Innovations

Mixed branding, perceived quality and consumer buying behaviour of cosmetic products among female nursing students in Abeokuta, Ogun state

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Abstract

The objectives of the study was to determine the impact of mixed branding and perceived quality on consumer buying behaviour of cosmetic products among female nursing students in Abeokuta, Ogun State. Data for the study were collected using a structured questionnaire from female nursing students at nursing institutes in Abeokuta, Ogun State. The data were analysed using regression. A total of 185 questionnaires (sample size) were distributed in two nursing institutes in Abeokuta, Ogun State. Based on the regression results, mixed branding had a positive and significant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta, product referral has a negative but insignificant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics and finally perceived quality of the brand has a positive and significant impact on impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta. The study recommends that Mixed branding is critical for attracting and retaining clients, especially in the cosmetics industry, where rivalry among businesses is intense and consistent. Also, continuous improvement in brand recognition, brand loyalty, and brand association, as well as product quality that meets consumer purchasing behaviour, must be maintained at all times.

Keywords: 1.Brand, 2.Mixed Branding, 3.Consumer, 4.Consumer Buying Behaviour, 5.Perceived Quality, 6.Product Referral.

1.0 Introduction

Beauty can be said to be the state of being perceivably attractive and good looking. Cosmetics can be regarded as an application of external beauty enhancement on the skin, hair, nails, etc. Beauty, especially in women involves both the skin and every part of the body (Baudrillard, 2020). Since the days of the old, the birth of a female child is believed to be the addition of beauty into the family. "Beauty is always about confidence and feeling comfortable in your own skin. A 'beautiful' girl or guy in her or his 20s who is insecure about every little detail starts to become less desirable than a person of average beauty who has that confidence beaming from within" (Franjić, 2021).

Cosmetic products over time have become very lucrative both for business and for personal use (Mohiuddin, 2019). In the recent times, there have been several household names of various cosmetic products. The dressing of a woman is said to be incomplete without the application of cosmetic products on her skin. The pride and self-esteem of every woman is to look good, feel good and be acknowledged by beholders of being beautiful (Washington, 2022).

Perception can be referred to the psychological behaviour toward a situation, product or service due to the person's belief and evaluation of their impacts or influences in a comprehensive and meaningful layout (Shariq, 2018). Various studies have revealed that the perceived quality of products cannot be judged based on quantitative impact due to the fact that every consumer have different preferences for different brands such as Impact of Diversity, Quality and Number of Brand Alliance Partners On the Perceived Quality of a New Brand (Mishra, Singh, Fang, & Yin, 2017). Branding: Perceptual Effect on Consumer Evaluation (Field, Bergiel, Giesen & Fields, 2012). Consumer Perception of Cobrands - the role of Brand Positioning Strategies (Singh, Kalafatis & Ledden, 2014). This is one and more reasons that some organizations involve in mixed branding. In addition, several studies have also revealed that when a customer enjoys the product or service of an organization, then it brings about customer satisfaction, quality service delivery, customer loyalty and brand image of the product or service such as Perceived Quality, Brand Image and Brand Trust as Determinants of Brand Loyalty (Abdullah Alhaddad, 2015). The Moderating Role of Perceived Quality (Zhao, Butt, Murad, Mirza, & Al-Faryan, 2021). The roles of Perceived Quality, Trust and satisfaction in Predicting Brand Loyalty (Al-Hawary, 2013). There have been attempts to understand the impact of mixed branding and perceived quality of the brands on consumer's patronage, but little or no attention has been placed on the weight of impact brands make on customer's loyalty based on their perceived quality especially on diversified products by same organization to the market.

