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# Retail Brand Personality and Brand Relationship Quality as initiators of E-Word of Mouth

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A B S T R A C T

**Purpose** - The primary objective of this research is to scrutinize the effects of retail brand personality and brand relationship quality on electronic word-of-mouth. This study also examines the mediating role of eWOM between brand personality and brand relationship quality.

**Study Design/Methodology/Approach** - The research utilizes a survey methodology to collect data from a sample of 300 young consumers were selected from various retailer stores in different cities across Pakistan, selected via convenience sampling. The response rate was 91%. A self-reported questionnaire was used to collect data. Statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 21.0, applying both descriptive statistics and inferential statistics techniques.

**Findings**- The results indicated that 26% of the participants were female and 74% were male. 31% of the participants have a family income ranging from 28,000PKR to 38,000PKR per month. In a similar vein, 39% of respondents indicated that they visited retailers twice per month. Moreover, findings indicate that retail brand personality has a positive correlation with brand relationship quality (r = 0.48**), and electronic word-of-mouth (r = 0.30**), as well as with intentions of store patronage (r = 0.27*). It was also established that eWOM acts as a mediator in the relationship between brand relationship quality and store patronage intentions.

**Practical Implications**- Retailers can leverage their unique brand personality trails that foster strong relationship quality to stimulate positive electronic word-of-mouth. All the positive determinants of eWOM can be utilized by marketers to convince consumers to visit their retail location or purchase their product. It may also aid them in averting negative consumer perceptions of their establishment.

**Originality/Novelty**- The dynamic of eWOM referrals, especially when originating from reputable and experienced sources, significantly shape consumers' purchasing behavior. Positive eWOM enhances the relationship between consumer and a brand, influencing their likelihood to visit or revisit the brand store.

*Keywords:* CSR, Electronic Word of Mouth, Brand Quality

## 1 | INTRODUCTION

Retail brand personality is defined as "the method by which the store is characterized in the customer's mind, predominantly by its practical qualities and incompletely by the emission of mental attributes" (Shadma Shahid, 2015). Outline, game plans, trends, colours, deal staff, and composition are the major tools used to build a strong retail brand identity (Möller & Herm, 2013). In his article, Möller and Herm (2013) provided an alternative perspective on retail brand identification and store image. Retailer image is defined as a scholarly description that encompasses all dimensions associated with a store, such as price, product selection, guidelines, and quality of class (d'Astous & Lévesque, 2003). Retail brand identification is, on the other hand, impeded by psychological dimensions that mimic human qualities. According to d'Astous and Lévesque (2003), thing grouping is an important standard for a general store image; however, it is not a character quality because it is not attributed to a person. According to da Silveira et al. (2013) made the same argument to distinguish brand image from mark identification. Several definitions of retail mark identification; we define retail chain identity as "a purchaser's perception of the human identity qualities associated with a retail outlet." A "retail chain" is defined as "a store that offers clothing and accessories in addition to nuclear family goods and equipment" (Blombäck & Ramírez-Pasillas, 2012).

Word-of-mouth is one of five social media drivers that engage consumers and enhance the customer experience (Ebrahim, 2019). Electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) influences customer purchasing significantly. eWOM is defined as "any positive or negative comment on a product or company that is made available to a large number of individuals and organizations via the Internet by potential, actual, or former customers (Voorveld, 2019)."

