

Analyzing the Antecedents and Consequences of Brand Experience: An Exploratory Study in the Case of Consumer Durables in the Indian Context

Mukesh Govind Kharat*, Rekha D. Chikhalkar**, Manoj Kumar Jha***, Manoj Govind Kharat****

ABSTRACT

In this competitive world people really desire not products, but memorable and unique experiences which are of great importance than the products. Providing unique and memorable experience is of utmost important both from consumer and marketers perspective. This research aims to analyze the antecedents and long-term consequences of brand experience of selected consumer durables. To identify the antecedents of brand experience exhaustive literature review and qualitative study in the form expert opinion was carried out. After that questionnaire was prepared which was pre-tested, the items for the questionnaire were adopted, modified and developed by referring to various research studies. This research work provides a reliable, pre-tested questionnaire for the integrated model showing the facilitators and consequences of brand experience for selected consumer durables. Also, this research work provides a roadmap for practising managers to precisely allocate budget and available resources to the facilitators/ antecedents to achieve favourable brand experience.

Keywords: Brand Experience, Facilitators, Consequences, Reliability Analysis, Exploratory Factor Analysis

INTRODUCTION

Marketing literature is witnessing a shift based on traditional branding features to a newly developed concept called brand experience for nearly a decade. Branding is a method to create customers' values (Vargo & Lusch, 2008) and brand experience achieves the aim of creating value. In the beginning, academics and marketing practitioners focused on the relationships between consumers and on rational factors associated with goods and services (Schmitt, 1999).

Marketing academics and practitioners have realized that, in the present highly competitive environment, customer experience is the key issue to be managed (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999; Berry et al., 2002; Iglesias et al., 2011). Today the market is saturated with multiple products in the same product categories, consumers find it

difficult to remember the products or the choice of products one over the other is more difficult (Kharat et al., 2018). Even for the markets of brands find it face the problem of unique place the product. In such a highly competitive marketplace brand experience plays a significant role for both the consumers and marketers of brands (Kharat & Kharat, 2017b). For consumers, it provides a reason for the choice of products and for brand managers it is a tool for distinguishing product and gaining competitive advantage.

In recent years, studies focusing on brand experience have become common in brand research (Santini et al., 2018). The idea of creating unique and valuable customer experiences has become a critical strategy among industry practitioners as well as in the academic literature (Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Vargo & Lusch, 2008; Lee & Jeong, 2014). Duncan and Moriarty (2006) depict the importance of

* Fellow (Doctoral) Programme, Marketing Management, National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Email: mukeshgkharat@gmail.com

** Professor of Marketing, National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Email: rdchikhalkar@nitie.ac.in

*** Professor of Marketing, National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Email: manojkja40@yahoo.co.in

**** Research Associate, National Institute of Industrial Engineering (NITIE), Mumbai, Maharashtra, India. Email: manojgkharat@gmail.com

brand experience by firmly making an assertion that, the generation of brand touch point when a customer, prospect, or other stakeholder is expressed, in some means, to a brand and consequently has a brand experience. Brand experience was first coined by Brakus et al. (2009), but experience traces long back in marketing literature since 1982 when Holbrook and Hirschman studied it in the form feeling, fantasies and fun. With increased competition among multiple brands, customers are exposed to numerous brands, due to different marketing practices developed to differentiate each brand from competitors (Lee & Jeong, 2014). Marketing practitioners and scholars accordingly have paid special attention to the importance of creating brand experiences, which play a critical role in developing marketing strategies for goods and services.

Brand experiences are a set of sensations, feelings, cognitions and behavioural responses that are evoked by many different stimuli which occur when customers directly or indirectly encounter with a certain brand (Brakus et al., 2009). These stimuli are the part of the brand design, communication, identity, symbol and environment as discussed by Brakus et al. (2009). Chattopadhyay and Laborie (2005) defined these stimuli or direct/indirect encounters with a certain brand as brand contacts. Providing a unique brand experience is important because customers are exposed to various brand-related stimuli as a part of marketing communications before they make purchase decisions. Brands capable of delivering a unique and distinctive experience by managing both the functional and emotional elements of the offering (Berry et al., 2002; Haeckel et al., 2003; Morrison & Crane, 2007; Iglesias et al., 2011). Understanding brand experience is utmost important for proper management and for the creation of pleasant brand experience (Kharat et al., 2017b). A memorable, unique and sustainable experience with a brand creates strong brand equity (Kumar et al., 2013). A well-managed and a positive brand experience can be a practical tool to attain competitive advantage (Clatworthy, 2012) and place a product uniquely in the competitive market, and can elicit brand loyalty (Iglesias et al., 2011) and positive word of mouth (Khan & Rahman, 2015). Creation of positive brand experience can happen when one understands how experience is created which means studying the facilitators/determinants of brand experience and their influence on it.

The present study is conducted in the emerging market context, and the study focusses on consumer durables. The consumer durables market in India is estimated to

have reached Rs. 1 trillion (US\$ 15.5 billion) in 2017 (India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), 2010). India is one of the largest growing electronics markets in the world. The growth expected in Indian electronics market is at 41 per cent CAGR between coming years 2017–20 and to reach US\$ 400 billion. The exports of Consumer electronics from India has reached US\$ 385.15 million in FY18 (up to February 2018). Urban markets accounted for the major share (67 per cent) of total revenues in the consumer durables sector in India. Demand in urban markets is likely to increase for non-essential products such as LED TVs, laptops, split ACs, beauty and wellness products (India Brand Equity Foundation (IBEF), 2010). In rural markets, durables like refrigerators as well as consumer electronic goods are likely to witness growing demand in the coming years as the government plans to invest significantly in rural electrification (IBEF, 2010). The study has selected consumer durables such as TVs, refrigerators, washing machines, air conditioners, ovens, laptops other household appliances.

