

## Review of Important Brand Loyalty Influencing Factors: State of Art

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**Abstract:** Brand loyalty is no longer a new concept but the importance of brand loyalty could never be overstated especially in recent decades as market competitions become globally fierce. Hence, to correctly understand the behavior of their customers or rather the antecedents of brand loyalty could be beneficial to marketers or entrepreneurs to secure their market positions. Thus, an increasing number of scholars have devoted to exploring the influencing factors of brand loyalty from various theoretical and industrial backgrounds. This study reviews the related academic studies on brand loyalty and particularly analyzes the influencing factors of Brand loyalty. It starts with introducing the evolution of brand loyalty research then defines brand and brand loyalty. Further, after revisiting the grounded theories of brand loyalty research such as the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) a summary of the most frequently researched influencing factors is presented. It is hoped that the study could shed some light in facilitating researchers to further develop conceptual framework and conduct empirical research and also guiding practitioners in rationalizing market strategy.

**Key words:** Brand loyalty, planned behavior, technology acceptance model, porter five forces, the service quality model

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### INTRODUCTION

The importance of brand loyalty for companies cannot be overstated. Brand loyalty brings many benefits such as the positive word of mouth (Dick and Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1999) the increase of the relative bargaining power of organizations (Anderson *et al.*, 2004) the increase of Return On Investments (ROI) (Jensen and Hansen, 2006). Top 20% of the customers are likely to produce 80% profit for a company (Kotler and Keller, 2005). Hence, it is lucrative for the business to make a good relationship between a company and customers.

Hence, in order to enhance the loyalty of their customers and achieve high rate of loyal customers, finding the factors that affect the loyalty becomes a core issue. Thus, from 2000s up to now more studies has been conducted by applying various theories in identifying the antecedents of brand loyalty (Mohsan *et al.*, 2011; Abubakar, 2014). Hence, this study reviews the literature and extracts the factors that have been used by researchers to create solid background about the existing theories and frameworks that have been used. Based on this, it aims to provide decision makers with the most critical factors that affect the brand loyalty.

**Literature review:** Recently, the term brand has attracted the attention of researchers and practitioners and it was defined as a supplier's guarantee that it will consistently and continuously transport on its promises including promises implicitly or explicitly produced by convenience and benefits to the consumer, specific quality thresholds and tangible features (Davicik *et al.*, 2015). There are some factors extending beyond the functional characteristics that are intrinsic to services and goods that are traded under those brand names (Aaker, 1991). These added intangible values might tell the difference from a product to its competitors having effect not only on the consumer's preferences but increase the satisfaction levels of customers which is always leading to much greater loyalty among customers (Davicik *et al.*, 2015). Studies in the second millennium contend that the term brand is a highly contextualized entity susceptible to diverse contemporary approaches and understandings and consequently to a never-ending theoretical development process. Theoretical development processes in this context, however are observed generally in two distinct techniques. One is from a nominal perspective while the other is the real form (Gabbott and Jevons, 2009). The term brand loyalty and customer loyalty have

been consciously or unconsciously mixed used in various studies (Srinivasan *et al.*, 2002; Yang and Peterson, 2004). In the present study they refer to the same meaning and they are used interchangeably. The early definitions of brand loyalty focused on the behavioral aspects of brand such as Jacoby and Olson (1970). Later the definitions of brand loyalty have emerged to include the behavioral and attitudinal aspects. Brand loyalty was associated with the emotional attachment (Aaker, 1991) and the repeat purchase based on attitude toward the brand (Assael, 1993; Dick and Basu, 1994; Oliver, 1997). Other definitions revisited the behavioral aspect of brand loyalty during 2000s. The attitudinal aspect of brand loyalty was also a focus on some recent definitions (Sheth and Mittal, 2004). More recent definition by Hosseini *et al.* (2015) was a reproduction of the definition of Oliver (1997) which focused on both attitudinal and behavior aspects of brand loyalty. This shows that the brand loyalty in both aspects is still dominant in the literature of brand loyalty, following which the present study adopts the definition of Oliver (1997). Table 1 shows some typical definitions of brand loyalty by previous studies.

