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Determinants of Green Purchase Intentions: Positive Word of Mouth as moderator

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Current research examines the extent to which environmental concern and green awareness impact on intentions of customers to purchase green products and further examines the moderating role of Positive World of Mouth in relationship of green awareness and environmental concern with Green Purchase Intentions. Based on the *Theory of Reasoned Action*, a customer's attitude verses intentions model has been developed and tried to address an attitude-intentions gap to find out the reality of green phenomenon in a developing country like Pakistan. Age-based quota sampling method is used for the collection of data and was assured that a certain percentage of respondents fit to each explicit age group. 344 was the total sample size of the study. A series of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) via AMOS 22 was performed to establish the discriminant validity of the variables. Data analysis techniques of Preacher and Hayes (2004) were executed and model one was applied for moderation analysis in SPSS 21. Overall, a good support was found for the hypothesized links. It was found that Positive Word of Mouth moderates the association of environmental concern and green awareness with green purchase intentions. For theorists, this, customers' attitude verses intentions model offers a better psychological explanation of the factors impacting customers green purchase intentions.

*Keywords:*Environmental Concern, Green Awareness, Positive word of mouth, Green Purchase Intentions, Theory of Reasoned Action.

1. INTRODUCTION

"Green consumerism refers to recycling, purchasing and using environment friendly products that have minimal damage to the environment (Rehman & Dost, 2013; Roberts, 1996, p. 29). The products which have least impact on environment, do not contaminate the nature and have the ability to be reused are termed as green products (Paul, Modi, & Patel, 2016; Shamdasani, Chon-Lin & Richmond, 1993). Such choices incorporate the use of hybrid cars which emit less carbon dioxide, machines that expend less power, wind and solar energy to generate electricity and purchasing of organic products and locally grown vegetables. With the passage of time, more organizations are participating in the green development either due to their enthusiasm for protecting planet or a longing to earn profit by developing the customers' interest in green products. Greening idea came into existence in 1960s, focusing on energy protection and contamination (Rehman & Dost, 2013). Subsequently, because of expanded political and social pressure, organizations started to utilize these ideas to recycling, redesigning of product, alternative products and in nifty packaging of the products (Rehman & Dost, 2013).

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Review of the literature reveals that there is continues increase in market share and growing demand of green products (Alamsyah et al., 2018; Rahmi et al., 2017; Schmeltz, 2012). There is extant literature on consumers' increasing concern related to environment and green purchase (Cooney, 2010; Joshi & Rahman, 2015; Kahraman & Kazançoğlu, 2019; Saad, 2006; Wu & Chen, 2014). On the other hand, despite all these facts, it has been inferred from the recent studies that green products' consumption is not up to the mark (Barbarossa & Pastore, 2015; Clifford & Martin, 2011; González et al., 2015) and issue needs to be resolved. Irrespective of above-mentioned challenges, green consumerism has been gaining importance day by day especially related to environment protection motive (Merli et al., 2019). Based on social, political, and economic conditions, the green products demand can vary according to the geographical regions (Gleim et al., 2013; Johnstone & Tan, 2015; Stern, 1999).

Environmental concern is considered to be the most imperative issues since 1990s (Ali & Ahmad, 2016; Malik et al., 2019). In business sector, the adaptation of environmental concerns has been gaining notoriety since past three decade (Arısal & Atalar, 2016). In Pakistan, many marketers are focusing on the green products which are environment friendly and have least impacts on environment (Hayat, Raza, Bilal & Farooq, 2019). In the most recent decade; sympathy towards environment is gradually increasing because of various factors i.e. the effect of real industry disasters, the ascension of environmentally concerned groups on the environment and expanded media reporting (Kalafatis et al., 1999; Merli et al., 2019). It left a very prominent impact on purchasing decisions of the consumers as they stared to take into account the environmental factor very seriously, believing that nature protection is not an undertaking to be fulfilled by the Government bodies but is the duty of every individual (ElTayeb, Zailani & Jayaraman, 2010). Ultimately, because of the organizations' choice to react to these purchasers' green marketing has` began to wind up an imperative field of learning (Alamsyah et al., 2018; Ali & Ahmad, 2016; PacO & Raposo, 2009).