To the best of authors' knowledge, this study is unique in addressing brand experience determinants for household consumer durables in the Indian context. None of the studies has addressed the chosen sector in the Indian context, thus this study fills the lacuna of this gap. The study will provide a deep understanding of the determinants of brand experience so that they can be well-managed to create happy customers and result in financial gains for firms.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Brand Experience

When exposed to information, the experience is bound to happen (Kumar et al., 2013). Experiences are private events that occur in response to stimulation and often result from direct observation and/or participation in events, whether real, virtual, or in dreams (Schmitt, 1999; Chang & Cheing, 2006). Customers consciously and unconsciously feel experiences and organize them into sets of impressions (Berry & Carbone, 2007). The brand experience is directly associated with brand or category familiarity (Santini et al., 2018). An experiential description of a brand given by De Chernatony (2006) states that "A brand can be regarded as a cluster of functional and emotional values, which promise a unique and welcome experience". Customer experience

is defined as the internal and subjective response that customers have to any direct or indirect contact with a firm (Kumar et al., 2013; Kharat et al., 2017b; Westhuizen, 2018). More experience with a brand (measured in terms of years of use) increases word-of-mouth (Karjaluo et al., 2016). Brand experience covers every aspect of a firm's offering which may include the quality of care, advertising, packaging, product and service features, ease of use and reliability (Meyer & Schwager, 2007). Experience is a multi-dimensional variable with various researchers conceptualizing it differently (Santini et al., 2018) and it proved to affect consumer behaviour (Prasad & Jha, 2014). Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) were the first to include experience in marketing literature in the form of consumption experience and conceptualized it as comprising of fantasy, feeling and fun. The experience was studied in tourism by Otto and Ritchie (1996) they listed hedonic, novelty, stimulation, safety, comfort and interactive as dimensions of experience for the tourism industry. Later in 1999, Schmitt conceptualized sense, feel, think, act and relate to dimensions of customer experience. Pine and Gilmore (1998) suggested four realms of experience namely, entertainment, education, estheticism and escape. Concentrating on the experiential value Mathwick et al. (2001) empirically identified aesthetics, playfulness, service excellence, customer return on investment as the dimensions of experiential value in online and offline shopping. Gentile et al. (2007), proposed Sensorial, emotional, cognitive, pragmatic, lifestyle and relational as the dimensions of brand experience. Chang and Chieng (2006) further divided the five dimensions of experience suggested by Schmitt (1999) into individual and shared experiences and empirically tested the effects of individual experience (sense, feel and think) and shared experience (act and relate) on the customer-brand relationship. Brand experience is defined as subjective, internal and behavioural responses evoked by brand-related stimuli (Brakus et al., 2009). It is a multi-dimensional phenomenon comprising of sensory, affective, behavioural and intellectual experiences of a customer with the brand (Brakus et al., 2009; Iglesias et al., 2011; Santini et al., 2018). Brand experience is evoked by functional, mechanic and humanic clues provided by the firm (Berry & Carbone, 2007; Kumar, 2013). Brand management includes many more activities apart from the traditional ones, such as communication or advertising (Frow & Payne, 2007; Iglesias et al., 2011). Brand experience is about delivering the brand promise and providing consistent action (Dall' Olmo Riley & de

Chernatony, 2000; Brodie et al., 2009; Iglesias et al., 2011).

The dimensions of brand experience are as discussed below

Sensory Experience

The term sensory experience relates to both experience and perceptions concerning our senses – sight, sound, scent, touch, taste and smell (Brakus et al., 2009; Hulten, 2011). The motive of sense marketing is to have an aesthetic impact via sensory stimulation. Simonson and Schmitt (1997) defined sensory experience as “marketing aesthetics as the marketing of sensory experiences in corporate or brand output that contribute to the organization's or brand's identity”. The marketing aesthetic literature explains that sensory experiences can be used to create brand identities (Schmitt, 1999b).

Affective Experience

The word ‘affective’ has become an all-embracing term which is regularly used to express feelings, moods and emotions. Accordingly, affective is “one of three main components of the attitudes a person or a potential customer can have regarding an object or phenomenon. The effective component is concerned with the customer's emotional reaction where the based on emotions is and involves such questions as, Is this brand good or bad? Is it desirable? Is it likeable?” In dealing with affective experience the aim is to understand consumers' feelings rather than their thoughts (Edell & Burke, 1987; Brakus et al., 2009; Schimtt, 2009). The perception of fun and enjoyment refers to the affective experience; affective experience can be positive leading happiness or they can be terribly negative. It could be said that affective experience is the resultants of the customer's inner feelings and emotions.

Intellectual Experience

Intellectual experiences deals with thinking, cognitive and problem-solving, the concept of ‘intellectual’ can be divided into two major factors – thinking and memory factors; other factors include cognition, product and evaluation factors (Guilford, 1956), divergent thinking

and convergent thinking (Guilford, 1956). The object of the memory factor is to ensure, that the company and brand are recognized, both in the near future and over a longer period (Guilford, 1959). Cognition refers to discovery, which can be differentiated by the kinds of things discovered, such as classes, patterns, problems and relations (Guilford, 1956).

Behavioural Experience

Marketing literature and consumer behaviour define behavioural experience as the one that results in the physical body experiences (Schmitt, 1999a, b; Gentile et al., 2007). Schmitt and Rogers (2008) claimed that behavioural experience is an “act” experience; its objective is to influence behaviour, physical experience, lifestyles and interactions. Additionally, Bill Xu and Chan (2010) informed that behavioural experience is another experience that reflects the customer’s personality, lifestyle and brand. Behavioural experience comes from the action of doing something; it does not occur after consuming products or services but does cover all of the product life-cycle stages (Gentile et al., 2007).

Operationalization of Constructs

Determinants of Brand Experience

Usability

Generally talking about the term *usability*, it reflects how easy a product is to use. It was first introduced in the 1980s to replace the cliché term *user-friendly* (Bevan et al., 1995). Usability defines certain essential qualities such as efficiency, learnability, memorability, error-reduction and satisfaction (Nielsen, 1993), functional value (Holbrook, 1999), perceived ease of use and usefulness in the context of technology adoption model (TAM) (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh & Brown, 2001; Verma & Sinha, 2017) and the utilitarian motive (Kim et al., 2013), and are aggregated into one broad construct by usability. Usability creates an association with the brand of the product by enabling the user to use it in a most suitable way (Kuhn et al., 2008; Hepola et al., 2017). Usability of a device can range from ease of use and assimilation of the product in day-to-day life to perform functions, as well as the convenience of

usage (Hallnäs & Redström, 2002; Church & Oliver, 2011; Manohar, 2018). The consumer endures problem-solving experiences in every interaction with the product and, depending on a positive outcome of the situation, may endear the product to the user (Schmitt, 1999a, b). A fruitful interaction with such a complex, yet facilitative, the product makes it extremely useful for the user and creates a positive emotion for the brand (Mishra et al., 2014; Kruger, 2018). As a consequence the brand gets to be perceived as one making innovative products, seconding as life companions. Another outcome of such thought-provoking usable experiences is a positive imagery of the brand (Chang & Chieng, 2006). Kim and Moon (1998) proposed that emotional usability does lead to enjoyment and fun. Usability leads to pleasure in use (Mishra et al., 2014), and pleasure is defined as a happy feeling. Brand experience dimensions defined by Brakus et al. (2009) comprises the affective dimension as one of the components of experience and affection is basically feelings.

