaro, Takht Bai, and Harrapa are a few of the heritage sites pointing toward old civilizations and have archeological importance too. The Mughal heritage sites include the Badshahi Mosque, the Shalamar Gardens, and the Shahi Fort among others. The history students and archeologists around the world can visit Pakistan.

Further, Pakistan also has the Arabian Sea, hence has beaches in Karachi and Gwadar which can be utilized in a way to promote beach tourism. According to a trend report by World Travel and tourism council, the most liked and approached leisure tourism spots are beaches. Therefore, the beach areas provide a major potential in attracting tourists and contribute to the economy. The discussion on the industry has shown the high potential of the industry and its ability to cater to both domestic and international tourists. The highest contribution to GDP was in 2019 which was 5.8% at the start of the pandemic. However, after the pandemic, the domestic spending of the sector has also decreased, the sector is progressing but at a slow pace. To increase domestic tourism and to attract international tourism, it is important to highlight the hidden sites and promote them. Brand coolness can be considered. Brand coolness has ten different dimensions which can be highlighted for different sites to attract both local and international tourists. Further, once places are highlighted and visited by tourists, it can create buzz

about the place which can further attract more tourists. Therefore, it is needed to promote places with the element of coolness, that can make tourists advocate for the place. This research argues the impact of brand coolness on brand advocacy and how that can be utilized to further enhance and strengthen the tourism sector.

1.4 Problem Statement

The tourism industry is one of the major economic contributors to the economy of the country, regions, and the global economy. The tourism industry faced immense challenges in 2019. Though this industry accounts for 6.1% of the Global GDP in the year 2021, but, still lagging behind. WTTC has divided the world into different regions including the Americas, Africa, the Middle East, the Caribbean, Europe, and the Asia Pacific region. According to the WTTC, the Asia Pacific region has the slowest recovery rate among all the regions reaching 4.7% of regional GDP in 2021. Further, Pakistan is a South Asian country that is a part of the Asia Pacific region and has been observing similar slow growth patterns. In the year 2021, tourism contributed 3.7% to the GDP of the country's economy.

Pakistan is a country with immense tourism potential. Pakistan has the potential to attract almost 1.2 Billion people (Source: World Populations Review, 2020) (1.2B Hindus, 507M Buddhists, and 26M Sikhs) for religious tourism. In addition, around 100 million tourists can be attracted to adventure tourism (Alertify, 2022). Global domestic tourism increased from 72% (2019) to 85% (2021) (WTTC, 2022). However, the growth of this sector in Pakistan in the year 2021 didn't only show a decrease in international spending from USD1095 million (2019) to USD 852 million (2021) but also domestic spending from USD 13,100 million (2019) to USD 8568.8 million (2021) (WTTC, 2022) which raises concerns. Further, as per the report by United Nations World Tourism Organization, in the year 2022, only 9% of tourists out of a total of 963 million visited the Asia Pacific region (UNWTO, 2023). Asia Pacific region consists of 5 sub-regions which implies only a small fraction of tourists visiting Pakistan, leaving a huge growth potential. Therefore, enhancing tourism growth in Pakistan remains a challenge. Based on the availability of various cool places and the potential to tap those in order to

increase tourism remains a problem. Consequently, it can also be deduced that Pakistan is facing an advocacy problem for potential tourists. As mentioned in the preceding section how the places fit the ideology of brand coolness, this study argues how brand advocacy can be framed through brand coolness in the tourism sector.

1.5 Research Question

Following are the research questions for the study

Research Questions 1

Can brand coolness be an antecedent of the brand advocacy?

Research Questions 2

What will be the relationship between brand coolness and brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations, and brand beliefs about a brand?

Research Questions 3

What will be the relationship between i) brand familiarity, ii) brand recognition iii) brand association iv) brand belief and the brand advocacy respectively?

Research Questions 4

Can i) brand familiarity, ii) brand recognition iii) brand association and iv) brand belief mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy?

Research Questions 5

What will be the brand relationships interplay?

Research Questions 6

Can brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations and brand beliefs jointly mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy?

Research Questions 7

Can customers' irrational beliefs weaken the relationship between i) brand association, and brand advocacy ii) brand belief and brand advocacy?

1.6   Research Objectives

The current study tried to address the following questions and their respective objectives.

RO1: To examine the brand coolness as an antecedent of brand advocacy

RO2: To find out the relationship of brand coolness and brand familiarity.

RO3: To find out the relationship of brand coolness and brand recognition

RO4: To find out the relationship of brand coolness and brand association

RO5: To find out the relationship of brand coolness and brand beliefs

RO6: To investigate the relationship between brand familiarity and brand advocacy

RO7: To investigate the relationship between brand recognition and brand advocacy

RO8: To investigate the relationship between brand associations and brand advocacy

RO9: To investigate the relationship between brand beliefs and brand advocacy

RO10: To assess the mediation if brand familiarity mediates between brand coolness and brand advocacy

RO11: To assess if brand recognition mediates between brand coolness and brand advocacy

RO12: To assess if brand associations mediate between brand coolness and brand advocacy

RO13: To assess the mediation if brand beliefs mediate between brand coolness and brand advocacy

RO14: To find out the relationship between brand familiarity on brand recognition

RO15: To find out the relationship between brand recognition and brand association

RO16: To find out the relationship between brand association and brand beliefs

RO17: To examine whether brand familiarity mediates between brand coolness and brand recognition

RO18: To examine whether brand recognition mediates between brand familiarity and brand associations

RO19: To investigate whether brand association mediates between brand recognition and brand beliefs

RO20: To investigate if brand beliefs mediate between brand association and brand advocacy

RO21: To examine if brand familiarity and brand recognition can jointly mediate between brand coolness and brand advocacy

RO22: To examine if brand associations and brand beliefs can jointly mediate between brand coolness and brand advocacy

RO23: To examine if brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations and brand beliefs can jointly mediate between brand coolness and brand advocacy

RO24: To identify the if customers' irrational beliefs weakens the relationship between brand associations and brand advocacy

RO25: To identify the if customers' irrational beliefs weakens the relationship between brand beliefs and brand advocacy

1.7 Significance of the Study

The study has important theoretical and practical significant.

1.7.1 Theoretical Significance

The study is theoretically important as it aims to contribute to the existing literature of the under study constructs which are brand coolness, brand familiarity, brand associations, brand recognition, brand beliefs, brand advocacy and customer irrational behaviors. The study also aims to contribute to the literature of sensemaking theory in the marketing literature at the individual level.

The researchers have keen interest in the consumer-brand relationships and how they impact each other. Due to the competitive markets and importance of the influence of brands on consumers, it is necessary for brand managers to innovatively manage brands (Azzari & Pelissari, 2021). Brand coolness is getting focus of the researchers due to its extensive use in the market but how something becomes cool and what that cool can do is largely understudied and not well understood (Loureiro & Blanco, 2023). Hence, this study proposes contribute to the literature of brand coolness by identifying its nomological consequences. This study will employ the higher order construct of brand coolness that (Warren et al., 2019) developed to understand coolness based on characteristics. Therefore, one contribution of the study is the investigation of positive consequences of brand coolness. The marketers and the researchers in the field of branding are always looking for the predictors of behaviors of the how they can get attached to the brand. Similarly, Bhati and Verma (2020) has highlighted the need of identifying the antecedents of brand advocacy. Brand advocacy is an important and desired behavior. The next contribution of the study is to provide antecedents to brand advocacy. The study will also add to the theoretical literature of Customer's irrational beliefs. According to the best of knowledge of researcher, there is only one study available on the use of customer irrational beliefs in the current time. Therefore, this study is considering the customer irrational beliefs as the moderator in the study. This will help in investigating the role of construct with other variables and will add to the literature of customer irrational beliefs. This study aims to use the irrational beliefs as moderator to explore if they tend to effect the brand relationships. The study is also important for the literature of sensemaking as it will use the sensemaking theory in the marketing perspective in the tourism context.

1.7.2 Contextual Significance

The tourism sector is getting competitive over the years and destination marketers are working on creating destination image and experiences to create a competitive advantage for themselves (Srivastava et al., 2022). Similarly, Pedeliento and

Kavaratzis (2019) argued the importance of place identity, image and culture to build a strong brand of a place which corroborates the idea of brand coolness where different dimensions ranging from apparent identity, image and culture are considered. Hence, using place as a brand in the concept of brand coolness can be beneficial for the research and practice. Therefore, many consumer-brand relations are adapted to tourism research (Farhat & Chaney, 2021). Hence, the context of the current research is the tourism sector.

Further, it is evident that the tourism industry is a booming industry. In the current postmodern time, tourism is that sector which has the widest variety and experience of social, cultural and economic activity and experience (Rop, 2022). It includes travel, destinations, shopping and other activities away from home. After India has claimed itself to be a tourist destination, people have started moving towards South Asia and therefore there has been a chance of a lot more international tourism. Pakistan has much at its disposal to provide, the kinds of tourism Pakistan can offer are rare to find in any of the similar countries. Pakistan has 8 main type of tourisms which includes; Adventure, Cultural, Heritage, Religious, Leisure, Shopping, Ethnic and Ecotourism.

Due to the booming tourism, destination branding has become an important factor and many brands are promoting themselves by using the destinations in a way or another. This study will help the tourism companies and even governments to look into the deeper levels and identify what customers think and want, how they relate themselves to different destinations, how they can be made cool enough in order to attract more people and make it close to them so they can try to visit the places over and over and spread the word about it. This study aims to provide practical insights to destination marketers generally and to the Pakistani Tourism Development Authority too in the specified scenario of Pakistan.

1.7.3 Practical Significance

The study will provide an insight to the marketers if these brand relationships work well, how and where they have to channel their efforts in order to create a strong bond with their customers. Knowing how they have to present a brand or renew it

in a way that it can help them build up strong ties with the customers. The study will also aim to provide the ideas to the marketers and the tourism department to promote a place and use certain attributes in order to increase advocacy of the place, which can be beneficial. Further, the study will be helpful for tourism managers as it will provide a clear picture of how the brand coolness is perceived by tourists and how it can impact positive behaviors. It will help tourism planners and managers to focus on building cool places and cool experiences to attract more tourists. The mediation linkages in the study will help managers determine the activities they require to do to impact the both cognitive and affective sides of the tourists in order for them to remember the place and to spread positive word about it. Similarly, the tourism managers will also learn how the irrational beliefs of the tourists can impact their behavior and what needs to be done to improve the level of activity in their tourist locations to avoid anything that can weaken the relationship. Hence, the study will help managers to plan to maintain coolness for a longer time.

1.8 Supporting Theories

Research frameworks can be supported by different theory approaches which can be through the use of a single theory or by multiple theories (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The framework of this study is complex and not explainable through the use of a single overarching theory approach. Thus, this thesis uses the multiple theory approach. Earlier researchers have used Appraisal Theory (Loureiro & Blanco, 2023) Self- Presentation theory (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022), Symbolic interaction, and deviance regulation theory (Tiwari et al., 2021), optimal distinctiveness theory (Koskie & Locander, 2023) and SOR ((Attiq et al., 2022). The choice of theory is also dependent on the research framework, factors involved and the context. In this research the Stimulus Organism Response (SOR) model provides support in explaining direct and transmittal relationships between constructs. The other supporting theories include sense making theory, affect transfer theory, attitude-behavior consistency theory and belief congruence theory and are explained below.

1.8.1 The Stimulus Organism Response Model

The thesis considers Stimulus Organism Response (SOR) model as one of the underpinning model of the study. The SOR model was presented by (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974). The model was developed in environmental psychology but has been widely used in different areas since its foundation (Zhu, Li, Wang, He, & Tian, 2020). SOR framework has been considered as a meta theory and is extensively used in different industries to explain the behaviors (Zhu et al., 2020). However, this claim isn't well take across the researchers. SOR model is well acclaimed by the researchers in understanding consumer behavior and their decision-making processes. The model involves three components, a stimulus, an organism and a response. The model states that the stimulus arouses the internal states of the customers and brings out a response in form of a behavior often (Alanadoly & Salem, 2022).

Further, according to (Buxbaum & Buxbaum, 2016), the most often stimulus range from materials which can include the features stores use to lure in the customers including lighting and music. The other kind can be organic, a disaster, academic achievement, environmental like the roads, birds, etc. Another kind are social that includes expressions, impressions, perceptions etc. They further mentioned the organismic component mostly contains the mental state both cognitive and affective and takes form of motivation, thinking, evaluation and judging. Finally, the response component consists of appropriate attitudes or behaviors that are required. Though SOR model is an extension of classical conditioning where there is a stimuli and that will bring a response, same stimuli will bring same response. This sounds unrealistic in most of human interactions and doings. That is why the S-R model became the SOR model. There are few researchers who still support the direct S-R link, However, Hussain, Hooi Ting, Zaib Abbasi, and Rehman (2023) argued that SOR model is a structural model and doesn't directly elicit a behavioral response, rather it takes the passage of internal change in customers and then brings about a behavioral outcome. The model is shown in **Figure 1.1**.

The SOR model consists of three steps. First step is the identification of stimulus which can be any external activity or a trigger in the observable environment.

In the second step, stimulus brings a change in the organism, through a change in the internal state; both affective and cognitive. The organism then causes a response in form of acceptance or rejection of the stimulus. Hence, at first the environmental stimuli impact the consumer physically and psychologically (Kumar, Dhir, Talwar, Chakraborty, & Kaur, 2021) which can then lead to affective and cognitive changes in the organism (Mostafa & Kasamani, 2021) that can further lead to the behavioral outcomes.
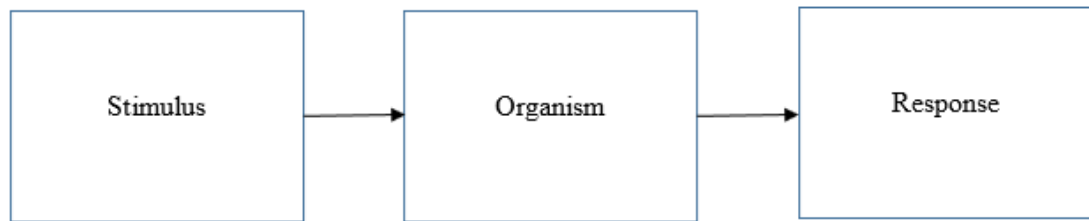
FIGURE 1.1: The SOR model (Source: (Mehrabian and Russell, 1974)

This thesis considers SOR model to supports the research framework because of a few reasons. First, SOR model provides an overarching framework to explain the relationships in a structured way (Shi, Liu, Kumail, & Pan, 2022). Secondly, SOR model is considered a valid and widely used support model in the tourism research (Baber & Baber, 2022).

Accordingly, in the thesis, Brand coolness is considered as the external stimulus. Brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, and brand beliefs as the organisms. Finally, brand advocacy is considered as the required response. The model is employed in a three-way structural process. First, it will identify the direct impact of stimulus brand coolness on the organism which are brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, and brand beliefs according to the framework of the study. Next, the model will help in identifying the impact organism cast to have a behavioral response by investigating the role of abovementioned organisms as antecedents of brand advocacy. Lastly the model will be employed in its true sense to test the sequence of stimulus-organism-response by considering simple mediations i.e. brand coolness leads to brand familiarity which will lead to brand advocacy. Similarly, brand coolness will aim to stimulate brand recognition, brand association, and brand beliefs respectively. Afterwards, these paths will each lead to brand advocacy. Furthermore, multiple kind of moderators

have been studied along with SOR model in order to enhance or decrease the impact of a variable on the response, examples of such studies are studies by (Duong, 2023; Teh et al., 2014). This study has introduced customer irrational beliefs as a moderator which can impact the relationship between brand beliefs and advocacy and brand associations and advocacy. Henceforth, SOR model provides a good fit for the research model. Other supportive theories are provided below.

1.8.2 Sensemaking Theory

Sensemaking theory states that an individual comes across multiple incidences and then he tends to make sense of them (Miles, 2012). The theory states that often people tend to make decisions or behave in a way based on external stimuli, they try to make sense of their decisions by framing a meaning that is suitable to them and base their decision on it (Muhammad et al., 2020). The process of sensemaking is widely used in organizational settings and group behaviors. Whereas, there have been incidences of individual sensemaking too. The process of sensemaking involves three components namely cues, frames, and meaning (Weick, 1995). The cues are external, and are available in the environment that can trigger the individuals to feel in a certain way. After sensing those triggers, individuals start thinking about the meaning of those cues, what they can mean, and how they can make sense for the individual to change it into action. The way people make sense of the cues is based on the frames of reference.

The frames of reference as explained by Miles (2012) are of six types ranging from individuals' ideologies, past experiences, and societal norms to make sense of the situation based on the reactions to the cues. After providing a meaning to the cues, individuals tend to take actions in the forms of changed behaviors. Further, Miles (2012) argue that sensemaking is a retrospective process, it simply means that individual needs to observe the cue and think about it. Sensemaking in most cases won't take an impulse action. In this study, sensemaking will be used as underpinning for the sequential path that will lead brand coolness to brand advocacy. The sequential path includes brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association and brand beliefs. Though SOR caters the direct mediations,

for the process to make sense in harmony of the mediators, sensemaking theory is employed.

1.8.3   Affect Transfer Theory

Affect transfer theory is mainly borrowed in social sciences from psychology by (Fiske, 1982). The theory is based on a schema-triggered process which can be best explained as a structural process of transferring affect. The theory suggests that the feelings about an object can be carry forwarded to another. The transfer can be cognitive and affective and takes place when there is a congruency in the feelings. The theory is adopted in marketing literature and is used for consumer evaluations and judgements (Ghosh & Dwivedi, 2022). Ghosh and Dwivedi (2022) further argued that transfer process is critical and can produce different results based on the negativity or positivity of the feelings. It is expected that familiarity may lead to recognition, which may further lead to association and that may enhance beliefs. Affect transfer theory will be the guide in understanding the transfer process.

1.8.4   Belief Congruence Theory

The belief congruence theory (Ajzen & Sexton, 1999) explains that there is a link between the attitudes of people and the way they act or behave. When people behave in a certain way they have something cognitive or affective going on that makes them take a particular decision. (Ajzen & Sexton, 1999) further mentioned the impact of time and context on the decision making. The beliefs and attitudes have both negative and positive valences and the complimentary factors can play a part in type of decision that will happen. If positives align together, the final decision will be positive and it can be negative in case of non-alignment of positive and negative. However, if the brand and attitudes are both negative, they will cause a negative decision and in that case a positive response is near to impossible. This theory of belief congruence provides the base for the moderation in the current study. If the brand associations and the brand beliefs will align

with tourist's irrational beliefs, tourists may show positive behavior and if they don't align, the relationship can weaken.

1.8.5 Integration of Theories

SOR model and Sensemaking theories can jointly support the research model of the current research. Firstly, it is required to draw parallels for both theories. SOR model consists of three steps, sensemaking theory also consists of three steps. SOR model consists of Stimulus, organism and response. Sensemaking theory is based on cues, frame and action. As the stimulus is external, so is the cue. Organism is about the internal change in the state of an individual, similarly, the frame of reference that allows the individual to make sense of the cue are the mental processes. At last stage, SOR model elicits a response in form of a behavior based on stimulus and organism, on the other hand the action is a behavior. However, SOR is a structural model and follows a straight path where the stimulus will lead to organismic change and then to response where in the sensemaking, multiple organisms can make sense of the cue. Sensemaking theory can provide a large room to identify the new external cues to start a thinking process which opens avenues for the new independent constructs or antecedents to gauge a response. Therefore, both the listed model and theory drew attention towards using brand coolness as an independent variable. Further, other supporting theories helped in building the unavailable literature links.

1.9 Operational Definitions of the Constructs

Following are the definitions of the constructs that are operationalized for the thesis.

1.9.1 Brand Coolness

The definition is operationalized on the basis of the widely accepted definition by (Warren & Campbell, 2014) and the dimensions of brand coolness by (Warren et al., 2019) brand coolness is defined as,

1.9.2 Brand Familiarity

This study operationalizes brand familiarity as "the tourist's knowledge about the place and its surroundings through direct or indirect interactions". This definition is based on the widely used definition of familiarity by (Alba & Hutchinson, 1987).

1.9.3 Brand Recognition

Based on Keller (1993), this study operationalized brand recognition as "the ability to recall a place based on the influence and memories of the place".

1.9.4 Brand Association

The current research considers brand association which is drawn from (Keller, 1993) as "any positive imagery of the place in the mind of the tourist"

1.9.5 Brand Beliefs

This research operationalized brand beliefs *"as positive perceptions about the place in tourist's mind based on brand recognition"*. The base of the theory is taken by (Lutz, 1975).

1.9.6 Brand Advocacy

Brand advocacy is operationalized as "the behavior of tourists to recommend the place, defend the place and shirk any negative communication about the place". This operationalization is based on the meta analysis by (Bhati & Verma, 2020).

1.9.7 Customer Irrational Beliefs

Customer irrational beliefs are operationalized as *"the unrealistic and biased cognitive perceptions and expectations of tourists based on their subjective favoritism,*

absolute fairness, reasoning supremacy, and power games at their place of visitation". The definition is operationalized based on the explanation of customer irrational beliefs by (Seger-Guttmann, 2019).

1.10 Organization of Study

The thesis is organized in five chapters.

Chapter 1 explains the background of the study, research problem, questions, objective and significance of the study. The chapter also mentions the use of theories.

Chapter 2 argues the existing literature review of the study variables and the formulation of research hypotheses.

Chapter 3 discusses the research methodology in detail including the research design, type and approach. The chapter also sheds light on sampling technique, selection and data analysis tools.

Chapter 4 shares the research analysis in detail regarding the data quality, measurement model and structural model. The hypotheses testing is also included in the chapter.

Chapter 5 includes a discussion on the research results and objectives. The chapter also highlights the contributions and shares the limitations of the study.

References and Annexures are provided afterwards.

Chapter 2

Literature Review

Introduction

The chapter is divided into two sections, the first section of the literature review, discusses the constructs of brand coolness, brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand associations, brand beliefs, brand advocacy, and customer irrational beliefs in detail. In the second section, hypotheses for the research are developed. Lastly, research hypotheses and research framework is provided.

2.1   Brand Coolness

The idea of coolness has traveled through history. Historically, coolness was part of cultures rather than objects. Throughout history, cool has been termed as any incident which was different from normal practices. For example, in the 1950s, the specific music genre showing a particular attitude was cool whereas in the 1960s and onwards it was used to represent the youth and their culture (Koskie & Locander, 2023). 1960s was the time when cool was considered important and became a commercial attribute, when people would buy pompous products to satisfy their need for hedonism (Loureiro et al., 2020). Quartz and Asp (2015) argued that coolness drives economies and there are rare chances that the coolness quotient won't be required. Researchers have over time tried attaching cool with particular features and objects but failed to make a consensus. Many regarded it

as an innovative feature, few called it a personality trait and few attached it to millennials (Loureiro et al., 2020).

Associating coolness with millennials is probably due to the overuse of the word cool by Generation Y (Van den Bergh & Behrer, 2016). Runyan, Noh, and Mosier (2013) explored Gen Y consumers to identify their perception of coolness and found that anything that youth find attractive, unique, authentic, novel, or innovative they term as cool. Young consumers also use coolness to enhance their self-identity (Leask, Fyall, & Barron, 2013). The millennials want to own cool objects to identify as cool, for the match of personality with cool brands, the sense of entitlement and upward mobility particularly in millennials. focusing more on buying cool products (Im, Bhat, & Lee, 2015; Warren et al., 2019). Currently, social media has made coolness accessible to a larger population, making it more achievable by customers and giving a growth reason to marketers (Koskie & Locander, 2023). Hence, accordingly literature suggests that brands are trying to attain the level of coolness in order to sustain the competition, being cool adds a driving force in major brands to derive new trends.

Cool quotient has helped many brands grow and fail (Warren et al., 2019) i.e. Facebook took place of Orkut because it was cool. Such importance of cool has made researchers and practitioners interested in knowing about brand coolness. In marketing coolness is considered as a multidimensional construct (Loureiro et al., 2020). Marketers have tried to sell the idea of coolness frequent enough that consumers started hunting for cool in the marketplace in form of products and services to satisfy a certain image (Belk, Tian, & Paavola, 2010). Due to such importance of coolness in marketing, Rahman and Kaleel (2013) aimed to define cool because of its frequent use in advertisement and marketing. Following him, other researcher also aimed to define brand coolness. The coolness has been defined as superlative or excellent (Gloor & Cooper, 2007), sophisticated and hedonist (Pountain, Robins, et al., 2000), attractive, original, culturally related and as an innovation (Sundar, Tamul, & Wu, 2014), escaping masses or being different (Sriramachandramurthy, 2009), subjective and dynamic (Zouaoui & Smaoui, 2019), continuous and contextual (Warren & Campbell, 2014), and it changes meanings from one culture to another (Gerber & Geiman, 2012).

There are over seventy different definitions of brand coolness. There is generally no consensus on what brand coolness is. however, one widely used and accepted definition is by (Warren & Campbell, 2014). They (Warren & Campbell, 2014) defined brand coolness as "a subjective and dynamic, socially constructed positive trait attributed to cultural objects inferred to be appropriately autonomous".

