

# DOES THE RELATIONSHIP OF BRAND EXPERIENCE, BRAND PREFERENCE AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION MATTER AMONG THE CUSTOMERS OF PEPSICO PAKISTAN? (A CASE OF LAHORE)

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**ABSTRACT:** *The main purpose of the present study is to investigate the relationship between brand experience, brand preference, and customer satisfaction among the customers of Pepsi Pakistan. Customer satisfaction is a crucial problem now-a-days for the companies. There are many studies conducted in advanced nations concerning brand preference, brand experience and customer satisfaction. This study is unique because it is the first study to check the relationship of brand preference on customer satisfaction; brand preference, brand experience & customer satisfaction relationships are checked collectively for the first time in the Pakistani cultural context. Young students are selected for conducting this research, because of the significant role of the young generation in consumption of beverages. Simple random sampling was used to select 350 student respondents from 3 newly developed universities located in Lahore. A structured questionnaire was used for collecting data. SPSS was used to calculate the reliability of data, correlation analysis and multiple linear regressions, for factor analysis AMOS was used. The outcomes of this research suggest positive relationships between brand experience, brand preference and customer satisfaction. All the three variables have a significant influence on each other among the customers of PepsiCo Pakistan. The outcomes of the current thesis will benefit the upper administration of PepsiCo Pakistan to nurture the growth of their business by increasing satisfaction of their customers. The value of beta for impact of brand preference on customer satisfaction is  $\beta=0.406$  and the value of beta for impact of brand experience on customer satisfaction is  $\beta=0.342$ , so we can say that brand preference is a better predictor of customer satisfaction*

**Keywords:** Pakistan, Brand preference, Brand experience, Customer satisfaction, Universities, Lahore, PepsiCo Pakistan, SPSS.

## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

This research is designed to check the relationship between brand experience, brand preference and customer satisfaction. This study considers customer satisfaction as the variable of interest. Customer satisfaction is the “customer’s reaction towards the assessment of perceived difference between prior expectations and real performance” [22]. Customer satisfaction is the most important and critical issue for the organizations and researchers [8]. Every organization wants to increase their market share and maximizing their profits along with reduction in cost [8]. Consumers were the heart of every organization in 1950s during the marketing era [8]. At that time organizations were producing only those things which they can sell and not just retailing the services and products which they can easily make as the organizations do in the production era [8]. As the consumption era started the attention of marketers have upsurges in customer, which shift in more consumption to post consumption era & organizations are better-off by providing some extra services and product to their consumers [8]. Satisfaction is supposed to as the judgment of the consumption experience. It entirely depends on the consumer’s judgment that either the organization is fulfilling the requirements of their customer or not [15]. Brand experience can be defined as the “perception of the consumer, at every moment of contact they have with the brand, whether it is in the brand images projected in advertising, during the first personal contact [3]. Brand experience is hypothesized as perceptions, behavioral reactions, judgments and feelings evoked by brand-related stimuli which are a piece of a brand’s identity, packaging, environment, design and communication [4]. Fascinatingly,

brand experience has engrossed attention in the marketing discipline [4]. Many marketing experts realized that understanding, how the customer experience brands are difficult for formulating marketing strategies for services and goods [11]. Marketing and Consumers researches have revealed that consumers got experience after various interactions with product and services, i.e. customers search for the product, buy the product and get services after consuming the product [4; 25]. Brand experience derived from the brand and the value of the brand by the formation of places which allow the customers to trial about what the brand really are [13]. A company’s brand includes more than just the formation of a logo or application of expressions and colors [13]. Brands have the capability to stretch beyond the graphic elements [13]. Brand preference is well-defined as “the consumer’s tendencies toward a brand that varies depending on the salient beliefs that are activated at a given time” [7]. Some past studies mainly focused on understanding, how an experience plays a crucial role in branding [26; 27; 28; 29], an efficient driver and to create superior value for the consumers and co-create new values for the consumers [30; 31; 32; 33]. Brand preference is closely associated with the brand choice that can aid customer judgment making and trigger brand buying [17]. Understanding the configuration of consumer preference across the population is a crucial input for developing and designing innovative strategies for marketing (17). It also reveals the heterogeneity of customer’s selections which leads to efficient market segmentation strategies (17). Although, predicting customer’s preferences among brands is a very difficult task (33).

