Antecedents of Consumers' Green Purchase Intention: An Integrated Approach

Mehkar Sherwani[1*] and Adnan Ali[2]

[1]*Business School, University of International Business and Economics, Beijing, China.*
[2]*School of Management, Xi'an Jiaotong University, China.*

Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration between both authors. Author MS designed the study, performed the statistical analysis, and wrote the first draft of the manuscript. Author AA managed the literature searches and the analyses of the study. Both authors read and approved the final manuscript.

Original Research Article

ABSTRACT

The chief goal of this study is to empirically test 1) the effect of perceived product quality upon green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, green brand loyalty and green purchase intention, and 2) the effect of green brand satisfaction, green brand trust and green brand loyalty upon the purchase intention of green brands users. The sample target for this research study consisted of three hundred and eighty-five respondents from four universities of Pakistan. Demographical analysis, correlation matrix and regression analysis were used to analyze and interpret the results. The results of this empirical study show that perceived product quality has positive effects on green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, green brand loyalty and green brand purchase intention. At the same time, it was revealed that green brand satisfaction, green brand trust and green brand loyalty have positive effects on consumers green brand purchase intention. By extending this research into the environmental context through an exploration of the dynamics between these four constructs– perceived product quality, green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, and green brand loyalty– this study seeks to provide an evaluation of new concepts of green marketing in the context

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Corresponding author: E-mail: mehkar.sherwani@iiu.edu.pk;

of environmental trends and increase consumers green purchase intention from four drivers: perceived product quality, green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, and green brand loyalty.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the world, on account of the disastrous environmental pollution arisen from industrial manufacturing activities, the public has increasingly noticed environmental problems [1]. Climate change due to the greenhouse effect, global warming, pollution of air and water supplies, agricultural land, defloration and species extinction, and exhaustion of fisheries are some of the main dangers to earth's environment [2,3]. In view of current problems, the continual dreadful conditions in the quality and quantity of the ecological resources have persuaded the public to consider their responsibility [4].

Therefore, several business initiatives that benefited the environment are the results of community pressure, increasing public pressure, new legislation and reactive calls to actions for specific environmental threats [5]. Besides, countless organizations are lying face down to accept the protection of the environment as their social responsibility [6,7]. Furthermore, a lot of organizations are setting the goal of attracting their consumers' attention [8], and to achieve this goal one way is a distinction. Organizations can distinguish their product by focusing on any physical properties such as design, taste or unphysical for instance brand name, country of origin and price [9]. Apart from these strategies, one way to distinguish their products from competitors is to implement the idea of green opportunity i.e. introducing and offering environmentally friendly or green products to consumers.

Green marketing, under this context, has received more attention in a number of businesses, for instance, the electronics and information industry [10,11]. "*Green marketing activities involve developing, differentiating, pricing, and promoting products and services that satisfy customers' environmental needs without a hurtful influence on the environment*" [12].

Companies must find an opportunity to apply green marketing activities to achieve new brand differentiation advantages and obtain a competitive advantage in new markets, as well as enhance their products' environmental performance/ quality and brand awareness [13]. Businesses worldwide are adopting green marketing strategies to respond green consumer demands [14], enjoy more competitive advantages [15], compliance with environmental pressures, improve corporate images [11] and to change their whole business philosophy [16]. Besides, together with several others justifications for the adoption of green marketing activities in different industries, green marketing activities will reflect positively on the company's intangible brand equity [17].

For businesses, brands are recognized as a strong marketing tool and crucial marketplace assets, therefore key sources of firm value. For this value to be realized, however, consumers must identify themselves with the brand, and this influences their purchases positively [18]. Therefore, at the moment, introducing a strong green brand and building its green brand equity is one of the foremost goals for companies. Ambler [19] and Davis [20] argued that brand equity is a key marketing asset which can stimulate a distinctive and welcomed relationship differentiating the bonds between the organization and its stakeholders [21,22] in addition to fostering long-term buying behaviour.

In contrast, some authors have a viewpoint that even in the green era; greenness of products cannot guarantee their sales are outstanding [23, 24]. Ample of green products, like organic foods, green cars, green electronic devices and green cleaning products have appeared on shelves, however, in most cases, these green products obtain reportedly low market shares against their traditional rivalries [25].