After Sales Service and Customer Support Activities

The service or the customer support activities once the sales are done plays a vital role (Levitt, 1983; Dasgupta, 2016; Gallagher et al. 2005), these activities are termed as after sales or customer support. Simmons (2001) referred these services as “field services” when they are embodied in the main characteristics that are located at a customer’s site and Lele and Karmarkar (1983) referred it as “product support activities”, defining all those activities that support the product-centric transaction. It constitutes a set of supporting pre and after-sales services, such as installation packages, technical advice for use, maintenance/repair, spare parts delivery, product upgrading, etc. (Saccani et al., 2006; Şahin et al., 2017). The term after-sales services by Agnihotri et al. (2002), “after-sales support” as well as “technical support” or even just “services”, by Goffin and New (2001) are often used in literature. It includes a set of activities that ensure that a product is available to consumers “over its useful lifespan for trouble-free use” (Loomba, 1998). It is also revealed that after-sales is affected by and affects the brand image (Lewis et al., 2004; Saccani et al., 2006). When referring to tangible goods it includes services as the transport/delivery to clients, the installation, the

product-related training, the hotline and advice by the help desk or technical support, and repairing service and even the recycling process (Saccani et al., 2006).

After sales service is the value-adding service to customers which affects customers perception towards the product brand (Dasgupta, 2016). Both the company and the consumer are benefitted from such activities, the consumer gets happy when their feedbacks are considered positively by the company and on the other hand, the company gets ideas to incorporate in the product and develop and innovate the product. The interaction with company peoples, their technical support, their understanding of the problem and speed of response these all results in positive attitude and emotions towards the product brand which is happy feeling (Gupta & Singh, 2017). On the other hand, sometimes training is the essential part of after sales, this training can provide a good learning experience for the user of the product revealing some unknown features.

Brand Clues (Appearance)

Brand clues incorporate functional clues (technical quality of the offerings), mechanic clues (the tangibles associated with the service) and humanic clues (the behaviour and appearance of service providers) (Berry et al., 2006). Studies have mentioned that different brand clues such as slogans and mascots (Keller, 1987), colors (Gorn et al., 1997), shapes (Veryzer & Hutchinson, 1998), design elements (Mandel & Johnson, 2002), packaging (Underwood, 2003), brand name (Srinivasan & Till, 2002; Warlop et al., 2005) customer billing, order and application forms (Coomber & Poore, 2012) can shape consumers' experience with a brand. Consumers are exposed to several brand clues when they search for brand-related information, purchase and consume brands. These brand clues evoke experiences with the brand and influence consumers' purchase decisions (Ramaseshan & Stein, 2014). According to Berry et al. (2002), experiences are evoked through feelings generated in response to various impressions formed by brand clues (functional, mechanic and humanic clues), and it is difficult to copy such clues, unlike product or service features.

Consumer brand experience can also get affected by appearance which is a brand-related stimulus (Brakus et al., 2009). Keller (1993) identifies the brand appearance as a non-product-related attribute. The appearance is

considered a non-verbal sensory cue attribute from an experiential point of view (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Appearance perception is a symbolic benefit aroused from consumer beliefs about the aesthetic appeal of the brand (Chitturi et al., 2008). However, appearance does not form an integral part required for product performance. The beauty or art of design that creates and affects consumer pleasure and which form the product's physical features and design constitutes the word aesthetics (Veryzer, 1993). Creusen and Schoormans (2005) perceived appearance as a functional or expressive belief, and it affects consumer evaluation of the product brand dependent on the aesthetic value. Aesthetic appeal forms one of the hedonic benefits (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Brand managers nowadays are focusing on this aesthetics of products besides its functionality, since its vital role in the consumer decision process. The colour, the size, shape, the overall design, all that contribute to visual appearance forms the product aesthetics (Chitturi et al., 2008; Khan & Rehman, 2015a). Comparatively brands with equal functionality the one which is high on aesthetic attributes is favoured by consumers. Also, it has been empirically tested that the brands having high aesthetics are important to the consumer than that have low (Khan & Rehman, 2015a, b). The aesthetic attributes are considered among the brand-stimuli that sustain consumers' experience of the brand (Brakus et al., 2009; Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Schmitt, 1999a, b). The aesthetics have a sensorial effect and these sensorial responses are related to the emotional and cognitive information processing in human brains (Hultén, 2011).

Other than the utilitarian attributes the hedonic attributes of the brand also play an important role in influencing consumer decision and it has been a vital area of research (Kharat et al., 2018). The hedonic attribute plays a major role in motivating the consumer and in the evaluation of the brand (Batra & Ahtola, 1991; Verma & Sinha, 2017). The most powerful themes in creating experiences as those that stimulate the consumer senses, and the more senses that are engaged the more affective and memorable the experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). Sheng and Teo (2012) stated that a total aesthetic experience constitutes the appreciation of the formal, expressiveness and symbolic quality of a product, appearance or environment. The formal quality is the sensory stimulation of the product and includes aspects such as colour, texture, shape, size etc. The expressive quality is related to certain

inherent human emotional experience (e.g., a specific colour provides a feeling of warmth) or because it is an acquired association (e.g., green could be a reflection of the restfulness of nature) (Sheng & Teo, 2012). The symbolic quality of a product does not only satisfy the cognitive experience but also satisfy the relationship between that experience and the customer (Sheng & Teo, 2012). Further, Sheng and Teo (2012) empirically showed that aesthetics plays an important role in shaping consumer experience. Empirically authors have shown that appearance/aesthetics affects consumer experience in a different context, such as online branding, and hospitality and tourism marketing (Otto & Ritchie, 1996; Morgan & Xu, 2009; Walls et al., 2011).

