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Article

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BRAND EXPERIENCE CLUSTERING AND DEPICTION OF BRAND SATISFACTION, BRAND LOYALTY AND EMOTIONAL CONFIDENCE

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Abstract: Brand experience (BE) is essential to depict long-term consumer brand relationships; this study investigates the influence of brand experience on emotional confidence (EC) and subsequent impact of brand satisfaction (BS) and brand loyalty (BL) in the context of car buying. Structural equation modeling was used to affirm the hypothesized relationships. This study further explores dimensions of brand experience: sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral concerning EC, BS, and BL. Hierarchical cluster analysis was performed to depict the relationship as a consequence, and four clusters were identified. The results of the structural model suggest that there is a positive and statistically significant influence of BE on EC, there is a positive and statistically significant influence of EC on BS, and there is a positive and statistically significant influence of BS on BL. When the direct path from EC to BL was added to the model, it increased the variance explained in BL and coefficient of EC was higher than the coefficient of BS suggesting that EC is an important construct within the formwork. The results of hierarchical cluster analysis identified four clusters; the relationship among EC, BS and BL showed interesting patterns; there were higher correspondents between EC and BL than between BS and BL; the pattern was consistent with the results of the structural model. The data was collected from car showrooms across Karachi city; the respondents were users of the brand.

Keywords: brand experience, brand satisfaction, brand loyalty and emotional confidence.

JEL Classification: M31.

1 Introduction

Widespread brand choice and consumers empowered by digital gadgets have posed a considerable challenge for marketing practitioners to sustain the long-term brand-consumer relationship (Das, et al., 2018). To understand the long-term brand-consumer relationship, different evaluative (i.e., brand attitude) and motivational (i.e., brand attachment) marketing constructs have been tested (Ajzen, 2005; Park, et al., 2010). These constructs have certainly enriched our understanding of the relationship. However, emotional confidence, despite its recognition and importance, has received little or no attention in the academic literature (Kidwell, et al., 2008; Rizvi and Oney, 2018). The emotional confidence (EC) is defined as affective certainty based strong emotional response, which is essential for a long-term brand-consumer relationship (Rizvi and Oney, 2018).

The EC as a construct has just surfaced in the literature and its antecedents and consequents are not well documented. Therefore, this study explores its relationship within the existing marketing frameworks. Rizvi and Oney (2018) argue that emotional confidence is a consequence of overall brand experience; presumably, stronger the brand experience, stronger is the affective certainty towards a brand.

Brand experience is considered a core interaction that may lead to various consequences such as brand satisfaction and brand loyalty (Brakus, et al., 2009). Brand experience as a construct is well documented in the academic literature, and it is further explored for possible consumer profiling, namely there are four dimensions of brand experience: sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010) and how it influences other constructs like brand commitment (Das, et al., 2018).

This study investigates the influence of brand experience on emotional confidence and whether or not emotional confidence influences brand satisfaction and brand loyalty. Further, clusters of brand experience dimensions were elicited to analyze the relevance of the elicited clusters concerning emotional confidence, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty.

To the best of our knowledge, no study has investigated the influence of brand experience on emotional confidence. It is important to note that consumer profiling based on the brand experience dimensions exists and its relative impact on purchase intentions is affirmed. However, such consumer profiles are not analyzed regarding emotional confidence, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty. This paper mainly deals with two major questions:

- 1) Does brand experience influence emotional confidence, and its relationship with brand satisfaction and brand loyalty is investigated?
- 2) Does consumer profiling based on consumer brand experience enrich our understanding of the relationship between emotional confidence, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty?

1.1 Background

Brand experience has captured the attention of both academics and practitioners. Brand experience is a multi-dimensional construct consisting of sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral dimensions (Brakus, et al., 2009). Although brand experience can be positive or negative, its measure implies positive experience towards a brand. It is neither an evaluative

construct like brand attitude, nor a motivational construct like brand attachment. The dimensions of the brand experience are also used to profile consumer and to investigate its influence on purchase intentions (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010). The brand experience is used to assess its impact on brand satisfaction, brand loyalty and brand commitment (Das, et al., 2018; Brakus, et al., 2009).

Confidence as a construct is widely used in behavioral science. It is considered a key and one of the most critical indicators of economic health. Despite its widespread use, the conceptual domain of confidence remains uncharted. The conceptual ambiguity poses a challenge regarding how to measure it, mostly confidence as a construct is conceptualized as a cognitive construct; despite highlighting urge and importance of emotional confidence (Kidwell, et al., 2008), very little progress has been made (Rizvi and Oney, 2018). Emotional confidence is conceptualized as an affective certainty based on strong emotions. However, emotional confidence is neither an evaluative construct like brand attitude, nor a motivational construct like brand attachment; conceptually, it is similar to brand experience. However, emotional confidence is a consequence of brand experience. Positive or negative brand experience may result in affective certainty (i.e., emotional confidence) to act. Both strong positive and negative brand experience can trigger affective certainty to act or not to act. But it is important to note in this study: emotional confidence is measured based on “strong positive emotions”. From a measurement perspective, brand experience implies positive experience, even though brand experience can be positive or negative.

