

# **THE EFFECT OF DUAL IMAGE (CORPORATE AND BRAND) ON CUSTOMERS' WOM: THE ROLE OF CUSTOMER LOYALTY**

**Methaq Ahmed Sallam**

College of Administrative Sciences, Najran University, Saudi Arabia

methaq68@yahoo.com, methaq68@hotmail.com

## **Abstract**

*The positive dual image e.g. corporate and brand image play important role in stimulating customers to buy company's products and services. When customers have the positive corporate image and corporate brand image also, they focus on aspects of a company, and via time, customers have the loyalty to the company and its brand, in addition, they usually express it by using the positive words of mouth, and which in turn is considered the goal of any company. The reason that lies behind using corporate image and corporate brand image are their direct and indirect strong impact that build customer loyalty and makes customers speak more positively about the company. This study aims to explore the impact of corporate image and brand image on customer's WOM, when the customer's loyalty is mediating. A study carried out in Saudi Arabia using 170 respondents as consumers who used any kinds of Internet service. Path analysis confirmed that, brand image had more positive impact on customers' loyalty than corporate image. In addition, the study illustrated that customer's loyalty had positive impact on customer's word of mouth.*

*Keywords: Corporate Image, Brand Image, Customer's Loyalty, Customer's WOM, Marketing*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Decades of consumer research has shown Word-of-Mouth Communication (WOM) to be a powerful influence on consumers' brand attitudes, judgments, and purchase intentions. Word-of-Mouth Communication can be generated in many different ways. For example, customer's trust, customer's satisfaction, customer's loyalty, brand love, corporate image and corporate brand

image. Word-of-mouth communication simply involves people sharing their assessment of their experiences. Word-of-mouth communication, which relates both to positive and negative evaluations of service encounters, has been shown to influence other people's purchase behavior (NG, 2001). Lo Chung (2012) Mentioned that word of mouth deals with the process of transferring of information from one person to the other through oral communication. The concept of word of mouth has become an important term in the marketing activities conducted by various organizations. Interpersonal communication or the word of mouth has gained importance in the decision making of the consumers. Word of mouth is gaining importance among the societal changes observed in the environment and has become one of the most important and effective communication channel.

Martenson (2007) indicated that customers to a favorable store image may affect perception of store brand. De Chernatony and Harris (2000) reported that corporate brand is vital because positive corporate brands help companies achieving higher performance, such as sales. Ogba and Tan (2009) announced that a poor brand image will lead to disaster, and lose customers. Marketing exists to deliver more value to satisfy customers as well as build a long-term and mutually profitability relationship with customers (Kotler, 2005).

A positive corporate image is not only increasing competition but also encourage consumers to repurchase (Tu et al., 2013). Corporate image helps consumers obtain a better understanding of the products offered by specific corporations and further mitigate their uncertainty while making buying decisions (Lin and lu, 2010).

Tu et al., (2013) mentioned that corporate brand image has been assessed as an important antecedent of customer commitment and loyalty. In turn, firms are hoping to reap the benefits of customer loyalty by depending on word-of-mouth (Hall, 2011).

### **Problem Statement**

Although many studies have been conducted on this issue, but there are still gaps that need to be filled in the literature. Studies conducted by previous researchers only focused on certain aspects of customers' WOM process, and the variables used in those studies were segmented in natural in previous studies. In other words, the model proposed in this study is an integrative one, and come from four separate models found in the area related literature, e.g. study of (Aydin et al., 2004) explored the relationship between corporate image and customers' loyalty, study of (Ogba et al., 2009) explored the relationship between brand image and customer loyalty, while study of (Duygun, 2015) illustrated the effect of customer loyalty on WOM. This means, that three main models of this study were segmented in four different studies, and each

one was separated alone, and this study tries to integrate them in one conceptual framework, and this is the contribution of this study.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

“The best customers, we’re told, are the loyal ones. They cost less to serve, they’re usually willing to pay more than other customers, and they often act as word-of-mouth marketers for your company” (Reinartz & Kumar, 2002, p. 86). The concept of customer advocacy, or word-of-mouth, has been extensively examined within the marketing and services literature as an outcome of successful exchange relationships (Hall, 2011). Struebing (1996) mentioned that a new academic study shows that revenue streams can be generated from attracting new customers via word-of-mouth recommendations, increasing the percentage of retained customers, and increasing spending or usage by existing customers. In addition, corporate image plays an important role to form customer loyalty, satisfaction and trust, therefore, customer's loyalty lead to support customer's WOM. This conceptual paper try to explore how independent variables which called are corporate image and corporate brand image impact on dependent variable which is called WOM when customer loyalty is mediating, and these issues are discussed in details to allay concepts of these concerns here.

