

## **ROLE OF BRAND LOYALTY IN BUILDING BRAND EQUITY: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF CONSUMER INVOLVEMENT LEVELS**

Shahid Nawaz, Lecturer, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

Email: [shahidnawaziub@gmail.com](mailto:shahidnawaziub@gmail.com)

Mudassar Ali, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

Email: [mudasar.ali@sngpl.com.pk](mailto:mudasar.ali@sngpl.com.pk)

Muhammad Ishfaq, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan.

Email: [ch.ishfaq54@yahoo.com](mailto:ch.ishfaq54@yahoo.com)

Muhammad Zahid Nawaz, Dongbei University of Finance and Economics, China. Email: [zahid.n@live.com](mailto:zahid.n@live.com)

Muhammad Noman Shafique, Department of Business Management, Dongbei University of Finance and Economics. Email: [shafique.nouman@gmail.com](mailto:shafique.nouman@gmail.com)

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***Abstract.** Although the concept of brand loyalty and equity in recent times has evolved one of the dominant phenomena of brand management, yet the picture is incomplete without considering the role of consumer involvement levels. The purpose of this study is to investigate significant antecedents of brand loyalty, and its role in building brand equity, relationships are also measured by conducting comparative analysis of consumer involvement levels. The self-administered survey and regression analysis used to measure relationships of variables. The findings showed significant and positive relationship of perceived quality, brand trust, and customer satisfaction with brand loyalty, and highly significant and positive impact of brand loyalty is found in building brand equity. Significant differences are found between high and low involvement settings. This research will provide exceptional learning opportunities for brand managers and scholars alike, through empirical verifying the relationships of variables, by using two brands of different consumer involvement levels.*

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**Key words:** Customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, brand equity, consumer involvement level.

### **Introduction**

Building superior relationship between customer and company is one of the proven victorious marketing strategies (Oh & Fiorito, 2002). Companies are employing their maximum efforts to establish good brands to compete in market for survival, using marketing as a process of gathering customers very strongly around brands, and building brand loyalty through meeting needs and

desires of consumers (Mitchell, 1997). Brand creates a clear and distinctive image in the mind of customers; it creates differentiation among the products of rivals to fulfill needs and wants of consumers (Oh & Fiorito, 2002).

Building and maintaining effective long-term relationship with customers have significant concerns not only for corporations but also for marketing managers as well. Brand loyalty assists in a better way to understand the relationship between brands and customers, in marketing management brand loyalty is one of the important objectives especially for consumer goods (Touzani & Temessek, 2009). Acquiring and satisfying new customer is more costly and problematic for companies, and it is the loyal customers that guarantee survival and growth of brand in future through repeat purchases. Brand loyal customers are willing to bear more cost as compare to none loyal customers (Anantharanthan Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1985). Brand image, brand communication, perceived quality and trust can create uniqueness when customers interact and utilize brand. Likewise, repeat purchase of brand by loyal customers, enhances market share for particular brand (Aaker, 1996).

Building trust is most essential yet significant landmark facing by brand manufacturers. Customers satisfaction build trust for brand, more customer is satisfied with performance of brand more trust will be built, that leads to brand loyalty. As a result, customers start perceiving superior quality from manufacturer and hoping some improvements and innovations into brands (Alam, Usman Arshad, & Adnan Shabbir, 2012). Brand managers are devoting special efforts to provide value according to brand image and what they communicate to customers, in order to achieve high customer satisfaction and building significant trust among customers (Alam et al., 2012). Moreover, brand loyalty builds an influential strength for success and survival of brand. It creates considerable value for company in the form of brand equity, which is playing significant role in designing goals and vision of company (Mohammad, 2012). Although brand is not a part of company financial statement, but so many specialized consultant consider brand one of the valuable assets. Corporations are more able to determine their success through brands then a technical innovation or new plant; it helps corporations in their hard times to boost sales at higher price and leads towards new markets under penetrating strategy (Mohammad, 2012).

Previously so many studies are conducted on company's efforts for brands, behavioral aspects of consumers related to brands, their effect on brand loyalty and significance of brand loyalty in building brand equity. This paper is focusing on role of company's efforts to create favorable behavior of customers regarding a specific brand for the sake of building effective brand loyalty that

leads to brand equity, such as creating good brand image based on its past performance and past experiences of customers and brand communication through promotional activates. Consumers perceive good quality from a brand, brand trust of customer, and customer satisfaction based on past experience of customers, are considered valuable elements that develop their loyalty for brands.

