JOURNAL OF BUSINESS PRACTICE, ECONOMICS, AND FINANCE
A MONTHLY, INDEXED, REFEREED AND PEER REVIEWED OPEN ACCESS INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
VOLUME 2, ISSUE 1 (AUGUST) 2024

THE EFFECT OF BRAND EQUITY ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR

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ARTICLE INFORMATION

Received: 09th May, 2024
Accepted: 28th July, 2024
Published: 20th August, 2024

KEYWORDS: Consumer purchase behavior, Consumer behavior, Brand awareness, Brand equity.

JOURNAL URL: https://ijois.com/index.php/jobpef

Editor-in-chief: Assist. Prof. Dr (C) Ari Riswanto

PUBLISHER: Empirical Studies and Communication – (A Research Center)
Website: www.cescd.com.ng

ABSTRACT

Consumer purchase behavior is an arm in the study of consumer behavior. It is the purchase behavior of individuals or households who buys goods and services for personal consumption. It is the selection and consumption of goods and services for the satisfaction of their wants. It is also the sum total of a consumer's attitudes, preferences, intentions, and decisions regarding the consumer's behavior in the marketplace when purchasing a product or service. There are many brands of electronics in the market, most customers love and wants to identify with Samsung products due to its value. Samsung is a big brand for electronics industry. Aaker (2009) outlined the four branches of brand equity which are, brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty and perceived quality. The aim of this study is to know the effect of brand equity (brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality) on consumer purchase behavior. Consumers were picked from different showrooms. A total of 200 consumers were studied. A structured questionnaire was used for collecting data for this research work. Both primary and secondary data was used for clarity. Multiple regression was used to test for the effect of the brand equity variables on consumer purchase behavior with the aid of SPSS version 20. The researcher tested for the level of significance and effect of brand equity on purchase behavior on Samsung electronics. The result showed that there is a statistically significant effect of brand equity on consumer purchase behavior of Samsung. Recommendation was also made.

Introduction

The conversion of product to a brand is called branding. Kotler (2009) defined branding as endowing products and services with the power of a brand. It can also be seen as the process of creating and managing brands in order to raise their net worth. Allen P. Adamson (2009) defines branding as "the execution and management of things that determine how people perceive the brand. Mario (2022), saw branding as the process of giving a meaning to specific organization, company, products or services by creating and shaping a brand in consumers' minds. It is a strategy designed by organizations to help people to quickly identify and experience their brand, and give them a reason to choose their products over the competition's, by clarifying what this particular brand is and is not. The goal is to attract and maintain loyal customers and other stakeholders by consistently delivering a product that meets the brand's promises. Branding is all about identity of a product which has to do with logo, name, design, packaging etc. Branding is very important to business, because it determines how people view our brand. It determines the value of a brand, by this I mean; it can increase the sales of product or vice versa.

The aim of branding led to brand equity which has to do with the value of the brand, and it can be understood from the viewpoints of the company, the market, or the customer. The author focuses on the value Samsung offers as a brand, and how it drives consumers to make purchase.

Research Questions

To what extent does brand association affect consumer purchase behavior?

To what extent does brand loyalty affect consumer purchase behavior?

To what extent does brand awareness affect consumer purchase behavior?

To what extent does brand quality affect consumer purchase behavior?

In light of the discussion above, the current study seeks to answer the following research questions:

Literature Review

Brand equity has been one of the major concerns in marketing. The term brand equity first came into wide spread use in the 1980s and was defined as "The added value" with which a brand endows a product (Farquhar 1989). Brand equity is the value of the brand in the marketplace(Pullig, 2008). Brand equity is determined by the perception of customers. A brand can be said to have a high value only if the perception of customer towards the brand is positive. A brand with strong brand value or brand equity has the capacity to elicit a favorable differentiated response from consumers. Brand equity is felt throughout the entire process of creating and promoting a product, and organizations will benefit financially from greater understanding of the elements that contribute to brand equity. Brand equity is viewed as consisting of brand strength and brand value (Lassar, Mittal and Sharma 1995). Brand strength constitutes the brand associations held by customers. On the other hand, brand values are the gains that accrue when brand strength is leveraged to obtain superior current and future profits(*BanksPaper-Meta18,* n.d.). The key reasons why companies engage in brand equity management. Mahajan et al. (1994) described the results of brand equity as:

- Enhanced performance (for example, increase in market share or increase in revenues due to the firm's ability to charge a premium price) and/or marketing efficiency (for example, reduced advertising and promotional expenditures) associated with the brand.