It is equally important for marketers especially of those who are involve in ecofriendly business practices, to comprehend the green purchasing behavior of the consumers along with scholars (Alamsyah et al., 2018). Increasing insight about the different ecological issues has driven an adjustment in purchasing patterns of the consumers (Kahraman & Kazançoğlu, 2019). There seems an evident modification in buyers' response towards a green way of life. Individuals are persistently making efforts to lessen their effect on nature. This adjustment in buyers' attitude has been noticed by the organizations as a result they are attempting to gain advantage over competitors by exploring the green market potential. Joshi and Rahman (2015) quoted that the customers with more awareness regarding green purchase process are more probable to purchase green items keeping in view the environmental concern and accessibility to buy green items (Young et al., 2010).

Therefore, in green marketing field a prominent research stream counting this study is an effort to pinpoint the growing requirement of addressing and exploring the role of different contextual and psychographic variables affecting the purchase intentions (González et al., 2015; Kahraman & Kazançoğlu, 2019; Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015; Moser, 2015). The new streams mightcontain the moderating and mediating roles of different constructs that might impact the attitude of consumers in different prospective

(Dagher & Itani, 2014; Paço et al., 2013; PacO & Raposo, 2009). The exploration of these streams will help scholars to comprehend the complex association of consumers attitude and their intentions to purchase and to further explore new directions in order to address the attitude-behavior gap (Joshi & Rahman, 2015). Likewise, the exploration of the roles of some moderating and mediating constructs might also facilitate the marketing managers to ponder and develop diverse kinds of marketing campaigns and strategies to appeal customers towards environmental friendly products (Dagher & Itani, 2014).

Despite the significant role of different constructs in provoking Green purchase Intentions (GPI) among the consumers in previous researches conducted in different cultures, in real world there is a lack of green products sales intensity as compared to reported in different surveys and studies (Biswas & Roy, 2015; Moser, 2015). As proposed by Ali and Ahmad (2016) in context of GPI, mostly researches have been carried out in context of developed countries (Bleda & Valente, 2009; Chan, 2004; Karjaluoto & Chatterjee, 2009) yet the results frequently negate each other (Rahbar & Wahid, 2011). Therefore, the results may just be applicable in specific times and in certain demographical, social, and topographical setting. It's not justifiable to generalize these specific demographic researches globally keeping in view the complex behaviors of buyers with regard to green purchase intentions (Joshi & Rahman, 2015). To fortify this argument, it was reported by Rahbar and Wahid (2011) that various cultures and market sections exhibit distinctive behaviors for environmentally friendly items.

Similarly, there are multiple studies related to impact of different factors on green purchase intentions in the context of Pakistan (Sabir et al., 2014; Saeed et al., 2013; Saleem, Khan, & Alam, 2015; Sheikh et al., 2014) and also the impact of multiple factors has been examined on environmental concern but there exist a gap to study the effect of green awareness and environmental concern on green purchase intentions (Malik et al., 2019). On the basis of that, researches pertinent to the impacts of different variables on buyer's intentions to purchase green products in rising Asian markets are thought to be opportune. Therefore, current study aims to bridge this gap along with studying the positive word of mouth as moderator between the association of green awareness and environmental concern with green purchase intentions. The present study aims to analyze the extent to which consumers of developing countries like Pakistan are aware of the green phenomenon and how that awareness impacts their buying intentions and also to examine that how much these consumers are conscious about the environmental protection as, study of Ali and Ahmad (2016) suggested working on referral marketing or word of mouth as a promoting environment friendly behavior linked with green purchase intentions of the consumers. The findings of the current study will facilitate the marketing managers to comprehend the composite nature of consumers' behavior to develop operative strategies of marketing in order to enhance the green consumption behaviors among the customers.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Environmental Concern is considered as a fundamental spirit that reflects how much the consumer is worried about risks to the universe, and the aftereffects of those risks for upcoming generations and for the concordance of nature (Muhmin, 2007; Arısal & Atalar, 2016). Environmental concern is conceptualized by Dunlap and Jones (2002) as

"the degree to which people are aware of environmental problems and assist struggles to solve them or signify the readiness to contribute personally to their solution" (p. 485). Likewise,Kalafatis et al. (1999) defined environmental concern as "the awakening and awareness of consumers in the fact that the environmental in danger and that natural resources are limited" (p.448). Having knowledge or information about something is termed as awareness. Green awareness intends to have the information about the impacts of an item on environment. At the point when the people assess an item and its components and advantages drawn from it with regards to environment, they are considered to be aware of green phenomenon (Rizwan et al., 2014). Green awareness is the green marketing concept implementation in industry based on increased customer care towards environment friendly product (Alamsyah et al., 2018; Wu & Chen, 2014).

