The Effects of Brand Affect on Female Cosmetic Users Brand Loyalty in Taiwan

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study aims at the discussion of the relationships among customer perceived value, brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty. In addition, the study uses brand trust and brand affect as mediators to analyze the relationship between customer perceived value and brand loyalty. The research subjects are female consumers who ever used cosmetics, and they are asked to respond the questionnaire on understanding the differences and influences among customer perceived value, brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty of cosmetics usage. The results reveals that (a) customer perceived value, brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty have a significant relationship among each other, (b) customer perceived value will affect brand loyalty through the mediation effect of brand trust and (c) customer perceived value will influence brand loyalty through the mediation effect of brand affect.

Keywords: Customer Perceived Value, Brand Trust, Brand Affect, Brand Loyalty

INTRODUCTION

In the 1970s, compact powder was the main cosmetic products in the domestic industry. At that time, cosmetic products were a luxury product because the society is still in the condition of deficiency of many things in daily life. Therefore, there are not too many chances to use cosmetics, and the most occasions to apply cosmetics are in a wedding ceremony or Chinese New Year. However, putting on make-up is believed as a suitable manner in any occasion nowadays. Also, following the spreading of cosmetic knowledge, the change of social viewpoint, and the high frequency of interpersonal interaction, the consumption in cosmetics has also increased (Dai, 1998). Thus, cosmetics has changed from a luxury product to a popular product because of the human nature in good looking, the increase of cosmetics requirement and the decrease of users' age. In the meantime, the trend of male consumers in cosmetics is increasing yearly.

Furthermore, the rising of new cosmetic products and new marketing channels also impact the market. Especially, the number of the specialty stores for famous brand cosmetics have mushroomed in many areas. The speed of expansion and scope of the impact of famous brand cosmetics are out of imagination. Buying famous brand cosmetics becomes a symbol for a person. However, these famous brand cosmetics still need to focus on their target markets. No matter business in Taiwan or global market the competition is always aggressive, business operators have to seek for their market competitive advantages in order to operate and grow continuously. The key lies in seizing consumers' heart. Therefore, how to increase customer's evaluation before or after purchase and repurchase a product is an important issue to a business. As for cosmetics in Taiwan, the competition and market value are huge, and there are many cosmetics sold in Taiwan including SHISEIDO, KANEBO, CHANEL, CHRISTIAN DIOR, AVON, OLAY and so on. From customers' point of view, cosmetic buyers feel they have hard time to ponder and distinguish the differences among each brand and make final choices because the functions are so similar. In addition to the price, other influence factors such as consumers' willingness and continuousness to buy products are concerned to this study.

When consumers decide to buy, they concern not only a product's value but also salespersons' service, business image, brand equity. Moreover, the quality of interactive relationship is also related to consumers' willingness to shop further. Therefore, consumers' trust, satisfaction and loyalty are all important to a business. In particular, when a business faces a hyper competitive market, it should consider how to increase its brand equity to build a brand value into consumers' mind in order to obtain the market competitiveness and create a profit. Accordingly, the aims of the study are to analyze the relationships among customer perceived value, brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty and propose the purposes as follows: (s) to discuss the relationships among customer perceived value, brand trust and brand loyalty, (b) to discuss the relationship among customer perceived value, brand affect and brand loyalty and (c) to discuss the key factors that influence brand loyalty.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer Perceived Value

Customer perceived value means the results of consumer's perception assessment to products or services (Zeithaml, 1988). That is a tradeoff result between perceived benefits and perceived costs. Perceived benefits are positively related to perceived value and behavior intention, and this is basic model of perceived value (Lovelock, 2001). Monroe (1990) considers that customer perceived value is quality or benefit received from a product in relative to the sacrifices in price. In addition, many researches propose perceived value is a consumer's assessment of the utility of product based on the perceptions of what is received and what is given (Sinha & DeSarbo, 1998; Sweeney, Soutar, & Johnson, 1999; Ulaga & Chacour, 2001; Engel, Blackwell & Miniard, 2001; Hellier, Geursen, Carr, & Rickard, 2003).

