



ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY

SCHOOL OF COMMERCE

DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING MANAGEMENT

**FACTORS AFFECTING CONSUMERS' PURCHASE DECISIONS OF
MOBILE PHONE BRANDS**

A STUDY ON ETHIO TELECOM RESIDENTIAL SALES IN ADDIS ABABA

BY:

ESAYAS ADHANOM

ADVISOR:

Dr. MESFIN WORKINEH

June 2023

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Approval Sheet

**Addis Ababa University School of Commerce
Graduate Studies Department of Marketing Management**

Factors Affecting Consumers' Purchase Decisions of Mobile Phone Brands

A Study on Ethio telecom Residential Sales in Addis Ababa

BY: Esayas Adhanom

Approved by Board of Examiners

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the thesis study I am submitting to the University of Addis Abeba School of Commerce for the M.A. degree in marketing management is my original work, has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other University, and that all citations for sources used in the study have been properly acknowledged.

Name: Esayas Adhanom

Adviser's Name: Mesfin Workineh (PhD)

Signature-----

Signature-----

Date -----

Date-----

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I owe each and every one of you my genuine and profound appreciation.

Esayas Adhanom

LIST OF ACRONYMS & ABBREVIATIONS

NAAZ: North Addis Ababa Zone

CAAZ: Central Addis Ababa Zone

SAAZ: Southern Addis Ababa Zone

Abstract

the primary goal of this study is to empirically analyze factors affecting consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands in Ethio telecom residential sales Addis Ababa. given the rapidly expanding market for mobile phone and the fierce competition that exists in this space, retailers, traders, and manufacturers face a challenge in clearly understanding the factors that affect consumers' purchase intentions. The researcher used a descriptive and factor analysis survey to achieve the broad objectives, in which the relationship between the dependent variable (purchase decision) and the explanatory variables (price, quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty and social influence) was statistically examined. The information was gathered from 383 respondents using a survey questionnaire using convenience sampling techniques. All of the explanatory variables were discovered to be statistically significant influences on the decision to purchase a mobile phone brand, according to the regression results. In order to improve their market, share and profitability, Ethio telecom residential sales division should place a high priority on factors such as price, quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty and social influence.

Key Words: Brand, Mobile phone, Purchase decision, Influencing Factors

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This particular chapter encompasses a comprehensive study on the Background of the research, Statement of the predicament, Aim and objectives of the inquiry, Significance of the exploration, and the Scope of the study. It also sheds light on the Limitations of the investigation, Plan of the inquiry, Organization of the research and Definition of Terms.

1.1 Background of the study

For numerous corporations, the mobile brands they possess are their most prized possessions and serve as a distinguishing factor from their competitors. To comprehend the notion of brand preference, it is imperative to ascertain the definition of a brand. The interpretation of brand has been extensive and diverse throughout the course of time, with numerous scholars presenting their own definitions, a few of which shall be presented in this investigation.

According to Helsen (2010), a global brand is a term, sign, symbol, or combination thereof that is utilized to distinguish the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers from those of competitors. As stated by Aaker (1991), a product is manufactured in a factory, whereas a brand is procured by a customer. A product may be imitated by a rival, but a brand is unparalleled. Additionally, a product may become outdated rapidly, whereas a thriving brand is enduring.

According to Kotler and Keller, esteemed authors in the field of marketing management, a brand is identified as a product or service whose features distinguish it from other similar products or services that aim to fulfill the same needs. These distinguishing characteristics may manifest themselves in functional, rational, or tangible aspects. Alternatively, these differences may be more symbolic, emotional or intangible, relating to the abstract representation or meaning of the brand (Kotler P. and Keller K.L, 2012).

A prosperous brand is a discernible commodity, amenity, individual, or site that has undergone improvement resulting in the user or customer perceiving pertinent, one-of-a-kind benefits that are most closely attuned to their requirements. Furthermore, the brand's capacity to uphold these

supplementary values despite competition plays a role in its triumph. (Mc Donald, and M.DeChernatory L., 2003)

According to Keller's (2004) research, brands serve the function of identifying a product's source, thereby enabling customers to assign accountability to a specific manufacturer or distributor. Brands assume a critical role by emphasizing a product's quality and other significant attributes, ultimately mitigating the risks that are commonly associated with purchase decisions.

The concept of a brand is defined by the American Marketing Association as "a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers" (American Marketing Association, 2022). Applying this definition, a brand can be understood as the perception or mental image that individuals associate with specific products, services, and activities of a company, encompassing both pragmatic and emotional dimensions. This implies that a brand is not solely comprised of tangible attributes, but also encompasses the affective responses that consumers develop towards a company or its offerings. These physical and emotional cues are evoked through exposure to the brand name, logo, visual identity, or messaging. Despite the existence of numerous brand definitions advanced by scholars in the past, this study adopts the definition of the American Marketing Association.

In 1894, Emperor Menelik II of Ethiopia introduced telecommunications service to the country, initiating the construction of a telephone line connecting Harar to Addis Ababa. In accordance with the Growth Transformation Plan (GTP) and following a five-year plan focused on education, health, and agriculture, the Ethiopian government has prioritized the enhancement of telecommunication services as a critical mechanism for the development of the nation. As a result of this endeavor, ethio telecom was established on November 29th, 2010, with the goal of facilitating the steady growth of Ethiopia and achieving ambitious objectives by 2015.

Since its inception in the 1980s, the mobile phone has emerged as an indispensable tool for daily operations and activities. The ubiquitous nature of commercial mobile phones has fostered widespread adoption of this technology, and the mobile network infrastructure that facilitates communication has become an integral component of the urban environment. (Kukushkin, 2018).

Our nation, Ethiopia, is swiftly transforming into a region with an escalating magnitude of mobile phone adherents. Over the years, the quantity of mobile phone users has steadily augmented. In

the year 2003, Ethiopia had a mere 1 million subscribers, but by 2022, the number had skyrocketed to an impressive 66.1 million. As the Ethiopian populace becomes more proficient in utilizing this technology, their preference for specific brands will undoubtedly exert a significant impact on their purchasing demeanor.

The advent of mobile phones is a recent technological development in Ethiopia. In 1999, the country commenced mobile phone services with a capacity of 36,000 lines in Addis Ababa. As of 2022, the number of subscribers has surged to approximately 66.1 million (<https://www.ethiotelecom.et/>, 2022). The primary mobile services offered by Ethio telecom are Voice, Data, and SMS.

At the commencement of the service, the Ericson brand dominated the mobile handset market as the service provider provided subscribers with this brand. Therefore, users of the service had limited options in their selection of mobile phone brands. However, in 2003, the introduction of prepaid mobile service allowed customers to purchase their own handsets (Ethiopian Telecommunication Corporation, 2005). The availability of multiple mobile brands and advancements in mobile technology have provided Ethiopian consumers with an extensive range of options, ranging from budget-friendly to premium smartphones. Consequently, a plethora of foreign companies have entered the market, including Nokia, Samsung, ZTE, Sony, LG, Huawei, Motorola, and iPhone. Locally manufactured phones are now vying for market share among Ethiopian mobile phone consumers, alongside foreign brands. The brands of mobile phones produced locally include Techno, SMADL, Tana, and Geotel.

Foreign-made and locally assembled mobile phones are sold to intended customers at Ethio telecom residential sales shops. Nokia, iPhone, Samsung, Huawei, Motorola, ZTE, and Oppo are examples of imported mobile devices. Tana, Smadl, Tecno, Itel, and Geotel are examples of locally manufactured phones.

Therefore, researchers and marketers have been interested in understanding and forecasting consumer brand choice decisions. Understanding customer behaviors as they choose brands among various product categories is part of brand choice research (Bentz, Y. and Merunka, D, 2000) Therefore, this study focuses on factors that affecting the purchase decisions of mobile phone brands among Ethio telecoms' residential consumers.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The advent of cutting-edge communication and information system technology has effectively diminished geographical barriers, thereby facilitating the dissemination of information across the globe in a more expedient and convenient manner. As the world progressively evolves into a global village, novel commodities from abroad are gaining traction in the domestic market. Owing to the widespread utilization of satellite television and social media platforms, the Ethiopian populace has become increasingly cognizant of diverse cultures, ways of life, and brands.

According to the GSMA report, Ethiopia stands as the second-largest market in Sub-Saharan Africa, boasting a population of about 120 million individuals. Despite this, the mobile penetration rate in Ethiopia remains low, with a recorded 34% at the end of 2021 in comparison to the regional average of 46%. This presents significant potential for growth in mobile subscriptions. To address the challenges of smartphone adoption and quicken the adoption rate, it is essential to introduce a variety of initiatives (<https://www.gsma.com>, 2022).

In Ethiopia, the level of mobile penetration is notably lower when compared to other African countries. However, there are 66.1 million mobile phone subscribers who own different brands of mobile phones (<https://www.ethiotelecom.et/>, 2022). During the process of making a mobile phone purchase decision, these subscribers take several factors into account. Nonetheless, little attention has been given to the factors that underlie the mobile phone buying decision process in Ethiopia by researchers.