Social Value

Social value points to the experiential component that enhances the consumer's social status and self-esteem (Vigneron & Johnson, 1999). Holbrook (1999) defined social value as one that occurs when one's own consumption behaviour serves as a means of shaping the responses of others. Products are an established pedestal and source of social interpretation and impressions (McDonagh et al., 2002; Taminau & Ferguson, 2015). In the social-cognitive view, interactions with the environment have a direct bearing on expectations about the likely outcomes of future consumption behaviour (Bandura, 1986). It represents the same process that describes the relationship among benefits sought, usage behaviour and benefits obtained (Palmgreen et al., 1985; Taminau & Ferguson, 2015; Moreira et al., 2017; Kruger, 2018). Thus, apart from their functional character and diverse design configurations of their elements, products are instrumental in portraying peoples' values and personality and help showcase social status. Social value has been placed prominently across all consumption value theories conceived today, more prominently by Holbrook (1999) and Sheth et al. (1991a, b). Mishra et al. (2014) showed that social value affects pleasure in use. Nysveen and Pedersen (2014) validated the five components of brand experience sensory, affective, intellectual, behavioural, and relational. Of these, the relational component is the person tries to relate to group, community or to an individual (e.g. celebrity, popular image), here the social value of the brand plays a crucial role. Other than this social value also affects an individual's emotions that are getting attracted towards

the popular personality assuming role models of society. Chahal and Dutta (2014) pointed out that socio-economic characteristics form the antecedents to the customer experience. The socio-economic characteristics that they defined are socio-economic status and associated groups such as relatives, friends and acquaintances. Thus the social value of the brand affects the affective component of the brand experience.

Brand/Marketing Communications

Consumers are looking for products and marketing communications that deliver unique experiences (Schmitt, 1999a; Moreira et al., 2017; Yang et al., 2017). Brakus et al. (2009) stated that different marketing communication activities can provide customer experience. Grewal et al. (2009) pointed out that promotions with any form like new media, such as the Internet, e-mail, blogs, shopper marketing, social marketing, and m-commerce etc. affect the experience of customers. Khan and Rahman (2015b) in their work on brand experience concluded that marketing communication forms the critical building block that determines brand experience. Marketing communications play an important role in experience formation during purchase and throughout the product usage (Egan, 2007; Chikhalkar & Chikhalkar, 2015; Hashim et al., 2018). Berry (2000) discussed creating a favourable impression on the new customer through marketing communications to deliver well-managed experiences. Events or sponsorship which forms marketing communication can add value to the brand (Cliffe & Motion, 2005; Taminau & Ferguson, 2015). Furthermore, marketing communications help companies in linking their brands with experiences and in creating experiences that build both offline and online brand communities (Keller, 2009; Yang et al., 2017; Roy et al., 2017). Marketing communications play an important role in acquiring a new customer by providing memorable experiences (Berry, 2000).

Website Attractiveness and Online Information

Keller (2009) argued that websites could give a large amount of detail and support their advertised claims, by comparing their products to competitors on performance, prices and designs. Not only this, websites can communicate rich experiences through videos and online ads, which bring consumers to the website of a brand

where they can learn more about the brand (Keller, 2009; Yoon & Youn, 2016; Yang et al., 2017). Website designers are rightly concerned with aesthetic appeal and attracting users. In the initial contact with a website, attractiveness will play a key role in determining dwell time (how long a user looks at the home page) and then increasing the motivation for exploration. Attractiveness is a key design concern for browsing users, but it is also important for users who arrive at a site via a search engine. Given a choice of several similar sites, the one which makes a better initial impression is more likely to be explored. Attractiveness may be considered to be the result of matching the user's motivations and requirements with the design features on a website and most important the content which the user looks for (Yoon & Youn, 2016). However, there are also more general issues such as the aesthetic appeal of a design, and eye-catching images that project brand identity and corporate image. Furthermore, there are general design effects that capture our attention such as the use of animations and sound. Control of attention has a complex cognitive mechanism however the design consequences are that user attention can be manipulated by choosing media to attract attention at the general level; only then does content have an important influence. Attractiveness is influenced not only by the attention but also by aesthetic qualities of a design, our motivation, requirements, and excitement invoked by the interface. Websites information availability and speed of information also play important role in providing memorable experiences.

Consequences (Outcomes) of Brand Experiences

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is one of the richly studied concepts in marketing literature, and the range of benefits derived from it is acknowledged by both academic and practitioners (Iglesias et al., 2011; Moreira et al., 2017; Ong et al., 2018). To survive in the competitive environment brand loyalty plays a crucial role (Amine, 1998). Companies of the brand are benefitted since the loyal consumer is less likely to switch to other brands. Thus brand loyalty helps in customer retention efforts (Reichheld & Scheffer, 2000; Lin, 2015; Yang et al., 2017; Şahin et al., 2017) and makes loyal consumers resistant to switch because of

competitive strategies (Dick & Basu, 1994). Brakus et al. (2009) argue that consumers want to repeat pleasurable experiences, and that brand experiences therefore also influence brand loyalty positively. In their empirical study, they found support for a positive effect of brand experience on brand loyalty.

Oliver (1999) classified loyalty in four phases as, cognitive loyalty based on brand beliefs. Affective loyalty as a function of liking or attitude toward a brand. Conative and action loyalty both related to behavioural loyalty. Conative loyalty is a reflection of intention to repurchase a brand, while action loyalty is about consumers' readiness to act and their willingness to overcome obstacles to keep on buying a brand in the future. In addition to these cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions of loyalty, Oliver (1999) also discussed the potential importance of social alliances and to be 'one with a group' as a motivation to become loyal. Chang and Cheing (2006) showed that brand experience shapes consumer-brand relationship, which is critical to the building of brand loyalty (Fournier, 1998). Brands which are capable of delivering a superior brand experience can achieve preference over and differentiation from other brands and build brand loyalty (Brakus et al., 2009; Iglesias et al., 2011; Ong et al., 2018). Based on the general arguments for a positive effect of experiences on loyalty, and the relevance of the brand experience dimensions for the loyalty construct. Morrison and Crane (2007), Brakus et al. (2009), Sahin et al. (2011), Kumar et al. (2013), Ramaseshan and Stein (2014), Nysveen and Pedersen (2014), Khan and Rahman (2015b) and few more studied brand experience and brand loyalty relation.

