

Globalization, Market Space and Religiosity: A study of Non-Alcoholic Perfumes

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Abstract:

In the age of hyper-capitalism, globalization has allowed the rise of the halal product industry and its consciousness worldwide. Over a period of time, the preference of a majority of Muslim consumers for non-alcoholic or halal perfumes has increased providing a substantially growing segment of consumers in the market for companies to target. Despite this emerging trend, little research has been done to understand personal dispositional factors such as the role of religiosity on consumer preferences in the perfumes industry. The present study investigates the relation between ethical self-identity (ESI) and purchase intention (PI) of consumers by analyzing the mediating role of attitude (ATT). Moreover, the moderating role of religiosity between ethical self-identity and purchase intention in the context of non-alcoholic perfumes was studied. Data was collected in 4 time lags from 220 consumers in Pakistan by using purposive sampling. The findings suggest that ethical self-identity influences the purchase intention of consumers if attitude toward non-alcoholic perfumes is positive and moderated by religiosity. Theoretical and practical implications of the study are also discussed.

Keywords: Halal cosmetics, ethical self-identity (ESI), Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), buying behavior (BH), Religiosity (REL), purchase intention (PI), non-alcoholic perfumes, Pakistan.

I. Introduction

Commercialization and commodification of social and economic goods has become core value aspects of globalized and growing integrated global political economy (Scholte, 2005). To capture larger market profits, ethical consumption has also gained significant importance in consumer studies (Papaioikonomou, Valverde & Ryan, 2012). These evolving economic trends allowed market oriented innovative thoughts to capture

Muslim markets, which pre-dominantly desire to integrate conception of 'halal' into financial procedures as well. It is because, today Muslim markets have been growing over a period of time and 2 billion global Muslims are now one of the largest segments of global consumers. Interestingly, to cater the need of Muslim Halal market, non-Muslim majority countries like Brazil with \$ 4.73 billion, India with \$ 2.11 billion and Australia with \$1.63 billion have dominating share of exporting Halal products, while China is catching up to take off and seek a substantial share in Halal market economy (Ali, 2016).

The current Muslim market is approximately 23% of the global market spending around \$2.1 trillion on halal products (Ali, 2016), which is projected to grow to 35% within the next 20 years. It is expected that by 2030, Muslim consumers will be 2.2 billion, which will be 26.4% of the expected global population (Temporal, 2011); and by 2050 Muslim population is expected to cross 2.8 billion that will further expand its market space (Ali, 2016). Halal cosmetics have a huge global market of its own with an estimated earnings of \$54,164 million by the early 2020s (Ray, 2017). The industry of Halal products in cosmetics worth \$ 20 billion and believed to be double by 2019 ("Halal Make up", 2016).

The concept of ittars (non-alcoholic traditional perfumes) and their use, among males in particular, is widely prevalent and encouraged in Muslim societies. Islam places great importance on personal hygiene, therefore, there is a big global market for halal perfumes and other halal products related to hygiene. In addition, the rise of the "green wave" has also led to non-alcoholic or halal perfumes gaining popularity amongst non-Muslims as well, as consumers are becoming more environmentally conscious ("Are halal cosmetics", 2010). These cosmetic products are examined and tested through Muslim quality standards at "Swiss-based Halal Certification Services (HCS)" ("Halal Make up", 2016). The certification is not only legitimizing the cosmetic product with halal tagging, but also halal certification respects the ethical consideration about the product purchase. This study focuses on non-alcoholic perfumes as a halal product that has gained greater popularity among consumer vis-à-vis growing market demand specifically in Muslim societies. In this study, Pakistan is chosen a case study to pilot the population of study.

The trend of buying non-alcoholic perfumes has consistently increased over a period of time. This has created opportunities for companies to cater to a growing segment of consumers and offer them a wide array of perfumes. However, little is known about the personal dispositional factors such as ethical self-identity of consumers. Thus a lack of theoretical support exists which supports the relation between ethical self-identity (ESI) and buying behavior (BH) toward non-alcoholic perfumes. The current study examined ESI as a potential determinant of attitude (ATT), as well as studied the mediating effects of ATT, Subjective Norms (SN), Religiosity (REL) and Perceived Behavioral Control (PBC) on purchase intention (PI).

