

SMART PHONES USER'S BRAND EXPERIENCE, ATTACHMENT AND LOYALTY: SPECIAL FOCUS ON EGYPTIAN GENERATION Y AND Z

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ABSTRACT

The main focus of this research is on Egyptian generation Y and Z smart phones user's brand experience, attachment and loyalty. The main objectives of this study is to test the mediating role of brand attachment between brand experience and loyalty, introduce a new attachment typology and a tailored experiential consumer's profiles, furthermore to explore the moderating effect of the new typologies both experiential and attachment on the relationships between brand experience, personality, attachment and satisfaction with brand loyalty with special focus on young generations. Previous research did not pay attention to those theoretical and practical gaps; that is why this research is required. To reach the objectives; the research adopted a quantitative approach using cluster and regression analysis. The results indicated that relationship between brand experience and loyalty is not mediated by brand attachment, consumers are classified into six clusters according to their experiential appeals and into four clusters according to their attachment styles, the experiential clusters have moderated the relationships between brand personality, attachment, satisfaction, and loyalty while users attachment types moderates the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty. The main conclusions drawn from this study are that consumer's profiles can play an important role in moderating some branding constructs relationships, moreover; not all experiential dimensions have the same impact on brand personality, attachment and satisfaction and that brand attachment do not mediate the relationship between brand experience and loyalty. It is recommended that further research to be conducted to investigate the sequential impact of experience dimensions per country and per brand category, further research is needed to test the consumers profiles stabilities in a multi-industrial/brand settings, finally further investigations is required on Generation Z being the future consumers and users.

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INTRODUCTION

Branding has changed in the past 25 years, consumers were initially thought to be completely rational but there is another side of their consumption that includes fantasies, fun and feelings (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982), at the same time brand attachment can shape branding strategies, consumer's behaviors and resources allocations (Park *et al.*, 2010). While previous studies have contributed much to the current understanding of both brand experience and attachment and how they are linked to brand personality, satisfaction and loyalty, previous studies have focused on a wide range of consumers without special focus on generation Y and Z

consumer's experiential and attachment differences and how it impacts their behavioral outcome particularly on a technological device such as smart phones. To address these gaps, this study extends prior investigations linking brand experience, attachment, personality and satisfaction with brand loyalty while taking into account the mediating role of brand attachment as a mediator between brand experience and loyalty and the moderating role of different experiential and attachment consumer profiles in Egypt. In the next section, the investigator briefly reviews the literature of brand experience, attachment, personality, satisfaction and loyalty, next the investigator presents how the study will be approached highlighting on the methodological approach, construct measurement, sample size, sampling technique and data collection instrument and then a model will be proposed based

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on the concluded hypothesis. Afterwards, the results and analysis will be presented and followed by the conclusion.

Literature Review

This section is divided into four sections respectively. The first will cover brand experience, the second section will cover brand attachment, the third section will cover brand personality and the fourth and final section will focus on satisfaction, brand loyalty and their relationship.

Brand Experience

Schmitt (1997) summarized brand experience by what an individual sense, feel and thinks, but the latest definition capturing its essence was proposed by Barkus *et al.*, (2009), the authors defined it as “*Subjective, internal consumer responses (Sensations, feelings and cognition) and behavioral responses evoked by brand related stimuli that is part of the brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environment*”, experience can take place even when consumers are not interested in the brand as there is an indirect exposure to the brand through advertising (Hoch and Ha, 1986) and the intensity of the experience could be extraordinary (Arnould and Price, 1993) or regular. Dimensions of brand experience were identified having sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual dimension (Barkus *et al.*, 2009), and based on the dimensions; five groups of experiential consumers were identified (Holistic, Utilitarian, Hybrid, Hedonic and Action oriented) each is attracted to a single dimension of experience or a mixture (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010). Brand experience is considered as the first touch point with the brand and based on consumer's perception of the brand actions such as logo, advertising or other brand related stimulus they formulate the perception of personality, accordingly; brand experience impacts brand personality (Chang & Chieng, 2006; Barkus *et al.*, 2009; Clemenz and Brettel, 2015), also a consumer can never be satisfied unless there is an actual experience with the brand to form his evaluation resulting in attitudinal or behavioral loyalty, so brand experience impacts satisfaction and loyalty (Villiers *et al.*, 2018; Santini *et al.*, 2018; Hariyanto *et al.*, 2018), same can be argued for attachment, a consumer cannot develop an emotional bond without having an experience either directly or indirectly with the brand, accordingly, brand experience impacts brand attachment (Clemenz and Brettel, 2015; Khan and Rahman, 2016; Haryanto *et al.*, 2018), but the position of brand attachment as a mediator between brand experience and loyalty remains untested and whether or not being attached to a brand can be a path to loyalty is an unanswered question, moreover; consumers don't behave the same way and experience the brand similarly, the existence of different experiential groups should have a moderating effect on the relationships between brand personality, satisfaction and attachment on brand loyalty, accordingly; below propositions are formulated:

- H1:** Brand experience impacts brand personality.
- H2:** Brand experience impacts satisfaction.
- H3:** Brand experience impacts brand attachment.
- H4:** Brand experience directly impact brand loyalty.
- H5:** Brand attachment mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.
- H6a:** Experiential consumer profiles moderate the relationship between brand personality and loyalty.

