

# Influence of Quality & Design on Purchase Intention: Empirical Study of Chinese Brand

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## Abstract:

*This study was undertaken in the context of Xiaomi mobile phones. Extensive literature review was carried out to find the gap and to define the variables essential for the study. Researcher has drawn evidences from earlier researches, which proves the relationship of product design with purchase intention and product quality with purchase intention. On the basis of relationship, literature was reviewed. To undertake the study, data was collected through structured questionnaire from the holy city Varanasi using convenience sampling technique. 200 questionnaires were distributed amongst the respondents, out of those 140 were returned responded. Total 4 questionnaires were found carrying unengaged responses. Hence researcher has used a sample of 136. Researcher has summated the scores of all the respondents for a particular constructs and applied linear regression technique to understand the relationship. On the basis of the findings, researcher has drawn the managerial implications for marketers around the world. At the end, researchers have tried to explain certain possible areas of research. Future areas of research will help the researchers to understand the subject in better way. The result of research concludes that product design and quality significantly and positively influence the purchase intention of consumers for purchasing Xiaomi mobile phones.*

**Keywords:** Chinese Products, Product Design, Product Quality, Purchase Intention, Xiaomi mobiles.

## Introduction:

India and China are not only two large economies in the world but also have high percent of growing middle class consumers. This fact suffices the importance of two great markets for manufacturers and the service providers. Marketers across the world have always focused on these two markets. Chinese manufacturers are known to produce large quantity of products (OEC, 2017). Manufacturing large quantity is the mantra of offering products at low price to the buyers. In recent years, the trade between India and China have grown significantly and reached to \$71.452 billion in 2016-2017

(Ministry of Commerce, 2017). Chinese products import to India has composed the major portion of the trade. On the other hand, recent political development between India and China was not a good indicator of trade. The confrontation of two armies in Doklam region of Bhutan (“**Chinese and Indian troops**”, 2017), India's denial to enter into an OBOR (One Belt One Road) initiative (MEA, 2017), China's hurdle for the entry of India in UNSC (United Nations Security Council) as permanent member (Kaura, 2015), and recent re-emergence of border dispute between two countries in Arunachal Pradesh (“**China Objects To President**”, 2017) are few of them. These

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developments at the political front have changed the mindset negatively of Indians for Chinese products. Assessing the impact of the mindset of Indians for Chinese products, numerous news agencies (discussed above) have contributed in their articles “whether or not to boycott Chinese products?”

It is pertinent to mention that on the one side, all political issues occurred, whereas on the other side keeping away from political worries, Indian consumers have shown overwhelming response by buying Xiaomi mobiles (“**Xiaomi claims 25 million**”, 2017). People have shown interest and have taken special efforts to purchase mobile phones from various online platforms. As a result Xiaomi brand became one of the leading mobile brands in India (“**Xiaomi is closing in**”, 2017). The brand image overshadowed the image of Country and in turn Xiaomi became well accepted brand among Indian middle class. At the time of opening of new sale, it is always said that this time the sale of Xiaomi will fall due to Boycott Chinese products Campaign (“**Xiaomi Makes Big Revelation**”, 2017), but Xiaomi is performing exemplary by breaking previous sales record. There is a big gap between in Expectation (“**Xiaomi Makes Big Revelation**”, 2017) and Actual (“**Xiaomi breaks 11/11**”, 2017) performance of Xiaomi brand in India. Considering the gap as the base of problem, this study deliberates to assess the influence of quality and design of Xiaomi mobiles on the purchase intention of Indian Consumers.

In view of the above discussed issues, this research was undertaken to understand the purchase intention of Indian consumers while purchasing Xiaomi mobiles. After reviewing the literature researchers found that product design and quality were the most important determinant to define the purchase intention of consumers. The drawn results paved the way for researcher to underline managerial implications in order to help the

marketer of India, China and third world countries. Further research in similar area with other variables to carry out wide-ranging work was suggested to future researchers.

