

The role of perceived value and brand identity in improving customers' attitudinal loyalty

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Abstract

The present study analyzes the relationship between the role of perceived value and brand identity in improving customers' attitudinal loyalty. The results were obtained by examining the opinions of customers of Tejarat and Melli Banks in Mazandaran province. The research method is descriptive which was implemented by survey method. The sample size of the research was 384 people, which was obtained based on Cochran's formula according to an unknown statistical population. A non-probability sampling method was available. Data analysis was performed based on Q et al.'s (2009) perceived value questionnaires, Mael and Ashforth's (1992) brand identity, and Jacoby and Chestnut's (1978) brand loyalty questionnaires. The validity of the questionnaires was examined and verified based on the content validity using the opinions of experts, the validity based on the views of a number of the statistical community, and the structure using the factor analysis method. The reliability of questionnaires was estimated by Cronbach's alpha method; 0.77, for perceived value, 0.82 for brand identity, and 0.84 for attitudinal loyalty, respectively. Data analysis was carried out in two levels, descriptive statistics and inferential statistics, including modeling of structural equations by Lisrel statistical software. The results showed that brand identity and perceived value are related to attitudinal loyalty with impact coefficients of 0.84 and 0.79, respectively. Brand identity has a relationship with perceived value with an impact factor of 0.86. Finally, it can be said that brand identity has relationships directly and indirectly with customers' attitudinal loyalty, in other words, perceived value in the relationship between brand identity and customers' attitudinal loyalty has played a mediating role.

Keywords:

perceived value,
brand identity,
attitudinal loyalty,
bank customers.

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Extended Abstract

Introduction

Today, maintaining and strengthening customer loyalty in line with a company's products or services has generally become the main and central point of marketing activities; if the brand's characteristics are known and defined correctly, they can lead to customer loyalty. Rapid changes in today's world have made organizations face various challenges, but there are successful organizations that take advantage of the opportunities created with the help of management tools and new technologies. E-commerce environment is one of these tools. Brand identity expresses the ideal characteristics that the brand intends to offer to customers. In other words, brand identity is what the brand promises and offers to the market (Essamri et al. 2019). The main essence of the brand is what is supposed to be depicted in the future and imprinted in the mind of the customer. A neat appearance and whatever comes to the eye is the expression of a brand's identity. Perceived value is obtained by comparing the cost of the product or service that customers pay for a brand with the benefit they get from it. In fact, when a customer buys a product or service, he wants to receive more value than its costs. Perceived value is the customers' evaluation of the value that is created for them by the supplier according to the balance between all the benefits and related costs in a specific consumption situation (Kim et al, 2019). According to the above material, the researcher is trying to answer the question: does brand identity have a significant effect on attitudinal loyalty with emphasis on the mediating role of the perceived value of customers of commercial and national banks in Mazandaran province?

Theoretical framework

Gostin & Batz (2000) define value as the emotional bond created between a customer and a producer after the customer consumes the goods or services produced by that supplier (Hosseini & Ali, 2022).

A brand, in order to be strong and remain strong, has the duty to be loyal to its identity. Brand image is unstable and transient. Most of its dependence is on the appearance of the brand name, not its essence (the concept of identity, the main/central core). Brand name represents a competition which should make the communicational approach determiners move from surface to depth, and examine the brand name basically.

Customer loyalty to the organization is a category that is affected by many and diverse factors and conditions inside and outside the organization; the degree of this effect varies from one organization to another according to the type of organization. Accurately knowing these factors and determining the effectiveness of each of them is very important in helping managers to make the right decision (Shiri et al, 2017).

Lumi et al, (2022), conducted a research entitled "The effect of brand image and customer perceived value on customer loyalty". The statistical population includes all the customers who use the sports brand Nike in Spain, 318 people were selected as a statistical sample through available sampling method. The research method was a survey, carried out applicably. The results showed that the image and perceived value of the customers have a positive and significant effect on the satisfaction and ultimately on the attitudinal loyalty of the customers, in whom the repurchase intention increases.

