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The paper aims to understand the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty in the fashion retail industry of Sri Lanka moderating the role of consumer gender. It is a fact that basic segmentation in the fashion industry is based on the gender.

Keywords: *brand experience, brand loyalty, fashion retail industry, consumer gender.*

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Effects of Brand Experience on Consumer Brand Loyalty in Fashion Retail Industry: Moderating the Role of Gender

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Abstract- The Intensity of the competition in the fashion retail industry is becoming notable where customers have left with the many purchasing alternatives than before. Fashion retail industry in a developing country such as Sri Lanka, encounter to threats from international level more frequently. Organizations are often adapting the brand strategies in order to remain their relationship between the customer and their brand. Since the fast fashion concept emerged it is no longer sufficient to provide a product solely to satisfy their customers, exceptionally in the fashion industry where local and international organizations have started to provide affordable luxury products. Eventually, brand loyalty has become more significance to maintain the image of the fashion retail industry which can be predicted that consumer expects intangible benefits to improve their lifestyles along with products.

The paper aims to understand the effect of brand experience on brand loyalty in the fashion retail industry of Sri Lanka moderating the role of consumer gender. It is a fact that basic segmentation in the fashion industry is based on the gender.

Hence this study attempts to understand the gender moderation in aforementioned relationship. The objectives of the study focused on determining the relationship between brand experience and loyalty and to examine the gender moderation within aforementioned the relationship. A structured questionnaire and an online survey utilized to gather both qualitative and quantitative data from 266 respondents who selected through convenient sampling method. The research indicates that brand experience has strong positive effect on brand loyalty where sensory dimension has higher influence in brand loyalty than other dimensions in the four factor model of brand experience. Further the brand loyalty consumers in Sri Lankan market are found to be moderate based on their gender which considering significance in factor of high quality.

Keywords: brand experience, brand loyalty, fashion retail industry, consumer gender.

I. Introduction

With the agile business practices, fashions have simultaneously changed from time to time to the point to labels clothes with the name of centuries such as 90's trousers and blouses. Fashion retail sector today too has shown significant market growth. Local retailers are expanding their scale and scope whilst global retailers continued to enter. In this context, the purpose of this study was to investigate, to what extend Sri Lankan fashion retail sector has grasped tourism market opportunities fashion retail sector today too has shown significant market growth. Local retailers are expanding their scale and scope whilst global retailers continued to enter. In this context, the purpose of this study was to investigate, to what extend Sri Lankan fashion retail sector has grasped tourism market opportunities fashion retail sector today too has shown significant market growth. Local retailers are expanding their scale and scope whilst global retailers continued to enter. In this context, the purpose of this study was to investigate, to what extend Sri Lankan fashion retail sector has grasped tourism market opportunities fashion retail sector today too has shown significant market growth. Local retailers are expanding their scale and scope whilst global retailers continued to enter. In this context, the purpose of this study was to investigate, to what extend Sri Lankan fashion retail sector has grasped tourism market opportunities Fashion retail industry is a novel and emerging sector in Sri Lanka. It was almost non-existent about three years ago while today it is estimated that local retailers are earning over 10 million US dollars annually (Dias, 2011). Moreover, they have the potential to reach up to US$500 million in the next few years (Dias, 2011). "In witnessing the growth of the fashion industry, the retail market is likely to grow by 50% of the number of pieces made or displayed and sold" (Dias, 2011). Prior to the 1990s, Sri Lanka was a closed economy. The retail sector majorly consisted of small privately owned single stores that did not have corporate management and were known as traditional retailers (Linage and Jayewardene, 2013). However, over the past few years especially after war conflicts, Sri Lankan fashion retail sector have rapidly expanded and the number of retailers have increased. This positive macro environment background has not only benefited domestic retailers but also has attracted international retailers. As to 2013 Global retail development index, Sri Lanka titled as "Sri Lanka, thriving with fresh investment ranks fifteenth with a market attractiveness of 16.6%" (Kearney, 2013). In essence, fashion retail industry today is at a forefront of success due to the positive macro environment changes such as post -war economic developments, growing

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middle class, changing consumer demands mainly due to the western cultural influences, improvement of infrastructural facilities, technological advancements etc. Fashion retail industry is a renewed and imaging sector has performed significant market growth in Sri Lanka. It was almost non – existent about three years ago while today it is estimated that local retailers are receiving over 10 million us dollars annually. Though over the past few years, especially after war struggle, Sri Lankan fashion retail sector have promptly extended the number of retailers have improved. According to, 2003 global retail development index Sri Lanka titled as "Sri Lanka thriving with fresh investment" rank fifteenth with investment ranks fifteenth with market attractiveness of 16. 6%. In spirit fashion retail industry today is at a forefront of success due to the grabbed tourism market opportunities as well.

