

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The Influence of Brand Experience on Brand Loyalty Among Mobile Phone Users in Pampanga, Philippines: A Mediation Analysis

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Abstract: The study investigates the influence of brand experience on brand loyalty and the mediating effects of two constructs—brand satisfaction and brand trust. The participants of the study were identified using a convenience sampling technique, and they were mobile phone users situated in Pampanga, Philippines. The study employed a predictive-correlational research design and used partial least squares (PLS) path modeling to measure the research hypotheses. It was found out that brand experience significantly and positively influences brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty. Moreover, brand satisfaction was found to be statistically related to brand loyalty and brand trust. The relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty was also positive and significant. The mediation analysis shows that brand satisfaction and brand trust mediate the link between brand experience and brand loyalty.

Keywords: brand, PLS-SEM, brand experience, brand loyalty, mediation analysis

More and more firms realize the relative importance of brand names of their products and services. Brand names are now considered an important asset of any organization. Because of the complexity of the market and the competition, people are confronted with a variety of choices but with less time to make a decision. Therefore, when a brand has the ability to simplify the decision-making process of an individual, reduce the level of risk, and have the capacity to set expectations, that brand is considered strong and invaluable. It is now imperative for strong brands to deliver on what is expected and sustain and enhance the strength of those brands through time (Keller, 2014).

Brands have the capacity to affect consumers' perceptions and, at the same time, transform brand experience (Rosenbaum-Elliott et al., 2015). On the part of the consumers, the special meaning that brands carry can alter their perceptions and experiences with a product or a service (Keller, 2014). With so much emphasis on customer experience, firms are now designing products and services that will provide lasting experiences (Huang, 2017). Previous studies on customer experience have identified the change from brand benefits to brand experience (Barnes et al., 2014; Dagger & David, 2012; Huang, 2017; Oliver, 2014; Olsen et al., 2013;

Schmitt, 2013; Vlachos et al., 2009). Furthermore, customer experience is now being emphasized by marketing practitioners and educators because of the complexities on the market (Berry et al., 2002; Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999). Moreover, consumers with superior brand experiences will tend to develop higher brand loyalty (Iglesias et al., 2011).

Brand experience is said to be an important concept that captures the core of branding. It refers to consumer's responses—personal, internal, and behavioral—induced by brand-related factors (Brakus et al., 2009; Schmitt, 2009). The concept of brand experience is different from the customer experience. Customer experience refers to the overall facet of an offering, which includes the company's quality of customer service, advertisement, product features, comfort, and reliability. It is a form of response from a customer that is both personal and internal, and evoked from direct and indirect interaction with the company. Direct contact may be through actual customer purchase and use of the product, whereas indirect encounter can be through unplanned encounter such as criticisms or news reports on the company's products and services (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). Based on prior studies, brand experience is said to be significantly and directly related to brand loyalty (e.g., Huang, 2017; Hussein, 2018; Ong et al., 2018). It has been argued that brand loyalty can be a tool to attain a competitive advantage. Brand loyalty leads to lower marketing expenses, greater access to channels of distribution, better resistance to competitiveness forces, less risky in terms of extending the brand, and more price elastic demand (Denoue & Saykiewicz, 2009).

Aside from brand experience, brand satisfaction and brand trust are said to be significantly and directly related to brand loyalty (Sahin et al., 2011; Venter et al., 2016). It has been noted that a high level of brand satisfaction results in sustainable and lasting commitment of an individual to purchase certain brands (Clarke et al., 2012). Furthermore, brand trust is also an important factor that leads to loyalty to brands (Papista & Dimitriadis, 2012; Venter et al., 2016). Considering the importance of brand loyalty, the present study aims to explore the effects of brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand experience on brand loyalty and how the brand satisfaction and brand trust act as mediators on the brand experience–brand loyalty relationship.

Research Hypotheses and Framework

The present study is founded on the theory of reasoned action, which explains that the factors affecting performed behavior include the attitude toward buying and subjective norm; hence, these two antecedents predict purchase behavior (Fishbein, 1980; Ryan & Bonfield, 1975). The theory of reasoned action argues that gauging the attitude of an individual toward performing an action predicts purchase behavior. Aside from attitude, overt behavior or subjective norm also affects the purchase behavior of an individual. In this case, the individual's behavioral performance can be influenced by social factors, such as his or her expectations (Ha, 1998; Lutz, 1991).

Brand Experience

According to Brakus et al. (2009), brand experience refers to sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, and social responses to any stimuli from brands. Stimuli from a brand may come from the brand's design, packaging, communications, and environments. Brand experience occurs from the consumer's interaction with the organization's products and services and from product/service personnel, which in turn yields to consumer responses to the brand (Hussein, 2018). These consumer responses are both subjective and internal (Ding & Tseng, 2015).

