

THE ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF BRAND PRESTIGE IN SMARTPHONE INDUSTRY IN IRAN

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the antecedents and consequences of brand prestige in smartphone industry, specifically comparing Apple and Samsung brand among Iranian people. Based on the existing theoretical background, it was proposed that four types of brand-related stimulus form brand experience and five types of brand-related stimulus form brand personality in consumer memory and thus influence the formation of brand prestige. Through a review of the literature, it was also hypothesized that brand prestige can result in five managerial outcomes: consumer well-being perception, customer brand identification, and brand relationship quality and brand loyalty. The results of data analysis indicate that all types of brand-related stimulus aid in the creation of brand prestige, and can thus help to: enhance customers' well-being perception, customer brand identification, and brand relationship quality. The critical managerial implications of these findings are then discussed in the latter part of the article. Based on the theoretical relationships between the conceptual constructs, a model was proposed and then tested utilizing data collected from 695 smartphone consumers. The results showed that fifteen proposed hypotheses were statistically supported and two proposed hypotheses were rejected. Theoretical/managerial implications that were derived from the analysis are presented and discussed in the last part of the article.

Keywords: smartphone, brand prestige, brand experience, customer well-being perception, customer brand identification, brand relationship quality, brand loyalty.

1. Introduction:

Since the launch of mobile phones, there has been a remarkable development both in their product sophistication and their fast and global adoption (Bayraktar et al., 2012). Nowadays, customers are continuously facing the dilemma: which phone to buy. After the smart phones have been released, the choice seemed to be even harder, since the opportunities and offers that producers are providing are endless (Seongwon et al., 2011; Milutinovic et al., 2011). Further to Knapman (2012) consumers of Smartphone are strongly influence by brand when it comes to choosing Smartphone. According to Ahmed (1991, p.25) a strong and clear brand image can increase consumer confidence and convince consumers to purchase. Also, Keller (2008) said

brand will help customers to identify a firm's products or services and makes itself differentiate from other competitors. Therefore, brand has been emphasized an important marketing tool to distinguish a brand from its competitors. Lately, brand experience, brand personality, and brand prestige, are recognized as important factors that link to desirable outcomes in brand loyalty and relationship marketing (Baek, Kim, & Yu, 2010; Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009; Ekinci & Hosany, 2006; Ha & Perks, 2005; Lee, Back, & Kim, 2009). Recent studies accumulate evidence on the effects of brand identity and identification and customer brand well-being on loyalty (Hwang & Hyun, 2012, He and Li, 2010; Marin et al., 2009).

To understand more about the the roles of brand experience and brand personality in the development of brand prestige and consequent effects of brand prestige on brand relationship quality and brand loyalty using data collected from nationwide smart phone customers in in Iran, this study aims to investigate how brand experience, brand personality, and brand prestige affect customer well-being perception, customer brand identification and brand relationship quality and (attitudinal and behavioral) brand loyalty. In addition, there is a few existing research examining how brand experience and brand personality affect brand prestige.

Iran's market is so attractive market for global brands. In the comparative market of smart phone, consumer behavior is always changeable and quite complex. A major competitor to Samsung or any other smartphone is Apple iPhone which is a very popular and high in-demand brand in Iran. Therefore, findings from this study will provide marketers and practitioners with better understanding of roles of brand experience and brand personality in creating brand prestige. Such understandings, consequently, will be critical and helpful in gaining and retaining a competitive position by enhancing customer well-being perception, customer brand identification, and brand relationship quality and in keeping customers being loyal in this extremely competitive market. The purpose of this study, therefore, is threefold: 1) to investigate roles of brand experience and brand personality in creating brand prestige, 2) to examine how brand prestige influence brand well-being perception, customer brand identification, brand relationship quality and brand loyalty, 3) Besides, this study also wants to test whether there are any differences in consumer antecedents and consequences of prestige and customer brand loyalty toward Samsung and iPhone brands in Iran or not.

2. Literature review:

2.1 Roles of brand experience and brand personality in forming brand prestige and brand Trust:

Customers are increasingly buying brands for experiential benefit as opposed to functional benefit (Ismail, Melewar, Lim, & Woodside, 2011; Zarantonello & Schmitt, 2010). According to Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009), brand experience can be defined as "subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and environments". Such brand related stimuli form brand experience in a consumer's memory, thus creating the consumer's brand perception (Keller, 1998). Following this logic, this study posits that brand experience influences consumers' perceptions of brand prestige. Aaker (1996) defines the brand personalities to be "the set of human characteristics associated with a given brand". Thus it includes such characteristic as gender, age, and

socioeconomic class, as well as such classic human personality traits as warmth, concern, and Sentimentality. Aaker (1997) demonstrated that a five-factor structure appears to best explain the way American consumers perceive brands across symbolic and utilitarian product categories. Those five dimensions are Sincerity, Excitement, Competence, Sophistication, and Ruggedness (Aaker, 1997). By using Aaker's (1997) five brand personality dimensions of sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness, Jung et al (2010) found significance on brand affect and brand trust resulting in brand loyalty. Lin (2010) says that brand preference is significantly influenced by personality traits.

2.2 Brand prestige:

Brand prestige is defined as the relatively high status of product positioning associated with a brand (McCarthy & Perreault, 1987; Steenkamp, Batra, & Alden, 2003). An inherent worth, a unique know-how, or a luxurious image are key characteristics by which a brand may be judged prestigious (e.g. Dubois & Czellar, 2002). Today, customers no longer make purchase decisions based only on the functional value of a product or service (Baek, Kim, & Yu, 2010), but take into consideration various other values, such as hedonic and social values, that they perceive in brands (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999). As such, Alden, Steenkamp, and Batra (1999) postulated that consumers select prestige brands as a signal of social status, wealth or power because prestige brands are purchased infrequently and are strongly linked to an individual's self-concept and social image. Prestige brand consumers can receive not only tangible benefits from prestigious brands, but also intangible benefits such as the signal of high-level social status, which typically does not occur when they purchase non-prestige brands.

2.3 Evaluating Relationships among Brand Experience, Brand Personality, Brand Prestige:

Because the frequency of buying two particular smartphone in Iran is relatively higher than the frequency in transaction in other brands, there is a good possibility that customers will have a higher level of actual brand experience (i.e., sensory, affective, behavioral, and intellectual). In addition, as customers notice positive characteristics of brand (i.e., sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication, and ruggedness) they will be more likely to perceive higher level of brand prestige. Therefore, the overall experience with the brand (brand experience) and association with the brand (brand personality) will influence in forming brand prestige. In consistent with the previous findings, this study proposes the following hypotheses.