This age of hyper-capitalism where the global structure of production and marketing revolves around the higher consumption of goods referred as consumerism, with a basic "ritual of consumerism is shopping" (Scholte, 2005: p. 163). At the same time, ethical consideration is equally important to address the desires of consumers. Therefore, for better understanding of ethical consumerism, the phenomena can further be categorized into societal, environmental, political, human rights violation,

environmental deprivation, animal cruelty, anti-country feelings and opinions. Ethical behavior may be either competing or contradictory as it entails a variety of concerns and conducts (Papaoikonomou, Cascon-Pereira & Ryan, 2014). Due to its competing or contradictory nature, a considerate amount of effort is needed to explain and predict purchase behaviors particularly of one of the growing industries such as non-alcoholic perfumes. Only a few studies have investigated ethical claims and concerns. Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) acts as a foundation for explaining ethical attitudes, behaviors and PI from a consumer perspective (Ajzen, 1985).

Despite the fact that ethical issues are a matter of interest in the market curiously it has been an ignored facet of consumer studies (Carrington et al., 2014). However, the evolving global norms are awakening the consumer with brand consciousness vis-à-vis more about ethical and health related issues. This study attempts to contribute to literature by examining the role of ATT as mediation between ESI and PI as little is known about the mechanics through which ESI effect PI. Moreover, religiosity as a moderator is a value addition in market research as it connects consumer's ethical self-identity and their religiosity to predict the attitude toward willingness to buy non-alcoholic perfumes. An added development is the implication of TPB, which holds significance in various studies of consumer behavior and ethical consumerism. It has also implications for companies who are involved in developing and promoting societal friendly products.

II. Literature Review

This section introduces the literature review pertinent to key concepts and hypothesizes their impact on the dependent variable, purchase intention (PI). The independent variables studied are ethical self-identity (ESI), the mediating variable investigated is attitude (ATT), subjective norms (SN) and perceived behavioral control (PBC).

ESI is a multifaceted and broad concept that refers to the perception of people about themselves as ethical beings (Papaoikonomou et al., 2012). Based on Harrison and et al.'s definition of ethical purchasers, consumers may identify themselves as ethical based on either their political, religious, spiritual, environmental, social or other motivations (Rahikainen, 2015). Research on perceived ethical obligation and self-identity has gained prominence after the work of Vitell and Muncy (2005) on consumer ethics. Previous studies found that purchases of organic food are higher in ethical consumers. Ethical consumers buy organic food due to ethical motive and environmental benefits. Thus, ESI is found to have a positive relation with purchase intentions of organic food (Papaoikonomou et al., 2014). Moreover, a positive relation was found between consumer ethical beliefs and consumer attitude (Vitell, 2015). However, researchers recommend conducting more research on studying ethical beliefs of consumers regarding organic consumption of food.

Along the same lines researchers reported that ethical consumers are eco-conscious and buy products which are environmentally and societal safe (Laroche et al., 2001; Harper and Makatouni, 2002). Likewise, the ethical motives of consumers influence the demand for organic products (Hartman and Wright, 1999; McEachern and McClean, 2002). The ethical motives of consumers help them in forming positive attitudes which result in buying societal friendly products (Shaw et al., 2000). Researchers are also of the opinion that ESI is symbolic in nature which is found to

predict ATT and intentions of customers while buying fair-trade groceries (Shaw and Shiu, 2003).

Rise, Sheeran and Hukkelberg (2010) conducted a study to examine the contribution of self-identity in predicting consumers' behavioral intentions and found that self-identity has an influence on behavior. A meta-analysis was conducted (Rise et al., 2010) to predict the role of self-identity under the light of theory of planned behavior which confirmed a strong correlation between ESI and intentions. Furthermore, they mentioned that self-identity is accounted for 9% increase in the intention through ATT, subjective norm (SN) and perceived behavioral control (PBC). Sparks and Shepherd (1992) also examined the role of green identity and found predictive and independent effect on consumer intentions. They also found that that green consumers prefer buying organic vegetables. Hence, we hypothesized that:

H1: ESI has a significant positive impact on consumers' ATT toward non-alcoholic perfumes.

