The Impact of Cosmopolitanism, Global Self-identity, and Online Communities on the Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) of Green Products: An Evidence from the University Students of UAE

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Abstract
Main objective of this research was to analyze the impact of Cosmopolitanism, Global Self-identity, and Online Communities on the Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) of Green Products in the university students of UAE. A convenient sample of 127 university students was drawn for this empirical investigation. The Tool for data collection was developed from the past researches (Kautish and Sharma, 2019, and Patel, Trivedi, and Yagnik, 2020). The tool, then, was converted into Google form and the link circulated among the students of Dubai Intl Academic City. Gathered sets of data were entered into SPSS then exported to SMART PLS-4 for analysis. The Smart PLS picked 100 valid observations for further analysis. Analysis based on Structural Equation Modeling was performed through Smart PLS. Based on the study findings, it was concluded that Cosmopolitanism and Online Communities indicate a positive association with the Customer based Brand Equity of University students towards green products. Whereas Global Self Identity is indicating a relatively stronger positive association with the CBBE for green products among university students.
Keywords: Cosmopolitanism, Global Self-identity, Online Communities, Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE), Green Products, University Students of UAE

1. Introduction

Cosmopolitanism, Global Self-identity and Online Communities, are the buzz words of modern global village. Social media platforms have put people from all over the world at one platform where they can exchange ideas and share their experiences. As there are global moves for sustainability aspects, inhabitants of this planet are very much active in their efforts to protect its environment and wise consumption of the available natural resources. The younger generation is actively participating in creating this awareness in rest of the other population that belongs to middle aged or senior age groups.

As per Sage Foundation (2023) the idea of cosmopolitanism describes a social, cultural, and political process whereby people feel connections not only locally but globally too as all human beings are members of a single community. Cosmopolitanism is both prescriptive and apparitional, believing humans can and should be "world citizens" in a "universal community". Kautish and Sharma, (2018) and Xiao (2017) have operationalized Cosmopolitanism as to be interested in learning more about people who live in other countries., to enjoy being with people from other cultures to learn about their unique views and approaches.

Dictionary of IGI Global (2023) defines Online Community as a group of people interacting via communication technologies in a virtual environment rather than face to face, for social, professional, educational, or other purposes. These communities have a purpose, are supported by technology, and are guided by norms and policies.

Park and Cho (2012) operationalize online communities as to show the friendship with online community members and consider as "we" instead of "they", to be happy for online community growth and a sense of being connected to the members of the online communities, to understand it's a long-term relationship and an important source get to get updates emerging trends.

According to Psychology Today (2023), the global self-identity encompasses the totality of knowledge and understanding that we gain about ourselves being a member of this global community as we develop our personalities, aptitudes, and capabilities, intellectual and physical attributes, interests, and relationships keeping in view the global trends.

Cleveland et al. (2014) McNeill and McKay (2016) operationalized global self-identity as to be influenced by the advertising activities of foreign or global companies, to get advertising from foreign or global brands who have a strong influence on brand choices, to pay attention to the latest trends by people in all age groups from other countries. And to be identified with famous international brands from different countries across the globe.

Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) is a branding model proposed by Keller which consists of defining a brand's salience or identity, brand meaning consisting of performance and imagery, consumer response through judgements and feelings, and brand relationships (IGI Global, 2023).

Yoo et al. (2000), Aaker, (1996), Yoo et al. (2000), Yoo et al. (2000) operationalized CBBE as the brand can be easily recognized among competing brands, Brand logo can quickly recall, the brand offers very good quality and customers consider to be loyal to this brand.

1.1. Problem Statement

Keeping the earlier discussion in view, the researchers planned to analyze the impact of cosmopolitanism, global online communities, and Global Self-Identity on the Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) of green products among the university students of UAE.

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1.1. Research Objective

The main objective is to this study and analyze the impact of Cosmopolitanism, Self-identity, and Online Communities on Customer based Brand Equity (Awareness, Associations, Perceived Quality, and Brand Loyalty) of University students towards green products

1.2. Significance of Research

University students are going to be the leaders and managers of the world in five, ten, or fifteen years time. This study is an attempt to get to know the insight of the future managers regarding future development with reference to sustainability. Secondly, the researchers have gone through various researches conducted in the area of sustainability but could not find any research addressing the study variables (Cosmopolitanism, Global Self-identity, and Online Communities and the Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) of Green Products) with reference to gulf region or UAE environment. Consequently, the study is an effort to fill in the identified knowledge, contributing significantly to the body of knowledge.

