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Impact of Big Five Personality Traits on E-Wom: Mediation of Brand Addiction and Moderation of Self-Liking

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Abstract: *This research examines the impact of brand addiction and self-liking in the relationship between big fiver personality traits and Electronic word of mouth (E-WOM). This research study is based upon a survey method, data from 233 respondents were collected to examine the impact of independent on dependent variables through mediation and moderation. Mediation and moderation were tested through Process and Hayes. The results of the present study show that the big five personality traits are a significant association with E-WOM. Results also reveal that brand addiction mediates while self-liking does not moderate the association between big five personality traits and E-WOM. This study also includes managerial implications, limitations and direction for future research.*

Key Words: E-WOM, Extraversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism, Consciousness, Openness, Self-liking, Brand Addiction and Big Five Personality Traits

Introduction

The representation of personality traits diving into addiction processes has been much important for better understanding the context of a consumer's behavioral addiction. The drive `of research is to discover substance-based addiction in the context of behavioral brand addictions needed (Cui, Mrad and Hogg 2018). In behavioral addictions framework, the field of technological brand addiction has emerging one as compared to other recognized domains, thus it is more important to know which procedures will be associated with new procedures of dependence process that may be mitigated the research in personality traits context and general contribution to both biological and behavioral addiction (Andreasse, Griffiths, Gjertsen, Krossbakken, Kvam, & Pallesen, 2013; Grant, Potenza, Weinstein & Gorelick, 2010). Andreassen et al. (2013) reported that personality characteristics such as neuroticism, extraversion, openness to experience, agreeableness and conscientiousness account for 6% to 17% of the variance of various addiction types (like addiction to Facebook, video games, smartphones and Internet).

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The motivation for current research comes from different past studies. Firstly Cui, Mrad and Hogg (2018) endorsed exploring and empirical investigation of consequences and antecedents of brand addiction based on empirical evidence to the generalizability of recent research findings. Second, theoretically and empirical investigation of technological brand addictions and personality traits were growing rapidly but more investigation is required to study the complex relationship between technological brands addiction and personality traits (Bozoglan, 2017). Thirdly, and most important research call was provided by Cui et al., (2018) as he invited the researchers to discover the consequences and antecedents of brand addiction because in recent literature it is considered to be the most important variable. So in the present study, we tend to explore both antecedents and consequences of brand addiction. Research into addictive technologies such as the internet, smartphone and social media brands has been growing drastically. Then Kircaburun and Griffiths (2018) Suggested that in general study addiction as well as other addictions considered more seriously such as social and technological brand addiction (e.g., cell phone, video games, Facebook, Twitter, Tinder, YouTube, etc.). Hence, it is important to understand how the addictive use of technology brands associates with different personality traits. Despite the explosion of technology brands such as the internet, mobile phones, games, social media, and Facebook, the addictive use of individuals increased of such brands (Błachnio & Przepiorka 2019). Finally, the most important characteristic of induvial who plays a significant role in shaping brand addictions may be self-liking. Tafarodi and Swann (2001) and Dogan (2011) claimed that self-liking was associated with self-esteem rather than self-competence.

Current research marks the investigation of the Big Five personality traits impact on mobile phone brand dependence (brands e.g., iPhone, SAMSUNG) and moderating role of consumer self-liking. Henceforth this contribution is much more important than many other types of research (Błachnio & Przepiorka 2019; Cui et. al., 2018; Bozoglan, 2017; Andreassen et al. 2013; Dogan, 2011; Grant et. al., 2010). This study also explores how brand addiction influences consumers' electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) after their experiences. Even though the association between internet craving and customers' e-WOM conduct has been examined in the situation of the restaurant business (Israeli, Lee & Bolden, 2019), the previous investigation has not examined e-WOM behavior in the brand addiction context. Hence current study explores the overall brand addiction role to generate e-WOM in the general consumer context.

