Original Article

The Effect of Brand Communication and Service Quality in the Creation of Brand Loyalty through Brand Trust (Case Study: Samsung's Representatives Company in Mashhad City)

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ABSTRACT

In today's competitive world, customers are the core of any business and their loyalty to the brand is a major factor in acquiring competitive advantage of organizations. At the heart of successful marketing communications strategies, brand localization activities in customers' minds are carried out in a way becoming a key component of business strategy. This means that organizations should be aware of the customer decision process in order to spread their message based on Inside-Out approach that is what customers want to hear. In addition to brand communications, one of the main strategies to build brand loyalty and gain competitive advantage is to improve quality of services. Today, service quality has become the great differentiating factor and the most competitive weapon of leading organizations; therefore, brand communication and service quality are very powerful paradigm which brand plays its role as a mechanism to involve the buyer and seller in a sincere long term relationship via them. Hence, the aim of this study is to investigate the effect of brand communication and service quality in creating brand loyalty through brand trust. This research is in terms of practical and descriptive approach. In the present study, the required information was collected through a questionnaire which is drawn from the study of Zehir et al., (2011). Statistical sample of study is Samsung Representatives Company in Mashhad city that are selected through two-stage cluster sampling. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed by Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Structural equations are used to examine the research hypotheses; furthermore, LISREL software was used to analyze data. The results indicated that brand communication and service quality variables have a meaningful and positive relationship with creation of brand loyalty; moreover, brand communication and service quality variables affect building brand trust positively. Additionally, the findings showed that brand trust variable play a mediator role in connection with effect of brand communication and service quality on the creation of brand loyalty.

Keywords: Brand, Brand Communication, Service Quality, Brand Trust, Brand Loyalty.

Introduction

The branding and brand management have many advocates in today's marketing world. Many of theorists, researchers and managers have considered future world of marketing as world of brand management and activities around branding. Perhaps no investment is useful for organizations more than a powerful, reliable and loyal name. The goal of most organizations is to build a loyal and powerful brand in the market. Financial experts believe that brand can create more value than the current value. Nowadays brand not only is an efficient tool in the hands of managers, brand also is a strategic requirement that can help organizations to create a sustainable competitive advantage. Increasing competition in the markets, especially in the service sector, has forced many organizations considering their brands as a competitive advantage (Keller, 1993). Brand is one of the important communication tools in the field of customer relationship management, and it is valuable for customers because (1) it reduces the risk of consumer and (2) it economizes decision-making costs. Moreover, brand is one of the effective signs in the market that organization uses it because of market information asymmetries. Information asymmetry exists in both customers' products and services and puts customers at risk of losses. Hence, to avoid the uncertainty of customer, customer's satisfaction with services provided by the firm. If customers become disappointed with brand, all of the organization's investments and its future profits will be lost. So brand acts as a leverage to encourage organization to operate its obligations appropriately. Brand can be described as a mechanism to engage both buyer and seller in a long-term relationship. As a result, brand can be used as a defensive tool in marketing that maintains current customers as well as an offensive marketing tool to attract new customers. The importance of defensive marketing has been identified via this knowledge that the cost of attracting a new customer is much higher than the maintaining the same customers (Sweeny& Swait, 2008). Therefore, marketing is located at the stage in its evolution that marketers not only want to attract new customers; they also want to have customers' loyalty. Today, customer's satisfaction is not enough anymore and the organization must not only rely on customers' satisfaction, they should also ensure that their satisfied customers are loyal. In this paradigm, the goal of establishing long-term relationships with interest groups and most important of all customers is to maintain greater customer and lose fewer customers, so organization's market share and profitability will increase (Samadi et al, 2009). This concept plays an important role in creating long-term benefits for the organization because loyal customers do not need extensive promotional activities and them gladly willing to pay more for acquisition benefits of their favorite brand. Therefore, brand with an emphasis on creating loyalty helps organization to compete effectively with global giants that have conquered global markets (Javadeyn et al, 2010). Thus, it can be stated that the most important characteristic of a brand is its trust and loyalty which is achieved through brand communication and service quality. Hence, regarding the issues raised and the creation of a highly competitive market, brand loyalty can have an effective role in selling products and services and evaluating effective factors on creating brand loyalty is necessary for an organization in order that they can design their marketing strategies to create a strong brand in the market in order to compete with the competitors to attract more customers. Therefore the main aim of this study is to investigate the effect of brand communication and service quality in building brand loyalty through brand trust

(Case Study: Samsung's representatives in Mashhad city) that its final results will lead to a deeper understanding about the concept of brand communication, service quality and brand trust and it can have applications for managers, decision-makers and marketers to improve brand loyalty.