Since, the country classification of Clothing Exports, there is a high demand for Sri Lankan apparels to export in European countries including Netherlands, United Kingdom, Germany, Italy, Belgian, Australia, etc. and also similar demand in United Status America as well. Hong Kong, Canada, China, United Arab Emirates, Japan and are also the buyers of Sri Lankan apparels overseas who transport export pays to the country (Central Bank of Sri Lanka, 2017).

With the reputation of being a leading country that satisfy the world's apparel needs, Sri Lankan garment industry proved that they satisfied the local market with their ability. When focus on the local markets there are some leading brands that concur the Sri Lankan fashion industry. Consider the local market there are some leading brands both international and local. Hence, in this study focus on the relationship between consumer brand experience and brand loyalty towards fashion retail industry according to the Sri Lankan concept.

Developing a strong brand identity and developing a memorable image is the key factors that maintain a company success. Effective branding builds a better reputation, quickly identifying over competitors and improve value of the organization (Workhouse, 2018). It is positively influence the customers purchasing decisions. So branding is the significant aspect in the marketing world but it may be happening many challenges. Even the most tailored brands face lot of troubles to change the market place and industry. In order to truly be a success, a brand wants to have its very own special niche or subcategory inside its industry. This does not definitely need to be another product or service, yet simply something that makes it emerge from different rivals in the commercial center. An organization could tailor their products and services and marketing strategies toward a specific niche.

Today brand experience has turned into a vital factor for the achievement of organizations. Business associations have started to consider customer experience with their brands beyond customer satisfaction. In marketing literature, the notion of experience has been examined from contrasting frame of references such as situations where customer experience on consumption, product, aesthetic, service and shopping. One more research area was brand experience (Baser, Cintamur, Arslan, 2015).

For confirmatory factors of brand experiences, many researchers follow the four-factor model which is considered as the best model with correlated factors. Based on Brakus, Schmitt & Zarantonello research in 2009, they have examined six studies to prove the reliability, validity, and distinctiveness of the four-factor model. Therefore, sensory, effective intellectual and behavioral responses awaken by brands formulated the entire concept of brand experience. The four-factor model focuses the situation where consumers search, shop and consume the product due to the fact that experiences are tend to enter one's mind while connecting with the brand itself. Further brand experience directly affects to consumer's brand trust and loyalty to build the emotional bond between consumer and brand.

II. Literature Review

Business and marketing practices have attracted by the concept of brand experience remarkably within recent period of time. Marketing practitioners have come to perceive that awareness that seeing how customers encounter brands are in the balance for expanding marketing procedures for good and services. (Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello, 2009). Moreover, researches have shown that Brand Experience as very pinnacle of fundamental factor in maintaining the brand within the customer mind.

In order to cater to the changing culture of the market environments, traditional marketing is no longer a solution. Hence the businesses achieve the opportunity to act on a far broader context with the shift of experiential marketing. Theoretically, experiential marketing is the contradictory side of traditional marketing. While experiential showcasing considers customers as a judicious and passionate being who take interest in accomplishing pleasurable experiences, conventional marketers understands buyers as balanced leaders who concerned practical highlights and advantages (Schmitt B., 1999).

According to the Schmitt B. (1999) contemplate on experiential marketing, there are five distinct kinds of experience modules that organization can create including; 'sensory experience, affective experience, creative cognitive experience, physical experience (behavior and lifestyle) and social-identity experience'. (p. 62).

As for the brand concerns, with greater extension of brands, it has no longer 'just' a product or

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service but a mean of providing the customer experience.

As the principal scholastics to conceptualize and measure the experiential elements of brand, in Brakus, Schmitt and Zarantonello's examination, hey have characterized brand experience as the personalized internal reactions of customers evoked by stimuluses related to a brand. Further, they demonstrate that bran encounter comprised of four measurements; sensory experience, affective experience, intellectual experience, and behavioral experience. Therefore, within a holistic view of experiential marketing, it is evidential that marketers provide the majority of experience to their customer through their brands.

