The impact of Experiential Marketing on Brand Usage Intention

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of experiential marketing (social support, social presence, and flow experience) on brand usage intention in the transportation sector in Sudan. The data were collected base on non-probability (convenience sampling) among the customers of mobile taxi booking application companies in Khartoum state and 384 questionnaires were distributed, and the response rate was (86%). The study used Structural Equation Modeling and path analysis to analysis the data. The empirical results show a partial relationship between the dimensions of experiential marketing and brand usage intention.

Keywords: Experiential marketing, social support, social presence, flow experience brand usage intention, Theory of planned behavior.

*Introduction

Transportation plays a vital role in the day-to-day activities of the society[1]. The transportation sector is the sector that provides services for the transport Global Industrial Classification (GICS). It contains different sections such as roads transport (roads and railways), air freight, airlines and logistics services.

The transportation sector in Sudan is considered one of the main axes in projects infrastructure which is a major pillar of the economic sector. It is an important element for the success of development plans and projects. It also contributes to increasing the National Product by completing various development projects in the field of transportation (maritime, land, air, and river), develop plans and policies and activating coordination between the different transportation modes. The Transportation services also contribute to the requirements of flourishing trade and exchange, which helps in expanding the scope of the market that provides opportunities for local and foreign competition. (Journal of Economic and Trade Cooperation, 2011).

Transportation or internal public transportation in Sudan is a service that provided to facilitate the movement of the citizens within the specified geographical area that includes the city, the locality and state. The quality and adequacy of this service has been affected by some distortions, as it is the case in most cities and capitals, which resulted in many problems that have exacerbated their severity. Actually, the transportation sector in Khartoum

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[1]Adewole Adewumi, Victor Odunjo and Sanjay Misra, (2015), Developing a Mobile Application for a Taxi Service Company in Nigeria, conference paper.

state in particular suffers from the lack of development. The transportation capabilities in Khartoum state cover only 40% of the actual need of the state with population of not less than 8 million people, and the number of people who daily use the transportation is about 2.5 million people[2]. Therefore, solutions and alternatives must be found to develop the existing transportation systems, and raising its level to that of the world technological development.

The abasement of technology therefore led to emergence of modern types of transportation known as taxi applications, as they contribute to meeting the needs of society, facilitate transportation and carry out daily activities. They also provide easy, cheap, safe and fast service especially with the expansion number in cities[3].

This service began in Sudan in 2014 through the application (Mishwar) for taxi services, and then many companies followed (Tarhal, Karim, Lemon, Al-Falih, Sawa Taxi), which created a competitive market for this service. Among the problems faced Mobile Taxi Booking Application Companies, taxes were imposed on vehicles operating in taxi applications, as part of the government efforts to expand taxation[4].

Indeed, mobile taxi booking service, offers multiple options of car shapes to be compatible with all customer needs, and the application also provides different payment methods for customers (cash and electronic payments) With the provision of professional drivers who know the main and secondary roads in Sudan well. Trips are followed through the tracking system (GPS) to ensure quality. Services or trips can be requested through the taxi application, or can by calling the call centers provided by these companies[5].

Mobile taxi booking usage intention in Sudan became very important because there was a competition in this market, and so it is important for these companies to understand the customer usage intention which will help them to formulate more effective strategies to retain users of this services. customers who have a good experience of using mobile taxi booking application service and who have positive attitudes towards this

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[3] Ady Widjaja, Widji Astuti and Abdul Manan, The Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Loyalty: Evidence on Online Transportation Services in Indonesia, International Journal of Advances in Scientific Research and Engineering, Vol 5 (4), Issue 4, pp 214-221.
[4] Al Ain News, Abu Dhabi, (2018).
[5] Al-Faleh Taxi, (2019), www.alfalihtaxi.com.

service, may be willing to continue using this service[6].

* Statement of the problem

Sudan has a small undeveloped service company. The owning form of Sudan's services companies comprises of either fully or partially private-owned firms. Companies suffer from the problem of customer withdrawal and the brand usage intention becomes a problem that threatens companies work in the field of services represented by the mobile application taxi companies.