- Longevity (or vulnerability) of a brand due to its loyal customer base and distribution relationships.
- Carryover potential (or extensibility) to other brands and markets of the acquiring firm. Hoang et al in their book brand equity and consumer response summarized brand equity with different definition from other Authors in the table below.

Table 1: brand equity definition

Farquhar (1989)	The added value endowed by the brand to the product
Aaker (1991)	A set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm's customers.
Keller (1993)	The differential effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand.
Lassar et al. (1995)	The enhancement in the perceived utility and desirability a brand name confers on a product.
Yoo et al. (2000)	The difference in consumer choice between the focal-branded product and an unbranded product given the same level of product features.
Vázquez et al., (2002)	The utility that the consumer associates to the consumption and use of the brand.
Kotler and Keller (2006)	A bridge between the marketing investments in the company's products to create the brands and the customers' brand knowledge.
Christodoulides and De Chernatony (2010	A set of perceptions, attitudes, knowledge, and behaviors on the part of consumers that results in Increased utility and allows a brand to earn greater volume or greater margins than it could without the brand name.

(Hoang et al., n.d.)

Aaker (1991) presents one of the most detailed and widely accepted definitions of brand equity as "A set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add or subtract from the value provided to a firm and/or to that firm's customers." He developed the model fig 2.4 to back up this definition.

This study is within the theme of consumer behavior which has been always of great interest to marketers. The knowledge of consumer behavior helps the marketer to understand how consumers think, feel and select from alternatives like products, brands and how the consumers are influenced by their environment, the reference groups, family, and salespersons and so on. This study will look into how brand equity affects and influences consumers' decisions to buy Samsung electronics. The outcome and conclusions of this study will be extremely helpful to

Samsung marketing experts who wish to grow their brand's market share because they will support and emphasize consumer perceptions and insights that are shaped by the role that brand equity plays in their decision to buy electronics.

Marketing experts will then be able to comprehend their target market and adjust their offers for this group of people in a way that will yield successful results. Understanding your target market is one technique to better understand customer behavior and raise satisfaction levels.

This study will present marketing professionals' offers to their target market while highlighting and attempting to fix the gaps in their marketing efforts. It illustrates the difficulty that results from underplaying the significance of brand equity and how it affects consumers' perceptions to the point where they become engaged, devoted, and brand ambassadors of the products or services they enjoy, generating positive word-of-mouth about the brand.

Concept of Brand loyalty

Brand loyalty in marketing refers to a customer's favorable attitudes toward a brand and their commitment to continually using the brand's goods and/or services in the face of flaws, competition, or environmental changes. Aaker (1991) stated that it is the extent to which how customers are loyal towards the brand. Loyal customers represent constant revenue for the companies. When a customer is loyal to a brand, there is a tendency he will continue to buy that brand of product rather than competing brands. Harvard business review by Julius Mansa (2022), stated that brand loyalty and customer loyalty not only grow revenue 2.5 times faster than industry peers, but also deliver two to five times the returns to shareholders over 10-year time frames. Ha also said that the primary reason that brand loyalty is so important to profitability is straight forward: 65% of revenue in most companies comes from repeat business with existing clients. Not only do existing customers loyal to brands purchase 90% more frequently than new customers, but maintaining the brand loyal segment is also far less expensive than marketing to attract new customers. Any customer that is loyal to a particular brand has this perception that the brand is of high quality and of a better performance than competitors, and the price is not a major point of concern. One of the first definitions of brand loyalty was given by Jacoby and Kyner, (1973): "the biased (i.e., non-random) behavioral response (i.e., purchase) expressed over time by some decision-making unit with respect to one or more alternative brands out of a set of such brands, and is a function of psychological (decision-making, evaluative) process". This definition emphasizes on how important brand loyalty's psychological component is, in addition to its behavioral components. It also explains that aside the brand the consumer bought, the consumer also has alternative to other brands. Nam et al (2011), has said that there are two perspectives to brand loyalty and they are behavioral approach and attitudinal approach. Behavioral approach is when a customer continually buys and uses a product of a particular brand. It was also defined as the consumer's repetitive and systematic purchasing behavior of a given brand(Touzani & Temessek, 2009). The behavioral loyalty approach has offered a number of measures and modeling approaches to evaluate the effective pattern of brand loyalty and to increase the predictability of brand repurchasing. There are some advantages of behavioral approach to brand loyalty that is the actual purchase directly affects the effectiveness and viability of the company and purchase is not incidental because they are frequently dependent on behavior over time.

