The Relationship between Marketing Communications and Customer Experiences:A Case Study of an Open and Distance Learning University in Malaysia

Stefanie Ng
Asia e UniversityNo 4, Jalan Sultan Sulaiman, 50000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Abstract: *The first objective of this paper is to establish whether there is a significant relationship between marketing communications (Marcoms) and customer experiences. The second objective is to identify the significant brand touchpoints of Marcomsthat are strongly correlated with customer pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase experiences. The third objective is to determine whether there is a significant relationship between customer post-purchase experiences and overall brand satisfaction, and the fourth objective is to determine whether there is a significant relationship between overall brand satisfaction and brand advocacy.*
The methodological approach to address the research questions is quantitative within the broader mixed methods research design for executing a case study strategy (Yin, 1994, 2009) of investigation. The unit of study is a real-life example of an open and distance learning (ODL) university in Malaysia disguised under the pseudonym of 'The Study University'. The statistical test results generated from the software package of SmartPLSconfirmed that as a whole, 'Marcoms' as an independent variable/constructcomprising 12 brand touchpoints has a significant relationship with the dependent variable of 'customer experiences'. The relationship between the two variables is strong and positive indicating thatMarcomshas a large influence on customer pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase experiences of PhD students with The Study University in the PhD decision journey.Findings show eight (8)key brand touchpoints of Marcoms that are strongly correlated with customer experiences: 1. Internet marketing, 2. Personal selling, 3. Customer support services, 4. Public relations/publicity, 5. Event marketing, 6. Word-of-mouth (WOM) communications, 7. Sales promotion, and 8. Offline advertising.Test results also show that there is a significant relationship between customer post-purchase experiences and overall brand satisfaction with The Study University. The relationship between these two variables is moderate and positive. Similarly, the results indicate that there is a significant relationship betweenoverall brand satisfaction with The Study University and brand advocacy. The relationship between these two variables is also moderate and positive.All the five research hypotheses: H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5 are supportedand the four research objectives are achieved with empirical evidence.

Keywords and Acronyms:*Marketing communications (Marcoms), brand touchpoints (BTPs), brand advocacy (BA), customer pre-purchase experiences (CPPE), customer purchase experiences (CPE), customer post-purchase experiences (CPSPE), higher educational institutions (HEIs), open and distance learning (ODL), overall brand satisfaction (OBS), PhD (Doctor of Philosophy).*

I. Introduction

Marcomsare widely used by organisations in various sectors of an economy to generate responses from potential and existing customers to their brands of offer. In the Malaysian economy, the education segment of the services sectoris one of the key drivers of socio-economic transformation.The proactive role of the Malaysian government in liberalising/privatising higher education to attract 200,000 international students valued at RM6 billion or 10% international student enrolment by 2020 (Malaysia, 2011a; Malaysia 2011b; Malaysia, 2012c) has led to the rapid growth of the higher educational institutions (HEIs) (Sirat, 2005; Tham, 2013).In 2012, there were 606 HEIs in Malaysia, of which 20 were public universities, 36 private universities and university colleges, 7 branch campuses of foreign universities, 485 public colleges, 21 polytechnics and 37 community colleges (Malaysia, 2012d; Wong, 2013). As at 31 August 2013, besides other types of HEIs in Malaysia, an official document of MyBrain15 (2010, 2013) from the Ministry of Education shows a total of 68 universities, comprising 20 public universities, 40 private universities and 8 branch campuses of foreign universities.

Rivalryamong public and private HEIs is reflected in the heavy engagement of Marcoms tools and media to gain customer attention to their brands of offer. The secondary data generated from a literature search as part of the exploratory researchof this case study indicate strongly that Marcoms play an important role in marketing higher educational programmes whereby universities were the 5th largest category of advertisers in Malaysia with an estimated total expenditure of RM175 million in 2013 (DentsuAegis, 2013) (see Appendix A).

Apart from advertising, there are other categories of Marcoms being used by universities and other HEIs in Malaysia. The phenomenon of using Marcoms for generating customer experiences is contemporary and fast emerging in view of the increasing popularity of using the instrument by universities in Malaysia to market their brands of educational programmes. Such a practice has inevitably led to the assumption that there is a relationship between Marcoms and customer experiences.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In view of the important role of Marcomsin marketing higher education programmes and the enormous amount of financial resources committed by HEIs which include The Study University, this paper aims to achievethe 4 objectives as stated above which are aligned with 4 research questions and 5 hypotheses as shown below:

1. Is there a significant relationship between Marcoms and customer pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey?

Hypotheses:
H1o: There is no significant relationship between Marcomsand customer pre-purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey.
H1: There is a significant relationship between Marcomsand customer pre-purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey.

H2o: There is no significant relationship between Marcomsand customer purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey.
H2: There is a significant relationship between Marcomsand customer purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey.

H3o: There is no significant relationship between Marcomsand customer post-purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey.
H3: There is a significant relationship between Marcomsand customer post-purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey.

2. Which are the significant brand touchpoints of Marcomsthat are strongly correlated with customer pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase experiences?

No Hypothesis

3. Is there a significant relationship between customer post-purchase experiences and overall brand satisfaction with The Study University?

Hypothesis:
H4o: There is no significant relationship between customer post-purchase experiences and overall brand satisfaction with The Study University.
H4: There is a significant relationship between customer post-purchase experiences and overall brand satisfaction with The Study University.

4.Is there a significant relationship between overall brand satisfaction with The Study University and brand advocacy?

Hypothesis:
H5o: There is no significant relationship between overall brand satisfaction with The Study University and brand advocacy.
H5: There is a significant relationship between overall brand satisfaction with The Study University and brand advocacy.

II. Literature Review

The body of literature on the Marcoms, brand touchpoints and experiential aspect of marketing is expanding in recent years but the bulk of research studies centres mainly on products and services other than education.Theearly works of scholars prior to the year 2000 such asStrong (1925), Shannon and Weaver (1949), Schramm (1954),Hirschman and Holbrook (1982, 1986), Rodgers, (1983, 1962), Colley (1983, 1961), Lavidge

and Steiner (1961),Carlzon, (1987), Barry and Howard (1990), Keller (1993), Kapferer (1997), Oliver (1997), Burnett and Moriarty (1998), Pine II and Gilmore (1999) and Schmitt (1999) have inspired later scholars in redefining marketing constructs. Contributions by scholars e.gGronroos (2000), Duncan (2002, 2005), Davis and Dunn (2002), Caru and Cova (2003), Davis and Longoria (2003),Shimp (2003, 2007), Braun (2004),Shaw (2004, 2007), Smith and Taylor (2004),Schultz and Schultz (2004),Blythe (2006), Jenkinson (2007),Meyer and Schwager (2007),Hughes and Fill (2007),Zarantonelloet al. (2007), Elliot and Percy (2007),Gentile, Spiller and Noci (2007),McKinsey-Court, et al. (2009), Brakus et al.(2009), Fill (2009),Spengler and Wirth (2009), Kotler and Armstrong (2010), McCall (2010),Schmitt (2010), de Chernatony et al. (2010),Smith and Zook (2011), Lancaster and Massingham (2011), Skard, et al. (2011), Kotler and Keller (2012), Belch and Belch (2012), Schmitt and Zarantonell (2013),Aaker (2013) and Klaus and Maklan (2013)provide valuable inputs to thetheoretical framework of this study.

Marketing Communications and Brand Touchpoints

Literature informs thatMarcoms can evoke the desired audience responses and induce a prospect/customer to experience/engage with a brand. Marcomsrefer to a mix of tools and media for message delivery (Fill, 2009). A company is represented by its brand of offer which is communicated to its target customers by means of Marcoms. The point of contact between the customer and the brand via Marcoms is known as 'brand touchpoint' which has been termed as 'communication touchpoint' by Jenkinson (2007).Kotler, et al. (2009) and Spengler and Wirth (2009) contend that all touchpointscontribute to building customer/brand experiences. Burnett and Moriarty (2006) argue that the primary value of a 'touchpoint' is the experience a brand provides.Although there are many other ways of creating touchpointsfor engaging customers with an organisation, this study focused only on Marcoms-based touchpoints.Customer experiences with the brand touchpoints of Marcomscan be positive or negative. There is a general consensus among scholars that customer experiences, brand satisfaction and brand advocacy can be influenced by Marcoms in one way or the other.

Customer Experiences

Marcoms,brand touchpointsand customer or brand experiences are inter-related constructs. Schultz (2006)asserts that marketers send out messages through the media and consumers respond in some ways.A review of literature indicates that the concept of customer experience is expressed in terms of human responsesto external stimuli including Marcoms by using the inherent five senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell and taste.To illustrate,Meyer and Schwager (2007, 118) define the notion of 'customer experience' as "the internal and subjective response customers have to any direct or indirect contact with a company."Schmitt (1999, 2010), Zarantonelloet al. (2007) and Brakus et al.(2009) build upon the definition by Meyer and Schwager (2007) and expand further by stating that customer/brand experience is "the subjective, internal consumer responses (sensations, feelings and cognitions) and behavioral responses evoked by brand-related stimuli that are part of a brand's design and identity, packaging, communications and environments". The role of Marcoms in stimulating customer's cognitive, affective and conative/behaviouralresponses has been explicated in the classic advertising models of AIDA – an acronym for awareness, interest, desire, action (Strong, 1925), Hierarchy-of-Effects (Lavidge and Steiner, 1961) and DAGMAR - an acronym for determining advertising goals for measured advertising results (Colley, 1983, 1961) and other Audience Response Hierarchy Models.

Theoretical Model

There is no one existing theoretical model from literature which can be directly applied to this study. Nevertheless, two theoretical models have been referred to in this study. First, is the model proposed by Shannon and Weaver (1949) to provide knowledge of human interpersonal communication process and to illustrate the existence of two fields of experience: sender's/marketer's field of experience and receiver's/customer's field of experience. The sender's field of experience was excluded from this study while the receiver's field of experience was included in this study. The second model isthe Brand Touchpoint Wheel(Davis and Longoria, 2003)wherebyMarcomshave been conceived as brand touchpoints which wrap round the customer in three stages of a circular customer decision journeyinstead of the conventional one-way linear direction. The pre-purchase touchpoints include advertising, public relations, web sites, new media, direct mail/samples, coupons and incentives, deals and promotions. The purchase touchpoints include packaging, point-of-purchase displays, store and shelf placements, salespeople and sales environments. The post-purchase touchpoints include product and package performance, customer service, newsletters, and loyalty programs.

Conceptual Model

Using the Brand Touchpoint Wheel Model of Davis and Longoria (2003) as the theoretical underpinning of this study, a new conceptual model (see Table 1) was developed for this study by incorporating the exploratory research findings of the case study and the technique of model building provided by the statistical software package, SmartPLS.