Due to the significance of word-of-mouth, marketers spend more on eWOM marketing. eWOM marketing can provide customer incentives for businesses. Consumer internet focus group research has been demonstrated to influence shopping decisions and business negotiations. According to Sari et al. (2018) examined that client knowledge sharing impacted clients' perceptions of product value (acquired benefits in relation to fetched or relinquished) as well as their propensity to recommend and repurchase the product. Similarly, Fehrenbach and Herrando (2021) claimed that both offline material (specialized publications and trial copies) and online feedback had a significant effect on customers and the reliability and totality of electronic word of mouth had a significant impact on consumers' purchasing intent. Online responses give a simple and relatively precise method for measuring verbal exchange and predicting product sales or diffusion (Kim et al., 2021). Online consumer feedback might be used as a complimentary bargaining partner to assist customers in locating the products that best meet their demands (Creed et al., 2021). Fehrenbach and Herrando (2021) claimed that producers can employ common client inspections near electronic media evaluation to enhance product stream quality, hence increasing future brand sales. They demonstrated that a precise control over social media remarks about a company's products, such as the release of an online study praising the company's products or criticizing those of its competitors, would have an effect on firm earnings and client flow. Web-based living enhances business dialogues and fosters ties for corporate branding (Mushtaque et al., 2022). Web-based living has significantly altered the electronic communication capabilities of businesses and their constituents, expanding the potential outcomes of eWOM from one-to-many and coordinated advertising correspondences (MC) to many-to-many and one-to-one exchanges (Tang & Guo, 2013). eWOM is any

favorable or negative review of a product or firm by prospective, existing, or former customers, or a huge number of people & fundamentals via digital resources (Gvili & Levy, 2016).

Individuals have a voice and are instantly heard thanks to the ease of access and exploitation of technology. They freely and dynamically communicate their conclusions around the world and have an impact on issues that are important to them (Ismagilova et al., 2020). Consumers describe things, services, brands, or experiences to attract more buyers. Clients are encouraged to complete online surveys by providing specialized tools that make the process simple (Lin, 2013). Buyers are willing to conduct research and submit ideas. This is possible due to the use design of their devices on a variety of web-based lives. The user-generated content depicted reflects the dynamic role that customers are increasingly playing in their purchasing decisions.

According to Goh et al., (2017), eWOM is a crucial technical tool that purchasers assess before making a purchase. Consumers trust others' judgment and experience while making risky decisions. Some researchers have noted that clients consider eWOM when buying automobile services and choosing warm gathering services. more they indicate that here square measure a few reasons that connects with one individual to pursue the WOM while making buys as their contribution with the stock that is the thing that amount care they're paying to their buys that decidedly emerge need to follow others suppositions promotion encounters, and once the individual is far involved in regards to the stock uses and request that it's meeting satisfy and furthermore the most vital reason is that customer (Goh et al., 2017).

Researchers have examined a wide range of eWOM issues, including the importance of eWOM for businesses (Babić Rosario et al., 2019), its links with buyer choices and buyer goals (Roy et al., 2017), its ability to persuade buyers (Zhang et al., 2013), and its precursor (Amos et al., 2014). Given the "simplicity of eWOM age and dispersal" (Cheung et al., 2008) and its effect on the customer purchasing process (Bueno & Gallego, 2021), research analysts have been requesting additional eWOM research for many years. Though the concept of eWOM has influenced the academic interests of many researchers, eWOM communication is not being addressed to the extent that it should be. While the majority of the advertising research literature focuses on consumers' attitudes towards marketing communication (Duffett, 2017).

There has been little research on eWOM in relation to retail brand personality and brand relationship quality. Practitioners have conducted some studies in the context of retail brand personality and brand relationship quality in recent years. However, more research is needed to link both variables to eWOM. Similarly, the purpose of this study is to identify this gap in eWOM research by investigating the impact of retail brand personality and brand relationship quality on eWOM. Understanding the impact of retail brand personality and brand relationship quality on eWOM (created by customers) from a managerial standpoint would aid the organization and managers in developing various strategies to encourage eWOM on social media.

## 2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 | Theoretical Underpins

**Equity theory**: This idea of equity tells us if the way resources are shared is fair for both sides. Individual obligations and pursuits define Adams and Freedman (1976), a work environment and conduct specialist, stating that agents attempt to maintain esteem between the data sources they pass on for a living and the results

