Macrothink Institute™

Journal of Management Research
ISSN 1941-899X
2015, Vol. 7, No. 2

The Effect of Brand Personality and Brand Satisfaction on Brand Loyalty: A Conceptual Paper

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Received: August 29, 2014 Accepted: December 2, 2014 Published: February 1, 2015

doi:10.5296/jmr.v7i2.6924 URL: http://dx.doi.org/10.5296/jmr.v7i2.6924

Abstract

Brand loyalty is one of the most-cited concepts in marketing literature, and both academic and practitioners have accepted the range of benefits derived from it. Today, brand loyalty plays a vital part in strategic management. It is surely true that the loyalty to the brand is amongst the most important company's fundamental tactics in order to acquire a maintainable competitive advantage. In order to get an understanding of brand loyalty, a discussion about the development of brand loyalty has been carried out in the following sections. The first section is about the different perspective of measurement of brand loyalty because of some argument in marketing literature and then second section is concerning potential antecedent of brand loyalty. This paper suggests a conceptual model to more understand the role of brand personality and brand satisfaction in influencing attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. The model

will highlights the variable on which the brand loyalty depends and is helpful for managers and marketers for the better understanding of their market and also help them to better serve the needs and wants of their potential customers. This article is next established into specific research hypotheses for future studies.

Keywords: Attitudinal loyalty, Behavioral loyalty, Brand satisfaction, Brand personality

1. Introduction

Loyalty lies at the core of marketing knowledge. Brand loyalty is still a very ongoing research subject. Tepeci (1999) noted the importance of brand loyalty. He argued that brand loyalty would be a more profitable approach rather than other marketing activities, such as price cuts or promotional programs. The conception of loyalty stems from the literature of customer behavior (Chegini, 2010). Following to the latest development in loyalty literature, it is observed that it is a matter of concern to the companies that consumers are currently less inclined towards the loyalty as compared to the recent past (Bennett & Rundel-Thiele, 2005; Dekimpe, Steenkamp, Mellens, & Vanden Abeele, 1997; Kapferer, 2005). According to the statement of Schriver (1997), in the U.S., "loyalty cannot be presumed as it was 50 years ago". A decline in the perception of brand loyalty has been found with the reference to few most famous national brands. Howell (2004) and Dekimpe et al. (1997), few privately labeled brands have been widely recognized in the present market. Ballantyne, Warren, and Nobbs (2006) Moreover, due to tough competition and fast introduction of a variety of new goods and facilities in the industry attract consumers to gain familiarity with the details of the product of a wide-ranging choice of improved and customer's friendly substitutes and prospects. Hence, it is vital for providers and industrialists make sure that their products differ in terms of quality and other features as compared to their opponents, so as to produce an attraction and liking for their services and goods (Bennett and Rundel-Thiele, 2005).

The initial empirical conceptualizations of brand loyalty were appeared during 1940s and 1950s. In these initial notions, brand loyalty was developed as a uni-dimensional construct and was described and explained in behavioural terms like market share (Cunningham, 1956) or attitudinal terms like brand preference (Guest, 1944). The one dimensional nature of the construct was challenged and debated by Day (1976) who went further to offer a two-dimensional concept of the term which consisted of behaviour and attitude. The definition of brand loyalty, which seems to be the basis for the majority of present brand loyalty studies, was developed by Jacoby (1971) based on these information.

Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) argue that brand loyalty can be examined under different approaches like attitudinal approach, behavioural approach or the compound approach. Despite the well-recognized significance of measuring loyalty as a composite construct involving attitudinal and behavioural dimensions, few studies have addressed the two-dimensional types of loyalty (Kaur & Soch, 2013). Caceres and Paparoidamis (2007) concluded that even if many authors speak about attitudinal and behavioral measurements of loyalty the majority of measurements are attitudinal. Accordingly, Kaur and Soch (2013) suggested that in the future, researchers should consider more than one dimension of loyalty when examining the loyalty relationship. Analysing the components of brand loyalty is crucial to understanding customer reactions to marketing efforts, which differ, based on customers purchase behaviour. However, most of the researchers are not only facing problems in trying to describe loyalty, but they seem to be keen in understanding the method of development of loyalty (Chinomona, 2013; Curasi & Kennedy, 2002; Kaur & Soch, 2013). The research made so far in the field of loyalty is not able to provide a proper vision of the concept of loyalty phenomena (Bandyopadhyay & Martell, 2007). The ambiguous and

contradicting opinions have been found as a result of much of the research that exists related to loyalty (Lewis & Soureli, 2006).

