

EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF GREEN MARKETING PRACTICES ON GREEN BRAND RESONANCE AND REPURCHASE BEHAVIOUR

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ABSTRACT

The main aim of this paper is to explore how higher level of green brand equity as green brand resonance is influenced by green marketing practices. The impact of green brand resonance on repurchase behaviour is also checked. Data is collected from 350 university students using green brands i.e Himalaya and VLCC. EFA and SEM methodology has been employed in the present study to analyse the data. Our results indicated positive significant relationship between green marketing practices and green brand resonance. Further green brand resonance significantly influence repurchase behaviour of the respondents. The study provides an important insights to the managers for improving their green brand resonance by employing strategically green marketing practices thereby improving their customer base, green brand image, competitiveness and profitability.

INTRODUCTION

Today's consumer has become green conscious where in every purchase decision requirement of green products and services becomes utmost important. Green products and services are generally associated with high quality where companies follow green concept from manufacturing to packaging, labeling, branding and promoting. The companies that follow these practices are socially responsible companies in the minds of the consumers where safeguarding of the environment is the foremost apprehension. The consumers prefer to be associated with the green brands these days which gives them a feeling of responsible citizen thus, companies are focusing on products and services with innovative techniques whereby green concept is the priority so that positive behavioural intentions can be enhanced for long term development strategy. Although the concept is not of a recent origin, but, the wave started long ago in the 1970 resulted from various environmental issues where the main concern of the companies was to increase their production, sales and customer base without having any responsible concern about the environment. With the beginning of the global concern towards the harmful impact on the environment, sustainable development with green concept and social responsibility was being given importance by most of the global companies with a competitive challenge of technological developments and innovative methods. But today the companies are overcoming these challenges with green brands having innovative concept to attract the green conscious consumers. Hence, now a day consumers always prefer the brand associated with green marketing concept which gives them a feeling of being attached, engaged, a community and thus they repeatedly purchases those brands. In this way, green marketing creates higher equity

for the brands i.e. brand resonance which is the perception of high image and quality brands among the consumers that they do not switch. Most of the literature on green marketing covers the brand equity concept and focuses on behavioural aspect but lacks the consequences like brand resonance imparting green concept. In the present study we proposed green brand resonance associated with brand resonance concept which is explained by green loyalty, green attachment, green engagement and green community. The main aim of the present study is to explore how green marketing is related to green brand resonance and repurchase behaviour. Also the study presents various stratagems for the managers to improve the repurchase behaviour of the consumers by incorporating the concept of green marketing.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Green Marketing

With the first of its kind a workshop organised by American Marketing Association (AMA) in 1975 in Austin, Texas, on 'Ecological Marketing', the idea of green marketing came into forefront of the marketing world. (Prothero, 1990 and Vandermerwe and Oliff, 1990). With the pioneering work of Jacquelen Ottman (1998) and Ken Peattie (1990) in the form of a book entitled 'Green Marketing' they divided the emergence of the concept into three phases. First phase focused on finding and providing solution to environmental problems and termed as ecological green marketing. In the second phase i.e. environmental green marketing, the focus was on providing innovative products and services to the consumers with solution for pollution and waste products and in the third phase, sustainable green marketing, sustainable practices focusing consumer behaviour, has been given more importance by the companies (Laheri, Dangi and Vohra, 2014). Because of growing concern about the green products among the consumers, this phenomenon has now become a matter of great concern among the companies (Worcester, 1993). Many research studies have also suggested modifying the products or services according to the needs of the green conscious consumers in terms of production process, packaging and marketing mix practices (Polonsky and Jay, 1994). Moreover, various case studies of successful business houses have also been conducted and cited in the literature that found that how green conversion towards green business made them giant in the consumer market (Menon and Menon, 1997). Literature also found that how environmentally conscious consumers respond to different features of the products promoted through green advertisements where focus was on recycle of the waste products, non hazardous contents and environment friendly products or services (Schuhwerk and Hagijs, 1995; Kilbourne, 1998; Ottman, 1998). Various developmental models were also presented with innovative product designs, green packaging and ideas that gained the attention of the consumers, companies and governments (Chen, 2001; Jain and Kaur, 2004; Rokka and Uusitalo, 2008). With this notion providing environmental friendly products and services to the consumers became a social responsibility with strategic practices of the individual and organizational factors of the companies which help them to make favourable social identity green brand equity, green satisfaction and green trust (Siegel, 2009; Dono, Webb and Richardson, 2010; Chen, 2010). Hence, consumers are always satisfied with the products and services and willing