they receive from them in comparison to the clear data sources and results of others (Tseng & Kuo, 2014). The concept is that individuals value considerate treatment, which pushes them to uphold virtue in their interactions and connections. Commitments determine workplace esteem. The affiliation commitments of agents are informative. The equity theory recommends reasonable and just associations. If a buyer believes they have a higher yield-to-input ratio than the company, online commitments can alter the ratio. This theory asks if both social assistants profit from resource distribution. It claims that individuals who feel underpaid or overpaid will encounter difficulties during various phases. This despondency motivates efforts to reestablish relational respect. It determines whether resource allocation is equitable for both social assistants. Self-esteem is determined by comparing each person's relational commitments and priorities. Accessories should not receive equal attention, care, and resources according to Adams and Freedman (1976). In his final study, Pritchard (1969) believes that everyone wants to settle down in life. According to this notion, when a situation is unequal, everyone will find an alternative solution (Sohaib et al., 2019). A great or negative experience can lead to a disappointing usage experience. Writing a conclusion comment equalizes the situation. The expressions of customers on web-based emotion platforms constitute a computer-generated network. For social benefits such as recognizable validation and social integration, purchasers may connect with online networks through eWOM correspondence (Kang, 2018). Buyers can leave comments on conclusion pages to demonstrate their proximity to and interest in the computer-generated community of platform users and to obtain social support from this community.

**2.2 | Cognitive Fit Model**

According to the cognitive fit hypothesis, data searchers are highly motivated and competent (Mishra et al., 2021). CFT could explain the apparent intellectual consistency of eWOM. According to the principle of data handling, a limited data processor addresses an issue by lowering the amount of critical thinking required (Simon, 2019). Intellectual compatibility reduces effort by matching the issue or job to its informational representation (Poppe, 2010). So, data preparation by customers is more successful when the material arrives in their chosen psychological format (Poppe, 2010). If the audience is persuaded and prepared to process sensible arguments, the elaboration probability model finds them to be the most appealing. When the audience is not motivated or skilled to absorb a message, using indirect suggestions such as value signals, supports, product nation, or parent organization reputation is more beneficial (De Maeyer, 2012). First, CFT was linked to the general context of individual basic leadership by describing how the match or fit between issue portrayal (e.g., the arrangement of survey content) and the critical thinking task (e.g., searching for or learning about an item) could lead to good conduct due to the formation of a reliable mental representation (Bačić & Fadlalla, 2016). CFT was evaluated in numerous areas. Sovacool et al. (2018) investigated whether the visual fit between the data representation structure (i.e., issue representation) and the shopping errand (i.e., critical thinking errand) may stimulate critical thinking. According to Chapleo, (2013) extended the original CFT model in order to study how external data and internal representations influence data recovery compatibility. These studies demonstrate that a psychological match is obtained when the issue representation and the critical thinking assignment emphasize similar content or processes, thereby promoting a credible mental image (Billiot & Rodriguez, 2012; Mesly, 2021). For customers with a high level of expertise, Liono et al., (2019)

found that quality-driven data had the greatest psychological fit and effect on the purchase plan. Advantage-driven data is especially beneficial for customers with limited knowledge.

### 2.3 | Cognitive Appraisal Theory

The cognitive appraisal theory is the basis for this investigation. According to cognitive appraisal theory, situational signals can elicit a variety of emotions. The concept describes utilization-related emotions and their influence on client behavior (Ortlieb et al., 2018). Positive word-of-mouth (WOM) behavior boosts repeat business for neighborliness' groups, which is vital for their long-term viability (Belimpasakis & Walsh, 2011). Good management experiences are crucial for customer retention (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2018). Positive administration occurrences hence increase psychological evaluation. This study expands the intellectual evaluation theory by incorporating lodge guests' social traits as components of positive emotions that contribute to the establishment of eWOM in a favorable administration setting. The results of social inspections are rage, happiness, disappointment, and pride (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2020). The intellectual fit hypothesis (CFT) may account for eWOM's apparent cognitive congruence. According to the data processing hypothesis, a limited data processor addresses an issue by diminishing critical thought (Simon, 2019). Subjective fit reduces effort by aligning the issue or task with the information representation of that issue or (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2020). So, data processing by customers is more interesting when the information is presented in their chosen subjective style (Serra-Cantallops et al., 2020). The elaboration probability show argues that rational arguments are most persuasive when the audience is motivated and prepared to comprehend them. When the audience lacks the motivation or ability to comprehend a message, indirect cues such as value signals, supports, country of manufacture, and parent business reputation are more persuasive (De Maeyer, 2012).

