

## INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF BRAND CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE ON CUSTOMER REUSE OF THE SERVICE THROUGH TRUST IN AYANDEH BANK

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**Abstract.** One of the concepts that have recently attracted the attention of experts in the field of consumer behavior is brand perception. This concept refers to experiences that derived from the complex customer interactions with the trust. Present research aims to Investigating the effect of brand perception on customers reuse of services in Ayandeh Bank. Required information was adapted by the questionnaire-based on research model and was responded by 384 Ayandeh Bank customers. The Structural equation modeling was used to analyze data and reliability had been confirmed. The result of this study confirmed that Brand perception has effect on customers reuse of services, with the trust. At the end based on research findings recommendations were presented.

**Keywords:** Brand perception - customers reuse of services – Trust.

**Introduction.** The most important factor in maintaining and developing a brand is creating loyalty to the attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors of customers. One of the important factors in the formation of customer reuse of services and, in general, the brand of an organization, is the image of the brand personality that is created in the minds of customers. Hence, companies consider their own long-term investments in the field of advertising, promotion and sales. Because they know that their market power stems from the brand's product creation and brings them a strong brand of loyalty to their customers. Therefore, it is essential for companies to assess their brand personality status in the minds of customers and their effect on customer loyalty to grow their position in the market.

**Statement of Problem.** Today, organizations with competitive markets and continuous change they have realized that, as in the past, they do not face a growing economic system and growing markets therefore, each customer has a special value and should fight to gain more market share. Although marketers have been thinking of finding new customers until yesterday, but in today's perspective, marketing is the discovery of a need, an effort to meet it, and continuity of effort. Today, customer reassignment on re-purchase of the product or reuse of the service has found a special place Therefore, only clients who have found a sense of belonging and a cardiac affluence and have a long-term profitability are considered capital for organizations. Strong brands create an identity firm in the marketplace. Undoubtedly, the banking industry is known as one of the most expensive economic foundations of any country. The dynamism, effectiveness, and capability of the banking system not only benefit the business of banks, but also impacts on the external environment (macroeconomic and commercial environments). Brand experience is not only an indicator in explaining the current financial value of the organization, but it can also be expressed as one of the most effective indicators in the organization's future activities. Meanwhile, the Ayandeh Bank has put one of its operational goals to implement programs and policies to attract and retain customers and it sees this as one of the challenges facing in terms of earning and increasing long-term profits. The services the Ayandeh bank offers to its customers is in fact a showcase of the bank, and customer reuse of the service will keep the customer and increase the performance of the bank. In this research, the basic question is, what is the customer experience of the brand affects on customer reuse of the service?

Investigating the effect of brand experience on customers reuse of services in Ayandeh Bank.

### Literature review

#### 1. The role of brand in services

As explained above, in the information economics perspective, the brand constitutes a strategic, long-term asset for the retail firm, which may be called upon to help with customer relationship issues like customer retention and customer beneficial behaviors (e.g., recommendations). Within the scope of our research we include long-term, formalized service relationships that are entered into by customers, as exemplified by those with retail banking and telecommunications. Such relationships tend to last years (though less often today than in the past), but are interestingly characterized by relatively low interaction levels between firm and customer. We propose that the brand is an important relational tool in the firm's customer relationship management (CRM) arsenal, as suggested by research from Erdem and Swait (1998). That stream of research builds on the information economics paradigm (Stigler, 1961; Stiglitz, 1987) applied to the product case, to propose that brands are valuable to consumers because (1) they reduce perceived risk of consumption and (2) they economize decision-making costs. The basis for these assertions is that the brand is an efficient market signal that the firm deploys to address market information asymmetries (i.e. consumers know less about a firm's product or service than does the firm, hence they are at a disadvantage, in the end leading to consumer uncertainty about the product). While the same reasoning is not directly applicable to the case of services, it is nonetheless the case that information asymmetries are likely to also exist among customers of services. Consider that customers have a limited number of interactions with their bank or telecom company, and these often occur following service problems (long queues, slow tellers, confusion concerning procedures) or even failures (broken ATMs, dropped calls, billing errors). Such events may serve to remind customers that their current impressions about the firm might be incorrect; essentially, they introduce a degree of uncertainty about the promises the firm has made, and its willingness and ability to keep them; and the benefit to the consumer of maintaining a longterm relationship with the provider.