H6b: Experiential consumer profiles moderate the relationship between satisfaction and loyalty

H6c: Experiential consumer profiles moderate the relationship between brand attachment and loyalty.

Finally a research question is proposed to explore whether or not generation Y and Z have a significant different in their experiential appeals.

Brand Attachment

Attachment theory is the result of the combined work of John Bowlby and Mary Ainsworth in the domain of the parent-infant relationship (Bretherton, 1992), it's a behavior resulting from an individual need to maintain proximity to a favored individual, the strongest emotions take place during its formation, maintenance and disruption/loss leading to security, joy or emotional distress/anxiety respectively (Bowlby, 1980). Thompson *et al.*, (2005) defined it as “*Emotion-Laden target-specific bond between a person and a specific object*”, it's emotionally exclusive expressed in affection, connection and passion. But this view was criticized as it neglected instrumental attachment and the dimensions were too specific to cover the entire range of emotions, also some emotions may fade away with time and accordingly; a new definition was proposed defining brand attachment as “*The strength of the bond connecting the brand with the self*”, brand self-connection and brand prominence emerged as two dimensions used to measure brand attachment (Park *et al.*, 2010). Studies have confirmed that brand attachment impacts brand loyalty (Nyadzayo *et al.*, 2017; Hwang *et al.*, 2018; Japutra *et al.*, 2018) and it's also impacted by satisfaction (Ammari *et al.*, 2016; Levy and Hino, 2016). Moreover; consumer's differences was also neglected in previous studies, accordingly the investigator argues that a typology of consumers based on their attachment types can be formulated, moreover; the attachment typologies should have the ability to moderate the relationship between satisfaction and brand loyalty; and brand experience and brand loyalty. Finally, exploring whether or not generation Y and Z are significantly different in their brand attachment is an unexplored area and was not covered by previous studies as far as the investigator is aware of, accordingly; the below propositions can be concluded:

- H7:** Brand attachment effects brand loyalty.
- H8:** Satisfaction positively effects brand attachment.
- H9a:** Consumers attachment profiles moderates the relationship between satisfaction and brand loyalty.
- H9b:** Consumer attachment profiles moderate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty.

Brand Personality

Aaker (1997) theoretical framework is considered as the basis of the current understanding of brand personality from its marketing perspective, she defined it as “*The set of human characteristics associated with a brand*” but due to the lack of theory verification, cross culture validation and mixing brand identity with its personality it was criticized by several studies (Azoulay and Kapferer, 2003; Austin *et al.*, 2003; Guens *et al.*, 2009). But despite of the theoretical shortfalls of Aaker (1997) scales, it is widely used, later an alternative scale was developed by Guens *et al.*, (2009) starting by identifying brand personality purely on personality theory excluding characteristics and any aspects of the brand's identity,

accordingly it was defined as “*The set of human personality traits applicable and relevant to the brand*”. The measurement of the brand personality impact revealed that it impacts brand loyalty (Molinillo *et al.*, 2017; Nikhashemi and Valaei, 2018) and satisfaction (Ong *et al.*, 2017; Nikhashemi *et al.*, 2017).

Accordingly, it can be concluded that:

H10: Brand Personality effect Brand Loyalty.

H11: Brand Personality effects Satisfaction.

Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty

Satisfaction can be viewed as an evaluative process, a response following consumer evaluation or the difference between what is expected and the actual performance of the product (Day, 1984; Westbrook and Olivier, 1991). Mano and Oliver (1993) and Oliver (1993) pointed that previous studies have focused on the cognitive side of satisfaction viz. the evaluative process and comparison preceding satisfaction and highlighted that satisfaction is a function of affection (positive or negative) and utilitarian outcomes concluding that satisfaction is a consequence of cognitive and affective judgment. In the early days, loyalty was thought to have single dimension measuring total purchase, this view was opposed as it is unable to differentiate between actual and fake loyalty (Day, 1969), led by this stream the attitudinal dimension of loyalty emerged and was considered as the second pillar or measuring brand loyalty (Dick and Basu, 1994), eventually, brand loyalty was defined as “*a deeply held commitment to rebuy or patronize a preferred product/service consistently in the future, thereby causing repetitive same-brand or same brand-set purchasing, despite situational influences and marketing efforts having the potential to cause switching behavior*” (Oliver, 1999). There are two main streams linking satisfaction to brand loyalty, the first suggests it's mainly positive and linear while the other considers it a nonlinear relationship. Studies advocates of the linear relationship concluded that satisfaction positively effects brand loyalty (Lee *et al.*, 2017; Ong *et al.*, 2017; Basit and Durrani, 2018) while the advocates on the nonlinearity suggested that it's not necessarily that satisfaction turns into loyalty such as a satisfying cup of coffee may not turn into coffee brand loyalty but it's inevitable that satisfaction is a seed to loyalty (Olivier, 1999). Accordingly it can be concluded that:

H12: Satisfaction positively effects Brand Loyalty.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The investigation adopted the survey strategy embodied in the use of self-completed questionnaire, the data was collected from five different Egyptian cities (Alexandria, Cairo, Port Said, Damietta and Elmenia), the targeted population are Egyptians living in the urban areas born between 1980 till 1994 representing generation Y and between 1995 till 2003 representing generation Z (Berkup, 2014 & Guens *et al.*, 2017). The investigation obtained 479 valid responses out of 600 from a convenient sample. The chosen focal brand is mobile smart phones, this is a technological device and an experiential one as well and it suits the chosen population being digital natives (Prensky, 2001). The unit of analysis are both individuals and groups, moreover this will be cross-sectional study.

