



The Interplay of Brand Attitudes and Quality Perception in Fostering Customer Brand Loyalty in Ibadan, Oyo State

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Abstract

The research examined the interplay of brand attitudes and quality perception in fostering customer brand loyalty. The specific objectives were to examine brand attitudes that affect customer brand loyalty and investigate the influence of brand quality on customer brand loyalty. Descriptive design was used to clarify better brand quality, brand attitude, and dependability of customer brand loyalty. In addition, an adopted questionnaire was used to collect data in the research. Consumers of refined Dangote salt from retail supermarkets and stores in Ibadan made the study's population. The study population is infinite, with a sample size of three hundred and eighty-five. Data gathered from the respondents were examined using descriptive and inferential statistics. The hypotheses were tested using regression analysis version 26 of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) to compute and analyse the data. The results revealed that customer brand loyalty is directly influenced by brand attitude and brand quality. The research recommended that the government monitor the brands' efficiency through various agencies to ensure the quality of the products produced and supplied to customers.

Keywords: Brand Attitudes, Brand Quality, Customer Loyalty, Customer Satisfaction.

1.1 Introduction

Businesses are increasingly thinking about becoming global and competing globally due to greater market competitiveness brought on by deregulation and globalisation (Isa, 2021). Technological innovation and complexity have changed customer expectations, increased competitiveness, and affected customer loyalty in the business sector, mainly employed to attract customers. Practitioners must boost customer loyalty to ensure their marketing plans align with the market's demand.

Marketing literature states that scholars are trying to know how customers regard businesses and react to branding in their activities (Saeed et al., 2022). Through extensive research, various branding models have been developed that include essential branding components and examine how they interact in diverse circumstances (Cleff, et al., 2018; Pina et al., 2021). A company's marketing strategy, particularly for its goods and services, is influenced by how its customers view it (Han et al., 2019). Brands may directly and

indirectly forecast client behaviour, including customer satisfaction, loyalty, and purchase intention. Han et al. (2019) assert that positive interactions can cause clients to feel loyal.

Nowadays, there needs to be more competition among enterprises. They need to work on maintaining their competitive advantage. In contrast to prior generations, today's consumers have rapidly shifting needs, which puts much pressure on firms. According to Marliawati and Cahyaningdyah (2020), a brand's experience affects consumers' brand loyalty. Consistency is a critical element of brand behaviour since prior research has shown that a brand would perform well in the market if it continually offered high-quality services that pleased customers (Devi & Yasa, 2021). Businesses continuously seek ways to increase customer loyalty because they rely on long-lasting connections with their clients. Like many other cultures, Nigeria has used much-refined salt for decades. Hence, there is only a little brand research on refined salt currently available, especially regarding suggestions for packaging and how packaging affects consumer choices (Midttun, 2015). Morrissey and DeWitt (2014) also pointed out that the need for high-quality and refined salt products has raised the significance of adding value to satisfy consumer preferences and presents a possibility for market expansion. In a highly competitive market, a company's brand is its most important intangible asset since it can inform customers about its products and services and lower the risk of their purchasing choice (Ashraf et al., 2018).

Based on the preceding, this study examines the interplay of brand attitudes and quality perception in fostering customer brand loyalty, focusing on customers of Dangote refined salt in Ibadan. The research will answer the following questions: How does brand attitude affect customer brand loyalty? And Does brand quality affect customer brand loyalty?

2.0 Literature Review

This literature review examines research on the interplay of brand attitudes and quality perception in fostering customer brand loyalty, focusing on key themes and issues. It analyses studies, theories, and methodologies to identify trends, gaps, and emerging perspectives and highlights future research areas.

2.1 Brand attitude

The brand attitude was defined by Wang (2013) as the visual packaging that influences consumers' perceptions of food products quality and their preference brands. Brand attitude refers to how a consumer perceives a brand as a whole, including how it responds to an item, brand associations, and whether they like or dislike the brand (Singh & Banerjee, 2018). O'Callaghan and Kerry (2016) opined that a product and the necessity of technological change characterise consumers' brand attitudes. Grinsven and Das (2016) defined brand attitude as a simple brand that offers temporary benefits. Arghashi et al., (2021) emphasise that a person's attitude is crucial based on a brand since brands express a consumer's attitude toward them, which is a critical component in a brand's success. A brand attitude is "an achievable, relatively permanent and at the same time deliberate, gradual, more or less intensive, and motivated customers' intention to react to a certain object" (Lita et al., 2021).

