
RELATIONSHIP OF CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND BRAND LOYALTY THROUGH THE PATH OF ATTITUDE TOWARD BRAND

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Abstract: *This research aims to address the issue of brand loyalty while identifying its potential predictors. Along with the relationships of customer satisfaction, attitude towards brand and brand loyalty. Attitude towards brand plays its role as a mediator. customer satisfaction has significant positive impact on attitude towards brand and brand loyalty. Total 225 customers are selected randomly for conducting the research. Attitude towards brand partially mediates the relationship of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty. For generalizing the result, current research can also be extended to customers of other users of products like FMCGs, luxury items and even for industrial products in which effect of customer satisfaction and attitude towards brand may be even more prominent in enhancing the level of brand loyalty.*

Keywords: *Customer Satisfaction, Attitude towards Brand, Brand Loyalty*

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Introduction

According to Jones & Suh (2000) and Pappu & Quester (2006) customer satisfaction is one of the most important factors for long run business success and growth and also the most favorite topic among the researchers to be researched within the market. Cooil, Keiningham, Aksoy & Hsu (2007) and Wolter et al., (2019) stated that customer satisfaction is basically the base of any business success in the long run and numbers of studies are being conducted to analyze the impact of customer satisfaction evaluations on post consumption like the attitudinal and such as behavioral loyalty. The research of Dimitriades (2006) and Hayati, et al., (2020) shows that the satisfied customers are less price sensitive and also less being influenced by the competitors attack and meanwhile remain loyal towards the organization for a long period of time in comparison to the dissatisfied customers. During the previous ten years, several studies have been conducted to analyze the relationship among loyalty and customer satisfaction (Sahai, et al., 2020). According to the study of Ahmad & Sherwani (2015) argued that customer loyalty is being influenced by the attitudes towards the brand and focus on the proper management of brand attitudes. Although, it is remained unidentifiable that how and when brand attitudes make an impact on the customer satisfaction and loyalty relation. Direct experience always has greater impact on the behavioral intentions than the indirect experience (Rocklage & Fazio 2020). It is easy to access the direct experience instead of any indirect experience. It is being analyzed that direct experience leads the customer satisfaction. Considering the theory true, customer satisfaction which comes through

direct experience may have greater impact on brand loyalty instead of indirect experiences (Morgeson et al., 2020).

This conceptualization is notable because overall satisfaction is a better indicator of future loyalty and business performance (Fornell, et al., 1996; Morgeson et al., 2020). Therefore, we view customer satisfaction as a customer's overall emotional response to the entire brand experience following the last purchase. Brand loyalty is the main variable of interest for marketing managers and researchers. The previous research on brand loyalty shows that spending expenses of loyal buyers are higher than non-loyal buyers. So, loyal customers are a company's most valuable group (Khan, et al., 2016). Eelen et al., (2017) explain there are positive as well as negative perceptions of the customers towards the brand and the negative perception may lead to patronize of the brand but in few occasions. The patterns in consuming durable and non-durable goods or consumption goods are not similar (Fazal & Kanwal 2017). Customers make a purchase in consumption goods frequently while the purchase of durable goods is made on rare occasions. Brand loyalty is a customer attachment to a high value of the brand (Aaker, 2014). A customer will deliver loyalty, trust for the brand in regard to their beliefs and expectation. Also, they will get remained to their loyal brand and are not carried away by the strategies of their competitor's brand (Aaker, 2014). Haq (2020) examines that 54% complaining customers were not loyal with the particular brand. Moreover, 10% customers are switching annually from one brand to another brand. Researchers claimed that it can cost as much as 6 times more than to attract a new customer than it does to keep an existing one. It is also noted that the any

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particular industry can increase profit by up to 60% by reducing potential migration of customers up to 5% (Radzi et al., 2018).

