CAUSE RELATED MARKETING AND GREEN PRODUCTS PURCHASE DECISION

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: Current environmental problems has forced marketing managers, academics and research companies to look for factors that might encourage consumers to buy green products. Therefore, the purpose of this research was to empirically investigate the impact of cause–related marketing on green products purchase decision specifically in Pakistan's context. It examines the level of influence CRM has on green products purchase decision. *Design/Methodology/Approach:* The current study is primarily based on quantitative research design that used structured questionnaires to collect the data from 4 cities of Pakistan. Data was collected through cross sectional method. *Findings:* The results revealed that cause-related marketing has a positive and significant relationship with green product purchase decision in Pakistan. People of Pakistan have positive inclination towards green products which are associated with any social or environmental cause. *Implications/Originality/Value:* On the basis of this research it can be concluded that cause-related marketing technique creates brand's reputation, brand attitude and make people socially responsibility by involving community.

KEYWORDS: Cause related marketing Ad credibility Brand attitude Green products purchase decision

1. INTRODUCTION

Countries and economies are constrained by environmental limits but resource conservation is ignored more than ever before. The process of industrialization is resulting into environmental degradation, global warming, land pollution, air pollution and water contamination (Chekima, Wafa, Igau, Chekima & Sondoh, 2016). As per literature review, unless one percent of GDP is dedicated to resolve the negative effects of climate challenge the adverse consequences would reduce the world resources by 20% by year 2035 (Wells, Ponting, & Peattie, 2011). In 2010, the average waste per day was 11 million tons and it will increase to 6 million tons per day by 2025 (Reynolds, Blackmore, & Smith, 2009). Although environment friendly or green products are gaining importance these days (Ling, 2013). Despite this, the market size of green products is only 4 % (Bray, Johns, & Kilburn, 2011; Ritter, Borchardt, Vaccaro, Pereira, & Almeida, 2015). The environmental problems faced by the mankind today, require a close corporation between firm, government and consumers to move towards sustainable choices. This requires brain storming and change in the thinking process. This transformation from non-environmental to pro environmental thinking process will change human buying behavior and thus can force the people to move towards sustainability (Polonsky, 2011). Peattie & Peattie (2008) asserted that a successful development towards sustainability needs more radical solution than just the growth of new products. It includes development and promotion of responsible consumption and sustainable lifestyle.

Policies related to production process have always been in debate for centuries. However, consumer's consumption pattern is a new discussion. How do the people consume, what makes them buy a certain product/ service and how do customer get motivated to buy a particular product? (Tucker, Rifon, Lee, & Reece, 2012). To find the answer of these questions, a significant policy objective would therefore be to encourage the consumers to embrace more viable consumption attitude which would also be a basis of potential profitable marketing prospects. Motivating the prospective buyers to shift towards green consumption choices is thus an imperative strategy goal; also a viable opportunity for prospective commercial marketing (Wells et al., 2011). Thus the concept of sustainability has become

a hot topic for academic research (Tucker et al., 2012).For Marketers it is important to emphasize on the importance and benefits of using green (Esmaeilpour & Bahmiary, 2017). In much of existing consumer behaviour research, green buying decision has been studied as a motivational tendency of a green consumer (Barbarossa & De Pelsmacker, 2016).For green products success, marketers should convey environmental information in their promotion messages about how consumption of eco-friendly products can reduce environmental problems (Paul, Modi, & Patel, 2016). Although, consumers' reaction towards ecologically themed ads is unpredictable that involves the interplay of ad elements and consumer characteristics (Tucker et al., 2012). However, companies linked up with social or environmental cause can bring a positive change in attitudes regarding green buying behaviours (Mcwilliams, 2016).

People like to enquire about the companies which are associated with some cause (Gupta & Pirsch, 2006; Mcwilliams, 2016). It is for the reason that the attitude of the buyers' towards the brand and his/her intent to react by participating in the cause related marketing endeavour tend to become stronger (Anridho & Liao, 2013). When a products and CRM campaign are combine together, it provides both intrinsic as well as extrinsic benefits. Extrinsic benefits include original product benefits and intrinsic benefits are experienced by caring and supporting a charity (Ladero, Casquet, & Wymer, 2013). Cause related marketing helps to enhance brand attractiveness. When consumers are attracted towards the brand through the cause, it is more likely that they would go for the purchase of that product (Qamar & Nawaz Lodhi, 2013).

