

Investigating The Role Of Experimental Marketing In Customer Loyalty And The Mediator Effect Of Customers' Mental Image On It

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Abstract

Experimental marketing is the process of identifying and providing customer requirements and interests in a beneficial way to get them involved in bilateral communications to bring the brand personalities into the life and create value added for the target customers. The current study is done with the aim of investigating the effect of experimental marketing dimensions on customer loyalty through mental image variable in Refah markets in Gorgan. Therefore, this study from the point view of its practical goal and data collecting tool is descriptive scrolling. Regarding lack of access to all customers of the society we used Cochran Formula for unknown societies and determined the sample size as 384 people. The sampling method in this study is non-random available and the data collecting tool is questionnaire. To confirm the validity of the questionnaire and to determine the normality of the society we used Confirmatory Factor Analysis and kolmogrov smironov Tests respectively.

To determine the questionnaire stability we also used Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. We used the structural equation method and Lisrel Software to analyze the data. According to the results of the research all dimensions of experimental marketing have a positive and meaningful relation with customer mental image while the customer mental image also has a positive and meaningful relation with customer loyalty.

Keywords: experimental marketing, customer mental image, customer loyalty

1. Introduction

In the competitive and challenging environment of today organizations emphasis on making stable and beneficial

relations with customers more than anything else and marketing management reach to the concept of experimental marketing from the concepts of production, sale, marketing, social marketing and relation-based marketing. In other words, while the traditional marketing has always emphasized on attraction of new customers and increase in sale theoretically and practically, modern marketing leads the companies to make effort maintaining current customers creating permanent relations in addition to obtaining new customers; since today the population combination of societies have changed significantly in different dimensions, the speed of economical development in developed countries has decreased, the rival companies' behavior has been complicated very much and many industries are encountered with surplus capacity, therefore, companies cannot attract new customers and should find a new way to reach their goals (Rezvani,45: 2014).

In the era of Internet transparency and global choice, organizations can no longer hide behind their policies and prices, customers are so smart that they know they have the right to choose and if they have a bad experience with the services provided, they use it and Going to the rivals, that is why the leverage of power from the organization has passed to the customers. From this, the issue of maintaining and enhancing customer loyalty for companies that are concerned about maintaining and developing their competitive position on the market, it is a strategic challenge that has led to many costs for understanding this concept and for gaining access to practical solutions to reinforce it (Huber, 96: 2002). This

has made contact with the customer and his satisfaction of the undisputed principles of modern marketing.

Sensory marketing is a new trend in marketing, whose various forms have attracted many marketing thinkers and thinkers in the last decade. Marketing is a sensation in the field of marketing communications, and it responds to the need for marketers to establish a two-way communication, in line with the audience's normal life and without disturbing. In this way, the marketer takes advantage of the customer's five senses in a positive way over the durability of the product, goods, service and ... In customer memory, and as a result, the buyer is happy with his purchase, and the company achieves its financial and non-financial goals desirable (Kim, 89: 2010). In other words, traditional marketing perceives the customer as a rational decision maker, which merely seeks the operational efficiency of the product and its interests, marketers see the consumer sense as a rational and emotional person seeking a pleasure experience of value. Their sensory, cognitive, behavioral, and relational uses.

As a result, marketers must provide space to engage people, enhance their senses and memorize them. In such a situation, sensory marketing looks at provoking five human senses as an important factor in increasing individual desirability. In fact, one of the important goals and principles of sensory marketing, communicating with consumers and various business sectors, and paying attention to the sustainability of customer satisfaction and loyalty after the purchase of goods and services, through arousal through the influence of sensory signs and the creation of The emotional state is positive (Funk, 355: 2012). In brief, sensory marketing has the following consequences:

- 1) Sensory marketing causes oral advertising, that is, customers themselves talk about you in each community;
- 2) Reinforcing communication with the brand personality increases the level of customer loyalty, and as a result There is a strategic approach to the brand;
- 3) Acquisition, maintenance and development of market share.