**Table 1:Customer Experiences with Brand Touchpoints of
Marketing Communications Model**

Source: Developed for this study (Ng, 2015).
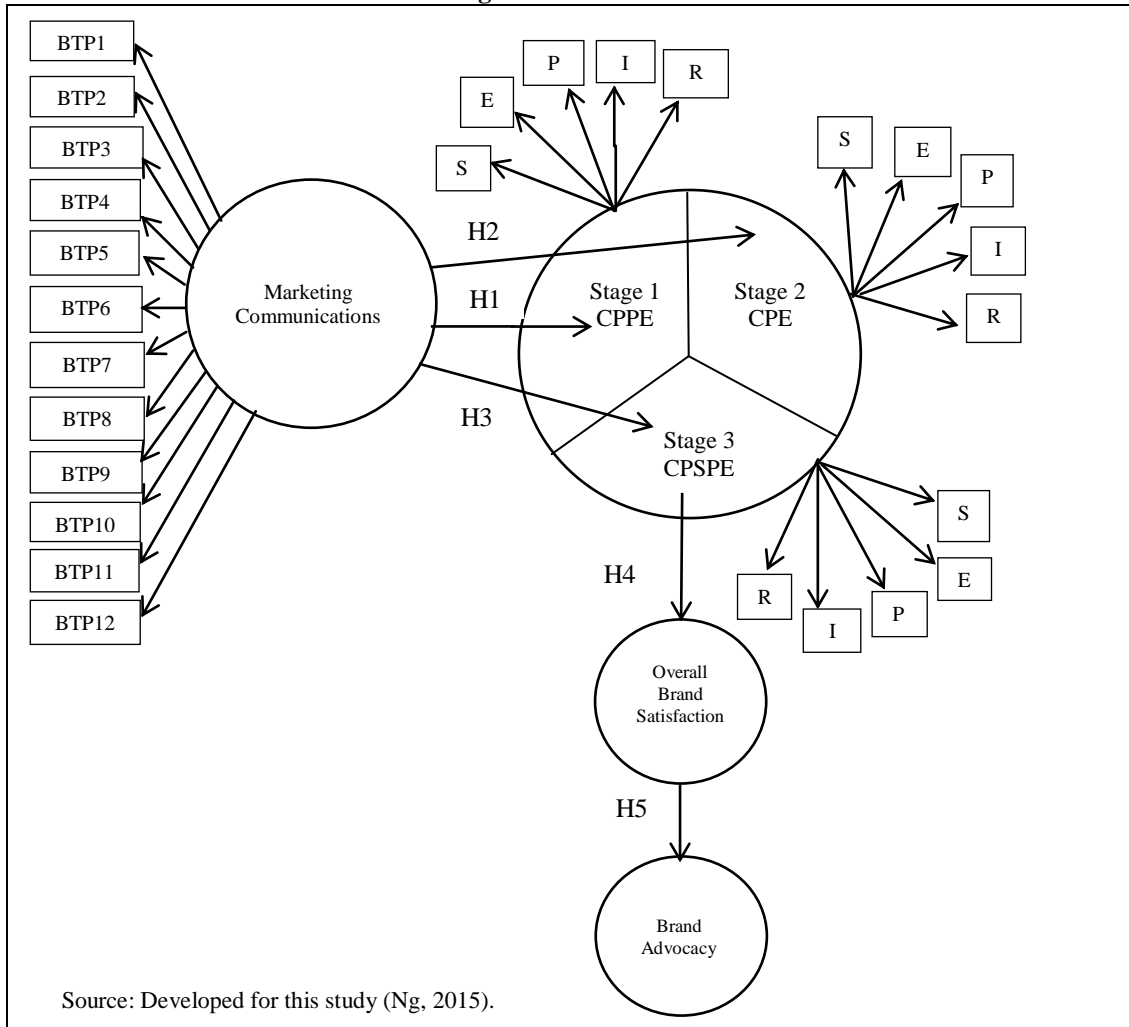
Keys
Brand Touchpoints of Marketing Communications:
BTP1   Offline Advertising
BTP2   Online Advertising
BTP3   Public Relations/Publicity
BTP4   Direct Marketing
BTP5   Internet Marketing
BTP6   Personal Selling
BTP7   Event Marketing
BTP8   Sales Promotion
BTP9   Sponsorships/Partnerships
BTP10   Customer Support Services
BTP11   Word-of-Mouth (WOM) Communications
BTP12   Point-of-Sale (POS) Marketing
CPPE   Customer pre-purchase experiences
CPE   Customer purchase experiences
CPSPE   Customer post-purchase experiences

Dimensions of customer experiences:
S   Sensory dimension
E   Emotional dimension
P   Physical dimension
I   Intellectual dimension
R   Relational dimension
Note: SPSS codes for scale items in Appendix B.
Source: Developed for this study.

Based on marketing/Marcoms theory, the dependent variable is 'customer experiences' while the independent variable is the 'Marcoms' factor. Within the theoretical PhD decision journey, there are 3 stages which a customer goes through: stage 1: CPPE, stage 2: CPE and stage 3: CPSPE. For simplicity, 12 BTPs of Marcoms identified from findings of the exploratory phase of this case study have been coded as BTP1 (offline advertising), BTP2 (online advertising), BTP3 (public relations/publicity), BTP4 (direct marketing), BTP5 (Internet marketing), BTP6 (personal selling), BTP7 (event marketing), BTP8 (sales promotion), BTP9 (sponsorships/partnerships), BTP10 (customer support services), BTP11 (word-of-mouth communications) and BTP12 (point-of-sales marketing). However, these BTPs have been re-coded to facilitate data examination, processing and analysisby using SPSS 20.0(see Appendix B).

Literature and empirical evidence inform that post-purchase experiences are important as they affect future decision-making.When post-purchase experience is satisfactory, the consumer is likely to repeat purchasing and/or recommend the same brand to others by word-of-mouth (WOM) communications (McKinsey-Court, et al., 2009). On the contrary, brand dissatisfaction adversely affects future purchasing decision. Dissatisfied consumers not only are unlikely to repurchase the same brand but may also spread negative remarks to discourage others from purchasing the brand. Studies have shown that negative WOM communications spread more rapidly than positive WOM communications and can become viral especially when messages are delivered through the Internet and social media platforms.

Operational Definitions
The conceptual model provides the basis for identifying a set of concepts important to this study. The following are the concepts beingoperationalised for facilitating the design of appropriate research instruments:

Customersrefer to registered full-time and part-time PhD students of The Study University's four (4) PhD degree programmes by research.

PhDDecision Journey refers to the purchasing decision journey of the participants as customers of The Study University. The theoretical PhD decision journey covers 3 stages: pre-purchase (searching for information prior to making some form of payment for enrolment in the PhD degree programmes by research); purchase (enrolment by making some form of payment for The Study University's PhD programme fees), and post-purchase (after enrolment in The Study University's PhD degree programmes by research). The post-purchase stage excludes graduation.

Marketing Communications(Marcoms)refer to a mix of tools and media for creating brand touchpoints (BTPs) to engage customers with The Study University.In quantitative analysis, 'Marcoms' as a whole is the independent variable/factor influencing customer experiences. The operational definitions of twelve (12) BTPs of Marcomsrelevant to this study are as follows:

BTP1: Offline Advertisingrefers to the use of paid-for, non-personal advertising in newspapers, journal and billboards. Commercial advertising using the audio-visual/broadcast media such as radio, television and cinema was excluded from offline advertising since The Study University did not used it.

BTP2: Online Advertising refers to the paid-for electronic advertising in search engines (Google's pay-per-click) and third-party portals (www.hotcourses.com.my, and www.mastersstudies.com). Paid-for social media advertising in YouTube and Facebook was excluded since The Study University did not use it.

BTP3: Public Relations/Publicity refers to activities initiated by The Study University to build relationships with the public/prospects/customers e.g campus visits, talks, seminars, media news releases, media interviews, articles published in the newspapers, gifts to speakers/visitors, text and visual messages/videos posted in The Study University's website and social media platforms (Facebook Fan Page, Twitter and YouTube).

BTP4: Direct Marketing refers to the use of direct mail, email, fax, and telemarketing.

BTP5: Internet Marketing refers to the use of The Study University's own website/portal and web-based communication mechanisms for information sharing and commercial transactions e.g enquiries, online application and payment of fees.

BTP6: Personal Selling refers to the use of face-to-face communications by the sales and marketing staff or representatives of The Study University to facilitate application and enrolment in study programmes.

BTP7: Event Marketing refers to the use of: (a) events organised by The Study University and held at its Kuala Lumpur Learning Centre for the public/prospects/customerse.g 'Academic Preview', 'Preview and Registration Day', 'Orientation Day', and 'Mini Exhibitions' held at shopping malls, corporate and institutional premises, and (b) events organised by external parties and held at public venues for the public/prospects/customerse.g The Star Education Fair and Facon Education Fair in the Kuala Lumpur Convention Centre (KLCC) and NAPEI Education Fair in the Mid Valley Shopping Mall's Exhibition Centre in Kuala Lumpur.

BTP8: Sales Promotion refers to the offer of incentives which include low registration fees, programme fee discounts for early and full payment, rebates, special fee discounts for senior citizens, handicapped, alumni and certain institutional customers.

BTP9: Sponsorships/Partnerships refer to The Study University's arrangements with its partnerse.g government bodies, institutions and corporations to enrol their sponsored employees in itsstudy programmes.

BTP10: Customer Support Services refer to offer of non-financial assistance or support services by The Study University which include programme counselling, handling enquiries, assisting students to apply for government scholarships e.g MyBrain15, study loans e.g PTPTN and Employee Provident Fund (EPF) withdrawal, addressing complaints, monitoring student performance, organising research workshops and colloquia, thesis supervision, providing research facilities/library resourcesand updating information on academic matters.

BTP11: Word-of-Mouth (WOM) Communications refer to the use of individual-to-individual personal communications to recommend The Study University's programmes to others e.g friends, colleagues, acquaintances and/or family members.

BTP12:Point-of-Sale (POS) Marketing refers to the use of marketing collateral/supportive display materials e.g banners, programme brochures, flyers/leaflets, information fact sheets, forms, notices, posters, wallscape, directional signs, signboards, photographs, premiums/merchandise, liquid crystal display (LCD) screen, videos, slides, computers for presentation/information sharing.

