

# MANAGING CUSTOMER'S BRAND EXPERIENCE FOR CREATING BRAND RESONANCE IN SMARTPHONES

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**Abstract:** *The present study is aimed at analysing the relationship between three constructs; i.e. brand experience, customer experiential value, and brand resonance. The study was undertaken in two stages; in the first stage a qualitative study was conducted to identify the smart phone brands which offered rich brand experience. Further in the quantitative study, the data were obtained from 188 smart phone customers from Jammu and Dehradun cities of Northern India using a structured questionnaire. The data analysis results have indicated that brand experience has significant positive effect on customer experiential value and brand resonance. And also the customer experiential value has been found to have partial mediation effect on the relationship between brand experience and brand resonance.*

**Keywords:** *Brand Experience, Customer Experiential Value, Brand Resonance, Smartphones, India*

## INTRODUCTION

The contemporary world is drifting to an experience economy (Wu & Zhuang, 2003; Pine & Gilmore, 1998); where customers do not always focus on products and service consumption but on the experiential element attached with the process. Experience economy is the new buzz word, which has gained attention from both academia as well as businesses interested in understanding successful brands mastering the art of customer experience management (Nagasawa, 2008). As a result successful brands have engaged in experience business and charged premium price from consumers for the time spent and experience enjoyed with the brands (Keller, 2009) and customers have readily agreed to pay extra for such experiences. This fact has also been stated in previous studies which were mainly conducted in primary experience sectors like hotels (Chuang, Lee, & Li, 2013; Kim & Kim, 2011; Oh, Fiore, & Jeoung, 2007), restaurants (Chang & Chieng, 2006; Jin, Lin, & Goh, 2013; Wu & Liang, 2009), and tourism (Chen & Chen, 2010; Williams, 2006; Yuan & Wu, 2008). However, while referring to the present day's customers; they expect more than just a simple exchange process to one that is full of pleasure and experiences. Therefore, along with the primary sector, where experience is the main product, Pine and Gilmore (1998) have found that the secondary experience companies which included manufacturing or service firms (e.g. in mobile services, Sirapracha & Tocquer, 2012) that are product based; wrap experiences with traditional offerings to make it more attractive and gain competitive advantage in the market place. Carbone and Haeckel (1994)

have clearly suggested experience to be a tool for a brand to break the commodity trap and create customer's preference for it. Therefore, experience is the new mantra for businesses and is a crucial element for today's consumer (Henderson, Cote, Leong, & Schmitt, 2003).

Since its introduction, customer behaviour has evolved from merely a simple economic exchange to more complicated motivations that include rational and emotional values during the whole process (Holbrook, 2002), as the experiential elements like emotions, feelings, fantasies, and fun are being attached to this exchange process (Holbrook, 2006). These experiential values that customer attaches with the product help people connect with a brand (Chinomona, 2013) and when done correct, it emerges as the most effective tool to win customer's brand loyalty (Sirapracha & Tocquer, 2012). Brand experiences along with the main offerings not only differentiate the product from competitors but also add value to the customers exchange process with the brand leading to positive outcomes such as customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, memory for the brand and consumer brand relationships. These positive outcomes like brand loyalty, customer emotion etc. help the brands to charge premium prices, the consumers are willing to pay and work as brand advocates since they perceive some distinctive value attached with the brand, which no other brand can provide or replicate. In such a heightened state of customers perceived experiential value they get attached to the brand and work as evangelists.

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Shaw and Ivens (2002) understood the importance of experience management and suggested that this is the latest battleground for competitor brands. Therefore, "Experiences" are the reality check between what the brand is saying or promising, who the brand is, what it is really delivering (brand experiences), to what is customers' perceived value out of the brand experience (customer experiential value) and what is the brand achievement (brand resonance). The present study focuses on consumption related brand experiences impacting the intrinsic and extrinsic values, which customers experience while enjoying, interacting, and operating smart phones. Since smartphones nowadays are a vital part of customers life with a very short product life. Therefore, the decision regarding mobile purchase is not just dependent on the rational values but also experiential values attached to it along with previous experiences of the users or others associated. Therefore it is critical to gain insights into the relationship between brand experience, customer experiential value and brand resonance in order to design effective marketing strategies for business growth and sustainability.