The perception of a specific brand affects attitudes towards it. According to a study, a person's fundamental perceptions of a brand's extrinsic qualities affect their feelings (Lita et al., 2021). A brand's attitude can affect behaviour because of its capacity for thought, emotion, and conative action. Wang et al. (2019) claim that a person's attitude is the primary factor in determining whether they want to engage in a specific behaviour. Consumer perceptions of advertising affect a person's desire to acquire something. The degree to which people value a brand may be directly influenced by brand attitude. Alam et al., (2022) brand attitude is viewed as a customer's mental state that enables them to sort through all available options to find commodities. The two essential elements of brand attitude are the strength of a consumer's positive or negative feelings based on their encounters with a specific brand and the assurance that the product has the positive or negative feeling is accurate.

2.2 Brand quality (BQ)

Zeithaml (2019) believed that brand quality refers to how customers perceive the product's overall quality or excellence. Jing et al. (2014) argued that brand quality is the capacity to perceive a product's superiority and increase brand pleasure. Based on this criterion, goods and services can be selected. Brand quality, according to Bartikowski (2020), is the acknowledgement of product quality, which affects customer purchasing decisions. Research already published has supported the influence of brand quality on brand intention.

Mariutti and de Moura (2019), brand quality is examined by brand equity and brand image and is powered by attitude influence

Based on inaccurate or biased information, consumers commonly create opinions. Consumers view a product's brand quality as a leading signal and believe it to be directly related to customer trust (Yan et al., 2019). Kurniawan and Indriani (2018) state that perceived value is a group of elements influencing how consumers feel about a brand. Studies examining the connection between brand quality and brand loyalty show that perceived quality affects the intention to purchase consumers (Alhaddad, 2015). The quality of a brand is the main factor driving consumer loyalty to the brand (Alhaddad, 2015). Also, the brand's image is influenced by its quality, as has been shown (Ming et al., 2011). A brand's value is boosted by brand quality in many ways, including by offering consumers a strong incentive to purchase the product, enabling it to stand out from rival brands, fetching a higher price, and creating the framework for brand extensions (Alhaddad, 2015). In addition, brand quality is now a thorough analysis of the calibre of a good or service offered. Consumers will evaluate products against a wide range of alternatives. A company's reputation for quality might indicate its success or failure. A product cognitive component that affects consumer purchasing intentions is brand quality. Consumers are more likely to purchase a product with high-quality characteristics (Sulthana & Vasantha, 2021).

2.3 Brand loyalty

Agarwal (2017) states that loyalty to a brand refers to a firm's resolve to repeat or continually subscribe to goods or services. Alhaddad (2015), brand loyalty refers to consumers' perceptions of brand equity as an additional benefit of the good or service that bears the brand name. Brand loyalty merely results from behaviour and attitude (Ong

et al., 2018). Hussein (2018), this is the strength of the link between a client's general attitude and repurchase trade. Shalehah et al., (2019) combined customers' positive views and repurchase behaviour to explain brand loyalty. Midttun (2015) states that brand loyalty refers to a steadfast will to disprove or resynchronise consistently chosen goods and services by repeating the process, which is a theory that encourages consumers to buy the same brand. Suer (2014) argues that brand loyalty is a strong commitment by consumers to buy their favourite brands repeatedly. Muhammad and Artanti (2016) state that brand loyalty is the act of customers continuing to purchase goods or services from a firm.

The long-term efficacy and profitability of a corporation depend on customer brand loyalty. According to Chinomona (2016), increasing brand loyalty allows business owners to boost recurring income, reduce expenses, boost sales volume, and promote repeat business. Businesses can obtain various tactical advantages from brand loyalty, including increasing their market share, luring new clients, stopping brand expansions, cutting promotion expenses, and protecting their brands against antagonistic attacks (Annisa & Dwi, 2020).

Wismiarsi and Purnama (2015) assert that devoted customers boost a business' competitiveness by increasing the likelihood that they will make repeat purchases, are less price sensitive, are less susceptible to competitor advertisements, spend less money overall, and promote the business positively. According to Badura (2017), a company's brand attitude is essential for offering the best offers because loyal customers assist them in expanding their business. According to Badura (2017), the advantages of brand loyalty include advantages over rivals, lower costs for customer retention, and word-of-mouth marketing.