Customer Experiences refer to sensory, emotional, physical, intellectual and relational responses from the study participants to the 12 BTPs (BTP1-BTP12) of Marcoms created by The Study University. The following are the 5 dimensions of customer experiences adapted fromSchmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007), Brakus, et al.(2009) and Skard, et al. (2011)with some modifications in order to fit into the context of this study:

Sensory dimension (S) refers to the experience impressions upon human senses in the process of responding to the BTPs of Marcoms.
Emotional dimension (E)refers to the feelings and emotions in the process of responding to the BTPs of Marcoms.
Physical dimension (P) refers to the bodily actions and behaviours in the process of responding to the BTPs of Marcoms.
Intellectual dimension (I) refers to the logical, reflective and critical thinking in the process of responding to the BTPs of Marcoms.
Relational dimension (R) refers to the customer–brand connection in the process of responding to the BTPs of Marcoms.

Methodology and Methods of Data Collection

For this paper, the emphasis is on the quantitative methodological approach of a mixed methods designfor a case study strategy (see Appendix C) to address research questions.Survey research was adopted as the main method of data collection involvingthe process of selecting a sample from the target population and designing asurvey questionnaire to be administered to the sample participants.

The Population and Sample

The target population for the survey research has been defined as full-time and part-time PhD students of The Study University enrolled in its four (4) PhD degree programmes by research: PhD (Arts), PhD (Business Administration), PhD (Education), and PhD (Information & Communication Technology/ICT). PhD students enrolled in the Doctor of Business Administration (DBA) and Industrial Doctorate degree programmes were excluded from this study as the academic requirements/characteristics for these two degree programmes differ from that of PhD degree programmes by research. PhD graduates were also excluded from this study.

The sampling frame was based on the published list of 521 registered students in The Study University's website accessed in September 2013. In determining the appropriate sample size for 521, the system proposed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970) was adopted whereby 226 was the recommended sample size for a population which in this case was the sampling frame of 521. The SPSS 20.0 was used to generate a sample of 226 randomly from the list of 521 PhD registrants.

Survey Questionnaire andMeasurement Scales

All the survey questions areof the structured/closed-ended type revolving round the constructs to be measured quantitatively.The survey questionnaire hasa total of 94 items. The first section on demographic profile of participants has 7 nominal scale items and 1 ordinal scale item while the second, third and fourth sections on influence of BTPs of Marcoms on customer experiences has84 ordinalLikert-scale items, and the last fifth section has 2 ordinal Likert-scale itemsfor measuring overall brand satisfaction (OBS) and brand advocacy (BA).

A full description of the measures of study constructs and their corresponding dimensions is provided in Appendix B. All the measurement scales have been pilot-tested, reviewed and validated before administering the final survey questionnaire to the sample participants. The measurement items/indicators of reflective models have been subsequently tested by using the final survey data for determining the level of internal consistency reliability. The accepted threshold for Cronbach's alpha coefficient is .70 (Nunnaly, 1978). Results show that all measurement items/indicators are internally consistent and reliable since their Cronbach's alpha coefficients are ≥.70 (see Appendix G).

Methods of Data Collection

Survey research is the main method of data collection for this study which takes the form of a cross-sectional study conducted between 15 April to 31 July 2014 by using a self-administered survey questionnaire distributed via email to the randomly selected sample of 226 PhD participants of The Study University. A total of 105 sets of completed survey questionnaire were received. Allresponses were valid. The response rate was 46.5%.

Data Examination and Preparation

Data file created and saved under the SPSS 20.0 format were checked by using SPSS version 20.0 (SPSS 20.0) for missing data and outliers.Subsequently data maintained in the SPSS 20.0 format were converted and saved as [csv] in compliant with the SmartPLS format.

Outlier Analysis

Data examination for detecting outliers was carried out by executing the SPSS 20.0 procedures: Analyse > Descriptive Statistics > Frequencies > Move study variables to the Variable(s) box > Statistics > Dispersion: tick Minimum, tick Maximum> Continue > OK. Results show no missing data and no extreme cases/outliers.

Data Analysis and Findings

For non-parametric analysis involving nominal, categorical and ordinal data, there is no requirement for testing normality of distribution of data sets. A series of analyses have been carried out by using SPSS 20.0 and SmartPLS which include (a) descriptive analysis of sample demographics, (b) factor loadings of study variables, (c) CFA convergent validity, (d) internal consistency reliability (Cronbach's Alpha Coefficients), (e) discriminant validity, (f) latent variable correlations, and (g) collinearity analysis to ensure validity and reliability of measurement models before proceeding to testing significance of relationships between study variables,hypothesis testing, bivariate regression and predictive analysis. Researchers and practitioners are

constantly faced with the need to make predictions - aprediction is a statement of what is believed will happen in the future based on past experience or prior observation (Burns and Bush, 2010, 596). A predictive model is built by using the relationships believed to exist among variables (Burns and Bush, 2010, 597).

Descriptive Analysis of Sample Demographics

From a total of 105 PhD participants taking part in this study, 54.3% of the total sample participants (n=105) are male and 45.7% are female. The modal age group is between 37-42 years old. 90.5% of the participants are Malaysians and only 9.5% are foreigners originating from countries affiliated to The Study University (see Appendix Efor more information on sample demographics). Based on the standard errors of skewness and kurtosis, all observations arewithin the ± 1.96 and hence the data sets are normally distributed. However, for non-parametric statistical analysis, there is no requirement for normality of distribution.

Factor/Outer Loadings

Measurement items of Marcoms and customer experiences have been assessed by factor loading analysis. Factor loadings of ≥.50 are considered indicative and significant while factor loadings ≥.70 are considered well-defined structure. Results show that the factor loadings for all items/indicators haveexceeded the thresholds of ≥.50 (see Appendix F), thus indicating the presence of convergent validity.

CFA Convergent Validity

Measurement items have been evaluated by a comprehensive Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to ensure validity and reliability of the measurement models. Based on the values of average variances extracted (AVE) ≥.50, composite reliability and Cronbach's alphas ≥.70 (see Appendix G) for all measurement items/indicators, convergent validity and construct reliability for the measurement models havebeen achieved.

Discriminant Validity

Measurement items have also been evaluated to ensurethat the latent variables involved areindependent of each other. Results show that the latent variablesare independent of each other with correlation values ≤ .90 (see AppendicesH, I and J).

Collinearity

Measurement items have been checked for collinearity by using SPSS 20.0. There are various recommendations for acceptable levels of variance inflation factor(VIF), for example, Hair et al., (1995) suggest that the maximum value is 10 which corresponds to the tolerance of .10, while Rogerson (2001) recommends a maximum VIF value of 5. According to Field (2013), collinearity within the data is not an issue whenall VIF values are ≤ 10 and tolerance values are well ≥.20. Results show that the two constructs are independent of each other with VIF below 10 and tolerance values ≥ .20 (see Appendix K). These values arewithin the recommended levels by Field (2013).

Tests of Significant Relationship

The bootstrapping function of SmartPLS is for calculating the significant t-value (if t-value is > 1.96, sig is at p < .05). By using the bootstrapping function to test the significance of relationship between constructs/variables, the results show that all loadings and regression weights for the measurement models are significant with t-values > 1.96, p < .05 (see Appendices L, N and P).

III. Findings
Details of statistical test results are shown as below:

1. Relationship between Marcoms and Customer Pre-Purchase Experiences

The relationship between Marcoms and CPPE with The Study University in the PhD decision journey is significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05) (see Appendix L).We reject H1o in favour of H1. The relationship between Marcoms on CPPE is a strong and positive as indicated by the value of R^2 in the linear equation. The independent variable (Marcoms)accounts for 89% of variance explained in CPPE (R^2= .89, p < .05), 75% ofvariance explained in sensory dimension (R^2 = .75, p < .05), 86% of variance explained in emotional dimension (R^2 = .86, p < .05), 85% of variance explained in physical dimension (R^2 = .85, p < .05), 63% of variance explained in intellectual dimension (R^2 = .63, p < .05) and 79% of variance explained in relational dimension (R^2 = .79, p < .05) (see Figure 1 and Appendix M).

Figure 1: R Square Values

	R Square		R Square		R Square
Marcoms	0	Marcoms	0	Marcoms	0
CPPE	0.89	CPE	0.84	CPSPE	0.71
Sensory	0.75	Sensory	0.57	OBS	0.59
Emotional	0.86	Emotional	0.45	BA	0.67
Physical	0.85	Physical	0.50	Sensory	0.01
Intellectual	0.63	Intellectual	0.39	Emotional	0.51
Relational	0.79	Relational	0.42	Physical	0.55
				Intellectual	0.38
				Relational	0.38

To address the second research question, the Spearman Rho test is used to identify the significant BTPs of Marcoms that are strongly correlated with CPPE, CPE and CPSPE. Results show that 5 significant BTPs of Marcoms ($p < .05$) are strongly correlated with CPPE: Internet marketing (r= .87), personal selling (r= .85), public relations/publicity (r=.83), event marketing (r= .83), and offline advertising (r= .76) (see Figure 2).

Figure 2: Spearman's Rho Test Results
Ranking of Brand Touchpoints of Marcoms based on Correlation Coefficient Size

SPSS Code	CPPE: Ranking of BTP	r	SPSS Code	CPE: Ranking of BTP	r	SPSS Code	CPSPE: Ranking of BTP	r
x14	Internet marketing	.87	x43	Internet marketing	.87	x77	Customer support services	.88
x15	Personal selling	.85	x48	Customer support services	.84	x78	WOM communications	.82
x12	Public relations/ publicity	.83	x46	Sales promotion	.78	x75	Sales promotion	.74
x16	Event marketing	.83	x45	Event marketing	.71	x72	Internet marketing	.69
x10	Offline advertising	.76	x44	Personal selling	.69	x70	Public relations/ publicity	.66
x19	Customer support services	.76	x47	Sponsorships/ partnerships	.68	x76	Sponsorships/ partnerships	.55
x17	Sales promotion	.69	x49	WOM communications	.67	x68	Offline advertising	.54
x18	Sponsorships/ partnerships	.64	x39	Offline advertising	.65	x69	Online advertising	.48
x20	WOM communications	.63	x42	Direct marketing	.59	x71	Direct marketing	.47
x11	Online advertising	.52	x40	Online advertising	.58	x73	Personal selling	.45
x13	Direct marketing	.55	x41	Public relations/ publicity	.57	x74	Event marketing	.40
x21	POS marketing	.38	x50	POS marketing	.38	x79	POS marketing	.30

r   Correlation Coefficient
All correlations are significantat $p < .05$
Source: Extracted from Spearman's Rho test results generated from SPSS 20.0

Marcoms has a large influence/effect (> .50) on CPPE and it is a significant predictor of CPPE (β= .95, $p <.05$) (see Figure 3 and Appendix M). The Beta weight indicates that the number of standard deviations change on the dependent variable that will be produced by a change of one standard deviation on the independent variable.Marcoms also has a large influence/effect (> .50) on the dimensions of CPE and it is a significant predictor of the sensory dimension ($\beta = .82$, $p <.05$), emotional dimension ($\beta = .87$, $p <.05$), physical dimension ($\beta = .87$, $p <.05$), intellectual dimension ($\beta = .75$, $p <.05$), and relational dimension ($\beta = .84$, $p <.05$) (see Figure 3).