to pay premium price for the green products which helps the companies to gain competitive edge in the market (Drozdenko, 2011; Kang, 2012; Rawat and Garga, 2012). Further, consumer behaviour towards green products is very much influenced by the promotion mix practices focusing green attributes and this behaviour differs along demographical characteristics of the consumers (Chetu and Kau, 2013 and Chahal and Mehta, 2013). Hence, environmental concern, environmental knowledge and environmental attitude were being the main components of measuring the consumer behaviour towards green marketing among the scholars (Laheri et al., 2014). Despite there is another facet of the green marketing literature highlighted a difference between actual green concern and actual green purchase intentions among the companies and consumers respectively where concept of green products and services seem to achieve limited success (Wong et al. 1996 and Crane, 2000). Green marketing literature advocate green marketing concept from different factors or dimensions and measures it as multidimensional construct. Schuhwerk and Hagijs (1995) took green marketing as an appeal to the consumers to buy green products with green appeal advertisements and financial appeal advertisements. Kilbourne (1998) suggested that green marketing practices included mainly economic, political and technological changes or modifications in the products or services that are compatible with the green environment. Peattie and Crane (2005) viewed that by using green environment concept in their products and services, organizations are focusing more in increasing their sales, with limited approach to the consumers needs, huge initial investments with marginal improvements to products and services. Further adding to this, view Reijonen (2011) measures green marketing with three dimensions as cultural determinism, psycho-socio-demographic determinism and calculative determinism. Researchers and scholars have also conceptualized green marketing as an objective to reduce waste, innovation in the products and services which generates profitability for the organizations (Pride and Ferrell, 2008), designing, promoting, pricing and distributing environment friendly products (Singh, 2011) and eco-label, eco brand and environmental advertisements (Delafrooz et al., 2014 and Chin, Chin and Wong, 2018).

Brand Resonance

Brand resonance is the highest value attached to the products and services because of its association with the particular brand (Keller, 2009). In other words the value attached to the products and services because of the position gained by the brand associated with it. The products or services are coupled with high equity brands which have the strongest relationship with the consumers generate worth and profit for the organizations. The concept of brand resonance was proposed by Keller (2009) in terms of trust, behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, a sense of community and active engagement that the consumers feel having associated with the brand which maintains a positive relationship between the consumer and the brand (Hasan & Ali, 2015).

Green brand resonance

In the present paper we propose green brand resonance which means the high sustainable brand equity established because of the green initiatives by the products and services attached with the brand which are directed towards environmental awareness. This high green brand equity or brand resonance included green loyalty, green attachment, green engagement and green community (Martinez, 2014). Although brand loyalty has been explored and measured in several studies with various antecedents and consequences (Nagar, 2009; Tanford et al., 2012; Martinez, 2014) but loyalty in terms of green brands still needs further investigation with in green marketing context and within behavioural consequences. Generating a loyal customer base is the most important issue towards the companies these days as consumer markets are flooded with numerous alternative brands and wider choices. Moreover loyal segments always show repeat buying behaviour, are less price sensitive, generate positive word of mouth and profits for the organizations (Reichheld, 1993; Williams and Naumann, 2011). In terms of green brands loyalty refers to the commitment of the consumers to continue and repurchase the same green brand in every new purchase (Burgess and Spinks, 2014). Further green brand loyalty generates positive word of mouth and recommendations from the loyal consumers about the green brand as the consumers feel psychologically satisfied using and associating with the brands that are beneficial to the environment. Brand attachment is the extent of bond to which the consumers are emotionally attached with the brand which helps to maintain the brand relationship, brand citizenship behaviour and positive evaluations (Badrinarayan, Sau and Kim, 2016). Complementing brand attachment, green brand attachment is the emotional bond that has been maintained between the consumers and the green brand because of its environment friendly characteristics which positively influence repeat purchase intentions of the consumers. Further, brand community is a special group of the admirers of the brand which is beyond any geographical limits, having greater positive interactions and unity in favour of the brand which can strengthen and deeper brand relationship (Badrinarayan et al., 2016). Thus, green brand community is the group of admirers of the green brands having strong unity in favour of the green brand. Lastly brand engagement is the high connections with the brands resulted from high motivational set of minds resulted in the cognitive, emotional and behavioural investment in the brand (Keller, 2012). In this regard, green engagement is the highly motivational set of mind connections with the green brand that generates repurchases intentions. Each dimension engenders favourable significance for the brands by way of increased purchases or repeat purchase behaviour, affective commitment to the brands and profitability (Burgess and Spinks, 2014).