Measurement

The measurement scale were all taken from previous studies, all with 7 point scale except for brand attachment having an 11 point scale, brand Experience was adopted from Barkus *et al.*, (2009) measured by 4 dimensions (sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual) each is measured with 3 statements, brand personality was adopted from Guens *et al.*, (2009) measured by 5 factors (responsibility, activity, simplicity, aggressiveness and emotionality), Satisfaction adopted from Oliver (1980) was measured with 5 statements, brand loyalty adopted from Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) measured by 4 statements split between attitudinal and behavioral loyalty and finally brand attachment adopted from Park *et al.*, (2010) was measured by 4 statements split between brand self-connection and brand prominence.

Pilot Study

Before moving to the main study, a pilot study over a convenient sample of 30 respondents was conducted to ensure the instrument reliability and validity. Using KMO, Item loading, AVE and Cronbach's Alpha the results indicated that all statements have succeeded to pass the cut off of each indicator except for the 1st item of the behavioral dimension of experience where Alpha was 0.581 and item loading below 0.4, and the second statement measuring satisfaction had item loading below 0.4 (Hair *et al.*, 2014), previous statements were rephrased accordingly and the investigator showed the changes to 10 random respondents within the age group of the target population to check if it's clear enough for final data collection, the respondents recommended to remove any reverse coded statements in brand experience as they were under the impression that they are being tricked rather being asked for their opinion and reverse coded statements were amended accordingly.

Proposed Model

Based on the relationships withdrawn from previous studies, a conceptual model reflecting the hypothesis was gathered in Figure 1.

RESEARCH FINDINGS

This part will reveal the results of the self-completed questionnaire. First a descriptive analysis of the sample will be expressed, followed by statistical assumptions verifications to choose the proper statistical technique, finally the results of the hypothesis will be revealed and discussed.

Descriptive Analysis

The total sample size is 479 respondents, male respondents represent 56.6% while female respondents represent 44.4%. Generation Y represent 60% of the total sample size while generation Z represent 40%. Cairo and Alexandria each represent 42.2% and 40.5% respectively of the total sample size while Elmenia, Port Said and Damietta representing 7.5%, 5.6% and 4.2% respectively. Regarding the educational level, students represented 28%, the ones holding a bachelor degree represented 51.4% while respondents holding a post graduate degree represented 20.7%. As for the marital status, single respondents represented 38.8% while married ones represented 59.5%, while both divorced and widowed respondents

represented 1.3% and 0.4% respectively. As for the variables, the mean for brand experience and personality were both 4.3, satisfaction was 5.6, brand loyalty was 4.8 while brand attachment was 6.1, it's noticed that the all the responses are leaning toward agreement.

Statistical Assumptions: The investigator started by the formal testing of normality of the research variables, Kolmogorov-Smirnov test results were significant, accordingly the investigator used the informal test of normality to verify it, and the result of the Skewness and Kurtosis were all within the limit ± 1 except for 3 items exceeded the limit, accordingly, it's concluded that the data in hand are not normal but the investigator counted on Hair *et al.*, (2014) assumptions that the investigator should only be worried about normality if the sample size is less than 200, with a sample size above 200 it can be neglected unless it leads to other statistical assumptions violations, since the sample size is 479 exceeding the recommendations of Hair *et al.*, (2014), accordingly, the investigator assumes data normality and proceeded based on parametric test of hypothesis after verifying the rest of the assumptions. Verifying the remaining statistical assumptions involves the test of multicollinearity, autocorrelation and Homoscedasticity. The results revealed that no multicollinearity exists between the independent variables as the VIF results were all in the range of 1 to 1.5, as for the autocorrelation, Durbin Watson test ranges in value from 0 to 4, a value near 2 indicates non-autocorrelation; a value toward 0 indicates positive autocorrelation; a value toward 4 indicates negative auto-correlation, upper and lower bounds for the critical values were established by Durbin and Watson and by observing the values at $K=5$ regressors, it could be noticed that $dL = 1.623$ and $dU = 1.725$, if the observed value of the test statistic is less than the tabulated lower bound, then we should reject the null hypothesis of non-auto-correlated errors in favor of the hypothesis of positive first-order autocorrelation,

since our model test results are 2.251 which is greater than 1.725, then no problem of autocorrelation. As for homoscedasticity and after checking the scatter plot, the variance of error is the same across the best fit line, accordingly, no heteroscedasticity exists.