According to research, a multitude of factors possess the ability to impact the selection of mobile phone brands among consumers. As per the findings of Sata (2013), consumers from all corners of the world are significantly influenced by an array of factors while deciding on a mobile phone brand. These factors can be associated with both the characteristics of the consumer as well as the features affiliated with the mobile phones. Sata (2013) categorizes these factors as price, characteristics, quality, brand name, durability, social factors, and several others.

Numerous investigations have been carried out regarding the administration of Ethio telecom, which includes an evaluation of the factors that affect the buying actions of mobile packages for consumers (Kaluale, 2020), the influence of product quality on customer gratification (Taye, 2019), and the sales performance of fixed line telephone service (Bogale, 2017), among others.

These inquiries essentially focus on the contentment of the customer and the quality of the service. The researchers analyze and identify different variables that impact the quality of service and customer satisfaction within the organization. Consequently, this study scrutinizes and identifies various factors that affect consumers' choices in purchasing mobile phone brands. The outcomes of this study provide discernment to the management of Ethio telecom concerning the significant factors that influence the customers' purchase choices of mobile phone brands. By doing so, the organization will be able to proactively address the upcoming competitive environment, attain customer satisfaction, and thus increase revenue.

1.3 Research Questions

General research question

What are the major factors affecting consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands?

Specific research questions

- What effect does the price of a mobile device have on consumers' purchases of mobile phone brands?
- How does the quality of the mobile devices influence consumers' when purchasing mobile phone brands?
- How does brand awareness influence consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands?
- How does brand loyalty influence purchase decisions of mobile phone brands of the customers?
- What are the societal elements that impact the selection of mobile phone brands by consumers?

1.4 Aim and objectives of the study

General Objective of the Study

The general objective of this study is to identify factors affecting consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands in Ethio telecom residential shops and discovered the most preferred brands among the customers.

Specific objectives of the study

- To discover the impact of mobile device price on the consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands.
- To examine the quality of the mobile devices influence Consumers' Purchase Decisions of Mobile Phone Brands
- To examine the influence of brand awareness on the consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands?
- To identify to what extent the brand loyalty of the customers' influences the purchase decisions of mobile phone brands.
- To discover the impact of social factors on mobile phone brand purchase decisions.

1.5 Significance of the Study

Any form of inquiry adds to the corpus of societal knowledge and can be employed to resolve particular predicaments. In light of this examination, the determinants that affect consumers' choices regarding mobile phone brands have been discerned. The results are anticipated to have noteworthy implications for mobile phone manufacturers, marketers, assemblers, importers, scholars, investigators, and Ethio telecom.

In the first instance, the closure of the knowledge gap on consumer selection criteria has conferred significant benefits upon mobile phone handset manufacturers and marketers in general. This outcome has enabled them to effectively steer their marketing strategies and capture or retain existing or new customers.

The findings of this research serve to enhance our comprehension of marketing in general and branding in particular. In contemporary times, the branding of a particular product or service assumes a pivotal role in the daily lives of the community as well as the profitability and continuity of a given company.

The identification of customers' preferences towards mobile phone brands is pivotal in enabling local companies to develop an effective marketing strategy, and thereby compete vigorously against foreign brands in the market.

Additionally, it may open up opportunities for academics who are eager to conduct additional research on the subject.

1.6 Scope of the study

This study aims to investigate the factors that impact consumers' choices when purchasing mobile phone brands, specifically focusing on the residential sales of Ethio telecom in Addis Ababa. While there are various elements that may affect consumers' decisions, this study will concentrate on the price, quality, brand awareness, social factors and brand loyalty of mobile devices.

Ethio telecom is a structured entity comprising regional and zonal offices, catering to two primary market segments, namely enterprise and residential customers. The nation is divided into ten regions and six zones, with this research solely focusing on residential customers in the Addis Abeba region. Specifically, the study concentrates on the North, Central, and Southern Addis Abeba Zones, with the other zones in Addis Abeba and all regions not being a part of this analysis. The research entailed the collection of crucial data from customers in the North Ababa Zone (NAAZ), Central Addis Ababa Zone (CAAZ), and Southern Addis Ababa Zone (SAAZ) via questionnaires, which took six weeks to complete. As a result, the findings of this study cannot be deemed as representative of the entire Ethio telecom customer base's brand preferences.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

Because of the sampling method that are used, this research is limited to representing the opinions of a small subset of the population. It is probable that the data only represent a portion of the population's beliefs because it was collected through convenience sampling. Some groups may be overrepresented, whereas others may be underrepresented. For the reasons stated above, we are not generalizing the findings of this study and claim that they apply to everyone.

1.8 Organization of the research report

The study comprises five distinct chapters, namely the Introduction, Review of Related Literature, Research Design and Methodology, Findings and Discussions, and Summary, Conclusions and

Recommendations. Each chapter offers a unique perspective on the research topic, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the subject matter.

The initial chapter comprises a comprehensive introduction to the research, encompassing the study's contextual backdrop, problem articulation, research inquiries, study aims, study significance, study scope and constraints, study timeline, study organization, and key term definition.

Chapter Two provides an in-depth analysis of the literature that is pertinent to the study at hand. This includes an exploration of key concepts and theoretical frameworks, a comprehensive review of empirical literature, as well as an extensive discussion on the various factors that impact consumers' purchase decisions with respect to mobile phone brand models. Moreover, this chapter puts forth a series of hypotheses and a conceptual framework to further elucidate the research problem at hand.

Chapter Three deals with research design and methodology. It includes the research methods, sampling techniques, data collection methods, and data analysis methods that are used in the study, as well as reliability and validity tests and ethical consideration are also include.

Chapter Four consists of the major presentation, analysis and interpretation of the data collected and discussion of the finding in a more analytical manner.

Lastly, Chapter 5 entails the formulation of conclusions, recommendations, constraints, and propositions for forthcoming research.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Brand: A brand, as defined by the American Marketing Association in 2022, is a distinguished name, term, design, symbol, or other identifiable feature that sets apart the goods or services of a particular seller from those of other vendors.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter provides a comprehensive discussion on the theoretical framework, empirical review, hypotheses, and conceptual framework of the subject matter under scrutiny, all of which serve to enlighten the readers. In alignment with the objectives of the study, this chapter delves into the intricacies of brands, brand equity, brand preference, consumer behavior, and mobile phone preferences.

2.1 THEORETICAL REVIEW

2.1.1 Brand Equity Perspectives

Academic examination of brand equity has been approached by scholars through two primary and distinct methods, namely financial and customer-based. Despite their dissimilarities in defining brand equity, both perspectives are complementary and offer useful insights into managing brand equity.

The financial approach involves evaluating the asset value of a brand name that contributes to the value of a business (Farquhar P. Han J. and Ijiri Y., 1991). This perspective focuses on quantifying the added value of brand equity in terms of cash flows, revenues, market share, or other comparable metrics. The financial approach represents a top-down method of measuring brand equity, utilizing data that encompasses an organization's overall performance, such as historical income statements, balance sheets, and cash flow statements. This top-down approach implies a direct correlation between a firm's profitability and brand equity (Simon, C.J. and Sullivan, M.W., 1993).

On the contrary, the perspective of brand equity that is based on the consumer is a quantification of brand equity that is grounded on the worth that consumers derive from the brand name. The definitions of customer-based brand equity encompass the subject from the vantage point of the consumer, be it an individual or an organization. Scholars address the reality that for a brand to hold any value, it must be appraised by consumers, indicating that this outlook stresses on how the customer perceives the brand rather than how it is assessed numerically. The perspective of the

consumer-based approach gauges brand equity from the foundation. Utilizing this technique, the scholar can scrutinize the branded product in isolation. This juxtaposition centers on approximating the products' marketing success or efficacy (Simon, C.J. and Sullivan, M.W., 1993).

2.1.2 Customers Based Brand Equity (CBBE)

Over the past two decades, the vast majority of research surrounding consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) has been conducted through the lens of two predominant theoretical frameworks: Aaker's brand equity model and Keller's consumer-based brand equity theory. It was Aaker who initially tackled the concept of brand equity from the consumer's perspective, although the term "consumer-based brand equity" was not explicitly used within his work. In 1991, his groundbreaking book, *Managing Brand Equity*, introduced the brand equity model (Zhuowei (Joy), Huang Liping A. Cai, 2015).

According to Keller (1993), there exist two distinct methodologies for measuring customer-based brand equity. The first, known as the indirect approach, aims to identify potential sources of equity, while the second, known as the direct approach, focuses on consumer reactions to various aspects of the firm's marketing program. Customer-based research indicates that customers' brand perceptions serve as accurate reflections of brand performance in the marketplace, with strong, positive customer-based brand equity exerting a significant impact on firms' financial performance (Kim W.G. & Kim, H., 2004). As per the premise, customer-based brand equity (CBBE) can influence several factors, including cost, revenue, profit, marketing, and brand extensions, among others (Tong, X. & Hawley J. M., 2014).