However, this day market has been saturated with different brands of the same products which bring about competition that may affect consumer purchase intentions to the brands. This is a result of increasing demand for new customers and also retaining the existing ones. This study seeks to fill this gap of knowledge by examining the influence of mixed brand and perceived quality on consumer purchase intention of cosmetic products among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

The specific objectives are to:

- evaluate the influence of mixed branding on consumer patronage of cosmetic products among female nursing students in Abeokuta.
- analyze the influence of product referral on consumers' patronage of cosmetic products among female nursing students in Abeokuta.
- determine the influence of perceived quality on consumers' patronage of cosmetic products among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

2.0 Conceptual Clarification

Concept of Mixed Branding

Branding is known to have been learnt in the field of study and business world for some years. Most organizations in their goals to keep a long-lasting relationship with customers, they engage in branding of their products and services. Due to the perceived quality of products or services enjoyed by consumers, brand loyalty is birthed amongst the consumers of the brand of products and services (Kim, Choe & Petrick, 2018). In mixed branding strategy, often times, consumers are not aware that they are buying same product from same company as long as it aligns with the preferences of the consumer to purchase the product which is the goal of the organization. The aim of mixed branding strategy by organizations is to diversify and enter into new markets or connect with seemingly complex audience to reach. Most companies with mixed branding strategy ensure that new or prospective consumers are connected to them without sacrificing the existing brand or loyal customers (Singh, 2012). Also, mixed branding strategy is achieved by organizations through their loyal customers who are loyal to the brand and the perceived quality of the brand. This makes it easier for the organization to penetrate into new markets and fit as a solution to the perceived needs of the new or prospective audience (Valvi & Fragkos, 2012).

Concept of Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is the customer's perception on the quality of a product or service. It is a subjective criterion which does not necessarily have to be in-line with the actual or objective quality of the product or service. This is based on tangible data such as raw materials, manufacturing process, warranty or after-sales service, etc (Dettori, Floris & Dessì, 2020).cooper

Attributes of Perceived Quality

The perceived quality depends on the features of the product (Stylidis, Wickman & Söderberg, 2020), which can be divided into two parts:

- Intrinsic (the essentials naturally)
- Extrinsic (the external values of the product, such as packaging, branding, advertising promotion,

The consumer gets a global idea from these features, among which we can highlight the following:

- Design: The first impression of the product or service that produces what you want to sell to the target audience is very important. It gives the consumer the expected image and feedback that the consumer will receive when using the product or service. It is not only about aesthetic features, but also its influence in this sense of resilience, freedom of usage, etc.
- Packaging: Organizations are progressively knowledgeable of the impact that packaging has on product perception. This is very important because the quality of a product or service is first perceived by relative and prospective consumer in the immediate environment for objective analysis.
- Brand: It is important for an organization to build on an existing and relevant brand in order to launch of a new product or service. The existing consumer believes from the idea that no other major brand can stand the quality of this brand of product or service which has an added value. Therefore, the consumer assumes that any other brand aside this preferred brand has poor quality and value of product or service.
- Marketing actions: A sufficient and substantial promotion of product or service can be easily decisive in the perception of the consumer. The purpose of any marketing function is hit the right target audience through different marketing channels with the right messages passed across. Some organizations make use of influencers, reviews are used as tools to encourage patronage of product or service.
- **Price.** The higher the quality of a product or service, the higher the cost of production and sales. This is because, the cost of raw materials are usually beyond the control of manufacturers coupled with other production costs like the running cost of the business such as salaries, utilities, packaging, advertisement, etc affect the cost of sales. However, when the perceived quality and value of a product or service is known, the consumer is left with no choice than to patronize the brand in order to get the best and expected result.

Product Referral System

Referral system is a marketing tactic by which customers are encouraged to advocate on behalf of the brand represented. It is usually a word of mouth mechanism. Referral systems allow customers to share their brand experiences with friends, neighbors, colleagues or partners instead of writing reviews online or submitting feedback surveys of the customers.

Although, there has been no proof that the referred consumers are more loyal than the new consumers of the brand. However, it is the duty of the organization to ensure sustainability of quality of product or service and retention of consumers. (Madeleine LaPlante-Dube, 2021).

