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THE EFFECT OF COMBINED ELEMENTS OF GREEN
MARKETING ON CUSTOMERS' LOYALTY TO THE
BRAND OF NAGHSHEJAHAN SUGAR COMPANY

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Abstract

The current research aims to focus on studying the effect of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty to the Brand of NaghsheJahan Sugar Company. The studied statistical population concludes the whole customers inside and outside of NaghsheJahan Company. We have calculated the sample size by Cochran formula, samples have been taken randomly and the number of customers studied as sample is 235 people. We have gathered data by analyzing a researcher's questionnaires. Testing the effect of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty to the Brand of NaghsheJahan Sugar Company has been carried out by the structural equation modeling approach. The results achieved from studying the research hypotheses show that the green marketing mix elements have effects on the dimensions of customers' loyalty toward the brand, and regarding the fitting indices RMSEA=0.000 and the other related indices, the effect pattern of the green marketing mix elements haveaproper fitting.

Key words: green marketing, combined marketing, loyalty, brand, NaghsheJahan Sugar Company

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Volume 2, Issue 1

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INTRODUCTION

Currently marketing based on social and environmental considerations is one of the most important activities of companies, and green marketing is one of the marketing domains which in the environmental matters have assigned itself in the newspapers a great discussion (*KotabMassaki and KristianHelsen, 2004, P 144*).

Green marketing is also called environmental marketing or social marketing. A kind of social marketing approach and viewpoint Reinforces and maintains the moral, social, human and environmental values in all procedures, tools, compliance market and Marketing and sales practices forsustainability in business.

Nowadays in marketing science, loyalty is a controversial and highly popular concept. What is certain is that the cost of attracting new customers is much more than the cost of retaining existing customers. Customer loyalty toward a specific product or brand is highly important, because we dare to say the most important property of many companies is their loyal customers. Nowadays increasing and retaining loyal customers is the long-term success key of many companies, and we are observing managers attitudes changing from attracting new customers into retaining existing customers, this is why many companies try to have satisfied and loyal customers.

The main aim of this research is to study the effect of green marketing mix elements (as a main factor of marketing) on customers' loyalty toward the brand (as one of the main marketing practices). The practical necessity of this research results can generally be expressed in three cases: 1.studying the effect of green marketing mix elements on each loyalty aspects and identifying deficiencies and improvable points of customers' loyalty toward the brand of NaghsheJahan Sugar Company, 2.making changes in customers' loyalty with a comprehensive view in case of change in the green marketing mix elements in order to achieve organizational goals, 3. Preventing customers' lack of loyalty due to lack of knowledge of adoptingmore complete and comprehensive policies on familiarity with green marketing mix.

As this article focuses on studying the effect of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty to the Brand of NaghsheJahan Sugar Company, in the following we'll have a review on the research literature, Conceptual framework designed for this research, research method and studying the intended hypothesis in this research.



ISSN: 2320-0294

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to definitions given by (mujumdar, 2005), (*Larson and Susanna* (2004)), (*Curasi and Kennedy*, 2002), in customers' strategy, customer's loyalty has a strategic importance for each organization. Increasing customers' loyalty has become a hot issue among managers, Consultants and Academic scholars (Keeninfam et.al, 2007, P 362). The importance of this issue is due to this fact that in making decisions about goods and services, customers consider customer loyalty. Organizations and institutes that succeed in creating customer loyalty, gain a big competitive advantage compared to their competitors (Acso, 2006, P187). Anderson and Naros (2004) believe that retaining customers of an organization is a much more efficient strategy than to try attracting new customers to substitute for the lost customers (gee et.al, 2008, P359).

Richard Oliver presented one of the most famous definitions on loyalty in 1999. He defines loyalty as this:" "a deeply held commitment to rebury or repurchase a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same brand or same brand set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts of competitors have the potential to cause switching behavior" (Oliver, 1999, P34).

There are three major courses in loyalty researches. Behavioral loyalty, attitudinal loyalty and mix loyalty that includes Behavioral and attitudinal loyalty. In the aspect of behavioral loyalty thukkerstated that behavior of (previous reburies of the same product/brand) perfectly represents loyalty.

