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## **The Eco Deigned Product Effects on Brand Love through Perceived Environmental Performance and Personality Traits in Fast Food Industry in Pakistan**

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### **Abstract**

The composition and level of human activities are posing serious threats to the environment and to the existence of human beings (Stern, 2007). Not long ago, production by mega industries and extraction of resources were responsible for destruction on earth whereas quite recently this destruction is being caused by private consumption. Consequently, there is an increased pressure to involve consumers to solve environmental problems by their active participation. Thus there is a need to empower and support consumers by increasing opportunities to involve in environmental activities and by understanding their attitudes and concerns toward society and environment. The current study was conducted in order to see the impact of Eco-Designed Products, Personality traits and Ethical Consumption on Brand Love with mediating role of Perceived Environmental Performance over the consumers of fast food in Pakistan. Majority of the respondents were young students. This research was aimed to determine the significant impact of variables over Brand Love. Companies nowadays are working over variables which help in achieving the brand love for their product or service. This research further opens up the gates to explore the impact of green products and perceived environmental performance in achieving brand love in fast food industry and other manufacturing industry. The researchers' conclusion with suggestions and recommendations was also summed up at the end of the study.

**Keywords:** Eco Deigned, Product Effects, Brand Love, Environmental Performance, Personality Traits, Fast Food Industry.

### **Introduction and Literature Review**

The strongest bond between a customer and a brand is called brand love, and it has positive effects like heightened brand loyalty and it has a favorable correlation with readiness to pay a

premium, positive word-of-mouth, and brand loyalty and the younger, masculine, athletic consumers seem to benefit from it the most (Liebl, Turcínková et al. 2022). This study examined the relationship between brand distinctiveness, brand credibility, brand intimacy, brand love, and brand citizenship behavior in Taiwan's restaurant setting since consumers' brand citizenship behaviors have a significant impact on brand strength (Han, Yang et al. 2022). When it comes to female fashion clothes brands, self-expression and the hedonic brand element are positively correlated with brand love and tangentially correlated with brand envy (Siddique and Rajput 2022). Personality significantly increases brand love. Secondly, brand love also has a strong beneficial influence on electronic word-of-mouth. Thirdly, electronic word-of-mouth and brand love are positively regulated by brand experience sharing (Liu and Yan 2022). The current study examined the similarities and differences in activated brain regions across romantic connections between people and brands from the perspective of brain connectivity (Watanuki 2022). The empirical investigation demonstrates that sentiments of brand love are unaffected by one's attitude toward one's place of origin. Nonetheless, it was shown that brand love has a significant impact on word-of-mouth and loyalty (Malhotra 2022). The current study examined the relationship between customer experience values, customer post-experience repercussions, and citizenship actions in order to provide hotels with valuable insights in a competitive market and it was discovered that customer citizenship behaviors (CCBs) were directly positively impacted by brand love and dedication (Lin and Choe 2022). This study aims to investigate the relationship between employee brand love and emotional commitment, positive word-of-mouth (PWOM) behavior, and turnover intention, based on the social identity theory discovered that employee brand love has a large positive effect on emotional commitment and PWOM, as well as a significant negative effect on turnover intention, using a sample of 289 professionals from public and private sector insurance businesses in India (Mittal, Gupta et al. 2022). The research found that reliability, attractiveness and information are the antecedents of green brand love and Green customer citizenship behavior and green brand love are strongly correlated and the outcome validated the noteworthy moderating influence of green brand love on the relationships between dependability, appeal, informational value, and environmentally conscious customer behavior (Zhang and Yang 2023).

**Personality Traits**

Regardless of culture, brand personality metrics, or experimental designs, sincerity as a brand characteristic is consistently linked to sweet tastes and genuineness and sweets are related in a way that promotes perceived congruence and fosters favorable brand views. Furthermore, sales of sweet foods are strongly correlated with brand honesty (Motoki, Nakahara et al. 2023). The affinity for the humanized brand both contribute positively to certain aspects of brand love and the notion that brand anthropomorphism is only beneficial in situations when customers find the humanized version of the brand appealing. Research constraints and implications (Delgado-Ballester, Palazón et al. 2020). Research on Sternberg's Triangular Theory of Love and the Stimulus Organism Response framework and the three elements of love—passion, intimacy, and commitment—all have a substantial impact on the usage scenario, according to the results and the nature of relationships differs based on the personality of the agent (Pal, Babakerkhell et al. 2023).