Furthermore, study is measuring the role of brand loyalty in building brand equity. Significant relationships are found of these variables in different studies, but very rare literature is found that measuring the effects of these variables by using consumer involvement levels. Our study is specially focusing on measuring the effect of these variables in two different settings by using two different brands having different customers' involvement levels. We are using two types of brands, firstly expensive or shopping goods having high involvement of consumers and secondly convenient goods having low involvement of consumers. Moreover, we shall measure relationships of all variables by analyzing data jointly and then compare data sets of two different brands of high and low involvement levels, to measure the differences.

## Literature Review

### Brand and Loyalty

Brand is one of the important phenomenon for marketing managers; it is an emerging concept which completes all features, attributes, characteristics and personality of a product. Ambler and Styles (1996) explained brand as “commitment on a set of traits bought by someone” which “maybe fantastic, logic, sensational, tangible or intangible”. Loyalty received significant attentions of authors; Rust and Oliver (1993) described loyalty as: “it is a strong commitment to superior services or goods repurchase in future to acquire the same brand despite of marketing efforts by potential rivals and their impacts”.

### Brand Image

Brand image is perception of consumer regarding brands described that “brand image is a thought of natural traits and it has a special relation to brand identity concept”. Image of brand inspires assessment that gives explanation why consumers keep emotional attachment with a specific brand than others (Brodie, Whittome, & Brush, 2009). Brand image stands for individual imagery that buyers connect with brand, which involves all graphic and evaluative brand-related information (Iversen & Hem, 2008). The point when purchasers have an ideal brand image, brand's messages have a stronger impact in examination to competitor's brand messages (Lee, Lee, & Wu, 2011).

Therefore, brand image is one of the significant components of consumers' behavior (Burmam, Schaefer, & Maloney, 2008).

### **Perceived Quality**

Perceived quality is described as consumer's assessment of product's communal excellence (Grewal, Monroe, & Krishnan, 1998; Zeithaml, 1988). Perceived quality implies a purchaser's elusive perception of entire quality or prevalence of a product or service, their general feeling about brand (Ramaseshan & Tsao, 2007). Informative content about innate signs (e.g. brand characteristics) and other outward signs, for example brand name, country of origin image, brand image and cost of promotional activities can impact perceived quality (Ahmed, Johnson, Pei Ling, Wai Fang, & Kah Hui, 2002; Speece & Phung Nguyen, 2005). The brand, which is normally associated with quality, can develop image in the customer's mind and could be cause to purchase specific product (Vranešević & Stančec, 2003).

Hankinson (2005) has researched brand image from the viewpoint of a consumer and has recognized three extents: pre-purchase knowledge, usage experience and post purchase behavior and these extents are connected to perceived quality. Scholars have investigated a significant positive relationship between brand image and perceived quality in both qualitative researches and quantitative researches (Bloemer, De Ruyter, & Peeters, 1998; Cretu & Brodie, 2007). As per balance theory (Heider, 2013), a customer's perceived quality of a brand with a negative image, will enhance after it fuses with a brand with a positive image, and vice versa. In addition, dominance of brand image they obtain is connected to perceived quality of brand (Dalakas & Levin, 2005). Based on literature about brand image and perceived quality, this study makes following hypothesis:

H1: Brand Image has a significant relationship with Perceived Quality.

### **Brand Loyalty**

Best post purchase conclusion as a consequence of consumer satisfaction is customer's brand loyalty, notion of "loyalty" developed out of expression "insistence" authored by Copeland (1923). Insistence is final phase of customers' attitudes around interest for branded products; in this phase buyers don't acknowledge substitutes when they choose to buy a product or services. Guest (1964) had defined brand loyalty as "an attitude behavior and a measured degree of preference consistency and purchasing behavior". Actual purchasing behavior towards any brand is brand loyalty (Carman, 1970). Brand loyalty has significant effect on marketing costs since activities used to attract new customers, have more expensive than maintaining old customers (Burton,

Easingwood, & Murphy, 2001). Furthermore, loyal customers form competitive barrier, which makes it harder for rivals to enter in same market, well known and successful brands can pull consumers, create loyalty and detain their imagination (Keller, 1998).