Mix loyalty

Perspective loyalty

Behavioral loyalty

1- Loyalty aspect schemes



Volume 2. Issue 1

ISSN: 2320-0294

In the attitudinal approach represented by Freener, customer loyalty is defined as aattitudinal(HaghighiKaffash et.al, 2010, P 79). (lotfanbatavajoh be mahemiladiye, sale dighigh e milady ra check konid, baste be mahmomkene 2010 ya 2011 bashad)

Attitudinal loyalty is the cognitive and emotional element of loyalty under the commercial name. Such a loyalty shows customers long –term commitment to the organization. Anyway customers' cognitive and emotional commitment to the organization, when it is change into actual reburies is very important. (*Anisimova*, 2007, P396). Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) tried to distinguish the Psychological concept of loyalty from its behavioral aspect. Their analysis got to this result that getting constant purchasing as an index of loyalty is worthless, as constant purchasing can be because of knowing what to buy, pleasant consequences after buying a specific brand or preferring a brand because it's easy to buy. Besides they found that when a customer buys several brands, non-constant purchases of a brand can show loyalty (Jacoby and Chestnut, 1978, P45).

Thus, conceptual loyalty is something beyond a simple reburying, becausebasicallyloyalty includes a behavioral aspect (related to the consumer's behavior) and another aspect related to the consumer's perspective, and commitment is considered as its essential and required characteristic (Jacoby and keener, 1973, P8).

Combining the aspects of attitudinalloyaltyand behavioral loyalty the first time was proposed by Day (1969), when he stated that attitude to loyalty merely based on purchase decisions (behavioral loyalty) cannot distinguish real loyalty from fake loyalty (Riron and Miller, 2007, P1).

Different definitions of brand have been presented by researchers. In fact we can say each of them has looked into this concept from a particular perspective. Brand is not just a logo or an advertising message, but it's a collection of expectations, hopes and communications resulting from a product or an organization (leiser 2004 as Ranjbar said, 2009).

Brand, mark or a commercial name that differentiates a product from the other products or services, nowadays attracts considerable attention, so that the slightest lack of attention wastes the whole marketing attempts. Thus to highlight their presence in the markets, companies have to pay attention to the effect of marketing mix elements on customers loyalty to the brand of

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Volume 2, Issue 1

ISSN: 2320-0294

NaghsheJahan sugar company in order to create a strong brand in the markets and in completion with the other competitors to attract loyal customers.

According to the definitions given by (*Jobber*, 2004), (*polonosky*, 2001), *Solomon* and stuart (1997) we can found that green marketing includes these cases: 1- producing products that their production process, usage and destroying has lessdisadvantages for the environment than the different indigenous products.

2- Mass-producing the products that have a positive effect on the environment. 3- Relevance of a product purchase with an environmental organization or an environmental (plan). Examples are given below. Familiarity (acquaintance) with green marketing mix elements (Green Products, Green Pricing, Green Promotion, Green Distribution) which are used innovatively, effect on the consumers behavior and get them to take into account the environmental aspects in their purchase behavior, so that the environmental concerns are reduced. Regarding the effect of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty to brand, and focusing this effect in this research, the first Hypothesis H of the research is developed this way;

H1: green marketing mix elements effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan sugar co.

Green product; a product that has less disadvantages for the environment D'souza et al, (2006) and can be repaired, renovated, reproduced, reused, recycled, and is Compatible with the ozone layer, fruits and natural vegetables (not chemical) (Kim, 1995, P124). The secondHypothesis Hstates;

H2: green marketing has effect on the customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan sugar co.

Green price; price is a key factor in the green marketing mix. Most consumers are willing to pay a higher price only in case they understand the value-added. This value can be in the Performance, efficiency, design, visual attraction or its taste Improvement or even it (value-added) can be because of the other characteristics of the green product such as longer life or harmlessness (Polonskyet.al, 2001, 27). The third Hypothesis Hof this research is as the following;

H3:green price has effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan sugar co.