2.4 Effects of brand prestige on customer well-being perception:

Customer well-being perception refers to how much a brand positively contributes to a quality of life perception (Grzeskowiak and Sirgy, 2007). On a practical level, Customer well-being perception indicates how consuming a brand's product contributes to enhancing a consumer's perception of quality of life (Sirgy et al., 2007). The concept of Customer well-being perception has been in the spotlight for practitioners and scholars in the field of marketing recently as consumers have begun more and more to consider quality of life as an important goal (Lee and Sirgy, 2004; Samli et al., 1987; Sirgy, 2001; Sirgy et al., 2007). High levels of Customer well-being perception lead to higher levels of consumer quality of life, which reflect higher levels of life satisfaction, overall happiness with life, absence of ill-being, greater social well-being, and other positive attributes (Grzeskowiak and Sirgy, 2007). For these reasons, Customer well-being perception is one of the most important criteria that consumers currently seek when they make

decisions about purchasing a brand's products and/or services (Sirgy et al., 2007). Many consumers purchase prestigious brands because they believe it is one way to enhance their quality of life (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Through owning prestigious products, consumers pursue interpersonal effects such as a conspicuous, unique social value in order to enrich their lives (Eastman, Goldsmith, & Flynn, 1999; Park, Jaworski, & MacInnis, 1986). Baek et al. (2010) have postulated that prestige brand seekers wish to enhance their quality of life, including their social status, through buying prestige brands. Empirical studies further support the theoretical relationship between brand prestige and Customer well-being perception (e.g. Hwang & Hyun, 2012). Hwang and Hyun (2012) investigated how brand prestige influences consumer well-being. Their structural equation modeling analysis results showed that brand prestige is a critical predictor of consumer well-being perception. Based on the theoretical and empirical backgrounds, the following hypothesis was proposed:

2.5 Effects of brand prestige on brand identification

As competition has become increasingly intense, it is more important than ever for a firm to differentiate itself from other firms and to effectively communicate these differences to the public (Nandan, 2005). Consumers will then subjectively interpret the brand, thus forming brand identity (Argenti & Druckenmiller, 2004; Rajagopal, 2010; Nandan, 2005). Social identity theory provides theoretical backgrounds for brand identification (Donavan, Janda, & Suh, 2006; Jones & Kim, 2011; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008). According to social identity theory, when two or more people have shared attributes that distinguish them collectively from other people, they feel an emotional bond between each other (Hogg, 2006) and consequently feel a high level of identification with each other and feelings of closeness.

In other words, identification is created when an individual integrates another person into his/her self-concept (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008). SIT (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) proposes that individuals strive to enhance their self-esteem which is based on the degree that one's social groups are valued and compared favourably relative to relevant out-groups. The notion that consumers buy products to enhance their self-esteem is well acknowledged in consumer behaviour literature (e.g. Grubb & Grathwohl, 1967). In line with this, Bergami and Bagozzi (2000) propose that members' fulfil their self-enhancement needs if they perceive that important others believe that their organization is well regarded (i.e. respected prestigious, and well-known). In other words, people identify with prestigious companies to maintain a positive social identity and enhance their self-esteem by viewing themselves in the company's reflected glory (Bhattacharya & Sen, 2003). Therefore, the greater the brand is perceived as prestigious by consumers, the more likely consumers identify with the brand to enhance their self-esteem.

2.6 Effects of brand prestige on brand relationship quality and loyalty Brand relationship quality (BRQ):

Brand researchers traditionally assess how consumers perceive and evaluate brands examining brand attitudes, brand evaluations, or perceived brand quality (Keller, 2003). Blackston (1992) discovered that the successful brand relationships consisted of two factors: trust and satisfaction. Trust is influenced by risk, credibility and intimacy, whereas satisfaction is influenced by initiative and supportiveness. However, it is not perfect that only two factors are used to measure brand relationships. For example, brand familiarity has been neglected in his theory.

The relationship between satisfaction and trust has been widely researched in marketing literature (Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008; Wang & Emurian, 2005; Schau, Muniz & Arnould, 2009). While there seems to me no consensus on the direction of causality, in the current study it is postulated that customer satisfaction with a brand should eventually lead them trusting that brand. According to Nam, Ekinici & Whyatt (2011), satisfaction with brand consumption generates a positive attitude toward that brand, which culminates in brand trust. Brand trust, in this vein, expresses the belief of consumers that the experienced brand satisfaction will continue to be fulfilled by the brand (Zhou, Zhang, Su & Zhou, 2012). Thus, the higher the degree of brand satisfaction the customer realizes, the higher the level of brand trust. Previous researchers have found a positive relationship between brand satisfaction and brand trust (Whang, Allen, Sahoury & Zhang, 2004; Suh & Han, 2003; Yoon, 2002; Kuenzel & Halliday, 2008). Similarly, deducing from the aforementioned discussion and empirical evidence, it can be expected that brand satisfaction is positively associated to customer brand trust in South Africa.

Prestige is the entity's exclusivity, respect, and status. Consumers express their own identity by associating with prestigious brands. This prestige may encourage consumers to spend more on retail purchases of the brand (D. Carlson, 2009). Brand prestige -meaning emotional or logical perceptions of consumers concerning a particular brand especially when it is difficult to differentiate products based on tangible qualitative characteristics- plays an important role in customer's shopping behavior. Customer satisfaction is an idea of fulfilling consumer's needs and desire and it has been considered as a key to marketing concept (Spreng, MacKenzie, & Olshavsky, 1996). Oliver (1981) defined customer satisfaction as "the summary psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding disconfirmed expectations is coupled with the consumer's prior feeling about the consumption experience" (p. 29). Consumers decrease information costs by receiving prestigious brand signal (Baek, Kim, & Yu, 2010). Similarly, Brakus et al. (2009) argue that brand prestige decreases time spent for searching other brands, which leads to decrease information costs. The findings may imply that consumers who hold a positive evaluative judgment toward brands (brand prestige) will be more dependable and rely more particular brand. Researchers also have found that perceived brand prestige has a greater effect on customer satisfaction and purchase intention (Steenkamp et al., 2003; Wong & Zhou, 2005). Trust has been considered as an essential concept in building customer relationship (Fukuyama, 1995; Gulati, 1995; Lewis & Weigert, 1985; Moorman, Zaltman, & Deshpande, 1992). Brand trust is often defined as the consumer's willingness to depend on the capability of the brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Therefore, a customer's perception of upscale, prestige, and high status (as measured in this study) on a particular brand will positively affect the consumer's belief about the brand's reliability, dependability, and responsibility (i.e., brand trust). Further, a customer perceives a particular brand prestigious will hold a positive attitude toward the brand. Therefore, we expect brand prestige leads to brand trust and to higher customer satisfaction and further affect attitudinal loyalty directly or indirectly.

2.7 Effects of well-being and identification and relationship quality on attitudinal and behavioral brand loyalty:

According to Keller (1998, p.54) brand loyalty is often ascribed to a behavioral sense through the number of repeat purchases, it entails consumer sticking with the brand and reject the overture of

competitors. Strong brand equity holds consumer loyalty because consumer values the brand on the basis of what it is and what it represents.