Types of Product Referrals

Direct referrals:

A direct referral system is a kind of tactic used by organizations on existing consumers by motivating the existing consumers with a value exchange promise. It is an act by which the organization, for instance, give each consumer a referral code or just their name on the organization's database in order to be used as a reference by the referred and prospective consumer in order for the existing consumer to get her gift as promised by the organization. The promised gift for referrals could come in form of service or product from the organization to the existing consumer who referred another consumer to the organization. This approach in business assist the business to grow and increase her reputation in the society (Lester, Rivers, &Topa, 2021).

Implied referrals

This is a type of referral system whereby the things are done effectively well to a consumer without that the services rendered can easily be referred to another person even without seeking for referrals. In this situation, an existing consumer may request for an indirect referral due to the trust the consumer has on the quality of service rendered (Lester, Rivers, &Topa, 2021).

Tangible referrals

Gifts has a way of melting the toughest hearts. Tangible referral simply refers to the act of placing a real value on an existing consumer, in fact, on a best existing consumer in order to use them as referral source to the organization. This type of action is usually done by well-established organizations who encourage increase in quality of consumers by gifting the best existing ones to gift their friends who are likely to become consumers of the brand. It is one of the easiest ways to attract new consumers to the organization. This could come in form of a N15,000 cosmetic gift to the best consumers and asking them to share the gift with a friend who may in turn become a consumer of the brand (Lester, Rivers, &Topa, 2021).

Concept of Consumer Buying Behaviour

Consumer behaviour, as described by the American Marketing Association, is "the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behaviour, and environmental events through which human beings conduct the transaction elements of their lives" (Qazzafi, 2019).

Consumer behaviour is an applied social science subject of study. Consumer behaviour analysis is defined as the "application of behavioural concepts, often acquired experimentally, to evaluate human economic consumption." Consumer behaviour, as a field, is at the crossroads of economic psychology and marketing science (Oazzafi, 2019).

In addition, consumer behaviour research is used to formally investigate individual qualities such as demographics, personality, lifestyle, and behavioural variables (such as rates of usage, occasions used, loyalty to brand, brand advocacy, and willingness to provide referrals) in an attempt to understand people's wants and consumption patterns. Consumer behaviour also indicates the consumer's influences, which can range from social groupings such as family, friends, sports, and reference groups to society in general (brandinfluencers, opinion leaders) (Qazzafi, 2019).

2.1 Theoretical Review

Expectations-Confirmation/disconfirmation Theory

This theory is mostly used as an approach to analyzing consumer relationship. Yüksel & Yüksel, 2001). It studies the expectations, perceived performance and how they lead to after-purchase satisfaction. This means that if a product performs beyond the expectation of the consumer, it becomes the positive disconfirmation in which the after-purchase satisfaction is the achieved. If the product performs below expectations, it becomes the negative disconfirmation in which the consumer is very displeased with the result of the after-purchase of the product. (Oliver, 1980; Spreng, MacKenzie & Olshavsky, 1996).