The mediating variable of the study is attitude towards brand. Attitude toward Brand is considered as the most distinctive concept in social psychology and marketing literature. It is the most investigated issue in the customer behavior researches (Belch & Belch, 2016). According to Kruger et al., (2019)s attitude can be considered to be a relative, enduring, context-specific overall evaluation of some aspects of a customer's environment, be it a product, service or brand (Hoyer et al. 2019; Petruzzellis 2018; Solomon 2013).

This research explains how attitude towards Samsung mobiles shape the customer satisfaction and marketers can boost the level of brand loyalty by promoting the more credible customers of Samsung mobiles. This research adds in the body of literature by proposing the customer satisfaction, attitude towards brand and brand loyalty in a single model. For the practical point of view this research describes that customer satisfaction and attitude towards brand are equally important in shaping the brand loyalty.

Customer Satisfaction

The consumer satisfaction as emotional as it is cognitive (Rodriguez del Bosque and San Martin, 2008). Although, in the literature there is difference among the definitions of consumer satisfaction but there are two common formulations are being identified such as overall satisfaction and transaction specific. According to Oliver (1993) transaction specific satisfaction is basically the post purchase reaction and judgment on the base of recent

experience with the firm. It is also the one time approach when any purchase occurs with the one service provider (Jones & Suh, 2000). Bitner & Hubbert (1994) overall satisfaction is overall thinking of customer on the base of all purchase encounters with such service provider. According to Veloutsou, Gilbert, Moutinho & Goode (2005) overall satisfaction shows the aggregate response on the base of all transaction specific satisfaction with such service encounters.

Transaction specific satisfaction reflects the one time purchase related post purchase reaction although the overall satisfaction reflects the average response on the base of all purchase actions (Auh, Salisbury & Johnson, 2003). As per the researchers Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha & Bryant (1996), Johnson and Gustafsson (2011) and Andreassen, Lervik & Cha (2001) overall satisfaction is one of the important factors for business growth and consumer loyalty. That is the reason that overall satisfaction is the response on the base of overall brand purchase experiences. One of the most important variables for the marketing related researchers and managers is the brand loyalty. Prior study suggested that the cost of retention is higher on loyal customers instead of non-loyal customers. Infact, loyal customers are being understood the most valuable customers (Ganesh, 2016).

There are negative and positive points of views of customers about the brand although negative thoughts may lead to repurchase but sometime (Dick and Basu, 2017). Patterns of consumption could be different related to durable and also the non-durable things (Thiele & Bennett, 2017). Customers may purchase the consumable products on a frequent bases, but the purchase of durable products are less frequent. The

attachment of the customers towards high value brand is called the brand loyalty (Aaker, 2014). If customer believe the brand and have positive expectation about the brand, then he or she will be loyal and have trust on the brand. Due to that they will remain loyal towards the brand and will not change the brand even with the efforts of competitors (Aaker, 2014). According to Goodman, & Newman, (2017) “examines that 54% complaining customers were not loyal with the particular brand, moreover, 10% customers are switching annually from one brand to another brand, researchers claimed that it can cost as much as 6 times more than to attract a new customer than it does to keep an existing one, it is also noted that the any particular industry can increase profit by up to 60% by reducing potential migration of customers up to 5%” (Radzi et al., 2018; Mbama & Ezepue 2018).

Brand Loyalty

Bandyopadhyay & Martell (2007), Dick & Basu, (1994) suggested that different studies have been conducted during the last 30 years but most studies were based on attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. Frequent and repeat purchase of the brand referred as the behavioural loyalty. On the other hand, attitudinal loyalty is basically psychological state of the customer about the brand such as the intention to purchase and also the intention to recommend the brand to others instead of making purchase action in actual (Jacoby, 1971; Jarvis & Wilcox, 1976). The authors have discourage the behavioural loyalty and argued in favor of the attitudinal loyalty because they though it is more adequate to have attitudinal approach like visitors may loyal to one tourist location through spreading positive word of mouth instead of visiting it again and again

(Chen and Gursoy, 2001). Hence the study adopts’ “attitudinal loyalty and defines brand loyalty as the consumer’s intention to visit or willingness to recommend the hotel or restaurant brand, it provide a competitive advantage by creating an effective barrier against competitors, increases the company’s ability to respond to competitive practices, because of this, brand loyalty has been evaluated as a concept to be dealt with both behavioral and attitudinal purchases” (Kim et al., 2015; Rai & Medha, 2013).