Oliver (1997) explained that brand loyalty indicates not only simple repurchasing, but also long-term psychological commitment to repurchase a particular brand's products consistently in the future. Because of the psychological commitment involved, loyal customers: (1) are willing to spend more money even though the prices may be higher than expected, (2) already have trust in the brand and thus consider the brand's products first (priority is given to the brand), and (3) have less intention to switch to other brands (Anderson & Narus, 1990; Bowen & Chen, 2001; Bowen & Shoemaker, 1998; Ladhari, Brun, & Morales, 2008; Reichheld & Sasser, 1990).

Later, Oliver (1997) defined customer loyalty as "a deep held commitment to rebuy or repatronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts that have the potential to cause switching behavior" (p. 34). This conceptual definition encompasses two distinct aspect of loyalty: attitudinal and behavioral.

2.8 Attitudinal Loyalty:

Attitudinal loyalty approaches brand loyalty mostly as an attitude and focuses on the psychological commitment of the consumer (Odin et al., 2001). Attitudinal loyalty concept refers to consumers' deal with the intensive problem solving behavior that covers the brand and feature comparisons and leads to strong brand preferences

(Bennett & Thiele, 2002). Within this context; attitudinal loyalty is an analysis of the consumer attitudes that include the consumer's psychological loyalty for the brand (Quester & Lim, 2003). Measurements for attitudinal loyalty use the attitudinal data which indicate the affective and psychological factors within the structure of brand loyalty and it is stated that these measurements are related with the commitment and loyalty feelings (Bowen & Chen, 2001). It is said that there is a relation between attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty. While Bennett & Thiele (2002) discussed that behavioral loyalty is an observable result of attitudinal loyalty; Thiele & Mackay (2001) discussed that the correlation between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty should be positive. Also some reviews on the issue revealed that there is a relation between attitudinal and behavioural loyalty (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Halim, 2006; Carpenter, 2008; Huang & Zhang, 2008).

2.9 Behavioral Loyalty:

Behavioral loyalty considers brand loyalty as a behavior. The person who buys a certain brand continuously is loyal to this brand (Odin et al., 2001). Behavioral loyalty can be defined as a behavior that is shown by a consumer to a brand within the form of repeated purchases (Back & Parks, 2003:420). However; behavioral measurement are insufficient to explain how and why the brand loyalty develops on the consumer (Dick & Basu, 1994) and they do not enable the study to reveal whether the repeated purchase arise from situational reasons or different complicated psychological causes other than habitual actions (Odin et al., 2001). Behavioral loyalty can be described as purchase loyalty as well.

A large number of prestige seekers have the goal of enhancing quality of life (Kim et al., 2012). Thus, when a prestige seeker feels that his/her quality of life is enhanced by consuming a particular brand, the customer tends to show strong repurchase intention toward the brand (Dagger & Sweeney, 2006; Kim et al., 2012). It can be theorized that consumers' well-being perception positively influences brand loyalty. Empirical studies further support the theoretical

relationship between well-being perception and brand loyalty. Sirgy, Lee, and Kressmann (2006) examined how wellbeing perception derived from automobile purchases creates loyalty toward car brands. They analyzed empirical data collected from 165 automobile owners in the U.S. and found that consumer wellbeing perception toward a car brand plays a critical role in the formation of brand loyalty. More recently, Hwang and Hyun (2012) examined how customer well-being perception derived from dining out influences behavioral intention. They found that customer well-being perception is a key predictor of behavioral intention.

Algesheimer, Dholakia, and Herrmann (2005) assert that customers identifying with a brand are more likely to be supportive and make recommendations about the brand through word of mouth communication. Han et al (2001) found brand identification through positive word-of-mouth communication has a positive effect on brand loyalty. They also found that the greater the attractiveness of a brand also has been show to have a direct effect on brand loyalty.

A brand's identity can be better understood in terms of a brand concept. A brand concept is what the brand can do to satisfy the needs of the consumer. This concept is based on what the consumer needs and is divided into three categories: functional, symbolic, and experimental. The functional category is based on the consumer's utilitarian need. For example, if someone wants to clean their clothes but has no laundry detergent, then a functional need exists to purchase laundry detergent. A symbolic consumer need is when a brand will communicate a meaning for the consumer and to others. For example, a Rolex watch may signify to the consumer that he has a higher income and can afford to buy this very expensive watch, and may signify to others that the person who wears a Rolex is very wealthy. Brand identification indicates that a consumer is emotionally attached to a brand (Hogg, 2006) and thus shows favorable actions toward the brand (Donavan et al., 2006). If consumers feel identification with a particular brand, they show strong brand commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990), which is a critical predictor of brand loyalty (Fullerton, 2005). In other words, brand identification helps to create brand loyalty. Empirical studies further support this argument. Kuenzel and Halliday (2010) examined the role of brand identification in the automotive industry. They analyzed empirical data collected from 1170 car owners in Germany and found a causal relationship between brand identification and brand loyalty. More recently, Stokburger-Sauer, Ratneshwar, and Sen (2012) investigated how brand identification affects brand loyalty using empirical data collected across several industries including the cell phone (n = 198), athletic shoes (n = 200), soft drink (n= 199), and grocery store (n= 199) industries. Their data analysis results revealed that brand identification helps to create brand loyalty.

One of the most important factors which directly influences brand loyalty is brand trust. The impact of the trust on loyalty becomes exclusively relevant and important in case of decision taken for changing the brand due to high level of perceived risk and obscurity (Ibanez et al., 2006). Trust plays a key role in increasing brand loyalty and also has an impact on the factors such as sustaining market share and price flexibility which are related with marketing results (Gommans et al., 2001). In most of the studies; brand loyalty is measured and evaluated in respect of two categories namely as attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty. There are studies which explain the significant impacts of brand trust both on attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty (Matzler et al, 2006; Matzler et al., 2008; Anuwitthanont, 2011; Ok et al., 2011; Hanzae & Andervazh, 2012).

Previous studies show that loyalty is positively influenced by customer satisfaction (Anderson & Sullivan, 1993; Bloemer & Ruyter, 1998; Da Silva & SyedAlwi, 2006; Yang & Peterson, 2004). When consumers are satisfied with the brand, they are more likely to repurchase and recommend them to their family or friends (Bennett & Rundle-Thiele, 2004). Also, customers' brand trust leads to brand loyalty.

