IMPACT OF PUBLIC RELATION AND BRAND IMAGE ON CUSTOMER’S LOYALTY IN MOBILE PHONE INDUSTRY OF PAKISTAN

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Abstract
Marketing is a vast field itself and branding or customers’ satisfaction or loyalty is another segment of marketing itself that is a detailed and in depth topic itself. Customers Loyalty, these days have gained a major part in promoting a product and then in its ability to be sold. Initially, customers’ loyalty was limited to the extent such as, the quality of the product and its useful life may be but now it has made way for all the users to be quite selective while making a purchase decision. As there are a lot of options available to each and every individual and they make decision on different basis. In the existing research, the study uses two concepts such as, Brand Image and Public Relations to examine their impact on the Customers’ Loyalty and that too of Mobile Phone Industry of Pakistan. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to examine the Impact of Public Relations and Brand Image on Customers’ Loyalty in Mobile Phone Industry of Pakistan. As a lot of literature exists in the global context and other countries of similar nature such as, India, China, Singapore etc. but Pakistan lacks the in depth study, hence, this would be a useful addition to the literature and examine some of the important factors. For this study, 200 respondents are surveyed regarding the Public Relations, Brand Image and Customers’ Loyalty with any other associated factors with the topic. When the surveys were completed and returned, the data was entered into SPSS for analysis. Several tests were run on the data, and significant findings are presented in this study. The results and data are discussed in depth within this report in the analysis chapter.

Keywords: Brand Image, Public Relations, Customers Loyalty and Mobile Phone Industry of Pakistan

Introduction
The research is mainly focused on the inspecting the impression of public relation and brand image on customers loyalty. The industry that has been taken into perspective would be the Mobile Phone Industry of Pakistan. Initially, this chapter would present the background in which the past studies and the field relevant knowledge shall be highlighted following the purpose, gap, objectives, theoretical framework and the hypothesis. Past studies and their findings would be emphasized in the literature and then further data would be collected and analyzed with the help of SPSS that would at the end show us the results for a conclusive findings.

A study conducted by Hanzaee and Farsani (2011) in Iran examined the impact of brand image and perceived public relations on customers loyalty, they suggested that enticing new consumers remains as a significant susceptibility. Nevertheless, today's businesses essentially should also emphasis on holding present customers and structuring lucrative yet long-term associations with them. The performance that states as crucial to customer retaining is superior consumer
worth. Devoted consumers are expectedly more to deliver the bases that help us accomplish our repurchase. Relationships are essential for our principles in both word-of-mouth and are keen to pay a top quality value. One of the utmost Public relations is demarcated by Grunig and Hunt (1984) as organization of announcement amongst an institute and its community, although Ledingham and Bruning (1998) describe public relations inn terms of relationship management.

Hence, Cutlip et al. (2006) claims public relations is the managing occupation which inaugurates and upholds mutually valuable relationships amongst the company and the public depending whom its accomplishment and disappointment depends.” Correspondingly, Dozier and Lauzen (2000) gives reason on describing public relations as a running purpose is a “prejudiced effort”. Superior customer loyalty suggests an advanced marketplace segment and an aptitude to mandate comparatively higher prices associated to folks of opponents. One main tool to key is public relations, which mentions to construction of upright relationships with the company's public by gaining promising profile-raising, constructing a noble business appearance and treatment of better management of disapproving stories, scenarios and proceedings.

This study’s main aims are determined to discover the association among the public relation and brand image in addition to the influence regarding them on customer’s loyalty. This paper shows the entire procedure through investigating how brand image influences the customer's loyalty. As the research on brand image and the public relation is not adequate in past academic research, this paper additionally means to satisfy this information gap. The existing study expects to give an implication of the customer's loyalty that is of most prominent significance to marketing managers of mobile phone industry. All together for the mobile phone industry in order for addressing the queries and the ultimate desire for the concentration on customers, whereas, the firms shall focus on the needs and the aims of the customers for examining it to a next level. The research results would not only benefit the industry of mobile phones as selected in the study, but additionally to understand and enhancing customer's loyalty.

Research Question

RQ1: Do Public Relations and Brand Image has an impact on the Customers Loyalty in Mobile Phone Industry of Pakistan?

Theoretical Frame work

![Diagram]

Research Hypothesis:

- \( H_1 \): There is a significant association among the variables of public relations and customers’ loyalty.
- \( H_0 \): There is no significant association among the variables of public relations and customers’ loyalty.
- \( H_2 \): There is significant association among the variables of brand image and customers’ loyalty.
- \( H_0 \): There is no significant association among the variables of brand image and customers’ loyalty.

