

INVESTIGATING THE ROLE PLAYED BY BRAND LOVE AND JEALOUSY IN SHAPING CONSUMER ENGAGEMENT (A CASE STUDY OF NIKE BRAND)

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Abstract. The purpose of the present research is to investigate factors effective on customers' active engagement. Therefore, the present study investigates the effect of customer engagement on purchase intention as well as how the mediating role of customer interaction, self-esteem and self-expressiveness is effective on customers' purchase intention. This research, from data collection viewpoint is descriptive and survey, including library study and 30 questionnaire that was distributed among the study population customers of Nike brand in Tehran, with a sample size of 400. Results obtained by using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov, Pearson correlation coefficient and structural equation modeling reflect: there is a positive and significant relationship between self-esteem and brand love; brand self-expressive and brand jealousy.

Keywords: Brand Love, Brand Jealousy, Self-Esteem, Brand Self-Expressiveness, Active Engagement, Customers' Purchase Intention

1 Introduction

In today's world, brand names have effective role as one of the intellectual properties in developing and earning more money in business units. The issues associated with brand names including brand-consumer relationship which deals with important concepts such as brand commitment, trust and loyalty and can bring many positive outcomes for companies and managers are highly regarded in marketing research. One of the dimensions of consumer-brand relationship is emotional aspect of this relation which is related to issues higher than mere loyalty or rather than being a supporter of certain brand name. This stage includes concepts such as brand attachment and brand emotional relationship and also feelings such as brand love and brand jealousy which are the main subjects in the present study. In recent years, the roles of customers and companies have been increasingly combined. Examples of this combination can be seen in customer participation activities in production or development of products (Jaakola & Alexander, 2014). The concept of customer engagement as one of these combined roles has been regarded in recent years by researchers and those who are active in industry (Van Doom et al., 2010). Customer engagement has become one of the recent activities of managers and often is applied by companies and organizations through websites and other social networks.

Brand love cannot merely predict the customer engagement; hence, it caused brand jealousy variable was regarded as a complement to brand love in order to make better prediction of customer engagement. Customer engagement is accompanied with many advantages and it is considered as a driving force to maintain a long-term relationship with customers (Sarkar & Sreejesh, 2014). Customer engagement is regarded as one of the strategic necessities to create a sustainable competitive advantage for companies and it can predict the future of business (Brodie et al., 2013); therefore, marketers pays certain attention to customer engagement.

Since, less research has been performed on customer engagement in Iran, the researcher made an attempt to conduct a research in this field and provide the way for future studies regarding customer engagement.

2 Theoretical framework of the research

Brand names are an integral part of consumers' lives and are present in all aspects. Recent research has been focused on understanding and explaining certain types of relations established between consumers and brand names. For example, concepts and measures such as brand sensitivity, brand

relationship, brand commitment, brand trust and brand loyalty are defined among the concepts related to consumer-brand relationships and consumers have been divided into groups based on the depth of such relations (Albert, et al., 2008). However, brand fascination is a new concept in the field of marketing science which has recently attracted the attention of many researchers and academics. Brand fascination has been uniquely investigated by researchers as one aspect or dimension of broader concepts such as relational value and brand emotional attachment. The results have shown that Brand fascination affects critical marketing variables.

Brand names make consumers' life meaningful and have an important role in shaping their behavior (Albert, et al., 2012). This belief that inanimate objects such as brand names can be mixed with human characteristics is considered important in terms of marketing and consumer psychology (Sung & Kim, 2012). In the area of interpersonal relationships, people are often interested in individuals with whom they share common features. The same belief is also true about consumer-brand relationships. This subject rooted in social psychology suggests that consumer experiences of brands create some brand images in his mind through a series of exchanges. Keller claims that brand images are acted similar to information nodes in individuals' memory and remind meanings of brand names to consumers (Hwang & Kandampully, 2012).

Recently, Riemann and Aaron claimed that these theories about human relationships can be also relevant to close relationship between consumers and brand names, because sometimes people have a similar relationship with favorite objects as they do with humans. Often, these objects are certain brands which consumers are in relation with and use them to build their identity. Like the sense of loving others, brand names can create warm feelings among consumers. Therefore, consumers experience a pleasant feeling of being important and finally, a close relationship is made between consumers and brand names. Brands can give a favorite image of themselves to consumers because self-definition by possessions allows individuals to introduce themselves more different than what they actually are.

