

The Effect of Brand Equity of Mobile Phones on Customer Satisfaction: An Empirical Evidence from Pakistan

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Abstract

Due to highly competitive and brand conscious market creating there brand equity of mobile phone is a very challenging work. The study was conducted to investigate the relationship between dimensions of brand equity and customer satisfaction. The study examines that the brand equity has significant positive impact on customer satisfaction. Brand association also has significant effect on customer satisfaction. Out of all dimension it was found that brand equity has a dominant effect on customer satisfaction. It is the strongest impact which tells that development of brand equity is essential to build customer satisfaction for mobile brands. This was further analyzed with the data analysis ($\beta=0.498$) followed by the brand association ($\beta=0.200$). The researcher used a questionnaire survey to collect the data belonging to the customer perceptions. 117 people responded the researcher. This data is used as a sample size. In a dynamic business environment the marketing have shortage of time, money and manpower to implement the branding strategies to allocate resources on the important dimensions through these results and findings.

Keywords

Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty, Brand Association, Brand Awareness, Brand Equity, Customer Satisfaction, Mobile Phones

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1. Introduction

Firstly the concept of brand equity was presented in marketing literature in the 1980's. later this got the vital importance practitioners and academicians (Aaker D. A., 2005). The formation of the concept of brand equity is based on the perceptions of consumers toward a specific brand, which might have a dependence upon various factors, out of them brand can be considered as one factor for a brand to have a value it is compulsory that it must be value by consumer. The power of brand lies in what consumer have felt, heard, seen and learned about the brand over the time as the result of their experiences about the brand. (Keller K. L., 2014). One way of measure of to what extent consumers are

identified with the brand is through brand equity one of the well reputed and most popular scholars on brand equity is Day in order to get a lot of advantages and fruits of activity, most the organization are building strong brand and there are giving marketing priority to them. Today most of the conceptualization of brand equity is agreed upon the phenomena which involve the value by consumers to a product, also the perception and association of a particular brand name. (Winter, 2013) (Chaudhuri, 2010). To fully understands the concept of brand equity we need to carefully examine its sources. The contributing factor in the formation of brand equity in mind of the consumer. Normally most

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common constructs which lead to brand equity or brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand association.

Most recently Pakistan handset mobile markets have to face a challenge of market environment, in the form of most demanding consumer, and very tough competition. With the increasingly competition and the fastest growing brand in the Pakistan handset mobile market, all the operator lay a lot of emphasis on the brand establishment and the voting substantive resources to establish customer satisfaction. Resultantly, there are a lot of brand which have been establish and many customers begin to show huge preference to these brand. Our research identify the issue with the focus of Lahore region in mobile industry our study measure the brand equity of mobile industry.

Pakistan is one of the world's highest number of mobile phone market and also one of the biggest markets by number sales of smart phone. The largest brand faces tough competition chines and local brand as they are building the capability to cover the broad consumer segment to compete at larger level. So, it can be said that the brand equity plays a vital role in helping the mobile handset managers to obtain competitive advantage and make strategic decisions wisely. The study results conclusion shows a deeper understanding of a mobile phone brand equity concept and the measurement of the effect of dimensions of brand equity on overall brand equity. The study also concludes the consequence of overall brand equity which ultimately leads to customer satisfaction.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Brand Awareness and Brand Equity

Generally known brands now possible to think, and therefore, is not a known brand. The more popular the brand is, the more potential individuals would mean to buy and suggest the service and product. (Horng, Liu, Chou, & Tsai, 2011).when people are more aware of a unknown brand through their experience, first they retain then they suggest someone to purchase this brand. This makes the brand more powerful. (mason & nassivera, 2012).

The Consumers use brand on the basis of their knowledge and experience. When selecting a product they think that a most popular brand is more trustworthy than a less known brand. (macdonald & Sharp, 2000).Many experts argued that reliable advertising is absolutely changed the consumer behavior about the product. (Brackett & Carr, 2001).

The consumers' familiar about the brand through advertising in this way they get more information about the product. (Buil & Cheratory, 2013). The consumers image build about the brand when they purchase the product and on the basis of

their knowledge they get more information about the brand. (Yoo & Donthu, 2002). brand awareness is related a good thing about the brand in the perception of consumer which is very helpful to support the product in the coming year. (Kim & Kim, 2005).