Responses from consumers, because of brand experience, may be classified into five: sensory, affective, cognitive, behavioral, and social. Sensory experience comes from the five senses of consumers, whereas affective experience is based on mood, emotions, feelings, and sentiments of consumers. Cognitive experience refers to how consumers think logically and creatively based on brand issues. Behavioral experience heightens the behaviors or intentions of consumers based on certain factors, including their physical experience of the brand, their lifestyle, and continuing patterns of behavior or interaction with other individuals. Finally, social experience refers to consumers and their connection to the brand, which stimulates their need for actualization, self-esteem, and affinity (Ding & Tseng, 2015).

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty exists when a consumer has the intention to buy a brand as his or her ultimate choice

(Yoo & Donthu, 2001). It is the level of attachment of a consumer to a specific brand (Liu et al., 2012). It is an important consequence or outcome in the field of marketing, and it can be measured based on attitude (such as the study of Kressmann et al., 2006) or based on behavior (such as the study of Romaniuk & Nenycz-Thiel, 2013). According to Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), attitudinal loyalty is the propensity of consumers' commitment and their emotions or attitudes to a brand, whereas behavioral loyalty refers to the number of repeat purchases and the intention of consumers to purchase the same brand in their forthcoming purchase. In business, brand loyalty has always been identified as an important factor (Han et al., 2008; Russell-Bennett et al., 2007). In the present study, both attitudinal and behavioral aspects of brand loyalty were measured.

Brand Satisfaction

When consumers evaluate their consumption experience, they sometimes develop a positive or favorable attitude towards a brand, and that is brand satisfaction. When individuals are satisfied to the product they purchase, it may lead to brand loyalty (Erciş et al., 2012) and it is due to possible repeat purchase (behavioral loyalty). Brand satisfaction is the consumers' response to a brand and during the initial purchase of the brand once the product is delivered (Chen-Yu et al., 2017). The concept of satisfaction is considered a complex one because the background, characteristics, and expectations of consumers and their responses to other factors, including convenience, atmosphere, location, sales personnel, and marketing efforts, all affect it (Anselmsson, 2006; Devesa et al., 2010; Lin, 2015).

Brand Trust

The degree to which consumers rely on the ability of a specific brand to perform its stated function is called brand trust (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Pavlou et al., 2007; Wang & Emurian, 2005). Brand trust happens when consumers believe and are confident that their desire for a particular brand will be satisfied (Zhou et al., 2012). Moreover, Delgado-Ballester et al. (2003) argued that brand trust occurs when consumers feel secure when interacting with the brand, and consider the brand as responsible and reliable.

Hypothesis Development

Various studies have identified that brand experience significantly affects brand satisfaction, trust, and loyalty. For instance, Chinomona (2013) found out that brand experience of African consumers significantly and positively affects brand satisfaction and brand trust. On the other hand, Lin (2015) investigated how brand experience affects brand satisfaction of airline passengers in Taiwan. The results indicated that brand experience of passengers is significantly and positively related to brand satisfaction. In the study of Fikri et al. (2018), the authors examined whether brand experience is significantly related to brand trust and brand satisfaction. The findings revealed that brand experience and brand trust are significantly and positively related. The same is true with brand experience having significant and positive relation with brand satisfaction. In the study of Sahin et al. (2011), the authors revealed that brand experience leads to brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty among metropolitan consumers in Istanbul, Turkey. The same is true with the research study of Başer et al. (2015), where brand experience was found to be positively related to brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty. It was also revealed that the direct effect of brand experience on brand satisfaction and brand trust was higher than that of brand experience–brand loyalty relationship.

Moreover, Ong et al. (2018) evaluated the effects of brand experience on brand loyalty. In the study, the authors identified four dimensions of brand experience, namely: sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual. On the other hand, brand loyalty was gauged based on three constructs—willingness to pay more, word-of-mouth, and repurchase intention. The findings showed that sensory experience positively and significantly influences willingness to pay more and repurchase intention, whereas the affective experience is significantly and positively related to word-of-mouth and repurchase intention. Moreover, behavioral experience significantly affects willingness to pay more and word-of-mouth. In contrast, intellectual experience significantly affects the three constructs of brand loyalty—willingness to pay more, word-of-mouth, and repurchase intention. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

- H1a. Brand experience positively affects brand satisfaction.

H1b. Brand experience positively affects brand trust.

H1c. Brand experience positively affects brand loyalty.

Menidjel et al. (2017) also found that brand satisfaction directly affects brand loyalty. Additionally, Han et al. (2018) examined the factors affecting brand loyalty in the coffee shop industry. The study revealed that brand satisfaction greatly contributes to brand loyalty. In the study of Veloutsou (2015), the author explored the interrelationships of brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty of women's cosmetic consumers in Scotland. The findings revealed that brand satisfaction is significantly related to brand trust and brand loyalty. In the field of hospitality management, Rather and Sharma (2016) evaluated the factors that influence hospitality brands. The results showed that brand satisfaction is one of the factors that directly influence brand loyalty. Krivic and Loh (2018) assessed the variables that influence brand loyalty of fitness club clients in Austria. The findings indicated that brand satisfaction significantly and positively influences brand loyalty. In the wine industry in Chile, Bianchi (2015) scrutinized several factors affecting brand loyalty. The author found that brand satisfaction has the highest impact on wine brand loyalty. Cheng et al. (2016) examined the antecedents influencing brand loyalty among theme parks in China. The findings showed that brand satisfaction significantly and positively affects them park brand loyalty.