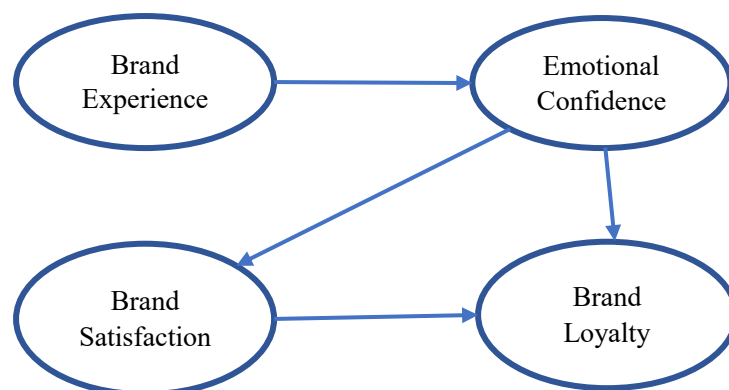


Figure 1. The Conceptual Framework (Source: Own research)

Stemming from recent development, Rizvi and Oney (2018) argue that emotional confidence can be a consequence of overall brand experience. Since antecedents of emotional confidence are not yet specified in the literature, it will be interesting to see whether or not brand experience influence emotional confidence. Moreover, Brakus, et al. (2009) have shown that brand experience could affect brand satisfaction and brand loyalty. In this study, we employ the same framework only by adding emotional confidence as a consequence of brand experience and as an antecedent of brand satisfaction and brand loyalty. Further, consumers are clustered based on brand experience dimensions to depict the relationship among emotional confidence, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty. Based on the theoretical model as well as the theoretical background presented above, the following hypothesis has been developed for the research study (the conceptual framework can be seen in Fig. 1):

- H₁: Brand experience has a direct and a positive influence on emotional confidence.
 H₂: Emotional confidence has a direct and positive influence on consumer brand satisfaction.
 H₃: Consumer brand satisfaction as a direct and positive influence on consumer brand loyalty.
 H₄: Emotional confidence has a direct positive influence on brand loyalty.

2 Methodology

The focus of this study was two-pronged, first to assess the influence of brand experience on emotional

confidence, second clustering of brand experience dimensions to depict the relationship between emotional confidence, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data (n = 240) in the context of car buying. Judgment sampling was used to obtain the data as prior experience (users of the brand) was warranted; so data was collected from various car service centers and the participation in the study was voluntary.

For this, validated scales of all constructs were used and the measures included brand experience, brand satisfaction, emotional confidence and brand loyalty (Brakus, et al., 2009; Oliver, 1999; Rizvi and Oney, 2018).

Structural equation modeling (AMOS) was used to analyze the data for the first part of the paper. For the second part of the paper, the four dimensions of the brand experience: sensory, affective, behavioral and intellectual were clustered to further assess the relationship among emotional confidence, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty within those clusters. Hierarchical cluster analysis was used (SPSS), as there were no prior assumptions regarding the number of clusters; the clusters were extracted by employing Ward's method to get a sizable cluster for further analysis. To validate the solution, both subsample and discriminant analysis were performed.

3 Data Analysis

Table 1 contains a descriptive analysis of demographic profile obtained from 251 respondents based on four demographic aspects, namely age, marital status, family income and driving Toyota experience.

Table 1. Demographic Profile (*Source*: Own research)

Age	Percent	Marital Status	Percent	Family Income (PKR)	Percent	Driving Toyota Experience	Percent
Under 16	2 (0.8)	Married	(156) 62.4	Under 25,000	18 (7.2)	0	16 (6.4)
17-25	66 (26.4)	Single	(94) 37.6	25,001 – 50,000	22 (8.8)	1 – 3	120 (48.0)
26-35	54 (21.6)			50,001 – 75,000	37 (14.8)	4 – 5	74 (29.6)
36-50	85 (34.0)			75,001 – 125,000	95 (38.0)	6 +	40 (16.0)
51-60	36 (14.4)			125,001 – 200,000	78 (31.2)		
Over 60	7 (2.8)						
Frequency	251						

Accordingly, the prime number of respondents, that is, 85 (34%) respondents from the age group 36–50 years, while 66 (26.4%) respondents from age group 17–25 years. Likewise, 54 (21.6%) respondents from age group 26–35 years. Also, the results indicate that 156 (62.4%) respondents were married and 94 (37.6%) respondents were single. Regarding family income, 95 (38%) respondents were from the family income group 75,001–125,000 PKR. Also, 78 (31.2%) respondents were from the family income group 125,001–200,000. About driving Toyota experience, the demographic profile results indicate that

120 (48%) respondents were 1–3 years' experience of driving Toyota as compared to 74 (29.6%) respondents with 4–5 years' experience.

3.1 Internal Consistency Reliability Test

An instrument used to conduct the self-administrative survey was based on two independents (i.e., emotional confidence & brand satisfaction) and two dependents (i.e., brand experience & brand loyalty) variable(s).

Table 2. Reliability, Mean, Std. Deviation & Factor Extracted with PCA (Source: Own research)

Scale	Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Extraction
EMOTIONAL CONFIDENCE Cronbach Alpha = 0.945	BEC1: Strong positive feelings play an essential role while buying Toyota Car	5.15	1.593	0.815
	BEC2: My strong positive feelings towards Toyota car gives me certainty to buy it	5.28	1.497	0.838
	BEC3: My Strong positive feelings guide my purchase of Toyota car	5.20	1.402	0.817
	BEC4: I rely on my strong positive feelings while buying the Toyota car	5.19	1.459	0.808
	BEC5: When I have strong positive feelings about the Toyota then it is easier to decide	5.23	1.335	0.772
	BEC6: My overall strong positive feelings towards Toyota makes me certain to buy it	5.24	1.447	0.761
	BEC7: My strong positive feelings about Toyota increase the likelihood of buying it again in future	5.08	1.468	0.649
BRAND SATISFACTION Cronbach Alpha = 0.861	BPQ1: Toyota offers very good quality cars	5.45	1.192	0.712
	BPQ2: Toyota offers cars of consistent quality	5.25	1.246	0.706
	BPQ3: Toyota offers very reliable cars	5.30	1.264	0.739
	BPQ4: Toyota offers cars with excellent features	5.28	1.278	0.718
BRAND EXPERIENCE Cronbach Alpha = 0.707	BEX1: Sensory	5.07	1.339	0.717
	BEX2: Sensory	4.86	1.413	0.683
	BEX3: Behavioural	3.87	1.641	0.859
	BEX4: Behavioural	3.82	1.759	0.896
	BEX5: Intellectual	4.24	1.849	0.539
	BEX6: Intellectual	4.58	1.543	0.671