2.2. Brand Association and Brand Equity

Brand association representing a base for consumers purchasing decision about the brand to purchase or not.the consumer have a lot of things in his knowledge toward the brand. (Emari & jafari, 2012). it was viewed that the relationship between the brand association and brand remembered by the consumer was highly significant and positive. In this way consumer again and again purchase and use the brand. (pouromid & Iranzadeh, 2012).

In order to purchase the product consumers have a lot of things in their knowledge. In this way they purchase the product. (Washbourm & plank, 2012). It is viewed that brand equity also included a brand association which is found by the researcher through the research. (Tong & hawley, 2014). Author believes that if a brand has association assist to support the brand and in this way brand has power to influence the consumers. (Bridges, keller, & Sood, 2000).

2.3. Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity

Brand loyalty is very important when making strategies in marketing. The loyal customers increase benefit for the organization by implement its work and also reduce cost. When consumer become loyal they do not think about price increase because the products satisfy their needs, also loyalty helps the organization to give response against treats e.g. competition Invalid source specified. Travis argues that the ultimate purpose and meaning of brand equity is brand loyalty Invalid source specified..Keller argue that customer and brand are related and also there is a relationship in between them Invalid source specified.

Brand equity signifies the degree of attachment with customer and it is linked to its use experience. Collaborated marketing system play a very important role to convince the consumer regarding brand loyalty Invalid source specified.. Consumer preference to repurchase a product has initiated repetitive to buy the same product. Similarly decisions are made to purchase the same product due to brand loyalty Invalid source specified..

In other words consumer become loyal because of well known brand to their products and brand stick, also consumer use it socially Invalid source specified. A favorable consequence of brand use creates positive brand equity that develops brand loyalty among consumer which positively creates particular feelings regarding brand preference over

others Invalid source specified. Invalid source specified.

2.4. Perceived Quality and Brand Equity

The quality which is observed or perceived by the consumer is called Perceived Quality. It affect the purchasing decision of consumer and creates value by meeting consumer needs and preferences for quality which results in customer satisfaction Invalid source specified. There is significant positive relationship is viewed between perceived quality and brand equity. The difficult work for consumers is to judge the quality. Invalid source specified. In recent article it was viewed that in the short term, higher quality perception increase the benefits for the organization because company increase profit due to premium prices and in the long run can result in business growth e.g. company can expand there their business and market share. In another recently published research it was posted that perceived quality and brand equity is directly related Invalid source specified.. Perceived quality of strong brand force people to make decision about purchasing Invalid source specified.. Perceived quality was called as a subjective assessment from consumer point of view because it depends on their observations and satisfying needs.

2.5. Brand Equity

In the beginning when the brand equity was growing, different types of models were presented by the researchers and it was defined with different perspectives. Brand equity is used in different diversified dimensions to solve the different issues in a different way. It varies from purpose to purpose (keller, Sternthal, & Tybout, Three questions you need to ask about your brand, 2002). it was initiative step by the researchers to study the subject and to discuss the core ideas of brand equity in detail it was called "value addition" of the product with reasonable conceptual work has been done on this (aaker, Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name, 1991), (aaker, Measuring brand equity across products and markets, 1996), (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000) (Srivastava, R. K., & Shocker, 2014) (kapferer & J. N, 2004) (Keller, Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity, 1993)

Moreover, there are number of methods adopted to define the meaning and contents of Brand Equity (Keller, Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring and Managing Brand Equity (2nd ed.), 2003) (Vazquez, R., Del Rio, A. B., & Iglesias, V., 2002) but the idea which was most common was further discussed (Vazquez, R., Del Rio, A. B., & Iglesias, V., 2002) (Keller, Strategic Brand Management: Building, Measuring and Managing Brand Equity (2nd ed.), 2003) (Washburn, J. H, & Plank, 2002), 2002). Operationalization studies, especially Aaker's model, were

initiated by (yoo, Donthu, N, & Lee, S, 2000). Now, The theory about Brand equity admits that the main concept revolves round the value addition of the product by the consumers' associations and the perceived concept of the customers about the specified Brand (Winters & L. C., 1991), (chaudhuri, 1995). Aaker defines it "as a combination of rights and obligations which are associated with that particular brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers" (aaker, Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the value of a brand name, 1991).