### 2.4 | Retail Brand Personality

In the popular article "Personality of retail store," store image is defined as "the path by which a store is portrayed in the customer's mind, more than halfway by its utilitarian aspects and insufficiently by a nature of mental traits" (Martineau, 1958). Yet, the majority of store image research focused on store functionality. So, it obtained a small piece of the aggregate and aggregate picture that customers created based on a retail store (Das, 2014) and released character-coordinated perspectives. According to Chang and Kwon, (2021) stated that the significance of a store can be better comprehended by analyzing a retail location's elicited cognition and supporting natural observations. They demonstrate that store conditions affect client emotional attributes. Similarly, Cervone and Pervin (2016) inventory measured personality qualities such as agreeability, aversion, zeal, and tiredness. Moreover, Ceccato and Tcacencu, (2018) analysed the personalities of shopkeepers and applied their findings to a Swedish clothing store's entertainment system. Independent of Aakerr's "enthusiasm" and "different-sided quality" assessments, they utilized two brand character approximations, "present day" and "wonderful," to assess the brand personalities of stores. Their study revealed that consumers can humanize retailers. Moreover, da Silveira et al. (2013) are more definitive: Shop identity is limited to psychological estimates that vary based on human traits, whereas store picture is a psychological delineation that contains all psychological estimates associated with a store (respect for cash, object confirmation, nature of association, and so on). They claim that shop personality evaluations can be distinct from brand personality evaluations generally and construct their own metric. This 5-dimensional scale explains the retailer's graph

and identifies retailers with the identity to assess retailer nature (chic, astounding, etc.), control (solid, pioneer, genuine), authenticity (resolute, credible, true blue), vitality (survive, dynamic, vivacious), and sourness (survive, dynamic, vivacious) (abrading, moderate, irritating, uproarious). While we respect their opinions over a scale for retailers, we believe that the disparity in scales for some groupings of stamped goods is not effective for education, promotion, or retail research. While a retail character scale may be more precise, one may argue that a BPS for automobiles should differ from those for clothing, etc. They illustrate that store environments influence the quality and sentiment of customers.

**2.5 | Brand Relationship Quality**

In this competitive global sector, branding strategy is anticipated to boost market share and customer loyalty (Theng So et al., 2013). Branding is one of the most effective means of fostering a strong customer-brand relationship; hence, more should be done to strengthen it and increases in repurchase, financial growth, and client retention (So et al., 2016). The quality of the customer-brand relationship is viewed as a spiritual bond (So et al., 2016). According to Giovanis and Athanasopoulou (2018), brand relationship quality is a customer-based indication of the quality and depth of the brand-customer relationship. Consumers can create dynamic relationships with businesses, similar to friendships (Hudson et al., 2015). Relationship promotion managers seek innovative client relationship-building strategies (Nguyen & Mutum, 2012). Customers and brands may share a similar relationship characteristic because brand relationships are founded on social relationships (Harrison-Walker & Neeley, 2004) and brand relationship quality is more complex than brand evaluations or behavioral goals.

Relationship promotion managers seek innovative client relationship-building strategies (Mishra et al., 2021). Since social contact defines brand relationship, quality consumer brand relationships may exist between customers and brands. According to Serra-Cantallops et al. (2020), brand relationship quality is a flexible and emotional construct with a number of relationship aspects, including emotional and socio-rationale associations (love/energy, self-association, and longing), behavioral ties (such as dependence and obligation), and constant mental feelings (believe, closeness and brand assistant quality). These elements can foster solid client–brand partnerships (Wali et al., 2016). Certain brands may value customer relations more than others. Hotels, airlines, and banks with superior customer service structures are likely to have stronger customer brand ties (Wali et al., 2016).