Literature Review

In the previous twenty years, corporate social responsibility (CSR) have raised in terms of a critical build, keeping in mind the both scholastic writing and business homes. CSR isn’t a new concept or a new ideas that has been developed recently (Wu, 2002). The CSR initiative are being backed by the organizations’ as socially and philanthropy as well (Brown.
and Dacin, 1997). Couple of perspectives have been determined the concept of CSR by keeping in mind the literature (Berger et al., 2007). An area of the research was originated by means of administration writing. Emphasis has been put while keeping the standardizing inquiry of an organization’s ought to take part in CSR exercises, then take these activities that impact on budgetary implementation. Another surge of research is taken out from advertising literature while concentrated as the buyers perceive the activities of CSR. In cooperation promoting and management literature have focused on the similar theme since a very long time. The exploration contributed, while the comprehension, CSR is the concept and its relational influence on buyer’s state of mind, discernment and conduct. Since 1990s, focusing in this decade, explore on shopper related CSR has been expanding. The explanation behind this expanding enthusiasm for CSR is its huge impact on purchaser reactions to the circumstance where shoppers are requesting more from organizations instead of a quality item at a lower cost. Aside from a significant group on the literature of CSR and the buyers, a detailed theory and its application has not yet been produced.

Brand image represents a critical aspect of selling activities; marketing and market offering with different definition and techniques to its conceptualization (Burleigh and Crosby, 1955; Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990; Martinez and Pina, 2003). A widely approved view is that product image represents customers’ opinions of merchandise as reflected by organization companies kept in client memory (Herzog, 1963; Keller, 1993a, b). Keller (1993a, b) recommended that these companies could develop from clients’ direct experience or from information obtained on market offering or due to the impact a pre-existing companies with an organization had on client. Brand image is, therefore, the mental image or knowledge of merchandise or a noticeable support or product and includes representational details that clients affiliate with the specific features of merchandise or solutions (Dobni and Zinkhan, 1990; Padgett and Allen, 1997; Aperia and Back, 2004).

Brand image represents the reasoned or emotional opinions clients link to specific producers (Low and Lamb, 2000) a set of principles structured by clients about a particular product, based upon some intended and exterior features of market offering causing to identified top the best the very best, and client excellent appropriate proper care (Aaker, 1994; Garcia Rodriguez and Bergantinos, 2001). Where identified top the best the very best represents customer’s knowledge of the overall top the best the very best or beauty of merchandise or solutions with respect to its intended purpose, in comparison to solutions (Zeithaml, 1988; Aaker, 1991; Keller and Davey, 2001). While client excellent appropriate proper care although subject to conversation as there are dichotomies to its definition, can be in comparison to client feeling of pleasure or frustration as a result of expertise or the act of analyzing a product’s identified performance (or outcome) with regards to a customer’s goals.

It is, therefore, the degree to which people are satisfied or dissatisfied with your little organization, product, or specific component of merchandise or solutions provided by your little organization. Support service is a due to a comparison between identified product performance and pre-purchase goals. A result recommended in Fornell et al. (2006) as leading to long-term client commitment. Fornell et al. (2006) developed a model called the Customer Satisfaction Collection targeted at motivating companies’ difference of market placement and to identify that the results of identified top the best the very best and product image could be client excellent appropriate proper care. Fornell et al. (2006) study indicates that product image results on client identified top the best the very best and fulfillment with due to strong fulfillment being potential consumer loyalty.

Customer loyalty is difficult to determine. In general, there are three unique ways to evaluate loyalty; actions dimensions, attitudinal statistic, and blend dimensions. The actions dimensions consider consistent, repetitious buy actions as an indication of dedication. One problem with the actions strategy is that do it again buys are not always the result of a emotional dedication toward the product (TePeci, 1999). For example, a visitor may remain at a resort because it is the most location. When a new resort reveals across the street, they switch because the new resort offers better value. Thus, do it again buy does not always mean dedication. Attitudinal dimensions use attitudinal data to reflect the emotional and emotional connection built into dedication. The attitudinal dimensions are concerned with the sense of dedication, engagement and allegiance. There are instances when a client holds a positive mind-set toward a resort, but he/she does not remain at the resort (Toh et al., 1993). A visitor could keep a resort in high regard, suggest the resort to others, but feel the resort was too expensive for him/her to use on consistently.

The above techniques evaluate dedication uni-dimensionally. The third strategy, blend dimensions of dedication, combine the first two dimensions and evaluate dedication by clients’ item choices, tendency of brand-switching, regularity of buy, recency of buy and total amount of buy (Pritchard and Howard, 1997; Seeker, 1998; Wong et al., 1999). The use of
both mind-set and actions in a dedication definition substantially increases the predictive power of dedication (Pritchard and Howard, 1997). The two-dimensional blend statistic strategy has been applied and reinforced as a valuable tool to understand client dedication in several areas, such as marketing, entertainment, elegant resorts and airways (Day, 1969; Jacoby and Kyner, 1973; Backman and Crompton, 1991; Pritchard et al., 1992; Pritchard and Howard, 1997). The writers of this research now utilize the blend way of client dedication. For that research, faithful people are clients who keep positive behavior toward the company, commit to repurchase the product/service, and suggest the item to others.

