

Dimensions and effects of brand experience and brand advocacy in the new generation consumer

Serap Bozkurt¹ and Şenay Yavuz²

¹Corresponding author, Faculty of Art and Design, Beykoz University, İstanbul, Türkiye, E-mail: serapbozkurt@beykoz.edu.tr, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5722-6252>

²Faculty of Communication, Maltepe University, İstanbul, Türkiye, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8130-7121>

Article Info	Abstract
<p>Research Article</p> <p>Received: 25 July 2025 Revised: 18 August 2025 Accepted: 8 September 2025</p> <p>Keywords: Brand experience, Brand advocacy, Consumer behavior, Sustainability, Experiential marketing, New generation consumers</p>	<p>The present research examines the effect of brand experiences on brand advocacy behaviors within the new generation of consumers raised within the dynamics of the digital age. The impact of brand experiences on the levels of brand adoption and advocacy among this new generation of consumers, who have grown up in close interaction with technology, was analyzed using data collected from 930 mobile phone users. The dataset was analyzed through the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique, which demonstrated that brand experiences positively affect brand advocacy. Especially physical shopping experiences and brand reliability/facilitation strongly trigger advocacy behaviors." The research findings also reveal that the subdimensions of brand experience and brand advocacy highlight the necessity for brands to adopt strategies based on communicative brand experiences to build sustainable relationships with their target audiences. The results provide critical strategic insights for brands aiming to appeal to the digital consumer profile.</p>

1. Introduction

The present era, often referred to as the digital age, the information age, or the technology age, is witnessing a continuous process of change and transformation. These terms are used due to the rapid advancement of digital technologies, accelerated access to information, and technological progress in today's world. The pace of change in this period stands out as a process shaped by dynamics that differ significantly from those of previous eras. In particular, due to the effects of digitalization, the profiles and consumption habits of new generation consumers have diverged markedly from traditional patterns. This generation is often referred to as "digital natives" (Prensky, 2003), and under the influence of globalization, they define themselves as global citizens. It has been observed that this consumer group, which is constantly interacting with technology, tends to have a low level of concern about long-term planning or adopting future-oriented thinking.

With the advancement of technology, the internet, and smart devices, the ways people communicate, access information, and conduct business have undergone fundamental changes—transforming social, economic, and cultural structures on a global scale. This research aims to investigate the impact of brand experiences on brand advocacy, to help brands establish a sustainable strategic edge and foster a lasting connection with the new generation of consumers. Specifically, it seeks to identify the experiences, actions, and interactions that lead to brand advocacy behaviors among new generation consumers, and to offer strategic recommendations that will help brands better understand and strengthen these behaviors. Within this framework, brand experience has generally been conceptualized in the existing literature across four dimensions (Brakus et al., 2009). This study, however, proposes a three-dimensional typology, which represents an original contribution, particularly in explaining brand advocacy among digital natives.

In the study, while examining the association between brand experience and brand advocacy, it is emphasized that brand advocacy is not merely limited to word-of-mouth communication; rather, it represents a broader and

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deeper sphere of influence. Word-of-mouth communication may include both positive and negative statements about brands, whereas brand advocacy should be considered a concept associated exclusively with positive experiences. In this context, the study examines whether strong experiential bonds formed between the consumer and the brand contribute to the brand's sustainable competitive advantage and the creation of lasting advocacy in the consumer's eyes.

Fundamentally seeking answers to the questions: *What is the impact of brand experiences on brand advocacy?* And which brand experiences lead to stronger advocacy behaviors in consumers? This study was conducted based on a widely used technological product—mobile phones. The results, however, may vary when applied to other product categories. Nonetheless, by focusing on the new generation of consumers, this research also offers insights for more comprehensive studies targeting the service sector or different consumer segments.

2. Literature review

2.1. *The concept and importance of brand experience*

Brand experience is a concept that encompasses behavioral, emotional, sensory, and cognitive responses triggered by brand-related stimuli, supported by the brand's identity, story, visual elements, packaging, presentation, and modes of communication. These experiences play a critical role in forming psychological bonds that strengthen consumers' attachment to the brand. Especially today, marketing professionals recognize that understanding how consumers interact with brands is fundamental to developing effective marketing strategies (Mascarenhas, 2006; Morrison & Crane, 2007).

Since brand experience is formed at every point where the consumer interacts with the brand, brands need to manage all touchpoints and provide a thoroughly integrated experience. Providing a consistent and positive experience at all touchpoints related to the brand helps strengthen the brand, gain a competitive advantage, increase customer loyalty, and enhance the brand image. Identifying the factors that influence the consumer experience and improving these factors enables businesses to enhance their competitiveness and achieve sustainable growth. When businesses communicate with consumers, they can reach potential customers and increase the satisfaction of existing ones, thereby boosting product or service sales and gaining qualities such as being preferred and remembered (Akdeniz & Kömürçü, 2021). Therefore, the notion of brand experience is gaining more prominence in the current marketing landscape.