**2.6 | Hypotheses**

Based on literature, the following hypotheses are developed:

***H1****: There is a significant and positive impact of retail brand personality on eWOM.*

***H2****: There is significant and positive impact of Brand relationship quality on eWOM.*

***H3****: There is significant and positive impact of retail brand personality on Store patronage intention.*

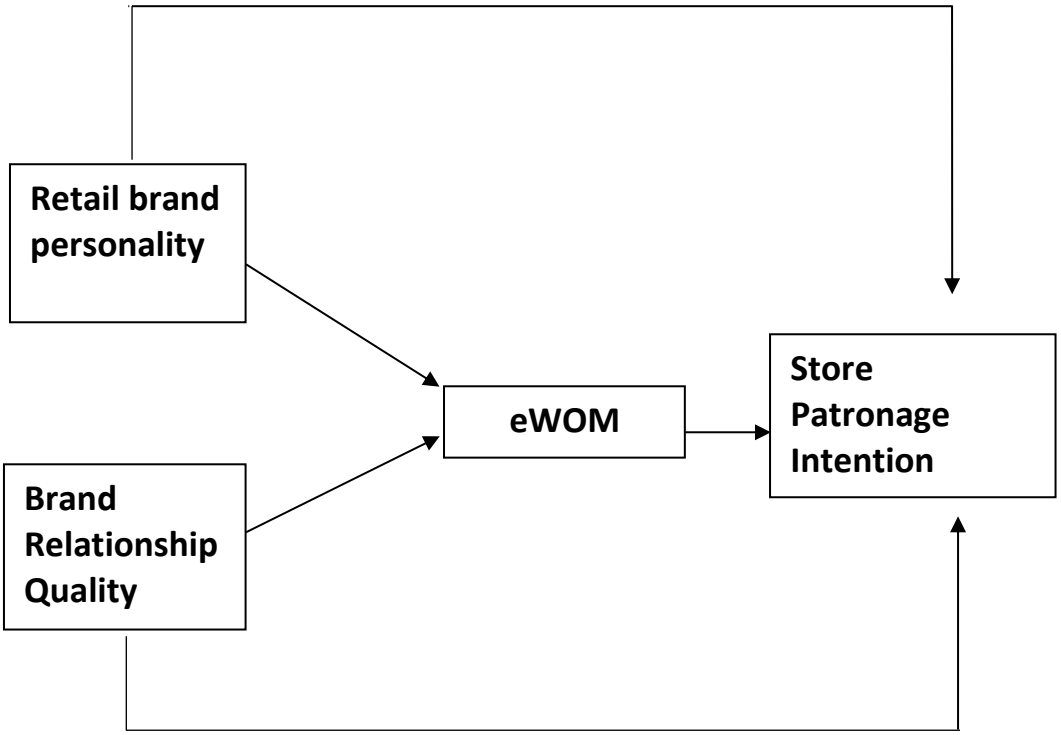
***H4****: There is a significant and positive impact of Brand relationship quality on Store patronage intention.*

***H5****: eWOM mediates the relationship between Retail brand personality and Store patronage intention.*

***H6****: eWOM mediates the relationship between Brand relationship quality and Store patronage intention.*

**Figure 1**

*Conceptual Farmwork*




## 3 | METHODOLOGY & DESIGN

### 3.1 | Research Design and Sample

In the current study the cross-sectional design was used, and convenience sampling technique was used to collect data. Young consumers of Pakistan falling in the age of 18 to 35 are taken as the population for this study. A total of 440 questionnaires were distributed to young consumers in Pakistan, of which 300 useable and complete surveys were returned. The response rate of 91% is an adequate response rate. The sample of size 300 young consumers was selected from different retail store of different cities of Pakistan. The young participants were given written and oral information about the research and make them understand that what is meant by eWOM. They were also shown some electronic words of mouth on social media which are given by some consumers in Pakistan.

### 3.2 | Data Collection Instrument

In the current study the following Five-point likert scale was used for measuring variable ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). This research identifies determinants of purchase intentions generally rather than focusing on some brand or product category.

| Variables | Scale Authors | Alpha | No. of items |
|---|---|---|---|
| Retail Brand Personality | Das et al., (2013) | .826 | 26 |
| Brand Relationship Quality | (Kim et al., 2005) | .800 | 18 |
| Electronic words of mouth | (Bambauer-Sachse & Mangold, 2011) | .612 | 6 |
| Store patronage Intension | (Dodds, 2002) | .644 | 3 |

### 3.3 | Data Analysis Techniques

In the current study the collected data was analyzed by using Amos: The Descriptive statistics, Factor Analysis, Regression analysis and Causal step approach for mediation was applied to the data.