III. Dimension of Brand Experience

a) Sensory Experience

It simply refers to the senses evoked by the brand itself, whereas outlook, colors, texture, design can be considering as stimuli in the apparel industry. This aesthetics of the products and brand make customer interested and influence to their purchase decision. 'Brand experience related sensory organs can be identify as sensation induced by brand associated stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications, and surrounding' (Hepola, et al., 2017: p.285). As a loyal customer involve and contact with the brand at every moment. It is the first time when the customer involves towards the brand that are created by the sensory organs.

'Consumers can easier to store visual stimuli in their minds due to the catching images as information and data about related products. Experience related to human sense organize individuals' beliefs, their feelings, and opinions about the brand which allows consumers to form mental formations and consumer's perceptions of applicable brand communications and inputs' (Huang, et al., 2015: p.132).

'Most academic research has found that variance of sensory information and data affect customer behavior and perception, feelings towards goods and services. Sight is the most influential human sense for discovering changes and differences in the human surrounding and is the most powerful and major sense type in perceiving goods and services' (Hulten, 2010: p.259).

b) Affective Experience

This dimension considers the customers' emotion and the association with the brand. Zarantonello and Schmitt (2010) mentioned that affective dimension includes the feelings generated by the brand and its emotional bond with the customer. 'Mostly high end shopping of fashion products can gain high consumer engagement towards themselves and it tend to have a desire to demonstrate positive affective consumer experience such as cheerfulness, contentment or relaxation'(Huong, Hong and Khai, 2015). 'Effective experience, which is deeply concentrated and embedded in consumers' minds automatically, is able to cause consumers' feelings and emotions' (Huang, et al.,2015: p.132). It can be generated during product and services consumption stage. Through the encouraging of emotional and effective experiences, the consumer brand relationship can be strengthened. Because stronger emotions towards product or service are resistant to change towards the opposite end of the emotion continuum, such as changing from positive to negative or from negative to positive (Huang, et al., 2015: p.132). Effective experience replicate consumers brand estimation and result in strong consumer relationship towards the brands. 'As highlighted of marketing has moved from deals to consumer relationships it is natural that effective commitment, being an emotional element, has received more consideration from researches than continues commitment has in recent years.

c) Intellectual Experience

Generally, the intellectual dimension involves the 'ability of the brand to engage consumers' convergent and divergent thinking' (Baser, Cintamur, and Arslan, 2015: p. 106). Pham Thi Lan Huong et al. (2015) have mentioned that intellectual experience as a mean of learning orientation. Besides in the fashion retail industry, it is observed as that shopping background allowed buyers to shape the unmistakable impression of the brand.

In Schmitt B. (1999) experiential marketing perspective, marketers appeal to reason with the goal of making subjective, critical thinking knowledge that draws in client inventively through surprise, intriguer and provocation. Solely depending on the emotional factors will not prevail customer from the competition. The methods of reaching information are far more beyond imagination which has to create highly knowledgeable customers. Further intellectual thinking is known to common for new technology products, yet it has also used from the product design to retailing and communication in other industries.

d) Behavioral Experience

As it names behavioral dimension concerns with the customers' reaction and behaviors towards a particular brand including physical expressions, lifestyle, and interaction with the brand. (Baser, Cintamur, and Arslan, 2015). The experience can be either generated when a person shops or use a product or services. Based on the Plam Thi Lan Hong et al. (2015) study, in the context of foreign research, this dimension has gained less attention compared to others. On top of that relating to the fashion industry, the researchers noted that high-class outfits explore both worthy conduct of the wearer and his or her correspondence style inspect by others.

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In other perspective, marketers try to adhere to this experience by targeting customers' lives through physical experience with the alternative lifestyle. Business use of the rational approach to change how the customer behaves is one of many paths. 'Changes in lifestyle and behaviors are often more motivational, inspirational and emotional in nature and often motivated by role models' (Schmitt, 1999: p.62).

e) Consumer Brand Loyalty

Corporations use attractive marketing tactics, such as loyalty or rewards programs, trials, incentives like free samples to build brand loyalty and brand ambassadors. Hänninen et al. paper on '' the effect of marketing communication on business relationship loyalty" (Hänninen, Nora; Karjaluoto and Heikki, 2017) discusses how the communication channels effect the customer brand loyalty. The consequence was the communication channel efficiency had better importance as a mediator between loyalty and perceived value.