Figure3: Total Effect

	CPPE	Marcoms	Sensory	Emotional	Physical	Intellectual	Relational
CPPE	0	0	0.87	0.93	0.92	0.79	0.89
Marcoms	0.95	0	0.82	0.87	0.87	0.75	0.84

2. Relationship between Marcoms and Customer Purchase Experiences

The relationship between Marcoms and CPSPE with The Study University is significant (t-value > 1.96, $p < .05$) (see Appendix N).We rejectH2o in favour of H2. The relationship betweenthe two variables is strong and positive.Marcomsaccounts for 84% of variance explained in CPE (R^2= .84, $p < .05$), 57% of variance explained in sensory dimension ($R^2 = .57$, $p < .05$), 45% of varianceexplained in emotional dimension ($R^2 = .45$, $p < .05$), 50% of varianceexplained in physical dimension ($R^2 = .50$, $p < .05$), 39% of variance explained in

intellectual dimension (R^2 = .39, p < .05) and 45% of varianceexplained in relational dimension (R^2 = .45, p < .05) (see Figure 1 and Appendix O).

Results generated from the Spearman's rho test show that 4 significant BTPs of Marcoms (p < .05) are strongly correlated with CPE: Internet marketing (r= .87), customer support services (r= .84), sales promotion (r= .78), and event marketing (r= .71) (see Figure 2).

Marcomshas a large influence/effect (> .50) on CPE and it is a significant predictor of CPE (β= .92, p <.05) (see Figure 4 and Appendix O). Marcomsalso has a large effect (> .50) on the dimensions of CPE and it is a significant predictor of the sensory dimension (β = .69, p <.05), emotional dimension (β = .61, p <.05), physical dimension (β = .65, p <.05), intellectual dimension (β = .57, p <.05), and relational dimension (β = .59, p <.05) (see Figure 4).

Figure4: Total Effect

	CPE	Marcoms	Sensory	Emotional	Physical	Intellectual	Relational
CPE	0	0	0.75	0.67	0.71	0.62	0.65
Marcoms	0.92	0	0.69	0.61	0.65	0.57	0.59

3. Relationship between Marcoms and Customer Post-Purchase Experiences

The formative model for the constructs: Marcoms, CPSPE, OBS and BA is graphically shown in Figure 5. The relationship between Marcoms and CPSPE with The Study University is significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05) (see Appendix P).We rejectH3o in favour of H3. The relationship between the two variablesis strong and positive: Marcoms accounts for 71% of variance explained in CPSPE (R^2= .71, p < .05), 51% of variance explained in emotional dimension (R^2 = .51, p < .05), 55% of variance explained in physical dimension (R^2 = .55, p < .05), 38% of variance explained in intellectual dimension (R^2 = .38, p < .05), and 38% of variance explained in relational dimension (R^2 = .38, p < .05). However, the relationship between Marcomsand sensory dimension is insignificant (t-value <1.96) (Figures1 and 5).

Results generated from the Spearman's rho test show that 3 significant BTPs of Marcoms (p < .05) are strongly correlated with CPSPE: Customer support services (r= .88), WOM communications, (r= .82) and sales promotion (r= .74) (see Figure 2).

Figure5: Reflective and Formative Models For Marketing Communicationsand Customer Post-Purchase Experiences
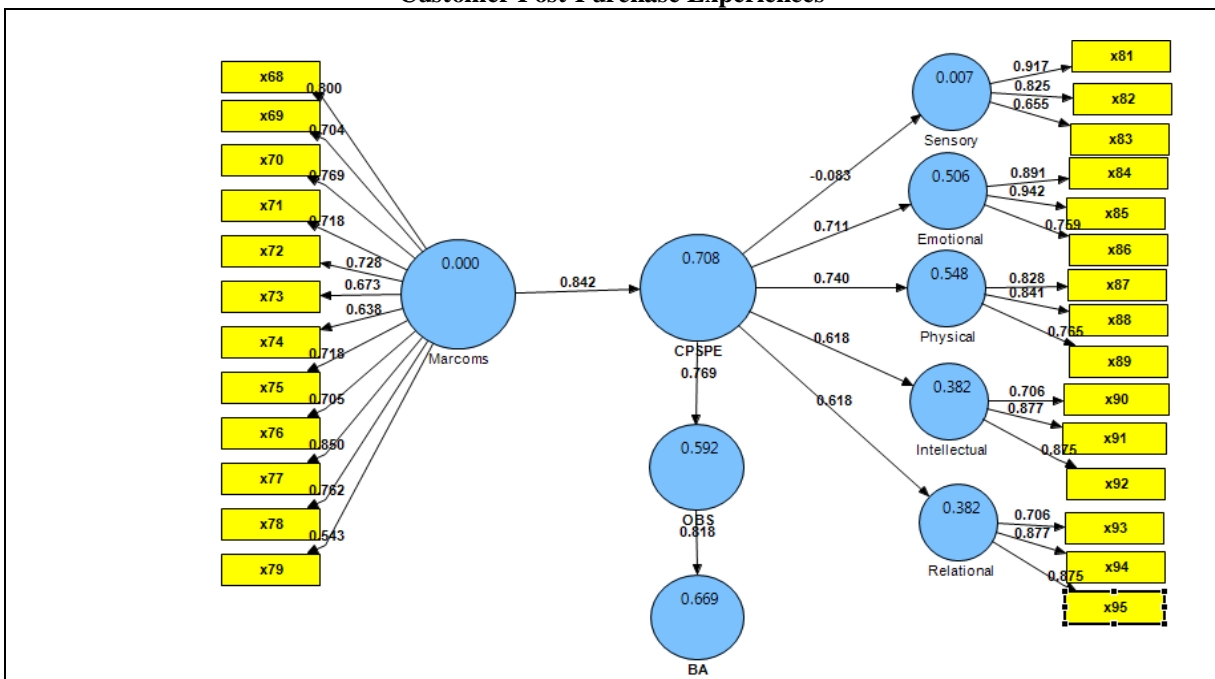
Source: Diagram generated from Smart PLS

Marcomshas a large influence/effect (> .50) on CPSPE and it is a significant predictor of CPSPE (β= .84, p <.05) (see Figures5 and 6). Marcomsalsohas a large effect (> .50) on the dimensions of CPSPE and it is a significant predictor of the emotional dimension (β = .60, p <.05), physical dimension (β = .62, p <.05), intellectual dimension (β = .52, p <.05), and relational dimension (β = .52, p <.05) except sensory dimension (β = -.07, p <.05) (see Figure 6).

Figure6: Total Effect

	CPSPE	Marcoms	OBS	BA	Sensory	Emotional	Physical	Intellectual	Relational
CPSPE	0	0	0.77	0.63	-.08	0.71	0.74	0.62	.62
Marcoms	0.84	0	0.65	0.53	-.07	0.60	0.62	0.52	.52
OBS	0	0	0	0.82	0	0	0	0	0

4. Relationship between Customer Post-Purchase Experiences and Overall Brand Satisfaction

The relationship between CPSPE on OBSwith The Study University is significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05) (see Appendix P).We reject H4o in favour of H4. The relationship between the two variables is moderate and positive:CPSPE explains 59% of variation in OBS (R^2= .59, p < .05). CPSPE has a large effect (> .50) on OBS and it is a significant predictor of OBS (β= .77, p <.05) (see Figures 2, 5 and6).

5. Relationship between Overall Brand Satisfaction and Brand Advocacy

The relationship between OBS on BAis significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05) (see Appendix P). We reject H5o in favour of H5. The relationship between the two variables is moderate and positive: OBS explains 67% of the variation in BA (R^2= .67, p <.05) (see Figure2).OBS has a large effect (> .50) on BA and it isa significant predictor of BA (β= .82, p <.05) (see Figures 2, 5 and 6).

Results of Hypothesis Testing

All the five research hypotheses: H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5 are well supportedby empirical evidence (see Table 2).

Table 2: Confirmation of Research Hypotheses

Hypothesis	Confirmation of Hypothesis	Finding	Meeting of Objective
H1	√ **Yes** Therelationship between Marcomsand customer pre-purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey is significant.	1. Marcoms has a strong and positive influence on customer pre-purchase experiences. 2. Marcoms is a significant predictor of customer pre-purchase experiences. 3. Marcoms is a significant predictor of sensory, emotional, physical, intellectual and relational dimensions of customer pre-purchase experiences	√ **Yes** 1. To establish whether there is a significant relationship between marketing communications (Marcoms) and customer experiences.
H2	√ **Yes** Therelationship between Marcomsand customer purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey is significant. .	1. Marcoms has a strong and positive influence on customer purchase experiences. 2. Marcoms is a significant predictor of customer purchase experiences. 3. Marcoms is a significant predictor of sensory, emotional, physical, intellectual and relational dimensions of customer purchase experiences.	√ **Yes** Under the first objective
H3	√ **Yes** Therelationship between Marcomsand customer post-purchase experiences with The Study University in the PhD decision journey is significant.	1. Marcoms has a strong and positive influence on customer post-purchase experiences. 2. Marcoms is a significant predictor of customer post-purchase experiences. 3. Marcoms is a significant predictor of emotional, physical, intellectual and relational dimensions of customer post-purchase experiences except sensory dimension.	√ **Yes** Under the first objective
No Hypothesis	Not applicable	**Ranking of significant BTPsof Marcoms based on correlation coefficient size** 1. CPPE: Internet marketing, personal selling, public relations/publicity, event marketing and offline advertising. 2. CPE: Internet marketing, customer supportservices, sales promotion and event marketing. 3.CPSPE: Customer support services, WOM communications and sales promotion.	√ **Yes** 2. To identify the significant brand touchpoints of Marcomsthat arestrongly correlated with customer pre-purchase, purchase and post-purchase experiences.
H4	√ **Yes** The relationship between customer post-purchase experiences and overall brand satisfaction with The Study University is significant.	1. Customer post-purchase experiences has a moderate and positive influence on overall brand satisfaction. 2. Customer post-purchase experiences is a significant predictor of overall brand satisfaction.	√ **Yes** 3. To determine whether there is a significant relationship between customer post-purchase experiences and overall brand satisfaction.
H5	√ **Yes** The relationship between overall brand satisfaction with The Study University and brand advocacy is	1. Overall brand satisfaction has a moderate and positive influence on brand advocacy. 2. Overall brand satisfaction is a significant predictor of brand advocacy.	√ **Yes** 4. To determine whether there is a significant relationship between overall brand

significant.		satisfaction and brand advocacy.

