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Relationship between Consumer Motivations and Sustainable Consumer Behavior in a Developing Market

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Abstract

The paper discussed the concepts presented in the Goal-Framing theory in the context of developing markets like Pakistan. The theory discussed three goals that effect the consumer behavior including normative motivations, hedonic motivations and gain motivations. For the purpose of gauging the consumer behavior, consumer intentions to purchase sustainable product was taken as an endogenous variable. The data was gathered from hybrid car users of Pakistan. These cars are expensive as compare to normal cars for two reasons, one because the cars are technologically advanced and second because they are not locally manufactured and all the hybrid cars available in the country are imported. The data was tested using Smart PLS where measurement model and structural model were applied to check the validity, reliability and hypotheses. As per the results, the marketers and institutional policy makers are suggested to make their strategies accordingly.

Keywords: Goal-Framing theory, normative motivations, hedonic motivations, gain motivations, consumer behavior.

Introduction

The revolution of technology has observed in many aspects in every society and especially in past two decades (Khan, K., & Hameed, I. 2017). However, even after having so many facilities after the inception of technology, the world is facing serious challenges. Growing threat of global warming has made the world powers and policy makers realized the importance of the issue (Khan & Irfan, 2019; Rezvani, Jansson, & Bengtsson, 2018). For some scholars, part of human behavior is involved in creating environmental problems (Barbossa & Pastore, 2015; Rezvani et al., 2018; Hameed & Waris, 2018; (Hameed, Waris, & Amin ul Haq, 2019). Advisor to Prime Minister of Pakistan for climate change, Aslam (2018) said that the country is ranked eight in the list that is most effected by global warming isses. Having the severe issue of the climate and global warming, the country needs a paradigm change in its policy to copeup with the challenges and deal with environmental issues on war footings. This also includes the change in consumer behavior as well and for that, policy makers and the marketers must know the relevant behavior that are important to consider while designing their promotional campaigns (Rezvani et al., 2018). For the purpose, there were three motivational factors were taken into consideration from the famous Goal-Framing theory (GFT) that affect the consumer sustainable behavior (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007). The factors were gain motivations, hedonic motivations and normative motivations.

This paper sheds light on several important aspects. First, the three motivational factors are to be checked in the developing market settings like Pakistan. Secondly, the conceptual foundations presented by Lindenberg & Steg (2007) are empirically tested. Third, the industry taken in this study is Hybrid cars. Car market itself is an industry that has a uniqueness of being expensive when people give extensive time in search, put extra effort and take time to purchase. Hybrid cars are even more expensive than the normal cars mainly because of two reasons. One,

because the technology is new and secondly, these cars are imported and are not manufactured in Pakistan.

Literature review

Consumer intentions to purchase sustainable products

This study undertakes consumer intentions to purchase sustainable products like hybrid cars as an endogenous variable. Ajzen (1991) in the theory of planned behavior (TPB) has taken intentions as a predictor of consumer behavior. It was termed as a signal to actual purchase by Ziethmal, Berry, & Parasuraman, (1996). Several sustainable studies have also taken intentions as a behavioral factor Rezvani et al., 2018; Khan, & Hameed, 2019; Schuitema, Anable, Skippon, & Kinnear, 2013).

Gain motivations

In their conceptual arguments, Lindenberg & Steg (2007) have termed gain motivations as "*to guard and improve one's resources*". The authors discussed that such goals force individuals to be more conscious about their personal resources. These goals are medium to long term goals where consumers try to increase the efficiency or reduce his/her financial cost. The GFT in its conceptual arguments relates this goal with the concept "*attitude*" of the TPB (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude is an overall evaluation of to engage in a particular behavior that is based on benefit or cost side of the behavior. The concept was taken and tested empirically in the sustainable studies as well (Rezvani et al., 2018; Khan & Hameed, 2019). Both the studies have proved the positive relation between gain motivations and consumer intentions to purchase sustainable products, therefore, it is hypothesized that:

H1. Gain motivations is a predictor of consumer intentions to purchase sustainable products

Hedonic motivation

The conceptual arguments of GFT termed hedonic motivations as "*to feel better*" or "*to feel better right now*" (Lindenberg & Steg, 2007, p. 119). This goal is related to self-esteem, excitement and pleasure of the individuals and also people try to avoid any effort. Since the goal is related to moods, therefore, the time duration is very short. Recent studies on sustainability proved that positive emotions effect the intentions positively Rezvani et al., 2018; Khan & Hameed, 2019). Miao & Wei (2013) have also discovered that hedonic motivations are the predictor of the sustainable consumption. The proposed concept is related to human feelings, and when the feelings are good, intentions to purchase such products are good and vice versa. Therefore, the variable is of important nature and fits in this particular study. This study therefore proposed the following hypothesis to be adopted:

H2. Hedonic motivations is a predictor of consumer intentions to purchase sustainable products

Normative motivations

The third motivational factor taken in this study is normative motivations. Lindenberg and Steg, (2007, p 119) have defined normative motivations as "*to act appropriately*". The GFT has borrowed this concept from the famous norm-activation model (NAM) (Schwartz, 1977). Initially the concept was applied in the normal categories but later it was successfully applied in the sustainable studies as well (Thøgersen, 1999). The NAM believed that when people are aware of negative consequences about the environment, their personal and moral norms are activated.

Personal norms are related to a person itself, however, moral norms are related to the society as a whole. The direct and indirect relationship of normative motivations with consumer intentions was tested in some recent studies and found a positive and strong role in effecting the consumer behavior (Rezvani et al., 2018; Khan & Hameed 2019). The concept taken in this study is related to the individual feelings of doing the right things in a society rather a collective feeling or collective observations. The collective part concept is covered in other variable i.e. social norms. Since the focus of this study is on motivational factors of an individual, therefore, the extraction of personal norms that is normative motivation in this study is taken. Hence, it was safe to propose the following hypothesis:

H3. Normative motivations is a positive predictor of consumer intentions to purchase sustainable products

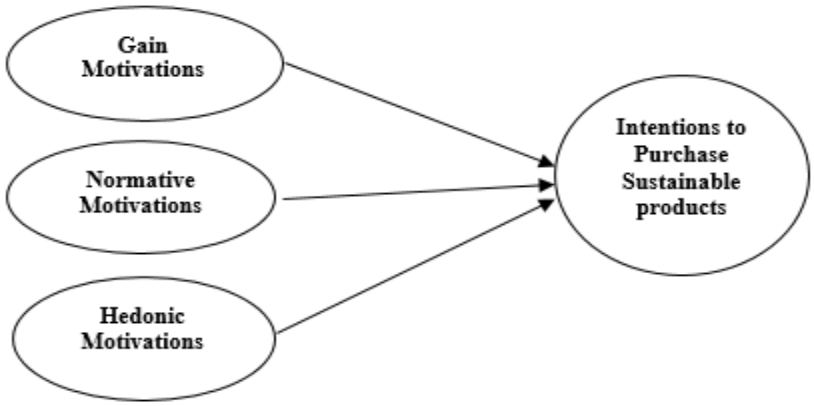

Figure 1: Proposed model *(*(Rezvani et al., 2018; Lindenberg & Steg, 2007)

Methodology

As discussed above, the industry taken in this study was hybrid cars. The nature of the car industry is categorized in high-involvement or high cost product category. In this category, hybrid cars consumers pay premium prices due to the high cost of such cars as compared to normal cars

because of their improved technology and cost cutting features. The target market of the industry is very specific and hence, the sampling technique was purposive sampling. The nature of the industry suggested to visit the market personally and collect the data, however, very few responses were also obtained using Google drive form. Moreover, the data was tested using SmartPLS and the measurement and structural models were applied. In measurement model, the reliability, validity, R square were tested. Moreover, blindfolding method was applied to check the predictive power of the data. In the structural model, the standard 5000 bootstrapping method was applied to test the hypotheses. The demographics details of the data were obtained using SPSS software. The sample size finalized after removing the invalid and incomplete responses was 309.

Results

The contains majority of the male population mainly due to the nature of the industry. However, women also participated in decent numbers, and a total of 89 women participated in the sample of 309 which can be considered as a significant contribution.