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Volume 2. Issue 1

ISSN: 2320-0294

Green promotion; ads presented mustallow customers tocompare, to determine the percentage

and the essence of the recycled product and to give consumers the real environmental

information. (phau et al, 2007). The forth Hypothesis H of the research is as the following;

H4: green promotion has an effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan

sugar co.

Green distribution; green distribution shall be along with pollution reduction and resources preserve in transferring productions to the market, it means formulating policies onreducing the pollutionsofdistributive cars, and enhancing environmental awareness within the company and between the sides of transportation contract (grow et al, 1996, P56). The fifth Hypothesis Hstates:

H5: green distribution has effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan sugar

METHODOLOGY

Considering that in this research library research methods and field methods like questionnaire are used, and their aim is to recognize green marketing mix elements, customers' loyalty to brand and the effect of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty to brand, in terms of aims the current research is an applied research, and based on essence and research method, it is a descriptive – survey research of field branch. Statistical population of this research is concluded of customers in the company and customers out of company. In this research customers' loyalty to the brand of NagsheJahan Sugar Company with the aspects of attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty is dependent variable, and the green marketing mix elements with the aspects of green product, green price, green promotion and green distribution is independent variable. Time domain of collecting this research data is from the early spring 2012 to the mid summer 2012. To gather the needed data we used a questionnaire which has 2 sections; the first section included general questions and demographic questions with 5 choices, and in the second section technical questions are asked in two parts, part A is for questions related to independent variable with 36 answers and part B is for questions related to dependent variable with 28 answers. Also 235 questionnaires were randomly distributed among the customers of this company. Rating scale of each question was from very low to very high, based on a score from 1 to 5.this

questionnaire had a acceptable face validity (by professors of Isfahan science and research university and Isfahan university) also it was approved by confirmed factor analysis. The reliability of the questionnaire was calculated as 0.94 using Cronbach's alpha, and was approved.

In the data analysis unit of this research, 235 people who are customers of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company are taken as statistical sample, and people who filled out questionnaires are taken as data sources. Considering the following formula the total customers of statistical population were at least 235 customers.

 $t_{\frac{\alpha}{2}} = t \text{ value}$

N = population size

N =sample size

0.07 = d Estimate error

 $0.05 = \alpha$ Assurance level

S= estimated standard deviation of population

$$n = \frac{N + \frac{t_{\alpha}^2}{2} + s^2}{d^2 + (N-1) + \frac{t_{\alpha}^2}{2} + s^2} = \frac{382 \times 1/96^2 \times 0/78}{0/07^2 \times (382 - 1) + 1/96^2 \times 0/78} = 235$$

To analyze data and to study research theory we tested t single samples to determine the aspects of customers' loyalty to brand, modeling structural equations through Amos 20 software for specifying the effectiveness of each marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty to brand has been used in the framework of a general model (pattern).

ANALYSIS

According to data collected from the distributed questionnaires among the samples studied, the first theory of the research formulated as the following will be studied.

-green marketing mix elements have effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan sugar co.

To study this hypothesis, initially using the data collected from the questionnaire related to the green marketing mix elements, regression coefficients of green marketing mix elements were specified.



ISSN: 2320-0294

Table 1. Demography data

frequency	£		
percentage	frequency		geı
93.1	190	male	gender
5.4	11	female	
18.1	37	1-5 years	
23.8	69	6-10 years	worl
17.6	36	11-15 years	k exp
10.3	21	16-20 years	work experience
5.4	11	more than 20 years	lce
7-4			

To evaluate the aspects of green marketing mix elements in this research, we have taken advantage of the previous studies. According to the theoretical definitions, to evaluate the aspects of the=is concept that includes green product, green price, green promotion and green distribution, we used green marketing mix elements. In general 36 questions were considered in the questionnaire for evaluating the mentioned cases based on Likert scale with five options (1= very low, 5= very high). The results conducted of the factor analysis for determining the accuracy of the proposed measuring models, present several indices. Indices used in this research indicate that the measuring models of green product, green price, green promotion and green distribution are proper models. The results of the confirmatory Factor Analysis are presented in table 2. Also some options were omitted because their load factors were less than 0.50; this is shown in table 2.