Alternatively put, this uncertainty concerns the perceived stability of the brand, and arises, just as in the product case, from the information asymmetry under which the customer operates. This asymmetry places the customer at a disadvantage in the relationship with the firm. The firm thus has an incentive to compensate for the resulting uncertainty by signaling their willingness to deliver on the service promises they have made to the customer. Brands are good signaling devices because existing customers recognize that acts compromising the brand (e.g., repeated and persistent service failures, a history of billing errors) can be punished by cashing in the “bond” implicitly posted by the firm (Wernerfelt, 1988). What “bond” is this? It is made up of all the brand investments the firm has made over the years (advertising, sponsorships, and social responsibility actions are all examples of such investments), as well as the revenue stream that these investments enable. These investments will be partly or fully compromised if consumers become disenchanted with the brand and leave the franchise; and clearly, corresponding future profits will be compromised. Essentially, brands give consumers leverage over firms, encouraging firms to behave appropriately, to wit, by forcing firms to keep promises they make to consumers.

Because of the implicit bond posted by the firm via the brand, signaling theory postulates that brands are credible (i.e. believable and trustworthy) signals: they motivate firms to be truthful about their products/services and to deliver on claims made about them. This concept of brand credibility is based on Hovland et al.’s (1953) early research on the credibility of the communicator, and was adapted to the context of the brand by Erdem and Swait (1998, 2004), Erdem et al. (2002) and Swait and Erdem (2006). Based on this definition, brand credibility comprises two key facets:

trustworthiness (i.e. the belief that the firm is willing to deliver on its promises) and expertise (i.e. the belief that the firm is capable of delivering on its promises). Note that trustworthiness is distinct from trust and can be described as a characteristic of an entity (e.g., person or brand). A fundamental theme in this conceptualization concerns the motivation of the communicator, i.e. whose interests the communicator has at heart, or the sincerity and trustworthiness of the communicator (Hovland et al., 1953). Brand credibility is a key element in Keller’s (2001) customer-based brand equity pyramid, representing one aspect of the consumer’s response to the brand. This is consistent with our conceptualization of brand credibility as representing the relationship over time of a customer with a brand. This perspective of a relationship between the

brand and customer has also been developed by Fournier (1998), Blackston (2000) and Sweeney and Chew (2002) among others. Consider that the brand adds value to the firm in two ways: it first attracts new customers by developing and focusing awareness and recognition, but then also serves as a reminder to current customers to think about the firm, and to do so favorably (Rust et al., 2000). It is in this latter case that the concept of furthering the relationship with the brand becomes meaningful. The brand can be described as a mechanism to engage both buyer and seller in a long-term relationship and play a key role in building this relationship (Dall’Omo Riley and de Chernatony, 2000; Davis et al., 2000). Thus, the brand can act as a defensive marketing tool to maintain current customers as well as an offensive marketing tool to gain new customers. The importance of defensive marketing in the retail service context has been recognized through the knowledge that the cost of attracting a new customer far exceeds that of retaining the same customer (e.g., Heskett et al., 1994; Reicheld and Sasser, 1990; Rust et al., 1995). It is important to understand that in the context of services, the primary service brand and the organization are often synonymous (Berry, 2000). As a result, the brand takes on a wider corporate meaning in the context of services.<sup>2</sup> In the context of relational services, the focus of the brand is on the customer’s experience with the organization and how this establishes brand perceptions and meaning (Brodie et al., 2002). This is consistent with our view that the consumer’s perceptions about a brand’s credibility are (essentially) a summary statistic of the relationship with the brand to date.

**2. Brand experience.** De Chernatony et al., (2011, pp. 31) describes a brand as “a cluster of functional and emotional needs that enables organizations to make promises about a unique and welcomed communication practices, such as advertising, where promises are given but not kept. It is about delivering the brand promise throughout all the service touch-points first.

