

Consumer spirituality orientation in sustainable development: Role of personology

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Abstract---Consumer Spirituality is becoming a popularly practiced phenomenon in the consumption markets, requiring attention. This links to survival and how people fulfil needs and desires. Today's consumers focus on quality over quantity, choosing items that have a meaningful impact on their lives and the world around them. What consumers choose or disapprove is often judged by branders through rigorous research and feedbacks. Deciphering requires understanding personality psychology of individuals as a being's actions and reactions, sentiments, personal and social functioning can be understood in terms of a whole person. So, relation between Consumer Spirituality and personology is assessed ultimately leading to analysing the impact of personology on Consumer Spirituality Orientation in sustainable development. Regression results reveal Personology strongly impacts Consumer Spirituality Orientation in sustainable development. The implications aim to extend researching Consumer Spirituality which substantially affects consumers' buying choices.

Keywords---Consumer Spirituality, personology, consumer spirituality orientation, sustainable development.

Introduction

The mindset of a consumer is never static. It constantly modifies giving rise to countless concepts, phenomena and trends for researchers and academicians to explore. Consumer Spirituality is one such under-researched concept. It replicates the growing determination among consumers to find true meaning and purpose of survival via consumption choices (Husemann & Eckhardt, 2019). It arose

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from spirituality, which is the force within an individual (Goldsmith, 1992) beckoning him to establish a relationship with God. This gives him an opportunity to connect his inner-self with the outer world and beyond. So, spirituality circulates around the meaning and interconnectedness constructs. It directly affects lifestyle and personality of an individual. Hence, it is natural to inquire about its influence in understanding the dynamics between oneself and consumption.

Henry Murray coined the term “personology” to study an individual’s personality, which, according to him is rooted in the brain. Personology theory postulates that personality is formed by an amalgamation of inherent needs, motives, and environmental influences. Murray defined needs quite simplistically. To identify the benefits of studying ‘the psychology of personality’ or personology from consumer’s standpoint, it is vital to discern the concept of needs. According to him, if any organism acts in a particular way to achieve a particular goal, it can be said that the organism needed to achieve it (Kelland, 2010). The primary or viscerogenic needs are food, air, clothing shelter etc. whereas various psychogenic needs include achievement, affiliation, and power, affect human behaviour. Understanding personology and how it manifests in consumer behaviour can provide valuable insights into the role of personality in spiritual consumption.

Sustainability can be simply stated as the practice of using today’s resources sensibly. It provides social, environmental, resources, technological and economic framework through regulations, codes, guidelines etc (Ozii, 2022). Sustainable development acts on meeting present generation’s needs, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet theirs. It incorporates sync between dimensions such as economy, society and environment. Today’s consumer has become aware of maintaining ecological balance (Mamta & Prakash, 2025) and the value that sustainability brings in his/her life. Due to this, consumer behavior plays a critical role in attaining sustainable development goals by integrating spiritualism and personality-induced drives can augment sustainable consumption (United Nations, 2015). Based on the understanding of Consumer Spirituality in sustainable development, this study analyses the impact of Personology on Consumer Spirituality in sustainable development.

Review of Literature

The rising significance of Consumer Spirituality can be advocated by the intensifying acceptance of transcendent feelings among consumers (Dubey et al., 2023) in this post-covid world. Be it digital spaces such as online spiritual communities, sacralising brands and commodities (Santana et al., 2022), mediation of moral identity in the relationship between spirituality and good or recycling practices (Rodriguez-Rad & Ramos-Hidalgo, 2018), spiritual tourism (Pham et al., 2019) or depending on indigenous values for maintaining unity with the natural world (Tariq & Tanveer, 2025), spirituality is increasingly affecting consumer choices. Though Consumer Spirituality is an emerging field, yet, it is under-researched (Spinelli et al., 2019; Vitell et al., 2018). This is because not many studies were found on Consumer Spirituality and the researcher was compelled to scrutinize the impact of spirituality on consumers-related work.

Personality is ever-evolving based on life experiences, which needs to be considered while deciphering a person’s behaviour. Though personality psychology has dispelled the notions of theorizing and atheoretical empiricism, it has not advanced in consumer research, making it a fringe player. As per the Personology Theory, there are countless environmental needs and presses that frame the personality of an individual (Kovary, 2020). This aids to understand course of human lives by investigating their individual differences (Williamson, 2018) through psychogenic needs (Murray, 1938). They can also aid to understand the past, present and future of a person influence one’s personality (Gebbers, 2022). This theory finds its place in psychology studies (Dunbar, 2024; Walsh, 2017; Hall & Lindzey, 1957) but it has not been blended enough to comprehend Consumer Spirituality.