Additionally, Zboja and Voorhees (2006) investigated the impact of brand satisfaction on brand trust among customers of retail stores. The results showed that brand satisfaction is significantly and positively related to brand trust. Ercis et al. (2012) also scrutinized the impact of brand satisfaction on brand trust consumers of mobile phones. The findings revealed that brand satisfaction leads to greater brand trust among mobile phone users. Moreover, Marist et al. (2014) examined the effect of brand satisfaction on brand trust among Indonesian consumers. The results indicated that higher brand satisfaction leads to higher brand trust. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H2a. Brand satisfaction positively affects brand loyalty.

H2b. Brand satisfaction positively affects brand trust.

Gözükara and Çolakoğlu (2016) examined how brand trust affects brand loyalty among millennial university students. The results showed that brand trust was significantly and positively related to brand loyalty. Chinomona (2013) evaluated the factors that affect brand loyalty in South Africa. The findings revealed that the relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty is highly significant, and the two latent variables are positively related. In the study of Menidjel et al. (2017), the authors also found out that brand trust positively influences brand loyalty. Furthermore, Alhaddad (2015) explored the constructs that affect brand loyalty in mobile phones among students. The results indicated that brand trust leads to brand loyalty. Therefore, we hypothesize:

H3. Brand trust positively affects brand loyalty.

Several studies have identified that different mediating constructs on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. Huang (2017) found that brand love and brand trust mediate the positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. In the study of Ramaseshan and Stein (2014), the authors examined the mediating effects of brand personality and brand relationships on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty of consumers in Australia. The findings showed that brand personality and brand relationships act as mediators on the brand experience–brand loyalty relationship. Moreover, Hussein (2018) explored the mediating effects of customer satisfaction and brand of origin on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. The author found out that only customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. Whereas, Başer et al. (2015) measured the indirect effects of brand satisfaction and brand trust on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. The findings showed that both brand satisfaction and brand trust act as mediators on brand experience–brand loyalty relationship.

Previous studies have identified the significant relationship between brand experience and brand satisfaction (e.g., Başer et al., 2015; Chinomona, 2013; Fikri et al., 2018; Lin, 2015; Sahin et al., 2011) and the significant relationship between brand satisfaction and brand loyalty (e.g., Bianchi, 2015; Cheng et al., 2016; Han et al., Krivic & Loh, 2018; 2018; Menidjel et al., 2017; Rather & Sharma, 2016; Veloutsou, 2015). Moreover, earlier research studies also showed that brand experience and brand trust (e.g., Başer et al., 2015; Chinomona, 2013; Fikri et al., 2018; Sahin et al., 2011) and brand trust and brand loyalty (e.g., Alhaddad, 2015; Chinomona, 2013; Gözükarar & Çolakoğlu, 2016; Menidjel et al., 2017) are positively and significantly related. Hence, the present study explored whether brand satisfaction and brand trust act as mediators on the brand experience and brand loyalty relationship. Hence, we hypothesize that:

H4. Brand satisfaction mediates the positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

H5. Brand trust mediates the positive relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

From the research hypotheses identified, Figure 1 presents the proposed research model on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. Moreover, the present study also explored the mediating effects of brand satisfaction and brand trust on the brand experience–brand loyalty relationship.

Methods

Participants of the Study

The respondents of the study were mobile phone users situated in Pampanga, Philippines. All participants were identified using a convenience sampling method. The distribution of the survey questionnaires was done offline or face to face. Out of 650 survey questionnaires distributed, 500 were answered completely and correctly by the respondents, a 76.9% response rate. The distribution of questionnaires commenced in January and ended in February 2018.