### Corporate Image

Upamannyu et al., (2015) mentioned that all the organizations have unique image and this image is formed on the basis of perception of its stakeholders, whether the organization does good jobs for them or not to do but the image of each organization would be unique in nature. (Dowling, 1986) defined image as specific viewpoints towards a certain matter through description, memory, or other ways of association with such matter. It results from the interactions among people’s impression, existing beliefs, thoughts, and feelings on such a thing. Giovanis et al., (2014) mentioned that corporate image has been identified as an important factor in the overall judgment of a service provider. It is defined as the mental picture that springs up at the mention of a firm's name. It is a composite psychological impression that continuously changes with the firm's circumstances, media coverage, performance, etc. Similar to a firm's reputation or goodwill, it is the public perception of the firm, rather than a reflection of its actual state or position.

MacInnis and Price (1987) pointed out that corporate image results from an evaluation process, which originates from thoughts, feelings, and previous consumption experience in relation to a business entity, turning consumers’ memories into spiritual impression (Yuille and Catchpole, 1977). Gray (1986) suggested that corporate image is the combination of

consumers' perception and attitude towards a business entity. Robertson and Gatignon (1986) further proposed that corporate image helps facilitate consumers' knowledge on products or services offered by a certain company and reduces uncertainty while making buying decisions. Consumers are directed to buy commodities from a company with good corporate image to reduce their risks. Nguyen and Leblanc (2001) found that corporate image is associated with a company's constitution and nature of behavior. For example, corporate name, corporate building, and product or service quality may reinforce customer's impression on a company.

Corporate image is defined as the "overall impression" left in the customers' mind as a result of accumulative feelings, ideas, attitudes and experiences with the organization, stored in memory, transformed into a positive/negative meaning, retrieved to reconstruct image and recalled when the name of the organization is heard or brought to ones' mind (Dowling, 1986). Thus, corporate image is a result of communication process in which the organizations create and spread a specific message that constitutes their strategic intent; mission, vision, goals and identity that reflects their core values that they cherish (Leuthesser and Kohli, 1997).

Walters and Paul (1970) indicated that corporate image features four aspects: subjectivity, screening, elaboration, and changeability. (Walters, 1978) suggested that the subjective attitude, feelings, or impression on an enterprise or its activities held by consumers are connected with attitude. Tu et al., (2013) mentioned that corporate image has been assessed as an important antecedent of loyalty.

## **Brand Image**

Lin et al., (2015) American Marketing Association defined it as: "a name, word, mark, symbol of any other characteristic used to identify manufacturer's product or service, and then distinguish with product or service of competitors". A positive corporate brand image is not only increasing competition but also encourage consumers to repurchase. With loyal customers, companies can reduce the operating cost and acquisition expenses (Tu et al., 2013).

Brand image represents an important aspect of marketing activities; branding and market offering with varied definition and approaches to its conceptualization (Martinez and Pina, 2003). A widely accepted view is that brand image represents customers' perceptions of a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer memory (Herzog, 1963; Keller, 1993a, b). Keller (1993a, b) argued that these associations could originate from customers direct experience or from information obtained on a market offering or due to the impact a pre-existing associations with an organization had on consumer. Brand image is, therefore, the mental picture or perception of a brand or a branded product or service and includes symbolic

meanings that consumers associate with the specific attributes of a product or service (Aperia and Back, 2004).

Koubaa (2007) mentioned that Brand image is the reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to a specific brand. Brand image research has long been recognized as one of the central area of the marketing research field not only because it serves as a foundation for tactical marketing-mix issues but also because it plays an integral role in building long-term brand equity (Keller, 1993).

A strong positive corporate brand image thus not only helps a firm to achieve a competitive advantage but also encourages repeat purchases. In fact, the importance of understanding the image of a retailer as a brand or how the brand impacts on the retailer's image and customer loyalty is well acknowledged in the recent branding literatures (Silva et al., 2006).