Table 2. Reliability, Mean, Std. Deviation & Factor Extracted with PCA (cont.) (Source: Own research)

Scale	Item	Mean	Std. Dev	Extraction
BRAND LOYALTY Cronbach Alpha = 0.883	BL1: In the future, I will be loyal to Toyota brand	4.84	1.399	0.713
	BL2: I will buy Toyota again	5.02	1.385	0.715
	BL3: Toyota will be my first choice in the future	4.74	1.523	0.782
	BL4: I will not buy other car brands	4.13	1.780	0.630
	BL5: I will recommend Toyota to others	4.89	1.387	0.651

For measuring emotional confidence, a total of 07 item(s) scale was used. Whereas, brand satisfaction, brand loyalty and brand experience were measured with 05, 04, 04 item(s) scale, respectively. Internal consistency of measurement is pivotal for the quality of results (Weijters, Cabooter and Schillewaert, 2010). Hence, a five-point Likert scale anchored between 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree was used to encourage unbiased responses (Greenleaf, 1992). Refer to the results summarized in Table 2, the internal consistency reliability values of four scales (i.e., BEC = 0.945; BPQ = 0.861; BEX = 0.707 and BL = 0.883) found to be acceptable between advised limits, that is, 0.70–0.90.

3.2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Refer to the results summarized in Table 3, KMO (i.e., Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) shows the fitness of the data for the strength of a factor structure. For instance, KMO value (i.e., .917 close to 1) indicates that correlations are reasonably well so that the strength of a factor structure could be attained (Hutcheson and Sofroniou, 1999). However, the “Bartlett's Sphericity” reveals the dissimilarity between variables, which is a signpost of aptness or inaptness of a factor structure detection. For example, the smaller χ^2 value, that is, 3959.76 significant at $p < 0.05$ show that a “factor analysis” could be suitable with the data.

Table 3. KMO and Bartlett's Test (Source: Own research)

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy		0.917
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3959.761
	Df	231
	Sig.	0.000

3.3 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

For factor extraction, a principal component analysis method was used to establish an independent linear combination of observed variables. Extraction values provided in Table 2 show the amount of variance that is explained by each factor. The variables with a high amount of variance indicate the strength of variable regarding their highest representation, whereas, variables with the lowest amount of variance indicates

the low representation in the factor space. For example, BEX4 = 0.896 and BEX3 = 0.859 indicates the high proportion of variance. In contrast, BL4 = 0.630 and BEC7 = 0.649 indicates the low proportion of variance in the factor space. Scree plot also indicates the percentage of “variance” in a factor structure (space). A scree plot exhibited in Fig. 2 shows the maximum variation in 6 factors as the eigenvalues on the y-axis flatten at 6th factor and remaining factors explain a minimal variation.

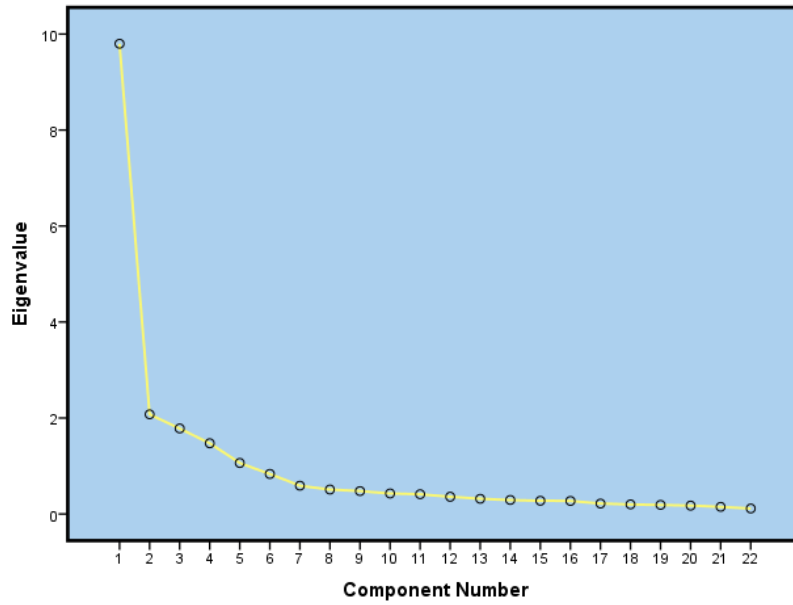


Figure 2. Scree Plot (Source: Own research)