2. Literature Review

This section is an attempt to study the progression of the domain in question while reviewing the related research. First, the table highlighting the progression is presented followed by the review of the research.

Table 1: Highlights of Past Literature

S.N	Year	Authors	Findings of the study
1	2015	Biswas, A. and Roy, M	The article is focused on millennials having concerns with regards to the environmental effects and global warming while making purchases. With emphasis placed on environmental knowledge translating into actions considering price fairness.
2	2015	Khare, A.	The article is focused on examining influence of past environmental attitudes, social and personal environmental norms, influence, and green self-identity on customers' green buying behaviour.
3	2015	Kumar, P. and Ghodeswar, B.M.	The article is focused on studying the factors affecting customers' green product purchase decisions.
4	2016	Yadav, R. and Pathak, G.S.	The article aims to address whether perceived environmental knowledge translates into action and the role of price fairness and environmental concern between Perceived Environmental Knowledge and Ecologically Conscious Customer Behaviour.
5	2016	Joshi, Y. and Rahman, Z.	The article is focused on determining the elements that relates to the green purchase behaviour for educated group of people.
6	2018	Jaiswal, D. and Kant, R.	The article is focused on operationalizing relating factors which are directly or indirectly involved with purchases of green products.
7	2018	Sreen, N., Purbey, S. and Sadarangani, P.	The article is focused on examining the impact of individual behaviour on green purchase intention by applying constructs from Theory of Planned Behaviour.
8	2019	Kautish, P. and Sharma, R.	The article is focused on studying the pertinent between terminal and instrumental. The effects of these value on green behaviour and attitude among young customers in emerging markets against the backdrop of a value attitude behaviour.
9	2020	Kautish, P. and Sharma, R.	The article is focused on examining functional relationship between terminal and instrumental values, environmental consciousness, and behavioural intentions for green products in light of value attitude behavioural framework.
10	2020	Patel, J.D., Trivedi, R.H. and Yagnik, A.	The article is focused on empirically examining the effect of self-identity (SI) and internal environmental locus of control (INELOC), among customers in collectivistic and individualistic culture.
11	2021	A Srivastava, N Gupta, NP Rana	This research studies the impact of customer cosmopolitanism on brand associations and towards foreign as well as domestic brands.
12	2022	Eva Yunitasari, Cesya Rizkika Parahiyanti	The research investigates the effect of customer ethnocentrism and Cosmopolitanism to Brand Preferences. It is an Insight from Generation Z in Indonesia.
13	2023	Khai Cong Dinh, Bang Nguyen-Viet & Hang Nguyet Phuong Vo.	The direct impact of green marketing tools on green brand equity characteristics and green purchasing intention was examined in this study.

2.1. Synthesis of Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The review of the above studies indicate that Customer Based Brand Equity of green products requires exposure to global initiatives and the same is shared through social media platforms hence enabling the world to transform into one global community that finally gets transformed as an ambassador of green initiatives and sustainability. Elements such as cosmopolitanism, self-identity and online communities all play a vital role in setting up such a transformational brand equity.

2.2. Hypotheses Development

H1: Cosmopolitanism has a positive impact on the CBBE of university students towards green products.

H2: Self-identity has a positive impact on the CBBE of university students towards green products.

H3: Exposure to Online Communities has a positive impact on the CBBE of university students towards green products.