It is necessary to make it separate that the customers who purchase the brand on a repeat bases and the other customer who prefer the brand with others and purchase as per such preferences. To make this separation possible, it is important to figure out the customer loyalty. Although, attitudinal type brand loyalty can be determined through the positive attitude in customers related to the brand is present or not. To build such positive attitude towards the brand, it is necessary to analyze the “satisfaction, commitment and integration” which plays very critical role. Through these factors’ customer can be encouraged to purchase the product. Infact, attitudinal loyalty continuously focusses on the customers original loyalty which is genuinely far ahead from the actual reason may have impact on the purchase choice and how customers thing and appreciate the brand or product (Gounaris & Stathapoulos, 2017; Alvi, et al., 2015). Brand loyalty displays the customers good side about the brand or product, and which also lead to repeat purchase behavior (Liu et al., 2012; Alvi, et al., 2020; Rather, 2017, 2018). Customers who are really attached to the brand are more often spread positive words instead of the customers who are not really attached to the product or brand

Doi: <https://doi.org/10.54692/ajss.2020.431092> (Harrigan et al., 2017; So et al., 2014). Such kinds of attitudes are always expected to enhance the loyalty and even repurchase behavior (Harrigan et al., 2017; Hollebeek, 2011).

Attitude toward Brand:

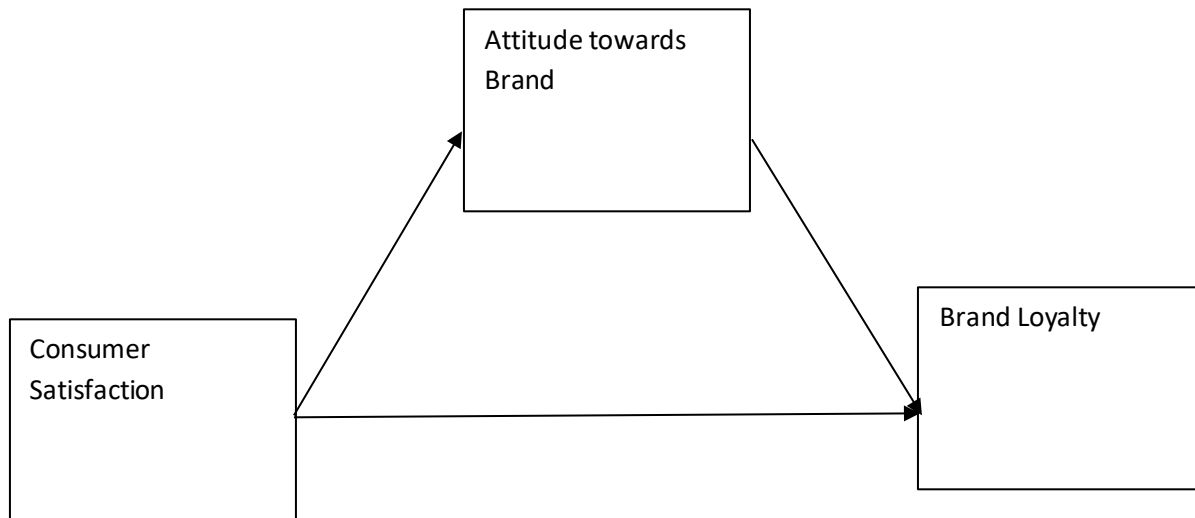
Among the marketing and social psychology literature, attitude toward brand is being considered the most important concept. It is among the top researched topics particularly related to consumer behavior studies (Belch & Belch, 2016). As per the Kruger et al., (2019), Hoyer et al. (2019), Petruzzellis (2018) and Solomon (2013) “attitude can be considered to be a relative, enduring, context-specific overall evaluation of some aspects of a consumer’s environment, be it a product, service or brand, therefore, brand attitude can be described as a consumer’s overall evaluation of the ability of the brand to satisfy needs” (Liu et al. 2012). Malik & Ahmad (2016) and Eagly and Chaiken (2014) define attitude as “relatively global and enduring evaluation of an object, issue, person, or action”. Sheerazet al. (2016) and Fishbein and Ajzen (2017) define attitudes as “learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object”. Mitchell and Olson (2018)