Table 2: results of confirmatory factor analysis related to the variable of green marketing mix elements



green marketing mix	green distribution	green promoyion	green price	green product	index
0.715	2.49	72.96	1.02	35.01	CMIN
0.69	0.645	0.002	0.312	0.2	P
0.99	0.99	0.95	0.97	0.97	GFI
0.004	0.01	0.05	0.008	0.03	RMR
1	1	0.98	1	0.98	CFI
0	0	0.06	0.01	0.05	RMSEA
				3&7	omited option

To evaluate the aspects of customers' loyalty in this research, we have taken advantage of the library studies which are in two dimensions of attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty. In general 28 questions were considered in the questionnaire for evaluating the mentioned cases based on Likert scale with five options (1= very low and 5= very high). Indices used in this research indicate that the measuring models of customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahanSugar Company are proper models. The results of the confirmatory Factor Analysis are presented in table 3. Also some options were omitted because their load factors were less than 0.50; this is shown in table 3.

Table 3: results of confirmatory factor analysis related to the variable of customers' loyalty to the brand of Company

factor	CMIN/DF	P	GFI	RMR	CFI	RMSEA	omitted option
attitudinal loyalty	_	I	1	0	0	0	_
behavioral loyalty	1.85	0.27	0.99	0.006	0	0.03	46

Results of analyzing the structural equations model and casual relations between the research main variables are shown in figure 1.

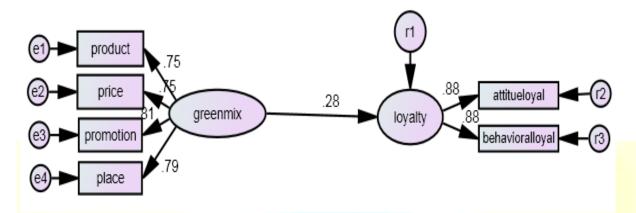


Fig1. First model of structural equations

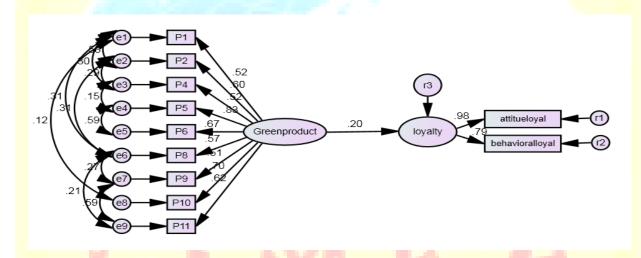


Fig2. Second model of structural equations

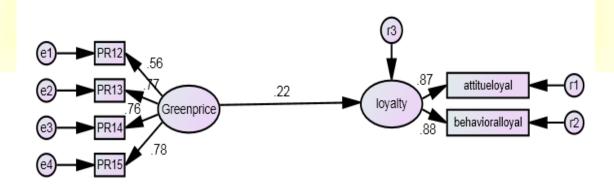


Fig3. Third model of structural equations

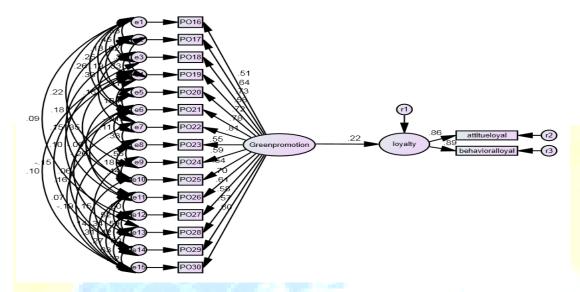


Fig4. Forth model of structural equations

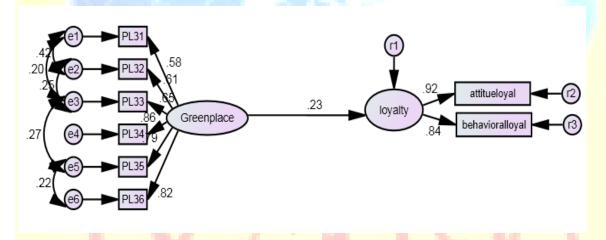


Fig5. Fifth model of structural equations

Table4.Fitness indices of structural equations model

	RMR	CFI	GFI	RMSEA	CMIN/df	CMIN
first model	0/005	1/000	0/99	0/000	0/31	02/52
second model	0/03	0/99	0/96	0/02	2/17	37/26
third model	0/01	0/99	0/98	0/05	1/58	12/66
forth model	0/04	0/98	0/93	0/05	1/60	115/737



