The Relationship among Perceived Value, User Satisfaction, Brand Trust, and Loyalty in Mobile Phone Context

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Abstract

Understanding the value that customers perceive in an offer, creating value for them, and managing it over time have long been recognized as essential elements of a firm's business strategy. Identifying what an individual customer seeks from a service also helps a firm with formulating its value proposition. The purpose of this paper is to extend this line of research to consider user satisfaction, brand trust, as mediating variables in the context of using mobile phone that relate customers perceived value and brand loyalty. It is also to investigate the roles of product knowledge and self-efficacy on the constructs.

Thus, this study investigates the importance of sub-dimensions of perceived value and brand loyalty. The main findings show that the positive linkage between satisfaction, brand trust, and brand loyalty in the mobile phone users is substantiated.

Keywords: Perceived Value, User Satisfaction, Brand Trust, Brand Loyalty, Mobile Phone

1. Introduction

Effective marketing requires good knowledge of the underlying needs and value perceptions of the specific user segments. Understanding the customer's perceived value have long been recognized as essential elements of a firm's business strategy [1]. Measuring customer perceived value is essential in assessing current services and for the development of further ones, because customer segments may have different motives to use services and thus perceive different value in them [2]. Customer value is regarded as a critical strategic tool to attract and retain customers [3].

Moreover, perceived value is recognized as being an important indicator in predicting certain consumer behaviors, and, as such, numerous researchers in the field of marketing have endeavored to examine its characteristics and applications [4]. Therefore, marketers should understand how individuals perceive the value of their mobile phones through the ways that it is contextually situated in their lives [5].

On the other hand, the concept of customer satisfaction has received much research attention in recent years. Previous empirical research has focused primarily on satisfaction, trust, and loyalty as the key ingredients for successful long-term customer relationships. In this sense, this paper aims to extend this line of research to consider user satisfaction, brand trust, as mediating variables in the context of using mobile phone that relate

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customer value and behavioral and attitudinal loyal intentions.

2. Literature Review and Hypothesis Development

2.1. Perceived Value

Sheth *et al*. [6] framework was used as a foundation for this study, as it contains both the utilitarian and hedonic view of consumption by including goal oriented consumption in functional value as well as the emotional aspects of hedonic consumption. The five value dimensions which have been identified by them are functional, social, emotional, epistemic and conditional value. Based on research about utilitarian versus hedonic consumption experiences, this study employs three out of the five dimensions proposed in the context of mobile phone using. These dimensions include the functional, emotional, social, and epistemic value. Additionally, guarantee value (such as maintain product performance, after service *etc.*) is employed in this study.

Babin *et al*. [7] used a review of prior literature and focus groups to develop a scale to measure hedonic and utilitarian shopping values and found two factors (utilitarian and hedonic). Therefore, perceived values were divided into two parts in this study; utilitarian value (*e.g.*, functional value, guarantee value) and hedonic value (*e.g.*, emotional value, epistemic value, and social value).

2.1.1. Utilitarian Value: Functional value is "the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity for functional, utilitarian, or physical performance" and represents value derived from effective task fulfillment [6]. The importance of a product's function is perceived as the major determinant of a buying decision [8].

Product guarantee value is similar to the functional value, but functional value is focused on the performance of the product itself. On the other hand, product guarantee value is focused on the after service concept that is required in order to maintain the performance and function of the product. In particular, the Korean consumers tend to choose the brand which taking into account the rapidity and accessibility of after service in the case of mobile phone. In short, mobile phone users may primarily perceive guarantee value rather than the functional value. Therefore, this study distinguishes guarantee value from functional value.

2.1.2. Hedonic Value: Norman [9] maintains that the business environment has drastically changed, as have consumers' desires to obtain the functional, as well as the hedonic aspects of a product. Emotional value is acquired when a product/service arouses feelings or affective states [10]. Emotional value is defined as "the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's capacity to arouse curiosity, provide novelty, and/or satisfy a desire for knowledge" [6].

Epistemic value relates to experienced curiosity, novelty or gained knowledge. The primary reason for purchasing may be curiosity about a new product [6]. The use of converged products may provide novelty and curiosity, thereby satisfying consumers' knowledge-seeking aspirations [11]. Consumers always try to seek for the novelty through the products and services; this is a fundamental consumer behavior.

Social value refers to social approval and the enhancement of self-image among other individuals [12], defined as "the utility derived from the product's ability to enhance social self-concept" [13] and "the perceived utility acquired from an alternative's association with one or more specific social groups" [6]. If the individual is convinced of the social approval of the purchase this will bring him/her a positive value [10].