define Attitude toward brand shows the aggregate analysis of the brand on an individual’s level. According to Shimp (2018) it is basically relying on personal intention related to brand and it would be considered as the most trustable factor to identify the customer behavior toward the brand.

Relationships of Variables

According to the Back & Parks (2003) prior researches shows the direct relation among the brand loyalty and customer satisfaction within the service industry. There is also a strong relation found within the hotel and retail banking industry among the variables of brand loyalty and customer satisfaction (Rust and Zahorik, 1993). It also shows the positive impact of customer satisfaction on the brand loyalty among the different sectors like restaurants, hairdressers, dentistry and auto repair services (McDougall and Levesque, 1994). It is easy to predict due to relation among customer satisfaction and customer loyalty (Faullant, Matzler, and Fuller, 2008; Alvi, et al., 2019). According to Anderson, Fornell, and Lehmann (1994), Fornell (1992), Hallowell (1996), Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000) and Lin and Wang (2006) there is positive relation among the customer loyalty and customer satisfaction.

Theoretical Model



Scale and Measurement

In this study the scale of Attitude toward brand is consist of eight-items scales. Response of first five items will be collected on five-point Likert scale which is ranging from (1 being “strongly disagree,” 5 “strongly agree”). Response of last three items will be collected on five-point Likert scale which is ranging from (1 being “very bad,” 5 “very good”). The scale is adopted from the researcher (Krosnick et al. 1993).

In this study brand loyalty measured in four-item scale. This scale comprised a five-point Likert scale (1 being “strongly disagree,” 5 “strongly agree”). The scale is adopted from the researcher (Kim 1998).

Customer satisfaction was assessed by two 5-point numeric scales as “extremely dissatisfied/extremely satisfied” (Spreng & Mackoy, 1996).

Target Population

Customers of Samsung Mobile users who live in Lahore are the target population.

Sample Size

A total of 225 people responded to this survey. Some respondents refused to participate to this study due to inconvenience of time and location.

Sampling Technique

Data is collected with the help of simple random sampling from list of selected customers. The researcher collected the data and made a list of Samsung users within 20 days then run data on excel sheet and select the customers.

Reliability Analysis

Reliability of data is based upon value of Cronbach's Alpha. If Cronbach's Alpha >0.50 then the data considers as reliable. Value of Cronbach's Alpha of customer satisfaction is 0.84. This indicates that data is reliable. Value of Cronbach's Alpha of attitude toward brand is 0.88. This indicates that data is reliable. Above table shows that overall value of Cronbach's Alpha is 0.75. This indicates that data is reliable.

Table No 1 Correlation

	CS	ATB	BC
CS	1		
ATB	0.39**	1	
BL	0.45**	0.38**	1

Correlation analysis explains the kind of relationship between the variables. Table no 1 shows that coefficient of correlation between attitude towards brand and brand loyalty is 0.39. This shows that positive significant

relationship with one another. The coefficient of correlation between customer satisfaction and attitude towards brand is 0.39 and shows that these variables positive significant relationship with one another. Above table shows that coefficient of correlation between brand loyalty and customer satisfaction is 0.45. This shows that these variables positive significant relationship with one another. Above table shows that coefficient of correlation between brand loyalty and attitude towards brand is 0.38. This shows that these variables positive significant relationship with one another.

