

Effects of Brand Experience and Product Involvement on Brand Loyalty for Vietnamese Consumers

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Contemporary consumers are increasingly looking at a product as an experience rather a material object. Consequently, an experiential approach in marketing is drawing attentions recently in generating consumer-based brand equity, as it emphasizes the importance of emotions in addition to rationality in consumer's consumption behavior. The purpose of this paper is to examine whether five different Brand Experience Scale have differentiated impact on consumers' brand satisfaction and brand loyalty in Vietnamese market. In particular, three different product category types, which have different levels of product involvement, are assessed in order to determine whether consumers make differentiated response to brand experience for products with different involvement levels. We find that Vietnamese consumers have differentiated brand experience in developing their brand loyalty for three different types of products which have different product involvement levels.

JEL Classifications: M2, F2, F6

Keywords: brand experience, brand loyalty, product involvement, Vietnamese consumers

INTRODUCTION

The new marketing environment of the 21st century has forced marketers to fundamentally change the way they develop marketing programs. Integration and personalization have become increasingly crucial factors in

building and maintaining strong brands, as companies strive to use a broad set of tightly focused and personally meaningful marketing activities to win customers (Keller, 2013). To break through the noise in the market in which generic mass-marketing messages no longer make effective persuasion for post-modern or

so-called “millennial” consumers, marketers are increasingly introducing unconventional ways of building relationship with consumers and creating brand equity. In other words, by providing personalized experience for consumers, marketers attempt to create awareness, spur demand, and cultivate loyalty (Keller, 2013). To respond to increasing desire of consumers for personalization, marketers attempt to promote not only product’s features and benefits, but also connecting these with unique and interesting consumer experience, thus experiential marketing has emerged as a way to maximize brand resonance.

Contemporary consumers are increasingly looking at a product as an experience rather a material object. In other words, consumers are in quest of embodied experience in products they purchase as “for the post-modern consumers, consumption is not a mere act of devouring, destroying, or using things; not the end of economic cycle, but an act of production of experiences and selves or self-images” (Vezina, 1989; Grundey, 2008). This leads to an experiential approach in marketing which emphasizes the importance of emotions in addition to rationality in consumer’s consumption behavior. Thus, experiential marketing has drawn attentions recently as an effective approach, particularly in generating brand equity. While traditional marketing characteristics entail product functional characteristics and superiority, experiential marketing presents characteristics such as orientation to the consumer experience, looking at it holistically (Grundey, 2008). While traditional marketing gives experience rather than objective meaning, experiential marketing defines experience as a subjective episode in construction/transformation of an individual, with an emphasis on emotions and senses lived during immersion at the expense of cognition dimension (Grundey, 2008).

Experiential marketing estimates both sides of consumers: rational and emotional. This

standpoint is more personal and individual for consumers. In this approach, marketers attempt to engage consumers in a memorable way, offering them extraordinary experiences and provide consumers a way to engage physically, mentally, emotionally, socially, and spiritually in consumption of a product (Arnould & Price, 1993). By engaging consumers in a personal way, a long-term relationship can be developed which may translate into their loyalty toward a brand with repeat purchase, resulting in brand equity. “Some industry experts argue that economic value now turns on more than a high-quality product or good service delivery: it turns on engaging customers in a memorable way offering them an experience, transforming them by guiding them through experiences” (Arnould & Price, 1993).

Schmitt (1999) argued that traditional approach to marketing view consumers’ decision-making process to emphasize excessively on the rational and logical elements of the decision, and propose to expand emotional and irrational aspects into the decision process. He noted that “experiential marketing is usually broadly defined as any form of customer-focused marketing activity, at various touch-points, that creates a sensory-emotional connection to customers” (Schmitt, 2003; 2008). Schmitt (2003) identified five different types of experiences: sense, feel, think, act, and relate (Table 1). Sense dimension in consumer experience implicate sensual and tangible aspect of a product or experience, appealing to five senses of sight, sound, scent, taste, and touch. Feel appeals to consumers’ inner feelings and emotions. Think appeals to the intellect, problem-solving experience. Act targets physical behaviors, lifestyles, and interactions. Relate creates experiences by taking into account individual’s desires to be part of a social context (Keller, 2013). Based on this concept, Brand Experience Scale (BES) has been developed and used to determine relative importance of five constructs on consumers’ behavioral

outcomes such as brand satisfaction and brand loyalty (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010).

