

An Empirical Study: Impact of Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) On Brand loyalty

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ABSTRACT

Objective: This current study has done to investigate the relationship between integrated marketing communications (IMC) and loyalty to brand in view point of customers of detergent industries companies In Karaj City. **Methodology:** The statistical population in this study is consists of customers in detergent companies In Karaj City which 384 people is as sample size of customers, by using the Cochran formula with method of available and simple random sampling were selected. For collecting data by method of Questionnaires were used, questionnaires selected in this study were standard. **Results:** Data with statistical programs in both descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed. The reliability of questionnaires with Cronbach's alpha coefficient was calculated and these coefficients for questionnaires integrated marketing communications and brand loyalty respectively was equal to 0.788, 0.754 and 0.717. All Hypotheses at level of 95% confidence were confirmed. **Conclusion:** The results of the Minor hypotheses showed that sale promotion on brand loyalty in the first rank, advertising on brand loyalty in second rank, public relations on brand loyalty in third rank, direct marketing on brand loyalty in fourth rank and the last rank have located.

1. Introduction

One of the main problems that today's marketing is facing, is its increasing decomposition. Since past years, modern or classic marketing has been completed by using modern marketing method and tools. Modern methods of marketing and customer management provide new facilities for modern or classic management tools. One of the important characteristics of modern marketing is that communication is not one sided and everything is in reciprocal communication. This problem is not only considered a challenge for companies, but also integrated marketing models provide the possibility which in addition to classic collective marketing, new markets can be developed, in which suppliers and Customers directly communicate with each other and provide their required products.

The first step in creating a brand in every business is providing a safe ground for establishing effective communication with Customers. Communication with Customers in marketing field has always had a special stature. Today world successful businesses have reached the conclusion that to achieve success one must be able to establish long term relations with Customers. As establishing long term relations, will be the foundations of creating a brand. One of the footstones of creating a brand is establishing marketing integrated communication. Therefore, in general integrated marketing communications is very effective in establishing Customers' loyalty and illustration. Brand is an understanding which is established in the customer's mind based on his previous experiences of product use. Which means when a communication with a customer is established through marketing integrated communication, an understanding is formed in their minds that are called Brand. Therefore, it will be a mistake if the mark or the trademark that is printed on the product is considered brand. Brand is an understanding that is developed in the mind and heart of the customer and the logo on the product consist a part of it.

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1.1 Research problem

Loyalty to a brand is indicated by the existence of a customer's positive view toward a brand, product, service or a seller. Development of competitive atmosphere between detergent industries shows the necessity of deep studies regarding their brands. Meanwhile, loyalty to a brand is of increased importance considering the competitive atmosphere. Therefore, it is necessary that these industries be completely aware of their competition brand and customer's mentality and their communication with them for promoting their brand. Nowadays, more than ever organizations require efficient and practical methods for establishing communication with their Customers. Essentially, integrated marketing communications is an activity for uniting all communicational, participation and messages expansion tools for establishing mutual communication with contacts and the purpose for a new and modern method (Pickton 2001). Integrated marketing communications is after maximizing [positive messages and minimizing negative messages that is sent regarding organization's trademark loyalty. However, this is only one of the purposes of companies' usage of marketing integrated marketing; When they are used for establishing long term relations, they still seek to construct and augment brand's loyalty so that with establishing loyalty toward brand, become profitable and increase stockholders' fortunes value (Rolly, 2004). So far, we investigated the marketing integrated communication, brand loyalty with or without other variables. But so far, we have not investigated simultaneous relation between these three variables. In the current research the purpose is investigating simultaneous relation between these three variables, based on which it can be said that the research, in addition to explaining the relationship of integrated marketing communications and brand's loyalty, this question will be answered, that how is the relationship of integrated marketing communications and brand's loyalty?

1.2 Research Objectives

1.2.1 Main Objectives

Identifying the relationship between IMC and brand's loyalty, in point of view customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.