3. Methodology

3.1. Theoretical Framework (three Independent Variables and one Dependent Variable)

Independent Variables

Dependent Variable

Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE)
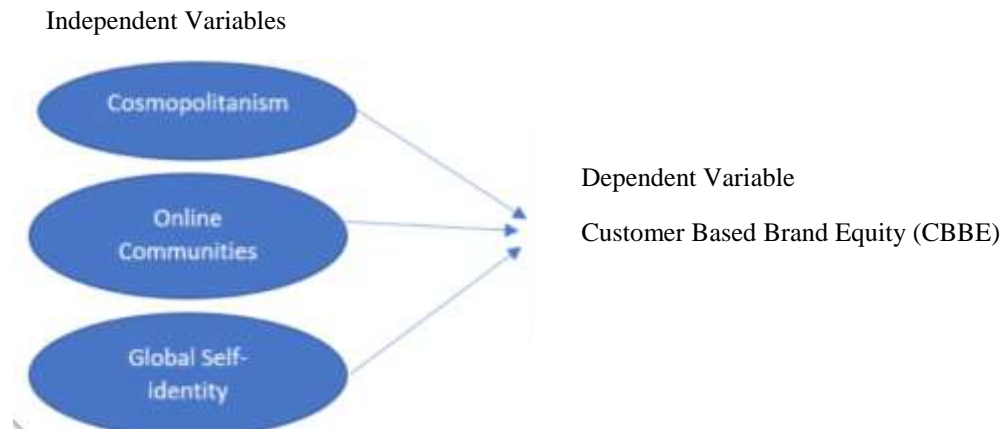
A sample of 127 university students was drawn through convenience sampling. The Tool for data collection was developed from the past researches (Kautish and Sharma, 2019, and Patel, Trivedi, and Yagnik, 2020). The tool was converted into Google form and the link circulated among the students of Dubai Intl Academic City.

Sets of data were entered into SPSS then exported to SMART PLS-4 for analysis. The Smart PLS picked 100 valid observations for further analysis.

Analysis based on Structural Equation Modeling was performed through Smart PLS. Data reliability analysis and results of hypothesis testing results follow:

3.2. Data Analysis

Slightly more than half (53%) of the respondents were female, and rest (47%) were male.

Almost half of the respondents (49%) were in the age group of 26 to 45.

Less than half (41%) were from management sciences and rest of them were from engineering (22%), Media sciences (12%) medicine and social sciences (25%).

3.3. Hypotheses Testing

The main object to this study is to analyze the impact of Cosmopolitanism, Self-identity and Online Communities on the CBBE of university students towards green products. In order to test the research model, PLS Structural Equation modeling was applied. Also known as PLS route modeling, based on the nature of the current research investigation.

"The use of statistical techniques that simultaneously analyze the connection between numerous variables" is what multivariate analysis entails (Starstedt et al., 2017). The researchers chose to test the hypotheses created for this study using the variance-based structural equation modeling approach, especially partial least square structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM),

Indicator loadings, average variance extracted (AVE), composite reliability (CR), Cronbach Alpha are all metrics of internal reliability that Risher et al. (2019) recommended evaluating for the measurement model. Our study aimed to test following hypotheses:

H1: Cosmopolitanism has a positive impact on the CBBE of university students towards green products.

H2: Self-identity has a positive impact on the CBBE of university students towards green products.

H3: Exposure to Online Communities has a positive impact on the CBBE of university students towards green products.

A Smart PLS model for the measurement model is created, and it offers factor/item loadings that show if each item is important for describing the construct. To confirm that the scales being used to track answers are adequate, construct reliability, discriminant validity and average variance retrieved were conducted.

3.4. Data Reliability Analysis through Smart PLS

|	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
CBBE	0.933	0.937	0.944	0.651
Cosmopolitanism	0.862	0.882	0.906	0.707
Global Self-Identity	0.807	0.822	0.873	0.634
Online Communities	0.886	0.896	0.917	0.691

The above table indicates that Cronbach's Alpha reliability has been higher than 0.60 for all the variables. Composite Reliability Analysis is another way to measure the internal consistency of items. It is recommended that the reliability of a construct is at least 0.70. High composite reliability is a very good indication that all items constantly measure the same construct. From the results above, all the composite reliability figures for the constructs ranges from 0.896 to 0.937, which exceeds 0.70. A clear indication that all the items consistently measure their corresponding construct.

Rho_c is also a composite reliability indicator computed on loadings. Average Variance Extracted (AVE) is a measure to assess convergent validity; Internal consistency reliability is "Satisfactory to Good" when the composite reliability (CR) is 0.70, and "Good to Excellent" when the CR is 0.80 or above. Extremely desirable, whereas values above 0.95 are viewed with caution since they can mean that the data has been corrected.

The figures have been above 0.60 indicating the internal consistency of the data collected for testing of the above hypotheses.

Figure 1 's reflecting PLS-SEM model demonstrates this link.

