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EWOM and brand awareness impact on consumer purchase intention: Mediating role of brand image

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Abstract: *The basic purpose of this research is to analyze the impact of electronic word of mouth (eWOM) and brand awareness on customer purchase intention with the mediating role of brand image. The research is conducted to analyze the full or partial role of mediator on the said relationship. This research is basically conducted on customers of mobile users of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. To check this relationship a total of 300 questionnaires were floated in four universities of twin cities, of which 262 questionnaires with a response rate of 87.33% were received back on which mediation analysis has been performed. The results show full mediating impact of brand image on Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM) and customer purchase intention relationship, while partial mediating role of brand image on relationship of brand awareness and customer purchase intention has been observed. This research will help marketers in implementing better marketing techniques for boosting customers purchase intention.*

Keywords: eWOM, brand awareness, brand image, customer purchase intention, mobile users.

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1. Introduction

Social media has become the most important medium of marketing in the 21st century. The vast human interaction has been increased extraordinarily with the emergence of social media and websites in modern times (Balakrishann, Dahnil & Wong Jiunn Yi, 2014). Word of mouth (WOM) is considered as a person to person communication idea. It is the powerful communication source of message transmission (Sen & Lerman, 2007). With the emergence of new technologies and increasing usage of internet, customers are getting information from internet and hence the word Electronic Word of Mouth has come to light (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012). According to Hennig-Thurau, Gwinner, Walsh, & Gremler. (2004) e-WOM is “any positive or negative statement made by potential, actual, or former customers about a product or company which is made available to multitude of the people and institutes via the Internet”. Word of mouth plays an important role in influencing people and also their buying behavior; Chevalier & Mayzlin (2006) suggests that word of mouth has greater and most influential role in consumers purchase intentions.

Many marketers come to realize that the consumer’s experience is a significant determinant for determining marketing strategies (Chattopadhyay & Laborie 2005). The brand experience occurs when customer search for the brand, interact with the brand, evaluate it and take decision for purchase (Hoch 2002). The customers first seek out information about the brand before buying/purchase to make better choice decisions (Darley & Smith, 1995). The process makes the customer more familiar with the brand and also increases brand awareness and knowledge which helps out the customers in quick purchase decision (Bloch, Sherrell & Ridgway, 1986).

The purpose of this study is to examine the combine effect of eWOM and brand awareness on brand image which leads to purchase intention of consumer market. The combine effect of eWOM and brand awareness on purchase intention with the mediating role of brand image has not been study before; hence the main purpose of this study is to explore this untouched combination of study. Furthermore this research is also conducted to help marketers for better implementation of marketing tool.

2. Literature Review

In the recent years online oriented content is increasing rapidly (Koiso-Kanttila, 2004). The Key attributes of internet are that it provides informational access to its consumer regarding product attributes, price, availability and experience (Brown, Pope & Voges, 2003). Word of mouth (WOM) is known as an information given by the people about products and services which influences the Consumers Purchasing

decision (Anderson , 1998). Rapid growth of internet usage influences marketers to make their marketing campaign online for more response through eWOM, now companies are focusing to transmit their information and message via electronic mediums for more effective response. Consumer are getting help in their purchase making decision by getting information about experiences of other people through eWOM (Zhang, Law & Li, 2010).

Branding is also becoming essential and important concern for marketers for the business growth (Homburg, Klarmann & Schmitt, 2010). Consumer is becoming conscious about brand while making purchase decision (Chi, Yeh & Yang, 2009). Brand is defined by Kotler (1997) as a name, logo, sign and label that differentiate one product or services from the competitor's product and services. Brand awareness from business aspect is defined as "the ability of the decision maker in organizational buying centers to recognize or recall a brand" (Homburg et al., 2010). While making a purchase decision an image of brand comes in consumer mind which shows their high brand awareness (Grewal, Monroe & Krishnan, 1998).