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The purpose of this paper is to examine whether four different BES have differentiated impact on consumers' brand satisfaction and brand loyalty in Vietnamese market. Customer satisfaction is claimed to be a reliable predictor of re-purchase intentions (Oliver, 1980; Nguyen & Nham, 2014). Moreover, other studies empirically support the impact of customer satisfaction on customer loyalty/brand loyalty (Chang & Chen, 2009; Devaraj, Fan, & Kohli, 2002). Brand loyalty is one of the most common variables for indicating behavior, which is defined as a customer's repurchase intention of a specific company, store, or product/service (Kotler & Armstrong, 1989; Nguyen & Nham, 2014). In managing customer relationship (CRM), a new generation of tactics is often used, which is loyalty program (Bhattacharya, 1998; De Mesa, 2013). Customer or brand loyalty has become an importance concept for retailers in managing revenue growth rate, serving a critical role in developing customer relationship, and retaining customers (De Mesa, 2013). Thus, in this study, brand loyalty is constructed as a final construct which reflect Vietnamese consumers' choice of branded products.

In particular, three different product category types which have different levels of product involvement are assessed in order to determine whether consumers make differentiated response to brand experience for products with different involvement levels. These product categories include: coffee, car, and television, which have different level of consumer involvement. The extent of consumers' interest in consuming a product and the amount of information the consumer search in making a purchasing decision

are associated with the level of involvement a consumer has with a product. Product involvement involves an ongoing commitment on the part of the consumer with regard to thoughts, feelings, and behavioral response to a product category (Miller & Marks, 1996; Gordon, McKeage, & Fox, 1998).

A high level of involvement refers to a buying situation in which a consumer may do extensive problem-solving—searching for information related to an interesting product. Consumers with high product involvement would find the product interesting and this would occupy the consumers' thoughts without the stimulus of an immediate purchase (Richins & Bloch, 1986). He/she may do so in order to minimize risk of choosing an inappropriate product which may result in unintended costs. Many of high involvement products are marketed through personal selling as firms may want to develop personal relationship with consumers who are searching for extensive information on the brand. On the other hand, product categories with low involvement level of consumers are often marketed through commercials and sales promotions. Products with low involvements carry lower levels of risk and often inexpensive, thus consumers often do impulsive buying or get into routine purchase without much information search. Due to the difference in inherent nature and characteristics of products with high vs. low involvement, different approach of connecting with consumers are applied (i.e. marketing and promotional strategies), thus consumers may be exposed to different product categories with different brand experience.

In this study, three products with different levels of involvements (i.e. car, television, and coffee) are examined to determine whether Vietnamese consumers have different response to four BES dimensions for products with high vs. low involvement levels. Findings from this assessment shed lights in terms of how to differentiate consumers' brand

Table 1.
Constructs of Brand Experience, Brand Satisfaction, and Brand Loyalty¹

Constructs	Items	Measurement Items	Reference	
Brand Experience	3	This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	Brakus (2009) Schmitt (1999)	
		Sensory		I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.
				This brand does not appeal to my senses.
Affective	3	This brand induces feelings and sentiments.	Brakus (2009) Schmitt (1999)	
				I do not have strong emotions for this brand.
				This brand is an emotional brand.
Behavioral	3	I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand.	Brakus (2009) Schmitt (1999)	
				This brand results in bodily experiences.
				This brand is not action oriented.
Intellectual	3	I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.	Brakus (2009) Schmitt (1999)	
				This brand does not make me think.
				This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.
Brand Satisfaction	5	I am satisfied with the brand and its performance.	Oliver (1980) Chandrashekar, Rotte, Tax, and Grewal (2007)	
				If I could do it again, I would buy a brand different from that brand.
				My choice to get this brand has been a wise one.
				I feel bad about my decision to get this brand.
				I am not happy with what I did with this brand.
Brand Loyalty	5	In the future, I will be loyal to this brand.	Yoo and Donthu (2001)	
				I will buy this brand again.
				This brand will be my first choice in the future.
				I will not buy other brands if this brand is available at the store.
				I will recommend this brand to others.

experience for different product categories, and provide some meaningful implications for marketers in developing strategies for marketing communications and promotion and for building brand equity.