2. Sensory Marketing, Definitions and Concepts

In the present age, marketers will succeed in analyzing and becoming aware of the behavior, psychology, thought and action of consumers. It can also identify the factors that give rise to intrinsic motivation for customers to purchase specific products. Therefore, if one can control the behavior of a consumer from the pre-purchase stage to the final purchase and end-user stage, one can hope that the implementation of marketing plans is very successful (Shahraki Moghaddam, 88: 2016). Sensory marketing is one of the most important and relatively recent tools for

other communication and promotion tools (advertising, public relations, sales, sales, and direct marketing).

Sensory marketing emanates from theoretical foundations in which brand experience, this allows the company to transfer its values and brand identity to a client's mind at a deeper level (Hassanzadeh, 47: 2014). Sensory marketing framework is based on the assumption that the company should reach the five senses of humans at a deeper level than achieved by massive and relational marketing. For this reason, sensory marketing deals with individuals individually and through dialogue and interaction. This is different from customer engagement in mass marketing and customer retention in relationship marketing. Accordingly, customer behavior and treatment should be based on logic and wisdom, along with emotions and values, in order to create brand awareness and create a sustainable image of the brand. This mental image is the result of the individual's sensory experiences of the brand. Thus, the human senses, not on mass marketing and relationship marketing focus not located at the center of the issue is "experiential marketing" called (Chen, 1115: 2007). Sensory marketing is a stimulating factor in consumer vigilance, which affects his abstract perception of the product.

The effect of sensory stimuli can sometimes be more than verbal advertising and affect the consumer's decision to purchase. Sensory marketing is the identification and supply of customer needs and interests in a lucrative way that engages consumers through live, two-way communication, with a memorable and memorable memory, Brings the brand into tangible and everyday life and creates added value for target customers. Knowing and controlling the effect of senses and perceptions on consumer behavior is the subject of research in this field (Hasanzadeh, 90: 2014).

Krishna and Schwartz (2012) argue that since people are deciding and acting on their own perceptions of reality, marketers' understanding of the concept of perceptions and related concepts in determining the factors affecting consumer purchasing is of fundamental importance Has enjoyed. Mashbaki (2008), People act and react based on their own perceptions rather than on the basis of reality. The reality for everyone is a completely personal phenomenon based on the needs, desires, values and personal experiences. Funk (2012), He believes that the selection and purchase of each person is influenced by four major psychological factors, including motivation, perception, learning, beliefs and beliefs. In fact, sensory marketing creates a memorable and memorable experience for the customer, in which the customer has the

opportunity to experience the brand by touching, tasting, smelling, hearing and seeing the product, immersing in the brand.

3. Dimensions of sensory marketing

Customer experience A series of interactions between a customer and a product originates from a company or part of an organization that responds to a response. These interactions are identified as different aspects of customer experience. Therefore, the customer experience is a complex set of perceptions, Emotions and thoughts that are the result of all the tangible or intangible effects of an organization or company. The customer experience is widely recognized as a multi-dimensional structure and its dimensions or factors help form a comprehensive view of customer experience and may be experienced by customers at the conscious or unconscious level of their existence. Kṛṣṇa (2012) presented a model in which five senses influence consumer perception; perception affects the person's knowledge and feelings; knowledge and feelings change the attitude of learning and the behavior (the decision to buy) In the consumer.

In this model, multivariate marketing includes five indicators of tactile sensation, olfactory sense, auditory sense, taste sensation and visual sense.

3-1.Sense of Sight: Human senses are the main factor in a better understanding of the needs, behaviors, and purchasing decisions of the customer. The components of the person's visual experience are a number of visual sensations of the company or brand. These sensory expressions, individually or collectively, can encompass goods, services and service prospects. Some sensory expressions such as layout, packaging, service style, color, and light can be appealingly appealing to the service.

3-2. Hearing sensory: In sensory marketing, this perception can be achieved through audio logos, promotional songs, voices and music. Lindstrom states that the sound stimulates emotional feelings and customer recognition. When customers have little familiarity with the message transmitted, Voices can usually have a positive impact on sensory marketing. Sounds that are personal, emotional, and friendly, usually create a positive hearing experience in relation to the brand image of the brand.