The arguments of the researcher for conducting this research are those previous studies are done in developing countries such as Asian countries, Therefore, this study focuses on the extend of brand usage intent among Sudanese transportation sector in Sudan.

* Research Objectives

The study attempts to achieve the following objectives:

1- To examine the relationship between experiential marketing and brand usage intention.

2- To measure the level of experiential marketing in Sudanese Transportation sector companies.

* Literature review

* The Concept of Experiential marketing

The concept of experiential marketing was first proposed by[7]. He believed that after making some observations or participating in certain events, consumers receive certain stimulations that trigger their motivations to drive purchasing. The term "Experiential Marketing" refers to actual customer experience with the product or service that drive sales and increase brand image and awareness[8]. Experiential marketing is becoming very popular in corporate world as a new way to appeal the consumer's attention[9], which gives customers the opportunity to experience a product first-hand, has increasingly become a focus of interest in recent years. Although most brands can benefit from experiential marketing, the sellers of high-end services and products can benefit the most from it[10]. In addition, helps to create experiences and

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[10] Soma Arora, Rajshekhar Chatterjee, (2017), Using experiential marketing to sell offroad vehicles in India: The Polaris way, Global

emotions to the customers[11]. [12]point out Experiential marketing allow customers to experience and become directly involved as the main body, creating a kind of unforgettable feeling, satisfy their needs mentally to the greatest extent in order to win customer trust and loyalty. Also [13] indicated Experiential marketing is a methodology, a concept that moves beyond the traditional "features- and benefits" marketing, experiential marketing connects consumers with brands in personality relevant and memorable ways.

* Social support

Social support refers to a person's sensation of being cared for, responded to, and helped by others[14]. Also, it's is the resultant of an individual's effective involvement and mobilization of their personal networks; it is not only a by-product of their associations[15]. Social support represents an individual's perceived available social resources, such as information generated by both formal support groups and informal assisting relationships; it leads people to feel that they are being cared for, loved, and esteemed, and thus obligated to fulfill mutual obligations[16]. Social support as a multi-dimensional construct, informational support and emotional support have been considered for interactions in online contexts[17,18,19], informational support refers problem solving assistance in forms of recommendation, advice and knowledge offering, whereas emotional support refers to intrinsic

Business and Organizational Excellence, 36(5), pp20–25.

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sustentation including encouraging, understanding and empathy[20].

* Social presence

The concept of social presence has evolved from interpersonal communication, specifically from[21] notion of ''co-presence,'' the mutual awareness of and attention to each other in a space. Social presence concept tries to describe whether the connections built among individuals in cyberspace situation are approximate to real life interaction[22] . [23] defined social presence is as the feeling that other actors are jointly involved in communicative interaction.[24] defined social presence based on the level of illusion of physically being with other people. Social presence has focused on face-to-face interactions between humans and has compared them to mediated interactions[25]. However, in light of technological evolution, the focus has shifted to the idea that humans increasingly engage in quasi-social relationships with new forms of artificially intelligent beings, such as computers (Biocca and Harms 2002[26]). Social presence refers to the degree to which a medium allows the user to establish a personal connection with other users (Choi, et.al, 2011[27]).

* Flow Experience:

Csikszentmihalyi (1975[28]), expressed the concept of flow experience, believes that flow is a comprehensive

[20] Mingli Zhang, Mu Hu, Lingyun Guo, Wenhua Liu, Understanding relationships among customer experience, engagement, and word-of-mouth intention on online brand communities: The perspective of Service Ecosystem, (2017), Management Research Review, Vol. 35 Iss 9 pp. 857-877.

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experience that each individual actively participates in voluntarily without thinking about reward or punishment while focusing on his or her topic of interest or work.

