

The Mediating Role Of Brand Authenticity In Strengthening The Relationship Between Brand Experience And Affective Commitment

An exploratory study of the opinions of a sample of smartphone brand customers

Hussein Ali Abdul Rasool

Aula Talib Jabbar

Al-Qadisiyah University - College of Administration and Economics

Corresponding Author: Aula Talib Jabbar

Abstract : Study This aims to invest the mediating role of brand authenticity through its (continuity, integrity, reliability/credibility, and symbolism) in strengthening the relationship between the brand experience (Affective experience, behavioral experience, cognitive experience, sensory experience) and Affective commitment. The study's central question is whether there is a significant influence relationship between the brand experience in Affective commitment, and three main hypotheses have been developed, and several hypotheses branch out from them to measure the level of association and influence by analyzing the relationship between these variables. The current study attempts to achieve a primary goal based on the interpretation of factors affecting the relationship between brand experience, Affective commitment, and brand authenticity Customers of smartphone brands were selected in the field for the study to test their hypotheses. The questionnaire form was adopted as a primary tool in collecting data related to the field side of the study. The sample size was (284) customers of smartphone brands, using statistical software such as (SPSS.V.24); several conclusions were reached, the most important of which is that brand authenticity has a role in enhancing the relationship between brand experience and Affective commitment. The study concluded with a set of recommendations, The most important of which is the need to form Affective bonds by linking the functional feature of the sign as a crucial Affective need that stimulates the functional need, which requires conducting more studies and personal interviews with customers to show their true Affective feelings.

Keyword: Brand Experience, Affective Commitment, Brand Authenticity.

INTRODUCTION: Brand authenticity is a basic human aspiration, which makes it “one of the cornerstones of contemporary marketing.” Moreover, authenticity has also been identified as one of the core values of brand image and a major success factor for brands in being a distinctive feature of brand identity. One of the most important marketing tools, as the experience of brands helps in creating loyalty to the brand and thus increasing the company’s sales and revenues, and from an intellectual point of view, the sensory brand attracted the interests of researchers in the scope of customer responses as an emerging and important field in marketing management, and due to the breadth and complexity of the factors affecting those responses It was a source for more research and marketing studies to identify the changing nature of individual behavior in light of the multiplicity of options and the expansion of competition, and the brand experience leads to behavioral results such as satisfaction, repeat purchases, loyalty and positive word of mouth about the product or brand, and the researchers agree that the customer is the basis Marketing work and the cornerstone of building intangible market assets that give the organization a sustainable competitive advantage In this sense, the researchers focused on studying and analyzing commitment in general and Affective commitment in particular, because of its impact on increasing the degree of affiliation and loyalty to the brand.

Research Methodology

First: The Problem of The Study

Brand experience represents the internal customer reactions (sensations, feelings, perceptions) and behavioral responses elicited by brand-related stimuli that are part of brand design, identity, packaging, and communication (Frasquet-Deltoro, 2021:389). The originality of the brand is a representation of its true nature, as it expresses the degree to which it is seen as a brand that is characterized by modernity and is not characterized by tradition as the authentic brand is known, so organizations need to implement new and innovative methods in marketing their products and services, and increase Affective commitment within the organization, and from Here, the problem of the study is reflected in a fundamental question (Does the originality of the brand play an important role in strengthening the relationship between the brand experience and Affective commitment), and from this question several important questions emerge:

1-What is the level of customer awareness of the dimensions of the brand experience?

2-What is the level of Affective commitment of customers towards the brand?

3-What is the level of customers' awareness of the dimensions of the brand's authenticity?

4-What is the nature of the relationship between brand experience and Affective commitment to the existence of the mediating role of brand authenticity from the point of view of the study sample?

Second: The importance of the study

1-Smartphone trade is one of the vital and important sectors that witness strong competition in societies, especially in Iraqi society, so conducting studies and research that will increase the chances of success and development of this sector.

2-Determine the nature and type of relationship between the brand experience and the Affective commitment to the existence of the originality of the brand, which enables future studies to measure the nature and type of this relationship on other samples through which it is possible to identify a set of strategic solutions that in turn represent a solution to the problems of each sample.

3-Expanding theoretical and applied knowledge related to the brand experience, Affective commitment and brand authenticity, as it is common in the field of classical economic theory that the sacrifices made by the customer are monetary sacrifices only, while the current study tries to provide an in-depth marketing vision based on the fact that sacrifice means Customers also bear non-monetary sacrifices such as time, effort, and brand research costs.

Third:- The objectives of the study

The current study attempts to achieve a primary goal based on explaining the factors affecting the relationship between brand experience, Affective commitment, and brand authenticity. To achieve this goal, the study set sub-goals represented as follows:

1- Knowing the level of customer awareness of the brand experience.

2- Recognizing the level of customers' awareness of the brand's authenticity.

3-Determine the level and nature of the Affective commitment that customers perceive towards the brand.

4-Recognizing the nature of the relationship between brand experience and Affective commitment from the customers' point of view.

5-Standing on the level of brand experience among customers towards the brand.

Fourth:- The hypothetical scheme of the study

The purpose of this paragraph is to develop a detailed plan for the study to follow in order to achieve the goals that you aspire to, as in Figure (1), and accordingly, the study variables can be identified as follows:

The independent variable: - It is represented by the brand experience and includes four dimensions (Affective experience, behavioral experience, cognitive experience, and sensory experience), which was relied upon from a study (Brakus et al., 2009; Stamatiou et al., 2021).

The dependent variable: - It is represented by Affective commitment, which is one-dimensional, which was relied upon from the study (Lariviere et al., 2014).

The intermediate variable: - It is represented by the originality of the brand and includes four dimensions (continuity, integrity, reliability / credibility, symbolism), which is consistent with the study (Fritz & Bruhn, 2017).