Brand image is a significant factor of consumer's perception of products or services, particularly when tangible characteristics of products or services are not sufficient to make differentiation among competitors (Cretu & Brodie, 2007). Nandan (2005) accepted that an association could enhance brand loyalty by guaranteeing consumers that its identity and brand image are appropriate. In addition, various studies have proved that brand image has positive effect on consumer brand loyalty (Zeithaml, 1988; Zins, 2001). Greater constructive brand image leads to significant customer brand loyalty (Johnson, Gustafsson, Andreassen, Lervik, & Cha, 2001). As we have discussed in balance theory brand image has significant and positive effect on brand loyalty (Heider, 2013). Superior brand image increases brand loyalty (Dalakas & Levin, 2005). Based on the above-mentioned literature, our hypothesis is:

H2: Brand Image has a significant relationship with Brand Loyalty.

Since the relationship of perceived quality and brand loyalty of customer is widely addressed in studies, comparatively significant relationship is found between perceived quality and brand loyalty. Most of the studies were measuring few constructs like brand loyalty, brand equity and customer satisfaction (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 1998; Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). Only few researches have focused on these two constructs (Chiang, 1991; Ha & Park, 2012). Such a relationship has possibility to give differentially to consumer attitude and behavior, in light of the fact that quality of brand loyalty could be clarified by perceived quality (McConnell, 1968). Customer perceived quality creates customer's expectations from brand, and if brand is fulfilling the same expectations, will increase brand loyalty of customers because of customer pleasure (Ha & Park, 2012). Thus, we hypothesize the following:

H3: Perceived Quality has a significant relationship with Brand Loyalty.

### **Brand Trust**

Consumers' believes that brand will meet their hopes and expectations, those associated with brand performance as cognitive and brand honesty as affective, (Gurvies & Korchia, 2002). Trust has gained significant attention of researchers in various disciplines, in applied sciences like marketing (Andaleeb, 1992; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), and management (Barney & Hansen, 1994), others are economics, sociology (Lewis & Weigert, 1985), and psychology (Rempel, Holmes, & Zanna, 1985). Various studies discovered that trust is indispensable for developing brand loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook,

2001; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Deutsch (1977) has defined trust in following words “the confidence that one will find what is desired from another, rather than what is feared”.

Agustin and Singh (2005) argued brand trust is level of confidence of consumer that he believe and rely on seller will deliver the promised product and services. Both trustworthy parties are connected on the grounds of responsibility, benevolence, honesty, fairness, and helpfulness (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Consumer improves trust in a brand depending upon positive convictions related to their expectation for performance of brand and behavior of organization (Ashley & Leonard, 2009; Zehir, Şahin, Kitapçı, & Özşahin, 2011). On one hand, Morgan and Hunt (1994) and Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande (1992) proved through their studies that brand trust always leads to brand loyalty. On other hand this create a positive image of brand in the minds of customers, empirical relationship is associated with three elements of brand, brand satisfaction, brand trust and brand image in consumer minds (Dalakas & Levin, 2005). Brand image is one of the antecedents to brand satisfaction and trust, both elements required brand awareness and positive brand image, without positive brand image one cannot be satisfied from brand and one should not have trust in brand (Dalakas & Levin, 2005; Esch, Langner, Schmitt, & Geus, 2006). So, based on above literature we hypothesize following:

H4: Brand Image has a significant relationship with Brand trust.

Brand trust develops brand loyalty because brand trust builds highly significant exchange relationship between seller and consumer (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). In fact, commitment defined as "an enduring desire to maintain a valued relationship" (Moorman et al., 1992). Therefore, commitment or loyalty boosts continuous process of value exchange and significant relationship between seller and consumer that has been developed by brand trust. So brand trust should be associated with brand loyalty, because trust is essential for significant relationships. Moorman et al. (1992), Morgan and Hunt (1994) and Mohammad (2012) supported through empirical finding in their studies that trust leads significantly towards brand loyalty. Consumers always try to purchase trusted brands and such brands evoke higher degree of brand loyalty (Mohammad, 2012). Based on these findings following hypothesis is suggested.

H5: Brand Trust has a significant relationship with Brand Loyalty.