ATT is characterized as favorable or unfavorable evaluation of object. Researchers found a positive influence of ATT on intentions of consumers. They also argued that ATT is a stronger predictor of intention as compared to SN (Hsieh, Rai, & Keil, 2008). Similarly, ATT has a positive impact on consumer intentions when buying green products. An individual's favorable ATT toward environment friendly products influences the intention of that person to show a desired behavior (Picazo-Vela, Chou, Melcher & Pearson, 2010). Eagly and Chaiken (1993) explained that beliefs are a cognitive component, ATT is an affective component and behavioral intention is a conative component. Due to which ATT is considered as strong predictor of intentions. Thus it has found to be one of the strongest predictor of intention. Accordingly, we hypothesized that:

H2: Consumer's ATT mediates the relationship between ESI and consumer's intention to buy non-alcoholic perfumes.

According to Islam and Chandrasekaran (2015), the influence of REL on consumer behavior is under researched. Religion plays a significant role because it influences the choices of customers and contributes in the formation of values and consumer ATT (Bailey & Sood, 1993). Moreover, most of the studies focused on Christians while followers of other major religions, such as Islam, were ignored. One of the most prevalent paradigm in REL was Allport's (1950) intrinsic and extrinsic REL (Brewczynski & MacDonald, 2006). The Extrinsic religiosity (ER) was characterized as endorsement of individuals' religious beliefs and his ATT or individuals indulging in religious acts to achieve their social status or goals (Allport and Ross, 1967).

Studies also showed that the intrinsic religiosity (IR) does not measure an individual's religiosity rather it measures the ATT towards his or her religion as a base of social support and comfort (Vitell, 2010). Arli and Tjiptono (2014) examined the relationship between ethical beliefs and REL and found that REL has significantly and positively predicted ethical beliefs. The studies which found the impact of ER were inconclusive and inconsistent while studies that found the relationship between IR and consumer ethics were consistent (Arli & Tjiptono, 2014). Thus, the study aims to find if

REL influences attitude of consumers toward non-alcoholic perfumes. It is hypothesized that:

H3: Intrinsic and external religiosity moderates the relationship between ESI and consumer ATT toward non-alcoholic products.

SN is defined as the performance or nonperformance of behavior with respect to perceived social pressure. It is the estimation of an individuals' societal norms that casts an influence in decision making. SN is predicted by the significant behaviors of others and their perceived judgment which influences the individual's behavior (Ajzen, 1991). Marquart-Pyatt and Sandra (2012) found that SN influence green buying intention. Recent researches open the horizon for further research on intention to buy green product innovations (Ertz, Karakas & Sarigöllü, 2016).

The advancing social pressure and norm to act green is strengthening the impact of SN on purchase intentions to behave in socio-friendly ways towards environment (Soyez, 2012). Allcott (2011) found that individual beliefs are a representation of SN. Kovalsky and Lusk, (2013) found that buying organic products minimizes the uncertainty of consumers to buy the socio-friendly products and leads toward a favorable purchase intention. Past literature agreed with the notion that there exists a positive correlation between determinant of PI and SN (Hsu, Chang & Yansritakul, 2016). SN acts as an important and influencing factor in encouraging the purchase or buying intention for eco-friendly or green products (Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016). Thus, the following hypothesis is formulated:

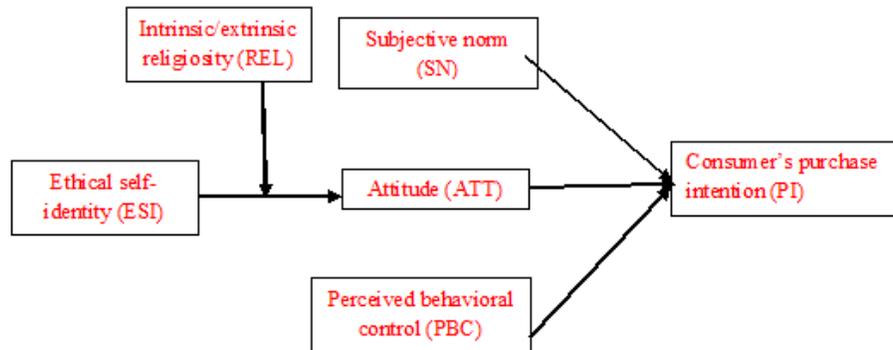
H4: SN has a significant positive influence on consumer's intention to buy non-alcoholic perfumes.