Woodruff and Gardial (1996) identify that perceived value is the balance between desirable attributes and sacrifice attributes, and Lapierre (2000) further defines perceived value as the balance between acquisitions and benefits and payments and sacrifices. Dodds, Monroe & Grewal (1991) also pinpoint that generally buyers will consider purchasing at a set of prices rather than a single price, and perceived value will influence purchase intention and Dodds, et al. (1991) argue that price and perceived value presents a curvilinear relationship. Perceived value in benefits contain internal and external attributes, quality in perceptions and high level abstractions, and perceived value in costs comprise monetary price and non monetary price such as time, energy and effort (Zeithaml, 1988; Petrick, 2002).

By referring to Zeithaml (1988), Dodds et al. (1991) and Petrick (2002) measurement on customer perceived value, the study proposes that perceived valued is consumers' overall perceptions on benefits and costs from cosmetics purchase and usage. The study focuses on the assessment on payments or sacrifices including two dimensions, behavior price and momentary price. Behavior price consists of time, energy and effort, and monetary price contains all service prices to customers (Petrick, 2002).

Brand Trust

Trust is not only been recognized as a very important human behavior but also been broadly discussed both in the fields of psychology, sociology and economics and in the topics of management and marketing practices (Hosmer, 1995). Generally speaking, trust is that a person believes the other person or mutually believes each other, and based on trust, it can facilitate the exchange on specific investment and information in the organization and mutual promises, the reduction of transaction costs, the occurrences of potential damages or revenges and frames with each other (Shen, 2004). Moorman, Deshpande and Zaltman (1993) define trust as a willingness to rely on an exchange partner in whom one has confidence. Similarly, Morgan and Hunt (1994) consider trust consists in an exchange partner in whom one deeply owns confident and honest. The definitions of trust on above all emphasize the importance of confidence. Therefore, the definitions can broadly apply to any condition such as transaction between buyer and seller or any transaction format between two parties.

Besides, the emphasis on the relationship marketing nowadays helps trust to play an important role on the connection development (Sirdeshmukh, Singh, & Sabol, 2002). Spekman (1988) also believed that trust is the foundation to build long term relationship with customers. Trust is a critical brand attribute (Delgado-Ballester, 2001) and an important element among businesses (Hess, 1995; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Trust can help a business to predict customer behavior. That is, when consumers trust a product, they will not easily to transfer to buy another product. Therefore, the defect rate will reduce, and the company will receive a higher trust assessment and create a higher customer value (Reinartz & Kumar, 2000). Furthermore, trust can save costs, create customer value and increase customers' satisfaction (Anderson & Narus, 1990) and build a long term relationship with customers (Doney & Cannon, 1997). If customers feel distrust to products and services, the relationship between the customer and the business will not be solidified (Morgan & Hunt, 1994).

Brand trust means that consumers believe a brand and provide their utilitarian requirements (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Moorman, Zaltman and Deshpande (1992) and Doney and Cannon(1997) stress that if consumers do not understand products and feel hard to make a decision because they are not willing to trust the product provided from a specific brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001) and brand trust comes from customers' perceptions on quality, brand innovative image, and producers' consideration from a brand (Lassar, Mittal, & Sharma, 1995). Accordingly, by referring to Doney and Cannon (1997) and Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) definitions and measurements, the study suggests that brand trust means consumers believe that a specific brand will provide a very reliable product such as a complete function, a quality assurance and after- sale service to them.

Brand Affect

In the definition of dictionary, affect refers to emotion or feeling, and it is a psychological reaction from pleasure, anger, sorrow and joy. A brand name, logo, or slogan will induce a consumer's positive or negative feeling on brand image and affect. Affect will also influence consumers' behavior and cognition. Watson and Tellegen (1985) also divide individual affections into positive affections and negative affections. Brand affect is a subjective feeling after using a product, and it is also a psychological phenomenon usually accompanying with responses from emotion and mood. Moorman et al (1992) and Morgan and Hunt (1994) define brand affect as a positive emotional response induced from a brand. In other words, brand affect is an exciting, cheerful and satisfying feeling when a consumer uses a product from a brand. A positive brand affect means consumers have a good impression and feeling, and it will raise the brand evolution in the consumers' mind. On the contrary if consumers have a negative brand affect response, they will feel unsatisfied with a specific brand, and brand evaluation will be very low. Although there are many different types of affect, Russell (1991) suggests that use pleasantness-unpleasantness and arousal-sleepiness as two dimensions to measure affections. In other words, when consumers use a product, they will feel pleasantness or unpleasantness and further evaluate the brand by expressing their arousal or sleepiness.