2.1 Review of the Related Literature

1. Sarkar & Sreejesh (2014) conducted a research titled "Examination of the Roles Played by Brand Love and Jealousy in Shaping Customer Engagement" among 170 persons who had automobile in metropolitan cities in India. The results of this research confirmed the effect of self-esteem on brand jealousy; self-expressiveness on brand love; brand love on brand jealousy; brand jealousy on purchase intention; and brand jealousy on customer active engagement. Brand jealousy played the role of mediating factor very well to show the effect of self-esteem and self-expressiveness on purchase intention.
2. Wallace, Buil and de Chematony (2014) conducted a research titled "Consumer Engagement with Self-Expressive Brands: Brand Love and WOM Outcomes" on 265 Facebook users who were following a brand name as their favorite brand during the past year. In this research, the effect of self-expressive brand (social self) on brand love; self-expressive brand (inner self) on brand love; self-expressive brand (inner self) on word-of-mouth advertising; self-expressive brand (social self) on brand acceptance; brand love on word-of-mouth advertising; and brand love on brand acceptance were confirmed. Also, the effect of self-expressive brand (social self) on word-of-mouth advertising and self-expressive brand (inner self) on brand acceptance which were expected to be approved were rejected.
3. Motaharnejad, et al., (2014) conducted a research titled "Investigating the Relation between Brand and Consumer (A Case Study of Home Appliances)" with the purpose of investigating the relation between brand and customer. Study population included all consumers of home appliances in Mashhad selected through simple random sampling. Proportional

to population size, 420 questionnaires were distributed in home appliance stores in Mashhad city and finally, 375 questionnaires were analyzed. The results showed that brand experience has effective and positive effect on brand satisfaction, brand trust, brand commitment and brand love. Brand satisfaction and brand trust have positive and significant effect on brand love and brand commitment. Brand love and brand commitment have positive and significant effect on word-of-mouth advertising and brand loyalty.

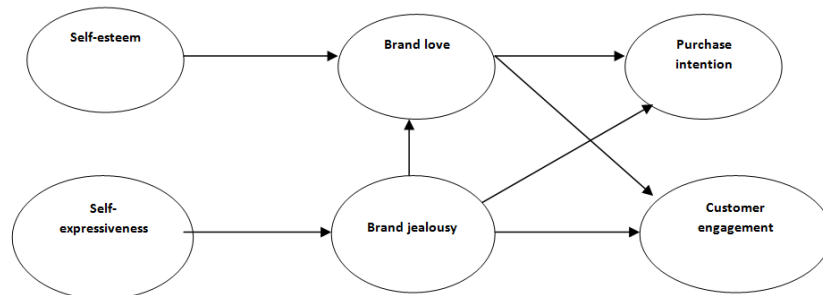


Figure 1. Theoretical model of the study (Source: Sarkar and Sreejesh, 2014)

Hypothesis 1. Self-esteem is positively and significantly effective on brand love.

Hypothesis 2. Self-expressiveness is positively and significantly effective on brand love.

Hypothesis 3. Brand jealousy is positively and significantly effective on brand love.

Hypothesis 4. Brand jealousy is positively and significantly effective on customer engagement.

Hypothesis 5. Brand jealousy is positively and significantly effective on customers' purchase intention.

Hypothesis 6. Brand love is positively and significantly effective on customer engagement.

Hypothesis 7. Brand love is positively and significantly effective on customers' purchase intention.

2.2 Research model and hypotheses

The theoretical model of the present study is based on the research conducted by Sarkar & Sreejesh (2014) investigating the factors effective on customer engagement. Figure 1 shows the theoretical model of the present study.

3 The Method of Research

This research, from aim viewpoint is applied and developed. Applied aspect of research is considered important with a focus on testing model in a particular industry. From data collection viewpoint, it is descriptive and correlational based on structural equation modeling among employees. The validity of the research questionnaire was investigated by three university faculty members as well as five experts. Study population was customers of Nike brand in Tehran. Since, the study population was unlimited; only 384 people were selected as the research sample. Therefore, 500 questionnaires were distributed and finally 400 questionnaires were given to the researcher. Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the reliability of research calculated based on the 40 people of sample size and it is summarized in table 1. According to the table 1, the reliability and validity of the questionnaire is approved. Lisrel 8.8 and SPSS 22 were used to analyze the data collected.

