

PREMIUM DENIM:
HOW PREMIUM IS THE BRAND NAME

by

TIARRA S. WADE

(Under the Direction of Jan M. Hathcote)

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to discuss the importance of the brand name on premium denim and the effect it has on the perceptions of the denim, the wearer and their brand loyalty behaviors. Implications for Premium Denim brands were found by researching the relationships between Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perceptions of Quality and Perceptions of the wearer and how these variables lead to Brand Loyalty behaviors. The results of this study will provide takeaways for the branding aspects of Premium Denim brands. The medium for studying the impact of the brand name was an online survey in which participants were asked to give their opinions based on the back pocket embellishments of premium denim. This study found that Brand Loyalty amongst Premium Denim Wearers can be explained by the Perception of Quality. This has implications for Premium Denim producers and marketers that have the potential to increase their presence in the Premium Denim and apparel market.

INDEX WORDS: Premium denim, Brand name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Quality, Perception of the Wearer, Brand Loyalty

PREMIUM DENIM:

HOW PREMIUM IS THE BRAND NAME

by

TIARRA S. WADE

B.B.A., Howard University, 2008

A Thesis Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER OF SCIENCE

ATHENS, GEORGIA

2011

© 2011

Tiarra S. Wade

All Rights Reserved

PREMIUM DENIM:
HOW PREMIUM IS THE BRAND

by

TIARRA S. WADE

Major Professor: Jan M. Hathcote
Committee: José Blanco F.
Yoo-Kyoung Seock

Electronic Version Approved:

Maureen Grasso
Dean of the Graduate School
The University of Georgia
August 2011

DEDICATION

I would like to dedicate this work to all of the phenomenal women who have been examples of strength and love in my life; Those who have faced many dark hours and refused to be swallowed by them. Women who have sacrificed for me and showed me what it really means to love. Hazel Comer & Suzette Croft.

‘Cause I’m a woman phenomenally. Phenomenal woman, that’s me.’ –Maya Angelou

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	vii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	viii
CHAPTER	
1 INTRODUCTION	1
History.....	3
Justification.....	4
Statement of Purpose.....	7
Research Objectives.....	8
2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE	9
Denim.....	9
Evaluative Criteria	11
Apparel and Brand.....	12
Apparel and the Logo.....	13
Apparel and Quality.....	14
Brand Equity and Brand Loyalty.....	16
Apparel and Perception of the Wearer.....	17
Prestige-Seeking Consumer Behavior.....	21
Personal Adornment.....	24
Conceptual Definitions.....	26
Proposed Model.....	27
Hypotheses.....	27

3	METHODOLOGY	29
	Online Survey Method	29
	Description of the Survey	29
	Data Collection	33
4	RESULTS	34
	Response Rate	34
	Sample Characteristics	34
	Data Analysis	36
	Relationships among Variables	37
	Multiple Regression Analysis	38
5	DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS	40
	Hypothesis Tests	40
	Study Limitations	40
	Conclusions	41
	Suggestions for Future Research	43
	REFERENCES	45
	APPENDICES	
	A Webpage	54

LIST OF TABLES

	Page
Table 1: Survey Items and the Variables they Measure.....	29
Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of the Sample.....	34
Table 3: Relationships among the Variables.....	37
Table 4: Summary of ANOVA.....	38

LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1: Luxury-Seeking Consumer Behavior Framework	24
Figure 2: Proposed Model.....	27

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Consumers from various income levels want luxury and are willing to pay for it. The so-called natural evolution of luxury is from class to mass. This means that luxury is introduced and embraced by the affluent; Luxury is then reconfigured and reinterpreted to the masses (Danziger, 2005). Luxury is defined as: something adding to pleasure or comfort but not absolutely necessary (Luxury, 2010). The word comes from the Latin “luxuria” and translates to “excess,” “widely recognized as the opposite of necessity, luxury is an emotionally charged word that carries a lot of baggage with it” (Danziger, 2005, p.17). In many instances the brand can define luxury for the consumer. The question this study investigated is how the brand name, in particular the visible logo, impacts the consumer’s perception of quality. Further it examined the perception of the wearers’ level of fashion innovation. It also examined how the visible logo, affects the brand loyalty of the Premium Denim consumer.

Designer names are often equated to status with better brands thought to signify higher quality and giving the consumer an array of positive feelings. The term Premium Denim is used to describe a pair of jeans sold in the market based on the superior fit and styling. Premium Denim is considered a product category within the product market and has a large presence. For the purpose of this study, I will define Premium Denim as high priced denim jeans, priced over \$130.00. The ‘premium denim craze,’ as it is known, made its appearance around the year 2000 and changed the denim market (Davies, 2005). Shopping for that ideal pair of jeans has become more of an experience than ever before. High-end department stores such as Nordstrom have

dedicated square footage in unprecedented numbers to the product line (Davies, 2005). While there are an estimated 300 plus brands (“Premium denim,” 2009) competing to have their own break-out moment in the denim industry, there are a few giants whose presence cannot be ignored such as True Religion, Rock & Republic and 7 For All Mankind. Still considered a niche market, the origin of the market is traced back to Southern California where three designers founded 7 For All Mankind and, with its success, branched out to create Citizens of Humanity in 2003 (Church, 2007).

The premium denim craze swept the denim market and changed the way well known chain retailers, such as The Gap Inc. position their denim lines. The jeans in the Premium Denim category are retailing upwards of \$130 and peak around \$695 for the ultimate in Premium Denim (“Premium Denim,” 2009). While sources vary on where the obsession with these high-end blues began, it has been argued that the popularity is due to fit, quality, brand and style (Carter, 2007). The brand of the item is a focal point on what makes a pair of jeans a premium item. The brand of a pair of premium denim equates those jeans with many of the characteristics noted above as important to the classification of Premium Denim; for example, trendiness or fit. Branding in today’s retail industry is one of the most important factors determining the success of an item.

The use of a brand name and image within the fashion industry offers a mark of distinction, satisfies the functional needs of the consumer, adds value to a product and becomes a symbolic reflection of the customer (Bridson & Evans, 2004). With the level of saturation in the denim market, it is important that designers differentiate themselves, by influencing the consumer purchase decision. The use of the brand name, particularly how that name becomes a visual interpretation of the actual product, has the ability to determine the success or failure of a

particular item. The premium denim market is, in many ways, the product of a brand- obsessed culture in which brand is a top factor in purchasing.

The first brand-based products appeared around the later half of the nineteenth century. Largely credited to the innovation of the factory and mass-production, branding arose out of the need to differentiate similar products from one another. According to Klein (2000), “Competitive branding became a necessity of the machine-age within a context of manufactured sameness, image-based difference had to be manufactured along with the product” (p. 6). While the idea of advertising is closely related to branding, the concept of branding caused a change in the role advertising played in selling a product. The goal was now to build an image and not just to sell a product for its functional usage. Similar to advertising, brands provided the ability to invoke feelings within a consumer. Until the “brand equity mania” of the eighties, in which companies were being purchased for up to six times more than their written value based on brand name alone, the manufacturing sector was resistant to the idea that consumers were buying a brand and not a product. With the eventual acceptance of this notion, came the rush to brand any and everything manufactures could get their hands on (Klein, 2000). “The act of branding was becoming a larger and larger focus of businesses. For (these) companies, the ostensible product was mere filler for the real production: the brand” (Klein, 2000, p.15).

History

The earliest function of the marking of property was to indicate ownership and the origin of goods. Before industrialization and the creation of commercial brands, marks such as monograms, earmarks, hallmarks and watermarks were frequently used. Brand-like marks also were used to describe the content of an object or container. The battle for power between royalties appears to have been responsible for the function of branding to indicate status or

reputation. Additionally, the slave trade routinely used branding to both identify slaves and to indicate their status as property (Moore, 2007).

With the desire to make a distinction between similar products through branding came the importance of the use of the logo as a signifier. While consumers were previously purchasing generic items such as sugar, flour and soap, they now desired to have specific brand name products (Klein, 2000). According to Klein (2000), “ In the 1880s corporate logos were introduced to mass-produced products like Campbell’s soup, H.J. Heinz pickles and Quaker oats cereal...logos were tailored to evoke familiarity and folksiness, in an effort to counteract the new and unsettling anonymity of packaged goods” (p.6). Many of the earliest known logos were designed using familiar personalities such as Aunt Jemima or Uncle Ben. Thus, for the consumer, the logo became the intermediary between a product and its perceived value.

Justification

Brand obsessed is a term often associated with the 21st century society. This idea exists in reference to the power the brand has on the consumer decision- making process. Western society is known for its desire and ability to have the “best” of any commodity. Brand name has become a signifier of the best in terms of apparel. Both the consumer and producer use the brand to convey an image. For companies, maintaining a strong brand image is central to their success or failure. Brands give the opportunity for commodities to separate themselves from the competition, as well as establishing an identity that can involve the consumer in cultural and self-expressive behavior. For the consumer, the consumption of brand name items is central to maintaining a positive image about oneself. Dress is used as an expression of self-identity in contemporary consumer culture, furthermore the increasing importance of the brand and logo on

dress is a socio-economic phenomenon driven by the portrayal of identity through a self-constructed image (Walker, 2008).

