

**THE IMPACT OF BRAND IMAGE AND CUSTOMER  
EXPERIENCE ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR: A  
STUDY AMONG INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS ON  
OFO, MOBIKE AND HELLOBIKE IN NANJING, CHINA**

**THESIS**



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## PERNYATAAN

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## ABSTRAK

Seiring dengan perkembangan ekonomi Cina, banyak perusahaan baru muncul dan berhasil menarik investasi senilai miliaran dolar. Salah satunya adalah di sektor *bike-sharing*, sepeda umum yang digunakan terletak dan disewa melalui aplikasi *smartphone*, jenis sewa sepeda ini tidak memiliki stasiun dok, sewa sepeda yang benar-benar bebas. Dengan tujuan untuk meningkatkan keunggulan kompetitif dalam persaingan yang ketat, perusahaan mengkaji *brand image* dan *customer experience* dengan tujuan untuk mendapatkan pemahaman yang lebih baik tentang *brand position* mereka di pasar dan tentang apa yang pelanggan rasakan dan inginkan.

*Brand image* memiliki peran penting untuk peningkatan kinerja bisnis, oleh karena *brand image* merupakan faktor yang secara positif dapat mengubah perilaku pembelian konsumen (*consumer buying behavior*). *Customer experience* adalah salah satu faktor untuk mempertahankan dan menjaga hubungan antara pelanggan dan merek (*brand*). Manajemen yang tepat pada *customer experience* merupakan salah satu faktor paling penting dalam membangun kepuasan pelanggan (*customer satisfaction*) dan loyalitas pelanggan (*customer loyalty*). Penelitian ini menjelaskan dampak *brand image* dan *customer experience* pada *consumer buying behavior* di sektor *bike-sharing* Kota Nanjing, Cina dengan mengambil kasus *Ofo*, *Mobike* dan *Hellobike*. Survei kuesioner dilakukan untuk mengumpulkan data menggunakan metode kuesioner dengan skala Likert kepada siswa internasional yang menggunakan aplikasi *bike-sharing* di Nanjing, Cina. Secara khusus, 175 data responden diperoleh, kemudian data diproses menggunakan perangkat lunak SPSS 25 untuk menguji validitas dan reliabilitas.

Hasil analisis menunjukkan bahwa *brand image* dan *customer experience* memiliki pengaruh positif langsung dan hubungan yang signifikan dengan *consumer buying behavior*. Penelitian ini memberikan saran untuk *Ofo*, *Mobike* dan *Hellobike* (nama perusahaan *bike-sharing* dalam studi ini) untuk meningkatkan kualitas pelayanan pelanggan (*customer service*) mereka yang akan mengarah pada *customer experience* yang lebih baik dan *brand image* yang positif. Selain itu *Ofo*, *Mobike* dan *Hellobike* perlu menerapkan strategi bisnis yang tepat dan spesifik dalam mempertahankan pelanggan yang sudah ada dan menarik pelanggan baru. Implikasi manajerial dari penelitian ini telah disesuaikan dengan kondisi terbaru dari *Ofo*, *Mobike* dan *Hellobike* untuk memperkuat dan mempertahankan *brand image* dan *customer experience* dari masing-masing perusahaan *bike-sharing* tersebut untuk mendapatkan keunggulan kompetitif (*competitive advantage*) di pasar.

**Kata kunci:** *Brand Image, Customer Experience, Consumer Buying Behavior, Bike-sharing*

## ABSTRACT

Along with the development of China's economy, a lot of business start-ups have emerged and succeed to attract billion dollars of investment to their disposal. One of them is in the bike-sharing sector, common-usage bicycles are located and rented via a smartphone application, this kind of bicycle rent has no bike-stands, no set docking station, a truly free-roam bicycle rent. In order to enhance the competitive advantage in the tight competition, firms examining the brand image and customer experience with the goal to get a better understanding of their brand position in the market and on what their customers feel and want.