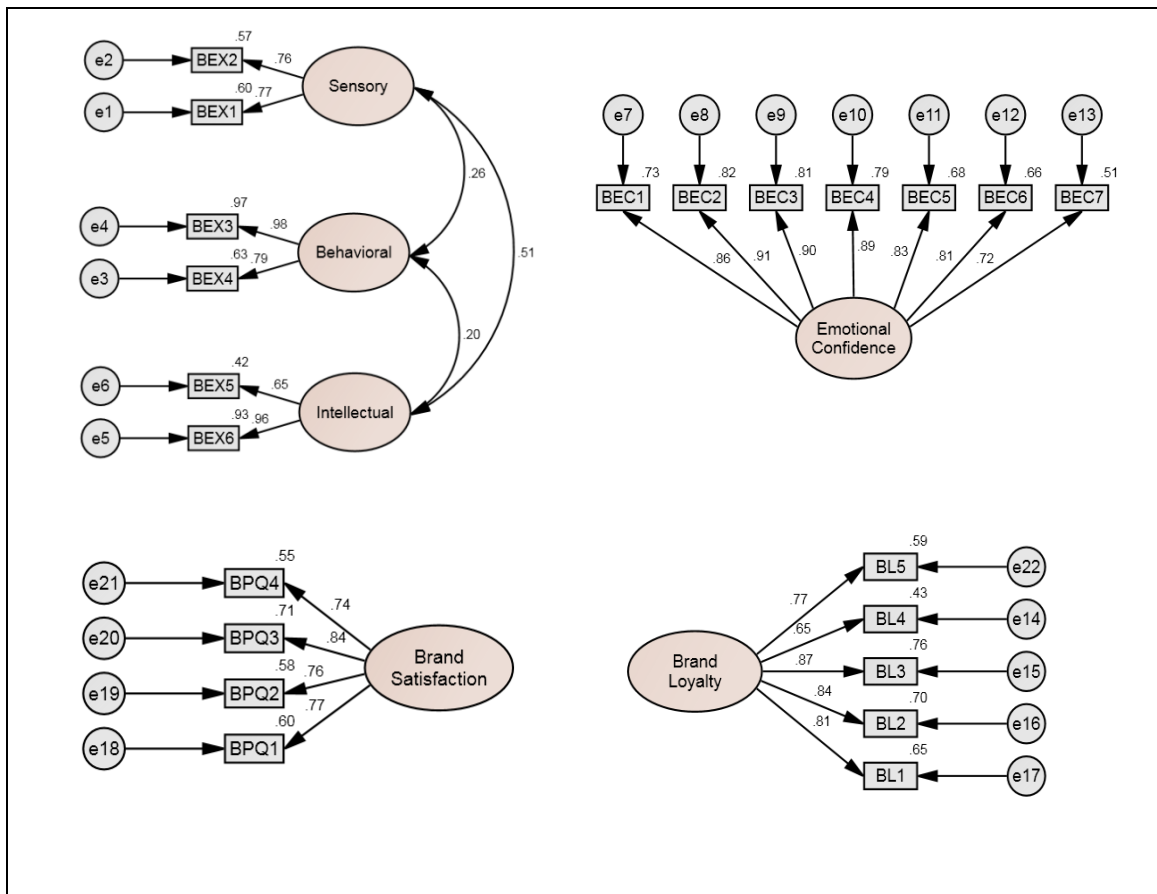


Figure 3. CFA Model (Source: Own research)

3.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

KMO value greater than 0.7 is an indication for “confirmatory factor analysis” (Hair, et al., 2010). Therefore, IBM-AMOS v19 was used to test the “confirmatory factor analysis” (see Fig. 3) independently before the “structural equation model” (Anderson and Gerbing, 1988). In order to use the “maximum likelihood” estimation method, data normality was confirmed as the values of Kurtosis (-0.548 & 0.825) and Skewness (-1.485 & -0.838) shown to be normally distributed and consistent with

the suggested limits (Kline, 2015). Refer to Table 4, all factor loadings (λ values) of 04 variables and 22 items are measured above-suggested limit 0.50 statistically significant at $p < 0.000$.

The composite reliability (CR) values (0.886 and 0.960) and average variance extraction (AVE) values (0.568 and 0.82) also measured between the suggested limits thus satisfied the “structural reliability” and “convergent validity” of the construct(s) used in this study (Bagozzi and Yi, 2012; Fornell and Larcker, 1981).

Table 4. CFA based Reliability & Validity (Source: Own research)

Variables	Factor Loading	t-value	R ²	α (alpha)	CR	AVE
Emotional Confidence						
BEC1	0.855	Fixed ^o	0.731	0.920	0.944	0.875
BEC2	0.906	19.856	0.820			
BEC3	0.898	19.536	0.806			
BEC4	0.888	19.099	0.788			
BEC5	0.827	16.788	0.684			
BEC6	0.813	16.319	0.662			
BEC7	0.718	13.400	0.515			
Brand Satisfaction						
BPQ1	0.772	Fixed ^o	0.596	0.925	0.963	0.682
BPQ2	0.761	11.818	0.580			
BPQ3	0.844	12.933	0.713			
BPQ4	0.742	11.504	0.551			
Brand Experience						
BEX1	0.775	Fixed ^o	0.600	0.882	0.815	0.572
BEX2	0.755	6.821	0.570			
BEX3	0.985	4.999	0.970			
BEX4	0.794	Fixed ^o	0.631			
BEX5	0.645	5.806	0.471			
BEX6	0.964	Fixed ^o	0.928			
Brand Loyalty						
BL1	0.805	10.754	0.649	0.838	0.802	0.851
BL2	0.837	11.072	0.701			
BL3	0.873	11.395	0.763			
BL4	0.652	Fixed ^o	0.425			
BL5	0.766	10.337	0.586			
*Based on ML estimation fixed parameter @ 1.0 α – value: internal consistency; CR – composite reliability; AVE – average variance extract.						