The consumer culture-based society in which we operate has affected what Americans as a whole value, and consequently, how social status is defined. For the purposes of this research, social status will be defined as a level of social achievement and acceptance within one's own class. Social status is often materialized through one's ability to obtain luxury and 'sub-luxury' items, which are used as signifiers within one's own subgroup. Furthermore, these items are coveted because of the influence of the rich and famous as seen through the media. According to Steinhauer (2005), "Goods and services have always been means to measure social station." Thorstein Veblen, who coined the phrase "conspicuous consumption" at the beginning of last century, observed that it was the wealthy, leisure class, and its manner of life and standards of worth that set the bar for everyone else. In a 2005 poll done by the New York Times, it was found that 81 percent of Americans said they had felt social pressure to buy high-priced items. Oddly enough, this social pressure was reported to have come from peers in their same social class (Steinhauer, 2005). Accordingly, social status has been both historically and currently defined by one's ability to obtain certain prestige products.

The story of denim is often traced back to one of the pioneers of the blue jean as we know it today, Levi Strauss. While the history of the actual denim fabric originally used in the creation of a pair of jeans is vague, the cotton-wool blend has been traced back to southeastern France around the sixteenth century. The term "denim," which we often use interchangeably today with jean, referenced a heavier and tougher fabric in comparison with the blue, indigo-dyed cotton used today. Strauss's story signifies the beginning of the jean as a legend (Sullivan, 2006). As a young and promising entrepreneur, Levi Strauss decided to capitalize on the gold hunting frenzy of 1849 to sell his family's dry goods. When Strauss's supply of needles, thread

and broadcloth began to run low, he was left with only a heavy brown tent canvas which he planned to use to build shelter units for the poverty- stricken gold hunters. Instead, Strauss was presented with a bet to create a pair of trousers strong enough to stand up to the harsh conditions of the gold mines. Strauss used the canvas and created a pair of sturdy, practical pants and won the bet (Little, 2007).

The demand for the trousers was so high that Strauss soon ran out of canvas. This forced him to switch to a more readily available fabric that would be just as able to protect workers from the environments in which it would be used. Levi switched to denim that was manufactured in a mill in New Hampshire. Thus, the American staple, jeans were born. The jeans had one back pocket, no belt loops, two suspender buttons and a waist- cinching buckle on the back. The work pants became even stronger in 1872 when Jacob Davis, a tailor, proposed the idea to reinforce the pockets with copper rivets. Davis and Levi patented these riveted pants with the number 139-121 for \$68. This style would later be called the “501” jean (Little, 2007). The actual phrase “blue jean” became popular in the 1960’s when the baby boom generation adopted the term for its favorite clothing item worn by film and music stars (Gerber, 2006).

By 1970, jeans had begun to be seen as a symbol of America. Sales continued to grow and by the late 1970s there were two major trends in the jeans craze. The first was a do- it- yourself vision, in which the consumer creatively used previously worn garments and other materials to customize their jeans. On the other end was the emergence of the high fashion version of the trend, already famous designers were designing denim lines for film stars and for runways in Paris. Couture denim made its way into the ready to wear market and designer jeans became an obsession. These designers stayed away from fringe and patches of the do it yourself era in an attempt to be more subtle. Designer jeans were nearly indistinguishable from one

another, except by the small designer label sewn on the back pocket. These jeans were now made to flatter the body and to be long lasting and uniform (Gordon, 1991).

In the year ending June 30, 2009 the overall denim industry had grown to \$13 billion (Holmes, 2009). Jeans drove the growth of the denim market, and in 2004 they were the only market to grow in women's denim apparel (Denim, 2005). In the apparel market, a growth indicates that the consumer knows the value of a product, and is willing to make a purchase and sacrifice in other areas. In the article, "Denim Does It" (2007), Allen B. Schwartz, founder of a clothing line which includes denim, states, " Women today are purchasing so many pairs of jeans not only because they are an easy fashion statement that are acceptable dressed up or dressed down, but because they are a status symbol. But, because it is still hard to find a great pair of jeans that maintain their fit, women are willing to spend the money on a new pair regardless of how many they already have in their closets (p.2)". Almost every designer uses denim in his or her line. Retail outlets use denim as focus items in their retail strategy season after season.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between the Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality and the Perception of the Wearer with each other. Furthermore, the influence of Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality and the Perception of the Wearer on the Brand Loyalty of Premium Denim wearers was analyzed.

Research Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were:

1. to examine the relationship between Brand Name, the Back Pocket Embellishment, the Perception of Quality and the Perception of the Wearer.
2. to examine how Brand Name, the Back Pocket Embellishment, the Perception of Quality and the perception of the wearer affect Brand Loyalty amongst Premium Denim consumers.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The major topics of research for this study are denim, brands, logos and the designer label (back pocket embellishment) and how these elements affect brand loyalty, the perception of product quality as well as perceived social status and level of fashion innovation of the wearer. Research on denim includes articles explaining the importance of denim as a product category due to its malleable yet classic nature. Areas of writings on brands, logos and the designer label consist of studies on the influence of the brand and logo on the consumer purchase decision. Perceived product quality is explored through past research conducted on the various measures consumers use to determine quality. Studies on brand loyalty include information related to consumer behavior. Lastly, perceptions of social status and level of fashion innovation of the wearer include the exploration of research on how choice of apparel is interpreted by peers or self.

Denim

Allen and Huffman (2005) examined the US market production and consumption of denim in order to determine opportunity areas for growth within the market. The researchers found that denim jeans are increasing in popularity among consumers in all retail channels including mass-merchants, national chains, specialty stores and department stores. According to their findings, the United States is a premier consumption market for denim jeans.

In their research on jeans as a global product, DeLong, LaBat, Nelson, Koh & Kim (2002) based their research on the theory that jeans have both extrinsic and intrinsic value. The researchers believed that jeans satisfy a purpose greater than their functional usage- durability, utilitarian and longevity; and that jeans are consumed for their fit, color and ability to bring together a look. Ultimately, their research suggested that jeans are often valued for the aesthetic experience they offer to the wearer. The researchers sought to identify which criteria are used in distinguishing between products, such as jeans, which are often similar in many aspects particularly in cross-cultural settings. The study found that design indicators such as labels, signature markings, stitching design and placement played a role in consumers various responses to jeans. The researchers further concluded that familiarity with brands was an important factor in the decision to purchase jeans.

Morgado (1993) examined the general interpretation of emblems on fashion apparel. Her research found that particularly in designer-label jeans, the label served as a symbol to communicate social and economic messages to others. Feinberg, Mataro & Burroughs (1992) explored the relationship between jeans and social identity. The researchers based their study on the assumptions that jeans are believed to hold social information about their wearer. The results of the study showed that the jean's brand labels ultimately led to different perceptions of the wearer's identity. Furthermore, the data suggested that preferences for specific brands of jeans were consistent with similar identity profiles amongst others with the same brand preference. Thus, it can be concluded that jean choice can be used as an indication of personality traits.

Davis (1989) researched his belief that brand-name jeans were used by the wearer to achieve the desire for individual distinction while also adhering to a Western cultural norm. He proposed that jeans have acquired an ever- changing image in which they symbolize democracy, utility, and classlessness while proclaiming taste, distinction and class division.

Workman (1988) believed that jeans have the ability to convey images related to fashion or utilitarian usage, and more than likely both. Workman found that jeans were often used as a status symbol when an identifying mark allowed such recognition. The article provides many implications for manufacturers and retailers of denim. According to the article, when it comes to jeans, which tend to be very similar, the product's association with certain types of people strongly influences the purchase decision.

Evaluative Criteria

The consumer decision-making process is influenced by both external and internal factors. Engel, Blackwell and Miniard (1993) define evaluative criteria as “the standards and specifications used by consumers to compare different products and brands” (p. 51); these criteria are ultimately used by the consumer to evaluate the outcome of their shopping experience and purchase decision. Evaluative criteria have been found to influence the evaluation of apparel in areas such as aesthetics, usefulness, performance, and both intrinsic and extrinsic characteristics (Bell, 2008). The Consumer Decision Making Model shows the consumer thought process as it leads them through the factors used in their purchase of products. Consumers are more likely to apply these criteria to assess product alternatives when the product is a high involvement product (Engel et al., 1993). Because of the personal relationship between consumers and their apparel purchases, evaluative criteria are regularly applied when shopping for clothing items. Studies involving the evaluative criteria used in the purchase decision process of premium denim found that fit, price, brand name, style, fabric, brand awareness, uniqueness, friend/peer opinion, and quality are amongst the most important.

Apparel and Brand

A well recognized brand image is one of the most valuable assets a firm in any industry can possess (Claycomb & Porter, 1999). The brand plays a critical role in that it helps the consumer to infer consumption benefits pertaining to a product pre-purchase and usage (Danaher, Wilson and Davis, 2003). It is believed that consumers form impressions of brands that ultimately have a major influence on purchase decisions. Favorable brand images positively influence patronage decisions and purchase behavior while unfavorable images adversely influence decisions and behaviors. Additionally, a brand distinguishes a product of one seller from those of competitors. Brand image is made up of consumers knowledge and belief about brand attributes and the positive or negative consequences of brand usage (Paul & Olson, 1994).

Forsythe (1991) examined the effect of brand names on shoppers' perception of apparel quality and price. She suggested that consumers use brand name in order to indicate product features and attributes. Forsythe found that shoppers who chose designer brands often did so for reasons other than quality assurance. The study also found the perception of apparel price among so-called brand conscious customers was likely to be influenced by brand name. Laroche, Kim and Zhou (1996) studied the influence of brand familiarity, confidence in brand evaluations, brand attitudes, and their effect on the purchase decision. Their results showed that familiarity with a brand influences consumer confidence toward a brand and therefore positively affects consumer intentions to purchase. Park and Stole (2005) further examined the effects of brand familiarity, experience and information on online apparel purchases. The researchers sought to identify how the consumer uses internal information to decrease the perceived risk of purchase. They concluded that brands that are perceived to be more familiar by customers are more likely to be purchased.