On this basis, we propose the following hypothesis:

- 1- Brand Personality has a positive effect on Brand Prestige*
- 2-Brand Experience has a positive effect on Brand Prestige*
- 3-Brand Prestige has a positive effect on Well-being Perception*
- 4-Brand Prestige has a positive effect on Customer brand identification*
- 5-Brand Prestige has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction*
- 6-Brand trust has a positive effect on Customer Satisfaction*
- 7-Brand Prestige has a positive effect on Brand trust*
- 8-Brand Personality has a positive effect on Brand trust*
- 9-Brand Prestige has a positive effect on Attitudinal brand loyalty*
- 10-Brand trust has a positive effect on Attitudinal brand loyalty*
- 11-Well-being Perception has a positive effect on Attitudinal brand loyalty*
- 12-Customer brand identification has a positive effect on Attitudinal brand loyalty*
- 13-Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Attitudinal brand loyalty*
- 14-Attitudinal brand loyalty has a positive effect on Behavioral brand loyalty*
- 15-Brand trust has a positive effect on Behavioral brand loyalty*
- 16-Customer Satisfaction has a positive effect on Behavioral brand loyalty*
- 17-Well-being Perception has a positive effect on Behavioral brand loyalty*

3. Methodology

3.1 Proposed model

In the literature review section of this research, 17 theoretical hypotheses were derived based on the existing theoretical/empirical backgrounds. Integrating the 17 theoretical hypotheses, a conceptual model was developed (Fig. 1).

3.2 Measurement

To empirically test the constructs in the proposed model, questionnaire items were developed based on multiple-item measurement scales that had been validated by previous studies as follows:

- * Brand experience was measured with twelve items cited from Brakus et al. (2009).
- * Brand personality was measured with five items developed by Aaker (1997).
- * Brand prestige was measured with three items employed by Baek et al., (2010).
- * Well-being perception was measured with four items developed by Grzeskowiak and Sirgy (2007).

- * Customer brand identification was measured with three items cited from Mael and Ashforth (1992).
- * Brand Trust was measured with three items developed by Smith (1997).
- * Customer Satisfaction was measured with three items adapted from Westbrook and Oliver (1981).
- * Attitudinal Loyalty was measured with five items cited from Chiou and Droge (2006)
- * Behavioral Loyalty was measured with three items employed by Kuenzel and Halliday (2008).

Using the above measurement items, an initial questionnaire was designed based on a 7-point Likert type scale (1 = strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree). To assess content validity (e.g. Hinkin, Tracey, & Enz, 1997), the initial questionnaire was carefully reviewed by three groups of experts: (1) four faculty members with a primary research focus on smartphone consumer behavior, (2) graduate students with relevant work experience, and (3) smartphone buyers. Based on the advice of the three expert groups, the initial questionnaire was revised. The questionnaire was revised according to the feedback received, and a pilot test was conducted with 80 actual smartphone consumers to evaluate whether the instrument could be clearly understood by consumers. Cronbach’s alpha was then utilized to assess the reliability of the measurement items. The values of Cronbach’s alpha for all of the constructs were greater than 0.7, which is acceptable (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998). The survey questionnaire was finalized and distributed to a group of smartphone consumers .

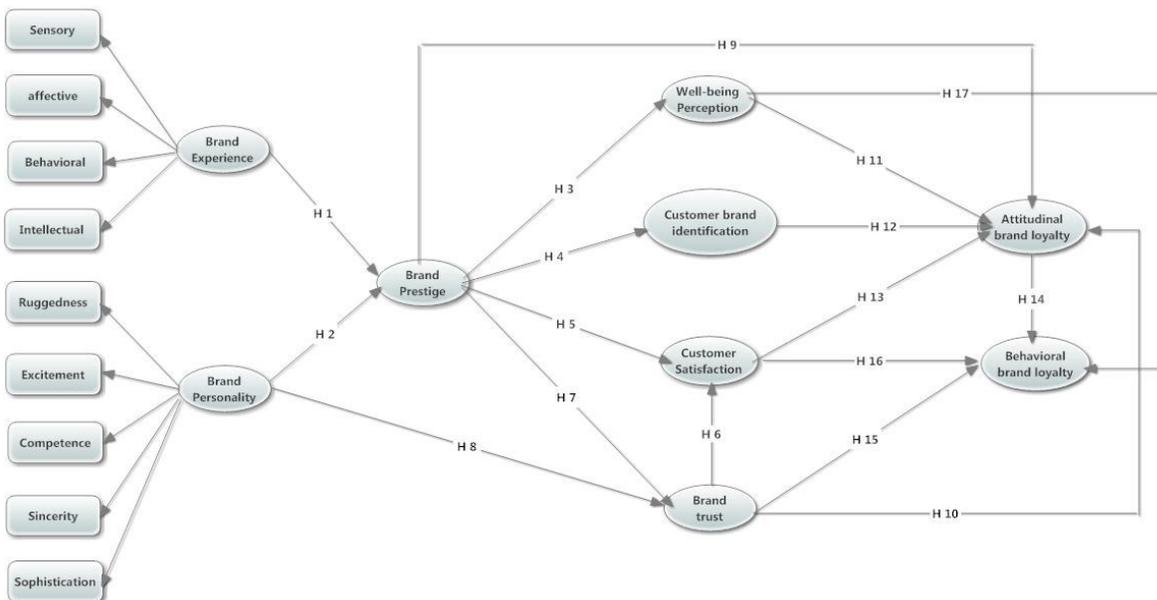


Fig. 1. Proposed conceptual model.

3.3 Sample and data collection

A self-report questionnaire was randomly distributed to 1,177 smartphone consumers. A total of 411 responses were returned, and six responses with missing information were eliminated. Consequently, 395 usable responses (yielding a usable response rate of 33.56%) were used for further data analysis.

3.4 Profile of respondents

Of the 395 respondents, most were female (31.6%, $n = 220$) and white (68.4%, $n = 475$). The age of respondents was ranging from 20 to 50. Over half of the respondents possessed either bachelor's (47.4%) or graduate degrees (14.3%). In terms of income, the respondents were fairly evenly distributed, with the smallest group less than \$600 and the largest group (33.8%) reporting income between \$6,000 and \$1,000 and the middle group (30.2%) reporting an income between \$1,000 and \$2,000.

Table1: Descriptive Statistics of Respondents Characteristics

| Measure | Value | Frequency(%) |
|-----------|--------------------------|--------------|
| Gender | Male | 475(68.4) |
| | Female | 220(31.6) |
| Age | Less than 20 | 107(15.4) |
| | 20-30 | 310(44.6) |
| | 30-40 | 246(35.4) |
| | More than 40 | 32(4.6) |
| Education | Diploma and less diploma | 123(17.7) |
| | Associate | 151(21.7) |
| | BA | 329(47.4) |
| | MA and PHD | 99(14.3) |
| Income | Less than 600\$ | 113(16.2) |
| | 600\$-1000\$ | 235(33.8) |
| | 1000\$-1500\$ | 210(30.2) |
| | More than 1500\$ | 138(19.8) |

4. Result

To test the model developed we used the partial Least squares (PLS) approach. PLS is a second generation multivariate technique (Fornell and Cha, 1994) which can simultaneously evaluate the measurement model (the relationships between constructs and their corresponding indicators), and the structural model with the aim of minimizing the error variance (Chin, 1998; Gil-Garcia, 2008). Smart PLS M2 Version 2.0 (Ringle et al., 2005) to analyze the data. Also following the suggestions of (Chin, 1998; Gil-Garcia, 2008) we used the bootstrapping method (700 resamples) to determine the significance levels for loadings, and path coefficients.

