



The Influence of Brand Loyalty on Cosmetics purchase Intention of Iranian Female Consumers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to investigate the relationship of factors affecting brand loyalty on purchase intention by using cosmetic of female consumers in Iran. Factors affecting of brand loyalty are brand name, product quality, price, design, promotion, service quality and store environment. A total of 408 questionnaires were distributed to female cosmetic consumers aged between 16-45. The survey was distributed at Tehran city at three malls. The proposed relationships have been tested using structural equation modelling (SEM) with lisrel and visual PLS. The research results showed that there is positive and significant relationship between factors of brand loyalty (brand name, product quality, price, design, promotion, service quality and store environment) with cosmetics purchase intention.

The objective of the analysis is to find out whether there is significant relationship between the variables. A scale of overall purchase intention in cosmetic sector was obtained, composed of seven factors and represented by 29 items that are significant for their measurement.

Keywords: Brand loyalty; purchase intention, store environment.

INTRODUCTION

In today's society, beauty and physical attractiveness are constantly emphasized as desirable and admirable characteristics [1,2,3].

Iran has emerged as the world's seventh largest consumer of cosmetics \$us2.1 billion (\$A2.26 billion) annually on various beauty products, the state-run English-language Iran daily newspaper reports. The report's findings indicate Iranian women and girls, generally urban and between the ages of 16 -45, spend a per capita average of about \$7 each month on cosmetics. Tehran is the capital and the largest city in Iran. The city had an estimated population of 14785000 in 2011. Tehran has grown to be a cosmopolitan metropolis. Its rapid development and urbanization, coupled with the relatively high average income of its population, has transformed Tehran. Buying behavior is heavily influenced by the values, norms, and expectations of Islam. The extended family is the foundation of rural and urban society, and thus there is a strong sense of loyalty to the clan or family. Therefore, one can imagine the intensive social interaction that takes place in Tehran and its impact on Iranian females purchase intention. This study analyzes the factors influence of brand loyalty on Iranian female on purchase intention.

The objective of this study is to brand loyalty factors on consumers' purchase intention. In the next section, we review the relevant literature and discuss the conceptual framework. Then we develop several hypotheses to be tested and describe the empirical approach and data collection. The last section outlines the implications of our findings and discuss for future research.

Theoretical background and hypotheses

Brand loyalty:

Loyalty has received considerable attention in marketing literature for over 80years beginning with the early work [4]. Brand loyalty implies that consumers have a good attitude towards a particular brand over other competing brands. loyalty was been defined and measured in relation to several marketing aspects such as brand loyalty, product loyalty, service loyalty, and chain or store loyalty[5].

Brand loyalty is the most significant component that many industries and many scholars are examining as factors that could influence brand loyalty. High brand loyalty could lower many aspects of cost spent by the organization. Furthermore, according to the framework of brand equity that was reported [6], brand loyalty is one component of brand equity. When brand loyalty increases, the brand's equity/value

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will increase, too. Brand loyalty is identical with the consumers' brand commitment [7,8]. Sequentially, added an opinion saying that consumers' brand loyalty or commitment is the result of trust[9]. This is because loyalty or commitment is the willingness to keep or maintain a high quality relationship. Loyalty has a powerful impact on firm performance [10]. Firms gain a competitive advantage by having a high rate of loyal consumers [4; 10], who are willing to pay higher prices and are less price sensitive [4]. Brand loyalty provides the firm with trade leverage and valuable time to respond to competitive moves. Understanding the concept of loyalty helps companies better manage customer relationship management in order to create long-term investment and profitability [10]. According to Khraim (2010) in his article mentioned that there were seven factors that influenced consumers' brand loyalty toward certain brands. The factors were brand name, product quality, price, design store environment, promotion and service quality[11].