3-3. Tastefulness: Sensory sensation is very rich in feelings and emotions, such as a unique fingerprint. The concept of "taste" is an effective statement for the

transcendental sense of the individual, so that what is eaten or fooled is considered as the overall product experience. It is clear that flavors can be used as a way of expressing individual identity and emphasizing lifestyle as a sensory expression. This is not restricted to restaurants or other environments where the nature and type of products naturally stimulate taste. The taste of the tea includes 2 tastes of bitter, salty, sweet, tart and juicy.

3-4. Sense of smell: In the marketing of the senses, the smell can be applied in several different ways and with several purposes. They can be used as marketing tools for product promotion and in strategic marketing to distinguish, promote, and strengthen the image of the brand. The fragrance can be an important part of the company's sensory marketing, because it has a close relationship with our memory and well-being. Each type of scent is naturally part of the daily lives of individuals. Spangberg and colleagues also found that the pleasant smell of the environment stimulated people to buy more.

3-5. The tactile sense: that is, the transmission of information or emotions when the physical or virtual touch of products and brands is entirely interactive. This process is based on perceptions and individual touch experiences to increase the physical and psychological interaction between the company and the individual (Rezvani, 56: 2014). Marketing improves the interaction between the company and the customers to the personal level and gives it more transparency. The texture of brands and services is influenced by the touch sensation and touch experience of the individual. Conscious use of texture in sensory marketing can increase the perceived value of the brand to the customer. Holton (2009) believed that when the human senses are at the heart of marketing, the company's chances of differentiating its brand rise.

In this case, the company must look for new designs and innovate on the agenda. This means that sensory marketing has a strategic orientation to reveal the identity and core values of the brand by helping all five human senses. Accordingly, he eventually senses marketing, seeking to create a sensory experience through the senses of vision and hearing, touch, taste and smell. This type of marketing creates incentives for customers and adds value to products. In other words, by emphasizing the creation and presentation of sensory experiences, Holton believes and believes human senses as the focus of the company's marketing activities. This allows the company to transfer its brand values and identity to a deeper individual level (quaye, 34: 2010).

The following summary of the results of research on sensory marketing is summarized in Table 1 below:

Table 1. Research background

findings	researcher	
Connects the sense of hearing, emotions and feelings, and affects the sense of brand interpretation.	Swiney & Whiter (2002)	1
The sense of taste differs from emotional sense and is often interacting with other senses, and ultimately the effects of tactile sensation.	Wanderer and Hennberg (2006)	2
The sense of smell is about welfare and is closely related to emotions and memories.	Garlene Warner (2006)	3
Connects the sense of hearing, emotions and feelings, and affects the sense of brand interpretation.	Garlene Warner (2006)	4
Sight is one of the strongest senses to discover changes and differences, and the most common sense to understand the goods.	Malcolm (2008)	5
The company must create its brand as an image through sensory strategies, including senses, sensors and sensory expressions based on cognition, emotions and value-based elements in the minds of humans.	Holten (2009)	6
The five senses can influence customer preferences, memories and choices, and they play an important role in emotional and empirical communication in the buying process.	Krishna (2012)	7
Sensory marketing affects five human senses and prolongs the positive mental image, increases the pleasure and eagerness of spending money to buy in customers, which leads to loyalty in customers.	Glendrin and shale (2013)	8
Sensory marketing affects five human senses and prolongs the positive mental image, increases the pleasure and eagerness of spending money to buy in customers, which leads to loyalty in customers.	Ucharonkit (2014)	9
Brand experience has a positive and significant relationship with customer satisfaction and loyalty. Brand satisfaction also affects brand trust.	Marist et al. (2014)	10
The sense of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell is affecting the stage of serving the market in the process of new service development. In addition, in terms of bank customers, the sensation of touching on serving the market is more effective than other senses.	Rezvani (2014)	11
Sensory stimuli affect the emotional indicators of perception and buyer's emotional indices on buyer behavior at the point of purchase.	Jazni (2014)	12
Sensory Marketing The direct impact of marketing on customer purchases is positive and significant. Also, perceived quality of services has a moderating effect on customer purchases.	Hasanzadeh (2015)	13
Tourism and tourism marketing are linked to the creation of a delightful experience for the customer of the destination, and it is possible to build this experience through multidimensional marketing. In addition, the purchaser's ecological factors do not affect the buyer's age and gender as a moderator of the relationship between perceived emotional indicators and purchaser's behavior in the shopping location.	Haghighi et al. (2016)	14
Brand experience has a significant effect on satisfaction, trust and affection, and trust in customer loyalty has a positive and significant effect.	Mirzai and colleague (2016)	15

