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## **A Study Of Stress Experienced By Transgender In An Experiential Event Setting And Its Impact On Customer Loyalty With Reference To The Cosmetic Industry**

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### **Abstract**

Experiential Marketing aims to immerse the consumers in a memorable experience that could portray a sense of attachment and a close relationship with the product or service. Transgender usually face stigma and discrimination even after many awareness programs, inclusion in many advertisements, campaigns, and fashion shows which leads to the rise of psychological stress amongst them. (1)the behavioral differences of the marketers for the transgender in an experiential marketing setting and how it leads to stress and (2) explore how it affects customer loyalty. The research will demonstrate the relationship between discrimination, stress, and customer loyalty. In-depth interviews were conducted with 100 participants from January-February 2019 and data analysis was done by using qualitative research method and suggestions have been given to minimize the emotional, cognitive, and psychological stress and gender biases and how to increase customer loyalty of this specific segment. Findings illustrate the effect of previous experience of stigmatization and the current response towards it. The effect of occupational designation and societal status of transperson also affected the level of stress. The researcher also suggested experiential innovation strategies to minimize the level of discrimination for the marketers and other strategies to cope up with the stressors.

**Keyword :- Transgender, Experiential Marketing, Stress, Emotion, Cognition, Customer loyalty.**

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### **Introduction:- Customer Experience and Experiential Marketing**

The term customer experience emerged in the 1980s that emphasized that consumers are the rational decision-maker who focuses on products attributes and experience attached with that specific brand. This is known as the experiential approach (Holbrook and Hirschman, 1982). The concept amalgamates various aspects like experience, rationality, emotional connection, economic and functional value, and satisfaction. Customer experience is made up of certain components like the sensorial component, the emotional component, pragmatic element, cognition, relational component. Loyalty can be defined as the usage of any product for an extended period and recommendation of that product to family and relatives. (Lovelock et al., 2010). Customers make repeat purchases due to

the attributes of the product and the experience attached to the brand. The behavioral transition is not easy for loyal customers. (Kotler and Keller, 2008). The customer's intention is strong to revisit and repurchase from the same brand. Another factor is to spread positive reviews through word of mouth. (Artuğer et al., 2013).

### **Gender Identity:-**

Gender identity is considered a crucial element in the formation of society. The two most accepted genders are male and female which are commonly acknowledged. The social structure limits the identity of other genders which gives emergence to discrimination in the societal pattern. West and Zimmerman (1987) elaborated that the term gender is developed by social interaction. The rudeness, rigidity, and awkwardness towards transgender are persistent.

The subjective perception and behavior towards them lead to anxiety, stress, and disturbance in purchase behavior. The various stigmas like separation, the difference in attitude, a prejudice which is still prevalent in the society and results in problematic consequences. Hypothesis H1: The biased personalized behavior has a significant and positive impact on the stress level of the transgender in an experiential marketing event. Hypothesis H2: The stress level of the transgender has a significant and positive impact on customer loyalty in an experiential marketing event.

Experiential marketing is considered as one of the crucial tools of marketing strategy to stand out in the era of competition and globalization. The previous literature shows that customer loyalty can be achieved through the incorporation of experiential elements with the offerings of the product. Chen et al. (2008) emphasized in their study experiential marketing is composed of five important dimensions like sense, feel, think, act, and relate, which is positively related the loyalty.

#### **Research Methods:-**

This research is explanatory. The research involves three variables, experiential marketing, and stress, and customer loyalty using a survey of transgender customers who

shops from experiential marketing campaigns or events in Mumbai. The sampling approach adopted for this study is convenience sampling of the respondents from malls, clubs, salons, and theatres. To determine the number of samples used the Slovin formula with an error rate of 5% -10% to obtain 100 respondents-50 Transgender, 25 male, and 25 female. The research followed a qualitative research approach so it was done in two parts. In the first phase, the analysis of the brands offering and their experiential strategy has been done with the help of direct interviews of employees of the cosmetic brands. The second phase includes the survey of the transgender through a structured questionnaire on a 1-5 Likert scale and market research to understand how the dimensions of experiential marketing specially personalized behavior of the staff in the experiential events affect the mood and behavior towards the brand. The questionnaire collected the demographics, motivation level, and purchase behavior of the transgender in buying the cosmetic products from an experiential event.

The reliability was checked by using Cronbach's alpha which was above 0.79. The predictors incorporated in the study reflected a linear relationship with the items. The normality was checked by applying the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test which was above 0.06.

**Descriptive Statistics for transgender in an experiential marketing setting of cosmetics:**

N=50	RANGE:	MEAN	SD
Employee behavior	1-5	1.28	0.95
Personalized attention	1-5	2.99	1.12
Joy	1-5	1.84	0.86
Confidence	1-5	1.63	0.91
Ambience	1-5	2.18	1.42
Offers	1-5	3.62	1.39
Self Esteem	1-5	1.96	0.83

**Results of the Chi-square test**

Item	Factor	$\chi^2$ Value	df	p-value
1. The behavior of the employee in an experiential marketing setting of cosmetics makes you happy	Gender	5.937	4	.024
2. The brand's experiential strategy refreshes your mood	Gender	6.142	4	.030
3. The Experiential Marketing event helps in raising your confidence	Gender	9.184	4	.029
4. The self-esteem gets boosted and stress minimizes in an experiential marketing setting from your chosen brand	Gender	6.221	5	.036
5. Do you recommend the products bought to your friends	Gender	5.612	4	.049

### Goodness of Fit

VARIABLES	KMO VALUE	BARLETT'S TEST	SIG	CRONBACH'S ALPHA
EM(STAFF BEHAVIOUR)	0.64	194.26	0	0.872
STRESS	0.71	614.20	0	0.796
CUSTOMER LOYALTY	0.59	812.76	0	0.736

**Research Result:**-The hypothesis testing is based on the goodness of fit shown in the above table to check the validity of the questionnaire. The regression coefficient for biased personalized behavior of the staff was not statistically significant at 5% of the significance level with a p-value of 0.46 and t count of 0.26 so it can be concluded that H<sub>0</sub> was accepted and H<sub>1</sub> was rejected. The regression coefficient of the stress level of the transgender for customer loyalty was not statically significant at 5% of the significance level with a p-value of 0.38 and t-count of 0.32. So it was concluded that H<sub>0</sub> was accepted and H<sub>2</sub> was not supported.

**Conclusion:**-The bivariate correlation was conducted to analyze the association of the dimensions of experiential marketing with stress and buying behavior. Transgender showed a higher correlation value between the dimensions of experiential marketing, stress, and buying behavior in comparison to males and females. The table of the chi-square test shows the significant differences among the subgroups of

the genders. The transgender significantly answered towards the lower scale in comparison to males and females. The difference in the responses of the items was prominently different between the genders. It was sought that the employees' behavior and staffs attitude towards the transgender customers were different and it affected the mood, stress level, buying pattern, and loyalty towards the brand. The personalized behavior of the staff towards the transgender is different from their behavior towards the male and female. The psychological impact and stress triggers their buying behavior and results in lower loyalty whereas the positive staff's attitude and behavior towards male and female generates the emotional connection with the brand and results in high customer loyalty. The other dimensions like ambiance and offers excite them. The brand should assess and implicit the discrimination towards the transgender community. Proper behavioral training programs should be imparted to staff members to reduce the disparity based on gender. The cultural stigma and stereotype should be pushed in the non-prejudice framework.



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