In line with this, the current research study aims at understanding as to how customer's experience with the smartphone brand augments experiential value derived though its usage thereby enhancing customers' brand resonance.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

### Brand Experience

Brand experience has attracted considerable attention in marketing practice as well as academia. Marketing practitioners have realised that understanding consumers' brand experience is critical for developing effective marketing strategies. Since what ultimately matters to consumers is whether brands can provide attractive experiences or not. A successful brand needs to create experiences that "deserve to be branded" (Smith & Wheeler, 2002). According to Dayal, Landesberg, and Zeisser (2000), the notion of brand and experience are very closely associated. Brand are no longer for just identification of a product or service being offered, they are the platforms through which the companies interact with customers about their promises and expectations (Montana, Guzman, & Moll, 2007). It is during these interactions that customers experience a brand. Alloza (2008) defined brand experience as customers' perception at every moment of contact they have with the brand; it can range from advertising in magazine depicting brand image to personal contact quality level at a store. Thus, brand experience is a continuous process and is created with each and every encounter of consumer with the brand during the whole process of searching, purchasing, receiving, and consuming products/services (Arnould, Price,

& Zinkhan, 2002; Brakus, Zarantonello, & Schmitt, 2009; Schmitt, 2009; Chang & Chieng, 2006). In addition brand experience is created during brand consumption talking to others about the brand; gathering brand information, promotions, and events, and so on (Ambler, Bhattacharya, Edell, Keller, Lemon, & Mittal, 2002). Based on the work of Schmitt (1999), the brand experience has been classified into individual and shared experiences. Individual experiences consist of sense, feel and think experiences that are personal in nature, in contrast, to act and relate experiences which are influenced by others and are regarded as shared experiences. Later developing on the above knowledge Brakus *et al.* (2009) conceptualised brand experience as subjective, internal consumer responses (sensation, feelings, and cognitions) and behavioural responses evoked by brand related stimuli (e.g. colours, shapes, typefaces, designs, slogans, mascots, brand characters) that are parts of brand design and identified packaging, communications, and environments. These brand-related specific stimuli include brand-identifying colours (Bellizzi & Hite, 1992; Gorn, Chattopadhyay, Yi & Dahl, 1997; Meyers-Levy & Peracchio, 1995), shapes (Veryzer & Hutchinson, 1998), typefaces, background design elements (Mandel & Johnson, 2002), catch phrases, mascots and brand characters (Keller, 1987). The brand stimuli have appeared as part of a brand's design and identity (name, logo and signage), packaging, marketing communications (ads and brochures) and in environments where the brand is marketed or sold (stores and events). Thus brand related stimuli constitute the major source of subjective, internal consumer responses that are referred to as brand experience. In secondary experience sector, the main offering is the product and experiences that are incorporated in the product. Therefore, the main constituents of brand experiences for a product centred firm are product experiences and consumption experiences of consumers. They have distinguished several dimensions and constructs of brand experience, which include four dimensions namely sensory, affective, behavioural, and intellectual. It is important to note that there is no one-to-one correspondence such that a certain stimulus type would trigger a certain experience dimension. Therefore the companies apply various sensory strategies in product creating multi-sensory brand experience to differentiate and position a brand in the human mind as an image (Hulten, 2011). Brand experience spans from brand consumption to product experience to the experience with the environment where brands are displayed (Kerin, Jain, & Howard, 1992) and leave a lasting trace in the long term memory of the consumer based on multiple exposures to brand-related stimuli. The brand experiences enhance the memorability and differentiation for the brand against its competitors. Therefore, brand experience serves as a new effective approach of turning around a fading brand (Schmitt, 1999), differentiate and position product or service (Morgan & Rao, 2003) and build competitive advantage for a company (Haeckel, Carbone, & Berry, 2003).

