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Brand Equity and Customer Satisfaction: the Mediating Effect of Brand Experience.

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ABSTRACT

The mobile phone industry is highly competitive, with brands constantly striving to establish a strong market presence. This research aims to explore the relationship between brand equity, brand experience, and customer satisfaction within India's mobile phone market. Drawing from theoretical foundations and empirical evidence, the research explores how brand equity contributes customer satisfaction through the development of brand experience. To assess these relationships, data were collected from 390 consumers of various brands and analyzed using structural equation modeling. The empirical findings led to the development of a new model demonstrating significant positive associations among brand equity, brand experience, and customer satisfaction. Based on these results, the study provides managerial insights, emphasizing that enhancing customers' brand experiences can strengthen brand equity and improve their overall satisfaction. While brand equity directly influences customer satisfaction, brand experience may serve as a key mediator in this relationship..

Keywords : Brand experience, Brand equity, Customer satisfaction, Mediation analysis

1. INTRODUCTION:

Branding has become a vital aspect of modern business, widely recognized for its significance yet difficult to define precisely (Davcik *et al.,* 2015). However, building and maintaining a successful brand presents numerous challenges (Chatzipanagiotou *et al.,* 2016). The concept of a 'brand' continues to evolve, influenced by various contemporary perspectives and theoretical developments (Lim *et al.,* 2020), making it a continuous process of refinement. When consumers identify a product or service and associate it with future purchases, it transforms into a brand (Krishnan, 1996), as they typically perceive products alongside their associated brands rather than in isolation (Agaba and Kalu, 2019). The notion of 'brand equity,' which emerged in the early 1980s, has garnered significant attention from both marketing practitioners and researchers. Brand equity refers to the additional value attributed to products and services with a well-established brand name, making them appear superior or more desirable compared to competing alternatives (Farquhar, 1989).

Marketing research primarily employs two approaches to evaluating brand equity: the financial perspective and the consumer perspective (Tasci, 2021). The financial-based approach assesses a brand's monetary worth by analyzing the additional revenue generated due to its name (Simon and Sullivan, 1993). In contrast, the consumer-based approach examines the brand-consumer relationship, focusing on cognitive and behavioral aspects through survey-based research (Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Keller (1993) described brand equity as the varying impact that brand knowledge has on consumer reactions to marketing efforts. Most studies on brand equity emphasize the consumer perspective, exploring how customer perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors contribute to value creation (Keller, 2003; Netemeyer *et al.,* 2004). Similarly, this research adopts the consumer perspective, highlighting that brand equity plays a crucial role in a brand's success and is heavily influenced by the quality of its products and services. Product quality and service quality can function either as substitutes or complements, depending on consumer perceptions. When acting as substitutes, exceptional service quality may offset shortcomings in product quality, enabling consumers to prioritize a positive service experience over product limitations. On the other hand, as complements, superior product quality combined with outstanding service can strengthen consumer preferences and work together to enhance brand value (Guajardo *et al.,* 2016). Therefore, this study examines the combined influence of product and service quality on brand equity within the ever-evolving mobile industry, which is characterized by technological advancements and shifting consumer preferences.

Recent research in branding literature has explored various aspects, including brand personality, brand community, brand trust, brand attachment, brand love, and brand experience (Aaker, 1997; Carroll and Ahuvia, 2006; Delgado-Ballester *et al.,* 2003; Brakus *et al.,* 2009). Marketing practitioners have increasingly recognized the importance of understanding how consumers experience brands in order to develop effective marketing strategies for products and services. While customer experience has garnered significant attention, limited research has examined how consumers perceive brand experiences and their impact on brand equity and brand authenticity. Similarly, Chinomona (2013) investigated how brand

experience influences brand satisfaction, trust, and attachment among consumers in South Africa. Brand experience has emerged as a critical factor influencing customer perceptions and behaviors (Brakus *et al.,* 2009). A positive brand experience fosters emotional and cognitive connections, leading to enhanced customer satisfaction. However, the mechanism through which brand experience affects customer satisfaction remains underexplored. One potential mediator in this relationship is brand equity, which encompasses perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness, and brand associations (Aaker, 1991).