1.2.2 Minor Objectives

- 1-Identifying the relationship between advertisement and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.
- 2-Identifying the relationship between public relations and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.
- 3-Identifying the relationship between direct marketing and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.
- 4-Identifying the relationship between sale promotion and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

1.3.1 Main Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between Integrated Marketing Communications (IMC) and brand's loyalty, in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.

1.3.2 Minor Hypothesis

- 1-There is significant relationship between advertisement and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.
- 2-There is significant relationship between public relations and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.
- 3-There is significant relationship between direct marketing and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.
- 4-There is significant relationship between sale promotion and loyalty to brand in point of view Customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.

1.4 Literature Review

Hawshenas & Radfar (2015) in a research titled "Internet's effect integrated marketing communications on Iran publication industry" showed that, information and communication technology in recent years in cyberspace had important effects and changes on social and economic life of individuals. Internet is not an exception. Internet provides many opportunities such interaction and customization and Customers and organizations are able to use them. The fact that organizations are not the sole source of information should not be ignored. Internet provides a huge mass of information and communication and interaction possibility between individuals and Customers. Main purpose of the research is finding the answer to this question: <<how can we combine internet with informational activities of an organization through a successful marketing, in a way that specific synergy in Iran's publication industry is achieved.

Dehqani Soltani & Co (2013) in a research titled "Structural equations modeling approach in explaining the effect experience, trust and loyalty to a brand in brand's special value" showed that, today in global market powerful trademarks come first. Maybe trademarks are important relational tool for managing relations with Customers in companies. This research was conducted with the purpose of investigating the effect of experience, trust, and loyalty to brand on Barez ties in Kerman. Statistical population in this research is all Barez tires consumers in Kerman simple sampling method is used to obtain sample mass. Information measuring and collecting tool is standard questionnaire in this research which for its final investigation Cronbach alpha coefficient was used. This current research, in terms of purpose was an applied research and also in terms of type of method was descriptive – correlation study (Reid, M., 2002). We used Klomogrov-Sminov tests to analyze the data obtained from the questionnaires. LISREL and SPSS of conformational factor analysis and structural equation modeling present in software packets indicate that experience, trust, and loyalty to brand have meaningful effect on Barez tire special value in Kerman. While the brand's loyalty factor has relatively higher effect in comparison with other factors.

Dehdashti, Shahrokh & Co (2012) in a research called "investigating brand's social identity viewpoint and its effect on loyalty expansion to brand (case study: Kaleh Dairy products production company)" showed that in recent years, discussion and investigation regarding brand has found a special stature in scientific and academic circles and in business. Several researchers and managers have reached the conclusion that the most valuable possession of a company for marketing process improvement is brand and branding knowledge. Despite this, Brand's identity concept which is an inner-organization