## Customer Experiential Value

Since the ultimate aim of any exchange process is to create superior value for customers, the businesses are continuously reforming and reinventing their products and services to increase the value output in order to differentiate their offerings from competitors (Shaw & Ivins, 2002). The main issue with companies has not been to compete on customer value delivery, but rather pursuit for contemporary ways to do it (Woodruff, 1997). Thus the customer's quest for experiential value is not just dependent on product and service quality but the experience journey gets initiated with the first interaction of brand with the customer and continues at every brand contact with the customers all the way up to after sale services (Maghnati, Ling, & Nasermodeli, 2012). Zeithaml (1998) has concluded that value consists of both objective and subjective elements. Therefore, to capture the complete essence of consumer value, it should comprise more than just functional utility (Bloch, Ridgway, & Sherrell, 1989). The consumption of product and service also serve as a source of creating both utilitarian as well as experiential values. The experiential value perceptions are based upon interactions involving either direct usage or distanced appreciation of goods and services (Mathwick, Malhotra, & Rigdon, 2001). These experiential values provide the customers with both intrinsic and extrinsic benefits (Babin & Darden, 1995; Farshad, Ling, & Nasermodeli, 2012). In this context, the experiences that start as a work or task and are utilitarian in nature lead to extrinsic value for the customer (Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). The extrinsic or functional value of the smart phones as a product is derived from a number of utilitarian features into a single available product. It satisfies many modern information technology needs like Internet browsing, emails, banking, telephony, video calling, shopping and text messaging. The add-on values in the form of GPS, help to navigate unfamiliar areas plus efficient tools such as notes, clock, calendar, address books etc. that enhance the functional value of the device. The type of operating systems and its efficiency in providing a big library of apps to download additional games and productivity tools further enrich the user consumption experience.

Intrinsic benefits on the other hand are various experiences that are enjoyed during the exchange process and there are number of outcomes attached to them (Holbrook, 1994). In a smartphone the aesthetics, audio player, photo albums, camera, games, and other entertainment features lead to the intrinsic value. Even the functional benefits have an influence on experience. In a smartphone even though connectivity is a functional benefit but it assists in fulfilling emotional and social needs of the user. For example, access to social networks sites like Facebook, Twitter, and Whatsapp allow people to satisfy their social relationship needs in different ways.

However, further research has broadened the concept of extrinsic and intrinsic perceived experiential value by including an activity dimension. Activity dimension includes reactive or passive value and active or participative value. Reactive value originates as a consequence of consumer's reaction to brand experience. Active or participative value, on the contrary, indicates an intensified association between the consumer and the product. This relationship between the customer and company is a vital criterion in crafting a lively and playful exchange experience (Deighton & Grayson, 1995). According to them, the brands tempt the customer across a threshold from distanced appreciation to active collaboration, and in the process create a number of values.

Concluding from prior research, customer experiential value has been categorised into four dimensions: consumer return on investment (CROI), playfulness, service excellence (SE), and aesthetic appeal (Mathwick *et al.*, 2001). Consumer's return on investment (CROI) is an active source of extrinsic value which describes the exchange between what customers receive for what customers have invested. The customer investment can include money, time, social and psychological resources (Keng & Ting, 2009). Service excellence is a reactive source of extrinsic value and is the perception of the customer towards the company once the exchange process is over and includes general appreciation of the customer towards consumption experience of the product or service derived, such as customer service. Service excellence is associated to whether or not the customers received promised reliable services (Keng & Ting, 2009). Therefore, this dimension reveals the efficiency of service provider in performing tasks related with purchased goods with proficiency and expertise.

Playfulness and aesthetic appeal reflect intrinsic value. Playfulness is an active source of intrinsic value as it represents intrinsic enjoyment delivered by the product during various activities and is alternatively named escapism and represents self-oriented intrinsic experience (Keng & Ting, 2009). Aesthetic value reflects the immediately satisfying experience through four senses and the entertaining effects (Keng & Ting, 2009). Experiential values that consumers identify during their interface with a brand in the long run serve as a critical base in their minds for future purchase decisions. Nevertheless, offering customers with high brand experience that lead to these four experiential values of Mathwick *et al.* (2001) by smartphone companies is an efficient way to sustain customer's heightened loyalty.