The term of "flow" defines a situation in which individuals act with a sense of concentration, total control and deep involvement[29]. Flow experiences are related to customers' positive behaviors. [30]; [31] It's describing a psychological state, as well as an optimal and enjoyable experience that people reach during their engagement in activities. Also, it's describing people's feelings when they are totally involved in an activity[32]. [33] identify the importance of flow experiences as a key component of the experiential marketing, as it influences customers' intention.

* Brand Usage Intention

[34] defined intention as a person's readiness to perform a given behavior. Intention has three cognitive antecedents attitude refers to the individual's evaluation (favorable or unfavorable) of the target behavior; subjective norms capture the opinions of social reference groups regarding whether the individual should engage in the behavior; and perceived behavioral control denotes [35]. [36] also defined intention as a person's location on a subjective probability dimension involving a relation between himself and some actions. It has been demonstrated in the theory of planned behavior that; intention is the antecedent of actual purchase behavior

booking experiences: an integrated model in an online service context", Information & Management, Vol.41 No.12, pp.174-198.

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[37]. Based on this theory,[38] has reiterated that one's behavior is a result of his intention to perform that particular behavior. This study focuses on purchase intention rather than behavior, because intention has wider implications and will often have a positive impact on an individual's actions [39]. intention refer to a consumer favors to buy a product or service because he or she needs a particular product or service, or even just by having an attitude towards a particular product [40].

Intention is a kind of decision-making that studies the reason to buy a particular brand by consumer [41]. At the same time, strong usage intentions are likely to drive re-use intentions, which is particularly key in the context of mobile application taxi service given the gradual "buying" experience resulting from service features[42];[43];[44]. [45] have confirmed that if a consumer has a positive attitude for a brand, it significantly impacts his buying aim and his readiness to pay a premium value. Brand attitude is thought to be a marker of intentions[46]. The attitude of customer toward a brand has a significant effect on its intention, as brand attitude is the most important determinant of intention [47].

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* Theory of planned behavior (TPB)

The Theory of planned behavior (TPB) captures information about social and behavioral control factors[48]. [49] defined intention as "a person's readiness to perform a given behavior." Also, TPB defined intentions in terms of three constructs: attitude (reflecting favorable or unfavorable feeling toward performing a behavior), subjective norm (perceptions about social forces in performing a behavior), and perceived behavioral control (constraints in performing a behavior) [50]. in other words, intention has three cognitive antecedents [51]: attitude refers to the individual's evaluation (favorable or unfavorable) of the target behavior; subjective norms capture the opinions of social reference groups (such as family and friends) regarding whether the individual should engage in the behavior; and perceived behavioral control denotes the perceived ease or difficulty of performing the behavior. In situations where the individual has a very high degree of control over the behavior, intention is a sufficient predictor of the individual exerting effort and taking action to achieve the goal [52].

* Hypotheses Development

H1. The relationship between experiential marketing and brand usage intention

According to[53] experiential marketing had a positive and significant effect on repurchase intention. This means that each increase in experiential marketing will increase repurchase intention. Experiential marketing is a way to make customers create experiences for a brand. Experiential marketing is the process of identifying and satisfying consumer needs and beneficial aspirations, engaging consumers through two-way communication that brings brand personality to life and adds value to the target audience[54].

[48] Mathieson, K. (1991). Predicting user intentions: Comparing the technology acceptance model with the theory of planned behavior. Information Systems Research, 2, 173–191.

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[53]Mid-Atl. Nyoman Sri Subawa, Ni Wayan Widhiasthini, Ni Putu Meiliana Wulan Sari Suastika, (2020), The Effect of Experiential Marketing, Social Media Marketing, and Brand Trust on Repurchase Intention in Ovo Applications, International Research Journal of Management, IT & Social Sciences, Vol. 7 No. 3, p 11 -21.

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Also[55] expressed that the positive relationship between experiential marketing and repurchase intention.