4.Customer's mental image

Customers are considered as one of the main components of the most valuable asset of the company. There is no doubt that any business without this asset will face a lot of problems. Customers are always looking for high quality

products, after-sales service and facility provision by service providers (Shahrak Moghaddam, 67: 2013). Customers' mental image of the company is a key element in the overall assessment of the quality of services and products and can have a significant effect on the attitude

or judgment of individuals about the company's supremacy.

A positive mental image enables consumers to differentiate a company from their competitors, and as a result, the likelihood of consumer purchases increases. In several studies, the influence of customers' mental image on their variables of loyalty and satisfaction has been proven. Awareness of customer insight helps companies design better strategies, and have a clear performance in defining their goals and achieving them (Chaiman, 156: 2007). However, according to some researchers, the value of human senses has long been overlooked, while human senses are important for clarifying brand identity and customer image of it.

Sensory Marketing by designing and implementing a vivid brand experience, customers are seeking to bring branding to create an acceptable level of branding in the customer's life. Sensory marketing is an integrated methodology that keeps target customers alive through brand-leading relationships that are worth more.

4-1. customer commitment

Today, maintaining and enhancing customer loyalty for companies that are concerned about maintaining and developing their competitive position on the market is considered a strategic challenge. Companies that are not merely looking for short-term sales and obtaining long-term customer satisfaction by providing superior and distinct value and value goods and services, they have a reputation for gaining more influence in the target market and will have more loyal customers than other competitors (Kim, 188: 2004).

According to many scholars, loyalty occurs when customers feel confident that the organization is best able to meet their needs, so that the competitors of the organization leave the set of customer considerations and only purchase from the organization Take action.

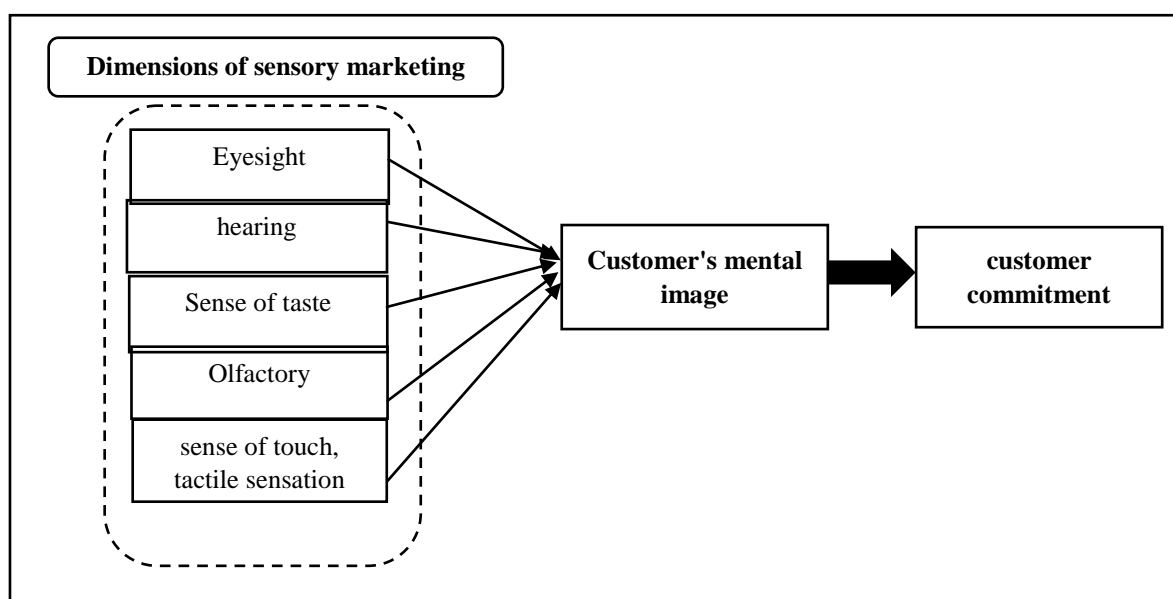
In other words, loyalty means the existence of a positive attitude towards a product (brand, service, shop, vendor) and its supportive behavior (Yu, 2000). Therefore, loyalty can be created by establishing a customer commitment to deal with the organization Specific and the purchase of goods and services has been repeatedly defined. One way to increase customer loyalty is to create a good brand or product experience in the customer's mind.

