

The Impact of Brand Image on Behavioral Loyalty

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Abstract:

This study aims to investigate the effect of brand image through the product related attributes on behavioral loyalty in the sports shoes market to Algeria, this work falls within the field of consumer behavior and starts from the assumption that consumers tend to focus on the product related attributes, which fall to their needs and preferences in repurchasing the same brand, a questionnaire tool were adopted to collect the data, the exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis were used in order to verify the study model that emphasized the strength of the relationship between the two variables.

Keywords: Consumer Behavior, Brand Image, Behavioral Loyalty.

JEL Classification : M 31.

تأثير صورة العلامة التجارية على سلوكيات الولاء

ملخص :

تهدف هذه الدراسة الى معرفة تأثير صورة العلامة التجارية من خلال الخصائص المتعلقة بالمنتج على الولاء السلوكي للعلامة التجارية في سوق الأحذية الرياضية بالجزائر. تدخل هذه الدراسة ضمن حقل سلوك المستهلك، وتنطلق من فرضية ان المستهلكين يميلون الى التركيز على السمات المتعلقة بالمنتج والتي تدخل ضمن احتياجاتهم و تفضيلاتهم، و بالتالي تساهم في تحفيز سلوكهم من اجل إعادة شراء نفس العلامة التجارية. تم اعتماد أداة الاستبيان من اجل جمع البيانات، كما استخدمنا التحليل العاملي الاستكشافي والتحليل العاملي التوكيدي من اجل التحقق من نموذج الدراسة و الذي يؤكد قوة العلاقة بين المتغيرين.

الكلمات المفتاحية : سلوك المستهلك، صورة العلامة التجارية، الولاء السلوكي.

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1. Introduction:

The origins of brand image conceptualized from the mental image which is a broad area of research in several human and social scientific fields, it developed in the 1960s and 1970s along with the development of memory models. This field has more space in marketing after the contributions of (A. Aaker, 1991) and (Keller, 1993) customer based brand equity.

2. Theoretical background:

2.1 The brand image:

The researchers differed in the typology of the brand image according to the variables of each field of study, one of The most important theoretical models used to determine the typology of the brand image is (Keller, 1993), which defined the brand image as "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory" Keller's typology includes both attitude, benefits and attributes, which in turn divided into product-related and non-product-related attributes.

Depending on the observation of (Biel, 1993) "While strong brands often have high market shares, market share alone does not distinguish them from other brands" Biel recommended that researchers focus more on the perceptual components of brand equity (especially brand image) and how they relate to consumer preferences, for the purposes of this project, (Cathy J. Cobb-Walgren , et al., 1995) adapt the familiar hierarchy of effects model as a framework for studying various antecedents and consequences of brand equity from the perspective of the individual consumer, the Antecedents and consequences model of Brand equity based on separating of the psychological and physical features that resulting from the advertising and other Information sources which leads to the formation of brand value that influences on the consumer preferences and purchase intentions. Finally, the brand choose.

(Woon Bong Na, et al., 1999) proposed a multi-attributes model for measuring the strength of the brand image, which taken from Srinivasan 1976, the approach to choose a brand as an alternative through the overall utility that includes the three levels: attributes, benefits and values, supported in the literature (Biel, 1993); (Park, C.S & Srinivasan, 1994).

In (Chen, 2001), the literature proposed two types of associations, organizational associations, and product associations, the second includes functional attributes associations and non-functional attributes associations.

Compared to the three assets of (A. Aaker, 1991), awareness, loyalty, and perceived quality. (Chen, 2001) proposed that brand associations are the basis for building strong brand equity. This is for several reasons. First, brand awareness is necessary but not sufficient asset to build strong brand equity. For example, a brand can be very well known for its poor quality. However, strong brands should have higher awareness.