The coolness of the luxury hotel brand, which reflects many brand attributes, promotes love and happiness, which aids in CBE and the effect of luxury hotel brand coolness on brand satisfaction and love is positively moderated by materialism (Khoi and Le 2022). The present study illustrates the combined effects of identical competitor offer and narcissistic personality on brand equity through the underlying mechanism of brand hatred, based on the assumptions of Sternberg's (2003) Duplex Theory of hatred and Brand hatred mediates the link between brand equity and a comparable competitor offer; and (b) a high degree of narcissism moderates the relationship between a similar competitor offer and brand hate (Husnain, Wang et al. 2021). In an effort to better understand the growing issue of unfavorable consumer-brand connections on the Internet, this article looked into the identity and motivations of consumers who join anti-brand forums targeted at the top ten worldwide businesses and research indicates that the primary consumer variables influencing both are gender, age, and country of origin (Brandão, Popoli et al. 2022). A research was conducted to model the antecedents and moderators of idol attachment, analyze its significance and notion, and evaluate its impact on human brand loyalty and the results showed that the phenomena of idol attachment is positively impacted by variety seeking, success vanity, and peer norms (Huang, Lin et al. 2015).

### **Eco Designed Products**

Research shows that green washing has a negative impact on consumers' green purchasing decisions and green washing has a negative impact on green brand loyalty, green brand image,

and green brand love, all of which positively influence green buying behavior (Hameed, Hyder et al. 2021). A research was done to investigate the structural relationship between green brand supportive intentions (GBSI) and GBE (green brand empowerment) and its drivers such as GBE (green brand experiential satisfaction), GBE (green brand love), GBE (green brand co-creation), GBE (green brand regret), and GBE (green brand perceptual evaluation) and results indicated that Green Brand Supportive Intentions positively correlates with Green Brand Empowerment (GBE) (Wu and Chen 2019). The relationship between green delight, green brand love, intrinsic desire for green behavior, and intention to make green purchases was examined and results shows that green intrinsic motivation favorably affects green brand and green delight (Lin 2022). The luxury brands are going green and the luxury market's new frontier is demarcated and voted in favor of environmental sustainability and the luxury fashion industry appears to be gravitating toward the green space and seeking out practical ways to cultivate brand loyalty and fanatical fandom (Platania, Santisi et al. 2019). The relationship between brands and environmental activists, building on earlier studies in the field of green marketing indicated the positive impact of assigning human-like attributes to nature and particular emotions produced by it on green brand advocacy (Syahrivar, Manurung et al. 2023). The environmental impact on a product occurs at all levels throughout its lifecycle and lifecycle evaluation is a commonly used element of GSCM (Wu, Tseng et al. 2011). The studies related to packaging also suggest that packaging can be recycled and reused (Large and Thomsen 2011). The design of the product defines almost 80 percent of the product image (Büyüközkan and Çifçi 2012). Eco-design is the activity of minimizing a product's environmental effect during its early life cycle without losing its performance or cost (Younis, Sundarakani et al. 2016). Eco-design means avoiding harmful material and using resources efficiently (Somsuk and Laosirihongthong 2017).

### **Ethical Consumption**

Awareness of how social networks might correlate with ethical consumption behaviors is also not clear. As the internet and especially social networks have changed the communication between consumers and firms (Wang, Yu et al. 2012). Different approaches to ethical consumption are influenced by different social, environmental and political concerns (Rodrigues and Lowan-Trudeau 2021). Furthermore, consumer behavior in ethical consumption is a free consumer choice pushed by political, social or environmental concerns which can inform into two main sides such as boycotting or buy coting. Therefore, individual concerns about

environment, political, and social issues will impact their behaviors (Ramdas and Mohamed 2014). Ethical consumption is referred to a deliberate decision for making a consuming choices based on individual moral beliefs (Crane and Matten 2004). When buying products from socially responsible companies, consumers show their actions as ethical consumption (Giesler and Veresiu 2014). Increasing concerns for ethical consumption is leading to growing attention to eco-friendly products' consumption (Chowdhury 2019). One of the primary attributes of ethical consumption behavior is that it is only effective in the aggregate if large numbers of consumers engage in similar behaviors for long periods of time (López-Fernández 2020).