One of the requirements in PLS-SEM is to measure the sufficiency of the sample size. The sample size used

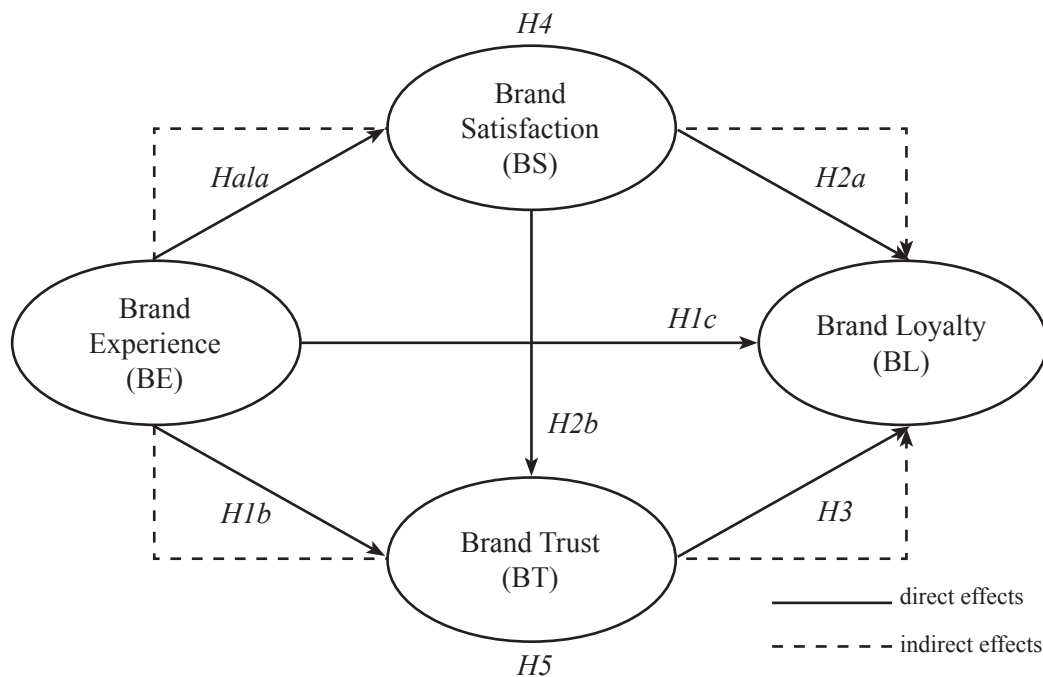


Figure 1. Proposed Research Model

is 500. There are two ways to estimate the sufficiency of the sample size: inverse-square root and Gamma-exponential methods (Kock & Hadaya, 2018). Using WarpPLS version 6.0 (Kock, 2017), a statistical software, with a minimum absolute significant path coefficient of 0.15, significance level of 0.05, and power level of 0.95, the inverse-square root method suggested 481 samples, whereas gamma-exponential method suggested 464 samples (see Figure 2).

Therefore, the sample size of the PLS-model must be between 464 to 481. The sample size used in the study is 500, which is highly sufficient to explain the results of the structural model.

Table 1 manifests that majority of the participants were female (60.4%). Moreover, in terms of age groups, 77.8% of the respondents were in the age groups 20 years old and below, and 21–30 years old. In terms of employment, 57% were college students, whereas

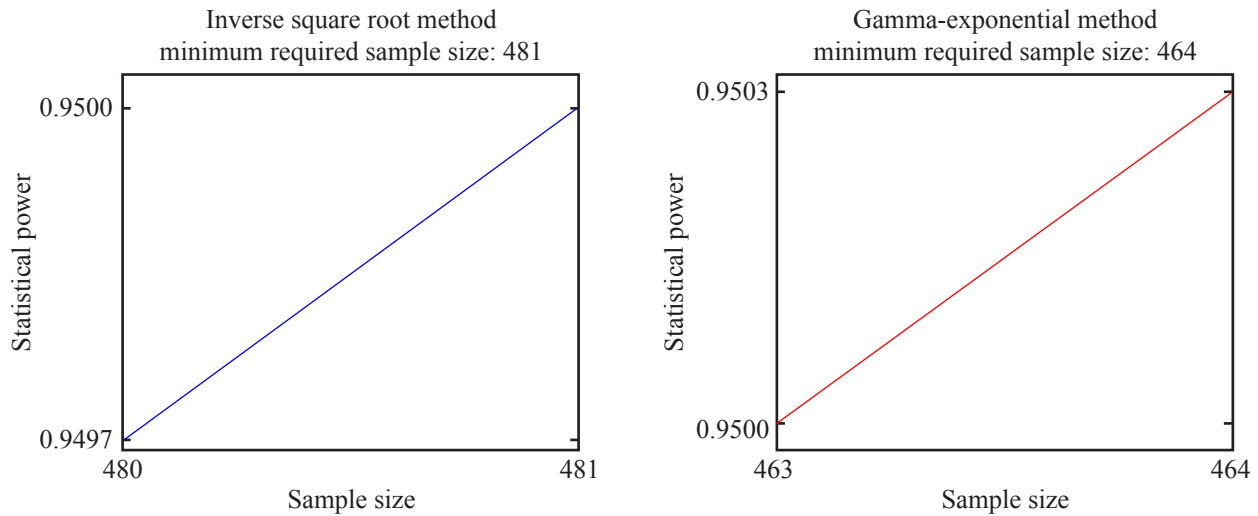


Figure 2. Results of the Inverse Square Root and Gamma-Exponential Methods

Table 1
Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

	Frequency	Percent		Frequency	Percent
Sex			Brand		
Male	198	39.6	Apple	179	35.8
Female	302	60.4	Samsung	166	33.2
Age			Oppo	64	12.8
20-below	226	45.2	Lenovo	17	3.4
21-30	163	32.6	LG	5	1.0
31-40	51	10.2	Nokia	8	1.6
41-50	47	9.4	Sony	4	0.8
51-above	13	2.6	Asus	28	5.6
Employment			Cherry Mobile	7	1.4
College Student	285	57.0	Huawei	6	1.2
Employed	187	37.4	Myphone	3	0.6
Self-Employed	9	1.8	HTC	5	1.0
Others	19	3.8	Acer	5	1.0
			Blackberry	2	0.4
			Others	1	0.2