Literature Review

Mediation of Brand Addiction

E-WOM means any online communication between clients about an occasion, goods, deal, brand-specific or a company (Kietzmann & Canhoto, 2013). Companies collect and use the amount of WOM composed on the Internet to progress and advance products, and services and to familiarize marketing policies. (D'Andrea, Ferri, & Grifoni, 2012). It is expected that extraversion has an influence on brand addiction, agreeableness has an influence on brand addiction, neuroticism has an influence on brand addiction, conscientiousness has an effect on brand addiction, openness to experience has an effect on brand addiction and addicted consumers spread positive E-WOM about their addicted brands. All these relations show that Big Five behavior traits play a vital part in a consumer's social brand addiction behaviour. In this intermediary process brand addiction is a responsive mediating factor that leads from Big Five personality traits to their E-WOM.

He discovered that people in extroversion are positively involved in brand evangelism, which is "a more active and committed way of spreading positive opinions and trying fervently to persuade others to get engaged with the same brand" (Matzler, Kurt, Bidmon & Grabner-Kräuter, 2006, p. 27). Azizih, Mousavi, Tahermanesh, Tabatabaee & Mirkamali, (2014) presented a significant relationship between extraversion, agreeableness, openness, neuroticism and word-of-mouth dissemination. Mulyanegara, Tsarenko and Anderson (2009) showed that there are important relations between Big Five personality traits and

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brand liking along with Muntinga, Moorman and Smit (2011) a study of consumer behavior has shown that product choice and brand preference are predicted by personality. Mrad and Cui (2020) found a positive direct and indirect mediating relationship of brand addiction between compulsive buying and life happiness. So we assumed that there is a direct relationship between big five personality traits and E-WOM is through brand addiction because the relation of big five personality traits is intervened by addiction towards a brand. If the customer is addicted to a brand then he must have a positive feeling about the brand. This investigation also shows that addiction works as a mediator. Based on existing literature the current research suggested that addiction has an influence on consumer E-WOM behavior which means brand addiction may be expected to act as a mediator in the association between Big Five personality traits and E-WOM. Hence the following hypothesis is formulated:

- **H1:** The association between extraversion and E-WOM is intervened by brand addiction.
- **H2:** The association between agreeableness and E-WOM is intervened by brand addiction.
- **H3:** The association between neuroticism and E-WOM is intervened by brand addiction.
- **H4:** The association between conscientiousness and E-WOM is intervened by brand addiction.
- **H5:** The association between openness to experience and E-WOM is intervened by brand addiction.

Moderation of Self-liking

Mar et al. (2006) defined self-liking as "a subjective evaluation of personal worth" and reported a strong adverse correlation between self-liking and neurotics. Self-Liking cannot predictabilities achieved because theoretically it is based on a more valuable subjective assessment. Another research Watson et al., (2002) reported a negative association between neuroticism depression facet and self-esteem. DeYoung et al., (2006) identified a vigorous interrelatedness of self-competence and Conscientiousness but a moderate association with neuroticism comparatively with respect to self-Liking.

Prior research found that conscientious and open individuals were the most powerful predictive variables for the diversity of competency such as self-liking (Mar et. al. 2006). Kircaburun and Griffiths (2018) found an indirect relationship between Instagram addictions through self-liking and lower conscientious individuals as well as lower agreeableness. Lower self-liking was correlated with both lower agreeableness and conscientiousness among the student sample, which in the outcome as more high-level addictive usage of Instagram. Tafarodi and Swann (2001) studied that an individual's acceptance or rejection attitude and individual's positive/negative remarks have a strong impact on their self-liking levels. Persons having a higher level of self-liking were comparatively more comfortable with social media settings and then spreading word of mouth or sharing information (Tafarodi & Swann, 1995). Wilkinson (2010) studied a student sample and reported advanced self-liking undergraduates with lesser level escaping, nervousness has more friendship with higher quality attachments with parents and peers. On the other hand, high levels of depression can be expected in people with low self-likings (Wilkinson, 2010), which was positively related to social media brand addictions (Andreassen et al., 2016). Smith et al., (2017) found that mild peer belongings among teens were positively linked to fake-liking searches on social media. These persons may have developed an addiction to social media users to meet their social media needs or self-liked desires. Mar et al., (2006) found partial correlation results among self-liking, agreeableness and conscientiousness. In a study Zhou, Li, Li, Wang and Zhao (2017) found a positive relationship between personality traits and addictive Internet usage. Ramsdal (2008) testified that a sample of undergraduates with more self-liking had higher conscientiousness, agreeableness, openness and lower level of extraversion. The outcomes showed that neurotics, extraverted, and openness to new experiences students were positively associated with their addictive behavior, while conscientious and agreeable were negatively correlated. Mar et al., (2006) argued that while claiming to be an assumption, conscience and openness are concerned