4-2. Conceptual model and research hypotheses

Generally, in the sensory marketing field, two models were found: sensory marketing model (2009) and Krisjan's sensory marketing model (2012), which has a lot of commonality. Therefore, to explain the conceptual model of this research in the sensory marketing segment of the two aforementioned models, is taken.

The main component of these two models is the sensation of the five senses in marketing marketing. Holton in this model states that the company should brand itself as an image through sensory strategies, including feelings, Sense senses and sensory expressions based on knowledge, emotions and value-based elements in the minds of humans. Kṛṣṇa also says that what a customer receives through five senses is affecting his perception of the brand.

Figure 1. Conceptual model of research



5. Research hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive and significant relationship between sensory marketing vision and customer image.

Second hypothesis: There is a positive and significant relationship between the sensory marketing auditory dimension and the customer's image.

Hypothesis 3: There is a positive and significant relationship between the sensory marketing and sensory marketing style.

Fourth hypothesis: There is a positive and significant relationship between sensory marketing smell and customer image.

Hypothesis 5: There is a positive and significant relationship between sensory marketing tactile dimension and customer image.

Hypothesis 6: There is a positive and significant relationship between customers' mental image and customer loyalty.

6. Research Method

The present study is descriptive-survey and analytical in terms of its purpose. The statistical population of the study consisted of all customers of the Welfare Shop in Gorgan.

Due to the lack of access to the full list of community clients, the Cochran formula was used for unknown (N) communities. Accordingly, with confidence 95%, standard deviation of 0.05 and error margin of 5% + + sample size were determined 384 people. The sampling method is available in this non-randomized study and is derived from the Cochran formula for unknown population volumes.

$$n = \frac{pqz^2}{d^2} = \frac{(0.05) \cdot (0.05) \cdot (1.96)^2}{(0.05)^2} = 384$$

The data gathering tool in this research is a Likert scale. To validate the validity of the questionnaire, a confirmatory factor analysis has been used in the LISREL software. Accordingly, the value of the factor load of the clauses should be greater than 4 and the mean value of the extracted variance should also be greater than 5 ($AVE \geq 0.5$), the results are shown in Table 2. Also, to determine its reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and composite reliability index (CR) have been used.

6-1. Bartlett Test and KMO

In this research, the KMO test was used to compare the index of correlation values observed with partial correlation.

Table 2. Bartlett and KMO test results

21735/834	X2	Bartlett Test
1035	Degrees of freedom	
0/000	Meaningful number	
0/923	Sample Kyser Mire and Alkin Exam	

Based on the results in Table 2, given that KME = 923/0, so we can say that for performing factor analysis there is sufficient sampling. Also, since the significance level of the Bartlett statistic is zero and less than 0.05, so the data gap is suitable for performing factor analysis.