Brand image, an imperative building block in consumer-based brand equity, is destined as "perceptions about a brand which reflected by the brand associations apprehended in consumer's memory" (Keller, 1998). Even though the term or notion brand image has been largely defined and used in diverse ways, one common agreement of the definition is that brand image is a consumer's aggregate impression of a particular brand care of the influence of a consumer's reasoned or emotional perceptions (Aaker, 1996).

Tu et al., (2013) explored that brand image has positive effect on customer loyalty. Ogba et al., (2009) mentioned that Brand image represents "the reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to specific brands". Selnes (1993) reported that that brand image has the influence on brand loyalty. In contrast, (Davies and Chun, 2002) found that brand image had an indirect influence on brand loyalty.

### **Customer loyalty**

Kazemi et al., (2013) mentioned that today is the era of loyalty such as customer loyalty, employee loyalty, management loyalty, and loyalty to the principles, ideals and beliefs and etc.(Oliver, 1997) indicated that customer loyalty is defined as a deeply held commitment to re-purchase a preferred product or service in the future. With loyal customers, companies can maximize their profit because loyal customers are willing to (1) purchase more frequently; (2) spend money on trying new products or services; (3) recommend products and services to others; and (4) give companies sincere suggestions. Gee et al., (2008) referred that customer loyalty means a commitment to doing business with specific organization and continuously purchase of certain goods and services. In another definition, loyalty is a strong commitment to

repurchase a product or service of organization in the future if the product despite the potential impact of marketing efforts of competitors.

Allama Syed and nifty Aymanh (2010) said, certainly, in today's market that is increasingly competitive, achieving loyal customers, one of the fundamental possessions to get greater market share. In general customer loyalty is defined as repeat buying behavior of a special trademark. In general loyalty can make a positive mentality in customers mind. Kazemi et al., (2013) referred that customer's loyalty has strong relationship with costumer word of mouth.

### **Costumer Word of Mouth**

Money (2004) mentioned that consumers search for information prior to making a purchase in order to reduce perceived risk. One such source of information is word of mouth (WOM). Marketing researchers have shown that WOM communication has an impact on consumer attitudes, consumer risk taking, short-term and long-term product judgments and purchase decisions and choice behavior.

Word-of-mouth means the measure of consumers' major informal communication. In early times, word-of-mouth meant at least two consumers, without commercial intention, communicating face-to-face regarding brands, products, or services. Communication is critical in customers' consumption and the process is called word-of-mouth (Lin & Chen, 2005). Word-of-mouth (WOM) communication usually invites thoughts on others. Some people engage in WOM communication to seek other people's opinions on products or companies. Other people first consider the characteristics of potential WOM message receivers and then deliver WOM messages to the relevant receiver (Allsop, Bassett & Hoskins, 2007).

Kazemi et al., (2013). Mentioned that word of mouth communications refer to the extent in which a customer informs his/her friends, coworkers, and relative about product or services that satisfies his/her needs. With regard to the relationship between customer satisfaction and word of mouth communications, some authors pointed out that the form and type of this relationship can be different in every level of customer satisfaction.

Kemp (2011) informed that decades of consumer research has shown Word-of-Mouth Communication (WOMC) to be a powerful influence on consumers' brand attitudes, judgments, and purchase intentions. It is generally more influential than advertising due to its higher credibility and more interactive nature. Accordingly, marketers are highly motivated to understand and exploit this powerful information source. Walker et al. (2001) mentioned that, Word-of-Mouth Communication can be generated in many different ways. For example, a consumer may actively seek out product advice from an acquaintance they perceive to be an

expert (solicited WOMC). He/she may overhear two unknown consumers discussing a product, store, or service, or he may be given unsolicited (or even unwanted) product information from someone. He/she may read product reviews on a website from complete strangers. It is this organic nature of WOMC that makes it powerful, but also makes it a challenging topic to study. It is clear that these different processes may produce WOMC that is highly variant in its perceived information value and its influence on the consumer.