H1a. The relationship between social support and brand usage intention

H1b. The relationship between social presence and brand usage intention

H1c. The relationship between flow experience and brand usage intention

figure (1) the conceptual framework of the study

Experiential marketing
-Social support
-Social presence
-Flow experience

H1
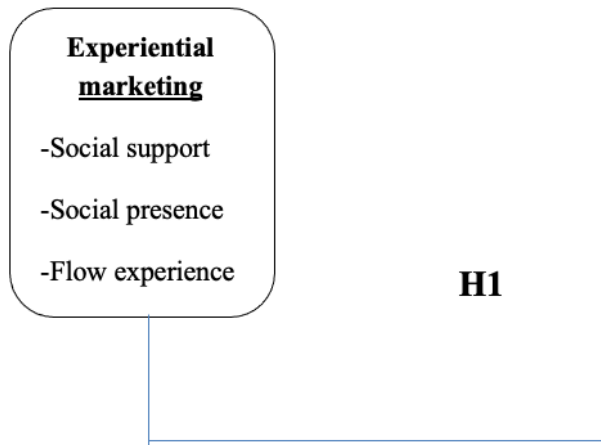
* Methodology

The descriptive approach was used as the most appropriate approach through which logical conclusions could be drawn that support the hypotheses. For the purposes of collecting data from its primary sources and testing the validity of the study hypotheses, the study designed the study tool represented by the questionnaire as a primary source. While books, scientific journals and previous studies were secondary sources. Also, a number of descriptive and inferential statistical methods were used to analyze the collected data using analysis SPSS, Amos25.

Consistent with the purpose of this study to examine the effects of experiential marketing (EM) on brand usage intention (BUI) in the Sudanese transportation Sector in Khartoum state the quantitative method was used (quantitative involves the collection of primary data from a large number of individuals, frequently with the intention of projecting the results to the larger population[56] for this purpose the study have used the descriptive method (use of survey). The questionnaire was relied upon as a main data collection tool, as it was designed according to the five-point.

The study population was made up of the Sudanese transportation sector, the questionnaire were distributed a total number of 384 questionnaire returned 332 represent of 86 % , the two research relied in the

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[55] Stania, A. B., Ferlina, A., & Trenggana, M. (2016). The Influence of Experiential Marketing to Repurchase Intention Through Customer Satisfaction as Intervening Variables (Consumers at Nanny's Pavillon Home

Bandung). Proceeding of Management, 3(1), 517– 526.

[56] Tomas Black, (1991), doing quantitative research social science

process of the statistical data analysis, The questionnaire of this study consisted of four mains sections manly the profile of customers secondly, specific questions designed to measure experiential marketing dimensions namely: (social support, social presence, and flow experience) are adopted by [57], thirdly specific questions designed to measure brand engagement (cognitive processing) was adopted by [58] and fourthly, specific questions designed to measure brand usage intention was adopted by [59;60] .

* Data Analysis

1- Factor Analysis for Study Variable

This researcher performs exploratory factor analysis in SPSS to yield a 'clean' pattern matrix. This involved factor extractions as well as generating key outputs, including; Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure, Communalities, Total Variance Explained (TVE), Goodness-of-fit Test, Pattern Matrix and the Correlation Matrix. This process of generating a 'clean' pattern matrix involves going through several iterations until there were no cross-

loading between scale items; which is central to determine discriminant validity. (Table1) showed the summary of sample adequacy experiential marketing.

* Exploratory for study variables
Table (1) Exploratory for study variables

	Items	F1	F2	F3	F4
Social support	Some friends listen to when I talk about the difficulties and ordered when using online mobile taxi booking application.	.790			
	Some of my friends are interested in my problems with mobile taxi booking application.	.765			
	When I have difficulties dealing with mobile taxi booking application i, some friends help me why figure out.	.714			
	Some friends give me suggestions to solve my problems with mobile taxi booking application.	.701			
Social presence	Communicating with mobile taxi booking application gives others good idea about me.		.661		
	My interactive with mobile taxi booking application is part of my daily activity.		.840		
	mobile taxi booking application is part of my social presence.		.923		
	My participation in the activities of mobile taxi booking		.739		

[57] Tomas Black, (1991), doing quantitative research social science

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brand equity scale. Journal of Business Research, 52(1), 1 –14.