37.4% were employed. Among the various brands of mobile phones, Apple and Samsung magnified 69% usage among the respondents.

Research Instrument

The instrument used in the study was a questionnaire. It consisted of two parts—demographic factors and the constructs on brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty. The demographic characteristics include the respondent's sex, age, employment, and brand of primary mobile phone used. On the one hand, brand experience was measured using the scale used in the study of Brakus et al. (2009) and Sahin et al. (2011). In the present study, the modified version has 10 items. With regard to the assessment of brand satisfaction, the four items used in this construct were taken from various studies, which include Washburn and Plank (2002), Sahin et al. (2011), and Erciş et al. (2012). As for brand trust, the nine items were taken from Sahin et al. (2011). For brand loyalty, the seven items were from the studies of Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Alemán (2001), Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996), and Delos Salmones, Crespo and Del Bosque (2005).

All items in the four constructs were measured using a 5-point Likert scale where 1 means strongly disagree and 5 as strongly agree. The validity and reliability of the said constructs were measured, as shown in Tables 3 and 4.

Data Analysis

A predictive-correlational research design was used in the present study to measure the interrelationships of the four constructs—brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty. The partial least squares-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) using WarpPLS 6.0 software was employed to estimate the parameters of the structural model. The assessment of the PLS-SEM results includes evaluations of the measurement model and the structural model. In the evaluation of the measurement model, validity and reliability tests are included. On the other hand, evaluation of the structural model entails the assessment of collinearity, path coefficients of the model, coefficient of determination, effect sizes, and predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2016; Samani, 2016). Moreover, because the present study evaluates the mediating effects of brand satisfaction and brand trust, a mediation analysis was conducted. A mediation

model measures how mediator/s, to some extent, absorbs the effect of the exogenous construct on an endogenous variable in PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2014).

Results

Evaluation of the Measurement Model

The evaluation of the measurement model includes the validity and reliability of the constructs. Reliability tests measure the quality of the research instrument used in a study. An instrument is said to be reliable if the measures or items for each latent variable are understood in the same way by different participants (Kock, 2017). In the present study, both the Cronbach's alpha (CA) and composite reliability (CR) were gauged. The acceptable coefficient for CA and CR is 0.70 and above (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Nunnally, 1978; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Kock & Lynn, 2012). Moreover, Kock and Lynn (2012) identified a more relaxed criterion for the coefficient of CA and CR, which is that one of the two reliability measures should be equal to or greater than 0.70. Based on the coefficients of CA and CR, as shown in Table 3, the latent variables brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty are highly reliable.

When it comes to validity measurements, both convergent and discriminant validity tests were performed. Discriminant validity is another measure of the quality of a research instrument. An instrument is said to have a discriminant validity when the items or measures of each latent variable are not confusing with regard to their meaning, and it is well-understood by the respondents. On the other hand, an instrument is said to have a convergent validity when the respondents and the designer/s of the instrument have the same understanding with the items or measures of each latent variable under scrutiny (Kock, 2017).

For the measurement model to be acceptable, both convergent and discriminant validity should be reported. The assessment of convergent validity includes the evaluation of the loadings of each item for every latent variable. The p-values for each loading must be equal to or lesser than 0.05, and each loading must have a value of 0.5 and above (Hair, Black, Babin, & Anderson, 2009; Kock, 2017). Based on the results in Table 3, the latent variables - brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty - are within the acceptable thresholds for convergent validity.