METHOD

Measures

In this study, Schmitt and Brakus' (2009 & 2010) four BES were used to measure the importance of brand experience of the nine selected brands. For the Sensory construct, three items were selected as following: this brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses; I find this brand interesting in a sensory way; and this brand does not appeal to my senses. For the Affective construct, three items were selected (e.g. this brand induces feelings and sentiments, I do not have strong emotions for this brand, and this brand is an emotional brand). The Behavioral construct had three items such as: this brand is an emotional brand; this brand results in bodily experiences; and this brand is not action oriented. The Intellectual construct had the following items: I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand; this brand does not make me think; and this brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.

Items were measured based on 5-point ratings of agreement (1= totally disagree, 5=totally agree). In addition, the Customer Satisfaction construct was measured with the following five items, which were used by Oliver (1980): (1) I am satisfied with the brand and its performance; (2) if I could do it again, I would buy a brand different from that brand; (3) my choice to get this brand has been a wise one; (4) I feel bad about my decision to get this brand; and (5) I am not happy with what I did with this brand. To measure the Brand Loyalty construct, five items were used

as in the study of Yoo and Donthu (2001): (1) in the future, I will be loyal to this brand; (2) I will buy this brand again; (3) this brand will be my first choice in the future; (4) I will not buy other brands if this brand is available at the store; and (5) I will recommend this brand to others.

Participants and Procedure

A sample of 270 university students in Hanoi, Vietnam participated in the survey study and 45% of the participants were female and 55% were male, with a median age of 25. For brand selection, a two-step process was applied in this study. At the first stage, pre-selected product categories that have different extent of consumer involvement (i.e. car, coffee, and television) were used. From preliminary research, these were considered to be three product categories with most distinctive personalities and marketed with various types of brand experience in Vietnam. These were found to be product categories which were most commonly listed products across various social situations. In the second stage, randomly chosen nine groups of 30 participants were asked to list preferred brand name for each of the three product categories (Table 2). Tagarino and Apodaca (1989) suggested that consumers consider a few brands, reject a few, and ignore the rest in order to simplify their decision making. Thus, this step is important in identifying brand names with reasonably high level of brand awareness since it is critical that the participants are familiar enough with the tested brand names. From this procedure, three brand names for each of the three product categories were identified for the survey study.

Table 2 shows that Honda, Ford, and Hyundai are top three most preferred brand names for high involvement product category (i.e. car); TCL, LG, and Sony are identified as preferred brand name for medium involvement product category (i.e. TV); and Trung Nguyen, Highland Coffee, and Nestle are top three preferred brand

names for low involvement product category (i.e. coffee). Vietnamese participants chose brand names of each category product from various country of origin.

Table 2.
Selected Nine Brands for Three Product Categories

Car	Coffee	Television
Honda	Trung Nguyen	TCL
Ford	Highland Coffee	LG
Hyundai	Nestle	Sony

Each of the nine groups with 30 participants were assigned to rate one specific brand name in a product categories, and the survey questionnaire was systematically rotated in order to minimize possible bias which may be associated with redundancy, fatigue, and maturation. The participants were asked to rate in terms of five dimensions of brand experience, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty. A total of 270 students rated the extent to which the items described his/her experiences with the brands listed, feelings of satisfaction, and loyalty toward the brands.

A survey questionnaire with 22 questions (Table 1) was developed and distributed to nine groups of 30 participants. The survey was originally developed in English and translated into Vietnamese which was further revised by experts (i.e. marketing professors in National Economic University of Vietnam). Many studies used student samples for an empirical analysis, however, the validity and generalizability of student samples have been questioned as the student population does not represent the general population or “real people” (Yoo *et al.*, 2000).

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

SEM is a statistical technique for testing and estimating causal relations using a combination of statistical data and qualitative assumptions (Wright, 1921; Piyachat *et al.* 2014). This study tests the following four hypotheses:

H1- there is a positive relationship between four BES observable variables and BE construct;

H2- Brand Experience (BE) construct has a positive effect on Brand Satisfaction (BS) construct;

H3- Brand Satisfaction (BS) has a positive effect on Brand Loyalty (BL);

H4- Brand Experience (BE) has a positive effect on Brand Loyalty (BL).