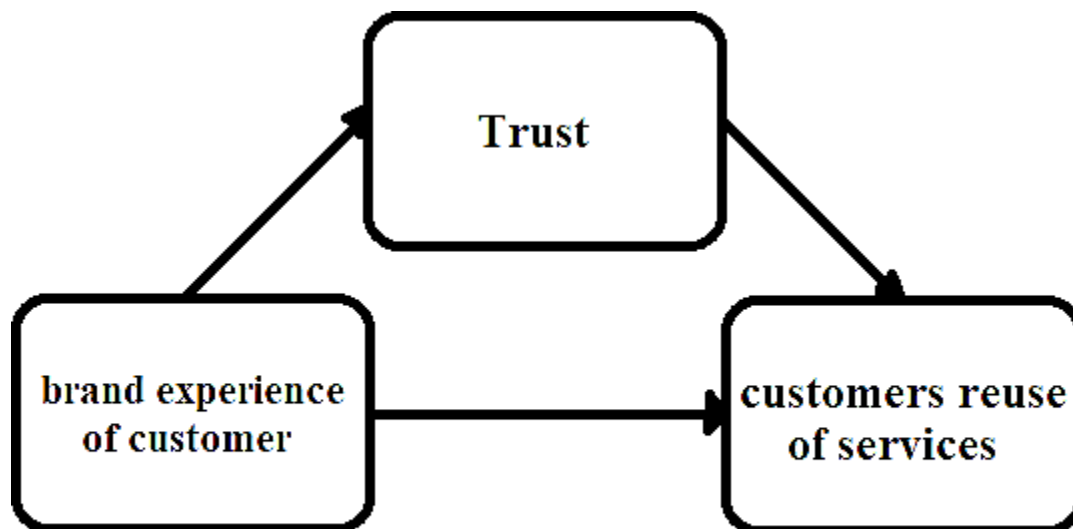
Brakus et al. (2009) explains that brand experiences can vary in both strength and intensity. They can be positive, or negative, spontaneous and short-lived, or deliberate and long lasting. The study indicates that brand experience has a behavioural impact, and affects consumer satisfaction and loyalty directly or indirectly. In previous research literature on experience and customer behaviour, it has been found that strong experiences promote better memory, because information is more vivid and concrete, and requires more elaborative internal rehearsal and self-generation of consumers (Houch and Deighton, 1989). This means that if the consumer has strong and positive brand experiences, he or she will remember this, and the chances are that he or she will choose the same brand again. However, if the customer’s experience differs from the brand promise, customers will rely on their own experiences and not the promise communicated through advertising (Berry, 2000). A positive, memorable and holistic brand experience of a service can therefore contribute to establishing a trustworthy relationship with the customer, and will over time be rewarded with loyalty if the promise is delivered. For services, therefore, it is vitally important to ensure that the customer experience consistently delivers upon the brand promise. When the branding process is done to perfection, the consumer’s perception of the brand will be the same as the brand’s proposition (Motto Filho, 2012). In reality, the delivery of a service experience may not always happen according to plan. In situations where service expectations are not met because of mistakes, the question arises how service loyalty can be saved. This brings us to the concept of “Service Recovery”. Service recovery refers to the actions a company takes to address customer’s complaints regarding perceived failure of a service (Spreng et al, 1995). If service recovery is implemented effectively, it will enhance the customer’s perception of the brand. This means that, although the brand promise was not delivered in the first instance, a “make it right” attitude of the company may even accelerate and sustain customers’ loyalty as they experience and

appreciate the “goodwill”. Given this context it is important to ensure service recovery measures are considered in designing the brand experience. Today, consumers not only buy products and services in order to fulfill functional needs but also to get the emotional experiences related to the purchase (Morrison & Grane, 2007; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010; Walter, 2013). For instance, consumers are willing to pay almost 50 NOK for a small cup of coffee to purchase the ‘Starbucks experience’, which is double the price compared to a coffee at a traditional café (Walter, 2013). Because of this increasing trend, marketers and designers ask themselves; how do consumers experience a brand? How is brand experience measured? Does brand experience affect consumer behavior? Brakus et al (2009) seek answers to these questions through their study on brand experience, and how this influences brand personality, which is defined as the set of human characteristics, associated with the brand (Aaker, 1997).