Brand loyalty refers to a strong internal attitude toward a mark which adds to buyers' mental connections toward the brand and the organization. The type of behavioral loyalty is a consumer's response expressed over time with some decision-making process involved (Ran Huang Stacy H Lee HaeJung Kim Leslie Evans, 2015).

Most researchers concur that brand loyalty can make firm advantages, for example, diminished advertising costs (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) and when the company has a good brand name with loyal customers help to gain the competitive advantage in the market. Brand experience is considered as a measure of brand loyalty, like a superior brand experience of a customer will lead the customer to prefer this brand in the future (Brakus et al., 2009), where the brand would have deposited in the mind of the customer. The literature has also shown that brand experience can be seen as a two-way influence which is direct and indirect influence on loyalty, and the brand engagement has been described as an intermediary between experience and loyalty.

f) Consumers' Gender

Considering about the gender as a moderating variable, this has a crucial part in the behavior of the consumers. As stated by Jin, Koh, and Lee(2015) study, male and female purchasers experience distinctive arrangement process when creating reliability towards attire brands. Gender is considered as a social identify construct and it is known to influence men and female with specific characteristics such as roles, values, attitudes, perception, preferences, and behaviors (Chung K., Yu J., Kim W., and Shin J., 2015). In other perspective, gender differences exist due to the biological, cognitive, behavioral and social cause; thus it becomes a notable influencing variable.

Generally, the cultural and growing background variances form the different characteristics associated with male and female. For example, Females age more than 60, stay at home looking for their grandchildren may be a similar scenario for Southern Asian countries. Contrary to the same demographic category in European country might be very outgoing and sociable. Therefore, the issue addressed by the Schmitt B. can be related to the gender differences in a nation in relation to the experience as well. As stated by Sivaraj and Sritharan (2014) Females involve greatly and vigorously in recall process of emotional events, real-world experiences and involved more in purchasing activities than males. Further stated that women tend to have more loyalty to service performances while men considered having more loyalty to product performance.

The connection is observed to be more grounded for guys when contrasted with females. As such, if guys get great e-tail brand understanding, they turned out to be more brand loyal than females. Consequently, analysts infer that as a vital discovering which features the significance of brand understanding and trust in internet retailing.

Based on a study conducted by Clef et al. (2013); The correlation between intellectual and behavioral dimension and consumer loyalty could not be verified. The empirical study was directed towards the Adidas sportswear brand, and they conclude that a positive relationship between experience and satisfaction is coming from sensory and affective dimensions while intellectual and behavioral elements represent lower significance.

It can be stated that eventually this result directly affects the brand experience and brand loyalty relationship since buyers' satisfaction is manipulated between brand experience and consumer brand loyalty in the study.

On account of the results from previous studies, it is evidential that the four-factor model proposed by Brakus et al. (2009) may differ from industry to industry.

IV. Problem Statement and Conceptualization

In the commercial center, brands are exceedingly critical because of the reason it speaks to the associations' responsibilities to their clients. As a result of in the most recent decade, advertisers have understood the significance of making a solid brand to have the capacity to separate in a forceful market. Be that as it may, having a solid brand is not anymore enough to make due over the long haul and gain an extensive customer base. Particularly in the fashion retail industry where numerous items satisfy a similar requirement of the customer, made it necessary for organizations to adjust to changes in the market and reach the attention of the market. The circumstance has

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prompted a wide assortment of brands that can be found and expanded rivalry.

Practically the number of international brands within the country is increasing day by day while providing consumers with more brand choices. Eventually it has become far more difficult to gain customer loyalty towards one preferred brand specifically for a long time.

Consequently, the customer-brand relationship has become a key factor for building a continuing relationship in the commercial world. Nowadays the marketers often well-structured to provide customers with a superior experience, in the expectation of affecting the customers' choices and give them a rich client experience to reinforce the estimation of the brand.

Specifically moderating factor as gender is one of the most significant elements for fashion marketers due to its role in segmenting the whole market environment. With the intention of facing the intense competition, effective differentiation is essential in targeting consumers. Hence, to establish a long-term relationship with these factors that are important for marketers that are directing at understanding market preferences and gaining brand loyalty from their customers.

a) Research Objectives

The following objectives are expected to achieve within the research findings.

1. *To determine the relationship between brand experience and customer loyalty in the fashion retail industry.*

The supporting sub-objectives will be addressed under the first main objective.