## **Brand Communication**

Brand communication is performing vital role in brand awareness and identification for market place, objective of brand communication is to expose brands to its audience (Sheth & Parvatlyar, 1995). Whereby effect could be maximized with high degree of awareness and recall, so that consumers prefer those brands in purchasing which have greater recall in customers' minds and satisfy consumer at optimum level (Pappu, Quester, & Cooksey, 2006). Exposure to brand communication activates influences response of consumers towards brands, which could be measured by evaluating components like brand recognition, brand awareness, brand uniqueness, brand preferences and strengths of brand association in the memory of customers (Zehir et al., 2011). Brand communication is essential and primary component in building and managing relationships of brands with all stakeholders (Zehir et al., 2011).

Success of launching new product or services is depending on brand communication activities of corporations. Brand communications influence attitude of consumers that create valuable attachment in terms of favorable purchase behavior towards brand (Low & Lamb Jr, 2000). Brand trust and loyalty are positive brand attitude that is essential for building and maintaining significant long term brand success (Pappu et al., 2006; Zehir et al., 2011). Brand managers are putting considerable efforts on brand communication activities to develop and preserve favorable attitudes of consumers. Various studies proved that brand communication is playing vital role in developing positive and favorable brand attitudes that leads to brand trust (Fullerton, 2005; Zehir et al., 2011). Wigley, Moore, and Birtwistle (2005) argued brand name has ability to evoke consumers' feeling like confidence, trust and liking, possible because of useful avenue of brand communication (Grace & O'cass, 2005; Zehir et al., 2011). Effective brand communication can develop brand trust, so based on these findings following hypothesis is suggested.

**H6: Brand Communication has a significant relationship with Brand trust.**

Consumer creates expectations from brand after utilization, through brand image and promotional activities of brands, in other words brand communication can develop consumer perception and expectations regarding brand (Ha, John, Janda, & Muthaly, 2011). Consumers are responding more positively towards those brands that have repetitive brand communication, they can change their perceived quality judgment, when influential brand communication is exposed to them repeatedly (Zehir et al., 2011). Advertising frequency can develop positive consumer attitude, favorable consumer perception, and perceived quality (Moorthy & Hawkins, 2005). Brand communication is affecting perception of customers regarding quality expectations; it enhances perceived quality of customers. Different studies

supported the significant relationship of perceived quality and brand communication (Ha et al., 2011; Moorthy & Hawkins, 2005). So, based on these findings we suggest following hypothesis.

H7: Brand Communication has a significant relationship with Perceived quality.

### **Customer Satisfaction**

Customer pleasure and positive attitude result of consumption experience of brand is known as satisfaction. Customer satisfaction is ancestor of consumer brand loyalty; consumer post purchase behavior is depending on the level of satisfaction from brand (Kasmer, 2005). Giese and Cote (2000) defined the phenomenon of satisfaction in most excellent way as “a summary affective response of varying intensity with a time-specific point of determination and limited duration directed toward focal points of product acquisition and consumption”. Satisfaction is consumer’s evaluation of products and services whether meeting their expectations (Ha et al., 2011). Satisfaction is consumer judgment based on his evaluation of last purchase and on encounters with provider in case of services.

Overall satisfaction is one of the significant indicator of future brand loyalty and performance of corporation (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996; Johnson et al., 2001). Therefore, satisfaction is consumer’s emotional responses to particular brand based on previous experienced. Suh and Han (2003) argued that satisfactoriness, compassion and truthfulness are the factors that indicate brand trust in consumers. Since trust creates an essential bond between customers and brand, it becomes one of the indicators of brand loyalty (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Brand managers are facing relatively difficult job to satisfy customer before developing trust, in such context, trust can influence customer satisfaction. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) investigated that many studies in literature foresee trust as main predictor of brand loyalty. Brand trust is very vital for consumer satisfaction, more the brand is trusted; more will be the customer satisfaction and more favorable customer purchase decision (Anantharanthan Parasuraman et al., 1985). Furthermore, customer satisfaction is antecedent to brand trust (Geyskens, Steenkamp, & Kumar, 1999; Ha et al., 2011). A number of researches found significant relationship between customer satisfaction and brand trust. Therefore, we proposed following hypothesis.

H8: Customer satisfaction has a significant relationship with Brand trust.

