INVESTIGATING THE EFFECT OF BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND IMAGE ON PURCHASE BEHAVIOR OF CUSTOMERS

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Abstract:

The purpose of this paper is to develop a comprehensive model that combines brand awareness and brand image perspectives on current and future purchases. These researchers used structural equation modeling to test the significance of the overall model and the specified paths. Findings indicate that current purchases are affected by directly by brand awareness and indirectly by brand image. In contrast, future purchases are not affected by either dimension of brand knowledge directly. The present study did not examine feedback effects and only included consumer categories, no individual differences variables. As such, these researchers recommend that future research examine feedback effects and include additional consumer categories, B2B categories and individual-differences variables such as variety seeking and innovativeness. Brand managers spend considerable resources on measuring brand awareness and brand image. This is a cross-paradigm paper and it is the first that combines two separate broad-based perspectives on brands in a simple comprehensive model for researchers and brand managers.

Key words: Brand awareness, Brand image, Current purchase, Future purchase, Structural Equation Model (SEM).

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Introduction:

Considering increases in competition among organizations and slow of growth new consumers, companies seek new ways to raise their selling abilities. The most popular trend is concentration on increasing purchases of existing customers through brand awareness and brand image. In this way, companies must learn about customer performance as this is important for in persuading customers to purchase companies brands, which leads to purchase repetition. Unfortunately, there have been little reciprocal effects between these brand awareness and brand image and few efforts have been made to integrate these aspects. In fact, conceptual aspects and brand relationships has been investigated in only two research samples (Agarwal and Rao, 1996). While brand knowledge is usually achieved using empirical modeling and tests, brand relationships are typically directed by explanatory samples consisting of sociological, anthropological and cultural theories in addition to qualitative data.

Brand relationships focus on three aspects including brand trust, brand satisfaction, and brand attachment (Fournier and Yao, 1997).

The present study reports results based on a model of brand knowledge brand awareness and brand image on customer purchase behaviors in the mineral water market. In this study, overall effectiveness of brand awareness and brand image were investigated among customers of Polor, Damash, and Damavand, Kohrang and Vata mineral water brands. Two important factors in repurchase, brand awareness, brand image, and image of customers, is an increase in competition and quality of different brands.

Additionally, customer -based valves occur when consumers are familiar with a brand and have knowledge about that brand, resulting in positive associations about the brand in customers mind. Thus, there are two types of brand knowledge, brand awareness and brand image (Agarwal, 2004).

Brand awareness refers to the survival of a brand in the consumer's mind. In others words, how easy is it for a consumer to recall a brand? Keller (1993) expressed that the reminder of a brand is the most common way of measuring brand awareness. On the other hand, brand effect on consumers is not based on brand awareness of the consumers, rather because the brand is a part of mental, social, and cultural environments. Thus, consumers associate with

brands relationships that are similar to their internal and personal relationships with other people. This relationship process can create positive affects and an understandable advantage relationship (Keller, 1993).

Brand Knowledge and purchase behavior:

Concerning brand and purchase research based on Keller, brand awareness is a precondition of creating a brand image. As such, when brand recall occurs in the mind, the association and stabilization of the brand become easier. As Kapferer (2004) showed, real awareness depends on image (Kapferer, 2004). Moreover, conceptual models indicate that brand knowledge (brand image), reactions of consumers toward a brand, defined as a brand awareness and perception, effect on preference and performance. This originates from marketing different activates and to investigate this effect, these researchers we suggested differences among two aspects of consumers behavior: current and future. These researchers defined current behaviors as brand purchase and future behaviors as the intention to purchase. To follow a model of consumer –based brand, these researchers also proposed that brand knowledge (awareness and brand image) would affect purchase and use of a specific brand. Based on this, these references proposed the following.

H1. Brand awareness effects brand image.

H2. Brand awareness has a direct effect on current purchases.

H3. Brand image has a direct effect on current purchase.

Additionally, research has suggested that brand value not only has immediate value, but also has long -term value through the association of future earnings. Thus, these researchers expected brand effect in relation to future behavior. As such, the following were proposed.

H4. Brand awareness has a direct effect on future purchases.

H5. Brand image has a direct effect on future purchase.

The final hypothesis focused on two internal variables: current and future purchase.

