# THE IMPACT OF BRAND VALUE ON BRAND COMPETITIVENESS

The role of brand value in driving brand competitiveness has recently received attention from marketing scholars like Winzar et al. (2018). From the perspectives of marketing and strategic orientation, we propose and test a framework that depicts the effects of these variables on brand competitiveness. Development of the framework was achieved by synthesising existing research from the marketing and management streams. A convenience sample of 374 retailers who worked with the brand as its business customers completed a survey questionnaire. Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was employed to test the proposed model. We found that brand value, created for business customers, indirectly enhances brand competitiveness through marketing orientation, albeit not directly. Moreover, brand differentiation directly and positively influences brand competitiveness in addition to building brand value. Our study is one of the initial attempts to explore the capability of brand value to bring together market orientation and strategic orientation for brand competitiveness and also extend the periphery of current knowledge about the variables that drive the competitiveness of a brand.

**Keywords –** Brand value, marketing orientation, strategic orientation, brand competitiveness, brand differentiation

**Paper type –** Research paper

## Introduction

Brand value demonstrates the capabilities of a brand to conduct its business activities in a way that permits managers to achieve a company's business objectives (Srivastava et al., 1998). Brand competitiveness, instead, reflects upon the ability of the brand to drive the market better than competitors in a marketplace (Muniz and Guinn, 2001; Winzar et al. 2018; Tong and Wang, 2011). Competing in a marketplace through business customers requires brand managers to make efficient use of the brand in order to differentiate the value they offer to business customers from that of their competitors (Leone et al., 2006; Webster, 2000). Business customer firms seek rational benefits from brand value and, in turn, they enable a brand to become competitive in the consumer market (Webster, 1992). Delivery of value in a format desired by business customers allows them to utilise the same for achieving their business objectives too (Amit and Zott, 2001; Cannon and Perreault, 1999).

Authors like Lynch and deChernatony (2004) and Mudambi (2002) have discussed the role played by the social and functional attributes of the brand in creating differentiation. Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) studied brand differentiation in relation to product, category and brand to understand purchase loyalty as market share and attitudinal loyalty as relative price. Using a dataset collected from three surveys of consumers and brand managers for 107 brands, Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) reflect on the close link between brand differentiation and market share of the brand, by embedding these two variables into features of the brand and product quality delivered to customers. Complexity of the delivery process of brand value requires brand managers to strategically understand the needs of business customers, and match them with the attributes of the brand to create and successfully deliver brand value. Kohli and Jaworski (1990) highlight the strategic role played by marketing in creating and delivering value that generates competitiveness, terming it market orientation. Similarly, research on strategic orientation of operations proposes the alignment of functional

activities of the brand for delivering value through management of demand in consumer markets (Sheth and Sisodia, 1999).

Both marketing orientation and strategic orientation have been discussed in the literature as independent managerial actions related to the creation and delivery of value. However, the ability of these two orientations to drive brand competitiveness as an outcome of their combined effort in the context of business-to-business markets is not well researched. Romaniuk et al. (2007) reviewed the role of differentiation in a brand strategy and its influence on customer purchase behaviour, using data collected from two different countries. The arguments of Romaniuk et al. (2007) were recognised into marketing concepts, such as the perceptions of customers about brand differentiation, that drive customer loyalty through purchase preferences and purchase decisions in a competitive market. Previous studies, such as Ahmad and Latif (2019), Winzar et al. (2018) and Romaniuk et al. (2007), have investigated these constructs but have not considered their combined effect on brand competitiveness. Based on current academic literature, the authors propose that the capability of brand value can determine brand differentiation and foster the marketing and strategic orientation of the brand, to achieve superior competitiveness. It is argued that the delivery of brand value to business customers, when built on strategic orientation of operations as a core functional aspect and marketing orientation as a core social aspect of the brand, has the capability to create brand competitiveness.

Previous studies have explained the benefits and implications of such unification through a variety of different frameworks, which are either based on a marketing (Brodie et al., 2008; Reid et al. 2005; Sharma et al. 2018; Winzar et al. 2018) or strategy point of view (Urde, 1999; Wong and Merrilees, 2007; Simoes and Dibb, 2001; Chang et al. 2018). Several recent studies, like Beverland (2016) or Odoom and Mensah (2019), have made attempts to consider the strategic aspect of brand orientation, but they have not reflected on the role

played by brand differentiation and brand value on the simultaneous influence of marketing and strategic orientation on brand competitiveness, nor have they considered the role played by brand value in strengthening the fusion of marketing orientation and strategic orientation for enabling brand differentiation to drive brand competitiveness. Furthermore, most of the studies are from the consumer perspective rather than from the perspective of business customers. The objective of this paper is to address this gap in the available literature by reviewing the constructs under investigation, specifically from the perspective of business customers of the brand.

In the subsequent sections, we discuss the existing academic understanding of the constructs under investigation, to build a theoretical base for research hypotheses and the accompanying conceptual framework. The next section entails the methodology. The last section considers and explains a large-scale field survey investigation which was undertaken to examine the research hypotheses, followed by a discussion of the managerial and theoretical implications and future research directions.

## Literature Review

Creating differentiation for a brand in a business-to-business market requires brand managers to focus on creating a unique brand value for business customers (Hunt and Morgan, 1995; Srivastava et al., 1998; Winzar et al. 2018). Brand value communicates about the capability of the brand to contribute to the business of its customer firms, and brand's subsequent ability to compete with competitors (Mcgrath, 2005). Assessments of brand value by business customers highlights the aptitude of the brand to be competitive in a marketplace (Powell and Powell, 2004; Lavie et al., 2007). Existing knowledge suggests that brand value that suits business customer firms should be oriented towards building the capacity of the business customer firm (Webster, 2000). When brands combine the functional aspects of their firm's

operations with its social facets, it can create the unique value desired by customers (Fahey et al., 2001). Combining the functional aspects of a firm's operational capabilities with its marketing skills can also create the unique value desired by business customers (Pettigrew, 1987).

The capability of a brand to generate demand through its marketing efforts reflects the strength of its social orientation and its ability to fulfil the demand generated through strategic management of its operational activities, thereby echoing the power of the differentiation of the brand (Payne et al., 2008). The basic argument of this paper is that a brand manager should approach the enhancement of brand competitiveness by means of two different orientations of its activities, i.e., marketing and strategy. We draw upon these two orientations of a brand's activities for creating differentiation in a way that proposes their fusion determined by brand value for brand competitiveness. The conceptual framework (Figure I) outlines the relationships between (i) brand value, (ii) brand differentiation, (iii) marketing orientation, (iv) strategic orientation of operations, and (v) brand competitiveness. We also identify components that define these constructs from the context of business customer firms, by reviewing the internal and external dimensions of brand value. The internal dimension explains the synthesis of two orientations and the external dimension reflects the constructs under investigation as determinants of brand competitiveness.