H₁ There is a significant relationship between green marketing practices and green brand resonance in terms of green loyalty, green attachment, green community and active engagement.

H₂ There is significant relationship between green brand resonance and repurchase intention.

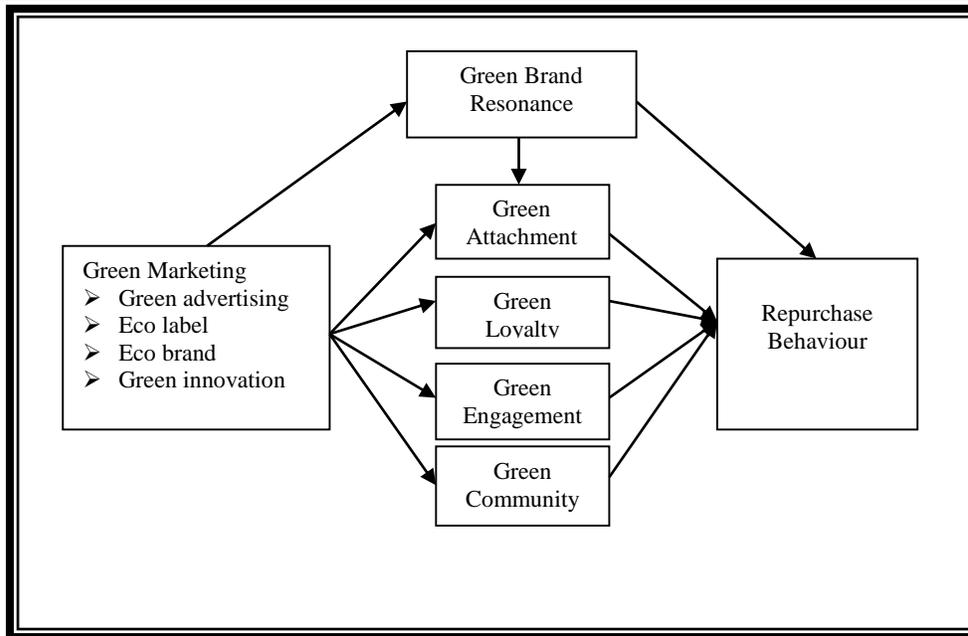


Fig.1: Hypothesised Model

METHODOLOGY

Brand Selection and Data Collection

In the present study, since our objective was to measure the green behaviour, we selected those consumers who have the experience of using green brands. We focused two cosmetic brands: Himalaya and VLCC as these brands are available in diverse product ranges for both men and women consumers and with varied marketing practices. Further, high awareness about these brands makes them ideal for the study as found out by the focused group. Data were collected using purposive sampling technique from the PG students of Jammu University who had the high awareness and minimum experience of about one year using these brands under investigation. As the study centered around the consumers with high environmental consciousness we chose students as an ideal respondents as a significant part of the society in terms of high concern about the environment and reliable responses (Rahbar and Wahid, 2011). About 350 students agreed to participate in the survey on the pre-selected criteria. We distributed structured questionnaires based on the five point Likert scale framed on the constructs used in the study with demographic information. For measuring green marketing we adopted measures from research papers i.e. environment advertising which measures the attitude towards green advertising, eco label for recognizing products that are environment friendly eco branding which measures activities for building green image and green innovation (Hassan and Ali, 2015, Chin et al., 2018). For measuring brand resonance we used the measures like loyalty, commitment, attachment and community from Badrinarayanan et al. (2016) and modified the items for measuring green brand resonance. Lastly for measuring repurchase behaviour we adopted Ohanion (1991) scale. The data so collected were measured using EFA SPSS 17.0 software and SEM technique in AMOS 17.0 software. Before this, normality of the data has also been checked using outliers method in SPSS 17.0 software. Reliability and validity is checked using, cronbach alpha, composite reliability, factor loading, average variance explained and discriminant validity.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