Overview of Brand awareness

Brand awareness is the ability of a potential buyer to recognize or recall that a brand is a member of a certain product category(Shariq, 2018)In marketing, the word "brand awareness" refers to how well a product is known to consumers. (Lynch and Srull; 1982) propose that knowledge of an established brand is demonstrated in the memory as a series of associations.

A crucial first step in advertising a new product or revitalizing an established brand is raising brand awareness. There is a spectrum of brand awareness, from the unsure perception that the brand is known to the conviction that it is unique to the product category. Brand awareness includes characteristics that set the product apart from the competition. High brand recognition products and services are more likely to see increased sales. When given a choice, consumers are just more inclined to choose a well-known brand than an unknown one. Brand awareness has some advantages attributed to it. It is the foundation all your marketing efforts have to rely on. Some of those advantages are:

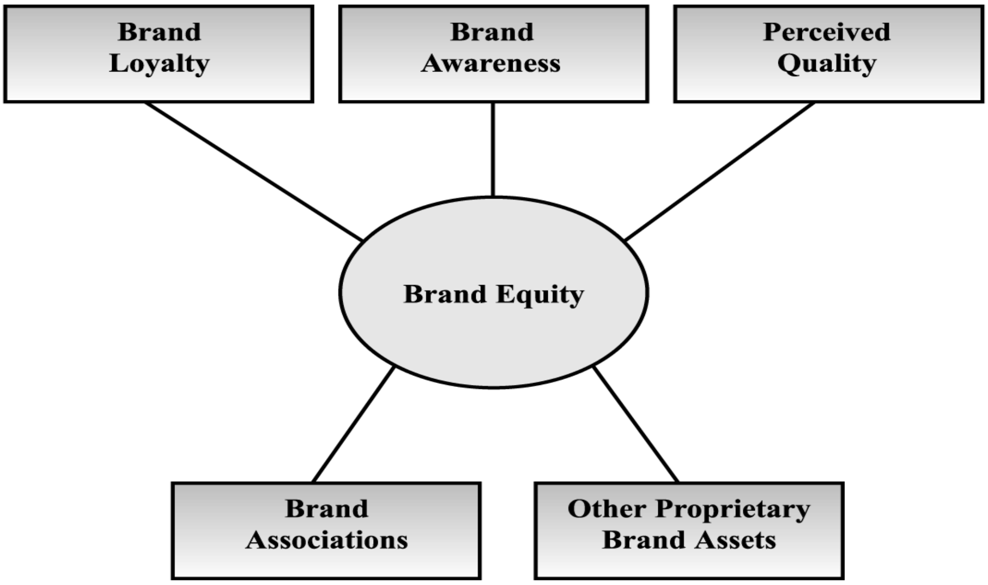
- **Brand awareness creates association:** Brand recognition aids in registering your company in clients' mind. It links specific behaviors and goods to a brand, encouraging consumers to sing the brand any time the need arises.
- **A brand enters the consideration set when there is brand awareness:** With brand awareness, a brand is chosen to be considered before purchase.
- **Brand awareness influences purchase decision:** when a consumer or a customer is familiar with your brand, it’s easier for them to take decision during purchase.

Aaker (1991) defines Quality as consumer ‘s perception of the overall value or superiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives. Quality from a consumer‘s perspective is referred to as perceived quality(Shariq, 2018). Perceived quality is first a perception by customer about a particular product. It plays a major role in brand equity. When compared to the product's intended use, a customer's perception of a product's quality is how satisfied they are with its capacity to meet their expectation. To understand perceived quality, the identification and measurement of the underlying dimensions will be useful, but the perceived quality itself is a summary, global construct (Aaker, 1992). Past studies have shown that perceived quality is associated with premium, price elasticity, brand usage, etc. Perceived quality provides a surrogate variable for other more specific elements of brand equity (Aaker, 1996).

Concept of Brand Association

This is one of the biggest physiological influences on consumer behavior. It is an association between your brand and a concept, image, emotion, experience, person, interest, or activity. A brand association is anything “linked” in memory to a brand(Shariq, 2018). These connections develop through time as a result of recurrent brand interactions and significant events like carnivals and other celebrations. A brand association is one word, image, or concept that comes to mind quickly and they’re important for every company to cultivate. Brand association can be positive or negative, and I believe every brand is working towards making a positive image. This is what differentiates you from your competitors, and makes people to always want to buy your product.