A summary of detailed statistical test results to support all the 5 research hypotheses is provided as below:

1. The relationship between Marcoms and CPPE is significant(t-value > 1.96, p < .05).Marcoms has a strong and positive influence on CPPE(R^2= .89, p < .05). Marcoms is a significant predictor of CPPE (β= .95, p <.05)and its sensory dimension (β = .82, p <.05), emotional dimension (β = .87, p <.05), physical dimension (β = .87, p <.05), intellectual dimension (β = .75, p <.05), and relational dimension (β = .84, p <.05).

2. The relationship between Marcoms and CPE is significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05).Marcoms has a strong and positive influence on CPE(R^2= .84, p < .05). Marcoms is a significant predictor of CPE (β= .92, p <.05)and its sensory dimension (β = .69, p <.05), emotional dimension (β = .61, p <.05), physical dimension (β = .65, p <.05), intellectual dimension (β = .57, p <.05), and relational dimension (β = .59, p <.05).

3. The relationship between Marcoms and CPSPE is significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05).Marcoms has a strong and positive influence on CPSPE(R^2= .71, p < .05). Marcoms is a significant predictor of CPSPE (β= .84, p <.05)and its emotional dimension (β = .60, p <.05), physical dimension (β = .62, p <.05), intellectual dimension (β = .52, p <.05), and relational dimension (β = .52, p <.05) of CPSPE except sensory dimension (β = -.07, p <.05).

4. Ranking of significant BTPs of Marcoms(p < .05) based on correlation coefficient size:

a. CPPE: Internet marketing (r= .87), personal selling (r= .85), public relations/publicity (r=.83), event marketing (r= .83), and offline advertising (r= .76).
b. CPE: Internet marketing (r= .87), customer support services (r= .84), sales promotion (r= .78), and event marketing (r= .71).
c. CPSPE: Customer support services (r= .88), WOM communications, (r= .82) and sales promotion (r= .74).

5. The relationship between CPSPE and OBS is significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05). CPSPE has a moderate and positive influence on OBS(R^2= .59, p < .05). CPSPE is a significant predictor of OBS (β= .77, p <.05).

6. The relationship between OBS and BA is significant (t-value > 1.96, p < .05). OBS has a moderate and positive influence on BA(R^2= .67, p <.05). OBS is a significant predictor of BA(β= .82, p <.05).

IV. Discussion

All the four research objectives have been met along with confirmation of five research hypotheses. This study contributes to new knowledge by addressing the knowledge gaps between Marcoms and customer experiences. The outstanding issue of whether Marcomscan generate the desired customer experiences with The Study University's brand of offer has been addressed.

The coverage of this study is extensive and comprehensive in view of a wide range of brand touchpoints of Marcomsbeing analysed.Several prior studies on the role of Marcomsin influencing brand choice/enrolment decisioninvolved only a few selected Marcoms variables.In this study a total of 12 BTPs of Marcoms engaged by The Study University have been subjected to rigorous testing for their significant relationships with customer experiences. The notion of customer/brand experiences is broader than that of brand choice/purchasing/enrolment decision. Furthermore, past researchers on Marcomsare more interested in analysing customer behaviour at the pre-purchase and purchase stages of decision making processes than the post-purchase stage. This study examinedcustomer experiences of PhD students with The Study University in the entire PhD decision journey.

Past studies on the topic of doctoral experiences are mostly narrative/qualitative (e.gHenrich, 2000; Crawford, 2003). Although there are research papers which adopt quantitative approaches to analyse the topic of doctoral experiences (e.gChiang, 2003), the perspective is essentially educational rather than inter-disciplinary. This study incorporates both disciplines: education and Marcoms, a specialist branch of study within the broad marketing domain.

The concept of Marcoms-based brand touchpoints is relatively new and is dimly understood. This study has made a significant and unique contribution to scholarship by uncovering the complexity of using Marcoms to create brand touchpoints for engaging customers to experience the PhD brand of offer from a real-life ODL University in Malaysia. Research findings are relevant to The Study University. This study provides directions

for The Study University to allocate resources on eight (8) key BTPs of Marcoms which have been found to be strongly correlated with customer experiences: 1. Internet marketing, 2. Personal selling, 3. Customer support services, 4. Public relations/publicity, 5. Event marketing, 6. WOM communications, 7. Sales promotion, and8. Offline advertising.

This study contributes to theory buildingby offering a newmodel under the label, "Customer Experiences with Brand Touchpoints of Marketing Communications Model" (see Table 1). This theoretical model can serve as a guide/platformfor future research in areas which have been excluded from this study or in areas which need further investigation.

The linkages between Marcoms and the dimensions of customer experiences that have been neglected by past researchers have now been identified and established.In this respect, this study is in response to the call by notable scholars (Schmitt and Zarantonello, 2013, 26-47) who single out "one valuable future research is on the dimensions of experiences and the interlink between experience dimensions and other constructs". The inter-link between customer post-purchase experiences and other important marketing outcomes such as overall brand satisfaction and brand advocacy has been examined and established. The research findings systematically point to the efficacy of Marcoms in influencing marketing outcomes as highlighted by numerous marketing scholars and practitioners. Spending on Marcomsis necessary to create brand awareness, interest, desire and action as postulated in the classic AIDA model (Strong, 1925) as well as other Marcoms models. Positive customer experiences are vital to achieve overall brand satisfaction whichaffects future purchasing decision making as well as brand recommendation to others (brand advocacy).

Limitations, Delimitations and Directions for Future Research
Although this study is comprehensive, it is not without its limitations. However, this paper will address the following issues which are commonly faced by researchers:

1. A cross sectional study instead of a longitudinal study
Owing to the time constraint set by the Ministry of Education in granting a one-year scholarship under the MyBrain15 PhDprogramme for a three-year full-time study, a cross-sectional study is deemed as pragmatic within the limited timeperiod of sponsorship. The direction of future research can take the form of a longitudinal study if time and resources are available for accumulating more data pertaining tothe phenomenon under investigation over a longer timeframe.

2. A case study strategy instead of an industry-wide study
The use of a case study especially a single case study is often criticised on the ground of generalisability of research findings. The choice of a case study strategy is based on the fulfillment of three (3) conditions as stated by Yin (2009, 12): (a) 'How' or 'why' question is being posed, (b) a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context, and (c) the investigator has little or no control over it. Moreover,thepurpose of a case study is to provide depth rather than breadth of analysis. The issue of generalisability is a positivist perspective. Rowley (2002, 20) points out that for a case study, generalisation is analytical rather than statistical, this means that if the case study design has been appropriately informed by theory, and it can be seen to add to the established theory. In this perspective, this case study has been informed by prior theory and prior theory informs hypothesis formulation for statistical testing. All researched hypotheses are well supported by empirical evidence. Thus replication of results can be performed insimilar higher educational setting. A successful attempt has been made to address this issue by undertaking the necessary statistical procedures to ensure validity and reliability of research findings for potential replication.

3. Small sample size and method of sampling
The sample size of this survey research was determined by using the widely accepted system of Krejcie and Morgan (1970). A simple random sampling method was used to draw a sample from the sampling frame as mentioned earlier by using the function provided by SPSS 20.0. Randomisation enhances representativeness of a sample and it provides the statistical basis for making inferences of the research findings to other segments of The Study University's populationbut not to other populations of other universities. For future research, the recommendation is to increase the sample size and to include other universities/HEIs in Malaysia if gaining access to their databases is granted by the institutions concerned. A sample survey inevitably has its limitations even though the sample size were to be increased because there are other technical issues which researchers have to address as well.

4. Other factors besidesMarcoms in influencing customer experiences and other marketing outcomes
Besides Marcoms, there are other factors which can affect customer experiences and other marketing outcomes. However, it is not feasible toinclude all the possible factors in a modeland also it is inappropriate for this study in view of the type of research questions and objectives being formulated. The research questions do

not call for factors other than Marcoms. The main aim of this study is to ensure meeting of objectives and to fill the knowledge gaps between Marcoms and customer experiences. The direction for future research can include other factors to expand the scope of investigation if literature informs that these factors are possible candidates/influencers of customer experiences and other marketing outcomes.

V. Conclusion

The business of marketing higher education by universities and other categories of HEI in Malaysia is a great challenge in today's dynamic and challenging marketing environment. This study provides an insightful knowledge into the contemporary phenomenon of using marketingcommunications as the instrument to create brand touchpoints for engaging a wide range of audiences to experience with an ODL University's brand of offer. Delivering brand messages and values to customers are the fundamentals of brand success.This case study offers a real-life example of a typical ODL University in Malaysia which uses a mix of online and offline Marcoms tools and media to generate favourable marketing outcomes and create positive experiences for its customers. Although there are limitations in using a case study strategy, nevertheless the research findings are applicable and beneficial to The Study University for future Marcoms planning as well as to other universities/HEIs since Marcoms are widely used for student recruitment and managing customer relationship for profitability.

Citation

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APPENDICES

Appendix A
Advertising Expenditure By Category In Malaysia (2013f)

Top 10 categories 2013f	Net RM Million	2013f vs 2012 YOY %
Government Institutions – Local	456	7%
Mobile Line Services	268	5%
Face Care – Womem	245	8%
Fast Food Centre	179	2%
University	175	10%
Tonic & Vitamin	171	9%
Diary- Kids Growing Up Milk	151	1%
Hair Shampoo & Conditioner	147	1%
Cleaning Agent – Laundry	139	4%
Communication – Corporate Ad	135	4%

Source:DentsuAegis Global Advertising Expenditure Report (May 2013, 116).

Appendix B
Measures of Study Constructs

Measures of BTPs of Marcoms
The items for measuring the influence of BTPs of Marcoms on customer experiences were constructed based on prior marketing/Marcoms literature and exploratory research findings of this study. There were 12 measurement items for rating the degree of influence of each BTP on CPPE, CPE and CPSPE in the PhD decision journey by using a 5-point ordinal Likert Scale (1= not influential to 5= most influential).