**MATERIALS AND METHODS**

This study is a quantitative and it uses the secondary data approach to come up with the findings. The studies were collected using the search engine such as science direct, emerald and IEEE. A total of 342 articles were identified and exposed to a refinement and screening processes to identify the most related studies. Inclusion criteria is to find empirical studies that have investigated the brand loyalty. A total of 108 articles were identified from emerald while 190 articles were extracted from science direct and 50 articles from IEEE. First screening conducted by reading the title and the abstract of the articles. As a result a total of 262 were removed due to the context of these articles. Next, a second full article reading was conducted and resulted in deleting 48 articles. As a result, a total of 32 articles were included in this study. A frequency analysis will be conducted on these articles after extracting the factors that affect brand loyalty. The highly frequent factors will be presented as the most important factors because they have been chosen and tested by researchers. Figure 1 shows the processes of selecting the related articles in this study.

Table 1: Selected researches on influencing factors of brand loyalty models

Sources	Influencing factors	Summary of findings
Punniyamoorthy and Raj (2007)	Involvement, functional value; price worthiness, emotional value; social value, brand trust, Satisfaction, commitment	Repeated shopping and feature value have relatively strongest impact on loyalty
Martenson (2007)	Relations, offer, price, nice, store brand, manufacturing brands, Corporate image, satisfaction	Customers are satisfied when the store is neat and pleasant and when they feel that the store understands their needs
Matzler <i>et al.</i> (2008)	Risk aversion, brand affect, brand trust	Customer's risk aversion is significantly related to brand loyalty. And risk aversion strongly influences brand trust and brand affect
Shukla (2009)	Contextual factors, brand switching cost, brand loyalty	Contextual factors have the strongest influence on purchase decisions. Furthermore, contextual factors influence the brand loyalty and switching behavior
Lin (2010)	Extroversion, agreeableness, conscientious, neuroticism, excitement, competence, peacefulness	Individual personality traits have significant relationship with brand personality namely, openness, excitement, competence, peacefulness, sincerity and sophistication
Hur <i>et al.</i> (2011)	sincerity, sophistication Brand community affect, brand community trust, brand community commitment, repurchase intention of brand, word of mouth of brand, constructive complaint of brand	Positive paths: brand community trust brand community commitment; brand community affect brand community commitment and brand community commitment brand loyalty behaviors
Nguyen <i>et al.</i> (2011)	Advertising attitude, distribution intensity, perceived quality, brand awareness	The connections between the brand loyalty and the perceived quality are significant, so as the connection between the brand awareness and the perceived including the connection between the consciousness of brand and the ideas of advertisement the connection between the consciousness of brand and others
Liu <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Affective loyalty to the bank and the department store, gender differences (moderator)	Affective loyalty to the bank and the department store as well as perceived credit card benefits, all positively influence consumer's attitude toward bank/department store co-branded credit cards there is a positive relationship between attitude and intention