Customer satisfaction is a critical determinant of business success, influencing customer loyalty, retention, and overall profitability (Kotler and Keller, 2016). It is commonly defined as the extent to which a product or service meets or exceeds customer expectations (Oliver, 1980). Companies that prioritize customer satisfaction gain a competitive advantage by fostering long-term relationships and enhancing brand reputation (Parasuraman *et al.,* 1988). Several models have been proposed to assess customer satisfaction, with the SERVQUAL model being one of the most widely used frameworks. This model identifies five key dimensions—tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy—that shape customer perceptions of service quality (Parasuraman *et al.,* 1985). Additionally, the expectancy-disconfirmation theory suggests that satisfaction arises when perceived performance matches or surpasses initial expectations (Oliver, 1997). Customer satisfaction is particularly relevant in service industries, where intangible factors such as trust, responsiveness, and personalized experiences significantly impact consumer perceptions (Zeithaml *et al.,* 1996). Research has also linked customer satisfaction to brand loyalty and positive word-of-mouth communication, further reinforcing its importance for business sustainability (Anderson and Sullivan, 1993). Given its significance, businesses continuously seek strategies to enhance customer satisfaction by improving product quality, service quality, and customer experience.

This paper examines the mediating role of brand experience in the relationship between brand equity and customer satisfaction. While extensive research has documented the direct effects of brand equity on satisfaction (Keller, 1993; Oliver, 1980), less attention has been given to the underlying experiential processes that may explain or amplify this relationship. Addressing this gap, the study offers a conceptual model and empirical strategy to better understand how brand experience can serve as a crucial conduit through which brand equity influences customer satisfaction.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Customer satisfaction is a marketing concept that assesses the extent to which a company's products or services meet or exceed customer expectations (Zeithaml and Bitner, 2000). In marketing literature, satisfaction has been interpreted in various ways. Some researchers define it as an overall evaluation based on the cumulative experience of purchasing and consuming a product or service (Anderson *et al.,* 1994). Oliver (1997) further described customer dissatisfaction as "the summary psychological state resulting when the emotion surrounding disconfirmed expectations is coupled with a consumer's prior feelings about the consumer experience." Additionally, Chi (2007) emphasized that customer satisfaction is influenced by the purchase and use of services, with satisfaction levels directly impacting the overall consumer experience. Mevhibe and Erdogan (2009) also highlighted that the higher the perceived service quality, the greater the customer's satisfaction and sense of pleasure, whereas lower service quality leads to dissatisfaction. In summary, customer satisfaction serves as a measure of how effectively a company meets customer expectations regarding its products or services.

The business world has increasingly recognized the significance of brand equity in a firm's growth and development. Numerous researchers have explored and defined brand equity in various ways. Kim *et al.* (2008) described brand equity as a key concept in academic research and an essential strategy in both brand management and business practice. Since its emergence as a topic of interest in the 1980s, scholars have debated its meaning from multiple perspectives and for different purposes (Keller, 2002). Park and Srinivasan (1994) defined brand equity as the difference between overall brand preference and multi-attribute preference, which is based on objectively measured attribute levels. According to *Business Dictionary*, brand equity refers to the power of a brand derived from the goodwill and name recognition a company has built over time, which can lead to higher sales volumes and greater profit margins in competitive markets.

Despite certain limitations in assessing whether experiences are positive or negative, Brakus *et al.* (2009) developed a robust empirical scale for further research on customer experiential brands. Notably, this model demonstrates discriminant validity from widely used branding measures and scales, such as brand evaluations, brand involvement, brand attachment, customer delight, and brand personality. Brakus *et al.* (2009) conceptualized brand experience as "subjective, internal customer responses" and "behavior responses" to brand-related elements, including image, logo, communication, and environment. Given the central role of experience in this study, Brakus's model is considered the most appropriate framework for examining customer experience with a brand, making it the preferred choice for application in this research.

Hypothesis Development

Brand Equity and Customer Satisfaction

Established brand attributes reduce perceived risk and heighten expectations, leading to greater satisfaction (Keller, 1993; Oliver, 1980). Brand equity enhances customer satisfaction by reinforcing trust and reducing perceived risk in purchasing decisions (Aaker, 1996). Higher brand equity is linked to increased customer retention and advocacy (Yoo and Donthu, 2001). Thus, we propose:

H1: Brand equity has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

Brand Equity and Brand Experience

A strong brand, characterized by high awareness, perceived quality, and positive associations, is more likely to create memorable and positive experiences (Aaker, 1991; Brakus *et al.,* 2009). Brand equity is instrumental in shaping brand experience by influencing brand associations, loyalty, and perceived quality (Keller, 1993). A positive and consistent brand experience is shaped by the components of brand equity (Zarantonello and Schmitt, 2010). Therefore, we hypothesize:

H2: Brand equity positively influences brand experience.