SPSS codes for scale items (x10 – x21) on BTPs of Marcoms influence on customer pre-purchase experiences (CPPE)
       x10 Offline advertising
       x11Online advertising
       x12Public relations/publicity
       x13Direct marketing
       x14Internet marketing
       x15 Personal selling
       x16Event marketing
       x17Sales promotion
       x18Sponsorships/partnerships
       x19Customer support services
       x20WOM communications

x21POS marketing

SPSS codes for scale items (x39 – x50) on BTPs of Marcoms influence on customer purchase experiences (CPE)

x39 Offline advertising
x40Online advertising
x41Public relations/publicity
x42Direct marketing
x43 Internet marketing
x44 Personal selling
x45Event marketing
x46Sales promotion
x47Sponsorships/partnerships
x48Customer support services
x49WOM communications
x50POS marketing

SPSS codes for scale items (x68 – x79) on BTPs of Marcoms influence on customer post-purchase experiences (CPSPE)

x68 Offline advertising
x69 Online advertising
x70Public relations/publicity
x71Direct marketing
x72Internet marketing
x73Personal selling
x74Event marketing
x75Sales promotion
x76 Sponsorships/partnerships
x77Customer support services
x78WOM communications
x79POS marketing

Measures of Dimensions of Customer Experiences

The items for measuring the dimensions of customer experiences were adapted from the acknowledged validated Brand Experience Scale developed by Schmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007) and Brakus et al. (2009) and Skard et al. (2011). Some wordings of the scale items were changed to fit into the context of this study (see Appendix D). There were 15 measurement items for measuring the level of agreement/disagreement of participants with each statement pertaining to the influence of Marcoms on sensory (S), emotional (E), physical (P), intellectual (I), and relational (R) dimensions of CPPE, CPE and CPSPE. A total of 45 measuring items were generated. Participants rated their customer experiences on each scale item by using a 5-point Likert Scale (1= strong disagree to 5= strongly agree). The items below were grouped by dimensions for convenience of data analysis; they were not grouped in this manner in the survey questionnaire.

SPSS codes for scale items (x23 – x37) on dimensions of customer pre-purchase experiences (CPPE)

x23 S1: This University brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.
x24 S2:I find this University brand graphics interesting in a sensory way.
x25 S3: This University brand is an international brand that appeals to my senses.

x26 E1: This University brand induces my positive feelings.
x27 E2: I have strong emotions for this University brand.
x28 E3: This University brand often engages me emotionally.

x29 P1: I engage in physical actions and behaviours when I use this University brand's services.
x30P2: This University brand results in bodily experiences.
x31 P3: This University brand engages me physically.

x32 I1: I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this University brand.
x33 I2: This University brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.
x34 I3: This University brand often challenges my way of thinking.

x35 R1: As a customer of this University brand, I feel like I am part of the scholarly community.

x36 R2: I feel like I am part of this University brand's international family.
x37 R3:When I use this University brand's services, I do not feel left alone.

SPSS codes for scale items (x52 – x66) on dimensions of customer purchase experiences (CPE)

x52S1: This University brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.
x53 S2: I find this University brand graphics interesting in a sensory way.
x54 S3: This University brand is an international brand that appeals to my senses.

x55 E1: This University brand induces my positive feelings.
x56 E2: I have strong emotions for this University brand.
x57 E3: This University brand often engages me emotionally.

x58 P1: I engage in physical actions and behaviours when I use this University brand's services.
x59 P2: This University brand results in bodily experiences.
x60 P3: This University brand engages me physically.

x61 I1: I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this University brand.
x62 I2: This University brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.
x63 I3: This University brand often challenges my way of thinking.

x64 R1: As a customer of this University brand, I feel like I am part of the scholarly community.
x65 R2: I feel like I am part of this University brand's international family.
x66 R3:When I use this University brand's services, I do not feel left alone.

SPSS codes for scale items (x81 – x95) on dimensions of customer post-purchase experiences (CPSPE)

x81S1: This University brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.
x82S2: I find this University brand graphics interesting in a sensory way.
x83S3: This University brand is an international brand that appeals to my senses.

x84 E1: This University brand induces my positive feelings.
x85 E2: I have strong emotions for this University brand.
x86 E3: This University brand often engages me emotionally.

x87 P1: I engage in physical actions and behaviours when I use this University brand's services.
x88P2: This University brand results in bodily experiences.
x89 P3: This University brand engages me physically.

x90 I1: I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this University brand.
x91 I2: This University brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.
x92 I3: This University brand often challenges my way of thinking.

x93 R1: As a customer of this University brand, I feel like I am part of the scholarly community.
x94 R2: I feel like I am part of this University brand's international family.
x95 R3:When I use this University brand's services, I do not feel left alone.

Measures of Overall Brand Satisfaction

The measure for the construct, overall brand satisfaction (OBS) was adapted from Brakus et al. (2009).Participants rated the level of overall brand satisfaction with the Study University on one item using a 5-point Likert Scale (1= very dissatisfied to 5= very satisfied).

SPSS codes for scale item (x96) on overall brand satisfaction (OBS)

Measures of Brand Advocacy

The last construct was brand advocacy (BA) or brand recommendation to others adapted from Maklan and Klaus (2011). It was measured by one item "Would you recommend this University brand to others?"Participants rated the likelihood of recommending The Study University to others by using a 5-point Likert Scale (1= not likely to 5= very likely).

SPSS codes for scale item (x97) on brand recommendation to others/brand advocacy (BA)

Appendix C
Exploratory-Descriptive Research Design For This Case Study
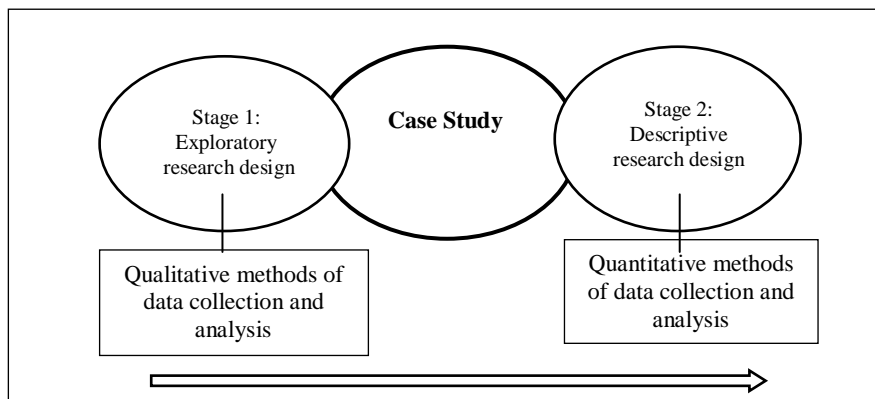
Source: Developed for this study.

Appendix D
Adapted Scaled Items For Measuring Customer Experiences

Construct	Scale Reference	Code	Statements for this study
Sensory	Schmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007), Brakus et al. (2009).	S1	This University brand makes a strong impression on my visual sense or other senses.
	Schmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007), Brakus et al. (2009).	S2	I find this University brand interesting in a sensory way.
	Skard, et al. (2011).	S3	This University brand is an international brand that appeals to my senses.
Emotional	Skard, et al. (2011).	E1	This University brand induces my positive feelings.
	Skard, et al. (2011).	E2	I have strong emotions for this University brand.
	Skard, et al. (2011).	E3	This University brand often engages me emotionally.
Physical	Skard, et al. (2011).	P1	I engage in physical actions and behaviours when I use this University brand's services.
	Schmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007), Brakus et al. (2009).	P2	This University brand results in bodily experiences.
	Skard, et al. (2011).	P3	This University brand engages me physically.
Intellectual	Schmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007), Brakus et al. (2009).	I1	I engage in a lot of thinking when I encounter this University brand.
	Schmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007),Brakus et al. (2009).	I2	This University brand stimulates my curiosity and problem solving.
	Skard, et al. (2011).	I3	This University brand often challenges my way of thinking.
Relational	Skard, et al. (2011).	R1	As a customer of this University brand, I feel like I am part of the scholarly community.
	Skard, et al. (2011).	R2	I feel like I am part of this University brand's international family.
	Skard, et al. (2011).	R3	When I use this University brand's services, I do not feel left alone.

Source: Adapted fromSchmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007), Brakus et al. (2009), andSkard et al. (2011).

Note:Some of the original wordings used by Schmitt (1999, 2010),Zarantonello et al. (2007), Brakus, et al.(2009) and Skard et al. (2011) for example, 'This brand', 'Brand' were changed to 'This University brand' and 'an international brand', 'community' was changed to 'scholarly community ' (R2), and 'the Brand family' was changed to 'this University brand's international family' (R3) in order to suit the study context.

Appendix E
Descriptive Statistics of Sample Demographics Generated from SPSS 20.0

SPSS Code	Variable	Frequency	Valid %	Mean	Median	Mode	S.D	Skewness	Kurtosis
	Demographics								
x1	Gender			1.46	1.00	1	.50	.24	.47
	1 Male	57	54.3						
	2 Female	48	45.7						
	Total	105	100.0						
x2	Age (years)			3.67	3.00	3	1.38	.24	.47
	1 < 31	2	1.9						

	2 31-36	20	19.0						
	3 37-42	31	29.5						
	4 43-48	26	24.8						
	5 49-54	14	13.3						
	6 55-60	8	7.6						
	7 > 60	4	3.8						
	Total	105	100.0						
x3	Nationality 1 Malaysian 2 Foreigner (specify)	 95 10	 90.5 9.5	1.10	1.00	1	.30	.24	.47
	Total	105	100.0						
x4	Highest degree obtained 1 Master 2 Doctorate	 103 2	 98.1 1.9	1.02	1.00	1	.14	.24	.47
	Total	105	100.0						
x5	Employment status 1 Employed 2 Unemployed/ Retired	 99.0 6.0	 94.3 5.7	1.06	1.00	1	.23	.24	.47
	Total	105	100.0						
x6	PhD programme enrolled 1 Arts 2 Business Administration 3 Education 4 ICT	 5 61 345	 4.8 58.1 32.4 4.8	2.37	2.00	2	.65	.24	.47
	Total	105	100.0						
x7	Study mode 1 Full time 2 Part time	 4 101	 3.8 96.2	1.96	2.00	2	.19	.24	.47
	Total	105	100.0						
x8	Main reason to study PhD 1 Social status 2 Research interest 3 Academic accomplishment 4 Career advancement 5 Intellectual development 6 Other (specify)	 8 15 23 41 18 0.0	 7.6 14.3 21.9 39.0 17.1 0.0	3.44	4.00	4	1.16	.24	.47
	Total	105	100.0						

Source: Extracted from output of SPSS 20.0.
S.D: Standard deviation

From a total of 105 PhD participants taking part in this study, 54.3% of the total sample participants (n=105) are male and 45.7% are female. The modal age group is between 37-42 years old. 90.5% of the participants were Malaysians and only 9.5% are foreigners originating from countries affiliated to The Study University.98.1% of the participants have Master's degrees as the highest academic qualification at the time of enrolment into The Study University's PhD degree programmes and only 1.9% or 2 participants have doctorate degrees from other universities. 94.3% are working adults while 5.7% are non-working adults (unemployed/retired). 96.2% of the participants enrolled in part-time PhD study as compared to 3.8% of full-time PhD participants. 58.1% of the total participants enrolled in PhD (Business Administration) degree programme by research as compared to 32.4% enrolment in PhD (Education), 4.8% in PhD (Arts) and 4.8% in PhD (ICT/Information Communications Technology). The main reason given by the participants for wanting to study PhD are: 'career advancement' (39.0%), 'academic accomplishment' (21.9%), 'intellectual development' (17.1%), 'research interest' (14.3%), and 'social status' (7.6%).Based on the standard errors of skewness and kurtosis, all observations arewithin the ± 1.96 and hence the data sets are normally distributed.