In the past, marketing primarily focused on the physical characteristics, pricing, and quality of products. However, modern consumers not only purchase a product or service but also value the experiential and hedonic aspects of the consumption process (Pine & Gilmore, 1998; Schmitt, 1999). Marketing practitioners argue that brand experiences can create emotional bonds that support genuine brand loyalty, thereby surpassing “false loyalty” that cannot be sustained by factors such as price or quality alone (Dick & Basu, 1994; Kumar & Advani, 2005). In this context, brand experience has gained increasing importance in marketing strategies. Various studies aimed at understanding how consumers experience brands have led to the development of numerous concepts and measurement tools, such as brand personality, brand advocacy, brand community, and brand loyalty (Brakus et al., 2009; Aaker, 2009; Carroll & Ahuvia, 2006). The scale developed by Brakus et al. (2009) aims to measure brand experience across four core dimensions, behavioral, emotional, sensory, and relational, and has been widely used in many studies (Brakus et al., 2009; Machado et al., 2014; Şahin et al., 2011).

Brand experience has become a central concept in both theoretical and practical aspects of modern marketing approaches. Understanding consumers' interactions with brands holds critical value for building strong emotional bonds, enhancing long-term customer loyalty, and sustaining competitive advantage in the marketplace. Additionally, recent international market reports highlight the significance of understanding Generation Z consumer behavior in the digital era. Forbes (2024), Deloitte (2023), and Nielsen (2022) highlight that Gen Z consumers exhibit distinct patterns of brand loyalty, advocacy, and digital engagement, making their experiences with brands particularly critical in shaping advocacy behaviors.

2.2. *Dimensions of brand experience*

Brand experience can be described as a multifaceted and evolving concept that lies at the center of today's marketing strategies and consumer behavior. It encompasses the entirety of perceptions, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors formed and developed across all interactions between the brand and its customers (Becan & Eaghani-oskoui, 2019). Brand experience is not limited to the product or service itself; instead, it encompasses various

touchpoints, including brand communication, customer service, packaging, store atmosphere, and even interactions with other consumers (Bayazit et al., 2019). The sum of these experiences contributes to the formation of the consumer's overall impression of the brand and fosters the development of a sustained relationship with it.

Brands utilize brand experience as a strategic means to set themselves apart and foster consumer loyalty in today's highly competitive market. In today's competitive arena, the replicability of products and services is increasing, making it more challenging for brands to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage (Yıldırım & Çatır, 2020). Therefore, brands aim to establish emotional connections and increase brand loyalty by offering unique and memorable experiences through experiential marketing strategies (Hamzah et al., 2023). Experiential marketing deepens the consumer's interaction with the brand, enabling the formation of emotional and memory-based bonds. This approach goes beyond merely offering a product or service; it seeks to strengthen the consumer-brand relationship through lived experiences.

According to the International Experiential Marketing Association (IXMA, 2015), experiential marketing offers consumers the opportunity to internalize a brand and create lasting impressions. Pine and Gilmore (2011) describe this process as an experience where "the brand is the stage, and the consumer is the actor." In this context, the experience economy is viewed as a strategy by which brands move from delivering "goods" to "services," and ultimately to "experiences," as a means of distinguishing themselves from competitors.

Brands aim to create personal and memorable experiences for consumers, going beyond offering an ordinary shopping or service interaction. Consumers may develop emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses related to the brand before purchasing a product, during the shopping process, or while using the product. These responses can either support brand loyalty or generate negative perceptions of the brand. In experiential marketing, prominent types of experience include product, shopping, service, user, customer, and event experiences. Each type uniquely shapes the consumer's interaction with the brand, triggering various sensory, emotional, or cognitive reactions. These responses shape the brand's cognitive position in the consumer's mind and its potential for fostering long-term attachment.

Brakus et al. (2009: 53) developed a brand experience scale that defines the components of experience across four dimensions: sensory, emotional, behavioral, and cognitive. According to this scale, brand experience is explained as the sensory, emotional, behavioral, and mental responses generated in consumers by the brand's visual elements, packaging, identity, communication, and other strategic planning efforts. The concept of brand experience was first introduced by Schmitt (1999: 64), who approached it from a holistic perspective, emphasizing that experiences should be examined across five main dimensions.

Sensory brand experiences encompass the brand's visual aesthetic elements, including color, logo, design, packaging, and architecture, as well as sensory appeals. Dirsehan (2010) states that these sensory experiences are formed in the consumer's mind through the five basic senses (taste, smell, sight, hearing, and touch). For instance, a specific scent or taste may create a positive perception of the brand. Konuk (2014) argues that for an intense sensory experience, all senses should be considered, emphasizing that brands appealing to all five senses have a lasting impact on consumer perception. Such sensory experiences are effective in enhancing brand loyalty and advocacy.

Emotional brand experiences involve interactions that evoke a range of emotional states in consumers, such as happiness, excitement, and love. Konuk (2014) defines emotional brand experiences as those that appeal to the consumer's feelings, ranging from simple emotions like fondness to deeper emotions such as pride or love. Batu (2013) states that emotions have a significant impact on consumer preferences. Richins (1997) identifies fundamental emotions likely to be experienced during consumption and emphasizes that brands influence consumers through emotional appeals. For example, brands can foster positive emotions toward themselves by investing in social responsibility projects and effectively communicating these initiatives (Efendioğlu et al., 2022).

Cognitive or intellectual brand experience enables consumers to acquire knowledge about the brand and develop positive perceptions toward it. Şener (2016) defines cognitive experiences as "rational appeals aimed at providing information about a product or service and influencing consumer preferences." Such experiences are often delivered through technological products, design elements, or promotional activities, encouraging consumers to think about the brand.