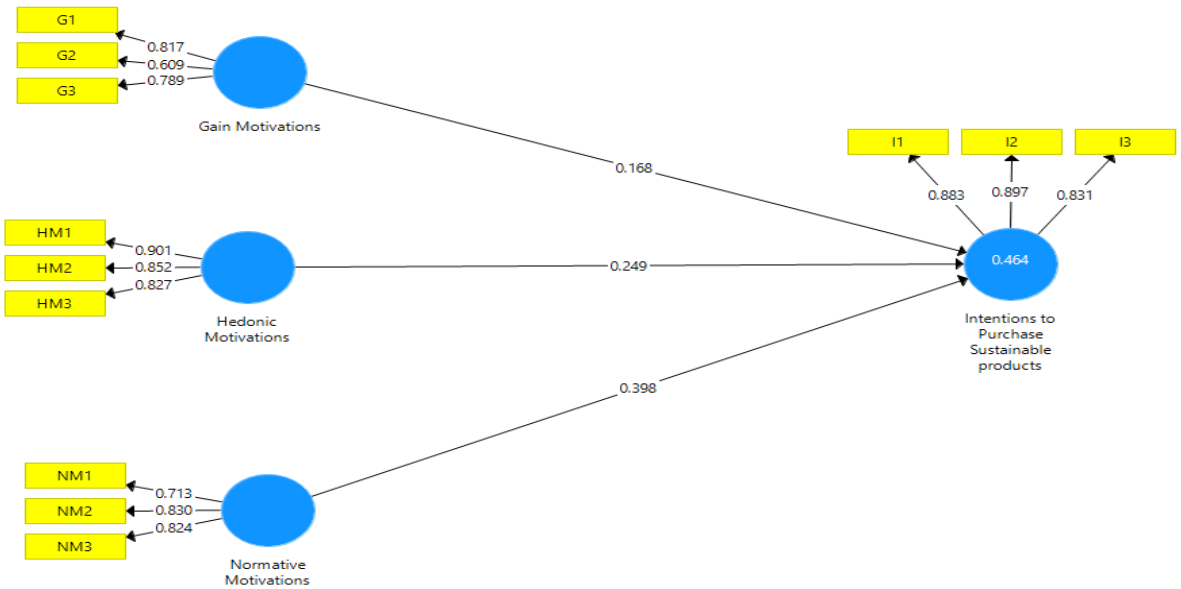

Figure 2. Measurement model

Moreover, only 10 respondents were below the age of 20 and majority of the respondents were from 21 to 50 age brackets. There were 32 respondents with age group 51 and above. The data of the demographics suggests that the majority of the target population was having income 140,000 and above. However, there were 56 respondents who have shown that the income less than 80,000 rupees. Only two respondents were with the education Matric or less, majority of the respondents' education was between intermediate and bachelors. There were 2 PhD degree holders and 68 master's degree holders. Moreover, the work experience data was mixed, there were 65 people with having less than 1 years of experience, up to three years, there were 50 people, up to 6 years of experience there were 65 people from 7 to 10 years of experiences there were 70 people and 59 people have responded experience with more than 10 years.

There were four variables taken in the study including endogenous variable. The measurement model was applied twice, as in the first attempt, the validity and reliability of the model was not found in the construct gain motivation. The item G4 was deleted and the model was run again. It was found that the outer loadings of the construct gain motivation were still not at par but the composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE) was just above the line and meeting the standard parameters. Therefore, it was decided to take the remaining items of the gain motivations and all the items taken of other constructs were retained as there was no major issue found. Moreover, the outer loadings of the items suggest that items are greater than the required values of 0.7. The data was also found clean with respect to Multicollinearity, as all the items' values of VIF were less than the standard VIF value of 5. The composite reliability values of all the constructs were greater than 0.7 which is the minimum requirements to have a reliable data. All four constructs have values greater than 0.5 in the AVE, that means all the items are explaining

variance to their own constructs rather explaining the error. Therefore, it is safe to say that the data is valid and reliable to predict the outcome.

Constructs	Items	Outer Loadings	VIF	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Gain motivations	G1	0.817	1.387	0.587	0.606	0.785	0.553
	G2	0.609	1.089				
	G3	0.789	1.327				
Hedonic motivations	HM1	0.901	2.449	0.825	0.828	0.895	0.741
	HM2	0.852	2.132				
	HM3	0.827	1.590				
Consumer intentions to purchase sustainable products	I1	0.883	2.150	0.840	0.844	0.904	0.758
	I2	0.897	2.365				
	I3	0.831	1.734				
Normative motivations	NM1	0.713	1.325	0.703	0.726	0.833	0.625
	NM2	0.830	1.512				
	NM3	0.824	1.356				

Table 1. Reliability and validity

The discriminant validity was checked using Fornell-Larcker and Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio methods. The table 2 is about Fornell-Larcker and table 3 represents HTMT method of checking the discriminant validity.

	Gain Motivations	Hedonic Motivations	Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	Normative Motivations
Gain Motivations	0.744			
Hedonic Motivations	0.418	0.861		
Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	0.477	0.543	0.871	
Normative Motivations	0.515	0.563	0.625	0.791

Table 2. Discriminant validity through Fornell-Larcker Criterion

All the diagonal values in the table 3 are found greater than their below and left side values, that means, the data is explain the variances of their own constructs rather explaining variances of

other constructs. Moreover, the table 3 represent the values of HTMT and in the table all the values are found less than 0.85. That again means that this method also confirms that there is no issue of discriminant validity in the data. Hence, another tool of validity is found correct.