According to Xia and Bechwati (2008),"Word of Mouth (WOM) communication is generally acknowledged to play a considerable role in influencing and forming consumer attitudes and behavioral intentions"(p.112). Researchers quoted that as compared to other communications,WOM discussions are relatively more persuasive (Smith, Menon & Sivakumar, 2005; Trusov, Bucklin& Pauwels, 2009). According to Gruen, Osmonbekov, and Czaplewski (2006)"Word of Mouth is perceived to provide comparatively more reliable information" (p. 21). Purchase intention is a combination of consumers' interest in buying a product and the possibility of buying" (Wu et al., 2015, p. 81). Likewise, the likelihood and willingness of a customer to choose an environment friendly product over the traditional product during purchase decisions is termed as green purchased intentions (Oliver & Lee, 2010). According to Namkung and Jang (2017) customers' intentions include their scheduling to buy or rebuy a good or service from a business, as well as their readiness to pay premium prices for eco-friendly products.

Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA)

According to TRA, attitude and subjective norms have an impact on consumers' intentions that leads them to execute a specific behavior (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Different scholars extended the TRA and added multiple attitudinal constructs to elucidate the disparity in purchase intentions of consumers (Bamberg, 2003; Han & Kim, 2010; Liu et al., 2012; Moser, 2015; Mostafa, 2007; Rahbar &Wahid, 2011). Paladino and Ng (2013) specified that when researchers are envisioned to discover the motivating factors that form consumers' intentions for the purchase of green products than the use of TRA. In current study, we also used the theory of reasoned action to develop a theoretical framework to explain that how EC and GA among the consumers affect their GPI and explains the moderating role of PWOM.

Relationship of Environmental Concern with Green Purchase Intentions

The degree to which an individual will feel a moral obligation to save the non-renewable resources and to protect the nature, the more protective action will be performed by him/her towards the environment and as a result, there is a high tendency and intention to perform an eco-friendly purchase behavior (Chekima et al., 2015). Consumers with more environmental concern actually have more knowledge about green products and can evaluate the information more precisely to make green purchase decisions thus, reflecting the environmental concern as major antecedent of green purchase intentions (Newton et al.,

2015). Chen and Peng (2012) specified that the individuals with more concern about their environment influence others' purchase behaviors as well as they consider it their responsibility to spread awareness about the eco-friendly products. Many previous researches support the statement and proved that people with strong views about environment concern are more likely to purchase environment friendly products (Hansla et al., 2008; Hutchins & Greenhalgh, 1997; Paul et al., 2016; Roberts, 1996) indicating the positive connotation between EC and GPI. Based on theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975) and literature available, it is stated that environmental concern serves as a reason to motivate customers to purchase green products. Therefore, we proposed that:

H1: There is a positive association between Environmental Concern and Green Purchase Intentions of the customers.

Relationship between Green Awareness and Green Purchase Intentions

Green awareness is the ability of a consumer to perceive and remember that the product is eco-friendly (Rizwan et al., 2014). Green awareness positively impacts the purchasing decisions of the buyers with environmental concerns. Litvine and Wüstenhagen (2011) investigated customers' state of mind towards green power and described that as the awareness about green power will increase, customers will be able to perceive the merits of it and as a result, green power purchase intention would increase significantly (Chekima et al., 2015). With increase of awareness, customers having environmental knowledge prefer to purchase environment friendly products (Han et al., 2011; Jauhari & Manaktola, 2007). On the bases of available literature and theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975), we posit that green awareness serves as a reason to motivate customers to purchase green products. Thus, it is hypothesized that;

H2:There is a positive association between Green awareness and Green Purchase Intentions of the customers.

Moderation

Moderating Role of PWOM between Environmental Concern and GPI

Informal word of mouth correspondence being a traditional method can be characterized as two-way communication among customers, friends, companions, or outsiders providing valuable information about a specific product service or brand and its acceptance is viewed as a powerful determinant for customers to acknowledge the others opinion (Rahim et al., 2015). Consumers are even thought to be more satisfied with the products if they encounter positive post-purchase conversations about those products (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Trusov et al., 2009). The key drive of the current research study is to find out the moderating effect of positive word of mouth on association of EC with GPI of customers, as PWOM is considered to be a viable medium for spreading information, based on the fact that it is human nature to share their feelings and experiences with their friends, family and colleagues. Thus, it is proposed that:

H3:Positive Word of Mouth moderates the relationship between Environmental Concern and Green Purchase Intentions such that this relationship will be stronger in case of high values of PWOM.