Figure (1) The hypothesis of the research

Fifth: The hypotheses of the study

The first main hypothesis: there is a statistically significant correlation between the brand experience and its dimensions and the brand authenticity variable.

The second main hypothesis: there is a statistically significant correlation between the brand experience and its dimensions and the Affective commitment variable.

The second main hypothesis: there is a statistically significant correlation between the brand experience and its dimensions and the variable of Affective commitment to the presence of the brand's authenticity.

The fourth main hypothesis: there is a statistically significant effect of the brand experience and its dimensions in the brand authenticity variable.

Fifth main hypothesis: there is a statistically significant effect of the brand experience and its dimensions in the Affective commitment variable.

The sixth main hypothesis: there is a statistically significant effect of the brand experience and its dimensions in the variable of Affective commitment to the existence of the brand's authenticity.

Sixth: - The research community and sample

The study was applied to a sample of customers of smart phone brands, and the formula (Hair, 2010) was adopted, which indicates $(\text{number of items} * 5) + 10\% \text{ safety margin}$, and as shown below:

$$(44) \times (5) = 220$$

$$220 \times 10\% = 22 \text{ margins of safety}$$

$242 = 22 + 220$ as (284) forms were distributed through the Google Form program and distributed to friends, relatives and family through social media, WhatsApp, Telegram, Facebook.

Seventh: Data analysis methods

The researcher relied on the five-point Likert gradient in order to distribute the points of strength on the questionnaire tool, and therefore, in order to analyze the field side of the study, a number of statistical methods were used in dealing with the questionnaires collected from the respondents.

1-Arithmetic mean: It is used for the purpose of knowing the average of the answers of the sample.

2-Standard Deviation: It is used for the purpose of knowing the dispersion of the responses of the respondents from the arithmetic mean.

3-Relative importance: which is determining the importance of each paragraph of the scale compared to the other paragraphs.

4-The simple correlation coefficient: It is used for the purpose of determining the correlation between the variables of the study.

5- Structural modeling equation through the Amos program to test hypotheses of direct influence and indirect influence.

Theoretical framework

First: The Concept Brand Experience

The brand experience arises from a set of interactions between the customer and the product or organization, which evokes a reaction. This experience is completely personal and involves the customer on different levels: mental, Affective, sensory, physical, and spiritual (Chen-Yu&Kincade,2018:2).

Brand experience describes the overall effect of interaction with a brand on customer awareness. It is highly subjective and can vary greatly between customers. Brand experience can be positive for one person and negative for another. It can also be shaped in very specific ways, usually by Where the impression that the customer takes from the sum of his experiences with his brand (Zha, 288:2020). A brand is influenced by the many interactions, touchpoints, communications, and content streams driven by brands and consumed by people (Hwang et al., 2021:3).

(Prentice et al., 2019:52) indicated that the brand experience is not a concept of Affective communication, as the brand experience can produce an Affective link, but the emotions are only one internal result of the stimulus that evokes the experience. And since the brand experience differs from brand evaluation, attachment to it, and customer enjoyment, the brand experience also differs conceptually and experientially from the subjective one (Coelho et al., 2020:42).

(Safeer et al., 2021:3) defined it as what the user feels when engaging or interacting with a brand, as some brands evoke feelings of innovation and technology, while other brands are untrustworthy and have a bad reputation.

Second: The importance Brand Experience

That brand experience can be positively but indirectly associated with relational benefits, and that brand familiarity, brand image, and brand personality can act as mediators in brand experience, and this finding

indicates that practitioners must understand customers' perceptions of relational benefits and developing marketing strategies that will lead to continuous relationships with customers (Keng et al., 2013:9). Marketers have been interested in how experiences can positively influence product marketing. Organizations have long tried to create buildings for the ultimate customer experience because it can lead to increased customer loyalty (Dumitrescu et al., 2012:57). Marketing research and practices have undergone a series of wide-ranging transformations over the past 25 years, shifting focus from creating fast-moving consumer product brands to building customer relationships through service marketing, and now to creating a compelling brand experience (Maklan 2012:772). (Ong et al., 2018: 756) indicated that identifying and improving the brand experience is a high priority for market research because experience replaces quality, given that one of the main areas of focus for marketing is to provide a distinctive brand experience.

Third: Dimensions Brand Experience

1-Sensory experience

The sensory dimension indicates that brands can leave a strong impression on the customer and can prevent non-brand stimuli from entering the mind of the customer (Stamatiou, 2021:8). Product sensing is essential for customers, especially in the retail industry, where concerns about a product's aesthetics (such as its colour, texture, and design) motivate customers to try to decide whether to purchase the product, and positive sensory experiences of customers help a brand identify a good brand (Huong et al. al., 2016:75)

2- Affective experience

Brands stimulate emotions that build Affective bonds with customers (Stamatiou, 2021:8). Customers' feelings are related to the product experience when they try a group of products, as joy exerts the greatest influence on the customer's experience, and customers who engage in high-end shopping for products tend to want to show a positive Affective experience such as joy, satisfaction, or relaxation to satisfy their shopping motives (Huong et al., 2016:75).

3-Cognitive experience

The cognitive dimension refers to the ability of brands to make customers think or feel curious (Stamatiou, 2021:8). Brand experiences affect customers' experience or what they learn about the brand, as learning trends and shopping experience contribute to customers' clear perception of the brand (Huong et al., 2016:75).

4-The behavioral experiment

The behavioral dimension includes physical experiences, lifestyles, and interactions with a brand, meaning that when a customer experiences a brand, it prompts them to take a physical action. Commercial (Stamatiou, 2021:8). The behavioral responses to a brand resulting from a stimulus associated with a particular brand are collectively termed a behavioral experience (Laghari, 2021:443).