According to Bagozzi and Khoshnevis (2022) the literature on brand coolness needs a strong reference to what is brand coolness, and how coolness impacts brands and their relationships. Warren et al. (2019) have then conceptualized the construct of brand coolness. Despite numerous definitions and frequent use of brand coolness by marketers, the knowledge regarding what brand coolness does is minimal. Therefore, Warren et al. (2019) aimed to conceptualize the construct of brand coolness rather defining it as they accepted the definition provided by (Warren & Campbell, 2014). Since coolness is considered positive, perceptive, culturally influenced and dynamic. However, according to (Warren et al., 2019), people have attributed cool with other traits too, i.e. rebellious which aligns with the contrarian cool of (Dar-Nimrod, Ganesan, & MacCann, 2018). Contrarian cool is being fearless and rough and considering every aspect of cool, not only positive aspects, which Dar-Nimrod et al. (2018) call as cachet coolness. Thus, (Warren et al., 2019) agreed with the conceptualized the construct based on its ten characteristics. These characteristics are extraordinary, authentic, aesthetically appealing, energetic, original, rebellious, popular, high status, subcultural, and iconic.

The characteristics all brand coolness, portray certain features. Understanding the characteristics is important for understanding cool. First characteristic is extraordinary, it means that brand is different from its competitors and provide higher value i.e. Apple. Next is energetic, which means the brand is very vibrant and exciting and it will stand out from the competition. Next, authentic which means that brand doesn't depict or show what it is not, it is true to its roots. Original focuses on doing things creatively and different from the normal practices. Aesthetically appealing shows the visually good looking, and attractive. Rebellious characteristic may mean that the brand doesn't shy away from look fierce and different and can be non-conformist to the societal standards. High status may

mean that it is exclusive and related with high self-esteem. Sub cultural means that brand doesn't become a cult hit and a massy brand but stays with a relatively smaller autonomous group. Popular takes on the trendy side of the brand where iconic means widely acceptable related to what it presents. These characteristics are deduced by Warren et al. (2019) based on the previous operationalization and definitions of brand coolness available in the literature. It is important to learn that these brand characteristics are highly moldable across industries.

Further, literature suggests that its always the small or subcultural level that a brand gets recognized as cool which is indicating niche cool, however (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022) that both mass and niche brand have equal chances to become cool. The concept of brand coolness is still in its infancy and most existing literature regarding the brand coolness is in the fashion (Loureiro et al., 2020). Nevertheless, researchers are considering other industries as well particularly Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2022), when they took the idea of brand coolness from products to service sector. Khoi and Le (2022) suggested the importance of coolness in the hospitality and tourism sector which has been ignored regarding building brand strategies. Consequently, leaving huge gaps to be fulfilled in brand relationships and in other industries. This thesis aims to identify brand relationships in the tourism sector considering a place as a brand.

The literature regarding brand coolness in the tourism industry is very limited. Destination branding is a crucial concept to create differentiation (Rather et al., 2021). Cool destinations are the better choices for younger generation as even employees and students want to work around cool places (Kock & Florian, 2021). But, the idea of tourism is different for different individuals catering the subjectivity aspect of coolness, hence the research in the area is minimum (Kock & Florian, 2021). Further, marketers have focused on the cool trends as customers are looking for coolness in market places (Koskie & Locander, 2023). Consumers tend to like the brands that match their personalities and as brand personality has always been an important factor in the prediction of behaviors. Many people tend to make a purchase of a certain brand because purchasing that brands sounds cool. This also holds true for tourism marketers as tourists want cool products and experiences (Kock & Florian, 2021; Loureiro & Blanco, 2023).

While this study attempts to underpin the idea of brand coolness on a destination it is also important to understand what does a destination mean. Destinations aren't tangible as a product; they can't be sold or purchased in the market. However, they can have tangible and intangible components for that they have become highly risked brands as anything about them can change anytime which is uncontrollable for the marketer. For that, it has become a crucial topic for both the marketers and the researchers to find the factors that can enhance the brand advocacy of a brand or destination, and what are the important relationships it can build for the marketing efforts to be relied on. Further, destination is not only the name of the place or a symbol or logo but it is a multidimensional concept (Tosun et al., 2021).

Destinations may include the residents of that place that may guide tourists, the scenic beauty and the accommodations (Qu, Kim, & Im, 2011). For the current study, the idea of destination includes all the features of a place both tangible and intangible the place has to offer. These features can include tangible components like the aesthetically appealing sites, the adventurous places including beaches, mountains, and theme parks, the market place, the exported products, the culture and the vibe of the place.

Consider these two cases One dimension of brand coolness is popular, popular places bring in the footfall, therefore marketers need to focus on the features of a place that make it popular i.e. the river of Venice, the beaches of Thailand. The tourism planners and marketers need to focus on the aspects of places, the historical aspects which are cultural and authentic i.e. Mohenjodaro, Pakistan, the rebellious aspects that can attract tourists to do something entirely different. Bryson et al. (2021) mentioned the extraordinary experiences of ordinary cities and vice versa, hence the tourism planners must focus on creating extraordinary and exceptional places that can allow tourists to enjoy and recommend. The Huete-Alcocer, López-Ruiz, and Grigorescu (2019) mentioned uniqueness plays an important role in identification of a destination. The iconic dimension of brand coolness mentions that customers consider the brand unique and also associate some culture with the brand. For this purpose the tourism departments must

work on creating a unique image of a place which can attract tourist i.e. Paris: the city of love (Godard, 2008). These assumed cases show how each dimension of brand coolness can be molded into destination.

The SOR model will provide main underpinning for the current research along with sensemaking theory. However, brand coolness has earlier been explained with the following theories Therefore, brand coolness of a place refers to all the above mentioned features of the place. Thus, in this study, brand coolness is defined as, a dynamic place that is authentic, extraordinary, aesthetically appealing, energetic, original, rebellious, popular, high-status, subcultural, and iconic.

2.2 Brand Familiarity

Brand familiarity plays part in a brand's success (Ruiz-Equihua et al., 2020) due to the knowledge regarding brand. If the knowledge structure is strong, higher is the level of familiarity (Shen, Lin, Chou, Wu, & Yang, 2022). Familiarity also reduces the energy that goes in getting to know an unfamiliar brand (Li, Yen, & Liu, 2020). Thus, familiarity is helpful in creating a competitive advantage for the brand (Aljarah, Sawaftah, Ibrahim, & Lahuerta-Otero, 2022). The degree of how much a customer knows a brand is brand familiarity (Foroudi, Gupta, Kitchen, Foroudi, & Nguyen, 2016). Brand familiarity echoes the brand knowledge a customer has based on direct and indirect interactions with the brand (Delgado-Ballester, Navarro, & Sicilia, 2012).

Brand familiarity has proven to be a major contributor in shaping the attitudes and consumer behaviors in positive directions (Kim & Song, 2022). Similarly brand familiarity builds the expectations of customers which then they want to be met (Kim & Song, 2022). Familiarity helps in managing market (Prentice, 2004) which is why brand familiarity is considered as an important factor in differentiating familiar and unfamiliar customers to make targeted marketing plans regarding the products and services (Tan & Wu, 2016).

Brand familiarity and brand recognition are often considered as mere brand aware-ness, however, both brand familiarity and recognition are more than mere static

awareness about the existence of brand (Li et al., 2020). According to Tasci (2018), brand familiarity is a dynamic and much more functional concept which also make consumer behave in a positive way towards the brand (Li et al., 2020). Familiarity can take many shapes and dimensions, as (Baloglu, 2001) mentioned that familiarity can be i) information based, sources can range from offline to online, ii) experiential, which is based on direct experience with the brand and iii) it can be self-rated, how a customer considers himself to be aware of the brand. Later Prentice (2004) added another type claiming it to be educational, where a customer educates himself regarding a brand which may be direct or indirect learning about the brand.

However, there have been inconsistencies in the literature regarding the conceptualization of familiarity. Alba and Hutchinson (1987) called it as the experiential knowledge whereas (Milman & Pizam, 1995) maintained that a single visit or use is enough for familiarity. Later, (Gursoy, 2011) further mentioned that a visit or experience isn't necessary, people can learn about the products and places otherwise and become familiar with them. Finally, Chen, Chung, Gao, and Lin (2017) claimed that the familiarity with a destination can be based on direct interaction by visiting the place or indirectly it can also exist based on the information regarding the place on social media or through other communication channels. The decision making effect of familiarity has made researchers keen to investigate it in different industries (Copeland & Bhaduri, 2020). Similarly, brand familiarity is also considered important in the tourism setting. In the case of a destination, many evidences from empirical research have shown the positive impact of familiarity on the image of the destination. Familiarity with a destination will get more people to that place and people tend to feel comfortable visiting a place which they have heard of often and will feel secure, Further, familiarity with a place or a destination enhances ease regarding the decision making of a tourist regarding destination selection (Henthorne, George, & Smith, 2013). Also, familiarity helps increasing the knowledge of the tourists and lessen their cognitive pressure (Chi, Huang, & Nguyen, 2020). Therefore, familiarity can be the tool that can guide on how tourists perceive a destination and how to they respond to it in either creating an image or learning more about it. Further, destination familiarity has been

established as an important factor in visiting a place due to the security of known. Contrariwise, the tourists with novelty seeking behavior may plan to visit unfamiliar places but they try to increase their knowledge about those places through use of available material and guides about the place i.e. familiarizing themselves with the place (Chi et al., 2020). Hence, it can be concluded that familiarity is an important factor for both risk-free and novelty seeking tourists.

Similar to the inconsistencies in the definition of brand familiarity, destination familiarity faces same. Once, it is decided that experience is not a most needed component of getting familiar, the knowledge about the place can help familiarity, the knowledge services are also considered important. Internet, tour guides, magazines etc. can provide details about the place and its features.

In today's date and time, internet is considered as the most important source of getting knowledge, hence information search is also equated with the familiarity (Tan & Wu, 2016). Therefore, to investigate the familiarity with a place, the researchers using single item scale are increasing the confusion hence, a multi item scale must be used to measure the destination familiarity (Tan & Wu, 2016). But the researchers choose the scale based on their operationalization of brand familiarity (Tan & Wu, 2016). The current study operationalizes brand familiarity as the tourist's knowledge about the place and its surroundings through direct or indirect interactions and will use a multi-item scale.

2.3   Brand Recognition

Brand Recognition is the confirmation to have seen or heard about a brand (Keller, 1993; Pidhurska, 2020). According to Norris et. al, (2021), uniqueness helps brands become easily memorable and helps to increase recall. A brand that identifies as true to itself helps in increasing brand recognition (Kim & Song, 2022). A brand which is easily recognizable is a remarkable asset for the brands, given consumer will always prefer a recognizable brand over a new brand (Porter & Claycomb, 1997). Brand Recognition helps in making a rational choice about the brand (Razak, Themba, & Sjahruddin, 2019; Song, Chan, & Wu, 2019) and future

behaviors. Furthermore, a recognized brand helps in quick decision making over unrecognized because customer gives more value to the brand they can recognize (Thoma & Williams, 2013). Moreover, literature shows that based on the idea of recognition heuristic, a recognizable brand may allow consumers to make impulsive decisions (Foroudi, Melewar, & Gupta, 2014; Razak et al., 2019). Recognition heuristic states when there is any confusion, the consumer will pick what they recognize.

Brand Recognition is considered as an important performance measure. However, the researchers have reservations on recognition as a performance indicator because of difficulties in measuring it. Considering this argument, companies focus on building a brand strong enough to be easily recognized and also emphasize on promoting the brand to create awareness so consumer starts knowing and recognizing the brand. Research shows that brand recognition eases the decision of customers due to lesser pressure on memory while making a choice. Hence, making it a powerful tool for brand managers (Pidhurska, 2020).

Literature on brand recognition in recent years is decreasing, and just one article between 2010 to 2015 (Kavak, Kazanci, Sahin, & Niray, 2015). Important reason can be that brand recognition is often studied as part of the brand awareness. Though being part of awareness, brand recognition isn't simply knowing a brand but a driving force towards decision making (Rahman, Bag, Hassan, Hossain, & Singh, 2022). Also, the majority of extant literature has used single item recognition question asking only if the customer can recognize the brand because the marketers ask the customers to name a particular thing and the respondent answer about the brand they recognize well. It is therefore important, that brand recognition should be studied in its full potential (Singh et al., 2023) where it can drive and trigger the behaviors of the customers. A lot of present research on brand recognition is in the context of advertising and communication

In the tourism context, it gets sometimes hard just to identify a destination or a place based on a single visual or randomly asked name (Lowry et al., 2015) which is why it is important to create brand image so it is identifiable. Through recognitions, customers can create differentiation in brand offerings. Also, how

recognition is effected and can effect needs to be studied with a multi item scale that many of the researchers have considered.

This study is set in the tourism industry and the importance of recognition is manifolds. Destination recognition is important while making a decision, because decisions come from evoked set and evoked set is made on the basis of recognizing a brand or a place (Qu et al., 2011). In the destination literature brand recognition is often discussed as a proxy name of brand awareness, hence brand recognition has seen impacting the image of the brand and tourist intentions. Recognition based on the available knowledge and features of a destination enhances the destination attachment and comfort (Bilro & Loureiro, 2023).

This study defines brand recognition as the ability to recall a place based on the influence and memories of the place. Brand Recognition helps in making a rational choice about the brand (Razak et al., 2019; Song et al., 2019) and future behaviors. As the current study is set in tourism setting, therefore this study operationalized brand recognition as the ability to recall a place based on the influence and memories of the place.

2.4 Brand Associations

Brand associations (BA) are considered as the building block of brand image in consumers' minds (Keller, 1993). Aaker and Equity (1991) has classically defined brand associations as any idea or information related to a brand that is stored in the memory of consumers, either negative or positive (Goyal, 2020). There has been unanimity in the definition of brand associations, however, there are further explanations of the definition. The associations can be functional or non-functional, where functional associations are related to the tangible aspects of brand and non-functional are related to intangible aspects which impact the customers (Fayrene & Lee, 2011). The non-functional attributes are linked with customers' social needs and self-esteem hence impact them more mentally (Fayrene & Lee, 2011). Likewise, Supphellen (2000) argued that most of the brand associations usually sit unconsciously in the head and hence require deep understanding.

The majority of associations are non-verbal i.e. visual or sensory (Goyal, 2020; Supphellen, 2000).

Further, Supphellen (2000) states that non-verbal associations create very strong emotional impressions which can either be negative of positive. Associations range from perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and any kind of thoughts about brand where the brand is felt near to the heart and mind and in words of (Keller, 1993) these are information stored in the memory and effects the decision of consumer while making a decision and helps doing repetitive purchases due to the associative network in the memory which gets triggered while thinking or seeing a brand. Brand association helps to gather information about the right execution of the brand and supports the brand to grow further. Hence, it becomes important for brand managers to create positive brand associations so customers don't avoid the brand (Jeon & Baeck, 2016).

Customers often pick up a brand over competitor due to the difference of brand associations (Kim & Chao, 2019). Brand associations become the reason of brand selection but, these associations tend to change over time, which requires managers to keep revisiting their marketing efforts regarding brand associations (Jaggi & Nim, 2020). Managers need to understand the features of associations in order to create strong associations for their brand. The association has basic 5 features including the strength of the association, how favorable it is, if it has created unique nodes in the memory, the relevancy of association with the brand that has created it and how many times that association is used. Association strength refers to how strongly the individual associates himself with the brand based on their communication. Favorability shows the tilt of individual towards the brand. Relevancy and uniqueness shows how distinct the individual has kept the associations in his memory and how relate he can do with the brand. The brand associations that are high on these parameters will help customers in the decision making and will be easy to transfer in a behavior (Till, Baack, & Waterman, 2011). Further they argued that strong brand associations lessen the price sensitivity hence making brand associations an essential for business success (Till et al., 2011). Hence, despite frequent use of brand associations there remains the need to understand

and identify the roles of brand associations exists in researchers (Thellefsen & Sørensen, 2015). Associations are meant to be equally important in the destination context. In the context of destination, all the nodes of information must be activated in order to define or establish the image of the destination. Cultural proximity, friendliness, ample resources availability, cleanliness, and weather condition tend to add to the brand association (Rahman et al., 2022). Alternatively, Xu and Ho (2021) claimed the destination image, emotion and memory of the placy makes up destination brand association. Further, destination brand association also influence the brand relationships. The current research considers brand association as any positive imagery associated with the place in the mind of the tourist.

2.5 Brand Beliefs

Customers expect from brands and those expectations are based on their perceptions about the performance that the brand will provide (Rizvi & Oney, 2018). Brand beliefs (BB) are defined as the perception of brand performance based on brand interactions and brand knowledge (Lutz, 1975). This definition has the agreement of the researchers in current times too. The beliefs of customers are benefit based which means that how much benefit a brand can provide Chen et al. (2017). These perceptions or beliefs are created in the mind of consumers level (Keller, 1993). Brand beliefs are developed when customers are interacting with the brand (Winchester, Romaniuk, & Bogomolova, 2008). Also, these interactions can range from direct interaction and usage of the brand or getting to know about the brand through any kind of promotional activity by the brand (Rizvi & Oney, 2018). Vogt and Andereck (2003) argued that the beliefs that are made based on direct interaction are stronger and resilient. Beliefs can be positive and desirable or negative and undesirable, and can impact the brand choices (Winchester et al., 2008).

Brand beliefs are a major component of brand based activity because the brand beliefs about a product impact the evaluation of the product (Sonnier, Rutz, & Ward, 2023). Brand managers aim to understand the customer beliefs in order

to create sustainability in their market offerings To alter the beliefs of a customer is a hard job as beliefs are not easily changeable (Lautiainen, 2015), therefore marketing managers need to focus more to help customers build strong beliefs. However, (Sonnier et al., 2023) argued that some of the brand beliefs of customers are lost in the memory and require probing to identify their impact. Hence, it can be inferred that most of the decision making based on brand beliefs is majorly influenced by recent brand beliefs. Further, brand beliefs can be based on product or place characteristics and attributes, resultantly require more efforts on branding (Trembath, Romaniuk, & Lockshin, 2011).

As often as beliefs are discussed in the literature, beliefs as construct are minimally used. This study considers brand beliefs as an important construct. Further, this research is set in the tourism context, therefore the beliefs of people about the destination will play a major role in determining the future behavior. Given the loss of beliefs based on older associations, marketers may require to keep updating the communication material to keep beliefs fresh. This research operationalized brand beliefs as positive perceptions about the place in tourist's mind.

2.6   Brand Advocacy

Customers who are highly inspired by a brand, defend it and recommend it actively to others are known as advocates of the brand (Fuggetta, 2012) and the behavior of advocating the brand is known as brand advocacy (Ahmadi & Ataei, 2022). Brand advocates tend to help increase the reach of the brand organically (Bhati & Verma, 2020). The researchers have argued that the customers who are advocating the brand not only spread positive word of mouth but also shun any negative word of mouth being spread against the brand (Bhati & Verma, 2020).

Brand advocacy got its strength by the strength of the customer. When customers got power to influence other customers based on their reviews about a brand, marketers understood the power of advocacy, and started to improve services to increase advocacy (Etale, Jerry, et al., 2022). Brand advocacy has long been considered just as favorable communication about the brand, spread of positive

word of mouth just for the sake of praising the brand and not influencing the consumption of the brand, and some have suggested that people are willing to spend time with the brand and then recommend it (Jillapalli & Wilcox, 2010; Wilk et al., 2021). It can be concurred that most of the researchers in the earlier researches have synonymously used brand advocacy as positive word of mouth, though both of them are discrete. Word of mouth is just spreading the word about the brand either negative or positive whereas brand advocacy is not only spreading positive word but also defending the brand.

Similarly, brand advocacy has also been considered as brand loyalty which is also a very different concept. The consideration could have been caused because the individuals that advocate a brand are basically loyal to it and support it wherever they can (Ali et al., 2022). Further, brand loyalty has always been a subject of interest for the researchers as it helps in promoting and selling anything because of numerous advantages that comes with it. It is said and proved that it is easy and inexpensive to retain a customer than to find a new customer (Aaker & Equity, 1991). And in the times of readily informed information customers have choices so brand loyalty has become a crucial for the survival of the firms. Similar expectations are from brand advocacy that it will help retain the customers because brand advocates are basically driven by loyalty. Interchangeable use of other brand concepts with brand advocacy has created the vision of brand advocacy as a frequently used concept, whereas, the literature shows very limited literature on brand advocacy.

For this research, the conceptualization of brand advocacy theorized by Wilk et al. (2021) and Sweeney, Payne, Frow, and Liu (2020) will be used. They have considered brand advocacy as more concreate and strong emotion and recommendation than positive word of mouth, as it is based on customer's relationship with the brand. Thus it is spreading strong positive communication and rejecting any negative communication about the brand actively. With the advent of internet and frequent use of social media has taken brand advocacy online which is more proactive as customers want to share about their experiences (Wong & Hung, 2023). Further they claimed that online brand advocacy is in real time and allow the firms to learn about their customers by interacting with them. Brand advocacy is

a voluntary activity and may be authentic unlike the sponsored content (Wong & Hung, 2023, p.234).

Brands need to get the top of mind places in the minds of the consumer and in an effort to do so they try to engage with customers and provide products that coincide with the customer image, at any place when the image of brand and customer's self-image match, they start advocating for the brand (Wallace et al., 2012).

Lever et al. (2022) stated that advocacy is recent phenomenon in the tourism industry and taken from the marketing's consumer-brand relationships, brand advocacy in tourism aims to consider the tourist- destination relationships. The destination advocacy is defined like the brand advocacy but the feelings are generated from and towards the destination (Srivastava et al., 2022). The brand advocacy of a destination is effected by satisfaction and brand image (Saini & Arasanmi, 2021, p.292), brand love and experience quality (Ali et al., 2022), trust and competitiveness (Tassawa & Banjongprasert, 2019), ethnocentrism (Lever et al., 2022) and engagement (Kumar & Kaushik, 2020). However, there is need for new determinants of brand advocacy in destination. Reviews commonly occur in the tourism sector (Martin, 2009) that highlight the importance of brand advocacy and the need to win the tourists to manage the competition.

Thus, for this study brand advocacy (BAd) is operationalized as the behavior of tourists to recommend the place, defend the place and shirk any negative communication about the place.

2.7 Customer Irrational Beliefs

The literature on customer irrational beliefs (CIB) is in the infancy stage. Seger-Guttmann (2019) has emphasized the need of understanding and consider customers' irrational beliefs due to their contribution in impacting the behavior of customers towards service providers across different service industries. Kahneman (2011) has proven against the notion that while a customer is making a purchase or a decision they come in contact with the products or when negotiating their

choice isn't purely or thoroughly rational. Whenever a customer is interacting with a service/ product or service provider there are certain external stimuli that are triggering him. Whereas, the internal factors have also noted to predict the behavior Fact remains that the behavior of a customer is an important aspect for the success of a business (Seger-Guttmann, 2019).

While considering in the importance of internal behaviors effecting the customer's behavior, subjective irrational beliefs have been observed as a key indicator. Most of the literature has focused on the cognitive aspect of a consumer. Seger-Guttmann (2019) developed a scale for customer's irrational beliefs by considering four dimensions namely subjective favoritism, absolute fairness, reasoning supremacy, and power games. Seger-Guttmann (2019) maintained that most interactions of customers with service providers either negative or positive are thoroughly influenced by their own perceptions which can be irrational often.

Irrational beliefs are discussed in the literature as verbal reasoning processes which are biased and have no realistic grounds. The interpretations of events happening based on those unreal perceptive grounds can cause distress and emotional sufferings (Seger-Guttmann, 2019). When individuals keep the distress in their mind for more time, it starts polluting the already existing memories and beliefs about the service providers. The responses based on those emotions are neither appreciated nor helpful in certain scenarios. Expectation remains that the positive cognitive factors may take over the negative emotions, however these are not always the case and therefore customer looks and sounds irrational. Irrational beliefs can be based on customer's sense of self and expectation of priority treatment and when it never happens, the irrational beliefs are based on assertiveness and ingratiation. Further, in the current study customer's irrational behaviors will be seen in the context of destination, as there can't be irrationalities towards the destination but the service providers in the destinations can evoke the irrationalities of the consumers which may affect the behavior towards the destination particularly.

In a destination there can be two types of service providers which can be a travel agent or the service providers at the destinations i.e. tour guide, hotel service provider, the salespeople and how customers interact with them and expect from

them. For this study, the unrealistic and biased cognitive perceptions and expectations of tourists based on their subjective favoritism, absolute fairness, reasoning supremacy, and power games at their place of visitation will be considered as customer's irrational beliefs.

2.8   Hypotheses Development

This section provides the details on the development of individual hypotheses.