Results and discussion

Figure No 2

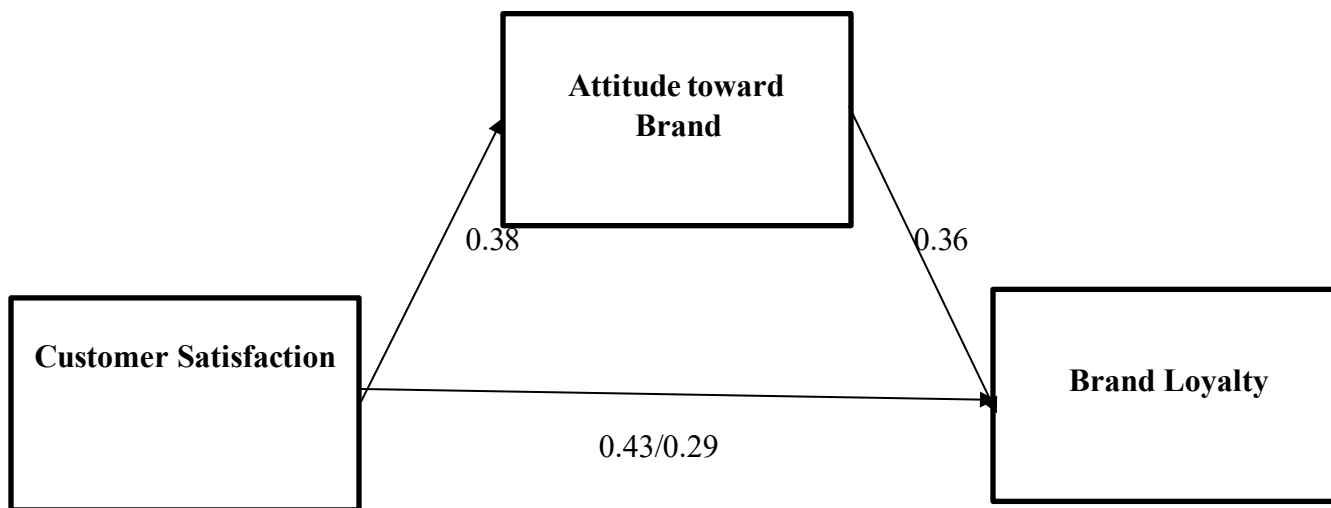


Table 2 Mediation Results

		“β”	“S.E	“F”	“R²”	“Decision”
“Path c (Step 1)”						
“Outcome”: Brand Loyalty						
“Predictor”:	Customer Satisfaction	0.43	.085	96.54	.35	0.000<0.01
“Step 2 (Path a)”						
“Outcome”: Attitude toward Brand						
“Predictor”:	Customer Satisfaction	0.38	.089	86.21	0.29	0.000<0.01
“Step 3 A (Path b)”						
“Outcome”: Brand Loyalty						
“Predictor”:	Attitude toward Brand	0.36	0.075	89.65	0.35	0.000<0.01
“Step 3B (Path c’)”						
“Outcome”: Brand Loyalty						
“Mediator”:	Customer Satisfaction	0.29	0.066			0.000<0.01
“Predictor”:	Attitude toward Brand	0.23	0.079			0.000<0.01
“P<0.01”						
“P<0.05”						
“P<0.10”						

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Above table describes the effect of customer satisfaction on brand loyalty. Value of R^2 and Value of F are good in range. The value of p of $F=0.000$. This value is <0.01 . This value is also in acceptable range.

For effect of customer satisfaction on brand loyalty p is 0.000. This value is <0.01 . This means that hypothesis of about effect of customer satisfaction on brand loyalty is accepted. Value of β for this relationship is 43. This shows that one-unit change in customer satisfaction result in 43% change in brand loyalty.

Above table describes the effect of customer satisfaction on attitude towards brand. Value of R^2 and Value of F are good in range. The value of p of $F=0.000$. This value is <0.01 . This value is also in acceptable range.