- *To determine the relationship of sensory experience towards the brand loyalty.*
- *To determine the relationship of affective experience towards the brand loyalty.*
- *To determine the relationship of intellectual experience towards the brand loyalty.*
- *To determine the relationship of behavioral experience towards the brand loyalty.*

2. *To examine the gender moderation within the relationship between brand experience and consumer brand loyalty in the fashion retail industry.*

b) Conceptual Framework

The frame of the study shows in Figure 1 illustrate the variables and relationship between the variables and outlined by the hypothesis developed in the preceding research.

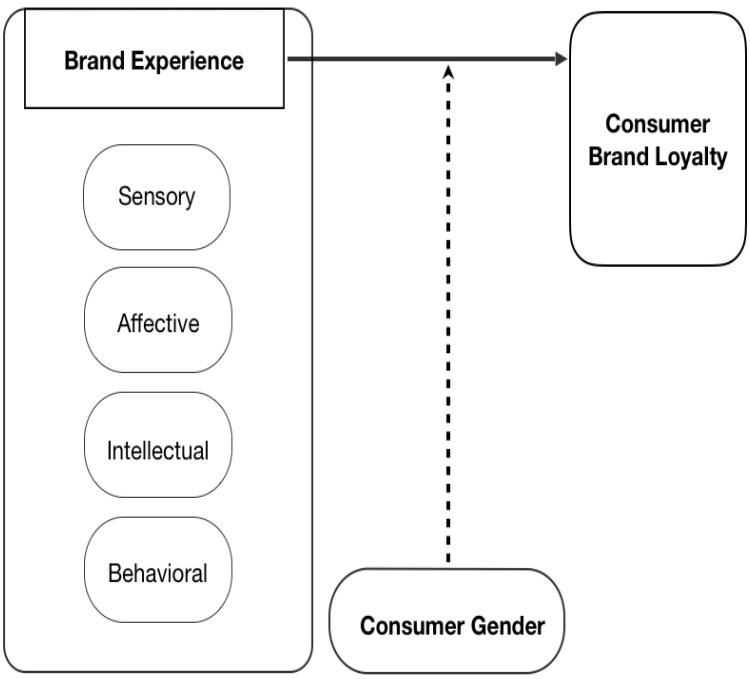

Figure 1

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H1: There is a relationship between Brand Experience and Consumer Brand Loyalty.

H2: Sensory brand experience has an influences Consumer Brand Loyalty.

H3: Affective brand experience has an influence on Consumer Brand Loyalty.

H4: Intellectual Experience has an influence on Consumer Brand Loyalty.

H5: Behavioral Experience has an influence on Consumer Brand Loyalty.

H6: Consumers' gender moderates the relationship between Brand Experience and Consumer Brand Loyalty.

V. Data and Methodology

a) Data and Sample

The researchers gathered both first hand and secondary source of information yet primary source will be the data that collected from Sri Lankan consumer at a micro level to increase the validity of the study. The focus of the research is in the urban area of the country where the fashion retail industry is more competitive. With the purpose of improving the reliability and the validity of the study towards the research setting, the research will be used both quantitative and qualitative data which will be analyzed respectively. Based on the theoretical definition of the population, researches plan to focus on the female and male consumers who engaged with fashion brands within Colombo district in Sri Lanka. Further, a sample is defined as a subset of the population which generalize and represent the characteristics of the population. To accomplish the target of the examination, researchers embraced both a subjective and quantitative methodology as the exploration system for the investigation. The information for the investigation will be gathered through a pilot survey and well-developed questionnaire. This study which is on Fashion Retail industry is bound to complete within several months hence it is short-term research. Hence the researchers chosen cross-sectional examination to directing the exploration.To proceed with the research, convenient sampling method will be selected, because considering the huge customers base of fashion retail industry, it is not that easy to get information from each customer. In order to gather adequate information from such a vast population within a short time period, research sample should be easily reachable. During the research, relevant details will be gathered from around 250 participants out of the focused population.

b) Method of Data Collection

During the pre-study of the research, 20 participants were selected accordingly ten from each gender. The pre-study was used to identify the most popular brand among the different age groups. In order to complete the pre-study, explanation on research study and concept was given by researchers to the participants. Odel, Levis, Gflock, Boss and Fashion Bug were selected from the list of 10 fashion brands since researchers cannot afford to cover all fashion brands available in Colombo district.