2.9   Brand Coolness and Brand Familiarity

Warren et al. (2019) have argued the connection between brand coolness and brand familiarity, nevertheless, the literature is still in its infancy. Accordingly, this study investigates if brand coolness stimulates brand familiarity in the tourism industry. Intuitively, the SOR model explains that firstly people acknowledge the stimulus and assign a meaning to the stimulus according to their frame of reference. Based on this argument, once people identify brand coolness, they may have a change of mind in the form of familiarity. Further, the theoretical support can be provided through the use of SOR model, it may be predicted that in the tourism sector, brand coolness as a stimulus may positively influence the organism which is brand familiarity due to its aesthetically appealing, popular and original dimensions particularly. As the tourists are exposed to the cool places, they may mget influenced. Therefore, based on this theoretical argument, they may have a change of mind in the form of familiarity. Hence, it is hypothesized that,

H1: Brand coolness positively influences brand familiarity.

2.10   Brand Coolness and Brand Recognition

When a customer plans to buy a thing or visit a place, the name that pops first in their memory is the brand recognition and that shows the strength and worth of the brand. This can be reflected that the brand with higher level of brand recognition

enjoys higher market share as well due to frequently chosen brand by the customers (Chi, Yeh, & Yang, 2009). The brand recognition plays a crucial role in the success of a brand, because of the similarity among multiple brands can tend to misrecognize the brands. This can become a problem for the brand and consumers. This is then important for brands to have distinguishable characteristics to stand out and get recognized properly to enjoy the bigger market share (Van Trang et al., 2022). The literature on brand recognition states that a brand that identifies as true to itself and is authentic helps in increasing brand recognition (Kim & Song, 2022). According to Norris et. al, (2021), uniqueness helps brands become easily memorable and helps to increase recall. Iconic and authentic are dimensions of brand coolness, which may posit that brand coolness can impact brand recognition. As the literature lacks the linkages between brand coolness and brand recognition, the SOR model helps in establishing the linkage, where people interpret an external stimulus by bringing a change in the organism. If tourists sense brand coolness as a stimulus, they may learn about the brand and get to understand it in the shape of brand recognition. Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed that;

H2. Brand coolness positively impacts brand recognition.

2.11   Brand Coolness and Brand Association

Foroudi, Jin, Gupta, Foroudi, and Kitchen (2018) argued that brand association is generated based on some information or activity by the brand. Consequently, this can be argued that brand association requires a trigger. Maintaining that brand coolness influences attitudes, we may consider brand coolness as the trigger. Whereas, the link between brand coolness and brand association is yet to be considered. Jin, Yoon, and Lee (2019) argued the importance of unique factors to stimulate brand associations. Similarly, Karagiorgos et al. (2023) mentioned the need of highlighting the popularity and original feel of place may be supportive in brand associations. Unique factors and popularity are the important aspects of brand coolness among others (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022; Warren et al., 2019). Hence, this can be argued that brand coolness may be supportive to stimulate

brand association. Further, the SOR model can be supportive to argue the relationship between brand coolness and brand association. According to SOR model, as stated earlier an external stimulus impacts the internal processing and brings a change in the organism. Brand coolness has already been argued as an external stimulus by (Attiq et al., 2022). Brand associations are the internal feelings of a consumer and hence are mentioned as organism by (KR & Venkatesan, 2020). Based on these arguments, this study proposes brand coolness as an antecedent to brand association and hypothesized as;

H3. Brand coolness positively impacts brand association.

2.12   Brand Coolness and Brand Beliefs

Customers look out for coolness in the marketplace which makes it important for the their relationship with the brand (Koskie & Locander, 2023) which is why marketers are always trying to plan and make efforts to make their brands cool for consumers. Further, brands may take advantage of the brand beliefs developed or modified based on the marketing efforts (Rodríguez-López, del Barrio-García, & Alcántara-Pilar, 2020). Furthermore, (Rizvi & Oney, 2018) argued that brand beliefs that are made on emotional judgements are difficult to amend and modify because such beliefs create a certain kind of confidence and assurance in the customer regarding the brand. Conversely, Hyun, Hlee, Park, and Chang (2022) have argued the importance of brand coolness in modifying the emotional state of customers. Hence, the aforementioned arguments suggest that brand beliefs can be developed by marketing the coolness, and planning to impact the emotions of customers by focusing on different dimensions of brand coolness. However, the linkage of brand coolness impacting brand beliefs is missing in the extant literature. Therefore, to identify if brand beliefs may be a consequence of brand coolness, this study employs SOR framework for strengthening the argument. According to the SOR framework, people tend to provide meaning to external stimulus. Beliefs have been argued as an organism of SOR model in literature (see Kim, Lee, & Jung, 2020; Yang et al., 2021). Therefore, once tourists identify a place cool, which can

stimulate their cognition to form a belief about the place. Therefore, it can be argued that brand coolness may act as a stimulus for brand belief. Hence,

H4: Brand coolness positively impacts brand belief.

2.13   Brand Coolness and Brand Advocacy

Brand coolness has been argued to influence behaviors like brand loyalty (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022), whereas the relationship of brand coolness and brand advocacy is yet to be considered. Therefore, this study argues brand coolness as a potential antecedent to brand advocacy.

A brand's strength depends on how easily it helps customers to develop a certain attitude towards it, which later help them to easily locate, identify and evaluate it and at the same time creating certain expectations. When a brand is dynamic and able to create a positive change in the attitude, it gets easier for the brand to generate sales and exercise its strength (Ishak & Abd Ghani, 2013). As brand coolness is assumed to impact behaviors. The notion of relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy can be argued due to a few reasons. One, literature argues the relationship between brand coolness and behaviors like word of mouth (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022) and loyalty.

This study extends the literature by arguing the relationship of brand coolness with another behavior; brand advocacy. Two, Script theory by (Tomkins, 1978) may support the linkage between brand coolness and brand advocacy. According to this theory, exciting and enjoyable scenes are responded with rapid and increased energy. Further, this theory argues that good and bad scenes can be magnified or biased from positive to negative or in opposite direction. This notion is parallel to the definition of brand advocacy where a tourist has positive recommendations of a place and shuns negative communication about a visiting place. Hence, it can be argued that brand coolness can influence brand advocacy of a tourist. Further, also by using the sense making theory, this proposed linkage can be justified. As the theory states that people attach meaning to the stimuli, hence brand coolness can act like an external stimuli and brand advocacy can be the meaning attached

to it which can be in form of repetitive visits and engagement. Therefore, it is proposed that

H5: Brand coolness positively influences brand advocacy.

2.14   Brand Familiarity to Brand Advocacy

Researchers and practitioners both considered the importance of brand familiarity. The familiarization with a brand helps in evaluation of a brand which later increases the chances of choosing, using and investing in a particular brand (Md Husin et al., 2022). Due to the nature of brand familiarity to explain behaviors and measure the effectiveness of marketing efforts (Bapat, 2017). Casaló, Flavián, and Guinalíu (2008) maintains that it is expected that familiarity will bring out positive change in the brand behavior of customers. Henthorne et al. (2013) concluded in a study that familiarity helps tourists to make their travel decisions easily based on the familiarity with the destination, familiarity increases the level of comfort, confidence and satisfaction (Kaya, Behravesh, Abubakar, Kaya, & Orús, 2019). Satisfaction increases the brand advocacy (Bhati & Verma, 2020). Similarly, brand familiarity tends to trigger word of mouth (Acharya, 2021) which is one component of brand advocacy i.e. spreading positive words about the brand.

Hence, when a tourist gets familiar with the place, he is expected to talk about the place which helps in bringing the long term relationship often (Pereira, Salgueiro, et al., 2019). The expectation of communicating about the place to peers is a response based on the learning. Familiarity is learning about a new brand or a place, new knowledge is called learning and learning is an internal process. The changes in internal mental state causes learning (Martin, 2009). Resultantly, familiarity can be considered as the change in the organism and brand advocacy is a response. The part of SOR model states the internal changes causes responses. Therefore, it is expected that when a tourist gets familiar with a place, they tend to indulge in the brand advocacy as a response (Ali et al., 2022). Thus, it is proposed that;

H6: Brand familiarity positively impacts brand advocacy.

2.15 Brand Familiarity to Brand Recognition

Recognition is to identify a brand based on its prominent attributes and that happens when a brand is known (Kim et al., 2020). Further Kim et al. (2020) argued that brand familiarity helps in increasing the recognition of the brand. It can be said that more a person interacts with a brand more of his cognition keeps a reminder of the brand and starts recognising it. Moving from familiarity towards recognition is a cognitive process (Bang & King, 2021). Further, Rahman, Hossain, Rushan, Hoque, and Hassan (2020) mentioned that brand familiarity is keeping the information about the brand in the memory, where brand recognition also takes place at the same moment and use the information available due to brand familiarity to recognize a brand. The impact of brand familiarity has been established with brand recognition in the advertisement industry (van Berlo, van Reijmersdal, & Rozendaal, 2020) and online retail setting (Rahman et al., 2020). Therefore, it can be argued that brand familiarity impacts the brand recognition. Similarly, in the tourism sector, when tourists visits a place or read about a place, get the basic knowledge which makes them familiar related to the place. Once a brands become familiar on the basis of its certain characteristics and attributes, consumers tend to start recognizing it, Pak-China border is one of the major tourist destinations in Pakistan and is recognizable by many now as most of the people that go to north, take pictures thers. This increases the indirect recognition. It is important for brands to be recognized because it shows how aware a customer is about a particular brand. Thus, it is hypothesized that;

H7: Brand familairity positively impacts the brand recognition.

2.16 Brand Recognition to Brand Advocacy

When a customer is able to recognize a brand, it has become part of their memory and then it is upto the customer if they want to evaluate and determine a

future positive behavior based on the recognition (Gigerenzer & Goldstein, 2011). Brand recognition has been established as an antecedent of brand loyalty (Azzari & Pelissari, 2021). Literature has also proven brand loyalty to predict brand advocacy. Applied in the destination set up, when a tourist is well recognized with a place, they may think about it, evaluate and expect to positively talk about it and advocate the place. Based on SOR theory, the internal cognition and feelings of a tourist will impact how they respond towards the place.

H8: Brand recognition positively impacts brand advocacy.

2.17 Brand Recognition to Brand Associations

Washburn and Plank (2002) argued that to create associations with the brand, a customer must recognize the brand based on its characteristics and attributes. An unware customer cannot create right kind of associations. Brand associations are considered as nodes in the memory hence a node must be there in order to create assocaitions. The node can be a pictorial or a verbal attribute of the brand which are helping a consumer make some sense about a brand and attach meaning and perceiptions about the brand. And then when a consumer is able to create links between different aspects of a brand and process the information that is based on the brand attributes that were recognizable for the customer. Therefore, it is assumed that brand recognition facilitates in creating brand associations.

According to the affect transfer theory, when a customer recognizes a brand, they transfer the effect to similar object. The brand recognition will transfer the knowingness to create associations with the brand which will be according to the brand image in the mind of the customers (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2012). In the tourism setup, if a tourist recognizes a place for its positive attributes, he will be able to create positive associations based on those characteristics. With this, it is hypothesized that;

H9: Brand Recognition positively influences brand associations.

2.18 Brand Association to Brand Advocacy

Consumers are willing to pay the premium prices (Budzanowski, 2017) for brands with positive associations. Kemp and Childers (n.d.) considered brand association with brand attitude, perceived quality, and perceived uniqueness. The literature is scarce to consider the linkage between brand association and brand advocacy. However, the brand association has often been seen as contributing to predicting customer based brand equity (Aziz, Kefallonitis, & Friedman, 2012). On the other hand, in the literature of counterfeit products customer-based brand equity has proven to predict brand advocacy (Baghi, Gabrielli, & Grappi, 2016). Thus, it may be assumed that brand advocacy can be shaped based on the tourists' associations with the place. This effort is consistent to researchers call on identification of antecedents of brand advocacy (Bhati & Verma, 2020; Choi et al., 2021). Therefore, brand association as an antecedent will be an addition to the antecedents of brand advocacy.

By considering SOR model, in this study the linkage between brand association and brand advocacy can be argued. For example, literature argues that brand association can be considered as organism (Halliburton & Bach, 2012) of SOR model depicting it as an internal change, while brand advocacy has been seen as a response (Zhang, Cheng, & Chen, 2022). Consistent to the notion of SOR model, brand association of tourist in shape of positive memory of the place in the tourist's mind can be translated into a response in shape of brand advocacy. Accordingly, this can be hypothesized as;

H10: Brand association will positively influence brand advocacy.

2.19 Brand Association to Brand Beliefs

Khamitov, Wang, and Thomson (2019) argued that most brand relations have dependencies on each other. Most of the brand-consumer relationships revolve around different brand attributes impacting each other and most of them predicting behavior (Albert & Thomson, 2018). Brand association and brand beliefs are

both considered as important predictors of other behaviors. However, research is scarce on their relationship. One research on product packaging stated that brand associations are impacted by the product packaging and further based on the image of those packaging brand beliefs are impacted (Pantin-Sohier, 2009). Further, brand associations related to a celebrity endorsement were tested to impact the beliefs in a study (Tian et al., 2022). Hence, there are indirect established link between brand associations and brand beliefs whereas a strong link is required. Here, by using the affect transfer theory, it is assumed that when a tourist creates associations with a place, he tends to shift those associations in the beliefs regarding that particular place. It can be elaborated as the impact of place associations is transferred to create beliefs about the place. Therefore, this research proposes to investigate if place based brand associations can impact the beliefs. Thus,

H11: Brand associations positively impact brand beliefs.

2.20 Brand Beliefs to Brand Advocacy

Brand beliefs' impact on emotions and decision-making has been argued (Sukhu et al., 2019). As literature states that cognitive beliefs impact advocacy (Pass, 2022). For example, Ahmadi and Ataei (2022) have considered the impact of emotional attachment on brand advocacy. Brand beliefs have predictive capacity to predict behavior (Sukhu et al., 2019). The relationship between brand beliefs and brand advocacy is scant in the literature. Ballantyne, Warren, and Nobbs (2006) controlled beliefs while studying advocacy can hint on the existence of impact of beliefs on advocacy. In their meta-analytic study on advocacy Bhati and Verma (2020) emphasized on the importance of identifying new determinants of brand advocacy. Additionally, the literature mentions the most brand relationships tend to positively impact consumer behavior and are usually positively associated with brand loyalty (Koskie & Locander, 2023). On the other hand, Rizvi and Oney (2018) mentioned brand beliefs a key factor to influence brand loyalty. Further, according to SOR model arguments, brand beliefs in shape of tourists' perceptive expectations of a destination can be translated into behavior in shape of brand

advocacy., the study intends to examine the impact of brand beliefs on brand advocacy. Therefore, it is proposed that

H12: Brand beliefs positively impacts brand advocacy.

2.21 Brand Coolness, Brand Familiarity and Brand Advocacy

Brand familiarity has been argued with brand coolness (Warren et al., 2019). However, there has been mentions of brand familiarity imapcting brand advocacy and (see Vashisht, 2019; Vashisht et al., 2021) have recommended to identify the imapct of brand familiarity in different roles i.e. mediating and moderating to investigate its impact on brand advocacy. Aljarah et al. (2022) used brand familiarity as a moderator in predicting brand advocacy and shown the impact of high vs low familiar brands in strengthening of online brand advocacy. However, the literature is scant regarding the linkage. Brand familiarity is considered one important contributing force as a mediator. Artigas, Vilches-Montero, and Yrigoyen (2015) mentioned that familiarity with a place makes tourists get closer to the place. Such arguments can allow us to investigate the transmittal effect of coolness on advocacy via familiarity. Likewise, the SOR model can also be useful in establishing this link, where brand coolness can stimulate familiarity with the place and can make tourists positively talk about the place and recommend it. Thus, it is proposed that

H13: Brand familiarity mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

2.22 Brand Coolness, Brand Recognition and Brand Advocacy

When direct linkages are not available in the literature, the theory can provide support. Brand recognition is considered as supporter of brand loyalty (Arani

& Shafiizadeh, 2019) and brand loyalty has seen as shaping brand advocacy . Since there may be chances of replication of the impact of brand recognition to brand advocacy, the SOR model provides base for the mediation process. Brand coolness as assumed in the study is the stimulus which may impact the tourists (the organism) by changing in their set of options by recognising the place in the form of brand brand recognition and then that recognition based on the coolness of the place may contribute in eliciting a response in the form of brand advocacy by the tourists. Based on the idea of the similarity bewteen SOR and sensemaking theory, the following link can also be supported by the explanation of sensemaking theory. The study proposes;

H14: Brand recognition mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

2.23   Brand Coolness, Brand Association and Brand Advocacy

The literature states that brand association can be a strong mediator once stimulating a response (Rahman et al., 2022). Brand coolness impacts the brand equity, and most studies on brand equity involves brand association, therefore the impact of brand coolness on brand association in indirect way can be seen (Khamwon & Kularbkaew, 2021). Similarly brand equity is an antecedent of brand advocacy as per the meta analytic study of (Bhati & Verma, 2020). Also, iIn the prior literature, brand associations are considered an important facilitators of transferring the impact (Tian et al., 2022) on different behaviors. Because brand associations require in certain scenarios an external cue which to create a collateral experience and further transfer impact based on it. Hence, the current study also considers brand association as a mediator between brand coolness and brand advocacy. Since there is a lack in the literature regarding the link, to consider the mediating role of brand association, the current study draws on the SOR model and argues brand coolness impact can also be transmitted on brand advocacy via brand association. Hence, the study hypothesizes that;

H15: Brand association mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

2.24 Brand Coolness, Brand Beliefs and Advocacy

Though the direct and mediation links lack in the literature between brand coolness, brand beliefs and brand advocacy. Tian et al. (2022) has mentioned brand beliefs a facilitator in impact transfer. Brand coolness have seen to impact the emotional state of individuals, and emotions can impact both brand beliefs (Rizvi & Oney, 2018) and brand behaviors (Hyun et al., 2022). Therefore the imapact of brand coolness on each state can be considered viable. However, if beliefs are considered as emotional and cognitive, they can be assumed to predict brand advocacy because advocacy can be predicted by other emotional constructs like brand love (Ali et al., 2022). Brand beliefs is the internal state of an individual which makes it organism in the context of SOR model. Brand coolness has been considered as a stimulus (Attiq et al., 2022), and brand advocacy as a response (Ali et al., 2022). Hence, drawing on SOR model, it is persumed that when a tourist visits a cool place, the feel of the place tend to change the feelings of the tourists in form of positive beliefs, which later make them advocate the brand. Therefore, it is hypothesized that

H16: Brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

2.25 Brand Coolness Brand Familiarity and Brand Recognition

The impact of brand coolness on brand familiarity is argued in the literature (Warren et al., 2019). Further, familiar brands are easy to recognize and brand familiarity is one of the main facilitator in the recognition (van Berlo et al., 2020).

Therefore, the mediating link between brand coolness and brand recognition via brand familairity can be established based on the existing linkages of direct paths. Further, by dawing on the affect transfer theory, the argument can be strengthened as affect transfer theory states that the similar kind of cognitive effects are transferred to another object. Which means a positive impact can transfer its positivity to the other object through cognition. Hence, it is assumed that when a tourist gets exposed to a cool place, they may try to gain knowledge about it and that familiarity may later transfer in the cognition of the toursit and tourist starts recognizing the place based on its features. The study hyptothesizes that;

H17: Brand familiarity mediates between brand coolness and brand recognition.

2.26 Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition and Brand Association

The literature claims that brand familiarity causes brand recognition and brand recognition can facilitate brand associations. Brand familiarity also impacts the brand association. (van Berlo et al., 2020). The complete linkage is presnet in the literature. It is assumed that familiarity facilitates the recognition for the tourist, which then sets in some memory node, which further strengthens the brand associations. Therefore, based on the literature argument, it can be considered that brand recognition can play a mediatory role between brand familiarity and association. Furthermore, the affect transfer theory also provides support for the linkage, the affect of familiarity that has transferred on recognition, can further be transferred in creating association. The impact can be positive or negative based on the beginning of transfer. If a positive familiarity is transferred, it can cause positive recignition and positive associations. We propose for the research that;

H18: Brand recognition can mediate the relationship between brand familiarity and association.

2.27 Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition and Brand Association

Brand recognition has a direct relationship with brand association. The first brand or place that comes to the mind of a customer in a product category has the highest value in the market and that brand have the highest memory in the mind. Hence, such associations are usually considered as important to tranmit the imapct and causes changes. (Goyal, 2020). The link from brand recognition to brand association to brand beliefs is found in the literature. Brand associations are considered as the source of meaning transfer to develop beliefs based on already avalaible brand knowledge in the memory. Sonnier et al. (2023) argues that the brand beliefs asked by researchers are not part of memory but are made based on the short term attributes and associations. However, considering that the available knowledge is considered as brand recognition, which helps in creating brand associations (van Berlo et al., 2020), when supports to build beliefs, they are long lasting. Further, affect transfer theory can also provide footing for the relationship as the recognition of place may create positive associations based on the attributes of the place that have settled in the nodes of the memory creating associations, which will be further transferred to the beliefs regarding the place. Based on these arguments, we postulate that;

H19: Brand associations mediate between brand recognition and brand beliefs.

2.28 Brand Association, Brand Beliefs and Brand Advocacy

Tian et al. (2022) has stated the facilitation power of brand associations and beliefs in transferring their impact on behaviors. Therefore, this study considers brand beliefs as a mediator which may transmit the impact of brand association on brand advocacy. As both brand beliefs and brand associations are considered

in the category of brand attitudes (Foroudi, 2019). The link between brand association, beliefs and brand advocacy can be built on the idea of attitude-behavior consistency theory. The attitude-behavior consistency has provided the base for Motivation and Opportunity Determinants (MODE) model of attitude-behavior by (Fazio, 1990). The model conveys that strong attitudes when positively aligned determine the positive behaviors whereas the opportunity always exists that the behavior can go in opposite direction when attitudes are not in similar direction. The MODE can use the spontaneous process or the deliberative process (Ellithorpe, 2020). Hence, it is posited that brand associations and brand beliefs as attitudes will align to influence the behavior i.e. brand advocacy. Based on these arguments, the study proposes that;

H20: Brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand association and brand advocacy.

2.29 Brand Coolness, Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition and Brand Advocacy

According to the framework (**Figure 2.1**) , the mediators can be divided into two categories, one category is regarding the awareness about the brand. Many researchers have considered brand familiarity as a part of brand awareness (Foroudi et al., 2014). Whereas, brand recognition is often studied as part of the brand awareness (Azzari & Pelissari, 2021; Rossiter, 2014). Therefore, the link of this category will explain if awareness about a brand, knowing about it and having knowledge about it can mold into advocacy behavior. Since based on the coolness of a place which is an external stimulus, awareness (familiarity and recognition) are organismic changes takes place in the mindset of a consumer, therefore there are chances of getting a response in reaction to the awareness as advocacy. Here, the researcher in addition to the SOR model, the argument is built by employing the sensemaking theory, when a tourist interacts with a place by visiting or indirectly i.e. by reading material. The tourist identifies the brand coolness of a place as the psychological external cue in the environment. That external cue would stimulate

the tourist and the tourist may start getting familiarize with the place, will keep in the memory based on the past practices of interactions with brands and places and may be able to recognize this place. Afterwards, once tourist recognizes a place, they may take an action and spread word of mouth about the place and recommend it to their peers by advocating the place. Hence, through the sensemaking, it is proposed that;

H21: Brand familiarity and brand recognition mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

2.30 Brand Coolness, Brand Associations, Brand Beliefs and Brand Advocacy

Brand associations and brand beliefs are often argued as attitudes, and have alo been measured as each other. Foroudi (2019) in their research on hotel signature have considered brand associations and brand beliefs as part of the attitudes. Though, brand associations, beliefs and attitudes all have their own independent scales, but researchers often use them interchangably. Brand associations and brand beliefs impact on brand advocacy is missing in the literature, however Xie, Bagozzi, and Grønhaug (2019) using two categorical questions to measure attitude showed them impacting brand advocacy. Similarly, brand coolness has aslo considered brand attitudes coolness in the study to test the construct scale by (Warren et al., 2019). Based on these arguments, the link from brand coolness to brand advocacy via brand association and brand beliefs look viable. Also, the sensemaking theory can provide support. For the tourists, brand coolness is the cue, which brings in internal change in the mental state of tourism by creating associations of the place, that turn into beliefs regarding the place. If the associations and beliefs are positive, they will form a positive behavior in form of advocacy. Also, because sensemaking also happens in retrospect so the tourist doesn't have to go through the complete process there and then. Therefore, it is proposed that;

H22: Brand associations and brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand beliefs.