Moreover, little attempts at conceptualizing loyalty and studying its antecedents are still being made (Haghkhah et al., 2013; Lam, Shankar, Erramilli, & Murthy, 2004; Rezaei & Amin, 2013; Roustasekehravani & Hamid, 2014). Generally there is not a field of theory in loyalty that is undefined. It also cannot be presumed that the methods through which loyalty are assessed in a particular situation is the same as another circumstance (Rundle-Thiele & Bennett, 2001). That is why researchers have tried to find the significant factors determining brand loyalty through various researches. Consequences, This paper proposes a model that include essential elements of brand loyalty and how they influence brand loyalty as the main achievement factors, which are brand satisfaction, and brand personality, which have an impact on the brand loyalty. The significance of this suggested model is explained as follows. First, this study will reveal the concept of brand loyalty that involves attitudinal and behavioural loyalty as well as provide more considerable knowledge for evaluating the consumers' perception of the brand. Second, the study is valuable because makes important theoretical contributions to the understanding of the association between brand satisfaction and brand personality and how this variables effect on attitudinal and behavioral brand loyalty independently it involves several limitations and these must be acknowledged.

This paper is structured into the following parts. The initial part provides the literature review. The next part, presents the proposed model and a set of research hypotheses grounded on the theories in the previous section. Lastly, is the conclusion together with the discussion on the implications of the research and future research direction.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Attitudinal and Behavioral Loyalty

Attitudinal loyalty refers to the suitable temperament towards the brand" (Bandyopadhyay & Martell, 2007). Later on, loyalty consequently evolved to include the attitudinal measurement tools. (Foxall, Goldsmith, & Brown, 1998; T. O. Jones & Sasser, 1995; Mellens, Dekimpe, & Steenkamp, 1995). It emphasizes that; feelings are responsible for attracting an individual's overall attention towards a product or services (Fournier & Yao, 1997). The dimensions of attitudinal loyalty include factors such as the willingness to repurchase, optimistic word-of-mouth, as well as commitment (Rundle-Thiele, 2005). In contrast to behavioural loyalty, attitudinal loyalty is distinct from common purchasing (Dekimpe et al., 1997). The structure of the customer's knowledge, either mental or emotional, behaves as a mediator between stimuli and responses (Zins, 2001).

Behavioural loyalty can be seen through a promising repeat buying pattern (Bandyopadhyay & Martell, 2007). Copeland (1923) initiated the first studies on loyalty with his research on sole brand loyalty where he had adopted a behavioral perspective. In the behaviorists' perspective, brand loyalty's intensity can be assessed by a particular brand's purchase (Brody & Cunningham, 1968) or the chances of purchase (Farley, 1964). Loyalty has been considered as a measurement of the behaviour of customers (Liu, 2006; Loveman, 1998) by

various researchers (Aydin & Özer, 2005; Aydin, Özer, & Arasil, 2005; Edvardsson, Johnson, Gustafsson, & Strandvik, 2000).The actual behaviour of the customer is the best way to evaluate the loyalty of customers to a product, as described by the researchers. However, many researchers have questioned the capability of utilizing behaviour as a degree of loyalty. Researchers have considered behavioural loyalty as a significant dimension, "but is not an adequate antecedent of real loyalty" (Baloglu, 2002). Conversely, the mainstream of empirical studies on the dimensionality of brand loyalty tend to agree that brand loyalty is a multi-dimension construct, but their results on the structure of brand loyalty tend to be divergent. Therefore, both the behavioural and attitudinal factors have been considered in this study. Operationalizing this combined explanation of loyalty to brand still demonstrated to be extremely challenging. Nevertheless, since this is the only fully recognized definition that acknowledges the possibility of multi brand loyalty, even if it does not make the perfect measuring instrument, it did provide a sound conceptual framework for this research.

2.2 Brand Satisfaction

Satisfaction appears when the performance of a brand meets the anticipations of the purchaser (He, Li, & Harris, 2012). The satisfied customers are, less sensitive to price movements, more loyal and more likely to involve in positive word of mouth behavior (Anderson, Fornell, & Mazvancheryl, 2004; Brady & Robertson, 2001; Matzler, Füller, Renzl, Herting, & Späth, 2008; Rezaei, 2015) The considerable conversation has been revealed in the literature regarding to the explanation and evaluation of satisfaction (Babin & Griffin, 1998; Bloemer, De Ruyter, & Peeters, 1998; Giese & Cote, 2000; M. A. Jones & Suh, 2000). It has been the field of main interest for many of the marketing managers. It is generally referred as a standard of a company's success (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele, 2004). In recent years, the concept of satisfaction has grasped attention based on the operation of its paradigm shift from transactional marketing to relationship marketing involving all activities in the business of maintaining successful relational exchanges (Ojo, 2010; Roustasekehravani & Hamid, 2014). As discussed earlier, brand satisfaction in this study refer to the overall pleasure or contentment the customer associates with the brand, fulfilling needs, wishes, and expectations (Nadeem, 2007). Consequently, one of the main components of brand loyalty is the satisfaction with the preferred brand.