2.4 Theoretical Review

One viable theoretical framework for illustrating the connection between a brand and devoted clients is the theory of lovemarks. Lovemarks are Kevin Robert's idea; he was the first scholar to organise the Lovemarks theory. The lovemarks theory is between several items and consumers, which was previously investigated by Fournier (1998). As a result of these researchers, Roberts (2004) specifically suggested that lovemarks have a robust structure and distinctive traits that can be used to explain the complex relationship between some companies and devoted clients. Roberts (2004), as lovemarks can be anything that appeals to a customer's heart, including a brand, an item, a service, an occasion, an experience, an individual, a business, or a nation, they can enhance customer loyalty beyond all reason. The notion of lovemarks, according to Roberts (2004), frequently indicates emotional solid connections between products and consumers and makes the brand recognised, owned, loved, respected, guarded, forgiven, and unable to be forgotten, replaced, or abandoned by consumers. A brand's ability to gain strength depends heavily on whether it is a lovemarks brand. In this regard, Roberts (2004) emphasised that to win a customer's persistent loyalty in contemporary culture, a brand should try to be seen as its "lovemark." For brands to connect deeply emotionally with consumers, "lovemarks" relies on customers' enduring, good feelings towards a brand or regular purchases (Roberts, 2004).

This research adopts the lovemark theory, which has a robust structure and distinctive traits that can be used to explain the complex relationship between some companies and

devoted clients. Lovemarks interplay with brand attitudes and quality perception in fostering customer brand loyalty of Dangote Refined salt customers in Ibadan, Oyo state.

2.5 Empirical Review

Chuenban et al. (2021) examined the coexistence of brand attitude, brand value, and brand quality. 400 questionnaires were sent to supermarkets in the Bangkok metropolitan area.

The data for the four constructs and the 13 observable variables were assessed using LISREL 9.1 and the study's structural equation modelling (SEM) and confirmatory fit (GOF) analysis. Their research led them to conclude that all of the cause factors positively impacted (73% R²) the BL of Thai canned tuna.

Diputra and Yasa (2021) examined how brand trust, brand image, and product quality affect consumer preference for and satisfaction with Samsung smartphones. The sample comprised 185 Denpasar City inhabitants who consume and purchase Samsung smartphones. The questionnaire's data were analysed using the AMOS programme and route analysis techniques. SEM (Structural Equation Modelling) was used. Techniques of intentional sampling were used. The findings revealed in the study that there is satisfaction when brands are of high quality and that the brand's image helps retain consumers.

Abbas et al. (2021) looked at brand awareness and customer satisfaction as potential mediators between brand image and customer loyalty. A non-probability sample of 300 respondents was selected to measure consumer happiness and brand loyalty using SPSS. Their research revealed that while customer loyalty and brand image are highly significant to customer satisfaction and brand recognition, brand image is not important for brand awareness.

Marliawati and Cahyaningdyah (2020) evaluated the influence of brand image and brand experience on brand loyalty by Customers of the Ijjah Collection who purchased Shopee in Indonesia, comprising 116 respondents, using a non-probability approach. Route analysis was gathered through a questionnaire examined using the IBM SPSS Statistics 22 programme. Their research revealed that brands are positively impacted by brand experience through brand trust, brand image through brand trust, and brand experience directly.

Amani (2020) examined consumers' opinions of the brand and their confidence in Pasargad Banks' Tehran branches. The sample size was 384 randomly selected customers of Tehran-based Pasargad Bank branches. Information was gathered for the study using questionnaires, descriptive statistical methods, consequential statistical methods, and the software programs SPSS and LISREL. The results showed that customer satisfaction affects a brand's perception among consumers, as well as their trust and loyalty.

Durmaz et al. (2018) used fundamental data collection to examine brand benefits and consumer loyalty. Bingol's 286 client groups were sampled to obtain the required information. The hypothesis was tested using correlation and regression analysis. According to the research, only brand reputation influences customer loyalty. Customer loyalty, brand benefits, and brand benefits related to brand image were constant.

Song et al., (2019) ascertained customers' love and respect for brands were discovered as a potent mediator in the connection between trust and brand loyalty, demonstrating the applicability of the theory of love marks to the study of how brand loyalty is formed. 401

different pieces of data were evaluated using the SPSS and AMOS statistical software tools to identify the structural relationships between satisfaction, trust, lovemarks, image, and brand loyalty. It was also discovered that the brand's image aided in developing confidence and contentment. Additionally, satisfaction affected both brand loyalty and trust, which were positively associated.

Wahyuni and Ghazali (2019) looked at the rise in customer loyalty and Word of Mouth to determine the level at which a bank is trying to provide the best service in order. 130 responses from respondents at PT. Bank Rakyat Indonesia made up the study's data set.

