

The Impact of Brand Experience on Customer Satisfaction in Courier Services of Sindh, Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to empirically investigate the impact of brand experiences on customer satisfaction in courier services in Sindh. The brand experiences was tested through its four dimensions as independent variables sensory experiences, affective experience, behavioral brand experience and intellectual brand experience and customer satisfaction as dependent variable. The convenience sampling technique was used to collect the data through questionnaire from the sample of 390 respondents. The data was analyzed thorough SPSS 20 software with the help of regression analysis to test the proposed model.

The results of findings state that all the dimensions of brand experience sensory experience, affective brand experience, behavioral brand experience and intellectual brand experience positively correlated with customer satisfaction. Brand experience cumulatively predicts the customer satisfaction by 46% of the proposed model. Among all the dimensions of brand experiences behavioral experiences predicts the customer satisfaction by 26% one of the major contributor to customer satisfaction in courier services.

The study recommends that the courier service providers must invest in advertisings which focus on emotions, the activations of courier outlets with colors and slogans, polite and friendly behavior adopted by the frontline employees when customers are consuming the service and neat and clean, furnished outlets with state of art services for the customers.

Keyword: *Brand Experience, Sensory Experience, affective Experience, behavioral Experience, intellectual experience, customer satisfaction, courier service providers*

1.0 Introduction

Brand experience is not a new concept in the marketing. It has impact on the consumer behavior. Particularly, Brand experience got the notice from the Practitioners and Marketers who have understood that to be successful in the market they must understand the brand experiences. The experiences are felt by the consumers when they are going to formulate the marketing strategies for products and the services. Many researchers have worked on that and suggested different models for brand experience measurement (Pine 1999, Schmitt Bernd 1999, Shaw and Ivens 2002, Wheeler and Smith 2002, Schmitt 2003, Chattopadhyay and Laborie 2005). A study shown by the marketing and consumer research

firms state that consumer experiences arise when the consumers are getting the information about the product, buy the products or use the service.

An extensive literature analysis of brand experience shows that the latest studies on the concept are on different aspects. Some researchers are interested how to measure the brand experience so they have developed the valid scale for the proper measurement of the concept (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009). Modern research suggests that some researchers are now interested in the possible outcomes of the brand experience which are connected with each other but different from the brand experience concept like brand differentiation, customer loyalty and consumer satisfaction (Morrison and Crane 2007, Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009, Zarantonello and Schmitt 2010).

The marketing research agencies have researched that experiences arise when consumers search or buy the product and use the product or service (Holbrook 2000). Brand experience is categorized into following factors: i.e. Sensory experience, affective experience, behavioral experience and Intellectual experience. All having impact on customer satisfaction in other product categories positively including services (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009). But for the services especially in the courier service providers like the TCS, OCS now known as Muller and Philips Pakistan, LCS and the DHL international no research has been done yet in the context of Pakistan especially Sindh. This is wide research gap and the current study is an attempt to cover this gap. The research on brand related attributes have the propensity for becoming the part of customers' long lived memory in the form of brand attributes or characteristics and hence it is possible that these attributes play important role in creating approaches like customer brand preference, customer credibility, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Keller, Parameswaran et al. 2011). This study focuses only one variable i.e. customer satisfaction.

So, the aim of the study is to analyze the impact of brand experience on customer satisfaction in courier services considering four dimensions of brand experience i.e (1) Sensory experience (2) Affective experience (3) Behavioral Experience (4) Intellectual experience

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Brand Experience

Brand experience is the total of all merchandise, shop, deal, and consumption experiences the customer has when contacting with the brand (Chattopadhyay and Laborie 2005, Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009). Brakus, Schmitt et al. (2009) functionalized a brand experience concept with four domains: sensory experience, affective experience, behavioral experience, and intellectual experience. They describe brand experience as nearly associated with many brand concepts (i.e., self-involvement, character, passion) but different in relation to customers' experience with the brand. Moreover, brand experience has influence on customers, influencing significantly on customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Aaker 1997).

Experiences are multidimensional measure with many scholars theorizing it differently. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) theorized consumption experience consisting of imagination, sentiments and entertainment. Otto and Ritchie (1996) described as gratification, newness, encouragement, security, luxury and shared as factors of experience for tourism industry.