## 4 | RESULTS and ANALYSIS

**Table 1**

*Socio-demographic characteristics of the participants (N= 300)*

| Variable | | F (%) |
|---|---|---|
| ***Gender*** | | |
| | Male | 220 (74.0) |
| | Female | 80 (26.0) |
| ***Marital Status*** | | |
| | Single | 242 (80.7) |
| | Married | 58 (19.3) |
| ***Education of respondents*** | | |
| | Intermediate | 33 (11.0) |
| | Graduation | 89 (29.7) |
| | Master | 54 (18.0) |
| | M.Phil | 113 (37.7) |
| | PhD | 11 (3.7) |
| ***income of respondents*** | | |
| | <=8000 | 48(16.0) |
| | >8000 &<=28000 | 88(29.3) |
| | >28000 &<=38000 | 93(31.0) |
| | >38000 &<=48000 | 26(8.7) |
| | >48000 | 7(2.3) |
| | 60,000 | 7(2.3) |
| | **70,000** | 31(10.3) |
| **No. visit to a retail store in a month** | | |
| | < 2 times | 117(39.0) |
| | >= 2 but less than 4 times | 67(22.3) |
| | >= 4 but less than 6 times | 52(17.3) |
| | >= 6 times | 64(21.3) |

Table 1 depicts that majority of the participants were male (74%) and (26%) were female. According to the table presented above, only 19.3% of the 300 participants were married, while 80.7% were unmarried; demonstrates that our sample is representative of 'young' Pakistani consumers. Moreover, table 1 shows that most of the young customers, i.e., 37% have M.Phil. level education. Because mostly young consumers who

visit retail store are mostly high education, so this well represents the sample. The majority of the participants (31%) have the monthly family income range 28000PKR to 38000PKR. Similarly, 39% participants revealed that they visited the retail store twice in a month.

**Table 2**

*Correlation among RBP, BRQ, eWOM and SPI*

| | R_B_P | B_R_Q | E_W_M | S_P_I |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Retail Brand Personality** | 1 | | | |
| **Brand Relationship Quality** | .482** | 1 | | |
| **Electronic Word of Mouth** | .309** | .407** | 1 | |
| **Store Patronage Intention** | .271** | .358** | .292** | 1 |

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

The basic purpose of correlation is to discover the relationship among desired variables in table 2. The correlations esteem ranges from - 1 to O and O to +1. The correlation value of - 1 determines that the factors have culminate negative relationship while +1 demonstrates an ideal positive relationship among variables. Zero esteem demonstrates that there is zero relationship or no relation among factors. In table the Correlation investigation is given among the other hand +1 shows a full perfect positive relation among variables. The zero value indicates that there is zero relationship or no relation among variables. In table the Correlation analysis is given among retail brand personality, brand relationship quality, electronic words of mouth and Store patronage intension and is clear that ach variable have a fine positive relationship as their value falls between 0 to +1, that fulfill one statement of regression analysis.

**Table 3**

*Regression analysis retail brand personality and brand relationship quality on electronic word of mouth*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 1.295*** | .307 | | 4.212 | .000 |
| | Retail Brand Personality | .211* | .086 | .147 | 2.455 | .015 |
| | Brand Relationship Quality | .424*** | .076 | .336 | 5.606 | .000 |

*Dependent Variable: Electronic Word-of-Mouth, ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05*

We checked the impact of retail brand personality and brand relationship quality on electronic word of mouth which shows in Table 3, and we found a significant positive influence of retail brand personality

(b=.211*, t=2.455, p<.05) and brand relationship quality (b=.424***, t=5.606, p<.001) on electronic word of mouth.