**<< Figure I about here >>**

## Brand Value

The brand value offered by a manufacturer provides emotional value to consumers, rational value to its business customers and reflects its operational efficiency as an important element

of the value it provides to both consumers and business customers (Parment, 2008). A brand that can provide these three different types of value to its customers can generate demand for its products in a competitive market (Keller and Lehmann, 2006). Fulfilment of demand generated through brand value requires brand managers to shift their focus back on to the activities of their firm (Srivastava et al., 1999). We also considered the contemporary definition of brand value provided by studies such as Kucharska et al (2018) as the strategic outcome of marketing initiatives of a firm useful to measure the effectiveness of efficiency of other organisational strategies. This definition enabled authors to argue that such a business requirement encourages brand managers to consider orienting different activities of their firm towards the smooth delivery of the promise made by their brand to different sets of customers through brand value. Literature on brand competitiveness suggests that fulfilment of demand makes a brand competitive in a marketplace (Parment, 2008). Baumann et al. (2016) found evidence for a link between motivational drivers and individual competitiveness. There are few other useful embryonic contributions from anecdotes that draw from viewpoint of brand equity and define brand competitiveness driven by innovation as a component of brand image (Jie, 2002, Liu et al. 2007). Other studies such as Diaz-Chao et al. (2016), Amegbe and Hanu (2016), Selase Asamoah (2014) and Krugman (1994) have operationalised the competitiveness of the firm using the lens of productivity but not as a construct that reflects on market share in relation to competitors. However, we find our conceptualisation of competitiveness is closer to Ketels (2006) as the ability of a firm to expand based on its internal and external capabilities. Ketels (2006) have tried to theoretically explore the ability of the three different types of brand values which can internally drive the integration of marketing orientation of the brand with the strategic orientation of operations, and externally determine brand competitiveness.

*Emotional Brand Value*

The emotional satisfaction provided by the brand reflects the value that it provides to consumers and facilitates the capturing of a large share of the market by the brand in the form of customer equity. Business customers consider such an ability to be brand value because it allows them to achieve a higher level of growth. Consistency in the emotional value provided by a brand allows its business customers to emotionally associate with the brand (Day and Wensley, 1988; Gupta et al., 2008).

*Rational Brand Value*

Business customer firms look for the most cost-efficient methods to achieve their organisational objectives (Altman, 2005). Manufacturers provide incentives in various formats when business customers purchase products in bulk quantities for selling on. Business customers buy in bulk anticipating that the demand for a brand's products will facilitate fast movement of its products into their customer segment (Strach and Everett, 2006). Demand reduces the effort required from business customers to sell and decreases the cost of selling incurred by business customer firms (Lambert and Cooper, 2000). Business customers assess this as rational brand value because it increases their profitability and helps them to achieve their business objectives (Gunasekaran and Ngai, 2005).

*Operational Brand Value*

Associating with a brand encourages business customers to engage with different activities of the brand. Engaging with a brand helps business customer firms to understand the efficiency orientation of the business practices followed by the manufacturer brand (Schau et al., 2009). Efficient business practices thus learnt, inspire managers of the business customer firms to

adopt relevant processes in their own firms, with an aim to improve the way their firm functions (Payne et al., 2008). The learning and adoption that occurs due to association with the brand lead to improvements in the operational efficiency of the business customer firm, which is judged as operational brand value by business customers (Gummesson, 2004).

These three different types of value, when offered together, are assessed as brand differentiation that generates demand in the business-to-business and consumer markets (Webster, 2000; Gummesson, 2004). Consistent provision of such differentiation requires brand managers to focus on the internal and external environment of the brand (Zineldin and Brendlow, 2001). We anticipate that the internal focus drives brand managers to position all the business activities of the brand as marketing-oriented activities, and pin down the locus of operational activities of the brand towards a strategic orientation. We also assume that the external focus stimulates a comparative intelligence in the minds of the business customers, and encourages them to differentiate between competing brands.

**Marketing Orientation of Brand Value**

Marketing orientation, in the academic literature, encapsulates the strategic use of the promotional mix in order to attract customers by creating and communicating value (Hede and Kellett, 2011). It has also been explained as a value-driven multi-layered functional approach that has the capability to initiate various organisational functions related to marketing (Kohli and Jaworski, 1990; Kozielski, 2019). Bernstein (1984) explains marketing orientation as a method that can be used by a firm to reflect how it orients its various functions towards marketing. Lambert and Cooper (2000) discuss marketing orientation in the context of business-to-business markets and position it as an approach for managing the value-driven market-oriented promotional mix. The concept of a market-orientated promotional mix in a competitive market, according to the literature, has four explicit facets:

customer management, competition management, conflict management and relationship management (Dwyer et al., 1987; Srivastava et al., 1998). This research borrows the concept of market orientation as a philosophy base adopted by firms for long term growth from a combination of marketing and organisational studies.

*Brand Value and Customer Management*

Gummesson (1991) explains the customer management ability of a brand as a practice that involves management of customers, not only by full-time marketers but also by other employees of the firm acting as amateur part-time marketers, who participate in the process of creation of value for customers. As indicated by Gummesson (1991), part-time marketers play an important role in satisfying business customers by successfully offering resources related to products such as services, marketing and quality management. The framework of market orientation tested by Jaworski and Kohli (1993) also indicates the role of top management, interdepartmental dynamics and organisational systems, in allowing a firm to become marketing-orientated and create value for customers. We argue that a value-driven marketing orientation allows a brand to manage its customers successfully in a competitive market because it allows integration of different functions performed by a firm.

*Brand Value and Competition Management*

Management of competition was explained by Miles and Darroch (2006) as an entrepreneurial skill required to manage competition, by understanding and creating superior value for consumers and business customers. In a study of business markets, Snoj et al. (2007) found that business customers use brand value to promote the brand and to fight competition in local markets. A deep understanding of the brand value can counter the promotional initiatives of competitors and enable brand managers to innovatively develop

marketing-oriented promotional programmes, which can lead to successful management of the competition (Snoj et al., 2007).

*Brand Value and Conflict Management*

Management of conflict in the cross-functional integration of organisational functions becomes very important for satisfying customers, given that it is common for different departments to have their own unique and differing concerns and preferences about their individual performance (Randel and Jaussi, 2003). Cross-functional teams should be stimulated to cooperate and minimise situations that could lead to conflict and dysfunctionality so that, in turn, they do not have a negative impact on the brand value (Rouzies et al., 2005). The marketing and sales literature places great emphasis on conflict management ability being developed in the functioning of every department (Rouzies et al., 2005). Similarly, Song et al. (2000) emphasise the role of marketing in the management of conflict within different departments of the organisation, in order to deliver brand value and become a marketing-oriented organisation.

*Brand Value and Relationship Management*

The communication-based relationship marketing model proposed by Duncan and Moriarty (1998) proposes that communication has the capability to develop relationships by creating brand-oriented value in the minds of customers and facilitates its comparison with competitors. Fierce competition requires the support of strategic relationship management with business customers (Doyle, 2001). A brand that contributes value in various ways to the business customer firm facilitates a relationship between brand managers and business customers. Successfully managed brand value-based relationships of brand managers with business customers encourage purposeful interactions and internally expedite the co-creation

of customised marketing-oriented initiatives as actions taken up by the brand (London and Hart, 2004). Considering the capability of brand value to drive different facets of marketing orientation, we propose that:

*Hypothesis 1: Brand value influences marketing orientation of the brand's activities through (i) customer management, (ii) competitor management, (iii) conflict management, and (iv) relationship management.*

**Strategic Orientation of Brand Value**

Strategic orientation of operations has been defined as a market-based approach adopted by a firm, to undertake actions that will successfully deliver value and fulfil the strategic agenda of their firm (Voss and Voss, 2000; Tsai, 2001; Chen, 2003). Successful delivery of brand value to business customers requires brand managers to strategically orient their business processes towards the requirements of customers who help the brand to capture the opportunities available in a marketplace (Turnbull et al., 1996). Business processes such as the actions and decisions of brand managers are characterised to be strategic in nature as they help both brands and business customers to achieve the long-term objectives of their respective firms (Gunasekaran and Ngai, 2004). The internal view of the strategic orientation of operations for business markets can be conceptualised through the following four dimensions: objective management, information management, process management and response management (Morgan and Strong, 1998; Bergeron et al. 2004). These dimensions are discussed in the following sections.