Schmitt (1999) theorized feel, think, act, sense and relate are all the facets of consumer experience. Pine and Gilmore (1998) recommended four domain of experience like, fun, training, beauty and liberation. Functioning on the practical value the observations recognized through beauty, liveliness, service performance and consumer gain on investment as the facets of practical value in on virtual and non-virtual supermarket interface. Sensual, emotive, rational, practical, routine life and interpersonal are all the facets recommended by Gentile et al. (2007). Chang and Chieng (2006) through observations confirmed the results of personal experience” think, feel and sense” and collective experience “relate and act” on customer-brand relationship.

According to Berry and Carbone (2007), Brand experience is aroused by practical, technician and human signs supplied for the firm. The service design and service offering are categorically important part of service experience concept (Zomerdijk and Voss 2010). For profitable businesses the service experience measure can be regarded as central point of attention especially in service dominant industry with paradigm shift (Vargo and Lusch 2008, Helkkula 2011)

The scholars have recommended an integrated approach for understanding the brand experience concept in which consumers’ experiences are generated from brand and analyzed through numerous factors. The consumers experience can be measured thought the four factors of brand experience concept i.e. Sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual.

2.1.1 Sensory Experience

According to Hwang and Hyun (2012), the sensory organs are the main source of sensory experience in the form of sensory attributes and aesthetics which the consumers may experience. The sensory experience can be influenced by consumers from brand via the stimulations of different senses like odor, image, contact and audition through the visual aspect (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009).

According to Jung and Soo (2012), the sensory dimension or aspect discusses the inspirations which are accompanying with visualization, audition, aroma, flavor, and physical contact that are offered by a brand.

Especially, sensory experience talks about the exciting brand performance that can be perceived through five human senses. This sensory dimension/ aspect will make customers sense that the brand has powerful influence and is engaging conferring to their senses. For example, customers will sense or feel the effective and reliable delivery of the courier service when they are observing the vehicle of TCS or the delivery boy of the TCS.

According to Schmitt (1999) senses experiences are generated in the form of vision, noise, poke, flavor and smell and collectively it is called as sense marketing. The customers can differentiate among diverse brands by means of brand awareness campaign done by the company. Sensory brand experience usually created by the service providers the form of physical antiquity and servicemen hints (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009).

2.1.2 Affective Experience

The exact moods and sentiments are linked with personal experiences and collectively these are called as affective experiences (Hwang and Hyun 2012). The opinion about brands can be developed in the mind of consumer may be positive like affection, aspiration and immodesty and negative like fright, hatred and depression (Miao, Lehto et al. 2014). In

the experiential marketing consumer positive emotions can be generated through stimulation (Iglesias, Singh et al. 2011).

Affective dimension or aspect is described as reaction of customers concerning the brand related inducements that is connected to customer's sentimental aptitude, emotion or disposition (Chen & Ma, n.d.). This affective dimension/ aspect will arouse customer's emotions i.e. entertaining, hot, and graceful, etc.

Brand associations can be influenced by emotional experiences which are creative and repetitive in nature (Chang and Chieng 2006). On the basis of contact and interaction between customer and service provider the strong feeling would be developed over a period of time and which impacts on brand associations and are coming in the category of feel marketing (Schmitt 1999).

These brand associations are the important and main source of strong feelings and can be generated through personal meetings and one to one contacts between the customers and experience service providers (Schmitt, 1999). Affective brand experience impacts the customers on the basis of performance of the experience service provider either satisfied or dissatisfied from the services.

2.1.3 Behavioral Experience

The Behavioral responses to the brand generated by specific brand associated stimulations are collectively called as behavioral experience (Shim, Forsythe et al. 2015). The experience service providers outlets are designed in the manner that when one customer visits the outlet then the customer willingly to participate in service process in terms of physical action as self-service and recommend other customer the same behavior this will increase the self-confidence of customer in service providers (Wang 2014). For example, when customer visit courier service outlet and experience reliable delivery of their gifts and parcels to other customers destinations then they are more confident to use that service again and again and recommend that great experience to other customers vice versa (Lu and Yuwen Shiu 2009).

The behavioral brand experience is helpful in making the opinion of customers about the brand either superior performance or inferior performance by the service provider. The customers best interest are served through the performance of the service provider when performance matches expectations of customer in terms of efficiency and reliability which will be helpful to handle riskier situation under the behavioral brand experience aspect (Doney and Cannon 1997). The commitment of customer about the focused brand would be affected by the bodily or physical actions of individual from the service providers.