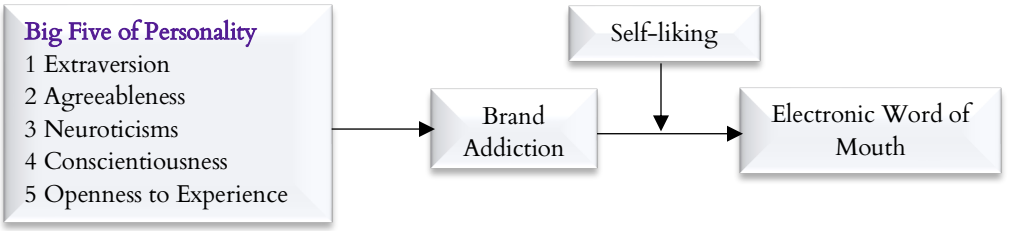
with self-efficacy rather than appreciation. He notes that acceptance, self-love and everyday use of the Internet have a weak but direct effect on addiction and forecast that conscientiousness and openness would be more powerfully linked with self-Competence than self-Liking with hypothesis confirmation reported that agreeableness, self-liking, and daily Internet use had a weak but direct impact on Instagram addiction. Karreman et al. (2013) reported a positive influence on awareness of depressive symptoms has been recorded due to the higher intensity of negative emotions.

It was initiated that 74% of new acquisitions were predisposed by consumer word of mouth, much more than any other advertisement media (Bulbul, Gross, Shin & Katz 2014). A survey of more than 28,000 users indicated that 92% of consumers trusted the word of mouth as compared to any other source of information (Neilsen, 2012). In short, word of mouth is an important factor that influences consumer decisions. Rogers (1961) defined self-liking as maintaining pride was not overconfidence and not self-esteem, but a sense of happiness and joyfulness because of yourself. In the current research the positive moderating role of brand addicted consumers' self-liking augured as the increasing efforts to integrate self-confidence due to positive word of mouth, they found self-liking as a general attitude towards selfless, which is similar to the current idea (De Angelis et al., 2012). De Angelis et al. (2012) said positive word of mouth often improves itself by linking a positive consumer experience with their self-liking level. Pupils with advanced self-liking were more conscientious, extraverted, open to experience, agreeable and less neurotic which may servile behaviors toward their likely brands (Ramsdal, 2008).

Based on this assumption, they found that the less self-esteeming users had a more positive word of mouth than the higher level of self-esteem due to the high desire. Thus, consumer esteem has been identified as an important moderating factor that engages consumers to spread positive word of mouth and brand addicted consumers behave as effusive. Hence, we assumed that a higher level of consumer self-liking had a greater urge to spread more positive word of mouth as compared to the lower level of consumer self-liking with reference to their addicted brand.

Hypothesis 6: The relationship between brand addiction and E-WOM is moderated due to consumers' self-liking.