Brand image is the key driver of brand equity, which refers to consumers general perception and feeling about a brand and has an influence on consumer behavior. Brand image plays a significant role to boost up any business performance as the brand image is an implied tool which can positively change consumers buying behaviors, on the other hand customer experience is one of the tools to maintain the relationship between customers and the brand itself. Proper management on customer experience is one of the most essential factor in building customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of brand image and customer experience on consumer buying behavior in bike-sharing sector in Nanjing, China by taking the case of Ofo, Mobike and Hellobike. A questionnaire survey was conducted to collect the data using questionnaire method by Likert scale to international students who use bike-sharing application in Nanjing, China. Specifically, 175 respondents were obtained, the data is processed using SPSS 25 software in order to test the validity and reliability.

Findings show that brand image and customer experience have a direct positive influence and significant relationship with consumer buying behavior. This study also gives suggestions for Ofo, Mobike and Hellobike to improve the quality of their customer service which will lead to a better customer experience and positive brand image. In addition, Ofo, Mobike and Hellobike need to implement the right and improved strategy in maintaining existing customers and attracting new customers. Managerial implication of this study had been adjusted with the latest conditions of Ofo, Mobike and Hellobike to strengthen and sustain its brand image and customer experience in order to gain competitive advantage.

**Keywords:** Brand Image, Customer Experience, Consumer Buying Behavior, Bike-sharing

## 摘要

随着中国经济的发展，许多创新业态已经显现并成功吸引数十亿美元的投资。共享单车行业便是一个典型。与传统单车应用不同的是，共享单车的位置和租用都是基于智能手机软件的，而且共享单车既没有固定的停车租车处，也没有设置停靠站，实现了真正自主漫游式的单车租赁。为了在激烈的竞争中增强企业的竞争力优势，公司通常会通过调查品牌形象及其客户行为，以更好地理解其品牌市场定位以及消费者需求和感受等。

品牌形象是品牌资产的关键驱动因素，它涉及到消费者对品牌的整体认知与感受，并会对消费者行为产生显著影响。品牌形象在提升公司绩效方面具有重要作用，品牌形象对消费者的行为有了积极的变化。而消费者体验是维护客户和品牌本身关系的工具之一。有了恰当的管理才能建立客户的满意和客户的忠诚度。本研究旨在以小黄车、摩拜单车和哈罗行车为列，深入检视品牌形象和消费者体验对南京共享单车行业的消费者消费行为的影响，其中，调查方法是用李克特量表法来采集数据，调查对象是在南京使用共享单车软件的留学生。具体而言，本研究实地获得了 175 受访者的调查数据，并运用 SPSS 25 软件对数据进行处理，以便验证正确性和可靠性。

研究结果显示，品牌现象和客户体验对消费者消费行为具有积极影响和显著关系。本研究并对黄车、摩拜单车和哈罗行车等提出消费者服务质量改进建议，以更好的消费者体验和更好的品牌形象。此外，黄车、摩拜单车和哈罗行车还有必要在留住现有客户和吸引新客户方面实施更可靠的策略。本研究进一步根据小黄车、摩拜单车和哈罗行车的最新情况提出了管理启示，以加强和维持企业的竞争优势。

**关键词：**品牌形象，消费者体验，消费者消费行为，共享单车



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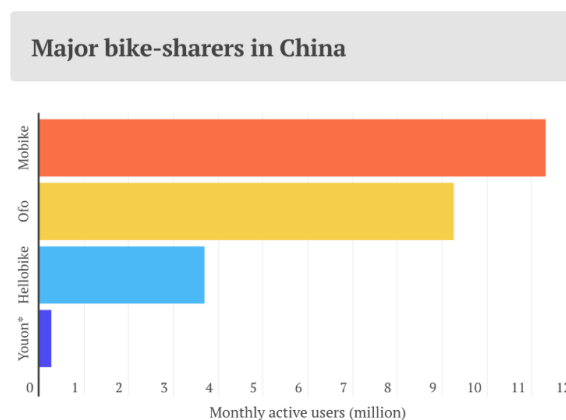
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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Research Background