Purchase intention:

Purchase intention has been widely in the literature as a predictor of subsequent purchasing[10]. Literature suggests that the identification of consumers with a company or brand can result into positive attitudinal and/or behavioral outcomes[12,13,14,15]. Aaker and Keller (1990) mentioned that a brand with high awareness and good image can promote brand loyalty to consumers, and the higher the brand awareness is, the higher brand trust and purchase intention are to consumers[16]. Consumers will have a higher purchase intention with a familiar brand[17]. Likewise, if a product has higher brand awareness it will have a higher market share and a better quality evaluation [18; 19]. A well known brand will have a higher purchase intention than a less well known brand [20]. Brand loyalty is a repurchase commitment that promises consumers will repurchase their favorable brands in the future, and they will not change their loyalty under any circumstance [21]. Some researchers also mentioned that consumers must have positive feelings to a brand, and then they will produce purchase intention[22]. purchase intention is a measure of the willingness to buy a product [18] and has also been operationalized as the probability that a consumer will buy a product or service [17].

Store environment:

An extensive amount of research has considered the impact of the store environment on consumer behavior[23]. The term atmospherics was coined by Kotler in 1973, referring to the conscious design of space for the purpose of creating certain effects in individuals and increasing the probability of desirable behavioral outcomes. Specifically, atmospherics are the controllable elements or stimuli within the service environment that influence emotional reactions and therefore impact behaviour [24]. Positive attributes of the store, which include store location, store layout and in-store stimuli affect brand loyalty to some extent. Store location and number of outlets are crucial in altering consumer shopping and purchasing patterns. Therefore, this study proposes the following hypothesis:

H1: There is a significant and positive relationship between store environment and purchase intention of cosmetics.

Brand name

In the cosmetic sector, luxury cosmetics, such as Max factor, L'Oreal, Revlon,... may have a brand-name image of high product class and wide recognition. The brand name is regarded as an essential part of the brand and the foundation for marketing communication efforts [25]. Brand names not only help identify the product but also acquire a rich set of symbols and meanings embodied by products [26]. For successfully developed and managed brand names, the associations that consumers make with the brand name creates value, or brand equity, that can be a highly valued asset to the company that owns the brand [27]. A meaningful name is one that conveys relevant information about the product, or an important product attribute, or establishes a connection between the product and the product category[28]. Marketing practice, as well as theoretical and empirical research, has suggested that meaningful brand names are easier to remember and recall than non-meaningful brand names, and also that meaningful brand names are generally preferred over non-meaningful brand names[29; 30]. Brand awareness and brand name plays an important role on purchase intention because consumers tend to buy a familiar and well known product [27,31].

Therefore the researchers propose this hypothesis:

H2: There is a significant and positive relationship between brand name of cosmetics and purchase intention.

Service quality:

Definitions of service quality revolve around the idea that it is the result of the comparison that customers make between their expectations about a service and their perception of the way the service has been performed [32]. The relationship between service quality and customer preference loyalty has been examined, among others [33]. They focused solely on repurchase intentions. They focused on the elements of repurchasing and willingness to recommend. Most of the studies linking service quality, satisfaction and behavioural intentions have been conducted in one specific service setting. For instance related service quality perceptions to consumer loyalty in banking [34].

The dimensions of service quality refer to the attributes which contribute to consumer expectations and perceptions of service quality, thus serving as the determinants of consumers' quality assessment.

Lehtinen and Lehtinen 1982 give a three-dimensional view of service quality. They see it as consisting of what they term "interaction", "physical" and "corporate" quality. At a higher level, and essentially from a customer's perspective, they see quality as being two-dimensional, consisting of "process" and "output" quality. This is not too dissimilar from the conceptualization who emphasizes two main dimensions of service quality in his model. Sales persons usually have the closest contact with customers, and therefore are particularly important in the link between employees and customers. Provided for a positive relationship between satisfaction and loyalty intentions with regard to both goods and services. Researchers found a very strong influence of customer satisfaction on intentions to repurchase automobiles, while Halstead and Page (1992) found that satisfied customers had higher repurchase intention than dissatisfied customers did. Finally, Yi (1990) suggested that customer satisfaction is an important determinant of positive word-of-mouth.

Therefore service quality influences brand loyalty. Thus, the following hypothesis is presented.

H3: There is a significant and positive relationship between service quality and purchase intention of cosmetics

Price

[35], state that price is one of the most flexible marketing mix elements that can be quickly changed, after changing specific product and service characteristics.