*Objective Management*

Objective management can be explained as a process of setting organisational goals and the course of action taken by companies to achieve them (Hensel, 1990; Tampoe, 1990; Jaques, 2009). Setting the objectives of a brand depends upon the vision and mission of the management; however, the subsequent course of action to meet the objectives depends upon the strategy adopted by various organisational departments, to follow the defined vision and mission (Nutt, 2002). Creation of brand value, when undertaken by the marketing department through internal orientation, reflects the strategic integration of different functions of the business such as marketing, sales, services, design and product development, towards the achievement of organisational objectives such as creating competitiveness (Tripodi, 2001).

*Information Management*

The literature on operations management highlights the need for brands to foster close relationships and open communications with suppliers, in order to build market knowledge (Chen et al., 2004). As indicated by Tajeddini et al. (2006), companies should use market information and competitor knowledge collected through open communications in order to create differentiation. An in-depth assessment of the information about the orientation of a competitor's organisational objectives, strategies to conduct business, and the resources and capabilities they possess, facilitates a comparative analysis that can be conducted by managers. As Varadrajan and Jayachandran (1999) found, information about the general market environment, industrial trends and a firm's internal environment enables managers to strategically orient the operations of their firm towards brand competitiveness.

*Process Management*

The strategic orientation of the operations of the marketing mix, when based on the efficiently managed processes of the firm, motivates business customers (Gupta et al., 2008).

The capability of the firm to manage its operational processes and marketing mix strategically helps in the delivery of competitiveness to customers (Woodruff, 1997; Zerbini et al., 2007; McNaughton et al., 2001). Competitiveness attained through business process management capabilities improves the perceptions of the brand in the business-to-business segment. It also reflects upon the smooth relationship nurtured by the brand , which encourages business customers to be loyal to the bran, to recommend the brand's products to consumers, and contributes to its competitiveness (Gunasekaran and Ngai, 2005).

*Response Management*

Godsell et al. (2006) studied the role of responsiveness of firms in aligning two important constructs, namely, demand creation and demand fulfilment, proposing that the proactive management of responses can enable a brand to drive the behaviour of its customers. Efficiency demonstrated by a brand in managing the responses of its business customers, influences their attitude towards the brand. A study of demand management conducted by Walters (2008) explains how response management can improve customer satisfaction by effectively attending to their requirements, complaints and feedback. The strategic orientation of response management has the capability of improving the brand experience of customers (Anderson, 2009). In order to propose that companies should strategically synthesise different aspects of the strategic orientation of their brand value, we propose:

> *Hypothesis 2: Brand value facilitates strategic orientation of the brand's operational activities through (i) objective management, (ii) information management, (iii) process management, and (iv) response management.*

**Brand Competitiveness**

Brand competitiveness has been studied as a strategic aspect of a brand's marketing and operational activities and is explained as a condition under which a brand successfully satisfies its customers through brand value, and positions itself competitively in a marketplace (Webster, 1992; Bharadwaj et al., 1993; Winzar et al. 2018). Scholarly studies such as Tong and Wang (2011) describe brand competitiveness as the ability of the brand to compete in a market using its uniqueness from competing brands based on aspects such as internal features, external image and regional characteristics. Similarly, Biaowen (2014) explains brand competitiveness as the integration of market share and value creation capability that help the company to gain recognition and build its overall image quality. As discussed by Bharadwaj et al. (1993), the purpose of building brand competitiveness is to enhance the overall performance of the business, based on the distinctive marketing skills and resource management tools used by the brand. Both aspects of business, i.e., marketing and operations, when strategically managed together by brand managers, can provide a competitive edge to the brand (Hensel, 1990).

*Knowledge of Brand Value*

Brand knowledge facilitates a better understanding of the value offered by a brand to its customers (Gupta et al., 2010). In the case of business-to-business relationships, knowledge of the value contributed by a brand to the business of its customer firms becomes a parameter of brand differentiation for business customers (fli et al., 2007; Keller and Lehman, 2006). Furthermore, ensuring that the orientation of brand knowledge shared with business customers is directed towards the needs of the market, places a brand in a superior position in a very competitive business-to-business market (Urde et al., 2013).

*Infrastructure for Brand Value*

Business customers of brands are generally small and medium firms that lack marketing infrastructure and need support from the brand to operate efficiently in a competitive market (Webster, 2000). Infrastructural support provided by a brand improves the efficiency of customer firms to orient their business activities towards the market and encourages business customers to be loyal to the brand in a competitive market. Fulfilment of the infrastructural requirements of business customer firms creates the capability of the brand to operate through a network of customer firms selling the products of the brand. This becomes useful for remote penetration of the brand into the market and pushes performance to a higher level in a competitive market (Gupta et al., 2008).

*Support and Brand Value*

Business customers receive marketing, selling and operational support from the brand in various formats such as sales, demand generation, after sales services, technical training for capability enhancement and price protection. A brand that seeks to become a preferred brand for business-to-business markets supports business customers in selling by orienting brand promotions towards the local market through the generation of higher sales numbers and higher revenue (Gupta, 2008). The preferred brand receives support from business customers in terms of market knowledge, product feedback and efficient management of customer complaints in a competitive market.

*Capabilities and Brand Value*

Building the knowledge-based capability of business customers engaged in selling products that require the seller to possess technical knowledge is very important for

brands operating in competitive markets (Webster, 2000). Developing other capabilities of business customers, such as the use of market orientation and strategic orientation to communicate brand differentiation, makes a brand quite strong in a competitive market (Urde et al., 2013).

*Relationships and Brand Value*

Developing relationships within a competitive market with appropriate customers builds the capacity of brands to create stronger brand associations. Brand associations, when nurtured using the commitment-trust theory of Morgan and Hunt (1994), can drive customer loyalty in a competitive market. This theory reflects upon trust as the key variable that needs managerial focus. Thus, we argue that:

*Hypothesis 3: The greater the brand value, the higher the brand competitiveness.*

Javalgi et al. (2005) conceptualised a strategic wheel of service performance by synthesising market orientation, strategic flexibility, competitive advantage and business performance using examples of brands like Amazon.com, Southwest Airlines and Lexus. The arguments of Javalgi et al. (2005) are based on the existing literature on relationship marketing, customer satisfaction, brand loyalty, and customer lifetime value and loyalty. Their findings suggest that higher levels of customer relationship, marketing, retention, satisfaction, loyalty and lifetime value can enable service providers to improve their performance. Grinstein (2008), performing a meta-analysis to review the relationship between marketing orientation and strategic orientation, found that the relationship between the two has an effect on other orientations of the firm such as learning, entrepreneurship and employee orientation.