Behavioral/active brand experiences influence consumers' lifestyles, habits, and interactions with others. Featherstone (1991) states that individuals express their identity through preferences such as appearance, eating and drinking habits, and lifestyle choices. Konuk (2014) argues that behavioral experiences establish a connection

between consumers' lifestyles and brands, integrating the brand into daily life. In this context, the experiences offered by the brand enrich consumers' lives and support their socialization.

The relational dimension encompasses the role a brand plays in the consumer's social identity and sense of belonging. Schmitt (1999) emphasizes that this dimension also affects the consumer's relationships within their social environment. In this context, it is important that consumers can express themselves through the brand and develop a sense of community with like-minded individuals. Today's consumers tend to connect with brands through experiences that help them reach their idealized identity and perceive the brand as an extension of their personality.

2.3. Components of experiential marketing and their impact on consumer behavior

Experiential marketing is a marketing approach that focuses on sensory experiences to enhance consumers' emotional and cognitive interaction with the brand. Within this framework, brand components also influence consumers' sensory, emotional, and mental aspects, thereby strengthening their connection with the brand and shaping consumer behavior. By offering products and services that meet consumers' needs and expectations, brands can increase consumer trust (Esch et al., 2010; Tavşan & Erdem, 2021).

Elements that form brand identity—such as logo, color, slogan, label, packaging, and brand story—reinforce brand experiences by shaping the brand's image in the consumer's mind (Yıldırım, 2015). Logos and colors not only contribute to the physical recognizability of the brand but also influence emotional perception. For example, warm red tones are often preferred in energetic food brands, while colors like blue and white, which evoke a sense of trust and cleanliness, are commonly used in the cleaning and healthcare sectors (Teker, 2002). These sensory stimuli help consumers retain the brand in their memory and distinguish it from other brands (Keller & Richey, 2006). Slogans are among the most effective communication tools of a brand. A well-crafted slogan conveys the brand's value clearly and concisely, offering a promise to the consumer. When this promise is designed in alignment with the sensory, emotional, and cognitive dimensions of brand experience, it enhances the brand experience. It plays a significant role in creating brand equity (Yıldırım, 2015). In this sense, slogans strengthen the consumer's bond with the brand and influence their purchasing decisions.

Through brand mascots, the abstract personality of a brand is made tangible, contributing to the consumer's identification with the brand. Mascots reach the consumer within the framework of a story created for the brand, helping to establish an emotional connection. Research indicates that brand mascots have a positive impact on consumer behavior, and associating the brand with a beloved character can increase brand loyalty (Kraak & Story, 2015). Compared to celebrity endorsements, mascots offer a more controlled and brand-appropriate character, which in turn enhances the brand's credibility (Arunrangsiwed, 2015). Reaching consumers through personalized messages also holds a significant place in experiential marketing. Aristotle's persuasive appeals—ethos, pathos, and logos—aim to influence consumers by appealing to their emotions or logic. These personalized touches make consumers feel special and valued, which in turn helps foster loyalty toward the brand (Baudrillard, 2017).

Brand storytelling contributes to the brand's ability to occupy a meaningful place in the consumer's mind. A story that consumers can relate to enables them to form an emotional bond with the brand, thereby enhancing brand loyalty (Aker, 2020). A compelling brand story creates a lasting impression by incorporating elements such as credibility, brevity, empathy, and humor (Chiu et al., 2012). Especially in the digital age, when consumers share their brand-related experiences on social media, it enhances consumer support for the brand and stimulates favorable peer-to-peer communication. Packaging and labeling are among the key components that influence the connection consumers build with a brand through the functionality and aesthetic design of the product. Consumers experience the brand through its packaging, and the functional benefits provided by the packaging are associated with the brand's reliability and quality (Farese, 1991). Elements such as color, shape, and design features guide consumers toward the brand. Additionally, the information provided on the label—such as product origin and sustainability features—positively affects brand perception and enhances consumer trust.

The effect of colors in brand identity appeals to the sensory dimension of the brand and captures consumer attention. The selection of specific colors creates an associative insight of the brand in the consumer's cognition. Warm colors like red evoke energy and stimulate appetite, while blue conveys trust and a sense of coolness. Establishing a memorable color palette for corporate brands is a factor that strengthens consumer loyalty (Teker, 2002). Experiential marketing creates a direct impact on consumers' purchasing decisions and brand loyalty by integrating emotional, cognitive, and sensory elements into their relationship with the brand. The proper design of brand components enables the brand to gain a meaningful and lasting place in the consumer's consciousness. In

this way, the consumer establishes an emotional link with the brand and perceives it not merely as a product or service, but as an experience, thereby strengthening their loyalty to the brand.

2.4. Brand advocacy as a strategic marketing tool

Brand advocacy is emerging as a concept of increasing importance in the fields of marketing activities and consumption behavior, referring to the voluntary support and recommendation of a brand by its customers. Brand advocates actively promote the brand's products or services, provide positive feedback, and encourage potential customers to prefer the brand, thanks to the positive experiences and emotional bonds they have developed with the brand (Akdeniz & Kömürçü, 2021). The American Marketing Association (AMA, 2024, 2025) associates the concept of 'brand advocacy' with community, sharing, UGC (user-generated content), and organic content strategies. Brand advocacy emerges as a result of the emotional bonds consumers build with brands, leading them to develop loyalty and even recommend the brand to others. Various terms are also used to describe brand advocacy, such as 'brand evangelist,' 'brand spokesperson,' 'brand enthusiast,' or 'brand missionary,' reflecting different levels of consumer commitment (Choudhury, 2019; Doss, 2013; Matzler et al., 2009; Singh, 2015).