Burns, Chang and Noel (2009) found that in order to increase the purchase of brand-name apparel amongst college students, retailers should highlight the important attributes of brand-name casual apparel. This conclusion was based on certain consumer beliefs about brand-name items such as the tendency of a consumer to associate designer labels or logos with quality or as a status symbol. According to the researchers, the branding of consumer items such as apparel adds product value, and thus, brand recognition is pertinent. Brand names may also be more or less important to consumers in different markets. Norum and Wang (1994) researched the importance of brand name based on the type of store in which the product was found. They concluded that brand name is important to department and specialty store patrons while less important to discount and second-hand store shoppers.

Apparel and the Logo

Bloch (1995) extensively examined the factors that make up a desirable fashion product. He examined various perspectives of a product such as design features, aesthetic elements, brand names and product forms. He concluded that the ideal form for a product is one that is superior to others in that it evokes both positive beliefs and emotions. Furthermore, he believes that this form will compliment the existing goods and will be consistent with consumers' aesthetic taste.

Clothing product information is communicated to the consumer by use of labels on packaging, hangtags and labels sewn into the clothing (Davis, 1987). More often than not, a combination of these elements are used in order to emphasize information such as the brand name or product attributes. The visible logo is one method by which manufacturers differentiate their products from both similar and non-similar products. In a large and highly competitive market for fashion apparel, many products are virtually identical, allowing for the substitute of products in the same category to easily occur (Morgado, 1993). The same researcher studied the

stages of the visible trademark in apparel and credits the Ralph Lauren polo pony and the Izod Lacoste alligator as two pioneers of the movement. Her research suggests that the visible logo plays an important role in differentiating between apparel brands.

Swartz (1983) found that the brand label a product carries affects how a consumer views a product. His research found that there was indeed a positive relationship between brand label and the perceived quality of products. A well-known brand name on a product has the ability to enhance the consumer perception of that product. In these cases the consumers' perception of prestige, design and quality of the product are often higher than that of a nonbranded product (Baugh & Davis, 1989). Ultimately, consumers are not only buying these goods for their utilitarian functions but for social and personal reasons such as status and high image (Baugh & Davis, 1989).

The back pocket embellishment is the physical representation of the brand name on premium denim, specifically located on the back pocket(s) of a pair of denim. While related to the logo, the back pocket embellishment may or may not be the same logo the brand uses on sewn on labels or hang tags. The back pocket embellishment may include; the size of the pocket, shape of the pocket, stitching, studs or rhinestones. Unlike other features of denim, such as the cut, the Back Pocket Embellishment is a consistent design for both men's and women's Premium Denim. This element is a prominent feature on Premium Denim and is used to differentiate the product category from other denim.

Apparel and Quality

Davis (1985) determined that consumers use the physical attributes of garments to classify them as low or high quality garments. Because high quality garments were determined to play a role in how consumers feel about themselves and how they perceive others to view,

having high quality garments is important for consumers in order to satisfy their needs (Hines & O'Neal, 1995). Hines and O'Neal (1995) found that consumers judge clothing quality for its social and psychological consequences.

Heisey (1990) suggested that intrinsic cues, such as the physical make up and design of a product have significant influence over perceived quality. Other research has shown that extrinsic cues such as advertising, presentation, brand name and vendor, have been found to be important in forming perceptions of quality (Behling & Wilch, 1988). Ultimately, consumers appear to use both intrinsic and extrinsic cues to differentiate among products and to shape impressions of quality and value (Forsythe, 1991). Kardes, Cronley, Kellaris and Posavac (2004) suggested that consumers often believe that the price of a product is indicative of its quality. The idea that you “get what you pay for” still exists amongst consumers. Mazursky and Jacoby (1983) found that consumers’ perceptions of product quality across industries might be affected by the product brand name. In terms of apparel, Holstius and Paltschick (1983) found that perceived quality was influenced by brand name specifically among so-called fashion- minded consumers. Similarly, Sproles and Kendall (1986), found that the brand conscious consumer is oriented toward purchasing expensive, well- known brands due to the belief that higher price equates to better quality.

Monroe and Chapman (1987) developed a model that supported Sproles and Kendall’s (1986) research. The model related quality, value and price to the consumer purchase decision. According to the model, consumers use price as a determinant of perceived quality. The model also positively relates willingness to buy to perceived value. This may in fact lead to the consumer’s decision to purchase premium and luxury brand goods. Higher perception of value turns into the willingness of a consumer to purchase higher priced products.

Brand Equity and Brand Loyalty

According to Bristow, Schneider and Schuler (2002) consumers are faced with the task of searching, evaluating and differentiating among comparable products in order to satisfy the consumer needs to a greater or lesser level. The researchers argue that the concept of brand equity includes products that have high brand loyalty, name awareness, perceived quality, and strong brand associations in the mind of the consumer. Keller (1993, p. 2) states that, “customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer is familiar with the brand and holds some favorable, strong and unique brand associations in memory.” This means greater loyalty towards a brand should lead to a greater willingness to pay a premium price for what the consumer considers a value brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Dodds, Monroe and Grenwal (1991) build their study based on the idea that when the quality of a product is difficult to judge solely based on packaging, consumers tend to use attributes such as brand name to evaluate the product quality. Dawar and Parker (1994) tested the use of potential signal use across cultures. They found that amongst brand name, price, physical appearance and retailer reputation, brand name consistently ranked the highest in terms of signal usage. This suggests that brand name is important to consumers for a variety of reasons and thus creates brand equity for the retailer by creating a brand loyal consumer.

Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) distinguish between the two types of loyalty a consumer may experience in terms of brand loyalty. The researchers define purchase loyalty as the willingness of the consumer to make a repeat purchase of the brand. Attitudinal loyalty is viewed as the level of commitment of the consumer towards the brand. Extensive research on the concept of brands has ultimately developed several models of how brands affect consumer behavior (Esch, Langner, Schmidt & Geus, 2006). Esch et al. (2006) believe that brand marketers, particularly in ever changing consumer goods sectors such as apparel, spend resources

to assess and track consumer awareness of brands and brand image. This suggests that the retailers understand the value of creating and maintaining brand loyalty amongst their consumers.

Brand loyalty is present when favorable attitudes for a brand are manifested in repeat buying behavior (Keller, 1993). “Brand loyalty is conceived to be simply biased choice behavior with respect to branded merchandise” (Tucker, 1964, pg. 1). Reichheld (1996) finds that brand-loyal consumers are willing to pay more for a brand because they perceive some unique value in the brand that no substitute can provide. Furthermore, loyal consumers may use more of a particular brand because they feel that they identify with the brand image (Upshaw, 1995). Dick and Basu (1994) propose that brand loyalty should increase when the consumer has more positive emotions towards a brand. Therefore, brands that make consumers happy, affectionate or joyful would be purchased more often and should encourage higher attitudinal commitment (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Apparel and Perception of the Wearer

According to Solomon (1983), products possess symbolic features and at times the consumption of goods depends more on their social meaning rather than their functional utility. The possession and display of material goods are used as indicators of one’s personal characteristics. Solomon concludes that the symbolism embedded in many products is often the reason for their purchase and use. Stone (1962) suggested that cues about one’s identity, values, attitudes and mood are often conveyed through the choice of clothing. Furthermore, he determines that appearance overall has been found to be one of the most powerful vehicles in nonverbal communication to others. Apparel thus imparts value to the wearer, both in his or her own eyes as well as in the eyes of others. Ultimately, the wearer has the ability to decide what he

or she wishes to communicate. From Stone's research it can be concluded that the wearer's desire to indicate certain attributes about themselves plays a role in determining factors in the decision to purchase.

Belk (1978) explored how visibly consumed items, such as apparel, affected the impression formed by others about the consumer. The research suggested that cues included the number and type of goods consumed as well as specific features of the goods such as style, color, uniqueness, condition or brand name. Solomon and Douglas (1987) have shown that apparel and apparel related items are used as symbols in the process of symbolic-completion because apparel items possess a high communicative value.

Rossiter, Percy, and Donovan (1991) constructed a framework in which it is assumed that prestige products, such as premium denim, are high-involvement products, and that sensory gratification, intellectual stimulation, and particularly social approval are the primary factors in selecting a prestige product. Their research also suggests that prestige products require a higher level of interest and knowledge, and strongly relate to the purchaser and wearer's self-concept. It has been found that the public meaning of prestige goods comes from the intrinsic communicative status of these items (Dawson and Cavell, 1987). Dittmar (1994) emphasizes the role that status plays in communicating information about the possessors and about social relationships.

Wang and Wallendorf (2006) based their research on the concept that a product's symbolic meaning affects satisfaction. Products are not only valued for their utilitarian performance but also for the role they play in social life, such as assisting owners in maintaining, demonstrating, and gaining social status. The researchers additionally propose that there are two conditions that set the stage for a product to signal high social status. First, the item must be in a product category that is often used by other people in communicating social status. Second, the

price paid for a product is an indicator of the level of status communicated. Apparel fits both of these criteria and is thus often used to communicate social status. Fournier and Mick (1999) proved that overall consumer satisfaction is partially determined by whether or not their desired social relationships have been supported and furthered by the purchase of a product.

Solomon and Douglas (1987) have shown that apparel and apparel-related items are frequently used as symbols in the symbolic self-completion process. Clothing is a significant social symbol used by individuals in the identification process. According to Feinberg, Mataro and Burroughs (1992), there are three main ideas that emerge from clothing research; individuals form impressions of others based on clothing cues, observers behave differently toward people depending on their clothing, and individuals prefer to wear clothing which communicates images similar to the images they have of themselves. The research sought to determine if apparel indeed offered accurate social information about its wearer. It was found that participants were able to make correct conclusions about an individual's identity from cues present in their apparel. It was found that clothing has a semiotic function that signals various cues about the social identity of its wearer.

