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REPEAT PURCHASE INTENTION AND BRAND LOYALTY VERSUS CUSTOMER LOYALTY TO HAND HELD PHONES IN OWERRI, NIGERIA

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Abstract
This paper investigates the effect of customers' intention to repeat purchases and brand loyalty on customer loyalty/ sales of selected hand-held phones in, Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. The population of this study was derived from customers of four selected brands. Simple Random Sampling technique was used to reach out to eighty (80) customers of four brands studied. This resulted in 320 respondents. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, and 320 copies of the questionnaire were distributed, out of which 268 (84%) was returned and useful for the study. The analysis was performed with the multiple correlation technique. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0, was used to do the analysis, and findings indicated that attributes such as brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty, are all important in customers' loyalty. The study concludes that repeat purchase is positively affected by brand equity. This study recommends that management of the companies studied need to do more on creating brand awareness as a way to increase brand equity. They should also, explore other efforts aimed at increasing service levels, in order to increase repeat purchases.

Key Words: *Brand association, Brand awareness, Brand equity, Brand loyalty, Customer Loyalty, Perceived quality, Repeat Purchase.*

Introduction
Repeat Purchase is important in marketing because of its ability to create value for both customers and businesses. It can enable, marketers achieve competitive advantage over competitors (Chen & Chang, 2018). Stiff competition in the market place compels firms to initiate competitive strategies in order to differentiate their products from competition, to enable them achieve success in the market. This requires competent tools for magnetizing, maintaining, and increasing consumers‟ loyalty. Companies use brand equity tools to set specific objectives, aimed at attracting consumers' repeat purchases. Some of these tools include taste, package design or intangible properties such as price, brand name and country of origin (Harcourt, & Ikegwuru, 2018).
Generally, this work has the objective to investigate the influence of customers' intention to repeat purchase of four selected hand-held phones in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. Specifically, it intends to:

1. to ascertain the extent of influence brand awareness has on customer loyalty.
2. to investigate whether brand association significantly influences customer loyalty.

3. to determine if perceived quality significantly influences customer loyalty.
4. to ascertain n=how brand loyalty influences customer loyalty.

Based on the above objectives, the following null hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

H_{o1}. Brand awareness does not significantly influence customer loyalty.
H_{o2}. Brand association does not significantly influence customer loyalty.
H_{o3}. Perceived quality does not significantly customer loyalty.
H_{o4}. Brand loyalty does not significantly customer loyalty.

Literature Review

Brand

A brand is a name, sign, symbol, design or indication that is meant to distinguish goods and or services of one firm or group of firms (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010; Aaker, 1991). Customers for the most part, frequently use and are disposed to pay higher prices for branded products when they have the option to decide on other products that fall into the same category (Pappu, Quester & Cooksey, 2020). Keller (2003) defined brand equity as 'the differential effect of brand knowledge on consumers' response to the marketing of the brand. It is understood as a brand model to which several associations has been connected. The concept of brand equity actually emerged from cognitive psychology and information economics (Rahman, Angeles & Lambkin. It is an indispensable possession of a product or service which could be attained through customers' buying behaviour. 2018). Brand equity indicates consumers' perception and attitudes towards it. Aaker (1991) identified different aspects of brand equity as brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty. These four dimensions of brand equity stand for consumer perceptions and responses to the brand. This study used the four dimensions of brand equity in both analysis and discussion. From the standpoint of cognitive psychology, brand equity is confirmed when consumers embrace or commit complimentary, physically powerful, and other brand associations to memory, which in turn leads to frequent repeat purchases. Accordingly, brand equity is known to enhance value by making a high degree of difference in consumer responses that exponentially increase product or service worth. Ultimately, the value of a brand is derived in the market through the actions of consumers.

The study of its outcomes has become, therefore, an urgent and challenging task (Torres, Bijmolt, Tribó, &Verhoef, 2012; Vomberg Homburg, & Bornemann, 2014). Previous investigations were rooted in cognitive psychology, spotlighting customer's recall ability and what influenced them (Christodoulides & De Chernatony, 2010). This is work is meant to propose a model to better understand brand equity and investigate the effects of this construct on customer loyalty, using data from customers of four hand held brands in Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria. This study also proposes causal relationships among four brand equity dimensions. The existence of a hierarchy among brand equity dimensions has been postulated in literature (Yoo & Donthu, 2001; Keller & Lehmann, 2006, 2003). The study is organized as follows: It opens with a brief, general discussion of brand equity. The conceptual model and hypotheses are presented. The correlation methodology is used after this, to analyse variables and arrive at

empirical findings. The paper then reaches conclusions, implications and limitations of the study.