Brand Satisfaction

Ganesan (1994) pointed satisfaction as a positive affective reaction as a result of a prior experience. Brand satisfaction is essential but not sufficient component of customer repurchase intention for a brand (Agustin & Singh, 2005; Dasgupta, 2016; Şahin et al., 2017; Moreira et al., 2017). Brakus et al. (2009) revealed that almost all of the respondents' descriptions of strong experiential brands were reported as positive and positive brand experience has a positive effect on brand satisfaction. Their study proposed a theoretical argument that brand experience creates value for the consumer and higher their level of satisfaction by making them more satisfied. Brakus et al.

(2009) supported McAlister and Pessemier (1982) notion to relate the effect of sensory brand experience. The authors argued that sensory stimulations are most valued by consumer and consumer look for such stimulation, as a result, that brand which provides such experiences are valued.

Oliver (1993) in their research study underscored the significance of both the cognitive and affective bases of satisfaction, thus showing the criticality of cognitive and affective experiential dimensions as antecedents of brand satisfaction. Furthermore, customers' relationship with a brand and with other customers are exposed to impact satisfaction positively (McAlexander et al., 2003; Ong et al., 2018). This indicates that sensory, affective, cognitive, relational and behavioural dimensions of experiences have positive influences on brand satisfaction (Nysveen & Pedersen, 2014; Lin, 2015; Yang et al., 2017; Moreira et al., 2017). Brakus et al. (2009) empirically confirmed with a variety of brand that brand experience has a positive effect on brand satisfaction. Further, Brakus et al. (2009) and Nysveen and Pedersen (2014) have empirically tested the mediating role of brand satisfaction in the relation of brand experience and brand loyalty.

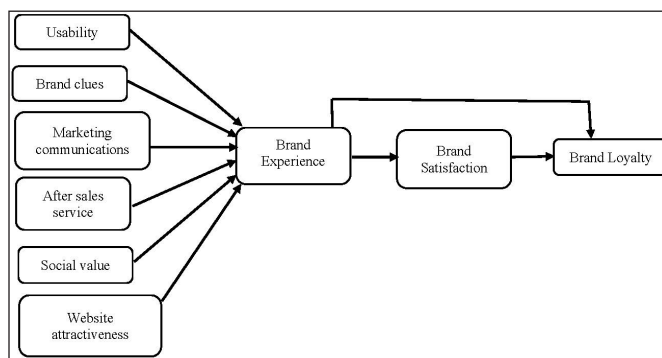


Fig. 1: Antecedents and Consequences of Brand Experience

LIST OF HYPOTHESIS

- H 1:** Usability have an effect on brand experience.
H 2: After-sales service or customer support have an effect on brand experience.
H 3: Brand clues have an effect on brand experience.
H 4: Social value have an effect on the brand experience.

H 5: Brand and Marketing communications have an effect on brand experience.

H 6: Website attractiveness of a brand have an effect on brand experience.

H 7: Positive Brand experience have an effect on brand loyalty.

H 8: Positive brand experience have an effect on brand satisfaction.

H 9: Positive brand experience have an effect on brand loyalty mediated by brand satisfaction.

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the current study is to explore the factors that are determinants of brand experience and to develop, refine and validate a scale for measuring the factors.

In order to achieve the stated objectives, the following methodological steps were followed:

- Item generation for the questionnaire with the help of extensive literature review and focus group interviews;
- Data collection for pilot study;
- Testing the scale for reliability and validity;
- Analyzing the item-to-total correlation and coefficient to assess the reliability of the scale and improve upon items to improve the reliability of the scale;
- Large sample data collection;
- Testing the scale was again for reliability; and
- To conduct factor analysis assessing the construct validity of the scale

ITEM GENERATION

The first step in the scale development process is the generation of a list of items for each construct in the theoretical model. Development of the scales to measure each of the constructs in the model proceeded through a series of steps. Aiming to generate specific items that comprise the proposed model, an extensive review of the literature dealing with the 9 factors was conducted. The items for measuring constructs of the proposed model were generated through extensive literature review, focus

group interviews and experts' opinion. For generating items related to brand experience various studies were considered and finally items were adopted with little modification from the studies of Chang and Chieng (2006), Brakus et al. (2009), and Nysveen et al. (2013). The item for the consequence of brand experience that is for brand satisfaction and brand loyalty were adopted from the studies of Caruana et al. (2000), You and Donthu (2001), Brakus et al. (2009), Ramaseshan and Stein (2014), and Nysveen and Pedersen (2014). To generate items for the precursors of brand experience, items from the studies of Puto and Wells (1984), Brooke (1986), Sweeney and Soutar (2001), Van Birgelen et al. (2002), Ha and Perks (2005), Saccani et al. (2006), Castañeda et al. (2007), Rigopoulou et al. (2008), Won Jeong et al. (2009), Petruzzellis (2010), Lee et al. (2011), Sahin et al. (2011), Sheng and Teo (2012), Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou (2013), Lee and Jeong (2014), Roswinanto and Strutton (2014), Mishra et al. (2014), and Khan and Fatma (2017) were adopted and modified.

Multiple measures for each of the dimensions were developed and/or modified from the items of existing scales, literature analysis, experts' opinion and focused group interviews. From the extensive literature search, focus group interviews and experts' opinion a total number of 120 items were selected. After assembling these items, in an initial screening, 16 items were deleted retaining 104 items.

Assessment of Content and Face Validity

The content-validity is defined as *"the amount to which a measure's items signify a proper sample of the theoretical content domain of a construct"* (Hardesty & Bearden, 2004). The requisite for content-validity of items, they needs to be face-valid too, which refers to *"the degree that respondents judge that the items of an assessment instrument are suitable to the chosen construct and assessment aims of research"* (Hardesty & Bearden, 2004).

At this stage, three experts (academicians/consultants) reviewed this initial item pool (104) and as the result of close scrutiny, 10 overlapping items were deleted retaining 94 items. In the third stage, the panel was asked to retain the clearly worded items. After a long discussion, due to lack of clarity and possibility of misinterpretation (Babin

et al., 1994), the panel unanimously agreed to deduct 10 of 94 items, thus retaining 84 items.