2.2. User Satisfaction

Customer perceived value is high when they have positive evaluations of and

affection for the product, which is consistent with the result of the well-known customer satisfaction index model [14]. The proposed relationship between perceived value and satisfaction is supported by value disconfirmation experience when a customer expects to receive benefits greater than the cost on each purchase made. There are many papers that confirm the relationship customer value and user satisfaction [15]. Consequently, we propose hypotheses as following:

H1a: Utilitarian value will have a positive effect on user satisfaction.
H1b: Hedonic value will have a positive effect on user satisfaction.

2.3. Brand Trust

Trust is at the core of the value that a strong brand provides to its consumers because it enables them to understand the offering and to face the perceived risk associated with buying and consuming the product [16]. Chen and Chang [17] posits that there is a positive relationship between perceived value and customer trust, since high level of perceived value can increase post-purchase confidence of the product.

And the importance of satisfaction in creating desirable consumer outcomes for manufacturers and retailers alike is well documented in the literature [18]. Actually, Brand satisfaction has been identified as an important antecedent of brand trust in many previous studies [19]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is established:

H2a: Utilitarian value will have a positive effect on brand trust.
H2b: Hedonic value will have a positive effect on brand trust.
H3: User satisfaction with the brand will have a positive effect on brand trust.

2.4. Brand Loyalty

Most of the marketing literature defines brand loyalty as a result of the interplay between the consumer's attitude and repeat purchase behavior [20]. Engel *et al.* [21] defined brand loyalty as the preferential, attitudinal and behavioral response toward one or more brands in a product category expressed over a period of time by a consumer.

It is currently accepted that loyalty includes two dimensions: attitudinal and behavioral. First, Attitudinal loyalty indicates a higher-order, or long-term and psychological commitment of a customer to continue a relationship with a service provider [22]. Second, Behavioral loyalty is defined as repeat patronage, meaning the proportion of purchases of a specific brand [23]. Dick and Basu [24] argue that both behavioral and attitudinal loyalty are important, when emphasis is both on understanding past behaviors as well as predicting future patronage by the customer. Thus, the behavioral and attitudinal components of loyalty are used in this study. Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4a: Utilitarian value will have a positive effect on attitudinal brand Loyalty.
H4b: Hedonic value will have a positive effect on attitudinal brand Loyalty.
H5a: Utilitarian value will have a positive effect on behavioral brand Loyalty.
H5b: Hedonic value will have a positive effect on behavioral brand Loyalty.

Satisfaction is the most relevant variable in the study of customer loyalty [25]. Satisfaction is widely regarded as an antecedent of customer intention to buy, continue to use or brand loyalty, as well as word-of-mouth [26]. User satisfaction is the most efficient and least-expensive source of market communication because consumers who are satisfied with a product or service will be more likely to disseminate their favorable experiences to others [15].

On the other hand, brand trust plays a particularly important role in building long-term relationships between consumers and their goods/services providers in the presence of

high perceived risk [27]. More precisely, brand trust acts as a major antecedent of customers' loyalty commitment toward a brand. Many researchers have suggested that brand trust develops positive attitudes that increase brand loyalty [28]. Hence, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6: User satisfaction will have a positive effect on attitudinal brand Loyalty.
H7: User satisfaction will have a positive effect on behavioral brand Loyalty.
H8: Brand trust will have a positive effect on attitudinal brand Loyalty.
H9: Brand trust will have a positive effect on behavioral brand Loyalty.

3. Research Methodology

The data used in this study were collected from university students who have experienced with using mobile phones during September 7 to 18, 2015 in Korea. A total of 395 questionnaires were returned within five days of delivery. After screening the data and eliminating the respondents with missing values, the analysis was performed with an effective sample size of 371 respondents. The respondents of this study were divided by male (n=117, 31.5 percent) and female (n=254, 68.5 percent). Major manufacture brands which users have possessed mobile phones in were as follows: SAMSUNG (n=214, 57.7%; such as Galaxy S-Series (n=128), Note-Series (n=86) *etc.*), LG (n=138, 37.2%; such as G-Series (n=116), View-Series (n=22) *etc.*), APPLE (n=19, 5.1%; such as 5s(n=12), 6s(n=5), *etc.*). Also, they are mostly found to be using SNSs (n=276, 74.4%) and Internet search (n=64, 17.3%).

The constructs in the study were measured using multi-item scales mostly adapted from the existing literature. All constructs were measured using five-point Likert scales (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). The survey questions are presented in the Table 1.