*Hypothesis 4: The greater the marketing orientation of operations of a brand, the higher the brand competitiveness.*

*Hypothesis 5: The greater the strategy orientation of operations of a brand, the higher the brand competitiveness.*

*Hypothesis 6: The greater the marketing orientation of operations of a brand, the greater the strategic operations orientation.*

**Brand Differentiation, Brand Value, Brand Competitiveness, Marketing Operations Orientation, and Strategy Operations Orientation**

A study of the relationship between strategic orientation and marketing orientation in an industrial manufacturing setting conducted by Morgan and Strong (1998) revealed a significant association between aspects such as the proactivity of a firm and its level of marketing orientation as an effective device that creates pull in the marketplace. The authors of this research argue that the benefits of marketing-oriented activities of brands and behaviours of the market are generally manifested within the strategic orientation of the brand, perceived as uniqueness by customers. Although the effects of the relationship between marketing orientation and strategic orientation of a firm have been studied in various different contexts, the literature fails to explain how they drive brand differentiation.

*Brand Benefits*

Benefits that business customers seek from a brand have been explained in the marketing literature as brand value (Mudambi, 2002; Lynch and deChernatony, 2004). The findings of Lynch and deChernatony (2004) reflect the similarity between benefits received from brands by consumers and by business-to-business customers. However,

their recommendations highlight the need for brand managers to effectively communicate brand benefits within and outside the organisation through the industrial sales force. Glynn et al. (2007) studied the benefits offered by a brand to business customers to understand the role of brands in business-to-business relationships. The authors of this study conceptualised the effects of financial, customer and managerial benefits of brands on reseller relationships, using brand share as the moderator of the relationship. Glynn et al. (2007) clarify that brands are important for developing the relationship between manufacturers and resellers in the packaged goods industry. They also reveal that resellers play an important part in the management of brands in business-to-business markets, when their perceptions of benefits drive the exchange of information and knowledge with brand managers.

*Brand Uniqueness*

Uniqueness of a brand has been explained from the context of advertising as an indicator of brand equity that is mediated by brand reputation (Chaudhuri 2002). Romaniuk et al. (2007) reflect upon customer perceptions of brand equity as a brand differentiation strategy by arguing that unique associations are not related to past usage or brand preference. The arguments of Romaniuk et al. (2007) are based on the explanation that uniqueness provides the reason for a customer's preference for a brand in comparison to its competitor brands. A brand management model requires a market orientation mind-set to explain how brand uniqueness can determine brand equity in a competitive market.

*Brand Effectiveness*

The effectiveness of a brand in engaging customers in a competitive market has been studied many times previously in different contexts by many marketing scholars such as

Pike (2010), Cui et al. (2014) and Berthon et al. (2007). Brand effectiveness was tested as a measure of brand differentiation by Berthon et al. (2007) to explain its effect on profitability, market share and growth of the company. Pike (2010) studied brand effectiveness from the perspective of destination branding and accountability to stakeholders, using a customer-based brand equity model, linking it with brand performance in a competitive market. The focus of Pike (2010) was on the future performance of marketing campaigns based on past marketing communications of the brand. A study by Glynn et al. (2007) provides an explanation of the ability of brand effectiveness to create value for business-to-business customers in a competitive market. The perception of resellers, concerning the effectiveness of a brand to provide relational and emotional benefits, is based on the brand's capability to strategically orient its business activities towards the target market.

*Brand Pull*

Brand pull is an important criterion of customers in business-to-business markets that consist of resellers. Brand pull has the ability to drive the preferences of resellers, which depends upon features such as the demand a brand is able to create, the efforts that are required to be put into selling a brand to consumers, and the volume of sales generated by a brand (Webster, 2000). Cespedes (1993) highlights the need for strong coordination between brand pull and sales. The findings of Cespedes (1993) reflect the need for a brand to generate superior value for customers by strategically orienting their marketing initiatives between the advertising department, salesmen and distributors who supply to resellers. Other studies like Cespedes (1993) and Kopp and Greyser (1987) also discuss brand pull with sales and push-based promotion programmes. While most of the previous research on brand pull is based on consumer markets, the focus of this research is on business markets. There is a lack of

understanding about the role of brand pull in creating brand differentiation for resellers, i.e., how resellers see brands differently based on their brand pull in consumer markets and find the brand to be more competitive than other brands in the marketplace. This research focuses on the linkage between brand differentiation and marketing and/or the strategic orientation of its operations and brand pull strategies Hence, we hypothesise that:

*Hypothesis 7: The greater the differentiation of a brand, the higher the brand value.*

*Hypothesis 8: The greater the differentiation of a brand, the higher the brand competitiveness.*

*Hypothesis 9: The greater the differentiation of a brand, the greater the marketing operations orientation.*

*Hypothesis 10: The greater the differentiation of a brand, the greater the strategy operations orientation.*

Drawing upon the theories reviewed, we propose a conceptual model (Figure I), that depicts the external influence of brand value in facilitating the integration of different facets of the strategic orientation of operations with marketing. We postulate that the intention and ability of managers to create brand competitiveness requires the integration of these two orientations, which can be facilitated by embedding them around the key types of value that business customers seek from the brand.

## Methods

### *Data Collection*

Brand value demonstrates the capabilities of a brand to conduct its business activities in a way that permits it to achieve its business objectives (Srivastava et al., 1998). Brand value, created for business customers, fosters the integration of the two diverse and essential activities of a business, i.e., marketing and strategic orientation, and orients them towards brand competitiveness. Hence, an IT retail industry was referenced on the evaluation questionnaires (Elsbach and Bhattacharya, 2001). The industry was chosen on the basis of an initial top-of-mind exercise, which was conducted with 45 postgraduate students at a London-based business school. They mainly believed that the retail industry is the key industry, which requires competitiveness. From the listed names on the directory, we contacted the related companies, collected data employing the face-to-face method and sent emails to improve the sample size, in order to also ensure that the sample comprised the most knowledgeable informants (Foroudi, 2018). In addition, we made an attempt to ensure that the targeted respondents completed the survey. Furthermore, we used non-probability 'snowballing' as a distribution and invited the original informants to suggest colleagues who could also complete the survey (Kirby and Kent 2010). A total convenience sample of 374 IT and marketing directors, managers, self-employed and support staff participated in the study over a three-week period in 2017.

We used a self-administered questionnaire to obtain their responses to the survey. Respondents were asked to answer questions based upon their prior experiences with the chosen industry. The data were collected in the UK, home of the most popular fashion industry. The male and female participants, who were mainly between 20 and 30 years old (53%) and who had successfully completed at least high school education, were considered eligible for this research. We distributed 410 questionnaires. Of the 374 usable responses, 63

per cent of respondents were men and 37 per cent were women. Further details of the respondent characteristics are shown in Table I.