6-2. Investigating the validity and reliability of the research

In this research, factor analysis was used to confirm the validity and to determine its reliability, Cronbach's alpha coefficient and composite reliability index (CR) were used. According to the results, the validity and reliability of the indices are acceptable. The results are in Table 3.

Table 3. Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

Reliability compound	Cronbach's alpha	(AVE)		Dimensions of sensory marketing
0/93	0/93	0/72	Eyesight	
0/83	0/87	0/67	hearing	
0/88	0/82	0/61	Sense of taste	
0/88	0/87	0/63	Olfactory	
0/79	0/92	0/78	sense of touch, tactile sensation	
0/90	0/90	0/75	Customer's mental image	
0/87	0/87	0/51	customer commitment	

7. Findings of the research

7-1. Descriptive findings

The findings of the present study in descriptive statistics showed that 61.5% of the subjects and 38.5% of them were male. In terms of education, roughly 12.9% of respondents under the diploma, 28/6 % diploma, 36/7% of the bachelor's degree and 21/2 of them have a master's degree and higher. Also, most of the respondents (46%)

were in the age group of 30-40 years old and the lowest group was under the age group of 20 years.

6-2. Measuring Necessity Indicator of Fit Model

The results of the study of fitting index variables are presented in Table 4. Accordingly, it can be said that the fit status of all the variables in the research is in a favorable situation.

Table 4. Results of the fitting of indicators of goodness of the research model

Variables			Standard values	Indicators
Loyalty	Customer's mental image	Dimensions of sensory marketing		
0/91	0/93	0/9	GFI>90%	GFI
0/94	0/93	0/987	0. 90<CFI<1	CFI
0/087	1/21	0/081	RMSEA<0. 1	RMSEA
2/78	0/075	2/36	Value less than 3	CMIN/df

7-2. Structural Equation Modeling Research

At this stage, fitness or fit indices are calculated and their values are compared with standard values, thus fitting the model is determined. After putting together the model

fitting indexes and general judgment about fitting the model, if fitted, it is decided to decide whether to reject or confirm the assumptions.