**2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW**

**2.1 Brand Experience**

Brand experience is referred to as personal, inner consumer feedback (feelings, emotional state, and perceptions) and behavioural reactions evoked by brand-relevant stimuli which are the portion of a brand’s design and personality, wrapping, communications and surrounding (25). On the other hand brand experience describes the empirical traits consisting of the entire connecting brand (23). The consumer observation about the brand relates to its experience (6). Hence, vendors should have full knowledge about the consumer perception for making effective marketing strategies (24). Brand experience plays a crucial role during developing brand strategy and ultimately becomes a paramount (24). (34) recommends that “marketing and external communications help to build the brand, but nothing is more powerful than the customer’s actual experience”. Brand experience contains the utilization of services or products which relates directly to the brand image, events & brand association (6). Research in the marketing field has demonstrated that experience happens when clients purchase product take services, get benefits after consuming the products (4; 25). Product experience occurs when consumers personally interact with the product by searching the product, examining the product and finally evaluating the product [10]. When the customer is physically interacting with the store’s environment we call this shopping experience [35; 36]. [37], proposes that brand experience does not occur before and after utilization of the product, but occurs when the customer interaction with the brand’s existence directly or indirectly. There are some past researches that depict about variables influencing brand experience and how the brand experience influences consumer satisfaction and create a relationship between brand experience and brand image [24]. [9], determined that brand experience influenced brand personality, brand love and brand image to express positive words of mouth. Positive words of mouth show the positive reaction of the consumer and furthermore increase customer satisfaction [24].

**2.2 Brand Preference**

The word preference is defined by different experts depending upon their field of study like psychologists [2], sociologists [21] and economists [20]. Therefore, between these disciplines no generally decided definition exists [9]. For example, in view of economists, preferences are steady and exogenous, recognized for their accuracy and are influenced by the choice behaviour of the customer [12]. Economic sight of preference was condemned for supposing that preferences are exogenous and steady [9]. Preferences of an individual are not steady [2], instead preferences can be exogenous and endogenous [20]. In the field of marketing, the concept of preference is perceived as the choice between substitutes or desirability [16]. According to [39], “A preference is a behavioural tendency that exhibits itself, not so much in what the individual thinks or says about the object, but how he acts toward it”. [21], distinguishes between four kinds of customer preferences, which are given below:

1. The extent to which the customer escalates and advances the capacity to consume certain goods is the actual preference.

2. One’s perceptions regarding actual preferences, which reflect the normative decisions of higher-order self (meta-self), are called Meta-preferences.
3. Distinctive set reflecting what is actually or truthfully the finest for the individual are called true preferences.
4. Preferences which satisfy the inferior or physical wants are perceived as unrestrained preferences [21].

Actual preferences help in determining individual’s preferences, which results in uncontrolled preferences and meta preferences [9]. There are many definitions in the marketing literature, some of the definitions are explained below in the table which extrapolates the meaning of brand preference [9].

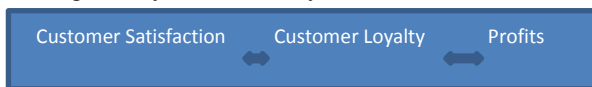
Source	Definition	Extrapolation
Hsee & Shannon, (2009)	Distinguish between two kinds of brands preferences; First one is the liking preferences, which reflect the customer’s reaction towards the brand and expose preferences or the second one is the choice of reflecting the behavioural reactions toward the brand.	Holistic A customer’s tendency towards the brand is reflected by cognitive, behavioural and affective responses.
Chang & Liu, (2009)	The customer’s biases towards a specific brand.	
Anselmsson et al., (2008)	The total of exceptional assets captures by the customers and measured by the brand’s strength experienced by the customer.	Biasness Different assessment of substitutes which results in a disposition towards a specific brand.
Hellier et al., (2003)	The level to which a customer prefers one brand over another brand.	
Wu, (2001)	Preferred brand is the selected brand between numerous brands of the similar class.	Differentiation Brand preference is created from the customer’s distinction and comparison among numerous substitutes of brands considered by them.
D’Souza & Rao, (1995)	Customer’s predispositions towards a brand that differs and depends on the salient beliefs which are started at a given time.	