Various experimental studies demonstrate that satisfaction is forerunner of brand attitude, brand repurchase plan, and customers’ loyalty for brand



(Pritchard, Havitz, & Howard, 1999; Russell-Bennett, McColl-Kennedy, & Coote, 2007). Brand loyalty is increased by customer satisfaction which measured through number of repeat purchase of same brand (Bennett, Härtel, & McColl-Kennedy, 2005; Ha et al., 2011). Furthermore, different researches have investigated that purchase and consumption develop two loyalty aspects of brand that is attitudinal and purchase loyalty, which performing significant role in determining repeat purchase behavior of consumer regarding a brand (Bennett et al., 2005; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Ha et al., 2011). However, studies on customer satisfaction and brand loyalty have found significant positive relationship number of time. Thus, we proposed following hypothesis based on above findings.

H9: Customer satisfaction has a significant relationship with brand loyalty.

### **Brand Equity**

Consumer based brand equity happens when consumers are acquainted with brand and hold great, solid, and interesting brand affiliations in memory (Keller, 1993). According to Aaker (1996) brand equity is a combination of tangible and intangible assets and liabilities associated with brand. Brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand awareness, brand affiliation and proprietary brand assets, such five brand equity assets are essentials for value creation, and most adequate fundamentals of brand equity assets (Aaker, 1992). Brand loyalty is an essential contemplation when measuring value of a brand as loyalty can convert into profit (Aaker, 1992). Brand loyalty acts as barrier for new rivals and provides bases for charging premium price of brand (Aaker, 1996). On one hand, brand loyalty perused repeat purchase behavior in customers, on other hand; it acts as a barrier in brand switching behavior of customers (Yoo et al., 2000). Therefore, superior the customer loyalty leads to greater brand equity (Lee et al., 2011). Indeed, brand loyalty is essential driver of brand equity that expedites certain marketing outcomes and advantages, which are closely attached with brand equity (Bello & Holbrook, 1995; Delgado-Ballester & Luis Munuera-Alemán, 2005; Lee et al., 2011). Therefore, based on our findings we like to propose following hypothesis.

H10: Brand Loyalty has a significant relationship with Brand Equity.

### **Methodology and Data analysis**

In order to measure the effects of study variables, we used high and low involvement behaviors of respondents. We asked to over 200 respondents to respond on self-administered questionnaires, using product categories based on consumer involvement. The population for our study is taken from cities of Pakistan by using convenience sampling. 161 questionnaires were selected for analysis; SPSS 20.0 was used for regression analysis to analyze relationships of

variables. We adopted scales items for our study from various previously published studies and literature. The results showed that all the variables had Cronbach's alphas values greater than 0.7, which means all items of variables are highly reliable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

## Results and Analysis

### Hypothesis Testing

This section of our study is testing relationships of our conceptual model, analysis was measuring causal relationships of variables. We have conducted analysis three times for our study. Firstly, entire data were analyzed to test relationships of hypothesis. Secondly, we divided data into two portions based on consumer high involvement brand (HIB) iPhon and low involvement brand (LIB) Lux, to measure the difference.

The regression results of data proved the significant positive relationship between brand image and perceived quality with ( $\beta = 0.467$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ). These results supported the H1. On other hand using product category with HIB and LIB, regression results are almost same with ( $\beta = 0.482$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ), and ( $\beta = 0.342$ ) & ( $p=0.001$ ) respectively. In both cases H1 is supported.

On one hand, results were confirmed there is no significant positive relationship between brand image and brand loyalty with a ( $\beta = 0.013$ ) and ( $p=0.819$ ). While using both product categories, results were similar with a ( $\beta = 0.040$ ) & ( $p=0.527$ ) in HIB and ( $\beta = 0.009$ ) & ( $p=0.921$ ) in LIB. These results were not validating H2 in all situations. On other hand, results were approved significant positive relationship between perceived quality and brand loyalty with ( $\beta = 0.114$ ) and ( $p=0.041$ ), and validated H3. H3 was also supported in case of LIB with ( $\beta = 0.197$ ) and ( $p=0.037$ ), but in case of HIB results were conflicting with ( $\beta = -0.115$ ) and ( $p=0.117$ ), so here H3 was not supported. Regression results proved that there is no significant positive association between brand image and brand trust with a ( $\beta = 0.091$ ) and ( $p=0.134$ ) in collective results, and with a ( $\beta = 0.005$ ) and ( $p=0.943$ ) in HIB and with a ( $\beta = 0.119$ ) and ( $p=0.205$ ) in LIB, so H4 was not supported in all situations.