Literature Review

Brand: Ghodeswar (2008) has noted that brand is defined as a set of customer experiences creating in all contact points with customers; moreover, Keller (1993) has also pointed out that brand is a mix of psychological and subjective symptoms on consumer's mind which adds value to the product or service, and these signs must be unique, outstanding and desirable.

Brand Communication: brand is the key to integrated marketing, and it is center of what the consumer wants. This is brand that consumers and customers have ongoing relationships with that. Brand Communication is also included creating and organizing tasks that play an important role in building brand relationships with customers and its aim is to expose customers to brand that can increase customers' awareness and reminding so that the customer will buy that brand having the highest reminding. Therefore, brand communications have to increase brand loyalty in order to strong the consumer's brand relationship over time (Duncan & Moriarity, 1998). Brand communication is the main integrative element in managing brand relationships with customers and causes customers' evaluation of brand and creates attitude toward the brand in customer's mind (Sahin *et al,* 2012). Consumers attach to brands which impact on their purchasing behavior. Positive brand attitudes like brand trust and loyalty are critical for the long-term success of brands. As such, marketers spend considerable effort

on creating and maintaining a positive attitude toward the brand (Zehir *et al,* 2011).

Service Quality: Quality of service is a focused assessment of services elements such as interaction quality, physical environment quality and outcome quality (Zehir *et al*, 2011). In addition, it is a sort of judgment which customers resulting from an investigation process where customers compare their expectations with the service they perceive to have received (Gronroos, 1984). So this difference between expectations and perceptions of customers and their perceptions of actual performance of services will create quality of services (Zeithaml *et al,* 1996), **so** that if a service meets or exceeds customer expectations, it has quality, but If customer service is less than their expectations, it necessarily does not mean that quality of service is low; however, it makes the customer dissatisfied (Venus & Safaeiyan, 2002). Therefore, organizations are looking for sustainable and high quality in order that they can Gain a competitive advantage.

Brand loyalty: American Marketing Association (AMA) has argued that brand loyalty is a privilege in which a client repeatedly purchases from one supplier instead of buying a product from multiple suppliers. It is also said that brand loyalty is a relatively fanatically behavioral response in shopping. In this situation, consumers have more tendencies to repurchase a brand revealed through behaviors which can impact on brand sales directly. This reaction is a function of cognitive and mental processes which customers express when they are faced with the products that are equal in all respects because consumers mostly choose brands that they know them (Vazifedost *et al,* 2010).

Brand Trust: brand trust, as defined by Morgan & Hunt (1994), is expectation about an exchange partner's trustworthiness and reliability and believe that brand trust leads

to brand commitment because trust creates exchange relationships. Trust creates this belief that the other side is trustworthy and it will lead to a strong, honestly, and useful cooperation.   A reliable brand focused on the real needs of consumers that are provided through products and services. Brand Trust goes beyond the level of consumer's satisfaction with the functional performance and this makes customers loyal to a brand. Therefore, Brand Trust is proposed as an important element to establish a long-term relationship between the consumer and the brand resulting in the development of brand loyalty (Ha & Perks, 2005).