### **Perceived Environmental Performance**

Consumers turn their perceptions of environmental performance into expectations regarding the firm's capacity to meet their interests in the future, and these expectations constitute corporate reputation (Pérez-Cornejo, de Quevedo-Puente et al. 2022). It is related to stakeholder's faith in the firm's performance (Singh and Misra 2021). Consistency failures regarding environmental impact can seriously damage the reputation of a firm (Lin, Zeng et al. 2016). Studies suggest that there is a positive influence of corporate social performance on corporate reputation (Pérez-Cornejo, de Quevedo-Puente et al. 2022). In fact, firms tend to hold robust corporate social performance policies to create and reinforce their corporate reputation (Pérez-Cornejo, de Quevedo-Puente et al. 2022).

### **Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the current study were:

1. To operationalize, validate and measure the concept of brand love.
2. To examine the impact of personality of consumer and cultural traits on consumer social responsibility.
3. To check if consumer social responsibility mediates the relationship between personality of consumer, cultural traits and intention to buy societal friendly products.
4. To explore the effect of ethical self-identity, personality of consumer and cultural traits on consumer's intention to buy and buying behavior of societal friendly products.

### **Research Questions of the Study**

The current study answered the following questions:

1. Does the concept of consumer social responsibility needs to be operationalized, measured, developed and validated as an important predictor of societal friendly buying intention and behavior?
2. What is the relationship between personality of consumer and cultural traits act as antecedents of consumer social responsibility?
3. Does consumer social responsibility mediate the relationship of personality traits and cultural traits with intention to buy societal friendly products?
4. Does consumer's social responsibility affect their intention to buy societal friendly products?

### **Significance of the Study**

The literature is replete with articles emphasizing the importance of organizations' efforts and initiatives regarding social responsibility. It is the premise of the current research that it may be difficult for corporate social responsibility to succeed without the assistance of consumers. That is, for corporate social responsibility to flourish and by pushing customers toward brand love, they should be using a pull strategy which is consumer social responsibility. This study examines this proposition: by examining literature which supports the role of brand love in consumer buying behavior of societal friendly products; measuring and validating and by investigating antecedents of brand love which will help organization to devise strategies. Consumers generally do not seem willing to pay more for socially responsible products even when they may state that these products are important to them. In practice, social responsibility seems to be only a peripheral, not a key factor in decision-making. Some consumers will, however, purchase socially responsible products but only if the price and/or quality are competitive with less socially responsible alternatives.

### **Research Methodology**

This is a cross-sectional study which is often used in social sciences (Younas, Javed et al. 2019). Nature of the study is quantitative, and it's ascribed to measure the students' response from all the private Universities of Pakistan.

### **Sampling**

The population of the study was all fast food consumers in Pakistan. The sample has been calculated using Smart PLS software and SPSS for demographic analysis. The total sample required from the population was 50 and we have gathered 65 responses which was greater than

the required one in order to increase the accuracy of our model as done by earlier researchers (Abdurrahaman and Osman 2017).

### **Data Collection**

For data collection, a survey was designed online in Google forms, and the link was shared with all the fast food consumers in Pakistan. By 9<sup>th</sup> January, 2024, the authors have collected 65 respondent's responses. There were a total of two sections. In the first section, we asked respondents about their Age, Gender, Education, and employment status in order to measure the demography of the respondents.

### **Measurement**

To measure the response of the fast food consumers, a questionnaire comprised of 25 items with 5 point Likert scale was used.