Table 1. Factors investigated in the present study

| Variable | Question No. | | Source |
|---------------------|--------------|------|---------------------------|
| Self-esteem | 1-3 | 0.76 | Sarkar & Sreejesh, (2014) |
| Self-expressiveness | 4-11 | 0.79 | |
| Brand jealousy | 12-14 | 0.82 | |
| Brand love | 15-24 | 0.75 | |
| Purchase intention | 24-27 | 0.70 | |
| Active engagement | 28-31 | 0.80 | |

4 Research findings

In this section, first research demographic variables are investigated. The frequency of men is 197, equal to 49.3 %; women 201, equal to 50.2 %; and missing data 2, equal to 0.6 %. The frequency of respondents by age is as follows: 86 people between 18-28 years of age, equal to 21.5 %; 182 people between 29-38 years of age, equal to 45.5 %; 89 people between 39-48 years of age, equal to 22.3 %; 42 people over 49 years of age, equal to 10.5 %; 1 missing data equal to 0.3 %. The

frequency of respondents by level of education is reported as follows: 107 people with Diploma degree, equal to 26.8 %; 96 people with Associate degree, equal to 24 %; 164 people with Bachelor's degree, equal to 41 %; 31 people with Master's degree and higher levels, equal to 7.8 %; and 2 missing data equal to 0.5 %.

The research hypotheses are analyzed based on the correlation matrix among latent variables. Table 2 shows the correlation matrix among latent variables.

Table 2. Correlation among variables

| | Perception | Learning | Motivation | Beliefs | Opinions | Satisfaction |
|------------|------------|----------|------------|---------|----------|--------------|
| Perception | 1 | | | | | |
| Learning | 0.845 | 1 | | | | |
| Motivation | 0.795 | 0.773 | 1 | | | |

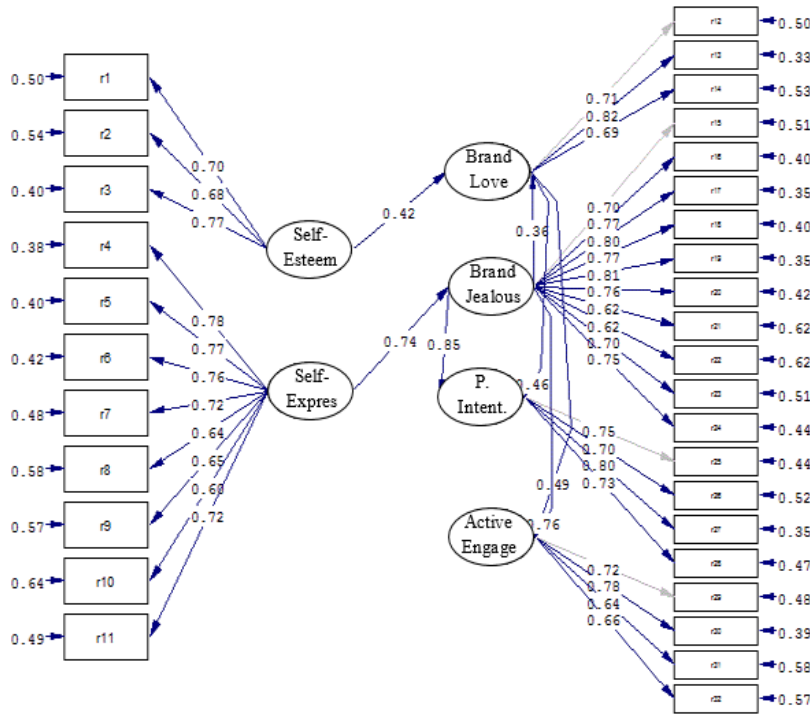
| | | | | | | |
|--------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|---|
| Beliefs | 0.807 | 0.821 | 0.771 | 1 | | |
| Opinions | 0.805 | 0.814 | 0.825 | 0.813 | 1 | |
| Satisfaction | 0.774 | 0.772 | 0.737 | 0.788 | 0.749 | 1 |