The process of fashion diffusion is of importance to fashion marketers, clothing theorists and consumer psychologists (Goldsmith, Moore & Beaudoin, 1999). Behling (1992) uses the Roger's (1962) model in order to represent the stages of adoption, including the ideal types: the innovators, the early adopters, the early majority, the late majority and the laggards. Behling (1992) also suggested that the terms early adopter, fashion leader and fashion innovator are often used interchangeably. The model is a classic bell-shaped curve that corresponds to a normal distribution curve (Rogers, 1962). In general early adopter is often used to encompass early adopters as well as fashion leaders and innovators.

Fashion leaders can be defined as those consumers that are more interested in fashion than other consumers in the market, they are generally more confident in their tastes, are the first to purchase new styles and influence other consumers to adopt and purchase new fashion items (Kaiser, 1990). In general the purchase of apparel satisfies the need to express identity and self-image (Kaiser, 1990). Fashion leaders influence the behavior of later buyers by word of mouth and also by wearing new fashion items for others to see (Martinez and Polo, 1996).

Goldsmith et al. (1999) found that fashion innovators perceive themselves as more comfortable, formal, colorful, and vain than later adopters. The research also noted that fashionable apparel is an important symbolic consumption area for consumers. Regardless of level of disposable income, consumers will often spend more on apparel that they feel perceive as expressing something meaningful about them.

Gibbins (1969) concluded that apparel is used as a means of conveying messages about the wearer and that a major dimension of clothes is their fashionability. He discovered that this judgment can come either from ones' knowledge of the newest clothing styles or from a consideration of styles worn by ones peers. Jones (1968) studied how people are rated based on their fashion choices. His research found that those wearing in-fashion clothing were given higher sociability ratings than those wearing out-of-fashion clothing. It follows that the fashionableness of clothing is an important cue in judging others (Johnson, Nagasawa & Peters, 1977). A conclusion can be made that fashion opinion leaders are more confident in their tastes, generally have a high level of interest and knowledge in and about fashion and have a unique self- image in comparison with other consumers.

Prestige Seeking Consumer Behavior

Vigneron and Johnson (1999) developed a prestige-seeking consumer behavior framework, which related the distinction between premium and non-premium brands to five values based on a specific socioeconomic framework. Their framework examined each of the sources of prestige consumption in order to integrate previous research and thus to define the “key perceived values which form the concept of prestige” (p. 1). The five values consisted of: perceived conspicuous value, perceived unique value, perceived social value, perceived emotional value, and perceived quality value.

The idea of conspicuous consumption as proposed by Thorstein Veblen (1899) continues to play a role in preferences for products, which are consumed or purchased, in public contexts (Corneo & Jeanne, 1997). The ‘Veblen effects’, as they are known today, are said to exist when a consumer exhibits a willingness to pay a higher price for a functionally equivalent good. Evidence suggests that Veblen effects may be significant in markets for luxury items. Veblen proposed that individuals crave status, and that status is enhanced by material wealth. Interpretations of the theory indicate that conspicuous consumption involves signaling. In particular, Veblen discusses two motives, “invidious comparison” and “pecuniary emulation,” for consuming conspicuous goods. Invidious comparison refers to a situation in which members of the higher class consume to distinguish themselves from the lower class. “Pecuniary emulation” exists when members of the lower class consume so that they will be thought of as a members of the higher class (Bagwell & Bernheim, 1996). Thus, one use of prestige products may be to signal both wealth and power; and in relation to this, highly visible prestige products would control the conspicuous consumers shopping behaviors (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999).

Vigneron and Johnson (1999), relate perceived unique value to what is known as the snob effect. The snob effect generally occurs when a new prestige product is launched and the “snob” becomes an early adopter in order to take advantage of the limited number of consumers. Conversely, it may also occur when status sensitive consumers reject a product when it begins to be consumed by the masses (Mason 1981). Ultimately, the idea of scarcity and exclusivity of prestige goods satisfies the need for uniqueness desired by the consumer (Vigneron & Johnson 1999).

The desire to possess prestige brands often serves as a “symbolic marker of group membership” (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999, p.6). In turn, products have some perceived social value to the consumer and go beyond utilitarian usage. Often referred to as the bandwagon effect, this is conceptualized as the antecedent of the snob effect (Berry, 1994). In general, the bandwagon effect influences a consumer to both conform with a prestige group and to be distinguished from non-prestige groups (Dittmar, 1994). Bandwagon consumers use the perceived value of prestige brands to enhance their own self- concept (Vigneron & Johnson 1999). Consumers use products to conform to the opinion of the groups to which they belong. Often the consumer is attempting to imitate affluent lifestyles learned through media by consuming similar prestige products. There is a proposed link between the meanings that individual consumers attach to material goods and prestige. In theory, materialistic consumers consider prestige possessions as a cue to evaluate personal or others’ prestige (Vigneron & Johnson 1999).

Certain goods and services are known to possess an emotional value greater than their functional utility (Sheth, Newman, & Gross 1991). This idea is referred to as the hedonic effect or the perceived emotional value. Luxury items are likely to have some perceived intangible benefits, adding to the likelihood of purchase at a higher price. Roux and Floch (1996) identified

emotional responses associated with consumption such as sensory pleasure, aesthetic beauty or excitement. Advertisers often attempt to elicit an emotional response within a potential consumer based on which one is likely to make the decision to purchase. Therefore, it is assumed that those who are not susceptible to interpersonal influence such as conformity to group norms may represent a more hedonist type of consumer. The emotional response elicited from prestige products for these consumers is a deciding factor in the purchase decision.

Quality is a factor associated with prestige brands across all categories. Prestige brands are expected and assumed to have greater quality than non- prestige brands. Higher price is used as an indicator to the consumer of a higher quality item and often makes products more desirable. Figure 1 shows Vigneron & Johnson (1999), Luxury-Seeking Consumer Behavior Framework.

“ The reassurance consumers derive from prestige brands actually enhances the value they derive from the use of the product. They may feel a heightened pleasure of anticipation long before they use them. For instance consumers may purchase and wear prestigious clothes because they are confident in the judgment of style from the designer” (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999, p.8).

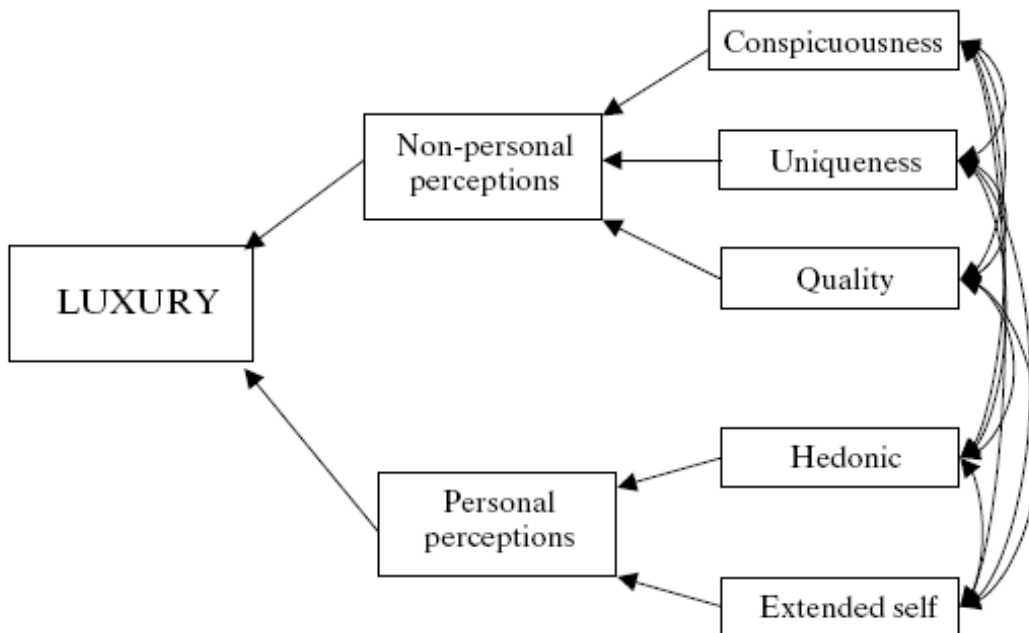


Figure 1

Luxury- Seeking Consumer Behavior Framework (Source: Vigneron & Johnson, 1999)

Personal Adornment

“ Personal adornment is a characteristic of all societies...for many people, dressing oneself can be an aesthetic act, and all aesthetic acts are ways of speaking, through which an individual may speak as an individual, what is said having meaning only because of relationships with other people.” (Eicher & Roach, 1979., p. 109). Dress is used as a form of communication in many ways. The visible logo is used as a nonverbal form of communication about an item of dress and its wearer. Beyond brand name, the logo communicates many ideas about a person, including social status.

Dress gives one the ability to differentiate oneself from others. While the language of personal adornment is often learned from one’s peers and an individual is expected to conform to certain patterns of dress, the goal is to declare a level of uniqueness. According to Eicher and

Roach (1979), “ Acquiring the most expensive clothing is often a way of achieving differentiation through rarity, which usually commands social admiration” (p. 111). Ideas associated with differentiation are often derived from a reference group. This reference group in essence is a ‘subgroup’ to which the individual belongs. Thus, individual differentiation refers to general societal norms for dress and is different from ‘subgroup’ dress norms. Therefore, an individual wishing to achieve differentiation from others in many ways may still be conforming to ‘group code.’ Logo adorned luxury items of dress are used to obtain this level of differentiation. At the same time, these individuals are conforming to group code amongst their own class or peer group.