Previous Empirical Studies

Effect of brand dimensions on customer repurchase intention of Refah Chain stores in Tehran city was evaluated by Samadi et al (2009).The results showed that brand evidence (main service, employees, brand, service conditions, price, and consistent with personal feelings) and also brand communication have a positive impact on satisfaction, attitudes, behavioral intentions and customer loyalty. Effect of brand on industrial customer loyalty was examined by Javadeyn et al (2010). The results indicated that brand equity and trust are the most important influencing factors on behavioral and attitudinal patterns of customers' loyalty. Furthermore, the influencing factors between behavioral loyalty and attitudinal loyalty may be different in the research fields. A study about scrutiny of brand social identity perspective and its effect in brand loyalty development was done by Shahrokh Dehdashti et al (2010). The findings showed that reliability of brand has a key role in improvement of behavioral intentions of customers. This means increasing in customer satisfaction will lead to recommend their bank to others and also their tendency to switch bank will reduce. Therefore,

managers should have special attention to brand reliability and consider its important role in customer relationship management and design more appropriate strategies and programs in order to develop their loyal customers.   Understanding customer satisfaction and loyalty was examined by Deng et al (2010). The results indicated that factors such as reliability, service quality, perceived value (functional, emotional, social and financial) and switching cost have a significant relationship with customer's loyalty and satisfaction. The research aims to investigate the importance of brand trust in the development of brand equity was done by Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Alemán (2005). The result showed that customers' satisfaction leads to brand loyalty through influencing two formative elements of brand trust (brand reliability and brand intention) and eventually it will lead to the creation of brand equity.

Research Hypotheses

The main hypotheses

H1: Brand communication has a significantly positive effect on creating brand loyalty through brand trust.
H2: Quality of service has a significantly positive effect on creating brand loyalty through brand trust.

Sub-hypotheses

SH1: Brand communication has a positive impact on brand loyalty.
SH2: Quality of Service has a positive impact on brand loyalty.
SH3: Brand Communication has a positive impact on brand trust.
SH4: Quality of service has a positive impact on brand trust.
SH5: Brand trust has a positive impact on brand loyalty.

Research Model

The research model investigates the effects of brand communication and service quality on building brand loyalty through brand trust which draws from the study of Zehir et al (2011). In this research, brand communication and service quality are independent variables and brand loyalty is dependent variable. Also brand trust is considered as intermediate variable.
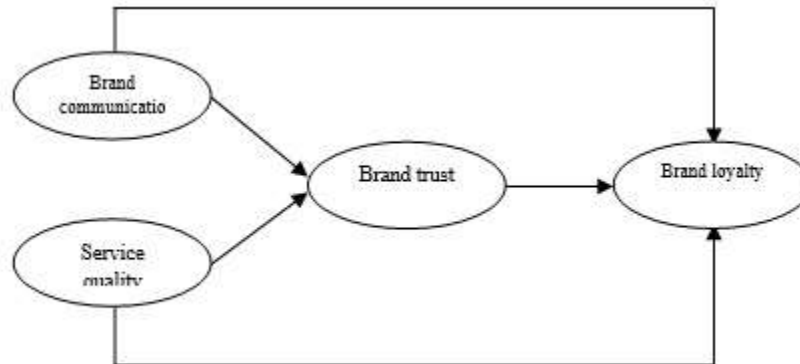

Figure 1. Research model

Research Methodology

This research is in terms of practical because it is designed to solve a real problem; furthermore, managers and marketers can use findings of research to promote the organization's performance. Moreover, Methods of data collection is in terms of Survey – Analytical approach that is consistent with the goals and the hypotheses of this study because it makes it possible to assess required data through variables sampling plan. Thereby, the relationships between them will be identified that their results will be applied for future decision-making process of representatives of Samsung Company.

Sample

Statistical population of this study includes referring customers to Samsung Representatives Company in Mashhad city. The sampling method using in this study is two-stage cluster sampling. The following equation was used to determine sample size:

$$n = \frac{(z_{\frac{\alpha}{2}})^2 \times pq}{d^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2 \times (0.5)(0.5)}{(0.07)^2} = 196$$

Therefore, to achieve the calculated sample size, 230 questionnaires were distributed among the participants. Finally, of 230 questionnaires that were collected, 13 questionnaires were excluded from the analysis due to a defect in filling, so the sample size of this study is 217 questionnaires.