Lias et al., (2012) mentioned that word of mouth has been an age old concept where a person shares his view with another person. The views of the person can be related to a product or the service he have received. The studies in consumer behavior suggest that words of mouth have a strong influence on the psychology of the person. The influence of word of mouth can have both positive and negative aspects. Relating word of mouth to the consumer behavior, it can be interpreted that the positive word of mouth increases the likelihood of the consumers in opting for the product, whereas the negative word of mouth does the reverse. The overall effect of the word of mouth is dependent on two factors. The total number of people being exposed to positive word of mouth or negative word of mouth helps in judging the final influence.

### **The Relationship between Corporate Image and Customer Loyalty**

When the consumer owns a good image about the company, the company's image - via the time - in turn affect his loyalty. Few previous studies explored the relationship between customer's trust and word of mouth, e.g. (Abd-El-Salam & Shawky, 2013) referred that corporate image has strong relationship and positive effect on customer's loyalty. Aydin et al., (2004) explored that corporate image has relationship with customer loyalty and strong effect. In addition, (Hart et al., 2004) found that corporate image has strong relationship and positive effect on customer's loyalty. Kaur, et al., (2012)illustrated that corporate image has relationship with customer loyalty and strong effect.

(Corporate) image in the service marketing literature was early identified as an important factor in the overall evaluation of the service and the company (Gummesson and Gronroos, 1988). Apart from image as a function of accumulation of purchasing/consumption experience over time, most organizations also provide complex and noisy informational environments (e.g. advertising, direct marketing, or PR) in order to attract new and keep existing customers

Corporate image can be an extrinsic information cue for both existing and potential buyers and may or may not influence customer loyalty (e.g. willingness to provide positive word-of-mouth). Corporate image is consequently assumed to have an impact on customers' choice of company when service attributes are difficult to evaluate.



Corporate image serves as an important factor influencing the perception of quality, consumer's evaluation of satisfaction with the service and customer loyalty (Nguyen and Leblanc, 2001). Keller (1993) defines image as perceptions about a company held in consumer memory. According to Nguyen and Leblanc (2001), corporate image is related to business name, architecture, variety of products/services, tradition, ideology and to the impression of quality communicated by each person interacting with firm's clients. A desirable corporate image increases the probability of brand choice, as well as produces greater consumer loyalty and decrease vulnerability to competitive marketing actions (Keller, 1993). Previous empirical research supports a positive link between corporate image and customer loyalty (Johnson et al., 2001).

### **The Relationship between Brand Image and Customer Loyalty**

The positive image of the company's brand - via its direct and indirect effect - tries to create loyalty among consumers. Syed Alwi (2009) mentioned that there is strong and direct relationship between corporate brand image and customer loyalty. Previous literature mainly focused on the influences of brand image on consumers' loyalty e.g. (Hung, 2008; Tu et al, 2013) Whose explored that brand image has positive effect on customer loyalty. In addition, (Ogba et al., 2009) referred that brand image have positive impact with consumer loyalty.

The concept of loyalty has diverse views in terms of its conceptualization and measurement. Various researchers tend to view the concept from different perspectives. For example, loyalty to Ehrenberg (1988) and Jacoby (1971) represents customer repeat purchase a view that if interpreted may suggest that customer loyalty only exist whenever customers embark on a do again (second buying journey) on a market offering. Whereas there is a connection between repeat purchase and loyalty, in that for a customer to be seen as loyal, it may be expected that such customer will continue with the act of buying a market offering repeatedly.

It is, however, necessary to note that such view does not provide one with deep practical understanding of the concept as a customer may repeat purchase not necessarily because of a continues feeling of satisfaction or as a result of real intent to stay with a brand. But could be as a result of strong necessity for a market offering at that point in time and, therefore, may not necessarily imply the expression "loyal" to a market offering and or brand as there may be limited alternatives. Other authors (like Hess and Story, 2005) seem to view loyalty as preference and commitment, respectively. While preference may represent an attribute of loyalty, there may be strong difficulty in accepting loyalty to directly mean commitment in that both concepts follow similar principles but are indeed different.



Infect some school of thought argues that loyalty is an aspect of commitment. For example, loyalty, in this instance brand loyalty was classified as an aspect of behavioural loyalty or attitudinal loyalty and defined by Oliver (1999).