2.2 Empirical Review

A research on the impact of branding on consumer purchasing behaviour was undertaken by Haralayya (2021). The purpose of this study was to determine how Ford's branding affected customer purchasing decisions. The questionnaire was created using suggestions from earlier researchers as well as responses from the respondents. The study's result demonstrates that many individuals prefer to utilise branded items in today's automated environment, from entry-level to premium products. Many people believe that branding teaches us to live properly. It was recognised that a brand might alter a person's behavioural and lifestyle choices. A research entitled Celebrity Endorsement and Consumer Purchasing Behavior among Students of the University of Benin: A Case Study of the Nigerian Telecommunication Industry was done by Omorodion & Osifo (2019). Three hundred and ninety-seven (397) students were administered a structured questionnaire using a convenience sample approach, according to the survey study design. Through the use of the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) estimation approach, multiple regression and Pearson matrix correlation techniques were employed to examine the model parameters used in the framework. The results showed that all celebrity endorsement characteristics are positively and significantly related to customers' choice to buy. Uzir, Al Halbusi, Thurasamy, Hock, Aljaberi, Hasan & Hamid (2021) performed a study on how customer satisfaction is affected by service quality, perceived value, and confidence in home delivery service staff: Evidence from a developing nation. A systematic questionnaire was used to gather information from 259 individuals who have used home delivery services. The results showed that customer satisfaction was impacted by service quality, customer perceived value, and trust. Trust served as a partial mediator in the relationships between service quality and customer satisfaction as well as between perceived value and contentment. Kim and Chao (2018) conducted research on how Colombian customers' consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) is impacted by their country of origin: an empirical comparison of the brands Huawei and Samsung. Findings show that Colombian consumers' decisions about smartphones are significantly influenced by their perceptions of the Perceived Quality (PQ). The Brand Equity and Market Performance: An Empirical Study of Food and Beverage Firms in Rivers State was explored by Horsfall, H., & Mac-Kingsley, I. (2018). Data were collected via a questionnaire from three tertiary schools of learning in Rivers State and the 54 managers of food and beverage companies there (236). The Pearson's products moment correlation coefficient, ANOVA, and regression techniques were used to examine the data. The study showed that all of the brand equity factors looked at were crucial in affecting the consumer acquisition behaviour through various statistical interactions and connection orientations. Perceived quality, brand loyalty, and brand association were revealed to have the next most significant statistical interactions with market performance after brand awareness. Onifade, T. A. and Opele, A. M. (2018) examined the effects of word-of-mouth marketing, switching resistance, cross-selling, and repeat purchases on consumer purchase intentions for hair cream relaxers. A common questionnaire was utilised to gather the data, and multiple regression was employed to evaluate the results. In eight tertiary institutions in Ekiti State, a total of 350 questionnaires (the sample size) were distributed. Results show a connection between word-of-mouth advertising and customers' preference for hair cream relaxers among female workers at tertiary institutions in Ekiti State.

Additional research reveals a limited association between switching resistance and customer preference, as well as a weak relationship between cross-selling and preference for hair cream relaxers.

3.0 Methodology

Research design

This study was adopted a descriptive survey as its research design. It is the collection of data from a specific group through interviews or application of questionnaires in order to get the accurate objective of the research. The target population of thestudy consists of 337 female nursing students in the nursing school, Abeokuta, Ogun State. A questionnaire was used as the research instrument to collect information from asample of one hundred and eighty-five (185) respondents based on sample size formula of Taro Yamane (1973) to calculate the sample size of this study. Data obtained were analysed using theregression model.

4.0 Data Presentation and Analysis

4.1. Demographic of the Respondents

The demographic information of the respondent was made up of age, marital status, student level, students institution and cosmetic brand referral of the respondents.

Table 4.1: Respondents' Age

Table 4.1 reveals that the highest percentage of the respondents 25.4% were in the age range of 26-30 years

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Below 26 Years	28	15.1	15.1	15.1
	26 - 30 Years	47	25.4	25.4	40.5
-	31-35 Years	26	14.1	14.1	54.6
Valid	36 - 40 Years	32	17.3	17.3	71.9
	41 - 45 Years	23	12.4	12.4	84.3
•	46 Years and Above	29	15.7	15.7	100.0
_	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Source: Data Analysis, 2022

while the ages below 26years accounted for 15.1%. Respondents older than 30 years altogether were 59.5%. This means that about 40% of the respondents were relatively young. However, 15.7% of those older than 30 years were the age 45 years and above.

Table 4.2: Respondent's Marital Status

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Single	59	31.9	31.9	31.9
	Married	94	50.8	50.8	82.7
Valid	Divorced	15	8.1	8.1	90.8
Vallu	Widow	10	5.4	5.4	96.2
	Separated	7	3.8	3.8	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Source: Data Analysis, 2022

Table 4.2 reveals the marital status distribution, it reveals that about half of the respondents 50.8% were married while single, divorced, widow and separated accounted for 32%, 8.1%, 5.4% and 3.8% respectively. This implies that cosmetic products are used irrespective of marital status.