Brand advocates are consumers who have a distinct sense of loyalty to a brand and actively support it. These individuals not only purchase the brand but also recommend it to others, defend it, and spread their positive experiences. This behavior results from strong emotional bonds established through the alignment of consumer interests and preferences with the brand (Lawer & Knox, 2006). Brand advocacy not only reflects the consumer's trust in the brand but also plays a key role in ensuring the brand's long-term sustainable success in the market (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997). The process of developing brand advocacy among consumers is shaped by the experiences starting from their first interaction with the brand. A consumer may encounter a brand through TV, magazine, or newspaper advertisements, or via another consumer. With today's technological advancements, consumers have easier access to brand-related messages; thus, it is known that consumer recommendations influence between 20% and 50% of all purchasing decisions (Bughin et al., 2010). Especially for first-time buyers or those purchasing expensive products, recommendations from other consumers serve as a valuable guide. In fact, certain individuals go so far as to launch blogs or social media profiles to either commend or critique companies, thereby sharing their experiences with a broader audience.

Brand advocacy is related to word-of-mouth communication; however, it goes beyond merely conveying a positive message—it is also a reflection of deep loyalty to the brand. In his book *Start With Why*, Simon Sinek attributes Apple's success to the brand's capacity to attract committed brand advocates. According to him, brand advocates significantly contribute to a brand's long-term success by spreading the brand within their communities and demonstrating their commitment to it (Sinek, 2009). Brand advocacy can differ in both social and physical aspects. *Social brand advocacy* refers to consumers defending the brand against criticism from others, whereas *physical brand advocacy* involves the brand becoming a part of the target group's lifestyle, where the customers integrate the brand into their life both visually and verbally (Aksoy, 2017).

Brands can create brand loyalty and gain a competitive advantage by influencing consumers' perceptions, emotions, thoughts, and behaviors related to the brand. Since brand experience is formed at each moment of engagement between the customer and the brand, it is important for brands to carefully manage all touchpoints and provide an integrated experience. It has been found that brands that value environmentally friendly technologies positively influence consumers' overall brand experience (Uzunkaya, 2021). Discovering consumers' knowledge about brands has drawn the attention of both researchers and practitioners (Demirağ, 2023).

In today's marketing literature, it is observed that the concept of brand advocacy has not been sufficiently examined, and its measurement is generally conducted through Peer-to-peer communication. However, Peer-to-peer communication may not solely represent brand advocacy, as negative experiences can also be shared within this form of communication. In this context, addressing brand advocacy as an independent concept in more detail is essential for brands to develop effective strategies in this area (Wilder, 2015). Previous research has often overlooked how employer branding and consumer engagement in online communities contribute to brand advocacy. For example, studies such as Yılmaz et al. (2019) on employer branding in the hospitality industry and Dessart (2021) on customer brand engagement in user-initiated online brand communities demonstrate the importance of context and consumer-driven interactions. By addressing these gaps, the present study expands the understanding of how brand experience dimensions influence advocacy among new-generation consumers.

The importance of brand advocacy for companies lies in its ability to support customer acquisition through consumer loyalty and contribute to building a credible brand image. Firms that adopt customer-oriented approaches in their marketing strategies aim to maintain long-term market performance by cultivating a healthy base of brand advocates. The contribution of brand advocates to the sustained achievement of a brand is considered the ultimate test of CRM (Customer Relationship Management) provides a sustainable competitive advantage (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997; Jillapalli & Wilcox, 2010). Brand advocacy, which emerges as a consequence of meaningful brand experiences, is the ultimate outcome of a loyalty process shaped from the initial consumer interaction with the brand. By strengthening this loyalty, brands can both attract new customers and enhance the brand perception of existing ones.

2.5. Key factors shaping brand advocacy among consumers

According to Morgan and Hunt's (1994) commitment–trust theory of relationship marketing, loyal customers are more likely to engage in cooperative behavior. Similarly, Palmatier (2008) suggests that relational loyalty toward a brand increases the likelihood of repeat purchases without considering competing brands. This loyalty spreads through user-driven brand-supportive organic communication and may trigger empathetic behavior toward the brand. Brand advocacy refers to consumers voluntarily sharing the brand with other potential customers out of love and affection for the brand.

Advocacy is not limited solely to the feeling of loyalty; it also includes the actions of defending a brand both socially and physically. Such behaviors arise from a combination of factors such as brand identification, participation in brand communities, trust in the brand, and brand communication. These characteristics not only strengthen the consumer's attachment to the brand but also enable them to act as a voluntary ambassador or advocate of the brand. Brand advocacy among consumers refers to behaviors exhibited with the aim of protecting a brand's success and image, stemming from their emotional bonds and loyalty to the brand. These behaviors can be examined in various dimensions, such as brand identification, trust, loyalty, social interaction, and participation in brand communities. As a powerful force in contemporary marketing, brand advocacy goes beyond mere customer satisfaction; it represents a deep attachment fueled by genuine enthusiasm and the desire to share positive experiences. This passionate support manifests in various forms—from word-of-mouth recommendations and social media endorsements to active participation in brand communities and co-creation of content (Setiawan et al., 2022).