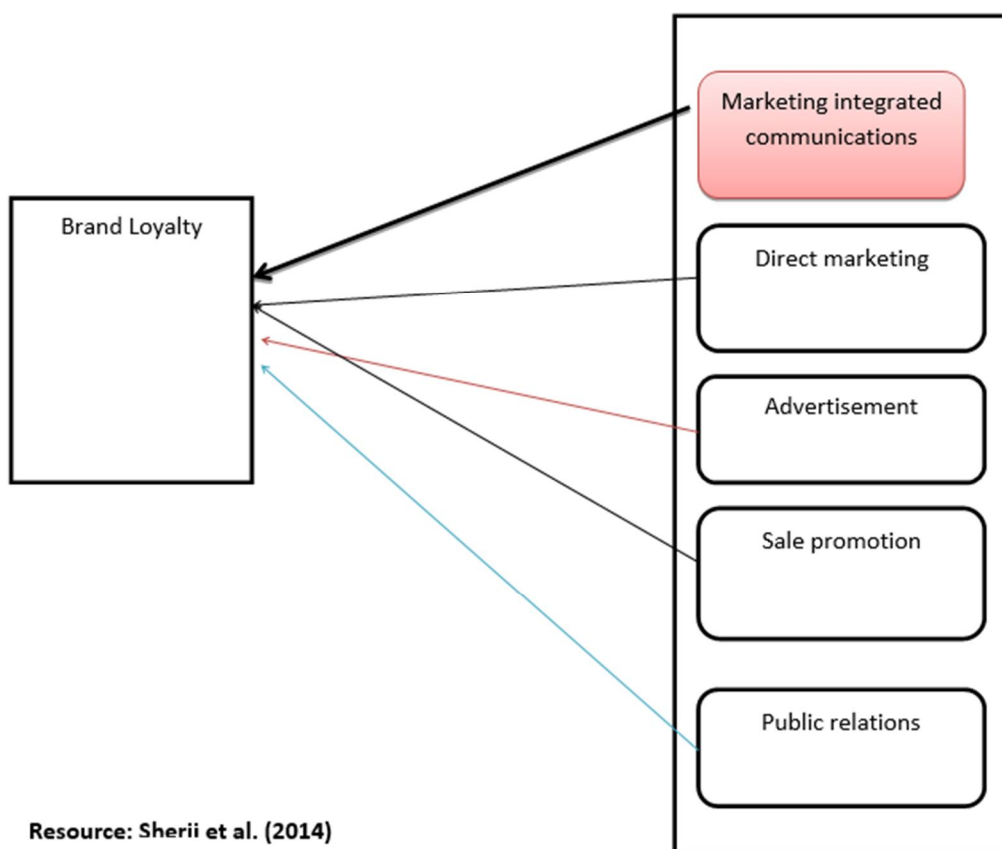
factor and is one of the most important discussions in marketing and brand, have been considered to a lesser degree (Chen, C. et al., 2007). Accordingly, current study is conducted with the purpose of investigating the effect of brand's identity on loyalty to brand expansion in detergent industry (dairy products). In present research Kaleh brand (in relation with Kaleh dairy products manufacturing company) which is a well-known brand across Iran is selected for the study. Therefore, all the Customers of Kaleh in Tehran metropolis as statistical population, and a sample of 475 individuals were selected. This project is a survey and questionnaires were used to gather information. To analyze the data and model confirmation CFA and conformational factor analysis (SEM) of structural equation modeling methods were used. Research findings indicated a positive effect of brand's identity on loyalty to brand and their relationship. Brand and strong identity causes the formation of long term relations between Customers and companies and leads to loyalty.

Kalantarzadeh in 2011 conducted a research titled "reasons of company's unsuccessfulness in Iran in achieving a strong name and mark and investigating the Customers in respect to Iranian products". As a result of interviewing the experts and investigating research's hypothetical foundations, reasons effective in Iranian trademarks unsuccessfulness were identified.

Sherij & Co finding (2014) in a research titled the relationship of integrated marketing communications and technology's influence and brand's special value showed that there is a positive relationship between marketing communication and brand's loyalty.

Prased and Sathi in a research in (2009) titled marketing communication effects on company's competitiveness in distrust conditions showed that the integrated marketing communications has a meaningful relationship company's competitiveness power by affecting Customers view in respect to company's brand.

Ai Lin (2010) conducted a study titled <<the relationship customer's identity adjective, trademark identity and loyalty to trademark>> which reached this conclusion that there is a positive and meaningful relationship between extrovert personality characteristic and enthusiasm, excitement aspects of brand and there is a positive and meaningful relationship between Customers compatibility personality characteristic and enthusiasm, excitement, honesty, and personality aspects of brand (Kim, A. J. et al., 2012). Qualification, strength, rigidity, and personality aspects of brand have a meaningful and positive effect on behavioral loyalty. Also, compatibility personality characteristic and experiencing tendency have a meaningful positive effect on outlook loyalty and behavioral loyalty.



2. Materials and Methods

2.1 Research Methodology

This current research, according to the purpose is an applied research and also according to type of method is descriptive – Correlational Research.

2.2 Statistical population and sample size and sampling method

The statistical population in this study is consists of Customers and employees in the detergent industries companies in Karaj city. The sampling method is available and simple random sampling method. Statistical population of the research is Customers of detergent industry companies of Karaj city are limitless. Therefore, in this research, we used Cochran formula for sampling which reduces the sample number to 384 for available Customers.