**<< Table I about here >>**

**Measures**

The questionnaires employed measures of the constructs from the existing literature. We employed three items to measure brand value (BV) (emotional, BE; rational, BVR; and operational, BVO). The scale measures four dimensions of strategic orientation (SO) (objective management, SOO; information management, SOI; process management, SOP; and response management, SOR). Marketing orientation (MO) was tested through four items (customer management, MCU; competitor management, MCO; conflict management, MCN; and relationship management, MOR). To measure brand competitiveness (CB), we employed four items: creation of value, CBCV; creation of demand, CBCD; delivery of value, CBDV; and delivery of demand, CBDD). Brand differentiation (BD) was measured using four items: brand benefits (BDB); brand uniqueness (BDU); brand effectiveness (BDE); and brand pull (BDP).

The first version of the items was checked by four marketing academics, who are experienced in the field of branding and they confirmed that the inter-judge reliability was high. The experts were asked to comment on the suitability of the items and check the clarity of the wording; their suggestions were then incorporated. The lecturers were asked about the importance of each statement and to indicate which items should be retained. Then, a comprehensive process of questionnaire testing and piloting followed (Bearden et al., 1993; Zaichkowsky, 1985). All responses were measured using a seven-point Likert-type scale,

mostly ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). The items used in the study are shown in Table II.

The initial measures were subjected to a series of factor and reliability analyses as an initial examination of their performance within the entire sample (Melewar, 2001). All *a priori* scales illustrated satisfactory reliability - Cronbach's alpha is .901, which is greater than 0.70 and thus highly suitable for most research purposes (Hair et al., 2006; Nunnally, 1978; Palmer, 2011). Reliability is a necessary precondition of validity. Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was performed in the pre-study to identify any pattern in the data (Table III). In addition, the suitability and truthfulness of data collected were confirmed by evaluating the value of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of sampling adequacy, which was found to be 0.928 (sampling adequacy of 0.6 and above is acceptable) and the Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) which was significant (BTS=.000<.001) and satisfied the required criteria (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007).

**<< Table II about here >>**

## Results

This research used structural equation modelling (SEM) and analysis of moment structure (AMOS) 21.0 of all 374 available observations to gain an insight into the various relationships among the research constructs, as well as to run the model to test the hypotheses (Arbuckle and Wothke, 1999). The proposed operational model reveals a chi-square of 340.479, and a root mean squared approximation of error (RMSEA) of .075 (<0.08 indicates acceptable fit). The comparative fit index (CFI) of .960 (>.90 indicates good fit) measures the proportion by which a model is improved in terms of fit compared to the base model (Hair et al., 2006). CFI is considered to be an improved version of the NFI index (the normed fit

index) (Byrne, 2001; Hair et al., 2006; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). NFI measures the proportion by which a model is improved in terms of fit compared to the base model (.942>.08 indicates acceptable fit) (Hair et al., 2006). TLI (Tucker-Lewis index), which is known as the non-normed fit index (NNFI), compares the $\chi^2$ value of the model to that of the independent model and takes the degrees of freedom for the model into consideration (Hair et al., 2006; Tabachnick and Fidell, 2007). IFI (the incremental fit index), and TLI (Tucker-Lewis index) were .960 and .952 respectively. Therefore, all of the model-fit indices indicated that the proposed measurement model's fit was acceptable (Byrne, 2001; Hair et al., 2006). The results of discriminant validity indicated that correlations between factors were less than the recommended value of .92 (Kline, 2005). Also, the homogeneity of the research construct was examined by convergent validity. The average variance extracted (AVE) for each construct ranged from 0.699 to 0.841 (Table III). A good rule of thumb is that an AVE of .5 or higher indicates adequate convergent validity.

**<< Table III about here >>**

The results, as seen in Table IV, demonstrate the final research model with structural path coefficients and t-values for each relationship with squared multiple correlations (R2) for each endogenous construct. Based on the model, H1, proposing the direct influence of brand value on marketing orientation ($\gamma$=.174, t-value=3.663), was fully accepted. The standardised regression path between the brand value and strategic orientation was different from zero at the .001 significance level ($\gamma$=-.156, t-value=-1.114, p .265), therefore, Hypothesis 2 was rejected. The hypothesised relationship between brand value and brand competitiveness was found to be insignificant ($\gamma$=.099, *t*-value=1.680, p.093), hence, Hypothesis 3 was rejected. The hypothesised relationship between marketing orientation and brand competitiveness (H4)

and marketing orientation and strategic orientation (H6) were found to be significant (γ=.190, *t*-value=2.404 and γ=.143, *t*-value=3.318 respectively). The hypothesised model shows that the effects of strategic orientation on brand competitiveness (H5) (γ=.178, *t*-value=3.316) was statistically significant, therefore, H5 was accepted.

The relationships between brand differentiation and brand value (H7), brand competitiveness (H8) and marketing orientation (H9) were found to be significant (γ=.518, *t*-value=12.142; γ=.407, *t*-value=7.050; γ=.313, *t*-value=7.206 respectively) and so Hypotheses 7, 8 and 9 were statistically supported. Based on the model, proposal of direct influence of brand differentiation on strategic orientation (γ=-.179, t-value=-1.308, p.191) was not statistically supported. Therefore, Hypothesis 10 was rejected.

**<< Table IV about here >>**

**<< Figure II about here >>**

## Discussion and Implications

Mudambi and Agarwal (2003) recognise the complexity of actions that need to be taken by brand managers to sell to consumers through business customer firms, and argue that brand managers can be equally as responsive to the needs of business customers as they are to consumers. It is argued that as the competitive environment in business-to-business markets does not provide certainty to the actors performing within it, firms have to be strategic in their orientation in order to successfully deliver brand competitiveness by effectively managing their internal processes (Laufer et al., 1996). The brand value delivered could be rational, emotional or operational, depending on the macro or micro requirements of their business customers. The academic literature also indicates that the strategic orientation of the

operations construct at the macro level can be managed using information about customers, competitors, products and/or processes (Voss and Voss, 2000).

This research is located within the business-to-business setting where two types of firms (brand-owning manufacturer firm and its business customer firm) are often mutually dependent upon each other for their business. Two important themes emerged from the review of the existing literature: (i) brands should orient their brand value creation model, notably brand differentiation, according to the requirements of the market and customers within these markets, and (ii) any brand value delivery model should be strategically oriented towards brand competitiveness. This study anticipated that brands use their positive associations with business customers (i.e., the brand value) to mobilise their strategic orientation of operations for mutual benefit (Halinen et al., 2002). This study also expected that mutual benefits could enable both brands and business customer firms to achieve their individual objectives by internally restructuring and establishing their business processes with the strategic orientation of operations, in other words, in accord with the requirements of the external environment in which the brand operates (Weitz and Jap, 1995; Moller and Halinen, 2000).

This study has derived important findings about how brand value plays a role in driving brand competitiveness. It has confirmed that the brand value perceived by business customers can be an important precursor to brand competitiveness, albeit not in the direct way that this research had expected. The findings indicate that brand value does not lead directly to brand competitiveness (H3). That is, the existence of enhanced brand value, per se, is insufficient for augmenting brand competitiveness. Instead, brand value leads to brand competitiveness indirectly through marketing orientation (H1, H4).