Results confirmed there is significant positive association between brand trust and brand loyalty with a ( $\beta = 0.321$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ). Similar results were found in both HIB and LIB with ( $\beta = 0.493$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ) and ( $\beta = 0.250$ ) & ( $p=0.029$ ) respectively. These results supported the H5 in all situations. And for next hypothesis, there is significant positive relationship between brand communication and brand trust with a ( $\beta = 0.167$ ) and ( $p=0.004$ ). Results were similar in HIB with a ( $\beta = 0.397$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ), H6 was supported by both

previous results. But results were contradiction in case of LIB with a ( $\beta = 0.051$ ) ( $p=0.578$ ), H6 was not supported by such results.

The results confirmed the significant positive association between brand communication and perceived quality with a ( $\beta = 0.302$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ), similar results were found in LIB with a ( $\beta = 0.390$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ). These results supported the H7. But in case of HIB results were conflicting with both previous results with a ( $\beta = 0.137$ ) and ( $p=0.206$ ) these results did not support the H7. Moreover, the regression results showed the highly significant and positive relationship between customer satisfaction and brand trust with a ( $\beta = 0.651$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ). Similar results found in both HIB and LIB categories, with a ( $\beta = 0.602$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ) and ( $\beta = 0.664$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ) respectively. These results supported the H8.

Significant and positive association was found between customer satisfaction and brand loyalty with a ( $\beta = 0.488$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ). Similar results found in both HIB and LIB categories, with a ( $\beta = 0.501$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ) and ( $\beta = 0.451$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ) respectively. These results supported the H9. Furthermore, regression results of study approved the significant relationship between brand loyalty and brand equity with a ( $\beta = 0.806$ ) and ( $p=0.000$ ). Similar results originated in both HIB and LIB categories with a ( $\beta = 0.845$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ) and ( $\beta = 0.711$ ) & ( $p=0.000$ ) respectively. H10 also supported by such results.

Below figure 2, 3, 4 summarize the results of regression analysis in three ways, collective, HIB and LIB one by one.

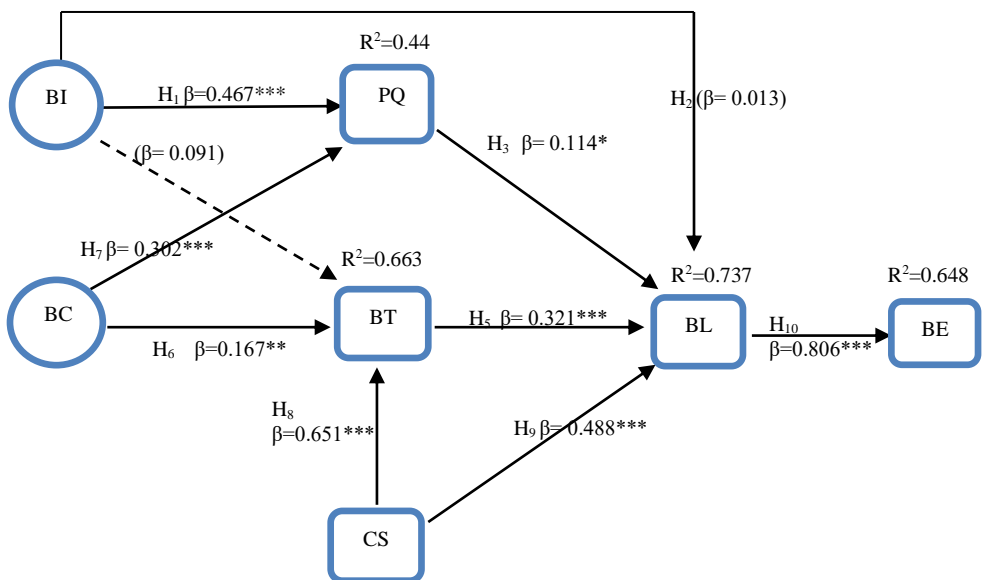


Figure 2. Structural model results in collective.