Keller defines brand equity as "the differential effect of brand knowledge (consisting of awareness and image) on consumer response to the marketing of the brand". (Keller, Conceptualizing, measuring, and managing customer-based brand equity, 1993) Rust consider brand equity to be "the customer's subjective and intangible assessment of the brand, above and beyond its objectively-perceived value" (Rust, Lemon, K. N., Zeithaml, & V. A., 2004) Yooode fine it as "the difference I n consumer choice between the focal branded product and an unbranded product given the same level of product features". (yoo, Donthu, N, & Lee, S, 2000) After these discussions of different researchers, we can say that brand equity incremental value due to brand name. Although the classic definition of brand equity refers to the value addition of the brand endowed by its name, current study on brand equity have given the broader vision to include a broad set of attributes that drive customer choice (yoo, Donthu, N, & Lee, S, 2000) (Rust, Lemon, K. N., Zeithaml, & V. A., 2004). Generally, brand equity Is explained as the effects of marketing which contribute to the brand in a unique way. Brand equity can more explained in a way that it the result of different outcomes for marketing of a product or any service because of its brand, comparing that what are the different types of results when the brand has no identification as a brand element.

According to Lassar, Mittal and Arun (Lassar, 2014), the existing results of the study define the brand equity with two different perspectives. The first one is financial and the other is customer perspective. Brand value of the organization is normally referred as the financial performance. Simon and Sullivan focused on the micro approaches and macro approaches as an estimation technique to measure the value of brand equity with reference to the other organizational resources. (Simon, Sullivan, M. W., & C. J, 1993) While, the customer perspective appraises brand equity based on the customers' perceived brand value from the anchor of marketing decision making (Kim, kim, & An, 2013). (Anna & Joseph, 2010) Brand equity is fully dependent on the two base elements, which are customer satisfaction and shareholder value. The study found that the key factors of the

Brand equity are that physical quality, staff behavior, ideal self-congruence.

3. Customer Satisfaction

Oliver said about satisfaction that it is “the summary psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding disconfirmed expectations is coupled with prior feelings about the consumer experience”. (oliver, 1999) Consumer satisfactions the key important factor behind the success of all businesses and entrepreneurs if you think in long run and a lot of study is conducted on the topic of customer satisfaction in the field of marketing. (Pappu. R, Quester, & cooksey, 2005). As we talk about the economic performance of the organization the key element is the customer satisfaction. it has a great influence on the consumer purchase intentions (Cronin & Taylor, 1992) it plays an

important role when customer repeat the purchases (LaBarbera, P. A., & Mazursky, 2014)

To gain the loyalty in heart of consumers the principal strategy is the improved customer satisfaction adopted by the Marketers, and then the customers are willing to pay and resultantly the life time value of the customer to the firm is enhanced (Hogan, Lemon, & Rust, 2002), (keller & Lehmann, Brands and branding: Research findings and future priorities, 2006). It’s the general principle that when your customers are fully satisfied they don’t care about cost and more loyal than the other customers. (Dimitriades, 2006). Customer satisfaction expresses the feeling level of someone after comparing the performance that he perceived with his expectations (Kotler, 2000). There is a significant relation between brand equity and customer satisfaction. Brands help in establishing new relations.