Moreover, the findings of this investigation explain that brand value can lead to brand competiveness indirectly through marketing orientation and, subsequently, strategic

orientation (H1, H7, H5), but not through strategic orientation on its own (H2, H5). This is an important finding which, in turn, suggests that a strategic orientation to operations activities is insufficient on its own for translating brand value to brand competitiveness, despite a strategic orientation having a strong positive influence on the development of brand competitiveness (H5). Taken together, these findings emphasise the crucial and pervasive role of marketing orientation in translating brand value to brand competitiveness, irrespective of the role a strategic orientation to operations may have. That is to say, it is the existence of emotional, rational and operational brand value exhibited by business customers towards the firm, which drives the firm's customer, competitor, conflict and relationship management capabilities which, in turn, develop the knowledge, infrastructure, relationships, support and capabilities that signify brand competitiveness.

Thus, whilst time and resources should be invested to help embed an objective management ethos and information, process and response management capabilities (strategic orientation) in the company's operations activities in order to help enhance brand competitiveness, it is investment in building customer, competitor, conflict and relationship management capabilities (marketing orientation) that specifically ensures that brand competitiveness is derived from brand value.

Another important, yet unexpected, result relates to the impact of marketing orientation on strategic orientation (H6) as the findings suggest that the relationship is more subtle. It found that an increase in marketing orientation leads to an increase in strategic orientation but not vice versa. This study confirms the proposed influence of brand differentiation. Firstly, as was the case with brand value, brand differentiation was found to have a direct positive significant influence on marketing orientation, but not on strategic orientation in operations. Secondly, and perhaps the most important finding of the present study, is that the process of

distinguishing the brand from other brands, products or services to make it more attractive to particular target markets (brand differentiation) leads directly to brand competitiveness (H8).

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H9 | Brand Differentiation | ---> | Marketing Orientation | .313 | .043 | 7.206 | *** | Accepted |
| H10 | Brand Differentiation | ---> | Strategic Orientation | -.179 | .137 | -1.308 | .191 | Rejected |

*Implications and Future Research*

Business customers generally consider the effort they have to put into the management of activities related to a brand as an added investment over and above the financial purchases of the branded products they make. Such efforts made by business customers in their relationship with the brand, make it important for the brand to generate and communicate its brand value and generate brand competitiveness.

In this respect, the findings have important implications for academics and practitioners. Firstly, unlike brand value, brand differentiation is a direct driver of brand competitiveness. Hence, it is recommended that brand managers ensure that investment is directed towards communicating the benefits of the brand and its uniqueness to business customers, and to create brand pull in the marketplace.

Secondly, strategic (operations) orientation can enhance the delivery of brand competitiveness, suggesting that the firm should develop such capabilities. However, if brand managers and operations managers wish to ensure that the brand value that it possesses is translated into brand competitiveness, it is the development of the firm's processes for managing customers and competitors and the protocols and capabilities for managing external relationships and disagreements or disputes that are, in fact, necessary. Accordingly, brand managers should be constantly evaluating the effectiveness of marketing orientation-related processes and activities and looking for ways to improve them.

Thirdly, brand/operations managers need to be aware of a potential trade-off between their investment in developing marketing and strategic (operations) capabilities respectively.

The findings imply that marketing capabilities that can translate brand value into brand competitiveness can be compromised by strategic operations activities. It may be that despite the recent advances in operations process development and thinking, operations activities may nevertheless continue to be inherently more inward facing, to the detriment of the inherently more outward-facing marketing orientation activities. Arguably, seeking to establish the reasons for this finding is an important avenue for future research, as it challenges the now common conventional wisdom that closer integration between the marketing function and the strategic operations function is inherently always a good thing.

In summary, the findings of the study provide evidence of significant relationships between marketing orientation and brand competiveness using research studies such as Kohli and Jaworski (1990), Jaworski et al (1993), Winzar et al. (2018) as well as Ahmad and Latif (2019). The authors of this research propose that brand managers aiming to operate in competitive markets can use the framework being offered. It provides them with guidelines on how to ensure that their brand value can be used to make their business customers feel confident about the capabilities of the brand and, hence, improve brand competitiveness. It is reasonable to argue that the findings imply that the successful management of marketing of the brand can encourage business customers to be associated with the brand for a longer period. It may also, for example, provide the brand with the confidence to offer the brand to new customers located in home or more remote new markets. Simultaneously, this study enables brand managers to align their strategic decisions about creation and delivery of brand value for consumers to the functional activities of the brand.

Furthermore, the study provides a new basis to encourage researchers like Zuo et al. (2019) to penetrate deeper into the complex nature of the relationships conceptualised, thereby providing a salient avenue for further empirical research. This research has provided a framework to examine the role of two important variables - marketing orientation and

strategic orientation of operations - in the context of business customers. More importantly, it has conceptualised the influence of brand value (emotional, rational and operational) on the marketing and strategic orientation of operations as a vehicle for enhancing brand competitiveness. Through this research, we also push existing boundaries of knowledge about the role of marketing orientation and strategic orientation, in the context of brand value and brand differentiation for driving brand competitiveness. Future research scholars working around this topic should investigate how brand competitiveness could be used to drive the most critical aspect of business-to-business relationships, i.e., brand loyalty. Developing loyalty amongst business-to-business customers is very critical for brand managers in a market wherein there are many brands competing to gain a share of the consumer market through business customers who deal with the consumer on behalf of the brand.

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**Figure I: Research model**