4.1 Measurement Model

Convergent validity is the degree to which multiple items to measure the same concept are in agreement. As suggested by Hair et al. (2010). Table 2 shows the variables and the first-order factors of constructs used in this study. We used the factor loadings, composite reliability and

average variance extracted to assess convergence validity. The recommended values for loadings are set at > 0.5, the average variance extracted (AVE) should be > 0.5 and the composite reliability (CR) should be > 0.7. From Table 3 it can be seen that we have brand experience and brand personality as second order constructs. Thus we followed the method suggested in the literature in PLS which is the repeated indicator approach to model the second order factors in the PLS analysis. From table 3 it can be seen that the results of the measurement model exceeded the recommended values thus indicating sufficient convergence validity.

Table2 The latentvariables,items,andsource.

| Construct and Scale Items | source |
|--|---|
| <p>Brand Experience</p> <p><i>Sensory</i> This coffeehouse brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses. I find this coffeehouse brand interesting in a sensory way. This coffeehouse brand appeals to my senses.</p> <p><i>Affective</i> This coffeehouse brand induces feelings and sentiments. I have strong emotions for this coffeehouse brand. This coffeehouse brand is an emotional brand.</p> <p><i>Behavioral</i> This coffeehouse brand reminds me of actions and behaviors when I use this brand. This coffeehouse brand results in bodily experiences. This coffeehouse brand is action oriented.</p> <p><i>Intellectual</i> I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this coffeehouse brand. This coffeehouse brand makes me think. This coffeehouse brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.</p> | Cited from Brakus et al. (2009) |
| <p>Brand Personality</p> <p><i>Sincerity</i> (Down-to-earth/Honest/Wholesome/Cheerful) <i>Excitement</i> (Daring/Spirited/Imaginative/Up-to-date) <i>Competence</i> (Reliable/Intelligent/Successful) <i>Sophistication</i> (Upper class/Charming) <i>Ruggedness</i> (Outdoorsy/Tough)</p> | Developed by Aaker (1997) |
| <p>Brand Prestige</p> <p>This smartphone brand ... (is very prestigious/has high status/is very upscale).</p> | Employed by Baek et al. (2010) |
| <p>Brand Well-being perception</p> <p>This smartphone met my overall well-being needs This smartphone played a very important role in my social well-being This smartphone played an important role in my travel wellbeing</p> | Developed by Grzeskowiak and Sirgy (2007) |

This smartphone played an important role in enhancing my quality of life

Customer brand identification

Cited from Mael and Ashforth (1992)

When someone praises this cruise brand, I take it as a personal compliment to me

I am very interested in what others think about this cruise brand

I feel good when I see a positive report in the media about this cruise brand .

Brand Trust

developed by Smith (1997)

This coffeehouse brand

(is very honest/is very reliable/is responsible/is dependable/acts with good intentions)

Customer Satisfaction

Adapted from Westbrook and Oliver (1981)

I am satisfied with my decision to buy coffee at this coffeehouse brand.

I have truly enjoyed this coffeehouse brand.

I feel good about my decision to buy coffee at this coffeehouse brand.

Using this coffeehouse brand has been a good experience.

I am sure it was the right thing to be a customer of this coffeehouse brand.

Attitudinal Loyalty

Cited from Chiou and Droge (2006)

If I had to do it over again, I would choose this coffeehouse brand.

I try to use this coffeehouse brand because it is the best choice for me.

I consider myself to be a loyal patron of this coffeehouse brand.

Behavioral Loyalty

Adapted by Kuenzel and

Halliday (2008)

I would recommend this coffeehouse brand to friends and relatives.

I intend to keep buying coffee at this coffeehouse brand.

If I need coffee, this coffeehouse brand would be my preferred choice.

I will speak positively about this coffeehouse brand.

I intend to encourage other people to buy coffee from this coffeehouse brand.

*All factors loadings are significant at $p, 0 < .001$.

4.2 Convergent validity

After confirming the convergent validity, we proceeded to assess the discriminant validity using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) method. Discriminant validity is the degree to which items differentiate among constructs or measure distinct concepts. The criterion used to assess this is by comparing the AVE with the squared correlations or the square root of the AVE with correlations. As shown in Table 4, we have used the second method which is to compare the square root of the AVE with the correlations. The criteria is that if the square root of the AVE, shown in the diagonals are greater than the values in the row and columns on that particular construct than we can conclude that the measures discriminant. From Table 4, it can be seen that the values in the diagonals are greater than the values in their respective row and column thus indicating the measures used in this study are distinct. Thus the results presented in Tables 3 and 4 demonstrate adequate discriminant and convergent validity.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

| Construct | AVE | Composite Reliability | Cronbachs Alpha |
|-------------------------------|------------|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.792 | 0.920 | 0.870 |
| Behavioral | 0.755 | 0.902 | 0.837 |
| Behavioral brand loyalty | 0.745 | 0.936 | 0.914 |
| Brand Experience | 0.722 | 0.889 | 0.862 |
| Brand Personality | 0.703 | 0.909 | 0.892 |
| Brand Prestige | 0.720 | 0.885 | 0.806 |
| Brand trust | 0.699 | 0.921 | 0.893 |
| Competence | 0.745 | 0.898 | 0.829 |
| Customer Satisfaction | 0.723 | 0.929 | 0.904 |
| Customer brand identification | 0.726 | 0.888 | 0.814 |
| Excitement | 0.754 | 0.925 | 0.891 |
| Intellectual | 0.806 | 0.893 | 0.760 |
| Ruggedness | 0.728 | 0.914 | 0.875 |
| Sensory | 0.779 | 0.914 | 0.859 |
| Sincerity | 0.832 | 0.908 | 0.799 |
| Sophistication | 0.799 | 0.888 | 0.751 |
| Well-being Perception | 0.714 | 0.882 | 0.801 |
| Affective | 0.789 | 0.918 | 0.866 |