Refer to the results summarized in Table 5, the χ^2 value attained significance at $p < 0.000$. In case of all four variables (i.e., emotional confidence, brand experience, brand satisfaction and brand loyalty), model

fit indicators (e.g., AGFI, RMR, CFI, TLI, NFI and RMSEA) are methodically compatible with the sample data.

Table 5. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (Source: Own research)

Fit Indices									
	χ^2	df	χ^2/df	AGFI	RMR	CFI	TLI	NFI	RMSEA
Emotional Confidence	87.324	34	2.56	0.798	0.075	0.954	0.931	0.946	0.145
Brand Experience	16.034	06	2.67	0.925	0.080	0.981	0.952	0.970	0.082
Brand Satisfaction	2.568	02	1.28	0.975	0.020	0.999	0.996	0.994	0.034
Brand Loyalty	19.016	05	3.80	0.915	0.049	0.980	0.960	0.973	0.106

Probability level = 0.000
 χ^2 – chi-square; AGFI – adjusted goodness-of-fit; RMR – root-mean-square; CFI – comparative fit index; TLI – Tucker-Lewis Coefficient; NFI – normed fit index; and RMSEA – root-mean-square error of approximation

3.5 Structural Equation Model

Fig. 4 shows the path diagram of a Structural Model 1. The model fit results appear in Table 6. The χ^2 achieved significance at $p < 0.000$. Likewise, the level of discrepancy was measured with χ^2 / df . The measured value (i.e., $600.738 / 203 = 2.95$ between 2 or 3) also shows the model fit. Besides, other 06 model fit

indices such as, AGFI = 0.780; RMR = 0.250; CFI = 0.897; TLI = 0.883; NFI = 0.853 and RMSEA = 0.089 indicates an “adequate model fit” as per the suggested brackets.

Hypothesis testing results based on Model 1 are listed in Table 7.

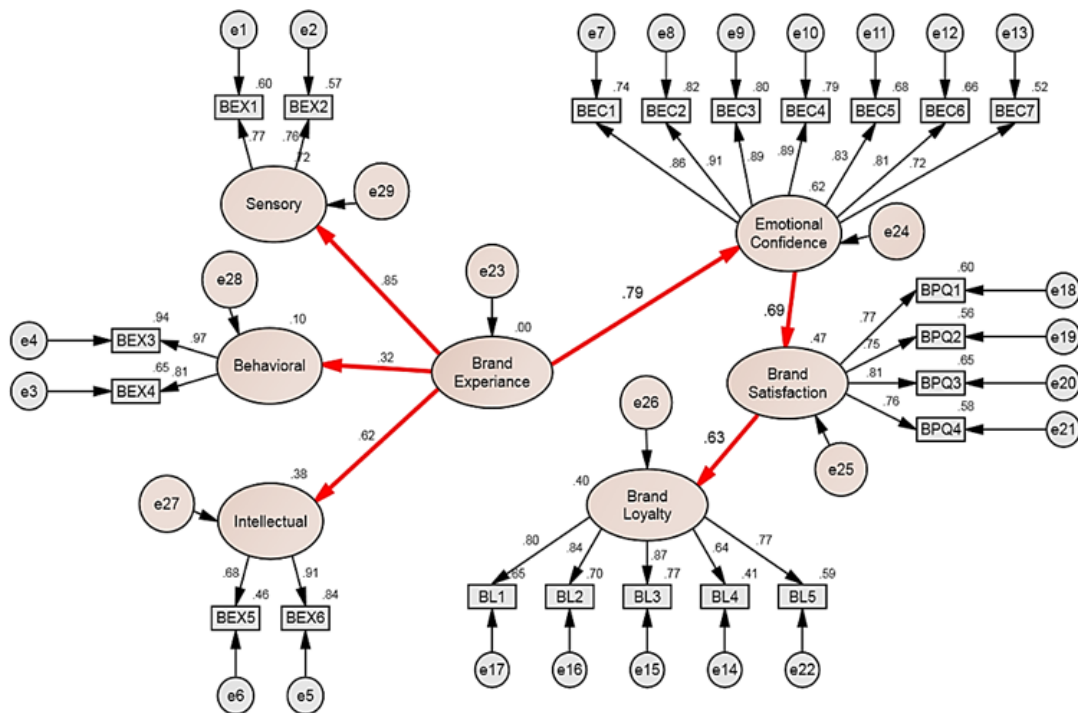


Figure 4. Structural Model 1 (Source: Own research)

Table 6. Fit Indices based on Model 1 (Source: Own research)

χ^2	df	χ^2/df	AGFI	RMR	CFI	TLI	NFI	RMSEA
600.738	203	2.95	0.780	0.250	0.897	0.883	0.853	0.089
Probability level = 0.000 χ^2 – chi-square; AGFI – adjusted goodness-of-fit; RMR – root-mean-square; CFI – comparative fit index; TLI – Tucker-Lewis Coefficient; NFI – normed fit index; and RMSEA – root-mean-square error of approximation								

Table 7. Hypothesis Testing Results based on Model 1 (Source: Own research)

R	Estimate	R ²	S.E	t-value	p-value
H1: Brand experience has a direct and a positive influence on emotional confidence					
0.786	1.228	0.617	0.178	6.890	***
H2: Emotional confidence has a direct and positive influence on consumer brand satisfaction					
0.689	0.465	0.474	0.047	9.947	***
H3: Consumer brand satisfaction as a direct and positive influence on consumer brand loyalty					
0.630	0.783	0.396	0.103	7.572	***
*t value = 1.228/.178 = 6.890 **The probability of attaining a t-value (critical ratio) as high as 6.89 in absolute value is ≤ 0.001 . More specifically, the regression weight for Brand Experience in the prediction of Emotional Confidence is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed).					