Validity and reliability of measurement instruments

Validity of questionnaire

In this study, method of content validity was used to assess the validity of the questionnaire so that questionnaire was given to experts and sellers and asked them to express their opinions about that. Then, validity of questionnaire was confirmed by reviewing comments and guidance of super advisors and advisor.

Reliability of questionnaire

Cronbach's alpha was used to determine the reliability of questionnaire. According to 21 samples, Alpha was equal to 0.916, so we can say that the questionnaire has a high reliability.

Table 1. Results of Cronbach's alpha test

Cronbach's alpha	Number of questions	variable
0.728	5	Brand communication
0.762	7	Service quality
0.845	5	Brand trust
0.879	11	Brand loyalty
0.916	18	total

Method of Data Analysis

In this section, Lisrel software was used so as to analyze data.

The Model and Hypothesis Test

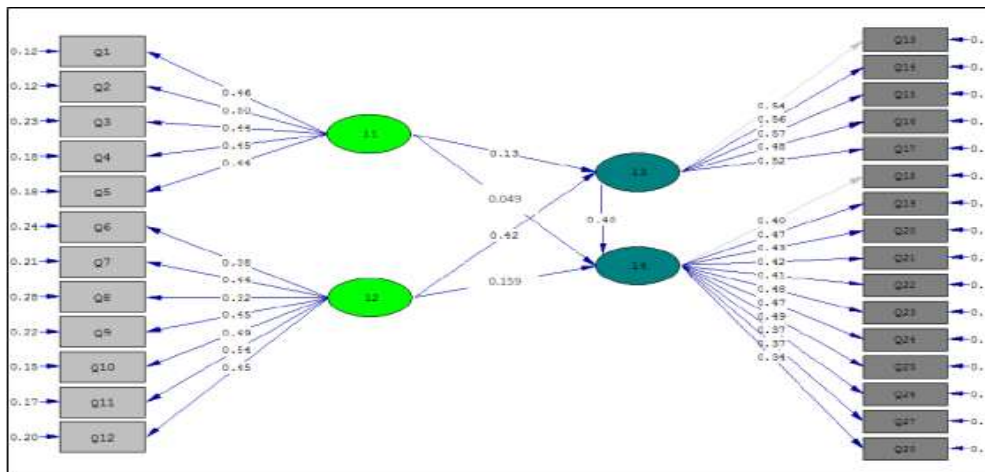In this part, test of model and hypothesis are presented.

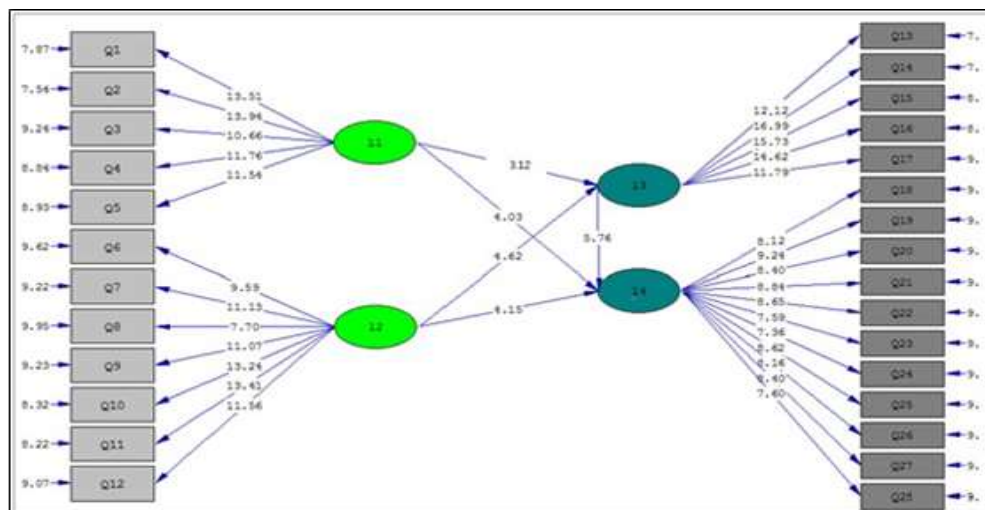**Figure 2.** Path coefficient values of structural equation model to explain the hypotheses

Figure 3. T-statistic values of structural equation model to explain the hypotheses

In the LISREL software, several criteria must be reviewed to assess the suitability of the model. A model which almost four of the following criteria be appropriate for that is a good model (Schumacker & Lomax, 1996).