The relationship between brand loyalty and price sensitivity has been a topic of interest to marketers for many years. One can conclude that consumer consideration to decide product brand is mainly based on price. Researchers have examined whether and how loyalty affects the price that consumers are willing to pay for a brand [36]. Recent researches on brand were conducted on building strong brands, brand image (via the brand name) on estimates of internal price standards, price effects on brand extension quality evaluations [33], or price perception in brand extension, strategic bundling of price. Therefore the hypothesis is stated as follows:

H4: There is a significant and positive relationship between cosmetics price and purchase intention.

Promotion

Promotion refers to the advertising and selling part of marketing. It is how you let people know what you've got for sale. The purpose of promotion is to get people to understand what your product is, what they can use it for, and why they should want it. You want the customers who are looking for a product to know that your product satisfies their needs.

The consumer normally has a perception of the brand in terms of the marketing communications spending made on it by the company. Advertising expenditure, as the main marketing communications tool in the consumer market, should be considered when determining the effects of marketing communications on consumers, and the perceptions that the messages are provoking among different target individuals. Thus we posited the following:

H5: There is a significant and positive relationship between promotion and purchase intention of cosmetics.

Product quality

Product quality is a basic driver of buyer intention across a wide range of categories in both goods and services market. Delivering high product quality to customers is a key strategy for improving performance in a competitive environment [37]. Product quality is a key issue in firms' internationalization. There are several interesting research questions that can be asked regarding the relationships between product quality and internationalization.

Product quality is therefore largely a perceptual construct as many variables influence a product's performance, durability, fit and finish, reliability, and other related aspects [38]. Delivering high product quality to customers is a key strategy for improving performance in a competitive environment [37]. Customers are typically unwilling to compromise on quality and consider this a basic criterion to qualify potential suppliers, being an even more important factor than price[39]. Researchers are relatively unanimous in saying the concept of product quality largely depends on the customer's perception. They define product quality as “a key attribute that customers use to evaluate products” [40]. Customers are typically unwilling to compromise on quality and consider this a basic criterion to qualify potential suppliers, being an even more important factor than price [39]. Researchers are relatively unanimous in saying the concept of product quality largely depends on the customer's perception.

H6: There is a significant and positive relationship between cosmetics quality and purchase intention.

Design:

Design is visual appearance, which includes line, shape and details affecting consumer perception towards a brand .Brands that supply stylish package attract loyal consumers who are fashion conscious. Fashion leaders or followers usually purchase or continue to repeatedly purchase their products in stores that are highly fashionable. They gain satisfaction from using the latest brands and designs which also satisfies their ego.A research conducted by Duff (2007) investigated the niche market in women’s cosmetics, and the results showed that cosmetics buyers were becoming more fashion conscious and were demanding products with more attractive design; furthermore, consumers have a tendency to use different makeup designs for different occasions. According to Sproles and Kendall(1986), fashion consciousness is generally defined as an awareness of new designs, changing fashions, and attractive styling, as well as the desire to buy something exciting and trendy.

Therefore we proposed:

H7: There is a significant and positive relationship between cosmetics design and purchase intention.

The research Model depicted in Figure 1.

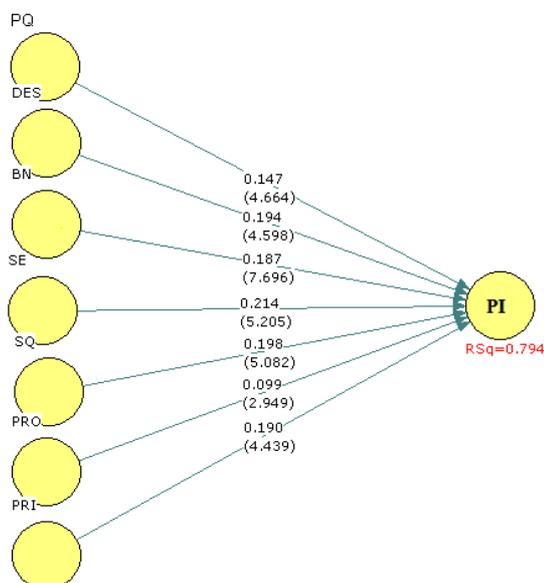


Figure1:Research Model

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In this section, the researchers focus on factors affecting of brand loyalty on purchase intention. Specifically, the researchers focus store environment, brand name, service quality, price, promotion, product quality as factors influencing on brand loyalty.