2.31   Brand Coolness, Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition, Brand Association, Brand Beliefs, and Brand Advocacy

The literature has argued the paths from coolness to familiarity (Warren et al., 2019), familiarity to recognition (van Berlo et al., 2020), recognition to association (Delgado-Ballester et al., 2012), and association to beliefs. The path from beliefs to advocacy is under consideration. However, the categorization of the mediators have been seen influening the brand advocacy. Based on the arguments, brand coolness can transmit its effect on brand advocacy through this path. Warren et al. (2019) had studied many variables with their measure and tried their direct and indirect relationships, one direct relationship was familiarity. There was a suggestion of testing more probable mediating variables and sequences of mediating variables. (Foroudi, 2019) conducted a research in hotel industry and has shown how the attributes of hotel create a mental picture about the brand and make customers familiar with it and customers can later recognize it. Afterwards they create associations and beliefs about the hotel which further lead to more behavioral changes. The sensemaking theory is employed to explain the interplay. Where the external cue of brand coolness has triggered the internal state of the tourist. They have to see what to do about it, they may then seek to get familiar with the brand and start recongizing it based on its features. Further they make certain image of the brand and create associations with it, based on those associations and the knowledge about the place, they may manage to have beliefs about the place. Once based on their frame of reference, they would create a chain of process to make sense the change the external trigger has brought. Next, they take an action about it in form of a behavior. If the internal change based on the trigger is positive, the change will be poisitive. It is expected that in this particular scenario of brand coolness of a place, the final reaction is positive brand advocacy. To investigate the process, it is hypothesized that;

H23: Brand coolness transmits its impact on brand advocacy through

*serial mediation by brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand asso-
ciation, and brand beliefs.*

2.32 Customer Irrational Beliefs as Moderator

Seger-Guttmann (2019) proposed that customers' irrational beliefs are internal processes and can impact their decision making. The literature provides the single study by (Seger-Guttmann, 2019) and the research gap in understanding and using of customer irrational beliefs. The earlier study is set in the service sector; this study considers the scale in the tourism sector. The author also proposed to check if the irrational beliefs of customers can predict the customer related outcomes and identify different relationships, this study uses the CIB as a moderator and to investigate if it can strengthen or weakens the relationships of different brand aspects. The construct is a multi-item higher order construct.

A multi-item moderator is a better predictor of the change as most moderators in researches are single-item scales (Hair Jr et al., 2021). However, considering the customer's irrational beliefs, the current study includes a destination where the situation and service setup is different than the habitual visited stores, and tourists may behave totally different in those settings and may not show their irrational beliefs. In the current study, customer irrational beliefs as moderator will impact the relationship between brand association and brand advocacy, and brand beliefs and brand advocacy. Belief congruence theory (Ajzen & Sexton, 1999) is used to provide base for the relation. According to the Belief congruence theory, there is a scheme of attitudes and beliefs in the individual's head which if aligned would strengthen the behavior and if not aligned, cannot impact or can have a negative impact. Here, if the customer's irrational beliefs don't align with the cognitive schema, they may induce negative impact on the relationship and will weaken it. To investigate the moderating effects of customer irrational beliefs, it is proposed that

*H24: Customer Irrational Beliefs weakens relationship between Brand
Associations and Brand Advocacy.*

***H25: Customer Irrational Beliefs weakens relationship between Brand
Beliefs and Brand Advocacy.***

2.33   Theoretical Framework
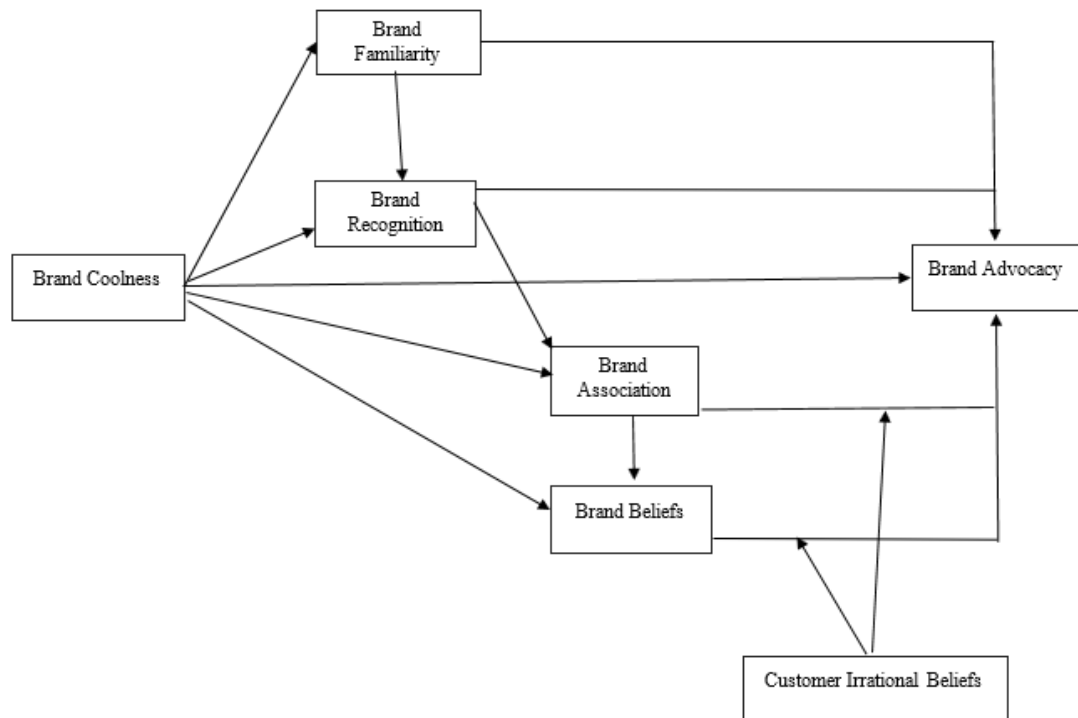
FIGURE 2.1: The Research Framework

The theoretical research framework presented in **Figure 2.1** is underpinned by
multi-theory approach. When the existing literature doesn't provide the linkages,
theories provide the support. The framework is based on the SOR framework
and sensemaking theory primarily. Affect transfer theory and belief congruence
theory supports few relationships. The direct paths from brand coolness to brand
advocacy with each mediator is supported with SOR model. Whereas, making
sense of all the mediators together is supported with sensemaking theory. The
relationships between familiarity, recognition, association and beliefs are supported
by Affect transfer theory. Lastly, to determine the moderation, belief congruence
theory was used.

2.34 Summary of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: Brand coolness positively influences brand familiarity.

Hypothesis 2: Brand coolness positively impacts brand recognition

Hypothesis 3: Brand coolness positively impacts brand association.

Hypothesis 4: Brand coolness positively impacts brand belief.

Hypothesis 5: Brand coolness positively influences brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 6: Brand familiarity positively impacts brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 7: Brand familiarity positively impacts the brand recognition.

Hypothesis 8: Brand recognition positively impacts brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 9: Brand Recognition positively influences brand associations.

Hypothesis 10: Brand association will positively influence brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 11: Brand associations positively impact brand beliefs.

Hypothesis 12: Brand beliefs positively impacts brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 13: Brand familiarity mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 14: Brand recognition mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 15: Brand association mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 16: Brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 17: Brand familiarity mediates between brand coolness and brand recognition.

Hypothesis 18: Brand recognition can mediate the relationship between brand familiarity and association.

Hypothesis 19: Brand associations mediate between brand recognition and brand beliefs.

Hypothesis 20: Brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand association and brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 21: Brand familiarity and brand recognition mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

Hypothesis 22: Brand associations and brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand beliefs.

Hypothesis 23: Brand coolness transmits its impact on brand advocacy through serial mediation by brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, and brand beliefs.

Hypothesis 24: Customer Irrational Beliefs weakens relationship between Brand Associations and Brand Advocacy.

Hypothesis 25: Customer Irrational Beliefs weakens relationship between Brand Beliefs and Brand Advocacy.

2.35   Conclusion

The chapter is divided mainly into two parts. First part dealt with the overview of the constructs and the later part dealt with the hypotheses development. In the first part, each construct is discussed in detail regarding its conception, definition, the seminal work regarding the construct and the future research avenues. During the course of review of literature which has been cited above, it was noted that there have been multiple research gaps that are required to be answered, Mainly the gaps were based on the work of (Warren et al., 2019) as they have opened avenue of nomological research regarding brand coolness across different sectors and industries.

Further, in the later part of the literature review, hypotheses were developed for the current research. The SOR model, Sensemaking theory, Affect Transfer theory and Belief congruence theory were used to provide the nonexistent research links to strengthen the research model. The summary of hypothesis and research model are followed by the hypotheses development.

Chapter 3

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Method

The chapters provide the details of the methodology employed for the study. Methodology refers to the systematic way a researcher responds to the research problem. Sarantakos (1998) defines methodology as a procedure that is followed by the social researcher in which the researcher has preliminary knowledge about the subject matter, the research methods, the techniques of data collection, the analytical framework, and the tool of analysis. This chapter includes details regarding the research philosophy, research approach, strategies, methods, and techniques that were followed to answer the research questions in an orderly manner.

3.2 Research Approach

The current research intended to observe the consequential impact of variables. Hence, this study used the quantitative approach. through the use of primary data collected through the questionnaire and tends to generalize the findings of the research data by using statistical tools.

The approach was chosen from the existing literature. In the existing body of literature, three main research strategies or approaches exist quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods. Quantitative research is considered important to

provide factual and strong evidence of the relationships and is primarily related to generalization through statistics tools and techniques (De Vaus & de Vaus, 2013).

Whereas qualitative research strategy is considered to focus on the in-depth understanding of a social phenomenon but lacks generalisability (De Vaus & de Vaus, 2013). One key characteristic of quantitative research is the minimum bias and prejudice of the researcher and more reliability in the facts and presentation of reality (Sarantakos, 1998). The current research intended to observe the consequential impact of variables. Hence, this study used the quantitative approach. through the use of primary data collected through the questionnaire and tends to generalize the findings of the research data by using statistical tools.

3.3   Research Philosophy

The proposed philosophy for this study is positivism, positivism allows to collect data quantitatively through questionnaires, make causal relationships and then analyze it numerically as a social scientist. The proposed philosophy was the best suitable among the rest available options. Further elaboration on the research philosophies is considered here. The research philosophy alludes to the presumptions made by an analyst concerning how research ought to be directed to create learning (Collis & Hussey, 2009). Understanding research philosophy is important in order to take right decisions based on the objectives of the study. Three most considered research philosophies are positivism, realism and interpretivism (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2007). Positivism accepts that the truth can be portrayed as unbiased by such properties that can be quantified and depends upon the instrument designed by the scientist; in this way positivism is connected with factual investigation and quantitative analysis. Interpretivism suggests to be part of the environment of the subject of research and understanding their issues from their point of view. Realism states that anything that is happening is the reality. Reality doesn't need mental interpretations. The proposed philosophy for this study is positivism, positivism allows to collect data quantitatively through questionnaires, make causal relationships and then analyze it numerically as a social scientist.

3.4 Research Design

The current study uses the explanatory design to investigate the relationships between brand coolness, familiarity, recognition, association, beliefs and advocacy. Explanatory study is the most suitable research design for the current study. As the research design is like the blue print of a research; it helps to determine the right tools required for research based on the research objectives. Among the research designs that are commonly used in research are includes descriptive, explanatory and exploratory (Saunders et al., 2007). The research designs are defined as: Exploratory research design is best used when the researcher requires answer to a problem for the clarity and to gain insights on what is happening in the field of study. Descriptive studies refer to the nature of design where exact factual and numerical data is required without any subjective interpretation. The studies that aim to study the casual relationships and linking of different variables. It tries to explain and investigate the happening. Explanatory study particularly uses the causal research design aiming to find the cause-and-effect relationships between the variables. As the aim of this research is to identify the cause and effect relationships between the understudy constructs, where the cause and effect relationship are further interpreted based on the past literature and theories, explanatory research design is the most suited.

3.5 Research Strategy

After finalising the research design, next step is to identify the appropriate research strategy. Research strategies include, experiment, survey, case studies, quasi experiments, ethnography.

The experiment deals with the observation of change in dependent variable because of independent variable. Experiment are mostly related to natural sciences, but are used in social and management science as well The researcher is a moderator and plan experiments in experimental and control groups.

When the experimental groups are not well defined, the type is called quasi experiment. Survey is the strategy mostly used in the deductive studies, in this type,

data is collected quantitatively to further analysed using statistics or statistical tools. The most common survey tool is a questionnaire.

Archival studies refer to the data collection from already available documents. Case study is a useful method when a researcher wishes to get detail information regarding a context in its natural setting.

Ethnography refers to the study of groups and highly used in qualitative studies, it used an inductive approach (Saunders et al., 2007). The research strategy for the current study is a survey design by using a questionnaire.

3.6 Time Horizon

After finalizing the strategy, time horizon needs to be determined. The time horizon of the research explains the number of times data will be collected. Time horizon can be of two types namely cross sectional and longitudinal. First type is cross sectional time horizon where the data is collected at one point in time. The other type is longitudinal in which the data is collected in multiple spells over the span of a time to compare the changes (Saunders et al., 2007).

The time horizon for this study is cross sectional. The reasons are because the tourists can't be found after over a period of time at the same location and it can't be clearly said when can they plan the next trip, especially in the times of Covid-19. Also, the study asked the tourists to identify a place from already visited places, therefore, this time horizon deemed fit. Also, the other studies regarding brand coolness have also used the similar time horizon (Loureiro & Blanco, 2023; Warren et al., 2019). There can be self-reporting bias but that can be minimized by keeping the subject anonymous.

3.7 Data Collection Time

The data for this research was cross sectional. It was collected during the pandemic time when international tourism was banned in most countries and flights were restricted in and out of Pakistan, where the research was mainly conducted. Hence,

the researcher contacted the tourism service provider firms to collect data. The data was collected between August 2021 and December 2022.

3.8   Study Setting

The study was conducted online, hence, the environment for the participants was natural as they filled it wherever they were convenient. Since 2017, online data collection through surveys constitute majority of quantitative researches and is an effective and efficient approach (Wu, Zhao, & Fils-Aime, 2022).

However, to cater the low response rate issue in online setting (Shiyab, Ferguson, Rolls, & Halcomb, 2023) suggested to take consent of participants and make survey look easy and viable. Accordingly, tourist operators were approached through telephonic conversation by finding their contacts through social media. They were then asked for suggestions on data collection of visitors. Tourist operators agreed to share an online link with the visitors in case the visitors are willing to offer their responses. Due to the online data collection, the researcher's interference was limited during the process. Less interference of researcher can bring better and more realistic results as it intact the anonymity of the respondents. Due to the anonymity, there are less feelings of being judged so respondents tend to provide more realistic responses (Loureiro & Blanco, 2023).

3.9   Unit of Analysis

The unit of analysis is whom the researcher is analyzing and obtaining information about (De Vaus & de Vaus, 2013). The unit of analysis can be an object, place, individual, or any symbol. However, the individual is usually the unit of analysis in the survey research (De Vaus & de Vaus, 2013).

For the current study, the unit of analysis was individual tourists. A tourist is someone who has travelled somewhere out of his home for leisure and other purposes. The unit of analysis for this study were the tourists who had already traveled at least once.

3.10 Population of the Study

The population of research constitutes of every member of a group that is fit for the analysis purpose related to the specified research (De Vaus & de Vaus, 2013). The current study is set in the tourism sector as tourism sector has huge growth potential and contributes towards global economy (Breitsohl & Garrod, 2016).

The population for this study are the adult individuals, Further, the individuals who have traveled more than once in their life and have gone out of their hometown for the travel purpose in order to have relevant experience required for the research where they have to think about their travel experiences to fill the questionnaire. A minimum of higher secondary background was required so they can understand English language which was medium of the survey instrument, no socioeconomic class was considered. Therefore, anyone who can understand English Language and has traveled inside or outside Pakistan was considered as the sample of the study.

3.11 Sampling Technique

Investigating the whole population seems impossible task. According to Sarantakos (1998) the process of selecting right kind of data units and research sample that is representative of the population of the study is known as sampling. Identification of the sample is determined through sampling techniques. There are two types of sampling which are used in research; probability and non-probability sampling.

The probability sampling techniques include simple random, stratified, stratified random etc. Whereas the non-probability sampling techniques include convenience, snowball and purposive sampling etc.

The non-probability sampling method makes way for some units to have a greater or lesser chance of getting selected. The convenience sampling is the kind of non-probability sampling where the researcher selects the sample on the base of accessibility and convenience of getting it. The convenience sampling is the kind of non-probability sampling where the researcher selects the sample on the base

of accessibility and convenience of getting it. Snowball sampling is a kind of the sampling where the initial sample provides the researcher with contact with further units of data collection(UDC). The snowball sampling works as the name indicates; the initial set of respondents in the sample keep adding more connected people or UDCs and thus giving a cumulative sample to the researcher. Convenience sampling is widely used technique.

However, this study used the purposive sampling, which is a common occurring in consumer behavior particularly coolness related studies (Guerreiro et al., 2023). Purposive sampling provides the researcher with a sample tailored to the needs and requirements of the research matter. The sampling through this method is done for catering to the goals of the research. Many brand related researches use the purposive sampling technique e.g. (Pranata & Permana, 2021).

Purposive sampling is based on the judgment of the researcher to identify and make a sample of informants that have certain information regarding the researcher's questions. In this study, tourists are the unit of data collection, specifically those tourists who have traveled at least once based on the context of the research. A tourist needs to have prior travel experience in order to retrospect and compare multiple places to judge which among them they considered cool, which isn't possible for a first-time tourist. Therefore, purposive sampling is the right choice for this study. The sample was specified in two ways. First before collecting the data respondents were asked if they had traveled before, only then questionnaire was shared. Secondly, the respondents who have not properly responded to the screening question 1 (See Appendix), the responses were not considered. The advantage of purposive sampling is it provides the needed sample for the researcher and screening questions have helped in getting the well needed sample without impacting the generalizability of the findings in the case of this research.

3.12   Sample Size

The study focuses on the tourism industry and wants to see the destination brand relationships, the sample for the study is be tourists. The sample size was determined using the G*Power calculator. The power and effect sizes were set at 0.90

and 0.05 respectively (Muhammad et al., 2020). Power refers to probability of correctly determining the hypothesis and not making type II error and the effect size shows the scale of the impact of a variable on other (Kang, 2021). The reason to set power at 0.90 is there is a 90% probability that researcher won't make the error. The maximum arrows pointing towards the dependent construct were 6 which are required to determine a sample size in G Power. The dependent variable in the study is brand advocacy and the directed arrows not only included the direct and mediated paths but also the moderator was linked to dependent variable to identify the sample size. The sample size determined by G power statistics to justify the population representative of current study is 355. However, 411 responses were collected within a six-month period The rationale for collecting more responses is that no information is missed and the minimum requirement is fulfilled in case of data loss or missed information.

3.13   Data Collection Tool and Process

The research instrument used to collect and analyze data was an online survey. The responses were collected on a 5-point Likert scale where 1 depicted strongly disagree and 5 showed strongly agree. The data for the current research was collected online. There are numerous benefits of collecting data online (Nayak & Narayan, 2019). One, the respondent can take their time in filling out the questionnaire and can perform in their own free time. Second, the respondent is not influenced by the interference of the researcher or the data collection administrator. Thirdly, if the data collection procedure is anonymous, there is less pressure of respondents not to answer and causing missing values in the data. In the online questionnaires, researchers can add commands so no answer is missed, but, it isn't in accordance to the research ethics. Fourthly, the data is being compiled in a file and is it easy to use it in any data processing software directly. However, (Nayak & Narayan, 2019) further mentioned that online data collection is most suitable for cross-sectional studies. As the current study is cross sectional, hence, the online method was an appropriate method to collect data. Before sending the online questionnaire link to anyone, two participant screening questions were

asked, if the respondent has recently visited a place as a tourist and if they are capable to read and write the English language. If no was the answer to any of these questions, they weren't sent the link to participate in the study.

This second section included the scales of the constructs brand coolness and brand familiarity, third section included the question about other brand constructs, fourth section comprised on questions about customer irrational beliefs.

The last section was about demographic characteristics. The original scales of the constructs used the word brand which was replaced with the word place, to give clarity regarding the context of the study. The questionnaire is attached in Appendix A. The data collection process was slightly slow and to improve the response rate few reminders were sent to tourist firms to contact the participants and asked them to fill in the questionnaire.

3.14   Research Instruments

The study collected responses on a 5-point scale for all the measures. The details of the measures are provided below. The table 3.1 provides the summary along the contributors of the scale, however the explanation only refers to where current study has adapted.

3.14.1   Brand Coolness

The instrument of brand coolness was adapted from (Warren et al., 2019) and had 37 items. The construct of brand coolness is a higher order, therefore, 37 items were spread across 10 dimensions of brand coolness namely authentic (4), exciting (4), aesthetically appealing (4), energetic (4), original (3), rebellious (4), popular(4), high-status (4), subcultural (4), and iconic (2). The instrument was 5-point Likert scale. The sample questions include,

- This place is fantastic

- The place is defiant

3.14.2 Brand Familiarity

The scale of brand familiarity consisted of 6 items and was adapted from Foroudi (2019) who had modified the scale developed by (Ha & Perks, 2005). Foroudi (2019) adapted the scale by using the word hotel, which was adapted for study, replacing the hotel with place. The sample questions include:

- The place and the services are familiar to me

- I think I have enough information to make an informed judgment about this place

3.14.3 Brand Recognition

The scale of brand recognition also consisted of 6 items. This scale was also adapted from Foroudi (2019) replacing the word hotel with the word place. The sample questions include:

- The place is recalled easily

- The place and its surroundings are memorable

3.14.4 Brand Association

The scale consisted of 4 items and was adapted by (Foroudi, 2019). The word brand was replaced with the word place. The sample questions include:

- This place is up-market

- I can easily imagine the place in my mind

3.14.5 Brand Beliefs

The scale consisted of 4 items and was adapted by (Foroudi, 2019). However, Foroudi (2019) in their study has mentioned all the researchers from whom each item was taken. The word hotel was replaced with the word place. The sample questions include:

- I like the way this place looks

- I believe, this place appeals to people like me.

3.14.6 Brand Advocacy

The brand advocacy instrument with 12 items was adapted from (Sweeney et al., 2020). The scale is recently developed to make advocacy distinct from other forms of communication. The sample questions include:

- I have only good things to say about this place.

- I would defend this place if people were to give negative comments about it directly to me.

3.14.7 Customer Irrational Beliefs

The scale for moderator customer irrational beliefs was adapted from Seger-Guttmann (2019) that consisted of 19 items. Customer irrational beliefs was also a higher order construct and the 19 items represent 4 dimensions which are subjective favoritism (6), absolute fairness (5), reasoning supremacy (4) and power game (4). The sample questions include:

- If I am a long-standing customer, the service provider will always take care of me ahead of the other customers.

- Service providers believe that "the customer is always right," and therefore, will always do whatever it takes to satisfy me.

3.15 Data Analysis Tools

Data analysis tools used for this study were MS Excel, SPSS and PLS-SEM. The purpose of using MS Excel was to clean data and then later on for moderation slope analysis.

TABLE 3.1: Instrument Details

Variable	No. of items	Contributors
Brand Coolness	37	(Warren et al., 2019)
Brand Familiarity	6	(Ha & Perks, 2005)
Brand Recognition	6	(Baker & Balmer, 1997; Dowling & Kabanoff, 1996; Hatch & Schultz, 2001; Omar & Williams, 2006; Van Riel & Van den Ban, 2001)
Brand Association	4	(Aaker & Equity, 1991), Pappu et al. (2005), (Washburn & Plank, 2002), and Yoo and Donthu (2002).
Brand Belief	4	(Batra, 2019; Keller, 1993), Kim et al., 2015; Kwon and Lennon, 2005, 2006, 2009
Brand Advocacy	12	(Sweeney et al., 2020)
Customer Irrational Beliefs	19	Guttman, 2019

SPSS was used for descriptive statistics of the study including skewness and kurtosis. Further, PLS-SEM was used for the data analysis including measurement model and structural model. PLS-SEM is a frequently used data analysis tool in current times as it is a flexible tool. It allows to measure SEM even if the distribution is not normal which is usually the case in management studies (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

3.16 Pilot Study

Pilot study is the trial test of the data collection instrument in research (Sarantakos, 1998) pilot study is recommended before data collection in order to identify the suitability of the questionnaire to collect the right kind of data (Saunders et al., 2007). The purpose is to identify and limit any weaknesses and ambiguities before the final data collection. The first step should be to get the data assessed by experts and then get the trial run done. The minimum number of respondents for a trial run should be 10 (Saunders et al., 2007). In the case of this study, the research instruments were already established and were adapted to fit the context.

Pilot study also provides the time respondents take and the suitability of the data collection medium (Sarantakos, 1998). The data of the pilot study was collected through the use of online Google forms. One reason for collecting data online was the restriction on activities due to Covid-19 pandemic across the globe. The data was collected on the Likert scale ranging from 1-5. The questionnaire had four sections that include all the questions, demographic information and the statement from the researcher.