Exploratory Factor Analysis with principle component analysis and varimax rotation method was used to purify the scale and reduced the large data into factors having adequate number of explainable variables. Eigen value greater than one and KMO, communality & factor loading values greater than 0.50 were the criteria for factor solution (Hair et al., 2010). We employed the process of EFA construct wise and the result has been presented in table 1. Significant KMO values and Eigen values indicate that the sample is adequate for further analysis. After EFA, the dimensionality of the factorial structure so emerged has been checked through measurement models in Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA). The results has been given in table 2 which confirmed that the variables in the measurement models explains the constructs well as shown by various indices like chi-square (<5), RMR(<0.08), RMSEA(>0.90), CFI (>0.90) and GFI (>0.90). Further the data is also reliable and valid indicated by average varianc explained (AVE), composite reliability (CR) and Alpha values (Table 3). After this, we checked our hypotheses using path model in AMOS 17.0. Path model Fig. 2 shows the results of hypotheses. Green marketing has a significant impact on green loyalty ($\beta-.63$), green attachment ($\beta-.18$), green community ($\beta-.26$), and green engagement ($\beta-.63$). Green advertisement shows the highest impact on the green loyalty and green engagement followed by green community and green attachment. Also green brand resonance has significant impact on repurchase behaviour of the consumers. Specifically, green loyalty ($\beta-.10$), green attachment ($\beta-.38$), green community ($\beta-.28$) and green engagement ($\beta-.61$) have significant impact on the repurchase behaviour of the respondents towards the green brand. Thus our hypotheses H1 and H2 are confirmed. The respondents find green advertising as the most valuable source of information for the green brands which is found to be enthusiastic, catchy and important in every day purchase decisions. Thus, they can easily recognize and recall the logo and the label of the green brand among the other non green brands which make less difficult for them to imagine the green brand whenever they talk about them. They believe that the green brand they are using is totally harmless manufactured with innovative eco friendly technology. Moreover, the company regularly guides their consumers with innovative use or recycling process of the leftover bottle or packets. Hence, respondents also have full trust that the green brand they are using has a reputation and socially responsible in terms of green environment. In this way the green brand always has been the first choice for the respondents in every purchase decision for which they are always willing to pay premium price. They do not have any switching intentions from this brand. The brand is very special to the respondents as they find the brand to be environment friendly thus they always feel excited and proud to be attached with the brand. Also with the other environment conscious respondents using the same green brands, they feel like a group having deep connection among them. Further, respondents feel proud to talk about the green brand and regularly share their suggestions and views with the company. Thus, because of high green brand resonance, they repeatedly buy this green brand.

IMPLICATIONS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Present study checked the impact of green marketing practices on green brand resonance and repurchase behaviour. It has several implications. Firstly, the study is the first of its kind that in corporate and validate the concept of green brand resonance based on the notions of brand resonance in terms of green loyalty, green attachment, green community and green engagement. Further green marketing construct is validated as four dimensional construct with environmental advertising, eco label, eco brand and green innovation. In this way the study adds to the existing green marketing literature a new concept of green brand resonance and green marketing by exploring and validating its further dimensions. The study provides several implications for the managers also. Green marketing concept must include green innovation in terms of use, technology, recycling and contents etc. which will create resonance among the conscious consumers and boost their repurchase behaviour. Also as a strategic and responsible step, green innovation helps the companies to gain competitive advantage in the market in terms of green loyalty, green attachment, green community and green engagement which in turn increase their brand worth and profitability.

The study will generate positive competitive feeling among the companies and a positive competition in the market where the main concern will be to provide such products and service brands that are qualitative, less priced and environment friendly and beneficial in real terms. Also customers will feel more satisfied, engaged and attached being a part of the green brand community which will create positive behavioural intentions.

