

The Impact of Branding n Consumer Buying Behavior: A Conceptual Study

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Abstract

Purpose: *The basic purpose of this paper to study the impact of branding on consumer buying behavior and how consumer attitude is changing towards buying a product.*

Design/Methodology/Approach: *This study is based on secondary data/information and data has collected from different sources like books, research journals related to marketing, business magazines, newspapers, databases and various websites. For the study, exploratory research design applied which reveals and provides the basic outline of finding & conclusion. The basic approach of the study is to screen out the attitude of the customer towards brand.*

Findings: *Today is an era of globalization. The globalized markets for homogeneous products and services have emerged. Marketers now realize that there is a global need to standardize the products, packaging, and communication to attain a least-common denominator positioning that would be successful across nations. However, the problem faced by the brand managers is how to implement the strategies that can realize the full potential of their brand in and across multiple markets at a given time. Multinational corporations must be receptive to the different markets they serve, including language and cultural requirements. Brand knowledge is a very important factor. As the consumer is more aware of the brand and he has all the knowledge about its price, quality etc, the more loyal he will be towards that brand.*

Practical Implications: *The study finding may act as a feedback which would help the advertiser and practitioners to understand the consumer perception which in term will help the marketer to create relevant brand building message.*

Social Implications: *The study findings revealed the social perception about customer shall be more aware with the brand throughout the more campaign and that would definitely increase the customer efficiency to buy the product in the name of brand. Whereas, brand creates value and value creates originality about any object.*

Originality: *The study findings focused on brand creation & brand value of a firm/company.*

Keywords: *Brand, value, belief, marketing, behavior, attitude, perception*

Introduction:

Since market conditions are constantly changing, the new role of brand management as an integral part of holistic marketing is more important than it ever was. According to the situation on current retail market, it is very important that enterprises manage their brands so they can flexibly fulfill desires and wishes of their customers. In order to create a competitive brand, they need to pay attention to their customers constantly. In current retail environment, consumers are overwhelmed with plenty of brands and products. Primarily, consumers are influenced by their individual attitudes, professed values but also by the environment in which they spend their lives. In our opinion, brand is a factor that has got an impact on consumer purchase preferences and therefore we decided to investigate the impact of brand on consumer behavior in connection with the age category of consumers.

In the age of twenty first century, almost every customer would like to buy branded products from the market. No doubt, brand plays very significant role in marketing strategies. Which product has excellent branding into the market; they haven't such need to promote at other level. Although, most of the marketer continuously doing effort to incorporate the valuable things into the mind of the customer and they do not want to rest any corner where customer would have any issue to buy the product. Meanwhile, internet has greatest tools of promotion which is helping the marketer to disseminate the features and specification about the product. As per the consumer behavior approach, customer use effort, money and time to buy the product. If customer became fail to have such kind of product; he may switch towards other brand or name. Branding is the process by which companies distinguish their product offerings from competition. Marketers develop their products into brands which help to create a unique position in the minds of customers. A brand is created by developing a distinguish name, packaging and design and arousing customer expectations about the offering. By developing an individual identity, branding permits customers to develop associations like prestige and economy with the brand. Buying a brand reduces the risk of the customer and eases his purchase decisions. Branding shapes customer perceptions about the product. Brand superiority leads to high sales, the ability to charge price premiums, and the power to resist distribution power.

Brand Names and Trademarks

A brand name is the part of a brand that can be spoken or written and *identifies* a product, service or company and sets it apart from other comparable products within a category. A brand name

may include words, phrases, signs, symbols, designs, or any combination of these elements. A brand name is not to be confused with a *trademark* which refers to the brand name or part of a brand that is legally protected. For example, Coca-Cola not only protects the brand name, *Coca-Cola*, but also protects the distinctive Spencerian script and the contoured shape of the bottle.

Corporate Brand Identity

Simply, the brand identity is a set of individual components, such as a name, a design, a set of imagery, a slogan, a vision, etc. which set the brand aside from others. The core identity reflects consistent long-term associations with the brand; whereas the extended identity involves the intricate details of the brand that help generate a constant motif.