## Literature Review:

### Product Design:

Product Design creates a primary imprint on the consumers mind and instantly speaks about the benefit associated with it. Consumer infers many attributes of the product out of its design or appearance (**Berkowitz, 1987; Bloch, 1995; Pilditch, 1976**).

Product Design enable marketers to distinct their products in comparison to other products. This distinction creates an opportunity to gain benefit (**Hammer, 1995; Kotler and Rath, 1984; Pilditch, 1976; Veryzer, 1995**). Many a time's companies put a lot of attention on product design and utilises it as a competitive instrument (**Dumaine, 1991; Nussbaum, 1993; Smith, 1994**). Quite a lot of studies have illustrated the positive impact of product design on the success of the product itself (**Black and Baker, 1987; Bruce and Whitehead, 1988; Gemser and Leenders, 2001; Roy, 1994; Thackara, 1997**). Now it was very evident to understand the role of product design on consumer preference. At the same time, product design affects consumer preferences in many ways (**Bloch, 1995**). Additionally, product design could also add value to the product itself. Consumers do get attracted to a product aesthetically look good.

### Product Quality:

When a product meets the desired prospects, the consumer feels satisfied and reflects the acceptability of the product that signifies the high quality of the product. If this is not the case then the

reverse reflection exhibits i.e. the product is of inferior quality. On the basis of the explanation, the Product's quality has been defined as "Its capacity to meet the customer's needs and desired prospects" (UNIDO, 2006). The quality of the product is to reflect its function that includes the overall durability, accuracy, ease of operation, reliability and reparability of products are also other product characteristics (Kotler et al., 2004). The customer defines the product quality as an inclusive assessment of the goodness of the performance of goods or services (Mowen and Minor, 1998). Researchers have claimed that performance of the products are the testimony of its interface with the operational environment (Murthy et al., 2006). Performance of the products are also being evaluated by products intrinsic and extrinsic cues (Kirmani and Baumgartner, 2000). The extent of life of a particular products are usually termed as durability (Murthy et al., 2006; Garvin, 1984).

#### **Purchase Intention:**

The word Purchase Intention was defined by Hawkins and Mothersbaugh, (2010) that excites or motivates the consumers to purchase the products or services. Most of study in Consumer behavior was undertaken to understand the Intention of Consumers to purchase (Blackwell Miniard and Engel, 2006; Engel et al., 1995; Ghalandari and Norouzi, 2012). Firstly Ajzen (1991) have said that the intention motivates the consumers and thereafter impacts their behavior. Hence majority of the researchers have used the term 'purchase behavior' and 'purchase intention' alternatively (Kim and Pysarchik, 2000). When there is a certainty of a particular behavior then the possibility of the respective intention for same will be strong.

#### **Product Design's relation with Purchase Intention:**

Veryzer, (1993) have done a research on Aesthetics of the products and its influence on the product preferences. It was observed that the Aesthetics plays a very important role in influencing the consumer's preference for the particular products. Bloch, (1995) have researched on the design of the product and the respective response of the consumer towards it. Bruce, (1988) conducted the study by putting the design before and measured its role in assessing the consumer purchase behavior. Whereas Burke and Jones, (2000) worked on the role of the packages and its impact on the consumer purchase consideration.

#### **Product Quality's relation with Purchase Intention:**

Researchers have empirically proved the positive and significant relationship of product quality with consumer purchase intention while studying Chinese products (Sarwar et al., 2013) in Malaysia. Another study was conducted to check the relationship of product quality with purchase intention. It was found that the product quality was significantly predicted the purchase intention of consumers for foreign and domestic products (Wang and Chen, 2004; Kirmani and Baumgartner, 2000). Additionally product quality was one of the highly considered independent variable to explain the variation of purchase intention (Khattak et al., 2011; Ettenson and Klein, 2005; Mostafa, 2010).