In a structural model, effort is there to analyze the impact of Cosmopolitanism, Self-identity and Online Communities on the CBBE of university students towards green products. Furthermore, Hypothesis testing figures are discussed below.
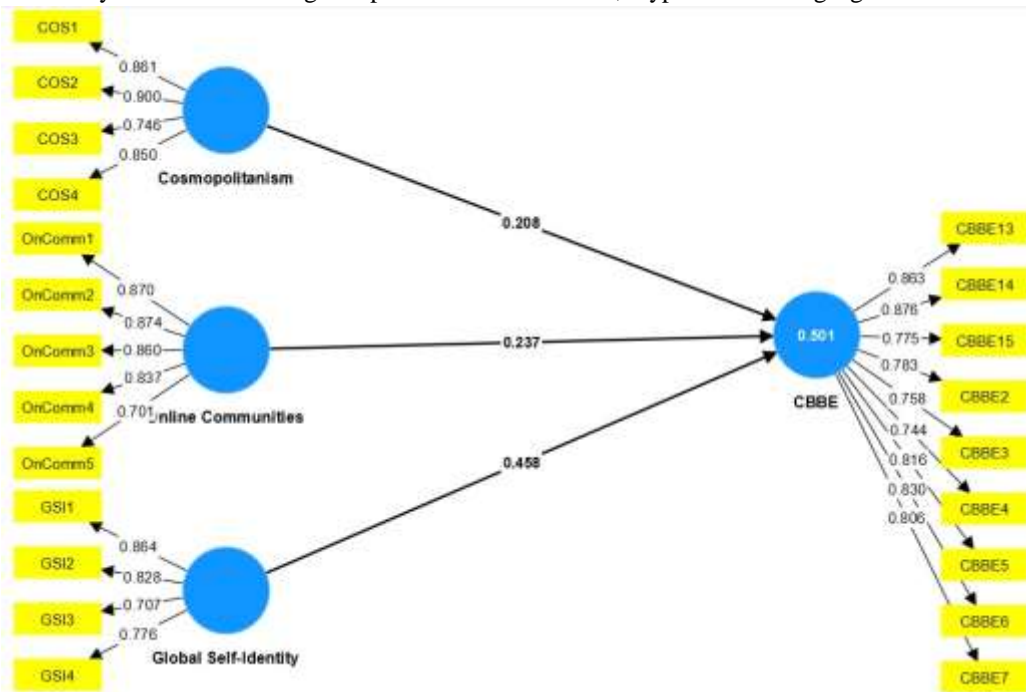
Figure 1: Reflective-reflective PLS-SEM model with indicator outer-loadings

As shown in figure 1, all the indicator item-loadings are above the threshold of 0.60 suggested by Hair et al. (2019) that is an indication of reliability. Examination of PLS-SEM estimates enable the researcher to evaluate the reliability and validity of the construct measures. Specifically, multivariate measurement involves using several variables (i.e., multi-items) to measure a construct.