According to Kotler et al. (2009), a brand's identity may deliver four levels of meaning:

1. **Attributes**- A brand's attributes are a set of labels with which the corporation wishes to be associated. For example, a brand may showcase its primary attribute as environmental friendliness. However, a brand's attributes alone are not enough to persuade a customer into purchasing the product.
2. **Benefits**- which are more emotional translations. If a brand's attribute is being environmentally friendly, customers will receive the benefit of feeling that they are helping the environment by associating with the brand.
3. **Values**- Aside from attributes and benefits, a brand's identity may also involve branding to focus on representing its core set of values.
4. **Personality**- Brand personality refers to “the set of human personality traits that are both applicable to and relevant for brands.”

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness involves a customers' ability to recall and/or recognize brands, logos and branded advertising. Brands helps customers to understand which brands or products belong to which product or service category. Brands assist customers to understand the constellation of benefits offered by individual brands, and how a given brand within a category is differentiated from competing brands, and thus the brand helps customers understand which brand satisfies their needs. Thus, the brand offers the customer a short-cut to understanding the different product or service offerings that make up a category.

Brand Recognition

Brand recognition is one of the initial phases of brand awareness and validates whether or not a customer remembers being pre-exposed to the brand. Brand recognition (also known as *aided brand recall*) refers to consumers' ability to correctly differentiate a brand when they come into contact with it. This does not necessarily require that the consumers identify or recall the brand name. When customers experience brand recognition, they are triggered by either a visual or verbal cue. For example, when looking to satisfy a category need such as toilet paper, the customer would firstly be presented with multiple brands to choose from.

Brand Communication

Although brand identity is regarded as the most fundamental asset to a brand's equity, the worth of a brand's identity would become obsolete without ongoing brand communication. Integrated marketing communications (IMC) relates to how a brand transmits a clear consistent message to its stakeholders. Five key components comprise IMC:

1. Advertising
2. Sales Promotions
3. Direct Marketing
4. Personal Selling
5. Public Relations

Definition of Brand

Brands have been around for centuries and unquestionably they represent a way to distinguish the goods or services of one company from those of another. The original motivation for branding was for craftsmen and others to distinguish their products so that customers could easily recognize them. Branding, or at least trademarks, can be traced back to ancient pottery. The word "brand" is derived from the Old Norse word "brandr", which means, "to burn". In order to identify their animals, the owners of livestock marked them in this way. For the same reason companies are marking, or branding, their products (Keller 1998).

"A brand is a name, term, design, symbol or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers" (Bennet 1995; Wood 2000).

Review of Literature

De Chernatony and McWilliam (1989), attempted to reveal the way brands have been interpreted. They identified five categories of brands: as devices of ownership; as differentiating

devices; as a means of communicating a guarantee; as a way to expedite the consumers' decision making; and as symbolic devices to provide consumers with a way to express themselves. *De Chernatony and Riley (1998)* provide a range of definitions used by the trade as well as by scholars. They identified definitions of the term "brand" emphasizing twelve different aspects, such as: a legal instrument; a logo; a company; a shorthand; a risk reducer; an identity system; an image in consumer's mind; a value system; a personality; a relationship; a value adding device; and an evolving entity. *Wood (2000)*, in her effort to summarize the plethora of definitions, grouped them into those with an emphasis on brand benefits to the company and those with an emphasis on brand benefits to the consumer. *De Chernatony (1997) & Webster (2000)*, a brand is therefore much more than a product or service. A brand is intangible and exists in the consumer's mind. A brand provides added values.

Types of Brands

Traditionally, manufacturers branded their products and sold them to customers by using the distribution channel. Wholesalers, distributors and retailers sold only the manufacturers' brands. Manufacturers were thus able to exert control over these distribution channel members. Basically brands are two types-

- A- **Manufacturer Brand**- they are created by producers and bear their chosen brand name. The responsibility for marketing the brand lies with the producer. Most manufacturer brands are supported by massive advertising budgets. They also have to manage long distribution channels to reach the final customers. The producer is an expert in designing and manufacturing the product. A manufacturer brand is likely to be more advanced and may have more innovative features than other brands in its category.
- B- **Own Label/Distributor/Store Brands**- They are created and owned by channel intermediaries. Most of these brands are owned by big and powerful retailers. The retailers do not manufacture these brands and may not have any knowledge about the underlying technologies and processes of the product. Retailers almost completely outsource manufacturing. Since retailers are in contact with customers, they can give very important information about the liking and disliking of customers, which the manufacturers of distributor brands can incorporate in the products they manufacture for the retailers.