These four hypotheses are tested for: the Global Four Factor Model (Figure 2); the Four Factor Model of Low Involvement-Coffee (Figure 3); the Four Factor Model of Medium Involvement – TV (Figure 4); and the Four Factor Model of High Involvement – Automobile (Figure 5). SEM is used to determine the empirical findings of five indicators of Vietnamese consumers’ brand choice behavior through four hypotheses.

RESULTS

Reliability and Validity

An Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) suggested that the four factors of brand experience explained 67% of the variance (Table 3 and Table 4). Varimax rotation of the exploratory factor analysis revealed four factors with eigenvalues greater than 1, and a clean factor

structure was exhibited with high levels of discriminant validity.

Cronbach's coefficient alpha (α) was calculated to assess the internal reliability of the four dimensions of brand experience and to select the final items of the model. The estimated results were found to be satisfactory with the alpha values higher than 0.7. This indicates satisfactory levels of internal consistency (Table 5).

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to assess and validity of the proposed model and to improve fitness of the model. A CFA of the full measurement model with all six constructs was conducted initially. Convergent validity was assessed by determining whether each observed

variable's estimated maximum likelihood factor loading on its latent construct was significant (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). Table 6 & Figure 1 show that the factor loadings in the model had a reasonable range, and each item loaded on the predicted factor, with standardized coefficients ranging from 0.56 to 0.86. All path coefficients were found to be significant ($p > .05$).

Model Estimation

To test the proposed hypotheses and models and to simultaneously estimate measurement and relational properties, we used structural equation modeling for the full latent model and conducted the confirmatory factor analyses (CFAs) on five independent

Table 3.
Exploratory Factor Analysis Results for Brand Experience

Item	Factor			
	Sensory	Affective	Behavioral	Intellectual
This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	.63	.23	.12	.19
I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.	.72	.36	.17	.11
This brand does not appeal to my senses.	.69	.20	.15	.31
This brand induces feelings and sentiments.	.15	.82	.13	.25
I do not have strong emotions for this brand.	.17	.76	.32	.16
This brand is an emotional brand.	.11	.72	.18	.26
I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand.	.22	.22	.80	.24
This brand results in bodily experiences.	.16	.26	.74	.33
This brand is not action oriented.	.25	.27	.71	.27
I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.	.22	.13	.28	.55
This brand does not make me think.	.15	.26	.12	.51
This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.	.33	.23	.29	.68

Table 4.
Total Variance Explained

Factor	% of Variance	Cumulative %
Sensory	25.71	25.71
Affective	22.11	47.82
Behavioral	11.36	59.19
Intellectual	7.61	66.80

Table 5.
*Reliability Analysis: Sample Statistics for Identified Constructs**

Construct	Mean	Std. Deviation	Cronbach's alpha
Sensory	3.02	1.25	0.78
Affective	3.34	0.96	0.89
Behavioral	3.19	0.74	0.85
Intellectual	2.88	1.12	0.81
Brand Satisfaction	3.11	0.84	0.87
Brand Loyalty	3.27	0.81	0.74

*N=270

Table 6.
Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Observable Variables		Latent Variables	Standardized Estimates	P
This brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	←	Sensory	0.86	*
I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.	←	Sensory	0.72	*
This brand does not appeal to my senses.	←	Sensory	0.67	*
This brand induces feelings and sentiments.	←	Affective	0.76	*
I do not have strong emotions for this brand.	←	Affective	0.83	*
This brand is an emotional brand.	←	Affective	0.65	*
I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand.	←	Behavioral	0.81	*
This brand results in bodily experiences.	←	Behavioral	0.74	*
This brand is not action oriented.	←	Behavioral	0.69	*
I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.	←	Intellectual	0.58	*
This brand does not make me think.	←	Intellectual	0.56	*
This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.	←	Intellectual	0.61	*

*p< .05

models pertaining each of BES, using SAS 9.1 software. We analyzed a model that assumed all items loaded on a single brand experience construct, and four separate one-factor models were estimated using a maximum likelihood function, in which each BES was used as an exogenous variable. This procedure was done in order to facilitate noise-free setting for assessment of each of four BES constructs.