A survey is scheduled to conduct in two stages including a pilot questionnaire and revised questionnaire during the research. The first stage is completed by using 30 participants consisting of 15 males and 15 females. Further the results generated from pre-study was used as input to the pilot survey questionnaire. Popular brands among customers and the reliability of the questionnaire is confirmed during the pilot survey. The revised questionnaire will be used to examine the connection between brand experience and loyalty of consumers by directing variable of buyers' gender.

The questionnaire will contain with descriptive and relational questions to find customer engagement and responses towards the brands. By considering the demographic factor of gender difference, the questionnaire will be distributed among 250 participants with the intention of covering at least 50 customers from each brand. The face validity of questions included in the questionnaire was checked, and following questions are subjective covers the concepts proposed to measure.

VI. Result and Discussion

a) Descriptive analysis

As highlighted by Khan I. and Rahman Z. (2016), Nunnally (1978) stated that the construct of the study builds to cover the theories are reliable if The Cronbach's α estimations of each develop item extended from 0.78 to 0.84, which is well over the prescribed dimension of 0.70.

Since the relative results of the study by displaying the constructive items are over the .84 except for the brand loyalty construct which resulted as .83. Hence the study has resulted beyond the recommended level that confirms the reliability of the research.

Majority of customers resulting 53%, do not ready to spent more than 10 000 Sri Lankan Rupees on fashion brands. In different point, customers seek the premium quality as characteristics but for the affordable price ranges. In addition, the customers who claimed that willingness to pay more than 20 000 Sri Lankan Rupees resulted only 2.63%.

Besides considerably higher proportion of participants resulting 33%, were ready to spend within the price range of less than 5000 Sri Lankan Rupees where we can conclude that willingness to invest is at the lower level compared to the customer expectations.

Table 1 represent the details of construct and measurements items along with the descriptive of the

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study, including Independent variable of Brand Experience and Dependent variable of Brand Loyalty.

Table 1

Construct and Measurement Items	Mean	SD	Cronbach's*a*
			0.865
This brand makes a strong impression on my visual	1.85	0.660	
sense or other senses	2.14	0.642	
I find this brand interesting in a sensory way	2.11	0.740	
This brand induces feelings and sentiments	2.44	0.859	
I do not have strong emotions for this brand	2.90	0.960	
This brand is an emotional brand	2.85	0.957	
I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this brand	2.47	0.865	
This brand makes me think	2.69	0.934	
This brand stimulate my curiosity and problem solving	2.87	1.098	
I engage in physical actions and behaviors when I use this brand	2.62	0.861	
This brand results in bodily experiences	2.40	0.919	
This brand is action oriented	2.57	0.836	

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b) Brand Loyalty

I consider myself to be loyal to this brand	2.04	0.835
This brand would be my first choice.	2.44	0.828
I will not buy other brands if this brand is available at the store.	3.03	1.107
I buy this brand whenever I can	2.37	0.895
I would go out of my way to buy this brand	2.68	0.951
I really love this brand	1.90	0.814

c) Correlation analysis

According to the first research question researchers can interpret the correlation table to find out the relationship between consumer brand experience and brand loyalty. Referring to above correlation table shows that the significant level of the relationship is 0.689. Therefore, this ($p<0.001$) probability, meaning that there was in strong positive relationship between consumer brand experiences towards the brand loyalty. From the past research finding showed that, 'the null hypotheses that were rejected in this Pearson correlation analysis, with a $p < 0.001$ chance, means that there was in facts a statically substantial relationship between consumer brand experience towards brand loyalty' (Maheshwari, et al., 2014).

According to the second research question of, which dimensions of brand experience influence on gender in creating customer brand loyalty, Pearson correlation signifies the level of relationship of consumer's sensory brand experience and brand loyalty is 0.558. Thus, ($p< 0.001$) probability means that there was a moderate positive relationship.

The relationship between affective experience dimension and brand loyalty has a significant level of the relationship of 0.533. Since the p value is $<$ than 0.001 probability means that there was a moderate positive relationship between these variables.

As above mentioned Pearson's correlation table demonstrates that the relationship between consumer's intellectual experience and consumer brand loyalty. The significant level of these relationship is 0.539. According to that this value confirmed that there is a moderate positive relationship between consumer intellectual experiences towards brand loyalty.

Above Pearson correlation table presence, the relationship between consumer behavioral experience and brand loyalty is 0.535. Thus, ($p<0.001$) likelihood means that there was a moderate positive relationship between these two factors.