**2.3 Customer Satisfaction**

Customer satisfaction exists when the needs of the consumers are satisfied or exceed by the use of products or services of an organization [1]. Customer services and customer satisfaction are completely two different terms; business organizations describe consumer services and on the other hand, consumers describe customer satisfaction [1]. That’s why, any business organization who desires to satisfy their consumers could express their services according to the needs and wants of their consumers [40]. Consumers also determine the quality of the consumer service and it should be taken as an opportunity of accomplishing customer retention and satisfaction [1]. Companies that desire to accomplish customer satisfaction necessarily are actually aware of the quality they are offering to their consumers in the shape of products and services [1]. It should now be what the business organization desires instead it must be what the consumer’s want [18]. Importance of customer satisfaction is massive in the business world, there are numerous advantages and some of them are explained below [1].

**2.3.1 Consumer loyalty and retaining**

The main advantage of satisfying consumers is to hold them for their whole life by making them addicted to their services and products [1]. In every single market or industry, there are many business organizations or rivals, making the services and goods for earning profits; that’s why, business organizations have to make sure that their formulated strategy is in the right direction for satisfying their consumers in order to distinguish their services and products [1]. As an outcome, consumers will become repetitive with the organization that satisfies their customers and in return customers favor to stay as long as they are constantly satisfied [19].



Graph: Service Profit Chain: Adapted from [19].

The above Graph depicts the flow and outcomes that follow customer satisfaction in the business organization (1). It also illustrates that customer satisfaction creates customer loyalty and as a result customer loyalty leads to profits for the business organization that provides customer satisfaction facilities (1).

**2.3.2 Increase in sales**

Whenever the organization satisfies their consumers, the consumers will be motivated to purchase more and more (1). The quality of the services and products are well-defined by the consumers` requirements and necessities have to be delivered every time to confirm that their sales upsurge (1). To confirm customer satisfaction, business organizations have to describe and redefine the corporate goals set by them in order to create everything which is included in the organization to work in the direction of this cause (1).

**2.3.3 Increase in profits**

Until the business organization has place all available tools of the business altogether for satisfying their consumers, afterwards the delivery and processes will be well-organized, customized and effective for the consumers known taste (1). By offering outclass products and services as desired by the consumers, the outcome will be in the form of value added revenues and high cost savings (18).

**2.3.4 Cost reduction**

The probable expenses associated with the manufacturing and distribution of services and products will be decreased as far as the target is to achieve customer satisfaction [1]. A quality that encounters customer's expectation will result in low cost in terms of time, preparation, operational, return and the costs associated with obtaining lost or new customers [1].

**3: HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT**

According to [38] brand experience has a significant positive effect on brand preference. On the basis of these studies current research has proposed the following hypothesis.

- H1: brand experience has a positive effect on brand preference.

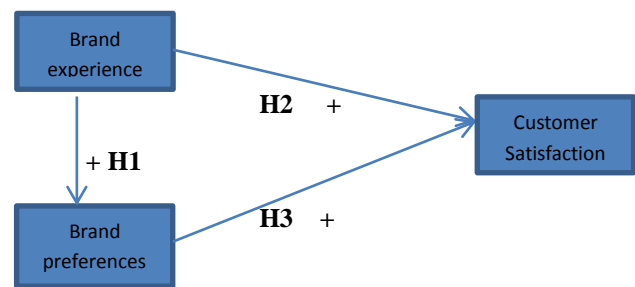
Brand experience positively influences customer satisfaction [5]. On the basis of this fact, this research has proposed the following hypothesis.

- H2: Brand experience has a positive impact on customer satisfaction

From the best of author knowledge, no previous study has proposed the relationship between brand experience & brand equity empirically. In this regard current research has proposed the following hypothesis.

- H3: Brand preference has an impact on customer satisfaction.

**3.1 HYPOTHESIZED FRAMEWORK**



**4: SCALE OF MEASUREMENT**

Brand experience was calculated by 6 items which were adopted from researchers [43]. Value of Cronbach’s Alpha for brand experience is 0.667 which shows that the data was reliable. Customer satisfaction was measured with the help of 5 statements. This scale was adopted from researchers [42]. Value of Cronbach’s Alpha for Customer satisfaction was 0.805 which shows that the data was reliable. Brand preference was measured using 2 statements which were adopted from researchers [41]. The value of Cronbach’s Alpha for brand preference was 0.726 which shows that the data was reliable.