Brand Experience and Customer Satisfaction

Brand experience refers to the sensations, emotions, and behaviors triggered by brand-related stimuli (Brakus *et al.,* 2009). Engaging and positive experiences enhance emotional connections, thereby increasing satisfaction (Schmitt, 1999). Positive brand experiences contribute to higher customer satisfaction by fulfilling psychological and functional needs (Khan and Fatma, 2017). Thus, we propose:

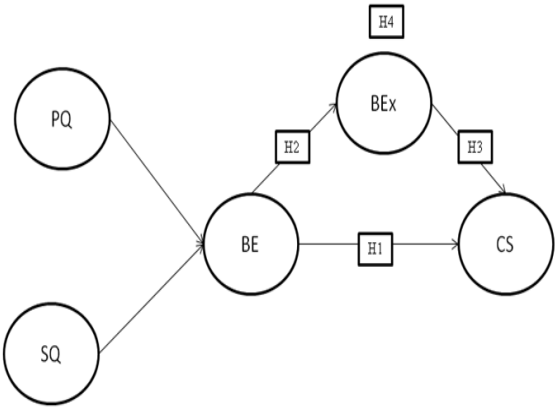
H3: Brand experience has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

Mediating Role of Brand Experience

Given that brand equity influences brand experience and brand experience enhances customer satisfaction, we argue that brand experience mediates the relationship between brand equity and customer satisfaction (Chen and Myagmarsuren, 2011). The impact of brand equity on satisfaction is partly channeled through the consumer's experiential interaction with the brand, suggesting an indirect effect that reinforces the direct association. This leads to our final hypothesis:

H4: Brand experience mediates the relationship between brand equity and customer satisfaction.

Figure 1: Proposed model



Source: Compile from Literature

(PQ: Product Quality, SQ: Service Quality, BE: Brand Equity, BEx: Brand Experience, and CS: Customer Satisfaction)

Methodology

This research aims to explore the relationship between brand equity, customer experience with the brand, and customer satisfaction. Additionally, the study examines how these relationships influence customer satisfaction. Based on the literature review and conceptual hypotheses, the research model tested in this study is presented as follows:

This study employs a quantitative research approach, utilizing survey data collected from 390 respondents across multiple brand users. The questionnaire aims to generate empirical evidence aligned with the research objectives and model. It is designed and directly distributed to individuals who have experience with at least one of four global brands, such as Samsung, Apple, Vivo, and OnePlus. The questionnaire is structured using clear, simple, and easy-to-understand language to ensure respondents can answer without confusion. It consists of two main sections. The first section includes questions measuring brand equity, brand experience and customer satisfaction. The second section contains demographic questions to collect respondents' personal information, including age, gender, education level, employment status, and monthly income. The questionnaire is designed using Likert's measurement scale. Likert surveys are widely recognized for being quick, efficient, and cost-effective methods of data collection. To facilitate data collection and improve accuracy, this study utilizes a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The questionnaire includes the following measurement items: 7 items for Brand Equity includes 4 for product quality and 3 for service quality (Aaker, 1991), 4 items for Brand Experience (Brakus *et al.,* 2009), and 6 items for Customer Satisfaction (Oliver, 1997). The target sample consists of customers living in Haryana, India who have experience with one of four well-known global brands: Samsung, Apple, Vivo, and OnePlus. These brands were specifically chosen as they are widely recognized among Indians consumers, making them suitable for this study. Given the large and undefined nature of the population, a convenience sampling method was selected. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to test the proposed hypotheses. The constructs are measured using validated scales from previous studies, such as Brakus *et al.* (2009) for brand experience, Yoo and Donthu (2001) for brand equity, and Oliver (1997) for customer satisfaction.

Respondents Demographic Profile

Table 1: Respondents' Profile

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	227	58.21%
	Female	163	41.79%
	Total	**390**	**100%**
Age	Up to 25 years old	73	18.72%
	26-35 years old	117	30.00%
	36-45 years old	84	21.54%

	46-55 years old	61	15.64%
	More than 55 years old	55	14.10%
	Total	**390**	**100%**
Education	Up to 12th	47	12.05%
	Graduation	88	22.56%
	Post-graduation	109	27.95%
	Professional	91	23.33%
	Other	55	14.11%
	Total	**390**	**100%**
Job Status	Student	129	33.08%
	Salaried	107	27.44%
	Business	95	24.35%
	Other	59	15.13%
	Total	**390**	**100%**
Monthly Income	Up to 50000	69	17.69%
	50001-100000	121	31.03%
	100001-150000	103	26.41%
	150001-200000	62	15.90%
	More than 200000	35	8.97%
	Total	**390**	**100%**