Oliver (1999) also suggests that ultimate customer loyalty is a function of perceived product superiority, personal fortitude, social bonding, and their synergistic effects. Further analysis of Oliver's discussion tend to suggest not that loyalty is commitment, but that loyalty is an aspect of commitment called attitudinal or emotional component of commitment (Ogba, 2008). Uncles et al. (2003) viewed customer loyalty from a 3 dimensional perspectives, an approach that seems to originate from Meyer and Allen (1991) study on employee commitment; where loyalty is referred to as favorable attitudes or beliefs for one brand which could seem to be an emotional attachment to that brand. Second, loyalty can be seen as a behavioral factor, for example, the purchase behavior to one special brand and loyalty as an accident approach that presumes the correlation between attitudes and behavior.

Whatever represents the meaning of brand loyalty as the list of authors with varied approaches seems endless, the fact remains that brand loyalty exist as a result of the interaction between a customer's relative attitude to a special brand, and also their repeat purchase behavior for that brand. Brand loyalty may, therefore, exist as a result of repeat purchase or due to the absence of perceived differences between brand alternatives Muncy (1996). It could also exist as a result of simple habitual purchase behavior (Assael, 1998), which could mean long or short-term involvement on repeat purchasing of a market offering or brand. A knowledge of brand loyalty is, therefore, necessary as according to Wood (2000) brand image is tailored to the needs and wants of a target market so as to facilitate brand loyalty. That is customer involvement in repeat purchase behavior on a brand and the success or otherwise of this process determines the degree of brand loyalty and will probably have influence on consumer long-term loyalty.

### **The Relationship between Customer Loyalty and WOM**

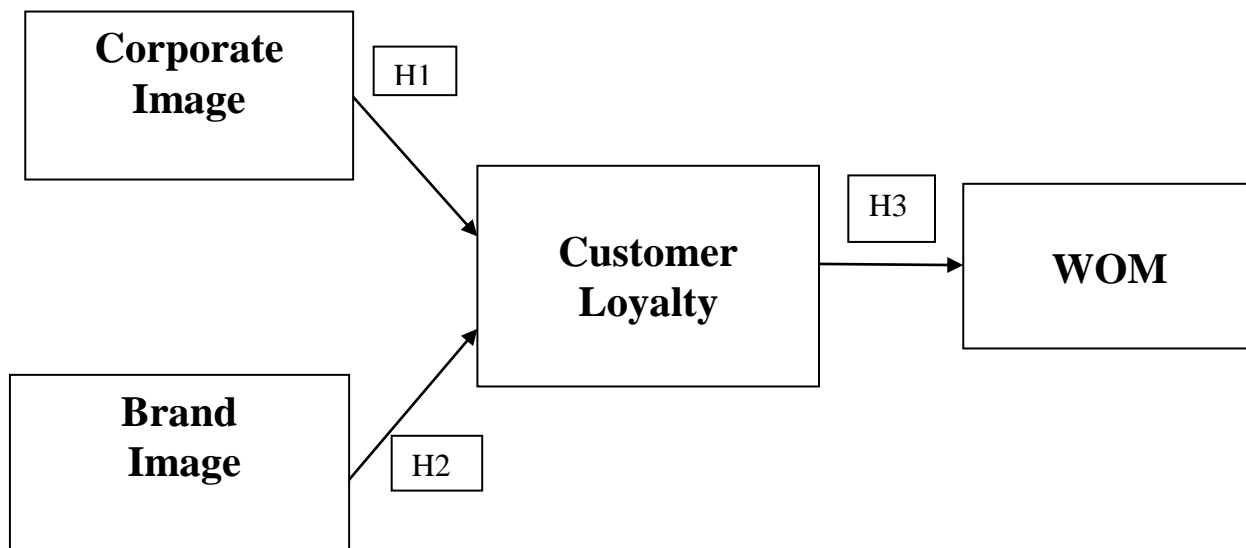
The positive speech by the consumer about any company it is a proof of his/her loyalty to the company. Matos et al., (2008) insured that there are few variables as antecedents of customer's WOM, and one of them is customer's loyalty. Previous literature mainly focused on the influences of consumers' loyalty on customer's WOM e.g. (Kazemi et al., 2013) referred that customer's loyalty has strong relationship with costumer word of mouth. In addition, (Hsu et I., 2013) explored that there is strong and positive effect between customer's loyalty and customer's WOM.