Research Model



Research Methodology

According to our research goals, we will focus on two streams social brand addiction for example Facebook, YouTube, Netflix, WhatsApp and technological brand addiction for example iPhone, SAMSUNG, OPPO. Both streams are having great importance and demonstrate much research in this context of addiction (e.g, Kircaburun & Griffiths 2018; Andreassen et al. 2013). Data will be collected from students of private and public universities in Pakistan using the convenience sampling technique. The target population will be the graduate of the last semester of their degrees because these students are well aware of all social media brands e.g., "Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, Twitter" (Kircaburun & Griffiths 2018). We will adopt a survey method approach to collect data from respondents both offline and online which will be administrated in the English language because the medium of instruction in the Pakistan (graduation level) education system is English.

This research-based study includes a deductive method for data analysis and then we use an inductive approach for the interpretation of the results of the study. This study is based on the positivist paradigm because this is best for such deductive studies (Athar, Butt, Abid, & Arshad, 2021). In the deductive approach, the researcher relies on quantitative surveys and questionnaires. This research study used questionnaires as the primary data collection instrument because questionnaires are the best source of data collection for such studies (Arshad, Abid, Contreras, Elahi, & Athar, 2021). This study used cross-sectional, descriptive and formal studies to collect the data from the respondents of the study.

Data Collection

Data will be collected from different university students in Punjab, Pakistan, through self-administered surveys established on the results of the detailed literature review (Raja et al. 2004; Kircaburun & Griffiths 2018). Further, for the purpose of successfully and effectively managing the response of consumers, we will be collected through a self-administered questionnaire.

Population and Sampling Technique

Respondents of this research will be those persons who are active users of (Facebook, Instagram, WhatsApp, and Twitter) and will be influenced by posts shared on these social brands. We will be visited different universities, and conduct an orientation session in classrooms about the current study purpose, and scope. Also, online data will be collected through different graduate students' WhatsApp groups, induvial WhatsApp status, Facebook story sharing and four Facebook pages which are administrated by the author himself using the online GOOGLE form application. We use the purposive sampling technique to draw the sample from the targeted population.

Measures

Big Five Personality

BFI proposed by John et al., (1991) was used to collect data about the big five personality traits. This includes 44 items and these all are short and easy to understand. This includes questions about each of these 5 major personality traits. These 5 personality traits can easily be measured using these 44 questions. This scale of BFI has better internal consistency, factor structure, reliability, discriminant and convergent validity as compared to other models (John & Srivastava, 1999). This scale also showed considerable agreement among self and peer reports.

Self-liking

This study used 16 item scale established by Tafarodi and Swann (2001) to measure self-liking. This scale ranges from absolutely disagree to absolutely agree. This scale includes items regarding self-worth and self-value.

Brand Addiction

Brand addiction is measured using 11 item scale developed by Mrad and Cui (2017).

E-WOM

E-WOM is measured using a scale established by Bambauer-Sachse and Mangold (2011).

Results

SPSS-24 was used to analyse the data from the current investigation. The demographic and study variables' mean and standard deviations were evaluated using descriptive statistics. To guarantee that the variables are valid and reliable for additional analysis, a reliability test was conducted. Correlation analysis of study and demographics variables was also conducted to determine the relationship between study and demographics variables. To see if there was a direct relationship between the study variables, regression analysis was used. The process by Hayes was employed for moderation and mediation analysis through Model 1 and Model 4 respectively.

Table 1 shows the mean, standard deviation, and correlation analysis of the results. The respondents' mean responsiveness to extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism,