SCALE AND MEASUREMENT

The current study used a measure of nine latent variables. The instrument used to measure latent variables is a self-reporting questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised two parts. In Part A of the questionnaire, the respondents were requested to furnish the demographic information related to age, sex, income and educational level. In Part B of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale (1 representing "strongly disagree" to 5 representing "strongly agree") their level of agreement with each statement representing the dimensions of the selected constructs.

QUESTIONNAIRE ADMINISTRATION

Questionnaires were administered personally to the respondents. Doubts and queries raised by the respondents with regard to any question were clarified instantly on the spot. Simple random sampling technique was used for the data collection.

DATA COLLECTION

A sample of sixty-seven respondents completed the pilot test. The questionnaire was tested for reliability. On the basis of the results of the pilot test, the questionnaire was further modified and shortened. In the next stage, the modified shortened questionnaire was used to collect data.

As explained by Saunders et al. (2012), the sample size estimation is very complex and dependent on several factors, including the statistical techniques, the size of the population, the margin of error and the degree of certainty. For complex model, a sample size of minimum 200 is considered to acceptable (Pallant, 2013; Kline, 2015). For the current study sample size of 200 was found to be acceptable in meeting all the requirements of the analysis technique. Thus new sample of 200 respondents completed the survey (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Hair et al., 2010; Lin & Hsieh, 2011). The data was collected across Mumbai city by interacting the respondents at shopping malls, university students at colleges and residential societies. Again the questionnaire was

subjected to reliability testing, validity and exploratory factors analysis.

Table 1: The Demographic Profile of the Respondent Participated in the Survey

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Levels</i>	<i>N</i>
Gender	Male	91
	Female	109
Age Group	18–25	58
	26–35	42
	36–45	65
	45 and above	35
Education	Primary	45
	Secondary, Higher Secondary and Diploma	50
	Graduate	55
	Postgraduate and above	50
Professional status	Employed	65
	Unemployed	25
	Retired	10
	Student	45
	Business	55

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The data that were collected were analyzed through the use of a statistical package – Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 20). The data were analyzed using reliability, validity and exploratory factor analysis (EFA) to assess the psychometric properties of the scale.

RELIABILITY ANALYSIS

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency that the measurement items of the variable are stable at any point of time and free of errors (Kline, 2015; Kharat et al., 2016). It captures the share of the variance in each measurement item explained by the latent variable. The first and the foremost step to refine the scale is the computation of coefficient α , i.e., Cronbach's alpha. For the preliminary refinement of the 65-item survey instrument, the data was gathered on the new sample of citizens.

The pilot study was conducted in January 2017 by intercepting the target population. The sample size was 67 respondents; this number meets the guidelines of the pilot study sample size. The minimum number of responses for

the pilot test is 10, and between 100 and 200 for large surveys (Saunders et al., 2012). The respondents were asked about the clarity of meaning, instructions, layout, wording and phrasing, and the time required to answer the questionnaire. After collecting the data, the items were purified by assessing their reliability. The reliability was assessed by measuring Cronbach's alpha, inter-item correlations and item-to-total correlation. The inter-item correlation measures the correlation among items, while item-to-total correlation measures the correlation of the item to the entire summated scale score. Cronbach's alpha assesses the consistency of the scale (Hair et al., 2010). Before factor analysis it is essential to assess the correlation among items which is logical for testing reliability, as it is important not to depend on a sole measure. Since the value of alpha depends on the number of items, it can lead to misleading results (Field, 2013). Therefore, the items are considered reliable with inter-item correlation and item-to-total correlation more than 0.3 (Field, 2013) and value of Cronbach's alpha exceeding 0.7 (Hair et al., 2010; Field, 2013). On the basis of the results of the pilot test 1, the questionnaire was further modified and shortened.

Thus, as recommended by Churchill (1979), Hair et al. (2010), Pallant (2013) and Field (2013), item analysis and reliability was carried out through the following means –

- item-to-item correlation is more than 0.3.
- item-to-total (summated scale) correlation is more than 0.5.
- Cronbach's alpha is at least 0.7.

For all the factors of the model, Cronbach's alpha was computed, that ranged from 0.70 to 0.94. According to Nunnally's criterion, the minimum satisfactory value of Cronbach's alpha is 0.7 (Nunnally et al., 1978; Nunnally, 1994). Although the criterion of alpha was satisfied, further to improve the value of alpha, corrected item-to-total correlation for each cluster of items was computed. Items possessing very low correlations and/or items whose correlations produce sharp drop among the corrected item-to-total correlations and/or items whose removal improves the value of alpha were deleted. This iterative sequence was repeated numerous times which resulted in the form of 60 items with five items being deleted. The improved values of Cronbach's alpha for all factors ranged from 0.89 to 0.96 specifying good

internal consistencies among all the items (Table 5). The item-to-item and item-to-total correlations were above 0.5. Further, the combined reliability was computed for all the 60-items (Nunnally et al., 1978; Nunnally, 1994) and it was found to be quite high, i.e., 0.91. Finally, total

60 items for all the factors were retained for the next stage i.e. the main study (Please refer annexure for a complete list of the used items). The reliability values of all the constructs for the pilot study are tabulated below in Table 1.

Table 1: Reliability (Cronbach's Alpha) – A Pilot Study

Sr. No.	Construct name	Construct Code	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Item-total correlation
1	Usability (Performance)	USA	6	0.949	All above 0.5
2	Customer support activities	CSA	7	0.943	
3	Brand clues	BC	4	0.833	
4	Social value	SV	6	0.941	
5	Marketing communications	MC	7	0.930	
6	Website attractiveness and online information	WA	8	0.945	
7	Brand loyalty	BL	5	0.910	
8	Brand satisfaction	BS	5	0.894	
9	Brand experience – sensory	BES	3	0.848	
10	Brand experience – affective	BEA	3	0.895	
11	Brand experience – behavioural	BEB	3	0.815	
12	Brand experience – intellectual	BEI	3	0.864	

EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS

The factor analysis technique is used to reduce data and classify the variables into a set of factors by identifying the underlying structure among variables (Tabachnick et al., 2001; Hair et al., 2010; Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013). The measurement items are grouped together based on the inter-correlation and these groups are known as factors; then, by using theory, these factors will correspond to a concept. There are two main approaches to factor analysis, they are exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) (Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013). The current study relies on the exploratory analysis at early stages of data analysis to summarize the data and group the variables together into a set of factors. The CFA is used later in the latter stage of data analysis through the SEM, to test the measurement theory.