**3. Trust.** Brand is a name, sign, symbol or design or the combination of all which means as an identification of a product or service and make it difference from the competitor (Kotler, 2012). Lau and Lee (2000) proof that brand trust is a mediating variable which related brand predictability, brand competency, brand reputation, brand satisfaction, brand experience, trust in company and brand liking with brand loyalty. Consumer’s trust in the marketing literature is concept which has a strong correlation with consumer’s perception. One of it is the concept proposed by Assael (1998). In this concept, brand trust is a cognitive component of the behavior. Trust is the expectation of the agents involve in a transaction and the risk which related with the expectation and behavior (Rai and Medha, 2013; Atkinson and Rosenthal, 2014). Brugha (1999) defined trust as an expression of a feeling. The feeling has an effect to cognition, affection and behavior. Assael (1998) said that trust could be measured by determining the attribute and benefit of a brand. Discussion about trust is related with relationship marketing (Morgan and Hunt, 1994, Parasuraman et al, 1985). Trust and commitment are mediating variables in the company relationship with their customers (Ekelundand Sharma, 2001; Tezinde et al ,2001; Morgan and Hunt, 1994; Alam and Yasin, 2010). There are two categories of trust, they are organizational trust and personal trust (Ekelundand Sharma, 2001). Brand trust is a part of personal trust. According to Gurviez and Korchia (2003), there are several things could be identified from trust. First, trust and commitment are the most important variables in maintaining long term relationship among partners in the business and industry. Second, explanation from trust and commitment in the relationship between company and consumers give supplement for business theory especially about transaction cost. Third, the biggest difficulties of constructing the trust concept are in the cognitive and affective based. Several factors, such as brand, trust, commitment and satisfaction give effect on loyalty (Tezinde et al, 2001; Lassoued and Hobbs, 2015; Joo, 2015).

#### THE ORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF THE RESEARCH

In this research, for investigating customers relationship management systems, AMJAD SHAMIM and MUHAMMAD MOHSIN BUTT, (2016) based on three dimensions of brand experience, customers reuse of services and trust have been used. According to that, research conceptual model based on research subject is as following.



AMJAD SHAMIM and MUHAMMAD MOHSIN BUTT, 2016

Figure 1: Research conceptual model

**Methodology of the research.** Present research is a descriptive-survey research. Statistical universe includes all Ayandeh Bank customers in Tehran. Because of extensive research universe 384 ones of them were selected by Morgan table. In order to gather data, a questionnaire has been used. The questionnaire consists of three parts. In the first part demographic information such as gender, education level, age, marital status and amount of income were allocated. In the second part, 13 questions were allocated to brand experience and 5 questions were allocated to trust 5 questions

were allocated to reuse of services and they were confirmed by vote taking and consultation with experts and decision-makers and then after investigating its reliability and validity, it has dealt with data gathering. The questions were in closed type and Likert scale has been used that includes five points of strongly disagree, disagree, partially, agree, strongly agree. The way of scoring choices is from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). It is worth explaining that the questionnaire was investigated by experts and its reliability and validity were examined and they confirmed.

Investigating the effect of brand experience on customer's reuse of services in Ayandeh Bank. In addition, sub-hypotheses of the research are as follows:

1. Brand customer experience has significant impact on customers' reuse of services.
2. The customer experience of the brand has significant impact on customer reuse of the service through trust.

**Analyzing the data of the research:**

In this research, independent variable is customer experience of the brand and its dimensions and dependent variable is customer reuse of the service. In following, results of research data analysis is presented: according to the analytical research model and for hypotheses examination related to the relationship between dependent and independent variables, the structural equation modeling (SEM) by LISREL 8.8 software have been used.

➤ Kolmogorov-Smirnov test:

With respect to, one of the default assumptions of the Pearson correlation test is observations normally distributed, first, to ensure normality of the variables, we used the KS test.