2.1 Electronic Word of Mouth (eWOM)

Early scholars define word of mouth as "oral, person to person communication between a receiver and a communicator whom the receiver perceives as non-commercial, concerning a brand, a product or a service" (Arndt, 1967). Patel (2015) has described WOM as "People trust people... it is called word of mouth". Word of mouth (WOM) is considered as an informal communication between parties regarding assessment of goods and services (Anderson, 1998). Word of mouth is a natural happening aspect in consumer behavior and it is considered as more effective source of communication in marketing which drag consumer towards making their purchase decision (Kozinet, De valck, Wojnicki, & Wilner, 2010). WOM is a way that helps in creating the brand association. It is the information conveyed by the consumer (Hertel, 1982). Consumers mostly transmit WOM to those who they have more social ties (Ryu & Feick, 2007). New technologies have renewed the concept of word of mouth, with the advancement of internet usage now people can post their reviews, recommendations, tips on the virtual atmosphere (Arenas-Gaitan, 2013).

The increased revolution of social media has made a marked increase in the progress and importance of WOM (Hutter, Hautz, Dennhardt , & Filler, 2013) . The new phenomenon is emerged with the name of electronic word of mouth (eWOM), eWOM is evolved during the last ten years and is new in the research field (Chan & Ngai, 2011). eWOM is defined as an "informal, person-to-person communication between a perceived noncommercial communicator and a receiver regarding a brand, a product, an organization, or a service" (Harrison-walker,2001). The Internet enables customers to share their opinions on, and experiences with, goods and services with a multitude of other consumers; that is, to engage in electronic word-of-mouth. (Hennign-Thurau et al., 2004).

Electronic WOM is considered different from Simple WOM as there is innovation and more adaption involved in eWOM and people are now more influenced with the internet

based information (Andreassen & Streukens, 2009). Marketers now seek and encourage those consumers that can convey eWOM positively because it motivates people to make purchase decision (Kim, Jhang & Adler, 2015).

2.2 Brand Awareness

Brand is known as a “name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, [that] is intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or a group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors” (Kotler, 1997). According to Aaker (1997) brand awareness is the “consumer ability to recognize and recall the brand in different situation”. Brand awareness is at the lowest end of brand knowledge that parameter starts from the simple brand recognition to the cognitive thinking based approach which is based on the detail information about the brand (Mandler, 1980). According to Yadin (2002) ability of brand to attain a pre planned recognition level is actually brand awareness; consumer can get the brand name before purchase behavior. Brand awareness affect on consumer brand choice, consumer pay purchase intention to those brand which they know, and it further impacts on quality consideration of brand that when consumer knows about the brand they consider it to be good (Macdonald & Sharp , 2000).

It has been found that marketers are striving to generate, maintain and retain the brand awareness. Marketers strive high where less involvement from consumer is observed. Advertisement is a vital source to give awareness about brand. The repetitive ads would retain the customer aware about the brand (Macdonald & Sharp , 1996). Brand awareness data is used to track the “share of mind” of consumers, a good and increased brand awareness is considered to be a result of good marketing plans and activities while decrease brand awareness is a serious matter of concern for marketers (Day ,Partt & Jr, 1971).

Brand is a mark in the heart and minds of consumer which on recalling give some sort of feelings and association, now brand is not just a sign, name or logo but more than this (Wijaya, 2013). Some product attributes are considered by consumer before making purchase Keller (1993) explained that brand image is reflection of consumer’s perception about product in the memory of consumer, every person has some nodes in their brain and consumer stores information of brand in those sets of nodes. Aaker (1997) also support it by stating that brand itself is defined as an image in the mind of people which is easily remember able and makes a positive brand which people can easily relate. Current and latest view of customers about brand is known as brand image, and it’s an association and set of beliefs within the mind of customers about specific brand (Dwayne, 2005). Aaker (1991) describes that positive brand association results in creating positive brand image. A question arises that what the elements are which put power to the brand and make it strong, to answer this question and to resolve the problem, after a prolonged observation it is revealed that brand trust and brand image would be the main powering aspects for making strong brand, brand in the competitive environment make a unique image in consumer’s mind through which consumers feel association with the brand (Aaker, 1997).