	Gain Motivations	Hedonic Motivations	Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	Normative Motivations
Gain Motivations				
Hedonic Motivations	0.623			
Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	0.679	0.651		
Normative Motivations	0.813	0.736	0.796	

Table 3. Discriminant validity through Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

The next criterion taken in the study was R square. Since there is only one endogenous available, therefore, one R square was found. The value of R square of the construct intentions was 0.464 which is considered to be a strong variance found in the data from the model given.

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	0.464	0.459

Table 4. R Square

Besides R square, the fitness of the mode was tested using Q square method. In the SmartPLS, blindfolding method was applied to find the values of Q square in the Construct Crossvalidated Redundancy. The table 5 suggested that the value of the Q square is greater than 0, hence the predictive power of the model is established.

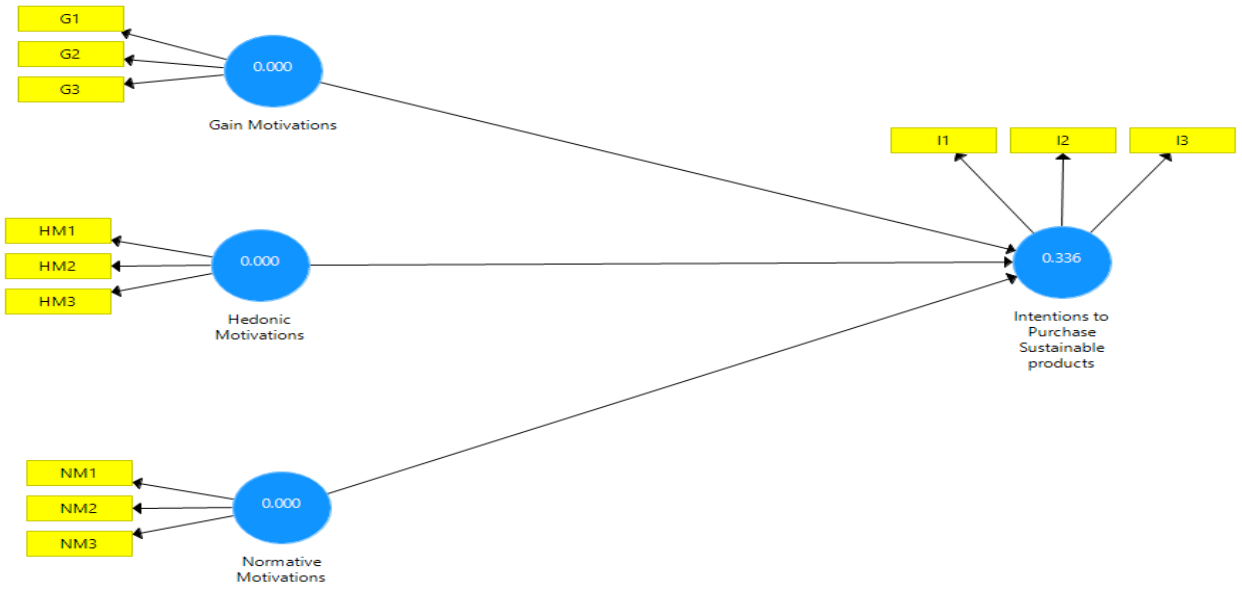

Figure 3. Model Fitness

	SSO	SSE	Q² (=1-SSE/SSO)
Gain Motivations	927.000	927.000	
Hedonic Motivations	927.000	927.000	
Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	927.000	615.310	0.336
Normative Motivations	927.000	927.000	