H6. Current purchases have a direct effect on future purchases.
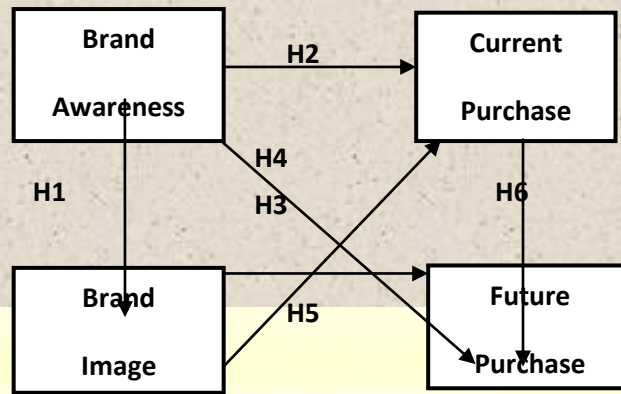
Conceptual Model:

Fig1. Conceptual models

Methods:

These researchers used a descriptive survey method. This method has additional practicality for future exploration of customers' information concerning the market. In addition, in order to analysis all data, descriptive and comprehensive statistics were used. The diagrams and abundance methods were used to describe statistics and the structural model for a confirmative factorial analysis and variance analysis were used in analyzing these statistics.

In this research, these researchers examined the hypotheses outline above for customers of mineral water producers in Tehran. Student were recruited to participate from Tehran Azad Islamic University who were enrolled in four separate units including Management and Social Sciences College of Azad Islamic University (Tehran-North), Management College of Azad Islamic University (Tehran-Center), Management and Account College of Azad Islamic University (Tehran-South), Management and Economy College of Azad Islamic University (Sciences and research).

Brand Awareness and Brand Image Measures:

Brand awareness was measured by unaided recall (Rossiter and Bellman, 2005). Participants were asked an open-ended question: "Which brands do you know in the product category of X?" Only those responses of participants who could recall the pre-selected brands were included in subsequent analyses. The position of the brand on the recalled list was coded on a ten-point scale (10 for first brand in the category, 9 for the second brand, etc). Brand image

included three measures; overall attitude toward the brand, perceived quality of the brand, and the brand's overall affect. These measures were rated on a five point scale (Low and Lamb, 2000).

Validity:

In this study, four validity (face validity, convergent validity and discriminate validity) were evaluated to assess the accuracy of the results of these four funds is detailed below.

Face Validity:

In this study face validity by the test subjects were studied in and after the reform, the face validity of the tool was confirmed.

Convergent Validity:

In this study to examine the convergent validity of the method using the average variance extracted and composite reliability the results of these two methods are used in the table 1 is shown.

Table1. AVE and CR Calculate

Number	Variable	Questions	AVE	CR
1	Brand Awareness	3	0/705	0/823
2	Brand Image	4	0/644	0/811
3	Current Purchase	5	0/707	0/814
4	Future Purchase	3	0/791	0/879

Given the composite reliability of all combinations of 0/7 and average variance extracted by the top 0/5 convergent validity can be confirmed.

2.2.4 Discriminate Validity

To calculate the discriminate validity of using this method, the shared variance between factors compared with single factor is the square root of the average variance extracted. If the variance between the common factors, the lower is the square root of AVE, discriminate validity is confirmed (Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table2. Discriminate Validity Calculate

Future Purchase	Current Purchase	Brand Image	Brand Awarenes	Variable
			0/70	Brand Awareness
		0/64	0/24	Brand Image
	0/70	0/16	0/39	Current Purchase
0/79	0/39	0/30	0/34	Future Purchase

Table3.Classifying Related Index with Each Variable

Resource	Variable	Number of index	Question
• Esch etal, 2006 • Rossiter,J.R and Bellman,S.2005 • Emma,K.mcDonal, 2000	Brand Awareness	6	1-2-3-5-10-18

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• Low& Lamb,2000 • Esch etal, 2006	Brand Image	7	4-6-7-8-9-11-12
• Mittal,V.and Kamakura,W.A, 2001 • Esch etal, 2006	Current Purchase	6	13-14-15-17-21-22
• Esch etal, 2006 • Mittal,V.and Kamakura,W.A,2001	Future Purchase	5	16-19-20-23-24
	Number of question in questionnaire	24	

Reliability:

I this method, internal compatibility was used to measure the reliability. The most important index of internal compatibility of Cronbach's Alpha Test which shows that how can question of test measure a special feature.