Fig. 5 shows the path diagram of a structural Model 2. The model fit results appeared in Table 8. The χ^2 achieved significance at $p < 0.000$. Likewise, the level of discrepancy was measured with χ^2 / df . The measured value (i.e., 560.370/202 = 2.77 between 2 or 3) also shows the model fit. Besides other 06 model fit indices, such as AGFI = 0.786; RMR = 0.186; CFI =

0.907; TLI = 0.894; NFI = 0.863 and RMSEA = 0.084, indicate an “adequate model fit” as per the suggested brackets.

Hypothesis testing results based on Model 2 are listed in Table 9.

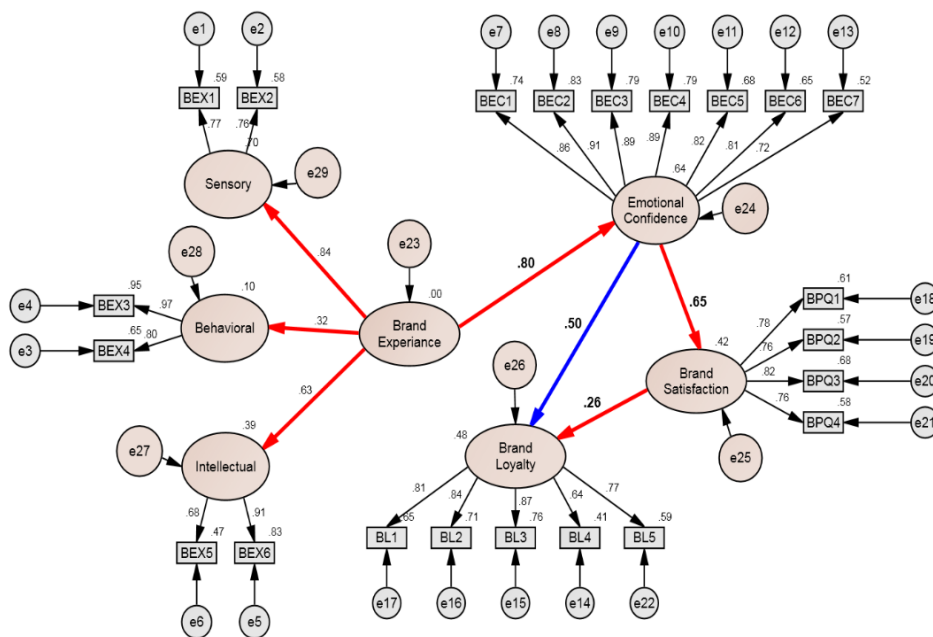


Figure 5. Structural Model 2 (Source: Own research)

Table 8. Fit Indices based on Model 2 (Source: Own research)

χ^2	df	χ^2/df	AGFI	RMR	CFI	TLI	NFI	RMSEA
560.370	202	2.77	0.786	0.186	0.907	0.894	0.863	0.084
Probability level = 0.000 χ^2 – chi-square; AGFI – adjusted goodness-of-fit; RMR – root-mean-square; CFI – comparative fit index; TLI – Tucker-Lewis Coefficient; NFI – normed fit index; and RMSEA – root-mean-square error of approximation								

Table 9. Hypothesis Testing Results based on Model 2 (Source: Own research)

R	Estimate	R ²	S.E	^o t-value	^{oo} p-value
H1: Brand experience has a direct and a positive influence on emotional confidence					
0.797	1.260	0.635	0.181	6.955	***
H2: Emotional confidence has a direct and positive influence on consumer brand satisfaction					
0.647	0.439	0.418	0.047	9.340	***
H3: Emotional confidence has a direct and positive influence on consumer brand loyalty					
0.496	0.412	0.246	0.070	5.857	***
H4: Consumer brand satisfaction as a direct and positive influence on consumer brand loyalty					
0.258	0.315	0.066	0.098	3.216	0.001
^o t value = 0.439 / 0.047 = 9.340 ^{oo} The probability of attaining a t-value (critical ratio) as high as 9.359 in absolute value is ≤ 0.001 . More specifically, the regression weight for Emotional Confidence in the prediction of Consumer Brand Satisfaction is significantly different from zero at the 0.001 level (two-tailed).					

4 Hypothesis Testing Results

Fig. 6 shows the path estimates based on both Model 1 and Model 2.

The first research hypothesis assumes that “*brand experience (BEX) has a direct and a positive influence on emotional confidence (BEC)*”. In the case of both Model 1 and Model 2, the results exhibited that (BEX) had a significant impact on the (BEC). Statistically, the influence of BEX on the BEC was found to be significant at $p \leq 0.001$ (M1: $\gamma = 0.786$, $t = 6.890$; M2: $\gamma = 0.797$, $t = 6.955$).

The second research hypothesis assumes that “*emotional confidence (BEC) has a direct and positive influence on consumer brand satisfaction (BPQ)*”. The results exhibited that BEC had a significant impact on the BPQ. Statistically, the influence of BEC

on the BPQ was found to be significant $p \leq 0.001$ (M1: $\gamma = 0.689$, $t = 9.947$; M2: $\gamma = 0.647$, $t = 9.340$).