Brand Awareness

This refers to whether consumers can bring to mind or be familiar with a brand, especially at the point of purchase. It is linked to the potency of a brand's presence in consumers' minds (Aaker, 1996). Keller (2003:17) defined brand awareness as "the customers' ability to recall and recognize the brand as reflected by their ability to identify the brand under different conditions and to link the brand name, logo, symbol, and so forth to certain associations in memory''. Harcourt and Ikegwuru (2018), remarked that brand awareness is a significant determinant of success for any brand. Brand awareness entails connecting the brand to similar associations in memory (Keller, 2003), hence, consumers must initially be aware of a brand, and this can be followed by other aspects of brand associations (Aaker, 1991). Brand awareness is closely linked with the power of brand associations, together with perceived quality (Pike et al., 2010; Keller & Lehmann, 2003).

Brand Association

Brand association comprises of mind-set, thoughts, images, beliefs, experiences, attitudes and a whole lot more, linked with a brand (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Brand associations are the notions that have relations to the brand name in consumer memory (Keller & Lehmann, 2006). According to Aaker (1992), brand association is the most time-honoured aspect of branding. They correspond to rationale for choosing a particular brand to purchase it and also ensuring continued loyalty for the brand. Chen (2001) noted that two types of brand associations exist and they are organization association and products association.

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is an added dimension regularly used to analyse branding effects (Feldwick, 2006). Perceived quality refers to the understanding of the general quality of a product or service compared to competition (Keller, 2003). Perceived quality denotes how the customer evaluates a product or service after an objective quality examination, which Anselmsson et al. (2007), refer to as the quantifiable, practical and its confirmable nature. An elevated objective quality does not automatically affix any worth to brand equity. As noted by Keller and Lehmann (2003), perceived quality and association symbolize the precursor leading to brand loyalty. Towering altitude of perceived quality and affirmative associations can increase brand loyalty (Pike et al., 2010; Keller & Lehmann, 2003).

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is the affection or profound dedication to a brand (Aaker, 1991). When consumers attain a more affirmative perception of a brand, loyalty emerges, and when they become more attached to a brand, they are expected to uphold nearness with the brand since the existence of the connection produces a mind-set of relief, cheerfulness, and protection (Park et al., 2010). Brand loyalty consists of Behavioural loyalty and Cognitive loyalty. Behavioural loyalty is distinguished where customer behaviour in

the market place points toward a character of frequent purchases or the dedication to re-purchase the brand often become a crucial choice. Cognitive loyalty comes up when in a necessity to make a purchase decision; a brand springs up earliest in the customer's intellect or a customer's initial choice.

Purchase Intention

Purchase intention is intimately linked to consumers‟ policy in making genuine purchases in definite periods of time (Howard, 1991). It can equally be described as the push for or spur emanating from consumers‟ minds to purchase a definite brand following their evaluation, before choosing to put together any purchase as relates to their needs, attitudes, and perceptions in the direction of the brands (Madahi & Sukati, 2012). Tariq Nawaz, Butt, 2013, see purchase intention as a multi-step route, where initially, consumers accumulate any associated information concerning their preferred brand, and begin to appraise it by means of its characteristics given that they have experienced the product and have some information regarding the product. Hosein (2012) states that, consumers purchase intention can be measured by level of interest, attention, and information search on a product shown by a consumer. Interest is consumers' mind-set in the direction of a brand that influences them to purchase. Attention to a product enable consumers to move out in search of a preferred brand. This behaviour and other similar events sway them to repeat purchase. Information is any knowledge or facts regarding the brand gathered by the consumer which can make him consider to purchase it.

Harcourt and Ikegwuru (2018) studied the relationships with four dimensions of brand equity and market performance (customer acquisition). This was done by means of data drawn through questionnaire from 54 executives of food and beverage firms in Owerri, Imo State and 236 academic staff of three tertiary institutions of learning in the State. Instruments were validated by means of Cronbach alpha's test, upon which all variables exceeded the yardstick 0.7. Data was analyzed by using the Pearson's Products Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC), ANOVA and regression analysis procedures. It was found that, all the dimensions of brand equity studied were critical at $P < (0.05)$ (one tailed) in shaping the behaviour of customer acquisition. Particularly, brand awareness was found to have the most decisive statistical interface with market performance.