Nunnaly stated that more than 7 percent is acceptable for reliability but less than it was accepted in some articles. This test was used for those questions which measure a single concept. Thus, is appropriate to measure reliability of Likert spectrum which is used to remove improper Variable. It should be mentioned that Cronbach's Alpha coefficient doesn't show the error by external factors in test and difference among respondents and only measure internal compatibility of items.

In this research, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated based on SPSS software. In the first pretest, 76 percents and in the second pretest, 88 percents promoted. In the main distribution, among 390 questionnaires which give back, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated 91 percent.

Table4. Cronbach's Alpha, the Time and Place of Each Test

First Pretest	Cronbach's Alpha 76 percents	Date: 23.01.2012 Place: Management faculty of Research and Science Azad University No.40	Existing Questionnaire In A enclosed
Second Pretest	Cronbach's Alpha 88 percents	Date: 2.02.2012 Place: Management Faculty of Azad Tehran University (North Branch)	Existing Questionnaire No. 40

In this research, the tools of investigating documents, was used as secondary data. In this method, to define variables and concepts, we used foreign and local articles. For this purpose, we summarized the current resources and in final stage, proper subject were selected and used in current research.

Behavioral Outcome Measures:

Current purchase behavior was measured using two items that focused on current purchase and usage patterns: "How often have you bought the brand in the past?" and "How often do you consume or use the brand?" Future purchase intentions were measured by "Do you intend to buy the brand in the future?" These items were rated on a scale ranging from 1=*not at all* to 5= *very frequently* (Macdonald and Sharp, 2000; Luk and Yip, 2008).

Results:

The results indicated that there are no meaningful differences between end users' interpretation regarding the five brands, Polor, Damash, Damavand, Koohrang and Vata, concerning the following four variants: Brand awareness, brand image, current purchase, and future purchase.

As such, these researchers came to the following conclusions:

1. Regarding brand awareness, customers had same awareness about the five brands at the time of purchase.

2. Regarding brand image, customers has some notion of brand image for the five brands at the time of purchase.

The results of individual comparison of the brands under study connection to the four variables indicate the following:

Regarding brand awareness, participants were more aware of the Damavand brand compared to the other brands. In terms of brand image, there was a significant difference between Damavand and Vata, while the other groups did not show any meaningful differences regarding brand image. Therefore, in the customer's view, Damavand has a more memorable brand image than does Vata. Additionally, participants reported higher levels of satisfaction for Damavand compared Koohrang and there were no difference in satisfaction among Damash, Polor and Vata.

Table5. Measuring Model with Significant Level of Factorial Load.

Construction or Factor	Sign	Path Index	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Significant Level
Brand Awareness	Q1	1/53	0/11	13/90	0/01
	Q2	2/79	0/18	15/50	0/01
	Q3	0/84	0/07	12	0/01
	Q5	0/94	0/08	11/75	0/01
	Q10	0/64	0/04	16	0/01
	Q18	0/41	0/05	8/2	0/01

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Construction or Factor	Sign	Path Index	Standard Deviation	Standard Error	Significant Level
Brand Image	Q4	0/75	0/2	3/75	0/01
	Q6	0/40	0/03	13/33	0/01
	Q7	1/09	0/08	13/62	0/01
	Q8	0/93	0/07	13/28	0/01
	Q9	0/95	0/05	19	0/01
	Q11	0/57	0/04	14/25	0/01
	Q12	1/2	0/07	17/14	0/01
Current Purchase	Q13	0/64	0/03	21/33	0/01
	Q14	1/09	0/08	13/62	0/01
	Q15	1/18	0/07	16/85	0/01
	Q17	0/66	0/04	16/5	0/01
	Q21	0/84	0/07	12	0/01
	Q22	0/9	0/06	15	0/01
Future Purchase	Q16	0/59	0/04	14/75	0/01
	Q19	0/8	0/04	20	0/01
	Q20	0/5	0/06	8/33	0/01
	Q23	0/57	0/04	14/25	0/01
	Q24	0/65	0/08	8/12	0/01

As indicated in Table 5, all factors were properly examined by related standards. In other words, the nominated standards of researcher for examining the considered factors, which were latent in this model of structural equations, had high accuracy. In order to examine whether the sample size was large enough according to estimated parameters and estimate the explaining power of the model, these researchers employed confirmative factorial analysis for the model. In considering an error limit of 1%, degrees of freedom=240, a sample size of 390, and RMSEA = 0/082, the analysis resulted in 1, thus indicating that the estimated model corresponded to the

sample size. Therefore, the current findings are reliable because the considered size was proportionate with the study's substructure. Additionally, in this stage, it was necessary to analyze the index of evaluation of fit for the confirmative factorial analysis model or measuring model.