During the pilot data collection phase, personal social media was used which is a justified medium to collect data at preliminary stages. According to (Saunders et al., 2007), non-probability sampling which includes convenience sampling sounds the most hands-on way to do it unless the problem is of scientific nature. Therefore, the researcher requested the participants through use of personal Facebook and Twitter Ids to fill the questionnaire. The process of pilot data collection wasn't very quick either as participants took time to fill in the questionnaires. Once, 65 responses were collected, data was analyzed for the reliability of the constructs in PLS-SEM software. At the pilot stage first, outer loadings and Cronbach's alpha were considered. **Annexure-B** shows outer loadings of variables. The acceptable range of Outer loadings is 0.7, the loadings with less values had to be deleted. However according to (Hair Jr et al., 2021), when constructs are novel, they can be assessed through theory to keep them or delete them. Based on this argument, all items of Brand Coolness and Brand Advocacy were kept for final data collection.

Cronbach's alpha was considered for the reliability analysis. **Appendix-B** shares the results of reliability testing. In the first step, reliability for brand associations and brand reliability was lower than 0.70, on the investigation, the outer loadings of item 1 of brand association and item 1 of brand beliefs were below the accepted range. Hence, they were deleted and the data was reassessed.

On the reassessment, Cronbach's alpha values were all above the minimum criteria of 0.70. Therefore, the instrument was reliable and can be used for data collection. After reliability was ensured, the researcher went ahead with the final data collection for the study.

The details of data analysis are discussed in the chapter 4.

TABLE 3.2: Pilot Reliability

Variable	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Brand Advocacy	12	0.936
Brand Association	4	0.715
Brand Beliefs	4	0.788
Brand Coolness	37 items for 10 lower-order constructs	0.899
Brand Familiarity	6	0.868
Brand Recognition	6	0.863
Customer Irrational beliefs	19 items for 4 lower-order constructs	0.959

3.17 Conclusion

In conclusion the snapshot of research methodology can be seen in the table below.

Research Approach	Quantitative
Philosophy	Positivism
Design	Explanatory
Strategy	Survey
Time Horizon	Cross-Sectional
Study Setting	Online
Unit of Analysis	Tourists
Data Collection Tool	Questionnaire
Sampling Technique	Purposive
Sample Size	Requires 355, Used 402
Statistical Tools	PLS-SEM, SPSS, MS Excel

Chapter 4

Results and Findings

4.1 Introduction

This chapter analyzes the results of the collected data. The chapter includes details on data screening and cleaning. Further the details analysis of the measurement model for the reliability and validity of the instrument. Furthermore, the chapter includes the results of the structural model through the structural equation modeling using the PLS-SEM technique for testing the hypotheses. Finally, the summary of the hypotheses results is provided.

4.2 Data Screening and Cleaning

One of the most important steps while preparing data for analysis is data screening and cleaning (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2013). This step is often skipped by researchers which impacts the data quality and future results (Aminu & Shariff, 2014). Data screening refers to checking data for errors and data cleaning refers to omitting of those errors to increase the quality of data. In this study, data was collected through Google forms, hence the data was downloaded in Microsoft Excel format and then screened for errors. The total number of responses collected was 411. However, when data was screened for cleaning, it was found that 9 of the responses were problematic. Using those responses would have affected the quality of the data. Therefore, those 9 responses were rejected based on two

reasons. One, the wrong understanding of cool places and wrong responses in return for example using name of furniture items as cool place. Second, the same response throughout the questionnaire for example 1(strongly disagree) for each question or 5 (strongly agree) for every single question. After elimination of such responses at the preliminary stage, there were 402 useable responses. Next, data was checked for missing values.

4.3   Missing Values and Outliers

Missing values and outliers are also a huge threat to the quality of the data. Missing values usually occur either due to the non-response of the participant or during the data entry stage. Kwak and Kim (2017) argued three types of missing value which are i) completely random, ii) random, and iii) not random. Completely random missing data may not cause biases in the data set, whereas the at random missing values are related to observable data which can impact the findings of the study and at not random data set usually have missing values regarding unobservable factors for researcher. Since the data was taken online, there were fewer chances of missing values. But, the data was still observed and less than 10 missing values were found. To manage missing values, this study used the imputation method. Imputations refer to using substitute values from the data set to fill for the missing values (Kwak & Kim, 2017). This study used the average value imputation to manage the missing values. Outliers are the values that don't much the most cases and are farfetched. Outliers are a major issue when the distribution of the data is normal (Kwak & Kim, 2017). When the distribution is skewed, the outliers don't impact much. However, not many outliers were found in this study. SPSS was used to identify the outliers and missing values in this study.

4.4   Normal Distribution

Normal distribution of data is one important assumption for structural equation modelling. To assess the normalcy of the data of the study, skewness and kurtosis

were checked. Skewness refers to how far the data is from the mean and ditches symmetry whereas kurtosis checks for the peaks in data. The data was found to be negatively skewed which shows that the data is asymmetrical and most values are above mean. And kurtosis test also showed some peaks in the data. The table 4.1 shows the results of skewness and kurtosis test. The tests range from -1 to +1 to find the skewness, few variables are highly skewed and few fall in the range. And the value of kurtosis should be between -2 to +2, the Kurtosis shows big spikes in the case of few variables according to the data.

Further the Shapiro-Wilk test was conducted to validate the results of skewness and kurtosis. The values of Shapiro-Wilk test were significant, however for normality the values should be more than 0.05. Consequently, it is concluded that the data wasn't completely normally distributed nor highly asymmetrical. Blanca, Arnau, Lopez-Montiel, Bono, and Bendayan (2013) suggested that there are less evidence of completely normal distribution of real time data. Blanca et al. (2013) further mentioned that most data distributions without any treatments are not normal and it is a common occurring particularly in social and health sciences. Hence, based on the distribution of data, for measurement and structural analysis, PLS-SEM is employed.

4.5   Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics is the organization and presentation of data. This is the simplest form of data presentation to analyze (Fisher & Marshall, 2009). Descriptive statistics help in summarizing the data and in providing the description of the sample (Fisher & Marshall, 2009). The descriptive statistics measure frequency and central tendency through the use of mean, median or mode. For measuring variation in the data, variance and standard deviation are used.

Normal distribution is highly desired in covariance based structure equation modelling (CB-SEM), however, Partial least square modelling (PLS-SEM) doesn't heavily rely on normal distribution (Hair Jr et al., 2021). PLS-SEM is a better alternative of CB-SEM that can manage skewed or kurtosis data.

TABLE 4.1: Skewness and Kurtosis

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Stat.	Statistic	Std.Error	Statistic	Std.Error
Energetic	402	-1.639	0.122	3.894	0.243
Appealing	402	-2.588	0.122	8.412	0.243
Original	402	-1.662	0.122	4.091	0.243
Authentic	402	-1.542	0.122	2.842	0.243
Rebel	402	-0.067	0.122	-0.666	0.243
High Status	402	-0.404	0.122	-0.046	0.243
Popular	402	-2.013	0.122	5.394	0.243
Sub cultural	402	-0.268	0.122	-0.501	0.243
Iconic	402	-0.781	0.122	0.328	0.243
Brand association	402	-1.59	0.122	4.243	0.243
Brand familiarity	402	-0.912	0.122	1.547	0.243
Brand recognition	402	-1.857	0.122	5.79	0.243
Brand beliefs	402	-2.048	0.122	6.192	0.243
Brand coolness	402	-1.491	0.122	4.936	0.243
Brand advocacy	402	-1.128	0.122	2.193	0.243
Subjective favoritism	402	-0.639	0.122	0.763	0.243
Power Game	402	-0.298	0.122	0.052	0.243
Absolute fairness	402	-0.567	0.122	0.763	0.243
Reasoning supremacy	402	-0.55	0.122	0.739	0.243
Customer irrational beliefs	402	-0.452	0.122	0.914	0.243
Valid N (listwise)	402				

TABLE 4.2: Normality Tests

	Kolmogorov-Smirnova			Shapiro-Wilk		
Tests of Normality						
	Statistic	**df**	**Sig.**	**Statistic**	**df**	**Sig.**
Brand Recognition	0.149	402	0	0.831	402	0.000
Brand beliefs	0.196	402	0	0.798	402	0.000
Brand Coolness	0.101	402	0	0.897	402	0.000
Brand Advocacy	0.098	402	0	0.922	402	0.000
Brand association	0.157	402	0	0.859	402	0.000
Brand familiarity	0.121	402	0	0.934	402	0.000
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Descriptive statistics also present the position of data through percentiles, interquartile range or the minimum or maximum value (Kaur, Stoltzfus, Yellapu, et al., 2018). The descriptive statistics of current study are depicted in **Table 4.3** and **4.4** for the theoretical constructs of the study. SPSS was used to determine the descriptive statistics for this study.

N in the **Table 4.3** shows the number of sample used for data analysis which is 402. The mean value for Brand coolness is 4.00 which shows that tourists have found the place cool, the mean values for brand advocacy is 4.03 that implies that tourists are willing to advocate the place. Brand familiarity and recognition have mean values of 3.96 and 4.26 respectively which shows the tourist's agreement of getting familiar with the place and recognizing it. Brand association has a mean value of 4.16 mentioning the association tourists may create with the place and 4.26 value of brand beliefs show that tourists have positive beliefs about the place. Similarly, Customer irrational beliefs has a mean value of 3.57 which is around neutral values depicting tourist may or may have few irrational beliefs regarding the place.

TABLE 4.3: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
BC	402	1	5	4	0.59245
BF	402	1	5	3.96	0.74942
BR	402	1	5	4.26	0.70347
BA	402	1	5	4.16	0.70567
BB	402	1	5	4.26	0.73572
BAd	402	1	5	4.03	0.73743
CIB	402	1	5	3.57	0.75601

Since the constructs brand coolness and customer irrational beliefs were higher order constructs, descriptive statistics for their lower order components are also presented in **Table 4.4**. Energetic, Extraordinary, Appealing, Original, Authentic, Rebel, High Status, Popular, Subcultural, Iconic are lower-order components of brand coolness. Their mean values depict that the tourists have agreed that these dimensions are related to their idea of cool. Rebellious has the mean value near average, all other have high values depicting their agreement the existence of these dimensions at the place they consider cool. Further, Subjective Favoritism, Power Game, Absolute fairness, reasoning supremacy are the lower order constructs of customer's irrational beliefs and according to the descriptive statistics, tourists may have certain irrational beliefs.

TABLE 4.4: Descriptive Statistics

	N	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Energetic	402	1	5	4.26	0.74886
Extraordinary	402	1	5	4.32	0.71698
Appealing	402	1	5	4.5	0.72999
Original	402	1	5	4.2	0.76738
Authentic	402	1	5	4.21	0.81278
Rebellious	402	1	5	3.12	1.08193
High Status	402	1	5	3.59	0.91075
Popular	402	1	5	4.36	0.74297
Subcultural	402	1	5	3.54	0.93011
Iconic	402	1	5	3.93	0.93182
Subjective Favoritism	402	1	5	3.65	0.83451
Power Game	402	1	5	3.39	0.91034
Absolute Fairness	402	1	5	3.61	0.84358
Reasoning Supremacy	402	1	5	3.64	0.83195

4.6 Common Method Bias

Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Podsakoff (2012) stated that the existence of common method bias can impact the validity of the survey. Therefore, it is important to look for any common method bias and remove it. There are general rules for avoiding common method bias by keeping the anonymity of the participants intact, using time lag (Podsakoff et al., 2012) using previously used established measures and pilot testing of the scale (Baumgartner & Weijters, 2012). Though this study adapted the instruments and kept the anonymity due to online survey but the data is cross-sectional. Hence, there is a need to check for common method bias in the data.

To identify if any common method bias exists, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) method suggested by (Kock & Ned, 2015) was employed. According to the (Kock & Ned, 2015), if the VIF value of any variable is more than 3.3, the issue of collinearity exists and there is a common method bias. However, **Table 4.5** shows that all the values of the current study are under 3.3 hence there is no common method bias and the survey is valid.

TABLE 4.5: Common Method Bias

Variable	BA	BAd	BB	BC	BF	BR	CIB
BA		2.849	1				
BAd							
BB		3.193					
BC	2.128	3.244			1		
BF		2.669				1	
BR	2.128	3.023					
CIB		1.533					

4.7 Data Analysis

Once, the data was cleaned and managed for quality, the data was considered safe for further analysis. This study considered partial least square structural equation modeling and used PLS-SEM (version 4.0.8.5) for the analysis. PLS software has become predominantly used software in the marketing and consumer behavior

studies based on its power to perform complex statistical procedures (Safeer, Chen, Abrar, Kumar, & Razzaq, 2022). The complex procedures may mean having multiple indicators, constructs and paths. Other advantages of using PLS-SEM includes its ability to manage to provide statistically powerful results of analysis even with small sample sizes, however, larger samples increase precision. Secondly, it is a nonparametric method, hence not dependent on normal distribution which makes it highly realistic method to use for behavioral studies (Hair Jr et al., 2021). Thirdly, PLS-SEM is considered a prioritized method when there is scant knowledge regarding structural relationship (Hair Jr et al., 2021). which is the case of this study. Hence, PLS-SEM is considered as the right method for the data analysis for the current study. Thus, for analysis, first measurement model is considered for reliability and validity. Afterwards, structural model is considered for hypothesis testing.

4.8   Demographic Statistics

60% of the sample consisted of male participants and only 40% of the participants were female. The education level of all the participants was above bachelors or bachelors in process. This also helps in accepting the accuracy of data as they all can understand English because the medium of education in Pakistan after matriculation is English. 55% of the population have completed their bachelors whereas 45% of sample is distributed between post-graduation and PhD.

The youth of Pakistan is in huge numbers and they are the ones who are traveling the most. In terms of age 55% of respondents were less than 25 years of age whereas 33% were between ages 26-35. According to Bureau of Statistics of Pakistan report 2017 (PBS, 2017), the maximum number of people are above the age of 15, 32% fall under 24 years of age, and 26.5% fall under the age of 25-29. The 88% of the population of the study falls under the age group 18-35 justifying the maximum population group. Also, youngsters tend to travel with their families and on their own. According to Haq, Ullah, and Sajjad (2019) the households travel during the vacation time of. They also observed a decrease in tourism as the age of household heads increases, making the youngsters more frequent travelers. Other Pakistan

based studies on tourism have also shown the major population hailing in the age group of 25-35 (Gillani, Iqbal, Javed, & Qamar, 2022; Ullah et al., 2022). According to Loureiro et al. (2020), millennials focused the most on cool and branded products and every coming generation is more conscious about material things than previous. Hence, this might be the reason that youngsters have more proportion as a participant in this study. **Table: 4.6** represents the demographics.

There are over 8 different kinds of tourism in Pakistan and more than 17 worldwide, according to the data analysis, the respondents selected adventure tourism as their top choice to visit a place Similarly, 64% of participants of the study selected adventure tourism as the type in which their cool place falls. Adventure tourism may include the sightseeing and other adventure activities like climbing, bungee jumping etc. Respondents were also asked to choose a place of their choice that they considered cool. 61.5% of respondents chose a local place whereas 38.4% chose an international place, they have considered cool.

TABLE 4.6: Demographic Profile

Demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	240	60
Female	162	40
Education		
Bachelors	221	55
Post Grad	57	14
PhD	21	5
Masters	103	26
Age in years		
18-25	220	55
26-35	133	33
35-45	41	10
45 and above	8	2
Type of tourism		
Cultural	58	14
Adventure	256	64
Religious	36	9
Others	52	13

4.9 Measurement Model

The measurement model considers reliability by considering Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability. Convergent validity was measured through outer loadings and average variance extracted (AVE). Lastly, discriminant validity is measured using HTMT ratios.
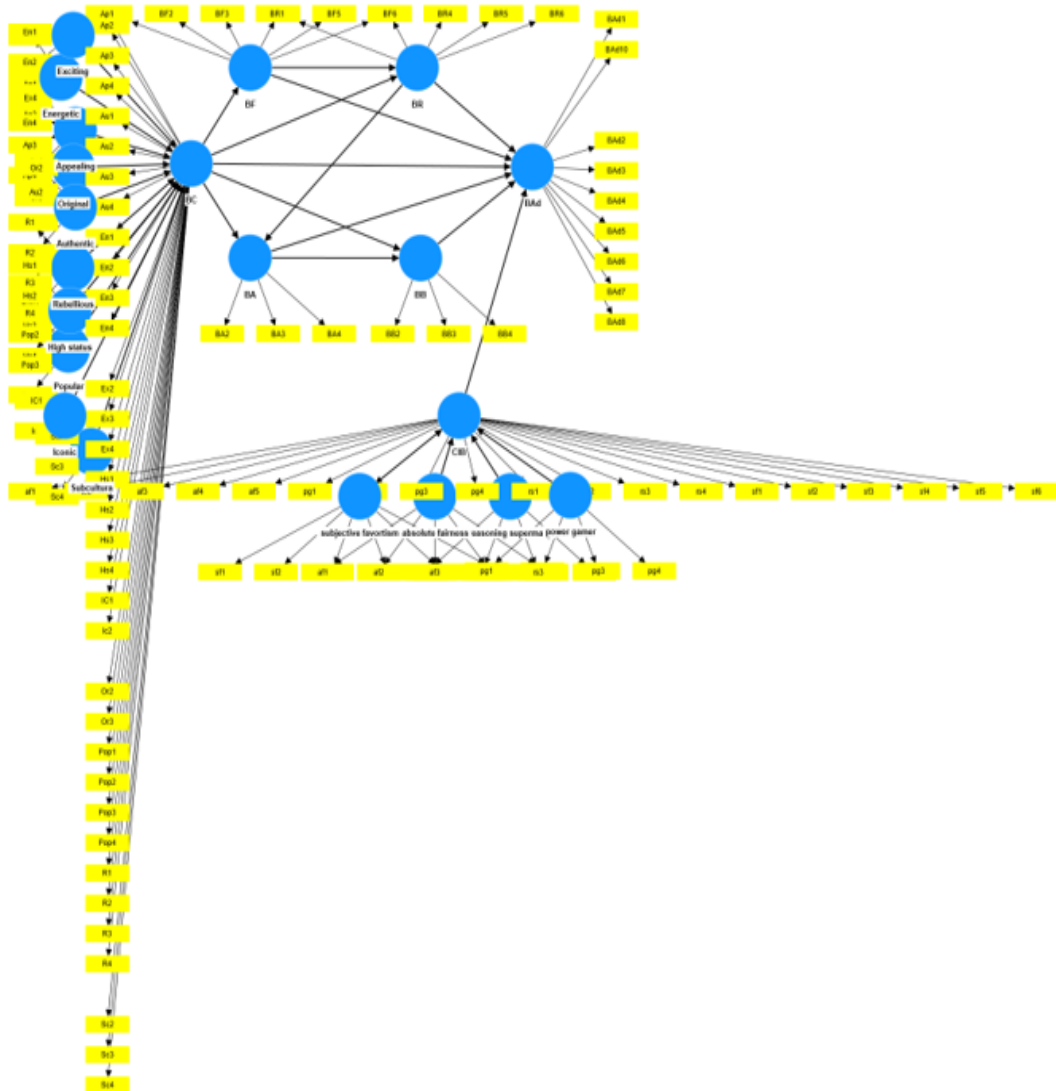
FIGURE 4.1: Measurement Model-Stage 1

The first step is to measure reliability and the most common method of measuring relaibility is internal consistency relaibility which is measured by Cronbach's alpha and it measures the intercorrelations of the indicator's items. Cronbach's alpha is sensitive to scale sizes, therefore composite reliability. The value of Cronbach's alpha is set on a minimum of 0.70 to consider the variable reliable (Sekaran &

Bougie, 2016), whereas the value of composite reliability ranges from 0 to 1 and higher the better (Hair Jr et al., 2021). Convergent Validity means how much the indicators correlate with the other indicators of same variable. Also known as internal reliability, the values should exceed 0.70 (Hair Jr et al., 2021). Further, AVE is a tool to measure the convergent validity of the construct. AVE refers to the relative measurement of construct variance against the residual (Hair Jr et al., 2021). The acceptable Value range of AVE is above 0.50. Discriminant validity determines how different a construct is from the other construct. It determines the uniqueness of the construct in the relationship (Hair Jr et al., 2021). HTMT values are considered for measuring discriminant validity.

4.10   Reliability and Validity

The constructs of the study included two higher-order constructs, brand coolness and customer irrational beliefs. When a construct is based on multiple dimensions it can be modelled as a composite higher-order construct (Rasoolimanesh, Md Noor, Schuberth, & Jaafar, 2019). Hence, an embedded approach was used for measuring reliability and validity (Hair Jr et al., 2021). In embedded approach, firstly, lower-order constructs were introduced, and the values of latent variable were extracted, afterwards after constructing lower order constructs values based on latent scores, in the second stage higher order construct was introduced. The advantage of this model is more parsimonious and concise model (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

For reliability analysis, firstly, the outer loadings of constructs were considered for the convergent validity of the items. The acceptable value of outer loading is above 0.70 (Sarwar & Muhammad, 2021). All of the items outer loadings converged at their own scale. However, few items with value less than 0.70, which were threat to the convergent validity, were deleted and the loadings were assessed again. The values of outer loadings are provided in **Table 4.7**. The deleted items were Ex1, Or1, Sc1 from low order components of brand coolness. BR2 from brand recognition. BA4 form brand associations. BB1 and BB4 from Brand beliefs and BAd9, BAd11 and BAd 12 from brand advocacy.
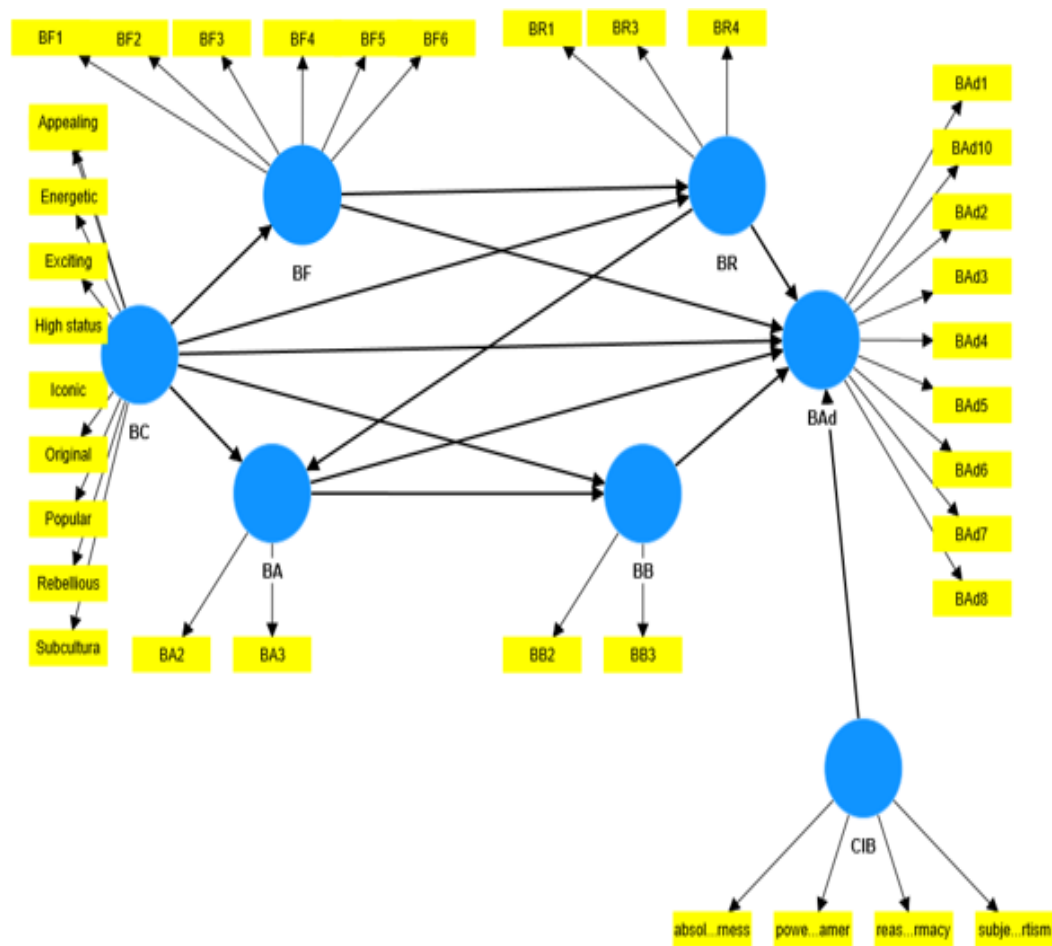
FIGURE 4.2: Measurement Model Second Stage

TABLE 4.7: Outerloadings

Construct	Item		Outer Loadings
	Brand Coolness		
Energetic	En1	The feel of this place is energetic	0.852
	En2	The feel of this place is outgoing	0.842
	En3	The feel of this place is lively	0.851
	En4	The feel of this place is vigorous	0.786
Extraordinary	Ex2	This place is superb	0.888
	Ex3	This place is fantastic	0.903
	Ex4	This place is extraordinary	0.87