Similarly, Joo-Eon (2017) examined the relationships between brand concepts and brand equity through the mediating roles of emotional attachment and customer commitment, and empirically demonstrates the important contribution of the three-brand concepts to customer commitment and to brand equity, as has been envisaged by previous researchers. The chief input of the study was to exhibit the effects of brand concepts linked to aesthetic, functional and symbolic benefits on brand equity. Hence, brand equity may be sighted as a connect in the pathway of effects that ultimately join brand concepts with market performance. Brand concept, emotional attachment and customer commitment are applicable constructs underlying brand equity, and commitment and loyalty are major intervening variables in relational interactions.

Santos and Cahyadi (2014) analyzed the impact of brand equity towards purchase intention in automobile industry by means of Aaker‟s brand equity theory, citing brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The population is Surabaya people who own or used to own both ABC and XYZ cars. The study used the simple random sampling technique in which 125 samples were collected and analysed using Multiple Linear Regression Analysis and comparative analysis. The result demonstrates that brand equity concurrently has a significant influence on purchase intention while only brand association and brand loyalty independently have a significant influence towards purchase intention. From the comparative analysis, ABC has a better brand association than XYZ, but a lower brand loyalty than XYZ.

Buil, Martı´nez and de Chernatony (2013) looked at the effects of brand equity on consumers' responses, using data from two European countries. The structural equation model (SEM) was employed. Measurement inconsistency and inflexibility of the model across the two national samples were appraised by means of multigroup confirmatory factor analysis. The results showed that brand equity dimensions interconnect. Brand awareness positively influence perceived quality and brand associations. Brand loyalty is also affected by brand associations.

It is safe to say that, perceived quality, brand association and brand loyalty are the foremost drivers of brand equity and customers' intention to repeat purchase. Results of several studies as shown above, further validate the positive effect of brand equity on consumers' responses. However, understanding of the phenomenon of brand equity requires the use of all areas of equity. These include all factors affecting a company's value and market value, which enable them to gain new customers and their ability to retain them.