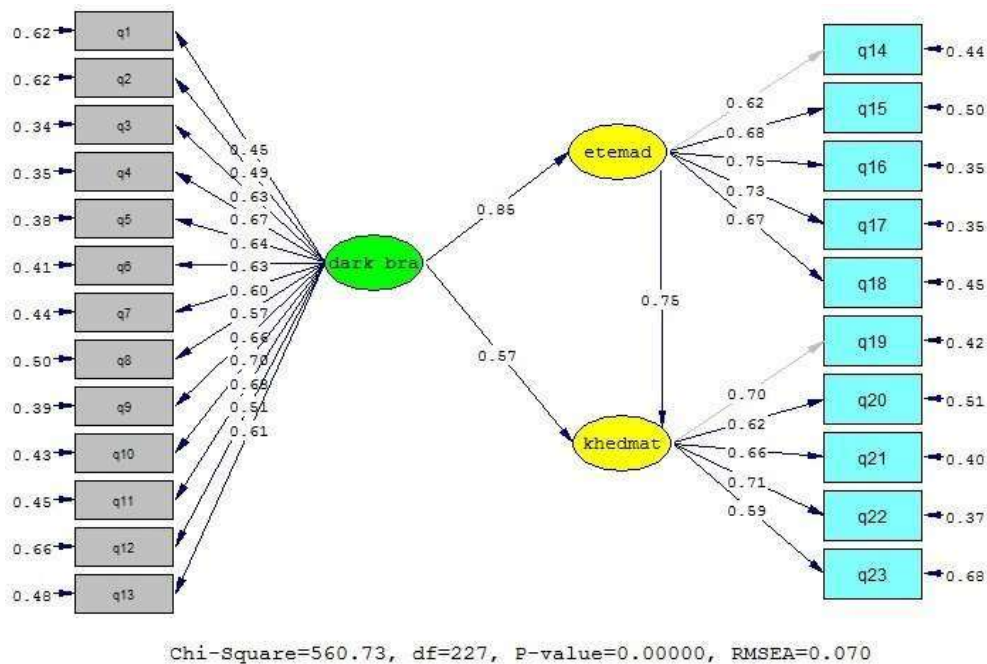
**Table1: Kolmogorov-Smirnov test**

Component	KS statistic	Significant level	result
Brand customer experience	1.519	0.220	Normal
Trust	1.971	0.231	Normal
customer reuse of the service	2.080	0.313	Normal

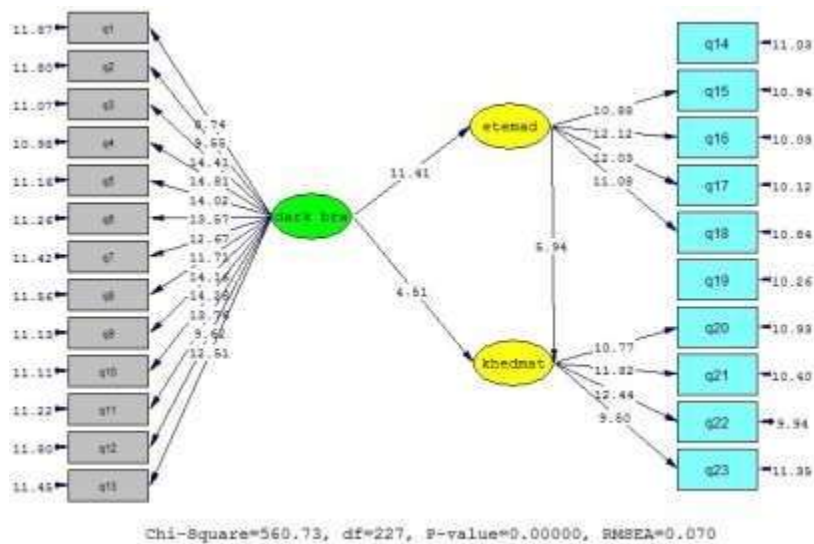
➤ **The theoretical model is based on software LISREL output**

To test the hypothesis and validity of theoretical research model and influence coefficients Structural equation modeling method was used.

LISREL Software was used to check the main research model. Finally, the model with the necessary corrections comes in below:



**Figure 2: Standardized values research model**



**Figure 3: The research model based on the t-Value**

For Estimation of main model, maximum likelihood method and to evaluate the model goodness, the chi-square index (X2), the ratio of the chi-square on degree of freedom (X2/df) normalized fit index (NFI), non-normed Fit Index (NNFI), root Mean Square Error of approximation (RMSEA) and Root Mean Square Residual (RMR) were used.

As can be observed, the significant number of chi-square is above 0.05 threshold that shows excellent goodness of model. On the other hand, if the ratio of the chi-square on degree of freedom be less than 3, show excellent goodness. If the RMSEA index be smaller than 0.05 shows excellent goodness of model too. In this model NFI and NNFI index are respectively equal to 0.97 & 0.98, RMSEA index is respectively equal 0.073 that confirm the estimated optimal goodness fit of model.