Brand Loyalty

Aaker (1996) assumes that a loyal consumer base represents a barrier to entry, a basis for a price premium, time to respond to competitor innovations, and a bulwark against deleterious price completion, and brand loyalty is a core dimension of brand equity. In addition, brand loyalty is the final destination of brand management, and if a company wants to test the weakness or strength of its customers' loyalty, it can easily check whether consumers still favor its product in contrast to competitors. Oliver (1999) also defines that the changes in marketing environments and strategies can influence consumers' purchase behavior but consumers' loyalty will remain, and they will still repeatedly to buy their favorite brands in the future. This phenomenon reveals that brand loyalty and consumer purchase attitudes (Chaudhuri & Holbook, 2001).

Most of the scholars popularly consider brand loyalty including behavior dimension and attitude dimension. Behavior loyalty referrers to repurchase behavior, and loyalty attitude means psychological commitment to a brand (Aaker, 1991; Assael, 1998; Oliver,1999; Prus & Brandt, 1995; Farr & Hollis, 1997). Thus, purchase frequency is not equal to loyalty. For instance, consumers to repurchase a product do not mean they like it but due to a convenient factor or a variety seeking behavior to purchase a certain specific product occasionally (Tseng, Liao, & Jan, 2004). Thus, repurchase frequency may not mean brand loyalty. In view of these possible factors, simply using consumer purchase behavior to evaluate brand loyalty is not reasonable. It must further utilize affect intention to analyze brand loyalty.

The followings explain what is a consumer psychological factor (altitude) and behavior factor (purchase and resistance from other brands' attraction): (a) attitudinal loyalty means consumers will like the same brand from the beginning to the end but the loyalty can only present repurchase willingness and they may not put into action (Assael, 1998; Oliver, 1999), and (b) purchase loyalty means that consumers not only prefer but also repeatedly purchase a brand. Consumers repurchase a brand because they are satisfied with a brand not due to convenience, time constrain, habit, dislike for another brand or a variety seeking behavior but a long time purchase and involvement in the brand (Knox, 1998). In other words, as time goes by, consumers will remain the same attitude to buy a certain brand at a similar condition, and that means preference, satisfaction and willingness to repurchase a certain brand continuously (Reynolds & Gutman, 1984).

The Relationships among Customer Perceived Value, Brand Trust, Brand Affect and Brand Loyalty

Chang and Wildt (1994) submit that value can facilitate loyalty. Parasuraman and Grewal (2000) propose that the more positive customer transaction perceptions are, the stronger customer loyalty is. Sirdeshmukh, Sigh and Sabol (2002) also deem that value will bring a positive influence toward customers. Brand trust and affect represent customers' preferences when customers trust a brand, they will prefer and depend on the brand and increase the repurchase willingness (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Bearden, Lichtenstain & Teel, 1984). Chaudhuri and Holbook (2001) identify that when customers increase confidence in a brand, they will raise their preference to a product or repurchase frequency in the future, and brand trust is positively related to brand loyalty. Singh and Sirdeshmukh (2000) assume that trust is a critical mediator between the behavior before and after purchase and it can induce a long term customer loyalty and connect the relationship between sellers and buyers closely. They further identify that under this connection customers will give a business a positive evaluation after purchase and promote their trust and loyalty. On the other hand, during the assessment of the relationship between consumers and brand loyalty, it

has to consider the affective factors in brand loyalty. Gundlach, Achrol and Mentzer (1995) think that brand commitment has a relationship with a positive brand affect. When consumers make commitments to a brand, they must have positive affect with the brand such as pleasure, joy and excitement. Dick and Basu (1994) also believe that when customers have positive affect to a product, their loyalty will increase. Accordingly, if a brand makes consumers feel happy, joyful and satisfied, they will promote their brand loyalty.