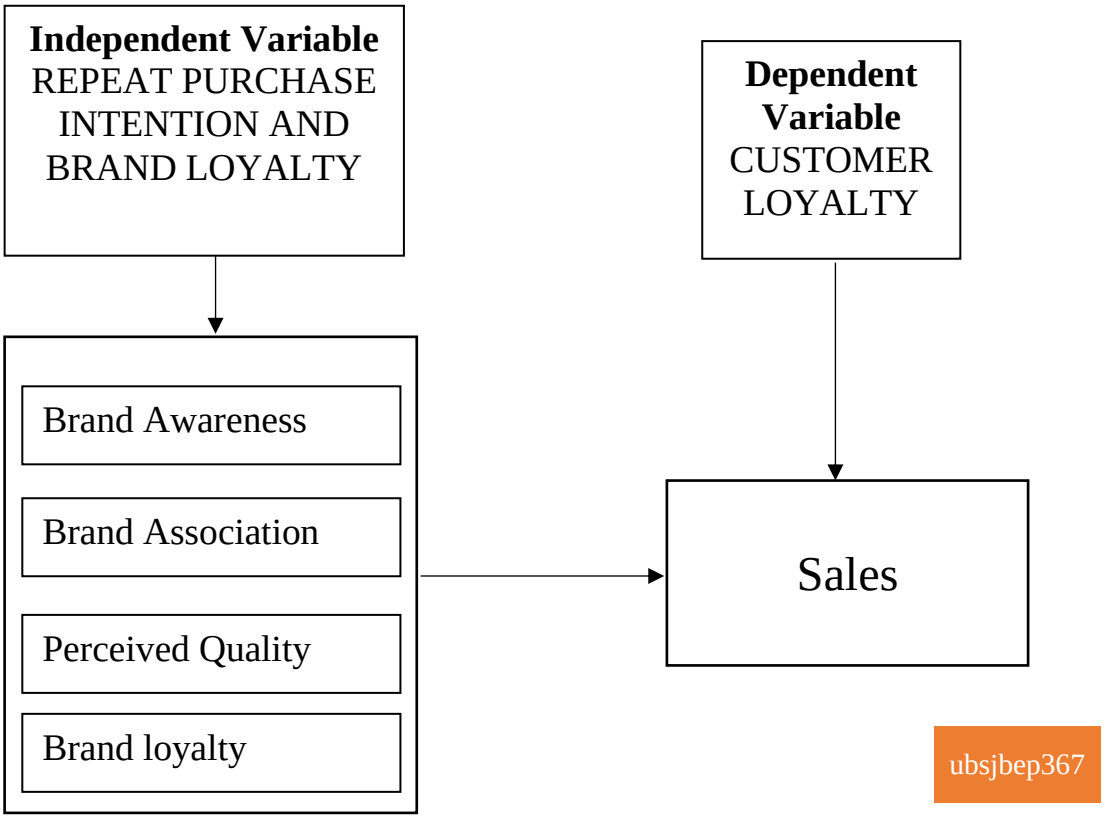

Figure 1: conceptual framework of the study. Source: Authors' concept, 2022.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Storgards (2011) noted that two theories support brand equity. These are:

i) **Consumer Motivation Theory:** This states that consumers are motivated to prioritize purchases towards the base of hierarchy. It is thus, vital that companies draft a message that instils sense of need or urgency in consumers. Marketers should design their brand in such a way that it will stimulate consumers drive to affect purchase.

ii) **Information Processing Theory:** This theory is based on the idea that humans actively process the information they receive from their senses like a computer does. Hearing what is happening when our brands receive information, records and store it. Thus, when a consumer is exposed to a product brand, the appearance of the brand will enable him to internalise whether he will respond positively to the product and vice versa. From the foregoing, our work will be anchored on consumer motivation theory because the way a product brand is designed influences consumer drive, and desires to make purchase depending on the type of goods.

Methodology

This research aims to analyse the influence of buyers' intention to repurchase on loyalty in brand loyalty of selected hand held phones in Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria. The research design adopted for this study is correlation. Correlational research design is a survey method that indicates the magnitude or strength and nature or direction of linear relationship that exists between two or more variables or set of data in a single group of subjects (Kpolovie, Joe & Okoto, 2014 cited in Kayii & Okiridu, 2020). The population of the study constitutes customers of four major hand held phones (Infinix, Samsung, Nokia and itel) in Owerri, Imo State. The population is chosen as this research aims to identify the brand equity elements of these phone brands. This study used purposive sampling; i.e. a non-probability sampling to select fifty (80) customers each of the four phones studied. This produced two hundred (320) respondents or samples among the population. The researcher distributed questionnaires to those who regularly use these phones. A total of 320 questionnaires were completed. Non-valid questionnaires were discarded, resulting in 268 valid questionnaires. Giving a response rate of 84%. Since the objective of this study is to analyse the effects of the influence of the elements of brand equity on customer loyalty, the multiple linear regression analysis was also used.

Result and Discussion

Reliability Analysis

Reliability Coefficient was worked out for the multiple scale and each of the subscales, and the results are reported in table 1. As we can see, the value of the Alpha coefficient for the composite scale and the subscales exceeds the threshold ($\alpha \geq 0.70$); hence, they are all reliable. Table 1 shows the reliability assessment of our predictor variables using Cronbach‟s alpha. It specifies how the items for each factor were internally related in the manner expected.

Table 1: Reliability Assessment of Predictor variables

Scale	Dimensions	Items	Reliability
BAW	Brand Awareness	6	0.853
BAS	Brand Association	6	0.868
PQ	Perceived Quality	6	0.836
BL	Brand Loyalty	6	0.832
Overall Reliability Scale		24	0.896

Source: SPSS 22.0 Window Output (Based On 2023 Field Survey Data)

Table1, outlines the reliability result of consumer-based brand equity and customer loyalty, which also contains the individual items reliability test. Clearly, all items are reliable and were used to investigate consumer-based brand equity and brand loyalty of hand held phones in Owerri, Imo State, Nigeria. The extent of the relationship between consumer-based brand equity and purchase intention can be operationalised using brand awareness (0.862) with 6- items measure; brand association (0.848) with a 6-item measure; perceived quality (0.816), and brand loyalty (0.822). According to Ghozali (2013), the indicators are well thought-out as reliable to represent the variables when the value of Cronbach‟s Alpha is higher than 0.7.