2.3 Brand Personality

Brand personality has been defined as "the set of human features related to a brand" (Aaker, 1997). Aaker (1997) has defined personality in terms of characteristics instead of the other psychologists that described it on the basis of traits. The demographic features come under the term of brand personality, such as social class, gender and age and they are affected by the image of brand users, product spokesperson and personnel and are indirectly influenced by the features of the product (Levy, 1999). Consumers tend to provide more favourable product evaluation based on the fit between self-concept and brand personality (Freling & Forbes, 2005). As an example a brand of cigarette named Marlboro is generally perceived to be used by males as "macho cowboys" is the symbol of brand image created by a brand. Similarly, Mercedes cars are thought to be used in higher classes as it presents an image of

superior quality and performance. The customers generally opt for those brands, which match their personalities with that shown by the people. Thus, they create a kind of association with brands as they do with human beings (Aggarwal, 2004). Brand personality in this study defied as the set of human personality traits that correspond to the interpersonal domain of human personality and those which are relevant to describing the brand as a reciprocal partner in the consumer-brand relationship Sweeney and Brandon (2006).

Customers generally prefer those brands, which have self-concept analogy (Kotler & Keller, 2005). Plummer (2000) claimed that brand personality might be vital in understanding the choice of brand. Consumers are more inclined towards the usage of those brands and products, which matches their features of personality. Therefore, the marketing department focuses on making customers believe and recognize a brand personality, and enhancing the relation between the brand and the consumers to create an equity and brand loyalty (Govers & Schoormans, 2005).

3. Research Framework

This conceptual paper suggests the two main antecedents of brand loyalty, which is derived from the theoretical foundations of prior research in marketing literature. Brand personality as well as brand satisfaction are widely used and accepted to explain the relationship between perceptions and the use of products. The two main constructs that influence behavioural intention and loyalty toward brand. Past investigators have postulated evidence of the significant effect of brand personality on brand satisfaction. Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009) believe brand personality to have significant direct impacts on brand satisfaction and loyalty. The existence of a connection or relationship between consumer satisfaction and brand loyalty was proposed by Yi and La (2002) and Ouwersloot and Tudorica (2001) in the past. In this regard, Louis and Lombart (2010) revealed the attributes of Coca-Cola's brand personality to have notable positive effect on the degree to which consumers are satisfied with the brand. Grounded on the literature, the following hypotheses were established:

H1: There is a positive relationship between brand personality and brand satisfaction.

In specific, the study suggests a model that tests the impact of brand personality on attitudinal and behavioral loyalty. The investigations carried out by Mengxia (2007) have shown that the impact of brand personality on customers' purchasing intention, loyalty, brand preference and affection, the results showed positive signs of these elements.. After investigation Guo (2003) also found that brand personality has substantial impact on brand preference as a number of interviewees agreed on the cognition of some brand personalities in the brands they prefer.

On a more particular note; the notable positive effects of retailer personality (or the personality characteristics) on the attitude of consumers toward the retailer has been examined by Ben Sliman, Ferrandi, Merunka, and Valette-Florence (2005) and Helgeson and Supphellen (2004). Chen (1998) found out that a more unique brand personality might result in a firmer brand loyalty. In the study conducted by Merrilees and Miller (2001) they show

that the perceived sincerity of a retail brand affects store loyalty directly; they however do not observe and remark on brand loyalty's remaining four dimensions. By contrast, Zentes, Morschett, and Schramm-Klein (2008) and Lombart and Louis (2012) have shown that the brand personality of a retailer can be used to adequately explain the attitudinal loyalty of consumers to the retail brand, but it is not sufficient to explain behavior. L.-Y. Lin (2010) demonstrated that the positive relationship between brand personality and brand loyalty is not completely supported. Based on the above studies, we propose the following hypotheses.

H2: There is a positive relationship between brand personality and attitudinal brand loyalty.

H3: There is a positive relationship between brand personality and behavioural brand loyalty.