In addition, Doney and Cannon (1997) define that trust is when consumers feel their transaction is definitely reliable they will have confidence to the product or the manufacturers. Harris and Goode (2004) find that perceived value has a positive and significant effect on trust in both internet book stores and travel websites. Ulaga and Eggert (2006) also suggest that perceived value is significantly affected to trust in a study of the relationships among satisfaction, trust, commitment, relation expansion and defection of purchasing managers in the chemical, mechanical, electronic industry. Moreover, joy and value of a product not only make consumers satisfy with a brand but also produce brand preference and trust. Sajeev and Colgate (2001) propose a behavioral intention consolidation model and argue that the construct of customer value from price and quality can influence behavioral intention. Ranaweera and Prabhu (2003) and Hartline and Jones (1996) also identify that trust and customer perceived value are motivators to customer loyalty. Singh and Sirdeshmukh (2000) adopt agency and loyalty mechanism viewpoints to present a framework for interrelation from pre-purchase, satisfaction, trust to loyalty. Tseng et al. (2004) contend that if customers can acquire more values from the transaction process, they will produce brand trust and brand affect and then create brand loyalty or repurchase intention.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Framework

The study adopts female cosmetic users as a research subject and uses customer perceived value as an antecedent variable and brand trust and brand affect as mediation variables to examine the purchase loyalty in female cosmetics users. The research framework is as shown in Figure 1.
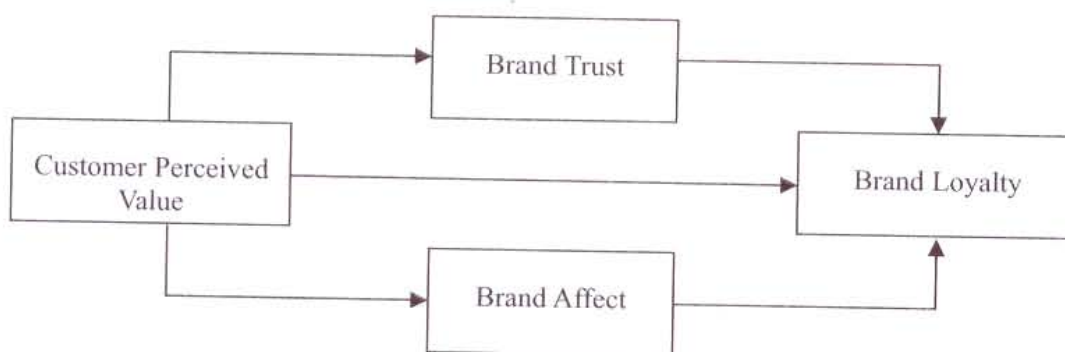

Figure 1: Research Framework

Research Hypotheses

H1: Customer perceived value will be positively affected to brand trust.
H2: Customer perceived value will be positively affected to brand affect.
H3: Customer perceived value will be positively affected to brand loyalty.
H4: Brand trust will be positively affected to brand loyalty.
H5: Brand affect will be positively affected to brand loyalty.
H6: Brand trust will mediate customer perceived value and brand loyalty.
H7: Brand affect will mediate customer perceived value and brand loyalty.

Research Measurement and Sampling

According to research framework, the measurement constructs include customer perceived value, brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty with a Likert 5-point scale from 5 to 1 to present extremely agree, agree, no opinion, disagree and very disagree. In addition, the study adopts convenience sampling to collect data from female consumers who ever used cosmetics. Data are collected from a questionnaire interviewed at the department stores. The duration for collecting data is three weeks. Totally 300 questionnaires are dispatched and 277 copies are collected. Excluding 53 invalid questionnaires, the response rate is 74.66%.

ANALYSIS AND RESULT

The study adopts Cronbach's α to examine the internal consistency of each dimension (customer perceived value, brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty). The results show that all Cronbach's α values of each dimension are higher 0.7 between 0.7734 and 0.9201. It indicated the framework has a highly internal consistency.