graph 2. Structural Equation Modeling

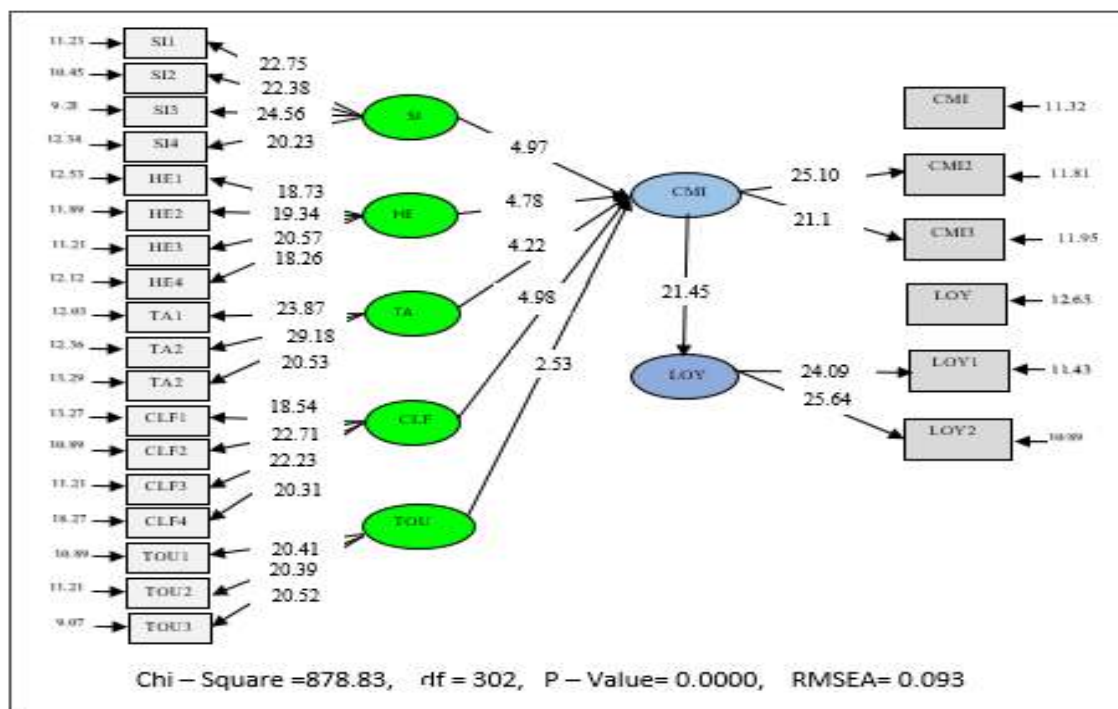


Table 5. Results of hypothesis testing

Result	(T-Value)	Path coefficient (Standard coefficient)	The dependent variable	independent variable	Hypothesis
Confirmation	4/97	0/92	Customer's mental image	Eyesight	1
Confirmation	4/78	0/68	Customer's mental image	hearing	2
Confirmation	3/22	0/73	Customer's mental image	Sense of taste	3
Confirmation	4/98	0/67	Customer's mental image	Olfactory	4
Confirmation	2/53	0/90	Customer's mental image	sense of touch, tactile sensation	5
Confirmation	21/45	0/85	Costumer loyalty	Customer's mental image	6

8. Discussion and Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of sensory marketing dimensions through the customer's mental image on customer loyalty in the Rafah chain stores in Gorgan. Deciding whether to reject or approve assumptions is based on the value of a meaningful number (T). Accordingly, at the 95% confidence level, if the calculated values (T) are between 1.96 and 1.96, the assumptions of the research are rejected and otherwise confirmed. In the first hypothesis, the results of the analysis showed that with respect to the value of $T = 4.97$ and the path coefficient of 0.92, this hypothesis is confirmed, so it can be said that there is a positive and significant relationship between sensory marketing vision and customer mental image. This finding is in line with the results of studies by Krishna (2012), Halton (2009), Melkwait (2008) and Rezvani (1393). In the study of the results of the second hypothesis, with respect to the value of $T = 4.24$ and the path coefficient equal to 0.68, there is a positive and significant relationship between the taste sensation and the customer's mental image. This result is consistent with the findings of Helton (2009), Wade Worker and Hennberg (2006), Thirst (2003). Also, the results of the third hypothesis study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between hearing loss and mental image of clients with regard to the values of $23.3 T =$ and the coefficient of 0.73. While confirming this hypothesis, we can say that there is a positive and significant relationship between these two variables There is. This finding is consistent with the results of Krishna studies (2012), Caroline Ahn (2006), Swinney Wiener (2002) and Saleh Abadi (1393). The results of the fourth hypothesis test indicate that, given the value of $T = 9.48$,

the value of which is between 1.96 and 1.96, this hypothesis is confirmed. Also, since the amount of path coefficient between two variables, the sense of smell and the customer's mental image is equal to 0.67, it can be said that the relationship between these two variables is positive and significant. This finding is consistent with the studies of Krishna (2012), Goldcoolough Stephen (2007) and Fayeur (2000) and Rezvani 2015. In examining the fifth hypothesis, a positive and significant relation between this two-tier relationship is confirmed between the sensory marketing sensory sensory dimension and the customer's mental image according to the value of $T = 2.53$ and path coefficient of 90.90. This finding is consistent with the studies of Holtan (2009), Peck and Winger (2006) Westerlin (2003) and Rezvani (1393). Also, in considering the fifth hypothesis that a positive and significant relationship between customer's mental image and their loyalty is confirmed, this hypothesis is confirmed by the amount of $T = 21.25$. The path coefficient equal to 0.85 indicates a positive and significant relationship between these two variables. Therefore, in view of the results obtained, it is suggested that managers of large stores, such as the Welfare Shop, should: 1) create a suitable appearance of the showcase, 2) appropriate arrangement and shelving of goods, 4) placing items in places that are more readily available to buyers; 5) making it possible to taste some food; 6) create an interactive satisfactory experience for customers to attract and retain their customers.

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