2.3 Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is described as a transaction behavior shown by customers after making evaluation of goods and services (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). According to Alford and Biswas (2000) purchase intention is consumer likelihood behavior of purchasing, higher purchase intention means consumer has higher likelihood of purchase. Whenever consumers intent to buy any product they made relevant research and gather information based on experiences and environment regarding that product or services after collecting enough information consumers make comparison and evaluate the products and make judgment on it (Wang, Cheng & Chu, 2012). Purchase intention is defined as the extent to which consumer has intention to buy online (Chu & Hsi-peng, 2007). According to Kotler (2003) individual behavior, attitude and unpredictable circumstances have effect on their purchase intention. Purchase intention is the important concept of marketing (Morrison, 1979). Purchase intention is increased with price and promotion (Alford & Biswas, 2000), with brand recognition (Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal, 1991), and also through the increased consumer familiarity with brand (Johnson & Russo, 1984).

2.4 Hypotheses Development

2.4.1 Influence of electronic WOM on brand image

With the rapid and growing advancement of internet usage now people can post their reviews, recommendations, tips on the virtual atmosphere (Gaitan, Javeir, Cataluna, Esteban & Correa, 2013). Word of mouth is an evaluation of product and services (Anderson, 1998). WOM opens up the door for people to give their opinions about brands with other people trust (Mayzlin, 2006; Patel, 2015). Branding is an important aspect for any organization to gather capital and is considered as organization asset, Strong brand enables organization to influence consumer for more purchase and to better visualize and understand the intangible aspects of the brand, more ever brand image can persuade the future profit and long term cash flow as consumers show willingness to pay high and be part of marketing success (Yoo & Donthu ,2001).. Brand association is created with the help of direct experience of purchasing and also by the information flow to the consumer through WOM (Hertel, 1986), and sets of brand association is brand awareness and brand image (Keller, 1993).

According to Keller (1993) Online and internet has more impact on creating and establishing brand image, and the strong impact of brand image is made through WOM which creates strong impact on brand judgment (Herr, Kardes, & Kim, 1991). The research Conducted in Iran shows that eWOM is an effective and influential tool which has a positive impact on brand image and consumer purchase intention, eWOM helps in building good brand image and has direct effect on it, the research reveals that brand image mediates the relation of eWOM and Purchase intention (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012).

H1: Electronic word of mouth has a Positive impact on brand image.

2.4.2 Influence of electronic WOM on consumer purchase intention

Consumers exchange their views and talk about product and services through face to face communication, telephonic network and now social media has also given boost to their exchanging view. Communication between the consumers influences their buying behavior and can change their purchase intention (Berger & Iyengar, 2013). eWOM is changing the behavior and decisions of people with the growth of internet and e-commerce, people now use others people suggestions and opinions while making purchase decision and even when making offline purchase decision they consider electronic information about things. eWOM is playing a key role in consumer purchasing decision now a days (Chan & Ngai, 2011).

Electronic word of mouth through electronic medium pushes people to gather information about their desired product and services not only from the few number of people they know, but also from the huge geographically detached number of people who have personally experienced those goods and services and collectively they influence on consumer purchase intention (Lee, Cheung, Lim & Sia, 2006). Creating immediate momentum among people to make word of mouth about product and services businesses deliver is very important in competitive environment, when businesses give gifts to their customers they create positive word of mouth about product and services on Face book and on twitter which directly influence other people's purchase intention as people trust people (Patel, 2015).

Many organizations are now investing on eWOM rather than on traditional marketing tools as they found eWOM as a strong communicating medium with greater influential power (Kilby,2007). Research on the Iran automobile shows that eWOM has strong and positive impact on the purchase intention, in this research brand image is used as mediator. The result of research showed that eWOM has strong and direct impact on the purchase intention while brand image is playing a partial mediating role (Jalilvand & samiei, 2012).

H2: Electronic word of mouth has a Positive impact on purchase intention.