Continued Table 4.7: Outerloadings

Construct	Item		Outer Loadings
Appealing	Ap1	The sceneries around this place look good	0.848
	Ap2	The place is aesthetically appealing	0.838
	Ap3	The place is attractive	0.9
	Ap4	The place has a really nice appearance	0.9
Authentic	Au1	The place and surroundings are authentic	0.841
	Au2	The place and its culture is true to its roots	0.79
	Au3	The place doesn't seem artificial	0.804
	Au4	The place has a feel that it doesn't try to be something it's not	0.81
High Status	Hs1	The place is chic	0.777
	Hs2	The place is glamorous	0.775
	Hs3	The place is sophisticated	0.756
	Hs4	The place is ritzy	0.767
Iconic	IC1	This place is a cultural symbol	0.803
	Ic2	This place is iconic	0.928
Original	Or2	The feel of this place is original	0.887
	Or3	The place looks like if it does its own thing	0.884
Popular	Pop1	The place is liked by most people	0.825
	Pop2	The place is in-style	0.752
	Pop3	The place is popular	0.86
	Pop4	The place is widely accepted	0.881
Rebellious	R1	The place has a feel it is rebellious	0.816
	R^2	The place is defiant	0.837
	R^3	The place is not afraid to break rules	0.837
	R^4	The place is non-conformist	0.837
Subcultural	Sc2	If I visit this place, it would make me stand apart from others	0.886
	Sc3	Going on this place helps people who visit it stand apart from the crowd	0.886

Continued Table 4.7: Outerloadings

Construct	Item		Outer Loadings
	Sc4	The people who go to this place are unique	0.836
Brand Familiarity	BF1	The place and the services are familiar to me	0.787
	BF2	The place and the services give me a feeling of goodwill	0.781
	BF3	The place and the services has services for today's consumer	0.76
	BF4	The place and its services offers the kind of experience, I would want	0.821
	BF5	I think I have enough information to make an informed judgment about this place	0.781
	BF6	The place and the services are well-known in detail	0.821
Brand Recognition	BR1	The place is recognizable	0.828
	BR3	The place is recalled easily	0.851
	BR4	The place is distinct from other places	0.83
Brand Associations	BA2	I am proud to visit this place	0.911
	BA3	I can easily imagine the place in my mind	0.911
Brand Beliefs	BB2	I enjoy staying at this place	0.953
	BB3	I like the way this place looks	0.948
Brand Advocacy	BAd1	When I recommend this place, I always do so strongly	0.812
	BAd2	I am enthusiastic in my recommendations of this place	0.826
	BAd3	I have only good things to say about this place.	0.792
	BAd4	When discussing this place, I urge people to consider going there.	0.854
	BAd5	Whenever there is a conversation about places to visit, I usually strongly recommend this place, without being asked.	0.822
	BAd6	I would defend this place if people were to give negative comments about it directly to me.	0.742

Continued Table 4.7: Outerloadings

Construct	Item		Outer Loadings
	BAd7	I describe this place as the best of its kind.	0.833
	BAd8	I have told more people about my positive experience at this place than I have with most other places I have visited.	0.804
	BAd10	I take the initiative to actively promote this place (e.g., passing on details about this place).	0.712
Customer Irrational Beliefs			
Subjective Favoritism	sf1	If the people around (shopkeepers/ travel agents) recognizes me from previous visits, he/she will always give me better treatment.	0.773
	sf2	If I cultivate a personal relationship with the service provider, he/she will always go the extra mile for me.	0.834
	sf3	If I am nice to the service provider, he/she will always be nice to me.	0.793
	sf4	If I am a long-standing customer, the service provider will always take care of me ahead of the other customers.	0.854
	sf5	If I compliment the service provider, he/she will always do anything to satisfy me.	0.844
	sf6	If I commend the company, the service provider will always do everything to please me	0.799
Absolute Fairness	af1	Service providers believe that customer is always right and therefore, will always do whatever it takes to satisfy me.	0.821
	af2	If I make an extreme effort to see the service provider, he/she will in return, always try harder for me.	0.871

Continued Table 4.7: Outerloadings

Construct	Item		Outer Loadings
	af3	The service provider always reveals all the relevant information to the customer so that the customer can make an informed decision.	0.819
	af4	The service provider will always be fair with me.	0.858
	af5	The service provider is always honest with the customer.	0.813
Reasoning Supremacy	rs1	If I present my case rationally (and not emotionally), I would always get what I want.	0.857
	rs2	If I'm very specific with the service provider regarding the things I want, I will always get it.	0.869
	rs3	If I am completely honest with the service provider, he/she will always do anything to please me.	0.869
	rs4	If I show what I know about the product or the service, the service provider will never lie to me.	0.854
Power Game	pg1	To get what I want from a service provider, I always need to be firm.	0.784
	pg2	If I show my clout over the service provider, I will always receive more.	0.888
	pg3	When I do not get what I want, I will always receive more if I threaten legal action.	0.838
	pg4	If I show weakness toward the service provider, I will never receive what I am entitled	0.785

After assessing the outer loadings, the values of Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability were considered for the reliability of the construct and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was considered for the convergent validity of the constructs. Classically Cronbach's alpha is considered as the measure of internal reliability with an acceptable value greater than 0.70. Nevertheless, Taber (2018) mentioned the loose use of Cronbach's alpha and different values of alpha as threshold and recommended the use of complimentary measures for the reliability. This study considered the composite reliability as the complimentary measure. The threshold value of composite reliability is also 0.70. Peterson and Kim (2013) maintained that the value of composite reliability is usually larger than Cronbach's alpha, hence the more value of composite reliability will strengthen the reliability claim. Accordingly, the values depicted in **Table 4.8** shows that the minimum value of Cronbach's alpha of brand associations is 0.796 which is above the acceptability threshold and the complimentary composite reliability is 0.907. Both of the values have proven the reliability of the scale. AVE is assessed for the convergent reliability of the construct and acceptable value of AVE is above 0.50 (Hair Jr et al., 2021). The value of AVE of all the constructs were more than 0.500 as mentioned in **Table 4.8**. Through acceptable values of outer loadings and AVE the convergent validity of the constructs is established (Hair Jr et al., 2021). Henseler, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2015) argued that with frequent use variance based SEM, only convergent validity isn't enough and other validities must be checked including the discriminant validity.

TABLE 4.8: Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
BC	0.893	0.913	0.525
BF	0.881	0.91	0.627
BR	0.837	0.902	0.755
BA	0.796	0.907	0.83
BAd	0.93	0.942	0.643
BB	0.894	0.95	0.904
CIB	0.912	0.938	0.791

Therefore, it is also required to establish the discriminant validity of the constructs.

Discriminant validity is essential to prove that constructs empirically differ from each other and exclusively measure what each one is suppose and do not capture the essence of another construct (Hair Jr et al., 2021). In the current study, discriminant validity is measured using the Hetrotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio criterion. Hair Jr et al. (2021) simplifies HTMT approach by explaining it to be the correlation between two perfectly measured constructs and the closer the correlation to 1 the lesser is the discriminant validity. Henseler et al. (2015) while proposing mentioned the use of threshold value of 0.90. There are other methods to establish discriminant validity i.e. cross loadings and Fornell-Larcker method. However, HTMT criterion is considered more rigorous than the other methods and is efficient in considering the discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015; Muhammad & Sarwar, 2021).

Table 4.9 shows the HTMT ratio values of all the study constructs. According to the table all the values are as per the recommendation i.e. less than 0.90 that establish the discriminant validity. As after the reliability and validity are established, measurement model is satisfactory. Satisfaction of measurement model is a necessary condition for evaluation of structural model (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

TABLE 4.9: Discriminant Validity

	BA	BAd	BB	BC	BF	BR	CIB
BA							
BAd	0.84						
BB	0.884	0.808					
BC	0.827	0.809	0.772				
BF	0.76	0.814	0.739	0.773			
BR	0.868	0.873	0.867	0.81	0.792		
CIB	0.412	0.498	0.369	0.578	0.609	0.418	

4.11 Structural Model

For the structural model coefficient of determination R^2, effect sizes f^2, out sample prediction (Q^2 predict), and t values were assessed.
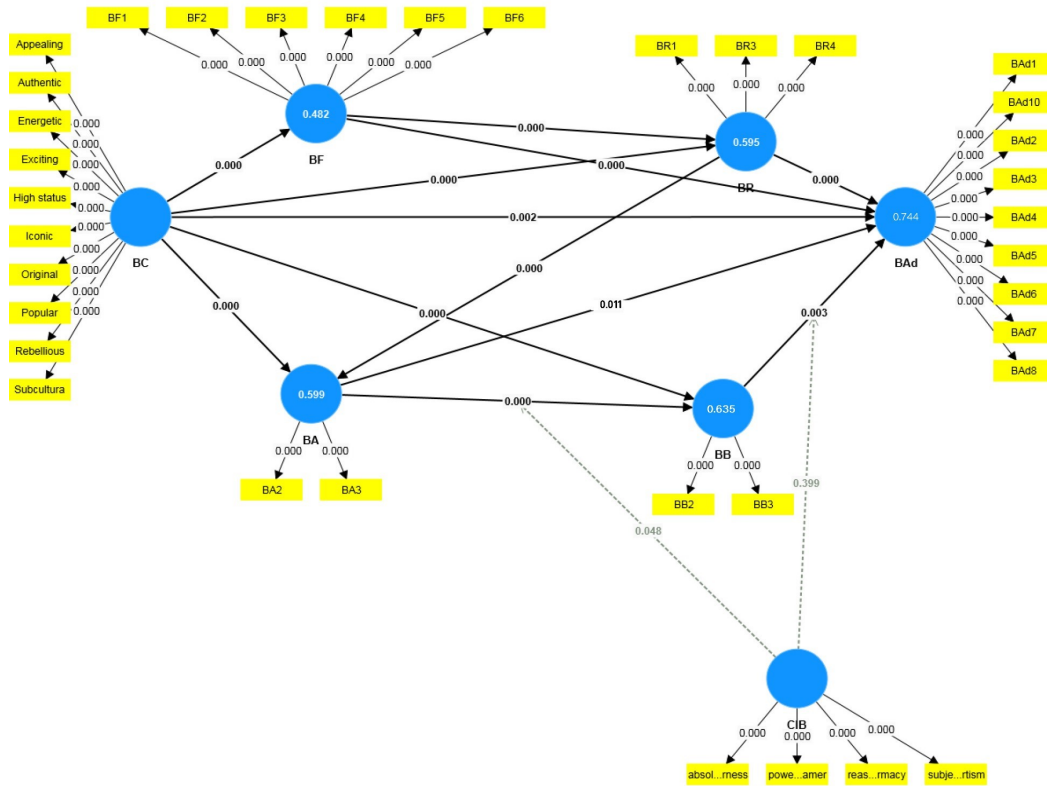
FIGURE 4.3: Structural Model

The 5000 subsamples bootstrapping procedure was employed to assess the t-values and path coefficients. Hair Jr et al. (2021) has mentioned the importance of coefficient of determination by mentioning its worth to show the predictive power of the model. R^2 is the combined correlation of independent construct on its dependent. It shows the in-sample predictive power of the model (Sarstedt, Ringle, Henseler, & Hair, 2014). The value of R^2 ranges from 0 to 1, the higher the value, the higher the predictive power. However, value of 0.20 is considered a good value in the consumer behavior studies (Hair Jr et al., 2021). According to **Table 4.10**, the R^2 values are all above 0.482 showing good prediction power of brand coolness. The value of f^2 is known as the effect size and requires to be greater than 0.02 in order to have an effect of exogenous value on endogenous. **Table 4.10** shows the minimum value of f^2 to be 0.30 which means all the constructs have a large effect (Cohen, 2013). Q^2 prediction states the strength of values reconstructed by the model and the predictive relevance of a construct. The values of Q^2 predicted for this model are above 0 which explains the predictive relevance of the model (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

TABLE 4.10: Predictive Relevance

	$\mathbf{R}^2$	$\mathbf{f}^2$	$\mathbf{Q}^2$
BF	0.482	0.930	0.484
BR	0.595	0.309	0.463
BA	0.599	0.239	0.521
BB	0.635	0.216	0.464
BAd	0.744	0.030	0.562

Another measure to assess the predict power of the model is root-mean-square error (RMSE). This is the most commonly used measure, however if the data is abnormally distributed MAE values are suggested. According to the study data analysis, the data wasn't abnormally skewed neither normal. Here to assess the predictive relevance of the data, RMSE is employed. Accordingly, PLS predict was used. PLS predict use all items of dependent variable with the independent variables to find the means.

TABLE 4.11: RMSE

	PLS-SEM_RMSE	**LM_RMSE**
BA2	0.696	0.684
BA3	0.661	0.637
BAd1	0.693	0.673
BAd10	0.902	0.879
BAd2	0.671	0.661
BAd3	0.776	0.795
BAd4	0.68	0.691
BAd5	0.763	0.788
BAd6	0.83	0.845
BAd7	0.641	0.652
BAd8	0.737	0.754
BB2	0.605	0.582
BB3	0.575	0.546
BF1	0.845	0.846
BF2	0.723	0.693
BF3	0.875	0.854
BF4	0.767	0.786
BF5	0.771	0.788
BF6	0.792	0.79
BR1	0.646	0.649
BR3	0.624	0.628
BR4	0.703	0.712

The values of PLS_RMSE are compared with the benchmark linear regression values LV_RMSE. According to the results if the values of benchmark LV-RMSE are in comparison higher than the values of PLS RMSE, the model lacks predictive power. The values comparative values are presented in **Table 4.11**.

The table shows that values of majority of the items are higher than the benchmark value, therefore, the model is considered as showing medium predictive power. If all the values are higher, then the model possess high predictive power

4.12 Hypothesis Testing

The linear hypotheses were tested using the PLS-SEM software and according to the results in **Table 4.12** all the hypothesis were supported significantly. Brand coolness positively impact brand familiarity (β=0.692, p= 0.000), brand recognition (β=0.487, p= 0.000), brand association (β=0.452, p= 0.000), brand beliefs (β=0.408, p= 0.000) and brand advocacy (β=0.168, p= 0.002). t statistics is also an important measure of determining significance, a relationship is considered significant when t value is larger than the critical value which in case of 5% significance level is 1.96.

The t values for hypotheses 1 to 5 are substantially higher than 1.96 considering the relationships are significant. Next in hypotheses,6,8,10 and 12 antecedents of brand advocacy were tested, according to result, those linear relationships are also supported. Brand familiarity positively impacts brand advocacy (β=0.219, p= 0.000). brand recognition to brand advocacy (β=0.272, p= 0.000), brand association to brand advocacy (β=0.125, p= 0.000) and brand beliefs to brand advocacy (β=0.176, p= 0.000) are all supported. As mentioned earlier, the t values are also greater than 1.96 implying significance of the relationships. Further, hypotheses 7,9 and 11 tested the impact of brand familiarity on brand recognition, (β=0.346, p= 0.000), brand recognition on brand association (β=0.376, p= 0.000) and brand association on brand beliefs (β=0.445, p= 0.000). These hypotheses were also supported with substantial t value.

TABLE 4.12: Hypotheses Testing

Relationship	Hypotheses	β	(SE)	T Statistics.	P Values	Results
BC → BF	H1	0.692	0.041	16.898	0.000	Supported
BC → BR	H2	0.487	0.055	8.999	0.000	Supported
BC → BA	H3	0.452	0.05	9.059	0.000	Supported
BC → BB	H4	0.408	0.054	7.657	0.000	Supported
BC→ BAd	H5	0.168	0.053	3.119	0.002	Supported
BF → BAd	H6	0.219	0.052	4.307	0.000	Supported
BF → BR	H7	0.346	0.052	6.675	0.000	Supported
BR → BAd	H8	0.272	0.056	4.825	0.000	Supported
BR → BA	H9	0.376	0.054	7.049	0.000	Supported
BA → BAd	H10	0.125	0.051	2.53	0.011	Supported
BA → BB	H11	0.445	0.057	7.856	0.000	Supported
BB → BAd	H12	0.176	0.05	3.574	0.000	Supported

Afterwards, the hypotheses for transmittal effects were tested and results are depicted in **Table 4.13**. Bootstrapping procedure is considered for the mediation analysis to find the confidence interval. According to Preacher and Hayes (2008), confidence interval helps determining mediation, if there is no zero between upper and lower limit of confidence interval, mediation takes place. However, it requires to look at the signs and significance level of direct and indirect effects to identify the type of mediation. Mediation is basically a process by which the independent variable transmits its effect on the dependent variable. There are instances where direct causal relationship did not exist but a mediated relationship existed (Hair Jr et al., 2021). According to (Zhao, Lynch Jr, & Chen, 2010), three types of mediation can happen namely, complementary, competitive and indirect only mediation. Complementary mediation happens when the direction of both the direct and mediation relationships is in the me side. For example, the direct relationship brings a change and then the mediation relationship follows the same path and strengthen it. Competitive mediation occurs when the direction of sign of path coefficient of direct and indirect relationships is different i.e. one is positive and the other is negative. The last type is indirect mediation where the direct relationship doesn't exist but the mediator's intervention helps make a decision.

4.13 Mediation Analysis

Hypotheses H13 to H16 considers simple mediation where impact of one variable transfers on the dependent variable by one mediator. PLS SEM provides the indirect path in the mediation analysis which means the final value of β is the cumulative score of all the paths included. Further, to maintain that mediation has taken place confidence interval is used as the yard stick. If there is no zero between the Confidence interval values, the impact is considered to take place. The results are shown in **Table 4.13**. H13 considers the impact of brand coolness to brand advocacy via brand familiarity. H17 claims that brand familiarity can mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand recognition ((β=0.240, p= 000, CI= 0.167, 0.319), H18 states brand recognition as a mediator between brand familiarity and brand association ((β=0.130, p= 000, CI= 0.080, 0.187).

TABLE 4.13: Mediation Analysis

Relationship	Hypotheses	β	(SE)	t-Values	P Values	Confidence Interval		Decision
						2.50%	97.50%	
BC → BF → BAd	H13	0.151	0.036	4.232	0	0.082	0.227	Supported
BC → BR → BAd	H14	0.132	0.03	4.358	0	0.075	0.193	Supported
BC → BA → BAd	H15	0.056	0.024	2.462	0.014	0.01	0.105	Supported
BC → BB → BAd	H16	0.072	0.022	3.295	0.001	0.032	0.118	Supported
BC → BF → BR	H17	0.24	0.039	6.12	0	0.167	0.319	Supported
BF → BR → BA	H18	0.13	0.027	4.749	0	0.08	0.187	Supported
BR → BA → BB	H19	0.169	0.038	4.412	0	0.098	0.249	Supported
BA → BB → BAd	H20	0.079	0.025	3.135	0.002	0.032	0.133	Supported
BC → BF → BR → BAd	H21	0.065	0.018	3.635	0	0.034	0.103	Supported
BC → BA → BB → BAd	H22	0.035	0.012	2.997	0.003	0.014	0.062	Supported
BC → BF → BR → BA → BB → BAd	H23	0.007	0.003	2.269	0.023	0.002	0.015	Supported

H19 expects brand association to mediate between brand recognition and brand beliefs ((β=0.169, p= 000, CI= 0.098, 0.249) and lastly H20 considers brand beliefs as mediator between brand association and brand advocacy ((β=0.079, p= 002, CI= 0.032, 0.133). The values of paths are significant and no zero between confidence interval. Therefore, hypotheses from H13 to H16 are accepted. The respective mediations are complementary. Next, hypotheses from H17 to H20 intend to identify the simple mediating effect starting from Brand coolness to brand advocacy. H17 claims that brand familiarity can mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand recognition (β=0.240, p= 000, CI= 0.167, 0.319), H15 states brand recognition as a mediator between brand familiarity and brand association (β=0.130, p= 000, CI= 0.080, 0.187), H16 expects brand association to mediate between brand recognition and brand beliefs (β=0.169, p= 000, CI= 0.098, 0.249) and lastly H20 considers brand beliefs as mediator between brand association and brand advocacy (β=0.079, p= 002, CI= 0.032, 0.133). The values of paths are significant and no zero between confidence interval supports the hypotheses. Hypotheses H21-H23 are multiple mediation hypotheses. Multiple Mediation Analysis were done the same way, H21 states that brand familiarity and brand recognition serially mediate between brand advocacy and brand coolness (β=0.065, p= 000, CI= 0.034, 0.103). H22 hypothesized the serially mediated relation of brand association and brand beliefs between brand coolness and brand advocacy (β=0.035, p= 003, CI= 0.014, 0.062). The final mediation Hypothesis H23 considers the serial mediation impact of brand familiarity, recognition, association and beliefs between brand coolness and brand advocacy (β=0.007, p= 023, CI= 0.02, 0.015). Based on the prescribed rules, the hypotheses are supported.

4.14   Moderation Analysis

Moderation is also the involvement of third variable, however unlike mediation this doesn't get involved in the system but, effects the relationship externally. Moderation can strengthen or weaken the relationship between two variables. The study has considered customer irrational beliefs as a moderator that is considered to weaken the relationship.

TABLE 4.14: Moderation

Relationship	Hypotheses	β	SE	t- values	P values	Confidence Interval		Decision
						2.75	**97.5**	
BA → BAd	H24	0.125	0.051	2.53	0.011	0.024	0.228	
CIB → BAd		0.055	0.038	1.351	0.177	-0.018	0.132	
CIB x BA → BAd		-0.07	0.08	0.814	0.415	-0.234	0.071	Rejected
BB → BAd	H25	0.176	0.05	3.574	0	0.079	0.276	
CIB → BAd		0.055	0.038	1.351	0.177	-0.018	0.132	
CIB x BB → BAd		0.074	0.072	0.946	0.344	-0.056	0.222	Rejected

For the moderation analysis, 5000 bootstrapping method was employed. According to Henseler and Fassott (2010), for moderation to take place, interaction term needs to be significant. According to **Table 4.14**, both the interaction terms are insignificant i.e. H24 interaction term (β= -0.070, p=0.080, CI= -0.234, 0.071) which implies there is no moderation. Similarly, for H25 no moderation took place as (β= 0.074, p=0.344, CI= -0.056, 0.222). The negative sign of β of the interaction term shows that moderator would act inversely for the relationship. If moderation would have taken place, it would have weakened the impact. The moderation can also be seen from the slope analysis as shown in **Figure 4.4 and 4.5**.
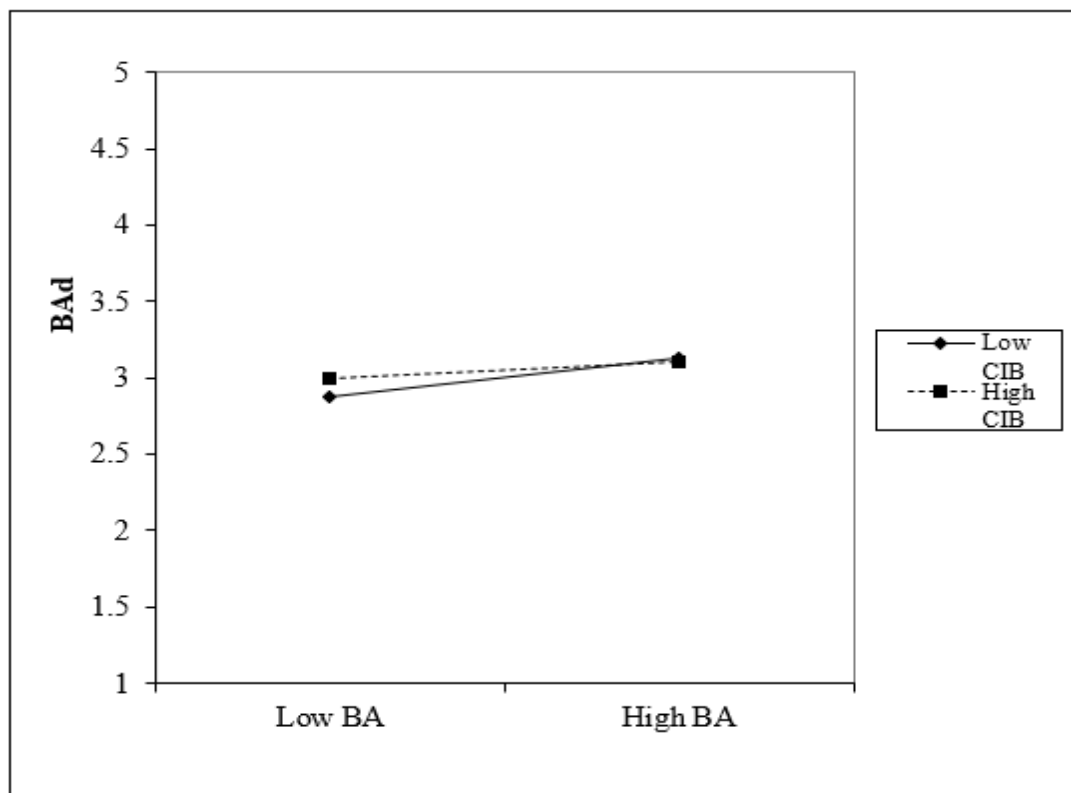
FIGURE 4.4: Interactive Effect of Brand Association and Customer Irrational Beliefs on Brand Advocacy