Ezati & Mazhari (2021) in a research, investigated the effect of brand equity, brand identity and loyalty on the repurchase intention of the sports shoes industry in Tehran University physical education students. This research was applicable in terms of purpose, and descriptive-correlative in terms of data collection. Data collection tools were standard questionnaires, whose formal and content validity was approved by 10 sports management experts. Its reliability was also calculated using Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.86. Data

analysis was done using SPSS and Amos software. The results showed that brand equity, brand identity and brand loyalty have a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention.

Ethodology

The current research is applicable in terms of purpose, and descriptive in terms of correlational data analysis. The statistical population of this research was made up of all the customers of the Tejarat and Melli banks of Mazandaran province. 384 people were selected as a statistical sample through available sampling method. To collect data, standard questionnaires of perceived value (Kuo et al, 2009) in 3 items, brand identity (Ashforth & Mael, 1989) in 4 items, and customer loyalty (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978) in 3 items were used.

Discussion and Results

In order to investigate the hypothesis of the research, the modeling of structural equations, the method of structural equation modeling with the help of spss software was used to test the hypotheses from inferential statistics. Then, Lisrel software was used to test the hypotheses or the conceptual model of the research, and the results related to the first hypothesis showed that the power of the bank's brand identity on the perceived value of customers was calculated as equal to (0.68), which shows that the correlation is favorable. The significance statistic of the test was also obtained (7.66), which is more than the critical value of t at the 5% error level, i.e. (1.96) and shows that the observed correlation is significant. Therefore, it can be said that the brand identity of the bank has a positive and significant effect on the perceived value of customers. The results related to the second hypothesis showed that the strength of the effect of customers' perceived value on their attitudinal loyalty was calculated as (0.76), which shows that the correlation is favorable. The significance statistic of the test was also obtained (8.74), which is more than the critical value of t at the 5% error level, i.e. (1.96), and it shows that the observed correlation is significant. Therefore, it can be said that the perceived value of customers has a positive and significant effect on their attitudinal loyalty. The results related to the third hypothesis showed that the power of bank brand identity on customers' attitudinal loyalty was calculated equal to (0.43), which shows that the correlation is favorable. The significance statistic of the test was also obtained (5.41), which is more than the critical value of t at the 5% error level, i.e. (1.96) and shows that the observed correlation is significant. Therefore, it can be said that the brand identity of the bank has a positive and significant effect on the attitudinal loyalty of customers. The fourth hypothesis analyzes the mediating role of perceived value in the influence of bank brand identity on customers' attitudinal loyalty. The results showed that the direct influence of bank brand identity on attitudinal loyalty was calculated as equal to (0.43), which shows that the correlation is favorable. The power of indirect effect of bank brand identity on attitudinal loyalty considering the mediating role of perceived value is equal to (0.51). Considering that the power of the indirect path is greater than the direct path, therefore, the presence of the perceived value variable increases the power of the impact and the mediating role of this variable is confirmed.

Conclusion

The current research was conducted with the aim of the role of perceived value and brand identity in improving the attitudinal loyalty of customers. These results are consistent and supported with the research findings of Loureiro&etal (2019) and Fernandez & Lewis (2019) and Lumi et al (2022) and Ezati & mazhari (2021) Zarepour Nasirabadi et al, (2019); In line with this, it can be said that the formation of brand identity in the minds of customers will create value in customers and increase relative satisfaction among them. Furthermore, the

attitude of the bank staff along with the service provision to the customers to introduce services can play a fundamental role (Buil&etal, 2016). The customer's perceived value is the customer's understanding of the bank's value, if this value is shown to him, it will make him satisfied with the bank's products (Chen & Lin, 2019).

It is suggested that the managers of Tejarat and Melli banks emphasize more on the intangible aspects of using services (emotional aspect of customers) in the advertising department; Advertisements that can convey the aspects of relaxation, pleasure and convenience in using the services provided by the bank to the society and try to create a positive attitude in the customers to buy.