(Ahemed, 2018) published that we have three categories of brand association. They are, attributes benefits and attitude. Brand association based on attributes is a descriptive feature that is characterized based on product and services. By promoting distinguishing features about the product or service a company offers, brands can help make their offerings stand out against their competitors. This makes it easier for customers to remember details about their brand in reference to competing products and may influence their decision to buy. Benefits-focused brand associations involve linking the brand to the personal value or positive meaning that consumers attach to the product or service. Brand association based on attitude is often based on customers overall evaluation. Brand attitudes may be connected to a certain lifestyle, such as being environmentally friendly or fitness-focused, or to a well-known figure in business, entertainment, sports, or other fields. Trademarks, patents, and channel partnerships are examples of proprietary assets. These resources are important because they shield the business from attacks of rivals and stop the loss of its strong client base and competitive advantages.



Source: Aaker (1991)

Consumer Buying Behavior

Consumer Buying Behavior refers to the buying behavior of the ultimate consumer (Ramya and Mohamed, 2016). It is often acknowledged that a key source of competitive advantage and enhanced company performance is a focus on the demands of the customer. Thus, businesses must comprehend their clientele, which in turn necessitates an examination of all the dynamics and elements impacting the preferences and purchasing decisions of consumers. Customer-oriented businesses should concentrate on satisfying their customers, and in order to do so, they should pinpoint their target markets and all of the intricacies and dynamics that pertain to them. Understanding the traits of the target market is one way to improve customer satisfaction and gain insight into consumer behavior.

A questionnaire survey using the convenience sampling approach was conducted in collecting data from showroom customers who has bought Samsung product in the present or in the past. A pre-test was performed, and the reliability of the instrument was determined using the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. the overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of the survey instrument is 0.822. This shows that the instrument(questionnaire) used for data collecting is a good tool. To analyze the impact brand equity on Samsung customers buyer behavior, a five-point likert scale questionnaire was developed. The likert scale ranged from "5" signifying "Strongly disagree" to "1" meaning "Strongly agree". The total of 200 student were respondent that participated in the study The first section of the questionnaire is aimed to gather general information about the respondents. On the other hand, the following section, which is the main purpose of the research, was designed using pre-determined variables related to brand equity dimensions (i.e. brand awareness, perceived quality, brand loyalty and brand association) and consumer buying behavior. Respondents are required to tick the boxes depending on how much they agree or disagree with each question. Multiple regression will be used to analyze data. The collected data was further analyzed using Statistical Package Software for Social Sciences (SPSS.20).

Methodology

Research Design

The study employed a survey research design to gain a comprehensive understanding of the effect of brand equity on consumer buying behavior.

Population and Sample

The population for this study comprises consumers who have made purchases in the past six months from well-known brands in various product categories such as electronics, apparel, and household goods within Abraka, Delta State.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

A stratified random sampling technique is used to ensure representation across different demographic segments such as age, gender, income, and education level. A sample size of 400 respondents is targeted to ensure statistical significance and generalizability of the results.

Data Collection Methods

A structured questionnaire developed to measure the different dimensions of brand equity (brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty) and consumer buying behavior. The questionnaire pre-tested for reliability and validity before being distributed. Data collection will be conducted online using a survey platform like SurveyMonkey.

Measurement Instruments

Brand Equity: Brand equity will be measured using a validated scale such as Aaker's Brand Equity Model. The scale includes items related to:

Brand Awareness: The extent to which consumers are familiar with the brand

Brand Associations: The attributes and associations consumers link to the brand.

Perceived Quality: Consumers' perceptions of the overall quality of the brand

Brand Loyalty: The degree of consumer commitment to repurchase or recommend the brand

Data Analysis

Descriptive Statistics: To summarize the demographic profile of respondents and key variables.

Correlation Analysis: To examine the relationships between brand equity dimensions and consumer buying behavior.

Regression Analysis: To identify the impact of brand equity on consumer buying behavior and determine the most influential dimensions.

Result and Discussion

Table 2: Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.715[a]	.512	.121	16.53388

Source: Researchers computation using SPSS version 20

Table 2 shows regression analysis outcomes that indicate the relation of brand association, brand loyalty, perceived quality and brand awareness (independent variables) on consumer purchasing behavior (dependent variable). The values of multi-correlation coefficients (R) can lie between -1 and +1. According to the model summary of multi regressions in Table 1, the multiple R is 0.715, this means that there is a positive linear relationship between brand equity elements and consumer purchase behavior. As can be seen in Table 1, R-square is equal to 0.512 approximately 50% of the total variability in the consumer purchase behavior is explained by brand equity (brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality).