The slope graphs are drawn in MS Excel using the Jeremy Dawson method (Dawson, 2014). Both figures have shown that customer irrational beliefs have no impact on the relationships. Nor on brand association and brand advocacy, neither on brand beliefs and brand advocacy. There are chances that tourists contain their irrational beliefs when they are visiting a place.
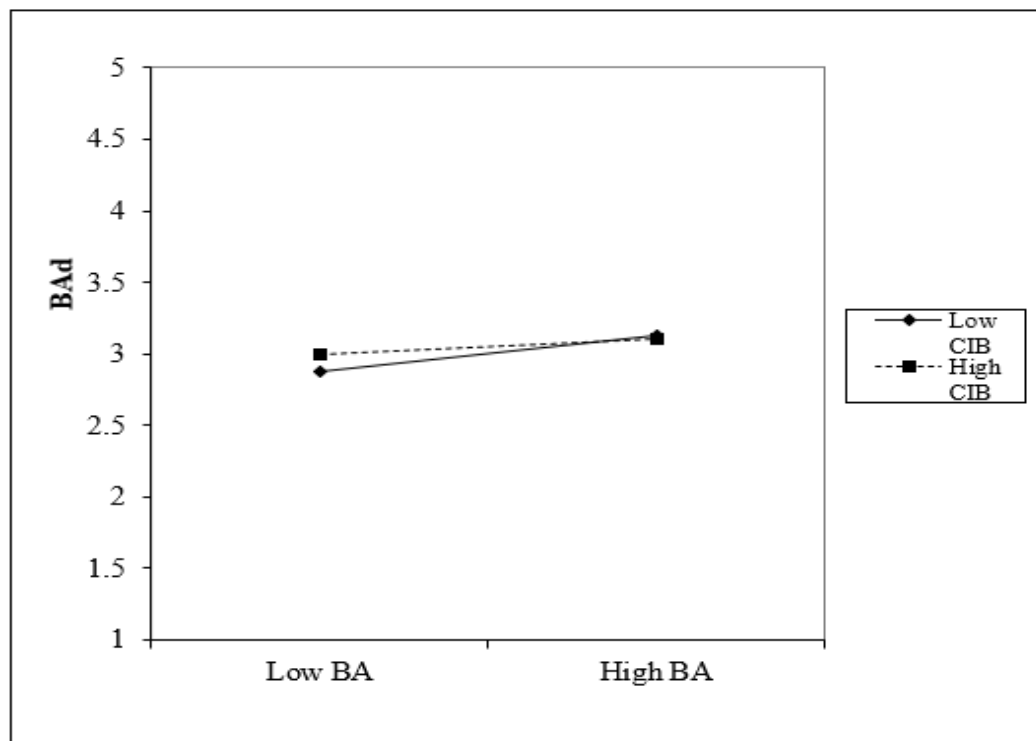
FIGURE 4.5: Interactive Effect of Brand Beliefs and Customer Irrational Beliefs on Brand Advocacy

TABLE 4.15: Hypotheses Summary

Sr. No	Statement	Status
H1	Brand coolness positively influences brand familiarity.	Supported
H2	Brand coolness positively impacts brand recognition	Supported
H3	Brand coolness positively impacts brand association.	Supported
H4	Hypothesis Brand coolness positively impacts brand belief.	Supported
H5	Brand coolness positively influences brand advocacy.	Supported
H6	Brand familiarity positively impacts brand advocacy	Supported
H7	Brand familiarity positively impacts the brand recognition	Supported
H8	Brand recognition positively impacts brand advocacy	Supported

Continued Table 4.15: Hypotheses Summary

Sr. No	Statement	Status
H9	Brand Recognition positively influences brand associations	Supported
H10	Brand association will positively influence brand advocacy.	Supported
H11	Brand associations positively impact brand beliefs	Supported
H12	Brand beliefs positively impacts brand advocacy	Supported
H13	Brand familiarity mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.	Supported
H14	Brand recognition mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy	Supported
H15	Brand association mediates the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy	Supported
H16	Brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.	Supported
H17	Branf familiarity mediates between brand coolness and brand recognition	Supported
H18	Brand recognition can mediate the relationship between brand familiarity and association	Supported
H19	Brand associations mediate between brand recognition and brand beliefs	Supported
H20	Brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand association and brand advocacy	Supported
H21	Brand familiarity and brand recognition mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy	Supported

Continued Table 4.15: Hypotheses Summary

Sr. No	Statement	Status
H22	Brand associations and brand beliefs mediate the relationship between brand coolness and brand beliefs	Supported
H23	Brand coolness transmits its impact on brand advocacy through serial mediation by brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, and brand beliefs	Supported
H24	Customer Irrational Beliefs weakens relationship between Brand Associations and Brand Advocacy	Rejected
H25	Customer Irrational Beliefs weakens relationship between Brand Beliefs and Brand Advocacy	Rejected

Chapter 5

Discussion, Implications, and Limitations

This chapter includes a discussion of the results of the hypotheses. Further, the chapter considers mentioning the theoretical and practical contributions along with the limitations and ideas for future research. Lastly, the chapter concludes the thesis.

5.1   Discussion

The study considered to empirically test and propose new linkages and to add to the literature of the study constructs including brand coolness, brand beliefs, brand recognition, brand associations, brand beliefs, brand advocacy and customer irrational beliefs. Brand coolness has become an interesting construct for investigation in the past year or two, and the existing literature on brand coolness provides very limited insights. The results of this current study have shown brand coolness can be called a strong predictor of brand relationships. The findings regarding brand coolness can be found in the operationalized definition of brand coolness for this study. The findings explain the positivity of brand coolness is helpful in evoking positive responses in individuals towards brands and places. Two, brand coolness is a dynamic concept, and caters to ten different dimensions. Therefore, when people may not relate to all of the dimensions, they can still consider that

they are adding to the cool quotient. Coolness evokes emotions in people which impacts their behaviors (Hyun et al., 2022) and, the dimensions of brand coolness the individuals relate to most may bring out internal changes in them. The study aimed to identify the direct linkages of brand coolness with brand familiarity and transmittal impact of brand coolness. Further, the thesis also aimed to identify the antecedents of brand advocacy and moderating role of customer irrational beliefs. According to the results of the study, other than the moderation hypotheses, all other hypotheses were supported. The thesis aimed to achieve certain objectives, a discussion on them is below.

5.1.1 Brand Coolness and Brand Advocacy

The first objective of the study was to understand if brand coolness is capable of predicting behaviors in the destination context, particularly brand advocacy. Brand coolness has become a crucial survival trait and the emphasis is to understand as many consequences of brand coolness as possible (Warren et al., 2019). Based on the impact of brand coolness on behavioral outcomes (see Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022; Koskie & Locander, 2023), this study proposed the impact of brand coolness on brand advocacy in hypothesis 5. This relation has two-fold importance as the linkage is desired by researchers of both fields brand coolness and brand advocacy. The results of the study revealed a positive and significant relationship between brand coolness and brand advocacy.

According to the context of the study, results suggest that whenever tourists identify a cool place, they'll spread the positive word about it, recommend it to peers and may deny any negative statements about the place. The empirical literature regarding the link between brand coolness and brand advocacy is scarce due to the infancy of the construct. Whereas a similar behavior i.e. willingness to recommend was demanded by (Guerreiro et al., 2023). This study may be the first link between brand coolness and brand advocacy but the literature provides support with the help of similar studies. This result has also strengthened the idea of brand coolness influencing attitudes and behaviors. Despite the differences in the conceptualization of brand advocacy and word of mouth, brand advocacy has

been synonymously used with word of mouth and the limited available research on brand coolness has proven that coolness arouses word of mouth (Bagozzi & Khoshnevis, 2022; Warren et al., 2019). Literature also suggests that brand loyalty drives brand advocates (Ali et al., 2023) and brand coolness drives brand loyalty (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2022). Furthermore, brand coolness induces brand love (Tiwari et al., 2021) and brand love leads to advocacy, individuals start supporting the brand because of their love and need to associate with the brand (Ali et al., 2023). The strategies that marketers have to apply when they have to generate word of mouth or loyalty should be applied to get a voluntary advocate. The characteristics of brand coolness can be well gelled in order to explain the destination experience and making expectations about the destination. Similarly, the relation can be supported by the notion of Script theory of Tomkins (1978) argues that exciting and enjoyable scenes are responded to with rapid and increased energy and good and bad scenes can be magnified as well as biased from positive to negative or in opposite direction. Hence, customers might be the reason of advocating positivity and shunning negativity. The result contributes to the literature of both brand coolness and brand advocacy.

5.1.2 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent of Brand Familiarity

To achieve the second objective, the hypothesis was built to identify the impact of brand coolness on brand familiarity, the results revealed that the hypothesis was accepted. The limited extant literature on brand coolness has argued that brand coolness can predict brand familiarity (Warren et al., 2019) whereas there has been no clarity if single item brand familiarity scale was used. The relationship is also consistent with SOR model where the stimulus can impact the organism. The cool place exhibits its coolness when a tourist interacts with it through direct or indirect means, hence the external exhibition of cool, allows them to gain knowledge about the place. The current results corroborate that brand coolness can impact brand familiarity in the tourism sector as well. However, familiarity in tourism is much more desired and much more ambiguous. It arises the question of interaction that

if the familiarity was based on a visit, will they tourist back or if the level of familiarity was based on indirect interactions, how will they choose a particular destination. (Felder, 2021) mentioned that first interactions may be random and superficial and would not last long, however familiarizing oneself with a thing intentionally after first random interaction will build up stronger relationships. Similarly, the familiarity with a cool place can be dependent on both direct and indirect interaction, first by visiting the place, tourist can get familiar and later, they can learn more about the place. Managers may need to work on managing the cool factors to extend it to the individuals to make them familiar that they seek more knowledge for a long term relationship.

5.1.3 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent of Brand Recognition

Likewise, brand coolness has also shown a significant positive influence on brand recognition. It depicts that individuals enhance their learning about the cool brand in order to remember it. As established the literature on brand coolness is scant, there is also not previous linkage between brand coolness and brand recognition. According to Legendre, Cartier, and Warnick (2020) brand theories try to impact the memory of potential consumers in order to gain their attention and impart knowledge and recognition is dependent on brand knowledge. However, Tiwari et al. (2021) mentioned that the coolness in technological products is related to having a hedonic experiences which can create positive emotions towards the brands and (Legendre et al., 2020) mentioned brand experiences impacting memory which leads to recognition de Oliveira Santini, Ladeira, Sampaio, and Pinto (2018) have claimed based on a meta-analysis of brand experience that brand recognition is one of the consequence of brand experience.

Based on these arguments, the relationship can be justified. Moreover, the results are also consistent with the stimulus to organism thread of the SOR model, people translate the stimulus into a meaning that they understand. Further, once the tourists can gain knowledge about cool places to remember them and be able to recall them later. The results suggest that marketers need to keep highlighting

the features of the place in order to keep them fresh in the minds of tourists and it will be easy to recognize it.

5.1.4 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent of Brand Association

Next, hypothesis 3 is also supported considering the impact of brand coolness on brand associations. Coolness has different dimensions like extraordinary, original, and exciting (Warren et al., 2019). The literature states that meaningful, exciting, original experiences with the destination help in creating positive associations (Xu & Ho, 2021). Further, brand coolness has also observed to impact the customer based brand equity, (Khamwon & Kularbkaew, 2021) and existing literature on customer based brand equity considers brand association as an important contributor and part of customer based brand equity (Sundarampillai, Amaratunga, & Devpura, 2022), therefore there can be a possibility that brand associations get stimulated by brand coolness. Similarly, based on the idea of nodes of memory in the individual, every individual has certain images in their mind, when they require a brand's offering, there is a collision between the offering's attributes and the individual's own personality. Similarly, in this case when a destination calls itself exciting, the individual is able to associate more with the place and have a positive image about it. Hence, despite the scarcity of literature and the absence of linkages, literature justifies the finding. Further, these results support the notion of SOR model, that brand coolness based on its dimensions impact the cognition of the tourist, and they tend to create certain associations based on that.

5.1.5 Brand Coolness as an Antecedent of Brand Beliefs

According to the results of the study, Hypothesis 4 was supported as brand coolness also positively influenced brand beliefs. The justification of the linkage is supported by literature. Brand beliefs are perceptive, emotional and cognitive (Rizvi & Oney, 2018). Further, literature proves that the cognition quickly gets effected by the stimulus (Yan, Shah, Zhai, Khan, & Shah, 2018). Brand coolness

impacts brand love which is a cognitive emotional construct (Tiwari et al., 2021). Similarly, brand coolness can also impact other emotional constructs i.e. brand beliefs. Further, aligned with the SOR model, the external stimulus impacts the cognition of people and brings a change according to the past experiences or frame of reference of people. Hence, this might be the other reason of positive influence of brand coolness on brand beliefs. Therefore, this study established the direct impact of brand coolness on brand beliefs.

5.1.6 Brand Familiarity as an Antecedent to Brand Advocacy

The literature has focused on considering familiarity in other relationships with brand advocacy to find the impact of brand familiarity (Vashisht, 2019; Vashisht et al., 2021). The results of the current study have revealed that brand familiarity has proven to be the antecedent of brand advocacy. In simplest of forms with familiarity comes ease, a strong knowledge base and at later stage belongingness and attachment (Felder, 2021). Attachment can lead to satisfaction and satisfaction is a renowned precursor of brand advocacy (Bhati & Verma, 2020). In the tourism context, getting to know of a brand can make satisfy the customer's need to know and belong. Places are intricate hence, tourists require more familiarity to feel safe and comfortable, once it is achieved, then at later stage make tourist talk about it and recommend it to others. For example, if a tourist has visited a place, they will talk about it, the intensity of communication is dependent on how well they have known the place and if they were satisfied with it. Familiarity can also be a helpful in managing the amount of knowledge that is required to be provided to the tourist to keep it exciting.

5.1.7 Brand Recognition as an Antecedent to Brand Advocacy

Further, hypotheses number 8 was also supported and brand recognition has also proven to predict brand advocacy. This finding can be explained by the ability of

recognition to be the predictor of loyalty and an influence on the word of mouth, because both of them have been considered part of advocacy (Ali et al., 2022). Brand recognition is also important because, the tourist has to recall about the place when they have to convince others to visit it. Also, if they are required to defend it from negative words, they need to recall the features they must respond positively with, hence, it is really important for the managers to plan activities to increase recognition to enhance brand advocacy. The theoretical support also supports the linkage. If a tourist has recognized a place well, they will talk about it, and if they are able to create distinction between the place they have visited from the others, they may also defend it if any negativity is uttered in front of them and advocate it based on strong feeling they have generated towards the place, then advocacy will be a natural response.

5.1.8 Brand Associations as an Antecedent to Brand Advocacy

Results of the study has shown that hypotheses regarding brand association predicting brand advocacy is also supported. Though the literature on the linkage is scarce however, literature states that brand association through proxies have impacted the brand advocacy. Similarly, brand equity has also been observed to impact the brand advocacy, based on the argument of brand association being a part of brand equity may have the capacity to impact brand advocacy as the results have shown. Further, the linkage can be supported by multiple supportive model and theories. First is the SOR model, where brand association as the organismic component can impact the response where the tourist based on his associations with a place, may tend to spread positive words about it. Also, brand association is the information in the memory, hence when tourists think about a place later, they tend to advocate it and would expect peers to have same experience by recommending it to them. Further, the attitude-behavior consistency theories can provide support. If the brand associations are positive, which will bring a positive change and therefore a positive response towards the brand by advocating the brand.

5.1.9 Brand Beliefs as an Antecedent to Brand Advocacy

Similarly, the impact of brand beliefs on brand advocacy has also been supported based on the results of the study. The last thread of SOR theory which is organism to response provides the support for the linkages. According to the SOR model Zhu et al. (2020) that the cognition and affect can elicit a behavior. Further, literature has support of brand advocacy as a response (Ali et al., 2022). Moreover, as established that beliefs are cognitive and emotional, which means when tourists emotionally connect with a place, they tend to advocate about the place for example, talking about it and recommending others to visit it passionately. Also, considering the idea of attitude-behavior consistency, when the beliefs are positive, there are higher chances of positive behaviors which has been shown through the results of the study. Therefore, the managers need to learn that brand beliefs are not only stay in the memory but they are strong enough to recommend the brand to people and to negate any negative comments about the place.

5.1.10 Mediation Impacts of Brand Familiarity between Advocacy and Brand Coolness

The results support the mediating path of brand coolness to brand advocacy via brand familiarity. Contextual explanation for each path can be beneficial for the marketing managers for better destination management. Once tourists find a place cool, in one instance they get familiar with it which is knowing the place just enough to talk about it and hence if the coolness aspect excites them they would advocate it. Literature states that familiarity starts fading over time and doesn't excite the customer (Chi et al., 2020) and that can be troublesome for the manager because the relationship dependent on its importance may lose the charm. However, the dynamism of brand coolness can then play its part and managers can use it to keep giving something new to the customer. By this, the customers of brands or the tourists will stay excited that something new is being presented to them despite them knowing the brand. The brands make efforts in order to be known by the consumer to reach a level where the consumer becomes an advocate for the company known as customer journey approach. In the customer's

journey familiarity plays an important role due to its importance of getting aware of the existence of brand to further connect to the brand until they consumers may start advocating the brand. Based on these arguments mediation through familiarity complements the link between brand coolness and brand advocacy. Further, these results can be explained based on the structural path of SOR model where the stimulus brand coolness has impacted the tourists in a way that they got familiarized with the place. This objective closed the gap by considering brand familiarity as a mediator to transmit the impact of brand coolness.

5.1.11 Mediation Impacts of Brand Recognition between Advocacy and Brand Coolness

The empirical results of the study also support the mediation hypothesis of brand coolness to brand advocacy via brand recognition. Based on the results, it is assumed that when brand coolness triggers brand recognition, the tourist may require to get acquainted with the place in order to be able to identify and recall the places and related activities with the place later on when they may have to recommend it to others and defend it against other places. For this study we may suggest the managers can use different dimensions of brand coolness and make them all recognizable to enhance the recognition. As the link was drawn on the SOR model, therefore, it is supported that SOR model justifies the link. The brand coolness as a stimulus brings in positive change in the internal cognition of the tourists, based on which they tend to spread word of mouth, recommend the place to others and shun any negative comment about the place.

5.1.12 Mediation Impacts of Brand Associations between Advocacy and Brand Coolness and Mediation Impact of Brand Recognition between Brand Advocacy and Brand Coolness

Similarly, according to the results, both mediation hypotheses H15 and H16 have also been supported. Both association and beliefs positively transmit the impact

of brand coolness on brand advocacy. This confirms the claim by (Tian et al., 2022) that brand association and brand beliefs help in transferring the impact. Given these mediations have also complemented the previous results, they may prove great internal support system in individuals. Through the lens of the SOR model, the brand coolness of a place has been a triggering point as a stimulus that has led to making changes in the mind of visitors. Due to those changes, they have created certain associations with the place and have made certain beliefs about the brand in their minds respectively. Further, both those associations and beliefs regarding the place have made them advocate about the place to others. Another reason might be the brand coolness might be triggering a psychological stimulus for the visitors. Hence, visitors might have created certain associations with the place and have put certain beliefs about the place in their minds respectively and subsequently shaping the brand advocacy of the tourists.

5.1.13 Interplay of Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition, Brand Association and Brand Beliefs

One of the research questions dealt with the interplay of brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association and brand beliefs. To answer this question seven objectives were developed in order to test the direct and mediating linkages. These constructs make the middle part of the framework (Figure 2.1) which can be considered as different organisms. The literature has discussed these relationships over the time since mid-1900s. However, consistency lacked due to inconsistent operationalization and using proxy variables for specific constructs. This study while making novel contributions was interested in identifying the interplay of these highly studied constructs.

5.1.14 Brand Familiarity Impacting Brand Recognition

According to the results of the study, the linkage between brand familiarity to brand recognition was supported. The link can be supported through literature.

As after getting familiar with anything, the unfamiliar anxiety is over, the individual is at ease and the next step is to learn in detail, that detailed learning then takes the form of recognition of something, a product, a place or a person (Felder, 2021). Further, the familiarity facilitates brand recognition when both are positive, which means if the brand familiarity is high only then the brand recognition can take place. When the brand familiarity is low and the tourist cannot distinctively create differentiation between the places, the brand recognition cannot be facilitated (van Berlo et al., 2020). Therefore, it is important for the managers in order to create recognition of their brand, they need to work towards creating strong brand familiarity.

5.1.15 Brand Recognition Impacting Brand Associations

The study supported the linkage between brand recognition and brand association. The study results negate the results of (Dew & Kwon, 2010) that claims no impact of recognition on associations, and the results corroborates with the past research by van Berlo et al. (2020) where they claimed the positive impact of brand recognition on brand association. Based on the idea of associative network theory which creates associations in the mind. Recognition intensifies the critical cognition and put things in places i.e. in different nodes (van Berlo et al., 2020), which help in building up memories which are termed as associations. Brand recognition based on its attributes and ability to recall a brand in the memory simultaneously supports the creation of associations in the memory. Further, the tourists may recognize the place and can create associations about the place based on those recognitions. Destination managers may note that associations lead to behaviors therefore, it is important to decide what features to strengthen to form the positive associations.

5.1.16 Brand Associations Impacting Brand Beliefs

The results of the study have revealed the positive impact of brand associations on brand beliefs. As both brand associations and brand beliefs are considered as attitudes but their bases are different. Brand associations are affect-based whereas

beliefs are cognition based. and emotional. The results of this study correspond to the notion that affect-based structures can impact cognition (Bodur, Brinberg, & Coupey, 2000). The linkage is also supported by the use of Affect transfer theory where a positive effect based on a schema is transferred to the next similar object. Further, literature proves that brand beliefs are facilitated by associations, therefore, when tourists make associations about a place, they are also setting up their beliefs regarding the place.

5.1.17 Mediation Impacts of Interplay of Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition, Brand Associations and Brand Beliefs

However, the other part of the interplay was each variable as a mediator between two constructs. Accordingly, brand familiarity was tested as a mediator between brand coolness and brand recognition, brand recognition was tested as a mediator between brand familiarity and brand association, brand association was considered between brand recognition and brand beliefs and finally brand beliefs were considered mediator between brand association and brand advocacy. All the hypotheses were positively and significantly supported. The explanation for the mediation effects may be supported with the affect transfer theory, in which the positive effect of an object or a feeling can be transferred to another. Accordingly, in tourism, the coolness can be transferred to recognition through familiarity, where a tourist gets familiar with a place and then transmits it onto recognition. Similarly, recognition can transfer the effect taken from familiarity to association and association can transmit the effect of recognition by making an imagery to brand beliefs. Therefore, the interplay of these brand constructs are useful in managing the tourism sector.

While every link has a justification of their own as well. Brand coolness is a trigger in the external environment, and unfamiliar individuals look for knowledge about the brands (Chi et al., 2020) therefore tourists may want to learn about the place. For example, an amusement park in the city has been made which sounds very interesting, after hearing about it, the individuals would learn about its details and

would plan a visit. Brand coolness impacting familiarity does same, after learning about cool, and getting familiar, the familiarity will facilitate in recognizing (van Berlo et al., 2020) through learning and gaining more information to recognize the brand. Therefore, this linkage is extremely realistic and easy for managers to build.

Further, the movement from familiarity to recognition is established, and according to (van Berlo et al., 2020), when the recognition becomes part of cognitive memory, it stays there until the associations are being made based on that. Positive recognition means positive associations.

Next, brand recognition impacts brand beliefs via brand associations. The argument continues here, when the brand is given place in the mind that it is quick to recall and easy to differentiate and it has certain memories based on it, it will further change the beliefs about the brand. Building on the idea of schema-triggered process, where cognition and affection are transferred, this linkage is important for marketer. It is important for marketers to learn, this is a process and process require certain time and continuous reminders. According to Butt (2022), the reminders must not over do it because forced and overdone triggers and reminders can have a negative impact.

5.1.18 Joint Mediation of Brand Familiarity and Brand Recognition between Brand Coolness and Brand Advocacy

Hypothesis 21 discuss the path from brand coolness towards brand advocacy based on brand familiarity and brand recognition. The literature states that recognition with the familiarity confidence stays longer and stronger rather than the one that is remembering something on its own (Yonelinas, Otten, Shaw, & Rugg, 2005), resultantly this is safe to state that the path based on familiarity and recognition will remember the cool place for the longer time and will be able to consider it while talking to the peers or deciding a trip. As it is stated that when there is confusion in what to pick recognition heuristic works and consumers picks the first

option that they remember. Similarly, in this case, when based on the marketer's efforts and the coolness of place helps in creating familiarity and that familiarity leads to gaining knowledge and recognizing the place, the cool place will be better remembered and based on the recognition heuristic it will come to the mind of the tourist quickly when they have to share or to recommend it to their peers.

Further, the sensemaking theory helps in the justification by putting things in perspective. Brand coolness lies in the external environment, therefore when it is sensed, tourists may use their frame of references and get familiarized with the place, which can further lead into recognition of the places. For example, if the tourists, gets familiarity of the place and use more information to increase the knowledge and then recognized the place even based on its characteristics and attributes, hence, recognizing it in a way that it can remembers it when it is talked about. After, making sense of the situation, the tourist may take an action by advocating the brand. Hence, it is important for marketing managers to identify the paths that can lead to favorable behaviors based on brand efforts.