Human beings depend almost completely on external social cues to identify people; in that respect, dress is imperative to distinguish individuals from one another. As it is termed in Eicher and Roach’s (1979) theory, “ social worth,” is evaluated based on outward appearance. Similar to Conspicuous Consumption, this idea was very influential in societies with social divisions based on class. Symbols of social worth belonged exclusively to the wealthy or elite classes (Eicher & Roach, 1979). Current practices continue to use symbols in order to evaluate social worth. Emblems and logos on clothing are used in place of clothing made from fabrics and rich colors from the past. Interpretations of these symbols are important within one’s peer group. Dress indicates one’s ability to consume. The logo and brand name of fashion items are used as outward indicators of this. Furthermore, the logo is also an indicator of the level of the ability to consume. Thus, the logo is a powerful tool in communication through dress. Brand names and logos contribute to the usefulness of dress as a functional tool within society.

Conceptual Definitions

1. Brand name- “ An arbitrarily adopted name that is given by a manufacturer or merchant to an article or service to distinguish it as produced or sold by that manufacturer or merchant and that may be used and protected as a trademark” (Brand name, 2010)
2. Fashion pocket- “ Embellishment or decorated pocket” (“Finding Jeans”, n.d.)
3. Quality- “ A factor used by many manufacturers, retailers, and marketers to differentiate their product from their competitors.” (Hines & O’Neal, 1995, p.227)
4. Fashion innovation- “ The behavior of fashion innovators and the process of fashion diffusion.” (Goldsmith, Moore, & Beaudoin, 1999. p.7)
5. Social status- “ The relative rank that an individual holds, with attendant rights, duties, and lifestyles in a social hierarchy based upon honor and prestige.” (“Social Status”, n.d.)
6. Brand loyalty- “ Simply biased choice behavior with respect to branded merchandise.” (Tucker, 1964, p. 3)

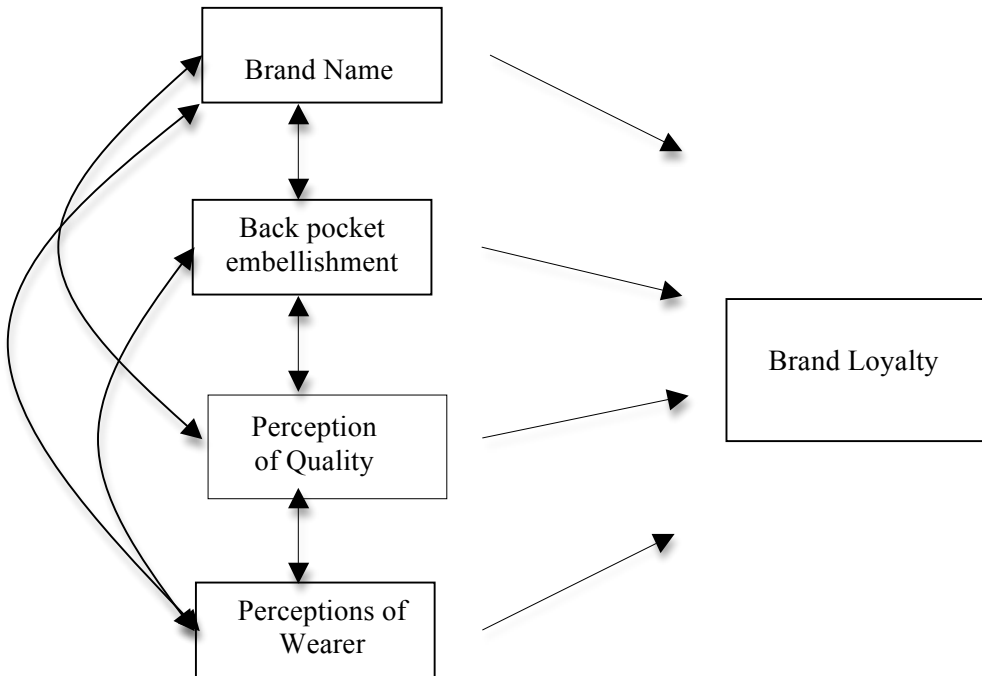


Fig 2 Proposed Model

Proposed Model

The proposed model for the study reflects how the four variables: Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality and Perception of the Wearer (as they related to Premium Denim) are all related to each other. The model also shows how Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of the Quality and Perception of the Wearer will influence the Brand Loyalty of Premium Denim consumers.

Hypotheses

H1: Brand Name, the Back Pocket Embellishment, the Perception of Quality and the Perception of the wearer will be significantly related with each other

H2: Brand Name, the Back Pocket Embellishment, the Perception of Quality and the Perception of the wearer will significantly influence the Brand Loyalty of Premium Denim wearers.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Online Survey Method

The method of research for this study was a online survey. The online survey method has advantages such as saved costs of printing and mailing (Dillman, 2000). Additionally, the likelihood for coding errors is reduced, since the electronic survey has the ability to record data at the same time respondents are answering. Having the advantage of design flexibility and the variety of question types, allows data to be accurately captured. Placing pictures throughout the survey that are accurate and detailed allowed for more precise assessment by the respondents. The capability to embed links into the survey allowed for the capturing of qualified respondents only to be counted as complete, ensuring more accurate results. Lastly, a major advantage of the collection method is the ability to obtain a national sample.

The sample for the survey was purchased through Survey Sampling International using their Esomar 26 program. This allowed for the sample to be targeted by age and income and uses a flexible rewards system. The targeted participants of this study are Premium Denim wearers ages 18 to 40 with an income range of \$40,000 and above.

Description of the Survey

The on-line survey (Appendix A), which has been programmed using Qualtrics, took approximately 10 minutes or less for participants to complete. The survey had a total of 20 questions, and asked for information on five topics: Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment,

Perception of Quality and Perception of the Wearer, Brand Loyalty and demographic information (Table 1). There were 3 points at which a response was mandatory and a respondent could potentially screen out of the survey: do you own denim priced at \$130 and above? age, and income range. All of these questions qualified respondents for the survey and had to be answered in a certain manner. The questions were either adapted from instruments in related research, or designed for the study by the researcher.

Table 1
Survey Items and the Variables they Measure

Item	Variable
1. I would be likely to purchase denim that had a well known brand name.	Brand Name
2. If faced with choosing between two pairs of denim with similar features, I would select the pair with the better known well name.	
3. The brand name of denim is important to me when deciding which denim to purchase.	
4. How important is the back pocket embellishment when purchasing denim.	Back Pocket Embellishment
5. How important is the back pocket embellishment on indicating the social status (wealth of the wearer).	
6. I often notice the back pocket embellishment on others when wearing denim.	
7. The best quality in denim.	Perception of Quality

8. The most sophisticated in denim.
9. The most luxurious in denim.
10. Premium denim wearers are willing to try ideas about clothing fashions. Perception of Wearer
11. Premium denim wearers often influence the type of clothing items their friends buy.
12. Premium denim wearers are often turned to by others for advice on fashion and clothing.
13. I will purchase this brand the next time I purchase Premium Denim. Brand Loyalty
14. I am committed to this brand.
15. I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over others.
-

The first section of the survey had three questions to measure the importance of Brand Name on the purchase of denim. Questions developed by Bristow, Schneider, and Schuler (2002) were used. The researchers created the brand dependence scale to measure consumers' use of brand name to differentiate amongst product alternatives. The entire sets of questions developed were found to have reliability in determining the relationship between brand dependence and brand disparity. Three questions were adapted from their seven-question scale to fit the purposes of this research.

The next part of the survey contained three questions and measured the influence of the Back Pocket Embellishment on the respondents' perception of denim. No formal scale has been created to measure the Back Pocket Embellishment, therefore the questions were created by the researcher. The researcher posed the question asking the respondents if they notice the back

pocket embellishment on others (question 6). This is crucial to being able to analyze the overall importance of the visible interpretation of the Brand Name. Rahman (2009), used pictures of the back pockets of denim to discover if the consumer had a preference based solely on design. His research found that when asked, respondents had preferences based on the back pockets.

The three questions (7-9) that measured the respondent's Perceptions of the Quality of denim based on the back pocket embellishment were adopted from Vigneron and Johnson (1999), Brand Luxury Scale. This scale was created in order to measure the perceived luxuriouness of a brand and included the Perception of Quality. The next three questions (10-12) similarly measured the respondent's Perception of the level of Fashion Innovation of the wearer of premium denim. The questions used were adapted from Feinberg, Mataro & Burroughs (1992) study which measured individuals use of clothing to communicate their social identity to others.

The final questions were based on Brand Loyalty and were adapted from previous studies on respondents' brand loyalty behaviors, particularly to brand name products (Bristow, Schneider, & Schuler, 2002; Keller, 1993).

While the majority of the questions in the survey measured variables of the research, there were a few demographic that were used to collect information from the respondent. For the purpose of ensuring the respondent qualified for the survey, question 13 asked if the respondent owned a pair of premium denim. Questions 18 and 20 respectively asked the age and income range of the respondents, which also determined whether or not the respondent qualified for the study. The survey also contained demographic information, such as the respondent's gender and occupation.