<i>Index</i>	<i>Index</i>	<i>Value reported</i>
<i>Chi square</i>	<i>X2</i>	822.88
<i>Goodness of Fit Index</i>	<i>GFI</i>	0.91
<i>Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index</i>	<i>AGFI</i>	0.98
<i>Normed Fit Index</i>	<i>NFI</i>	0.97
<i>Non-Normed Fit Index</i>	<i>NNFI</i>	0.98
<i>Incremental Fit Index</i>	<i>IFI</i>	0.99
<i>Comparative Fit Index</i>	<i>CFI</i>	0.99
<i>Root Mean Square Error of Approximation</i>	<i>RMSEA</i>	0.073

➤ **Hypotheses Test**

In this section, by using structural equation modeling, the research hypotheses are discussed. According to discussed hypotheses, all analyzes have been done in the level of error 0.05 and confidence of 95%. To verify and accept the hypothesis, significant number of t-value should be larger than 1.96.

In the hypothesis, H0 assuming no correlation between variables and H1 confirmed positive correlation and significant relationship between the variables.

➤ **First hypothesis: Brand customer experience has significant impact on customers' reuse of services.**

It value is 0.57 that achieve from multiplication between the pathway of Brand customer experience and customers' reuse of services ( $0.59 \times 0.62 \times 0.64 = 0.23$ ). It shows significant and positive correlation and confirm the hypothesis

➤ **Second hypothesis: Brand customer experience has significant impact on customer reuse of the service through trust.**

It value is 0.63 that achieve from multiplication between the pathway of Brand customer experience and customer reuse of the service through trust ( $0.85 \times 0.75 = 0.63$ ). It shows significant and positive correlation and confirm the hypothesis

**Conclusion and suggestions.** The aim of this research was to Investigating the effect of brand experience on customer's reuse of services in Ayandeh Bank. Results of the research showed that brand experience influence on customer's reuse of services. The obtained results confirmed the positive impact of Brand customer experience and customer reuse of the service through trust. According to studies conducted in the research process and the results of statistical analysis of research data can be offered the following suggestions:

- ✓ The reasonable price of services can have a significant impact on brand awareness by customers. It is therefore proposed to avoid a negative attitude in the client's mind a reasonable price will be set for the service.

- ✓ Other factors that make the customer have a good experience with the brand, is the suitability of the service to the needs of customers therefore, it is suggested that a team of expert with customer surveys provide the customer's needs.
  - ✓ Other factors that make customers have better understand from brand and tend to re-use the service are a neat and appealing look and good behavior of bank's employees therefore, it is suggested that the bank managers would do more by providing a disciplinary and moral charter in the workplace.
  - ✓ Other important factors are the physical features of the bank, according to the type of services provided.
  - ✓ Maintaining reputation, credit and bank name are so important for the customers.
  - ✓ Trust in the service records a long-term positive attitude in the customer's mind this can be done by explaining how to use the service patiently and calmly by the employees of the bank.
  - ✓ Security is one of the factors that inspire trust in the customer's mind. Bank employees can build confidence by following the security issues in dealing with customers and educating customers about security issues when using their services.
  - ✓ Provide accurate, transparent and honest and expert advice
  - ✓ Providing complementary services, this factor can also help a customer's sense of trust.
  - ✓ The behavior of bank employees has a very important role in making trust.
  - ✓ Intimacy and handle customer problems can make trust. Intimacy creates trust and vice versa. Customer's voice and response to it, especially complaints and criticisms, can enhance the sense of trust.
- **The other research suggestions**
- ✓ It is recommended that future researchers to use from this model in other organizations and compare the results with this research.
  - ✓ It is recommended that future researchers to use from other models.
  - ✓ It is recommended that future researchers to use Mediating variables such as organization resources.
- **Limitations of the research**
- ✓ Some people do not cooperate in completing the questionnaire.
  - ✓ The lack of a standard questionnaire for survey the research purposes.
  - ✓ Lack of scientific sources about this subject.
  - ✓ Time-limited for further investigation.

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