In view of many analysts, this is because consumers might not have understood what consists certain green products or in what ways it benefits the environment as compared to traditional products [26]. This is, however, a significant challenge considering the fact that several organizations promote their new products which embody false, misleading, ambiguous and overwhelmingly deceptive claims about the green attributes of their products or services, customers are not willing to buy their products anymore

[13,27]. Many leading businesses have responded by designing, producing and promoting green products, but still facing the challenge to overcome consumer scepticism about their functional performance in terms of price, quality, value, performance etc and/ or these products green attributes [13,27].

When green products perform competitively not only according to green product attributes but also on the basis of traditional product attributes, the green product attributes will act to serve as the source of additional value that could generate consumer preference towards such green brands [28,29]. This can be the view from another perspective argued by Ottman et al. [30] in his study that in contrast to the traditional electrical products, green electronic products are usually priced at a premium. Thus, it is particularly important for the organizations to make sure that along with green attributes, the functional performance of their green brands is also better if not at least equal than the traditional electrical products in the same category to generate substantial green brand equity.

In consequence, it comes into view that businesses are facing a dual challenge, one is to turn out positive perception towards green branding initiatives and the second is to produce eco-friendly products that match if not outperform the functional performance of traditional products [31]. In addition, from the previous few decades, instead of lot of research in academia specifically integrating green marketing into contemporary business practices as well as the growing interest of marketing researchers in environmental related issues [16,31], not a significant number of green brands can established their brand equity most prominently in developing countries. This could be one reason for low adoption levels of green products.

In order to comprehend and deal with this issue, some recent research studies on green marketing have developed various new concepts, for instance, green satisfaction, green loyalty, green trust, and green purchase intention to measure customers' specific behaviours in context of green branding schemes [31,32]. In the current study, a researcher proposes a conceptual model to investigate the expected links between conventional concepts of branding (perceived product quality) and green constructs of branding (green satisfaction, green trust, green loyalty to tape consumers green product purchase intention.

The main objective of current research is to empirically test 1) the effect of perceived product quality upon green brand satisfaction, green brand trust green brand loyalty and green brand purchase intention, and 2) the effect of green brand satisfaction, green brand trust and green brand loyalty upon the purchase intention of green products users.

Importantly, the knowledge of connections between traditional branding concepts and green branding concepts perceived is expected to have theoretical and practical implications for researchers, practitioners, marketing managers, overall green product businesses and offer tangible benefits for green products management. An exploration of the dynamics between these four constructs – perceived product quality, green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, and green brand loyalty and extending this research into the environmental context – this study seeks to provide an evaluation of new concepts of green marketing in the context of environmental trends and increase consumers green purchase intention from four drivers: perceived product quality, green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, and green brand loyalty.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 The Positive Effect of Perceived Product Quality on Consumers Green Brand Satisfaction

The consumer satisfaction is also associated with the quality of a product. Kotler and Keller, [33, p.169] reported in this context that without a doubt, the best quality of a product is the more satisfied the consumer is. Product quality leads to performance and in conclusion to customer satisfaction. According to Zeithaml et al. [34], the idea is that consumers' positive affect toward product or service is likely to motivate the consumers to recommend as well as repurchase that specific brand to others [35]. In addition, Martenson [36] reported that actual green brand satisfaction can result in a general intention to repurchase green brand.

According to Honkanen et al. [37], customers are more enthusiastic to buy brands that they hold positive feelings towards, for instance, environment-friendly brands. Vandermerwe and Oliff [38] and Gordon [39] stated that environment-friendly brands most likely hold a competitive advantage over traditional/ un-environment friendly brands. For instance,

Shrum et al. [40] found that there are some consumers who are willing to pay a price premium for environment-friendly brands. Similarly, Soutar., Ramaseshan and Molster [41] reported that lots of consumers are ready to pay money for green products in spite of definite reservations, even if green products are considered satisfactory from the environmental point of view. Therefore, to attract these customers businesses may compete by offering comparable green quality products at the competitive prices in the market or they may produce higher quality green products and charge high prices to meet the higher costs of production [24,42].

Similarly, Diamantopoulos et al. [29] argued that several consumers responded that they are reluctant to abstain from essential product benefits during the purchase decision. Therefore, environment-friendly products must compete on the basis of essential product characteristics such as durability or convenience along with environmental aspects. Besides, according to Ottman [43], customers accepted environmentally friendly products when their primary need for convenience, affordability, performance and quality were met, and when they understood how environmentally friendly products could help to solve ecological problems. Therefore, in the context of our present work, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis- 1: Perceived product quality has a direct and positive influence on green brand satisfaction.