Moderating Role of PWOM between Green Awareness and GPI

Word of mouth is either literal word of mouth or stems from personal discussions (Berger, 2014). As the awareness about environmental issues is increasing, companies are becoming more conscious in finding out the ecological effect of the products offered by them as well as the operational activities taking place while manufacturing those products, as these days during purchasing items, buyers are more inclined towards the reviews of other individuals around them and word of mouth is the fastest medium of such reviews (Rahim et al., 2015).

Awareness about products is increased by interpersonal communication which is a source of persuasion to other consumers to buy things (Berger, 2014) and as the awareness about green products will increase, it will in turn increase the green purchase intentions. According to the researches, it is stated that more experienced people have more knowledge and responsiveness towards eco-friendly products and their alternatives, as result the word of mouth generated by them can affect the purchase intentions of the buyers positively, more authentically and at greater extent (Rahim et al., 2015; Xia & Bechwati, 2008).Thus, it is proposed that:

H4: WOM moderates the association between Green Awareness and Green Purchase Intentions such that this relationship will be stronger in case of high values of PWOM.

Theoretical Framework

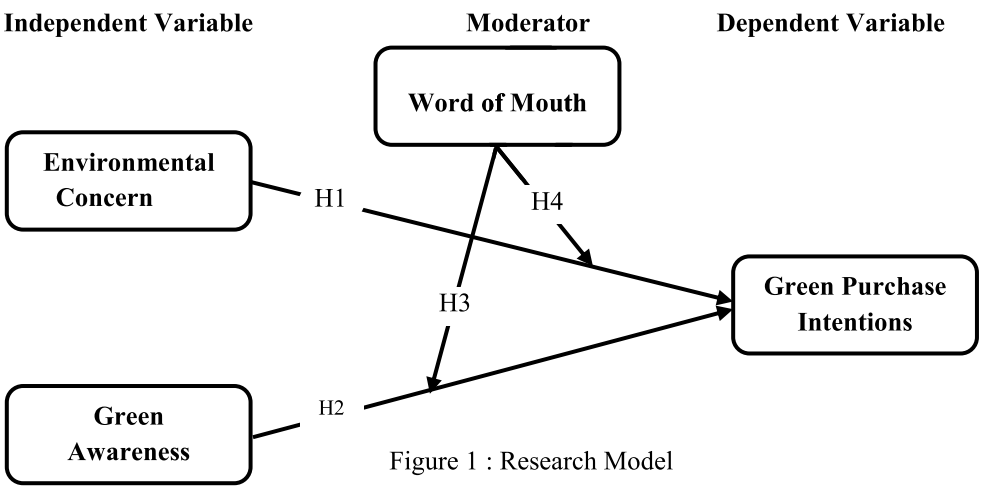

Figure 1 : Research Model

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Sampling Technique

The main purpose of current study is hypotheses testing as it is empirical in nature and is conducted by a field survey. The study is cross sectional by nature. Data have been

personally collected from the respondents visiting supermarkets of Rawalpindi and Islamabad as unit of analysis. Quota sampling method has been used for data collection in which certain percentage (25%) of each age group (18-25 years, 26-35 years, 36-45 years, and 46 years and above) has been ensured (Rosenbaum, Otalora, & Ramírez, 2016). The sample size of the study is comprised of 344 respondents. The whole process of data collection took place in 5 weeks. Out of total 344, 33.7% respondents were employees, 25% were self-employed, 3.2% were retired personnel, 18.3% were house wives, and 19.8% were students, whereas, 36.3% respondents were females and 63.7% were males. Out of total 344 respondents, 63.6% were married and 36.4 % were unmarried, whereas, 52.3% were graduate and below, and 47.7% respondents were post-graduate and above.

Measure

Questionnaires of this research were in English language and its validity has been approved already by earlier researches from Pakistan (Naseer et al., 2016). Five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagrees to 5 = strongly agree had been used to measure all items of the study constructs. The questionnaire was comprised of 18 items with following details. Green Purchase Intentions had been measured with five-item scale developed by Taylor and Todd (1995). Sample items include: “I plan to spend more on environment friendly product rather than conventional product”. “Cronbach's alpha” for these five items in this study was0.75.Environmental Concernhad been measured with five-item scale developed by Kilbourne and Pickett (2008). Sample items include “I would be willing to reduce my consumption to help protect the environment”. Cronbach's alpha for these five items in this study was 0.77. Green Awareness had been measured with five-item scale developed by Chen (2010). Sample items include: “You recognize the meaning of the environmental slogans and symbols that your brand uses in its marketing campaigns.”Cronbach's alpha for these five items in this study was0.79.Positive Word of Mouthhad been measured with a 3-item scale developed by Babin et al. (2005).Sample items include: “I will encourage friends and relatives to shop the green products” Cronbach's alpha”for the all the itemswas0.78.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Before moving to the main analysis, frequency test was used to identify and remove missing data and to correct the erroneous entries. To establish the discriminant validity among all the study variables, a series of Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was executed in AMOS 22 to test all the links suggested by Schmitt, Coyle, and Saari(1977). As suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), 2, 3, and 4 factor models versus 1factor models has been evaluated. Out of total 11 probable pairings of the variables, results for 2, 3, and 4 factor models were good as compared to single factor models. Table 1 imitates the CFA results of full model (4 factors vs. 1 factor), IVs vs. DV as 3 factors vs.1 factor model, IVs, vs. moderator as 3 factors vs. 1 factor model, Moderator vs. DV as 2 factors vs. 1 factor model, and IV (1) vs. IV (2) as 2 factors vs. 1-factor model.