Table 4: Convergent Validity (Reliability and inter-construct correlations for reflective scales)

| Construct | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| ALyt | 0.890 | | | | | | | | |
| BLyt | 0.509 | 0.863 | | | | | | | |
| B Ex | 0.411 | 0.380 | 0.849 | | | | | | |
| B Per | 0.415 | 0.394 | 0.739 | 0.838 | | | | | |
| B Pre | 0.287 | 0.294 | 0.586 | 0.598 | 0.849 | | | | |
| B Tru | 0.304 | 0.268 | 0.571 | 0.642 | 0.371 | 0.836 | | | |
| C S | 0.301 | 0.298 | 0.636 | 0.620 | 0.376 | 0.391 | 0.850 | | |
| C BI | 0.307 | 0.298 | 0.537 | 0.581 | 0.323 | 0.289 | 0.411 | 0.851 | |
| CWB | 0.306 | 0.319 | 0.605 | 0.633 | 0.415 | 0.429 | 0.353 | 0.350 | 0.845 |

Note1: Diagonals represent the square root of the AVE while the off-diagonals represent the correlations

Note2: BExp = Brand experience; BPer = Brand personality; BPre = Brand prestige; CWB = Customer Well-being; CBI= Customer brand identification;BS = Customer satisfaction; BTru = Brand trust; ALyt = Attitudinal brand loyalty; BLyt = Behavioral brand loyalty

4.3 Structural Model

As shown in Table 5. To evaluate the structural models' predictive power, we calculated the R^2 , R^2 indicates the amount of variance explained by the exogenous variables (Barclay et al.1995). Using a bootstrapping technique with a re-sampling of 700, the path estimates and t-statistics were calculated for the hypothesized relationships. Two hypotheses were not supported in the testing: As shown in Table 4, the path coefficients (h7 and h15) are not significant at $P < 0.05$. Hypothesis 1, which proposed a positive relationship between BPer on BPre, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.364 and T-value=8.903 and $p < 0.001$. Increased BPer, BPre also increased. Hypothesis 2, which suggested that BExp has a positive impact on BPre, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.316 and T-value=7.6913. The research findings indicate that BExp is a function of increasing BPre. Hypothesis 3, which predicted a positive relationship between BPre and CWB, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.415 is estimated and T-value=12.6777. Increased BPre, CWB also increased. Hypothesis 4, which proposed a positive relationship between BPre and CBI, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.323 and T-value=8.5618. Increased BPre communication, CBI also increased. Hypothesis 5, which suggested that BPre directly influence CS, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.267 and T-value=7.0482. Increased BPre, CS also increased. Hypothesis 6 was supported as well, which proposed that BTru positively influence CS. The research findings indicate that a positive standardized coefficient of 0.292 is estimated and T-value=7.6798. Increased BPre communication, BS also increased. Hypothesis 7, which predicted a positive relationship between BPre, , was not supported by $t=0.5384$ and $p=?$ Hypothesis 8 was supported as well, indicating positive relationship between BPer and BTru and. The research findings indicate that by a positive standardized of 0.653 is estimated and T-value=0.6533. Increased BPre communication, BTru also increased. Hypothesis 9, which suggested that BPre directly influence ALyt, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.100 and T-value=2.3645. Hypothesis 10, which predicted a positive relationship between BTru and BLyt, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.130 and T-value=3.2232. Increased .BPre communication, CWB also increased. Hypothesis 11, which predicted a positive relationship between BPre and CWB, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.135 and T-value=2.8166. Increased BPre, increased CWB. Hypothesis 12 was supported as well, which proposed that CBI positively affect ALyt. The research findings indicate that a positive standardized coefficient of 0.152 is estimated and T-value= 4.2102. Increased CBI, also increased ALyt Hypothesis 13, which predicted a positive relationship between CS and ALyt, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.107 and T-value=2.5708. Increased CS, also increased ALyt. Hypothesis 14, which suggested that ALyt has a positive impact on BLyt, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.316 and T-value=7.6913. So Hypothesis. The research findings indicate that ALyt is a function of increasing BLyt Hypothesis 15, which predicted a positive relationship between BTru and BLyt, was not supported by T-value=1.1055 and $p=?$ Hypothesis 16, which proposed a positive relationship between CS and BLyt , was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.107 and T-value=3.0583. Increased CS, BLyt also increased. Hypothesis 17, which suggested that CWB directly influence BLyt, was supported by a positive standardized coefficient of 0.135 and T-value=3.7232. Increased CWB, BLyt also increased.

Table5: Comparison of the path coefficients in both samples

| HYPOTESIS | | Beta | t-valu | R Square | | |
|-----------|--|-----------------|-------------|-----------|---------------|--------|
| Result | Sign | | | | | |
| H1 | Brand Personality -> Brand Prestige | 0.364 5 | 8.903 | 0.40 3 | support ed | + |
| H2 | Brand Experience -> Brand Prestige | 0.316 5 | 7.6913 | | support ed | + |
| H3 | Brand Prestige -> Well-being Perception | 0.415 4 | 12.677 7 | 0.17 3 | support ed | + |
| H4 | Brand Prestige -> Customer brand identification | 0.323 | 8.5618 | 0.10 4 | support ed | + |
| H5 | Brand Prestige -> Customer Satisfaction | 0.266 9 | 7.0482 | 0.21 5 | support ed | + |
| H6 | Brand trust -> Customer Satisfaction | 0.292 3 | 7.6798 | | support ed | + |
| H7 | Brand Prestige -> Brand trust | - 0.019 5 | 0.5384 | 0.41 2 | NS | N S |
| H8 | Brand Personality -> Brand trust | 0.653 3 | 21.537 6 | | support ed | + |
| H9 | Brand Prestige -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.1 | 2.3645 | 0.18 3 | support ed | + |
| H10 | Brand trust -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.130 4 | 3.2232 | | support ed | + |
| H11 | Well-being Perception -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.116 8 | 2.8166 | | support ed | + |
| H12 | Customer brand identification -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.151 6 | 4.2102 | | support ed | + |
| H13 | Customer Satisfaction -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.109 1 | 2.5708 | | support ed | + |
| H14 | Attitudinal brand loyalty -> Behavioral brand loyalty | 0.423 6 | 11.881 9 | | support ed | + |
| H15 | Brand trust -> Behavioral brand loyalty | 0.038 8 | 1.1055 | 0.30 1 | NS | N S |
| H16 | Customer Satisfaction -> Behavioral brand loyalty | 0.107 5 | 3.0583 | | support ed | + |
| H17 | Well-being Perception -> Behavioral brand loyalty | 0.135 2 | 3.7232 | | support ed | + |

|t|>1.96 Significant at P<0.05, |t|>2.58 Significant at P<0.01

4.4 Comparison of the path coefficients in both samples:

In this part, we divided all the respondents into two groups: Apple consumers, and Samsung consumers, and we established structural multi-group models for the groups. Having assessed the structural multi-group model, we examined the coefficients of the causal relationships between constructs, which would validate the hypothesized effects. Table 6 illustrates the paths and their significance on the structural model.