2.2 The Positive Effect of Perceived Product Quality on Green Brand Loyalty

Product performance assessments from a customer point of view depend on many factors, in particular, the type of loyalty relationship the customer has with the brand [44]. According to many researchers, brand equity can provide a competitive advantage for the organization, because it gives the brand to sell at higher prices with higher profit margins and the power to capture a larger market share [15,45]. Therefore, it is necessary to incorporate the concept of green marketing into the framework of brand equity, as the idea of green marketing can become a new way of brand positioning.

According to Erenkol and Duygun [46], most organization has recognized brand equity as one of the most valuable intangible assets because marketing literature considers brand equity a very important concept [47]. In a similar vein, Yoo and Donthum [48] mentioned that brand loyalty indicates consumers' intentions to remain loyal to a particular brand. In addition, they argued that brand loyalty can be shown as consumers tend to buy the brand as the first choice. Loyal consumers are not only committed to a brand as well, this commitment led to the permanent purchase of this particular brand during usage [49]. According to the argument above, it is expected that high product quality will increase customer brand loyalty.

Hypothesis- 2: Perceived product quality has a direct and positive influence on green brand loyalty.

2.3 The Positive Effect of Perceived Product Quality on Green Brand Trust

Customers would perceive ambiguity as they feel uncomfortable with incongruity and information ambiguity [50]. If consumers are puzzled with the product's functionality, they are not likely to trust the integrity, benevolence and competence of the product [51]. Moreover, according to Mitchell and Papavassiliou [52] consumers are often reluctant to trust a product due to their confusion of the product. In consequence, customers' mystification has a momentous negative impact on consumer trust [53].

At the present time, customers are reluctant to trust many businesses' environmental claims, as a number of companies exaggerate the environmental performance of their products [27]. In this context, Chen [11] argues that in this environmental era, the green trust would influence consumers' purchase behaviours. Moreover, just like the conventional brand equity frameworks, trust is a factor that is, in fact, important in green brand equity frameworks, given the bad reputation of various businesses' environmental actions and intentions. Deceptive, uncertain and green washing marketing campaigns confuse consumers resultantly these campaigns can increase their doubts and weaken their trust [54].

In addition, Morgan and Hunt [55] reported that confused consumers are likely to have less trust in a market which gives them with unclear and at times contradictory product information. Therefore, Walsh et al. [56] argued that reducing consumer confusion and on the other hand increasing cognitive clarity might increase consumer trust. Thus we hypothesize

Hypothesis- 3: Perceived product quality has a direct and positive influence on green brand trust.

2.4 The Positive Effect of Perceived Product Quality on Green Brand Purchase Intention

Perceived quality is referred as *"the customers' assessment of the overall supremacy attributes or performances of a brand/ product with regard to its intended objectives"* [57,58]. Ramaseshan and Tsao [59] mentioned that perceived quality refers to the intangible perception of the whole quality of consumers or superiority of a product or service – their overall feeling about the brand. Ahmed et al. [60] further added that information about intrinsic cues, for instance, brand features and other extrinsic cues for example brand name, brand image, country-of-origin image, price or else the total that advertising can influence perceived quality. A brand can create an image in consumers' mind and can be motivation to purchase a specific product, which is usually associated with quality [61].

According to Aaker [62] and Sweeney et al. [63], perceived quality is a set of attributes contributing to the perception of a product's or brand's quality, thus it can reduce the costs of managing customers, make it possible to charge a higher price, increase purchase volumes and create a positive word-of-mouth effect [64]. Mitchell [65] argued that according to perceived risk perspective by and large customers are unsure about product quality, and by this means think their purchase decisions are most likely risky since the purchases outcomes cannot be completely anticipated. Furthermore, perceived quality is the main requirement of the perceived value [66], and is one of the requirements of satisfaction [67]. Over and above, perceived quality is essential for this theory which states that strong brands add more value to the customers' purchases [68].

Similarly, previous studies [62,69] have also studied the direct association between quality and decision making, and have reported that brand perceived quality does have a direct effect on consumer's decision making as it provides them with a sound reason to prefer one brand over the other. Given these results, we posit the following hypotheses:

Hypothesis- 4: Perceived product quality has a direct and positive influence on consumers' green brand purchase intention.