1.1   Theoretical framework and literature review

The model used in the research is supported by cognitive response model proposed by (Greenwald & Greenwald, 1967). According to this model, when an individual is exposed to any advertisement, the kinds of responses stimulated and how these responses are linked with attitudes and purchase intentions, the most descriptive and commonly used theory is cognitive response model. No individual is born with cognitions, but attains them from communication in surroundings. Every source of communication brings new information to an individual's existing attitudes, knowledge, feelings, and believes. When this new information is added through communication, that individual starts reasoning about the content and its surroundings.An individual's attitude relevant cognition might strengthen existing cognitions as well as develop the new ones. Cognitive response arouse when an individual see an ad. He/She then evaluate it in the light of past experiences, knowledge and attitudes.

1.2   Cause- related marketing and ad credibility

Mullen (1997) defined cause-related marketing as a process of formulating and implementing marketing activities that are characterized by contributing a specific amount to a designated non-profit effort that, in turn, causes consumers to engage in revenue providing exchanges. Adkins, (2000) defined cause related marketing as a profitable activity in which companies get benefit in terms of strong brand image. Cognitive response theory suggest that any persuasive communication is perceived as credible when it includes more strong argument for product or topic (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). It has been found that consumer's feelings and judgments about a brand is formed after they are exposed to an advertisement. These judgments influence viewer's attitude and beliefs towards the ad and the respective brand (Batra & Ray, 1986). Advertiser's use different emotions that includes credibility, trust and hope to evoke emotional response in customers after viewing the ad (Tang & Chiu, 2015). Ad credibility means truth and believability about the content of the advertisement. If the ad is perceived as credible, consumer would think less negative about the advertiser (Cotte, Coulter, & Moore, 2005).   It has been found that the way consumers feel about the ad when they are exposed will affect their assessment of the brand (Edell & Burke, 1987). Consumer's positive perception about CRM lead to a positive evaluation towards CRM alliance (Bergkvist, Zhou, & Bergkvist, 2019). Therefore, CRM improves consumer's perception of sponsoring organization, differentiates from other competing brands and consequently upsurges purchase intentions of consumers (Barone et al., 2000).

When environmental issues are linked with CSR communications it has stronger impact on brand evaluations than CSR communications linked with social issues. CSR communications which are environmental based results into positive perception about the brand and the company (Venger & Pomirleanu, 2018). Companies which are motivated towards doing well should effectively communicate their actions to its customers, in order to convince them that their sustainability efforts are authentic and genuine (Leonidou & Skarmeas, 2017). For less involved individuals, emotional appeals used in the ad guide their attitude formation (Hartmann, Ibáñez & Sainz, 2005). Consumers have favourable views about the company that sponsor the cause and thus have positive attitude towards the ad (Patel, Gadhavi, & Shukla, 2017) . Thus, keeping in view the above discussion the proposed hypothesis is:

H₁: Cause related marketing positively influence ad credibility.

1.3 Ad credibility and green products purchase decision

Advertising is a powerful way to communicate through mass media, in order to build positive brand attitude and purchase intentions (Tang & Chiu, 2015). Ad credibility includes the dimension of source credibility. Source credibility includes perceived trustworthiness and expertise (Tromala et al., 2006; Sallam & Amed, 2012). Consumers who are highly involved in green products perceive the green ad to be more truthful and believable and thus have strong aptitude towards environmental protection behaviours (Tariq, 2016; Tucker et al., 2012). The greater the ad credibility the more positive the brand attitude and green products purchase intentions (Sallam & Ahmed, 2012). Successful verbal exchange of authenticity leads towards brand identification, brand loyalty and increase sales (Chalmers & Price, 2009). Authentic advertisements attract customers towards the company's offerings (Tang & Chiu, 2015). Consumers feels more positive for the companies which participates in cause-related marketing activities and therefore prefer to buy such sponsor products (Patel, Gadhavi, & Shukla, 2017). Thus, the hypothesis suggested here is:

H2: Ad credibility positively influence green product purchase decision.

1.4 Cause- related marketing and green products purchase decision

People with pro environmental attitude are receptive to green ads. These ads create positive credibility and attitudes (Tariq, 2016). In case of environment friendly products, providing environmental education is not enough and this does not necessarily evoke pro- environmental attitudes. Emotions and beliefs need to be targeted (Pooley & O'Connor, 2000). A study done by (Baker & Ozaki, 2008) concluded that the role of emotions in decision making process cannot be ignored. These emotions creates attitude towards the brand. Moral emotions positively influence purchase intentions (Kim & Johnson, 2013). Consumers feel more positive about the brands linked with CRM promotion campaign. CRM is an effective tool in creating emotional attachment with the brand. Emotional attachment with the brand is strong predictor of purchase intentions (Patel et al., 2017). Emotional attachment not only leads to brand attitude and positive buying behaviour but also influences consumer's information processing and knowledge activation (He, Zhu, Gouran, & Kolo, 2016). A CRM campaign linked with a product not only enhances the effect of moral identity on purchase intention but also helps in changing the consumer's consumption pattern (He et al., 2016). CRM campaigns can encourage individuals towards ecological safe products choices (Chekima et al., 2016). It is because, the type of photo used in CRM ad did make a difference on intentions to purchase the product (Lafferty & Edmondson, 2009). Thus keeping in view the above literature review, hypothesis proposed is:

H3: Cause related marketing positively influence green product purchase decision.