Source: Primary Survey

The demographic profile of the respondents (N=390) reveals that the majority are male (58.21%), while females constitute 41.79% of the sample. In terms of age distribution, the largest proportion falls within the 26–35 years category (30.00%), followed by individuals aged 36–45 years (21.54%), up to 25 years (18.72%), 46–55 years (15.64%), and more than 55 years (14.10%). Regarding educational qualifications, 27.95% have completed post-graduation, 23.33% hold professional degrees, 22.56% are graduates, 14.11% belong to the "Other" category, and 12.05% have studied up to the 12th grade. The respondents' job status indicates that 33.08% are students, 27.44% are salaried employees, 24.35% are engaged in business, and 15.13% fall into the "Other" category. In terms of monthly income, 31.03% earn between ₹50,001 and ₹1,00,000, followed by 26.41% in the ₹1,00,001–₹1,50,000 range, 17.69% earning up to ₹50,000, 15.90% in the ₹1,50,001–₹2,00,000 range, and 8.97% earning more than ₹2,00,000. These findings provide a comprehensive understanding of the respondents' socio-economic and demographic characteristics.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 2: Respondents' Brand Preferences

Brands	Frequency	Percent
Samsung	143	36.67%
Apple	61	15.64%
Vivo	106	27.18%
OnePlus	80	20.51%
Total	**390**	**100%**

Source: Primary Survey

Table 2 presents the brand preferences of the respondents, indicating that Samsung is the most preferred brand, accounting for 36.67% of the total sample (N=390). Vivo follows with a preference share of 27.18%, while OnePlus is chosen by 20.51% of the respondents. Apple, despite its strong brand reputation, is preferred by 15.64% of the participants, making it the least selected brand in this study. These findings suggest that consumer preferences are diverse, with a significant inclination toward Samsung and Vivo, which together constitute more than 60% of the total responses. This distribution highlights variations in brand appeal, potentially influenced by factors such as pricing, features, brand perception, and market positioning.

Structural Equation Modeling

Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) is a multivariate statistical technique used to analyze complex relationships between observed and latent variables. It combines factor analysis and multiple regressions modeling to examine direct and indirect relationships within a theoretical framework. SEM is widely applied in social sciences, marketing, psychology, and business research to test and validate conceptual models.

Examination of the Measurement Model

Measurement model examines the relationships between observed variables and their corresponding latent constructs (using Confirmatory Factor Analysis, CFA). The measurement model is evaluated based on reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity to ensure its appropriateness for further structural analysis.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability is examined through "Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR)". CA and CR values for all constructs exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, ensuring acceptable internal consistency (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). Validity is assessed in terms of convergent validity using AVE and indicator loadings.

Table 3: Reliability and Validity of the Model

Second order	Zero order	Items	Construct items	CA	CR	AVE

construct	**construct**		**outer loadings**			
Brand Equity (Formative Construct)	Product Quality	PQ 1	0.789	0.731	0.832	0.553
		PQ 2	0.726			
		PQ 3	0.745			
		PQ 4	0.712			
	Service Quality	SQ 1	0.866	0.763	0.865	0.682
		SQ 2	0.869			
		SQ 3	0.736			
	Brand Experience	BEx1	0.810	0.827	0.885	0.659
		BEx2	0.842			
		BEx3	0.732			
		BEx4	0.858			
	Customer Satisfaction	CS 1	0.833	0.894	0.919	0.653
		CS 2	0.802			
		CS 3	0.843			
		CS 4	0.769			
		CS 5	0.834			
		CS 6	0.766			

Source: Authors' Compilation

Table 3 presents the reliability and validity assessment of the model, focusing on the second-order construct, *Brand Equity*, and its associated zero-order constructs: *Product Quality, Service Quality, Brand Experience,* and *Customer Satisfaction*. The outer loadings of construct items range from 0.712 to 0.869, demonstrating adequate indicator reliability as they surpass the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70 (Hair *et al.,* 2019). For internal consistency reliability, Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values for all constructs exceed 0.70, indicating satisfactory reliability. Composite Reliability (CR) values range from 0.832 to 0.919, surpassing the recommended threshold of 0.70, further confirming the constructs' reliability (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Convergent validity is assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), with values ranging from 0.553 to 0.682, all above the 0.50 benchmark, establishing adequate convergent validity (Hair *et al.,* 2017). These results suggest that the measurement model exhibits strong reliability and validity, supporting its appropriateness for further structural model analysis.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity assesses whether the constructs in the model are distinct from one another. It ensures that each construct captures a unique aspect of the theoretical framework and does not excessively correlate with other constructs.

Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Table 4: Fornell Larker Criterion

Constructs	**PQ**	**SQ**	**BEx**	**CS**
PQ	**.744**			
SQ	.092	**.826**		
BEx	.085	.497	**.812**	
CS	.040	.387	.509	**.808**

Source: Authors' Compilation

Table 4 presents the Fornell-Larcker criterion results, which assess discriminant validity by comparing the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct (diagonal values) with its correlations with other constructs (off-diagonal values). The square root of AVE for *Product Quality (PQ), Service Quality (SQ), Brand Experience (BEx),* and *Customer Satisfaction (CS)* are 0.744, 0.826, 0.812, and 0.808, respectively. These values are higher than their respective inter-construct correlations, confirming that each construct shares more variance with its indicators than with other constructs. The relatively low inter-construct correlations further support the distinctiveness of the constructs, ensuring adequate discriminant validity (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). Thus, the measurement model meets the Fornell-Larcker criterion, demonstrating that the constructs are theoretically and empirically distinct.

Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) Ratio

Table 5: HTMT Criterion

Constructs	**PQ**	**SQ**	**BEx**	**CS**
PQ				
SQ	.134			
BEx	.114	.613		
CS	.078	.463	.592	

Source: Authors' Compilation

Table 5 presents the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio results, which assess discriminant validity by evaluating

the degree of correlation between constructs. The HTMT values for all construct pairs remain below the recommended threshold of 0.90 (Henseler *et al.,* 2015), with the highest value observed between *Service Quality (SQ)* and *Brand Experience (BEx)* at 0.613. Since all HTMT values are well below the conservative threshold of 0.85, the results provide strong evidence of discriminant validity, indicating that the constructs in the model are empirically distinct and measure separate theoretical concepts.

Discriminant validity also involves assessing multicollinearity. Before conducting the bootstrapping process, the researcher examined multicollinearity conditions by calculating the "Variance Inflation Factor (VIF)" values. All statements had VIF values below 3, confirming the absence of multicollinearity issues in the measurement model.

Brand equity is classified as both a second-order and a formative construct. As a result, evaluating its convergent and discriminant validity is not necessary.

Evaluation of Structural Model

The structural model is assessed to examine the relationships between constructs and determine the model's predictive power. This evaluation involves assessing path coefficients, coefficient of determination (R^2), predictive relevance (Q^2) effect size (f^2), and model fit indices.

Table 6 presents the coefficient of determination (R^2), effect size (f^2), and predictive relevance (Q^2) for the constructs *Brand Experience (BEx)* and *Customer Satisfaction (CS)*. The R^2 values indicate the proportion of variance explained by the independent variables.

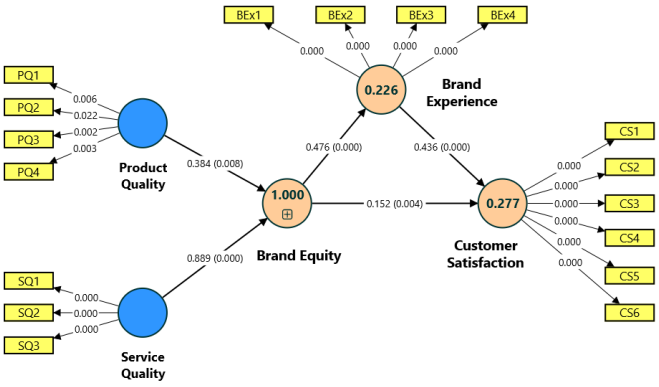
Table 6: Coefficient of Determinations

Variable	R-Square	F-Square	Q-Square
BEx	.226	.213	.214
CS	.277	.204	.119

Source: Authors' Compilation

The R^2 for *BEx* is 0.226, suggesting that the predictor variables account for 22.6% of its variance, while *CS* has an R^2 of 0.277, indicating that 27.7% of its variance is explained by the model. These values suggest a moderate level of explanatory power (Cohen, 1988; Singh *et al.*, 2024). The f^2 values, which measure the effect size of exogenous variables on endogenous variables, are 0.213 for *BEx* and 0.204 for *CS*, both reflecting a medium effect size according to Cohen's (1988) guidelines. This implies that the predictor variables have a meaningful impact on the respective dependent variables. The Q^2 values, obtained through the blindfolding procedure, assess the model's predictive relevance. The Q^2 values for *BEx* (0.214) and *CS* (0.119) are both positive, confirming that the model exhibits sufficient predictive accuracy (Hair *et al.,* 2019). Overall, these findings support the robustness and predictive strength of the structural model.