Fourth: The Concept Affective Commitment

Customer Affective commitment refers to the customer's association with a certain behavior in relation to the brand even in the absence of rooted motivation or positive attitudes, i.e. it reflects the customers' Affective commitment to the organization, as well as that the Affective commitment produces beneficial outcomes for the brand to reduce the intent to transform and strengthen relationships with customers (Abdul-Rasool & Khadhim, 2019: 208).

Affective commitment is the Affective connection that guarantees a positive relationship between customers and the brand, and the Affective dimension positively affects retention and referrals. et al., 2015:63). Affective commitment is one of the main elements of customer commitment (Kim et al., 2014: 1629). Affective commitment refers to the Affective feeling where the customer is affected by the degree of his awareness of the characteristics that distinguish the brand from others (Sadiq, 2018:155). Affective commitment is based on the Affective attachment to the brand so that the committed customer recognizes strongly the membership in the brand, participates in it and enjoys it, and although building Affective commitment was developed as a means to explain the association of workers with work groups and organizations, it can be applied in situations where there is a consumption relationship between the customer and the organization (Dinc et al., 2018: 17).

On the one hand, he stated (Mattila, 2014:134) that Affective commitment may be the key to loyalty to the brand, as Affective commitment reflects the customer's sense of belonging and participation with the brand, and therefore it is closer to Affective bonding, and it is expected that Affective commitment will moderate customer responses to failure Service and service recovery results. Marketing scholars have explicitly pointed out the Affective nature of customer commitment, in that it represents a constant desire to maintain a relationship of value. 398)

(Purba et al., 2015:147 ; Esfahani et al., 2014:947) believes that Affective commitment represents an Affective attachment, identification, and identification of the customer's identity with the identity of the brand and their willingness to maintain the relationship with it. And (Mohammed & Al-Swidi, 2020:1-2) defined it as the customer's Affective attachment to service providers that enhances the sense of belonging and participation with a particular brand.

Fifth: The Importance Affective Commitment

Affective commitment is one of the important means through which customer loyalty can be enhanced and the customer's credibility enhanced by addressing his psychological exhaustion and improving his dealings with the brand for as long as possible (Aslam & Safdar, 2012: 4019); (Lee et al., 2017: 131). Also, Affective commitment is a more Affective factor that develops through the personal involvement or reciprocity that the customer has with the brand, which leads to a higher level of trust and commitment. When customers like a certain company or brand, they show an Affective attachment or commitment to its product (Ribeiro et al., 2021:3)

Affective commitment can encourage customers to increase behaviors beneficial to organizations, such as loyalty to the organization, and to participate in improving performance by encouraging service providers to earn customer loyalty for the purpose of achieving organizational goals and values (Yang et al., 2017:2).

Sixth: - Dimensions The concept of brand authenticity

Authenticity relates to trust and describes something that is honest, real, and truthful. The discussion centers around the relationship between authenticity and the pursuit of what is good in one's life or revealing one's true self to others. The dichotomy between reality and subjectivity remains central to understanding authenticity in sociology. Authenticity is not a state of being as much as it is Objective to a particular process, and refers to a set of characteristics agreed upon by individuals at a particular time and place that represent an ideal model (Guèvremont, 2018: 507)

)Dwivedi et al., 2018:13) mentioned that the authenticity of the trademark is developed through the evaluation of the reality, as the reality can be analyzed through the information available for the trademark, logo, age, signs of origin and performance, and these aspects help in verifying the trademark. The authenticity of the brand can be explained through a constructive perspective, as this perspective shows that the authenticity of the brand can be created through a built personal or social process, and the constructive view depends on quality (Haider, 2020:37)

The perceived consistency of the brand's behavior that reflects its core values and history, according to which the brand is seen as being true to itself, objective, modern, and not imitating other brands (Fritz et al, 2017:325). and an assessment that relates to the consumer's perception of the brand's truth or 'honesty', rather than objective realism, and reflects the consumer's perception of whether the brand is acting in consistency with its core essence rather than factual accuracy (Campagna et al., 2021:4).

Seventh :-The Importance brand Authenticity

The importance of brand authenticity emerges from being compatible with customers' preferences for brands or authentic experiences while finding meaning in their lives. Therefore, the importance of brand authenticity is represented in the fact that it helps customers by providing information to evaluate the originality of the brand, as it is determined depending on the extent of love The customer is for the brand, and therefore the authenticity of the brand is necessary to increase the customers who love the brand (Safeer et al., 2020: 1125). Authentic brands are also associated with many positive psychological and behavioral outcomes related to the customer. Regarding the psychological effects of brand authenticity, perceptions of authenticity have a positive effect on the customer's attitude to the brand (Fritz, 2017:329).

Eighth: - Dimensions brand Authenticity

1-Continuity

Continuity determines the temporal consistency of the organization's brand based on the organization's ability to transcend current trends and maintain its ability to meet customers' requirements over time, as well as focusing on understanding the customer's traditions and beliefs by communicating continuously to know their tastes and requirements at all times. The capabilities of the organization to meet the requirements of customers over time and conform to their perception and expectations in a way that contributes to positively affecting customers' feelings (Jian et al., 2019:4).

2-Integrity

Integrity is demonstrated by sharing information openly, credibly, with high reliability, and joint completion of tasks that contribute to achieving the organization's goals (Gillespie et al., 2020: 2).

Integrity refers to the ability of workers to follow the ethical rules and standards for desirable and undesirable behaviors set by the organization (Krot & Lewicka, 2012:226)

3-Credibility/reliability

Credibility refers to the need for the manager to be a source of trust among the employees and works to address undesirable behaviors, problems and events within the work. The organization takes into account the degree to which the promotion of the organization and its brand is consistent with a realistic and coherent awareness of what customers can experience when visiting the organization in person (Jiménez-Barreto et al., 2020:3)

4-Symbolism

Symbolism represents an important basis for shaping the degree of authenticity of the organization's brand by measuring the extent of the brand's ability to effectively convey all its symbolic aspects through organization-specific stimuli such as images, texts, videos, design and product interfaces via the Internet, which allows this to take into account the extent of individuality, nature and truth The brand of the organization (Morhart et al, 2015:200).