The present study is limited to the two green brands namely Himalaya and VLCC and that too in the consumer goods category. Further research must include luxury brands and high technology brands like automobiles, OTC, refrigerators etc. Also, indirect relationship has not been checked in the present study. Further research should focus on the mediation or moderation of brand resonance in green marketing and behavioural intentions of the consumers towards green brands. In the present study, cross validation of the green brand resonance construct has not been conducted which may further factorise the construct better. Other concepts like brand experience, brand identity, customer satisfaction, word of mouth, financial performance, competitive advantage could be included in the model for better generalization of the results. The study did not consider the impact of demographical variables in the model which could broaden the views further.

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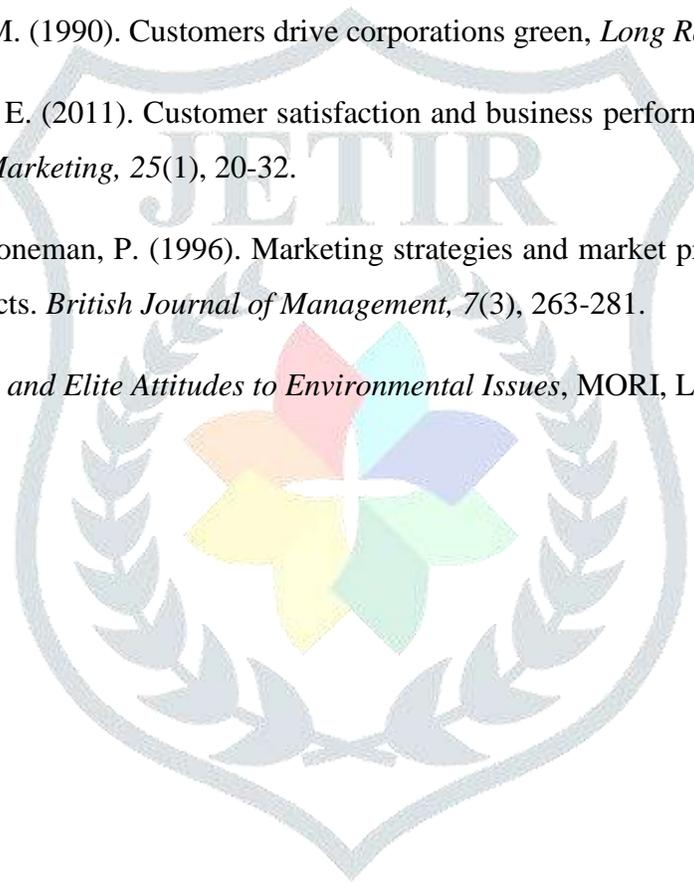
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Appendix 1

Table 1: Results of Exploratory Factor Analysis

GREEN MARKETING			
Environmental Advertising	FL	KMO	EV
Enthusiastic and catchy	0.79	0.82	2.91
Valuable source of green brands information	0.85		
Awareness about green brands in nation's economy	0.79		
Important to everyday buying habits	0.76		
Eco Label		0.80	1.88
Can quickly recall the symbol or logo of my brand	0.83		
Can recognize my brand among new brands	0.87		
Have no difficulties in imagining my brands	0.59		
Eco Brand		0.79	1.57
Awareness about eco brand	0.83		
My brand is socially responsible	0.73		
My brand is trustworthy	0.69		
My brand has a reputation for quality	0.65		
Green Innovation		0.70	2.36
Environment friendly process and technology	0.64		
Chemical free contents	0.79		
Information for reusing the bottle or packet	0.85		
BRAND RESONANCE			
Green attachment		0.68	2.49
Special brand for me	0.64		
Feel proud to use this green brand	0.80		
Always excited to buy this green brand	0.84		
Green loyalty		0.76	2.13
Willing to pay a higher price for this green brand	0.73		
Think twice to buy another non green brand	0.73		
Always recommend this green brand to others	0.66		
This brand will be first choice in my every purchase	0.94		
Do not switch to other brands.			
Green community		0.65	1.98
This is the brand used by other people who are environment conscious	0.60		
Feeling of deep connection with the others using the same green brand	0.73		
Green engagement		0.72	1.99
I always interested to talk about this green brand	0.78		
I regularly share my views with the company about this brand	0.87		
REPURCHASE BEHAVIOUR			
I repeatedly buy this green brand	0.82	0.68	2.98
I am satisfied with this green brand	0.80		
This green brand will be my first choice in every purchase decision	0.77		