## Brand Resonance

Branding is a strategy for long-term relationship, which is about building confidence, consistency, and above all, establishing loyalty (Hameide, 2011). Such heightened strong connection between consumer and the brand is

known as resonance. It refers to the nature of the ultimate relationship and the extent to which customers feel they are 'in sync' with the brand (Keller, 2003). In the Customer Based Brand Equity model, resonance results when it completely reflects a harmonious relationship between customers and the brand. For such brands, customer have a high degree of loyalty along with close relationship with the brand in such a manner that they actively seek means to interact with the brand and share their experiences with others thereby acting as brand evangelists and advocates. Thus, brands with such strong resonance benefit from both the increased customer active loyalty and decreased vulnerability to competitive marketing action. Therefore the task for the brand is to ensure that the customer has right experiences to create the right brand knowledge and image. The brand resonance components include behavioural loyalty, attitudinal attachment, sense of community, and active engagement (Keller, 2001). Brand loyalty may derive from higher value of a brand or from the favourable affect experienced by customers who use the brand. This loyalty, in turn, may be determined by feelings or affect elicited by the brand (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001). Further Carroll and Ahuvia (2006) have coined brand-consumer relationship as a "brand love" that is greater for brands in hedonic product categories and for brands that offer more symbolic benefits. Thus two key characteristic of brands with highest levels of brand resonance are active loyalty and brand attachment (Mohamed & Musa, 2012). In fact, active loyalty is the main dimension to resonance because it is considered to be the path that leads to certain marketing advantages and outcomes, which have been closely associated with brand equity (Delgado & Aleman, 2005; Keller, 2003; Bello & Holbrook, 1995). Consequently, active loyalty underlies the on-going process of continuing and maintaining a valued and important relationship that has been created by trust and commitment (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Garbarino & Johnson, 1999). Hence, brand resonance is especially capable of building deep attachments and evoking strong emotion (Keller, 2003).

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK AND HYPOTHESES FORMULATION

The customers with a positive and pleasant experience are likely to purchase the same brand repeatedly and become loyal to the brand; thereby suggesting that brand experience has a direct impact on brand loyalty and plays a crucial role in the process of building brand (Iglesias, Singh, & Batista-Foguet, 2010). Thus, the attitude towards a brand is established with its first interaction and it serves as an evaluation point in the minds of the customer for repeat purchase. Moreover brand management literature suggests that a positive brand experience tends to produce a positive emotional and cognitive state, which finally leads

to psychological satisfaction with the brand (Kim & Kim, 2005). Thus brand experience affects consumer loyalty and past satisfactions. In such a scenario, the consumers are more likely to buy a brand again and recommend it to others and less likely to buy alternative brands (Mittal & Kamakura, 2001; Oliver, 1997; Reicheld, 1996). Brand resonance is the extent to which consumers are loyal and attached to a brand. Thereby, suggesting that creating correct experiences is critical for a brand to have long lasting impact on consumers. Keeping in mind the aforesaid discussion, the hypothesis is proposed as:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Brand experience has a positive impact on brand resonance.

In order for a brand to build relationship with consumers, the brand experience needs to be emotionally meaningful for the customer and enhance the value outcome. Value is now centred in the experiences of consumers (Pralhad & Ramaswamy, 2004), rather than rooted in goods and services. The value that is added to the exchange process because of experiences is known as experiential value. As Brakus, Schmitt and Zhang (2008) have claimed that experience provides value and utility similar to effective attributes. Thus, it is expected that more a brand stimulates multiple experience dimensions, the more value a customer will attach with the brand, leading to a satisfied consumer. Therefore, the second hypothesis is propounded as:

**H<sub>2</sub>:** Brand experience affects customer experiential value positively.

The relationship between customer satisfaction and loyalty is stronger for customers with a higher-perceived value. It is so due to the fact that value is known an ultimate outcome of marketing activities and recognised as an important factor for customer satisfaction (Fornell, Johnson, Anderson, Cha, & Bryant, 1996; Kotler & Levy, 1969; McDougall & Levesque, 2000; Patterson & Spreng, 1997) and brand loyalty (Chang, Wang & Yang, 2009; Keng, Huang, Zheng, & Hsu, 2007; Brakus *et al.*, 2009; Yang & Peterson, 2004). Particularly, the consumers loyal to brands are willing to pay more for a product since they perceive some unique value in the brand that no alternate brand can offer (Jacoby & Chestnut, 1978; Farshad *et al.*, 2012).