The Practical Aspect Of Research

First: Coding the main study variables and their constituent dimensions

The current study contained, within its laboratory model, four basic variables, which are shown in Table (1). It also shows the dimensions, the number of paragraphs that form its measurement structure, and the symbols used within the statistical program.

Table (1) showing the variables, dimensions, number of questions and their symbols

Variable	Dimension	Number of Paragraphs	code	Scale Source
Brand experience	Affective Experience	3	Emo	Brakus et al.,2009
	Behavioral Experiment	3	Beh	
	Cognitive Experience	3	Kno	
	Sensory Experience	3	Sen	
Brand authenticity	Continuity	5	Con	Fritz&Bruhn,2017
	Integrity	5	Int	
	Reliability/credibility	5	Rel	
	Symbolism	4	Sym	
Affective commitment	unidimensional	8	Com	Lariviere et al.,2014

Second: - the structural validity of the sample adequacy test

Researchers use the (KMO, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) criterion to verify the criterion of sample adequacy, which is one of the necessities of the tests for the study. There are two conditions to verify that first condition within the test, which is determined by the value of (KMO, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin), which should be (0.50). or greater than it as a condition for accepting that the sample is sufficient, in addition to the level of the value of the (Bartlett) test whose level of significance must be less than (0.05) as a condition for its statistical acceptance, and that this test is also an indicator of the relationship between variables (Quality, 2009:166) making sure that The presence of acceptable correlations between the paragraphs of the questionnaire on the condition of significant value (Chi-Square) to indicate the acceptability of the mentioned correlation coefficients, as shown in Table (2), which shows the verification of the sufficiency of the sample according to the approved indicators.

Table (2) KMO and Bartlett's test for study dimensions

Dimension	Number of Paragraphs	KMO	Chi-Square Bartlett Test	Sig
Affective experience	3	0.713	1411.721	.000
Behavioral experiment	3			
Cognitive experience	3			

Sensory experience	3			
Brand experience variable	12			
Continuity	5	.764	2852.774	.000
Integrity	5			
Reliability/credibility	5			
Symbolism	4			
Brand authenticity variable	19			
Affective commitment variable	8	.765	1260.475	.000

Third: - Test The Stability Of The Measurement Tool

The measure of reliability of the questionnaire for the study shows the level that shows good internal consistency of the scale, and this indicates that the paragraphs that make up the scale represent the whole phenomenon to be measured, and when you repeat the distribution of the questionnaire on the same sample at two different time points, there is a possibility to reach the same results, as it represents the degree in which individual differences can be measured in harmony and homogeneity when answering a specific scale, and the scale is considered stable when it measures what it was built for, as the measurement of the stability of the resolution aims to verify the internal consistency of all the paragraphs of the resolution and the dimensions as a whole at different points in time so that the results remain the same or very close. Including that the acceptable value for the level of stability is a ratio of (0.70) or higher than it. In the event that it was found that the percentages for stability were lower than the accepted standard, it shows that the scale shows weak internal consistency and cannot be accepted. Table (3) shows the stability test of the questionnaire. As well as extracting the structural validity ratio to find out the measurement tool's validity ratio with respect to the variables and sub-dimensions, depending on the answers of the sample members.

After conducting the analysis, it is clear that the values of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the study's main variables and its sub-dimensions ranged between (0.75-0.88). The study and its standards are valid for final application, as they are characterized by accuracy, stability and high honesty.

Table (3) the results of the consistency between the components of the scale

sequence	variables and dimensions	Cronbach alpha coefficient	Structural honesty coefficient
1	Affective Experience	0.76	0.87
	Behavioral Experiment	0.85	0.92
	Cognitive Experience	0.80	0.89
	Sensory Experience	0.85	0.92
	Brand Experience Variable	0.82	0.90
	Continuity	0.75	0.87
	Integrity	0.78	0.88
	Reliability/Credibility	0.78	0.88
	Symbolism	0.76	0.87
2	Brand Authenticity Variable	0.88	0.94
3	Affective Commitment Variable	0.87	0.93

Fourth: - Description and diagnosis of the study's measurements and analysis of its results

1-Brand experience

And at the level of the brand experience variable, it was found that the behavioral experience dimension was the most agreed upon by the study sample individuals. individuals towards this dimension, and the response level reached within a very high rank, and thus it ranked first after the behavioral experiment, then followed in sequence according to the arithmetic mean after the cognitive experiment, as the arithmetic mean reached (4.48)

And the amount of dispersion (standard deviation) (.657), which shows that the dispersion in the answers was low, which is reflected in the statement that there is harmony with the views of the study sample about

the availability of the cognitive experience in the application environment and the level of the response was very high, then it ranked third after the sensory experience, which achieved The arithmetic mean reached (4.48) and a standard deviation within the limits of (.669), which indicates that there is generally good agreement about the availability of this dimension within the scope of the application environment and within the test period and with a very high response level, and it ranked last after the Affective as the arithmetic average reached (4.33). And a standard deviation (.652) and within a very high level of response. In total, the brand experience variable achieved an arithmetic mean of (4.45), which represents the average of the average dimensions of the variable. The deviation of the standard responses of the sample from the brand experience variable was at the level of (.657) and within a very high level of agreement about the variable, and this indicates that there is a good availability of the experience variable. The brand according to the customers of the smart phone brands, the study sample, and that the behavioral experience is the first reflection of their desire for the brand, which constitutes their good knowledge about these brands, the practice of using them, and their gratitude for their experience. Table (54) presents a statement of the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, relative importance, level of response, and order of dimensions.