#### **Statement of the Problem:**

Time to time voice by Indian Social groups are raised against Chinese products on different social media platforms by slogans like 'Boycott Chinese products'. There are many political reasons behind this type of agitations. Political reasons includes; Standoff of two army in the Doklam region of Bhutan ("Chinese and Indian troops", 2017), India's bid to become a permanent member to

United Nations Security Council (**Kaura, 2015**) India's denial to sign contract of China's ambitious project called OBOR (One Belt One Road) (**MEA, 2017**) and latest recurrence of border dispute between two nations in Arunachal Pradesh (**"China Objects To President", 2017**). Other reason includes inferior product quality and design of Chinese products, which are hazards to life (**"Made in China' Tops EU List of Unsafe Products", 2015**). The voice against Chinese products converts louder in every festive season. Quite to the contrary, the Xiaomi mobile is performing exemplary and the sale has increased many folds by fixing new targets for itself (**"Smartphone sales in India", 2017**). Indian consumers are waiting for online sale to open so that they can purchase their beloved mobile brand without miss (**"Redmi Note 4 goes", 2017**). It is interesting to mention that every time it is being said that the sale of Xiaomi will fall due to Boycott Chinese products Campaign (**"Xiaomi Makes Big Revelation", 2017**), but Xiaomi is performing exemplary by breaking previous sale record. There is a big gap between in Expectation (**"Xiaomi Makes Big Revelation", 2017**) and Actual (**"Xiaomi breaks 11/11", 2017**) performance of Xiaomi brand in India. Considering the gap as the base of problem, this study deliberates to assess the influence of quality and design of Xiaomi mobiles on the purchase intention of Indian Consumers.

### Objective of the study:

In the view of the problem stated above, the aim of the study was to assess the influence of quality and design of Xiaomi mobiles (*A Chinese product*) on the purchase intention of Indian Consumers. On the basis of research aim, and on arguments in literature, subsequent hypothesis were drawn:

**H1:** Product Design has significant and positive influence on Consumer purchase intention towards Xiaomi Mobiles.

**H2:** Product Quality has significant and positive influence on Consumer purchase intention towards Xiaomi Mobiles.

### Research Methodology:

The research design of this study was exploratory cum descriptive in nature. The work was emphasised on one dependent variable (purchase intention) and two independent variables (product design and product quality). The study was focused on the consumer purchase intention for Xiaomi mobile phones in Varanasi city of India. In the absence of sampling frame, researcher has used non-probability sampling technique i.e. Convenience sampling (Zikmund et al., 2013). A standardized questionnaire was developed consisting of 12 questions in two sections. Section 1: carried two questions on education and gender. Whereas Section 2: carried 10 questions of purchase intention (3 questions), product design (4 questions), and product quality (3 questions).

Researchers have distributed 200 questionnaires. Out of which 140 questionnaires were completely filled and returned. 4 questionnaires were found unengaged (similar responses for all the questions). Hence these 4 questionnaires were omitted from the study. Finally researcher has conducted the study on 136 questionnaires which adequately follows the thumb rule of  $(50 + 8k)$  where k is the number of independent variable (Green, 1991). Male responses 52.9% (72) were slightly high as compared to the female responses 47.1% (64). In education 51.5% (70) respondents were post graduate or above and 48.5% (66) respondents were under graduate.

The statements were adapted from the previous literature available to measure the underlying constructs. For *Product design* (Holbrook, 1980; Bamossy et al., 1983; Hekkert, 1995; Muller, 2001; Veryzer, 1993; Belk, 1988; Landon, 1974; Sirgy,

1982; Solomon, 1983; Veryzer, 1995; Bloch, 1995; Dawar and Parker, 1994; Creuson and Schoormans, 2005); *Product Quality* (Kirmani and Baumgartner, 2000; Murthy et al., 2006; Dawar and Parker, 1994); *Purchase Intention* (Lew and Sulaiman, 2014; Bruce and Whitehead, 1988; Landon, 1974; Ghalandari and Norouzi, 2012; Ajzen, 1991; Kim and Pysarchik, 2000).