According to Aaker's perspective, the measurement of brand equity ought to be executed through the lens of the consumer. The financial value of an organization is directly proportional to the extent of brand awareness, loyalty, and association. In essence, the dimensions of brand equity, specifically brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand association, and perceived quality, determine the financial value of the firm. The Aaker CBBE model is extensively utilized for the development, maintenance, sustenance, and evaluation of brand equity over time (Aaker, 1991).

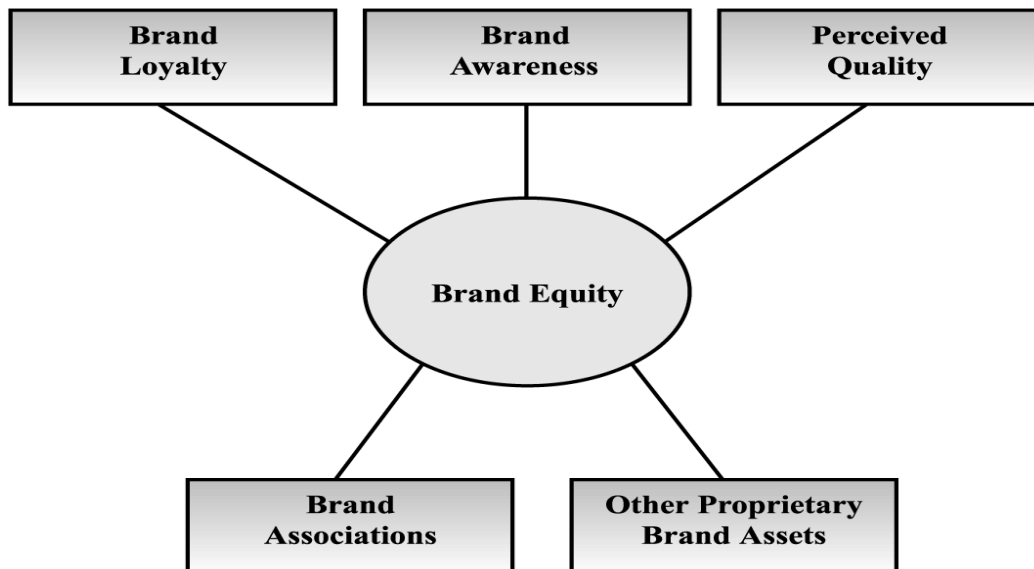
From the consumer-based perspective of Netemeyer, brand equity is perceived from the standpoint of the individual consumer. This perception is utilized by marketers to formulate effective strategies that enable them to comprehend, satisfy, and influence consumer behavior. Consequently, the reactions of consumers towards a brand name could be evaluated by marketers.

In recent times, customer-based brand equity has received significant attention. Various conceptualizations exist, and these conceptualizations have provided valuable insight into the processes that consumers utilize to assess and select brands within a specific product category (Netemeyer et al., 2004).

2.1.3 Dimensions of Brand Equity

Aaker's framework incorporates CBBE by amalgamating a variety of brand attributes including awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, brand loyalty, and other exclusive brand assets such as patents, trademarks, and channel relationships. Aaker asserts that a brand's CBBE is robust when consumers are acquainted with it, perceive a favorable image of it, which encompasses superior product quality, and demonstrate loyalty towards it. Although proprietary brand assets do not pertain to consumer-based brand equity, the first four dimensions of brand equity embody consumer perceptions and reactions towards the brand (Aaker, 1991).

Figure 2.1 David A. Aaker's five dimensions of brand equity model.



Source: Aaker (1991)

2.1.3.1 Perceived Quality

Perceived quality pertains to the consumer's assessment of a product's overall excellence or superiority, divergent from its objective or factual quality. It is a higher order abstraction that transcends individual attributes of a product, representing a comprehensive evaluation that, in some instances, resembles attitudes. This appraisal is typically rooted within a consumer's evoked set (Zeithaml, 1988), indicating that it is exclusively the users who are responsible for evaluating

product quality, and not the managers and/or experts. Ultimately, perceived quality manifests as a product's ability to provide an elevated level of satisfaction in comparison to alternative options.

According to Baldauf et al. (2003), the attainment of competitiveness by a firm is facilitated by product quality, which is an essential resource. When creating a brand, a company must effectively communicate the brand's essence to position it within the marketplace in the minds of the audience, and align the characteristics of the brand with the needs and expectations of consumers.

The provision of security and assurance to customers regarding product quality is a significant function of branding. The establishment of powerful brands within a market is a result of consistently providing customers with an engaging experience. The contribution of distribution channels, the product on offer, the physical environment, employee behavior, and brand communication towards the overall experience cannot be overstated (Hamann et al. 2007).

2.1.3.2 Brand Awareness

Almost all models of brand equity identify awareness as a crucial determinant (Aaker, 1991). The initial step in constructing brand equity, awareness is undoubtedly indispensable, as without it, customers would be unable to contextualize offerings. Brand awareness pertains to a consumer's capacity to recognize and recall a brand in diverse scenarios. As per this definition, brand awareness comprises brand recall and brand recognition. While brand recall pertains to a scenario in which customers observe a product category and can recollect an exact brand name, brand recognition refers to their ability to recognize a brand when a brand cue is present (Keller, 1993). This implies that customers can accurately identify a brand if they have ever encountered or heard of it. Brand awareness confers three primary benefits upon consumers:

- A) Consideration advantages
- B) Learning advantages; and
- C) Choice advantages (Keller, 2003).

Buyers are presented with an extensive array of merchandise emanating from diverse brands. This leads to a situation where the brands that are already known to the customers get prioritized in the hierarchical ordering. The brands that are most prevalent are those that can be easily identified, categorized and subsequently procured (Baldauf et. al, 2003).

2.1.3.3 Brand Association

Brand association refers to the relative intensity of a consumer's favorable sentiments towards the brand (Emmanuel, 2014). The composition of brand associations encompasses all thoughts, sentiments, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, and attitudes related to the brand and is anything that is linked in memory to the brand (Aaker, 1991). Aaker delineates certain specific domains in which robust associations generate worth: firstly, they facilitate the processing and retrieval of information, which is why they are exceedingly significant during the time of purchase when gathering facts and specifications that would otherwise be arduous or even unfeasible; secondly, they can impact the interpretation of facts and elicit reflections about the experience by swiftly drawing upon memory, which is imperative during moments of decision-making (Aaker, 1991).

2.1.3.4 Brand Loyalty

Brand Loyalty is a phenomenon whereby a consumer exhibits a steadfast commitment to a particular brand and repeatedly purchases that brand over an extended period. This level of devotion is instrumental in not only retaining existing customers but also in attracting new ones. Furthermore, Brand Loyalty has a direct correlation with increased brand equity. Customers' perceived value, brand trust, customer satisfaction, repeat purchase behavior, and commitment are all factors that contribute to the cultivation of Brand Loyalty. Although repeat purchases serve as the most visible manifestation of Brand Loyalty, the other dimensions mentioned above are equally instrumental in fostering Brand Loyalty among consumers (Menon, 2016).

The rationale for this can be explicated by the fact that the profitability of customers increases with their length of association with the enterprise. The loyalty of customers enhances the firm's profitability by diminishing the expenses, comprising operational costs, price premiums which consumers are willing to pay, and referrals to potential customers. Word-of-mouth advertising by loyal customers is one of the most efficacious types of marketing for any corporation that seeks new customers. Devoted customers are more receptive to novel products introduced by the company as brand extensions. They are the pioneers in acquiring these products because they have confidence in the brand (Menon, 2016).

2.1.3 Relationship Between Brand Equity and Brand Equity Dimensions

2.1.3.1 Perceived Quality and Brand Equity

Perceived quality, as defined by Keller, pertains to the quality that is discerned or perceived by the consumer. It is noteworthy that perceived quality and brand equity exhibit a significant positive correlation. Recent literature reveals that a heightened perception of quality yields short-term advantages for the organization, as the company can command premium prices and eventually experience business growth, such as expanding market share. Additionally, a recent study highlights that perceived quality and brand equity are intrinsically linked since individuals make purchasing decisions based on the perceived quality of a strong brand. This corroborates with previous research which also found that perceived quality and brand equity are directly related (Keller, 2003).

2.1.3.2 Brand Awareness Brand Equity

Brand equity is heavily reliant upon brand awareness, which encompasses a potential consumer's capacity to recognize or recall a brand as a member of a particular product category (Aaker, 1991). According to Keller's definition, brand awareness entails two sub-dimensions: brand recall and recognition. Brand recognition serves as the critical initial phase in the brand communication process, wherein a company communicates a product's attributes until a brand name is established and associated with them (Keller, 1993). Brand awareness can indicate quality and commitment, as it enables consumers to familiarize themselves with a brand and consider it at the point of purchase (Aaker, 1991).