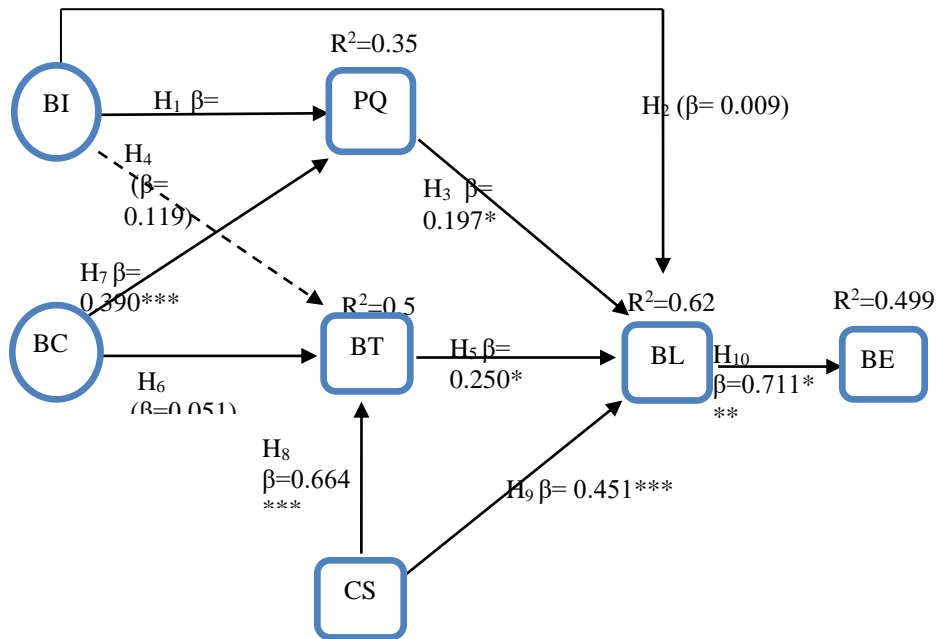


Figure 3. Structural model results of HIB iPhone.

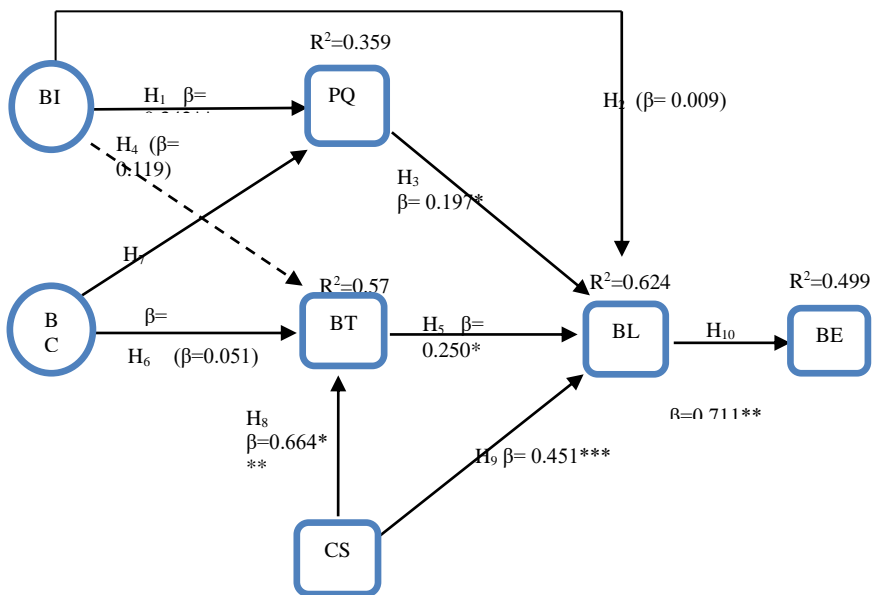


Figure 4. Structural model results of LIB Lux.

Note: \* $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.001$ , ( )  $p > 0.05$

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

This study is focusing on the role of company's efforts for creating favorable behavioral aspects of customers regarding brands in order to build effective brand loyalty that leads to valuable brand equity for brands. Brand trust, perceived quality and customer satisfaction are key aspects under study to explore their impact on building brand loyalty. Furthermore, current study is measuring role of brand loyalty of customers in building brand equity. Our research is specially focusing on measuring effect of these variables in two different settings by using two different product categories that have different involvement levels of customers and a comparative study is conducted to measure differences between these two settings.