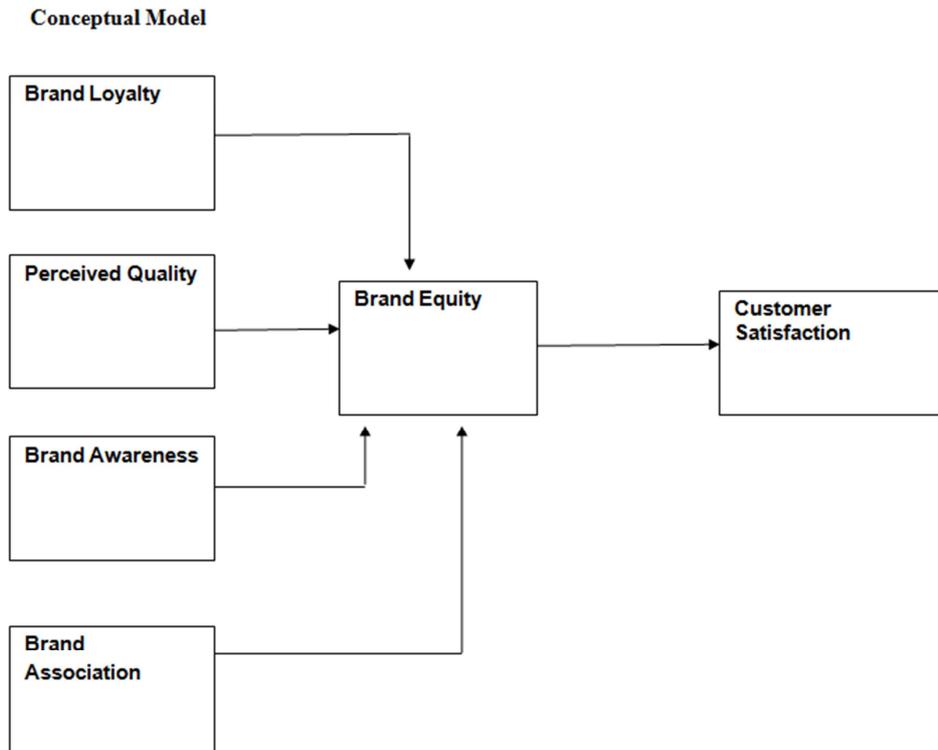


Figure 1. Theoretical Framework.

4. Methodology

4.1. Research Design

In our study we use descriptive research design in order to come at the conclusion of inferences which were derived after doing hypothesis testing.

4.2. Scale Development

Our scale consists of five different dimensions. These

dimension bases on the study of Yoo et al in 2000 which examine the Aaker’s model of brand equity presented in 1991. These dimension are brand loyalty brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality. The reason is that there is best thing in scale development due which we are able to study academics and practitioners with a very closer view with respect to structural model of brand equity creation process and universally accepted measure of brand equity which has a vital role in implications of marketing practices for manager in field of marketing (Washburn and Plank 2002). we used a likert scale containing five point ranging

from serial 1 to 5 in which scale start with strongly disagree and at strongly agree.

4.3. Sample Techniques and Collection Method

Our study examines the behavior of people of Lahore mostly in Punjab University Lahore. A questionnaire survey was used to collect the data belonging to the customer perceptions. 117 people responded us. Researcher used this data as a sample size. Researcher uses the convenience sampling technique in this study in order to choose the potential respondent. Researcher use SPSS software for data analysis of 117 questionnaires.

5. Research Findings

5.1. Demographics

Table 1. Descriptives.

| Variable | Category | Frequency | % |
|-----------------|----------------|-----------|------|
| Gender | Male | 65 | 55.6 |
| | Female | 52 | 44.4 |
| Age | 18-25 | 96 | 82.1 |
| | 26-35 | 19 | 16.2 |
| | 36-45 | 2 | 1.7 |
| | 46 and Above | - | - |
| Education Level | Intermediate | 43 | 36.8 |
| | Graduate | 70 | 59.8 |
| | Post Graduate | 1 | .85 |
| | Doctorate | 3 | 2.6 |
| Occupation | Student | 95 | 81.2 |
| | Government | 17 | 14.5 |
| | Private Sector | 4 | 3.4 |
| Marital Status | Self Employed | 1 | .90 |
| | Single | 97 | 82.9 |
| | Married | 19 | 16.2 |

The demographic statistics is provided in table 1. Respondents of this survey consist of 55.6 percent male and 44.4 percent female, which mean there were more of male participants. Out of total respondents between the ages of 18-25 years old group has the highest respondents (82.1 percent)

Table 3. Regression Coefficients.

| Hypothesis | Relationship | Beta Coefficient (β) | Sig. | Conclusion |
|------------|---|------------------------------|------|-----------------|
| H1 | Brand Equity → Customer Satisfaction | .498 | .000 | Significant |
| H2 | Brand Association → Customer Satisfaction | .200 | .036 | Significant |
| H3 | Brand loyalty → Customer Satisfaction | .164 | .056 | Significant |
| H4 | Perceived quality → Customer satisfaction | .087 | .390 | Not significant |
| H5 | Brand awareness → Customer satisfaction | .190 | .056 | Significant |

6. Discussions

The proportion of male (56.6%) is greater than female (44.4%) in our sample. Our study investigate the positive

that are followed by the age group of 26-35 years

Old (16.2 percent), 36-45 (1.7 percent) and finally the age group of 46 years old are not in the participated in this survey. The respondents' highest education levels were majority in graduate Degree (59.8 percent), following by intermediate Degree (36.8 percent), Doctorate (2.6 percent) and Post Graduate (.9 percent). Majority of the respondents are students (81.2 percent).