China is well-known as the world capital of bicycles. Over the last 4 years, China has been infected by a bike-sharing fever where brightly colored bicycles are located and rented via smartphone application. They are ridden for a time period and then parked at the roadside for the next consumer. No bike stands, no set docking station, truly free-roam bicycle rent. Until now, around 60 firms have put 16-18 million bicycles onto Chinese streets. Ofo was founded in 2014 and based in Beijing, China. Ofo is the world's first and largest station-free bike sharing platform. On the other hand, Mobike was founded in 2015 and today it claims to have over 100 million registered users across more than 100 cities. While Hellobike was first unveiled in 2016, but not until late 2018 this bike-sharing brand rise to become one of the giant in the industry. Currently, Hellobike becomes the country's third-largest bike-sharing app.



Note: Youon is Hellobike's second-largest shareholder

Data: Trustdata (May 2018)

Chart: Tech in Asia

**Figure 1.1.** Major bike-sharing users in China

For consumers, decision making to buy some products or services can be painful (Pfister, 2003). It needs effortful processing of available information to reach a suitable judgment. Thus, consumers may rely on inferences to make a choice. Inferences come from previous experiences and relevant information about the product's cues like a brand. Brand image can be defined as "a set of perceptions about a brand as reflected by the brand associations held in consumer's memory" (Hsieh and Lindridge, 2005). Brand image is the reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to a specific brand, hence brand is important for every product in the market. Brand image is what comes to the mind of the customer when a brand name is mentioned. There are three important aspects of an image, such as favorability, strength, and uniqueness of brand associations. A positive brand image reduces the customer's perceived risk about the brand and increases the level of customer's satisfaction and loyalty. In order to differentiate their brand image, firms should deliver a compelling customer experience. This compelling customer experience is the key driver of customer loyalty (Juthamard Sirapacha and Gerard Tocquer, 2012).

While customer experience can be defined as the outcome of customers interactions with the company, which include the interaction with the staff, self-service technologies, and the service environment. These interactions influence not only what they think and feel about a brand but also the strength of their relationship with the brand (Xu and Chan, 2010). There are seven reasons for the importance of customer experience, that is, it improves customer satisfaction, fosters repeat customers and customer loyalty, increases customer advocacy and referrals, reduces customer churn, creates a competitive advantage, increases revenue and sales, and builds stronger customer relationships. Positive customer experience can build its own momentum,

creating an 'ecosystem of goodwill' which costs relatively little to maintain but can deliver a loyal fan base and tangible bottom-line returns (KPMG LLP, 2011).

A consumer is a person who purchased a product. Thus, the consumer can be defined as, "Any individual who buy products or services from a market for his/her personal usage". A consumer consumes all those goods and services which are available in the market to fulfill their needs and wants. Different consumers show different behaviors toward products and services. Therefore, the study of their behavior is another important task for producers and marketers. Further, consumer buying behavior has shown a consumer play three types of roles while buying a product which are buyer, payer and user. If a consumer feels satisfied with one brand, then he/she will show a commitment with the brand and become loyal to it. Any business can attain the attraction of people through branding and enjoy the competitive advantage of the market.

Brand can be defined as a special name and/or symbol, such as trademark, logo or package design intended to identify the products or services of either one seller or a group of sellers, and to differentiate those products or services from the competitors (Aaker, 1991). A brand name gives the value, identity and meaning to the product itself. A brand is a set of mental associations and these associations should be exclusive, desirable and strong. It is very important to note that how a consumer perceives about the brand. Hence, perceived quality can be further divided into service quality and product quality. Service quality is judged by its empathy, responsiveness, competence, reliability and tangibility. While product quality is perceived by its seven dimensions; features, performance, durability, reliability, conformance with specification and serviceability (Aaker 1991). Consumers give importance to all those factors which are related to their selected brands. Brand image is the key driver of brand equity, which refers to the consumer's general perception and feeling about a brand and has an

influence on consumer behavior. For marketers, whatever their companies' marketing strategies are, the main purpose of their marketing activities is to influence consumers' perception and attitude toward a brand, establish the brand image in consumers' mind, and stimulate consumers' actual purchasing behavior of the brand, therefore increasing sales, maximizing the market share and developing brand equity (Zhang, Y. 2015).