## **Results and Data Analysis**

In data analysis, we used various statistical tools. Table 2 shows the details overview of the respondents. In this study, most of the respondents are male which is representing 61% (n=122) and females represent 39% (n=78). Among respondents, there were 91% students and 63% among them were Bachelor students. For inferential examination in this study, we have used Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Smart PLS 3.7 was used to perform SEM. Construct Validity and Reliability; Smart PLS is extensively used in social sciences for data analysis (Abdurrahaman, Owusu et al. 2018). Table 3 shows detailed results about Outer loadings against each item are above the required threshold of 0.5. Values of internal consistency (Cronbach Alpha) are also above the necessary threshold. Average Variance Extracted is also above its essential value which is 0.5 (Sarstedt, Ringle et al. 2021). (Table 2 also contains Coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) values. The R<sup>2</sup> value shows the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable. The combined effect of the independent variables of this study (Eco Design Practices, Personality Traits, and Ethical Consumption) is 66% on the dependent variable. After making sure, the model is fit through all aspects, construct reliability, validity, all parameters are as per thresholds the bootstrapping technique was applied to the model to test the hypothesis. It has been concluded that all independent variables have a significant positive direct impact on Brand Love. Four hypotheses haven been supported and three hypotheses have not been supported. It has been concluded that: There is no significant impact of Eco-Design Practices on

Brand Love; There is significant impact of Eco-Design Practices on Perceived Environmental Performance; There is no significant impact of Ethical Consumption on Brand Love; There is a significant impact of Ethical Consumption on Perceived Environmental Performance; There is a significant impact of Perceived Environmental Performance on Brand Love; There is a significant impact of Personality Traits on Brand Love; There is no significant impact of Personality Traits on Perceived Environmental Performance as shown in (Table 4), (Figure 1) and (Figure 2).

Table 1 Phase1 of SEM Analysis (Measurement Model)

Variable Name	Composite Reliability	AVE	R2	F2
Brand Love	0.896	0.634	0.664	
Eco-Designed Practices	0.817	0.530		0.002
Ethical Consumption	0.912	0.674		0.022
Perceived Environmental Performance	0.903	0.757	0.600	0.360
Personality Traits	0.819	0.605		0.100

<b>Gender</b>	Male	122	61%
	Female	78	39%
<b>Profession</b>	Student	181	91%
	Employed	6	3%
	Self-Employed	6	3%
	None of the Above	6	3%
<b>Education Level</b>	Intermediate	53	27%
	Bachelor	125	63%
	Master	6	3%
	M.Phil.	6	3%
	Ph.D.	9	5%

Table 2 Demographics



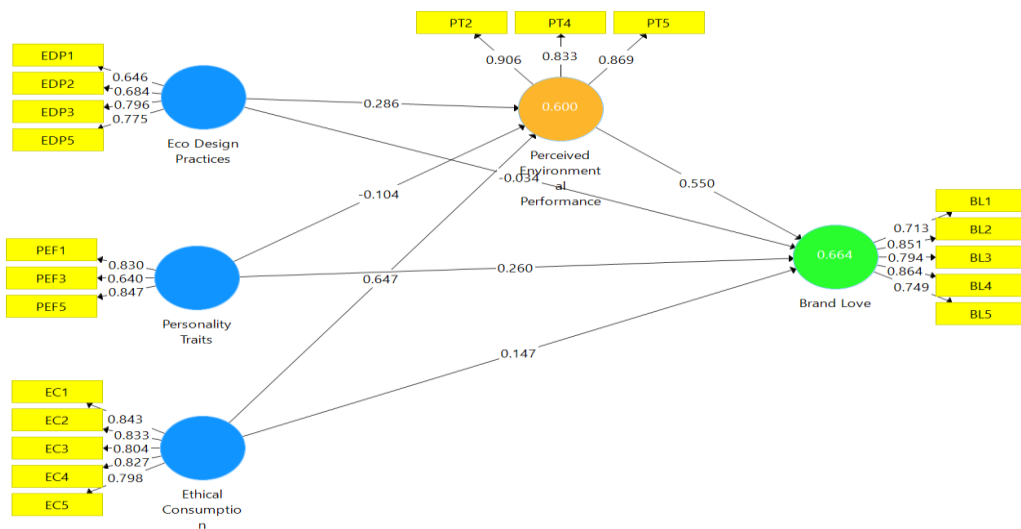
Table 3 Outer Loadings

Outer Loadings	Brand Love	Eco Designed Practices	Ethical Consumption	Perceived Environmental Performance	Personality Traits
BL1	0.713				
BL2	0.851				
BL3	0.794				
BL4	0.864				
BL5	0.749				
EC1			0.843		
EC2			0.833		
EC3			0.804		
EC4			0.827		
EC5			0.798		
EDP1		0.646			
EDP2		0.684			
EDP3		0.796			
EDP5		0.775			
PEF1				0.906	
PEF3				0.833	
PEF5				0.869	
PT2					0.830
PT4					0.640
					0.847