H4: There is an indirect relationship between cause related marketing and green products purchase decision through the mediation of ad credibility.

1.5 Cause-related marketing and brand attitude

Noorpur (2009) in her book defined brand attitude is what the consumers think about the brand, as per the consumer. Kotchen & Reiling (2000) defined brand attitude as favourable or unfavourable individual's own evaluation, emotional feelings and behaviour tendency that an individual keeps towards a brand is brand attitude. Emotions which are generated as a result of CRM advertisements, usually has positive influence towards the brand (Tang & Chiu, 2015). Consumers' attitude toward the company is less affected as compared to consumers attitude towards the brand in case of product-cause relatedness (Joo Kim, Kim, & Han, 2005). Under high and in some case low involvement products, people first measure corporate image. Corporate image not only stimulate brand trust but also has a strong impact over brand affect, which is directly linked with emotional aspect of the brand (Gupta & Pirsch, 2006). CRM campaigns are powerful tool to persuade customers to buy (Natarajan, Balasubramaniam, & Jublee, 2016). Alcaniz, Perez, Mafe & Blas (2012) in their research on CRM topic found that consumer's perception about the important of the cause greatly influence their attitude towards the sponsor brand. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis proposed here is …H5: Cause related marketing positively influence brand attitude.

1.6 Brand attitude and green products purchase decision

Fishbein and Ajzen (1980) conceptualization of brand attitude was defined as a predisposition to respond in a favourable or unfavourable manner to a particular advertising stimulus during a particular exposure situation, while purchase intentions was defined in terms of the likelihood that an individual will purchase the advertised brand. Brand attitude has a significant role towards intentions to buy (Graham, & Shimp, 2013; Newell & Goldsmith, 2001).

When brand attitude is considered as a multidimensional construct, its hedonic component is influenced by the no claim component of ad, while its utilitarian component is influenced by both the claim and brand beliefs. However, both component of brand attitude are expected to influence purchase intentions/ decision (Yoon et al., 1995). Theory of reasoned action suggested that consumers' attitudes and intentions can be influenced by pointing individual's normative beliefs (Ajzen & Fishbin, 1980). Emotional preferences can modify consumer's attitude towards sustainable choices. Olsen, Slotegraaf & Chandukala (2014) in their research suggest that for green product new in the market, marketers should try to create green products identity. Person with positive attitude towards green products will prefer green products during its purchase decision process (Anvar, 2014). For increasing the sales of green products, it is important to first build attitude towards green brands (Mohd Suki, 2016). Khan & Mohsin (2017) found that social as well as environmental value positively affect consumer's purchase decision. Therefore, in the light of above literature review, the last two hypothesis proposed are:

H_6: Brand attitude positively influence green products purchase decision.

H_7: There is an indirect relationship between cause related marketing and green products purchase decision through the mediation of brand attitude.

1.7 Research framework

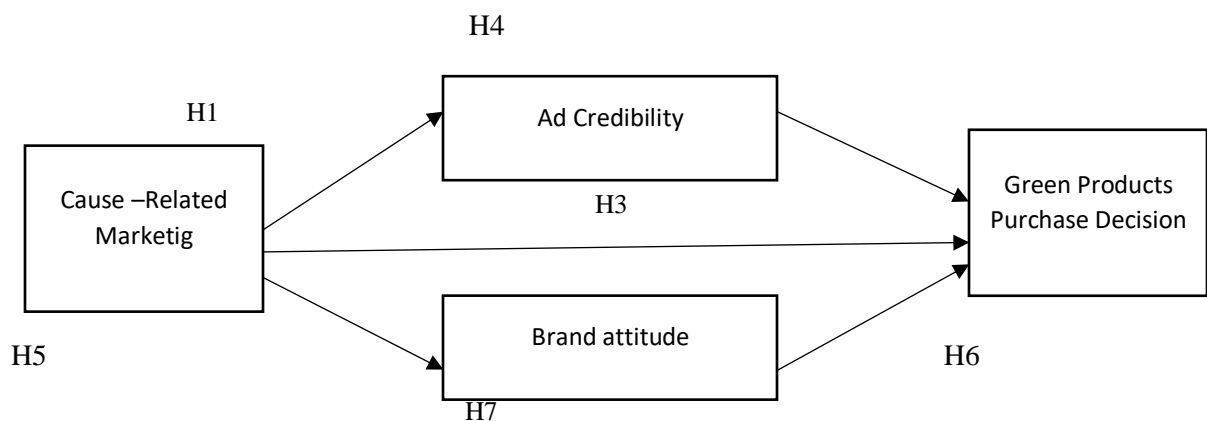On the basis of above discussion, the proposed research framework of this study is given in fig 1 below.