[60]Paul Harrigan, Uwana Eversa, Morgan P. Milesb, Tim Dalyc. (2017), Customer engagement and the relationship between involvement, engagement, self-brand connection and brand usage intent, Journal of Business Research, 0148-2963.

Construct	Item			
	application makes me feel belonging.			
Flow experience	1) Interacting with mobile taxi booking application develops my experiences.			.909
	2) Interaction with mobile taxi booking application increases my curiosity.			.737
	3) I enjoy my experience interacting with mobile taxi booking application.			.856
	4) I am excited in dealing with mobile taxi booking application with my experience.			.731
Brand usage intention	expect to stay with the current mobile taxi booking application company rather other companies			.617
	I will pay more attention to mobile taxi booking application service			.827
	Will recommend my friends to use mobile taxi booking application			.864
	Should continue to use mobile taxi booking application			.889

* Confirmatory factor analysis

figure (2)
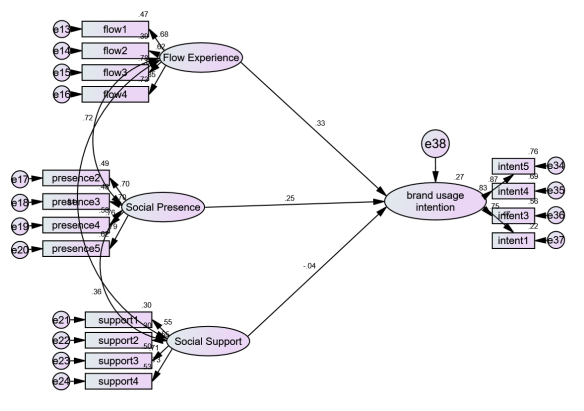
2- Reliability Analysis

This study entire set of 3 latent variables has Cronbach's alpha values above 0.70, This means they are internally consistent. In (Table 2), under 'Cumulative %' column scale items are uni-dimensional, meaning that scale items are moving in the same direction.

Table (2) Reliability of the study variables

Construct	Variables	No of items	Mean	SD	Cronbach s alpha
Experiential marketing	Social support	4	3.8050	.73576	.732
	Social presence	4	3.3840	.96116	.825
	Flow	4	3.6002	.87898	.846
Brand usage intention	Brand usage intention	4	3.9202	.76238	.803

3- Descriptive Statistics and Reliability of the Study Variables

The descriptive statistics for the study variables are presented in the table "Table 1", the main value for social support is 3.8050 with standard deviation of .73576, mean of social presence is 3.3840 with standard deviation of .96116, mean of flow is 3.6002 with standard deviation of .87898, and finally mean of brand usage intention is 3.9202 with standard deviation of .76238. The Cronbach's alpha value is calculated for checking the internal consistency of scales. It's absorbed from this table, for all the variables the alpha value is above 0.60

which indicates that all variables' scales are reliable.

4- Person Correlation Analysis

The correlation analysis was conducted to see the initial picture of the interrelationships among the variables under the study. Therefore, the importance of conducting correlation analysis is to identify any potential problems associated with multicollinearity (Sekaran, 2000). (Table 3) represents the correlation matrix for the constructs operationalized in this study. These bivariate correlations allow for preliminary inspection and information regarding hypothesized relationships. In addition to that, correlation matrix gives information regarding test for the presence of multicollinearity. The table shows that no correlations near 1.0 (or approaching 0.8 or 0.9+) were detected, which indicate that multicollinearity is not a significant problem in this particular data set.

Table (3) Person's Correlation Coefficient for All Variables

			Estimate
brand_usage_intention	<-->	Flow_experience	.492
brand_usage_intention	<-->	Social_presence	.477
brand_usage_intention	<-->	Social_Support	.223

The table shows that no correlations near 1.0 (or approaching 0.8 or 0.9) were detected, which indicate that multicollinearity is not a significant problem in this particular data set.