Perceived behavioral control (PBC) reflects a particular performance of a behavior possessed by individuals in terms of its perceived ease and difficulty. It occurs only if the ability and motivation to perform the behavior exists (Ajzen, 1991). It deals with the consumer's self-confidence while performing buying or purchase behaviors towards green/eco-friendly products or items. Researchers refer to perceived behavioral control with respect to environment which include processes like recycling, socio-friendly purchasing and using public transport (Xiong, Li, Ding, & Mo, 2012). It may also be comprised of consumers' pro-environmental actions leading to buying or purchase intentions (Ertz et al., 2016).

Von Meyer-Höfer et al. (2013) found a strong association between PBC and intention to act pro-environmentally. This in turn transforms environmental intention to actual behavior of consumers to buy eco-friendly products (Marquart-Pyatt, 2012). Similarly, PBC has been positively associated with the PI of green products (Lu & Gursoy, 2016). Moreover, green hotels, socio-friendly products and organic food suggests that PBC is positively correlated with buying intention, thus, creating a pollutant free economy (Maichum, Parichatnon & Peng, 2016). As such, we expected PBC to be a strong predictor of consumer intention.

H5: PBC has a significant positive influence on consumer's intention to buy non-alcoholic perfumes.

Figure 1: Research Study Model



III. Research Methodology and Variables

Research Methodology of the study is discussed in detail as follows.

A. Sample

The awareness about buying non-alcoholic perfumes is growing in the Muslim community yet researchers have ignored consumers of the growing non-alcoholic perfumes industry. This paper was conducted to fill the gap by conducting the study in a Muslim majority country, namely Pakistan. The population of the study included the literate consumers who are aware about non-alcoholic perfumes and are keen to buy them. The data was collected by using purposive sampling from consumers who were enrolled in the Masters Programs of the twin cities, Islamabad and Rawalpindi, universities, including SZABIST, CUST, Riphah International University, Air University, Bahria University, and National Defense University. 450 questionnaires were distributed and 220 were returned in which 217 were complete questionnaires with a response rate of 48%. The participants' gender bifurcation was 68% males and 32% females. The reason for the low number of female respondents was that comparatively fewer female than male enroll in a Masters' program as most of them, due to cultural constraints, get married after their bachelors' degree. More importantly, due to the socio-religious factors in a society like Pakistan, females are more reluctant to share their opinions on personal hygiene leading to most of the questionnaires distributed to the females being returned partially or not answered. Also the male respondents were more forthcoming with the answers again due to cultural and religious factors mentioned elsewhere in the study.

151 respondents hold a Master's degree as we targeted the literate class who are aware of the concept of alcoholic and non-alcoholic perfumes, the environmental impacts of these perfumes. The low number of female respondents and the requirement of surveying higher level degree holders may affect our results. Therefore, the study may yield different results as compared to those studies targeting more female respondents and excluding the requirement of higher education.

B. Procedure

The data was collected in 4 time lags to avoid methodological issues. Cole and Maxwell (2003) recommend the use of a minimum of two time lags data collection methods in moderated mediation and mediation models to predict their true functionality.

The consumers enrolled in Master level degree program were selected and tracked by the last three digits of their registration number at their respective universities. The same last three digits were also used as a code for data analysis. Time lag one started in the beginning of the semester i.e. February, 2018 when enrolment in the classes was high. Data of time lag two was collected in March 2018, which measured SN, PBC, and ATT. Additionally, the intention to buy non-alcoholic perfumes was measured in time lag three in May, 2018. Lastly, the REL was measured in time lag four in, June 2018. Each of the time lags had a one month gap and the data collection process was completed in one semester. A briefing session was conducted before each time lag to remind the participants of the purpose of the research and its connections with the previous time lags.

C. Instrumentation

The ESI was measured by using 2 item scales of Shaw and Shiu (2003) with reliability value of .716. ATT, SN norm and PBC were measured by using the tool developed by Ajzen and Madden (1986) with $\alpha = .740, .762, .897$ respectively. Intention of customers regarding non-alcoholic perfumes were measured by using tool developed by Chan and Lau (2000) with $\alpha = .926$. The scale of religiosity was adapted from Gorsuch and McPherson (1998) with $\alpha = .832$ and $\alpha = .708$ for IR and ER respectively. The five point Likert scale was used ranging from 1=strongly disagree (SD) AND 5=strongly agree (SA). The value of KMO was .893 with $p = .000$