Table 1

CFA Results

Measurement Models	χ^2	DF	CFI	GFI	NFI	RMESA
EC- GA (2 Factor)	**77.59**	**29**	**0.96**	**0.96**	**0.94**	**0.06**
EC- GA (1 Factor)	566.57	32	0.58	0.74	0.58	0.221
GPI-WOM (2 Factor Model)	**50.27**	**17**	**0.96**	**0.96**	**0.94**	**0.06**
GPI-WOM (1 Factor Model)	198.59	18	0.76	0.86	0.75	0.17
EC- GA-GPI (3 Factor Model)	**174.59**	**79**	**0.95**	**0.94**	**0.90**	**0.06**
EC- GA-GPI (1 Factor Model)	810.34	83	0.53	0.72	0.51	0.17
EC- GA-WOM (3 Factor Model)	**132.32**	**57**	**0.96**	**0.95**	**0.93**	**0.06**
EC- GA-WOM (1 Factor Model)	797.15	59	0.58	0.70	0.57	0.19
EC-GA-GPI-WOM (4 Factor Model)	**259.07**	**122**	**0.94**	**0.92**	**0.90**	**0.05**
EC-GA-GPI-WOM (1 Factor Model)	1003.69	124	0.61	0.75	0.59	0.14

Descriptive and Correlations

Prior to correlation analysis, in order to identify controls, ANOVA was conducted and found no significant impact of any demographic variable (Age, Gender, Marital Status, Income, Education & Occupation) on dependent variables of our study. Table 2 depicts the standard deviations, means, Cronbach's alpha and correlations of the study constructs. It is evident from bivariate correlation that there is significant positive correlation of ECwith GA($r = 0.41, p < .01$), PWOM ($r = 0.63, p < .01$), and GPI($r = 0 .27, p < .01$. Similarly, there is a significant positive association of GA, with PWOM($r = 0.23, p < .01$), and GPI($r = 0.27, p < .01$). Likewise, PWOM has a significant positive correlation with GPI($r = 0 .23, p < .01$).

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Correlations, and Reliabilities

Variable	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4
Environmental Concern	3.69	0.74	(0.77)			
Green Awareness	3.69	0.71	.41**	(0.79)		
Positive Word of Mouth	3.78	0.83	.63**	.23**	(0.78)	
Green Purchase Intentions	3.27	0.83	.27**	.17**	.23**	(0.75)

Note:N=344; ***p*<.01 "Cronbach's alpha" are reported in parenthesis.

Moderation using Bootstrap Process Technique
PWOM as a Moderator between the Association of EC and GPI

To study all proposed relationships, we applied Preacher and Hayes (2004) data analytical techniques. Table 3, depicts the findings. Hypothesis 1 stated that EC and GPI are positively associated and it was accepted as results fully supported the proposed link (B = 0.29, t = 3.83, p < .00). It is also evident from table 3, that PWOM is positively and significantly linked with customers intentions to purchase green products ($B = 0.15$, $t = 2.13$, $p < .03$).

Table 3

Moderated Regressions of Environmental Concern and PWOM on GPI

Predictor	B	SE	T	P
PWOM as a mod betweenEnvironmental Concern and GPI				
Constant	3.20	.05	66.69	.00
EC	.29	.08	3.83	.00
PWOM	.15	.07	2.13	.03
EC*PWOM	.17	.06	3.11	.00

Conditional direct effects of X on Y

	Effect	Boot SE	T	p	LLCI	ULCI
PWOM -1 SD (-.83)	.14	.08	1.8	.07	-.01	.30
PWOM M (.00)	.29	.07	3.8	.00	.14	.44
PWOM +1 SD (.83)	.43	.09	4.5	.00	.24	.62

"*Note:* N=344. Bootstrap sample size=5000; CI =confidence interval; LL =lower limit; UL =upper limit; EC= Environmental Concern; PWOM=positive Word of Mouth; GPI=green purchase intentions."