**The Statements for the different constructs are as follows:**

#### **Product Design:**

1. I believe that Xiaomi mobiles has good Aesthetics.
2. I believe that Xiaomi mobiles has positive symbolic value.
3. I believe that Xiaomi mobile meets the usability and functional requirement.
4. I believe that Xiaomi mobiles are Attractive and draw attention.

#### **Product Quality:**

1. I feel that performance of Xiaomi mobiles are long lasting.
2. I feel that Xiaomi mobiles are durable.
3. I feel that Xiaomi mobiles are robust in using.

#### **Purchase Intention:**

1. I feel Xiaomi mobile is a good choice in its segment.
2. I will recommend others to purchase Xiaomi mobile.
3. I feel one should prefer to buy Xiaomi mobile.

The researcher has focused on convenience sampling technique of non-probability sampling. Data was collected through a field survey through a

questionnaire on five point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree '5', Agree '4', Neutral '3', Disagree '2', to Strongly disagree '1'(Vagias, 2006).  
Data Analysis and Findings:

#### **Reliability Analysis:**

This research paper has ten statements of Product Design (4), Product Quality (3), and Purchase Intention (3) respectively. Researcher has used the summated Likert type scale (Likert, 1931). Before measuring the constructs, researcher has checked the reliability of the questionnaire using Cronbach Alpha. This measurement is used to check internal consistency of the respondents (Cronbach, 1951). There is thumb rule: “If  $\Rightarrow .9$  – Excellent,  $\Rightarrow .8$  – Good,  $\Rightarrow .7$  – Acceptable,  $\Rightarrow .6$  – Questionable,  $\Rightarrow .5$  – Poor,  $< .5$  – Unacceptable” (Nunnally, 1978). The Internal consistency for these constructs was 0.847. This can be said as 'Good' level of internal consistency (**Table 1**).

**Table 1: Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha ( )	Number of Constructs
.847	3

#### **Regression Model:**

The aim of this research work was to predict the variation in the purchasing intention of Consumer, for buying Xiaomi mobile phones. Researcher has used two independent variables, so that the purchase intention of the consumer can be predicted. Researcher has applied multiple regression technique to explain the variation of the dependent variable.  $R^2$  value (coefficient of determination) was 54.2%. Two independent variables (Product Design, Product Quality) had explained 54.2% of the variation in the dependent variable i.e. Purchase Intention (**Table 2**).

**Table 2: Model Summary**

Model	R	R2	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.736	.542	.535	1.865

a. Predictors: (Constant), Product Quality, Product Design.  
 Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

**Statistical Significance of Model:**

The ANOVA table shows the value of significance, i.e. Sig. 0.000 ( $p < 0.05$ ), which is an indicator of overall model fit for the data. It also demonstrates that, out of total sum of squares (1010.118) this model explained 547.583. The independent variables (Product Design, Product Quality) significantly explains the dependent variable i.e. Purchase Intention,  $F(2, 133) = 78.728, p < 0.05$ . On the basis of the values given in **Table 3**, for different variables, it can be concluded that the model was a good fit for the given set of data

**(Table 3). Table 3: ANOVA**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	547.583	2	273.792	78.728	.000
Residual	462.534	133	3.478		
Total	1010.118	135			

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention  
 b. Predictors: (Constant), Product Quality, Product Design

**Estimated Model Coefficient:**

The overall equation of coefficients predicts Purchase Intention by two independent variables i.e. Product Design, Product Quality.

$$\text{Purchase Intention} = 2.291 + (0.288 * \text{product design}) + (0.440 * \text{product quality}).$$

The un-standardized coefficient demonstrates that this equation could be utilized to predict the variation of dependent variable

**(Table 4: Coefficients**

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	
(Constant)	2.291	.851		2.693	.008
Product Design	.288	.059	.402	4.911	.000
Product Quality	.440	.091	.397	4.845	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Purchase Intention

**Results:**

Each independent variable shows statistical significant relationship with the dependent variable. On the statistical values mentioned in **Table 4**, it is pertinent to mention that. Product design (Standardized Beta = 0.402;  $t = 4.911; p < 0.05$ ), and Product quality (Standardized Beta = 0.397;  $t = 4.845; p < 0.05$ ) is significantly related to Purchase Intention. The calculated value of 't' was also found higher than tabulated value at 95% confidence level (Hair et al., 2010).