Consumers form their social identity through shared values and self-concepts associated with brands. In this process, rather than focusing on functional benefits, they develop brand identification through mutual interactions with the brand. Especially in the case of hedonic products, consumers move closer to their ideal self-image, which in turn strengthens their self-perception (Belk, 1988; Levy, 1959; McCracken, 1988). Trust in a brand is built when the brand consistently fulfills its responsibilities toward consumers. Consumers perceive a brand as an entity with a personality, and in moments of indecision, trusting the brand facilitates their decision-making process (Doney & Cannon, 1997). Brand trust is directly related to loyalty and belief in the brand's promises (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001).

Brand loyalty is a key factor influenced by consumers' commitment to and preference for a brand. Aaker (1996) characterizes loyalty as an outcome shaped by accumulated usage experiences. In contrast, Oliver (1999) portrays it as a strong and enduring intention to repeatedly purchase a favored product or service in the future, even in the face of factors or marketing attempts that might encourage switching. Loyal consumers strengthen a brand's strategic edge in the market by reinforcing their commitment to the brand (Ballester & Alleman, 2001). Word-of-mouth communication is a form of communication that lies outside the brand's control, shaped by the information consumers receive from those around them. In this process, the sharing of positive or negative experiences by consumers plays a critical role. Interpersonal communication contributes to the brand's credibility and is influential in shaping attitudes toward the brand (Godes & Mayzlin, 2004). This functions as a mechanism that enhances brand loyalty. In an era dominated by digital connectivity and information overload, brand advocacy emerges as a reliable and effective source of information—resonating with consumers who seek authentic opinions and experiences, beyond the clutter of traditional advertising (Tonder & Petzer, 2023).

Consumers seek a feeling of connectedness within a group through their interactions with brands. On social media, brands develop various methods to engage with consumers. Participation in and belonging to a brand community enables consumers to form emotional bonds and increases their loyalty to the brand (Duygun, 2020; Goulding et al., 2013). Brand advocates actively support and promote the brand due to their emotional attachment. These

consumers make commitments on behalf of the brand and contribute to positive word-of-mouth marketing strategies. Today's technologies allow advocacy behaviors—such as taking on the role of a voluntary brand ambassador—to be carried out more quickly and effectively (Walker, 2010).

Brand advocates not only preserve the brand's positive image but also defend it against negative comments. Their resistance to brand detractors and negative information builds a strong fan base that reinforces the brand's long-term stability. Brand advocacy helps personalize brand experiences by increasing consumers' loyalty and support for the brand (Bendapudi & Berry, 1997; Jillapalli & Wilcox, 2010). Brand advocacy behavior in consumers has a multidimensional structure and is a significant factor that strengthens brands' market positions by deepening their relationships with consumers.

3. Methodology and findings

This article was derived from a doctoral dissertation titled "The effect of brand experience on brand advocacy in the new generation consumer: A field research," accepted by the Department of Public Relations and Promotion, Maltepe University Graduate Education Institute. The study was approved by the ethics committee of Maltepe University, as per its decision dated April 10, 2020, numbered 2020/02-02.

The theoretical propositions were tested using the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique. SEM is referred to as a new-generation data analysis technique by Bagozzi and Fornell (1982). It is a suitable and straightforward process for modeling the interactions between dependent and independent variables. It allows for a systematic and comprehensive approach to modeling (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988). The sample group for this research includes the new generation of consumers who have grown up intertwined with technology. The sample consists of 930 individuals who use mobile phones and agreed to participate in the research. Of these participants, 475 were female and 455 were male. Regarding age distribution, 252 individuals were between 18 and 25 years old, 407 were between 26 and 33 years old, and 271 were above 34 years old. Additionally, the participants were university students at the undergraduate, master's, and doctoral levels. Based on the dataset obtained from the participants, the effect of brand experiences on the level of brand adoption and advocacy was analyzed. The data were evaluated using the SEM method, and it was concluded that brand experiences have a substantial and favorable influence on brand advocacy.

According to the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results for both scales, the factor loadings of all items in both the brand experience and brand advocacy scales ranged between 0.76 and 0.99. These values exceed the thresholds accepted in the literature, supporting the construct validity of the scales. Additionally, the relationships between all items and the latent variables are significant at the 99% confidence level ($t > 2.58$). The CFA fit indices meet the expected threshold values. The findings indicate that the scales used are valid and reliable.

Table 1 presents the sub-dimensions of the Brand Experience scale, which was adapted and developed from the Retail Brand Experience Scale by Khan and Rahman (2015, 2016). Upon examining the items grouped under the first factor of the scale, this factor was named "Communicative Brand Experiences", and it was found that the reliability level of the Communicative Brand Experiences dimension was high (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.949). When the items grouped under the second factor of the scale were examined, the factor was named "Physical Brand Shopping Experiences", and it was determined that the reliability level of this dimension was also high (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.948). Looking at the items under the third factor, the factor was named "Experiences of Brand Reliability and Facilitation", and this dimension also demonstrated a high level of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.904). As a result, the dimensions of brand experience were explained in three sub-dimensions as follows:

Communicative brand experiences

This dimension encompasses the way a brand interacts with consumers. It is shaped through various touchpoints, including advertising campaigns, social media content, and customer service. Clear, sincere communication that aims to build an emotional bond strengthens the overall brand experience. Primarily through digital channels, effective communication leaves a positive impression on consumers and supports brand loyalty.