Significant level = 0.01

4.1 Path analysis (hypotheses testing)

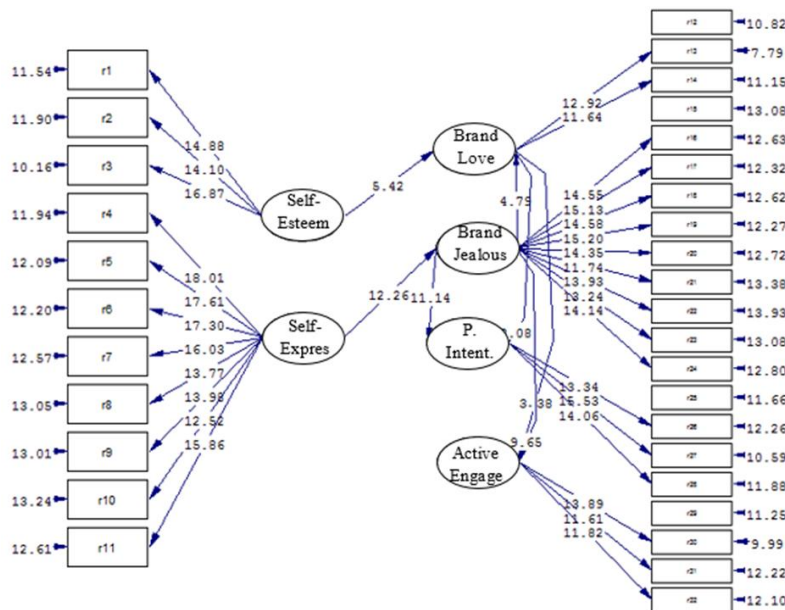
Lisrel software was used to test hypotheses and investigate the relation among factors of model. The results obtained from

model analysis in different cases of path and significant coefficients have been shown in figure 2 and 3.



Chi-Square=718.70, df=456, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.048

Figure 2. Theoretical Model of the Study in cases of significant coefficients (t-statistic)



Chi-Square=718.70, df=456, P-value=0.00000, RMSEA=0.048

Figure 3. Theoretical Model of the Study in cases of standard path coefficients

Different types of tests are used in research to determine the fit of model (Houman, 2005). Generally, it suffices to use 3-5 indexes in order to validate a model (Tabatabaei, 2002). In the

present research, following values were calculated: $\chi^2/d_f = 1.576$, RMSEA = 0.04, NFI = 0.99, NNFI = 0.98, CFI = 0.99.

Therefore, the research data are sufficiently fit with factor structure and theoretical foundations and this represents that questions are consistent with theoretical structures.

4.2 Research hypotheses testing

In hypothesis 1, the effect of self-esteem on brand love indicates a standard path coefficient with value of 0.42 and $t = 5.42$. t -value for this parameter (according to one percent error rule in rejecting null hypothesis for values out of the range from -2.58 to 2.58) has been calculated more than 2.58 ; therefore, it can be concluded that the null hypothesis is rejected with 99% confidence and hypothesis 1 is accepted. In hypothesis 2, the effect of self-expressiveness on brand jealousy indicates a standard path coefficient with value of 0.74 and $t = 12.26$;

therefore, this hypothesis is accepted. In hypothesis 3, the effect of brand jealousy on brand love indicates a standard path coefficient with value of 0.36 and $t = 4.75$; therefore, this hypothesis is accepted. In hypothesis 4, the effect of brand jealousy on active engagement indicates a standard path coefficient with value of 0.76 and $t = 9.65$; therefore, this hypothesis is accepted. In hypothesis 5, the effect of brand jealousy on customers' purchase intention indicates a standard path coefficient with value of 0.85 and $t = 11.14$; therefore, this hypothesis is accepted. In hypothesis 6, the effect of brand love on active engagement indicates a standard path coefficient with value of 0.49 and $t = 3.38$; therefore, this hypothesis is accepted. In hypothesis 7, the effect of brand love on customers' purchase intention indicates a standard path coefficient with value of 0.46 and $t = 3.08$; therefore, this hypothesis is also accepted (table 3).

