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Customer Brand Commitment: An Empirical Evidence from FMCGS Markets of Lagos State Nigeria

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Abstract

The study is an empirical analysis of consumer brand commitment in the food industry of Lagos State, Nigeria. The descriptive survey design was adopted to examine 17,552,940 consumers of packaged products in Lagos State (Lagos State Bureau of Statistics, 2005). The proportionate sampling technique (a variant of stratified sampling method) was used to draw a sample of 2,500 consumers across the 20 local government areas of Lagos State. Questionnaire was the main instrument for data collection rated on a 6 – point Likert scale. 2374 copies of questionnaire were successfully returned representing a response rate of 94.96%. Data were analysed using the descriptive statistical techniques of Percentiles with the aid of SPSS software. The result of the study reveals that consumer brand commitment influence consumer behaviour in the food industry. The study recommends that marketers should strive to develop or design brand packages that enhance consumer emotional and social attachments to a brand during purchase situations.

Keywords: Branding; Brand commitment; Consumer behaviour.

1.0 Introduction

Marketers are interested in developing "committed" relationships between consumers and brands and have used social media as avenues to achieve such partnerships. Affective commitment is an emotionally base attachment to a brand where a consumer derives such value from a brand that he/she is interested in maintaining a long-term relationship with the brand. The benefits of having consumers emotionally committed to a brand proved to be multi-faceted. Such commitment manifested in varying forms of loyalty where strong affective commitment was positively related to greater purchase loyalty.

Customer commitment is a central construct in the development and maintenance of marketing relationships because it is a key psychological force that links the consumer to the selling organisation (Bansal et al. 2004: 238). There is overwhelming evidence to suggest that the higher the level of commitment, the higher the level of brand loyalty (Fullerton 2005: 105). Regarding commitment and relationship marketing, it is noteworthy that commitment occurs when consumers pledge loyalty while this may not be the case in relationship marketing. There may be a relationship but not a commitment.

2.0 Literature Review

Hren (2013) in a quantitative research attempted to determine the possible correlation between consumer commitment and brand personality characteristics. The study used the concept of cult brands to measure perceived brand personality characteristics and the consumer's commitment level for the brand. Results showed that all five of the "Big Five" personality characteristics had a positive correlation with consumer commitment. The personality characteristics of sincerity, excitement and competence possessed the highest, strong, positive correlation with consumer commitment. Sophistication and ruggedness were shown to have rather low, weak and insignificant positive correlations with consumer commitment.

Li (2013) attempted to identify the key antecedents influencing on brand commitment levels demonstrated by Chinese luxury consumers. The study finds that Chinese consumers' social value positively impact on brand commitment towards luxury brands but functional value and symbolic value were not. In addition, emotional value positively impact on brand commitment on luxury brands. The finding offers a new insight into consumer perceptions of luxury brands and provides managerial implications for marketers to build sustainable luxury brand businesses in China. Consequently, the stud offers new empirical findings which contribute to a re-conceptualization of the antecedents of brand commitment in the area of luxury brand consumption.

Choi et al (2013) carried out a cultural examination of exercise commitment and brand equity in United States and South Korean fitness clubs. The results suggest that cultural differences do exist in both the predictors of exercise commitment and brand loyalty between the American and Korean sample utilized. While escape and price were predictors of exercise commitment in both cultures, pride and product delivery were also important to the Korean sample. In addition, logo, price and location were significant predictors of brand loyalty to a fitness club with the American sample, while escape, place, product delivery and price were important for the Korean sample. This suggests that, in order to develop consumers who are committed to exercise, Korean fitness club managers may need to provide a more in-depth service experience to deliver the expected value on the price those consumers pay and to build loyalty towards the club. In addition, the results of the study point to the need to continue to examine brand associations that foster exercise commitment and brand loyalty in other cultures in order to cultivate service based brand equity.