2.3 Analysis method

Data obtained from questionnaire distribution in two sections of descriptive and deductive were considered and analyzed: In order to analyze research data and investigating the effect of independent variables on dependent we used regression test (Brunello, A., 2013). For model credibility, we have used structural equation model (SEM).

2.4 Research hypothesis test using structural equation modeling

For evaluating effective factors on loyalty to brand and determining the coefficients of each of the effective variables on them, we have used by structural equation modeling (SEM) model through LISERL software. All of the current hypotheses of this study were confirmed, because T path coefficients of all the variables were more than 1.96. As a result, all of the hypotheses were confirmed (Naeem, B., 2013). It can be seen that, the integrated marketing communications with (effect coefficient of 0.93 and significant number of 10.58) had effect on brand's loyalty. Sale promotion with (effect coefficient of 0.76 and significant number of 5.91) on loyalty to brand in the First rank, advertisement with (effect coefficient of 0.71 and significant number of 3.01) on loyalty to brand in the second rank, public relations with (effect coefficient of 0.66 and significant number of 2.98) on loyalty to brand in the third rank, direct marketing with (effect coefficient of 0.54 and significant number of 2.34) on loyalty to brand in the fourth and the last rank have located.

Table 1. The results of Research hypotheses test by structural equation method (SEM)

Research Hypotheses		Path Direction	Path Coefficient	T	Rank
Main Hypothesis		IMC and loyalty to brand	0.93	10.58	-
Minor Hypothesis	H1	advertisement and loyalty to brand	0.71	3.01	5
Minor Hypothesis	H2	public relations and loyalty to brand	0.66	2.98	6
Minor Hypothesis	H3	direct marketing and loyalty to brand	0.54	2.34	8
Minor Hypothesis	H4	sale promotion and loyalty to brand	0.78	5.91	2

3. Discussion and results

3.1 Integrated marketing communications status based on customers in detergent industries companies in Karaj

According to research findings, Customers of detergent industries companies of Karaj in case of integrated marketing communications have suitable status. These companies in integrated marketing communications had (Mean of 3.706 and standard deviation of 0.394) and T test has confirmed the significance of the findings (Barker, R., 2013). Among of dimensions, direct marketing with (Mean of 4.014 and standard deviation of 0.586) in the first rank, sale promotion with (Mean of 3.694 and standard deviation of 0.585) in the second rank, public relations with (Mean of 3.595 and standard deviation of 0.847) in the third rank, advertisement with (Mean of 3.563 and standard deviation of 0.273) in the fourth rank have located.

3.2 Status of loyalty to brand in view of point of customers in detergent industries companies in Karaj city

According to research findings, Customers of detergent industries companies in case of loyalty to brand have suitable status. These companies in loyalty to brand had (Mean of 3.196 and standard deviation of 0.731) and T test has confirmed the significance of the findings.

3.3 Conclusion of hypotheses

3.3.1 Main Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between integrated marketing communications and brand's loyalty, in point of view customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city.

The findings of second main hypothesis indicate that there is significance correlation between integrated marketing communications and loyalty to brand. The Results have indicated that there was a direct and significant effect between integrated marketing communications and brand's loyalty among Respondents of detergent industry companies in Karaj city. Also the results of path analysis by LISERL software showed that, integrated marketing communications and loyalty to brand with (factor loading of 0.93 and meaningfulness number of 10.58) was confirmed. As a result, it can be said that integrated marketing communications and loyalty to brand in detergent industries Respondents of Karaj city are effective. The Result of this Hypothesis is consistent with research findings of Sherij et al. (2014).

3.3.2 Minor Hypothesis

3.3.2.1 The First Minor Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between advertisement and loyalty to brand in point of view customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city. The findings of the fifth minor hypothesis indicate that there is significance correlation between advertisement and loyalty to brand. The Results have indicated that there was a direct and significant effect between advertisement and loyalty to brand among Respondents of detergent industry companies in Karaj city. Also, the result of path analysis by LISERL software showed that, advertisement and brand loyalty with (factor loading of 0.71 and meaningfulness number of 3.01) was confirmed (Reid, M., 2005). As a result, it can be said that advertisement and loyalty to brand in detergent industries Respondents of Karaj city are effective. The Result of this Hypothesis is consistent with Sherij et al. (2014) research findings.