Table (4): Arithmetic means, standard deviations, response score, and ordinal importance of the main dimensions of the brand experience variable (n = 284)

Main Dimension	Main	standard deviation	Relative importance	answer level	ordinal importance
Affective experience	4.33	.652	0.87	very high	4
Behavioral experiment	4.50	.652	0.90	very high	1
Cognitive Experience	4.48	.657	0.90	very high	2
Sensory Experience	4.48	.669	0.90	very high	3
Overall rate of the brand experience variable	4.45	.657	0.89	very high	-

2-Brand authenticity

At the level of the brand originality variable, it was found that the dimension of continuity was the dimension most agreed upon by the individuals of the study sample, as its arithmetic mean reached the highest percentage as it reached (4.50) and that the amount of standard deviation was within the limits of (.614), which indicates a good harmony of the convictions of individuals towards this dimension, and the level of the answer reached within a very high rank, and thus it ranked first after continuity, then followed in sequence according to the arithmetic mean after integrity, as the arithmetic mean reached (4.46) and the amount of dispersion (standard deviation) (.570), which indicates that the dispersion in the answers was Low, which is reflected in the statement that there is harmony with the views of the study sample about the availability of the integrity axis in the application environment, and the level of the response was very high, then it ranked third after the reliability / credibility, which achieved an arithmetic mean of (4.42) and a standard deviation within the limits of (.636), and it ranked third. The last place is after symbolism, which achieved a computational mean of (4.40) and a standard deviation within the limits of (.623), which indicates that there is generally good agreement about the availability of this dimension within the scope of the application environment and within the test period and with a very high response level. The brand has an arithmetic mean of (4.44), which represents the average of the average dimensions of the variable. The deviation of the standard responses of the sample from the brand originality variable was at the level of (.611) and within a very high level of agreement about the variable, and this indicates that there is a good availability of the brand originality variable according to the opinion of customers Smartphone brands of the study sample. Table (5) presents a statement of the arithmetic mean, standard deviation, relative importance, level of response, and order of dimensions.

Table (5) The arithmetic means, standard deviations, response score, and ordinal importance of the main dimensions of the trademark authenticity variable (n=284)

Main Dimension	Main	standard deviation	Relative importance	answer level	ordinal importance
Continuity	4.50	.614	0.90	very high	1
Integrity	4.46	.570	0.89	very high	2
Reliability / credibility	4.42	.636	0.88	very high	3

Symbolism	4.40	.623	0.76	very high	4
Overall rate of brand prestige variable	4.44	.611	0.89	very high	-

3-Affective Commitment

This paragraph is concerned with showing the descriptive characteristics of the Affective commitment variable, which is expressed through eight basic paragraphs (questions), as it is clear from Table (6) that the paragraph with the highest arithmetic mean was the eighth paragraph, whose content is (I do not think of leaving the current brand.) as its arithmetic mean was (4.75), and this paragraph had a slight dispersion of (.535), which indicates that the sample was consistent in terms of its conviction in the content of the question, as it had a very high level of response and a relative importance of (95%). As for the lowest arithmetic mean, it belonged to the first paragraph whose content was (I am happy to be a customer of the current brand). It was (4.24), which is a median with a very high response level, and its standard deviation reached (.771). It indicates a small percentage of dispersion towards this paragraph, which It indicates the consistency of individuals' convictions about the content of this paragraph, with an importance level of (85%). The Affective commitment variable was generally with an arithmetic mean of (4.50), while its standard deviation amounted to (.803). It indicates the consistency of sample answers about the availability of a variable. Affective commitment with a very high level of response. This means that there is a good Affective commitment among customers towards the brands of their smart phones, and they never intend to leave them, and they feel happy and belong to that brand.

Table (6) Arithmetic means, standard deviations, response level, and ordinal importance of the Affective commitment variable (n=284)

N	Phrase	Main	standard deviation	Relative importance	Answer level	ordinal importance
1	am happy to be a customer of the current brand	4.24	.771	.85	very high	8
2	The current brand is the one that takes the best care of its customers.	4.50	.597	.90	very high	4
3	There is a sense of trust towards the brand.	4.47	.578	.89	very high	6
4	I try to reciprocate in my relationship with the brand.	4.46	.579	.89	very high	7
5	Feel a strong sense of belonging to the existing brand.	4.49	.597	.90	very high	5
6	For me, the current brand holds a great deal of personal meaning	4.54	.571	.91	very high	3
7	I intend to stay on the current brand because of the Affective attachment to it	4.55	.595	.91	very high	2
8	I'm not thinking of leaving the current brand.	4.75	.535	.95	very high	1
General Average		4.50	.803	0.90	very high	

Fourth: - Testing the correlation hypotheses

1-Testing the first main correlation hypothesis

The first main hypothesis is concerned with verifying the level of correlation (correlation) between the emergence of a certain level of brand experience and the association of that appearance with Affective commitment through the content of the hypothesis (there is a direct correlation with significant significance between the brand experience and the Affective commitment variable) as the apparent values are shown in Correlations Matrix Table (7) at the level of the independent variable with the dependent variable, as well as at the level of the dimensions of the independent variable with the dependent variable, as it is clear that there is a strong correlation level between the brand experience variable and the Affective commitment variable, so the value of the correlation was (.536**), which is a significant value Statistically acceptable significance indicated by the two asterisks above the value, which indicates that the calculated t is higher than its tabular value and is within a confidence level (0.99), meaning that it was accepted with significant limits (0.01). There is a good correlation between the availability of the brand experience variable and the availability of the Affective commitment variable within the limits of the smartphone brand customers' convictions, the sample of the current study. And this result shows that there is support for accepting and achieving the first main link hypothesis between the brand experience variable and the Affective commitment variable.