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IDDIN.	Z 3ZU	1-UZ34

	0/01	0/99	0/98	0/02	1/12	15/73	
fifth model	0/005	1/000	0/99	0/000	0/31	02/52	

The output results of E-mouse software in estimating the model standard shows that the models of analyzing the structural equations are proper models. The RMSEA value of models is quite proper and less than 0.10 (higher values might be due to the number of samples); GFI values are also more than 90 percent. NFI and CFI values, the both are more than 90 percent, and eventually RMR values are about 0. Calculation of significant digits shows that, the effect of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty has become meaningful (significant). (In determining models' significant digits, its significant digit shall be more than 2 and less than 2.) On the hand, according to figures 2,3,4,5, and table 4, each green marketing mix element (green product, green price, green promotion, green distribution) has effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company. Considering that this research interests in determining the effects of variables on each other, using the casual coefficients obtained in the structural equations model, the results of hypotheses testing are presented in table 5.

Table 5: results of testing the research hypotheses

Hypothesis	sample size	significance level	regression coefficient	test result
green marketing mix on customers' loyalty to the brand	235	0.001	0.28	confirmed
green product on customers' loyalty to the			r 4	
brand	235	0.015	0.19	confirmed
green price on customers'				
loyalty to the brand	235	0.013	0.21	confirmed
green promotion on customers' loyalty to the				
brand	235	0.012	0.22	confirmed
green distribution on customers' loyalty to the				
brand	235	0.004	0.23	confirmed



Volume 2, Issue 1

ISSN: 2320-0294

In the significance level of 0.05, if the significance number of the table is less than 0.05, the relation between each pair of research variables is confirmed.

CONCLUSION

According to analyzing the data collected from questionnaires and using proper statistical methods and tests, we can answer the only theory (hypothesis) this research came up with, in answer we can say in case of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company, green marketing mix elements have effect on customers' loyalty toward the company brand, and this is a positive and meaningful effectiveness. Therefore, based on the conceptual framework and studying the research hypothesis, the proposed model of the effect of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty toward the brand of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company will be presented as shown in fig.1.

Regarding the results obtained from the first hypothesis of this research, we suggest the managers of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company to take the effects of green marketing mix elements on customers' loyalty seriously, so that they can achieve the organization's (company's) aims in the competition arena.

Studying data related to the first hypothesis, and considering table 5 and fig.1, green marketing mix options (green product, green price, green promotion, green distribution), have different severity of effects on this structure, so that among these four options the maximum effect is related to green promotion with regression coefficient of 0.81, and the minimum effect is related to green product and green price with a regression coefficient of 0.75. Furthermore, the effects of loyalty options this structure options which on are equal; loyalty includeattitudinalandbehavioralloyaltywith a regression coefficient of 0.88.

Thus, from the perspective of this company's customers, what have the most effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company are to inform people that the products or production processes are green, to advertise and to apprise people of environmental issues, to publicize green standards through the media, and the etc.

As mentioned before, nowadays marketing mix is one of the efficient methods of marketing that has a great effect on customers' loyalty, and in marketing mix there shall be a systematic approach between the components and factors in order to be effective in influencing and persuading customers. In another term, the factors studied in green marketing mix must be



Volume 2. Issue 1

ISSN: 2320-0294

coordinated with one another, and if any of these components is uncoordinated with the rest, it will reduce the effectiveness and efficiency of the collection, and the organization fails to achieve its aims.

The results obtained from this research correspond to the researches done by (Ramezanian et.al, 2010) and (AzadehPourqafari 2009) that reported the effect of green marketing mix on consumers' purchase behavior. Because she (A.pourqafari) also in her researches reported the effect of each green marketing mix element on book purchasers' behaviors to be positive and meaningful, and she mentioned to marketing importance and researches related to that as one of the strongest tools available to managers. Moreover *McMullan*(2005) studied loyalty dimensions as to attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty. AlerK and Setely (1999) studied commitment in attitudinal loyalty.