Thus, the hypothesis of the study is:

**H<sub>3</sub>:** There exists a significant relationship between Customer experiential value and Brand Resonance.

Additionally, a recent IBM report has identified customer experience with brand as a key factor for companies in building loyalty to brands, channels and services (Badgett, Boyce & Kleinberger, 2007). In this regard, Sirdeshmukh, Singh, and Sabol (2002) have argued that customer value is a superordinate goal and customer loyalty is a subordinate goal, as it is a behavioural intention. According to goal and

action identity theories, a superordinate goal is likely to regulate subordinate goals. Thus, customer value regulates “behavioural intentions of loyalty toward the service provider as long as such relational exchanges provide superior value” (Sirdeshmukh *et al.*, 2002). Therefore, delivering customer experiential value is of critical importance in a firm’s strategy for creating strong brand resonance. Brand experience positively affects brand resonance (Mohamed & Musa, 2012) and brand experience enjoys a positive relationship with perceived customer experiential value (Mai, 2012). Since loyalty and attachment are outcomes of experiential value (Lee, Uniremidy, & Overby, 2004) and dimensions of brand resonance (Mohamed & Musa, 2012) so there exists a relationship between customer experiential value and brand resonance. Accordingly, the hypothesis is formulated as:

**H<sub>4</sub>:** Customer experiential value mediates the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Resonance.

## OBJECTIVES

In line with the hypotheses of the study the following objectives have been formulated:

1. To study the effect of brand experience on brand resonance.
2. To examine the relationship between brand experience and customer experiential value.
3. To establish relationship between customer experiential value and brand resonance.
4. To investigate the mediating impact of customer experiential value on brand experience and brand resonance relationship.
5. To suggest the strategic inputs for improving the brand experience of customers and developing brand resonance.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study comprised both quantitative and qualitative research. In the first stage a qualitative study was conducted to identify the smart phone brands. This study fortified our base for brand choices that came out to be Apple and Samsung. The quantitative research was used to empirically test the relationship between Brand experience, experiential value and brand resonance.

A questionnaire was used to conduct the quantitative study measuring the construct identified for the study. The validated measurement scales from previous studies were used for the purpose along with the information regarding the demographic profiles, such as gender, age, income, occupation and highest academic qualification level. Thus the questionnaire consisted of three constructs i.e., brand experience, customer experiential value and brand

resonance. All items were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

## Sample and Data Collection

The data were obtained from Apple and Samsung smartphone users of Jammu and Dehradun cities in northern India. A structured questionnaire was randomly distributed to 240 smartphone consumers. A total of 188 responses were returned, and 18 responses with missing information were eliminated leading to a total of 170 valid responses.

## RESULTS

A total of 170 valid respondents were analysed in this study. According to the survey, the gender distribution of the respondents consisted of male (52%) and female (48%). The age group between 20-30 years old emerged as the largest respondents’ group (58%; 99 people); followed by the age group between 31 to 40 years old (32 %; 54 people) and the age group above 40 (10%; 18 people). Most of the respondents are educated; as they were either graduates or post graduates (87.8%).

## Reliability Test and Validity

Prior to data analysis, the collected data were subjected to various statistical tests for purification. In data purification stage, the reliability of the scale was measured by using Cronbach’s alpha coefficient for each scale. The Cronbach’s alpha coefficients for all variables were between 0.964- .840 (table 1), exceeding the typical threshold 0.7, as proposed in the literature (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006; Nunnally, 1978). With extensive literature review and extensive discussion with experts’ content validity was also worked out. The degree to which two measures of the same concept are correlated assess convergent validity and it was found to be satisfactory (Malhotra, 1999), as the correlations between the items were significant and the values were greater than 0.50. Moreover, communalities of all the items were also above 0.50, indicating convergent validity. Discriminant validity of the data was also proven, as the correlations between constructs were less than 0.30, demonstrating that each construct is different from the other.

Given the high number of variables used in this study, first an Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was run. Results of the EFA demonstrated that all items were loaded into clear factors that had high items with primary loadings (higher than .60).