Follow the second research question based on the Pearson correlation, want to find out which dimension of brand experience influence on brand loyalty. Therefore, constructed on the correlation test values, we can figure out consumer sensory experience toward the fashion brands can have the highest influence on creating brand loyalty. Because, the significant between the sensory experience and brand loyalty (0.558) was the highest significant level compared other experience dimensions.

Moreover, rendering to the above Pearson correlation test confirmed that the significant level between the consumer's gender and brand loyalty is 0.105. According to the outcomes presets that there is a weak positive relationship between consumers' gender and brand loyalty. Constructed on that findings we can confirmed the sixth research hypotheses as.

d) Regression Analysis

The analysis explains the variation in one variable by using another variable. Accordingly, the coefficient of determination or the R Square describes the percentage of the changes occurs in dependent variable based on the independent variable.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.689[a]	.475	.473	.48683

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand_Experience

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Therefore 48% of variation occurs in Brand Loyalty which can explained by Brand experience of consumers. Due to the fact that the percentage is below the 50%, the relationship is moderately strengthen.

$$Y = b0 + b1\,x1 + b0 + b1\,x2 \ldots b0 \ldots b1\,xn.$$

Brand Loyalty= f (Sensory, Affective, Intellectual, Behavioral).

Brand Loyalty *(Y) = .241 + .304 (SE) + .251 (AE) + .123 (IE) + .213 (BE) + e*

Accordingly, the Sensory experience on brands results p= 0.000, Affective experience on brands gained p= 0.000, Intellectual experience on Brands gained p= 0.008 and Behavioral Experience on brands showed p = 0.000. Comparatively the mentioned four results are more than 0.050 which indicate the collective influence of brand loyalty.

e) ANOVA analysis

To monitor the whether Consumers' gender moderates the relationship between Brand Experience and Consumer Brand Loyalty, research hypothesis was formulated that there is a significant due to consumer's gender on the brand experience and brand loyalty parallel to which a null hypothesis was formulated that stated the opposite of the hypotheses.

Consumers' gender moderates the relationship between Brand Experience and Consumer Brand Loyalty. The p value (denoted by "*Sig.*") is .000 in both Anova tables. Because of P value is lower than significant value of 0.05 there for, Consumers' gender moderates the relationship between Brand Experience and Consumer Brand Loyalty.

There is a relationship between brand experience and consumer brand loyalty	Positively Accepted
Sensory brand experience has an influence on a consumer brand loyalty	Positively Accepted
Affective brand experience has an influence on consumer brand loyalty	Positively Accepted
Intellectual experience has an influence on consumer brand loyalty	Positively Accepted
Behavioral experience has an influence on consumer brand loyalty	Positively Accepted
Consumers gender moderates the relationship between brand experience and consumer brand loyalty	Accepted



Figure 2

f) Word Cloud

Based on the qualitative results the word cloud depicts the participants' opinions with relating to the selecting brands of their choice. The size of the words included in the Figure explain the frequency of the worlds utilized to shows the experiences of the consumers. Besides the size, thickness and colors of the words represent the words according to the majority. Hence the 'High Quality' can be identify as a main significance factor for customer to remain with the brand and creating long term relationships.

VII. Conclusion

This study provides empirical evidence on the relationship among consumer brand experience and brand loyalty in Sri Lankan fashion retail industry. This study also attempt to determine the moderating role of gender on the relationship that consumer brand experience and brand loyalty. To achieve the above mentioned research objectives, the study proposed six hypotheses and empirically examined them. Findings of the study suggest a significant impact of consumer brand experience on brand loyalty. The study also confirmed that gender acts as a moderator in the relationship that consumer brand experience and brand loyalty in fashion retail industry.

Nevertheless, the study has some limitations which give important directions for future research. First, the study considered that sample size of the study which comparatively small with the other related literature studies. Further the sample only focus on the urban area of Colombo which is one of main city. Even sample of 266 participant was not sufficient to reach every area of Colombo City. Furthermore the study utilized the convenient sampling technique to gather relevant data pertaining only the most reachable participants. Researchers considered the mentioned method was appropriated for the study due to the time limitation. However in order to develop more generalizable research study Random sampling would be more applicable in collecting the data. The study

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contains only five fashion brands in the Sri Lankan market to understand the customer perception on the research problem. The brands were examined through cross sectional study where the effect on brand experience and brand loyalty was analyzed within short time period. It will be appropriate to consider more brands to gain deeper understanding on customers' behavior towards brand.

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