Data and Methodology

In this study, researcher has used positivism paradigm because it includes the experimental and descriptive study. According to the body positivism has a single, external and objective of the research question. Therefore, empirical studies is selected to take control and structural methods to identify a research project from initial build appropriate research question and hypothesis and using appropriate research methods. The existing study exists on the positivism paradigm as research philosophy. The approach would be deductive. The study and the researcher is verifying and examining a theory which has already been formulated so in the proposed study, research problem that is already existing is going to be verified and tested so the approach would be deductive here and research paradigm would be positivism.

Data collection methods

A questionnaire or a survey is a means of collecting facts and figures and a slope of transcribed enquiries of getting together evidence almost related to a specific inhabitants by testing a group and certain of its associates, typically done over a structure of homogenous enquiries. They can be managed one or the other to entities or clusters. It is a conversation in which one person elicits information from a new individual. A transcription or explanation of such a discussion is too named a discussion. The discussion is equally a study process and a prevalent system of non-fiction.

The quantitative data will be collected using questionnaires. For the proposed study, research would use questionnaires and the motive is that questionnaires are an investigation tool containing of a sequence of enquiries and additional stimulates for the persistence of collecting evidence from respondents. Even though they are repeatedly planned for numerical breakdown of the reactions. The sample size and sampling for the proposed study would be 300 sample size and probability sampling would be followed. As the study is based on collecting data from the customers therefore, the sampling technique used here would be simple random sampling. The respondents would fill in the questionnaires and after that the data would be analyzed using the SPSS Software. The data would be collected from any of the retail stores or hypermarkets from where the perception of the customers could be collected and secondly, from universities as well where students could also give in their useful input regarding the related factors and its impact. Hence, the sampling technique in the study would be simple random sampling and the sample size / population would be 300 respondents.

Analysis

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Respondents’ Demographics</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gender (N=300)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>51.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>49.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age (N=300)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 25</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>32.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-35</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>29.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>24.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-onwards</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>13.5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table mentioned in the frequency distribution as mentioned above shows the details of all the respondents that are 300. The above table shows that out of 300 respondents, 152 (51.0 %) stand as males, moreover, 148 (49.0 %) were female. The
total respondents were 300 and, 90 (32.5%) remain valid as less than 25 years, 84 (29.5%) are 26 years to 35 years, 74 (24.5%) are 36 years to 45 years and 52 (13.5%) are above 45 years. This shows that most of the respondents in this study are less than 25 years as it gives a clear picture that the respondents were mostly students. Out of 300 respondents, most of the respondents are males and females are less as compared to the males.

Reliability

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No</th>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Items</th>
<th>Cronbach Alpha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.903</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Brand Image</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.923</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Customer loyalty</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>.772</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 shows the value of Cronbach alpha and the items computed in each variable in order to determine the reliability value more larger than or equal to 0.7. The above table shows the variables and the number of questions that are related to that particular variable and its Cronbach Alpha’s value. Public Relations is independent variable and its value is 0.903, whereas according to the criteria the value is greater than 0.7, therefore the data of the variable is reliable. This result shows that questionnaire is reliable and this research’s hypotheses are testable. The Customer loyalty is dependent variable and its value is 0.772 and it also shows as the value is more than or equaling the value of 0.7, therefore, reliability of the data is approved. This result shows that questionnaire is reliable and this research’s hypotheses are testable. The Brand Image is independent variable and its value is 0.923, therefore it represents that the data is reliable. This result shows that questionnaire is reliable and this research's hypotheses are testable.

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Minimum</th>
<th>Maximum</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Public Relations</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.7890</td>
<td>1.12874</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Image</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>5.00</td>
<td>2.7920</td>
<td>1.15490</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer loyalty</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>2.7010</td>
<td>.91135</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows that all the variables have a 100 percent response rate as all the valid numbers are 300. The further values shows minimum and maximum values as to what the respondents have filled for that specific variable. The mean then shows the average value of that particular variable and then further the table tells us the standard deviation. Standard Deviation shows that to what extent that particular variable cause deviations in the data. The minimum values for the Public Relations, Brand Image and Customer Loyalty are 1.00, whereas, the maximum values for Public Relations, Brand Image and Customer Loyalty are 5.00, 5.00 and 4.60 respectively that shows that the maximum values that are suggested by the respondents. The mean for each variable are as, Public Relations (mean: 2.78), Brand Image (mean: 2.79), and Customer loyalty (mean: 2.70). It shows that the average value of the particular variable. The smallest decision which is checked by the respondent is 1 and the higher checked category by the respondents are 5. Values regarding standard deviation for customer loyalty stated as (S.D.91135), it is the most minimum value in comparison to all the other variables. It suggests that the answers that respondents have given were all related and same and has a consistency in the answers. While looking at the value of standard deviations, the value of the public relations is (1.128), that is the most high out of all the other variables and it clearly shows that there it has a high degree of deviation. Whereas, the value for Brand Image’s (S.D 0.91135) shows the deviation in the data.
Correlation