**Table 1: Factors identified by Principal Component factor analysis and reliability test**

Factor's Name	Variable	Factor loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	
Brand Experience	The Smartphone (SP) makes a strong impression on my visual and other senses like its color , design, shape, looks, touch etc.	.873	.870	
	I find my SP brand interesting in a sensory way. (e.g. its touch and feel, sound quality, looks nice, visually warm etc.)	.864		
	My SP brand does appeal to my senses. (shape, mobile touch, looks etc.)	.787		
	My SP brand induces feelings and sentiments. (you feel refreshed, inspired using this brand)	.743		
	I have a strong emotion for this mobile brand.	.713		
	I am emotionally attached to my mobile brand i.e., it feels like a part of my life.	.730		
	It engages me into a lot of thinking. (reminds me to use my imagination)	.818		
	My SP brand does make me think.	.841		
	Customer Experiential value	Its display is attractive.	.814	.882
I like the way it looks.		.870		
I think it is enjoyable. (the games ,apps etc)		.669		
My SP is very exciting.		.781		
It helps in entertaining me.		.713		
It gets me away from it all.		.709		
It makes me feel like I am in another world.		.694		
I get so involved that I forget everything else.		.786		
I enjoy for its own sake, not just for the mobile applications.		.835		
The feature assortment in my smartphone fits my needs.		.620		
I am happy with the price.		.902		
The price of my phone is very high, given the quality.		.835		
Brand resonance		In future, I will be loyal to this phone brand.	.843	.962
		I will buy from this SP brand again.	.848	
	My phone brand will be my first choice in future.	.846		
	I will not buy other brand if this SP brand is available.	.843		
	I will recommend this SP brand to others.	.769		
	I really love this SP brand.	.775		
	I would really miss this SP brand if it went away.	.772		
	My SP brand is special to me.	.741		
	My SP brand is more than a product to me.	.727		
	I really identify with people who use the same SP brand that I use.	.686		
	I feel like I almost belong to a club with others users of this SP brand.	.771		
	My brand is a SP used by people like me.	.812		
	I feel a deep connection with others who use this SP brand.	.847		
	I really like to talk about this SP brand with others.	.748		
I am proud to have others know I use this brand.	.715			
Compared to other people; I closely follow news about this SP brand.	.619			

**Regression Analysis**

Further, the data analysis was conducted to analyse the causal effect of independent variables on dependent variables. As such this section presents analysis of the relationship between various variables that have been considered in study.

**Hypothesis H1:** Brand experience has a positive impact on brand resonance.

Regression analysis was conducted to test our first hypotheses. It is used to predict future outcomes based on dependent and independent variables. The value of R<sup>2</sup> ranges between 0-1; where 0 depicts that regression line does not fit the data whereas 1 indicates a complete fit. In Table 2 ( R<sup>2</sup>

= 0.414 , F = 119.208, p = 0.000) suggests that 44.4% of the variation in brand resonance can be explained by Brand experience. Moreover, the value of p< 0.000 indicates that brand experience has a positive effect on brand resonance.

**Hypothesis H2:** Brand experience affects customer experiential value positively.

Further the analysis of regression coefficients reveal that brand experience (β =0.643, p< 0.000) is a significant contributor towards increasing the customer experiential value. The relation H<sub>2</sub> generated R<sup>2</sup> =0.413 indicates that brand experience exerts 41.3 % impact on customer experiential value.

**Hypothesis H3:** There exists a significant relationship between customer experiential value and brand resonance.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis: Brand experience and Brand resonance**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.643 <sup>a</sup>	.414	.410	.94066	.414	119.208	1	169	.000

**Table 3: Regression Coefficients: Brand experience and Brand resonance**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.783	.378		2.075	.040
BE	.798	.073	.643	10.918	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BR (Brand Resonance)

**Table 4: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	105.479	1	105.479	119.208	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	149.537	169	.885		
Total	255.016	170			

a. Dependent Variable: BR( Brand Resonance)

b. Predictors: (Constant), BE (Brand experience)

**Table 5: Regression analysis: Brand experience and Customer experiential value**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.643 <sup>a</sup>	.413	.409	.70443	.414	119.208	1	169	.000

**Table 6: Regression Coefficients: Brand experience and Customer experiential value**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	2.142	.283		2.83	.000
	BE	.597	.055	.643	10.903	.000

a. Dependent Variable: CEV( Customer experiential value)

**Table 7: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	58.992	1	58.992	118.883	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	83.861	169	.496		
	Total	142.853	170			

a. Dependent Variable: CEV (Customer experiential value)

b. Predictors: (Constant), BE (Brand experience)