Brand loyalty is completely differentiated and separated from brand satisfaction. In satisfaction, the degree to which the expectations of consumer are met by a particular brand is evaluated and measured whereas in loyalty, the likelihood of customer's return along with the degree of the consumer's willingness to engage in partner-like activities for the services or products are assessed and measured (Bowen & Shoemaker, 1998). Although customer satisfaction has been identified as necessity and requirement for loyalty, it does not imply that satisfied customers will necessarily become loyal customers (Bowen & Shoemaker, 1998). Furthermore, despite the importance of preserving satisfied customers, loyal customers hold greater importance in comparison since a satisfied customer who does not spread positive word of mouth and has no returning intention does not possess any net present value for the firm. Thus, creating satisfied customers is not sufficient by itself since it does not ensure that they will return to buy the brand (Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000). In general, it has been suggested that higher satisfaction is identified with higher loyalty (Ball, Coelho, & Machás, 2004; Hallowell, 1996; Stauss & Neuhaus, 1997). Satisfaction plays an important role in building loyalty toward brand. As a general guideline, customer satisfaction and brand loyalty are quite nearly identified (H.-H. Lin & Wang, 2006). The significant positive influence of brand satisfaction on brand loyalty has been confirmed in several studies (Ekinci, Dawes, & Massey, 2008; Magin, Algesheimer, Huber, & Herrmann, 2003).

Based on the assertion of a number of researchers, loyalty has to be evaluated and measured by combining the behavioural and attitudinal dimensions. Based on these researches brand loyalty results from multi-dimensional cognitive attitudes toward a particular brand and the repeated purchasing behaviour. Thus the two concepts of attitude and behaviour were suggested to be mixed and combined within a single theoretical definition by Jacoby (1971). According to Baloglu (2002), the reason for customers' purchase of the brand cannot be explained by focusing only on behavior (for instance the repeated purchasing behavior) and the situational factors, familiarity and competitive effects (for instance shared loyalty or multi-brand) cannot be explained by examining attitude alone. Based on a great number of researches, satisfaction is an antecedent of brand intention and attitude (Bennett, 2001; Eddy, 1999; Oliva, Oliver, & MacMillan, 1992; Patterson & Spreng, 1997) along with attitudinal brand loyalty (Ringham, Johnson, & Morton, 1994). Customer satisfaction has been proposed as one of the factors that encourage customers to remain with a particular brand. In cases where customers feel satisfied with their chosen brand's performance, they are expected to

exhibit high attitudinal loyalty (M. A. Jones & Suh, 2000). The behavioural loyalty viewpoint is in related to repeat patronage's concept. Earlier researches have established the relationship between behavioural loyalty and satisfaction (Liang & Wang, 2004, 2007). Therefore the relationship between behavioural and attitudinal brand loyalty with satisfaction is hypothesized as followed:

H4: There is a positive relationship between brand satisfaction and attitudinal brand loyalty.

H5: There is a positive relationship between brand satisfaction and behavioral brand loyalty.

A connection between behavior and attitude has been proposed where attitude leads to behavior (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Baldinger & Rubinson, 1996; O'brien, 1971; Sheth & Venkatesan, 1968). But this relationship is not unconditional despite it have been proposed since behavior cannot predicted by attitude all the time (Kraus, 1995). Other variables including situational factors, norms and variety seeking can intervene (Ajzen, Timko, & White, 1982). Through conducting a meta-analysis study of eighty eight attitude-behavior researches it has been discovered that although behavior can significantly be predicted by attitude, the relationship is obvious in just 62% of the cases (Kraus, 1995). There are various explanations for this inconsistency in different cases one of which is the effect of uncontrollable environmental factors and situational factors (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). Attitude serves as a better predictor in cases where the attitude of customers is shaped by their direct experience with the attitude object rather than instances where they experience an indirect experience (Fazio & Zanna, 1978). In contrast Bennett, Härtel, and McColl-Kennedy (2005) believe attitudes to be predictors of behavior in business sector where critical accountability and important processes of decision-making are involved. Behavioral loyalty is one of the perceivable results of attitudinal loyalty. Although positive attitude is among the significant goals, it is not essentially in agreement with behavior thus latent loyalty can occur because of the barriers that can be created between behavior and attitude as a result of situational effects. This finding has been explained through the reasoned action theory by Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) where they noted that a particular behavior is based on a specific attitude (where specific degree of involvement is assumed) and some situational influences may take place between behavior and attitude. Although there are mixed evidences in the findings of attitude-behavior researches, behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty are expected to have a notable relationship. That is why a relationship between behavioral brand loyalty and attitudinal brand loyalty was hypothesized in this research as:

H6: There is a positive relationship between attitudinal brand loyalty and behavioral brand loyalty.