5.1.19 Joint Mediation of Brand Associations and Brand Beliefs between Brand Coolness and Brand Advocacy

Hypothesis 22 discusses the flow based on associations and beliefs. Associations and beliefs are much more sensitive to discuss. Many theories are based on the congruency of attitude and behavior and cognition and affect. If any of these don't match with each other, the results are negative. Therefore, when the link from brand coolness to brand advocacy based on brand associations and brand beliefs is supported, it is the evidence that coolness is exerting positive impact which is being transferred based on positive memory nodes and positive beliefs based on knowing the brand. Advocacy by tourists based on this will be long lasting and stronger. Further, sensemaking theory has also provided the support for the relationship. By getting triggered by the external cue i.e. brand coolness, a tourist may base on its past frame of references, create certain associations which

will lead to the brand beliefs to put the cue in perspective. Further, they may take an action in the form of brand advocacy.

5.1.20 Joint Mediation of Brand Familiarity, Brand Recognition, Brand Associations and Brand Beliefs can between Brand Coolness and Brand Advocacy

While the last mediation hypothesis 23 is the strongest link. It follows a process, a mental process, where familiarity takes place first, and then it helps in recognition, afterwards recognition helps in associations and then beliefs are made. When a proper process from getting to know the brand and ending at advocating about the brand happens, this again shows the strength the brand has and the strength of complement that each mediation variable is adding. Sensemaking theory works in reciprocity, hence it is the best example of it to get triggered, process and then take a positive action. The explanation of this linkage lies in the sensemaking theory where brand coolness of the place has impacted the tourists. Once they discover the attractions of a place based on its coolness, they would try to seek the answer. They would then learn about the place, up to the extent that they can differentiate it from its competitors by recognizing it, afterwards based on their experience with the place, they can create an image of the place in their mind which over time can change into beliefs regarding the place. For example, for the individuals who don't have any experience with Mercedes still consider it cool because of the mental image and beliefs associated with it. Similarly, Paris is considered as city of love, even without visiting it, these are the mental processes based on the knowledge of the product or place. Therefore, when the tourists create mental imagery based on the knowledge about the place, they have made sense about it based on reference frames. Afterwards, they may recommend it to others, or write online reviews or start getting defensive related to the place. This is how sensemaking work, they make sense of an external cue and make sense of the process and take an action about it. These relationships will help the tourism managers to understand the thought process of the consumer and will guide them regarding brand strategies.

5.1.21 Customer Irrational Beliefs as Moderator

Customer irrational beliefs were tested as a moderator for weakening the linkages between brand associations and brand advocacy and brand beliefs and brand advocacy. According to the belief congruence theory, the hypotheses were aligned that customer irrational beliefs will have a weakening impact because the brand associations and brand beliefs studied in the current study are operationalized as positive variables. According to (Seger-Guttmann, 2019, p.297), sometimes customers don't involve their cognition and affection and are emotionless towards a particular scenario and have unjustified emotionless perceptions, which can impact the consumer behavior manifolds. As customer irrational beliefs are considered negative, biased and un called for (Seger-Guttmann, 2019, p.297), they wouldn't gel with the positive variables and would lessen the impact. The result of the study then revealed that, both the hypotheses (H24 and H25) were rejected. The rejection shows that in the tourism setup customers' irrational beliefs do not affect the relationship with advocacy based on associations and beliefs. There is the possibility that when tourists are out of their natural habitats, they behave differently with the service providers. The other reason can be when they are out of their hometown they are generally exhibiting positive emotions, and used of affect and cognition can improve perceptions, beliefs and judgements.

5.2 Theoretical Implications

The study has many theoretical contributions. First, the study aimed to add the limited literature of brand coolness. Brand coolness is an important and relatively new concept and due to its infancy, researchers are keen to investigate its consequences to increase their knowledge about brand coolness (Warren et al., 2019). The study considered brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, brand beliefs, and brand advocacy as the consequences of brand coolness. Therefore, this study contributes to the existing scant literature body of brand coolness by proposing and empirically testing the linkages between the constructs which were yet to be tested (Guerreiro et al., 2023; Tiwari et al., 2021). Brand

coolness has shown a strong positive influence on all these constructs which validates the ability of brand coolness to influence attitudes and behaviors.

Second, by considering brand advocacy as the consequence of brand coolness, the study has responded to the suggestions to consider to ponder on new antecedents of brand advocacy (Bhati & Verma, 2020), hence contributing to the literature body of brand advocacy. By considering tourism as the context, the new antecedents will provide an answer to (Saini & Arasanmi, 2021; Ali et al., 2022).

Third, the study has contributed to the literature of brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, and brand beliefs by providing a new antecedent and a new consequence. Further, all constructs are used as a whole construct rather than used with or through a proxy. This will motivate the future researchers as well to study these constructs on their own.

Fourth, this study has identified the transmittal impact of brand coolness towards brand advocacy via brand familiarity, brand recognition, association and brand belief respectively using the SOR model and sensemaking theory.

The sensemaking theory has been extensively previously used in the organizational behavior studies. This study has broadened the horizon of sensemaking theory by using it in tourism marketing context, outside the organizational domain focusing on individuals and the theory has deemed fit on the given scenario. Fifth, the study is the second study as per the best existing knowledge that has considered customers' irrational beliefs. The construct of customers' irrational beliefs is novel and requires further exploration. This study added to the literature of customer irrational beliefs by using it as a moderator in the brand relationships.

Sixth, the study is set in the tourism context, hence adding to the literature on tourism and destination studies and by responding to the research calls of (Khoi & Le, 2022; Saini & Arasanmi, 2021).

5.3 Practical Implications

Researchers mentioned the importance of brand coolness and its consequences for the marketer despite the uncertainty regarding the effect of the phenomenon

(Khoi & Le, 2022). Hence, this study tried to respond to that ambiguity and has implications for brand managers in general and tourism managers in particular. Since the scope of tourism has increased, destination marketers and planners are trying their best to stay relevant and promote themselves as the best. The findings of the study have revealed that brand coolness has shown a positive impact on brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, brand beliefs, and brand advocacy. Brand advocacy is a powerful tool and a treat for destination marketers. It is then important for the tourism planners to identify the places that have most of the cool elements embedded, and market them in a way that can allow tourists imagine to be spending their time there.

Individuals enjoy visiting places where they have a feeling of goodwill and can enjoy and most tourists are frequently using their social media for online experience (Wilk et al., 2021) before visiting a place. Marketing communication is the key to generate clout and to enhance the message of brand which can improve the brand knowledge and people can get familiar for it. Therefore, to deal with such tourists, tourism managers need to use online tools like social media platforms and websites for their cool brands. Tourists plan to visit places that make them stand out of the crowd and they make their decisions with well-sorted information. A place has some history associated with it which helps explain the culture of the place, the people like to visit contemporary places, in that light, managers must create iconic images highlighting the culture and glamor of the place. By doing so managers will make the place easily recognizable.

To highlight the uniqueness and energetic vibe of a place, the tourism managers need to arrange unique festivals and events and promote them on their social media pages to create awareness about the lively feeling of the place. Tourism managers can offer virtual tours of adventurous and rebellious places like mountains and activities like hiking, rowing, and surfing. Also, tourism planners can arrange annual or quarterly competitions based on the adventure side of the place. To highlight the aesthetically appealing places it will be important for the managers to record the testimonials of the tourists advocating the place and use them to promote the places as tourists in today's age trust the recommendations of other

tourists rather than the service providers (Choi et al., 2021). Testimonials is one of the most authentic and is currently in use by many consumer brands.

Similarly, it is important to intact the originality of places and Tourism planners may need to plan annual cultural festivals to celebrate the authentic culture of the place. Tourism managers can focus on the true spirit of the place and focus on the real vibe of the surroundings of the place while planning events. Further, tourism managers can plan certain activities that make tourists stand out and can feel proud to visit the place. One successful example of these exists in the Sindh province of Pakistan, a historical monument Mohenjodaro exists and to increase its familiarity among people, the tourism managers planned a Sindhi festival at that place to increase the tourist footfall at that place. This can be done by organizing environmentally friendly events, or exclusive activities for those tourists who revisit the place often and recommend the place to others often. Managers also need to identify the most glamorous and equally sophisticated spots of destination. Managers can strategize in a way to give the feel of exclusivity and glamor where tourist may be allowed to arrange their own personal events. Such spaces can also be used for recreational retreats. This will fulfill the need of high status among tourist, and this will create an association with the place being a personal. The parties planned by the tourism planners of Paris are an example of such activities.

In terms of brand association, tourists associate themselves with the place and feel proud that they have visited the place. Hence, tourism managers can offer them unique experiences by providing information about all the happening activities, and the place uniqueness. This will make it easier for the tourist to imagine the place later. Further, tourists expect a place to look the way they have imagined it, to strengthen their belief about the place, managers need to carefully plan the activities according to the feel of the place, and they should avoid any activity that is against the conceived image of the place e.g. Qawali nights at Shahi Fort in Lahore manages to cater the historical ambiance of the place however a fun festival may not be appropriate association for a historical place like Shahi Fort.

It is important for tourism managers and planners that the tourists advocate the place that they have visited and spread positive feel they have experienced. Managers need to provide the best ambiance and experiences for the tourists,

such that they recommend the place to others with full zeal. Tourists can reject negative remarks about the place by their peers. The managers need to keep in touch with the tourists and follow up with them about their visit. This can be done by using social media tools properly. The tourist providers can also share some souvenirs and offline and online postcards with tourists to actively engage with them.

Another important consideration for brand managers is that tourists advocate for overall experiences of places rather than just visually appealing sites. Thus, it is the manager's duty to create a smooth experience that can let tourists have only positive associations and beliefs so they advocate the place with complete zeal. For great experiences of place, the destination managers need to get in touch with the service providers around the important tourist spots and train them to understand the psychology of the tourist. The tourist may have irrational beliefs, but it is important for the service provider to facilitate the tourists as much as they can. Facilitating tourists is important for two reasons i) they provide monetary benefits ii) they will talk about the place and positive interactions will increase the footfall. In sum, this study elaborates the managers shape brand advocacy by considering brand coolness, brand familiarity, brand associations, brand associations, and brand beliefs and how they can avoid customers' irrational beliefs.

Managers may need to consider that brand coolness can lead to brand advocacy through familiarity, recognition, association, and beliefs. This observation is worthwhile and managers may create some phase wise advertising campaigns using the internet and print media to hype up the destination bit by bit. An example of such type of advertisement is Coming Soon and then revealing the deals in short phases.

5.4   Implications for Policy Makers

Given the involvement of states in the tourism sector, there are certain policies for the government sector policy makers:

- Simplify the travel routes and plans. As, WTTC recommends the same to its partner countries, only then tourists may come to Pakistan. Based on the results of the study focusing on the cool places like beautiful north sightseeing or by heritage tourism in Taxila and Harrapa, brand advocacy can be increased and the tourists can advocate about Pakistan to their countries and can improve the tourism in the country.

- The state tourism department needs to educate the service providers in the tourist destinations to help build a strong relationships with tourists so they strengthened their beliefs about the place and doesn't let their irrational beliefs create issues in advocacy.

5.5   Limitations and Future Research

The study also acknowledges the limitations. First, the study identified only five consequences of brand coolness, in the future, the researchers can focus on identifying more consequences such as purchase behavior, brand resonance, and brand commitment. Further, this study has identified the direct and transmittal impact of brand coolness, the future researchers can also investigate, what causes brand coolness and what other roles brand coolness can play and impact i.e. mediator and moderator roles.

Secondly, this study did not identify the effect of the individual dimension (extraordinary, authentic, aesthetically appealing, energetic, original, rebellious, popular, high status, subcultural, and iconic) of brand coolness on brand advocacy, or any other consequences like familiarity, recognition, beliefs, and associations. The literature argued the impact of iconic dimension on brand recognition and the impact of original dimension on brand associations. Such considerations open an avenue for future researchers to find the impact of each dimension.

Third, the study used cross-sectional data for the analysis whereas future researchers can use longitudinal data or can conduct experimental studies. Understanding the related level of familiarity and advocacy will be very interesting

when studied through experiments. The positive use of brand coolness dynamism is helpful but if due to its dynamic nature, it goes from cool to uncool or other destination go from uncool to cool. Hence, a longitudinal study is recommended for future research. Further, a qualitative study can also be conducted to learn the perceptions of consumers across different cultures.

Fourth, Customer irrational beliefs, did not moderate the relationships between brand beliefs and brand advocacy, and brand associations and brand advocacy. To the best of researcher's knowledge on the basis of existing literature, only one study has dealt with customer irrational beliefs by providing a scale. In future, researchers can employ the variable to identify different roles in different fields. The future researchers must also consider other contextual factors that may lead to the irrational beliefs of the customers.

Fifth, to increase the generalizability of the study, and validate the constructs, the research should be considered in different service industries like banking and insurance in the future. Banking industry has taken a turn and now the mobile apps and the internet banking has put things at ease and have made things cool to manage. The amalgamation of technology and financial services have increased the expectations of the customers. Hence, it can become a very appropriate industry to work on to find the impact of coolness.

Further, for different generations brand coolness may vary, for example for Generation Z a brand might be cool but for millennials, this might not be the case. Most of the population in the study falls in Generation Y as known as the millennials cohort. Hence, the study might bring more useful results when considered for different generations to keep the coolness intact for actual and potential customers.

Lastly, the data was collected online during the pandemic shut down and researcher couldn't visit any tourist spots to identify tourists. So, the choice of picking a cool place was given to the tourist, in future researchers must visit places that are part of cult cool and get data from the people visiting those places, that will be helpful to understand the brand coolness of a particular place at a deeper level. That will further clarify which of the dimensions are most important. Also, this research was conducted in Pakistan and the respondent was predominantly Pakistani. Though

there were few international respondents but they were born Pakistanis. Therefore, the research should be conducted in different cultures and settings in the future to validate the findings.

5.6 Conclusion

The study aimed to answer seven questions regarding three relatively novel constructs. The first two questions are required to assess the consequences of brand coolness on other brand constructs. Based on the gaps in the literature, a framework was developed based on SOR model and sensemaking theory. The result then identified 5 positive consequences of brand coolness which are brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, brand beliefs and brand advocacy. The researchers in the field of brand coolness are keen to learn about new relationships and consequences of brand coolness which this study has satisfied by providing all positive consequences.

Supplementary, one of the consequence, brand advocacy required new determinants as per literature, therefore, new antecedents were found for it, brand familiarity, brand recognition, brand association, brand beliefs. Brand advocacy has become more trusted mode of communication for consumers. It is also important for marketers because it is free. However, they need to spend their energies on causing it. This research has provided them with four cognitive and one environmental perceptive antecedents. Further, that transmittal effects of brand coolness were required, the data analysis supported the transmittal impacts as well. Coolness can transmit its impact on behaviors via cognitive and affective mediators. Summing up the results, the study suggests that brand coolness can be a powerful factor in impacting the customers with the cool features. Customers may buy a product or visit a place to feel cool about it. This will help them getting to know place in better way. Today's youth is always active on social media and willing to provide their reviews. Working on them with right kind of strategies can help them get attached to the brand and advocate about it. Further, the moderator Customer irrational beliefs were tested, the moderator didn't show any impact in the tourism field, however, may be it can be useful in other services.

Conclusively, brand coolness has provided the managers with major contributions on what path to take to successfully impact the behaviors and brand coolness has provided the clarity on its importance in the field and its smooth transition to different industries.

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Appendix-A

Research-Questionnaire

Dear respondent,

I am a research degree student, at Capital University of Science & Technology Islamabad. Currently, I am pursuing my doctoral research. Therefore, your participation is important in this survey. This survey takes approximately 15 minutes. All information provided will remain confidential and will be used only for research purpose. Please choose the most options that defines your perspective. Your time and participation will be highly appreciated.

Thanking You.

Fizzah Khalid Butt

Q1. What was the coolest destination you ever visited? _____

Q2. In what category you consider that destination

- Religious

- Adventurous

- Cultural

- Shopping

- Other_____

Kindly fill this form according to the destination and its surroundings in your mind While filling the questionnaire kindly note:

1= Strongly Disagree

2= Disagree

3= Neutral

4= Agree

5= Strongly Agree

Sr. No	Statement					
1.	This place is exceptional	1	2	3	4	5
2.	This place is superb	1	2	3	4	5
3.	This place is fantastic	1	2	3	4	5
4.	This place is extraordinary	1	2	3	4	5
5.	The feel of this place is energetic	1	2	3	4	5
6.	The feel of this place is outgoing	1	2	3	4	5
7.	The feel of this place is lively	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The feel of this place is vigorous	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The sceneries around this place look good	1	2	3	4	5
10.	The place is aesthetically appealing	1	2	3	4	5
11.	The place is attractive	1	2	3	4	5
12.	The place has a really nice appearance	1	2	3	4	5
13.	The feel of this place is innovative	1	2	3	4	5
14.	The feel of this place is original	1	2	3	4	5
15.	The place looks like if it does its own thing	1	2	3	4	5
16.	The place and surroundings are authentic	1	2	3	4	5
17.	The place and its culture is true to its roots	1	2	3	4	5
18.	The place doesn't seem artificial	1	2	3	4	5
19.	The place has a feel that it doesn't try to be something it's not	1	2	3	4	5
20.	The place has a feel itis rebellious	1	2	3	4	5
21.	The place is defiant	1	2	3	4	5
22.	The place is not afraid to break rules	1	2	3	4	5
23.	The place is non-conformist	1	2	3	4	5

24.	The place is chic	1	2	3	4	5
25.	The place is glamorous	1	2	3	4	5
26.	The place is sophisticated	1	2	3	4	5
27.	The place is ritzy	1	2	3	4	5
28.	The place is liked by most people	1	2	3	4	5
29.	The place is in-style	1	2	3	4	5
30.	The place is popular	1	2	3	4	5
31.	The place is widely accepted	1	2	3	4	5
32.	This place doesn't make people out of place who use it different from other people	1	2	3	4	5
33.	IF I visit this place, it would make me stand apart from others	1	2	3	4	5
34.	Going on this place helps people who visit it stand apart from the crowd	1	2	3	4	5
35.	The people who go to this place are unique	1	2	3	4	5
36.	This place is a cultural symbol	1	2	3	4	5
37.	This place is iconic	1	2	3	4	5
38.	This place is up-market	1	2	3	4	5
39.	I am proud to visit this place	1	2	3	4	5
40.	I can easily imagining the place in my mind	1	2	3	4	5
41.	Some characteristics of the place come to my mind quickly.	1	2	3	4	5
42.	I believe, the place has good serviceability.	1	2	3	4	5
43.	I enjoy staying at this place	1	2	3	4	5
44.	I like the way this place looks	1	2	3	4	5
45.	I believe, this place appeals to people like me.	1	2	3	4	5
46.	The place and the services are familiar to me	1	2	3	4	5
47.	The place and the services give me a feeling of goodwill	1	2	3	4	5
48.	The place and the services has services for today's consumer	1	2	3	4	5

49.	The place and its services offers the kind of experience, I would want	1	2	3	4	5
50.	I think I have enough information to make an informed judgment about this place	1	2	3	4	5
51.	The place and the services are well-known in detail	1	2	3	4	5
52.	The place is recognizable	1	2	3	4	5
53.	The place's recognizability have influence on my decision.	1	2	3	4	5
54.	The place is recalled easily	1	2	3	4	5
55.	The place is distinct from other places	1	2	3	4	5
56.	The place and its surroundings are memorable	1	2	3	4	5
57.	The surroundings and sceneries of this place are recognizable	1	2	3	4	5
58.	When I recommend this place, I always do so strongly	1	2	3	4	5
59.	I am enthusiastic in my recommendations of this place	1	2	3	4	5
60.	I have only good things to say about this place.	1	2	3	4	5
61.	When discussing this place, I urge people to consider going there.	1	2	3	4	5
62.	Whenever there is a conversation about places, I usually strongly recommend this place, without being asked.	1	2	3	4	5
63.	I would defend this place if people were to give negative comments about it directly to me.	1	2	3	4	5
64.	I describe this place as the best of its kind.	1	2	3	4	5
65.	I have told more people about my positive experience at this place than I have with most other places I have visited.	1	2	3	4	5

66.	When talking about this place, I usually compare it other places, explaining how others aren't worth it.	1	2	3	4	5
67.	I take the initiative to actively promote this place (e.g., passing on details about this place).	1	2	3	4	5
68.	Even when there is no conversation, but if I think there are people who have an interest in this type of place, I strongly recommend this, without being asked.	1	2	3	4	5
69.	When practical, I provide positive written feedback about this place (e.g., recommendation blogs, ratings, and comments on review websites).	1	2	3	4	5
70.	When I recommend this place, I always do so strongly					
71.	If the people around (shopkeepers/ travel agents) recognizes me from previous visits, he/she will always give me better treatment.	1	2	3	4	5
72.	If I cultivate a personal relationship with the service provider, he/she will always go the extra mile for me.	1	2	3	4	5
73.	If I am nice to the service provider, he/she will always be nice to me.	1	2	3	4	5
74.	If I am a long-standing customer, the service provider will always take care of me ahead of the other customers.	1	2	3	4	5
75.	If I compliment the service provider, he/she will always do anything to satisfy me.	1	2	3	4	5
76.	If I commend the company, the service provider will always do everything to please me.	1	2	3	4	5

77.	Service providers believe that "the customer is always right," and therefore, will always do whatever it takes to satisfy me.	1	2	3	4	5
78.	If I make an extreme effort to see the service provider, he/she will in return, always try harder for me.	1	2	3	4	5
79.	The service provider always reveals all the relevant information to the customer so that the customer can make an informed decision.	1	2	3	4	5
80.	The service provider will always be fair with me.	1	2	3	4	5
81.	The service provider is always honest with the customer.	1	2	3	4	5
82.	If I present my case rationally (and not emotionally), I would always get what I want.	1	2	3	4	5
83.	If I'm very specific with the service provider regarding the things I want, I will always get it.	1	2	3	4	5
84.	If I am completely honest with the service provider, he/she will always do anything to please me.	1	2	3	4	5
85.	If I show what I know about the product or the service, the service provider will never lie to me.	1	2	3	4	5
86.	To get what I want from a service provider, I always need to be firm. .	1	2	3	4	5
87.	If I show my clout over the service provider, I will always receive more.	1	2	3	4	5
88.	When I do not get what I want, I will always receive more if I threaten legal action.	1	2	3	4	5
89.	If I show weakness toward the service provider, I will never receive what I am entitled	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix-B

TABLE 5.2: Outerloadings

	Ex1	0.834
Extraordinary	Ex2	0.913
	Ex3	0.932
	Ex4	0.887
	En1	0.827
	En2	0.803
Energetic	En3	0.719
	En4	0.853
	Ap1	0.67
Appealing	Ap2	0.805
	Ap3	0.824
	Ap4	0.737
Original	Or1	0.325
	Or2	0.757
	Or3	0.904
Authentic	Au1	0.824
	Au2	0.766
	Au3	0.724
	Au4	0.84
	R1	0.913
	R2	0.926
Rebellious	R3	0.718
	R4	0.601
High Status	Hs1	0.816
	Hs2	0.831
	Hs3	0.735
	Hs4	0.752
Popular	Pop1	0.827
	Pop2	0.65
	Pop3	0.885
	Pop4	0.832

161

Continued Table 3.2: Outer Loadings

	Ex1	0.834
Subcultural	Sc1	0.837
	Sc2	0.553
	Sc3	0.592
	Sc4	0.694
Iconic	IC1	0.554
	Ic2	0.959
	BA1	0.301
	BA2	0.867
Brand Associations	BA3	0.811
	BA4	0.613
	BB1	0.468
	BB2	0.824
	BB3	0.885
	BB4	0.795
Brand Beliefs	BF1	0.82
	BF2	0.77
	BF3	0.795
Brand Familiarity	BF4	0.826
	BF5	0.682
	BF6	0.748
	BR1	0.654
	BR2	0.678
Brand Recognition	BR3	0.798
	BR4	0.824
	BR5	0.876
	BR6	0.72
	BAd1	0.85
	BAd2	0.796
	BAd3	0.741
Brand Advocacy	BAd4	0.85
	BAd5	0.69
	BAd6	0.76
	BAd7	0.786
	BAd8	0.797
	BAd9	0.789
	BAd10	0.743
	BAd11	0.722
	BAd12	0.553
	sf1	0.786
	sf2	0.86

Continued Table 3.2: Outer Loadings

	Ex1	0.834
Subjective Favoritism	sf3	0.88
	sf4	0.92
	sf5	0.85
	sf6	0.843
	af1	0.813
	af2	0.809
	af3	0.754
	af4	0.755
	af5	0.702
	rs1	0.911
	rs2	0.924
	rs3	0.924
	rs4	0.887
	pg1	0.842
	pg2	0.938
	pg3	0.898
	pg4	0.803