Loyalty reflects favorable attitudes toward the brand or organization (e.g. Dick and Basu, 1994; Evanschitzky et al., 2006). In this respect, one aspect associated to loyalty positive WOM and recommendation (Hallowell, 1996). To be precise, loyal customers usually promote the firm by emphasizing the main attributes of its products and services. This is motivated by the fact that loyalty is the result of the individual's beliefs that the quantity of value received from consuming a product or service is greater than the value of non-consuming (Hallowell, 1996). Thus, in response to this greater value obtained, the individual is motivated to remain loyal to the firm and to promote it by, for instance, positive WOM behaviors. Therefore, taking these considerations into account, we propose that loyalty may lead to positive WOM:

### Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses

The framework below is proposed to ensure that corporate image and brand image are as independent variables impact on dependent variable which is called customer's word of mouth when customer loyalty is mediating. Based on what have been presented in the literature, the following framework (Figure 1) and three hypotheses have been developed for the study.

Figure 1: Framework of the Study



- H1. Corporate image has positive effect on customer loyalty.
- H2. Brand image has positive impact on customer loyalty.
- H3. Customer loyalty has positive impact on customer word of mouth.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

### Sampling

Based on the Sekaran (2008) sampling refers to the procedures of choosing enough amount of elements from existing population, so that a research of the sample and a finding of its properties or features would make it possible to generalize such properties or features to the population elements. Young and middle age people who are studying in Najran university and using any kinds of Internet service providers are a targeted group to fulfill the instrument of this study. Most of these students have at least two-year experience by using mobile, the Internet facilities and broad bands. The samples for this study are randomly chosen among the targeted population. The total of 200 questionnaires were distributed to participants, of which 30 questionnaires were incomplete or there were missing data that could not be analyzed. So, a total of 170 questionnaires were analyzed and the findings are presented in the next part.

### Variable measurement

A five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree were used to measure responses for all corporate image, brand image, customer loyalty and customer's word of mouth variables in the study. This study tried to adopt measurements from previous studies as shown here, and in the same time tried to adapt them to be suitable with this study. For example, items to measure corporate image and customer loyalty were adopted from Aydin et al., (2004) studies. Three items to measure brand image were adopted from Kem & kem (2005) studies and two items were adopted from (Davis et al., 2009). For customer's word of mouth, three items were adopted from the study of Sweeney and Swait (2000).

## ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

### Respondents' Background

Respondents' Background Of the total 170 respondents surveyed, most were not married (29.4%), while (70.6%) not married, and were in the age between 20-30 years (64.1%), and were in the age between 31- 40 years (34.1%) while (1.8%) were in the age over 40 years. Duration is an important item and the table below shows how the respondents are categorized based on their period of using Internet services. Duration is an important item and the table (1) below shows how the respondents are categorized based on their period of using Internet services.

Table 1. Respondents' Background

Duration		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	2 years	90	52.9	52.9	52.9
	3 years	71	41.8	41.8	41.8
	4 years	9	5.3	5.3	100.0
	Total	170	100.0	100.0	

### Multiple Regression Analysis

The multiple regression analysis is the statistical technique used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent (criterion) variable and several independent (predictor) variables (Hair et al., 1998; 2000). In order to test the hypothesis, both variables of dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) seem to have an effect on customer's loyalty with a significant value of  $\beta = 0.13$  ( $p > 0.01$ ) and  $\beta = 0.30$  ( $p > 0.05$ ) sequential. These results indicate that H1 is accepted and two of its corollary hypothesis, i.e. H1 and H2 are accepted and Table 2 below shows that.

Table 2: Multiple Regression Analyses: the Relationship between Dual Image e.g. (Corporate and Brand) and Customer's Loyalty

Customer's Loyalty	Beta	t-test	Sig	VIF	tolerance
Corporate Image	.13*	1.3	.000	2.1	.469
Brand Image	.30**	3.80	.000	2.1	.469
R <sup>2</sup>	.166				
Adjusted R Square	.156				
F Value	16.3**				

### Simple Regression Analysis

The simple regression analysis is the statistical technique used to analyze the relationship between a single dependent (criterion) variable and single independent (predictor) variables.