Regression Analysis

The study applies simple regression to analyze the relationships among customer perceived value, brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty. As shown in Table 1, customer perceived value is significantly related to brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty ($\beta=0.646$, $p=0.000$; $\beta=0.597$, $p=0.000$; $\beta=0.647$, $p=0.000$). Brand trust significantly affect brand loyalty ($\beta=0.749$, $p=0.000$), and brand affect significantly accounts for brand loyalty ($\beta=0.714$, $p=0.000$). Therefore, H1、H2、H3、H4、H5 are supported.

Table 1: Regression for Customer Perceived value, Brand trust, Brand affect and Brand Loyalty

I.V. \ D.V.	Brand Trust	Brand Affect	Brand Loyalty	Brand Loyalty	Brand Loyalty
Customer Perceived Value	0.646**(0.00)	0.597**(0.00)	0.647**(0.00)		
Brand Trust				0.749**(0.00)	
Brand Affect					0.714**(0.00)
ΔR^2	0.414	0.353	0.416	0.558	0.508
F-Value	158.717	122.838	160.095	282.998	231.237

*: p<0.05, **: p<0.01

Meditation Effect of Brand Trust and Brand Affect

In order to test H6, the study adopts Baron and Kenny (1986) suggestions, the study examine the meditation effect of brand trust on customer perceived value (behavior price and momentary price) and brand loyalty. First, predict brand loyalty from customer perceived value; then, predict brand loyalty from brand trust. Behavior price is significantly and positively related to altitudinal loyalty ($\beta=0.545$, $p=0.000$; $\beta=0.146$, $p=0.023$), and monetary price is significantly and positively related to behavioral loyalty ($\beta=0.447$, $p=0.000$; $\beta=0.249$, $p=0.000$). Brand trust is significantly and positively related to altitudinal loyalty and behavior loyalty ($\beta=0.684$, $p=0.000$; $\beta=0.724$, $p=0.000$). It satisfies the condition that independent variable and meditation variable are significantly related to dependable variable (see Table 2).

Table 2: Regression Analysis for Customer Perceived Value, Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty

	Model 1				Model 2	Model 3	
	Brand Loyalty		Brand Loyalty		Brand Trust	Brand Loyalty	
	Altitudinal Loyalty	Behavior Loyalty	Altitudinal Loyalty	Behavior Loyalty		Altitudinal Loyalty	Behavior Loyalty
Behavior Price	0.545** (0.000)	0.447** (0.000)			0.540** (0.000)	0.294** (0.000)	0.146* (0.024)
Monetary Price	0.146* (0.023)	0.249** (0.000)			0.196** (0.002)	0.055 (0.352)	0.139* (0.014)
Brand Trust			0.684** (0.000)	0.724** (0.000)		0.463** (0.000)	0.558** (0.000)
$\Delta R2$	0.405	0.386	0.466	0.523	0.45	0.521	0.555
F-Value	76.928	71.165	195.288	245.074	92.171	81.880	93.798

*: p<0.05 **: p<0.01

Second, predict brand trust from customer perceived values. The result shows that customer perceived value (price behavior and momentary price) is significantly and positively related to brand trust ($\beta=0.540$, $p=0.000$; $\beta=0.196$, $p=0.002$). Third, as shown in Table 2, predict brand loyalty from customer perceived value and brand trust. The results show behavior price is significantly related to altitudinal loyalty and behavior loyalty ($\beta=0.294$, $p=0.000$; $\beta=0.146$, $p=0.024$) and momentary price is significantly related to behavior loyalty ($\beta=0.139$, $p=0.014$). The results also indicate β value is smaller. Therefore, the results reveal that brand trust has a partial mediation effect on behavior price and brand loyalty, and brand trust has a partial mediation effect on monetary price and behavior loyalty. In addition, momentary behavior is insignificantly related to altitudinal loyalty ($\beta=0.055$, $p=0.352$). Therefore, brand trust has a perfect meditation effect on monetary price and altitudinal loyalty. So, H6 is supported.

Moreover, in order to test H7, the study adopts Baron and Kenny (1986) suggestion to examine the meditation effect of brand affect on customer perceived value and brand loyalty. As shown in Table 3, first, customer perceived value (behavior price and monetary price) is significantly related to altitudinal loyalty (β=0.545, p=0.000; β=0.146, p=0.023), and customer perceived value (behavior price and monetary price) is also significantly related to behavior loyalty (β=0.447, p=0.000; β=0.249, p=0.000).