Participants were given a survey using a 1–10 rating scale. Data analysis was carried out in AMOS version 21 using structural equation modelling to examine the causality of 8 study hypotheses. The study concludes that while customer satisfaction, loyalty, and word-of-mouth (WOM) are positively connected with service quality, the brand image does not influence these factors.

3.0 Methodology

Descriptive design was used to clarify better brand quality, brand attitude, and dependability of customer brand loyalty. In addition, an adopted questionnaire was used to collect data in the research. Consumers of refined Dangote salt from retail supermarkets and stores in Ibadan comprise the study's population. The study population is infinite. Using the Cochran formula (1977) to determine the sample size, the study aims to achieve a balance between precision, confidence, and feasibility, ensuring that the findings can be generalised to the entire population while keeping the survey manageable in terms of resources. The study questionnaire was given to respondents using a purposeful sampling strategy. This is done to guarantee that the appropriate respondents are chosen to participate in the study. The questionnaire was the primary tool utilised in this study since it allowed respondents to express themselves and gave the researcher more detailed data. Chuenban et al., (2020) were used as inspiration for the research questionnaire. The internal consistency and integrity of the study instrument were also assessed by utilising a reliability test employing Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which showed 0.70. Data gathered from the respondents were examined using descriptive and inferential statistics. The hypotheses

were tested using regression analysis. Version 26 of the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to compute and analyse the data.

4.1 Result and Discussions

Multinomial logistic regression creates a model representing the connection between the explanatory and nominal response variables. The response variable and the explanatory factors have a linear relationship.

Hypothesis I:

H_i: Brand attitude positively affects customers' brand loyalty.

Table 1 **Model Fitting Information**

Model	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC	BIC	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.

Intercept	1856.676	2031.300	1766.676			
Only						
Final	1262.850	1612.098	1082.850	683.826	45	.000

Source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

Information about the model fitting indicates a significance value less than 0.05. As a result, the null hypothesis would be rejected, and the alternative hypothesis would be accepted. Hence, brand attitude positively affects customers' loyalty to Dangote refined salt (Keller, 2012).

Table 2 Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Pearson	2490.034	2655	.989
Deviance	916.350	2655	1.000

Source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

Table 2 above displays the Deviance and Pearson Chi-square tests and can be used to evaluate how well a model fits the data. Not statistically significant results indicate that the model and the data work well together. In this case, the Pearson value is substantial (at sig. value less than 0.05); however, the Deviance value is non-significant (at sig. value more significant than 0.05). This denotes a mixed value and can indicate that further modifications are required before the observed data can be adequately fitted to the model (Hosmer et al., 2013). The results indicate that brand attitude effectively pinpoints the factors influencing customer brand loyalty. As a result, the model emphasises the importance of brand mindset.

Table 3 Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell	.852
Nagelkerke	.853
McFadden	.301

Source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

Table 3 shows the pseudo-R-square values used as approximate equivalents to the OLS regression's R-square values. The pseudo-R-square represents the percentage of variance in the dependent variables in the regression model that can be accounted for by the independent variables. The Nagelkerke value shows that 85.3% of the variance of customer brand loyalty is explained by the independent variable, brand attitude (Nagelkerke, 1991).

Table 4 Likelihood Ratio Tests

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC of Reduced Model	BIC of Reduced Model	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	1781.068	1955.692	1691.068	608.218	45	.000
BA	1856.676	2031.300	1766.676	683.826	45	.000

Source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

If the significance value is less than 0.05, we interpret it to mean that the assumption is satisfied. In contrast, a significant answer (sig. value greater than 0.05) implies that the assumption is not satisfied (Field, 2013). Therefore, from the table above, brand attitude satisfies the assumption of the likelihood ratio test.

Hypothesis II:

H_i: Brand quality positively affects customers' brand loyalty.

Table 5 Model Fitting Information

Model	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC	BIC	-2 Log Likelihood	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept Only	1900.097	2074.721	1810.097			
Final	1236.651	1585.899	1056.651	753.446	45	.000

source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

The model fitting information shows a significance value of less than 0.05. This means rejecting the null hypothesis and accepting the alternate hypothesis (Field, 2013). Thus, brand quality positively affects brand loyalty to Dangote refined salt.

Table 6 Goodness-of-Fit

	Chi-Square	Df	Sig.
Pearson	121297.493	2610	.900
Deviance	896.613	2610	1.000

Source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

The Deviance and Pearson Chi-square tests, which help detect whether a model demonstrates a good fit to the data, are included in Table 6 above. Non-significant results are signs that the model accurately describes the data. Since the significance level in this situation is more than 0.05, the Pearson and Deviance values are considered non-significant (0.900 and 1.000, respectively). This demonstrates that the observed variable fits the model well. The findings suggest that brand quality identifies factors influencing brand loyalty (Hosmer et al., 2013). Brand quality is, therefore, important in the model.