Table 3: Analysis of ANOVA

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1433.154	4	358.289	512.311	.003[b]
	Residual	1366.846	5	273.369		
	Total	2800.000	9			

Source: Researchers computation using SPSS version 20

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) in Table 3 is used to test whether the overall regression model is a good fit for the data. The table shows that the independent (brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and perceived quality) statistically significant predicts dependent variable (customer purchase behavior). F= 512.311, p (0.03) < 0.05 (i.e., regression model is a good fit). which means that the four brand equity elements are significant to consumer purchase behavior.

Table 4: Analysis of Coefficients

Coefficients									
	Unstandardized Coefficients		**Standardized Coefficients**			**95.0% Confidence Interval for B**		**Collinearity Statistics**	
Model	**B**	**Std. Error**	**Beta**	**t**	**Sig.**	**Lower Bound**	**Upper Bound**	**Tolerance**	**VIF**
(Constant)	7.005	21.397		.327	.757	-47.998	62.008		
Brand loyalty	.629	.667	.538	.943	.389	-1.086	2.344	.299	3.345
Perceived quality	.088	.383	.142	.231	.827	-.896	1.073	.258	3.872
Brand awareness	.014	.486	.022	.029	.978	-1.236	1.264	.166	6.032
Brand association	.094	.231	.191	.407	.701	-.499	.686	.442	2.261

Therefore, the multiple regression equations of this study are brand loyalty -0,629, Perceived Quality -0.088, brand awareness- 0.014, brand association -0.094 = customer purchase behavior. As can be seen in Table 2 based on significance (Sig.) column, the p-value for each sustainable marketing element is less than 0.05 which means that all brand equity elements have contributed to explaining the variance of the dependent variable (consumer behavior) so the hypothesis is supported. Constant 7.005, is the predicted value of the dependent variable. The multiple regression equations represent that consumer purchase behavior (dependent variable) changes by 7 unit, as the brand association, brand loyalty, brand awareness and perceived quality will change with 0.629, 0.088, 0.014, 0.094 in the same direction of consumer purchase behavior.

Discussion

According to the results of our respondents, we discovered that the major reason why customers choose Samsung to other brand is because of what Samsung can offer in terms of warranty, after sales services, quality of the brand, etc. This research has also made us to understand that because Samsung is a premium product, people associate with the brand in other to show forth their class. This supports our hypothesis 1 which states that brand association affect consumer purchase behavior. Findings indicates that brand associations contribute to powerful image (Aaker, 2009). Brand awareness is another element in brand equity that affect purchase consumer purchase behavior. This supports our hypothesis 2 which states that brand awareness has effect on consumer purchase behavior of Samsung electronics. This is similar to the research carried out by (Ahmed, 2020). Brand loyalty is another element in brand equity that purchase consumer purchase behavior. This supports our hypothesis 3 which states that brand loyalty influences consumer purchase behavior. The purpose of brand loyalty should focus on turning consumer behavioral intention to a quick purchasing intention decision (Othman, Chowdhury, Bo, Omar & Osman, 2015). This was confirmed in this research, customers are loyal to Samsung brand and are willing to make repurchase due to their quality aftersales services. Perceived quality affects consumer purchase behavior. This supports our hypothesis 4. Ahmed (2020) said that perceived quality is an important aspect of a brand, and from our analysis, perceived quality has a significant effect on consumer purchase behavior. This means most customer buy Samsung electronics because of its quality.

Conclusion

This study aimed to investigate the effect of brand equity on consumer buying behavior, focusing on key dimensions such as brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The findings from both the quantitative survey and qualitative interviews provide several key insights:

The study confirms that brand equity significantly impacts consumer buying behavior. Higher brand equity leads to increased purchase frequency, stronger purchase intentions, and greater brand loyalty.

Among the dimensions of brand equity, brand awareness and brand loyalty emerged as the most influential factors affecting consumer decisions. Consumers are more likely to purchase from brands they recognize and trust.

While perceived quality and brand associations also positively influence buying behavior, their impact is slightly less pronounced compared to brand awareness and loyalty. However, these dimensions still play a crucial role in differentiating brands in a competitive market.

The qualitative insights reveal that consumers value consistent quality and positive brand experiences. Emotional connections and personal relevance of the brand further enhance consumer loyalty and purchase behavior.

Recommendations

Based on the conclusions drawn from this study, the following recommendations are proposed for brand managers and marketers to effectively leverage brand equity to influence consumer buying behavior:

There is need for Investment in comprehensive marketing campaigns that increase brand visibility across various channels, including digital, print, and broadcast media.

Loyalty programs that reward repeat purchases and long-term engagement with the brand should be implemented.

Customers should be encouraged to share their positive experiences through reviews and testimonials. These will help in addressing any negative feedback constructively and transparently to maintain trust and credibility.

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