2.1.3.3 Brand Association and Brand Equity

Brand association functions as the basis for consumers' decision-making process with respect to which brand to purchase or not (Emari H. & Jafari A., 2012). The consumer possesses a wealth of knowledge regarding the brand. It was hypothesized that the correlation between brand association and brand recall by the consumer was notably significant and positive. As a consequence, consumers will continue to engage in purchasing and utilizing the brand (Pouromid, B., & Iranzadeh, S., 2012). In this manner, consumers possess an extensive understanding of the product before making a purchase (Washbourm, J. H., & Plank, R. E., 2012). Brand equity encompasses a brand association that the researcher has identified through research (Tong, X., & Hawley, J. M., 2014). The author postulates that brand association provides support for the brand, and

consequently, the brand will possess the capability to influence consumers (Bridges, S., Keller, K. L., & Sood, S., 2000).

2.1.3.4 Brand Loyalty and Brand Equity

When formulating marketing tactics, brand fidelity is an indispensable factor. A faithful clientele proffers the organization the advantage of executing its operations while reducing expenditures. Upon achieving loyalty, customers become impervious to price hikes, given that the merchandise satisfies their needs; furthermore, loyalty enables the organization to address challenges posed by rivals. As posited by Keller, a correlation exists between the consumer and the brand. However, the cited source is deemed invalid (Keller, 2003).

As per Keller, brand equity signifies the extent of emotional connection with the customer and is linked to the usage experience. The inclination of consumers to repeatedly purchase a product reflects their preference, which, in turn, influences brand loyalty. In simpler terms, consumers tend to develop loyalty towards a product and its brand owing to its widespread recognition. The utilization of a well-known brand leads to positive brand equity, fostering brand loyalty amongst consumers and generating positive sentiments towards the brand in comparison to others (Keller, 2003).

2.1.4 The Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Models

models exist for assessing brand equity. As noted by Avachi, academic researchers who gauge customer attitudinal mindset and customer performance outcomes primarily depend on Aaker's (1991) conceptual framework of brand equity (Avichai Shuv-Ami, 2016). Keller further expounded on Aaker's concept of brand equity and introduced the initial official definition of CBBE. Keller's (1993, 2008) CBBE model is developed by "sequentially establishing six 'brand building blocks' with customers" (Keller, 2008).

Keller's first model suggests that the CBBE model or pyramid can be utilized for creating robust brand equity (Keller, 2003). Keller defines customer-based brand equity as the differentiating effect of brand knowledge on consumer response to the marketing of the brand (Keller, 1993). According to Keller's model, constructing a strong brand involves four steps: -

1. Establishing a comprehensive brand identity entails amplifying the scope and extent of brand awareness.

2. Developing appropriate brand meaning through strong, favorable, and distinctive brand association.
3. Getting positive, accessible brand reactions.

Developing enduring brand connections with consumers that are marked by fervent and engaged allegiance is a significant objective for marketers. To achieve this goal, a series of six fundamental elements of brand establishment must be instituted: namely, brand salience, brand performance, brand imagery, brand judgment, brand feeling, and brand resonance.

Brand salience: This inquiry pertains to facets of brand consciousness amid consumers. To what degree is the brand effortlessly recalled and recognized in sundry situations and circumstances? To what extent does the brand occupy a prominent position within individuals' cognitive faculties, being readily recollected and identified? What sorts of stimuli or prompts are necessary? How extensive is the reach of brand awareness?

Brand performance: the term "brand performance" pertains to the endeavor of a product or service to satisfy the utilitarian demands of its consumers. This concept encompasses the innate attributes of a brand in relation to its product or service qualities. It raises the question of how effectively a brand is evaluated in terms of objective quality assessment. Additionally, it probes the extent to which a brand caters to the utilitarian, aesthetic, and economic requisites and wants of its consumers in its respective product or service category.

Brand imagery: Brand imagery pertains to the inherent characteristics of a product or service, specifically how the brand endeavors to cater to the psychological or social exigencies of its customers.

Brand imagery: denotes the abstract perceptions that individuals have of a brand, as opposed to the practical functions that the brand performs; hence, imagery pertains to a more elusive facet of the brand.

Brand judgment: is a crucial aspect of understanding customers' perceptions of a brand. It centers on customers' personal opinions and evaluations regarding the brand. The process of brand judgment involves the amalgamation of all the different performance and imagery associations related to the brand, which results in the formation of various types of opinions.

Brand feelings: refer to the emotional response and reaction demonstrated by consumers towards a particular brand. Additionally, brand feelings are intricately linked with the social currency that is evoked by the brand.

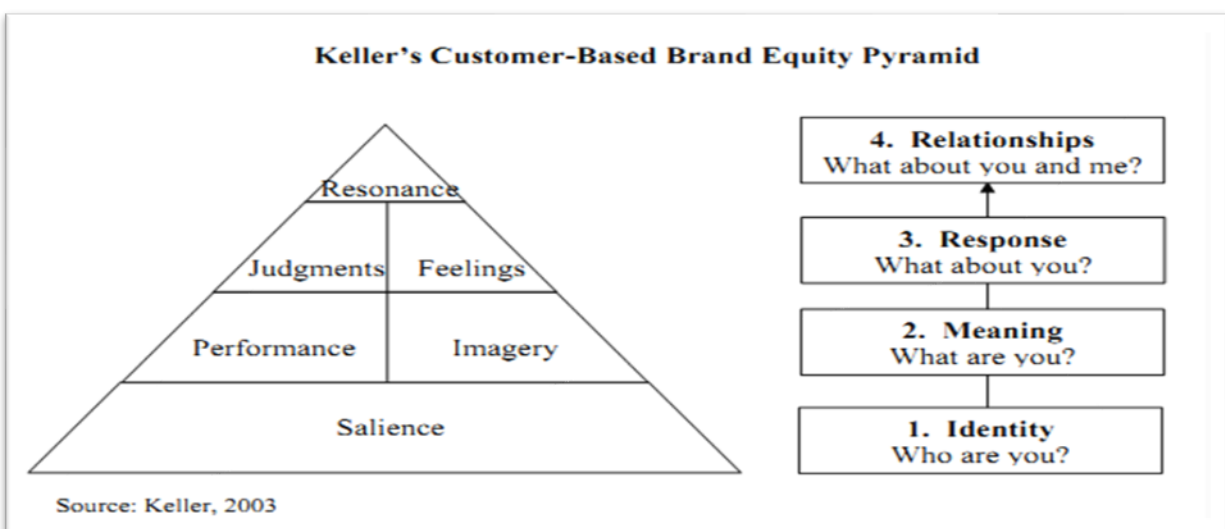
Brand resonance: pertains to the quality of the customer's connection with the brand and the extent to which they perceive congruence with the brand. As per this framework, the most robust brands excel in all six facets and, thereby, accomplish all four stages of brand establishment.

The model's basic premise is that the power of a brand is based on what customers have learned, felt, seen, and heard about it over time. Keller emphasizes the importance of measuring consumer-based brand equity for the firm's long-term and short-term benefits. He went on to say that measuring CBBE is strategic and can help improve marketing productivity.

To summarize, the primary distinction between these two models is brand loyalty. According to Keller, brand loyalty is a result of CBBE, whereas Aaker contends that brand loyalty is a cause of CBBE. Many academic articles, research reports, and books have used these two models in the last two decades, with the emphasis on conceptual development of the CBBE concept.

Moreover, Keller (2003) argues that the method of measuring consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) is an indirect approach that endeavors to pinpoint conceivable origins of brand equity channels, the efficacy of marketing communications, and the triumph of brand extension through the assessment of brand awareness and the features and connections amidst brand associations. As the direct approach concentrates on consumer reactions towards different factors of the firm's marketing scheme, the model is inapplicable for the present study.