Fig. 1: research framework

2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.1 Participants

Data was collected from the people of capital cities of three provinces of Pakistan which are Lahore, Peshawar, Karachi and from federal territory, Islamabad. Data was collected from the both males and female which have done bachelor's degree and above and are doing jobs or are self-employed. As previous researches supports the logic that when the education level of consumer is high, their willingness to buy environment friendly products also becomes strong (Casey & Scott, 2015). Secondly people who are doing jobs have buying power (Zhao, Gao, Wu, Wang, & Zhu, 2014). Thirdly, Cui, Trent, Sullivan, & Matiru, (2003) identified three socio-demographic characteristics that contribute towards successful CRM campaigns. The first one is educational background of consumers. Second is income level of consumer and consumers with previous donation activities usually have positive attitude towards CRM offers.

Respondents were first asked about their willingness to be part of this research. After they got agreed to respond, their education and employment status were asked. Then, respondents were asked if they have ever purchase any product associated with social or environmental cause. After that respondents were given a small description of CRM by showing them print advertisements of three different types of CRM campaigns sponsoring green products. Then they were shown a list of green products available in Pakistan along with the definition of green products for better understanding of the research purpose. Next, respondents were requested to complete the questionnaire. At the end of the questionnaire, respondents were asked about their personal information and also their knowledge about environmental problems and its possible solutions. Out of these 800 questionnaire it was found that 275 people have never purchased any product associated with a cause either social or environmental. The rest 525 people do have purchased product or service linked with cause. Out of these 525 questionnaires, 74 were found incomplete or

answered twice on the same questions. Therefore they were discarded from the survey. The rest 451 were kept and analysed through AMOS. As previous literature support the logic that it would be more practical to target CRM campaign to people who are more already inclined toward charitable arrangement (Galan-Ladero et al., 2013).

2.2 Procedure

Quantitative research design is dominant in social science because this research design generates valid and reliable data by using standardized tools and techniques (Sekran, 2000). Thus, keeping in view the support towards quantitative research, the current study also adopted quantitative tools and techniques to examine the relationships among study variables. Data was collected through survey research design. For collecting the quantitative data in business research, survey methods are widely used (Zikmund et al., 2013). This study specifically used 'self-administered questionnaires. Data from the respondents was collected through structured questionnaire. Data was collected through cross sectional study. This study was done in two phases. In the first phase, a pilot study was conducted and its purpose was to examine the reliability and validity of the research items used in the questionnaire. Its purpose was to check the possible problems can could be faced by the general educated public during data collection. In the second phase, data from rest of the respondents was gathered.

2.3 Instruments and measures

The variable ad credibility was operationalized by measuring it through two dimensions. One dimension of ad credibility is advertising credibility and the other dimension is advertiser's credibility. The five items measuring advertising credibility was adapted from the research of (Beltramini, 1988) which was also used by (Gree, 2003). All the five items scale loaded as one reliable factor (eigenvalue= 3.7, α= 0.91, p < .001). The items that measured advertiser's credibility were adapted from the research done by (Newell & Goldsmith, 2001).This five points likert scale contains questions about trustworthiness and expertise of the company. The complete scale with all eight items had α coefficient of 0.84.

The first four items used to measure CRM were adopted from the research of (Ladero et al., 2013). The factor loading of each items were 0.768, 0.671, 0.812 and 0.579 respectively. Loading average is 0.707, α =0.797, composite reliability is 0.803 and extracted variance (AVE) is 0.58. The last three questions used to measure CRM are adapted from the research of (Dahl & Lavack, 1995) which are also used by (Moosmayer & Fuljahn, 2010) in his research. The factor loadings of each construct was between 0.50 and 0.97, which were in acceptable ranges (wu & Wang, 2011). The first 3 items used to measure green products purchase decision are adapted from the research of (Intelligence & Kumar, 2015). The factor loadings of each items were 0.789, 0.619 and 0.589 respectively. The last three items used to measure green products purchase decision are taken from the research of (Noor, Masuod,Said, Kamaruzaman, & Mustafa, 2016). The factor loadings of these items were 0.858, 0.846, and 0.908 respectively. The composite reliability of this instrument was 0.904 and the average variance extracted was 0.75.