The result illustrates a significant relationship between Product design explaining Purchase Intention, (**H1** stands accepted); and a significant relationship between Product quality explaining Purchase Intention, (**H2** stands accepted).

Therefore, through the statistical value found in the results, it can be concluded that the Indian customer's purchase intention was statistically and significantly related with product design and product quality of Xiaomi mobile phones. It can further be concluded, that higher the importance given to design and quality in Xiaomi mobiles, purchase intention of Indian consumer is likely to increase.

**Managerial Implications:**

The empirical work of this research has established the significant relationship between product design and purchase intention; product quality and purchase intention. This body of work

is a substantial addition to the existing literature. Both the independent variables (product design, product quality) have significantly predicted the variation in purchase intention. Many studies in past have talked about the relationship of product design with purchase intention (**Bruce, 1988; Veryzer, 1993; Burke and Jones, 2000**) and product quality with purchase intention (**Khattak et al., 2011; Ettenson and Klein, 2005**) separately, but this study has focused on two independent variable (product design and product quality) and its effect on dependent variable (Purchase Intention) for a Chinese Brand (Xiaomi mobile) in case of Indian Consumers.

Many lessons are emerging out of the results of this study. These lessons are for manufacturers and marketers of China, India and other countries as well. Chinese mobile manufacturers are advised to focus more on product design and product quality. As this study empirically proves that the design and quality of the Xiaomi mobile was significantly and positively related to the purchase intention. It is also important to understand that this research was conducted in Holy city Varanasi of India, which is a tier-2 city. Large chunk of middle class Indian Consumer resides in this type of cities. Indian middle class is growing faster than everbefore, and has been identified as a big market of mobile phones ranging between 10,000/- to 15,000/- price range (The price range of Xiaomi). Hence not only the Xiaomi mobile phone manufacturer but marketers can utilize the result of this study to target this segment of the market, but also other mobile phone manufacturers and marketers can take the lesson.

Despite the existence of animosity among Indian Consumers due to economic and border issues, Indian Consumers are regularly purchasing Chinese products. The purchasing trends of Indian Consumers are increasing, despite the animosity for China origin products. This illustration

provides a clear understanding to the marketers that purchase intention due to brand structure is more important than country of origin cue. Therefore marketers are counselled to focus less on country of origin, and put more effort in manufacturing and marketing activities. More research for product quality and product design will help in improving the experience of Consumers, which in turn will lead to higher intention for purchasing the mobile phones. Mobile phone manufacturers, if focuses on higher quality and design of mobile phones will be able to achieve higher consumer purchase intention.

### **Conclusion:**

This study was started to understand the relationship and predictability of two independent variables (product design and product quality) for purchase intention. It is also important to understand that, despite the tarnished global image of Chinese products, Indian consumers are purchasing frequently. So the researcher aimed to understand the influence of product design and product quality on purchase intention. Finding the close relationship of product quality and product design with purchase Intention, the researchers has drawn the managerial implications, which is useful to manufacturers and marketers of mobile phones belonging to India, China and third world country. Therefore research concludes with the findings that, the product design and product quality significantly predicts the purchase intentions of Indian Consumers for Xiaomi mobile phones.

### **Scope for Future Research:**

In this study, researcher has not considered or analysed any demographic characteristics and its relation with purchase intention of the Indian consumers. But similar kind of the study could be undertaken to understand the relationship of these

variables using them as moderating variable like Age, Income, and Gender. Another area of future research could be to work on the data on pan India basis. The research based on the data of 'pan India' would require more resources. Other independent variables could be undertaken for future studies are perceived risk, trust etc. These studies will help the manufacturers and marketers to understand the underlying context in more holistic manner.

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