**Table 8: Regression Analysis: Customer Experiential Value and Brand Resonance**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.777 <sup>a</sup>	.604	.602	.77292	.604	257.876	1	169	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), CEV

b. Dependent Variable: BR

**Table 9: Regression coefficient Customer experiential value and Brand resonance**

Model	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	t	Sig.	
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	-.537	.339		11.970	.115
	CEV	.038	.065	.777	16.059	.000

a. Dependent Variable: BR( Brand resonance)

**Table 10: ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	154.055	1	154.055	257.876	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	100.961	169	.597		
	Total	255.016	170			

a. Dependent Variable BR( Brand resonance)

b. Predictors: (Constant), : CEV (Customer experiential value)

H<sub>3</sub> (relation between customer experiential value and brand resonance) with  $\beta=0.777$ ,  $p<0.000$ , is significant and 77.7 % of variation in brand resonance can be explained by customer experiential value.

**Hypothesis H4:** Customer experiential value mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand resonance.

It was determined using the Sobel Test for mediation. The relevant values needed for the Sobel test of mediation are  $Z\text{-value} = a*b/\text{SQRT}(b^2*s_a^2+a^2*s_b^2)$  where,

- The unstandardised regression coefficient brand experience → brand resonance (a) = **0.59**
- The standard error (sa) = **0.055**
- The relationship between customer experiential values → brand resonance, with brand experience controlled.
- The unstandardised regression coefficient (b) = **0.828**
- The standard error (sb) = **0.081** of the path from the mediator to the dependent variable  $Z= 7.40030999$ , std. error= 0.06601345, p value= 0.000. So according to this mediation analysis, it has been confirmed that customer experiential value significantly mediates the relationship between brand experience and brand resonance, which confirms our partial mediation analysis of the same data.

## CONCLUSION

Brands today have recognised the relevance of creating and delivering memorable and unique experiences through various offerings during the consumption and usage, which enhances the experiential values along with products and services attributes. The present study examines the relationships between brand experience, customer perceived experiential value and their effect on brand resonance. In the present context, the study holds immense relevance as the customers are graduating towards appreciating experiential value also. Thus it has implication not only in terms of adding to the marketing literature but also to the practicing manager.

Earlier studies have mainly examined the positive results of brand experience and experiential value in the primary experience sector or industries whose main aim is to produce experiences. Few studies have observed similar outcomes in the secondary experience sector or manufacturing businesses, which differentiate their products by adding experience to the primary offering (Sundho, 2009). The present study has added to the literature on experiential marketing by researching the impacts of brand experience on the behaviour of customers in product manufacturing companies, where products rich in experiences are produced to enhance their resonance towards the brand. Smartphones

being high involvement products with a short product life; the brand experience plays an important role in purchase decisions of the customer. This is so due to the fact that while referring to smartphones, the technology and features are easily replicable therefore the brands need to provide irreplaceable experience during the consumption and usage of it. The results have also suggested that customer experiential value has a significant positive impact on brand resonance therefore brands need to develop strategies to enhance customer experiential value.

Results of this research are in line with the findings of past studies that have concluded that brand experience enhance brand loyalty and attachment (Keng *et al.*, 2007; Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello, 2010). A brand rich in experiences has a significant positive impact on customer experiential value and brand resonance in smartphones. Moreover, this can be accredited to the role that smartphones play in our day-to-day lives, both functional as well as emotional. Smartphones act as an extension of our own personalities and brands high on experience are perceived high on value and have a bearing on the smartphone brand choice and ultimately brand resonance. Smartphone has taken as an important auxiliary that is proficient of more than just communicating. It has already replaced camera, radio, notebook, calendar, gaming consoles, clock etc. and is performing multiple tasks. This addiction to phone can also be reinforced by the new term nomophobia that's incorporated in dictionary meaning worry experienced by an individual due to fear of not having a mobile phone.

As far as the practical implications are concerned, the study gives an insight into the understanding that creating brand experience plays a crucial role for companies to achieve competitive advantage and avoid "commodity trap" (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The smartphone brand experiences with the product, its features and during the usage enhance the experiential value. The different functions that enhance the experience in smartphones like camera, Internet browsing, app store, shopping, games etc. are major predictors for brand resonance. Managers of smartphones, however, may use different combinations of product features and usage experiences in order to develop particular desired images for their brands.

In sum, this study provides smartphone companies a roadmap to enhance their competitive situation by practicing experiential marketing and enhancing experiential values.

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