Second, the other assets of brand equity improve the brand loyalty. However, loyalty sometimes excluded from the conceptualization of brand equity. Because the consumers are sometimes in the habits of buying a particular brands without really thinking of the buying reasons (Keller, 1998)

(Korchia, 1999) referred simpler definition to brand image "all that a consumer can possibly associate with a particular brand." (Mitchell, 1982) : page 46, for a review).

(Korchia, 1999) suggested a new typology of the brand image, and classified Brands associations into six broad dimensions, 15 dimensions in total: The firm, Other Organizations, Evoked universe (Brand personality / Life Style, Celebrities/ Characters, Users, Usages/ Experiences)

Attributes (Non-product related Attributes (mix) Product class/ Price/ Communication/ Distribution) Product related Attributes (Concrete), Benefits (Functional, Experiential, Symbolic), Attitudes.

In our work, we defined the product-related attributes as the core associations and major factor in determining the consumer's brand image, which greatly contributes to his repeated buying behavior. (Keller, 1993) defines product related attributes "the ingredients necessary for performing the product function sought by the consumer. Hence, they relate to a product's physical composition".

2.2 behavioral loyalty:

The brand loyalty is one of the most important purposes every organization seeks through its marketing strategies. Loyalty considered a permanent source of income, some economist have argued about Pareto principle (the 80/20 rule) in this context, in other words, 20% of the clients contribute 80% of the profits.

Many researchers assume that attitudinal loyalty, which is based on emotional and psychological dimensions, is rare due to the multiplicity alternatives resulting from the increased competition, market openness, prevailing consumer culture, this trend of researchers favors the behavioral loyalty approach based on the repetition of the process of buying the same product or brand and finding marketing strategies that address the problem of consumers' tendency to switch.

(Chi Kin (Bennett) Yim & P. K. Kannan, 1999) work relied on the behavioral loyalty model through the hypothesis of dividing the market into the hard-core loyalty, when consumers repeatedly purchase one exclusive alternative, and reinforcing loyalty when consumers switch between several alternatives, but often buy one or more substitutes of products in significant extent compared to other alternatives. This segment consists of the potential switchers that are homogeneous in terms of their switching response to product characteristics and marketing mix variables.

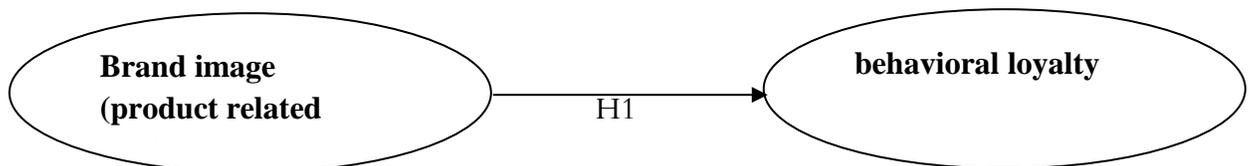
According to (Boonghee Yoo, et al., 2000) Loyalty is the tendency of the consumer to be loyal to a central brand. Which is evident through the purchase intention to the brand as a first choice.

(Arjun Chaudhuri & Morris B. Holbrook, 2001) based on the definition of (Oliver, 1999), brand loyalty as a deeply held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing. Chaudhuri referred to the difference between the two concepts through the previous studies of (A. Aaker, 1991); (Assael, 1998); (Day, 1969); (Jacoby, Jacob & Robert Chestnut, 1978); (Jacob Jacoby & David B. Kyner, 1973); (Oliver, 1999); (Tucker, 1964)).

Behavioral, or purchase, loyalty consists of repeated purchases of the brand, whereas attitudinal brand loyalty includes a degree of dispositional commitment in terms of some unique value associated with the brand.

3. Research hypotheses:

The main purpose of our study is to investigate the relationships between brand image and loyalty (Chi Kin (Bennett) Yim & P. K. Kannan, 1999) and (Ike-Elechi Ogba & Zhenzhen Tan, 2009), based on the literature, we hypothesize directional relationships among product related attributes, and behavioral loyalty, the relational paths among the constructs are summarized in Figure 1.