2.4.3 Influence of brand awareness on brand image

Brand awareness concept can be understood through understanding brand depth and width concept. Depth reflects that how conveniently brand is recalled and recognized by the consumers while width reflects that how fast brand name comes into customer mind while making purchase (Hoeffler & Keller, 2002). The basic element of brand awareness is brand name (Davis, Golicic & Marquardt, 2008). The brand name in customer's mind is the brand image that's come quickly in customer's mind while recalling brand during purchase (Aaker, 1997). An essential condition to create brand association for consumers is that the brand must be present in the consumer's mind. The power and strength of the Mental information processing nodes decide that how often these nodes occur with different sort of information that help in making association and attachment with brand (Keller, 2008). Brand awareness positively increase brand image through constant and repetitive exposure in the memory node (Lowry, Vance, Moody, Beckman & Read, 2008).

Brand awareness has high influential power on consumer purchase intention through brand association and also through positive brand image; with the help of marketing activities consumer get awareness about the brand and a positive image would be created that effect on purchasing intention (Keller, 1993). Brand awareness has direct effect on affection, conation and cognitive thinking and indirect on purchase intention (Sharifi, 2014). Study shows that brand image helps in establishing retail image, brand image helps in creating and modifying consumer perception about fashion.

The brand image of those brands is high which score high brand awareness, it is draw conclusion that brand awareness helps in recognizing of brand in customer mind (Porter & Claycomb, 1997). Process used to make the customer more familiar with the brand also increases the customer brand knowledge and brand awareness which ultimately helps customers to make quick purchase decision (Bloch et al., 1986). Brand awareness can change the consumer purchase decision if it has still no association with it because brand awareness helps in the development and strengthening of brand association and helps in creating strong brand image (Keller, 2008).

H3: Brand awareness has positive impact on brand image.

2.4.4 Influence of brand awareness on consumer purchase intention

Repetitive advertisement pinches on customers consideration sets, and makes them aware about the brand hence whenever customer sees that brand, he/she can easily recognize it (Macdonald & Sharp, 2000). Consumers choose those brands for purchase intention which needs little time and less cognitive effort (Hoyer, 1984). Brand awareness helps consumers to recognize the brand in the product category and influences them to make purchase decision (Percy & Rossiter, 1992).

Research conducted on Taiwan cellular phone company shows that brand awareness has positive impact on purchase intention with the mediating role of brand loyalty and brand perceived quality, the study result depicts that marketers try to build brand awareness through sales promotion, advertisement and other marketing tools, when brand awareness is increased then brand loyalty would also be increased which ultimately increases the purchase preference and purchase intention of brand (Chi at el , 2009). Previous research on social media and fan page commitment shows that overloaded information on fan page and social media regarding brands would have negative impact on brand awareness and decreased eWOM while active engagement of customers with the fan page would result in increased positive brand awareness and increased in communicating eWOM which has ultimate positive effect on purchase intention (Hutter et al., 2013).). Brand awareness and customer purchase intention has positive directed relationship in the presence of mediator brand image (Shah, Aziz, & Jaffari, 2012).

Study of Hoyer and Brown (1990) showed the impact of brand awareness on choice, frequency and brand sampling, result shows that consumer made choice of purchase or had intention of purchase towards those brands which they are aware about hence brand awareness has positive impact on consumer brand choice leading toward purchase intention.

H4: Brand awareness has positive impact on Consumer purchase intention

2.4.5 Influence of brand image on consumer purchase intention

Consumer brain has sets of nodes in which information is stored regarding brands (Keller, 1993). The strength of association related to those brand nodes vary from consumer to consumer, level of processing and involvement is attached with those nodes which influence consumer's association and push their buying behavior towards that brand (Collins & Loftus, 1975). Brand image build the brand because it's a source of creating credibility and brand reputation which influence the consumer intention to buy that brand (Wijaya, 2013). Strong and positive corporate and brand credibility is a source of creating strong and positive brand image and brand equity which ultimately increase the purchase intention of consumers (Zou & Huifen Fu, 2011). The previous researches show that WOM has impact on brand image which ultimately effect on consumer purchase intention. The result of the study shows that brand image has partial mediating role between WOM and consume purchase intention (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012; Fianto, Hadiwidjojo, Aisjah, & Solimun, 2014; Diamantopoulos, Schlegelmilch & Palihawadana, 2011).