openness, self-liking, brand addiction and E-WOM was greater than 3.00. The study variables' reliability analysis is higher than the industry benchmark of 0.70. Cronbach's alpha reliability ratings were extroversion (0.754), agreeableness (0.823), conscientiousness (0.827), neuroticism (0.669), openness (0,814), self-liking (0.854), brand addiction (0.803) and E-WOM (0.902). Table shows that extraversion is significant positive related with self-liking (r= .175, p< .05), brand addiction (r=0.847, p<.05) and E-WOM (r=.210, p<.05). Agreeableness is significant positive related to E-WOM (r=0.134, p<.05), significant negative with brand addiction (r= -0.199, p<.05) and no association with self-liking (r=0.105, p>.05). Conscientiousness is significant positive related to E-WOM (r=0.158, p<.05), significant negative with brand addiction (r= -0.168, p<.05) and no association with self-liking (r=0.115, p>.05). Neuroticism is significant positive related with self-liking (r= .190, p< .05), brand addiction (r=0.419, p<.05) and E-WOM (r=.185, p<.05). Openness to experience is significant positive related with self-liking (r= .164, p< .05), brand addiction (r=0.991, p<.05) and E-WOM (r=.236, p<.05). Self-liking is significant positive related to brand addiction (r=0.174, p<.05) and E-WOM (r=.892, p<.05). Brand addiction is significant positive related to E-WOM (r=.253, p<.05).

Table 1. Correlations

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. Gender	1.54	.50											
2. Occupation	2.29	1.55	-.236**										
3. Mobile	3.20	1.90	.056	.263**									
4. Extraversion	3.77	.62	-.103	.117	-.013	(0.754)							
5. Agreeableness	3.09	.73	.231**	-.146*	-.101	-.310**	(0.823)						
6. Conscientiousness	3.08	.72	.212**	-.097	-.085	-.292**	.979**	(0.827)					
7. Neuroticism	3.66	.51	-.057	.034	.066	.596**	-.374**	-.326**	(0.669)				
8. Openness	3.75	.58	-.111	.202**	.045	.862**	-.226**	-.197**	.430**	(0.814)			
9. Self-Liking	3.53	.90	-.055	.120	.044	.175**	.105	.115	.190**	.164*	(0.845)		

10. Brand Addiction	3.74	.56	-.097	.217**	.027	.847**	-.199**	-.168*	.419**	.991**	.174**	(0.803)	
11. E-WOM	3.61	.93	-.022	.136*	.026	.210**	.134*	.158*	.185**	.236**	.892**	.253**	(0.902)

Table 2 shows the regression investigation for the direct relationship of the study. In Model 1, gender, occupation and mobile are not associated with E-WOM and these demographics only contribute 1% change in the dependent variable. Model 2 shows that extraversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, neuroticism, openness, self-liking and brand addiction are significantly associated with E-WOM and these contribute 12% change in E-WOM. Model 3 shows that self-liking is a significant positive association with E-WOM and a 78% change in E-WOM is due to self-liking. Model 4 shows that brand addiction is significant and positive associated with E-WOM and a 6% change in E-WOM is due to brand addiction. Model 5 shows the direct relationship of all study variables with E-WOM. This shows that all the variables contribute 80% change in E-WOM. This also shows that extraversion, agreeableness and neuroticism are not associated with E-WOM. Conscientiousness, openness to experience, self-liking and brand addiction are significantly associated with E-WOM.

Table 2. Regression Analysis

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5
Gender	0.02	-0.04	0.07	0.04	0.05
Occupation	0.08	0.07	0.02	0.05	0.00
Mobile	-0.00	0.00	-0.01	-0.00	-0.00
Extraversion		0.22**			-0.06
Agreeableness		0.26**			-0.35
Conscientiousness		0.29**			0.41**
Neuroticism		0.34**			-0.01
Openness		0.27**			-0.40*
Self-liking			.92***		0.89***
Brand Addiction				0.38***	0.63***
E-WOM					
R square	0.01	0.13	0.79	0.07	0.81
Δ R square		0.12	0.78	0.06	0.80