Data Collection

After approval by the Institutional Review Board, a survey link to the web was distributed to the potential respondents by Survey Sampling International (SSI). The link was sent to qualifying members of their database, ages 18-40 with average yearly household income ranges of \$40,000 and above. The administrative aspects of the survey, including access to questions, editing and viewing results were password protected and not accessible by the respondents. Upon total completion of the survey, respondents were sent to an embedded link serviced by SSI to be counted as complete.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Response rate

The survey website address was distributed by Survey Sampling Incorporated (SSI), to members of their database fitting the demographic requirements of the survey: age 18-40 and income range of \$40,000 and above. There were a total of 469 responses of which 275 were considered complete by terms of the qualifications of the study. This yielded a response rate of 58.6%, which is a considerably high response rate. Given the method through which the survey was administered, this rate met the expectations of the researchers. The respondents were offered an incentive through Survey Sampling Incorporated (SSI), for their participation.

Sample Characteristics

The sample consisted of 275 complete respondents from across the country, all of who were recruited using the SSI database. There were 138 female respondents and 137 male respondents, this resulted in an almost even split. The age range for qualified responses was ages 18 to 40; within this 19 percent were between the ages 18 and 24, 48% were between the ages of 25 and 31 and 33 percent were between the ages of 32 and 40. The most reported occupation was an executive/administrator with 28 percent, followed closely by professional/technician (22%) and other (19%). The majority of the respondents (66%) reported their ethnicity as white, 13 percent were black and both Asian/pacific islander and Hispanic were both reported at 8 percent. The yearly household income was required to be at least \$40,000 in order for responses to

qualify as complete. The majority of respondents reported income above \$10,000 (32%), 24 percent reported both \$60,000-\$79,999 and \$80,000 and \$99,999. Table 2 shows the demographics for the study broken down by category.

Table 2
Demographic Characteristics of the Sample

Characteristic	Frequency	Percent %
Gender		
Male	138	50%
Female	137	50%
Age		
18-24	55	19%
25-31	136	48%
32-40	92	33%
Occupation		
Homemaker	21	7%
Student	39	14%
Executive/administrator	78	28%
Clerical or service worker	10	4%
Professional/technician	61	22%
Sales/marketing	14	5%

Trades-person/Machine operator	4	1%
Other	54	19%
Ethnicity		
White	187	66%
Black	38	13%
American Indian	6	2%
Asian/Pacific Islander	23	8%
Hispanic Origin	24	8%
Other	5	2%
Income		
\$40,000-\$59,999	54	20%
\$60,000-\$79,999	65	24%
\$80,000-\$99,999	67	24%
above \$100,000	89	32%

Data Analysis

First, using Cronbach's alpha, internal reliability was tested for the following variables: Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality, Perception of the Wearer and Brand Loyalty. Following this, the data were analyzed with Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). A reliability of .70 or higher is considered acceptable in most social science research situations. The questions measuring brand name had an acceptable reliability coefficient of .916. The three questions measuring the importance of the Back pocket embellishment had an

unacceptable alpha of .449. The three questions measuring respondents' beliefs about the quality of Premium Denim had an acceptable alpha of .940. The questions measuring the respondents' perceptions of the wearer had an alpha of .869, which is also acceptable. The final three questions on brand loyalty had an acceptable alpha of .820. Next, the responses to the three questions under each variable were summed in order to determine a single variable. This was done so that further analysis of each of the variables could be completed.

Relationships among variables

Next, the variables were analyzed using regression analysis (see Table 3). From this analysis, the following 10 correlations were given; Brand name and Brand Loyalty, Back Pocket Embellishment and Brand Loyalty, Quality and Brand Loyalty, Wearer and Brand Loyalty, Back Pocket Embellishment and Brand Name, Quality and Brand Name, Wearer and Brand Name, Quality and Back Pocket Embellishment, Wearer and Back Pocket Embellishment, Wearer and Quality.

The results for multiple regression analysis show that there is a positive correlation between 7 of the ten relationships between variables. Brand Name and Brand Loyalty ($r=.266$), Perception of Quality and Brand Loyalty ($r=.367$), Perception of the Wearer and Brand Loyalty ($r=.298$), Perception of Quality and Brand Name ($r=.457$), Perception of the Wearer and Brand Name ($r=.597$), Perception of the Wearer and Back Pocket Embellishment ($r=.104$), Perception of the Wearer and Perception of the Quality ($r=.597$).

Table 3

Relationships among the Variables

Variable	Brand Loyalty	Brand Name	Back Pocket Embellishment	Quality	Wearer
Brand Loyalty					
Back Name	.266*				
Back Pocket Embellishment	-.007	.019			
Perception of Quality	.367*	.457*	-.070		
Perception of the Wearer	.298*	.597*	.104*	.597*	

Note * significant

Multiple Regression Analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used to measure how strongly the independent variables (Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality and the Perception of the Wearer) predicted the dependent variable (Brand Loyalty). According to the output, the R² value is .150. This means that 15% of the variance in Brand Loyalty can be explained by the independent variables: Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality and the

Perception of the Wearer. The Anova table illustrated in figure 4 shows the significance of the four independent variables in predicting Brand Loyalty $F(4, 278)=12.098, p<.001$.

Table 4
Summary of ANOVA

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F
Regression	408.887	4	102.222	12.089*
Residual	2316.862	274	8.456	
Total	2725.749	278		

* $p<.001$

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Hypothesis Tests

H1: Brand Name, the Back Pocket Embellishment, the Perception of Quality and the Perceptions of the wearer will be significantly related to each other

This hypothesis was partially supported. Four of the six relationships were found to have a significant relationship to one another: Brand Name and the Perception of Quality ($r=.457$), Brand Name and the Perception of the Wearer ($r=.597$), Back Pocket Embellishment and the Perception of the Wearer ($r=.104$) and the Perception of Quality and the Perception of the Wearer ($r=.597$).

H2: Brand Name, the Back Pocket Embellishment, the Perception of Quality and the Perceptions of the Wearer will significantly influence the Brand Loyalty of Premium Denim wearers.

This hypothesis was supported. Fifteen percent of the variance in Brand Loyalty is explained by the four independent variables. It was further discovered that the Perception of Quality had a Beta of .280 and was the only variable that influenced the Brand Loyalty of Premium Denim Wearers.

Study Limitations

A few of the limitations in this study were related to the lack of research on Premium Denim. While there have been a few studies on denim in general, there has been virtually no

research on Premium Denim. This caused many assumptions to be made based on information that may not have necessarily related to Premium Denim. Other limitations involved the design of the survey. The parameters set fourth by the program through which the survey was designed limited how some of the questions were presented. Design guidelines, such as limits on pictures and click through capabilities challenged the survey and question designed.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship among each of the variable pairs: the Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality and the Perception of the Wearer. Furthermore, the influence of Brand Name, Back Pocket Embellishment, Perception of Quality and the Perception of the Wearer on the Brand Loyalty of Premium Denim wearers was analyzed. The review of literature indicated that brand name was an important factor in how certain products are consumed. It was found that evaluation of the brand name affected the tendency of the consumer to associate designer labels or logos with quality or as symbols of status. The literature also suggested that the designer label served as a symbol to communicate social and economic messages to others. It was also found that loyal consumers used more of a particular brand because they felt that they identified with the brand image. Brand name ranked the highest in terms of signal usage by consumers amongst other factors. Ultimately, these factors were found to lead to brand loyalty on some level.

Several results from this study can be applied to the branding of apparel. Brand Name was found to have a significant relationship with both the Perceptions of the Quality of Premium Denim and Perceptions of the Wearer. These results support the importance of Brand Name in the consumer decision- making process. While this can be applied to apparel in general, Premium Denim producers should continue to focus on branding as one of their key strategies.

These findings support Danaher, Wilson and Davis 2003 study, which found that the consumer will infer the benefits of product consumption based on brand alone. These findings also support Burns, Chang and Noel (2009) study, which found that consumers use certain brand names as status symbol markers. These findings further suggest that Premium Denim is consumed for purposes other than basic fit as suggested in Cotton Incorporated's 1995 denim study ("denim apparel market", 1995). Premium Denim marketers should use this as an advertising tool by selling the lifestyle of the wearer.

This study also found a significant relationship the Back Pocket Embellishment and the Perceptions of the Wearer. These results back up Baugh and Davis (1989) study, which indicated that consumers purchase goods for social reasons. Premium Denim wearers recognize the Back Pocket Embellishment as an indicator of personal attributes of the wearer. For the Premium Denim wearer, the desire to be associated with attributes such as a social status or level of fashion innovation may also be reasons for consumption. The Back Pocket Embellishment may be indicative of price or shopping behaviors, which in turn will lead to assumptions such as social status or cultural groups. Furthermore, Premium Denim Wearers may associate the Back Pocket Embellishment with the brand name and thus associate the wearer with the attributes of the brand.

The Perception of Quality was also significantly related to the Perception of the Wearer. This information is valuable to both the production and branding of apparel items. The quality of an item has an affect on how the consumer is viewed and leads to a positive evaluation of the consumer. Items that are perceived as quality, are associated with a positive evaluation of the wearer (level of fashion innovation/social status), which may lead to a brand loyal or product category loyalty amongst the consumer. This challenges apparel manufactures to create quality

items. Further, retailers should market the attributes that indicate quality through their advertising.

The research also indicated that 15% of the Brand Loyalty to Premium Denim brands can be explained by the Perception of Quality. These results suggest that quality is an important factor in the Brand Loyalty behaviors of Premium Denim consumers. These findings agree with Holstius and Patrick's 1983 study that found that perceived quality of apparel was influenced by brand name. While there are many brands within the Premium Denim category, consumers tend to be loyal to the brands that they perceive as having high quality. As related to apparel in general, this is an important finding for both apparel production and marketing. Further, a high perception of value leads to consumer willingness to purchase higher priced products (Monroe & Chapman, 1987). This can be applied to Premium Denim and beyond to other premium products, which tend to have a higher price point. Creating a quality item and focusing marketing on the characteristics of quality will lead to brand loyal consumers.