Table (7) Matrix of correlation coefficients between brand experience and its dimensions and Affective commitment

Correlations						
	Affective experience	behavioral experiment	Cognitive experience	Sensory experience	Brand experience	Affective commitment

Affective experience	Pearson Correlation	1	.093	.257**	.314**	.604**	.393**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.117	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
behavioral experiment	Pearson Correlation	.093	1	.318**	.301**	.643**	.316**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.117		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Cognitive experience	Pearson Correlation	.257**	.318**	1	.339**	.708**	.308**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Sensory experience	Pearson Correlation	.314**	.301**	.339**	1	.736**	.427**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Brand experience	Pearson Correlation	.604**	.643**	.708**	.736**	1	.536**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Affective commitment	Pearson Correlation	.393**	.316**	.308**	.427**	.536**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

2-Testing the second main correlation hypothesis:

The first main hypothesis is concerned with verifying the level of correlation (correlation) between the emergence of a certain level of brand authenticity and the association of that appearance with Affective commitment through the content of the hypothesis (there is a direct correlation with significant significance between the originality of the brand and the variable of Affective commitment) as the apparent values are shown in Correlations Matrix Table (8) at the level of the intermediate variable with the dependent variable, as well as at the level of the dimensions of the intermediate variable with the dependent variable, as it is clear that there is a strong correlation level between the brand authenticity variable and the Affective commitment variable, so the value of the correlation was (.653**), which is a significant value Statistically acceptable significance indicated by the two asterisks above the value, which indicates that the calculated t is higher than its tabular value and is within a confidence level (0.99), meaning that it was accepted with significant limits (0.01). There is a good correlation between the availability of the brand originality variable and the availability of the Affective commitment variable within the limits of the smartphone brand customers' convictions, the current study sample. And this result shows that there is support for accepting and achieving the second main link hypothesis between the brand authenticity variable and the Affective commitment variable.

Table (8) Matrix of correlation coefficients between brand authenticity and its dimensions and Affective commitment

Correlations							
		continuity	integrity	Reliability/credibility	Avatar	Brand authenticity	Affective commitment
continuity	Pearson Correlation	1	.463**	.509**	.491**	.785**	.466**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
integrity	Pearson	.463**	1	.457**	.430**	.741**	.449**

	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Reliability/ credibility	Pearson Correlation	.509**	.457**	1	.511**	.799**	.599**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Symbolism	Pearson Correlation	.491**	.430**	.511**	1	.792**	.516**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Brand authenticity	Pearson Correlation	.785**	.741**	.799**	.792**	1	.653**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284
Affective commitment	Pearson Correlation	.466**	.449**	.599**	.516**	.653**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
	N	284	284	284	284	284	284

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Fifth: - Testing the impact hypotheses

1-The first main hypothesis

This hypothesis is concerned with testing the effect of the independent variable brand experience on the dependent variable Affective commitment, which states:

(There is a significant direct effect relationship between the brand experience variable and the Affective commitment variable)

Table (9) shows the standard values and the non-standard values of the impact coefficient as well as the measurement error and the critical percentage in the light of which and the level of significance it is clear whether the results are accepted or not.

Table (9) Estimates of the influence model between the brand experience variable and the Affective commitment variable

variable and dimensions	path	Variables	normative Beta	Non-normative Beta	error	critical ratio	Moral
Affective commitment	<---	Affective commitment	.536	.611	.057	10.678	***
Com1	<---	Affective commitment	.615	1.087	.083	13.129	***
Com2	<---	Affective commitment	.781	1.070	.051	21.049	***
Com3	<---	Affective commitment	.688	.912	.057	15.938	***
Com4	<---	Affective commitment	.667	.885	.059	15.072	***
Com5	<---	Affective commitment	.748	1.023	.054	18.931	***
Com7	<---	Affective commitment	.763	1.041	.052	19.837	***
Com6	<---	Affective commitment	.740	.969	.052	18.513	***
Com8	<---	Affective commitment	.825	1.013	.041	24.533	***
Affective experience	<---	Brand experience	.604	.854	.067	12.760	***

behavioral experiment	<---	Brand experience	.643	.968	.069	14.112	***
Cognitive experience	<---	Brand experience	.736	1.141	.062	18.280	***
Sensory experience	<---	Brand experience	.708	1.037	.061	16.875	***

2-The second main hypothesis

This hypothesis is concerned with testing the effect of the mediator variable brand authenticity on the dependent variable Affective commitment, which states:

(There is a significant direct effect relationship between the brand authenticity variable and the Affective commitment variable).

Table (10) shows the normative and non-standard values of the impact coefficient, as well as the measurement error and the critical percentage in light of which and the level of significance it is clear whether the results are acceptable or not.

Table (10) Estimates of the influence model between the brand authenticity variable and the Affective commitment variable

variable and dimensions	path	Variables	normative Beta	Non-normative Beta	error	critical ratio	Moral
Affective commitment	<---	Brand authenticity	.653	.802	.055	14.511	***
Com1	<---	Affective commitment	.615	1.087	.083	13.129	***
Com2	<---	Affective commitment	.781	1.070	.051	21.049	***
Com3	<---	Affective commitment	.688	.912	.057	15.938	***
Com4	<---	Affective commitment	.667	.885	.059	15.072	***
Com5	<---	Affective commitment	.748	1.023	.054	18.931	***
Com7	<---	Affective commitment	.763	1.041	.052	19.837	***
Com6	<---	Affective commitment	.740	.969	.052	18.513	***
Com8	<---	Affective commitment	.825	1.013	.041	24.533	***
continuity	<---	Brand authenticity	.785	.973	.046	21.295	***
integrity	<---	Brand authenticity	.741	.888	.048	18.573	***
Reliability/credibility	<---	Brand authenticity	.799	1.053	.047	22.358	***
Symbolism	<---	Brand authenticity	.792	1.086	.050	21.835	***

3-The third main hypothesis

This current paragraph is concerned with investigating the mediation of the brand authenticity variable in the relationship between brand experience and Affective commitment, and knowing whether mediation is complete or partial mediation.