Figure 2.2 Keller's brand resonance model (Keller, 2013)

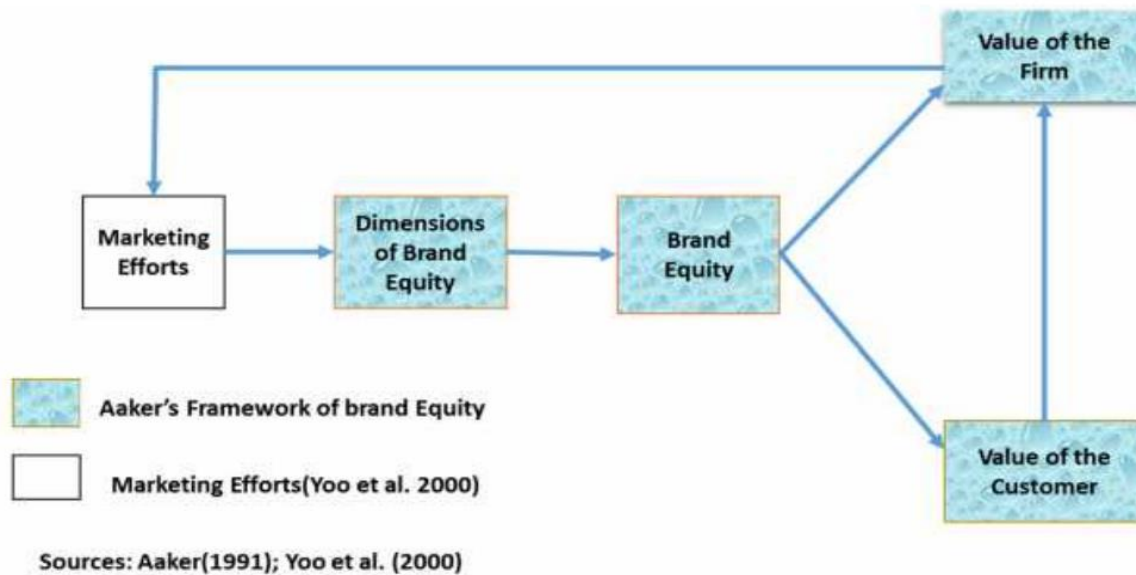


In their analysis of the second model, Yoo et al. (2000) contend that a considerable marketing effort ought to be committed to scrutinize the potential influence and correlation between brand equity and the determinants of brand equity, alongside the impact of marketing mix components that can be utilized to establish a robust brand equity. For instance, Yoo et al. (2000) conducted an investigation on the relationship between chosen marketing mix components and brand equity at a perceptual level for brands of shoes, camera films, and television sets. Their results indicate a strong correlation of advertising expenditure and distribution intensity with brand equity. From the customers' point of view, it is unnecessary to incorporate marketing mix components in this examination to explore the dimensions of brand equity.

The divergence in the conceptualization of brand loyalty is notable between Aaker's (1991) and Yoo et al.'s (2000) perspectives. Aaker (1991) explicitly defined brand loyalty as an emotional attachment that a customer possesses towards a brand. In contrast, Yoo et al. (2000) construed loyalty as a predisposition to remain loyal to a central brand, substantiated by the intention to purchase the brand as the first option. Another notable differentiation is Aaker's (1991) distinction between brand awareness and brand association dimensions. Aaker (1991) posits that a brand association's potency is contingent on the frequency of experiences or exposures to communications, reinforced by a network of other associations.

Moreover, Aaker (1991) posited that brand associations could furnish value to consumers through conferring a rationale for purchasing the brand and by instilling favorable attitudes and feelings in them. On the other hand, Yoo et al. (2000) conceptualized the CBBE model, amalgamating the awareness/association dimensions into a singular component. Their model also incorporated store image as a gauge of perceived quality, alongside other marketing mix constituents that have both direct and indirect impacts on CBBE components, such as price, distribution intensity, advertising expenditure, and price deals. However, including these elements would be unsuitable for the present inquiry.

Figure 2.3 depicts the Customer Based Brand Equity model, as extended from the seminal work of Aaker (1991), as proposed by Yoo and colleagues in the year 2002.



The Brand Asset Valuator (BAV) represents the third model for measuring consumer-based brand equity (CBBE) as asserted by Keller (2013). Each individual pillar is constructed from a variety of metrics that correspond to distinct facets of consumers' brand perceptions. In conjunction, the four pillars map out the progression of a brand.

Energized differentiation is a key element to gauge a brand's uniqueness and the direction towards which it is headed. This crucial metric is pivotal for the development of a profitable brand. Furthermore, it is closely linked to pricing power and valuation multiples such as market value to sales are often explained through it.

Relevance: The concept of relevance pertains to the degree of suitability a brand holds for consumers, alongside the magnitude of a brand's potential franchise or penetration.

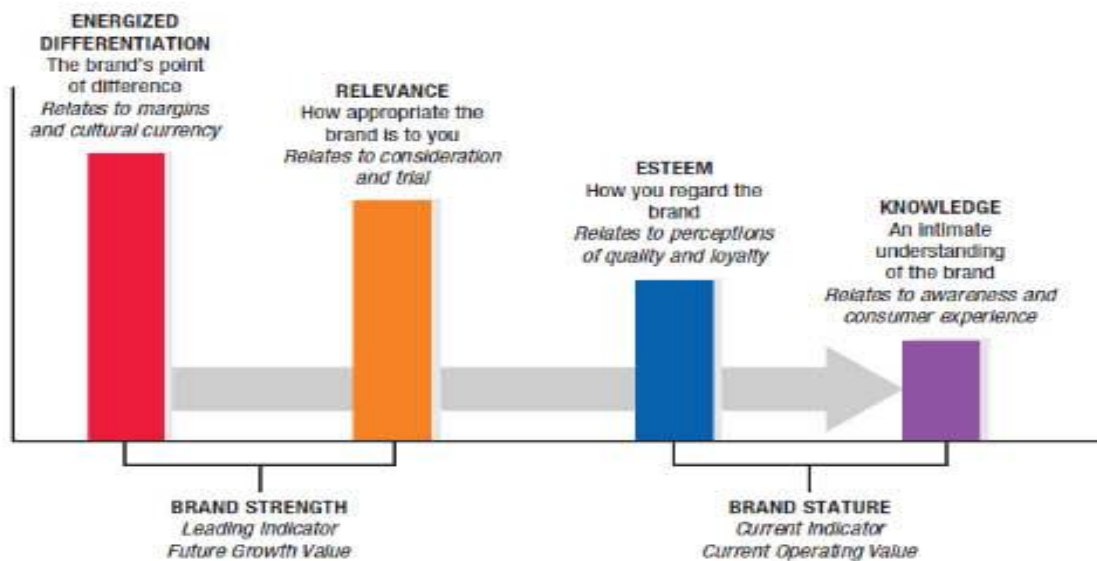
Esteem: The measurement of the brand's high regard and respect, in essence, its likability, is what is being referred to as loyalty. This loyalty, in turn, is found to be associated with one's self-esteem.

Knowledge: the assessment of consumers' awareness of a brand in relation to its salience is a measure of great significance. Astonishingly, the potential of a brand exhibits an inverse correlation with its degree of familiarity.

Keller (2013) conducts an investigation into the interconnections between the four dimensions. The "pillar patterns" of a brand are indicative of its present and prospective status. Examining each

brand pillar in isolation is inadequate; rather, the associations between the pillars provide insight into brand health and opportunities. Keller (2013) asserts that extensive research has been conducted on the correlation between BAV metrics, financial performance, and stock price. Consequently, the BAV model scrutinizes and evaluates the current and future status or soundness of different categories of brands throughout their lifespan. Furthermore, the model can be utilized for the appraisal of asset fluctuations and their impacts on stock prices, as well as future return expectations.

Figure 2.4 Keller's Brand Asset Valuator Model



Source: Brand asset valuator model; (keller, 2013)

2.1.5 Relationship of Customer Equity to Brand Equity

According to Keller et al. (2011), Blattberg and Deighton have defined customer equity as the ideal equilibrium between expenses incurred by marketers on customer acquisition and those on customer retention. Rust, Zeithaml, and Lemon, as cited by Keller et al. (2011), have further identified three components and key drivers of customer equity.

Value equity: Value equity refers to the objective evaluation made by customers regarding a brand's usefulness based on their perceptions of the benefits gained as compared to the sacrifices made. The key drivers of value equity are quality, price, and convenience.

Brand equity: On the other hand, brand equity denotes the subjective and intangible appraisal that customers make of a brand in addition to its objectively perceived value. The three main drivers of brand equity are customer brand awareness, customer brand attitudes, and customer perception of brand ethics.

Relationship equity: Lastly, relationship equity pertains to customers' inclination to remain loyal to a brand despite their objective and subjective evaluations. The four main drivers of relationship equity are loyalty programs, special recognition and treatment programs, community-building programs, and knowledge building programs.

Brand equity, however, is concerned with strategic aspects of brand management, specifically how marketing initiatives can be designed to generate and capitalize on brand awareness and image among consumers. As per Keller et al. (2011), brand equity and customer equity are closely intertwined, with many actions that boost brand equity also enhancing customer equity. While customer equity places greater emphasis on the "back end" of marketing programs and the actualized value of marketing activities in terms of revenue, brand equity places greater emphasis on the "front end" of marketing programs and the intangible value that marketing initiatives can potentially create.