H5: Brand image has a Positive impact on Consumer purchase intention.

On the basis of above variables relationship following model of the study is developed.

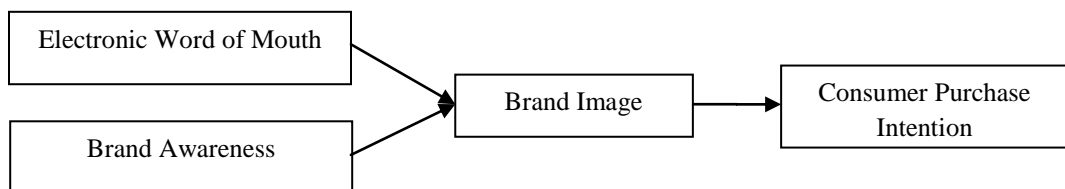


Figure 1: Model of the Study

Hierarchy of effect model

Lavidge and Steiner (1961) presented a model of Hierarchy of Effect Model, which has different stages that concerns when the product is first introduced in the market and the main purpose of it is to create awareness among targeted customer about the new product and to influence them to have purchase intention and to make the actual purchase decision.

In the first step marketer tries to make customer aware about the brand through different marketing tools mostly through advertisement. When the customer becomes aware about brand then he/she begins to gain knowledge about that brand and start comparing brand with its competitors. In step three after getting adequate knowledge customer starts liking brand and start preferring it on rest of the similar brand producer. In fifth step of conviction customer interest to buy that brand is increasing and customer has

fully intention to purchase that brand. In the last stage customer make purchasing of that brand and pay the payments (Juchem, 2009).

According to Hierarchy of Effect model when the brand awareness is created through marketing tool then it pushes customer to get knowledge about that brand, the information is stored in the brand nodes of the brain (keller, 1993). The customer starts liking that brand and give preference to that brand over competitors brand (Juchem, 2009). Brand image is cognitive thinking process Brand awareness creates brand image and which influence customer to create the purchase intention. Brand image mediates the relationship between brand awareness and customer purchase intention (Keller, 1993).

3. Methodology

To study the impact of eWOM and brand awareness on consumer purchase intention with the mediating role of brand image, the primary data has to be collected. In order to achieve the desired outcomes of this research, sample data was collected from the mobile users. Individual unit of analysis was used in this study, thus both male and female mobile users were contacted. Cross sectional time horizon was selected for this research study and the study setting was non-contrived. The correlation, regression is used as statistical test for present study.

The main population of this study was the university students who used mobile phones in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The sample consisted of mobile user students of four universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. 300 questionnaire were floated out of 262 were received. The sampling technique used was non-probability sampling, 'convenience sampling'. Probability sampling was not an option because the sampling frame was not available. Thus, data was collected from students who voluntarily participated in the study.

Structured questionnaire as a research tool was used to collect the data. Survey instrument of the study was adopted from the different sources and compounded into a single questionnaire. The sources were Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold (2011), Shukla (2010), Low and Lamb (2000), Aaker (1996) and Keller (2001).

EWOM was measured on six items adopted from the Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold (2011). These items were measured on five point likert scale. One item *If I don't read consumers' online product reviews when I buy a product/brand, I worry about my decision* was reverse coded.

Brand awareness is measured on five items using 5-point likert scale, adopted from two different sources Aaker (1996) and Keller (2001). Brand awareness measures the brand recall and brand recognition components. Brand image is measured from five items on 5- point likert scale ranging from Strongly agree to strongly disagree. The items were adopted from Low and Lamb (2000).

Purchase intention of customer was measured on three items adopted from Shukla (2010). The items include *"I would buy this product/brand rather than any other brands available"*, *"I am willing to recommend others to buy this product/brand"* and *"I intend to purchase this product /brand in the future"*

Data analysis was done based on correlation and regression using SPSS v.20. Pilot study was conducted on a data of 50 questionnaires for checking the reliability of the instrument. The result of pilot study was reliable, valid and significance; hence further research was conducted.