Table 3. Summary of research hypotheses

| Hypothesis No. | Hypothesis | | Standard path coefficient | t- statistic | result | Significant level (percent) |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|--------------|-----------|-----------------------------|
| | from | to | | | | |
| 1 | Self-esteem | Brand love | 0.42 | 5.42 | confirmed | 99 |
| 2 | Self-expressiveness | Brand jealousy | 0.74 | 12.26 | confirmed | 99 |
| 3 | Brand jealousy | Brand love | 0.36 | 4.75 | confirmed | 99 |
| 4 | Brand jealousy | Active engagement | 0.76 | 9.65 | confirmed | 99 |
| 5 | | Purchase intention | 0.85 | 11.14 | confirmed | 99 |
| 6 | Brand love | Active engagement | 0.49 | 3.38 | confirmed | 99 |
| 7 | Brand love | Purchase intention | 0.46 | 3.08 | confirmed | 99 |

5 Suggestions

According to the results obtained from hypotheses testing, the following suggestions are recommended:

1. Suggestions based on hypothesis 1: In the early stages of a customer-brand relationship, when the customer is just starting to engage and purchase a brand, his interest can be very high. If the company has the ability to preserve customer's enthusiasm and strengthen it in the early stages, it can take advantage of benefits including brand commitment and positive word-of-mouth advertising for a long time. Fashion brands strategy should be in the way that brand personality and images are used to increase the emotional relationship between customers and brands.

2. Suggestions based on hypothesis 2: Companies encourage their customers through establishing emotional relationship with them to talk positively about their brand and develop more word-of-mouth advertising. If this goal achieved, it would increase the number of their customers and in this way company's profitability would be improved. Since, the brand personality could strengthen the customers' subjective perception; a deliberate effort can be made to create a powerful brand by a selection of distinct personality which is in accordance with desired sections on the market.

3. Suggestions based on hypothesis 3: Being well-known because of superior quality can bear the greatest impact on brand image; hence, branded apparel companies need to emphasize on maintaining and enhancing the quality of their products in order to improve their brand image over time and according to the sixth hypothesis to increase brand love. Manufacturing companies need to maintain and even improve the quality of products to create a positive word-of-mouth advertising and in this way encourage their customers to increase their purchase intention.

4. Suggestions based on hypothesis 4: Companies should prevent negative word-of-mouth advertising because such advertising has negative effect on purchase intention and

damages the company's brand. Manufacturing companies can create a positive word-of-mouth advertising by presenting an online platform to satisfy consumers and meet their needs simply. This will not only increase performance of product sales, but it will also decrease advertising costs. Brand managers must take advantage of means enhancing the credibility of the product quality to attract customers' attention and trust. Product quality reputation is achieved through getting certificates, offering insurance for goods, increasing popularity, etc.

5. Suggestions based on hypothesis 5: People who have personality traits interested in online purchase usually are optimistic. They have a positive impression on the product and an eagerness to own it and they make a decision to purchase it without hesitation. This indicates that consumers with vigorous features can be easily exited for purchase intention. Companies would be able to attract unplanned shopping behaviors through arousing customers' emotions and making them interested in brand.

6. Suggestions based on hypothesis 6: According to the research results, most customers of Nike products are between 18-38 years of age; as a result, advertising companies must make efforts to attract the attention of this age range. When a brand is well-known, it causes a better mental image and increases brand love in this group and in this way it is accompanied with word-of-mouth advertising for Nike brand. Most customers of Nike brand are athletes, young people and also educated ones. Although, they have common characteristics, distinct groups can be recognized among them and customized marketing activities must be done for each group as a specific target market. It requires extensive and detailed data collection from customers. In the way that in addition to overall demographic variables, some information about customers' interests, activities and lifestyle are achieved. Through categorizing homogeneous groups of customers, customized marketing activities can be focused on them. For example, related advertising messages and news are sent to individuals interested in public sports and walking and are always purchasing products related to such activities or young women including students are encouraged to

buy new models of bags and sport shoes through receiving related advertising and information or a certain page is considered for them on companies' website and social networks.

7. Suggestions based on hypothesis 7: Companies should produce and introduce products with high prestige to draw attention of people with high self-value and individuals who consider themselves as important ones and on the other hand try to build identity using well-known and luxury brands and put themselves in a high social status. Companies would be also able to encourage individuals and customers to purchase and use their products and services by improving value, service and quality of products. They should also consider different obstacles which prevent the purchase.

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