Table 2. Fitness indices

Name of tests	value
RMR	0.081
GFI	0.89
AGFI	0.82
NFI	0.74
CFI	0.72
RMSEA	0.023

The model fitting parameters that are shown in the above table confirm model validity. In the next section, we analyzed Sub-hypotheses.

Table 3. Test results of Sub-hypotheses

Result	P-Value	T-Statistics	Path Coefficient	Number Of Hypothesis
H_0 Rejected	0.000	4.03	0.049	The first sub-hypothesis
H_0 Rejected	0.000	4.15	0.159	The second sub-hypothesis
H_0 Rejected	0.000	3.12	0.13	The third sub-hypothesis
H_0 Rejected	0.000	4.62	0.42	The forth sub-hypothesis
H_0 Rejected	0.000	5.76	0.40	The fifth sub-hypothesis

The first sub-hypothesis: There is a meaningful relationship between Brand Communication and Brand loyalty.
 as it is shown in the above figure (Table 2), the variable of brand communication (p-value<0.05) has a meaningful relationship with the brand loyalty; furthermore, The amount of path coefficient between brand communication and brand loyalty is positive, so brand communication has a direct impact on brand loyalty.
The second sub-hypothesis: Quality of Service has a positive impact on brand loyalty.
As it is shown in the above figure (Table 2), the variable of quality of Service (p-value<0.05) has a meaningful relationship with the brand loyalty; furthermore, the amount of path coefficient between quality of service and brand loyalty is positive, so quality of service has a direct impact on brand loyalty.
The third sub-hypothesis: brand communication has a positive impact on brand trust.

as it is shown in the above figure (Table 2), the variable of brand communication (p-value<0.05) has a meaningful relationship with the brand trust ; furthermore, The amount of path coefficient between brand communication and brand trust is positive, so brand communication has a direct impact on brand trust.
The fourth sub-hypothesis: quality of service has a positive impact on brand trust.
As it is shown in the above figure (Table 2), the variable of quality of Service (p-value<0.05) has a meaningful relationship with the Brand Trust; furthermore, the amount of path coefficient between quality of service and brand trust is positive, so quality of service has a direct impact on brand trust.
The fifth sub-hypothesis: brand trust has a positive impact on brand loyalty.
as it is shown in the above figure (Table 2), the variable of brand trust (p-value<0.05) has a meaningful relationship with the brand loyalty; furthermore, The amount of path coefficient between brand loyalty and brand

trust is positive, so brand trust has a direct impact on brand loyalty.

The first main hypothesis: Brand communication has a significantly positive effect on creating brand loyalty through brand trust.

Because significant level for effect of brand communication on building brand trust is less than 0.05 (p-value<0.05) and also significant level for effect of brand trust on building brand loyalty is less than 0.05 (p-value<0.05), brand trust is a mediator variable. This means brand communication has an effect on creating of brand loyalty through brand trust with path coefficients of 0.052(Multiplying the path coefficient of brand communication impact on building brand trust and the path coefficient of brand trust impact on building brand loyalty). So because the indirect effect of brand communication on building brand loyalty (with path coefficients of 0.052) is more than its direct effect on building brand loyalty(with path coefficients of 0.049), brand trust plays mediating role in the relationship between brand communication and brand loyalty.

The second main hypothesis: quality of service has a significantly positive effect on creating brand loyalty through brand trust.

Because significant level for effect of service quality on building brand trust is less than 0.05 (p-value<0.05) and also significant level for effect of brand trust on building brand loyalty is less than 0.05 (p-value<0.05), brand trust is a mediator variable. This means service quality has an effect on creating of brand loyalty through brand trust with path coefficients of 0.168(Multiplying the path coefficient of service quality impact on building brand trust and the path coefficient of brand trust impact on building brand loyalty). So because the indirect effect of service quality on building brand loyalty (with path coefficients of 0.168) is more than its direct effect on building brand

loyalty(with path coefficients of 0.159), brand trust plays mediating role in the relationship between service quality and brand loyalty.