Source: (by the author)

Figure (1): Theoretical model.

4. Methodology:

This work is a part of an overall concept, which is the consumer based brand equity. The previous literature developed several psychometric measurement of its dimensions. The 8-item questionnaire tool used. Five elements of brand image related to product attributes from (Woon Bong Na, et al., 1999) work (IMG1: Products of this brand are easily available, IMG2: Good design, IMG3: Modern style, IMG4: Feels soft to touch, IMG5: Stand the shocks). Two elements for behavioral loyalty from (Arjun Chaudhuri & Morris B. Holbrook, 2001), (LOY1: I will buy this brand the next time I buy [product name], LOY2: I intend to keep purchasing this brand), one element from (Boonghee Yoo, et al., 2000) work. (LOY3: I will not buy another brand if this brand is not available. We adopted five Likert scale (totally agree /agree / don't know / agree / totally disagree).

This scale applied to the sports shoes product category, and the respondents were free to choose their favorite brand before answering the measurement items. The questionnaire distributed over the city of Tiaret (Algeria) In January and February 2021 period, 315 collected questionnaires amenable to be treated. Through the SPSS program, both of exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis used in order to ensure the validity of the model.

5. Results:

5.1 Descriptive analysis:

The results showed that 70.8 percent of the respondents are less than 30 years old and 42.5 percent are between 18-25 years old. 61.3 percent of males and 67 percent are a university level education.

5.2 Reliability indicators:

The reliability of the scales was tested by the Alpha Cronbach method (Lee J. Cronbach & Richard J. Shavelson, 2004), the result shows that the Cronbach alpha coefficient for 8 elements used in the measurement is: 0.896, the more result is greater than 0.6 and closer to one, the scale is more reliable, which indicates that the degree of our scale reliability is acceptable.

5.3 Exploratory factor analysis:

After performing the exploratory factor analysis test by the vari max rotation, we found that all the proposed items in the scale are according to the theoretical framework. 5 elements for the brand image in the first factor with a contrast ratio of 46.718 and 3 elements for behavioral loyalty in the second factor with a contrast ratio of 25.956 as the total contrast ratio between them is 72.674, which is a good interpretation ratio. Also, the representation rate for all items are greater than 0.6,

The Kaiser index (Kaiser, 1960) is 0.895, which indicating the good quality of the measurement.

The following table shows the matrix : factors loadings of items.

Table (1): factors loadings of items.

Factor 1 (brand image)	Factor 2 (behavioral loyalty)	Quality of representation
Img1: 0.768		0.602
Img2: 0.860		0.807
Img3: 0.867		0.796

Img4: 0.774	0.666
Img5: 0.708	0.643
Loy1: 0.718	0.744
Loy2: 0.657	0.756
Loy3: 0.893	0.800
Latent root: 3.737	2.076
The ratio: 46.718	25.956

Source: (by the author : statistical software SPSS)

5.4 Confirmatory factor analysis:

Goodness-of-fit statistics of the measurement model are as follows: (Michael W. Browne & Robert Cudeck, 1992), (Blair Wheaton , et al., 1977), (Hu & Bentler, 1999), (Liesbet Goubert, et al., 2004).

Chi-Square Ratio $X^2 / (df) = 2.946$ (recommended value : less than 5.00),

(RMSEA) = 0 .079 (recommended value: 0.05 to 0.08),

(RMR) = 0 .041 (rec value : less than 0.08), (GFI) = 0.953 (rec value : more than 0.90),

(AGFI) = 0.911 (rec value : more than 0.80), (NFI) = 0.964 (rec value : more than 0.95),

(CFI) = 0.976 (rec value : more than 0.95), (IFI) = 0.976 (rec value : more than 0.95),

(TLI) = 0.964 (recommended value : more than 0.95).

Regarding the hypothesis tests (supplied by the AMOS), as shown in table 2, the hypotheses are supported in the estimated structural model, the product related attributes has a significant positive effects on behavioral loyalty.