**Table 4**

*Regression analysis retail brand personality and brand relationship quality and electronic word of mouth on store patronage intention*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.173*** | .256 | | 8.848 | .000 |
| | Retail Brand Personality | .120** | .070 | .105 | 1.715 | .007 |
| | Brand Relationship Quality | .249*** | .064 | .247 | 3.869 | .000 |
| | Electronic Word of Mouth | .126** | .047 | .157 | 2.674 | .008 |

*Dependent Variable: Store patronage intention; ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05*

Further, we checked the impact of retail brand personality, brand relationship quality and electronic word of mouth on store patronage intentions. Table 4 shows the values, which reveals the positive significant impact of retail branch personality (b=.120**, t=1.715, p<.01) brand relationship quality (b=.249***, t=3.869, p<.001) and electronic word of mouth (b=.126**, t=2.674, p<.01) on store patronage intention.

**Table 5**

*Regression Analysis of eWOM as a Mediator between, retail brand personality and store patronage intension*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.819*** | .241 | | 11.701 | .000 |
| | Retail Brand Personality | .309*** | .064 | .271 | 4.836 | .000 |
| | (Constant) | 2.460*** | .251 | | 9.785 | .000 |
| | Retail Brand Personality | .228*** | .066 | .199 | 3.470 | .001 |
| | Electronic Word of Mouth | .183*** | .046 | .230 | 4.008 | .000 |

*Dependent Variable: Store patronage intention; ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05*

In table 5, Electronic words of mouth is playing the mediating role between retail brand personality and store patronage intention. Where we first check the impact of retail brand personality on store patronage intention and we found a positive significant impact (b=.309***, t=4.836, p<.001). In second phase we test the impact of retail brand personality (b=.228***, t=3.470, p<.001) along with electronic word of mouth

(b=.183***, t=4.008, p<.001) on store patronage intention and we again found a positive significant impact. We also found that when we add electronic word of mouth with retail brand personality, the effect value of retail brand personality decreases from .309*** to .228*** which shows the partial mediation of electronic word of mouth.

**Table 6**

*Regression Analysis of eWOM as a Mediator between, Brand relationship quality and Store Patronage Intension*

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | t | Sig. |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | B | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| | (Constant) | 2.668*** | .200 | | 13.346 | .000 |
| | Brand Relationship Quality | .361*** | .055 | .358 | 6.604 | .000 |
| 1 | (Constant) | 2.424*** | .214 | | 11.348 | .000 |
| | Brand Relationship Quality | .289*** | .059 | .287 | 4.894 | .000 |
| | Electronic Word of Mouth | .139** | .047 | .175 | 2.981 | .003 |

*Dependent Variable: Store patronage intention; ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05*

In table 6, electronic words of mouth is playing the mediating role between brand relationship quality and store patronage intention. Where we first check the impact of brand relationship quality on store patronage intention and we found a positive significant impact (b=.361***, t=6.604, p<.001). In second phase we test the impact of brand relationship quality (b=.289***, t=4.894, p<.001) along with electronic word of mouth (b=.139**, t=2.981, p<.01) on store patronage intention and we again found a positive significant impact. We also found that when we add electronic word of mouth with brand relationship quality, the effect value of retail brand personality decreases from .361*** to .139** which shows the partial mediation of electronic word of mouth.

## 5 | DISCUSSION

In the present study, retail brand personality and brand relationship quality have a keen impact on eWOM. This suggests that when a customer has a rich relationship with a retail brand, he or she will spread positive electronic word of mouth about the product, and the customer is influenced by those words too. Similarly, retail brand personality also has a positive relationship with eWOM. Mostly young consumers are influenced by the eWOM about a specific retail brand. These results are contradictory to the previous research conducted by Babić Rosario et al. (2019). The hypothesis of "eWOM" was accepted, which means that consumers who read reviews and experiences of other customers will have a positive attitude towards retail brands and will have intentions to buy from those stores. This is true in the Pakistani context as the sampled population is

young. And due to the enhancement of technology and the high attention of consumers towards electronic media, consumers now read and accept the reviews of other customers. These findings are supported by the findings of past research (Bueno & Gallego, 2021). It was concluded from the results that eWOM has a positive effect on brand relationship quality and will likely build a strong relationship with brands that have a positive image in consumers' minds. The consumers who have a positive relationship with a brand have high affection, high confidence, and generate positive eWOM about that brand and retail store (Ceccato & Tcacencu, 2018). The hypothesis of brand relationship quality and retail brand personality with electronic words of mouth was accepted, which reveals that Pakistani young consumers tend to spread positive words about the store they like and have a loyal relationship. The availability of eWOM about the store gives consumers who visit the store for the first time an opportunity. Sharing their ideas and experiences helps other consumers. These findings are supported by the research conducted by (Das, 2014).