The Value of the Brand

Consumer or user, to the brand owner, to the distributor (retailer and wholesaler) and to the economy and society as a whole. Although the value of branding is not in doubt, we have to note that some companies do not brand their products. The main reason for this is that they are unable, or unwilling, to assume the responsibility, or cost of promoting the brand and of maintaining consistent product quality.

Value to Consumers

Overall the most important benefit of branding to the consumer is that brands simplify the decision making process (Jacoby, Szybillo et al. 1977). In a world where time and convenience are highly regarded, this is a very important benefit. There are following benefits of brand to the customers-

- Identification of the product's source. Consumers can identify the maker of the product and hold him responsible.
- Risk reduction. Brands can serve as perceived risk reduction devices. During the process of buying and consuming a product, consumers have to deal with different types of risks (functional, physical, financial, social, psychological, time). Brands are one way that consumers try to handle these risks.
- Search cost reduction. Consumers through trial and error learn and evaluate brands. So, when the need for a repurchase arises, they do not need to search again. Additionally, brands help consumers compare prices across stores and to be absolutely sure that he/she is comparing apples with apples.
- Signal of quality. The brand name is one of the attributes consumers use as a surrogate indicator of quality. So, brands have a major impact on consumer product rating (blind vs. branded product testing confirms this

Value to Brand Owners

There are following benefits of brand to the owners-

- Assists in product handling and tracing, in organizing and monitoring inventory and accounting records
- Offers legal protection. A brand name can be protected through registered trademarks
- Offers control over the channel of distribution. Channel members have a greater interest in cooperating with a strong brand. They are more likely to cooperate to the

rules of the company that represents them since they do not want to lose the opportunity to sell a strong brand.

- Builds a corporate image. Developing powerful brands facilitates the building of a corporate image
- Provides differentiation. Brand owners in their effort to differentiate their products “name” them. They use brands in order to identify and distinguish their product offerings (tangible goods and or services) from the others.
- Reduces the cost of new product introduction. Brands provide an opportunity to develop relationships of trust with the consumers. Marketers can use these relationships, and leverage their brands by introducing new products under an existing brand name.

Value to Distributors

There are following benefits of brand to the distributor-

- Improve the image of the store and help the distributor to establish a specific market position
- Generate traffic and improve store loyalty. As a result of an improved image, they attract more customers into the store. Additionally, brand owners build their brands and through their pull strategies try to develop a preference for the brand and for those who distribute them.
- Lower risk and uncertainty and allow faster inventory turnover. For a successful brand, there is an established demand pattern. So, estimating sales and placing orders might be easier. Additionally, the distributor has the owner’s commitment to promote the brand.
- Higher margins. Brands, especially successful brands, provide added value and as such they can support higher prices. Selling costs are expected to be lower because the distributor gets the marketing expertise and support of the brand’s owner. So, we have higher margins for the distributor.