Test of Hypotheses

The study used the multiple regression analysis, and paid attention on the result of Adjusted R^2, F-test and t-test. Coefficient of determination or Adjusted R^2 measures how well the regression model explains or turns the variation of dependent variable (Ghozali, 2013). The nearer Adjusted R^2 value to 1, the better the independent variables can predict the dependent variable. The F-test chiefly illustrates whether all independent variables used in the regression model concurrently have impacts on the dependent variable (Ghozali, 2013). The study used 95% confidence level in which the significance level is 5%.

Table 2: ANOVA

	R^2	F-test	Sig
Regression	5.928	24.535	0.0000

Source: SPSS 22.0 Window output (based on 2023 field survey)

Table 2, shows whether the independent variables concurrently have an influence on the dependent variable. From the F-test shown in table 1, it can be seen that the significance F in the Sig. line confirms value of 0.000, which implies it is lower than 0.05 significance level. Besides; the F value illustrated in table 1 is 24.535, which is higher than F table (2.6795). Accordingly, it can be implied that H0 is rejected, demonstrating that there is a concurrent influence of the independent variables (the components of consumer-based brand equity) on the dependent variable (customer loyalty). The result of this research shows that brand equity concurrently has an

influence on purchase intension, which support our earlier findings as applicable (Astuti & Kurnianto, 2013; Agusli & Sondang, 2013).

Table 3: Effects of individual Independent Model

Model	**Unstandadized Coefficients**			
	B	**Std Error**	**t**	**Sig**
(Constant)	0.67	0.874	0.121	0.02
BAW	0.94	204.85	19.926	1 0.00
BAS	0.89	0.423	19.9812	0.00
PQ	0.74 17	0.97	19.9490	0. 00
BL	0.81 35	1.35	18.5987	0. 00

Source: SPSS 22.0 Window output (based on 2023 field survey)

Table 3 shows the effect of individual independent variables on the dependent variable. According to t-test, individual variable (brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty) has a significant influence on the dependent variable (purchase intention) when the significant t is less than significance level (0.05) and t-test statistic value is greater than or lower than ± table (± 1.979). As depicted in table 3, brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty have significant influence on purchase intention as the t-critical values are greater than 1.979 and significance t is lower than 0.05. Hence, it can be asserted that elements of brand equity are established to individually have a significant influence on purchase intention of telecommunication brands. This finding is in line with previous related studies (Astuti & Kurnianto, 2013; Jalilvand, Samiei & Mahdavinia, 2011), which found that all components of brand equity individually have a significant influence on purchase intention.

Table 4. Adjusted R Square

R	R^2	Adjusted R^2	Std Error of The Estimate Model 1
0.992	0.985	0.980	2.485

Source: SPSS 22.0 Window output (based on 2022 field survey data).

Table 4 illustrates the regression model explanation of the dependent variable. The higher the value of adjusted R^2, the better the independent variables in explaining the dependent variable. From table 4, it can be distinguished that the adjusted R Square is 0.980. This indicates that 98.0% of the variance in purchase intention of these Mass Transit firms can be explained by the variance of the components of brand equity (brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty), considering the sample size and independent variables. Moreover, this also indicates that there are 2.0% other factors that cannot be explained in this study but have significant influence on purchase intention in the firms.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study collected 320 questionnaires; however, only 268 questionnaires were valid and used for the study. The outcome of the reliability and validity test illustrate that all parameters engaged in the study are reliable and valid. The overall aim was to determine whether consumer behaviour(loyalty)by phone users‟ confirm whether or not there is strong brand equity and brnd loyalty. Based on the multiple regression test, brand equity parameters (brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty) concurrently have significant influence on patronage. Moreover, brand awareness has the most critical influence on repeat purchases. This is followed by brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty. The study therefore, concludes that brand equity has significant influence on consumer loyaly of selected hand-held phones in Owerri, Imo State of Nigeria.

From the findings of this study, it is hereby recommended as follows:

i. Owners of these brand names in Nigeria should do more on creating brand awareness to increase brand equity.
ii. They should also, incorporate more brand equity enhancement programmes, so as to maximise the full benefits of repeat purchase by loyal customers.

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