The three dimensions measuring brand attitude are brand trust, brand affect and purchase intentions. The items measuring brand trust are adopted from the research by (wu & Wang, 2011) which was also used by (Delgado-ballester, 2014). The factor loadings of these questions are 0.87, 0.89, 0.66, 0.75, 0.63, 0.82, 0.78, and 0.88 respectively. The three items adapted to measure brand affection are taken from the research of (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001) which was also used by (wu & Wang, 2011). The coefficient alpha for brand affect was 0.93. The four items adapted for measuring purchase intention dimension are taken from the research of (Dodds et al., 1991) which was also used by (wu & Wang, 2011). The coefficient alpha value of this scale was 0.965 and M2= 4.08. The cronbach's alpha of each construct exceeded the suggested cut-off value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). The factor loadings of each construct were between 0.51 and 0.960, exceeding the suggested cut-off value of 0.5 (wu & Wang, 2011). The complete questionnaire was measured on five point likert scale with 1 as "Strongly disagree", 2 as "Disagree", 3 as "Neutral", 4 as "Agree" and 5 as "Strongly agree".

3. ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

There are two parts of this section. First part consists of descriptive statistics, validity and reliability of the measuring instruments used in the study. In the second part, the in direct, direct and total effects of the variables was tested which was proposed by (Melero & Montaner, 2016). The descriptive statistics of the respondents are given in table 1 below

Table 1: Sample descriptive

Variables	Codes	Frequency	% of total sample
Gender	Male	201	44.6
	Female	250	55.4
Age	20-29	132	29
	30-39	154	34
	40-49	104	23
	50-59	61	14
Education	Doctorate	48	10.6
	MPhill	65	14.4
	Masters	241	53.4
	Graduate	97	21.5
Income	20k-40k	78	17.3
	41k-60k	168	37.2
	61k-80k	152	33.7
	81,000 and above	53	11.7
Occupation status	Full time employed	265	58.7
	Part time employed	100	22.1
	Self-employed	86	19
Residential area	Karachi	140	31
	Lahore	131	29
	Islamabad	100	22.3
	Peshawar	80	17.7

3.1 Preliminary analysis

Mean, standard deviation, skewness, kurtosis and correlation values are explained in Table2 below. The mean values starts from 4.1 to 4.4 where as standard deviation lies between 0.57 and 0.43. The values of skewness and kurtosis are within (-3 to +3) which is acceptable range according to the (Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012). All the correlation values are below 0.9 and are moderately correlated. Hence no issue of multicollinearity is found.

Table 2: Mean, standard deviation, correlation, skewness and kurtosis values

Variables	Mean	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis	CRM	AC	BA	GPPD
CRM	4.4	0.43	-.710	.381	1			
AC	4.2	0.57	-.400	-.039	.671**	1		
BA	4.1	0.48	-.882	.199	.553**	.441**	1	
GPPD	4.2	0.44	.105	.231	.676**	.489**	.384**	1

Note: GPPD= Green products purchase decision, CrM= Cause-related marketing, AC= Ad Credibility, BA= Brand attitude.

Secondly, convergent and discriminant validity was calculated for each construct. For convergent validity, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and average variance extracted (AVE) were calculated. For discriminant validity, the square root of AVE should be greater than their correlation coefficients values of all the variables.If AVE value of 0.5 or more is obtained, it indicates that convergent validity is established. However, few other researchers support that convergent validity of 0.49 is also acceptable (Huang, Wang, Wu, & Wang, 2013; Larcker, 1981). Convergent validity was further measured through CFA which reveals factor loading > .50 indicating strong convergent validity of the variables.

Table3: Convergent validity, reliability and unidimensionality

Variables	Dimension	Factor loadings	CR	CMIN	AVE
Cause related marketing	C1	700	0.97	3.6	0.49
	C2	.590			
	C3	.852			
	C4	.610			
	C5	.662			
	C6	.734			
	C7	.720			
Ad credibility	AD1	.557	.926	5.0	0.508
	AD2	.709			
	AD3	.786			
	AD4	.801			
	AD5	.752			
	AD6	.614			
	AD7	.632			
	AD8	.730			
	AD9	.798			
	AD10	.807			
	AD11	.732			
	AD12	.581			
Brand attitude	BA1	.695	.907	4.8	0.53
	BA2	.706			
	BA3	.706			
	BA4	.704			
	BA5	.690			
	BA6	.708			
	BA7	.755			
	BA8	.756			
	BA9	.717			
	BA10	.711			
	BA11	.722			
	BA12	.706			
	BA13	.758			
	BA14	.784			
	BA15	.826			
	BA16	.790			
	BA17	.668			
Green products Purchase decision	GPPD1	.747	.998	1.3	0.57
	GPPD2	.793			
	GPPD3	.873			
	GPPD4	.776			
	GPPD5	.586			

Note: CFI= confirmatory factor analysis, AVE= average variance extracted and CMIN= Chained multilateral index number

From the results of convergent validity it has been confirmed that the concepts used in this research are in fact related to each other.