The fit measures for the proposed model had a reasonable fit which were reported in Table 7. The value of RMSEA of about 0.05 or less would indicate a close fit of the model to the degree of freedom. But there is also the opinion that a value of about 0.08 or less for RMSEA would indicate a reasonable error of approximation (Browne & Cudeck, 1993). The findings suggest that the Affective model

and the Four factor model appear to have a close fit of the model to the data, while the Behavioral model and the Intellectual model are still reasonably fit. The Four factor model was found to be the best-fitting model ($\chi^2(59) = 289.76, p < .05; RMSEA = 0.04$). Only the Sensory model had RMSEA value greater than 0.08. However, other goodness of fit statistics (i.e. CFI & GFI) showed that all listed models had a reasonable fit of the variables in the model and statistically significant except the Sensory model and the Intellectual model. For instance, high value of CFI > 0.90 are indicative of an excellent fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999). In terms of the values, the ratio between the statistic and the number of degrees of freedom for all five models ranged from 4.58 to 4.91, close to 5, indicating a reasonable fit.

Table 7.
Goodness of Fit Statistics: Five Models of Brand Experience Scale (BES) as the Antecedents

Models	SRMR	NFI	Chi-Square (df=59)**	GFI	CFI	RMSEA
Sensory model	0.76	0.91	287.15* (df=59)**	0.93	0.89	0.09
Affective model	0.58	0.88	275.36* (df=59)**	0.91	0.85	0.05
Behavioral model	0.67	0.90	282.07* (df=59)**	0.92	0.90	0.06
Intellectual model	0.54	0.90	270.25* (df=59)**	0.87	0.91	0.06
Four factor model	0.53	0.94	289.76* (df=59)**	0.95	0.93	0.04

* $p < .05$,

** difference between sample moments & parameter

DISCUSSION

Global Four Factor Model of BES

Figure 2 shows the overall estimated structural equation model of the Four Factors of BES. Results of measurement and structural model test are reported in Figure 2. Brand experience was considered to affect consumer behavioral outcomes through a direct and indirect route as brand evokes an experience, which leads to satisfaction and loyalty (Chaiken, Liberman, & Eagly, 1989; Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). All of four BES were found to have statistically significant direct effects on two key behavioral outcomes (i.e. Brand Satisfaction-BS and Brand Loyalty-BL). Thus, Brand Experience Scales (BES) was found to have significant effects on consumer behavior and may be considered to be a reasonably important predictor of consumers' brand buying behavior. The total effect of brand experience through Brand Satisfaction (BS) on Brand Loyalty (BL) is 1.21 (.56+.75.86). Brand experience was found to have differential effects on satisfaction and loyalty. The direct effect of brand experience on BS was higher (.75) than the direct effect of experience on BL (.56). Four of the BES had differential link to the Brand Experience construct: the Affective (.83) and the Behavioral (.81) were found to have higher path coefficients than the Sensory (.78) and the Intellectual (.76).

Four Factor Models of High, Medium and Low Involvement Product Categories

In order to determine whether different product category has different extent of impacts of the Four BES dimensions on consumers' behavior, separate structural equation models were estimated for three product categories. The Four factor models for low and medium involvement product categories are shown in Figure 3 (Low involvement product – coffee) and

in Figure 4 (Medium involvement product-TV), while the Four factor model for high involvement product is shown in Figure 5 (automobile). The results show that the Four factor models of all three product categories had different relational properties between BES and Brand Satisfaction (BS) and Brand Loyalty (BL).

For high involvement product (i.e. car), behavioral dimension of BES was found to have the most significant impact on BS and BL, while medium (TV) and low (coffee) involvement products, affective dimension of BES was found to be the important determinant on BS and BL. For high involvement product, affective dimension was found to have the least impact on BS and BL, and intellectual dimension was found to be least important for consumers' BS and BL for low involvement product. This outcome show striking contrast of consumers' brand experience for high and low involvement products. It supports the proposition that consumers tend to do impulsive shopping on low involvement product with less product search effort compared to medium and high involvement products, thus affective and sensory aspects of brand experience tend to influence their satisfaction and loyalty for a brand. According to VN-brand (2013)' study, Vietnamese consumers consume 1.15kg coffee per year and coffee is considered to be an important part of Vietnamese culture. Thus, affective experience of coffee and personal feelings is critical factor determining BL and BS of a coffee brand in Vietnam. This suggests that marketers particularly in food industry should pay attention to hedonic aspects of products and their advertisement and marketing activities may need to include affective and sensory aspects of brand experience.