Figure 2.5 Brand Equity Vs Customer Equity



Source Keller. (2011)

2.1.6. Consumers Decision-Making

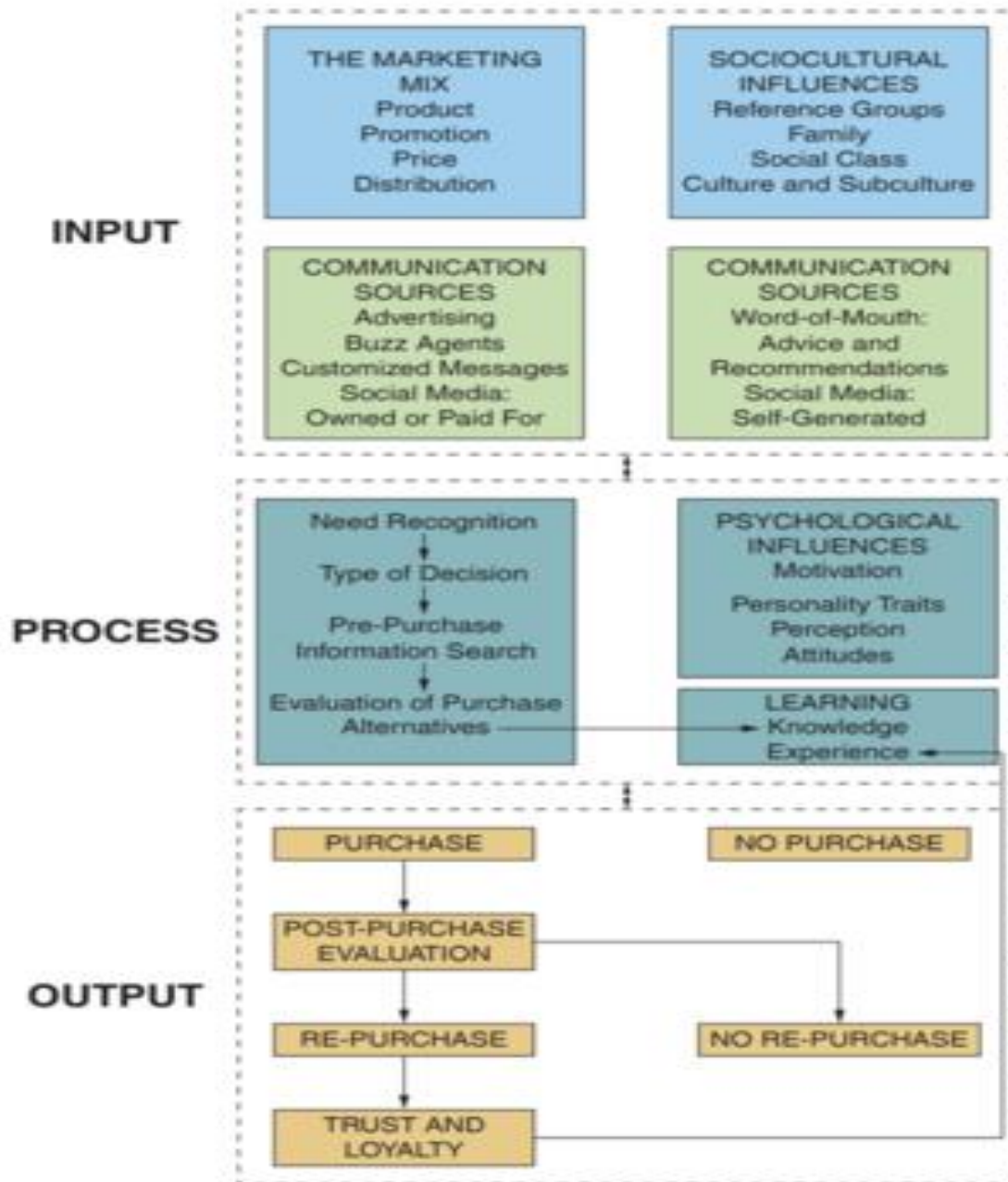
Consumer decisions encompass a multitude of stages and are subject to a diverse range of factors, including demographics, lifestyle, and cultural values. Moreover, when accommodating the needs and desires of multiple individuals or groups, the complexity of consumer decisions is further magnified (David & Hawkin, 2016).

2.1.6.1 The Customer Decision Making Model

According to Schiffman and Wisenblit's (2015) conceptualization of the consumer decision-making model, there exist three primary phases which encompass the input, process, and output stages.

The primary phase of consumer decision-making, commonly referred to as the input stage, involves two crucial factors that exert an influence: the marketing initiatives of the firm, encompassing its product line, pricing strategies, and promotional undertakings, as well as its distribution channels, and sociocultural dynamics that encompass family, friends, neighbors, social stratum, cultural and religious beliefs, and entities with a subcultural identity. The transmission of information from the firm and sociocultural sources to the consumer is also included in this stage. The second phase is a process-oriented stage that accentuates the consumer's decisions, which are undergirded by psychological factors such as perception, personality, motivation, learning, and attitudes. These factors have a bearing on how the external inputs from the input stage influence the consumer's recognition of a need, pre-purchase information exploration, and evaluation of alternatives. The knowledge acquired through alternative assessment becomes an integral part of the consumer's psychological factors through the process of learning. The activities that follow a decision in the output stage are characterized by both purchase behavior and post-purchase evaluation. The aforementioned process is visually represented in the diagram situated below.

Figure 2.6 Customer Decision Making Model



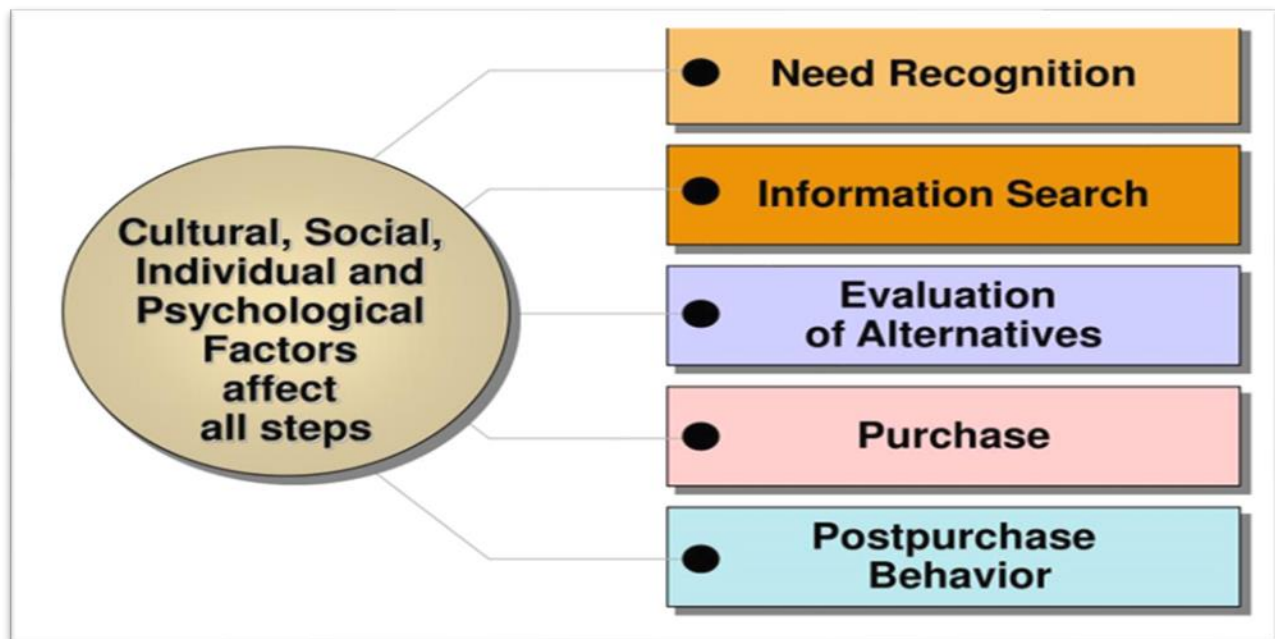
Source: Schiffman & Wisenblit. (2015)

According to the preceding discussion, consumers are influenced during purchase by the product itself (product feature and brand), the price of the product, family and friends (social influence), customer need and attitude. (convenience of the product).

2.1.6.2 The Customer Decision Making Process

Schiffman and Wisenblit (2015) present a comprehensive definition of the consumer decision-making process, comprising five essential components. The process model concerns itself with the mechanisms employed by consumers to arrive at decisions. The psychological aspect of the process model encompasses internal factors such as motivation, perception, learning, personality, and attitudes. These factors exert a significant influence on consumers' decision-making processes, including their needs and wants, awareness of available product options, information-gathering activities, and evaluation of alternatives. The five stages of the consumer decision-making process are elaborated upon below.

Figure 2.7 The Customer Decision-Making Process



Source: Dulce (2023)

I. NEED RECOGNITION

The initial phase of the process by which consumers make decisions involves identifying the need. This recognition of need, as named by Kotler and Keller (2006), is referred to as "Problem recognition." According to the same authors, this process commences with fundamental requirements, such as air, water, food, and shelter. In some instances, the process may begin at a level beyond these basic needs. The most critical factor that drives the purchase of a product or service is the need, as all purchasing decisions are predicated on this. Ascertaining the desires of customers is the first step in assessing the consumer

decision-making process. Determining the market's demand permits the facile execution of diverse marketing decisions.

II. SEARCHING AND GATHERING INFORMATION

The second phase of the consumer decision-making process involves the search for information. Once the consumer has identified their needs, they proceed to gather all relevant information. Given their inherent skepticism when it comes to making choices, individuals require comprehensive information prior to expending their financial resources.