**5.0 DATA COLLECTION**

Young students are selected for conducting this research, because of the significant role of the young generation in consumption of beverages. Simple random sampling was used to select 350 student respondents from 3 newly developed universities located in Lahore. A structured questionnaire was used for collecting data.

**Reliability of data and validity of scale**

Data was collected using a structured questionnaire and simple random technique is applied. Target respondents of

the study are the students of Lahore Garrison University, Lahore Leads University and Information Technology University. Total 350 questionnaires were distributed out of which 306 questionnaire were returned back with a response rate of 86%. Out of received 306 questionnaires 6 questionnaires were eliminated because they were incomplete. Analysis was applied on the remaining 300 completed questionnaires.

**Table No:1 Factor Loading and Reliability**

Variable	Statement	Value of Factor Loading	Value of Cronbach Alpha
Brand Experience	BE1	1.0	0.667
	BE2	1.09	
	BE3	0.52	
	BE4	0.91	
	BE5	0.45	
	BE6	0.67	
Brand Preference	BP1	1.00	0.726
	BP2	1.02	
Customer Satisfaction	CS1	1.0	0.805
	CS2	0.96	
	CS3	1.01	
	CS4	0.96	
	CS5	1.13	

Current study is using a scale of 35 statements and the scale is developed under the light of previously published articles in the same field of research. Validity of all the adopted scales is checked using factor loading. Factor loading of all the 13 statements which are using as an instrument of data collection was more than 0.40. Any statement having factor loading less than 0.40 will be eliminated in the final analysis. Cronbach alpha is used to check the reliability of the data. SPSS16 used to perform the tests. Data is reliable if value of cronbach’s alpha is greater than 0.50 [14]. In the current study value of Cronbach alpha of all the instruments are greater than 0.667 which shows that data is reliable.

**6: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**6.1 Correlation Analysis**

The table No.2, shows the correlation between brand experience, brand preference and customer satisfaction. A positive correlation exists among brand experience, brand preference and customer satisfaction. The correlation between brand preference and customer satisfaction is stronger as compare to the correlation exists among brand experience and brand preference.

The above table No: 3, describes the regression analyses for the current study. With the help of regression analysis the relationship and effect of independent variable on dependent variable is explained. Value of R Square shows the level of influence, which the independent variable has on dependent variables.

**Table No: 2**

**Correlations**

	Brand Experience	Brand Preference	Customer Satisfaction
Brand Experience	1	.406	.477
Brand Preference		1	.609
Customer Satisfaction			1

\*\* Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level

**6.2 REGRESSION ANALYSIS**

**Brand Experience Relationship with Brand Preference**

**Table no: 3**

	B	t	p
(Constant)	1.087	4.349	0.000
BE	0.618	7.675	0.000
R Square	0.165		
F	58.913		0.000
Durbin-Watson	1.907		

Dependent Variable: BP

\*\*\*Significant at the 0.01 level.

\*\*Significant at the 0.05 level.

\*Significant at the 0.10 level.

The resulting value will be acceptable when it is > 25%. The value of p illuminates the actual extent of the relationship. When the value of P is less than 0.05, 0.01 or 0.10, then the hypothesis is acceptable in regression analysis. These 3 levels are the basis on which the hypothesis is accepted. The Value of F represents the level of association among independent and dependent variables. The greater the value of F, stronger will be the relationship between the variables. Value of  $\beta$  explains the extent of influence of the independent variable on dependent variables. Value of Durbin Watson should range from 1.5 to 2.5. For regression analysis the value of t must not be zero. Above given table demonstrates the relationship of brand experience with brand preference. For the relationship of brand experience with brand preference, the value of  $p=0.000$  i.e.  $< 0.01$  and value of  $\beta = 0.618$ . This shows that brand experience has a significant positive effect on brand preference. It also reflects that brand experience can cause 61.8% change in brand preference respectively. Value of R Square is 0.165 which shows that brand

experience has 16.5% influences on brand preference. Value of Durbin Watson is 1.907, which is within the stated range of 1.5 to 2.5 which reflects that it is acceptable. The value of F is 58.913 which shows that brand experience have a strong association with brand preference. Above table also shows the values of t which are not zero. So on the basis of all above given values of  $\beta$ , R square, t, p, F and Durbin Watson our proposed hypothesis no 1 (H1) is accepted.