The table (11) shows the presence of a direct effect between the brand experience variable and the dependent variable, the Affective commitment, in the presence of the mediator variable, the originality of the brand, if it reached ($B = 0.19$, $P < .01$), which is a significant effect, as the critical ratio of the test was (3.324).

table (11) show that there is an ability of the brand originality variable to transfer the influence from the independent variable the brand experience to the Affective commitment variable with an effect of (Indirect effect $B=0.34$, $P<.01$).

Variables	path	Variables	Standard R.W.	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
Brand authenticity	<---	Brand experience	.650	.603	.042	14.374	***

Affective commitment	<---	Brand experience	.193	.220	.066	3.324	***
Affective commitment	<---	Brand authenticity	.528	.648	.071	9.086	***

Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusions

1-There is an agreement by the sample to fulfill the brand that they deal with because of the high-tech capabilities of the brand that satisfy their needs and desires, which means that the sample realizes the authenticity of the brand they deal with and their ability to be unique, honesty, integrity, adherence to its promises and realism in the light of its heritage and history that reflects All of those characteristics.

2- The interest of smart phone companies in fulfilling their promises by providing high-quality products that are compatible with the tastes of different customers, which also means that the sample customers evaluate the relationship positively by creating successful and unique experiences away from imitation, reflecting themselves and their true values.

3-Smart phone companies continue their interest through sympathy, attention, and allocating more time to customers, which creates a degree of customer commitment to smart phone brands that comes as a result of the reviewer making a comparison between maintaining his relationship with the brand versus what he would lose if he decided to choose another brand.

4- The study sample answers showed a high readiness by the sample to exert more efforts and time in order to continue and sustain the relationship with their current brands. Rather, customers may pay more money in return for maintaining their relationship with this brand and increasing the volume of their purchases from the brand.

Recommendations

1- Introducing new ways by brands to communicate with their customers, including the use of technology in the implementation and effective communication of the message of the relationship, as well as making a comprehensive change in the appearance of the brand from time to time, and providing an expansion of the relationship and new versions, where these versions can contribute In further communicating the message around the brand.

2- The need to form Affective bonds by linking the functional feature of the mark as an important Affective need that stimulates the functional need, which requires conducting more studies and personal interviews with customers to show their true Affective feelings.

3- Brands must achieve credibility and integrity in the relationship with the customer and maintain feelings of connection and honesty by making continuous efforts to meet the customer's functional and Affective needs, whether hidden or apparent.

4-The need to develop the physical characteristics of brands based on functional features into Affective characteristics based on the personal characteristics of the brand, which transforms the relationship between the brand and the customer into a psychological relationship according to the customer's mental orientations, beliefs, hobbies and feelings.

5-Discovering new sites and places to interact with the brand's communities, establishing partnerships with new channels and outlets to sell its products, and establishing new links and new types of sponsorship by linking it to viewers and social personalities of opinion leaders, which may enable the brand to change its presentation or personality

References

1. Abdul-rasool, h., & khadhim, e. (2019). The effect of marketing culture and customer psychological contracts on customer affective commitment. Journal of al-rafidain university college for sciences (print issn: 1681-6870, online issn: 2790-2293), (1), 205-217.
2. Aslam, c. J., tran, v. D (2012). Relationships among brand experience, brand personality, and customer experiential value. Contemporary management research, 9(3).
3. Brakus, j. J., schmitt, b. H., & zarantonello, l. (2009). Brand experience: what is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty?. Journal of marketing, 73(3), 52-68
4. Campagna, C. L. (2021). The Missing Piece of the Puzzle: How Brand Authenticity Drives Brand Engagement.
5. Chen-yu, j., cho, s., & kincade, d. (2018). Brand perception and brand repurchase intent in online apparel shopping: an examination of brand experience, image congruence, brand affect, and brand trust. Journal of global fashion marketing, 7(1), 30-44.