Table 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Public Relation</th>
<th>Public Relation</th>
<th>Brand Image</th>
<th>Customer loyalty</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>.947**</td>
<td>.720**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brand Image</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.947**</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
<td>300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Customer loyalty</td>
<td>Pearson Correlation</td>
<td>.720**</td>
<td>.741**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The above graphic presentation of correlation shows the relationship between two scale variables. In the above table, the Pearson’s test is calculated because these variables have linear relationship between each other, \( r = .947 \) which shows the positive relation between Brand Image and Public Relations and the sig. is 0.01 which is less than 0.05 shows that there is strong relation between them.

Discussion

First hypothesis is supported. The findings of investigation showed significant elation among public relations on Customer loyalty in Pakistan. Relation among variables were positive and significant as well due to fact that sig. value was less than or equal to 0.005. Value representing the variation shall be the value of adjusted R square value was .516 and it shows 51% variation of independent variable public relation on dependent variable customer loyalty. This is moderate effect in positive direction. This research is consistent with Chung, et al (2015) showed CSR affects customer loyalty in a positive manner. CSR is listed as the importance of the following factors: including the protection of customers, being responsible for initiating the charity, considering as a responsibility by law, ethical duty, social accountability besides eco-friendly influence.

Second hypothesis is supported. There is great influence of the brand image on the customer loyalty within the local scenario of Pakistan. Relationship among variable was again found to be significantly positive as per the criteria of the significance value as in the case of the previous developed hypothesis. The value for the variance is represented by the value of adjusted R square as the value was .547 and it shows 54.7% variation of independent variable brand image on dependent variable customer loyalty. The conclusion reveals, there is a straight and direct impact on the customer loyalty in relation with it and CSR. The proposed reading accomplishes that notwithstanding its reputation by means of a positive construct regarding the areas of service marketing. Regarding the brand image, it has a positive association on the loyalty of the customers. It could also be said that the customers’ loyalty along with the top quality besides a good brand image may paves the way towards the loyalty. For a sure reason, it doesn’t narrates that the service quality doesn’t stands as valid and important.

Findings of the study shows and facilitates the argument that quality is also a key value while discussing the services context. CSR is primarily focused by the companies and are involved in that for the image building and enhancing the existing market repute. Regarding the image and reputation, there exists a major conceptual difference (Gray and Balmer 1998). While both of the concepts are the important ones to discuss as they are strongly affecting the competitiveness of a firm that is the important point or discussion as competitive advantage. The organization could create a specialized position in the general public market, if they could utilize their strategies’ accordingly as under the umbrella of CSR (Smith, 2003). Third hypothesis is also supported and found great impact of public relation on brand image in Pakistan. Their relationship was similar to the previous both cases and is significant association among the variables. Likewise, the value of variance is being shown by the adjusted R square it shows 89.7% variation of independent variable public relations on dependent variable brand image. This is strong effect in positive direction.

Conclusion

The existing study is very helpful in determining the concept regarding the importance of the included variables
especially public relations and then its significant part, whereas, this function was not being considered as a vital part for success. Unlikely to that, the research shows that it is also equally important as any other variable and construct for conducting research. Brand Image is considered to be an important element of any branding activity but similarly, public relations and customer loyalty are regarded equally un-important phenomena’s. Contrary to that, with the help of existing research and after conducting analysis, the results suggests that all the variables used in the research are equally important and more importantly all the independent variables have an impact on the dependent variable. As the analysis shows us that the customers’ loyalty has strongly been effected by the constructs of brand image and public relations in the context of mobile phone industry of Pakistan. The results and analysis have been discussed in detail in their respective chapters.

Limitations

The study certainly has some limitations as some of those could also be derived from the future research’s perspective. There are numerous articles and literature present on the concepts of brand image, public relations and customer loyalty but very less material was related or could have been extracted with keeping in mind the theme of this study. So it suggests that there were less resource materials in the local context due to which difficulty was faced and a lot of time was consumed during the searching of the related material. Secondly, there isn’t a research culture prevalent in the country so it is quite difficult to find the surveys completed by the specified time and people need to be guided a lot for the appropriate filling of the questionnaires. Lastly, conducting the research related to thesis is not an easy task at all and yet it was time bounded so therefore, it was one of the vital limitations of the study. Further as narrated above that the sample size could be improved so the findings of the study could be used to a broader concept and can be generalized.

References