On the other hand, automobile is a product category in which consumers' perception of their bodily experience, physical actions, and behavior are important drivers for their brand satisfaction. In addition, intellectual dimension of brand experience also substantially influence consumers' BS and

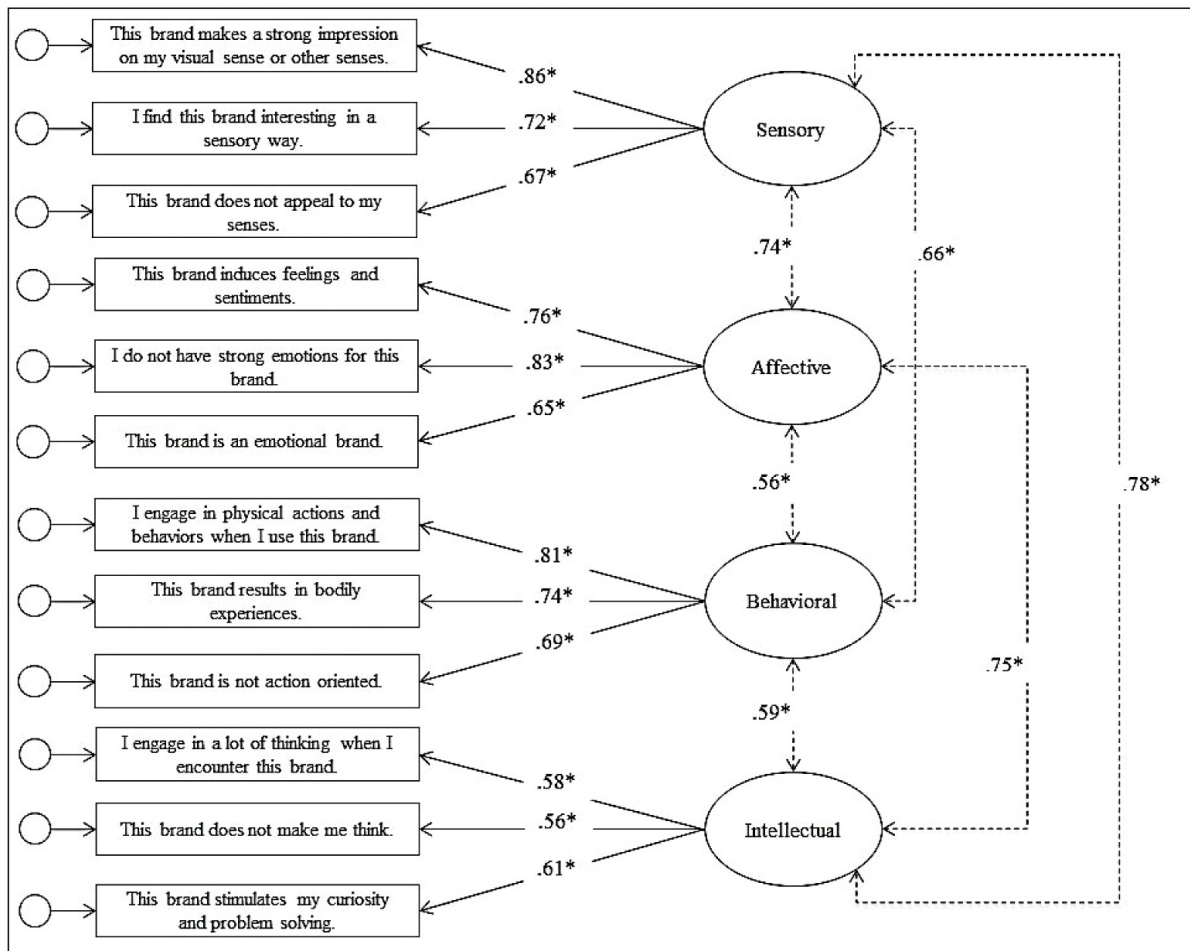
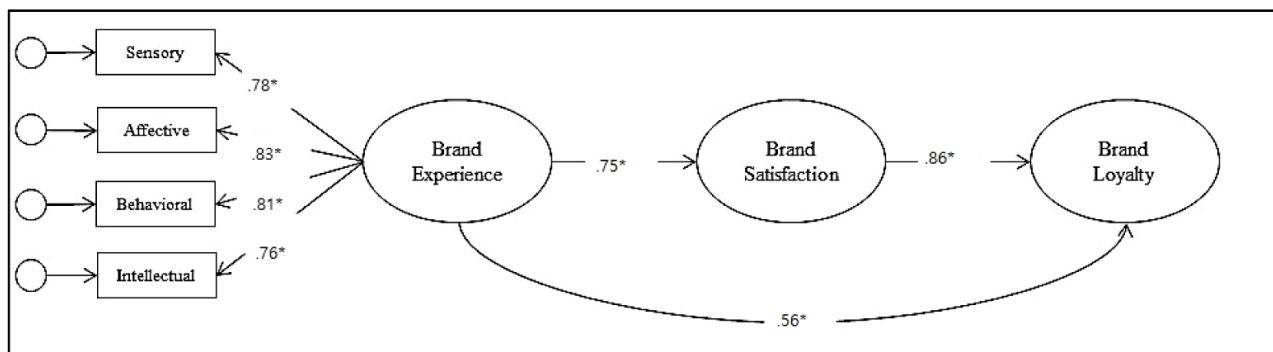
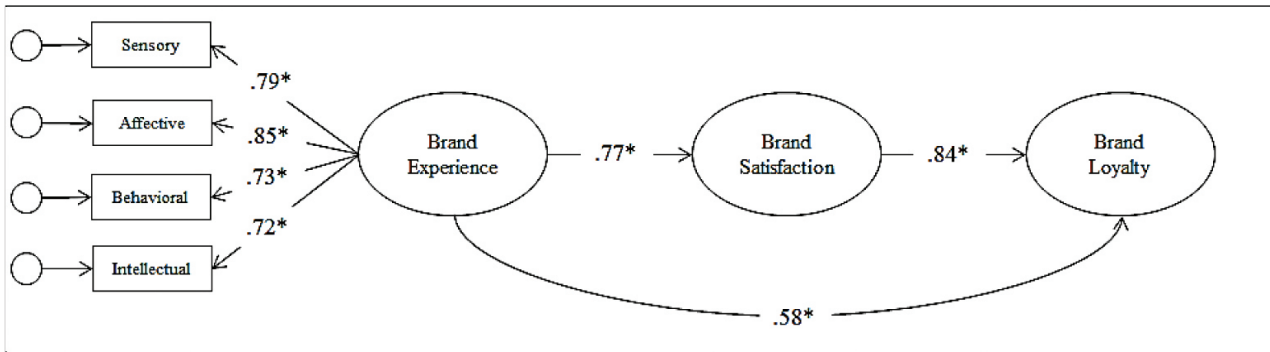