Customer's loyalty has been hypothesized in H2 to have an effect on customer's word of mouth. Table 3. illustrates that Customer's loyalty explained (0.20) of the variance in customer's word of mouth ( $R^2=0.20$ ). The variable of Customer's loyalty was found to be positively and significantly associated with customer's word of mouth as ( $\beta=0.45$ ,  $p < .01$ ). It is obvious then that H3 which has proposed the effect of Customer's loyalty on customer's word of mouth is accepted. This finding seems to be in line with the previous study of Hsu et al., (2013).

Table 3: Simple Regression Analyses: Relationship between customer's Loyalty and Customer's Word of Mouth

WOM Path c	Beta	t-test	Sig	VIF	tolerance
Customer's Loyalty	.45**	6.5	.000	1.000	1.000
R <sup>2</sup>	.20				
Adjusted R Square	.20				
F Value	42.8**				

## DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

The objective of this study as stated earlier is to investigate the dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) relationship with customer's loyalty, the effect of customer's loyalty on customer's word of mouth, and to illustrate the mediating role of customer's loyalty between dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) and customer's word of mouth. The study found that brand image was found to have a greater impact on customer's loyalty, then, corporate image. This result reflects that Saudi consumer is impacted by image of brand more than corporate image to trigger him to be loyal. In addition, the study explored that customer's loyalty has significant effect on customer's word of mouth, and this result seems to contrast with previous studies' results, For example (Hsu et al., (2013; Hall, 2011).

This study concluded brand image as significant component of dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) rather than corporate image. The findings provide an understanding of Saudi's consumer behavior and thus gave practitioners some ideas in understanding how to use the corporate image and brand image factors to enhance the consumers' loyalty. It is hoped that the study can provide insights for further research in this area and help policy makers of companies to employ the implementation of the role of dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) as it is found to be the main driver of consumer word of mouth in marketing. However, the limitations of the study need to be noted. For instance, using a sample size of only 170 consumers means that the results cannot be generalized for all Saudi consumers. And that collecting data at only one point in time knowing that dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) is based on long-term marketing strategies that needs time to be built and to be nurtured points to the more appropriately used longitudinal approach study in order to cope with the long-time nature of the marketing strategies investigated in this study.

This study was the first in Saudi Arabia context that examine the effect of dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) on customer's word-of-mouth with reference to ISPs operating in

Saudi markets. It is highly advisable, by this study, that the concepts of dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) are indeed an important factors for ISPs and generally for other service providers. The significant relationship between dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) and customers' loyalty was found in which the relationship between brand image and customers' loyalty showed to be more significant. On the other hand, in the second part of the model, the relationship between customers' loyalty and word-of-mouth found to be significant.

## **RECOMMENDATION**

Based on what was mentioned above, it can be argued that the dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) Influence customer's loyalty. In addition, the customers' loyalty was shown to be influential on consumer's word of mouth. Companies in Saudi Arabia should pay more attention to create strong image of brand and company, to build customers' loyalty with their services, this is due to the fact that customers loyalty would impact greatly on word of mouth, which is considered to be one of the cheapest and easiest way of attracting new customers instead of spending a lot of money of TV ads, billboards, etc. This study will be useful for the managers in Internet service providers companies, especially the marketing managers to understand the market orientations in their decision making process, and train their employees in such a way that can create more satisfied customers with the provided services.

## **LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH**

It is hoped that the study can provide insights for further research in this area and help policy makers of companies to employ the implementation of the role of dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) as it is found to be the main driver of consumer word of mouth behavior in marketing. However, the limitations of the study need to be noted. For instance, using a sample size of only 170 consumers means that the results cannot be generalized for all Saudi consumers. And that collecting data at only one point in time knowing that dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) are based on long-term marketing strategies that needs time to be built and to be nurtured points to the more appropriately used longitudinal approach study in order to cope with the long-time nature of the marketing strategies investigated in this study. In addition, the same research needs to be conducted in other service industries that have long-term relationship with their customers such as banking industries. Other researches can include the word of mouth's influence on financial aspects of corporation, which was not explored in this study. Other scholars can include other factors that are not covered in this study (e.g. customers' trust can be taken in to this model). Since this study showed that there is a significant relationship between dual image e.g. (corporate and brand) and customers' loyalty, the future studies can focus on

the relationship between CRM (customer relationship management) and dual image e.g. (corporate and brand). Lastly, like any other studies, this study has its own limitation; one of which is the conduct of this study a developing country that people did not understand the significance of this study and required times to explain the process, some of which were worthless.

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