Test of Hypothesis

Based on the statistical assumptions, the hypothesis will be tested using parametric testing embodied in the use of regression analysis. The results indicated that there is a positive significant effect of brand experience on brand personality as the corresponding coefficient is 0.620, the corresponding P-value is 0.000 ($P\text{-value} < 0.05$) and that R square is 0.334, which means that brand experience explain 33.4% of the variation in brand personality. By further testing the impact of brand experience dimensions on brand personality dimensions, the following results emerged, brand experience dimensions influences brand personality dimension: Responsibility, there is a positive significant effect of affective, and intellectual experience on responsibility as the corresponding coefficients are 0.404, 0.280 respectively and the corresponding P-values are 0.000 ($P\text{-value} < 0.05$), while sensory, and behavioral experience are shown to have an insignificant influence on responsibility. Finally, R square is 0.429, which means that brand experience explain 42.9% of the variation in responsibility. While the impact of brand experience dimensions on activity revealed that there is a significant effect of sensory, affective, and intellectual experience on activity, as the corresponding coefficients are 0.161, 0.172, 0.306 respectively and the corresponding P-values are 0.017, 0.013, 0.000 ($P\text{-value} < 0.05$) while behavioral experience had an insignificant impact, finally; R square is 0.187, which means that brand experience explain 18.7% of the variation in Activity. The multiple regression analysis of brand experience dimensions on Aggressiveness

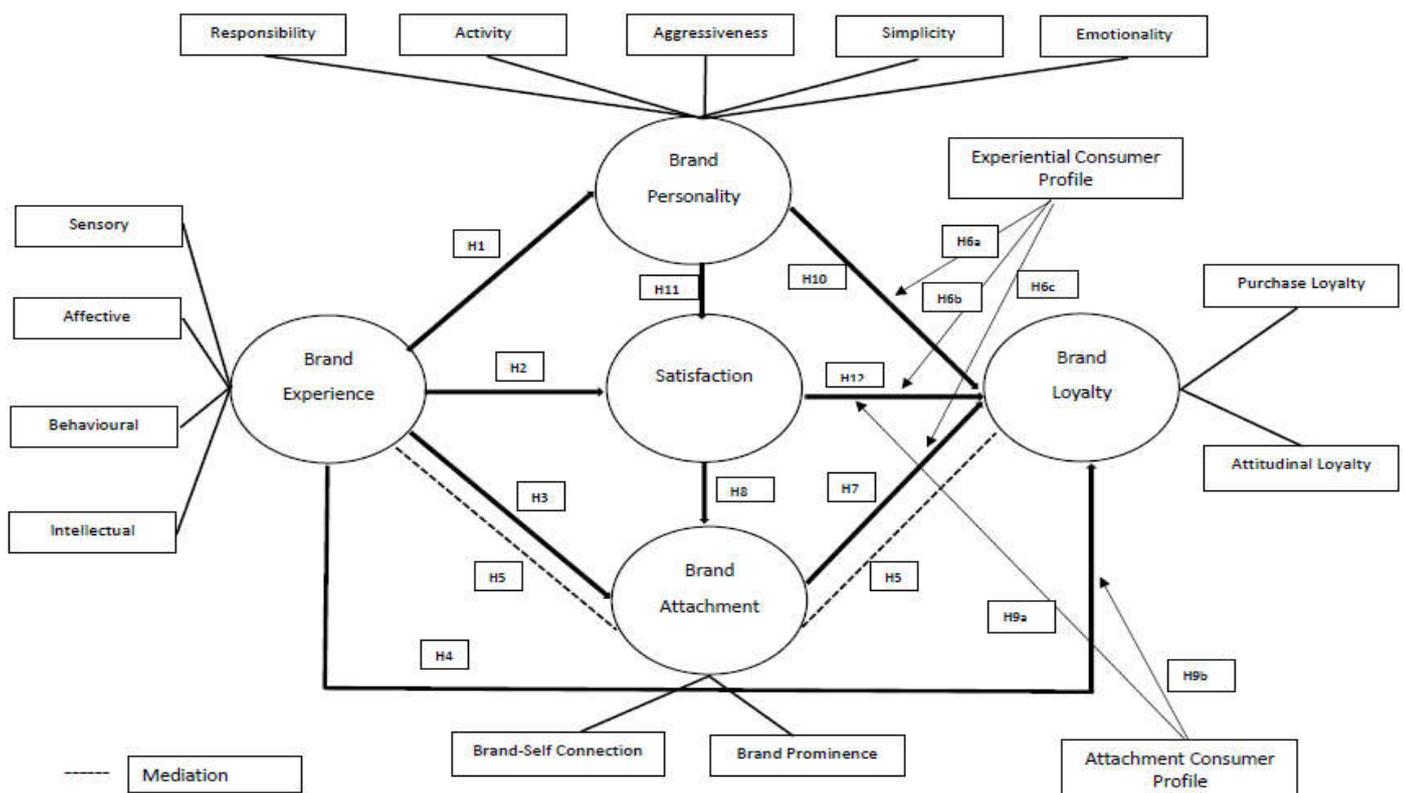


Figure 1. Proposed Model

revealed that there is a significant effect of all brand experience dimensions on aggressiveness as the corresponding coefficients are 0.227, 0.301, 0.399, 0.212 respectively and the corresponding P-values are 0.000 (P-value < 0.05) and R square is 0.479, which means that brand experience explain 47.9% of the variation in aggressiveness. The multiple regression analysis of brand experience dimensions on simplicity revealed that there is a significant effect of all brand experience dimensions on simplicity as the corresponding coefficients are 0.483, 0.283, 0.134, 0.228 respectively and the corresponding P-values 0.000, 0.000, 0.000, 0.028, 0.000 respectively (P-value < 0.05) and R square is 0.224, which means that brand experience explain 22.4% of the variation in aggressiveness. The multiple regression analysis of brand experience dimensions on emotionality revealed that there is a significant effect of all brand experience dimensions on emotionality as the corresponding coefficients are 0.286, 0.435, 0.350, 0.245 respectively and the corresponding P-values 0.000 respectively (P-value < 0.05) and R square is 0.474, which means that brand experience explain 47.4% of the variation in Aggressiveness.