The EFA is conducted in three steps: (i) suitability of data, (ii) factor extraction and (iii) factor rotation. The suitability of data is determined by the sample size and the strength of the relationships between items and participant to item ratio (Hair et al., 2010; Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013). Researchers suggest that the sample size of 200 cases at least and the ratio of 5:1 between participants and items is good for factor analysis (Hair

et al., 2010; Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013; Kline, 2015). The measure of sampling adequacy (MSA) quantifies the inter-correlations among the variables with a value that ranges from 0 to 1. Variables having the values of 0.5 or more are good variables forecasted by other variables without error; while those falling under 0.5 should be removed (Hair et al., 2010). The factorability of data is measured by two statistical measures: Bartlett's test of sphericity and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) (Tabachnick et al., 2001; Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013). Bartlett's test of sphericity is a test of significance of the correlation matrix, a significance level of <0.5, indicates the existence of sufficient correlations among variables i.e., it confirms the hypothesis that the correlation matrix similar to identity matrix. KMO represents the ratio among the sum squared of correlations and the summation of sum squared correlations and sum of squared partial correlations. The appropriateness of factor analysis requires a minimum value of KMO as 0.6 (Tabachnick et al., 2001; Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013).

The second step is the factor extraction, determining the number of factors that describe the structure of the variables in the analysis (Hair et al., 2010, Field, 2013, Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013). There are two methods of factor extraction: common factor analysis and

component analysis or the principal component analysis (PCA). The common analysis “*undertakes that the unique and error variance both are not of importance in defining the structure of the variables*” (Hair et al., 2010). Whereas, the PCA “*considers the total variance and derives factors that contain small proportions of unique variance and in some instances error variance*” (Hair et al., 2010). The current study depends on PCA, the commonly-used method (Osborne & Costello, 2009; Pallant, 2013) and appropriate for data reduction (Hair et al., 2010; Field, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013). The number of extracted factors is determined by eigenvalue and scree test (Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013). Finally, the factor rotation is the third step, for which there are two main approaches; orthogonal and oblique rotation. There exists no rules for choosing between methods; however, Hair et al. (2010) suggest the orthogonal rotation for data reduction. Varimax rotation is the commonly-used approach of orthogonal rotation, which is employed in the current study (Osborne & Costello, 2009; Hair et al., 2010; Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013). Varimax rotation minimizes the number of variables with extreme loadings (high or low) on a factor.

The EFA was applied to the 60 items scale. The objective of EFA was to govern the condition where links among the latent and observed variables are uncertain or unidentified. A minimum cut off criteria followed for the deletion of the items was: factor loadings (<0.50) (Karatepe et al., 2005; Hair et al., 2010; Yong & Pearce, 2013; Kline, 2015), cross-loadings (>0.40) or communalities (<0.50) (Hair et al., 2010; Yong & Pearce, 2013; Kline, 2015). All the MSA values of each item were above 0.5, indicating good inter-correlation between items. The appropriateness of the analysis was determined by the examination of KMO statistic of sampling adequacy. For good factor analysis, the value of KMO must be at least 0.60 and above (Tabachnick et al., 2001; Pallant, 2013; Yong & Pearce, 2013; Kline, 2015).

The following points relate to factor analysis. Normality, linearity, homoscedasticity and homogeneity of the sample was assumed.

The following criteria were satisfied:

- (a) The minimum sample size is 50.
- (b) The minimum respondents-to-variables ratio is 5.

- (c) There exist significant correlations among many of the variables.
- (d) Partial correlations among most of the variables are 0.5 or less.
- (e) The MSA, overall and for individual variables, is at least 0.5.

The number of factors was decided based on the following criteria –

- (i) Empirical evidence,
- (ii) Eigenvalue is more than 1, and
- (iii) Cumulative percentage of total variance extracted is at least 60%.
- (iv) Unidimensionality was assessed in terms of items loading on a single factor and nonexistence of significant cross-loadings.

However, to check the pattern matrix and underlying dimensions of constructs, EFA was conducted on the fresh sample of 200 respondents. The results revealed good pattern matrix structure and convergent and discriminant validity. The EFA analysis marked that eigenvalue of all factors was greater than 1 (Kaiser, 1960; Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2015; Kharat et al., 2017a), therefore, no factors were eliminated from the study. These 9 factors accounted for 76.27 per cent variance in the analyzed items and KMO measure was 0.663, which indicated good factor analysis. The Barlett’s test of sphericity was found to be significant ($p < 0.05$). All factor loadings were above 0.7. All communalities ranged from 0.50 to 0.83. After inspection all items fulfilled the minimum cut off criteria mentioned above no items were deleted. Finally, a total of 60 items for all the factors was retained as shown in Table 2. The results of EFA for the study are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Results of EFA – Main Study
KMO and Barlett’s Test**

N = 200
Total Variance explained = 76.277 %
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy = 0.663
Bartlett’s Test Approximate Chi-Square = 12623.907, $df = 1770$ Significance = 0.000

Eigenvalues of Constructs

<i>USA</i>	<i>CSA</i>	<i>BC</i>	<i>SV</i>	<i>MC</i>	<i>WA</i>	<i>BL</i>	<i>BS</i>	<i>BES</i>	<i>BEA</i>	<i>BEB</i>	<i>BEI</i>
6.542	6.238	5.014	4.871	4.204	3.699	3.616	2.906	2.467	2.446	1.903	1.860
Communalities of all constructs greater than 0.5											