Shuv-Ami (2013) in a new brand commitment scale for market segmentation combined well established and related constructs of consumer behaviour into one scale-commitment. He defined commitment as the degree of attachment to a brand that has four emotional and behavioural underlying constructs: emotional and behavioural attachment to repurchase or patronise a preferred brand represented by brand loyalty construct; the need to reinforce end of consumption pleasurable experience-which is the satisfaction construct; the strength of attachment is represented by the involvement construct or the relevance and importance of the brand category and the attachment to the brand because the other brands are not a real alternative in comparison to the brand used is represented by the relative brand performance construct. However, the study provided an explanation for the inconsistency of the use and measurement of brand loyalty, commitment and involvement and their relationship to satisfaction. Examining the attributes of brand images between segments of commitment may explain in part why the customer is committed or not committed to a brand studying the brand commitment of the competitor may reveal the uncommitted users and the potential users of the company's brand.

3.0 Methodology

The survey design was adopted to enhance a comprehensive investigation of consumer brand commitment in the food industry. The target population comprised 17,552,940 consumers of packaged products in Lagos State (Lagos State Bureau of Statistics, 2005) which is one of the biggest economic and commercial nerve centres in Nigeria. The stratified sampling method was used to select sample from the target population while its variant, proportionate sampling technique was used to obtain sample of 2500 from the twenty (20) Local Government Areas of Lagos State. The main instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire with two parts A and B. Part A covered respondents demographic data while Part B contained instruments for the measurement of the independent variable (brand commitment), the dependent variable (consumer behaviour). The questionnaire items were measured on a 6-point Likert Scale of Very Low (VL) = 1; Low (L) = 2; Average (A) = 3; High (H) = 4; Very High (VH = 5 and Extremely High (EH) = 6. Simple Percentile statistical technique was used to aggregate the responses.

4.0 Results and Analysis

Table 1: Summated Frequencies and Percentages for Responses on Brand Commitment

Brand Commitment	Extremely High Freq (%)	Very High Freq (%)	High Freq (%)	Average Freq (%)	Low Freq (%)	Very Low Freq (%)	Total Freq (%)
I will stay with my brand through good and bad times.	559 (23.5)	776 (32.7)	493 (20.8)	325 (13.7)	104 (4.4)	117 (4.9)	2374 (100)
I am willing to make sacrifices to keep using my brand.	493 (20.8)	720 (30.3)	638 (26.9)	374 (15.8)	87 (3.7)	62 (2.6)	2374 (100)
I will actively seek out my brand.	587 (24.7)	699 (29.4)	670 (28.2)	315 (13.3)	72 (3.0)	31 (1.3)	2374 (100)
I have made a pledge to stick to my brand.	537 (22.6)	608 (25.6)	613 (25.8)	375 (15.8)	119 (5.0)	122 (5.1)	2374 (100)
I will recommend brand to my friends and relatives.	695 (29.3)	800 (33.7)	496 (20.9)	304 (12.8)	48 (2.0)	29 (1.2)	2372 (99.9)

Source: Researcher's Statistical Analysis, 2016.

Table 8 shows that only 23% of the respondents agree not to stay with their brands through good and bad time; but 77% of the respondents agree to stay with their brand at any point in time. This is evidenced as 493% (20.8%) of the respondents rated this item high, 776 (32.7%) rated it very high and 559 (23.5%) rated it extremely high. It is observed that 22% of the respondents are not ready to make sacrifices to keep using their brand. This is evidenced as the respondents in this category rated this item as very low, low or medium but the remaining 78% of the respondents are ready to sacrifice for their brand; 17.6% of the respondents affirmed not to seek out their brand while 82.4% decline to this item by rating it high, very high and extremely high.

Respondents ability to stay with their brand was jettisoned by 25.9% of the respondents but 613 (25.8%) of the respondents rated this item high, 608 (25.6%) rated it very high and 537 (22.6%) rated this extremely high; this shows that 74.1% of the respondents are ready to stick to their brand. While 496 (20.9%) of the respondents rated recommending their brand to friends and relatives high, 800 (33.7%) rated this item very high and 695 (29.3%) rated it extremely high. Some of the respondents (16.1%) rated recommending the brand to their friends and relatives very low, low, or low.

5.0 Conclusion

To guarantee consumer commitment as a result of brand physical attractiveness, brand label and logo should be simplified and contain accurate information as consumers will like them. Since size and shape have been identified to be significant attributes of communication of value through brand packaging, we recommend that stakeholders and marketing practitioners should create design impressions that elicit and reinforce brand loyalty by consumers.

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