6. Coelho, f. J., bairrada, c. M., & de matos coelho, a. F. (2020). Functional brand qualities and perceived value: the mediating role of brand experience and brand personality. *Psychology & marketing*, 37(1), 41-55.
7. Dinc, m. S., kuzey, c., gungormus, a. H., & atalay, b. (2018). Accountants' whistle-blowing intentions: the impact of affective organisational commitment. *International journal of business governance and ethics*, 13(1), 15-32.
8. Dumitrescu, l., stanciu, o., tichindelean, m., & vinerean, s. (2012). The importance of establishing customer experiences. *Studies in business and economics*, 7(1), 56-61.
9. Dwivedi, A., & McDonald, R. (2018). Building brand authenticity in fast-moving consumer goods via consumer perceptions of brand marketing communications. *European Journal of Marketing*.
10. Esfahani, m., feng, y., & akhter, s. N. (2014). Online retailing: relationship among e-tailing system quality, e-satisfaction, e-trust and customers commitment in china. *International journal of economics, commerce and management*, 2(10), 1-17.
11. Fritz, K., Schoenmueller, V., & Bruhn, M. (2017). Authenticity in branding—exploring antecedents and consequences of brand authenticity. *European journal of marketing*, 51(2), 324-348.
12. Gillespie, N., Searle, R., Gustafsson, S., & Hailey, V. H. (2020). Preserving employee trust during crisis. *Behavioral Science and Policy*, 6(COVID-19 special issue), 1-10.
13. Guèvremont, A. (2018). Creating and interpreting brand authenticity: The case of a young brand. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour*, 17(6), 505-518.
14. Haider, A. (2020). Antecedents and Outcomes of Perceived Brand Authenticity: A Study of Sustainable Brands (Doctoral dissertation, CAPITAL UNIVERSITY).
15. Huong, p. T. L., hong, n. T., & khai, t. T. (2016). Effects of brand experience on brand loyalty in fashion retail business. *Journal of economic development*, (jed, vol. 23 (3)), 73-88.
16. Huong, p. T. L., hong, n. T., & khai, t. T. (2016). Effects of brand experience on brand loyalty in fashion retail business. *Journal of economic development*, (jed, vol. 23 (3)), 73-88.
17. Hwang, j., choe, j. Y. J., kim, h. M., & kim, j. J. (2021). Human baristas and robot baristas: how does brand experience affect brand satisfaction, brand attitude, brand attachment, and brand loyalty?. *International journal of hospitality management*, 99, 103050.
18. Jian, Y., Zhou, Z., & Zhou, N. (2019). Brand cultural symbolism, brand authenticity, and consumer well-being: the moderating role of cultural involvement. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*.
19. Jiménez-Barreto, J., Rubio, N., & Campo, S. (2020). Destination brand authenticity: What an experiential simulacrum! A multigroup analysis of its antecedents and outcomes through official online platforms. *Tourism Management*, 77, 104022.
20. Keng, c. J., tran, v. D., & le thi, t. M. (2013). Relationships among brand experience, brand personality, and customer experiential value. *Contemporary management research*, 9(3).
21. Kim, h. (2014). Transformational leadership, organizational clan culture, organizational affective commitment, and organizational citizenship behavior: a case of south korea's public sector. *Public organization review*, 14(3), 397-417.
22. Krot, K., & Lewicka, D. (2012). The Importance Of Trust In Manager-Employee Relationships. *International Journal of Electronic Business Management*, 10(3).
23. Laghari, m. K., & latif, s. A. (2021)the impact of brand experience on customer satisfaction in courier services of sindh, pakistan.
24. Lariviere, f. A., ghorbani, h., & zamani, b. (2014). Investigating the relationship between corporate reputation and customer behavioral intentions through roles of customer trust, customer commitment and customer recognition. *International journal of academic research in business and social sciences*, 4(4), 470-484.
25. Leecharoen, b., & chaiyapan, s. (2022). The mediating effect of the customer satisfaction and repurchase behavior relationship of electronic gadgets in bangkok, thailand. *Psaku international journal of interdisciplinary research*, forthcoming, *asian administration & management review*, 5(1)
26. . Lee, h. H. M., & engelhardt, j& Zhou, N. (2017). I am authentic and you said it: analyzing brand authenticity on social media. *Acr north american advances*
27. Maklan, s. (2012). Exq: a multiple-item scale for assessing service experience. *Journal of service management*
28. Mattila, a. S. (2014). The impact of service failures on customer loyalty: the moderating role of affective commitment. *International journal of service industry management*.
29. Mohammed, a., siti, a. E., & nayati, u. H. (2020)islamic compliance and quality of e-banking services build trust and customer commitment using e-banking islamic bank.
30. Morhart, F., Malär, L., Guèvremont, A., Girardin, F., & Grohmann, B. (2015). Brand authenticity: An integrative framework and measurement scale. *Journal of Consumer Psychology*, 25(2), 200–218

31. Neelam, n., bhattacharya, s., sinha, v., & tanksale, d. (2015). Organizational culture as a determinant of organizational commitment: what drives it employees in india?. *Global business and organizational excellence*, 34(2), 62-74.
32. Ong, c. H., lee, h. W., & ramayah, t. (2018). Impact of brand experience on loyalty. *Journal of hospitality marketing & management*, 27(7), 755-774.
33. Prentice, c., wang, x., & loureiro, s. M. C. (2019). The influence of brand experience and service quality on customer engagement. *Journal of retailing and consumer services*, 50, 50-59
34. Purba, t., & taylor, s. (2015). Targets of commitment in service provider-consumer relationships. In *creating and delivering value in marketing* (pp. 157-157). Springer, cham.
35. Rastegari, m., amirhoosini, s. E., & torkfar, a. (2018). Modeling the role of brand community on brand characteristics by mediation of brand attachment (case study: domestic and foreign sport wear customers). *Journal of physical education and sport*, 18(1), 319-326.
36. ribeiro, n., gupta, m., gomes, d., & alexandre, n. (2021). Impact of psychological capital (psycap) on affective commitment: mediating role of affective well-being. *International journal of organizational analysis*.
37. Sadiq, t., (2018). Gamified services: how gameful experiences drive customer commitment. In *gamifin* (pp. 75-82).
38. Safeer, A. A., He, Y., & Abrar, M. (2020). The influence of brand experience on brand authenticity and brand love: an empirical study from Asian consumers' perspective. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*.
39. Safeer, a. A., yuanqiong, h., abrar, m., shabbir, r., & rasheed, h. M. W. (2021). Role of brand experience in predicting consumer loyalty. *Marketing intelligence & planning*.
40. Stamatiou, k. A. L., & leber, m. N. (2021). The impact of brand experience on attitudinal loyalty through the moderating role of actual and ideal self-concept (master's thesis, handelshøyskolen bi).
41. Stamatiou, k. A. L., & leber, m. N. (2021). The impact of brand experience on attitudinal loyalty through the moderating role of actual and ideal self-concept (master's thesis, handelshøyskolen bi).
42. Stamatiou, k. A. L., & leber, m. N. (2021). The impact of brand experience on attitudinal loyalty through the moderating role of actual and ideal self-concept (master's thesis, handelshøyskolen bi).
43. Yang, t., guo, y., ma, m., li, y., tian, h., & deng, j. (2017). Job stress and presenteeism among chinese healthcare workers: the mediating effects of affective commitment. *International journal of environmental research and public health*, 14(9), 978.
44. Zha, d., melewar, t. C., foroudi, p., & jin, z. (2020). An assessment of brand experience knowledge literature: using bibliometric data to identify future research direction. *International journal of management reviews*, 22(3), 287-317