

## ABSTRACT

In today's competitive business environment, banks operate in a severe rivalry due to various factors, including globalisation, fast technological developments and homogeneous nature of banks services. For this reason, building valuable brands is crucial in differentiating banks and adding value to the banking services. The research problem that emerged was: investigating the major bank marketing communication tools to examine their impact on building bank brand equity. The researcher went about in achieving this purpose by: identifying the major marketing communication tools used by banks that help build bank brand equity via the customer-based brand equity (CBBE) dimensions from customers' perspective; and testing and analysing the hypotheses in order to develop the final research model. In order for this purpose to be attained, two research questions were answered: what are the major bank marketing communication tools that help build bank brand equity? Which hypotheses regarding the impact of the major bank marketing communication tools on building bank brand equity via the CBBE dimensions are supported in this study?

This research was carried out in the Egyptian banking sector from the customer perspective. Mixed-method research was used. The first phase was the qualitative research approach, which consists of conducting and analysing semi-structured interviews. These interviews were carried out with fifteen bank customers based on judgmental sampling technique. The purpose of these interviews were to identify the major bank marketing communication tools that help build bank brand equity via the CBBE dimensions; to help develop a proposed conceptual framework; to help develop the research hypotheses; and to help develop the intended questionnaire survey. According to the findings, advertising, personal selling and direct marketing were the most popular marketing communication tools in the Egyptian society for banks.

Once the needed insights were emerged, the second phase, the quantitative phase, was conducted. The researcher distributed and collected large-scale questionnaire survey. These questionnaires were carried out with 465 bank customers based on a quota sampling technique. These questionnaires were then analysed by using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) to test and analyse the research hypotheses; and to help develop the final research model. Findings showed that the major bank marketing communication tools consist of personal selling, direct marketing and advertising respectively according to their importance on building bank brand equity. Given the fact that all CBBE dimensions are interrelated, not all of them directly impact bank brand equity. Only brand loyalty and brand perceived quality were found to have a significant positive direct effect on bank brand equity. When conducting this study, the researcher faced several limitations. The data were collected only in Cairo and Alexandria; only the major controllable marketing communication tools were assessed, and non-probability sampling was used.

**Keywords:** brand equity, overall brand equity, CBBE dimensions, marketing communication tools, banking sector, customer perspective.