Table 4.3:Categories of Students

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Freshers	53	28.6	28.6	28.6
	Mid-Year	97	52.4	52.4	81.1
	Final Year	35	18.9	18.9	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Source: Data Analysis, 2022

Table 4.3 shows the categories of students with the highest percentage of 52.4% are mid-year students while fresher and final year students accounted for 28.6% and 18.9% respectively. This implies that even students irrespective of their categories use different cosmetic products to enhance their beauty.

Table 4.4:Respondents' Institution

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	School of Nursing, FMC, Idi Aba, Abeokuta	25	13.5	13.5	13.5
	School of Mental Health Nursing, Abeokuta	160	86.5	86.5	100.0
	Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Source: Data Analysis, 2022

Table 4.4 reveals that amongst the two institutions examined, 13.5% of the respondents were selected from the School of Nursing, FMC, while 86.5% of the respondents were selected from the School of Mental Health Nursing (ARO). This implies that every female student in either institution uses different brands inclusive of mixed branded cosmetic products based on perceived quality.

Table 4.5 **Respondents Perceive Quality In Brands To Refer**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
	Vaseline cosmetic products	41	22.2	22.2	22.2
	Lux cosmetic products	23	12.4	12.4	34.6
Valid	Oriflame cosmetics products	4	2.2	2.2	36.8
	Others	13	7.0	7.0	43.8
	Nivea cosmetic products	8	4.3	4.3	48.1

Revlon cosmetic products	6	3.2	3.2	51.4
Rexona cosmetic products	6	3.2	3.2	54.6
Gillette cosmetic products	28	15.1	15.1	69.7
Johnson's cosmetics products	25	13.5	13.5	83.2
Aveena cosmetic products	8	4.3	4.3	87.6
Caro White cosmetic products	7	3.8	3.8	91.4
Dove cosmetic products	16	8.6	8.6	100.0
Total	185	100.0	100.0	

Source: Data Analysis, 2022

Table 4.5 reveals that cosmetic products with the highest percentage 22.1% of the respondents would love to use brands from Vaseline cosmetic products based on their perceived quality over time, closely followed by Gillette Cosmetic Products, 15.1%, followed by Johnson's cosmetic products, 13.5%, followed by Lux cosmetic products 12.4%, followed by Dove cosmetic product 8.6%, Other brands include Nivea cosmetic products 4.3%, Revlon cosmetic products 3.2%, Rexona cosmetic products 3.2%, Aveena cosmetic products 4.3%, Oriflame cosmetics products 2.2% while others nonspecific brands accounted for 7.0%. The choices made amidst different branded cosmetic products reveal that preferred brands are based on perceived quality by the customers of the brands. It shows that most customers prefer brands made by Vaseline Cosmetic products organization based on the perceived quality of their products.

Inferential Statistics: Hypotheses Testing

Multiple regression models are used to calculate the impact of each independent variable on the dependent variable. In the case of the research, the dependent variable is consumer buying behaviour (CBB) while the independent variables are Referrals (RS), Perceived Quality (PQ) and Mixed branding (MB).

Table 4.6 Regression Result

	Model Summary							
Model	R	Std. Error of the Estimate						
1	.64571							
	a. Predictors: (Constant), MB, PQ, PR							
	b. Dependent Variable: CBB							

Source: Data Analysis, (2022).

From the model summary in Table 4.15, we see that the R-square value is 0.734 and the Adjusted R-square is 0.717 indicating a strong positive relationship between the dependent and independent variables. This means that in the regression model, the three independent variables account for more than 70% of the total variation in consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics.

Table 4.7 ANOVA Result

ANOVA								
	Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.		
	Regression	79.895	3	26.632	46.276	.000b		
1	Residual	104.165	181	.575				
	Total	184.059	184					
a. Dependent Variable: CBB								
	b. Predictors: (Constant), MB, PQ, <rs< td=""></rs<>							

Source: Data Analysis, (2022).