2.5 The Positive Effect of Green Brand Satisfaction on Green Brand Purchase Intention

Specifically, in the marketing field, customer satisfaction is one of the most widely discussed topics [70]. For instance, earlier researchers have demonstrated customer satisfaction with a green brand can result in consumers purchase intentions [36,71], in addition to repurchase behaviour [72]. Highly satisfied consumers with a brand may recall its name directly, compared to less satisfied consumers with it [73].

An important viewpoint is that even in the green era, the greenness of products cannot guarantee their sales are outstanding [23,42,74]. So, green products must match upon traditional product attributes, such as value, quality, price, and performance against non-green products to attract consumers. Therefore, businesses need to develop products which possess both of traditional product attributes and greenness to enhance consumer purchase intentions [13,75].

Mai and Ness [71] and Martenson [36] reported that consumer actual satisfaction with a green brand can result in a general intention to repurchase that green brand [72]. Therefore, it is obvious that when a consumer appraises a green brand or an environment-friendly product plus he is positive about satisfaction and intention to repurchase relationship, the outcome is a high-level loyalty and a certain degree of green commitment [76]. Previous researchers have also found the direct effect of consumer satisfaction on consumer purchase intention of a brand [34,77,78]. Aligned with above arguments, we posited the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis- 5: Green brand satisfaction has a direct and positive influence on consumers' green brand purchase intention.

2.6 The Positive Effect of Green Brand Trust on Green Brand Purchase Intention

Trust is the fundamental element of every relation, so the researchers considered trust as a most important factor on which a relationship is based [79]. In addition, Flavian et al. [80] added that trust is the essential ingredient in the success of any relationship. A trust to a brand refer to consumer's higher expectation or likelihood and is based on the consumer belief that brand is responsible, competent and trustworthy [81]. Ganesan [82], and Hart and

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Saunders [83] argued that trust is a level of willingness to rely on one object derived from the expectation of its benevolence, ability and reliability. In addition, according to Lin et al. [84] trust is the intention to accept vulnerability anchored in positive expectations of the capability and integrity of another one.

In the literature of marketing studies, both researchers and practitioner have increasingly focused on brand trust concept. Specifically, in recent studies, brand trust has been recognized as an essential in building strong consumer-brand relationships [85,86], which in turn positively affects brand loyalty [87,88,89]. The relationship between consumer trust and loyalty had been supported in several studies [87,88, 89,90].

Studies in the past have also examined the direct association between brand trust and consumer purchase intention, and have reported that brand trust does have a direct effect on purchase intention of consumer [32,91,92,93,94,95,96]. Based on the above literature, the hypothesis is proposed as below:

Hypothesis- 6: Green brand trust has a direct and positive influence on consumers' green brand purchase intention.

2.7 The Positive Effect of Green Brand Loyalty on Green Brand Purchase Intention

Brand loyalty is "*the attachment that a customer has to a brand*" [62, p. 65]. Academics and practitioners agree that customer loyalty is probably one of the best measures of success [97] and most important strategic element in any organization in creating the sustainable competitive advantage [98]. Loyal customers help firms to reduce marketing expenditures, spread positive word of mouth, effectively increase market share, are less price-sensitive and willing to pay premium prices, and improved organizational profitability [97]. Moreover, Brand loyalty creates a group of buyers that remain loyal for a long time and less likely switch to a competitor brand due to the fact that loyalty adds considerable value to a brand or organization [99]. In the past, researchers have found that brand loyalty is an important antecedent of consumer purchase intention [100,101]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is set forth:

Hypothesis- 7: Green brand loyalty has a direct and positive influence on consumers' green brand purchase intention.