D. Result

The results of the study bear the threshold p value which is less than .05. The results of bivariate correlations show that all variables of the study are significantly positively correlated. ESI was positively correlated with ATT ($r = .372, p < .01$). IR is positively correlated with ATT ($r = .812, p < .01$) and ER ($r = .883, p < .01$). It has also a positive and significant association with ATT. SN was positively associated with ESI ($r = .546, p < .01$) and ATT ($r = .727, p < .01$). PBC was significantly positively correlated with ESI ($r = .516, p < .01$), ATT ($r = .860, p < .01$) and SN ($r = .801, p < .01$). Purchase intention also had significant positive correlation with ESI ($r = .367, p < .01$), ATT ($r = .846, p < .01$), SN ($r = .834, p < .01$) and PBC ($r = .861, p < .01$).

The demographic variables of the study included age (in years) gender (male = 1, female = 2) and qualifications (Bachelors to PhD) were controlled. The mediator of the study was ATT which had significant positive correlations with ESI and PI. Table 1 shows the results hypothesized relationship. ESI has a significant positive impact on ATT ($p < .01$) toward non-alcoholic perfumes. 13.5% change in ATT is driven by ESI of the customers. The overall model to predict ATT was significant ($f = 33.410, p < .01$). ESI was significantly positively correlated with ATT which continued in regression equation ($\beta = .358, p < .01$).

Table 3 gives the results of multiple regressions. ATT, SN, and PBC bring 83% change in intention to buy societal friendly products ($R^2 = .831$) with overall model fitness ($F = 348.926, P < .01$). The regression equation of ATT, SN, and PBC is $\beta = .420, .370, .314$ respectively. Thus the hypothesized relation of ATT, SN and PBC is accepted.

Table 1: ESI and Attitude

ESI and Attitude					
	R^2	F	B	t	P
ESI	.135	33.410	.358	5.783	.000

The bootstrapping method of Preacher and Hayes (2008) was used which is a nonparametric method to generate estimations of direct and indirect effects. Bootstrapping method also assists to get better estimates due to its resampling approach. We have used 5000 bootstrap resamples with 95% confidence interval. The model of mediation was run for analysis.

Table 2: Attitude, subjective norm and PBC to purchase intention

Attitude, subjective norm and PBC to purchase intention					
	R^2	F	β	t	P
	.831	348.926			
Attitude			.420	6.292	.000
Subjective Norm			.370	7.670	.000
PBC			.314	4.223	.000

Table 3 shows the direct, indirect and total effects and bootstrap results of ESI on intention to buy societal friendly products with ATT as mediator.

Table 3: Effect of Attitude as Mediator (M) between the ethical self-identity and purchase intention

Effect of Attitude as Mediator (M) between the ethical self-identity and purchase intention						
	Effect of IV on M	Effect of M on DV	Direct Effect	Total effect	Bootstrap Results for indirect effect	
					LL 95% CI	UL 95% CI
Ethical Self-identity	.3021	.9891	.0593	.3581	.1869	.4149

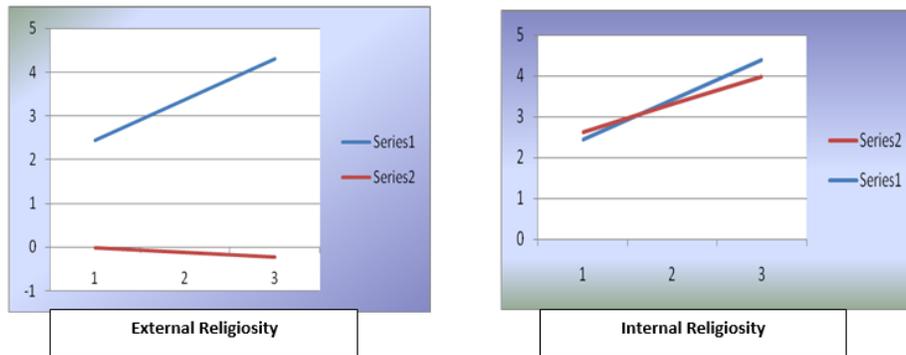
The effect of ESI on ATT is .3021 and effect of ATT on intention to buy societal friendly product is .9891 with 95% confidence interval. On the other hand, the direct effect is .0593 and the total effect is .3581 with $p > .05$. The relation between ESI and ATT falls between .1869 and .4149. Hence, the hypothesis relationship between ESI and PI from attitude is fully accepted. Preacher and Hayes's model 1 of moderation was used for analysis. ESI is independent variable, ATT is dependent and REL is moderator. All the conditions to run moderation analysis are satisfied. The interaction term is significant $p=.000$ and R square is 0.0510 with F statistics of 44.60. The graphical representation of the model is also presented which shows a positive trend that IR strengthens the relationships between ESI and consumer's attitude toward Non-alcoholic perfumes.