Table 7 Pseudo R-Square

Cox and Snell	.878
Nagelkerke	.880
McFadden	.332

Source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

The pseudo-R-square values shown in Table 7 approximate the R-square value in OLS regression. As evidenced by the Nagelkerke value, brand quality, an independent variable, accounts for 88% of the variation in brand loyalty (Nagelkerke, 1991).

Table 8 Likelihood Ratio Tests

Effect	Model Fitting Criteria			Likelihood Ratio Tests		
	AIC of Reduced Model	BIC of Reduced Model	-2 Log Likelihood of Reduced Model	Chi-Square	df	Sig.
Intercept	1815.658	1990.282	1725.658	669.006	45	.000
BQ	1900.097	2074.721	1810.097	753.446	45	.000

Source: SPSS 26 Output (2024).

Once the significance value is less than 0.05, we interpret it to mean that the assumption is satisfied. In contrast, a significant answer (sig. value greater than 0.05) implies that the assumption is unsatisfied (Field, 2013). Therefore, from Table 4.3.8, brand quality satisfies the assumption of the likelihood ratio test.

4.2 Discussion of Result

The results revealed that customer brand loyalty is directly influenced by brand attitude and brand quality. The study's findings imply that brand attitude and quality significantly impact brand loyalty. In line with their conclusions, Chuenban, et al. (2021) research on the relationship between brand attitude, brand quality, and brand value in Thai canned tuna. The factors influencing Thai consumers' brand loyalty (BL) towards tuna fish canned goods were looked at in their study. This is also consistent with Diputra and Yasa's (2021) discussion on the Influence of product quality, brand perception, and consumer trust on the buying behaviour of Samsung brand smartphones in Denpasar in their study.

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The conclusion and recommendations section summarises the study's key findings and offers actionable insights for stakeholders. It provides practical guidance and suggests strategies for addressing issues in real-world applications.

5.1 Conclusions

The primary goal of this research study was to determine the interplay between brand attitudes and quality perception in fostering customer brand loyalty towards Dangote refined salt. This is because consumers so widely use Dangote salt to test the importance of brand loyalty to customers, and it is particularly intriguing and helpful after thoroughly considering the research results and the literature evaluation. Every business's ultimate goal is to boost product sales. Customer brand loyalty is one of many strategies that can be used to attain this objective, some direct and some indirect. Brand loyalty is customers' perception of brand equity as an additional benefit to the product or service connected with a brand name. Increasing brand loyalty, Chinomona (2016), allows business owners to boost recurring income, reduce expenses, boost sales volume, and promote repeat business. Businesses can receive tactical benefits from brand loyalty, such as increasing their market share, luring new clients, stopping brand expansions, cutting promotion expenditures, and reinforcing their brands against hostile attacks (Annisa & Dwi, 2020). Thus, brand loyalty is one of the most efficient ways to retain customers. Today's consumers have also raised their expectations and increased their bargaining power. As the product's creator, it is essential to raise consumer happiness because it has a favourable impact on brand loyalty. As a result, the marketers and businesses that can meet and fulfil the wants of their customers will continue to be market shareholders and be able to increase their market worth at a higher level. It could be concluded in this research, in line with other research, that brand attitude and brand quality affect customer brand loyalty to Dangote refined salt in Ibadan.

5.2. Recommendations

In line with the findings of this research and its implications emanating, the following recommendations are proffered:

- i. To attract more customers, an organisation should improve its brand quality to increase customer brand loyalty. It should continuously offer different strategies to improve its quality and ensure and improve its brand loyalty.
- ii. It is recommended that the government should monitor the brands' efficiency through its various agencies to ensure the quality production of brands provided and supplied to customers.

5.3 Study Limitations and Suggestions for further studies.

The researcher could not broaden the study's reach outside the focus area. Additionally, the researcher proposes that more research be conducted on this subject across brands to help with adequate generalisation given that the study was restricted to a single brand. This idea can be examined in Nigeria using a more exact way of collecting and analysing data. Additionally, it is advised that future researchers expand their study of this subject by using more samples to improve the diversity of their findings. Additionally, it is strongly recommended that the research model used in this study be developed by including additional factors that may influence customer brand loyalty and applying this research model to other sectors.

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