5.2. Reliability Test Results

Reliability test can be used as a measure that signals the consistency and stability of the instruments used in the survey when repeated measurements are made. A well known approach to measure reliability is to use the Cronbach's alpha. A reliability test was done and Cronbach's α for the factors were found to be 0.657, 0.663, 0.740, 0.740, 0.748 and 0.761, respectively. The values are acceptable as they were found to be greater than the recommended value of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1988). The summary is provided in table 2.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis.

| Dimension | Cronbach's Alpha (α) |
|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| Brand Loyalty | .657 |
| Perceived Quality | .663 |
| Brand Awareness | .740 |
| Brand Association | .740 |
| Brand Equity | .748 |
| Customer Satisfaction | .761 |

5.3. Regression Analysis

For the purpose of testing five hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5), regression analysis was used in this research. Table 3 provides regression analysis results, which reveal a significant relationship between brand association and customer satisfaction. Also a significant relationship was found between brand equity and customer satisfaction. The beta coefficients (β) are in the hypothesized direction, and are used to assess the contribution of dimensions of brand equity to the overall brand equity.

relationship among brand equity brand association and customer satisfaction which is also a contribution to existing knowledge and the different literature review explain it in different ways. The primary objective of the study is investigating the relationship between brand equity

dimensions and customer satisfaction. The study examines that the dimensions of brand equity has significant positive impact on customer satisfaction. Brand association also has significant effect on customer satisfaction. Out of all dimension it was found that brand equity has a dominant effect on customer satisfaction.

7. Limitation

The research study in order to examine the brand equity of handset mobile brands is limited to Lahore only, so there is gap to study the behavior and attitude of the consumer in other provinces and regional market of Pakistan, in order to avoid the significant regional gap in. Moreover, there are restrictions the sampling technique (convenience sampling) which indicates that the outcome of the study cannot be generalized because data is collected from readily available respondents which does not represent the whole population.

Another limitation is the low response rate because some respondents cannot return the questionair.This refers to a constant difference between the results from the sample and the theoretical results from the entire population.

8. Future Implications

In this research customer satisfaction was measured using a single measure. In future multiple measures may be used to see the relationship between equity and customer satisfaction Inter-relations among brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty and this will help to identify the important contributor towards customer satisfaction. In terms of recommendations for application, our study finds out that the brand equity and brand association are the important variables which effect the customer satisfaction.

9. Conclusion

For branded product category building brand equity is very important. Due to highly competitive and brand conscious market the mobile phone facing the same brand equity problem. The study was conducted to investigate the relationship between the dimensions of brand equity and customer satisfaction. The study examines that brand equity has significant positive impact on customer satisfaction. Brand association also has significant effect on customer satisfaction. Out of all dimension it was found that brand equity has a dominant effect on customer satisfaction. It is the strongest impact which tells that development of brand equity is essential to build customer satisfaction for mobile brands. This was further analyzed with the data analysis

($\beta=0.498$) followed by the brand association ($\beta=0.200$).

There are two implications that are derived from the findings. The first is that marketing managers should concentrate their efforts primarily on brand equity, which has high importance in the construct of customer satisfaction and will contribute positively to the firm's brand equity. They should work to retain the consumer association and gain repeated business in the highly competitive mobile market. The benefits of the brand equity to the firms are; gaining high market share and new customers, supporting brand extensions, reducing marketing costs, and strengthening brand to the competitive threats.

The second implication is that manager should concentrate on the inter correlations among four dimension of brand equity. Brand loyalty can be increased when the customer is aware of the brand's good image and better quality, which in turn will increase overall brand equity. Further empirical studies supporting the positive relationship between consumer satisfaction.

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