To measure the effect of brand loyalty on cosmetic purchase intention, in the research was used 29-items questionnaire developed by khraim (2011).25 items scale was taken into account for factors of brand

loyalty and purchase intention 4-items that developed[41].construct with a five point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to five (strongly agree). A questionnaire was developed and pilot tested at three malls, the most famous cosmetics outlet in Tehran. The questionnaire contained brand loyalty factors on cosmetic purchase intention. The survey was carried out on a random sample of 420 female cosmetics consumers aged between 16 to 42. The survey was distributed in Tehran city at cosmetic mall. A total of 408 usable questionnaires were returned.

To ensure of validity and reliability for questionnaire a pilot test were used before the formal survey. This pilot test contained 42 female consumers of cosmetics. The results of this test indicated that Cronbach's α did include the necessary values and validity is verified. For internal reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for all items of each construct. Results indicated all the scales were considered to be reliable (Cronbach's alpha). For determining reliability and validity of the questionnaire in this research Cronbach's alpha is used.

Cronbach's alpha for constructs are: product quality: .841, design: .789, brand name: .770, store environment: .821, service quality: .872, promotion: .762, price: .810, purchase intention: .847. The questionnaire measures eight constructions containing seven of which are external and one internal. External constructs includes: Brand name, product quality, price, design, store environment, Promotion, service quality and internal is purchase intention.

Cronbach's Alpha includes the necessary values and its validity is verified. Responses of sample statistics are utilized in investigating the validity and reliability. Conceptual model is investigated and tested by structural Equation modeling method. Implemented by SPSS statistical software packages, visual PLS and lisrel. In conceptual research modeling lisrel is used and to validate the validity and reliability questionnaire program with in visual PLS using partial least squares.

RESULTS

Results and findings of the research are described in two sections, descriptive results and deductive results. In descriptive section, the correlations between the measured indices are introduced. In deductive section, the conceptual model includes measures which are investigated and two sections are tested.

Descriptive results

Each constructions of the research are measured using the correlation between research items are depicted In index 1. The mean of research items above the central limit value, is the measured scale.

Correlation between items related to loyalty and other measured items are positive and meaningful. Kolmogorov-Smirnov values indicate that none of the indices have normal distribution.

Deductive Analysis and investigating conceptual model

Conceptual model is investigated by using structural equation modeling and the impacts of external constructs on internal construct are tested. In addition investigating the measuring and structural sections of model judgment is made based on the fitness indexes of the model. Due to the non-normal distribution of the research items, these data are first converted to normal distribution and then the research mode is investigated. In the measuring section it is clarified that the relation between the items and the related structures. In other words factor loading of items is larger than .50 and t-value of them is greater than 1.96. This value supports the reliability of the structure using measurement. As it can be seen in table1, all factor loadings are above .50 since the overall fit of the model is acceptable. The reliability of the construct can be assessed based on Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and average variance extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was determined by the variance extracted value. Also discriminant validity of constructs is larger than 0.6 that indicates the reliability of the items α - Cronbach and composite validity supports the validity of items for each constructs. These results are depicted in table 2. The results of Fit-Index depicted in table3. The fit-indices the results of these have been depicted in the ending part of this section.