Table 3: Regression Analysis for Customer Perceived Value, Brand Affect and Brand Loyalty

	Model 4				Model 5	Model 6	
	Brand Loyalty		Brand Loyalty		Brand Affect	Brand Loyalty	
	Altitudinal Loyalty	Behavior Loyalty	Altitudinal Loyalty	Behavior Loyalty		Altitudinal Loyalty	Behavior Loyalty
Behavior Price	0.545** (0.000)	0.447** (0.000)			0.538** (0.000)	0.331** (0.000)	0.169** (0.009)
Monetary Price	0.146* (0.023)	0.249** (0.000)			0.145* (0.024)	0.088 (0.139)	0.174** (0.002)
Brand Affect			0.643** (0.000)	0.702** (0.000)		0.397** (0.000)	0.517** (0.000)
ΔR^2	0.405	0.386	0.411	0.491	0.397	0.498	0.546
F-Value	76.928	71.165	156.826	216.002	74.268	74.680	90.280

*: p<0.05 **: p<0.01

Furthermore, brand affect significantly accounts for altitudinal loyalty and behavior loyalty (β=0.643, p=0.000; β=0.702, p=0.000). It satisfies the condition that independent variable and meditation variable are significantly related to dependable variable (see Table 3). Second, brand affect (mediation variable) is regressed with customer perceived value (dependent variable). It shows that customer perceived value is positively and significantly related to brand affect (β=0.538, p=0.000<0.01; β=0.145, p=0.024). It indicates that independent variable is significantly related to dependent variable. Third, predict brand loyalty from customer perceived value and brand affect. The results show that behavior price is significantly related to altitudinal loyalty and behavior loyalty (β=0.331, p=0.000; β=0.169, p=0.009), and monetary price is also significantly related to behavior loyalty (β=0.174, p=0.002). In addition, β value is smaller. It indicates that brand affect has a partial effect on brand loyalty and monetary price has a partial effect on behavior loyalty. The results also show that monetary price insignificantly accounts for altitudinal loyalty (β=0.088, p=0.139). It indicates that brand affect has a perfect effect on monetary price and brand loyalty. Thus, H7 is supported.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTON

The study proposes that customer perceived value will be positively related to brand trust, brand affect and brand loyalty and brand trust and brand affect will mediate customer perceived value and brand loyalty. In addition, the study chooses female cosmetic users as research subjects. The result of validity analysis shows that the framework is supported which indicates that there is a relationship among four constructs. In addition, the study following Baron and Kenney (1986) suggestions to test meditation effect, the results indicate that brand trust and brand affect will mediate customer perceived value and brand loyalty. Moreover, it displays that the acquisition of brand loyalty depends on after purchase effects from customer perceived value, brand trust, and brand affect. The results also show customer perceived value is a motivator to brand loyalty and indicate that value plays a key factor in the exchange relationship. This provides a new view and evidence to the study of brand loyalty that customer perceived value will influence brand trust and brand affect, and further to influence brand attitude and purchase behavior. Therefore, how to increase customer brand loyalty through customer perceived value, brand trust and brand affect is an important issue to a business. In aspect of customer perceived value, the quality of product is the foundation of brand. If the performance of a product is not good, the brand will not last long. Also, a brand is intangible and it has to rely on physical products to deliver benefits and meanings to consumers and satisfy their needs. So, good or bad of a product will decide a brand destine. Therefore, the personnel in the research and design department has to clearly understand customers' needs and makes segmentations and categories to presents a physical product meeting and satisfying consumers' requirements. In aspects of brand trust and brand affect, these two factors have to involve (a) whether transaction objects show reliability to consumers and (b) whether transaction objects show sincerity to consumers. During transaction processes, a business has to show its sincere attitude toward consumers and actively understands their responses and requirements before and after purchase and after through interactive communication. Only by doing, consumers' trust and comfort can be raised, and only by understanding consumers' psychological needs, their brand trust and preference can be promoted. Hence, a successful brand strategy has to create consumers trust and affect and also increase their brand satisfaction through certain marketing activities. As a result, consumers will repurchase the brand because of brand loyalty.

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