4. Results and Discussion

The value of cronbach's alpha of whole questionnaire is .891 that shows that the reliability of questionnaire is good and provides direction that data is good for further analysis. The alpha reliability results are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

| Construct | Item Numbers | Cronbach's alpha |
|-----------------------------|--------------|------------------|
| Electronic Word of mouth | 06 | .880 |
| Brand Awareness | 05 | .822 |
| Brand Image | 05 | .880 |
| Customer Purchase Intention | 03 | .882 |
| Over all scale | 19 | .891 |

In demographic analysis frequency of gender and age of participant is calculated.

Table 2: Profile of Respondent

| | | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|----------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 64 | 24.4 |
| | Female | 198 | 75.6 |
| | Total | 262 | 100 |
| Age | 15-19 | 25 | 9.5 |
| | 20-24 | 196 | 74.8 |
| | 25-29 | 23 | 8.8 |
| | 30-34 | 11 | 4.2 |
| | Above 35 | 7 | 2.7 |

The respondent profile shows that 64 are male and 198 are female. The male and female participant percentages in this study are 24.4% and 75.6% respectively. The profile of mobile industry (Table 3) shows the percentage of respondents using Qmobile, Samsung, Nokia, Apple and HTC.

Table 3: Profile of Mobile Industry

| Mobile Name | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------|------------|------------|
| Q Mobile | 52 | 19.8 |
| Samsung | 80 | 30.5 |
| Nokia | 57 | 21.8 |
| Apple | 38 | 14.5 |
| HTC | 35 | 13.4 |
| Total | 262 | 100 |

Table 4 shows the value of mean, skewness and kurtosis. Mean of eWOM, brand awareness, brand image and purchase intention show conscience in population, the value of skewness and kurtosis should lie between -1 & + 1 and -3 & +3 respectively, the skewness and kurtosis for eWOM, brand awareness, brand image and purchase intention values are lie between -3 & + 3 which shows that data is normally distributed

Table 4: Descriptive Statistics and Normality

| | Mean | St. Dev. | Skewness | Kurtosis |
|--------------------------|-------|----------|----------|----------|
| Electronic Word Of mouth | 2.346 | 0.916 | 1.155 | 0.705 |
| Brand awareness | 1.826 | 0.693 | 1.810 | 2.090 |
| Brand Image | 2.006 | 0.900 | 1.388 | 2.048 |
| Purchase Intention | 2.201 | 1.051 | 1.022 | 0.304 |
| N = 262 | | | | |

The table 5 presents correlation matrix. It shows that all variables are significant at 0.01 which means all variables are significant at 99%. As all the variables have value less than 0.8 hence they all are considered as a separate construct.

Table 5: Correlation Analysis

| | Electronic Word of mouth | Brand awareness | Brand Image | Purchase Intention |
|--------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| E Word of mouth | 1 | | | |
| Brand awareness | .299* | 1 | | |
| Brand Image | .291* | .500* | 1 | |
| Purchase Intention | .181* | .353* | .546* | 1 |

*P<0.01 **P<0.005 ***p<0.10 (2 tailed)

Regression analysis to check the mediation was done in four steps as outlined in Table 6.

Table 6: Table of Mediation Analysis eWOM-BI-PI Model

| Model | Unstand. Co-eff. | | Stand. co-eff. | t | P | R ² Change | Adj. R ² |
|-------------|------------------|-------|----------------|--------|-------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| | Beta | SE | Beta | | | | |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.085 | 0.081 |
| Constant | 1.336 | 0.147 | - | 9.102 | 0.000 | - | - |
| eWOM | 0.286 | 0.058 | 0.291 | 4.904 | 0.000 | - | - |
| 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.298 | 0.296 |
| Constant | 0.922 | 0.133 | - | 6.919 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Brand Image | 0.636 | 0.061 | 0.546 | 10.510 | 0.000 | - | - |
| 3 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.033 | 0.029 |
| Constant | 1.715 | 0.176 | - | 9.742 | 0.000 | - | - |
| eWOM | 0.207 | 0.074 | 0.181 | 2.962 | 0.003 | - | - |
| 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.299 | 0.294 |
| Constant | 0.872 | 0.174 | - | 5.071 | 0.000 | - | - |
| eWOM | 0.027 | 0.062 | 0.024 | 0.436 | 0.663 | - | - |
| Brand Image | 0.629 | 0.063 | 0.559 | 9.918 | 0.000 | - | - |