According to table 5 and fig 2, regression coefficients of options related to green product, the fifth option (using recyclable packages) with a regression coefficient of 0.83 has the maximum effect, and the first option (producing products in order to meet customers' real needs) and the forth option (using packages with a less thickness) with regression coefficients of 0.52 have the minimum effect on green products. Furthermore, loyalty options including attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty respectively have regression coefficients of 0.98 and 0.79 on loyalty.

Thus productsplay an important role in customer loyalty and a way to give customers satisfaction and to keep them loyal to a company is using packages with a less thickness, and also producing products in order to meet customers' real needs.

Considering the fact that product types provided by different companies are largely similar, what is important here is salience and specific features of company products. Therefore according to the results of fig.2 we suggest companies to inform people more widely of the signs of recyclability packaging.

The results obtained from this hypothesis about product, partly correspond to the research done by (HosseinMatni, 2004) on product. Becausein his researches he knows product and specifically packaging type as a factor effective oncustomer loyalty, this factor is one of the main factors of profitability. Kamoln Chaiyawat (1998) also recognized factors that have a positive and meaningful relationship with purchase behavior of green products. Mehdi Haghighikaffash et.al



Volume 2. Issue 1

ISSN: 2320-0294

(2010), Abbas aliHajkarimi et.al (2009) and Varzeshkar (2003), believe that the satisfaction factor has effect on loyalty, and it corresponds to some results obtained from this research.

According to regression coefficients of options related to green price in table 5 and fig 3, the fifteenth option (products' high price due to the products value-added such as improving its visual attraction and its taste) with a regression coefficient of 0.78 has the maximum effect and the twelfth option (products' high price due to the abandonment of old-used and polluting technologies and using new and clean technologies) with a regression coefficient of 0.56 has the minimum effecton green products. Furthermore, loyalty options including attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty respectively have regression coefficients of 0.87 and 0.88 on loyalty.

Pricing is significantly important, because it directly has effects on customers. Hence, price has an important role in customers' loyalty.

According to regression coefficients of options related to green promotion in table 5 and fig 4, the twenty second option (to advertise through brochures and catalogues on green products and green processes of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company) with a regression coefficient of 0.81 has the maximum effect and the sixteenth option (to advertise and to inform people that the products of NaqsheJahan Sugar Company are green) with a regression coefficient of 0.51 has the minimum effect on green promotion. Besides, loyalty options including attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty respectively have regression coefficients of 0.86 and 0.89 on loyalty.

Therefore, advertising has a major role in the whole activities of organizations and companies. Proper advertising introduces products and services to customers who haven't tested the company's products so far. Fig4 findings show thatNaqsheJahan Sugar Company has poorly advertised the products of being green, so that its regression coefficient has been reported to be 0.51, and it can endanger the competitive condition of the company. As a result we suggest NaqsheJahan Sugar Company to find its target customers, and with regard to the customers' needs bring about innovations in advertising and informing through brochures and catalogues on the company's green products and green processes, so that it can keep and even develop its share in the competitive market.

This conclusion is similar with some research results of laura C.McGowan (2000), Asadollahi (2005), Salar (2004). These researchers also indicated that most environmental advertisings are

on products and they also emphasized on the highlighted role of advertising in reburying behaviors.

According to table 5 and fig5, the result of studying this hypothesis indicates that green distribution is accepted with a regression coefficient of 0.23 and assurance of 0.95. In another term we can say with an assurance of 0.95, green distribution has effect on customers' loyalty to the brand of NaqsheJahanSugar Company.

According to regression coefficients of options related to green distribution, the thirty forth option (to enhance environmental awareness of people responsible in products transportation) with a regression coefficient of 0.86 has the maximum effect and the thirty first option (using a transportation system with the least pollution) with a regression coefficient of 0.58 has the minimum effect on green distribution. Moreover, loyalty options including attitudinal loyalty and behavioral loyalty respectively have regression coefficients of 0.92 and 0.84 on loyalty.

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