Item Loading Values

<i>Construct Name</i>	<i>Item Loading Values</i>	<i>Construct Code</i>	<i>Items</i>
I am comfortable with the use of this brand's products.	0.890	usability USA	USA 1
This brand has high-quality offerings.	0.889		USA 2
I find this brand's products are easy to use.	0.895		USA 3
I feel very confident using this brand.	0.915		USA 4
I can accomplish the task more efficiently and effectively using this brand.	0.808		USA 5
This brand comes with innovative features making it more usable and customer friendly.	0.835		USA 6
This brand is concerned about customers.	0.904	Customer support activities CSA	CSA 1
I always have an excellent experience when I use this brand's customer service and support.	0.950		CSA 2
I always get good advice and instructions from the personnel related to this brand.	0.947		CSA 3
This brand's staff efficiently deals with my queries and complaints.	0.891		CSA 4
The brand's staff better understands my needs.	0.895		CSA 5
I find the employees of the brand kind and friendly.	0.764		CSA 6
I always have instant response whenever I access the brand's electronic service.	0.763		CSA 7
I find this brand aesthetically appealing.	0.759	Brand clues BC	BC 1
The visual appearance (packaging) of this brand is attractive.	0.867		BC 2
This brand is uniquely designed and different from its competitors.	0.887		BC 3
The name of the brand is impressive and stimulates my senses.	0.771		BC 4
This brand has a positive social image.	0.907	Social value SV	SV 1
This brand makes a good impression on others.	0.918		SV 2
This brand enhances my social status and value.	0.915		SV 3
This brand creates a favourable perception, improving the way I am perceived.	0.916		SV 4
This brand reflects who I am.	0.802		SV 5
This brand makes me feel accepted in a group.	0.748		SV 6
Advertisements of this brand are meaningful.	0.702	Marketing com- munications MC	MC 1
I like the appealing advertisements of this brand.	0.749		MC 2
I enjoy the way the brand carries its promotional activities.	0.879		MC 3
The brand's advertisement makes me want to buy the product it features.	0.896		MC 4
The brand communicates in an emotional way.	0.890		MC 5
I learn something from the advertisement that I didn't know before about the brand.	0.879		MC 6
The brand's message effectively communicate the value I expect from the product.	0.743		MC 7
The web page layout of this brand is appealing to me.	0.813	Website attractive- ness and online information WA	WA 1
The variety of visual display on the site is interesting and amusing.	0.865		WA 2
The website of this brand provides relevant, accurate and correct information.	0.886		WA 3
It is easy and comfortable to navigate this brand's website.	0.935		WA 4
Results are always returned promptly the many times I visited this brand's website.	0.712		WA 5
I always find the results up to date.	0.905		WA 6
The website has an efficient interactive mechanism.	0.784		WA 7
Looking at the information presented on the website provides me with a learning experience.	0.890		WA 8

<i>Construct Name</i>	<i>Item Loading Values</i>	<i>Construct Code</i>	<i>Items</i>
In the future, I will be loyal to this brand.	0.746	Brand loyalty BL	BL 1
This brand will be my first choice in the future.	0.904		BL 2
I will not buy other brands if this brand is available at the store.	0.830		BL 3
I will recommend this brand to others.	0.819		BL 4
I will buy this brand again even if I am required to pay a higher price.	0.900		BL 5
I am satisfied with the brand and its performance.	0.930	Brand satisfaction BS	BS 1
My choice to get this brand has been a wise one.	0.852		BS 2
I think that I did the right thing when I decided to get this brand	0.821		BS 3
I am happy with what I did with this brand.	0.641		BS 4
If I could do it again, I would buy the same brand.	0.909		BS 5
This brand makes a strong impression on my visual and other senses.	0.857	Brand experience – sensory BES	BES 1
I find this brand interesting in a sensory way.	0.871		BES 2
This brand appeal to my senses.	0.841		BES 3
This brand induces feelings and sentiments.	0.850	Brand experience – affective BEA	BEA 1
This brand is an emotional brand.	0.858		BEA 2
I have strong emotions for this brand	0.925		BEA 3
This brand results in bodily experiences.	0.837	Brand experience – behavioural BEB	BEB 1
I engage in physical actions and behaviours when I use this brand.	0.844		BEB 2
This brand is action oriented.	0.853		BEB 3
I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand.	0.904	Brand experience – intellectual BEI	BEI 1
This brand stimulates my curiosity and problem-solving.	0.927		BEI 2
This brand makes me think intellectually and creatively	0.836		BEI 3

COMMON METHOD BIAS

Common method variance (CMV) is the potential problem with self-reported, single respondent data. Harmon's one-factor test suggested by Podsakoff et al. (2003) to investigate the bias of CMV in the data set of

current study. The basic assumption is that if a substantial quantity of CMV exists, either a one factor will emerge from the unrotated factor analysis or one general factor will account for the bulk of the covariance in the independent and dependent variables (Hair et al., 2010). The Harman's single factor test identified no significant CMV. The result of Harman's single factor test is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Common Method Bias – Harman's Single Factor test

<i>Components</i>	<i>Extraction sum of squared loadings</i>		<i>Rotation sum of squared loadings</i>	
	<i>% of variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>	<i>% of variance</i>	<i>Cumulative %</i>
1	10.904	10.904	9.868	9.868
2	10.396	21.300	9.132	19.00

The results showed that there were no significant differences found. Thus, the current study was found to be free of CMV.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This particular research was carried out to develop reliable measures to measure the determinants of the brand experience. There very limited studies addressing the

determinants of brand experience, this study is the unique one addressing brand experience for consumer durables in the Indian context. The items to measure the construct brand experience, brand loyalty and brand satisfaction are adopted from earlier research work with little modification as per the context, but in case of the determinants, expert opinion and available literature were used to develop measures. This research study is the one which addresses the determinants of brand experience which is the major

gap from the literature. Since the determinants are first time used with brand experience there was a need to follow a systematic procedure to develop measures which this research paper tries to attempt. Statistical analysis such as Reliability analysis and exploratory factor analysis were carried out the results as discussed had fulfilled the necessary criteria of matching with standard values.

This research study is the one which studies brand experience from different perspective till today brand experience was studied from a hedonic perspective but this study looks it from the utilitarian perspective too. Usability has not been studied with brand experience and hence no measures were available to measure the construct in experience context, this particular research work fills the lacuna. Few conceptual papers had worked on marketing communication that too not in the selected sector in the Indian context. Social value and customer support activities are the critical determinants of brand experience which has not been addressed within experience context, and hence no proper measures were available in experience context. The study has developed valid and reliable measures for the determinants of brand experience and its consequences for consumer durables with Indian consumers.

This research study bears certain limitations first the research has used the analysis such as the exploratory factor analysis and the reliability analysis to develop measures future research should use confirmatory factor analysis with more data so that the measures can be generalized. Second, the research has suggested the relation among the determinants, brand experience and its consequences, future research needs validate these relations with real consumers.

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