The third research hypothesis assumes that “*Consumer brand satisfaction (BPQ) has a direct and positive influence on consumer brand loyalty (BL)*”. The results exhibited that BPQ had a significant impact on the BL. Statistically, the influence of BPQ on the BL was found to be significant at $p \leq 0.001$ (M1: $\gamma = 0.630$, $t = 7.572$, M2: $\gamma = 0.258$, $t = 3.216$).

However, the fourth research hypothesis intentionally included in Model 2 assumes that “*emotional confidence (BPQ) has a direct and positive influence on consumer brand loyalty (BL)*”. The influence of EC on BL was found to be significant at $p \leq 0.001$ (M2: $\gamma = 0.496$, $t = 5.857$).

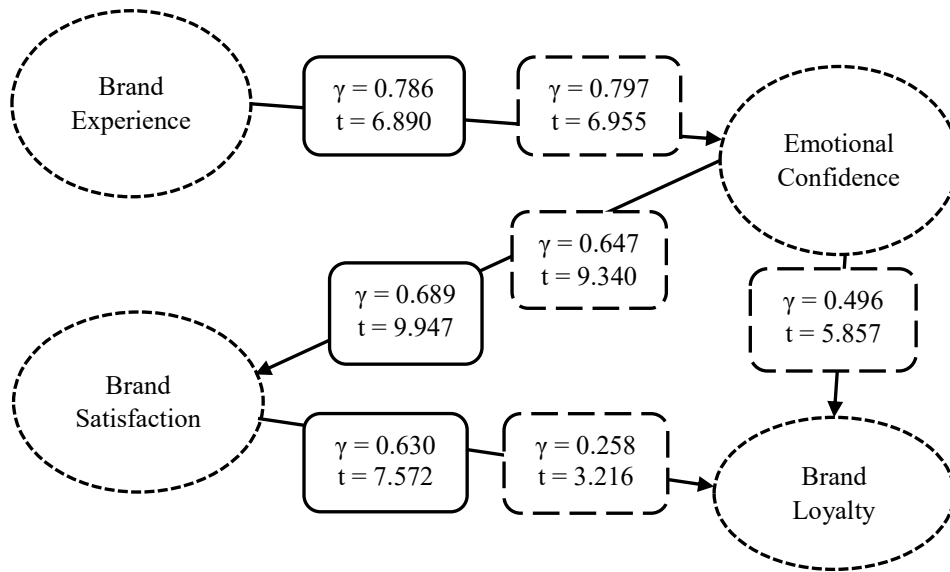


Figure 6. Path Estimates based on Model 1 (Straight Line) and Model 2 (Dotted Line) (Source: Own research)

5 Cluster Analysis

Table 10 shows the elicited clusters. Four clusters were extracted based on brand experience dimensions using hierarchical cluster analysis. Fig. 7 shows a graphical representation of the brand experience dimensions along the elicited clusters. Cluster 1 shows above-average scores on all the dimensions, whereas Cluster 2 shows below average on all the dimensions. Cluster 3 indicates the highest intellectual aspect with

relatively lower, but above average sensory experience; in this cluster behavior, the experience is the lowest with relatively higher but below average emotional experience. Cluster 4 shows that behavioral, sensory and emotional experience is above average with below average intellectual experience. The primary objective of these clustering was to observe how the clustering of brand experience dimensions depicts the relationship among brand loyalty, brand satisfaction and emotional confidence.

Table 10. Elicited Clusters based on brand experience dimensions (Source: Own research)

	N	Sensory	Affective	Behavioural	Intellectual
1	70	10.58	9.47	9.51	10.84
2	97	8.57	6.65	5.98	7.19
3	26	11.76	7.57	5.00	13.46
4	47	11.36	10.40	11.12	7.87
Total	240	10.05	8.31	7.91	9.07

Fig. 8 shows scores of emotional confidence, brand loyalty and brand satisfaction. As expected, the above-average scores of all the brand experience dimensions depict higher brand loyalty, and emotional confidence and brand satisfaction are slightly below average. Similarly, that was the case in the second cluster below average brand experience pulled the

brand loyalty and emotional confidence and brand satisfaction downwards; however, correspondents of the brand satisfaction was less. Interestingly, in the third cluster, higher intellectual and sensory experience pulled the brand loyalty and emotional confidence upwards but that was not the case with brand satisfaction.