Physical brand shopping experiences

This includes all touchpoints a consumer experiences in a store or physical environment. Elements such as store atmosphere, staff attitude, product presentation, and layout directly affect this experience. Positive physical experiences help shape a favorable perception of the brand. In this context, the physical environment significantly influences a consumer's initial impression and overall attitude toward the brand.

Experiences of brand reliability and facilitation

This reflects how trustworthy the brand is perceived to be by consumers and how much it simplifies their daily lives. Product and service quality, transparency of processes, and after-sales support play a critical role in building trust. At the same time, ease of interaction with the brand ensures the continuity of positive experiences and increases customer satisfaction.

Table 1. Factors and reliability scores of brand experience dimensions

Items	Factor loadings	α
Factor: Communicative brand experiences		
9. Every piece of information I receive about this brand through mass media increases my interest in it.	0,604	
7. I find it interesting to connect with this brand through social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.	0,634	
17. I find this brand's events interesting in a sensory way (visually, audibly, etc.).	0,652	
8. I feel good when I receive any information or message about this brand.	0,660	
16. This brand's activities are important to me and evoke positive emotions (e.g., concerts, festivals, trial stands at sales points, etc.)	0,667	0,949
22. The things said about this brand evoke positive emotions in me.	0,695	
19. The things said about this brand capture my interest.	0,718	
18. The events of this brand are emotionally appealing to me.	0,764	
20. I feel like a part of the stories told about this brand.	0,787	
21. I find the stories told about this brand entertaining.	0,806	
Factor: Physical brand shopping experiences		
10. The way this brand arranges its shelves is appealing.	0,651	
12. The proper arrangement of this brand's store shelves makes me feel good.	0,689	
11. The sales points of this brand leave a strong impression on my mind.	0,696	
13. I really enjoy shopping from this brand because the sales staff make things easier for me.	0,772	0,948
15. The willingness and readiness of this brand's sales representatives to help provides me with a better shopping experience.	0,776	
14. I feel good when purchasing this brand because the sales staff have the necessary knowledge.	0,799	
Factor: Experiences of brand reliability and facilitation		
3. When I think of excellence, this brand comes to mind.	0,641	
6. The transparency in this brand's billing process strengthens my trust in the brand.	0,645	
4. With its simple, well-prepared and clear invoices, this brand makes me feel good.	0,678	
5. The ease of this brand's ordering process makes me feel at ease.	0,681	0,904
2. Whenever I come across this brand name, I feel excited.	0,684	
1. This brand name stimulates my senses (visual/auditory, etc.).	0,760	

Source: Bozkurt, (2021).

Table 2 presents the sub-dimensions of the brand advocacy scale, which was adapted and developed from Wilder's (2015) study titled "Brand Advocacy: Conceptualization and Measurement." Upon examining the items grouped under the first factor of the scale, this factor was named "Brand Equity and Identification", and it was found that the reliability level of this dimension was high (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.962). When analyzing the items grouped under the second factor, the factor was named "Brand Loyalty", and this dimension also demonstrated a high level of reliability (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.944). For the items grouped under the third factor, the name "Defending the Brand" was considered appropriate, and this dimension also showed a high reliability level (Cronbach's Alpha = 0.930). The overall reliability of the newly adapted 19-item scale was determined to be 0.974. As a result, the dimensions of brand advocacy were explained in three sub-dimensions as follows:

Brand equity and identification

This relates to the meaning consumers attribute to the brand. The more the consumer identifies with the brand, the stronger the bond becomes. Brand identity, symbols, logos, slogans, and emotional communication elements play a role in forming this identification. The connection between the brand and individual values can lead the consumer not only to prefer the brand but also to represent it.

Brand loyalty

This refers to the consumer's ongoing commitment to the brand. In this dimension, the consumer does not consider alternative brands and repeatedly chooses the same one. Loyalty extends beyond repeat purchase behavior and encompasses the consumer's overall attitude and emotional attachment to the brand. For brands aiming for stable long-term income, brand loyalty is a key strategic advantage.

Defending the brand

This includes behaviors such as recommending the brand to others, making positive comments, and defending the brand against criticism. This represents the most effective form of word-of-mouth marketing. When consumers voluntarily speak on behalf of a brand, it is a strong indicator of trust and satisfaction. Therefore, brands should focus on creating experiences that turn consumers into advocates.

Table 2. Factors and reliability scores of brand advocacy dimensions

Items	Factor loadings	α
Factor: Brand equity and identification		
8. I would be a perfect salesperson for this brand.	0,488	0,955
19. I believe in the values this brand possesses and develops.	0,707	
13. This brand says a lot about my personality.	0,730	
14. The image of this brand is consistent with how I want to see myself.	0,737	
15. This brand reflects what is important to me in life.	0,814	
17. This brand shares the same values as I do.	0,823	
16. I have many things in common with this brand.	0,839	
18. My values are very similar to the values that this brand holds.	0,848	
Factor: Brand loyalty		
10. I will continue to purchase even more of this brand's products in the next few years.	0,686	0,944
20. I recommend this brand to others when asked for advice.	0,689	
22. I frequently recommend this brand to others.	0,704	
12. I intend to remain loyal to this brand in the future.	0,736	
21. This is the first brand I recommend to others.	0,770	
11. I am very likely to purchase this brand's products again.	0,811	
Factor: Defending the brand		
1. If a friend or acquaintance says something negative about this brand, I defend it.	0,570	0,939
2. If a friend or acquaintance says that a competing brand is better than this one, I explain why I disagree.	0,558	
3. If a friend or acquaintance makes fun of this brand, I stand up for it.	0,678	
6. If I think you should use this brand, I try to convince you to give it a try.	0,691	
9. I have made an effort to get someone to try this brand.	0,692	
7. I have persuaded others to try this brand.	0,715	
4. If a friend or acquaintance questions the quality of this brand, I try to convince them.	0,761	
5. If a friend or acquaintance says they don't like this brand, I try to prove why it is a good brand.	0,773	

Source: Bozkurt, (2021).