Figure 1.
Confirmatory Factor Analysis: Discriminant and Predictive Validity of the Brand Experience Scale (BES)



*P<0.5

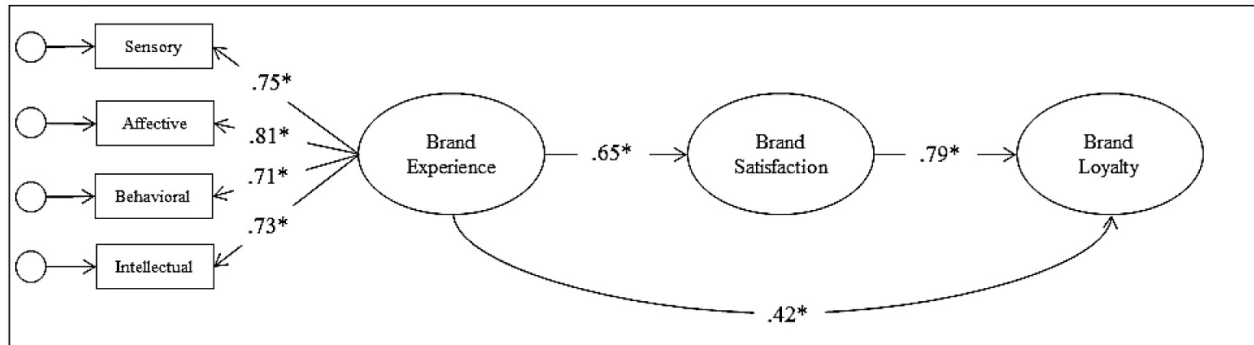
Figure 2.
Global Four Factor Model of BES



*P<0.1

Figure 3.