Table 4

Significant Interactions' slope test results

Interaction	Outcome Variable			
	Green Purchase Intentions			
	Condition of Moderator			
EC*PWOM	Low Value of PWOM		High Value of PWOM	
	B	*P value*	***B***	***P value***
	0.14	P< .07	**0.43**	**P< .00**

EC= Environmental Concern; PWOM= Positive Word of Mouth.

Hypothesis 3 proposes that PWOM will moderate the association between EC and GPI in a way that this connotation would be stronger in case of more PWOM. This hypothesis was fully supported (β = .17, t = 3.11, p < .001). The conditional direct influence proved significant through two-tailed significance test (Effect = .43, Boot SE = .09, t = 4.50, p < .001)Furthermore, bootstrapping results verified these effects as shown in Table 4, with a 95% CI (Confidence Interval) depicting direct conditional influence having non-zero values (.24, .62). Hence, H3 is accepted. Simple interaction plot at +/- SD of PWOM had been plotted to validate the findings regarding direction of moderation analysis more precisely. Fig. 2 imitates the interaction plot. For the high value of positive word of mouth, the slope for the association of EC and customers intentions to purchase green products is positive and significant (Simple slope = .43, t = 4.50, p < .001), whereas, for low PWOM the slope is insignificant and weak (Simple slope = 0.14, t = 1.8, n.s). Hence, full support was found for Hypothesis 3.

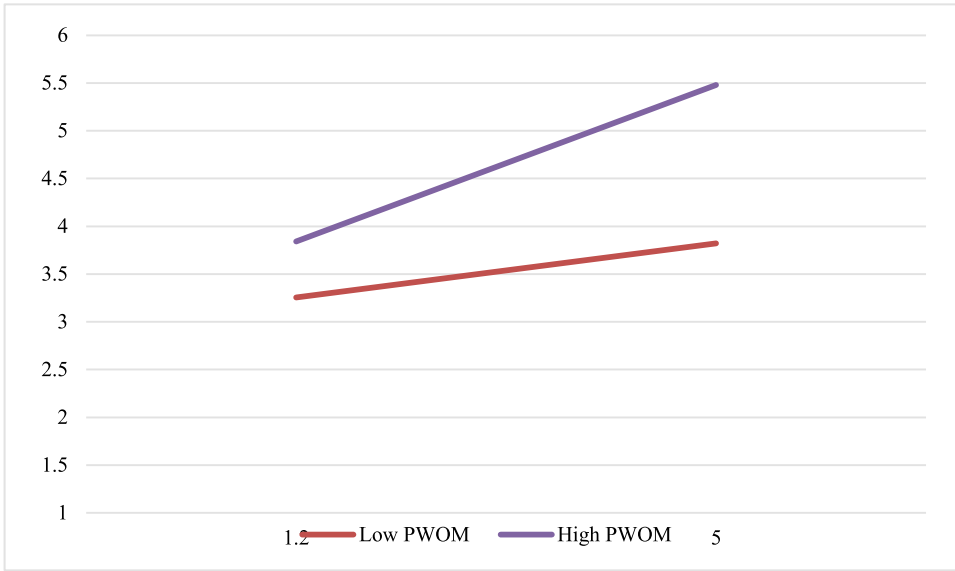

Figure 2: The interactive effects of EC and PWOM on GPI

PWOM as a Moderator between the Association of Environmental Concern and GPI

H2 stated that GA positively associated to GPI. This hypothesis has been fully supported ($\beta = .37$, $t = 4.76$, $p < .001$). Thus, the hypothesis 2 was accepted. Table 5depicts the results, where there is a significant value ($\beta = .17$, $t = 2.73$, $p < .001$) for green awareness related to green purchase intentions.