3.2 Model evaluation

Preacher & Hayes (2008) recommended path analysis technique for examining the mediation process using bootstrapping. Five different models were tested in this study. Model 1 explains the direct impact of CRM on green products purchase decision is shown. Model 2 explains the direct effect of ad credibility on green products purchase decision. Model 3 shows the direct impact of brand attitude on green products purchase decision. Model 4 explains the indirect impact of CRM on green products purchase decision mediated through ad credibility. The last model i.e model 5 describes the indirect impact of CRM on green products purchase decision mediated through brand attitude.

The values of path coefficients and model fit indices are mentioned in table 3.   The chi square/ degree of freedom (CMIN/DF) recommended value is between 2 and 5, for root mean square of approximation (RMSEA) should be < .09 , for goodness of fit index (GFI), adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI), and comparative fit index (CFI) should be < or = 0.95 (Hair et, al, 2006). Table 4 below explains that all the five models full fill the model fit threshold indices.

Table 4: Model Fit Indices

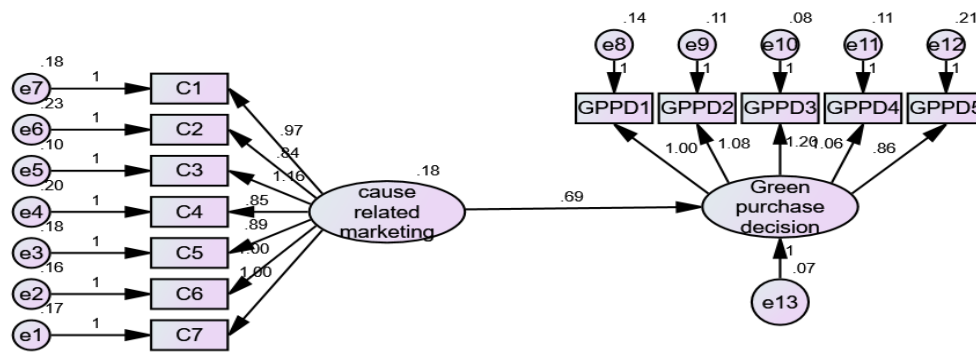| Models	CMIN/DF	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMSEA
Model 1	2.07	.950	.938	.935	.951	.049
Model 2	2.99	.901	.875	.911	.943	.067
Model 3	4.06	.834	.798	.870	.898	.083
Model 4	2.30	.893	.872	.906	.944	.054
Model 5	2.89	.840	.814	.869	.910	.065

Fig. 2: Model 1: direct impact of cause-related marketing on green products purchase decision
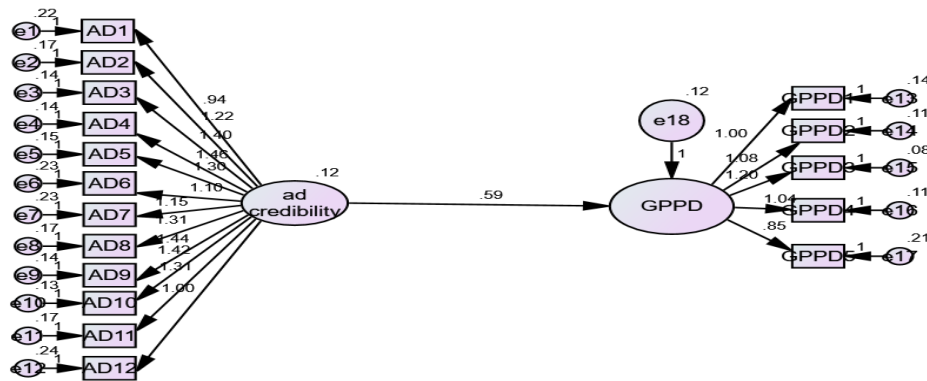