Table 1: Continue

Sources	Influencing factors	Summary of findings
Aurier and de Lanauze (2012)	Perceived quality, perceived relationship orientation, trust, affective commitment	The result showed that perceived quality impacts relationship quality (trust and affective commitment) which in turn influences attitudinal loyalty
Liu <i>et al.</i> (2012)	Brand personality congruity, brand user imagery congruity, brand usage imagery congruity, brand attitude	Results shows that the congruity of customer and using environment intend to have bigger pre-factors for consciousness of brand and brand loyalty than BPC, considering the test of some luxury fashionable brands
Laroche <i>et al.</i> (2013)	SM based brand communities, customers relationship, brand, trust	The findings of structural equation modeling suggest that brand communities built upon mass media take good influence on the relationships between customers and many other factors, such as industry, brands products. Under this situation, it may have good impact on both loyalty and trust of the brand
Kuo and Feng (2013)	Interaction characteristics, product information sharing, community interactivity, community engagement perceived benefits, learning benefits, social benefits, self-esteem benefits, hedonic benefits, Community commitment	This study suggests that with the development of “brand community engagement”, more members are likely to perceive many benefits due to interaction characteristics of brand community. In addition, enjoy, society and other things have become the dominant elements to become the promise of society. If these have the promise of society they may be against brand loyalty instead of other opponent brands
So <i>et al.</i> (2013a, b)	Brand identification service quality, perceived value, brand trust	Brand identification affects significantly brand trust, service quality and perceived value. While the four variables affect the brand loyalty
Bennett	Utilitarian function, value-expressive function, ego-defensive function, knowledge function	It is expected that there are significant relationships between the four functions of loyalty and the brand loyalty dimensions
So <i>et al.</i> (2013a, b)	Corporate associations, corporate activities, corporate values, corporate personalities, functional benefits, symbolic benefits, emotional attachment	Limited effect of corporate branding on customer emotional attachment and brand loyalty. Only corporate association, functional benefits and symbolic benefits were found to have a significant impact on emotional attachment
Viktoria	Sincerity, excitement, sophistication, ruggedness competence, employer brand affect, employer brand trust	The results indicate that employer brand trust and affect are both influenced by the brand personality trait sincerity
Thompson <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Perceived value, perceived quality brand trust, individual differences (moderator)	The results suggests that consumers, one the aspect of high in personal standards of collectivism values, are obviously more keen on a focal brand, especially the lower standards of quality of perceive and trusted brand
Krystallis and Chrysochou (2014)	Brand evidence, brand name price/value for money, core service, employee service, service escape, feelings, self-image congruence, brand hearsay controlled communication, word of mouth, publicity satisfaction (mediator ), brand attitude	Findings confirm that brand evidence might have great influence on consumer satisfaction, attitude and behavioral loyalty towards service brands
Minarti and Segoro	Customer satisfaction, switching cost, trust in brand	The finding proves that customer changing cost and satisfaction had a great impact on the loyalty of consumers. On the other hand, the brand trust will not have impact on the loyalty of consumers
Maheshwar	Continuance commitment, experience, affective commitment	Experience and affective commitment influence brand loyalty. Affective commitment mediates the influence of experience on broad loyalty.
Das (2014)	Retail brand personality, self-congruity, gender (moderator)	Results revealed that both retail brand personality and self-congruity constructs have positive impacts on store loyalty and gender significantly moderates these impacts
Balakrishnan <i>et al.</i> (2014)	Online Word of Mouth (E-WOM), online communities, online advertisement	The result indicated that the online marketing communications, specifically, EWOM, online communities and online advertisement are effective in promoting brand loyalty and product purchase intention through company website and social media platforms
Lee <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Simplicity, reduction, organization, integration, prioritization, interactivity, perceived control, perceived responsiveness, nonverbal information, perceived personalization, usability, satisfaction, brand trust	The findings of the study confirm that simplicity and interactivity are two significant determinants of mobile phone usability and that interface simplicity is an important precondition for positive interactivity and usability experience. Our findings also show that usability is a distal determinant of brand loyalty, exerting its influence indirectly through the mediators of satisfaction and trust

Table 1: Continue

Sources	Influencing factors	Summary of findings
Cho <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Awareness of manufacturer's name product-quality perception product quality inferences (extrinsic cues) product quality inferences (Intrinsic cues) perceived risk financial functional risks psychological risks rice-value perception price sensitivity value sensitivity behavioral characteristics exploration deal proneness retailer brand attitude national brand attitude	The results suggests that it may have positive effect on attitudes towards retail brands in the case of Korean whose manufacturer supplied the retail brand on producing package products, although the company fails to mitigate the perceived risks where customers generally hold towards the retailing brand products
Luo <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Social network community engagement impression management brand use, consumer loyalty consumer other consumer, community commitment	Social network, community engagement, impression management and brand use positively influence consumer-other consumer's relationships and only social network and community engagement positively influence consumer-brand relationships The consumer-brand-consumer triad relationships could significantly enhance brand loyalty directly as well as indirectly through community commitment
Dwivedi (2015)	Consumer brand engagement, vigor, dedication, absorption, involvement with category, brand usage experience	The results support the three-dimensional factor structure of consumer brand engagement. Brand engagement not only exerts a significant impact on loyalty intentions but also explains significantly more variation in the outcome in addition to the variation explained jointly by value, quality and satisfaction
Hosseini <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Service performance, brand association, quality of experience	Service experience, brand association and quality of experience have significant effect on the brand loyalty
Sasmita and Suki (2015)	Brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand image	Empirical results via multiple regressions authenticated that brand awareness predominantly affects brand equity among young consumers. These young consumers get input and awareness of the particular product or brand from the social media. They can clearly recognize the particular product or brand in comparison to competing products or brands and know how it looks and its characteristics from the social media
Torres <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Perceived quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty	The results suggest that the positive effects of perceived quality and brand awareness on brand loyalty. The relationship between the two variables and brand equity is mediated by brand loyalty
Pedeliento <i>et al.</i> (2016)	Brand attachment, brand self-congruity, brand reliability, product attachment, product-self congruity, product reliability product irreplaceability	Brand self-congruity and brand reliability affect brand attachment. Similarly, product-self congruity and product reliability affect product attachment both brand and product attachment affects brand loyalty. product irreplaceability was found to be a direct driver of brand loyalty
Drennan <i>et al.</i> (2015)	Product knowledge, product, experience, brand satisfaction, brand trust, brand love	The five variables have significant effect on the brand loyalty
Veloutsou (2015)	Brand evaluation, trust, satisfaction, brand relationship	The findings revealed that the strength of the consumer brand relationship is a very strong predictor of brand loyalty. They also suggested that brand relationship does not moderate the relationship between brand trust, satisfaction and brand loyalty but it mediates the link amongst these constructs