IV. Discussion

The results of the study yielded very interesting findings which meets the objectives of the research. The researchers hypothesized that ESI predict the consumer ATT. Results of the study confirmed that if a consumer believes that he is an ethical individual, his ATT toward willingness to buy non-alcoholic perfumes will be positive. The results are aligned with the meta-analysis of Rise et al. (2010). Rise et al. (2010)

predict the role of self-identity under the TPB, which confirmed a strong correlation between ESI and intentions. Furthermore, they mentioned that self-identity accounts for 9% increase in the intention through ATT, SN, and PBC. Whereas, in the present study, ESI brought 13% change in consumer intention. Sparks and Shepherd (1992) also examined the role of green identity and found predictive and independent effect on consumer intentions.

Figure 2: Moderating Effects of Religiosity



As per the TPB, the ATT, SN, and PBC explain the significant effect toward willingness to buy societal/environmental friendly products. Interestingly, the findings of the current study are aligned with previous results and predict a very strong significant effect on intention to buy societal/environmental friendly products. An individual's favorable ATT toward environment friendly products influences the intention of that person to show a desired behavior (Picazo-Vela, Chou, Melcher & Pearson 2010). Marquart-Pyatt and Sandra (2012) found that SN influence green buying intention. Recent researches open the horizon for further search on intention to buy green product innovations (Ertz et al. 2016).

The ESI was predicted with ATT only, as ATT is found to have strong predictor of intention to buy non-alcoholic perfumes. In previous researches, this relationship is not previously hypothesized. The strong correlation is found between ESI and ATT. The direct effect was also found to be significant. Thus this adds contribution in literature. Another contribution is made by IR and ER which is first time studied to predict consumer ATT toward non-alcoholic perfumes. Results confirmed that REL plays a significant role in enhancing the ATT of consumers toward non-alcoholic perfumes. PBC also found to have significant relationship with intention to buy non-alcoholic perfumes. Likewise, Xiong, Li, Ding and Mo (2012) studied OBC and interestingly found the same results. Ertz et al. (2016) also confirm the same findings in their study which comprised consumer's pro-environmental actions leading to buying or purchase intentions von Meyer-Höfer et al. (2013) found a strong association between PBC and intention to act pro-environmentally.

V. Conclusion

The study aimed to address a very critical knowledge gap by applying the TPB to predict ATT as mediator between ESI and consumer intentions and religiosity as moderator between ESI and attitude to buy non-alcoholic perfumes. The perfume industry regarding production of non-alcoholic perfumes for one of the growing Muslim community was highly ignored in terms of knowing consumer behavior through religiosity and ESI. Despite of numerous researches in consumer ethics, this area was still questioned. Previously, ESI was studied as background factors which was not a clear indicator of predicting the attitude of consumers. Hence, attitude was ensured as a mediator to bridge the relation between ESI and consumer intentions to buy non-alcoholic perfumes. The researchers concluded that ethical consumers positively evaluate the products and they show willingness to buy non-alcoholic perfumes. The study revealed important managerial implications for the organizations that produce non-alcoholic perfumes. While planning their advertising strategies, companies can focus on the factors which influence the decision making of the customers. Moreover, the positioning of the environmental products should be done by considering the factors of how consumers' ESI will strongly predict the buying behavior of the customers.

The present study has few limitations. First, the study's sample was composed of consumers who usually intend to buy non-alcoholic perfumes. Second, the sample size was small and number of non-alcoholic perfumes mentioned in the questionnaire was limited. For researchers, the research opens new doors to predict the buying behavior of consumers by applying the TPB. For instance, the future researchers may also study the effect of ESI on SN and PBC. Moreover, the industry specific sample may also be studied contrasting to the current study, which has collected the data from perfumes industry only. Lastly, the literacy of the customers regarding non-alcoholic perfumes may also be studied as moderating variable to predict if literacy strengthens the relationship between ATT and willingness to buy non-alcoholic perfumes.

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