Accordingly, the 1st hypothesis is supported. The overall result is partially conforming to Chang & Chieng (2006), and compatible with Barkus *et al.*, (2009) and Clemenz and Brettel (2015) results confirming that indeed brand experience has a significant effect on brand personality. The results have also indicated that not all brand experience dimensions impact all of brand personality dimensions, all perceived personality dimensions (responsibility, activity, aggressiveness, simplicity and emotionality) of the smart phone are significantly impacted by the affective and intellectual dimensions of brand experience suggesting that user's emotions that were impacted by being exposed to their smart phones is impacting how they perceive the mobile phone personality traits, accordingly through affective experience they discover how their smart phone is responsible, active, bold, simple and emotional. Same is applicable on how the intellectual experience and the user's curiosity and problem solving stimulation is impacting the user's perception of the smart phone personality dimensions. sensorial experience and stimulation significantly impact the user's perception of all the personality dimensions except responsibility indicating it's not easily establish unless its triggered by intellectual and affective experience while behavioral experience is significantly impacting all personality dimensions except responsibility and activity traits, this confirms once again that the responsibility trait can only be triggered through affective and intellectual experience, while activity seemed not to be significantly impacted by behavioral experience despite that it entails some sub traits such as dynamic.

The regression analysis of brand experience influence on satisfaction revealed that there is a positive significant effect of brand experience on satisfaction as the corresponding coefficient is 0.093 and the corresponding P-values are 0.040 (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.009, which means that brand experience explain 9% of the variation in satisfaction. By further testing the impact of brand experience dimensions on satisfaction, the results revealed that a positive significant effect of sensory, behavioral and intellectual experiences on satisfaction as the corresponding coefficients are 0.148, 0.232, 0.133 respectively and the corresponding P-values are 0.012, 0.000, 0.005 respectively as (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.052,

which means that brand experience explain 5.2% of the variation in satisfaction. Therefore, the 2nd hypothesis is supported and the results conforming to Barkus *et al.*, (2009), Clemenz and Brettel (2015), Khan *et al.*, (2016), Villiers *et al.*, (2018) and Haryanto *et al.*, (2018), despite that brand experience dimensions explains 5.2% of variations in satisfaction but it's worth pointing that only 3 dimensions of brand experience have significant effect on satisfaction indicating that consumers sensorial, behavioral and intellectual experiences with their mobile smart phones impacts their satisfaction with their mobiles. The regression analysis of brand experience on brand attachment revealed that there is a positive significant effect of brand experience on brand attachment, as the corresponding coefficient is 0.635 and the corresponding P-value is 0.000 (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.142, which means that brand experience explain 14.2% of the variation in brand attachment while the multiple regression analysis of brand experience dimensions on brand attachment revealed that there is a positive significant effect of brand experience; sensory, affective, and intellectual on brand attachment, as the corresponding coefficients are 0.386, 0.472, 0.323 respectively and the corresponding P-values are 0.000 respectively as (P-value < 0.05). On the other hand, behavioral is shown to have an insignificant influence on brand attachment as the corresponding p-values is 0.055 (P-value > 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.269, which means that brand experience explain 26.9% of the variation in brand attachment. Therefore, the 3rd hypothesis is supported and the result is conforming to the conclusion indicated by Ramaseshan and Stein (2014) and Clemenz and Brettel (2015).

The regression analysis of brand experience influence on brand loyalty revealed that there is a positive significant effect of brand experience on brand loyalty, as the corresponding coefficient is 0.554 and the corresponding P-value is 0.000 (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.253, which means that brand experience explain 25.3% of the variation in brand loyalty. It could be observed that there is a positive significant effect of brand experience; sensory, and intellectual on brand loyalty, as the corresponding coefficients are 0.508, 0.206 respectively and the corresponding P-values are 0.000 respectively as (P-value < 0.05). On the other hand, affective and behavioral are shown to have an insignificant influence on brand loyalty as the corresponding p-values is 0.099, 0.193 (P-value > 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.319, which means that brand experience explain 31.9% of the variation in brand loyalty. Therefore, the 4th hypothesis is supported and the results are conforming to Barkus *et al.*, (2009), Ramaseshan and Stein (2014), Clemenz and Brettel (2015) and Khan and Rahman (2016), and Haryanto *et al.*, (2018) but not with Morrison and Crane (2007), Iglesias *et al.*, (2010) and Francisco-Maffezzoli *et al.*, (2014), based on the results derived from this research, it seemed that this relationship is direct indicating that the relationship exclusivity to be only via mediation is not to be taken for granted. By testing the mediating effect of brand attachment between brand experience and loyalty, the results revealed that it's insignificant as the P-value is 0.273.