3.3.2.2 The Second Minor Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between public relations and loyalty to brand in point of view customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city. The findings of the sixth minor hypothesis indicate that there is significance correlation between public relations and loyalty to the brand. The Results have indicated that there was a direct and significant effect between public relations and brand loyalty among respondents of detergent industry companies in Karaj city. Also, the result of path analysis by LISERL software showed that, public relations and brand loyalty with (factor loading of 0.66 and meaningfulness number of 2.98) was confirmed. As a result, it can be said that public relations and brand loyalty in detergent industries respondents of Karaj city are effective. The Result of this Hypothesis is consistent with Sherij et al. (2014) research findings.

3.3.2.3 The Third Minor Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between direct marketing and loyalty to brand in point of view customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city. The findings of the seventh minor hypothesis indicate that there is significance correlation between direct marketing and brand loyalty. The Results have indicated that there was a direct and significant effect between direct marketing and brand loyalty among Respondents of detergent industry companies in Karaj city. Also, the result of path analysis by LISERL software showed that, direct marketing and brand loyalty with (factor loading of 0.54 and meaningfulness number of 2.34) was confirmed. As a result, it can be said that direct marketing and brand loyalty in detergent industries Respondents of Karaj city are effective. The Result of this Hypothesis is consistent with Sherij et al. (2014) research findings.

3.3.2.4 The Fourth Minor Hypothesis

There is significant relationship between sale promotion and loyalty to brand in point of view customers of detergent industries companies in Karaj city. The findings of the eighth minor hypothesis indicate that there is significance correlation between sale promotion and brand loyalty. The Results have indicated that there was a direct and significant effect between sale promotion and brand loyalty among Respondents of detergent industry companies in Karaj city. Also, the result of path analysis by LISERL software showed that, sale promotion and brand loyalty with (factor loading of 0.78 and meaningfulness number of 5.91) was confirmed. As a result, it can be said that sale promotion and brand loyalty in detergent industries Respondents of Karaj city are effective. The Result of this Hypothesis is consistent with Sherij et al. (2014) research findings.

4. Conclusion

All the hypotheses of this research were confirmed. The results showed that the integrated marketing communications with (effect coefficient of 0.93 and significant number of 10.58) had effect on brand's loyalty. Sale promotion with (effect coefficient of 0.76 and significant number of 5.91) on loyalty to brand in the First rank, advertisement with (effect coefficient of 0.71 and significant number of 3.01) on loyalty to brand in the second rank, public relations with (effect coefficient of 0.66 and significant number of 2.98) on loyalty to brand in the third rank, direct marketing with (effect coefficient of 0.54 and significant number of 2.34) on loyalty to brand in the fourth and the last rank have located.

First, all the activities of integrated marketing communications including advertisement, public relations, sell advancement and direct marketing, actually positively affect Organization's brand and contacts view. Due to the America's advertisement agency's definition of integrated marketing communications (1989), it can be said that the concept of marketing communications is compiled for reflecting the most cohesion among communicational tools. Also, based on Duncan's statement (1993) fundamental concept of marketing integrated communications, is achieving coherent cooperation and planning. Duncan (2002) in his definition mentioned that, integrated marketing communications is a reciprocal process for establishing profitable relations with Customers and other strategic subsidiaries, which the control of all the messages sent to this group and purposeful discussion for achieving cooperation and max efficiency, are essential to organization's success. Second, integrated marketing communications output, has a significant effect on strength and capability of organization's brand. As Duncan (1999) in evaluation of output mentioned, integrated marketing communications application affects awareness of trademark, outlook toward trademark, trademark's strength and its loyalty. Also, Shimp (2000) sated that the necessity of cooperation and

communicational tools cohesiveness is important for gaining a strong trademark. In this regard Young Chi (2002) also in his research with evaluating hypotheses tests, reached the conclusion that integrated marketing communications had a significant effect on organization's brand loyalty.

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