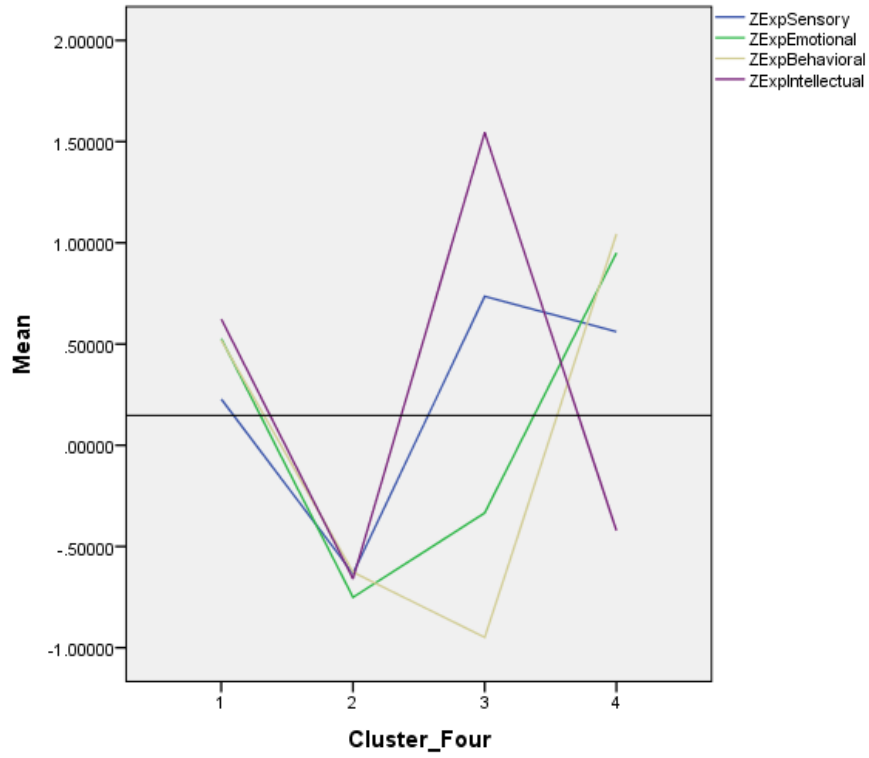


Figure 7. BE Dimensions Clusters (Source: Own research)

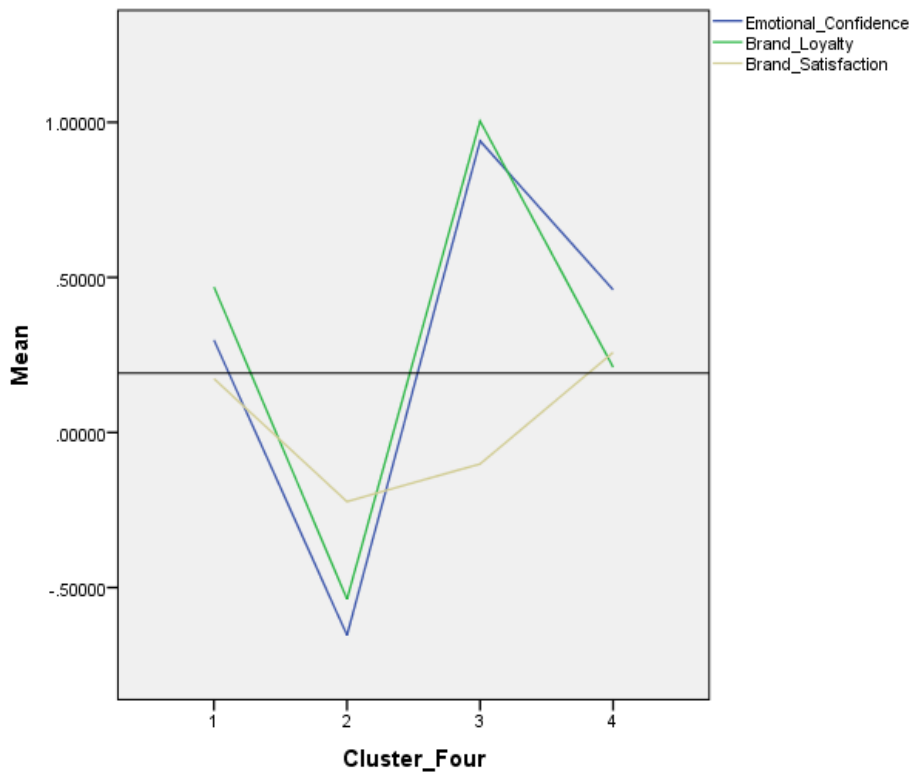


Figure 8. EC, BS and BL within BE Clusters (Source: Own research)

6 Conclusion and Discussion

This study affirms that brand experience in the context of car buying influenced emotional confidence, and there was a positive and statistically significant influence of brand experience on emotional confidence. The results show that within the framework, emotional confidence plays an essential role as there is a positive and statistically significant influence on brand satisfaction. The inclusion of a direct path in the model increases the relative model fit (SEM) as the value of chi-square further reduced. The affirmation of the hypotheses paved the way for further analysis, the use of structural equation modeling just showed the holistic impact of brand experience on emotional confidence. The relatedness of the sub-dimensions (i.e., sensory, affective, intellectual and behavioral) was not fully explored. The relationship between emotional confidence, brand satisfaction, and brand loyalty was further analyzed through clustering of the brand experience sub-dimensions. Four clusters were elicited (see Fig. 7).

In Cluster 1, all BE dimensions were above average, whereas in Cluster 2 all BE dimensions were below average, both clusters were pretty distinct. However, Cluster 3 and Cluster 4 showed some exciting patterns and the main contrast was based on intellectual experience. In Cluster 3, intellectual experience was highest and sensory experience was above average, whereas behavioral experience was lowest and affective experience was below average. In Cluster 4, intellectual experience was most depressed and behavioral experience was highest, and both affective and sensory experiences were below average. The relationships between EC, BS and BL within the elicited clusters were observed (see Fig. 8).

The observation suggests that higher BE (Cluster 1) depicts higher EC, BS and BL. Similarly, lower BE (Cluster 2) suggests lower EC and BL; the BS satisfaction dipped down but not as much as the EC and BL. The observation of Cluster 3 was interesting as both EC and BL was the highest, and BS was below average. Contrary to the assumption that higher affective experience should translate into higher EC and BL. Similarly, in Cluster 4, when intellectual experience was below average, the EC and BL dipped;

it seems like the intellectual experience drives the EC and BL.

7 Limitations and Future studies

The use of judgmental sampling reduces the scope and generalizability of the study. Sample size ($n = 240$) for performing cluster analysis is not sufficient as more clusters can be observed with higher sample size. However, this study shows some interesting pattern that can further either be replicated or refuted with a higher sample size.

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