The ANOVA result in table 4.13 shows that the fitness of the model is good. The F value of 46.27 is statistically significant at a 5% level of significance (0.000 < 0.05). The outcome suggests that the model has strong predictive power.

Test of Hypotheses

Each hypothesis stated in chapter one of the research will be tested using coefficient results from the regression analysis to determine if a significant relationship exists between the dependent variable and independent variables.

Decision Rule:

If P-value < 5% (0.05): Reject the null hypothesis (H_0) and accept the alternative hypothesis (H_1) If P-value > 5% (0.05): Reject the alternative hypothesis (H_1) and accept the null hypothesis (H_0)

Table 4.8 Coefficients

			Coefficie	nts				
Model		Unstandardized (Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.		
	(Constant)	.669	.169		3.957	.000		
1	MB	.308	.147	.250	2.090	.038*		
1	RS	133	.090	136	-1.477	.141		
	PQ	.592	.095	.520	6.194	.000*		
	a. Dependent Variable: CBB							

Source: Data Analysis, (2022).

Research Hypothesis 1

 H_{01} : There is no significant impact of the purchase of another brand of cosmetic products of the same brand firm among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

The regression results between *mixed branding(MB)* and consumer buying behaviour showed that β =.308 is statistically significant at 5% (0.038 < 0.05). This implies that mixed branding has a positive and significant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H₁) and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is a *significant*

impact of the purchase of another brand of cosmetic products of the same brand firm among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

Research Hypothesis 2

 \mathbf{H}_{02} : There is no significant impact of product referral on consumers' patronage of cosmetic products among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

The regression results between product referral and consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics showed that the coefficient β = -.133 is statistically insignificant at 5% (0.141>0.05). This implies product referral has a negative but insignificant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta. Therefore, we accept the null hypothesis (H₀₂).

Research Hypothesis 3

 H_{03} : There is no significant impact of perceived quality on consumers' purchase of the products among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

The regression results between perceived quality of brand and consumer buying behaviour showed that the coefficient β =.592 is statistically significant at 5% (0.0000<0.05). This implies perceived quality of the brand has a positive and significant impact on impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta. Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis (H₀₁) and accept the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant impact of perceived quality of a brand of cosmetic products on consumers' purchase of the products among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

4.1 Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study revealed that mixed branding had a positive and significant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta which agreed with Omorodion & Osifo (2019). Secondly, product referral has a negative but insignificant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics which does not agree with Onifade and Opele (2018) which revealed that word of mouth referral has positive inpact on consumer buying intentions, and finally perceived quality of the brand has a positive and significant impact on impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta which is agreement with study of Kim and Chao (2018) and the study of Uzir, Al Halbusi, Thurasamy, Hock, Aljaberi, Hasan & Hamid (2021) that revealed that perceived quality has a positive influence on the consumer buying behaviour.

5.0 Conclusion

The study concludes that:

- mixed branding has a positive and significant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta.
- Product referral has a negative but insignificant impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta.
- perceived quality of the brand has a positive and significant impact on impact on the consumer buying behaviour of cosmetics among female nursing students in Abeokuta.

5.1 Recommendations

Based on the results of the analysis the following recommendations are made:

Every company's endeavour relies heavily on branding to succeed. Cosmetic firms are encouraged, in
this viewpoint, to improve and preserve their brand. Customers have strong knowledge of cosmetic
brands or goods, and they trust well-known brands, therefore they may be customer surveys or
brand performance assessments.

- Mixed branding is critical for attracting and retaining clients, especially in the cosmetics industry, where rivalry among businesses is intense and consistent.
- Continuous improvement in brand recognition, brand loyalty, and brand association, as well as product quality that meets consumer purchasing behaviour, must be maintained at all times.

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