2.1.4 Intellectual Experience

The experience generated under the category of intellectual experience state that when customers were stimulated from the event in the form of curiosity and creative thinking about the brand then Intellectual experience will be raised (Jung and Soo 2012).

The term "intellectual" discusses to encouraging innovation through amazement, attraction and stimulation and generating enduring memories about a brand in consumers' long term memories (Schmitt 1999).

Intellectual dimension/ aspect described as customer's rational reactions to the brand in which customer is aroused to think or feel inquisitive about dimensions within the brand (Jung and Soo 2012). For example, customers may feel inquisitive about the connotation behind brand's pattern, design or symbol.

Customer's creative problem solving solution can be done with the help of intellectual experiences (Schmitt, 1999; Brakus et al., 2009). Think marketing impacts positively on Intellectual brand experience. The cognitive thought processes and creative problem solving experiences of customers affects positively under the category of intellectual experiences and which can be done with the help of think marketing (Schmitt, 1999).

These Customers' concurrent and different thoughts were stimulated with the help of rational decision making process (Schmitt, 1999). Cognitive thought process can easily predict these Brand associations (Chang and Chieng, 2006). The customers are encouraged to participate in complicated and creative thought processes by analyzing the brand this is what the mission of think marketing (Schmitt, 1999). The brand quality valuation, brand trust and brand commitment are all are impacting on complicated thought processes.

2.2 Customer Satisfaction

According to Kotler (2000), consumer satisfaction is described as an individual's sentimental decision towards service or product which is the outcome of matching good's actual work or performance with the good performance or work potentials (Angelova and Zekiri 2011). Affiliated with Kotler, Hansemark&Albinsson (2004) also described customer satisfaction as customer's sentimental reaction or approach against service or product provider by assessing the modification between what customer believes and (Angelova and Zekiri 2011). Henceforth, mentioning to those descriptions, it can be determined that the heart of customer satisfaction connects on the appraisal between customers' beliefs and genuine experience towards the service or product.

The association between satisfaction and customer experience has been analyzed in the marketing literature. The researcher declared that as the services are high in experience and credence service excellence and their pick up process is uncertain, experience controls the assessment process and not the total result that is called as satisfaction (Zeithaml, Bitner et al. 2006). The Renowned researchers believed that complete or total experiences are described as positive experience which when are present in the service means higher the level of satisfaction or satisfaction increases (Shankar, Smith et al. 2003, Kim, Kim et al. 2008). Others said that service reliability and service validity are two important and essential circumstances which are to be realized for customer satisfaction to happen (Galetzka, Verhoeven et al. 2006).

Customer satisfaction structures are also very important amongst other scholars (Oliver 1997, Giese and Cote 2000, Wiers-Jenssen, Stensaker et al. 2002). In spite of the plethora of working literature on customer satisfaction, the researchers admitted that a broadly acknowledged interpretation of customer satisfaction has not yet been entrenched (Giese and Cote 2000). Satisfaction may be characterized as the opinion of gratifying contentment of a service (Oliver 1997) which can be evaluated as the amount of the gratifications with numerous characteristics of a service or product (Churchill Jr and Surprenant 1982).

Customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction demands experiences with respect to service or the product and it is affected by the distinguished performance and the significance of the service or product (Anderson and Sullivan 1993). In relation to distinguished performance or normal performance, distinguished performance secondarily impacts satisfaction via normal performance indicator (Wirtz 1993, Richins 1997) or impacts it openly without limitations (Yi 1993, Wallin Andreassen and Lindestad 1998, Ching Bui Tse 1999). Customer satisfaction is firmly connected to brand trust (Delgado-Ballester, Munuera-Aleman et al. 2003).