Fig 3: Model 2: Direct impact of ad credibility on green products purchase decision
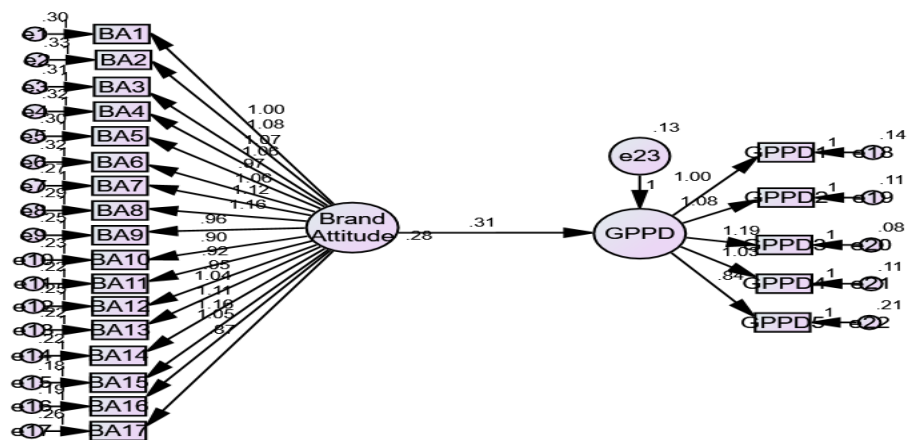
Fig. 4: Model3: Direct impact of brand attitude on Green products purchase decision
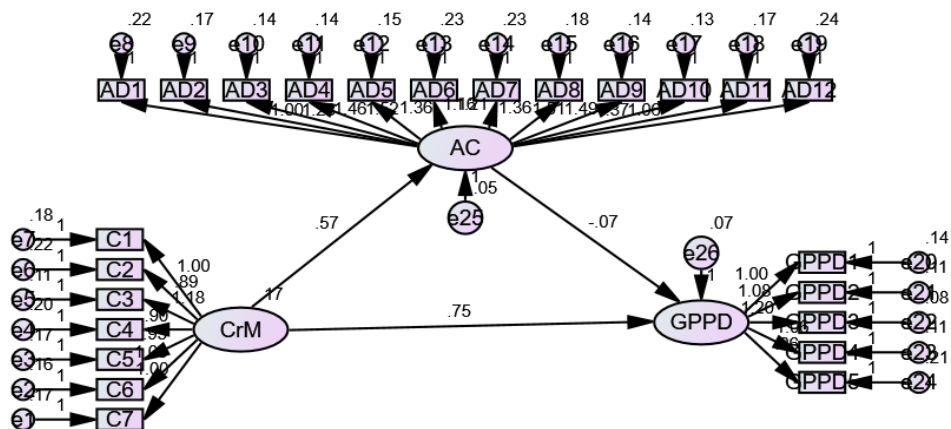

Fig. 5: Model 4: Indirect Impact of Cause-related marketing on green products purchase decision
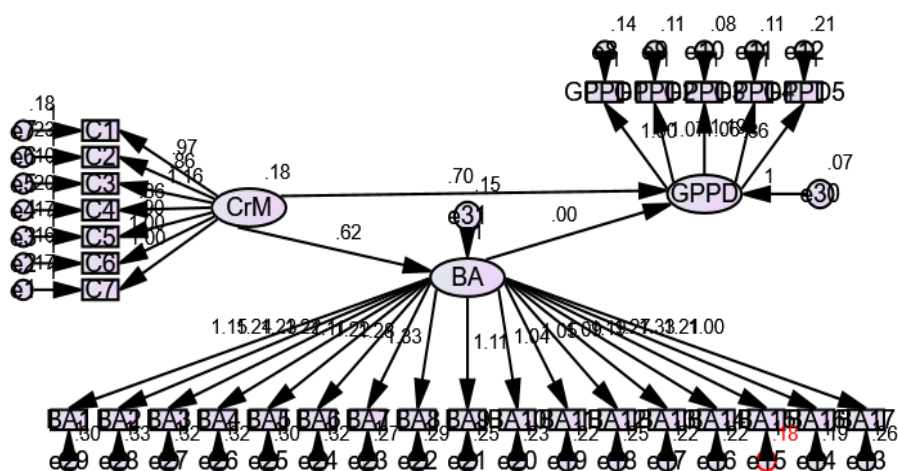*Note: CrM= cause-related marketing, AC= Ad Credibility, GPPD= Green products purchase decision*

Figure 6: Model 5: indirect impact of cause-related marketing on green products purchase decision
Note: CrM= cause-related marketing, BA= brand attitude, GPPD= green products purchase decision

3.3 Structural model and hypothesis testing

Hypothesis testing is a way to test the claim or hypothesis proposed in the study by using data measured in a sample. Table 4 below explains results of unmediated hypothesis whereas table 5 explains the results of mediated hypotheses proposed in the study.

Table 4: standardized coefficients for structural paths.