Table 3*Convergent Validity and Reliability Measures*

Constructs/Items	Item Loading	AVE	CR	CA
<i>Brand Experience</i>				
1. The mobile phone brand that I am currently using makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.	0.736			
2. I find this mobile phone brand interesting in a sensory way.	0.762			
3. This mobile phone brand appeals to my senses.	0.734			
4. This mobile phone brand induces feelings and sentiments.	0.808			
5. I have strong emotions for this mobile phone brand.	0.750	0.561	0.927	0.913
6. I consider this mobile phone brand as an emotional brand.	0.733			
7. This mobile phone brand results in bodily experience.	0.735			
8. This mobile phone brand is action-oriented.	0.760			
9. I engage a lot of thinking when I encounter this mobile phone brand.	0.754			
10. This mobile phone brand makes me think.	0.717			
<i>Brand Satisfaction</i>				
1. The products/services provided by this mobile phone brand meet my expectations.	0.840			
2. The products/services offered by this mobile phone brand are desirable.	0.843	0.704	0.905	0.860
3. This mobile phone brand always brings happiness and delight to me.	0.835			
4. Overall, I am satisfied with this mobile phone brand.	0.837			
<i>Brand Trust</i>				
1. This mobile phone brand takes good care of me as customer.	0.796			
2. This mobile phone brand meets my expectations.	0.810			
3. I am confident with this mobile phone brand.	0.766			
4. This mobile phone brand NEVER disappoints me.	0.791			
5. This mobile phone brand guarantees satisfaction.	0.828	0.654	0.944	0.934
6. This mobile phone brand is honest and sincere in addressing my concerns.	0.821			
7. This mobile phone brand is reliable in solving the problem I encounter with its products/services.	0.834			
8. This mobile phone brand exerts efforts in providing customer satisfaction.	0.825			
9. This mobile phone brand compensates me, in some way, for the problem I encounter with their products/services.	0.805			
<i>Brand Loyalty</i>				
1. I will still use the same mobile phone brand in the next few years.	0.808			
2. If I will replace my old mobile phone, I will still choose the same mobile phone brand.	0.873			
3. I consider myself to be loyal to this mobile phone brand.	0.893			
4. To me, this mobile phone brand is clearly better than the other brands in the market.	0.871	0.733	0.951	0.939
5. I would recommend this mobile phone brand if somebody asks for my advice.	0.847			
6. I would continue with this mobile phone brand even if its rates increased slightly.	0.857			
7. I would not change my mobile phone brand if another brand will offer better price.	0.842			

All item loadings are significant at 0.001 ($p < .001$). AVE = average variance extracted; CR = composite reliability; CA = Cronbach's alpha

Table 4
Discriminant Validity Using Fornell and Larcker Criterion

	BE	BS	BT	BL
BE	0.749			
BS	0.633	0.839		
BT	0.630	0.747	0.809	
BL	0.570	0.663	0.710	0.856

BE – brand experience; BS – brand satisfaction; BT – brand trust; BL – brand loyalty. Diagonal elements are the square root of AVE of constructs, whereas the off-diagonal elements are the correlation between constructs.

Furthermore, the assessment of the discriminant validity of the measurement model includes the evaluation of the values of the average variance extracted (AVE). The values of the AVEs must be equal to or greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Kock & Lynn, 2012). As seen in Table 3, the coefficients of AVE for all latent variables satisfied the acceptable validity.

Additionally, discriminant validity assesses the correlations among variables with square roots of AVE coefficient (Kock, 2017; Lacap, 2019). For every latent construct, the square root of the AVEs should be greater than any of the correlations involving the said variable (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). In short, the diagonal values must be greater than any of the values to their left in the same row (Kock, 2017). Thus, the results in Table 4 indicate that the measures used in the study have discriminant validity.

Evaluation of the Structural Model

Evaluation of the structural model involves the assessment of collinearity, path coefficients of the structural model, coefficient of determination (R^2), effect sizes, and predictive relevance (Q^2). Figure 3 illustrates the PLS path model. The beta coefficients (β) are the path coefficients of the mediation model. The beta coefficient between brand experience and brand satisfaction is significant and positive ($\beta = 0.66, p < 0.01$). The same is true with the relationships between brand experience and brand trust ($\beta = 0.30, p < 0.01$) and brand experience and brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.15,$

$p < 0.01$). Additionally, there are significant and positive relationships between brand satisfaction and brand trust ($\beta = 0.55, p < 0.01$) and brand satisfaction and brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$). In terms of brand trust and brand loyalty, a significant and positive relationship also exists ($\beta = 0.42, p < 0.01$).

Direct and Indirect Effects

Table 5 presents the direct and indirect effects of the PLS path model. Analysis of the data indicated that brand experience positively affects respondents' brand satisfaction ($\beta = 0.655, p < 0.001$). The path coefficient magnifies that brand experience increases the level of brand satisfaction of the consumers. The effect size of BE→BS is large (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.429$). The result suggests that H1a is supported. Moreover, brand experience significantly and positively affects respondents' brand trust ($\beta = 0.305, p < 0.001$). The beta coefficient signifies that brand experience augments the level of brand trust of the consumers of mobile phones with an effect size of medium (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.202$). Therefore, H1b is supported. In terms of brand experience and brand loyalty, a significant and positive relationship exists between these two variables ($\beta = 0.149, p < 0.001$). The BE→BL path indicates that brand experience increases the level of mobile phone users' brand loyalty with a small effect size (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.089$). Thus, H1c is supported.