Figure 2: Structural Model Assessment



Source: Computed using Smart-PLS4

Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Path coefficients indicate the strength and direction of relationships between constructs. These coefficients are assessed using the bootstrapping method, which provides t-values and p-values to determine statistical significance. Significant path coefficients ($p < 0.05$) confirm hypothesized relationships, supporting the theoretical framework.

Direct Relationship

Table 7: Hypotheses Remarks

Exogenous & Endogenous Variable	Hypotheses	Path Coefficient	Standard Error	T statistics	P-Value	Remarks
BE -> CS	H1	.152	.053	2.863	.004	Supported
BE -> BEx	H2	.476	.051	9.362	.000	Supported
BEx -> CS	H3	.436	.050	8.778	.000	Supported

Source: Authors' Compilation

The hypothesis testing results presented in Table 7 indicates significant direct relationships among the studied constructs. The path coefficient for H1 (BE → CS) is 0.152, with a standard error of 0.053 and a t-statistic of 2.863, yielding a p-value of 0.004, confirming a statistically significant positive effect of BE on CS. Similarly, H2 (BE → BEx) exhibits a strong positive relationship, with a path coefficient of 0.476, a standard error of 0.051, and a t-statistic of 9.362 ($p = 0.000$), suggesting a highly significant influence of BE on BEx. Furthermore, H3 (BEx → CS) demonstrates a substantial positive effect, with a path coefficient of 0.436, a standard error of 0.050, and a t-statistic of 8.778 ($p = 0.000$), indicating that BEx significantly contributes to CS. These

findings provide empirical support for the proposed direct relationships, underscoring the critical role of BE in shaping both BEx and CS, while also highlighting the strong mediating role of BEx in enhancing CS.

Mediation Analysis

In the mediation analysis, the researcher investigated the mediating role of BEx in the relationship between BE and CS.

Table 8: Mediating result

Variables	Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	Standard Error	T statistics	P-Value	Remarks
BE -> BEx-> CS	H4	.208	.032	6.537	.000	Supported

Source: Authors' Compilation

The mediation analysis results presented in Table 8 provide empirical evidence supporting the indirect effect of BE on CS through BEx. The path coefficient for H4 (BE → BEx → CS) is 0.208, with a standard error of 0.032 and a t-statistic of 6.537, yielding a p-value of 0.000, indicating a statistically significant mediating effect. These findings suggest that BEx plays a crucial role in transmitting the influence of BE on CS, reinforcing the notion that the effect of BE on CS is not only direct but also operates through an indirect pathway. This highlights the mediating mechanism of BEx, emphasizing its importance in enhancing customer satisfaction and further validating the theoretical framework underlying the study.

4. CONCLUSION

Brand experience is new concept that marketers and brand managers have not concerned much in Indian market. In this research, it is concluded that brand experience has good mediator between brand equity and customer satisfaction. The SEM analysis confirms the direct effect of brand equity on customer satisfaction (H1 supported), the positive impact of brand equity on brand experience (H2 supported), and the significant role of brand experience in enhancing customer satisfaction (H3 supported). The mediation analysis further confirms that brand experience partially mediates the relationship between brand equity and customer satisfaction (H4 supported). These findings align with prior research and underscore the importance of brand experience in leveraging brand equity to improve customer satisfaction. The study provides empirical evidence that brand experience serves as a crucial mediator in the brand equity-customer satisfaction link. This has significant implications for brand managers, suggesting that enhancing brand experience alone is insufficient; efforts should also focus on strengthening brand equity to maximize customer satisfaction. Overall, the study underscores the critical role of both direct and indirect mechanisms in shaping customer satisfaction. Organizations should focus on delivering superior brand equity to enhance customer experience, which ultimately leads to higher satisfaction. The findings contribute to the existing literature on brand management and customer satisfaction, providing valuable insights for practitioners seeking to optimize brand strategies to improve customer relationships and loyalty. Future research should explore these relationships across diverse industries and consider longitudinal designs to capture the dynamic nature of brand interactions

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