Table1: Reliability and overall measurement model

<i>measurement items</i>					Reliability and validity of the study measures		
Construct	Item	Factor loading	t-value	R ²	COMPOSITE RELIABILITY	α	AVE AVERAGE VARIANCE EXTRACTED
Product Quality	PQ1	0.77	-*	0.59	0.894005	0.841487	0.678525
	PQ2	0.79	15.63	0.62			
	PQ3	0.66	12.96	0.44			
	PQ4	0.82	16.24	0.67			
Design	DES1	0.83	-*	0.68	0.864391	0.789322	0.617415
	DES2	0.61	12.45	0.37			
	DES3	0.81	17.63	0.65			
	DES4	0.55	11.12	0.30			
Brand Name	BN1	0.75	-*	0.57	0.854205	0.770953	0.594879
	BN2	0.69	12.54	0.48			
	BN3	0.64	11.64	0.41			
	BN4	0.63	11.44	0.39			
Store Environment	SE1	0.62	-*	0.39	0.882091	0.821791	0.652357
	SE2	0.65	10.95	0.42			
	SE3	0.83	13.03	0.68			
	SE4	0.86	13.30	0.73			
Service Quality	SQ1	0.81	-*	0.66	0.912606	0.872292	0.723052
	SQ2	0.79	17.71	0.63			
	SQ3	0.78	17.33	0.61			
	SQ4	0.79	17.64	0.62			
Promotion	PRO1	0.78	-*	0.61	0.864625	0.762641	0.680766
	PRO2	0.66	12.38	0.43			
	PRO3	0.75	14.00	0.57			
Price	PRI1	0.82	-*	0.67	0.913632	0.810643	0.841001
	PRI2	0.81	17.38	0.66			
Purchase intention	PI1	0.72	-*	0.52	0.897998	0.847747	0.687599
	PI2	0.73	14.70	0.54			
	PI3	0.79	15.94	0.63			
	PI4	0.76	15.26	0.58			

Table2: correlation of latent variables

Correlation of Latent Variables								
	PQ	DES	BN	SE	SQ	PRO	PRI	Purchase intention
PQ	1.000							
DES	0.611	1.000						
BN	0.220	0.332	1.000					
SE	0.209	0.425	0.492	1.000				
SQ	0.314	0.545	0.496	0.541	1.000			
PRO	0.112	0.265	0.335	0.635	0.362	1.000		
PRI	0.317	0.554	0.440	0.491	0.756	0.387	1.000	
Purchase intention	0.485	0.676	0.604	0.682	0.738	0.510	0.719	1.000

Note:

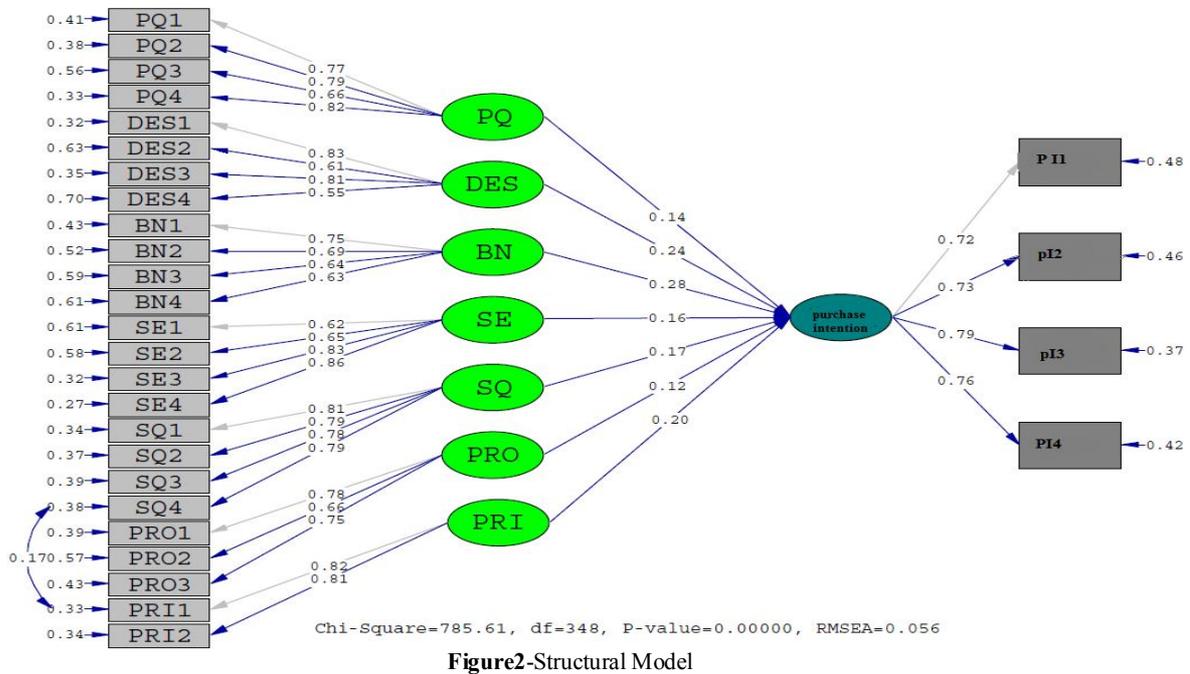
- SQ=service quality
- PQ=product quality
- DES=design
- PR=promotion
- PRI=price
- SE=store environment
- BN=brand name