Therefore, the 5th hypothesis claiming that the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty is mediated by brand attachment is not supported. This relationship was never tested in any of the traced literature and based on the derived results brand attachment is not a mediator between brand

experience and brand loyalty confirming the previous hypothesis that the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty is direct in the presence of brand attachment in the context of mobile smart phones, moreover; it indicates that brand loyalty is attained without necessarily developing attachment. Before proceeding in testing H6a-b-c, the investigator reveals the results of the users experiential cluster analysis, the results reveals 6 significant clusters, users enjoying all aspects of experience moderately are referred to as “Hybrid” users; users putting a much stronger weight on the sensorial stimulations of the mobile and also intrigued by the mobile capacity to engage their intellect and problem solving, on the other hand they seemed not attracted by the brand capacity to engage them emotionally or on the behavioral level are referred to as “Semi-Inner-Directed” users; users who do not value any experiential aspect of the brand, and they only pay attention to the utilitarian value of the mobile are referred to as “Utilitarian” users, users enjoying sensorial and affective stimulations and relatively enjoy the behavioral aspect that inspires action, yet not stimulated by the brand capacity to engage them on the intellectual level are referred to as “Inner behavioral” users; users valuing every aspect of experience are referred to as “Holistic” users; finally, users enjoying how the brand is able to engage their problem solving capacity and curiosity, how the brand is impacting their life style and the brand's emotional stimulation yet they do not put much weight on the sensorial stimulation of the brand are referred to as “Outer-Semi-Inner” (Lotfy, 2018).

Based on the clusters moderation, the results revealed that experiential consumer profiles significantly moderates the relationship between brand personality and loyalty as the corresponding coefficient is -0.187 as well as P-value is less than 0.05, and satisfaction and brand loyalty as the corresponding coefficient is -0.156 as well as P-value is less than 0.05 and finally between brand attachment and loyalty as the corresponding coefficient is -0.109 as well as P-value is less than 0.05. Hence Hypothesis H6a-b-c are supported. The generated clusters were different in description and numbers from the ones generated in Italy by Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010), this indicates that different countries or different cultural zones may have different consumer's experiential profiles or may even point toward different consumer experiential profiles per product category per country. Moreover, in a research era that is characterized by being highly focused on customer experience, the existence of such consumer typology may result in differential outcomes between many branding construct. In this research we only tested three, and it resulted in further explanations for some relationships that were considered final; for instance such as the relationship between satisfaction and brand loyalty. Having different consumer profiles that is based on their experiential appeals have also explained how different typologies may impact the relationship between brand personality and brand loyalty; brand attachment and brand loyalty.

By testing the impact of brand attachment on loyalty, the results revealed a positive significant effect of brand attachment on brand loyalty, as the corresponding coefficient is 0.150 and the corresponding P-value is 0.000 (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.053, which means that brand attachment explain 5.3% of the variation in brand loyalty. Moreover; the multiple regression of brand attachment dimensions on brand loyalty revealed that that there is a positive significant effect of brand prominence on brand

loyalty, as the corresponding coefficient is 0.122 and the corresponding P-value is 0.000 (P-value < 0.05). On the other hand, there is insignificant effect of brand self-concentration as p-value is more than 0.05. Also, it was found that R square is 0.061, which means that brand prominence explain 6.1% of the variation in brand loyalty. Therefore, the 7th hypothesis is supported. These results are conforming to Thompson *et al.*, (2005), Ammari *et al.*, (2016), Levy and Hino (2016), Nyadzayo *et al.*, (2017), Huwang *et al.*, (2018) and Japutra *et al.*, (2018). Despite that the overall hypothesis is accepted but based on the regression analysis of brand attachment dimensions, it's indicated that brand-self connection had an insignificant effect on brand loyalty while brand prominence had a significant one, this indicates that the smart phone user's responses reflect that their loyalty is driven by instrumental attachment as it has a significant effect on changes in how they are loyal to their smart phones rather than their emotional ones. By testing the impact of satisfaction on brand attachment the results revealed that there is an insignificant effect of satisfaction on brand attachment, as the corresponding P-value is 0.522 (P-value > 0.05). Therefore, the 8th hypothesis is rejected. The results are not conforming to Ammari *et al.*, (2016), this may be due to the nature of the brand itself, moreover; it's not necessary that satisfied consumers become attached to their brands. However, literature seemed to have contradicting results about the nature of this relationship as Levy and Hino (2016) results were exactly the opposite of the previous indicated research pointing that brand attachment is the construct effecting satisfaction, so the results of this research did not finalize the ambiguity regarding the nature of the relationship.

Before testing hypothesis H9a & b, the investigator reveals the results of the user's attachment cluster analysis, the results revealed 4 significant clusters. Users attached to the brand on the emotional, cognitive and utilitarian level are referred to as “Holistically Attached” users; users attached to the brand because of its instrumental value and pay little attention to the emotional and cognitive aspects of attachment are referred to as “Instrumentally Attached” users; users not attached at all on the emotional, cognitive or utilitarian level can be referred to as “Disconnected or Detached” users and finally users emotionally and cognitively attached to the brand but they pay little attention or give little importance to the instrumental value of the brand can be referred to as “Emo/Cog attached” users (Lotfy, 2018). By testing the moderation of the attachment profiles, the results revealed a significant moderation between satisfaction and brand loyalty as the corresponding coefficient is 0.105 as well as P-value is less than 0.05 while there is an insignificant moderation role of attachment profiles between brand experience and brand loyalty as P-value is more than 0.05. Accordingly H9a is supported while H9b is rejected. The regression analysis of brand personality influence on brand loyalty revealed that there is a positive significant effect of brand personality on brand loyalty, as the corresponding coefficient is 0.275 and the corresponding P-value is 0.000 (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.071, which means that brand personality explain 7.1% of the variation in brand loyalty. Therefore, the 10th hypothesis is supported. The results are conforming to Barkus *et al.*, (2009), Lin (2010), Ong *et al.*, (2017) and Nikhashemi and Valaei (2018) pointing that how consumers perceive the brand personality of their smart phones effects their loyalty toward the brand. The regression analysis of brand personality influence on satisfaction revealed that