The hypotheses were examined by comparing the path coefficients based on the Wynne Chin approach. Chin (2000) provides an approach for multi-group comparison, which is to treat the standard error estimates from each resampling in a parametric sense via t-tests. Therefore, hypotheses testing by comparing the path coefficients can be performed. 15 hypotheses were supported in the testing: As shown in Table6, hypothesizes 2, 5, 6,8,9,10,11 and 16 apple is superior to Samsung. In contrast in Hypothesizes 1, 3, 4,12,13,14 and 17 Samsung is higher than Apple. Also H7 and H15 in both of them were rejected.

Table6: Comparison of the path coefficients in both samples

| Hypothesis | | Samsung consumers (n=345) | | | Apple Consumers(s=350) | | | t-value comparing the two group |
|------------|--|---------------------------|-----|------|------------------------|-----|------|---------------------------------|
| | | B1 | Se1 | T1 | B2 | Se2 | T2 | |
| H1 | Brand Personality -> Brand Prestige | 0.3 | 0.0 | 7.55 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 5.05 | -7.499 |
| | | 29 | 44 | 2 | 02 | 60 | 2 | |
| H2 | Brand Experience -> Brand Prestige | 0.3 | 0.0 | 8.02 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 6.65 | -9.853 |
| | | 54 | 44 | 8 | 83 | 58 | 2 | |
| H3 | Brand Prestige -> Well-being Perception | 0.4 | 0.0 | 10.8 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 11.3 | -10.463 |
| | | 25 | 39 | 25 | 08 | 36 | 47 | |
| H4 | Brand Prestige -> Customer brand identification | 0.3 | 0.0 | 7.08 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 7.78 | -8.110 |
| | | 29 | 46 | 4 | 23 | 42 | 3 | |
| H5 | Brand Prestige -> Customer Satisfaction | 0.2 | 0.0 | 5.51 | 0.2 | 0.0 | 6.30 | -6.716 |
| | | 69 | 49 | 3 | 70 | 43 | 2 | |
| H6 | Brand trust -> Customer Satisfaction | 0.2 | 0.0 | 5.29 | 0.3 | 0.0 | 7.16 | -8.619 |
| | | 44 | 46 | 2 | 34 | 47 | 0 | |
| H7 | Brand Prestige -> Brand trust | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.27 | - | 0.0 | 1.27 | 1.599 |
| | | 11 | 42 | 2 | 0.0 | 47 | 0 | |
| | | | | | 6 | | | |
| H8 | Brand Personality -> Brand trust | 0.5 | 0.0 | 15.7 | 0.7 | 0.0 | 20.2 | -22.294 |
| | | 94 | 38 | 72 | 17 | 35 | 45 | |
| H9 | Brand Prestige -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.74 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 2.73 | -3.235 |
| | | 85 | 49 | 2 | 29 | 47 | 8 | |
| H10 | Brand trust -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.1 | 0.0 | 2.41 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 2.75 | -3.417 |
| | | 27 | 53 | 4 | 39 | 51 | 3 | |
| H11 | Well-being Perception -> Attitudinal brand loyalty | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.50 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 3.71 | -4.466 |
| | | 74 | 49 | 4 | 74 | 47 | 5 | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|----|---|-----|-----|------|-----|-----|------|---------|
| H1 | Customer brand identification -> | 0.1 | 0.0 | 3.98 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 2.65 | -2.850 |
| 2 | Attitudinal brand loyalty | 69 | 42 | 9 | 21 | 45 | 4 | |
| H1 | Customer Satisfaction -> Attitudinal | 0.1 | 0.0 | 2.37 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.63 | -1.973 |
| 3 | brand loyalty | 18 | 50 | 6 | 84 | 51 | 2 | |
| H1 | Attitudinal brand loyalty -> Behavioral | 0.4 | 0.0 | 10.4 | 0.4 | 0.0 | 10.8 | -10.902 |
| 4 | brand loyalty | 27 | 41 | 72 | 22 | 39 | 47 | |
| H1 | Brand trust -> Behavioral brand loyalty | 0.0 | 0.0 | 0.18 | 0.0 | 0.0 | 1.67 | -1.693 |
| 5 | | 08 | 45 | 1 | 65 | 39 | 3 | |
| H1 | Customer Satisfaction -> Behavioral | 0.0 | 0.0 | 2.12 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 3.11 | -3.198 |
| 6 | brand loyalty | 90 | 42 | 4 | 28 | 41 | 5 | |
| H1 | Well-being Perception -> Behavioral | 0.1 | 0.0 | 2.99 | 0.1 | 0.0 | 3.18 | -3.181 |
| 7 | brand loyalty | 38 | 46 | 8 | 31 | 41 | 6 | |

$|t| > 1.96$ Significant at $P < 0.05$, $|t| > 2.58$ Significant at $P < 0.01$,

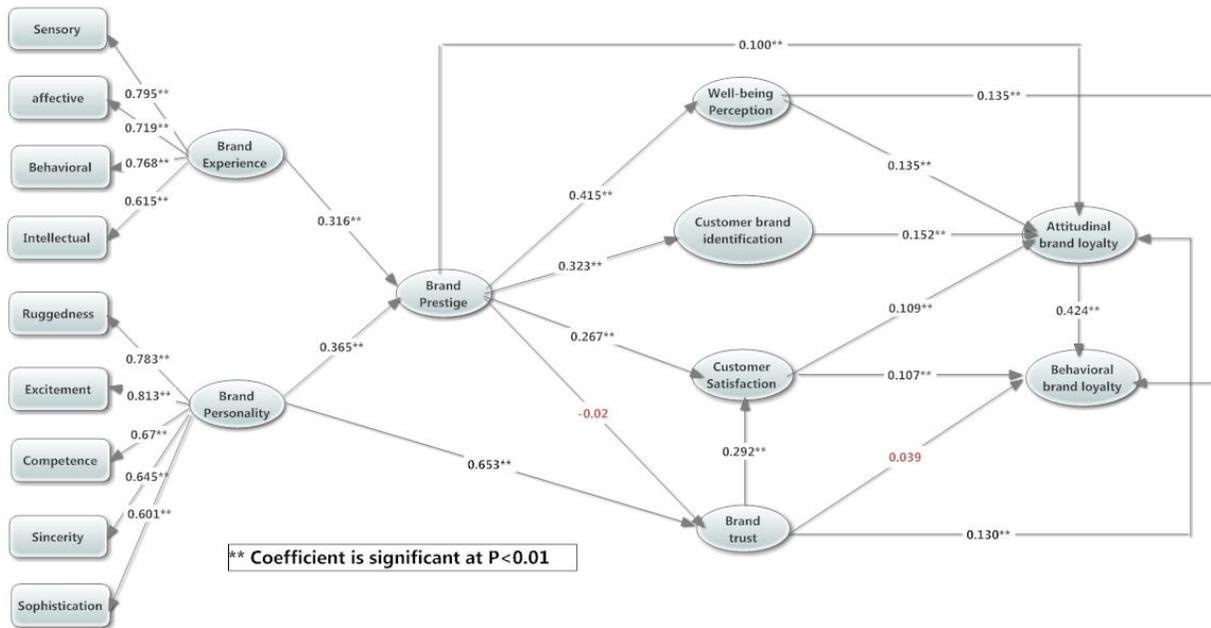


Figure 2: The PLS Algorithm Results

5. Discussions and implications

The purpose of this study was to investigate antecedents and consequences of brand prestige in the smartphone market context in Iran. Based on the theoretical background, it was proposed that brand-related stimuli form experience and personality about a brand in a consumer's memory, thus influencing brand prestige. Therefore, this study hypothesized that four sub-dimensions of brand experience included sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual stimuli also five sub-dimensions of brand personality included sincerity, excitement, competence, sophistication and ruggedness, are key antecedents of brand prestige in smartphone market. In addition, via a thorough literature review, four consequences of brand prestige were derived: consumer well-being perception, customer brand identification, and brand relationship quality and brand loyalty.