*Source: Primary survey

Keywords: KMO-Kaiser Meyer Oklin, EV-Eigen values, FL-Factor Loadings

Table 2: Results of CFA

Constructs	Chi-square/df	RMR	RMSEA	GFI	CFI
Environmental Advertising	3.35	0.02	0.04	0.993	0.985
Eco label	1.40	0.04	0.02	0.995	0.997
Eco branding	2.72	0.01	0.04	0.995	0.990
Green innovation	2.36	0.03	0.06	0.995	0.996
Green Attachment	2.25	0.04	0.04	0.996	0.992
Green loyalty	1.59	0.05	0.02	0.998	0.969
Green engagement	1.43	0.02	0.02	0.996	0.999
Green community	1.51	0.06	0.01	0.995	0.999
Repurchase behaviour	3.89	0.01	0.05	0.998	0.997

Keywords: RMR-Root mean square residual, GFI-Goodness of fit index, CFI-confirmatory fit index, RMSEA-root mean square

Table 3: Reliability and Validity of Latent Constructs

construct	Alpha value	Average Variance Explained	Composite reliability
Environmental Advertising	0.76	0.63	0.89
Eco label	0.73	0.62	0.82
Eco branding	0.72	0.52	0.77
Green innovation	0.81	0.56	0.85
Green Attachment	0.82	0.69	0.85
Green loyalty	0.77	0.59	0.78
Green engagement	0.77	0.67	0.86
Green community	0.69	0.56	0.82
Repurchase behaviour	0.73	0.61	0.83

Table 4: Discriminant Validity

Constructs	GREEN MARKETING	BRAND RESONANCE	REPURCHASE BEHAVIOUR
GREEN MARKETING	0.56		
BRAND RESONANCE	0.07**	0.59	
REPURCHASE BEHAVIOUR	0.39**	0.27**	0.57

** Co-relation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), values diagonally below 1 are square of correlations

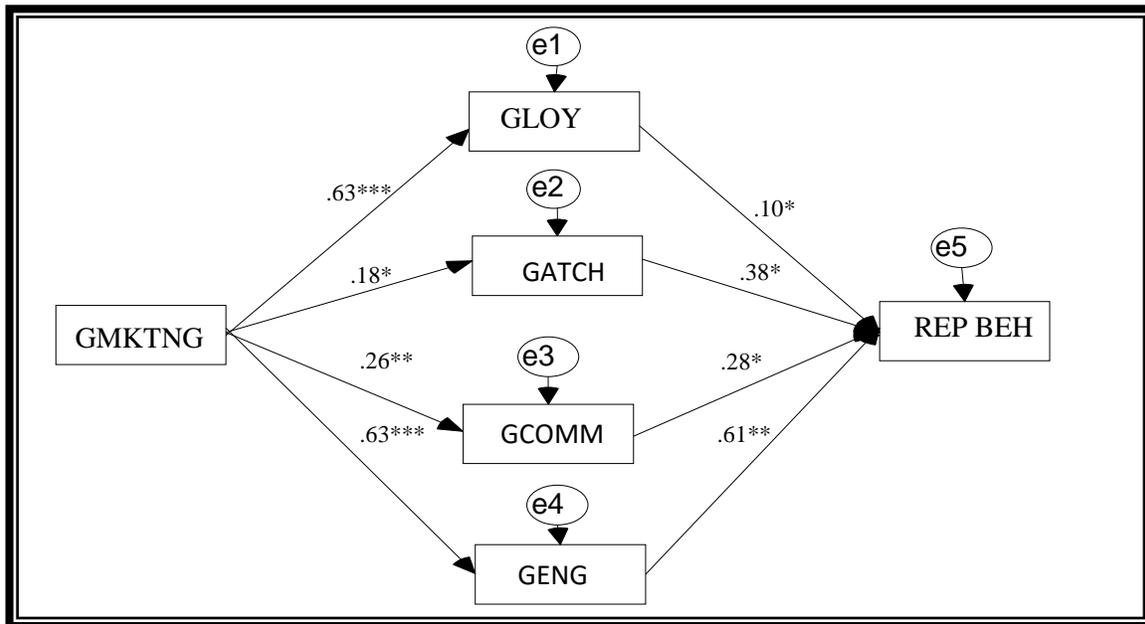


FIG.1 Path model showing hypothesized relationship