($\beta = 0.914$, T .test = 11,569), H1 is supported.

Table (2): Hypothesis tests data.

Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
0.914	0.079	11,569	***

Source: (by the author : statistical software AMOS)

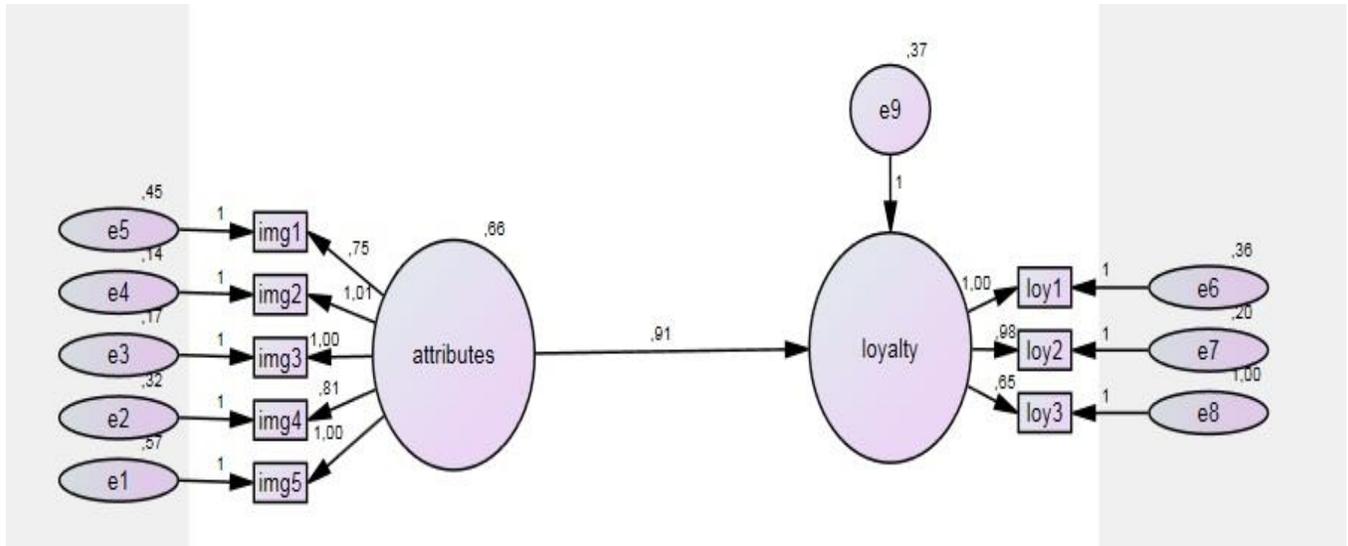


Figure (2): Figure 2. The final model from AMOS.

6. Discussion:

The results showed that product-related attributes, which represent one of the basic elements in forming a brand image, affect largely the behavioral loyalty of the consumer and this is consistent with the results of (Ike-Elechi Ogba & Zhenzhen Tan, 2009) and (Chi Kin (Bennett) Yim & P. K. Kannan, 1999). Therefore, we recommend the marketing managers to focus on creating a specific features and characteristics of brands that represent the competitive advantage, which contributes to building brand loyalty to consumers.

We find that the 2 and 3 elements of the brand image contributes the most to the loadings of this factor, also in terms of the quality of representation, which explains the interest of consumers in these two characteristics (good design, modern style), so they are the most influential in the repetition of consumer buying behavior.

On the other hand, we recommend that future researchers focus more on the relationship between the brand image and the behavioral loyalty, especially in commodities that are consumed periodically and have a difficulty of loyalty to only one brand, such as clothes and shoes.

As well as researching other approaches, trough using intermediate and modified variables in order to gain a more understanding of the purchasing behavior of consumers on the one hand, and to know the strengths and weaknesses of various brands on the other hand, as our study focused only on two variables (independent and dependent) with eight elements of measurement. In addition to the smallness of the sample and focus in one geographical area.

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