Hypothesis	Structural paths	Beta	T-Value	P-value	Results
H1	CRM→AD	.671	19.1	0.00	Accepted
H2	AD→GPPD	.689	11.89	0.00	Accepted
H3	CRM→GPPD	.676	19.45	0.00	Accepted
H5	CRM→BA	.523	13.00	0.00	Accepted
H6	BA→GPPD	.384	8.824	0.00	Accepted

Note: CRM= cause related marketing, AD= ad credibility, GPPD= green products purchase decision, BA= brand attitude

From results, it has been found that all the unmediated hypothesis are accepted. Secondly for checking the mediation effect, boot strap method was used. To perform the bootstrap analysis, AMOS 22 was used. At 95% confidence level, the bootstrap estimates of direct, indirect and total effects was selected. The results of the test is as under in table 4.

Table 5: Results of mediated hypothesis

Hypothesis	Structural paths	Direct effects	Indirect effects	CR	P Value	Results
H4	CRM→Ad credibility→GPPD	0.69	0.06	19.22	0.168	Not supported
H7	CRM→Brand attitude→GPPD	0.69	0.002	1.038	0.299	Not supported

Note: CRM- cause related marketing, Ad = ad credibility, GPPD= green products purchase decision

4. DISCUSSION , CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research aims to investigate the impact of CRM on ad credibility, brand attitude and green products purchase decision. To achieve this objective, a questionnaire was distributed in four major cities of Pakistan. The findings of this study is based on 451 consumers of Pakistan. The data collected through questionnaire provided substantial evidence to prove that cause-related marketing have significant impact in motivating people to buy green products in general and Pakistan in particular. People get emotionally involved with the products which are sponsoring any social or environmental cause and thus like to participate by buying that product. In terms of promoting green products/ sustainable products, people can be persuade to buy these products by linking green products with any social and environmental cause. Secondly, cause-related marketing also enhances advertisers' and advertising credibility. People start trusting on the advertisement and its sponsor which is sponsoring some cause. Similarly cause-related marketing also develops and enhances brand attitude. Finally, a major theoretical and practical gap in covered through this study, that is in order to understand which factors motivate people to buy environment friendly products more and more research in required to answer the questions related to willingness to pay for environment friendly products (Niaz, 2014; Qamar & Nawaz Lodhi, 2013; Tucker et al., 2012; Tully & Winer, 2014;Singh & Crisafulli, 2018).

From results, a statistically significant relationship is found between ad credibility and green products purchase decision and brand attitude and green products purchase decision. Surprisingly, ad credibility and brand attitude are not acting as a mediating variables between cause-related marketing and green products purchase decision. This might be because of weak environmental knowledge and biological affect as explained by (Ling, 2013). Due to less exposure of green advertisements linked with cause marketing, people of Pakistan have limited knowledge about green products. They are not sure whether a green brand will work exactly the same way as their traditional or famous brand do (Pickett-Baker & Ozaki, 2008). Therefore it is important to identify the variables that may strengthen the relationship between ad credibility and green products purchase decision and brand attitude and green products purchase decision.

4.1 Research limitations and future research Recommendations

Like other studies, this study has also some limitations. However, these limitations don't undermine the importance of this researches. Indeed it creates more avenues for the future researches interested in this marketing

research context. Firstly, data for the present research was collected by showing paper advertisements containing cause-related marketing associated with green products to the customers. However future studies can show them electronic advertisements in focus group session and can check the impact of CRM on green products purchase decision. Secondly, future research can investigate the moderating influence of consumers environmental responsibility which is cooperatively under-research and poorly understood concept in relation to CRM and green products purchase decision (Esmaeilpour & Bahmiary, 2017; Wells et al., 2011).

4.2 Theoretical implications

The current study complements theory of cognitive response model by identifying the role of CRM as an important precursor of green products purchase decision. Hence, it opens new opportunity of research in the same area by highlighting the influence of CRM on ad credibility, brand attitude and green products purchase decision.

4.3 Practical implications

This study has identified CRM as an important precursor to green products purchase decision. CRM technique helps in increasing awareness about green products. Thus by using CRM advertisements as promotion tool, companies can create an emotional bond between the product and its perspective customers. Secondly, cause-related marketing technique creates brand's reputation, brand awareness and make people socially responsibility by involving community. It also addresses society's social and environmental issues. With the help of CRM, company is able to build up the trust in brand and can build a long lasting relationships with the company based on loyalty (Kim et al., 2005; Menon, 2013).   The role of marketing cannot be ignored in promoting green products. However, it is vital that marketers should try to promote green products in a way that consumers should feel that their role in environmental preservation is significant. Thus by buying a green product, they can contribute their part in cause.

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