According to the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) results for both scales, all items in the brand experience and brand advocacy scales had factor loadings ranging between 0.76 and 0.99. These values exceed the thresholds accepted in the literature, supporting the construct validity of the scales. In addition, all items were found to be statistically significant at the 99% confidence level ($t > 2.58$) in their relationships with the latent variables. The CFA fit indices also met the expected threshold values. The corresponding fit indices are summarized in Table 3. These findings demonstrate that the scales used in the study are valid and reliable

Table 3. CFA fit indices for brand experience and brand advocacy scales

	X^2/df	p	RMSEA	CFI	GFI	AGFI	NNFI	NFI	RMR	SRMR
Brand experience	4,008	0,000	0,057	0,99	0,93	0,91	0,99	0,99	0,054	0,038
Brand advocacy	1,326	0,002	0,019	0,99	0,97	0,97	0,99	0,99	0,030	0,019

Source: Bozkurt, (2021).

Figure 1 illustrates a model developed to demonstrate the impact of brand experiences on brand advocacy, based on the SEM path diagram of the scales used in the study “*The Effect of Brand Experience on Brand Advocacy in the New Generation Consumer: A Field Study*” (Bozkurt, 2025).

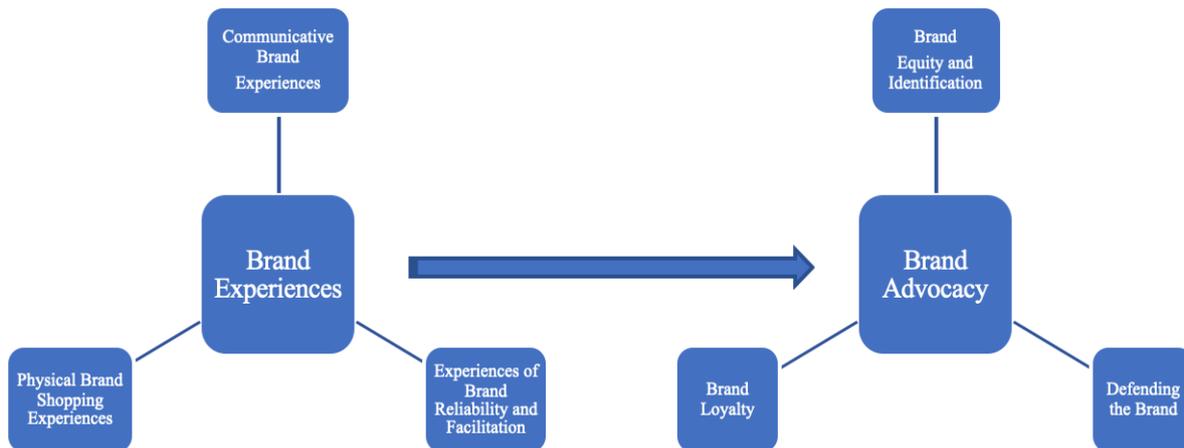


Figure 1. Structural model of the relationship between brand experiences and brand advocacy

As shown in Figure 1, communicative brand experiences, physical brand shopping experiences, and brand reliability and facilitation constitute the dimensions of brand experiences and contribute to the development of brand advocacy in consumers. Brand advocacy, in turn, can be examined in three dimensions: brand equity and identification, brand loyalty, and defending the brand.

4. Discussion and conclusion

According to the scales used in the study, the research SEM model defines brand experiences in three dimensions: “communicative brand experiences, physical brand shopping experiences, experiences of brand reliability and facilitation” also in three dimensions: “brand equity and identification, brand loyalty, defending the brand” as illustrated in the path diagram (Figure 1).

The concept of brand experience in this study was operationalized through three interrelated dimensions. Communicative brand experiences reflect how brands engage with consumers via advertising campaigns, social media content, and customer service interactions. Clear and sincere communication, especially in digital channels, strengthens emotional bonds and reinforces loyalty. Physical brand shopping experiences include in-store elements such as atmosphere, staff behavior, product presentation, and layout, which shape first impressions and long-term attitudes toward the brand. Finally, experiences of brand reliability and facilitation emphasize trust, transparency, and the extent to which a brand simplifies consumers’ daily lives. These dimensions collectively illustrate how experiential interactions can create strong emotional and functional ties with consumers.