Value to Economy and Society

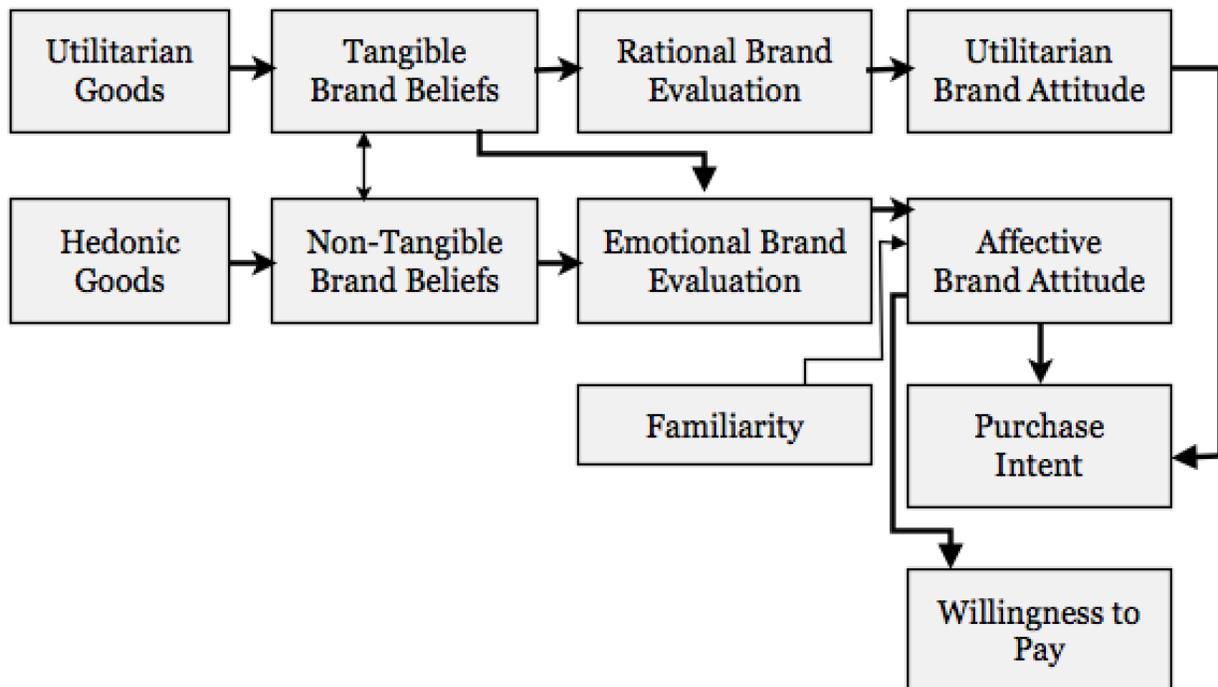
Branding is the creation and the cornerstone of capitalism. So, we cannot underestimate the role of brands to the economy and to society. For example, they

- Add Economic Value. Brands stimulate demand and drive the market forward

- Stimulate Innovation. Brands in order to survive have to develop and maintain differentiation.
- Increase Exports and Employment. Brands and especially global brands are a very strong asset to the economy of their home country. They increase exports and support a country’s trade surplus.

Theoretical Framework

Emotion and Reason in Consumer Behavior: Attitude Formation



If we go through this question-

What is the role of emotion and reason in developing and forming attitudes about products, brands, and advertisements?

That view shows a causal relationship between beliefs, attitude, and behavior such that beliefs play a causal role in the formation of an attitude and the attitude plays a causal role in the person’s actions or behavior. Moreover, the view suggests that the beliefs are a necessary condition of forming attitudes toward a product or campaign.

In consumer behaviour consumer shows the attitude towards the product experience, ideas and services. Nation’s economy is affected by the consumer behaviour (Engel, Miniard et al. 2006). To meet customer need marketing strategies are made (Engel, Miniard et al. 2006). Blackwell,

Miniard et al. (2001) define that consumer behaviour is a combination of buying and using services or products. Therefore, seven steps for consumer buying decision are “need recognition, search for information, pre-purchase, evaluation, purchase, consumption, postconsumption evaluation and divestment (Engel, Miniard et al. 2006)”.

Concussion

This paper investigates the relationship between the branding and consumer buying behaviour. Using a theoretical model, we explain the positive impact of branding on consumer buying behaviour. Based on the model, our result suggests that the advertisement create the brand image and increase the preference and suggestion towards purchase during purchase decision. Same the impact of the brand image, brand loyalty and brand association has the significant impact on consumer buying behaviour. Definitely, in fact that brand is the factor which has an impact on consumer purchase decision-making process. Brands provide information about products and create associations that affect the mind of the consumer in purchase process. Very important category of consumer behavior research is brand awareness. Suitable forms of marketing activities as a whole can create a positive brand associations and start a purchase action of positively seen brands. Brand represents a certain value in the mind of consumer. Without the psychological linkage would be a product or a service indistinguishable from each other. Our study has aimed on impact of a brand on consumer behavior. More of the people they go for brand and then decide to buy the product. On behalf of the investigation of different literature survey we found that the quality is the key factor in their decision-making process of purchasing a brand.

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