* -parameter set equal to 1.0 for identification model

Table3: Fit –Index Model

MODEL-FIT INDEX	recommend value	recommender	structural model
X2/df	≤ 3	Jun et al; 2006	2.257
RMSEA	≤ .08	Jun et al; 2006	0.056
RMR	≤ .05	Jun et al; 2006	0.047
NFI	> .90	Forza and Filippini, 1998	0.96
GFI	> .80	JUN et al; 2006	0.88
CFI	> .90	JUN et al; 2006	0.98
AGFI	> .80	Forza and Filippini, 1998	0.85
PGFI	> .50	Kayank, 2003	0.71
PNFI	> .50	Kayank, 2003	0.83

The analysis of SEM on the proposal model has generated results which are illustrated in figure2



The model tested subsumed the specified relationships proposed in the hypotheses. The overall Fit indices for the structural model revealed a chi-square of 785.61 with 348 degrees of freedom. For this model RMSEA=.056 and RMR=.047 both within the acceptable level. The goodness-of-Fit index (GFI)=.88,NFI=.96 and PNFI=.83 all accept for GFI which are acceptable.

Conclusion

The main objective of the research was to investigate the impact of factors of brand loyalty on cosmetic purchase intention of Iranian female consumers.

The findings provide evidence that a relationship exists between these variables. The results of this study have important implications for both marketers and managers ,since evidence shows factors of brand loyalty among consumers affects their purchase intention .

This research has provided insights into female consumer buying behavior in the city of Tehran. Brand loyalty is important for an organization to ensure that its product is kept in the minds of consumers and prevent them from switching to other brands. From the analysis of this study, it was shown that there

are seven factors of brand loyalty that were appropriate in Iran which are, the brand name, product quality, price, promotion, service quality and store environment.

The findings revealed that all of the factors of loyalty have positive relationships with purchase intention. These results are depicted in table3.

Table4: Results of hypothesis test

Hypothesis path	Results of hypothesis test			
	SEM model		PLS model	
	Standardized Estimates	t-value	Estimates	t-value
Product Quality → purchase intention	0.14	2.87	0.1470	4.6639
Design → purchase intention	0.24	3.38	0.1940	4.5983
Brand Name → purchase intention	0.28	5.99	0.1870	7.6964
Store Environment → purchase intention	0.16	2.32	0.2140	5.2051
Service Quality → purchase intention	0.17	2.06	0.1980	5.0816
Promotion → purchase intention	0.12	2.01	0.0990	2.9486
Price → purchase intention	0.20	2.19	0.1900	4.4388

As shown in table 4 t-values for all paths are greater than 1.96 so these values indicates positive relationship between all factors on purchase intention were supported. In other words there are positive effect of brand name, product quality, price, design ,promotion ,service quality and store environment on consumer purchase intention supported. Both models (SEM, PLS) supported these results.

Limitation and future research

The limitation of this study is location, as we analyzed a very particular area and it would be important to carry out research in other places to confirm the results obtained in this study. It is highly recommended for future research to expand the span of attributes that affects brand loyalty and purchase intention, as well as to study more products and services in order to get an in depth and more clear picture about real relationship between the different product/service attributes purchase intention.

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