Table 1. Measurement Scales

Construct	Measurement item	Researcher
Functional value	1. The Performance of this phone is excellent. 2. The function of this phone is useful. 3. I think the superior product quality is important.	Ryu *et al*.(2012)
Guarantee value	1. After sale service is more important in mobile phone. 2. I think that the accuracy of service is very important. 3. Service procedures of this phone are not complicated.	Zhang *et al*.(2014)
Emotional value	1. Using this phone gives me pleasure. 2. Using this phone makes me feel good. 3. Using this phone provide me a various enjoyment.	Walsh and Mitchell(2010) Roig *et al*. (2006)
Epistemic value	1. I purchase this phone to test new technologies. 2. This phone provide me with a new experience 3. I purchase this phone out of curiosity.	Andrews *et al*.(2012) Pura(2005)
Social value	1. Using this phone help me to make interpersonal relationship closer. 2. Using this phone gives me social approval. 3. Using this phone makes a good impression on other people.	Hur *et al*.(2011) Sanchez-Fernandez *et al*.(2009)
User satisfaction	1. I am satisfied with this brand. 2. It is a smart decision to purchase this brand. 3. I am pleased with experience of purchasing.	Tom (2012)
Brand trust	1. This brand is very dependable. 2. This is an honest brand. 3. I rely on this brand.	Zboja and Voorhees(2006)
Attitudinal Brand loyalty	1. I use this brand I am evaluating because it is the best choice for me. 2. I intend to pay higher price in this brand. 3. I consider myself to be a loyal patron of this brand.	Kuikka and Laukkanen(2012)
Behavioral Brand loyalty	1. I intend to keep buying this brand I am evaluating. 2. I wouldn't switch to other brands, if I had a problem with this brand. 3. I intend to purchase this brand in the future.	Kuikka and Laukkanen(2012)

4. Results

4.1. Reliability and Validity of Measures

The analysis started with conducting a CFA (confirmatory factor analysis). CFA was used AMOS 18.0 with maximum likelihood estimation to assess the measurement model. Utilitarian value and hedonic value included some sub-constructs that were considered as a second-order factor in this study. Overall fit indices demonstrated a good fit with the data in Table 2, and significant t-values of each item's estimated path coefficient on its posited latent construct and high squared multiple correlations for the individual items indicated convergent validity [29]. Also, the results of the composite reliability test showed that the values of all twelve constructs used in this study exceeded the minimum requirement of 0.70, indicating that multiple measurement items were highly reliable for measuring each construct [30].

Table 2. Convergent Validity and Reliability

Construct	Variable	Estimate	Std. estimate	S.E.	C.R.	Composite reliability	AVE
Functional value	FV1	0.814	0.745	0.075	10.874		
	FV2[a]	1.000	0.701	-	-	0.811	0.589
	FV3	0.746	0.715	0.068	10.985		
Guarantee value	GV2	0.950	0.879	0.035	26.827		
	GV3[a]	1.000	0.967	-	-	0.949	0.863
	GV4	0.765	0.734	0.042	18.202		
Emotional value	EV1	0.763	0.721	0.045	16.955		
	EV2[a]	1.000	0.938	-	-	0.869	0.691
	EV3	0.754	0.712	0.050	15.070		
Epistemic value	EP1	0.901	0.794	0.056	16.115		
	EP2[a]	1.000	0.888	-	-	0.865	0.684
	EP5	0.734	0.705	0.054	13.587		
Social value	SV1	0.805	0.765	0.047	17.027		
	SV2[a]	1.000	0.844	-	-	0.873	0.697
	SV5	0.824	0.797	0.046	18.032		
User satisfaction	US2	0.868	0.834	0.034	25.664		
	US3	0.917	0.881	0.033	27.767	0.934	0.826
	US4[a]	1.000	0.927	-	-		
Brand trust	BT3	0.899	0.862	0.049	18.344	0.894	0.810
	BT4[a]	1.000	0.998	-	-		
Attitudinal loyalty	AL2	0.718	0.745	0.058	12.382	0.753	0.604
	AL3[a]	1.000	0.707	-	-		
Behavioral loyalty	BL2	0.767	0.728	0.055	13.999	0.823	0.701
	BL3[a]	1.000	0.855	-	-		

Notes: $\chi^2 = 502.86$, d.f. = 216, p = 0.000, GFI = 0.913, AGFI = 0.866, RMR = 0.040, TLI = 0.939, CFI = 0.957, RMSEA = 0.063; a: Reference variable

Further, in order to test discriminant validity, the square root of AVE (average variance extracted) should be greater than the correlation between every construct [30]. Table 3 shows that all AVEs exceeded the minimum criteria (above 0.5) [31], and all AVEs are higher than squared inter-construct correlations. This result provides evidence of discriminant validity. Therefore, all constructs are treated as separate constructs in the further analysis.