The analysis in figure 2 indicates that that the p value in all the hypotheses has been less than level of significance that is 0.500 indicating that Cosmopolitanism, Self-identity and Online Communities have positive impact on the CBBE of university students towards green products. Figure 3 is showing even clearer picture of the model and the association among various variables. Out of Cosmopolitan and Online Communities, Global Self Identity is indicating a strong positive association with the CBBE of university students for green products.
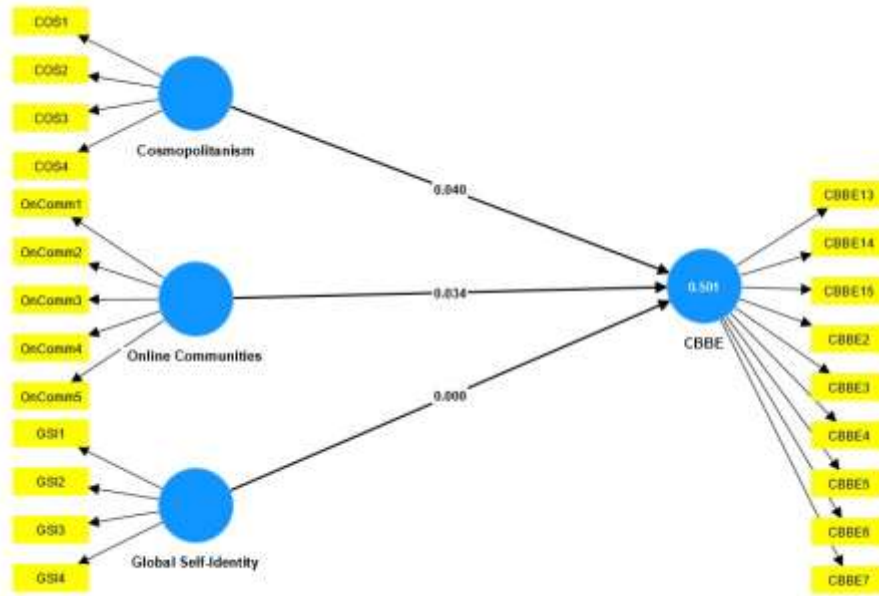
Figure 2: illustrates Reflective-Reflective PLS-SEM Model being tested.
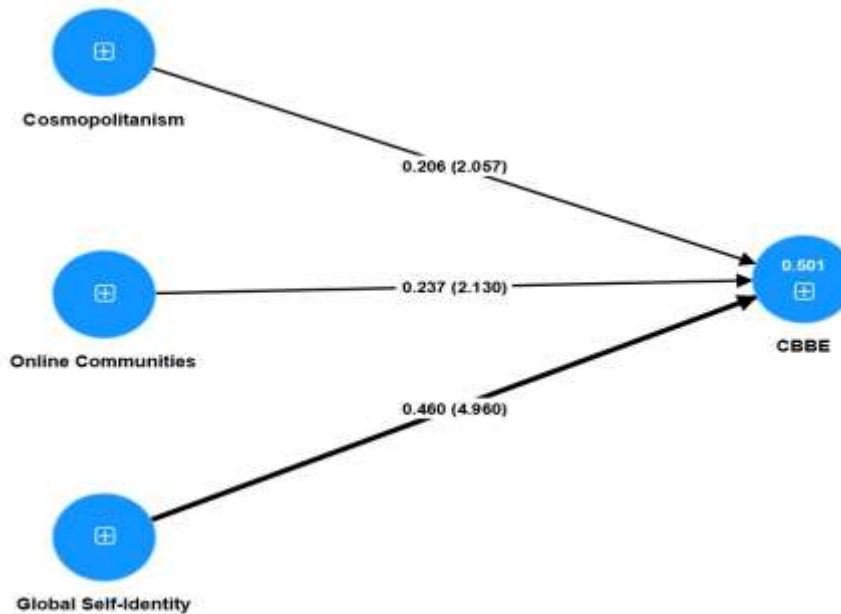

Figure 3 Hypothesis Testing

Positive Beta values 0.4060, 0.237 and 0.206 indicate a positive association between independent variables and the dependent variable. The t value has been 4.96, 2.13 and 2.05. Higher Beta and T values of Global Self Identity indicate the strength of its positive association with the CCBE of university students for green product

The main reason for the stronger positive association between Global Self Identity and CBBE of University Students appears to be mainly due to promotional initiatives by the global brands about their eco-friendly practices. The logic behind the strong and positive association between the Global Self-Identity and CBBE for Green Products among university students is below. For Global self-identity, majority of the participants were neutral towards the attitude regarding customer-based brand equity as compared to the remaining dependent variables such as online communities and cosmopolitanism. Hence, the Beta and T values for global self-identity is the highest as compared to any factor, meaning that the university students are more inclined towards having a global self-identity as compared to any other factor. This can be seen in the figures presented above and can also be validated from the fact that everyone nowadays is striving to have their own identity online.

4. Conclusion

Based on the study findings, it was concluded that Cosmopolitanism and Online Communities indicate a positive association with the Customer based Brand Equity of University students towards green products. Whereas Global Self Identity is indicating a relatively stronger positive association with the CBBE for green products among university students.

4.1. Recommendations for the Authorities

Based on the conclusions it was recommended that university students to be involved for the launch of sustainability programs through promotion messages designed targeting youth of the planet global. Because the future managers / professionals and entrepreneurs need to get fully convinced and equipped with the utility of such green and sustainable initiatives now while promoting such messages from global platforms and while using global approaches.

4.2. Recommendations for the Future Researchers

Another study may be designed to analyze the same variables in South Asian and African countries to get to know the reality and then necessary measures may be a recommended to the respective authorities. Another study may be designed with a larger sample size. Addressing the same variables including university students from all the seven Emirates of UAE.

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