Similarly, brand advocacy was conceptualized across three distinct but complementary dimensions. Brand equity and identification refer to the alignment between brand values and consumers’ self-concept, reinforcing the symbolic and emotional meaning of the brand. Brand loyalty reflects an ongoing commitment that extends beyond repeated purchasing, indicating resistance to competitors and a stable long-term preference. Defending the brand encompasses proactive behaviors such as recommending the brand, countering criticism, and voluntarily promoting positive word-of-mouth. Taken together, these advocacy dimensions highlight that advocacy is a dynamic outcome of deeper consumer–brand relationships, driven by both rational and emotional commitments.

The data-based results of the study indicate that new-generation consumers are strongly influenced by brand experiences, and these experiences significantly drive brand advocacy behaviors. In particular, physical brand experiences and the brand’s reliable and facilitative features have a decisive impact on brand loyalty and advocacy behaviors. Although communicative brand experiences are reliable, their impact remains limited in the digital age due to the effect of negative word-of-mouth communication. The experiential bond between the consumer and the brand not only creates momentary satisfaction but also encourages the consumer to advocate for and represent the brand. In this context, it has become inevitable for brands to adopt experience-oriented approaches aimed at securing long-term market distinction and cultivating lasting relationships with new-generation consumers.

4.1. Theoretical implications

These findings make significant contributions to the theoretical understanding of brand experience and advocacy. The study refines experiential marketing theory by demonstrating that communicative brand experiences alone are insufficient in the digital age, where negative word-of-mouth dominates. Instead, physical experiences and trust-related dimensions emerge as stronger and more sustainable drivers of advocacy. This supports and extends the frameworks of experiential marketing (Schmitt, 1999; Pine & Gilmore, 2011) and commitment–trust theory (Morgan & Hunt, 1994), highlighting the central role of consumer trust in transforming loyalty into advocacy. Furthermore, by operationalizing advocacy in three dimensions—equity and identification, loyalty, and defending the brand—the study advances consumer behavior research and underscores that advocacy is not merely an outcome of satisfaction but a deeper psychological and relational bond between consumers and brands.

This approach also enriches existing literature by providing empirical support for the notion that communicative brand experiences may not be sufficient in isolation to drive advocacy in the digital age. Instead, physical experiences and trust-related dimensions have a more lasting effect, suggesting a refinement of experiential marketing theories in the context of Generation Z and digital-native consumers. Furthermore, the study advances consumer behavior theory by linking experiential marketing with commitment–trust theory. The results suggest that consumer trust, when reinforced by consistent and positive brand experiences, is the true mechanism that transforms loyalty into advocacy. This theoretical linkage also demonstrates how consumer psychology and marketing communication interact, opening the door for more interdisciplinary research in branding, sociology, and digital communication studies.

4.2. Practical implications

These findings are also concretely supported by contemporary brand practices aimed at enhancing consumer experience and fostering advocacy. For instance, Starbucks enriches in-store experiences through personalized services (Starbucks, 2023), while Apple seamlessly integrates online and offline shopping (Apple, 2023). In Turkey, Trendyol strengthens consumer advocacy tendencies with user-friendly digital solutions such as Trendyol Go (Trendyol, 2024), while LC Waikiki builds trust through its sustainability campaigns (LC Waikiki, 2023). These practical examples demonstrate how the results of this study can be reflected in marketing strategies.

Drawing upon the results of the research, a number of strategic suggestions can be proposed. First, it is crucial for brands to establish a sustainable and strong communication language in digital environments. Communication strategies enhanced by personalized and consistent messaging that appeals to consumers' emotional needs are likely to strengthen the long-lasting connection between the consumer and the brand. Second, building trust-based relationships should not be limited to product or service quality alone; it must also be supported by the quality of after-sales services, transparency of processes, and the brand's approach to social responsibility.

In addition, brand experiences developed through sensory, emotional, and relational touchpoints, which are the basis of experiential marketing, transform the consumer's connection with the brand into a personal relationship, thus encouraging brand advocacy beyond brand loyalty. These managerial insights underscore that advocacy requires systematic investment in consumer-centered strategies rather than short-term promotions. Moreover, brands should invest in digital community-building practices to create long-term advocacy. Establishing online platforms where consumers can share experiences, provide feedback, and interact with both brands and peers will amplify advocacy behaviors. Such communities not only extend the brand's reach but also generate authentic user-generated content, which is more persuasive than traditional marketing messages. Managers should recognize that digital communities are no longer optional supplements but vital spaces for strengthening consumer trust and loyalty.

4.3. Limitations and future research directions

These results should also be considered within the cultural context. Since the sample is drawn from Turkey, the findings reflect consumer values shaped by local social and cultural dynamics. Therefore, the generalizability of the results may be limited, and future studies should include cross-cultural comparisons. The results derived from this research have been evaluated in the context of high-visibility products such as mobile phones. Future research can provide a broader perspective on the sustained relationship between brand experience and advocacy by including different product categories, service sectors, and cultural contexts. In addition, future studies could benefit from combining quantitative methods with qualitative approaches, such as in-depth interviews or netnography, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of how consumers articulate their advocacy behaviors in different environments.

Furthermore, the study primarily focused on consumer perspectives, without addressing the role of organizations and employees in fostering advocacy. Future research could integrate internal branding perspectives to examine how employee engagement and organizational culture influence consumers' advocacy behaviors. Similarly, the role of artificial intelligence and personalized recommendation systems in shaping advocacy deserves closer investigation, as AI-driven interactions are becoming an integral part of digital brand experiences.

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The authors equally conducted the research design and implementation, analysis, and article writing without using AI applications.

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