Conclusion:

The path index and construction model in comparison to dependency construction is shown in the below table.

Table6. Construction Model in Comparison to Dependency Construction

From Construction	To Construction	Standard Parameter	T	Standard Error	Significant Level
Brand Image	Current Purchase	-0/17	0/14	-1/19	No Significant
Brand Image	Future Purchase	0/08	0/67	0/12	No Significant
Brand Awareness	Brand Image	0/15	0/06	2/61	0/01
Brand Awareness	Current Purchase	0/25	0/12	2/17	0/01
Brand Awareness	Future Purchase	0/16	0/13	1/21	No Significant
Current Purchase	Future Purchase	0/92	0/23	3/93	0/01

Based on the above analysis, these researchers concluded the following.

- By increasing one unit of brand awareness, brand image increased 1.12 units. Therefore, the results support Hypothesis 1; brand awareness had a direct effect on brand image.

- By increasing of one unit of brand awareness, current purchase intentions increased 0.45 units; the more brand awareness, the higher current purchase intention of that brand. Therefore, Hypothesis 2 was accepted.

- According to the information obtained from the structural model, there were no significant differences between brand image and current purchase intentions. Therefore, Hypothesis 3 was rejected. Of note, hypothesis of zero would be accepted regarding this matter that "brand image has a direct effect on the current purchase."

- Concerning Hypothesis4, by entering brand awareness into the covariance matrix structural model the concept model became imbalanced. Thus, the present path for the test of forth hypothesis was excluded from the statistical model since studying its simultaneous effect with other structures was not possible. Therefore, there was not enough evidence to adequately explore this hypothesis.

- Results suggest that the effect of brand image on future purchase intentions is meaningless; therefore, Hypothesis 5 was rejected and a zero accepted.

- Brand awareness, in terms of trust did not show a meaningful effect at the .001 level. Thus Hypothesis 5 was rejected and a zero hypothesis concerning brand awareness does not have a direct effect on brand trust was accepted

- Resulted indicated a significant effect for current purchase intent; therefore, Hypothesis 6 was accepted. By increasing current purchase by one unit, future purchase intent increases by 92 units. Additionally the path coefficient of this relation was very high; thus, it can be suggested that current purchase intent and effective factors may specify future purchase intent of customers.

Recommendations:

Recommendations to Researchers

These researchers recommend that future research use similar method as the current study with similar variables at the national level.

Since this research was conducted in relation to goods with low mental involvement and designed a class of consumed products (i.e., mineral water), these researchers recommend that future studies focus on classes of products with high mental involvement, as well as draw

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comparisons between those products of high mental involvement and those of low mental involvement.

In addition, it is possible to conduct this research in B2b markets since these markets involves interpersonal person relations and various brand factors maybe more clear.

Finally, that future research includes more survey questions present in the literature in order to conduct comprehensive discovery investigations as well as repeated test.

Managerial Implications:

In brand management practice, brand image and brand awareness are considered the central variables for assuring the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. However, current results indicate that it is not sufficient to focus only on these two variables: especially when brands are intended to last forever. For long-term brand success, brand relationship variables, including brand trust, brand satisfaction, and brand attachment, plays an important role in buying behavior. Since the creation of these relations often results in stable values among consumers and brands, the effects of these relationships may be clarified in the future. Therefore, brand managers are well advised to use measures of brand relationships in addition to brand knowledge measures. Managers should also develop strategic and tactical initiatives that ensure consumers are satisfied trust, and feel attached to the brand. This may require managers employ standard marketing and communication techniques in addition to experiential marketing techniques, which result in increased interactions and emotional connections between the customer and the brand (Fournier, 1984; Clark, 1979, 1984).

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