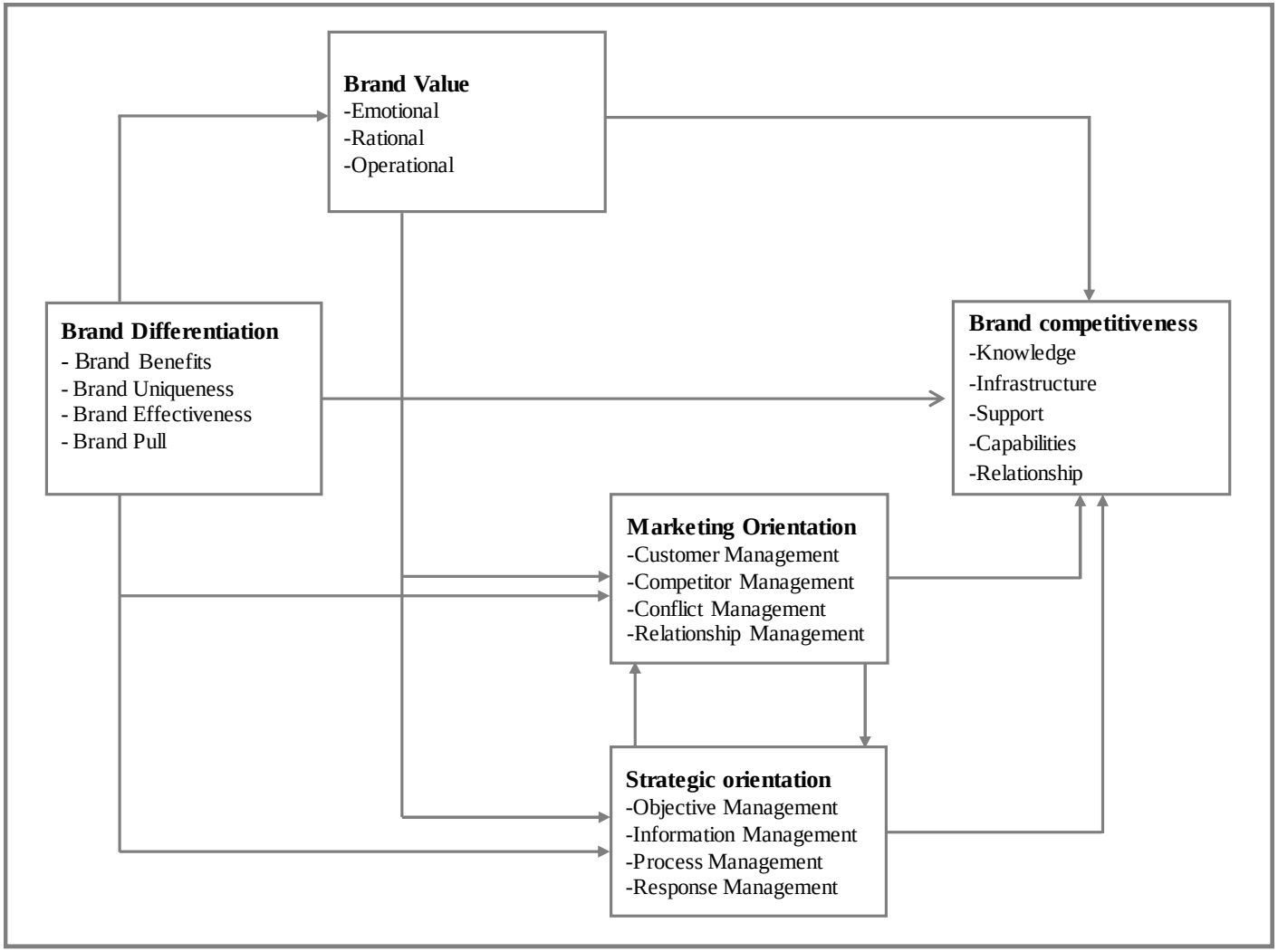

**Figure II: Validated Structural Model**

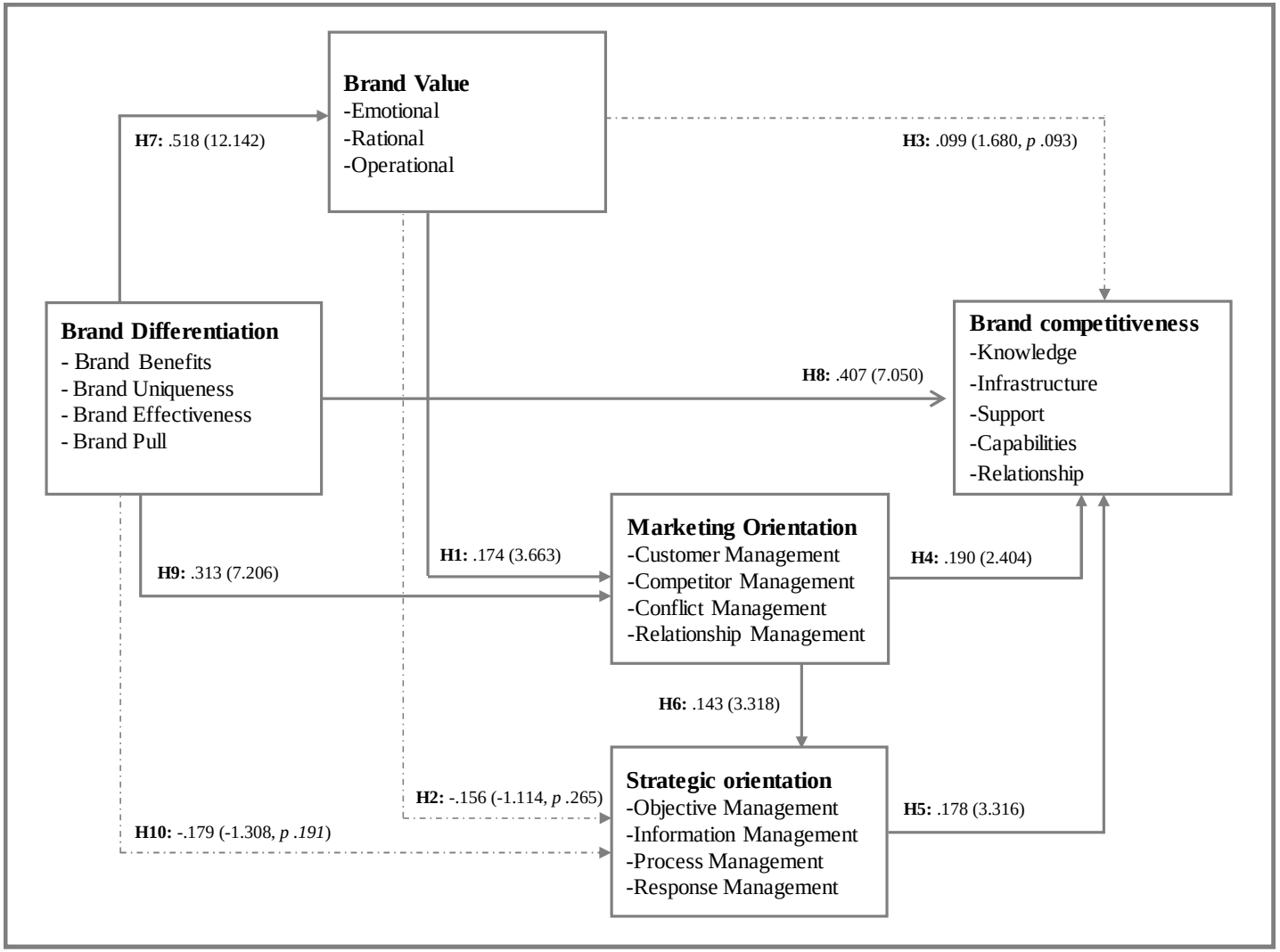

**Table I: Respondent Characteristics**

| Demographics | Frequency | Percent | Demographics | Frequency | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | | | Education level | | |
| Female | 138 | 36.9 | High school | 50 | 13.4 |
| Male | 236 | 63.1 | Undergraduate | 105 | 28.1 |
| | | | Postgraduate and above | 219 | 58.6 |
| Age | | | Employment status | | |
| 20 to 25 years | 110 | 29.4 | Owner of a Company | 7 | 1.9 |
| 26 to 30 years | 200 | 53.5 | Top Executive/Manager | 16 | 4.3 |
| 31 to 35 years | 50 | 13.4 | Senior Manager | 8 | 2.1 |
| 35 to 40 years | 12 | 3.2 | Junior Manager | 18 | 4.8 |
| 40 + | 2 | .5 | Self-Employed | 325 | 86.9 |