Appendix F
Factor Loadings

CPPE Items	Factor Loading	CPE Items	Factor Loading	CPSPE Items	Factor Loading
x10	0.82	x39	0.85	x68	0.80
x11	0.73	x40	0.75	x69	0.70
x12	0.82	x41	0.80	x70	0.77
x13	0.74	x42	0.72	x71	0.72
x14	0.86	x43	0.81	x72	0.73
x15	0.79	x44	0.73	x73	0.67
x16	0.74	x45	0.86	x74	0.64
x17	0.86	x46	0.78	x75	0.72
x18	0.79	x47	0.80	x76	0.70
x19	0.87	x48	0.85	x77	0.85
x20	0.83	x49	0.78	x78	0.76
x21	0.61	x50	0.62	x79	0.54
Sensory		Sensory		Sensory	
x23	0.87	x52	0.84	x81	0.92
x24	0.58	x53	0.54	x82	0.82
x25	0.88	x54	0.88	x83	0.65
Emotional		Emotional		Emotional	
x26	0.86	x55	0.88	x84	0.89
x27	0.94	x56	0.94	x85	0.94
x28	0.84	x57	0.77	x86	0.76
Physical		Physical		Physical	
x29	0.85	x58	0.83	x87	0.83
x30	0.82	x59	0.84	x88	0.84
x31	0.75	x60	0.77	x89	0.76
Intellectual		Intellectual		Intellectual	
x32	0.68	x61	0.72	x90	0.71
x33	0.89	x62	0.87	x91	0.88
x34	0.88	x63	0.87	x92	0.87
Relational		Relational		Relational	
x35	0.91	x64	0.88	x93	0.71
x36	0.83	x65	0.85	x94	0.88
x37	0.93	x66	0.91	x95	0.87

Source: Extracted from output ofSmartPLS.

Appendix G
CFA Convergent Validity

	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbachs Alpha	Communality
Marcoms	0.63	0.95	0.95	0.63
CPPE	1	1	1	1
Sensory	0.62	0.83	0.70	0.62
Emotional	0.77	0.91	0.85	0.77
Physical	0.65	0.85	0.73	0.65
Intellectual	0.67	0.86	0.75	0.67
Relational	0.80	0.92	0.87	0.80
Marcoms	0.61	0.95	0.94	0.61
CPE	1	1	1	1
Sensory	0.59	0.80	0.70	0.59
Emotional	0.75	0.90	0.83	0.75
Physical	0.66	0.85	0.74	0.66
Intellectual	0.67	0.86	0.76	0.67
Relational	0.78	0.91	0.86	0.78
Marcoms	0.52	0.93	0.92	0.52
CPSPE	1	1	1	1
OBS	1	1	1	1
BA	1	1	1	1
Sensory	0.65	0.85	0.80	0.65
Emotional	0.75	0.90	0.84	0.75
Physical	0.66	0.85	0.74	0.66
Intellectual	0.68	0.86	0.76	0.68
Relational	0.68	0.86	0.76	0.68

Source: Extracted from output ofSmartPLS.

Appendix H
Discriminant validity- Latent Variables Correlations

	Emotional	Intellectual	CPPE	Marcoms	Physical	Relational	Sensory
Emotional	1						
Intellectual	0.7	1					
CPPE	0.8	0.8	1				
Marcoms	0.8	0.8	0.8	1			
Physical	0.7	0.8	0.7	0.7	1		
Relational	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	1	
Sensory	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.7	1

Source: Extracted from output ofSmartPLS.

Appendix I
Discriminant validity- Latent Variables Correlations

	CPE	Emotional	Intellectual	Marcoms	Physical	Relational	Sensory
CPE	1						
Emotional	0.7	1					
Intellectual	0.6	0.7	1				
Marcoms	0.8	0.7	0.7	1			
Physical	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	1		
Relational	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.7	0.8	1	
Sensory	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8	1

Source: Extracted from output ofSmartPLS.

Appendix J
Discriminant validity- Latent Variables Correlations

	BA	CPSPE	Emotional	Intellectual	Marcoms	OBS	Physical	Relational	Sensory
BA	1								
CPSPE	0.6	1							
Emotional	0.4	0.7	1						
Intellectual	0.4	0.6	0.7	1					
Marcoms	0.6	0.8	0.6	0.6	1				
OBS	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.7	1			
Physical	0.5	0.7	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.6	1		
Relational	0.4	0.6	0.8	0.8	0.6	0.5	0.8	1	
Sensory	0.3	-0.1	-0.1	-0.02	-0.01	0.1	-0.1	-0.02	1

Source: Extracted from output ofSmartPLS.

Appendix K
Collinearity Statistics

Coefficients[a]			
		Collinearity Statistics	
CPPE: Model		Tolerance	VIF
1	Offline advertising	.284	3.516
	Online advertising	.160	6.245
	Public relations/publicity	.280	3.575
	Direct marketing	.165	6.066
	Internet marketing	.228	4.390
	Personal selling	.166	6.027
	Event marketing	.175	5.711
	Sales promotion	.215	4.662
	Sponsorships/partnerships	.330	3.031
	Customer support services	.224	4.456
	WOM communications	.211	4.731
	POS marketing	.564	1.772
a. Dependent Variable: Customer pre-purchase experiences			

Coefficients[a]			
		Collinearity Statistics	
CPE: Model		Tolerance	VIF
1	Offline advertising	.251	3.977
	Online advertising	.183	5.461
	Public relations/publicity	.279	3.580
	Direct marketing	.206	4.852

Internet marketing	.323	3.096
Personal selling	.185	5.417
Event marketing	.235	4.260
Sales promotion	.378	2.645
Sponsorships/partnerships	.331	3.022
Customer support services	.259	3.857
WOM communications	.173	5.783
POS marketing	.584	1.712

a. Dependent Variable: Customer purchase experiences

Coefficients[a]

CPSPE: Model	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
1 Offline advertising	.319	3.136
Online advertising	.447	2.237
Public relations/publicity	.233	4.296
Direct marketing	.386	2.588
Internet marketing	.504	1.986
Personal selling	.223	4.475
Event marketing	.254	3.938
Sales promotion	.230	4.340
Sponsorships/partnerships	.510	1.960
Customer support services	.304	3.285
WOM communications	.406	2.463
POS marketing	.635	1.574

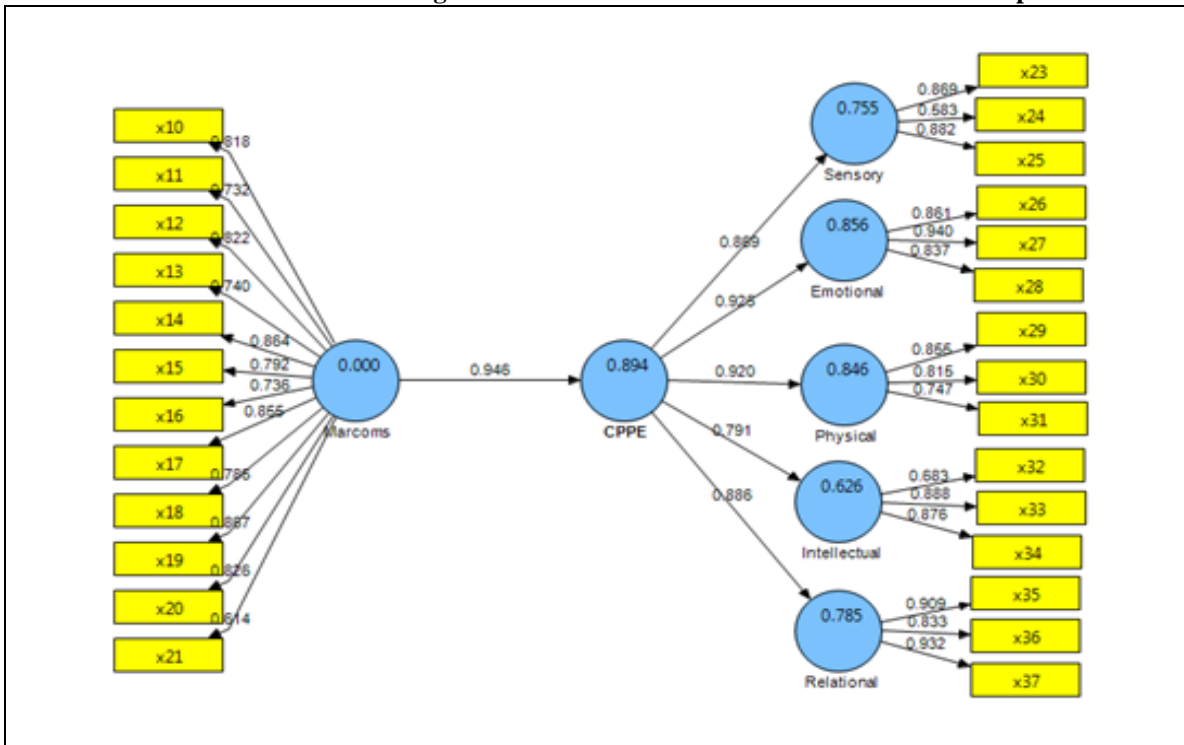a. Dependent Variable: Customer post-purchase experiences

Source: Extracted from output ofSmartPLS.