At present time, business work is not only about price but also consumer satisfaction, attraction, relationship, and loyalty matter a lot. Perception of consumers about a brand depends on their experience because it involves how they thought and feel about the brand itself. At the same time, it is also able to measure the strength of consumers' relationship with the brand. Therefore, it is important to investigate this subject. The main purpose of this research is to explore the impact of brand image and customer experience on consumer buying behavior in bike-sharing market in Nanjing, China.

## **1.2. Problem Statement**

Mobike, Ofo and Hellobike are three different bike-sharing firms which has quite significance market portion in China, their brand image and customer experience presumably affected their consumer buying behavior. From this approach, the author can define some main problems that this research seeks to solve.

- 1) How is the impact of bike-sharing's brand image on customer experience?
- 2) How is the impact of bike-sharing brand image on bike-sharing's consumer buying behavior?
- 3) How is the impact of customer experience on bike-sharing's consumer buying behavior?

### **1.3. Research Objectives**

The main objective of this study is to analyze the impact of brand image and customer experience on consumer buying behavior. The objectives of this study are:

- 1) To establish the impact of bike-sharing's brand image on customer experience.
- 2) To establish the impact of customer experience on bike-sharing's consumer buying behavior.
- 3) To establish the impact of bike-sharing's brand image on bike-sharing's consumer buying behavior.

### **1.4. Scope of Research**

This research will focus on brand image, customer experience, relationship between brand image and customer experience, relationship between brand image and consumer buying behavior, relationship between customer experience and consumer buying behavior. This research used questionnaire to gather and summarize customers perceptions. Questionnaire participants were international students who use Mobike, Ofo and Hellobike in Nanjing, China.

### **1.5. Research Significance**

From this research Ofo, Mobike and Hellobike will find out the impact of their brand image and customer experience on their consumer buying behavior. In this research consumer only refer to international students in Nanjing, China. This study gives a brief understanding on how to improve brand image and customer experience so that, Ofo, Mobike and Hellobike can get competitive advantages. This study also informs Ofo, Mobike and Hellobike about their deficiency from the consumers perspective.

## **1.6. Research Contents**

This research is divided into seven chapters, that is, introduction, literature review, research methodology, Mobike, Ofo and Hellobike company profile, empirical analysis of the research result, recommendation and managerial implication, conclusion, limitation and future research. This study is divided into seven chapters as illustrated below:

**Chapter 1: Introduction**, presents the field of investigation, the identified problem area, and the research question. The case company is briefly described and connected to the topic of the dissertation.

**Chapter 2: Literature Review and Conceptual Framework**, a comprehensive summary of previous research and theoretical review on brand image, customer experience, and consumer buying behavior, giving definitions and discussing different perspectives on related theories. Explanation of the relationship between brand image and customer experience, brand image and consumer buying behavior, customer experience and consumer buying behavior.

**Chapter 3: Research Methodology**, the methodology used to collect information and data includes research model, research steps, operationalization variables, and data collection method. The researcher philosophy of science position is presented together with the overall research strategy and techniques employed for data collection.

**Chapter 4: Bike-sharing Company Profile**, a brief introduction on bike-sharing firms and their brand, condition of the company, bike-sharing firms development process and PEST analysis for this type of business.

**Chapter 5: The Empirical and Comprehensive Analysis of The Research,** provides descriptive analysis result, crosstabs analysis, model verification and hypothesis test.

**Chapter 6: Recommendations and Managerial Implications,** provides suggestive recommendations and insights based on the empirical findings and further research such as latest literature review and interview.

**Chapter 7: Conclusions, Limitations and Future Research,** summarizes the research and its findings, presents theoretical implications as well as limitations and future research of the research.