2.8 Conceptual Framework

H(4)
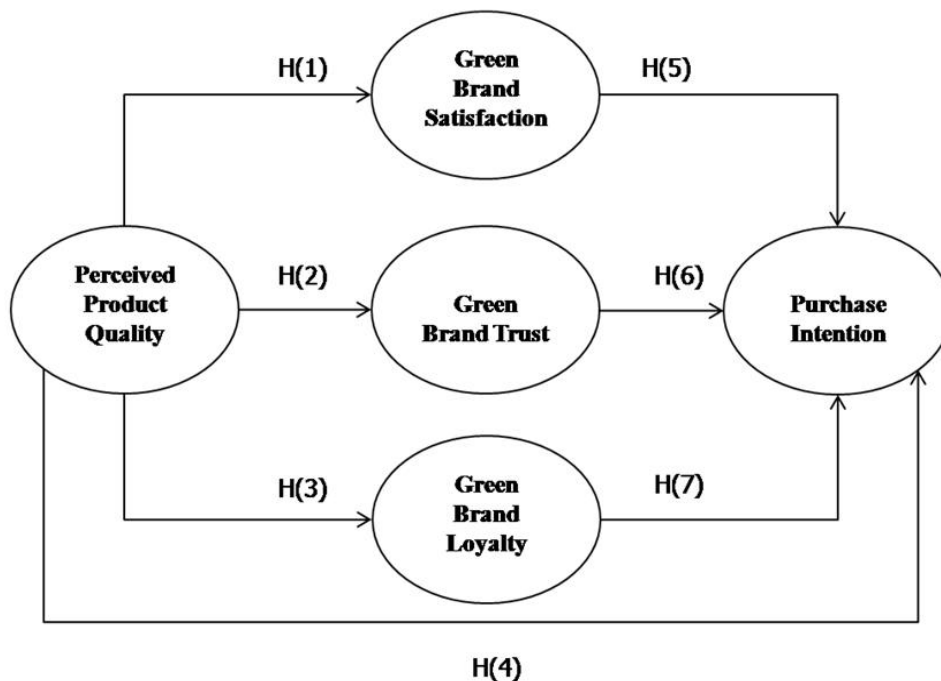
3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sampling Technique and Sample Size

The researchers will test the above-proposed model by collecting data in a developing country, Pakistan since much of the published conventional and green brand equity research has been developed in the developed nations such as the USA or European countries. The unit of analysis in this research study was academic scholars/ students of four universities in capital of Pakistan, who are interested in environment-friendly purchasing habit. For this purpose, researchers selected four universities from the federal capital of Pakistan. These universities are International Islamic University Islamabad, Muhammad Ali Jinnah University, FAST National University Islamabad, and Quaid-e-Azam University.

3.2 Data Collection

In order to collect the data, this research study referred to previous studies to design questionnaire items in the environment-friendly products' context. A two-page questionnaire was designed comprising 40 questions. Out of 35 questions, 5 questions for measuring demographic features of the respondents and 39 questions were designed for measuring the core variables of the study. Besides, researchers also prepared an online version of the questionnaire by using the website of question pro.com. Finally, researchers used two methods to fill out the questionnaire from the respondents. Personally, administer method was used for those respondents which are easily accessible for the researchers. Alternatively, the online version of the questionnaire was emailed to respondents which are not easily accessible to the researchers. The researchers will get the email addresses of faculty members and some students from their concern universities websites, plus researchers used personal contacts for this. Besides, mailing the question paper to a person, a humble request to circulate it among your colleagues and students will also be posted. The sample target for this research study consisted of three hundred and eighty-five Pakistani respondents.

3.3 Measurement of Variables

Perceived brand quality was measured using the four items adapted from the work of Washburn and Plank [102]. Green brand trust was measured using four items adapted from the work of Chen [11] and later used by [96]. In order to measure the green brand satisfaction variable, three items were adapted from the study of Oliver [70] and Chen [11]. Similarly, four items were used to measure the green brand loyalty based on work of Chaudhuri and Holbrook [94]. Consumers green purchase intentions were measured using a three-item scale adapted from Li (1997).

4. RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Characteristics of the Respondents

Table 1 show, most respondents (65.5%) are male than female respondents (34.5%). Similarly, an overall dominance of "21-30" age category respondents (52.2%) followed by "31-40" respondents age category (25.2%), "less than 20" age category respondents (17.1%) and "41-50" age category respondents (5.5%). Out of the total, 44% respondents are in "less than 30,000" income group followed by "31,000-45,000" income group (38%), "46,000-60,000" income group (13%) and "more than 60,000" income group (5%). In addition, the majority of them (47.5%) are getting bachelor education followed by "Master" (35.6%), "PhD" (9.6%), and "any other" category (7.3%). Finally, a majority of respondents were single (62.3%), and had no professional experience (57.7%).