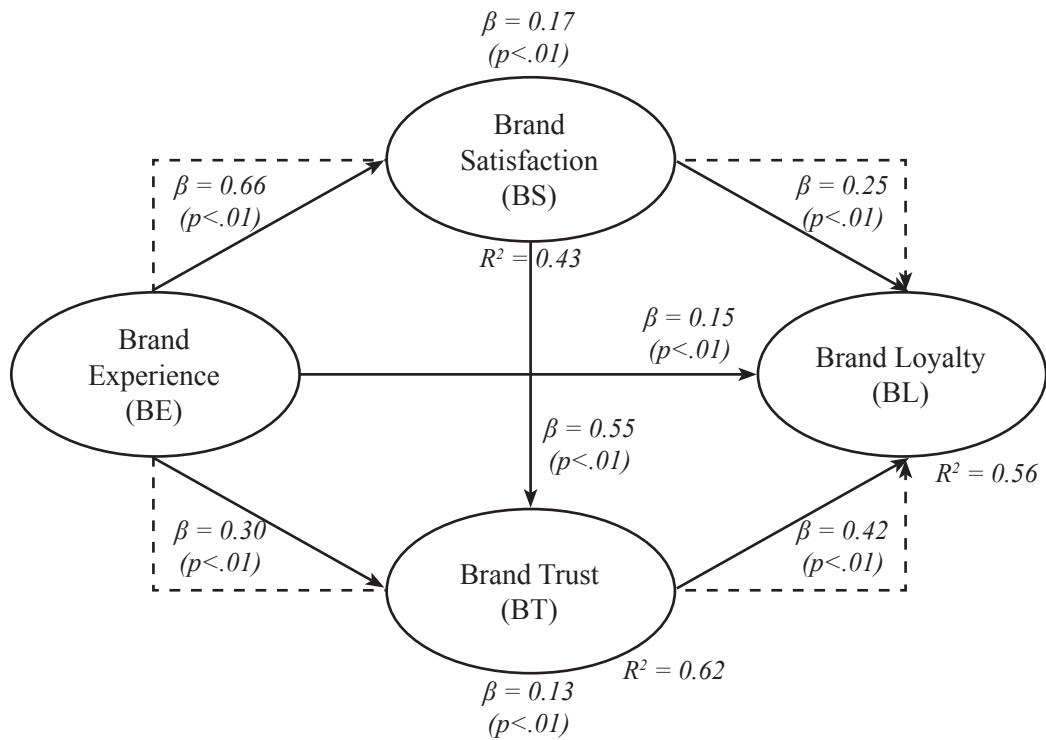


Figure 3 . The Brand Experience – Brand Loyalty Model With Parameter Estimates

Table 5

Direct and Indirect Effects

	β	SE	p-value	f^2
Direct Effects				
H1a. BE→BS	0.655	0.041	<0.001	0.429
H1b. BE→BT	0.305	0.043	<0.001	0.202
H1c. BE→BL	0.149	0.044	<0.001	0.089
H2a. BS→BL	0.253	0.043	<0.001	0.168
H2b. BS→BT	0.551	0.042	<0.001	0.413
H3. BT→BL	0.422	0.042	<0.001	0.300
Indirect Effects				
H4. BE→BS→BL	0.165	0.031	<0.001	0.098
H5. BE→BT→BL	0.129	0.031	<0.001	0.076

BE=brand experience; BS = brand satisfaction; BT = brand trust; BL = brand loyalty; f^2 is the Cohen's (1988) effect size: 0.02 = small, 0.15 = medium, 0.35 = large; SE = standard error; b = standardized path coefficient.

Table 6
Collinearity Assessment, Coefficient of Determination, and Predictive Relevance

Constructs	Full Collinearity VIF	R^2	Q^2
Brand experience	1.881		
Brand satisfaction	2.653	0.429	0.431
Brand trust	2.927	0.615	0.615
Brand loyalty	2.242	0.557	0.558

Regarding brand satisfaction and brand loyalty link, a significant and positive relationship exists between these two constructs ($\beta = 0.253, p < 0.001$). This suggests that brand satisfaction augments the level of brand loyalty of mobile phone customers. The effect size of the BS→BL path is medium (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.168$). Therefore, H2a is supported. Furthermore, brand satisfaction significantly and positively affects customers' brand trust on mobile phones ($\beta = 0.551, p < 0.001$). The positive path between brand satisfaction and brand trust has a large effect size (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.413$). Therefore, H2b is supported.

The indirect effect of brand satisfaction on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.165, p < 0.001$). This suggests that brand satisfaction partially mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty with a small mediation effect (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.098$). Additionally, analysis of the data revealed the indirect effect of brand trust on the brand experience–brand loyalty relationship is statistically significant ($\beta = 0.129, p < 0.001$). This indicates that brand trust also partially mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty with a small extent of mediation effect (Cohen's $f^2 = 0.076$). To wit, brand experience is positively related to brand satisfaction and brand trust, which in turn affects brand loyalty. Therefore, H4 and H5 are supported.