**p<0.05, **p<0.01, ***p=0.00*

Mediation of Brand Addiction

Table 3 represents the regression investigation for the mediation of brand addiction among the big five personality traits and E-WOM. Regression was tested through Process by Hayes model 4. The table displays that brand addiction mediates the association between extraversion and E-WOM (B= 0.34, p<.01). This provides support to 1st hypothesis of the study that brand addiction mediates the relationship between extraversion and E-WOM. The table shows that brand addiction mediates the relationship between agreeableness and E-WOM (B= -0.07, p<.05). This provides support to 2nd hypothesis of the study that brand addiction mediates the association between agreeableness and E-WOM. The table shows that brand addiction mediates the association between conscientiousness and E-WOM (B= -0.06, p<.05). This provides

support to 3rd hypothesis of the study that brand addiction mediates the relationship between conscientiousness and E-WOM. The table shows that brand addiction mediates the relationship between neuroticism and E-WOM (B= 0.16, p<.01). This provides support to 4th hypothesis of the study that brand addiction mediates the association between neuroticism and E-WOM. The table shows that brand addiction mediates the association between openness to experience and E-WOM (B= 0.26, p<.01). This provides support to the 5th hypothesis of the study that brand addiction mediates the relationship between openness to experience and E-WOM. This represents that all the study hypotheses are being supported by our data the study.

Table 3. Regression Analysis for Mediation of brand addiction

Variables	B	Se	P
Extraversion → Brand addiction → E-WOM	0.34	0.14	0.00
Agreeableness → Brand addiction → E-WOM	-0.07	0.03	0.01
Conscientiousness → Brand addiction → E-WOM	-0.06	0.03	0.01
Neuroticism → Brand addiction → E-WOM	0.16	0.05	0.00
Openness → Brand addiction → E-WOM	0.26	0.09	0.00

Table 4 shows the regression analysis for the moderation of Self-liking. Regression was tested through Process by Hayes model 1. The table shows the interactional term (Brand addiction * Self-liking) with E-WOM non-significant. This displays that self-liking does not moderate the association between brand addiction and E-WOM. So hypothesis 6 of the research is not being sustained by our data.

Table 4. Regression Analysis for moderation of Self-liking

Variables	B	SE	P
Brand addiction* Self-liking	0.07	0.05	0.18

Discussion and Conclusion

The discussion and conclusion section includes a discussion about the results, managerial and practical implications, limitations, direction for future research and conclusion. Results reveal that brand addiction mediates the relationship between extraversion and E-WOM. This means that the relationship between extraversion and E-WOM is through brand addiction. Extraversion personality type persons have talkative and energetic in nature therefore they are more chances to addicted towards brands and so it's higher chance to feast E-WOM about the brand. Agreeableness is the personality type perceived as kind and sympathetic and they are more addicted towards the brand and so higher chance to spread E-WOM. Conscientiousness is the personality type that are having a high level of self-discipline and is more addicted towards a brand and so they also spread positive vibes about brands through E-WOM. Neuroticism is the personality trait that disposition to experience negative effects like anger and anxiety and they have addictive to brands and so spread positive about brands called E-WOM. Openness to experience is the persons that share their experience with others and so there is a higher chance to addict to brands and so they spread E-WOM. This study proves that brand addiction mediates the association between big five personality traits and E-WOM. The current study also shows that self-liking does not moderate the association between the big five personality traits and E-WOM.

Practical & Managerial Implications

The present research has also had some practical and managerial implications. This study has implications for the managers that managers must focus on the factor that is addictive to brands so that they can spread positive vibes about the brands. Self-

liking does not moderate the association between big five personality traits and E-WOM, so the manager must not focus on that factor because it does not contribute towards E-WOM. This study also has practical implications that this is the research study that should be applied by most retail companies because that helps them to speak positively about brands.

Limitation & Direction for Future Research

Like other studies, this research also includes some limitations. The data collection of this study is limited to 233 respondents so that is a major limitation in this study. In the future, more data should be collected to generalize the results. Data were collected only from a few cities so in the future data must be collected from more cities. Due to financial and other constraints, the current study focus on a few mobiles and a few social networking sites and that limitation should also be addressed in the future. The current study only focuses on a few demographic factors so in the future more demographic factors should be considered to improve the study.

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