Table 5. Model Fitness

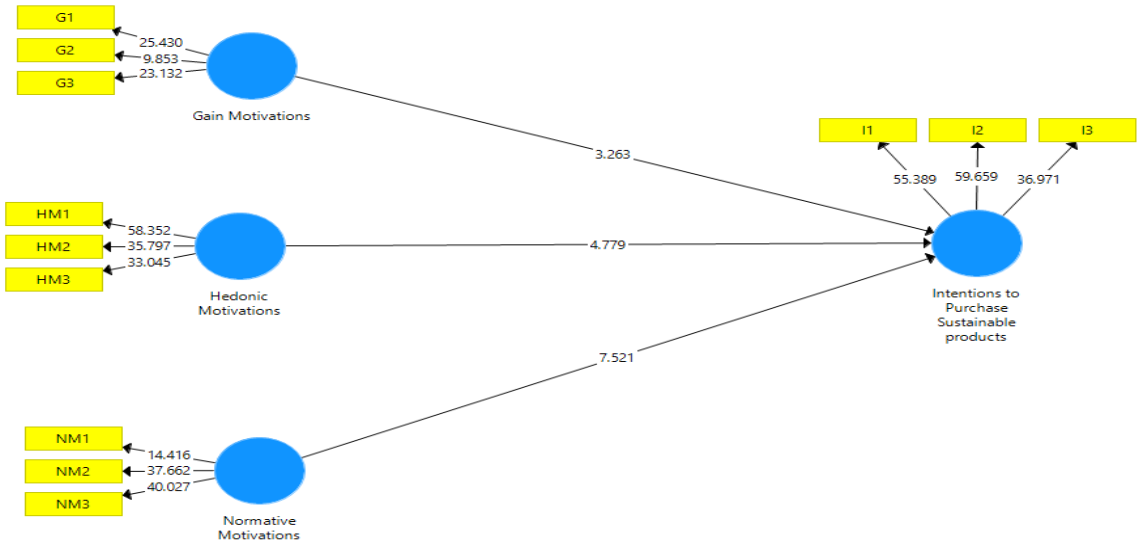

Figure 4. Structural model

After checking all the relevant measure of validity and reliability, the study then proceeded towards checking the hypotheses. There were three hypotheses taken in the study that were proposed to effect on the dependent variable, intentions to purchase sustainable products. The p value of hypothesis gain motivations was found less than 0.05, the T value was also greater than 2. The variance explained with endogenous variable was 16.8%. Hence, the hypothesis was proved to be positive and significant, therefore, it may be said that gain motivations effect the consumer intentions to purchase hybrid cars. The p value of hypothesis hedonic motivations was found less than 0.05, the T value was also greater than 2. The variance explained with endogenous variable was 24.9%. Hence, the hypothesis was proved to be positive and significant, therefore, it may be said that hedonic motivations effect the consumer intentions to purchase hybrid cars. The p value of hypothesis gain motivations was found less than 0.05, the T value was also greater than 2. The variance explained with endogenous variable was 39.8%. Hence, the hypothesis was proved to be positive and significant, therefore, it may be said that gain motivations effect the consumer intentions to purchase hybrid cars.

	Original Sample (O)	Sample Mean (M)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Gain Motivations > Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	0.168	0.170	0.052	3.263	0.001
Hedonic Motivations > Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	0.249	0.249	0.052	4.779	0.000
Normative Motivations > Intentions to Purchase Sustainable products	0.398	0.399	0.053	7.521	0.000

Table 6. Hypothesis – Path Coefficients

Conclusion and recommendations

The study has checked the concepts provided by the Goal-Framing theory (GFT) by measuring them empirically. The industry selected was high involvement or high cost i.e. hybrid cars. The theory proposed that the three are motivational factors that affect the consumer behavior

and among those factors, normative motivations is the factor that effect the most. The study found that all the three motivational factors affect the consumer behavior. The instrumental or material part of human nature has a role to play in effecting consumer behavior and explained the variance of 16.8%. Consumer emotions is the second most relevant factor that is affecting consumer sustainable consumption with the variance of 24.9%. The relationship of these two factors with consumer sustainable consumption means that even in industries related to nature, certain other factors are relevant than to the ethics and morality of the consumers. Finally, the last motivational factor taken in the study was normative motivations. This variable was found to be the most important concept as was also proved conceptually by the GFT. In the expensive industry like hybrid cars, the personal moral norms have a role to play in impacting the consumer behavior. Normative motivations in this study comes out to be the strongest factor that effect the consumer behavior with the variance of 39.8%. While promoting their products, sustainable industries must focus on themes of messages related to normative motivations, hedonic motivations and gain motivations.

Despite having such a diverse study, there are several limitations observed in this study. First, the industry taken in the study is unique, future researchers may also explore other low involvement industries i.e. different kind of organic food, cosmetics, organic packaging etc. The sampling technique could also be changed and convenience sampling technique may be applied. There are several studies that provide evidence of interplay between the motivational factors discussed i.e. normative motivations can impact consumer emotions and instrumental values and then effect the intentions as well, hence, the mediation role could be checked. Moreover, other than the motivational factors, future researchers may explore the factors like, personal factors, socio-demographics etc. that effect the consumer behavior.

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