Part of the evaluation of the structural model is the assessment of full collinearity assessment. According to Kock (2015) and Kock and Lynn (2012), the value of full collinearity VIF must be equal to or lesser than 3.3.

As seen in Table 6, the coefficients of full collinearity VIF of brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty are within the acceptable values; hence, the measurement model is said to have no vertical and lateral collinearity.

The coefficient of determination or simply the r-squared (R^2) was also assessed. The R^2 coefficients are the variance percentage in the latent variable that is explained by the latent variables that are hypothesized to affect it (Kock, 2017). The R^2 coefficients of 0.43, 0.62, and 0.56 reflect the predictive accuracy of the exogenous variable on endogenous variable/s. Finally, predictive relevance was also evaluated using the Stone-Geisser test or simply Q^2 (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). To say that the measurement model has predictive validity, the values of Q^2 should be higher than 0 (Kock, 2015). As seen in Table 6, the Q^2 coefficients meet the said requirement.

Discussion

The present study confirmed that brand experience significantly and positively affects brand satisfaction. This indicates that brand experience is present, and consumers develop a favorable attitude towards that brand; thus, their level of brand satisfaction rises. Prior studies also suggested that brand experience and brand satisfaction are positively related (Baser et al., 2015; Lin, 2015; Sahin et al., 2011). Moreover, the results also revealed that brand experience leads to brand trust and brand loyalty. The findings suggest that, when a consumer has a positive response in a brand, he or she feels secure with it and his or her commitment and degree for repeat purchase increases and these results are similar with previous studies (Baser et al., 2015; Chinomona, 2013; Ong et al., 2018; Sahin et al., 2011).

Moreover, the study also found that brand satisfaction significantly and positively affects brand loyalty and brand trust. As the level of brand satisfaction rises, brand loyalty and brand trust move in the same direction. The results are in congruence with preceding undertakings (Bianchi, 2015; Cheng et al., 2016; Han et al., 2018; Krivic & Loh, 2018; Menidjel et al., 2017; Rather & Sharma, 2016; Veloutsou, 2015). In terms of brand trust and brand loyalty, the findings revealed that they are positively and directly related, and these results are in congruence with the studies of Alhaddad (2015), Chinomona (2013), Gözükarar and Çolakoğlu (2016), and Menidjel et al. (2017).

The findings also showed that brand satisfaction and brand trust act as mediators on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. The results suggest that brand satisfaction and brand trust contribute to the strength of the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. The study of Baser et al. (2015) also found that brand satisfaction and brand trust indirectly affect the brand experience–brand loyalty relationship.

The theory of reasoned action proves that subjective norm and attitude are the primary considerations regarding the purchase behavior of an individual (Ha, 1998). When the purchase behavior of an individual is favorable, brand loyalty is possible. With the increasing importance of branding and brand management in business, emphasizing the influence of brand experience on brand loyalty is a must. A favorable brand experience may develop brand loyalty (Iglesias et al., 2011), and in the present study, brand satisfaction and brand trust contribute to the strengthening of the said relationship. Hence, it is important for mobile phone companies to provide favorable and lasting brand experience because brand experience leads to brand satisfaction and brand trust, which in turn will result in brand loyalty. With the level of competition among smartphones and “PH is fastest-growing smartphone market in ASEAN” (2016), brand loyalty is truly a huge challenge.

There are various strategies that mobile phone companies may consider if their aim is geared toward the attainment of brand loyalty. One of the important strategies is to deliver consistent products and services.

Brand experience is important; therefore, pre- and after-sale service form part of the brand experience, and when it is favorable, brand loyalty will be realized. Connecting with consumers brings about a sense of belongingness. When individuals feel that the brand engages its consumers, the sense of brand satisfaction triggers brand trust, which may lead to brand loyalty. Lastly, mobile phone companies must ensure that they deliver value to their consumers. Meeting or even exceeding the expectations of the consumers contributes to the realization of brand loyalty.

It is also worthy to highlight that in the present study, brand satisfaction and brand trust mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty. In short, in an industry such as mobile phones, where consumers are constantly faced with myriad choices in terms of brands of mobile phone models, manufacturers must continuously evaluate consumer characteristics and expectations in order to attain brand satisfaction. Moreover, mobile phone companies must put emphasis on delivering the identified functionality of the mobile phones they offer in the market and build a sustainable trust relationship with the consumers for them to express confidence and trust in mobile phone brands.

The present study has its limitations. First, it only includes brand experience, brand satisfaction, and brand trust as factors that may affect brand loyalty. Future researchers may find interest in looking at the other antecedents that may influence brand loyalty. Additionally, other researchers may also consider in analyzing other logical and meaningful mediators on the relationship of brand experience and brand loyalty.

Declaration of ownership:

This report is our original work.

Conflict of interest:

None.

Ethical clearance:

This study was approved by the institution.

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