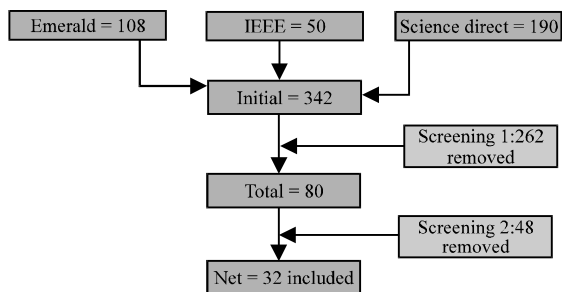


Fig. 1: Process of selecting related studies

**Influencing factors of brand loyalty:** The purpose of reviewing the existing framework is also to identify the factors that have been used by other researchers in developing their framework. It is found that factors that affect the brand loyalty are varied. While some of the researchers followed the traditional predictors of loyalty such as perceived value, perceived quality and trust (Matzler *et al.*, 2008; Aurier, 2012; So *et al.*, 2013a, b; Thompson *et al.*, 2014; Torres *et al.*, 2015) while others have extended the scope of loyalty and incorporated factors related to personality trait such as peacefulness,

sincerity, sophistication, love (Lin, 2010; Drennan *et al.*, 2015). Some studied the individual factors that are related to the perception of the customers while others emphasized the factors related to the brand itself such as quality, value, etc. Table 1 presents a summary of the reviewed articles that have investigated influencing factors. It shows researchers, years, country, independent variables, dependent variables, sample, methods, tools of analysis and result.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The findings of this study are based on the 32 articles that have been reviewed. A frequency analysis was conducted by extracting the most important factors from the 32 article (Table 2). Some variables carry similar meaning and different wording such as perceived quality and service quality. Thus, these factors were combined to form one variable. After extracting the factors, a frequency analysis was conducted to identify the most frequent and commonly used factors by previous studies. Table 2 demonstrates the most frequently researched factors.

It can be seen that trust and perceived quality which are the traditional predictors of brand loyalty have been researched most frequently in the previous studies. This indicates the importance of the variables and the validity of using them as predictors of brand loyalty. New variables have emerged due to the development of technology and the changes in customer’s behavior. These include satisfaction, benefits of using the product, brand awareness, commitment to the brand, switching cost between brands and substitute products, attitude towards brand the brand experience and the perceived value (De Wulf *et al.*, 2001).

These factors have emerged due to the incorporation of theories and models to deal with different aspects of brand loyalty such as the online brand loyalty and the offline one. The factors that have been extracted could be related or attributed to the afore-mentioned theories such as the theory of planned behavior and the technology acceptance model which linked the attitude to the behavioral intention and to brand loyalty as well as the porter five forces model which assumes that switching cost is an indicator for the decision of the customers. Switching cost also operationalized and conceptualized as perceived behavior control in many previous studies. Therefore, the incorporation of switching cost in the present study is supported by both porter five forces and the theory of planned behavior. Last but not least the service quality model assumes that product quality is a key to the satisfaction. Once the customer is satisfied, they trust the brand and this leads ultimately to brand loyalty.

**Table 2: Most frequently researched factors**

Factors	Frequency	Rank
Brand trust	14	1
Perceived quality/service quality	7	2
satisfaction	8	3
Benefits/perceived usefulness	6	4
Brand awareness/advertisement	5	5
Commitment	5	6
Price/cost/switching cost	4	7
Attitude	3	8
Brand experience	3	9
Perceived value	3	10

**CONCLUSION**

To conclude the study reviewed the related academic studies on brand loyalty and particularly the influencing factors of brand loyalty. It started with the introduction of the evolution of brand loyalty research, followed by the definitions of brand and brand loyalty with the dimensions of brand loyalty further elaborated. After revisiting the grounded theories of brand loyalty research, it consolidated the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) and the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and found that the core antecedents of brand loyalty lie in the link of attitude-behavior intention-brand loyalty. Following this string it selected the most related studies and extracted the most frequently researched influencing factors. Researchers hoped that future study would accordingly identify the interrelationship amongst those factors and establish conceptual framework to better guide practitioners in rationalizing market strategy.

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