The Four Factor Model of Low-involvement product category: Coffee



*P<0.1

Figure 4.

The Four Factor Model of Medium-involvement product category: Television



*P<0.1

Figure 5.

The Four Factor Model of High-involvement product category: Automobile

BL. Findings suggest that Vietnamese consumers make rational process in their judgment of a brand. Automobile is considered to be a product category with experiential and relational aspects (Chiou & Droge, 2006) and it is critical to establish their brand loyalty as it involve long placement cycles for buyers which makes it challenging to get consumers' repeat-purchase decision (Che & Seetharaman, 2009; Sahin et al., 2012). This implies that marketers may need to emphasize physical experience of automobile (i.e. test drive) or advertise bodily experience of automobile products.

High involvement product category tends to be in luxury product category with high-end price range, and consumers tend to extend their search process to ensure purchase of desirable brand. This is likely to involve intellectual and behavioral process of brand experience such as “engaging in physical actions” and “engaging in rational analysis of a brand.” In Vietnam, automobile is one of the most luxury product categories in which only 2% of the population (less than 87 millions) owns a personal car. Consequently, the intellectual experience of a brand has critical contribution to formation of a brand loyalty. Regarding BES's impact on BS and BL, all three models—high, medium, and low involvement products—show similar pattern of relationship; BES had greater effect on BS than on BL. Positive brand experience may effectively raise the satisfaction level of a brand, but may not necessarily guarantee brand commitment and repurchase of the brand. Therefore, it may be necessary for marketers to explore additional branding strategies to solidify consumers' commitment to a brand. Future research may need to explore possible existence of mediating factor for the relationship between BES and BL.

CONCLUSION

As more consumers prefer to be engaged with a brand at a deeper and broader level, marketing

communications may need to be reformed in order to establish a dialogue and build a long lasting relationship with consumers. With the digital revolution, landscape for marketing communication with consumers is rapidly changing with shift from traditional approach to relational approach. This implies that traditional media such as TV, radio, and newspapers are losing their power on consumers. Furthermore, a new way of promotion with various new medium (e.g. online-marketing and experience) is emerging to create awareness of the brand, to link brand associations to consumers' perception, and to elicit positive brand judgment or feelings. In particular, experience play a critical role in brand management at personal level as it complements brand building in the virtual world (i.e. online marketing) by engaging consumers in the real or physical world. These two types of marketing efforts reinforce each other, and experiential marketing facilitates engagement of consumers' senses and imagination to a brand as consumers “experience” transform their current brand knowledge to desired brand knowledge, which marketers attempt to pursue. Thus, critical tasks from marketers' perspective is how to develop and design marketing communication in the physical/real world through experience in order for consumers to transform brand knowledge structure in a way that could broaden and deepen their relationship with the brand.

Practical Marketing Implications

Our study findings verify that consumers differentiate their way of experiencing a brand subject to product category and product involvement level. For high involving brands, behavioral aspects of experience may enable consumers' perceptual change of brand knowledge, which may lead to brand satisfaction and brand loyalty. For medium and low involving brands, affective aspects of experience was found to be important in relating consumers

personally to the brand. Our proposed model was found to provide meaningful and practical implications for marketers who may attempt to target on specific product category segment with experiential marketing approach. Vietnamese consumers were found to be affected by brand experience in the process of making decisions regarding brand judgment and brand resonance, and shown to have differentiated response to four major BES subject to product category and involvement level. Thus, marketers who wish to enter Vietnamese consumer markets may need to develop a marketing program which entails “extraordinary experience” that are intense, positive, intrinsically enjoyable leading to merging of action, awareness, attention or clear focus, personal integration and control, awareness of power, joy, and valuing (Abrahams, 1986; Arnould, 1993; Csikszentmihalyi, 1975; Csikzentmihalyi & LeFevre, 1989; Privette, 1983). It is only when interpersonal interaction takes place between a consumer and a brand, then such extraordinary experience with unusual events and high level of intensity can result in a sense of newness of perception and process, in other words, change in the brand knowledge of consumers (Privette, 1983 ; Abraham 1986). In future study, explicit effects of experiential marketing programs on consumers’ choice behavior may need to be further developed in order to have more comprehensive guideline for building brand loyalty in Vietnamese market.

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