Table 3. Correlations and Squared of AVE

Construct	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)
1.Functional value	0.767								
2. Guarantee value	0.428**	0.929							
3. Emotional value	0.083	.248**	0.832						
4. Epistemic value	0.044	0.204**	0.500**	0.827					
5. Social value	0.120*	0.128*	0.548**	0.340**	0.835				
6. User satisfaction	0.112*	0.234**	0.163**	0.107*	.119*	0.909			
7. Brand Trust	0.233**	0.194**	0.032	0.010	0.084	0.498**	0.900		
8. Attitudinal loyalty	0.127*	0.136**	0.222**	0.147**	0.284**	0.555**	0.438**	0.777	
9. Behavioral loyalty	0.073	0.155**	0.066	0.159**	0.098	0.438**	0.485**	0.483**	0.837

Notes: The square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) values are presented on the diagonal and Correlations are below diagonal; * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$,

4.2. Structural Analysis and Hypothesis Testing

The structural model created indicated acceptable goodness-of-fit-measures in Table 4, and it shows the results of hypotheses in this study. Utilitarian value and hedonic value have the strongest effect on user satisfaction, supporting H1a and H1b. Furthermore, Utilitarian value also has a significant positive effect on user satisfaction supporting H2a. However, the path between hedonic value and brand trust is not significant and therefore H2b is rejected. User satisfaction has a significant positive effect on brand trust supporting H3. In addition, Hedonic value, user satisfaction, and brand trust have an effect on attitudinal brand loyalty. Thus, H4b, H6, and H8 are supported. On the other hand, because utilitarian value has not a significant effect on attitudinal brand loyalty, H4a is not supported. Furthermore, the path between hedonic value and behavioral brand loyalty is not significant and therefore H5b is rejected. However, utilitarian value, user satisfaction and brand trust have a significant positive effect on behavioral brand loyalty, supporting H5a, H7, and H9.

Table 4. Results of Structural Analysis

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate	Std. estimate	S.E.	C.R.	Result
H1a	Utilitarian value → User satisfaction	0.423	0.323	0.092	4.579**	Supported
H1b	Hedonic value → User satisfaction	0.224	0.173	0.068	3.274**	Supported
H2a	Utilitarian value → Brand trust	0.150	0.139	0.061	2.459*	Supported
H2b	Hedonic value → Brand trust	0.013	0.012	0.050	0.264	Rejected
H3	User satisfaction → Brand trust	0.374	0.453	0.042	8.799**	Supported
H4a	Utilitarian value → Attitudinal loyalty	0.083	0.068	0.071	1.172	Rejected
H4b	Hedonic value → Attitudinal loyalty	0.254	0.213	0.065	3.887**	Supported
H5a	Utilitarian value → Behavioral loyalty	0.176	0.139	0.075	2.352*	Supported
H5b	Hedonic value → Behavioral loyalty	0.063	0.050	0.064	0.972	Rejected
H6	User satisfaction → Attitudinal loyalty	0.501	0.543	0.059	8.419**	Supported
H7	User satisfaction → Behavioral loyalty	0.415	0.430	0.059	7.068**	Supported
H8	Brand trust → Attitudinal loyalty	0.227	0.204	0.062	3.646**	Supported
H9	Brand trust → Behavioral loyalty	0.404	0.346	0.064	6.330**	Supported

Notes: χ^2 = 513.11, d.f. = 234, p = 0.000, GFI = 0.907, AGFI = 0.863, RMR = 0.044, TLI = 0.942, CFI = 0.957, RMSEA = 0.062; * $p<0.05$, ** $p<0.01$

5. Discussion and Conclusion

The main purpose of the study is to find out the positive linkage between perceived value, brand trust, and brand loyalty. In the theoretical section of the paper, five

dimensions of perceived values of mobile phone are identified. The results show that utilitarian value and hedonic value are positively related to user satisfaction. These results suggest that the high perceived value than to increase the satisfaction. In other words, utilitarian value and hedonic value plays a crucial role to enhance customer satisfaction. Thus, marketers should focus on developing customer value in the perspective of customer.

Utilitarian value has a significant positive effect on brand trust and behavioral brand loyalty, but hedonic value doses not. The findings demonstrate that utilitarian value is more important than hedonic value in establishing brand trust and behavioral brand loyalty. Hence, marketers should encourage attributes of utilitarian value including function and guarantee of mobile phone. In addition, the positive linkage between satisfaction, brand trust, attitudinal brand loyalty, and behavioral brand loyalty is substantiated. This means that user satisfaction has a stronger influence on brand trust and brand loyalty. Thus, marketers should concentrate their efforts on user satisfaction to enhance brand trust and brand loyalty.

Some choices made during this research may limit the generalization of the findings. First, since this research concentrated on the mobile phone market, the results may not be applicable to different industries. Second, the fact that the data were gathered on a non-random sample of university students for a specific mobile phone brand may affect the findings. In addition, the participants were from Korea. To generalize the findings of this study, more diversified random samples across region and age are suggested. There are also some methodological limitations that have to be taken into consideration when evaluating the results of this study. Utilitarian value, hedonic value, and brand loyalty constructs are truly second-order factor or not, thus encouraging future research on the topic.

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