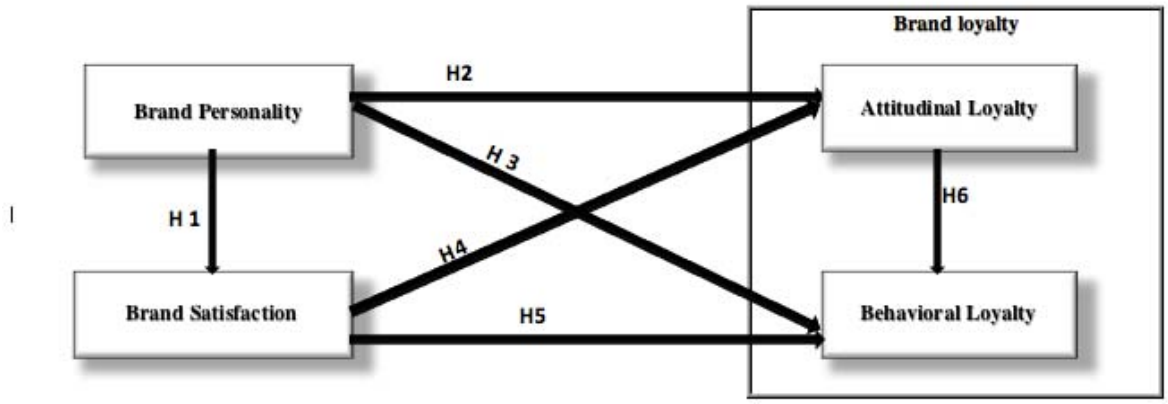

Figure 1. Research Framework

From the available literature this paper draws on the importance of integration between brand personality, brand satisfaction, attitudinal and behavioral brand loyalty, which is currently not a common practice. As discussed earlier, brand personality appears to be a key component in achieving brand loyalty. Yet, most of the researchers are not only facing problems in trying to describe loyalty, but they seem to be keen in understanding the method of development of loyalty (Chinomona, 2013; Curasi & Kennedy, 2002; Kaur & Soch, 2013; Roustasekehravani & Hamid, 2014). The proposed study direction is in line with Kaur and Soch (2013) suggested that in the future, researchers should consider more than one dimension of loyalty when examining the loyalty relationship. Analyzing the components of brand loyalty is crucial to understanding customer reactions to marketing efforts, which differ, based on customers purchase behavior.

This research is significant because makes important theoretical contributions to the understanding of the association between brand personality and brand satisfaction and how this variables effect on brand loyalty independently it involves several limitations and these must be acknowledged. This study will also reveal the relationship between concept of behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty. This study will empirically measure brand loyalty and its antecedents in mobile phone industry in Malaysia. The date will gather from Mobile phone user (aged 18 or over) who had favorite mobile phone in different shopping and public places of Kuala lumpur. The structural equation modeling will be used to analyze the data. Based on the above issues, the present study will designed to determine the effect of brand personality as an important antecedent to brand loyalty in very competitive mobile phone industry. The analysis is based on findings and theories from the consumer personality psychology and consumer behavior literature. These results provide important insights into the effects of brand personality in creating satisfaction and brand loyalty in order to have competitive advantage in today market.

4. Conclusions and Future Research

In line with the previously discussed subjects, the objective of this research is to gain an

understanding of the relationship between brand personality and its results. On a theoretical level, the research proposes a model of the outcomes of brand personality which consists of brand satisfaction that is resulted from future behavioral intentions and attitude. Past studies tended to concentrate on particular connections. According to various researchers, attaining and keeping brand loyalty is a difficult task that requires the appropriate brand personality and satisfaction. This possess different challenges for marketing experts who are assigned with improving and enhancing the brand loyalty; however, it also offers an opportunity for researchers for further investigations to gain a better understanding of the relationships. The significance of measuring attitudinal brand loyalty and behavioral brand loyalty in gaining a better understanding and developing a better measurement of brand loyalty has been emphasized in this research. The significance of brand loyalty has been observed by Tepeci (1999). He believes brand loyalty to be a more profitable approach in comparison to other marketing activities like promotional programs or price cuts. The most significant finding of this research is that it is important for marketing managers to examine the components that lead to the loyalty of their customers and then find out the constituents of their loyalty. Without this understanding, it is hard for a company to determine the specific actions that are likely to lead to the greatest loyalty improvements. This research could also be expanded to include different types of respondents and different types of brands in the market. The current study has only examined the relationship among brand personality, brand satisfaction and attitudinal and behavioral loyalty; future research should incorporate more variables of interest based on loyalty frameworks. This study did not investigate other possible extraneous factors that could affect brand satisfaction besides brand loyalty. Further research in this field would be of great help in different types of brand and industry. As mentioned in the literature review one of the biggest challenges in marketing literature is evaluating the wide range of factors directly related to attitudinal and behavioral loyalty.

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