It is at this juncture in the decision-making process that consumers weigh the pros and cons of their purchase options. The advent of online shopping sites and evolving trends has resulted in consumers being significantly more knowledgeable and better equipped to make informed purchase decisions.

Consumers have the ability to obtain vital information concerning a particular product or service from various sources. These sources may include previous customer reviews, printed materials, or electronic media associated with the product. A prudent purchase decision is crucial, as it prevents the consumer from hastily collecting information about the products and brands available in the market. It is worth noting that consumers receive information from a plethora of sources.

Personal ContactsThe aforementioned source is deemed as one of the most superior means of obtaining information for consumers and holds significant sway over their corresponding purchasing decisions. As consumers frequently engage in discussions with their acquaintances, familial relations, colleagues, and other individuals regarding their product preferences and requirements, the recommendations and allusions put forth by these parties may very well influence said consumers' ultimate buying choices.

Commercial source of information: This variety of information sources may be obtained through electronic media, including radio, television, newsletters, and internet advertisements, as well as through the promotional efforts of salespersons and public displays.

Printed Sources: It mainly can be found from promotional broacher's and fliers, magazines and newspapers.

Previous Purchase Experiences: Past personal experiences of the consumers about the product.

III. Alternative evaluation

After consumers have identified their need and the best way to meet that need, they immediately begin the availability of the best options on the market. Thus, at this stage, consumers are evaluating various available options based on the price, quality, and value added on the feature of the product, or other important factor of the product.

The discerning customer undertakes a thorough review and comparative analysis of substitute products prior to selecting the optimal product that is best suited to meet their individual needs. The third stage of the consumer decision-making process encompasses a prudently cautious appraisal of all potential alternatives and substitutions of products that are currently available on the market.

Consequently, subsequent to identifying their need recognition and acquiring pertinent product information, the consumer ultimately elects to procure the most superior product attainable in the market, based on their financial capabilities, personal style, individual taste, or specific preference.

IV. Actual Purchase of the product or the Service

In the aftermath of the culmination of the antecedent three phases of the consumer decision-making process, the consumer ultimately determines the product or service they shall procure and its corresponding point of acquisition. Subsequent to a comprehensive evaluation of all pertinent information, the consumer arrives at a rational verdict to purchase the product that satisfies their needs and wants. Advertising and marketing campaigns, personal connections' referrals, or a combination of both, often function as catalysts that stimulate the emergence of needs and desires.

V. Post Purchase Evaluation

This constitutes the ultimate phase in the process of consumer decision-making. The consumer proceeds to scrutinize and assess the acquired product, evaluating its usefulness, the degree of satisfaction derived from its utilization, as well as its worth in proportion to the fulfillment of their intrinsic needs. Should the consumer discern that the product acquired has fulfilled their expectations and provided value, their loyalty towards the product is bound to be secured.

2.2 EMPIRICAL LITERATURE REVIEW

The investigation of the determinants that affect consumers' choices to purchase specific mobile phone brands has been a recurring topic in research. In other countries, numerous empirical studies have been carried out to analyze the impact of various factors on consumers' decisions to acquire mobile phones, especially within Ethiopia. These studies have produced various empirical results concerning the influence of these variables in different settings.

The investigation carried out in Hawassa Sidma, Ethiopia indicates that the primary consideration that guides a consumer's decision to acquire a mobile phone is price, as disclosed by the Pearson correlation findings. The features incorporated in the mobile device represent the second most critical factor that consumers contemplate when making their purchase. It is noteworthy, however, that not all mobile phone features command equal significance. Concomitantly, the brand name and durability of mobile phones are additional factors that enjoy moderate correlation and equal influence in the consumer's purchase decision (Sata, 2013).

A study carried out in Sri Lanka by M.I.M. Riyath, titled "Factors Influencing Mobile Phone Brand Preference Among Sri Lankan University Students," revealed that the brand preferences of this demographic are influenced by various factors, including but not limited to price, style, quality, promotion and advertising, features, third-party recommendations, brand image, celebrity endorsements, and after-sale services. Notably, price is a significant consideration for Sri Lankan university students when it comes to purchasing a mobile phone. Therefore, when deciding which brand to purchase, price is a key factor that this demographic considers (Riyath, 2014).

Based on the aforementioned study conducted in the Ghanaian municipality of Mfantseman, a strong correlation has been observed between consumers' purchasing decisions and the variables of interest, namely branding, price, technical specifications, and phone quality. Bugyei (2020) affirms that branding significantly influences individuals' mobile phone purchasing decisions.

Drawing from the relevant empirical literature by Sata (2013), Riyath (2014), and Bugyeri (2020), the present researcher posited the following hypotheses.

H1: The choice of a consumer's mobile phone brand is significantly influenced by the price of the mobile device.

Kotler and Armstrong (2010) posit that the impact of social factors on consumer behavior encompasses the family, the reference group, one's social status, and one's role. Gass (2015) indicates that social influence pertains to both deliberate and inadvertent endeavors to modify the opinions, attitudes, or actions of another individual. Owing to the tendency of people to comply with social norms, particularly when the conduct is conspicuous, social influence exerts a substantial effect on our conduct.

A recent investigation carried out by Mustafa and Al-Rifat in Dhaka, Bangladesh divulged that the "social factor" exerts the strongest affirmative impact on the purchasing judgments of mobile phones by customers in Dhaka. Subsequently, brand, advertising, and price follow suit (Jasia Mustafa & Ahsan Al-Rifat, 2019).

According to Wong's (2019) investigation into smartphone purchase intentions amongst the post-1990s demographic in Hong Kong, social influence demonstrates a positive and notable correlation with the intention to purchase smartphones. This finding is further supported by the conceptual framework developed by Manimekalai and Ramesh (2016), who also acknowledged social impact as an influential factor in the acquisition of smartphones.

In our country, Agago et al. (2015), Engidaw (2020), and Hussen (2019) have collectively arrived at the same conclusion, namely that social influence exerts a significant impact on the purchasing intentions of smartphone consumers.

Drawing from the relevant empirical literature, as explored in Mustafa et al. (2012), the present researcher has derived the following hypotheses.

H2: Consumers' decisions to buy particular mobile phone brands are significantly influenced by social factors.

In the study conducted in Oman, a total of seven variables were carefully chosen to probe into the interrelationships between brand appellation, price, product characteristics, convenience, reliance, social sway, and purchase inclination. The research findings revealed that heightened brand cognizance among Omani consumers exerts a positive influence on their smartphone purchase decisions (Renjith Kumar R and Diana Fernandez, 2020).

In the study conducted by Azira (2016), an examination was made on the variables that affect the inclination of university students in Malaysia to acquire smartphones. The research unearthed that the purchasing intentions of consumers for mobile phones are significantly impacted by the brand name. In an effort to establish the influence of brand image on the selection of mobile phones by consumers, Marumbwa (2013) undertook a study in Zimbabwe. The findings of the study revealed that brand image has a constructive effect on preference and results in elevated levels of customer satisfaction in the selection and use of mobile phones. Sata (2013), in order to scrutinize the factors that affect customers' decision to purchase a mobile phone, employed the use of an empirical research method using a survey. The research discovered that young consumers exhibit a preference for purchasing a reputable brand of handset.

Based on the empirical literature discussed above, the researcher has formulated the following hypotheses.

H3: Brand recognition has a big impact on consumers' choices of mobile phone brands.

The research, titled "Factors Influencing Brand Preference for Mobile Phone Purchases: Evidence from Bangladesh," examines six variables to investigate the correlation with mobile phone brands. These variables include price, quality, unique characteristics, usability, brand image, and promotional activity. Among these variables, the quality of the mobile phone ranks the highest among the chosen sample population, as reported by Mahbubur Rahaman and Juhora Jamin Juha (2022).

In 2013, an inquiry was carried out by Alfred Owusu with the aim of discerning the factors that bear on consumers' choices regarding the purchase of mobile phones. The research revealed that the quality of the device is among the key factors that sway the consumer's decision to procure a mobile phone within the Kumasi Metropolis. To collect the data, personal interviews, questionnaires, and pricing lists were employed to assess the chosen mobile phones. As indicated by the survey, both the price and quality have a noteworthy influence on the consumers' purchase decisions.

In 2013, Khan and Rohi conducted a study with the aim of identifying the variables that influence young people's brand preferences for mobile phones. The study utilized a self-administered questionnaire to gather data from private university students at City University and Sarhad University in Peshawar. The questionnaire was randomly distributed to 110 respondents who participated in the survey to determine their brand selection criteria. To analyze the responses,

descriptive statistics, regression, and coefficient analysis were employed. The findings of the survey revealed that the quality of the mobile phone was the primary factor influencing consumers' decisions on brand preference.

Consequently, the researcher put up the following idea:

H4: Consumers' purchase decisions for particular mobile phone brands are significantly influenced by the quality of the device.