there is a positive significant effect of brand personality on satisfaction, as the corresponding coefficient is 0.134 and the corresponding P-value is 0.001 (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.021, which means that brand personality explain 2.1% of the variation in satisfaction. Therefore, the 11th hypothesis is supported, The result is conforming to Barkus *et al.*, (2009), Ong *et al.*, (2017), Nikhashemi *et al.*, (2017) pointing that how brand users perceive the personality of the brand effects their satisfaction toward the brand. The regression analysis of satisfaction influence on brand loyalty revealed that there is a positive significant effect of satisfaction on brand loyalty, as the corresponding coefficient is 0.431 and the corresponding P-value is 0.000 (P-value < 0.05). Also, it was found that R square is 0.151, which means that Satisfaction explain 15.1% of the variation in brand loyalty. Therefore, the 12th hypothesis claiming that satisfaction affects brand loyalty is supported. This is probably one of the most researched relationships in literature and the result are conforming to previous findings of Anderson and Sullivan (1993), Olivier (1999), Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000), Punniyamoorthy and Raj (2007), Lee *et al.*, (2017). A summary of the results is expressed in Table 1.

Table 1. Summary of the results

| # | Hypotheses | Result |
|-----|---|---------------|
| H1 | Brand Experience effects Brand Personality. | Supported |
| H2 | Brand Experience effects Satisfaction. | Supported |
| H3 | Brand Experience effects Brand Attachment. | Supported |
| H4 | Brand Experience directly effects Brand Loyalty. | Supported |
| H5 | The relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty is mediated by Brand Attachment. | Not Supported |
| H6a | Experiential consumer profiles moderate the relationship between Brand Personality and Brand Loyalty. | Supported |
| H6b | Experiential consumer profile moderates the relationship between Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty. | Supported |
| H6c | Experiential consumer profile moderates the relationship between Brand Attachment and Brand Loyalty. | Supported |
| H7 | Brand Attachment effects Brand Loyalty. | Supported |
| H10 | Satisfaction effects Brand Attachment. | Not Supported |
| H9a | Consumers Attachment types moderates the relationship between Satisfaction and Brand Loyalty. | Supported |
| H9b | Consumer Attachment types moderate the relationship between Brand Experience and Brand Loyalty. | Not Supported |
| H10 | Brand Personality effect Brand Loyalty. | Supported |
| H11 | Brand Personality effects Satisfaction | Supported |
| H12 | Satisfaction effects Brand Loyalty. | Supported |

Finally, the results have revealed that there is no significant difference in brand experience and attachment scores between generation Y and Z as Mann-Whitney test revealed an insignificant results with P value exceeded 0.05.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Based on the results, the investigator concludes that not all brand experience dimensions impact all of brand personality dimensions, all perceived personality dimensions of the smart phone are significantly impacted by the affective and intellectual dimensions of brand experience while the sensorial dimension impacted all brand personality dimensions except responsibility, on the other hand the behavioral dimension impacted all brand personality dimensions except

responsibility and activity and user's emotions that were impacted by being exposed to their smart phones is impacting how they perceive the mobile phone personality traits, accordingly through affective experience they discover how their smart phone is responsible, active, bold, simple and emotional, same is applicable on how the intellectual experience and the user's curiosity and problem solving stimulation is impacting the user's perception of the smart phone personality dimensions, while the sensorial experience and stimulation caused by the smart phone tend to significantly impact the user's perception of all the personality dimensions except responsibility, this indicates that the responsibility trait is not easily establish unless its triggered by intellectual and affective experience. On the other hand, behavioral experience or life style changing experience caused by being exposed to the brand is significantly impacting all personality dimensions except responsibility and activity traits, this confirms once again that the responsibility trait can only be triggered through affective and intellectual experience, while activity seemed not to be significantly impacted by behavioral experience despite that it entails some sub traits such as dynamic.

The investigator concludes that affection and emotions have an insignificant impact on the overall user's satisfaction and that user's interaction with their smart phones resulting in sensorial stimulations, intellectual curiosity and experience impacting their life style are the main drivers toward a satisfied user, moreover; not all brand experience dimensions did impact or explain variations in brand attachment, the investigator concludes that sensorial, affective and intellectual experiential dimensions only have the significant impact on brand attachment while behavioral experience do not explain changes in attachment behavior, viz. brand attachment is triggered and driven by users inner experiences. the investigator concludes that sensorial and intellectual dimensions of brand experience are the main drivers in the explanation in the variation in smart phone users loyalty toward their brands, sensorial and intellectual experiences had the significant impact on brand loyalty and explaining its variation while behavioral and affective experiences had an insignificant one, accordingly; loyalty can only be achieved through rich sensorial and intellectual interaction with the smart phone brands, brand attachment does not mediate the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, brand attachment also does not explain the mechanism or the process linking brand experience and brand loyalty, moreover; the results suggests and it's not necessary for smart phone users to be attached to the brand to become loyal. Different types of consumers exist either based on attachment or experience, attachment profiles types were holistically attached, instrumentally attached, disconnected or detached and emo/cog attached and each have its own characteristics while experience profiles types were into hybrid, semi-inner-directed, utilitarian, inner behavioral, holistic and outer-semi-inner. The investigator concluded that experiential consumer's profiles significantly moderate the relationship between brand personality and loyalty; satisfaction and brand loyalty; brand attachment and brand loyalty. On the other hand, the attachment consumer's profile significantly moderated the relationship between satisfaction and brand loyalty, yet it had an insignificant moderating effect on the relationship between brand experience and brand loyalty, the existence of both consumer's typology have altered and impacted the nature of the relationships. Accordingly; each cluster have its own distinct significant impact on the tested relationships.