Table 5

Moderated Regressions of Green Awareness and PWOM on GPI

Predictor			**B**	**SE**	**T**	**P**
PWOM as a mod between Green Awareness and GPI						
Constant			3.25	.04	73.93	.00
GA			.17	.06	2.73	.00
PWOM			.21	.05	3.97	.00
GA*PWOM			.13	.06	2.23	.02
Conditional direct effects of X on Y						
LOC	**Effect**	**Boot SE**	**T**	**P**	**LLCI**	**ULCI**
PWOM -1 SD (-.83)	.06	.07	.87	.40	-.08	.21
PWOM M (.00)	.17	.06	2.7	.00	.04	.29
PWOM +1 SD (.83)	.28	.08	3.3	.00	.11	.45

"*Note:* N=344. Bootstrap sample size=5000; UL =upper limit; LL =lower limit; CI =confidence interval GPI=green purchase intentions"

Table 6

Significant Interactions' Slope Test Results

Interaction	Outcome Variables			
	Green Purchase Intentions			
	Condition of Moderator			
GA*PWOM	Low Value of PWOM		High Value of PWOM	
	B	*P value*	*B*	*P value*
	0.06	P< .40	**0.28**	**P< .001**

GA= Green Awareness; PWOM= Positive Word of Mouth

Hypothesis 4 proposes that PWOM will moderate the association btw green awareness and green purchase intentions in a way that this connotation would be stronger in case of high values of PWOM. This hypothesis was fully supported (β = .13, t = 2.23, p < .001). The conditional direct influence was found to be significant through two-tailed significance test (Effect = .28, Boot SE = .08, t = 3.30, p < .001). Moreover, bootstrapping results verified these effects as shown in Table 6, with a 95% CI (Confidence Interval) depicting direct conditional influence having non-zero values (.11, .45). Hence, H 4is accepted. Fig. 3 imitates the interaction plot. For the high value of PWOM the slope for the association of green awareness and GPI is positive and strong (Simple slope = .28, t = 3.3, p < .001), whereas, for low positive word of mouth the slope is insignificant and weak (Simple slope = 0.06, t = 0.87, n.s). Hence, Hypothesis 4 found full support.

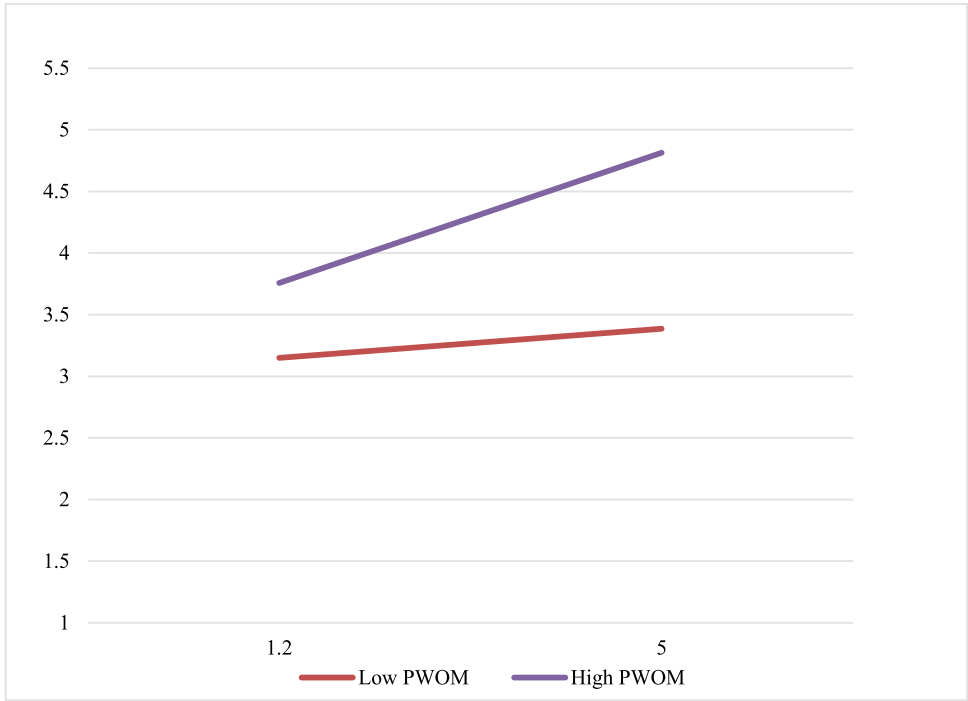

Figure 3: The interactive effects of GA and PWOM on GPI.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Consistent with previous researches (Hansla et al., 2008; Hutchins & Greenhalgh, 1997; Newton et al., 2015; Paul et al., 2016; Roberts, 1996) a positive association between EC and GPI of consumers was found. Similarly, current findings about the association of customers' green awareness with their green purchase intentions are in line with the findings of (Chekima et al., 2015; Han et al., 2011; Litvine & Wüstenhagen, 2011; Rizwan et al., 2014). Related to moderator role of positive word of mouth, findings of our study support the arguments proposed by Jalilv and and Samiei (2012) that consumers are even thought to be more satisfied with the green products if they encounter positive post-purchase conversations about those products, the results of the research clearly indicate that the association of EC and GA with GPI is stronger in the presence of more PWOM, proving it as a moderator. Researcher recommends to demeanor the similar research in diverse sceneries to elaborate the concept of green purchases in developing countries.