P value is significant at * P> 0.01, **P> 0.05, *** P>0.1 (2 tailed)

In first step Electronic word of mouth (eWOM) is taken as independent variable and brand image as dependent variable, the relationship is found to be positively related and it is proved that eWOM has positive impact on Brand image. The P value is significant and it is shows that eWOM can bring 8.5 % change in brand image. H1 is proven to be true in this step.

In the next step brand image is taken as independent variable while purchase intention as dependent variable. The relationship between these two variables is come up with significant p value and shows brand image brings 29.8% change in customers purchase intention. H2 is accepted in this step.

In the third step of mediation analysis eWOM has taken as independent variable while Purchase intention as dependent variable the regression shows that p value is significant and there is positive relation between these two variables it is also prove that change in eWOM brings 3.3% change in customers purchase intention beta value is positive which shows positive relation between these two variables. H3 is accepted in this step of mediation.

In fourth step eWOM and brand image is taken as independent variable while customer purchase intention as dependent variable the relationship shows the insignificant p value which shows that brand image has full mediating impact on relationship. H4 is also accepted in this step of mediation analysis.

To analyze direct or indirect effect of mediator on relationship Sobel test is run (Baron & Kenny, 1986) indirect effect is 87% which shows eWOM influence on purchase intention through brand image is 87%.

Model Two (Table 7) is presented as Brand Awareness → Brand Image → Customer Purchase Intention

Table 7: Table of Mediation Analysis for BA-BI-PI

| Model | Unstand. co-eff. | | Stand. co-eff. | t | P | R ² Chang | Adj. R ² |
|-----------------|------------------|-------|----------------|--------|-------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| | Beta | SE | Beta | | | | |
| 1 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.250 | 0.247 |
| Constant | 0.821 | 0.136 | - | 6.032 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Brand Awareness | 0.649 | 0.070 | 0.500 | 9.311 | 0.000 | - | - |
| 2 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.298 | 0.296 |
| Constant | 0.922 | 0.133 | - | 6.919 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Brand Image | 0.636 | 0.061 | 0.546 | 10.510 | 0.000 | - | - |
| 3 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.124 | 0.121 |
| Constant | 1.226 | 0.172 | - | 7.142 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Brand Awareness | 0.534 | 0.088 | 0.353 | 6.074 | 0.000 | - | - |
| 4 | - | - | - | - | - | 0.307 | 0.301 |
| Constant | 0.753 | 0.163 | - | 4.611 | 0.000 | - | - |
| Brand Awareness | 0.160 | 0.090 | 0.106 | 1.771 | 0.078 | - | - |
| Brand Image | 0.576 | 0.070 | 0.493 | 8.258 | 0.000 | - | - |

P value is significant at * P> 0.01, **P> 0.05, *** P>0.1 (2 tailed)

In table 7, in first step brand awareness is consider as independent variable while brand image as dependent variable the p value of the relationship is significant and positive beta value show positive relation, it is drawn that change in brand awareness brings 25 % change in brand image. H5 is accepted here.

In the second step brand image is taken as independent variable and customer purchase intention as dependent variable, the p value is significant, beta value is positive which shows positive directed relation, the change in brand image brings 29.8% change in customer purchase intention. H6 is proven to be true in this step.

In the third step of mediation analysis brand awareness is taken as independent variable while purchase intention as dependent variable the p value of this relationship is significant and has positive beta value. The change in brand awareness brings 12.4% change in customer purchase intention. H7 is accepted to be true here.