Appendix L
Significant Relationship Between Marketing Communications and
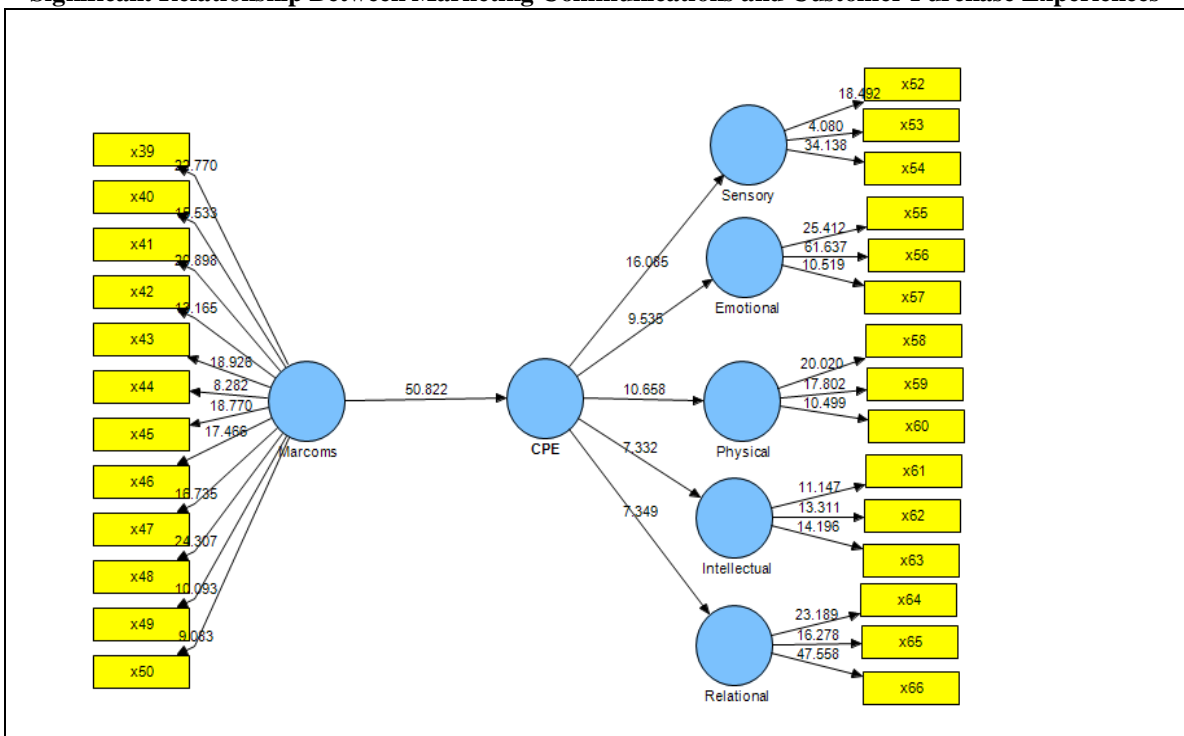**Customer Pre-Purchase Experiences**
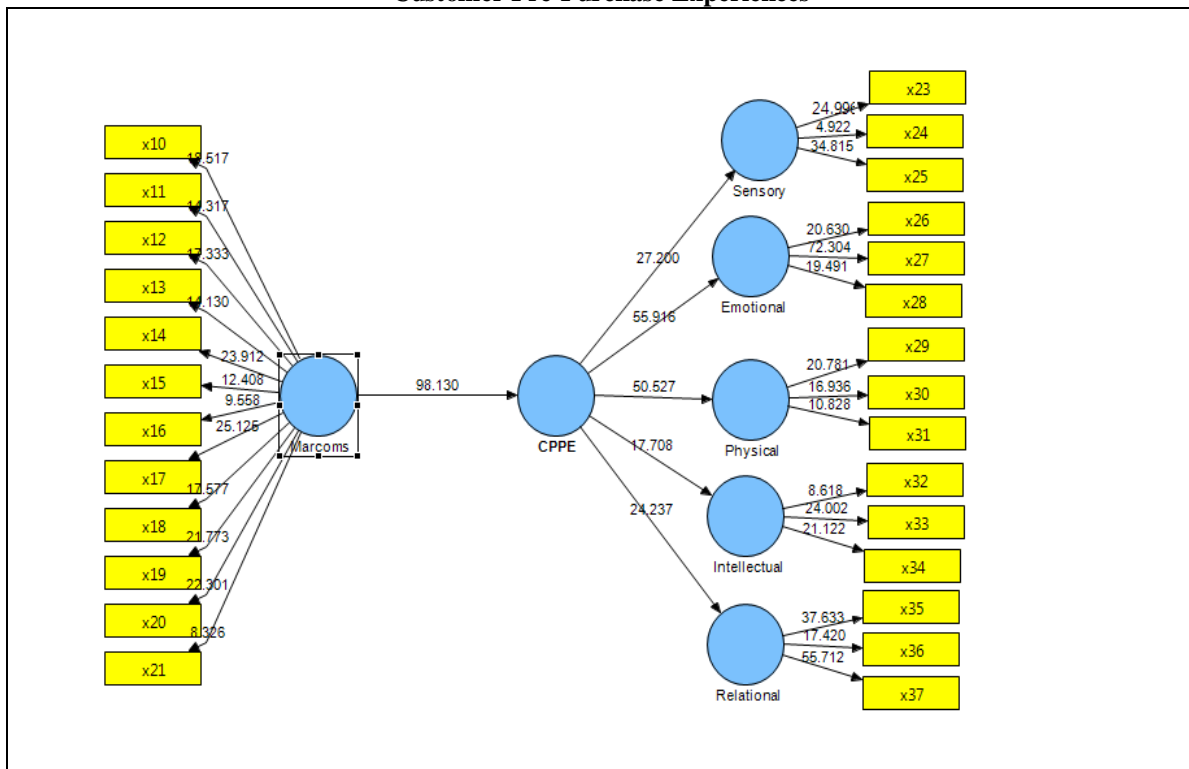
Source: Diagram generated from SmartPLS.

Appendix M
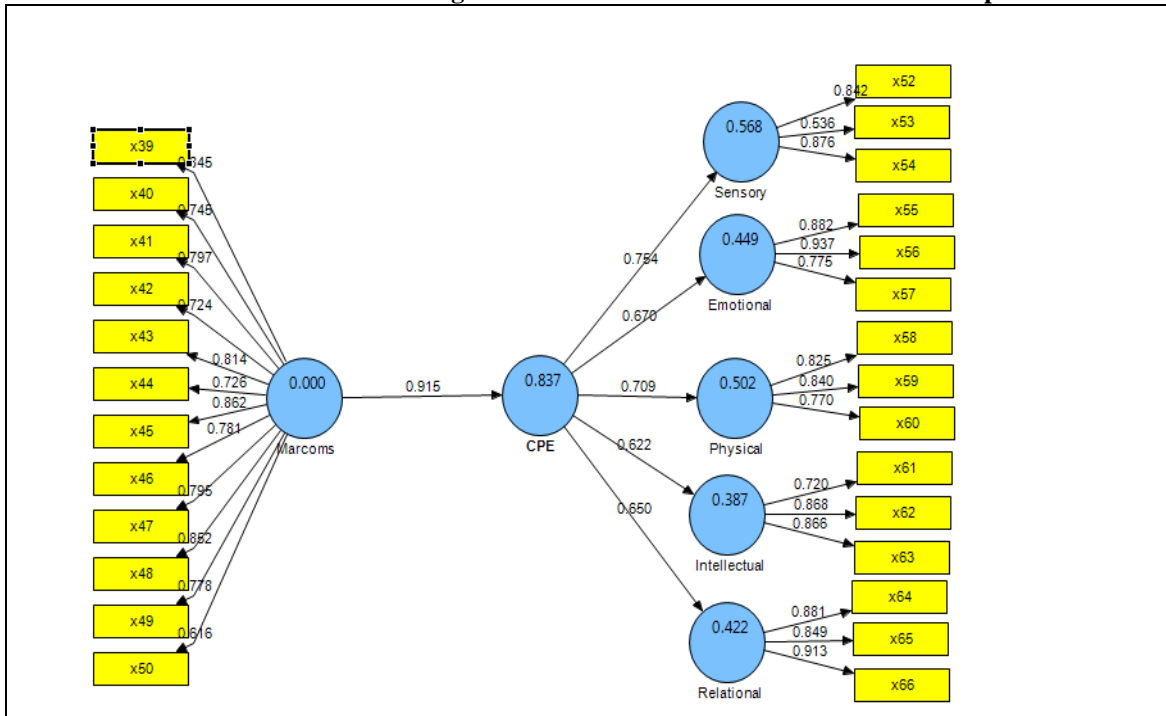**Reflective Models For Marketing Communications and Customer Pre-Purchase Experiences**

Source: Diagram generated from SmartPLS.

Appendix N
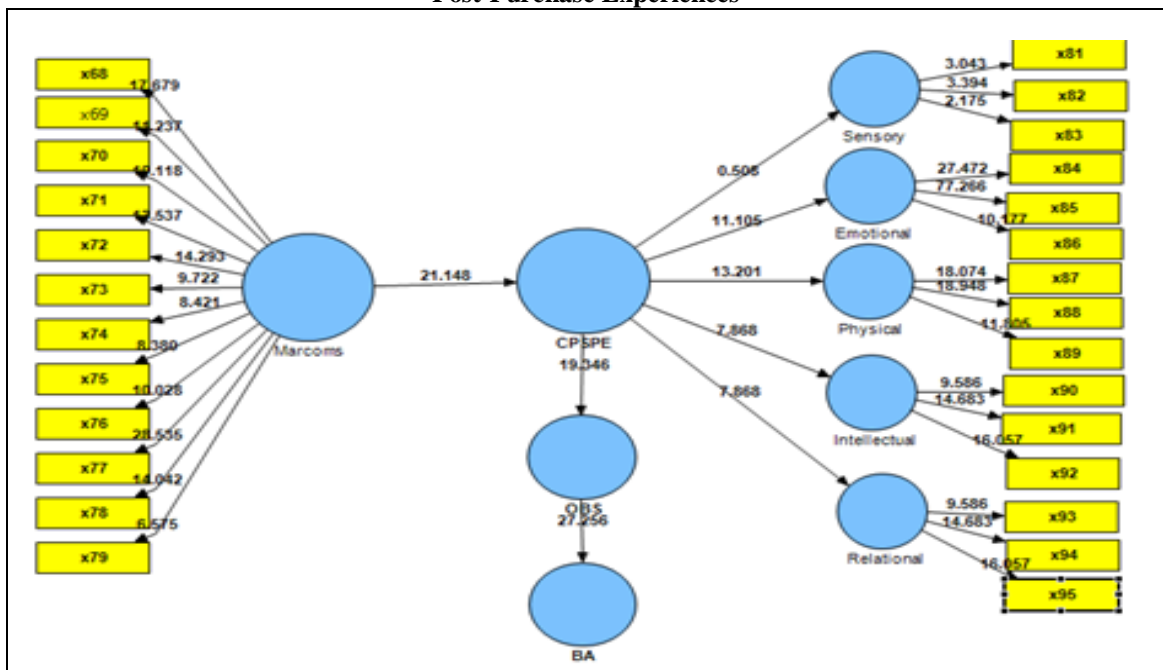**Significant Relationship Between Marketing Communications and Customer Purchase Experiences**

Source: Diagram generated from SmartPLS.

Appendix O
Reflective Models For Marketing Communications and Customer Purchase Experiences

Source: Diagram generated from SmartPLS.

Appendix P
Significant Relationship Between Marketing Communications and Customer
Post-Purchase Experiences

Source: Diagram generated from SmartPLS.