Finally, the investigator concludes that there is no significant difference between the two groups (Generation Y and Z), indicating that despite that each generation is different yet they share the same experiential appeals toward mobile smart phone and they seem to be attached to their smart phone brands in the same way due to that fact that both generations were born in an era characterized by being a digital one with high exposure to technology. As for the recommendations, this study recommends that brand management should focus on maximizing and intensifying both affective and intellectual experience to deepen the perception of the personality dimension of responsibility, activity, aggressiveness, simplicity and emotionality, on the other hand; they would need to work on their marketing communication regardless of the used channel as long as it works to engage behavioral and sensorial experience to increase the users overall experience, also they should try to engage affective experience as it might lead to the maximization of the overall user's satisfaction. Brand management should try to engage affective and behavioral experience to maximize and increase loyalty, it would give them an edge over any other competitor as it would be a tool of differentiation versus any other competitor. Also, brands should start considering experiential segmentations of their current users and targeted ones and customize/tailor their communication campaigns to target specific types of users based on their preferred experience. Same is applied on the attachment consumer profiles; since attachment directly impacts brand loyalty, it's beneficial to establish a bond between the brand and the users by tailoring/launching attachment programs to appeal to specific attachment users based on their type.

Finally, this study recommends the following for future research. firstly, the brand experience literature have indicated that there are four main types of experiential dimensions (sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual), but further investigation is required to pinpoint if there is a sequence that the brand triggers once the consumer is exposed to it, for instance does being exposed to the stimulus of a smart phone starts by the sensorial then moves to the affective experience? Does each brand category have its own sequence? Does a specific stimulus triggers a specific experience? Does it differ from one country to another?.

Second, several studies have indicated that brand experience impacts brand personality, but the results obtained from this research requires further investigation regarding which of the brand personality dimensions are first triggered by the impact of brand experience dimensions. Does a specific experiential dimension triggers a specific personality trait? Is the impact sequential or parallel?. the results suggests that not all experiential dimensions impact personality dimensions, but how to engage the remaining experiential dimensions to impact all personality dimensions?

Third, the proposed attachment typology suggests that there are several attachment types, among those are the utilitarian ones, this specific type may easily shift to another brand if his instrumental need has been fulfilled by another brand, but how to shift the utilitarian or instrumentally attached consumers into an emotionally attached consumers? What kind of messages the brand should transmit to be able to do so? Does it require a change in any of the consumer touch points?

Fourth, this research have proposed a new experiential and attachment consumer typology, but further investigation is required to check whether or not the same profiles would emerge in different settings or different countries in the Mena area, in other words; would the same typologies emerge if tested on another product category? Or would it emerge if tested in another country sharing the same cultural features?

Fifth, the nature of the relationship between satisfaction and brand attachment remains controversial and requires further investigations to conclude its direction and nature and should be tested in a multi-industrial setting to shed light on the relationship in a comparative way. Sixth, more focus should be placed on how users friends, family and acquaintances can alter the decision making process of the user and moreover; can they impact their experience and attachment? If yes, then how?.

Finally, very scarce resources were available on generation z. this particular generation requires further investigation on all levels despite that this study have provided evidence that they share the same experiential and attachment appeals as generation y. branding research should shed more light on this particular generation appeals, their decision making process, how it is different from previous generations and it also has to be investigated in a multi-industrial settings, this study has concluded that there is no difference between generation y and z when it comes to their experiential and attachment scores but what about their differences in other branding constructs?

Limitations

There was a number of obstacles that this research have faced, one of the most important limitations is time when it comes to the balance between generation y and generation z, the research needed more time to increase the number of the survey participants in generation z, moreover; the accessibility to generation z was not that easy while respecting the chosen sampling technique, moreover; a considerable number of generation z were not interested in participating in the survey making the mission to increase the number of participants not an easy one. the usage of structural equation modelling lead to the elimination of one of the essential constructs in the research and accordingly could not be used which is brand attachment due to Heywood case which is a negative variances and correlations exceeding the value of 1 (Nachtigall *et al.*, 2003), accordingly, SEM will generate an improper result when a Heywood case(s) is present, the research tried to overcome this by amending negative variances to zero and proceed but it impacted the model overall fitness and had to be left out. Also, the decrease of the number of indicators to be only two per latent variable, despite that it might be fine, but model might be at least empirically under identified (Nachtigall *et al.*, 2003), accordingly; the research relied on the results of the regression analysis.

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