The demographics of the respondents who were Premium Denim wearers also has implications for Premium Denim producers. There was an equal amount of reported male and female respondents. This indicates that Premium Denim as a product category appeals to a mixed market. Therefore, Premium Denim producers should advertise in gender neutral as well as gender specific mediums (such as magazines). It was also found that the majority of Premium Denim wearers reported an annual household income of \$100,000 and up. This is important for product placement in specific markets, locations and advertisements.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research on this topic would attempt to reveal stronger relationships between the variables. Using a survey format that allowed more picture capabilities, and the use of more

brands of Premium Denim may show stronger relationships between the variables. Further, using the combination of the survey method and focus group would allow for more in depth conversation about the feelings wearing a premium product evokes within a wearer. More open-ended questions on the survey would be able to further measure adjectives associated with specific back pocket embellishments. There is also opportunity to research Premium Denim brands' target markets and who the consumers actually are, how and why they consume. Future studies should try to determine the consumers' usage for Premium Denim and other premium products. Determining if the consumer is purchasing solely to give off a specific image about oneself versus for the quality of the product would add to research concerning branding. Further research on the advertisement techniques of the brands would also yield results that could be used by Premium Denim and other apparel brands.

REFERENCES

- Allen, R., & Huffman, M. (2005). An analysis of the us bottom weights market: Production, consumption, and denim. *Journal of Textile and Apparel, Technology and Management*, 4(4), 1- 11.
- Bagwell, L. S., & Bernheim, B.D (1996). Veblen effects in a theory of conspicuous consumption. *The American Economic Review*, 86(3). Retrieved from:
<http://www.jstor.org/pss/2118201>
- Baugh, D. F., & Davis, L. L. (1989). The effect of store image on consumers' perceptions of designer and private label clothing. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 7(2), 15- 21.
- Behling, D.U. (1992). Three and a half decades of fashion adoption research: What have we learned? *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 10(2), 34- 41.
- Behling, D.U., & Wilch, J. (1988). Perceptions of branded clothes by male consumers. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 6, 43-47.
- Bell, M. (2008). Prestige seeking consumer behavior and evaluative criteria of premium brand jeans. *Scholars Archieve @ OSU*. Retrieved October 1, 2009 from:
<http://hdl.handle.net/1957/8458>
- Belk, R.W. (1978). Assessing the effects of visible consumption on impression formation. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 5, 39- 47.
- Berry, C. J. (1994). *The idea of Luxury: A Conceptual and Historical Investigation*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Bloch, P. H. (1995). Seeking the ideal form: Product design and consumer respons. *The Journal of Marketing*, 59(3), 16-29.
- Brand-name. (2010). *Merriam-Webster dictionary.com*. Retrieved September 21, 2010 from <http://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/brand-name>
- Bridson, K., & Evans, J. (2004). The secret to a fashion advantage is brand orientation. *International Journal of Retail Distribution and Management*, 32, 403-411.
- Bristow, D. N., Schneider, K. C., & Schuler, D. K. (2002). The brand dependence scale: Measuring consumers' use of brand name to differentiate among product alternatives. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 11(6), 343- 356.
- Burns, L. D., Chang, Y., & Noel, C. J. (2009). Attitudinal versus normative influence in the purchase of brand-name casual apparel. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 25(1), 79-109.
- Carter, E. (2007). What exactly makes premium denim so premium? *Stylelist*. Retrieved October 1, 2009, from: <http://www.stylelist.com/2007/01/16/what-exactly-makes-premium-denim-so-premium/>
- Chaudhuri, A., & Holbrook, M. B. (2001). The chain effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty. *Journal of Marketing*, 65, 81-93.
- Church, S.M. (2007). An analysis of the premium denim market. Retrieved October 1, 2009 from: <http://www.nctextileconnect.org/documents/Premium%20Denim%20Edited.pdf>
- Claycomb, C., & Porter, S. S. (1999). The influence of brand recognition on retail store image. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 6(6), 373-387.
- Corneo,G., & Jeanne, O. (1997), Conspicuous consumption, snobbism and conformism. *Journal of Public Economics*, 66, 55-71.

- Danaher, P. J., Wilson, I. W., & Davis, R. A. (2003). A comparison of online and offline consumer brand loyalty. *Marketing Science*, 22(4), 461-476.
- Danziger, P. (2005). *Let them eat cake: Marketing luxury to the masses- as well as the classes*. Chicago: Dearborn Trade Publishing.
- Davis, F. (1989). Of maids' uniforms and blue jeans: The drama of status ambivalences in clothing and fashion. *Qualitative Sociology*, 12(4), 337-355.
- Davis, L.L. (1985). Effects of physical quality and brand labeling on perceptions of clothing quality. *Perceptual and Motor Skills*, 61, 671-677.
- Davis, L. L. (1987). Consumer use of label information in ratings of clothing quality and clothing fashionability. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 6(1), 8-14.
- Davies, J. (2005). Denim has legs. *The San Diego Union Tribune*. Retrieved September 9, 2009, from: http://www.signonsandiego.com/uniontrib/20051005/news_1b5denim.html
- Dawar, N., & Parker, P. (1994). Marketing universals: Consumers' use of brand name, price, physical appearance, and retailer reputation as signals of product quality. *Journal of Marketing*, 58(2), 81-95.
- Dawson, S., & Cavell, J. (1987). Status recognition in the 1980s: Invidious distinction revisited. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 14, 487-491.
- DeLong, M., LaBat, K., Nelson N., Koh, A., & Kim, Y. (2002). Global Products, global markets: Jeans in Korea and the United States. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 20(4), 238-245.
- “Denim apparel market”. (2005). *Cotton Incorporated*. Retrieved October 1, 2009 from: <http://www.cottoninc.com/PressReleases/?articleID=351>
- Denim does it. (2007, January 25). *Women's Wear Daily*, 18, 2.
- Dick, A. S., & Basu, K. (1994). Customer loyalty: Toward an integrated

- conceptual framework. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 22, 99–113.
- Dillman, D.A. (2000). *Mail and Internet Surveys*. New York: Wiley
- Dittmar, H. (1994). Material possessions as stereotypes: Material images of different socio-economic groups. *Journal of Economic Psychology*, 15, 561-585.
- Dodds, W.B., Monroe, K. B., & Grewal ,D. (1991). Effects of price, brand and store information on buyers' product evaluations. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 28 ,307-319.
- Esch, F. R., Langner, T., Schmitt, B. H., & Geus, P. (2006). Are brands forever? How brand knowledge and relationships affect current and future purchases. *Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 15 (2), 98-105.
- Eicher, J.B., & Roach, M.E. (n.d.). The language of personal adornment. In Barnard, M. (Ed.), *Fashion theory: A reader*. (p. 109-121). New York, NY: Routledge.
- Engel, J. F., Blackwell, R. D., & Miniard, P. W. (1993). *Consumer Behavior* (7th ed.). Chicago, IL: The Dryden Press.
- Feinberg, R. A., Mataro, L., Burroughs, & W. J., (1992). Clothing and social identity. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 11(1), 18-23.
- “ Finding jeans that fit.” (n.d.). *Jeans and Accessories*. Retrieved September, 21, 2010 from: <http://www.jeans-and-accessories.com/jeans-that-fit.html>
- Fournier, S., & Mick, D.G. (1999). Rediscovering satisfaction. *Journal of Marketing*, 63, 5-23.
- Forsythe, S. M. (1991). Effect of private, designer, and national brand names on shoppers' perception of apparel quality and price. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 9(2), 1-6.
- Gerber, M. (2006, June). Denim domination. *License Magazine*, 242- 246
- Gibbins, K. (1969). Communication aspects of women's clothes and their relationship to fashionability. *British Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 8, 301-12.

- Goldsmith, R. E., Heitmeyer, J. R., & Freiden, J. B. (1991). Social values and fashion leadership. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 10(1), 37- 45.
- Goldsmith, R. E., Moore M. A., & Beaudoin P. (1999). Fashion innovativeness and self-concept: a replication. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 8(1), 7-18.
- Gordon, B. (1991). American denim: Blue jeans and their multiple layers of meaning. *Dress and Popular Culture*. Bowling Green: Bowling Green Popular press
- Heisey, F. L. (1990). Percieved quality and predicted price: Use of the minimum information environment in evaluating apparel. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 8(4), 22-28.
- Hines, J. D., & O'Neal, G. S. (1995). Underlying determinants of clothing quality: The consumers' perspective. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 13(4), 227- 233.
- Holmes, E. (2009). Seeking a \$200 fit in \$60 jeans. *The Wall Street Journal*. Retrieved October 1, 2009, from:
<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052970203706604574373182520071954.html>
- Holstius, K., & Paltschik, M. (1983). Brand names and perceived value. *European Research*, 11, 151-156
- Johnson, B. H., Nagasawa, R. H., & Peters, K. (1977). Clothing style differences: Their effect on the impression of society. *Family and Consumer Sciences Research Journal*, 6(1), 58- 63.
- Jones, M. (1968). Esteem accorded to clothed figures as related to fashion and perception. *Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: Ohio State University*.
- Kaiser, S. B. (1990). *The social psychology of clothing* (2nd ed.). New York: Macmillian.
- Kardes, F. R., Cronley, M. L., Kellaris, J. K., & Posavac, S. S. (2004). The role of selective information processing in price-quality inference. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 31, 368-374.