Conclusion

The main purpose in this article is to study effect of brand communication and service quality in creating of brand loyalty through brand trust.

The results of testing the first main hypothesis showed that brand communication has an indirect impact on creating brand loyalty through brand trust. This result agrees with the researches of Sahin et al (2012) and Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman (2005).

The results of testing the second main hypothesis showed that service quality has an indirect impact on creating brand loyalty through brand trust. This result agrees with the research of Ramaswamy (1996).

The results of testing the first sub-hypothesis showed that brand communication has a direct impact on brand loyalty. This result agrees with the researches of Duncan & Moriarity (1998), Esch et al (2006) and Samadi (2009).

The results of testing the second sub-hypothesis showed that service quality has a direct impact on brand loyalty. This result agrees with the researches of Aydin, & Ozer (2005) and Deng et al (2010).

The results of testing the third sub-hypothesis showed brand communication has a direct impact on brand trust. This result agrees with the research of Grace & Ocass (2005).

The results of testing the forth sub-hypothesis showed that service quality has a direct impact on brand trust. This result agrees with the researches of Ramaswamy (1996) and Parasuraman (1998).

The results of testing the fifth sub-hypothesis showed that brand trust has a direct impact on brand loyalty. This result agrees with the researches of shahrokh dehdashti et al

(2010), Javadeyn et al (2010), Deng et al (2010) and Delgado-Ballester & Munuera-Aleman (2005).

In this section, According to the research findings, Suggestions for improving the performance of sales representatives in order to create and enhance customer loyalty to the Samsung brand are proposed.

Since in this study it was found that one of the effective factors in building brand loyalty is service quality, managers of Samsung Representatives company should strive to enhance the quality of service for their customers because in this way they can increase customer's loyalty which will lead to earn more profits. Hence, Representatives by using up to date and efficient services, appropriate staff behavior, perform the services promised, honesty and suitable information and appropriate response to customer's requests not only provide quality objectives of the organization, they also build proper attitude of brand trust in customers' minds and finally can attract and retain more customers improving their performance in this competitive environment.

A significant part of after-sales service is addressing customer complaints. Customer loyalty should be widely considered through effective investigation of complaints. In fact, complaints should be considered as opportunities to improve customer relationship and is used as an instrument to meet the changing demands of customers.

Improvement, beautification and expansion of physical facilities in the area of sales and providing services of Samsung Company should be considered. In this regard, it is recommended that these representatives do the necessary measures in conjunction with proper coverage of personnel, equipment arrangement mode, using modern equipment and suitable furniture, continuous cleaning of the workplace and so on.

According to the results of this study brand communication has an impact on creating customer loyalty. According to this issue that advertising is a primary means of organization communication with target customers, it is proposed to marketing managers of Samsung company that media habits of target market are identified through proper markets segmentation and selection and enhancing customer loyalty of Samsung company brand via using modern advertising techniques and communication channels which are in accordance with their target population.

Due to the high competition between representatives of different brands, building a customer mentality among customers and non-customers and creating awareness and reminding them about company products have high priority. In other words, it can be stated that the main reasons for not purchasing goods of representatives by non-customers are the low-level imaginations and mentality, Lack of awareness and consequently not recalling customers about existing and new products and services and also rewards and discounts that Samsung brand company grant customers at various periods. So in order to penetrate the minds of potential and actual customers, awareness and customers reminding by using advertising and appropriate brand communications should be strengthened. But it is clear that only control and direct attention to these communications is not enough to create brand loyalty. Therefore, according to the research model, understanding the relationship existing between this variable and other effective variables on brand loyalty such as brand trust helps this organization and its representatives to create and increase brand loyalty among actual and potential customers.

Brand communication can be used as a useful tool to build brand trust and brand loyalty. For instance, the advertising can be used as an effective tool to make intangible services

tangible. Therefore, an accurate picture of previous Services should be displayed, so that it does not exceed the actual experience of consumption.

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