In the last step, brand awareness and brand image is taken as independent variables while customer purchases intention as dependent variable to analyze the mediation impact, which is significant hence it shows no full mediating impact of brand image on relationship, while the beta value of brand awareness is decreased from 0.534 to 0.160

and beta value of brand image is also decreased from .636 to .576 which shows that there has a partial mediating impact on the relationship that brand awareness has directly and indirectly both impact on purchase intention in the presence and absence of mediator brand image. By analyzing the beta, t and p value it is proved that H8 is accepted that's shows that brand image mediates the relationship between brand awareness and customer purchase intention.

To analyze direct or indirect effect of mediator on relationship sobel test is run (Baron & Kenny, 1986) indirect effect is 70% which shows purchase intention influenced by brand awareness through brand image is 70%.

The frame work designed in this research is based on mediation; hence mediation analysis is done to check the significance and impact of mediation, the main model of this research is divided into two sub model and on each part separately mediation is run, the mediation analysis of eWOM influence on purchase intention is fully mediated by brand image the mediation impact is 87 % similarly mediation analysis of brand awareness influence on purchase intention is also partially mediated by brand image and brand image impact on the relationship is 70%.

eWOM is getting popular medium of marketing from the last ten years, now a day's consumers get more attentive and attractive towards eWOM rather than traditional advertisement medium (Mcdonnell, 2005). eWOM helps people to think about brand and creates brand image in people mind (Yoo & Doenthu ,2001). Brand image mediating impact on the relationship is 87% which means in Pakistan people are getting aware about the internet and user of internet services is increasing in Pakistan. Now people can post, comment, review every single thing of them on social media (Gaint et al., 2013). Similarly brand awareness impact on purchase intention through brand image is 70% which also shows that brand awareness helps increasing brand image which ultimately push customer intentions to purchase. In this research the sample size of the data is 262 and response rate is 87 % but generalizability of research is also limited that's mean research is applicable only in area of twin cities because data is from the university of these twin cities.

In Pakistan youngsters are more conscious about the brand, and everybody has mobile phone hence the research is basically targeting those youngsters who has mobile phone and it analyzes that either they feel that eWOM and brand awareness have impact on purchase intention through brand image. Marketers consider eWOM as essential marketing tool hence focus on it increase customer purchase intention.

5. Conclusion

The purpose of conducting this research is to analyze the impact of eWOM and brand awareness on customer purchase intention with the mediating role of brand image. One of the strong research purposes is to find out whether brand image has full mediating role or partial mediating role. All eight hypotheses are accepted and proven to be true in research that eWOM has positive and strong impact on brand image as it is proven previously and extracted from the research of Jalilvand and samiei (2012). The hypothesis eWOM has strong and positive impact on customer purchase intention is

accepted with the change impact of 3.3%. The hypothesis that brand image plays a mediating role between eWOM and purchase intention is also accepted. eWOM has direct and strong positive impact on the brand image, and brand image plays as a mediator role between the relationship of eWOM and customer purchase intention (Jalilvand & Samiei, 2012).

Brand awareness has a strong and positive influence on brand image; brand awareness helps in developing image about the product and services (Keller, 1993). H5 is accepted that brand awareness has positive impact on brand image (Cho, 2011). The partial mediating impact of brand image on the relationship of brand awareness and customer purchase intention is also accepted; Brand awareness helps in creating cognitive thinking of brand and has indirect impact on customer purchase intention in the presence of brand image (Sharifi, 2014). Brand awareness and customer purchase intention has positive directed relationship in the presence of mediator brand image (Shah, Aziz, & Jaffari, 2012).

The research is limited only to sample collected from the universities in twin cities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Secondly, non-probability sampling technique was adopted which limited the generalizability of the results. Third, the variables have been studied in their holistic form ignoring the dimensions, thus, future studies can take into account the dimensions of the variables as well for meaningful results. The impact of eWOM can be studied with dummy variable of gender as male and female has different perceptions and opinion. Brand trust, brand loyalty and consumer purchasing power can studied as mediators or moderators can also bring new insights.

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