- Keller, K. L. (1993). Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity. *Journal of Marketing*, 57, 1-22.
- Klein, N. (2000). *No logo*. New York, NY: Picador USA.
- Laroche, M., Kim, C., & Zhou, L. (1996). Brand familiarity and confidence as determinants of purchase intention: An empirical test in a multiple brand context. *Journal of Business Research*, 37, 115-120.
- Little, D. (2007). *Denim, an American story*. New York, NY: Schiffer
- Luxury. (2010.). *Merriam-Webster.com*. Retrieved September 21, 2010 from <http://merriam-webster.com/dictionary/luxury>
- Martínez, E., & Polo, Y. (1996). Adopter categories in the acceptance process for Consumer durables. *The Journal of Product and Brand Management*, 5(3), 34-47.
- Marzurksy, D., & Jacoby, J. (1983). *Forming impressions of merchandise and service quality: An exploratory study* (Working Paper No. 83-86). New York: New York University, Institute of Retail Management.
- Mason, R. S. (1981). *Conspicuous Consumption*, New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Monroe, K. B., & Chapman, J.D. (1987). Framing effects on buyers' subjective product evaluations. *Advances in Consumer Research*, 14, 193-197.
- Moore, L. (2007). *The rise of brands*. New York, NY: Berg.
- Morgado, M. A. (1993). Animal trademark emblems on fashion apparel: A semiotic interpretation. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 11(3), 31- 38.

- Norum, P.S., & Wang, H. (1994). The children's wear consumer: An investigation of store patronage patterns in the U.S.A. *Journal of Consumer Studies and HomeEconomics*, 18, 331-353.
- Park, J., & Stoel, L. (2005). Effect of brand familiarity, experience and information on online apparel purchase. *International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management*, 33(2), 148-160.
- Paul, P. J., & Olson, J. C. (1994). *Understanding Consumer Behavior*. Burr Ridge, Illinois: Richard D. Irwin, Inc.
- “Premium denim still hot with US consumers.” (2009, September 6). *FashionMag*. Retrieved October, 1, 2009 from: <http://uk.fashionmag.com/news-72226-Premium-denim-still-hot-with-US-consumers-investors>
- Rahman, O. (2009). Evaluative Criteria of Denim Jeans: A Cross-National Study of Functional and Aesthetic Aspects. Retrieved October, 1, 2009 from: http://polyu.academia.edu/WingsunLiu/Papers/730782/Evaluative_Criteria_of_Denim_Jeans_A_Cross-national_Study_of_Functional_and_Aesthetic_Aspects
- Reichheld, F. (1996). *The Loyalty Effect*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
- Rogers, E. M. (1962). *Diffusion of innovations*. New York: The Free Press.
- Rossiter, J.R., Percy, L., & Donovan, R.J. (1991). A better advertising planning grid. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 31(5), 11-21.
- Roux, E., & Floch, J. M. (1996). Gérer L'Ingérable: La Contradiction Interne de toute Maison de Luxe. *Décisions Marketing*, 9, 15-23
- Sheth, J. N., Newman, B. I., & Gross, B. L. (1991). Why we buy what we buy: A theory of consumption values. *Journal of Business Research*, 22 (1), 159-170.

- Social Status. (n.d.). In Britannica online. Retrieved from <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/551450/social-status>
- Solomon, M., & Douglas, S. (1987). Diversity in product symbolism: The case of female executive clothing. *Psychology and Marketing*, 4, 184-212.
- Solomon, M.R. (1983). The role of products as social stimuli: A symbolic interactionism perspective. *Journal of Consumer Research*, 10, 319-329.
- Sproles, G. B., & Kendall, E. L. (1986). A methodology for profiling consumers' decision-making styles. *The Journal of Consumer Affairs*, 24, 134-147.
- Steinhauer, J. (2005). Class matters: When the jonses wear jeans. *The New York Times*. Retrieved from: <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/05/29/national/class/CONSUMPTION-FINAL.html>
- Stone, G. P. (1962). Appearance and the Self. In Arnold M. Rose (ed.), *Human Behavior and Social Processes: An Interactionist Approach*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin. 86-118
- Sullivan, J. (2006). *Jeans: A cultural history of an American icon*. New York, NY: Gotham Books.
- Swartz, T.A. (1983). Brand symbols and message differentiation. *Journal of Advertising Research*, 23, 59-64.
- Tucker, W. T. (1964). The development of brand loyalty. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 1(3), 32- 35.
- Upshaw, L. (1995), *Building Brand Identity*. New York, NY: John Wiley & Sons.
- Veblen, T. B. (1899). *The Theory of the Leisure Class*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Vigneron, F., & Johnson, L.W. (1999). A review and a conceptual framework of prestige-seeking consumer behavior. *Academy of Marketing Science Review*,1. Retrieved from <http://www.amsreview.org/articles/vigneron01-1999.pdf>

Walker, R. (2008). *Buying in*. New York, NY: Random House.

Wang, J., & Wallendorf, M. (2006). Materialism, status signaling and product satisfaction. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34(4), 494- 505.

Workman, J. E. (1988). Trait inferences based on perceived ownership of designer, brand name, or store brand jeans. *Clothing and Textiles Research Journal*, 6(2), 23- 29.

Appendix A

WebPages

Web Page Address: https://qtrial.qualtrics.com/SE/?SID=SV_5BetgWpk7MWQPWY

CONSENT LETTER

To whom it may concern;

The following survey is part of a study titled, “Premium Denim: How Premium is the Brand”. The study is being conducted by Tiarra Wade of the Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors (TMI) department at University of Georgia, (614) 354-3278 under the direction of Dr. Jan Hathcote (TMI, University of Georgia, (706) 542-4907. Activities related to this research may be published.

The purpose of this study is to discuss the importance of the brand name on premium denim and the effect it has on the perception of the denim, the wearer and their buying behaviors. Participation in this research is voluntary and you may withdraw at any time without penalty or skip questions you feel uncomfortable answering. To partake in this research, please answer the survey questions and submit the survey. The expected duration of this study is ten to fifteen minutes. Participation in this research is anonymous and no names will be associated with the survey.

If you have questions do not hesitate to ask now or at a later date. You may contact Tiarra Wade at (614) 354-3278 or tswade5@uga.edu. Thank you for your time.

Tiarra Wade
Graduate Student
Textiles, Merchandising and Interiors
University of Georgia
(614) 354-3278
tswade5@uga.edu

Premium Denim: How Premium is the Brand

Q2 BRAND NAME Please answer the following questions

I would be likely to purchase denim that had a well known brand name (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If faced with choosing between two pairs of denim with similar features (fit, style, color etc.), I would select the pair with the better known name brand (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The brand name of denim is important to me when deciding which denim to purchase (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q23 BRAND NAME Please answer the following questions

I would be likely to purchase denim that had a well known brand name (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If faced with choosing between two pairs of denim with similar features (fit, style, color etc.), I would select the pair with the better known name brand (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The brand name of denim is important to me when deciding which denim to purchase (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 BACK POCKET EMBELLISHMENT Back pocket embellishment includes; size of the pocket, shape of the pocket, stitching, studs or rhinestones. Please answer the following questions in reference to the back pocket embellishments seen below. Please observe the images of back pocket embellishments below and answer the questions which follow

Q3 True Religion



Q4 Rock & Republic



Q5 7 For all Mankind



Q6 Citizens of Humanity



Q7 Antik Denim



Q8 Please answer the following questions

How important is the back pocket embellishment when purchasing denim (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
How important is the back pocket embellishment on indicating the social status (wealth) of the wearer (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q9 Please answer the following question

I often notice the back pocket embellishment on others when wearing denim (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
-------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------	-----------------------

Q13 PERCEPTION OF QUALITY & WEARER Based on the back pocket embellishment below do you agree or disagree with the following statements on the quality of premium denim



Q14 Please answer below

The best quality in denim (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The most sophisticated in denim (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The most luxurious in denim (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q20 Please answer the following based on premium denim (denim priced at \$130 and above) wearers

Premium denim wearers are willing to try new ideas about clothing fashions (1)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Premium denim wearers often influence the type of clothing items their friends buy (2)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Premium denim wearers are often turned to by others for advice on fashion and clothing (3)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 Do you own denim priced at \$130 and above?

- Yes (1)
- No (2)

Q15_1 BRAND LOYALTY Please enter the brand name of your MOST frequently purchased pair of premium denim (denim priced at \$130 and above) in the boxes below and answer the following questions based on that brand ONLY I will purchase this brand the next time I purchase premium denim

Click to write Statement 1 (7)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
--------------------------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Q15_2 I am committed to this brand

Brand from above (7)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
-------------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Q15_3 I would be willing to pay a higher price for this brand over others

Brand from above (7)	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
-------------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------	----------------------

Q17 What is your gender

- Male (1)
- Female (2)

Q18 What is your age

- 18-24 (1)
- 25-31 (2)
- 32-40 (3)
- Other (4)

Q19 What is your occupation

- Homemaker (1)
- Student (2)
- Executive/administrator (3)
- Clerical or service worker (4)
- Professional/Technician (5)
- Sales/Marketing (6)
- Trades-person/Machine Operator (7)
- Other (8)

Q20 What is your ethnicity

- White (1)
- Black (2)
- American Indian (3)
- Asian/Pacific Islander (4)
- Hispanic Origin (5)
- Other (6)

Q22 What is your average yearly household income

- \$0-\$39,999 (1)
- \$40,000-\$59,999 (2)
- \$60,000-\$79,999 (3)
- \$80,000-\$99,999 (4)
- above \$100,000 (5)