For effect of customer satisfaction on attitude towards brand is 0.000. This value is <0.01 . This means that hypothesis of about effect of customer satisfaction on attitude towards brand is accepted. Value of β for this relationship is 38. This shows that one-unit change in BC result in 38% change in attitude towards brand. Above table describes the Effect of ATB on brand loyalty. Value of R^2 and Value of F are good in range. The value of p of $F=0.000$. This value is <0.01 . This value is also in acceptable range.

For effect of ATB on brand loyalty is 0.000. This value is <0.01 . This means that hypothesis of about effect of ATB on brand loyalty is accepted. Value of β for this relationship is 36.0. This shows that change in one unit of ATB result in 36.0% change in brand loyalty. For checking the mediation of attitude toward brand between the relationship of customer satisfaction and brand loyalty current study reports that the path between the relationship of

attitude toward brand on attitude toward brand is significant ($\beta=0.43$, $p=.000$) and for the relationship of attitude toward brand is significant with brand loyalty ($\beta=0.36$, $p=.000$). Thus, both the paths from independent to mediator and mediator to dependent variables are significant.

For checking the mediation influence of attitude toward brand for the relation of attitude towards brand with brand loyalty. Current research analyses the three direct relationships. Table no 5 describes that all these relationships are significant. For evaluating the mediation effect, current research regresses the independent variable (attitude towards brand) with mediator variable (brand loyalty) on brand loyalty. It is observed that value of β is reduces from 0.43 to 0.29. This value describes that mediation is exist for the relation of brand credibility with brand loyalty, but this is partial mediation. Hence mediation of attitude toward brand between the relationship of brand credibility and brand loyalty exists.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This research describes the relationship of customer satisfaction, attitude towards brand and brand loyalty. Attitude towards brand plays its role as mediator. This research proposes two hypotheses for direct relationships and one hypothesis for the mediation effect of attitude towards brand between the relationships of customer satisfaction with brand loyalty. Results indicate that customer satisfaction and attitude toward brand has positive effect on brand loyalty. Similarly, attitude towards brand has positive significant effect on brand loyalty. Results also describe that attitude towards brand partially mediates the relationship of customer satisfaction with brand loyalty.

Limitations

Several limitations of this study should be considered when the current results are interpreted.

- It includes only the range of customers of Samsung Mobile who are within the boundaries of Lahore Pakistan.
- Demographic variables were included as control variables in the regression analysis and are taken as serious limitations.
- An additional limitation of present research is that obtained results cannot be comprehensive to female customers because majority of the participants were male.
- As in this study questionnaires are taken as measurement instruments, there was less chance for customers to explain in their own words about the reasons for brand loyalty.
- This research includes only few antecedents of brand loyalty.
- This research does not include the potential outcomes variables

Future Researches

- Longitudinal studies will facilitate an understanding of the relationship between the variables in more depth.
 - It is interesting to include the customers of other mobile companies such as Apple, OPPO and Q mobiles and can compare the level of customer loyalty among the customers of these companies.

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- The aim of the study was to establish relationships between the prescribed variables, future studies can include a larger and wider variety of variables; replication of the study in other regions may produce different results due to contextual differences.
- It is also worthwhile to consider female customers of Samsung mobile for generalizing the results because large number of females also used Samsung mobiles.
- This research cannot be limited to mobile industry because other sectors like banking, beverage, cosmetic, textile and fashion industry also use the concept of brand loyalty for generating more profit and for competitive advantage also.
- In future, researches in depth interviews will also a helpful tool for attaining the complete information about the brand loyalty and other variables.
- In future studies, to include the range of other potential antecedents like pleasure, product quality, brand image, brand reputation, brand love, brand satisfaction, brand trust, brand commitment, brand experience along with current variables to understand the phenomenon of brand loyalty.
- Can also be helpful some potential outcomes i.e. brand equity, market share, positive word of mouth may also be included in future researches.

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