4.2 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The current research employed confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to test the internal consistency of the scales using AMOS before estimating the structural model. The measurement model (see Table 2) indicators show an excellent fit [chi-square $\chi^2(1257)$=2076.56, c^2/df ratio=1.653 (p<0.000); root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA)=0.059; PCLOSE=.144; goodness-of-fit (GFI)=0.930; Incremental fit index (IFI)=0.934; normed fit index (NFI)=0.901; comparative fit index (CFI)=0.972; and adjusted goodness-of-fit (AGFI)=0.890]. Cronbach's alpha for the constructs ranged from 0.70 to 0.95 [perceived product quality .88, green brand satisfaction .91, green brand trust .79, green brand loyalty .90, and purchase intention 0.85.] [103], the average variance extracted (AVE) ranged from 0.63 to 0.89, and composite reliability (CR) exceeded .70, and [104].

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To assess the discriminant validity, this research compared the AVE with the variance shared between all construct pairs as suggested by Fornell and Larcker [104]. This test suggests that a scale possesses discriminant validity if the correlation between two variables must not be greater than their AVES. For example, the correlation between brand perceived quality and purchase intention is 0.35[**] and the square root of the AVEs of brand perceived quality and purchase intention are 0.87 and 0.83, respectively; both AVEs are above the correlation (0.35) between them implying the presence of discriminant validity.

4.3 Structure Equation Modeling

Table 3 how that perceived product quality is positively and significantly related with green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, green brand loyalty and brand purchase intention. Similarly, green brand satisfaction is significantly and positively related to green brand trust, green brand loyalty and brand purchase intention. Moreover, green brand trust is also positively associated with green brand loyalty and brand purchase intention. Finally, green brand loyalty is positively and significantly linked with brand purchase intention.

Table 1. Demographic profile of respondents

	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Gender			**Marital status**		
Male	252	65.5	Single	240	62.3
Female	133	34.5	Married	145	37.7
Age			**Education**		
20 -	66	17.1	Bachelor	183	47.5
21 – 30	201	52.2	Master	137	35.6
31- 40	97	25.2	Ph.D.	37	9.6
41 – 50	21	5.5	Any other	28	7.3
Income (in Pakistani rupees)			**Background**		
30,000 -	169	44	Non-professional	222	57.7
31,000 - 45,000	148	38	Professional	163	42.3
46,000 - 60,000	50	13			
60,000 +	18	5			

Table 2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis and Scale Reliability