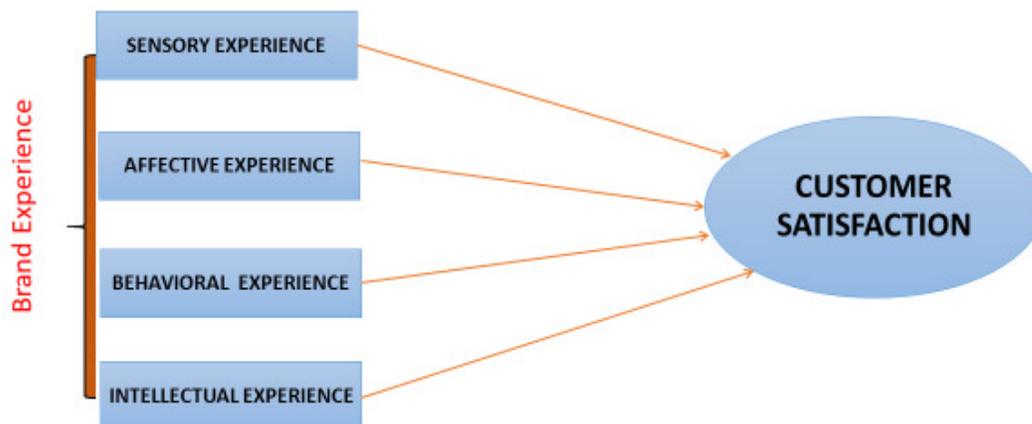
2.3 Theoretical Framework and Proposed Hypotheses

The investigations on experiences suggest that experiences are linked with the human beings and their environment (Dewey 1926). The philosopher John Dewey (1926) studies that the experiences can be understood through knowledge that is surrounded by classifying, evaluating and reasoning about the things. Additionally intellectual experiences generated from knowledge and these experiences consist on perceiving the things through the senses, emotions and actions. The pleasure factors are categorized as intellectual, emotional social and physical (Dubé and Le Bel 2003). Generally on experiences the work of Schmitt (1999) is also of great importance in his work Schmitt describes experiences in five dimensions: sense, feel, think, act, and relate.

On the basis of above studies the Brand experience concept was constructed which state experiences are categorized as sensory experience, affective experience, intellectual experience and behavioral experience these are generated through brand relate stimuli which are part of a brand design and identity, packaging, communication and environments.

Based on the work of Brakus (2009) the theoretical framework can be developed here for the courier industry in Sindh Pakistan. The framework consists of four independent variables of Brand experience and one dependent variable customer satisfaction.

2.4 Research Model



Source: Model Proposed by Brakus et al 2009

On account of above mentioned theoretical framework the upcoming hypotheses developed from this study:

H1: Sensory experience affects customer satisfaction positively.

H2: Affective experience affects customer satisfaction positively.

H3: Behavioral Experience affects customer satisfaction positively.

H4: Intellectual Experience affects customer satisfaction positively.

3.0 Research Methodology

This study is quantitative in nature. For collecting the data survey procedure was adopted. In survey method the data was collected through questionnaire with the intention of generalizing the result from sample to the overall (Fowler Jr 2013).

This is cross sectional study that includes the collection of data from the sample of population at one point of time. The data were analyzed in SPSS.20 software due to quantitative nature of the research.

3.1 Sampling

Convenience sampling technique was used to collect the data from the customers of courier service providers. A formal questionnaire was formulated for the respondents for collection of data. For the ease data was collected from the students, employees of upper education institute of Sindh those who are using the courier service as well from the outlets of different courier service providers in Shikarpur and Sukkur which includes the students, employees and businessmen. The sample consist on students of Shah Abdul Latif University Khairpur and it sub campus Shikarpur, the Sukkur Institute of Business Administration, SZABIST Shaheed Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology Larkana Campus and University of Sindh Dadu Campus. In this research 400 questionnaires were distributed and out of them 390 were received and used for the analysis again for the screening and outlier no any questionnaire consisting missing data and hence 390 questionnaires were retained for study representing 98% response rate. This sample represent whole of the population.

3.2 Survey Questionnaire

The brand experience contains 12 items (Brakus, Schmitt et al. 2009) and the customer satisfaction scale consist on 04 items (Patterson and Smith 2003), means the total of 16 items were used in the questionnaire to measure the concepts.

4.0 Data analysis and Discussion

4.1 Reliability Analysis

The reliability analysis shows the stability and consistency of the scale results after some period of time that no any fluctuation in the results and concepts results are consistently same. Its value must be equal to or greater than 0.7 (DeVellis 2016).

“Reliability Analysis”			
Variable Names	Cronbach’s Alpha Value	No. of Items	No. of Valid Cases
Sensory Experience	.818	03	390
Affective Experience	.726	03	390
Behavioral Experience	.916	03	390
Intellectual Experience	.792	03	390
Brand Experience	.913	12	390
Total	.820	04	390
Customer Satisfaction			

All the dimension have good internal consistency and value of reliability of each dimension is greater than 0.7, it is recommended that scale having Cronbach’s alpha value greater than .7 will give desired results in all other statistical techniques (DeVellis 2016).