There are many spiritual concepts but the researcher focusses on the act of conserving nature as a duty of mankind towards God (Du, 2025; Hancock, 2019), inspiring to promote sustainability; or buying from brands selling eco-friendly or sustainable commodities (Saxena & Sharma, 2023; Al-Hadrawi et al., 2022; Charzyńska et al., 2021). As research justifies that temperaments and personality traits are strongly linked to emotional behaviour, consumer rationality is affected and he/she might consciously or sub-consciously practice spirituality while buying commodities labelled as vegan, eco-friendly, sustainable, cruelty friendly etc. Conclusively, Valor and Martínez-de-Ibarreta (2021) revitalize this notion to investigate sustainable lifestyles, which is one of the trend-setters for modern-day consumer. Extant literature highlights green consumer behaviour, eco-friendly and sustainable consumption-related proofs but lacks in multiple respects where this research contributes. First, Consumer Spirituality itself has not been explored much. Second, we present a new approach of whether and how personology can impact Consumer Spirituality Orientation in sustainable development. Based on this, following hypothesis is proposed:

H₀₄: There is no significant impact of personology on Consumer Spirituality Orientation in sustainable development.

Method

Since this is a primary data-based study, self-structured questionnaire is developed for data collection. The questionnaire was sent to five consumer behaviour experts for review and recommended changes were performed. Four cities from Uttar Pradesh, India were selected encompassing Lucknow, Agra, Kanpur and Ghaziabad. Cochran's formula was used to determine the sample size, i.e., 385 as the population is large and infinite. Purposive sampling method was used to select respondents. To test the impact of personology on Consumer Spirituality, regression analysis was conducted. Personology was taken as the independent variable. To identify whether all items representing the independent variable were included in or excluded from the regression model, all variables were entered and none removed. Proceeding further, ANOVA results justified that the regression model is overall statistically significant ($p = 0.001$), justifying that Consumer Spirituality is significantly dependent on personology, making it a significant predictor. The table given below represents the results.

Table 1: ANOVA Results

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	10.555	9	1.173	3.074	.001
Residual	148.805	390	.382		
Total	159.360	399			

NOTE: Source is primary data. Regression is significant on 0.05 level. Dependent variable is Consumer Spirituality Orientation in Sustainable Development.

The coefficients table explains the unstandardized coefficient highlighting the raw negative effect ($B = -0.284$) of the predictor on dependent variable. The estimate of regression coefficient is fairly precise ($SE = 0.062$) with a moderate negative effect of personology ($\beta = -.332$) on Consumer Spirituality orientation in sustainable development. The results increase further significance ($t = -4.571$, $p = 0.000$), explaining that the negative impact is extremely strong and the hypothesis is consequently rejected in this case. The coefficients table presents the results.

Table 2: Regression Coefficient

Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
B	Std. Error	Beta		
-.284	.062	-.332	-4.571	.000

NOTE: Source is primary data. Regression is significant on 0.05 level. Dependent variable is Consumer Spirituality Orientation in Sustainable Development.

Ultimately, an interesting insight was observed with Consumer Spirituality orientation in sustainable development's dependence was checked on personology via regression. There was a negative effect of the independent variable, arising primarily because of trying to improve self-image in front of the society and develop social bonds.

Suggestions and Conclusion

The concept of Consumer Spirituality itself is quite under-studied so the authors wanted to contribute in extant literature, realizing the rising significance of mental turmoil faced by people and the lasting effects their purchasing patterns create on environmental degradation. Today's hi-tech world of smart shopping and virtual markets, has provoked scrutinizers to take the route of novel concepts impacting consumption. The authors recognise that purposive sampling method is used in this study due to financial and time constraints. Future research can opt for rigorous approaches but by utilizing the results of this study, key stakeholders, academicians and marketers can get an opportunity to reconnoitre Consumer Spirituality from an invigorated perspective, representing it by personality traits. The role of Personology and its propensity to manipulate and impact sustainable choices on calculable terms, directly empowers seekers of consumer needs and desires. This study provides a pathway to promote Consumer Spirituality studies in behavioural research for the benefit of mankind.

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