The results of this study supported the hypothesis that retail brand personality has a positive impact on store patronage intention. A number of previous studies have found a link between retail brand personality and consumer behavior (Duffett, 2017). In the past, this store patronage concept was not linked with the retail brand personality. This research recommends that store patronage (which refers to the quantity of stores that buyers patronize) is an imperative part of shopper patronage behavior, which portrays buyers' general patronage view and is nearly connected with the potential for consumer affection (Goh et al., 2017). This study found a retail brand's personality tends to create a strong store patronage view in customers' minds. Materialistic consumers patronize those stores that have a strong and positive image in their minds. These findings are supported by previous studies in that there is a positive attraction between retail brand personality and store patronage intention. Previous research shows that the probability that customers will purchase at a given store increases the positive perception of that store (Kim et al., 2021). Because retailer personality functions as an indicator of attractiveness, as the customer's perceived status of the retailer improves, the frequency of store patronage may decrease. This is provided that the buying amount per shopping trip rises, and aggregate consumption stays constant; shopping frequency must decrease. This study has also found a positive relationship between store patronage intention and brand relationship quality. This means that customers patronize those stores that have a positive image in their minds. Customers used to spend money and time in their preferred store. The last two hypotheses were also accepted, which showed that eWOM can be a mediating variable among retail brand personality, brand relationship quality, and store patronage intention.

### 5.1 | Managerial Implications

Every research has some implication that is considered as its practical application. This research has following managerial implications:

- The results of this research may assist marketers and retail store to understand the customer’s choice and requirements.
- Since eWOM is the most positive determinant of RBP and BRQ, electronic words of mouth are supposed to be the most useful instrument for marketers and customers. This will motivate the consumer to visit the retail store.

- Marketers can use all the positive determinants of eWOM to entice customers to visit their retail store or buy their product. It can also help them to prevent the customer to build a bad experience with their store.
- The basic purpose of this study is to investigate the motivation that consumers have to comprehend their views on online consumer-reviews platforms (i.e., eWOM communication).
- The results of this study give platform operators a short explanation of how users' eWOM articulation objects work.

### 5.2 | Academic Implications

This study is an attempt to elaborate on and clarify the link between brand personality and retail brand personality with eWOM, a concept that has more practical implications for the concept of brand personality and brand-consumer relationships in Pakistan. Thus, the study findings further confirm the role of brand personality appeal in Pakistan. Finally, prior research has frequently used attitudes towards brands and store patronage as outcomes of brand personality (Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2018). This current study extends the outcome of brand personality and relationship quality by investigating their impact on both eWOM transmission and store patronage. In other words, the study findings highlight the importance of brand personality and quality relationships in enhancing both WOM transmission and store patronage. Further, there is existing literature on retail store personality, brand relationship quality, and eWOM; however, the focus is mainly on the importance of establishing a keen relationship with these store patronage factors (Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2018). Although the existence of brand personality and relationship quality is necessary for a retail store, what makes them more impactful than others is crucial for the success of retail.

## 6 | CONCLUSION

The study reveals that retail brand personality and brand connection quality not only have a direct positive association with electronic word of mouth, but also significantly influence shop patronage intentions. This is the conclusion that can be drawn from the findings of the study. The mediation effect of electronic word of mouth (e-WOM) further emphasizes the vital function that it plays in improving the impact of brand personality and relationship quality on the consumer's inclinations to visit and patronize business establishments. In light of these findings, it is recommended that retailers place a high priority on the development of a powerful and appealing brand personality and make investments in the cultivation of healthy relationships with their customers. Through this action, companies will be able to successfully leverage the power of word-of-mouth marketing (e-WOM) to create increased store traffic and patronage, which will ultimately boost their market presence and profitability.

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