* Model Fit and Hypotheses Testing and Finding

The fit index statistic tests the consistency between the predicted and observed data matrix by the equation (Keith, T,2006). One of the differences that exist between the SEM technique and regression method is that the former one does not have any single statistical test applicable for evaluation of model predictions "strength" (Hair, J.F., et al,1988). In this regard, Kline (Kline, R.B,1988) believed that there are "dozens of fit indexes described in SEM literature, more than any single model-fitting program reports". However, according to Hair, Black (Hair, J.F., et al,1988) and Garson (Garson, G.D, et al 2007), the chi-square fit index, also known as chi-square discrepancy test, is considered as the most fundamental and common overall fit measure. Thus, in a good model fit the value of chi-square should not be very significant, i.e., $p > 0.05$ (Hair, J.F., et al,1988). The thresholds listed in the (table 4) below are simply a guideline

H1. The relationship between experiential marketing (social support, social presence, and flow

experience) and brand usage intention.
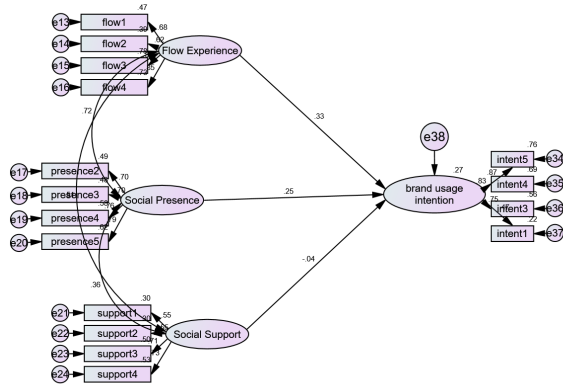
Path analysis between EM and BUI
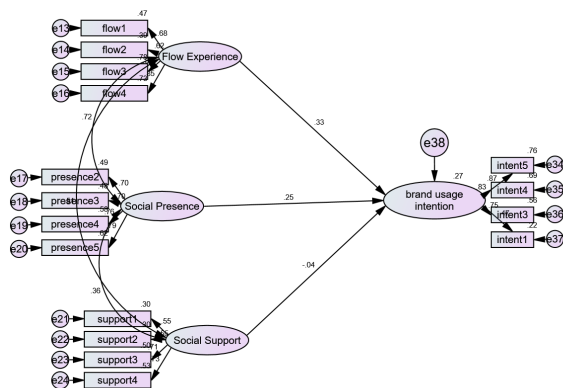

Table (4) Path analysis of EM and BUI.

Relationship			Estim ate	S. E.	C. R.	P	Res ult
brand_usage_int ention	<-- -	Flow_exper ience	.233	.078	2.994	.003	Support
brand_usage_int ention	<-- -	Social_pres ence	.162	.064	2.519	.012	Support
brand_usage_int ention	<-- -	Social_Sup port	-.035	.069	-.501	.616	N S

*** Significant at .05 level, NS Not Significant

The path analysis of flow experience to brand usage intention (.233) is significantly different from at the (.003) level, path social presence to brand usage intention as large as (.162) is significantly different from at the

(.012) level, and path social support to brand usage intention (-.035) is not significantly different from at the (.616) level.

* Discussions

This study aims to investigate and examine the impact of experiential marketing dimensions on brand usage intention in the online mobile taxi booking application companies in Sudan. Exploratory factor analysis for experiential marketing dimension (social presence) excluded one item of this dimension, which is (customer does not have good social relations with online mobile taxi booking service providers), exploratory factor analysis also excluded one item from brand usage intention, which is (when a new mobile taxi booking app company appears, the customer does not intend to use it).

For that, the path analysis in Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) analysis was used to test the hypothesis of the study. The hypothesis predicts that there is a positive relationship between experiential marketing and brand usage intention. The results showed that two dimensions of experiential marketing namely flow experience and social presence have a positive effect on brand usage intention, while social support show no effect on brand usage intention.