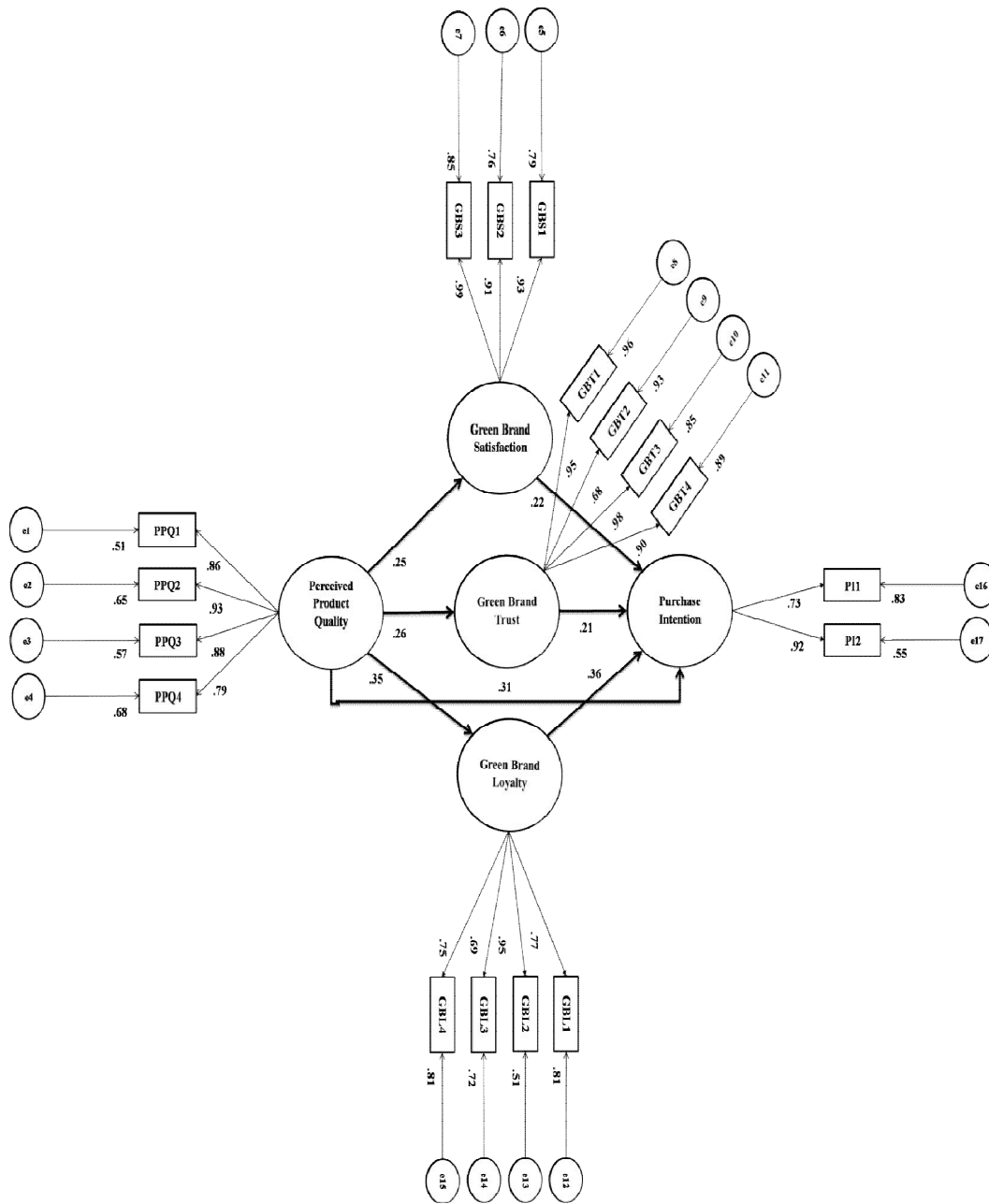|	Components					CA	AVE	CR
	1	2	3	4	5			
Brand Perceived Quality						.88	0.75	0.88
BPQ1	.86							
BPQ2	.93							
BPQ3	.88							
BPQ4	.79							
Green Brand Satisfaction						.91	0.89	0.93
GBS1		.79						
GBS2		.76						
GBS3		.85						
Green Brand Trust						.79	0.78	0.97
GBT1			.96					
GBT2			.93					
GBT3			.85					
GBT4			.89					
Green Brand loyalty						.90	0.63	0.90
GBL1				.77				
GBL2				.95				
GBL3				.69				
GBL4				.75				
Purchase Intention						.85	0.69	0.82
PI1					.73			
PI2					.92			

Fig. 1. The Structural Model

First, results in Table- 4 reveals a significant positive correlation between perceived product quality, and green brand satisfaction (γ=.315**, B=.250, p<0.05), green brand trust (γ=.245**, B=.263, p<0.05), green brand loyalty (γ=.375**, B=.350, p<0.05) and consumers green brand purchase intention (γ=.350**, B=.305, p<0.05), supporting H1, H2, H3 and H4. In terms of effect size, perceived product quality contributes high to green brand loyalty (β=.350, p<0.05) followed by green brand purchase intention (β= .305, p< 0.05), green brand satisfaction (β=.250, p<0.05) and green brand trust (β=.263, p<0.05) respectively. So, it can be stated that the higher quality of a green product/ brand generate higher brand loyalty with the green product, increase consumer green brand purchase intention, produce more brand satisfaction, and show more green brand trust.

Table 3. Means, standard deviations (SD) and correlations amongst constructs

	Mean	S.D	Perceived product quality	Green brand satisfaction	Green brand trust	Green brand loyalty	Purchase Intention
Perceived product quality	4.578	.3236	-	-	-	-	-
Green brand satisfaction	4.339	.4377	.315 (.94,.87)	-	-	-	-
Green brand trust	4.466	.4046	.245 (.88,.87)	.236 (.88,.94)	-	-	-
Green brand loyalty	4.338	.4163	.375 (.79,.87)	.192 (.79,.94)	.301 (.79,.88)	-	-
Purchase intention	4.508	.4673	.350 (.83,.87)	.346 (.83,.94)	.262 (.83,.88)	.273 (.83,.79)	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)., *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4. Results of regression analysis