**Table II: Study constructs and scale items**

| Main constructs | Measure | Authors |
|---|---|---|
| **Brand Value (BV)** | | |
| | Emotional (BVE) | Day and Wensley, 1988; Gatignon and Xuereb, 1997; Gupta et al. 2008; Keller and Lehmann, 2006; Parment, 2008 |
| | Rational (BVR) | Altman, 2005; Lambert and Cooper, 2000; Strach and Everett, 2006 |
| | Operational (BVO) | Gummesson, 2004; Payne et al., 2008; Schau et al., 2009 |
| **Strategic Orientation (SO)** | | |
| | Objective Management (SOO) | Hensel, 1990; Jaques, 2009; Nutt, 2002; Tampoe, 1990; Tripodi, 2001 |
| | Information Management (SOI) | Chen et al., 2004; Tajeddini et al., 2006; Varadrajan and Jayachandran, 1999 |
| | Process Management (SOP) | Gupta et al., 2008; McNaughton et al., 2001; Woodruff, 1997; Zerbini et al. 2007 |
| | Response Management (SOR) | Anderson, 2009; Godsell et al., 2006; Rust et al. 2004 |
| **Marketing Orientation (MO)** | | |
| | Customer Management (MCU) | Gummesson, 1991; Jaworski and Kohli, 1993 |
| | Competitor Management (MCO) | Miles et al., 2006; Snoj et al., 2007 |
| | Conflict Management (MCN) | Randel and Jaussi, 2003; Rouzies et al., 2005; Song et al., 2000 |
| | Relationship Management (MOR) | Doyle, 2001; Duncan and Moriarty, 1998; London and Hart, 2004 |
| **Brand Competitiveness (CB)** | | |
| | Creation of Value (CBCV) | Amit and Zott, 2001; Gummesson, 1991; Payne et al., 2008; Tripodi, 2001 |
| | Creation of Demand (CBCD) | Godsell et al., 2006; Keller and Lehmann, 2006; Payne et al., 2008 |
| | Deliver of Value (CBDV) | Amit and Zott, 2001; Cannon and Perreault, 1999 |
| | Deliver of Demand (CBDD) | Amit and Zott, 2001; Cannon and Perreault, 1999; Sheth and Sisodia, 1999 |
| **Brand Differentiation (BD)** | | |
| | Brand Benefits (BDB) | Porter, 1985; Song and Parry, 1997 |
| | Brand Uniqueness (BDU) | Porter, 1985; Song and Parry, 1997 |
| | Brand Effectiveness (BDE) | Porter, 1985; Song and Parry, 1997 |
| | Brand Pull (BDD) | Porter, 1985; Song and Parry, 1997 |

## Table III: Inter-construct correlation, mean, standard variation, and AVE

| CFA loading | | Mean | STD | AVE | Cons. Reli. | BVE | BVR | BVO | SOO | SOI | SOP | SOR | MCU | MCO | MCN | MOR | CBCV | CBCD | CBDV | CBDD | BDB | BDU | BDE | BDP |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Brand Value @ .924** | | | | **0.804** | **0.925** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **BVE** | .824 | 5.7433 | 1.26762 | | | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **BVR** | .855 | 5.6952 | 1.33548 | | | .788** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **BVO** | .830 | 5.6364 | 1.37241 | | | .763** | .854** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Strategic Orientation @ .954** | | | | **0.841** | **0.955** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **SOO** | .840 | 5.1711 | 1.38263 | | | .467** | .462** | .492** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **SOI** | .834 | 5.1176 | 1.41499 | | | .444** | .460** | .493** | .832** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **SOP** | .794 | 5.3396 | 1.33811 | | | .489** | .504** | .558** | .777** | .789** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **SOR** | .863 | 5.1952 | 1.39393 | | | .515** | .523** | .540** | .881** | .873** | .868** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **Marketing Orientation @ .901** | | | | **0.699** | **0.903** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **MCU** | .768 | 5.5214 | 1.29686 | | | .403** | .451** | .471** | .439** | .441** | .463** | .455** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **MCO** | .830 | 5.8476 | 1.30406 | | | .419** | .470** | .489** | .440** | .451** | .466** | .451** | .722** | 1 | | | | | | | | | | |
| **MCN** | .779 | 5.6604 | 1.31793 | | | .452** | .474** | .507** | .479** | .499** | .511** | .518** | .673** | .790** | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| **MOR** | .751 | 5.3556 | 1.35388 | | | .352** | .337** | .377** | .420** | .446** | .435** | .432** | .627** | .649** | .714** | 1 | | | | | | | | |
| **Brand Competitiveness @ .941** | | | | **0.797** | **0.940** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **CBCV** | .830 | 5.2353 | 1.52486 | | | .393** | .416** | .406** | .486** | .505** | .474** | .485** | .433** | .412** | .520** | .457** | 1 | | | | | | | |
| **CBCD** | .782 | 5.5535 | 1.44091 | | | .433** | .481** | .494** | .500** | .516** | .527** | .513** | .472** | .450** | .540** | .471** | .814** | 1 | | | | | | |
| **CBDV** | .784 | 5.4278 | 1.43450 | | | .469** | .491** | .519** | .512** | .530** | .553** | .541** | .498** | .439** | .528** | .431** | .769** | .855** | 1 | | | | | |
| **CBDD** | .867 | 5.3048 | 1.48383 | | | .384** | .380** | .346** | .450** | .454** | .432** | .457** | .381** | .318** | .415** | .376** | .845** | .757** | .752** | 1 | | | | |
| **Brand Differentiation @ .953** | | | | **0.839** | **0.954** | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| **BDB** | .790 | 5.4492 | 1.58794 | | | .494** | .501** | .520** | .517** | .538** | .526** | .560** | .494** | .543** | .592** | .561** | .540** | .593** | .516** | .451** | 1 | | | |
| **BDU** | .814 | 5.4251 | 1.54243 | | | .473** | .538** | .515** | .533** | .529** | .539** | .547** | .492** | .501** | .575** | .532** | .599** | .639** | .569** | .515** | .869** | 1 | | |
| **BDE** | .811 | 5.3904 | 1.59675 | | | .451** | .490** | .513** | .521** | .544** | .515** | .538** | .489** | .505** | .535** | .551** | .591** | .635** | .572** | .510** | .842** | .882** | 1 | |
| **BDP** | .718 | 5.3075 | 1.62886 | | | .432** | .491** | .452** | .549** | .540** | .549** | .550** | .533** | .487** | .578** | .546** | .650** | .656** | .612** | .566** | .766** | .830** | .824** | 1 |

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
b. Listwise N=374

**Table IV: Structural Equation Model Result**

| Hypothesized relationships | | | | Estimate | S.E | C.R | p | Hypothesis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| H1 | Brand Value | ---> | Marketing Orientation | .174 | .047 | 3.663 | *** | Accepted |
| H2 | Brand Value | ---> | Strategic Orientation | -.156 | .140 | -1.114 | .265 | Rejected |
| H3 | Brand Value | ---> | Brand Competitiveness | .099 | .059 | 1.680 | .093 | Rejected |
| H4 | Marketing Orientation | ---> | Brand Competitiveness | .190 | .079 | 2.404 | .016 | Accepted |
| H5 | Strategic Orientation | ---> | Brand Competitiveness | .178 | .054 | 3.316 | *** | Accepted |
| H6 | Marketing Orientation | ---> | Strategic Orientation | .143 | .043 | 3.318 | *** | Accepted |
| H7 | Brand Differentiation | ---> | Brand Value | .518 | .043 | 12.142 | *** | Accepted |
| H8 | Brand Differentiation | ---> | Brand Competitiveness | .407 | .058 | 7.050 | *** | Accepted |
| H9 | Brand Differentiation | ---> | Marketing Orientation | .313 | .043 | 7.206 | *** | Accepted |
| H10 | Brand Differentiation | ---> | Strategic Orientation | -.179 | .137 | -1.308 | .191 | Rejected |

**p<.01, *p<.05.