**4.2.2 Brand Experience & Brand Preference Relationship with Customer Satisfaction**

**Table no: 4**

	B	t	p
(Constant)	0.784	4.510	0.000
BE	0.342	5.760	0.000
BP	0.406	10.399	0.000
R Square	0.434		
F	113.770		0.000
Durbin-Watson	2.121		

Dependent Variable: CS

\*\*\*Significant at the 0.01 level.

\*\*Significant at the 0.05 level.

\*Significant at the 0.10 level.

Table No 4 describes the regression analyses for the current study. With the help of regression analysis the relationship and effect of independent variable on dependent variable is explained. Value of R Square shows the level of influence, which the independent variable has on dependent variables. The resulting value will be acceptable when it is > 25%. The value of p illuminates the actual extent of the relationship. When the value of P is less than 0.05, 0.01 or 0.10, then the hypothesis is acceptable in regression analysis. These 3 levels are the basis on which the hypothesis is accepted. The value of F represents the level of association among independent and dependent variables. The greater the value of F, stronger will be the relationship between the variables. Value of  $\beta$  explains the extent of influence of the independent variable on dependent variables. Value of Durbin Watson should range from 1.5 to 2.5. For regression analysis the value of t must not be zero. Above given table demonstrates the relationship of brand experience and brand preference with customer satisfaction. For the relationship of brand experience with customer satisfaction, the value of  $p=0.000$  i.e. < 0.01 and value of  $\beta = 0.342$ . This shows that brand experience has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. It also reflects that brand experience can cause 34.2% change in customer satisfaction respectively. Value of R Square is 0.434 which shows that brand experience has 43.4% influences on customer satisfaction. Value of Durbin Watson is 2.121, which is within the stated range of 1.5 to 2.5 which reflects that it is acceptable. The value of F is 113.770 which shows that brand experience have a strong association with customer satisfaction. Above table also shows the values of t which are not zero. So on the basis of all above given values of  $\beta$ , R square, t, p, F and Durbin Watson our proposed hypothesis no 2 (H2) is accepted. For the relationship of brand preference with customer satisfaction, the value of

$p=0.000$  i.e. < 0.01 and value of  $\beta = 0.406$ . This shows that brand preference has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. It also reflects that brand preference can cause 40.6% change in customer satisfaction respectively. Value of R Square is 0.434 which shows that brand preference has 43.4% influences on customer satisfaction. Value of Durbin Watson is 2.121, which is within the stated range of 1.5 to 2.5 which reflects that it is acceptable. The Value of F is 113.770 which shows that brand preference have strong association with customer satisfaction. Above table also shows the values of t which are not zero. So on the basis of all above given values of  $\beta$ , R square, t, p, F and Durbin Watson our proposed hypothesis no 3 (H3) is accepted.

**7.0 CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RESEARCHES**

In the world, many of the businesses are facing the problems concerning customer satisfaction. The present thesis focuses on the beverage industry in the context of Pakistani culture. Beverage industry in Pakistan is facing problems in terms of their customer satisfaction, which is purely based on their customers. Thus the foremost goal of the current research is to check that is the relationship of brand preference, brand experience and customer satisfaction matter among the customers of Pepsi Pakistan there. To investigate the relationship among these variables, three hypotheses were proposed using the above mentioned three variables. Quantitative method is used for investigation and SPSS 16 is used for data analysis. The results of this study confirm that brand experience and brand preference have a positive impact on customer satisfaction, along with that brand experience has a positive impact on brand preference. So, all proposed hypothesis are proven to have a significant relationship with each other. Present study highlights the significant points regarding the influence of brand preference, brand experience and customer satisfaction along with their dimensions on the customers of PepsiCo Pakistan. It is important here that customer satisfaction has a robust effect on other variables. PepsiCo should pay more attention on the practices of customer satisfaction to increase their revenues. From the current study, we found that brand preference has a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction and a change in brand preference can cause a variation of 40.6% in customer satisfaction. The above hypothesis is firstly proposed in this study and no study has been undertaken before. Further the results show that brand experience has a significant positive relationship with brand preference and a change in brand experience can cause a variation of 61.8% in brand experience; brand experience has a significant positive relationship with customer satisfaction and a change in brand experience can cause a variation of 34.2% in customer satisfaction.

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