4.2 Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis technique is one of the basic statistical technique which shows the strength and direction between two variables while does not predict the cause and effect relationship between the variables. In this research all the dimensions of brand experience i.e. sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual were tested on customer satisfaction to check the strength of association and direction among the variables.

Correlations		
		Customer Satisfaction
Sensory Experience	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed) N	.508** .000 390
Affective Experience	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed) N	.537** .000 390
Behavioral Experience	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed) N	.565** .000 390
Intellectual Experience	Pearson Correlation Sig (2 tailed) N	.504** .000 390
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).		

4.3 Hypotheses test

Hypothesis 1 sensory experiences impacts positively on customer satisfaction in courier services

Results of correlation shows the association between the sensory experience and customer satisfaction and was measured through Pearson product movement correlation coefficient in which there found a strong positive relationship between sensory experience and customer satisfaction while not violating the assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. $r = .508$, $n = 390$, $p < .000$ means that higher the sensory experience higher will be customer satisfaction. Hence hypothesis 1 fully supported.

Hypothesis 2 Affective experiences impacts positively on customer satisfaction in courier services

A strong positive relationship between Affective experience and customer satisfaction is found, $r = .537$, $n = 390$, $p < .000$ means that higher the Affective experience higher will be customer satisfaction. Hence hypothesis 2 fully supported.

Hypothesis 3 Behavioral experiences impacts positively on customer satisfaction in courier services.

Results of correlation the association between the Behavioral experience and customer satisfaction and was measured through Pearson product movement correlation coefficient in which there found a strong positive relationship between Behavioral experience and customer satisfaction while not violating the assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. $r = .565$, $n = 390$, $p < .000$ means that higher the Behavioral experience higher will be customer satisfaction. Hence hypothesis 3 fully supported.

Hypothesis 4 Intellectual experiences impacts positively on customer satisfaction in courier services.

Results of correlation the association between the Intellectual experience and customer satisfaction and was measured through Pearson product movement correlation coefficient in which there found a strong positive relationship between Intellectual experience and customer satisfaction while not violating the assumption of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity. $r = .504$, $n = 390$, $p < .000$ means that higher the sensory experience higher will be customer satisfaction. Hence hypothesis 4 fully supported.

4.4 Regression Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.679 ^a	.461	.456	.73769440

a. Predictors: (Constant), SE , AE , BE , IE

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

The table shows the value of R square which determine the contribution of dependent variables into independent variable. This reports that the all the dimensions of brand

experience i.e. sensory experience, affective experience, behavioral experience and intellectual experience contributes commutatively in the prediction of customer satisfaction by 46.1%. This is very good contribution of independent variables in dependent variable.

ANOVA^b

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	179.486	4	44.871	82.455	.000 ^a
	Residual	209.514	385	.544		
	Total	389.000	389			

a. Predictors: (Constant), SE, AE, BE, IE

b. Dependent Variable: Customer Satisfaction

The table of ANOVA shows the statistical significance by $p < .000$. This reports the test of regression is 100% accurate by running all the independent variables on dependent variable.

5.0 Conclusion

According to the results, the brand experience from its all dimensions influenced positively on the customer satisfaction in the courier services. The sensory experience associated with customer satisfaction in courier services $r = .508, p < .000$. The affective experience associated with customer satisfaction in courier services $r = .537, p < .000$.

The behavioral Experience associated with customer satisfaction in courier services, $r = .565, p < .000$ and the Intellectual experience associated with customer satisfaction in courier $r = .504, p < .000$.

The regression analysis supports the model with the value of R square 46.1%. This is comparatively a strong contribution of all the independent variables into dependent variable. It means that still there are other factors which can contribute in the prediction of customer satisfaction in courier services.

It is also recommended that the proper setting arrangement must be provided by the courier service providers to the customers so the customers can sit and talk to each other in the pleasant environment this will increase the affective experience by means of positive emotion and will lead to create a bonding relationship among customers and the courier services providers and its performance will be increased.

Supporting that argument researchers recommended that experiences linked with brand when customer get same clue with different setting can be easily recalled and recognized from the memory and included in the category of Intellectual Experience (Hwang and Hyun 2012).

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