Current study develops conceptual frame work for further debate on brand image, brand communication, perceived quality, brand trust, customer satisfaction, brand loyalty and brand equity in two different settings. Empirical finding of study suggesting that brand image has a significant positive relationship with perceived quality similar to previous studies (Cretu & Brodie, 2007), while using product category setting, result slightly different, in HIB; relationship is somewhat strong as compare to LIB, indicating brand image contributing more in case of HIB. The relationship between brand image and brand loyalty is not supported by results in all cases that means brand image is not contributing directly in building brand loyalty; results are contradiction to previous literature (Dalakas & Levin, 2005; Johnson et al., 2001). Perceived quality has significant but weak relationship with brand loyalty (Ananthanarayanan Parasuraman & Grewal, 2000; Yoo et al., 2000), but in case of HIB relationship is insignificant and negative, indicating perceived quality is not playing role in making customer loyal. On one hand, brand image has no significant relationship with brand trust; current study is not supporting this hypothesis in all settings, means brand image is not capable in building brand trust among customers; these findings are not similar to previous studies. On other hand, brand trust has significant relationship with brand loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Mohammad, 2012; Morgan & Hunt, 1994), in case of HIB relationship is highly significant and strong as compare to significant but weak relationship in LIB. It is due to low involvement of consumers, they trust brand but not highly loyal with brand as they are in HIB.

On one hand, brand communication has a significant relationship with brand trust (Fullerton, 2005; Grace & O'cass, 2005; Pappu et al., 2006; Zehir et al., 2011), highly significant and strong relationship is found in case of HIB, but insignificant relationship is found in case of LIB that means brand communication is not capable in building brand trust among customers in case of LIB. On other hand brand communication has a significant relationship with

perceived quality (Ha et al., 2011; Moorthy & Hawkins, 2005), but in case of HIB relationship is insignificant that means brand communication is ineffective in customer perceived quality aspect. Customer satisfaction has a significant and strong relationship with brand trust (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Ha et al., 2011; Suh & Han, 2003) and with brand loyalty (Bennett et al., 2005; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Ha et al., 2011) and no differences are found in all settings, that means customer satisfaction is one of the key antecedents of brand trust and loyalty. Furthermore, brand loyalty has a highly significant and strong relationship with brand equity (Aaker, 1992; Bello & Holbrook, 1995; Delgado-Ballester & Luis Munuera-Alemán, 2005; Lee et al., 2011; Park & Srinivasan, 1994), relationship is slightly high in case of HIB as contrast to LIB.

This study contributes in marketing literature in following respects, first, this study measure the relationships of variables in different setting to identify level of relationships among variables and measure differences, if any, by using different data settings based on consumer involvement, as previous studies were not focusing on using product categories to check relationships. Second, current study investigated that role of brand image is insignificant in terms of developing brand trust and brand loyalty in all setting, but brand communication somewhat has impact on perceived quality and brand trust. Third, customer satisfaction is emerged as one of the major antecedents to brand trust and customer brand loyalty. Fourth, on one hand brand trust has been investigated as dominant role in creating brand loyalty in customers, on other hand study explains highly significant role of brand loyalty in building brand equity. Lastly, main rational of study is comparative analysis of brands based on high and low consumer involvements, study contribute significant differences between both settings and provide learning opportunity for not only researchers but also for brand mangers.

### **Managerial implications**

Implications of study are very simple for brand managers, as study shows that brand trust, perceived quality and customer satisfaction have significant role in building brand loyalty, so on one hand, managers should deploy resources on programs related to these factors to build brand loyalty among customers. On other hand, managers should design advertising and promotional policies that must incorporate for developing better brand image, consumer perception of brand quality and brand trust. Focus should be on developing such kind of advertisement that not only highlights brand quality aspects, but also minimizes gender differences in advertising and sale promotion activities. Customer satisfaction is found one of the important antecedents not only for

developing brand trust but also for brand loyalty; in this regard brand managers should focus on developing marketing programs and activities to create higher satisfaction among customers.

Brand loyalty is performing significant role in creating brand equity for brands, so managers must implement programs for enhancing brand loyalty among customer through deploying resources for loyalty programs in order to improve better financial and none financial performance of brands i.e. brand equity. Last but not least, while setting marketing programs for brands, managers must consider consumer involvement levels. Special attentions are required in case of low involvement brands; brand managers should consider advertising containing rational approach, pricing, product availability and sales promotion activities, to develop good brand image, brand trust and higher satisfaction for achieving significant brand loyalty that leads to brand equity.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

Although our study tries to select a true representative sample from population but still the sample size and sampling technique are representing only specific part of entire population. The current study used specific high and low involvement consumer brands from market. Future research can be conducted, firstly, by replicating this study by using large sample. Secondly, some other brands can also be used for future research. Thirdly, some other variables affecting brand loyalty and brand love can also be used for future research.

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