The result out lined that the Sudanese transportation sector have an

average level of experiential marketing dimensions (social support1,2,3,4) higher level than social presence and flow experience (mean=3.72,3.50, 4.02,3.98; Std=1.014,1.081, 0.920,0.929) this agree with [61] and [62] that means experiential marketing is applied through online services such as (online brand communities, online travel websites users).

The result revealed that two dimensions of experiential marketing process which are social presence and flow experience have a positive significant relation with the brand usage intention, due to that customer interaction with mobile application taxi service increases his experience and is excited to use it. This study disagreed with[63] in that the social presence seems to have insignificant direct influence of word-of-mouth intention, this result

related to a major difference that concentrated on intention about communities, while it is in accordance with [64] similar in their used on the Internet. On the hand,[65] indicated flow experience had significant relation with behavior intention, flow experiences serve as an important attribute for experiential marketing [66], influencing customer behavior s [67]. The results also revealed that social support had insignificant relation with brand usage intention that is lack of listening and attention by friends for difficulties faced the customer to use mobile application taxi, this result confirmed that mobile application taxi could attain customer experience through the alignment of brand usage intention. Our findings differ from the results of

[61] Mingli Zhang, Mu Hu, Lingyun Guo, Wenhua Liu, Understanding relationships among customer experience, engagement, and word-of-mouth intention on online brand communities: The perspective of Service Ecosystem, (2017), Management Research Review, Vol. 35 Iss 9 pp. 857-877.

[62] Seonjeong Ally Lee, Miyoung Jeong, Myunghee, Mindy Jeo, (2016),"Effects of experiential stimuli on customers' responses", journal of hospitality and tourism technology, Vol. 7 Iss 4 pp. 390 – 404.

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[64] Mingli Zhang, Mu Hu, Lingyun Guo, Wenhua Liu, Understanding relationships among customer experience, engagement, and word-of-

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previous studies as [68] social support exerted direct significant and positive impacts on word-of-mouth intention, this result is similar to the result reached by[69] used (social support, social presence ,and flow) as mediating, so customers are similar in needs, which lead to the same perceptions and experiences[70], which shows that relationship between experiential marketing (customers' sensorial experience, cognitive experience, lifestyle, relational experience and emotional experience) and purchase intention, This study agrees with its use of online services.

* Theoretical implications

The aim of this study was to test a theory of planned behavior (TPB), that it's essential to improve understanding of these constructs of TPB and their influences on intention.

The theoretical importance of this study comes through knowledge the impact that experiential marketing contributes and the brand usage intention for Sudanese service sector and identifying the study variables. Accordingly, the results showed that

there is significant effect relationship between the dimensions of experiential marketing (social presence and experience flow) and brand usage intention, while there is no significant effect relationship between experiential marketing (social support) and brand usage intention.

* Managerial implication

The results of this study may be useful to practitioners in service companies specially when its results are taken in goodness, where it is possible to value from its results in knowing more factors that make up experiential marketing from the reality of application in these companies that affect in brand usage intention for service companies, thus studying these factors constitute opportunities to help in companies under study.

The concept of experiential marketing is a modern concept in Sudanese environment, subjecting it gives clear importance within the scientific frame work advanced marketing methods in acquiring new knowledge and gaining a competitive

[68] Mingli Zhang, Mu Hu, Lingyun Guo, Wenhua Liu, Understanding relationships among customer experience, engagement, and word-of-mouth intention on online brand communities: The perspective of Service Ecosystem, (2017), Management Research Review, Vol. 35 Iss 9 pp. 857-877.

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advantage should be given companies that seek to interest in them.

* Limitation and Future study

Several limitations were inherited in the present study that restrict the generalization of the findings and opens directions of the future research.

this study is based on a single transportation sector, i.e., the mobile taxi booking application companies in Khartoum state, future research may consider multiple transportation sectors to support the generalize ability of these results.

is that brand usage intention used without uni-dimensions considered, thus future research could look at the brand usage intention as multiple dimensions?

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