Hypotheses				Estimate	P	Supported
H1	Green brand satisfaction	<---	Perceived product quality	.250	***	Supported
H2	Green brand trust	<---	Perceived product quality	.263	***	Supported
H3	Green brand loyalty	<---	Perceived product quality	.350	***	Supported
H4	Green brand purchase intention	<---	Perceived product quality	.305	***	Supported
H5	Green brand purchase intention	<---	Green brand satisfaction	.237	***	Supported
H6	Green brand purchase intention	<---	Green brand trust	.205	***	Supported
H7	Green brand purchase intention	<---	Green brand loyalty	.356	***	Supported

Second, green brand satisfaction (γ=.346[**], B=.237, p<0.05), green brand trust (γ=.262[**], B=.205, p<0.05) and green brand loyalty (γ=.273[**], B=.356, p<0.05) are positively correlated with green brand purchase intention, supporting H5, H6 and H7. Again, in terms of effect size, green brand loyalty contributes more to green brand purchase intention (β=.356, p<0.05) followed by green brand satisfaction (β= .237, p< 0.05) and green brand trust (β=.205, p<0.05). That is, if a green brand generates high loyalty, satisfy consumers and enhance trust level on the green product, the possibility that they will purchase a green brand is higher.

5. CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of this empirical study show that perceived product quality has positive effects on green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, green brand loyalty and green brand purchase intention. At the same time, it was revealed that green brand satisfaction, green brand trust and green brand loyalty have positive effects on consumers green product purchase intention. Therefore, all seven proposed hypotheses were supported in this study, indicating that green brand purchase intention is optimized by greater investment in the green product- customer relationship (perceived product quality, green brand satisfaction, green brand trust, and green brand loyalty) in the green core competence of an organization. That is, investment in the green brand-customer relationship is likely to strengthen green product purchase intention and enhance green business.

There are several contributions to this research study. First one is to identify the factors that possibly can generate green brand equity in a developing country i.e. in Pakistan. Secondly, the literature shows that still there is a troublesome gap between what consumers say, they will do and how they actually behave in terms of purchase consumptions [105]. So, next

contribution is to predict the mechanics through people emotions, worries and concerns related to the environment could be transformed into purchase intentions. As through this research, the researchers want to know that how we can transform consumers concerns into actions.

Moreover, only a handful of researchers provide empirical evidence on the validity of the interrelationships amongst green branding constructs [11,13,32] compared to previous researchers which paid great attention to explore the interrelationships of traditional branding constructs (such as brand product quality, its credibility, consumer satisfaction, loyalty, trust and consumer-based brand equity etc). More significantly, only the latest research study conducted by Ng et al. [31] explored the relationships amongst conventional and green branding constructs in a holistic framework, no one before attempted to find this relationship.

In addition, the majority of the research studies were conducted in developed nations to be precise on samples of Western or European countries, which are perceived as having higher levels of environmental awareness/ knowledge and green momentum. Future studies need to be conducted in other nations specifically in developing nations to evaluate the differences that may exist between cultures, especially when dealing with consumer behaviour in an environmentally conscious setting. In the past a great deal of emphasizing was paid by researchers to explore the pertinent issues of brand image, brand affect, brand satisfaction, brand trust, brand loyalty, and brand equity, to date, very few researchers have explored these issues from the perspective of green marketing [32]. Therefore, this study hunts to fill the research gap.

6. LIMITATION AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

First of all, all the respondents in this research were Pakistani students studying at various universities in Pakistan. The study, however, would have yielded more and varied answers should it be conducted in a comparative study mode by considering some other developing country sample such as India together with Pakistani sample. Though research has yielded many results, the study could have been expanded to increase the variables pool such as green product price, green product credibility and green product availability factors to get richer insights into the decision-making the process of consumers in addition to numbers of respondents.

Similarly, the researcher used convenience sample technique to collect data that only included university students from Pakistan with the majority from bachelor program. As a result, the sample is not generalizable to the whole Pakistani population and may not be reflective of all developing country respondents Muslims due to the reasons discussed above. Taken as a whole, respondents with different income levels, education levels, age groups, professional background, and an equal proportion of male and female should be taken into account for data collection in addition to data analysis to understand consumer patterns in future research.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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