Theoretical relationships between four sub dimensions of brand experience, five sub dimensions of brand personality, brand prestige and four consequences of brand prestige were derived based on the literature review. After integrating the theoretical relationships stated above, a model was proposed and tested using actual smartphone consumers.

Brand prestige is an essential condition for creating a smartphone's brand positive image. For this reason, smartphone industries should dedicate marketing expenditure with the goal of inducing smartphone consumers' sub-dimensions of brand experience and brand personality responses from the smartphone brand.

The results of data analysis indicate that all sub dimensions of brand experience and brand personality have a significant impact on smartphone consumers' perceptions of brand prestige level. The results of the study also revealed that brand prestige has a positive influence on smartphone consumers' well-being perception. In other words, when smartphone consumers feel that a smartphone brand is a prestige brand, they believe that using that brand can enhance their quality of life. Many people buy a brand because it indicates a high level of social status, thus enhancing their quality of life. When such social needs are satisfied, people feel quality of life enhancement (Steenkamp et al.,2003; Vigneron & Johnson, 1999).

This study empirically verified the theory using data collected from the smartphone market. The findings also showed the positive relationship between brand prestige and customer brand identification. It can be interpreted that, when a smartphone has high status, consumers feel that the smartphone company's brand image is congruent with their self-image. Luxury smartphone consumers are typically concerned about self-image and place great importance on what other people think of them. Therefore, they seek to connect their self-image to the prestigious image of the luxury smartphone brand. Finally, the results of the study showed that brand prestige of smartphone positively affects brand loyalty.

With regard to practical implementation, practitioners need to develop effective brand positioning strategies by communicating its brand. The original objective for branding was to differentiate a brand from other similar brands, and that is still the essence of branding (Aaker, 2003; Davis, 2008). Findings in this study imply that developing experiential (behavioral), sensory, affective, and cognitive aspects of a brand will induce consumers' perception of brand prestige. Further, if a brand evokes an experience, this will further lead to satisfaction and loyalty (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009) directly and indirectly. Therefore, marketers must provide ways customers can experience brand in various ways. For example, the use of action verbs associated with a company logo may allow customers to store the brand longer, and the brand can be retrieved when customers aroused by certain need. Further, knowing that brand personality plays a significant role in building brand prestige, a firm needs to create distinctive brand personality (although it is a long process) and communicate its brand as a part of the consumer life. Although this study has not proposed the direct effect of brand experience on brand personality because of complicatedness of analysis using second-order structure, the high correlation between the two constructs emphasize that having customer's experience of the brand and building unique brand identity together will have a great influence in the development of favorable attitudinal and behavioral brand-related outcomes. Developing and communicating marketing efforts that are congruent well with personality and characteristics of a company's target market is critical.

Smartphone producers should concentrate on brand prestige and its antecedents and consequences. Also Consumers have high brand loyalty towards a brand if they are satisfied with the product delivered by it. This is why smartphones should focus their strategy to create or attract loyal customers which can be done through delivering a high quality products, this will result in establishing a long term commitment with loyal customers who will not switch easily to another brand, compared to non-loyal customer who can switch easily. This will lead in increasing the sales volume of smartphone and would give the chance to the brand to present its Smartphone in the market with a premium price.

As respects brand personality has significant impact on brand prestige, because many brands, especially technology brands, have similar features, it may become more important to concentrate on emotional issues to clearly differentiate the company from others. This is where the investment in brand personality may make a difference. Communications play an important role in creating and maintaining brand identity and brand personality (Fawcett, 1993). Therefore, firms must have an effective communication strategy to tell their consumers what the brand stands for. Brand identity affects the building of a relationship between the brand and the consumer. When the brand personality seems attractive in the eyes of the consumer then brand identity is formed. Brand identification that is developed and maintained through brand personality will help consumers consider the brand as a companion. In addition to having strong communications other efforts such as strong community Brand identity affects the building of a relationship between the brand and the consumer. Involvement, sales promotions, social contributions, and public relations can help establish a strong brand personality. However, all efforts must remain consistent so the consumer will not become confused. Brand personality is not easily created, but once it is apparent to the consumer, it appears the effects are great (Kim, et al., 2010). Data analysis indicates, brand prestige is a key predictor of consumers' well-being perception in experiences with smartphone industries. Therefore, although brand prestige creation can be a challenging process (Dubios & Czellar, 2002), brand prestige is an essential condition for creating a smartphone industry's positive image. For this reason, smartphone industries should dedicate marketing expenditure with the goal of inducing consumers' sensory experiences and consumers' intellectual responses from the smartphone brand. This study extended the existing theory by empirically testing the theoretical relationships between consumer well-being perception, customer brand identification, customer satisfaction, brand trust and behavioral and attitudinal intentions to brand loyalty in the smartphone market. It is thus recommended on a practical level that smartphone industries should seek to enhance consumers' well-being perceptions, such as social well-being. More importantly, it should be taken into account that well-being perception can be created by inducing positive brand experience (particularly sensory and intellectual experience) and by enhancing the level of brand prestige.

6. Limitations and Future Research

Despite its beneficial theoretical and practical implications, this study possesses two limitations that should be addressed. Firstly, when it comes to investigating ancestor and consequences of prestige. This study is limited to some factors mentioned in model 1. Furthermore there are many tycoons in the smartphone phone industry such as iPhone, Samsung, LG, Sony, HTC etc. So, it is essential to look at differences among these huge brands in term of consumers' perception in future research. , this study is limited to the comparison of Samsung and iPhone only. These

limitations may lead to miss out some other important factors that may efficiently explain ancestor and consequences of prestige. Also The data in this study were collected smartphone consumers from Iran. Therefore, the extent to which the conclusions are cross-culturally generalizable is somewhat limited. To ensure external validity, future research might be required in order to test the proposed model using different populations in different cultures.

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