The present study tried to analyze the awareness level of customers of a developing country like Pakistan about the green phenomenon and further impact of that awareness on their buying intentions and their consciousness level related to protecting environment around them. It was found that those consumers who are more conscious about their purchasing related to harmless products and are more caring about their environments are more likely to buy greener items as compared to those who don't care about their health and environment. It is witnessed that nowadays, there is a continuous improvement in customers' knowledge about green phenomenon and consumers prefer greener products therefore, this study will facilitate the marketing managers to comprehend the composite nature of consumers' behavior to develop operative marketing strategies in order to encourage the green consumption behaviors among the customers and also facilitate those customers who are green conscious. In this way, they will not only be a source of spreading information regarding going green but also can increase the sales of green products that will ultimately result into organizational productivity and achievement of a competitive edge.

This study was conducted to inspect the impact of marketing techniques in setting up green brands and to convey examples of green consumption into modern living styles in prevailing context where eco-friendly products can easily be accessed. This study is valuable for organizations and advertisers since it gives understanding related to green market possibilities and helps them to target green buyers. It will provide assistance to marketers to understand the buying behavior of consumers who are more conscious about environment. Even though green phenomenon is one of the most debated issues all over the world but still people in developing countries are less aware of the green purchase intentions as they have less knowledge about the significance of the green products. The aim of current study is to establish a ground for especially the people of developing countries to come across the importance of green awareness and for the marketers to formulate the strategies to attract the people towards the green products.

Green phenomenon encourages an individual to modify his views, activities and conducts from the basic point of views and activities. The importance of positive word of mouth should be understood by the marketers in any way either face to face or through any other medium that how it attracts customers towards the GPI. It is

valuable as the framework of the paper suggests that the green awareness and environmental concern impact the green purchase intentions of the buyers in more significant way, if the consumers are encountered with more positive word of mouth regarding those products. Therefore, it can be said that marketers need to connect with potential customers with PWOM; as a result, customers may come up with positive evaluation regarding a product and untimely resulting into long term customer- organization relationship.

Along with the distinctive theoretical comprehensions and multiple empirical strengths, current study has few limitations, which if addressed in future may result into a valuable addition in green marketing field. Firstly, the respondents of the current research are the consumers who visit supermarkets of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Therefore, due to a difficulty in approaching the same customers again the data is cross-sectional. A time lagged research plan can be applied through further studies by collecting data from the customers using the goods or services of some specific brands over and over, where contacting the same customers is comparatively easy. Secondly, in comparison to quantitative method used in current study, a mixed method approach (qualitative plus quantitative) can be applied in future researches, as being a developing country green pheromone is just emerging in Pakistan and much needs to be explored in this regard. Thirdly, theoretical framework of current study only analyzes the moderation path, whereas, a moderated mediation model by adding environmental responsibility as moderator and environmental concern as mediator may be studied on the bases of theory of reasoned action (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). In addition, the CFA's results, strong factor loadings, and positive moderation results, noticeably specify that the findings of our research are not limited or contaminated by self-reported measures.

6. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATION

We conducted this study to examine the extent to which environmental concern and green awareness impact customer's intentions to purchase green products, based on the increasing need of addressing and exploring the role of multiple contextual and psychological constructs affecting the purchase intentions (González et al., 2015; Kumar & Ghodeswar, 2015; Moser, 2015) and the moderating role of PWOM on the link of environmental concern and green awareness with green purchase intentions. The study has tested the TRA using a combination of novel variables. Thus, the study has extended the existing literature on the concerns of consumers about the environment, green awareness, purchase intentions of green products and PWOM. Data was collected from respondents visiting supermarkets of Rawalpindi and Islamabad by using aged based quota sampling method by ensuring 25% respondents fit to each age group. The study findings supported most of the hypotheses indicating that EC and GA are positively associated with GPI and the association of green awareness and environmental concern with GPI is stronger at the high values of PWOM. The overall study provides understandings about the underlying forces that form customers' attitudes and behavioral intentions related to green phenomenon based on TRA. Thus, along with the theoretical

contribution, the current study has extended the unique dynamics by testing them empirically in context and culture of Pakistan.

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