Table 4 (Bootstrapping Summaries)

	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value	Supported?
Eco Designed Practices > Brand Love	0.118	0.269	0.788	Not supported
Eco Designed Practices > Perceived Environmental Performance	0.115	2.474	0.014	Supported
Ethical Consumption > Brand Love	0.142	1.008	0.313	Not Supported
Ethical Consumption > Perceived Environmental Performance	0.121	5.382	0.000	Supported
Perceived Environmental Performance > Brand Love	0.150	3.698	0.000	Supported
Personality Traits > Brand Love	0.114	2.256	0.024	Supported
Personality Traits > Perceived Environmental Performance	0.158	0.659	0.510	Not Supported

Figure 1 structural Equation Model



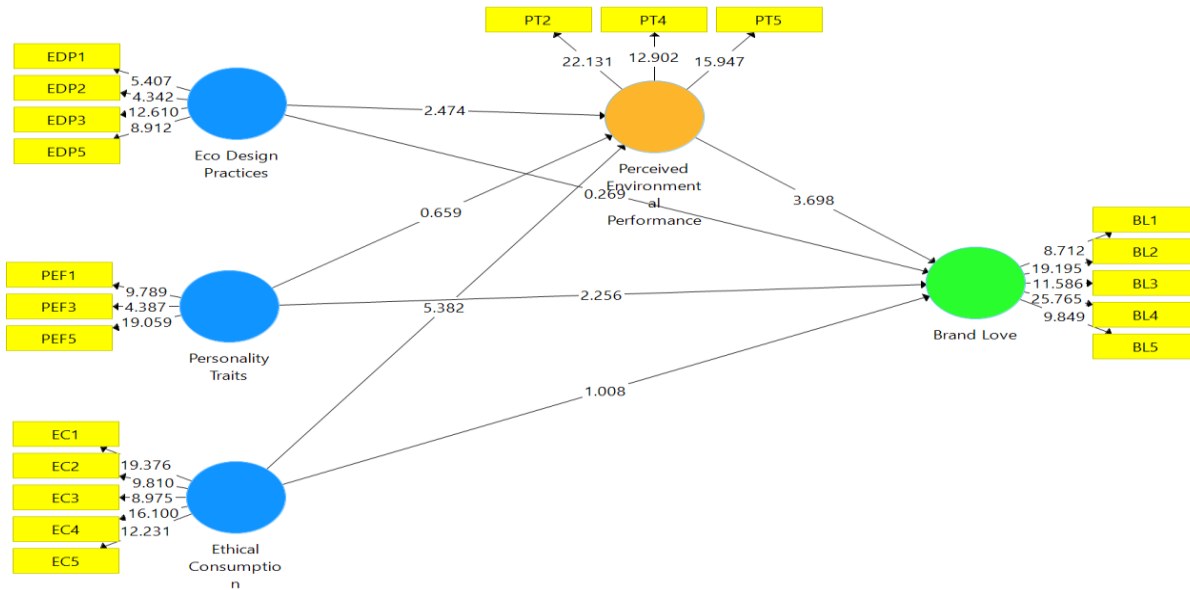


Figure 2 Bootstrapping Results

### Conclusions and Recommendations

This research helped in determining the impact of green products. Personality traits and ethical consumption over brand love with mediating role of Perceived Environmental Performance. The results showed that after getting data from the consumers of Fast Food Industry, the variables such as Personality Traits and Perceived Environmental Performance have a positive and significant impact on brand love. The results showed that Eco-Designed products do not have a direct and significant impact on Brand Love. But Eco-Designed Products impact the Perceived Environmental Performance positively.

This research can also be conducted in any other geographical location or any other population having age brackets of 30 to 40 years having a professional background. This sample had a population comprised of almost 91% youngster. Therefore, another research can also be conducted using same conceptual framework over different geographical area and population.

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