Customers who exhibit loyalty to a particular brand are inclined to pay a premium price, primarily because they acknowledge the superior quality, effectiveness, and uniqueness that the brand exclusively provides. It has been established that trust represents the most crucial determinant for perpetuating long-term relationships, and both the attainment of targeted value and the maintenance of such relationships are significant (Wel et al., 2011).

H5: Brand loyalty significantly influences consumers' decisions to buy particular mobile phone brands.

2.3. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF THE STUDY

Finally, by examining various factors that affecting consumers' purchase decisions of mobile Phone brands, it was possible to identify actual factors that might affect Ethio telecom customers' choice of mobile phone, as shown in Figure 2.1 below. The framework includes one dependent variable (purchase decisions of mobile phone brands) and five independent variables (price, quality, brand loyalty and awareness, social factors) that have an impact on consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands.

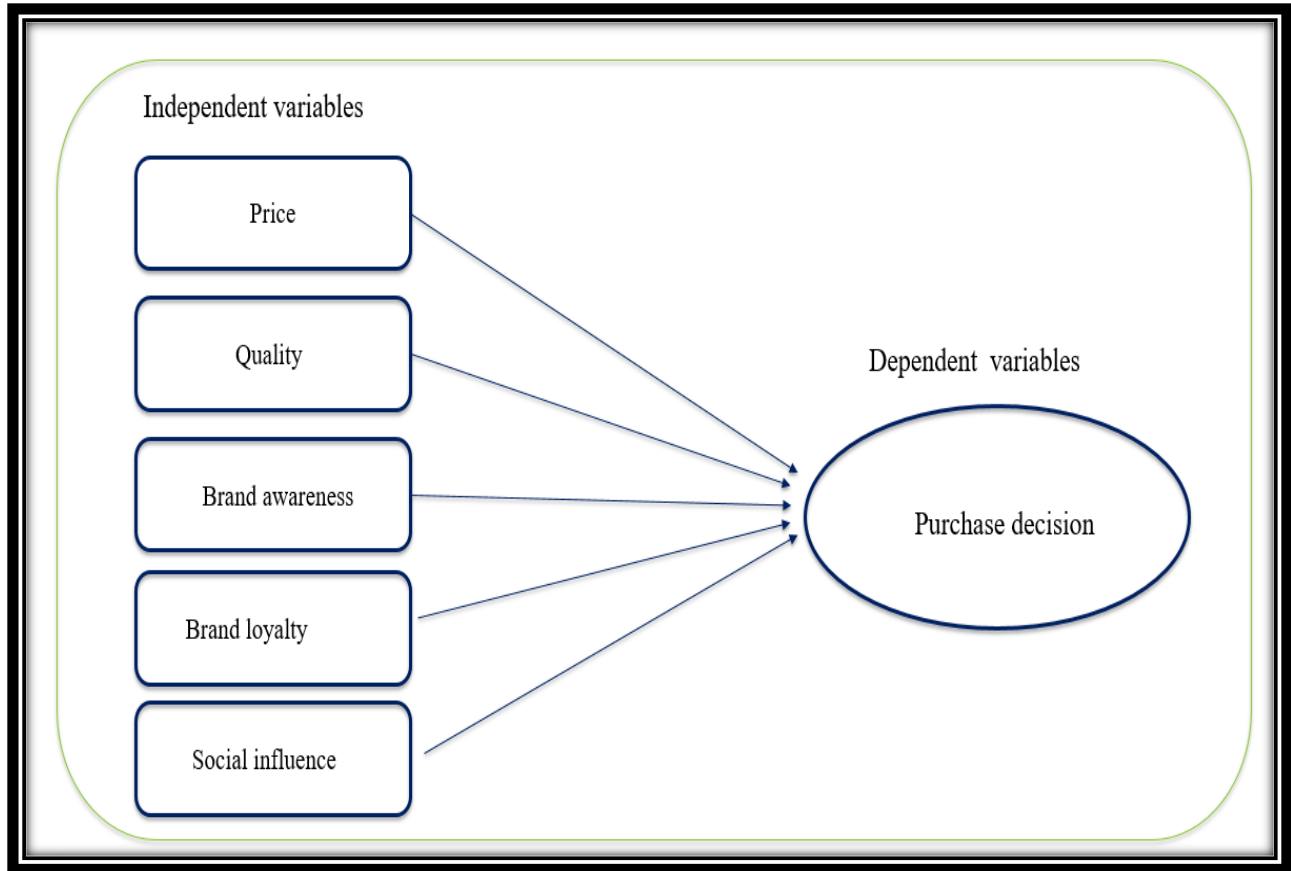


Figure 2.8 Developed by a student researcher after reviewing related literature

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

In this particular chapter, the researcher has comprehensively deliberated upon various crucial aspects such as the Description of the Study Area, Research Approach, Research design, Population and Sample, Data Sources and Type, Data Collection Procedure, and Data Analysis technique that have been meticulously employed by the study.

3.1. Research Approach

Kothari (2004) posits that a research approach is the establishment of conditions for data collection and analysis, with the objective of harmonizing relevance to the research purpose and procedural economy. The research approach embodies the conceptual framework for conducting research. This framework serves as the guide for gathering, measuring, and analyzing data (Sellitiz, 1966). A research strategy aids in making decisions regarding questions related to an inquiry or research study, such as what, where, how much, by what means, etc. Thus, the research approach gives a general description of what the research will do, including how it will test the hypothesis, what it means operationally, and how it will conduct the final data analysis.

The three principal categories of research methodologies include exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. As posited by Saunders et al., these approaches are fundamental in the field of research. definition of exploratory research as a research methodology with a primary goal of understanding the problem situation under study can be found in their 2003 publication. Exploratory research is used when there is little information available about the situation (Yin, 2003).

Studies that focus on describing the characteristics of a specific person or group are known as descriptive research studies. The majority of social research falls into this category. The primary goal of descriptive research is to describe the situation as it is at the moment (Kothari, 2004). The descriptive research methodology, as per Creswell, entails a meticulous inquiry of facts, which necessitates precise and comprehensive analysis of observations. Its primary objective is to amass information on the current state of affairs (Creswell, 2009).

Explanatory studies entail an intensive analysis of a given situation or issue with the objective of identifying the various factors under consideration and determining their corresponding causes and

effects. Such research is commonly applied in fields that have undergone substantial prior research (Saunders M. Lewis P. & Thornhill A., 2003). In this particular study, the researcher adopted a combination of descriptive and explanatory research approaches to achieve the five research objectives and ascertain and quantify the factors that influence customers' decisions when selecting specific mobile phone brands.

3.2. Research design

Creswell (2009) elucidates three distinct research designs, namely quantitative, qualitative, and a hybrid of the two. There exists a plethora of approaches to tackle research problems. Quantitative research is useful in establishing relationships between independent and dependent variables within a population. However, quantitative research aims to employ mathematical models to natural phenomena, utilizing measurements as a fundamental link between empirical observation and mathematical expression of quantitative relationships (Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2003).

To expedite and accurately reach its conclusion, this study opted for a quantitative research design based on its aims and the availability of pertinent data. Consequently, a quantitative research approach was utilized in analyzing the correlation between the dependent variable, namely Purchase Decision of Mobile Phone Brand, and independent variables.

3.3 Data type and source

The study utilized data obtained from primary and secondary sources. The former was procured by means of administered questionnaires that were disseminated to the respondents, while the latter was extracted from various publications, including books, research papers, journals, and other materials that hold relevance to this inquiry.

3.4 population and sample

Selecting the study's population constitutes the initial step. As per its definition, the populace encompasses "the complete group of units under investigation for analysis, while the element denotes the unit from which the required data is procured" (Davis, 2000). According to Creswell's interpretation, a population represents a group of individuals who share similar characteristics (Creswell, 2009). The target populace denotes a group of individuals or organizations that researchers can identify and investigate due to their shared trait.

Ethio telecom's organizational structure comprises of zonal and regional offices, categorizing its customers into enterprise and residential segments. The customer base is widely dispersed throughout Ethiopia, occupying all ten regions and six zones, which are primarily situated in Addis Ababa, the capital city. For the purposes of this study, participants were recruited from among Ethio Telecom's residential customer base, residing in Addis Ababa. The rationale behind selecting Addis Ababa as the study population stems from the diverse nature of its residents, originating from various regions of the country, thereby representing an array of cultural, religious, political, commercial, and economic backgrounds. Consequently, the study's findings may be deemed generalizable at the national level.

The researcher selected three of Addis Abeba's six zones through a straightforward random sample technique, namely South Addis Ababa Zone (SAAZ), Northern Addis Ababa Zone (NAAZ), and Central Addis Ababa Zone (CAAZ). The choice of zones as the research population's focus instead of regions was based on cost effectiveness.

The study's target participants were young and adult shoppers who were at least 18 years old. This consumer category may be one of the most critical market segments for mobile phones in Ethiopia, as they are more likely to allocate their resources towards branded phones.

3.4.1 Sampling procedure

Probability sampling and nonprobability sampling comprise the two principal categories of sampling techniques. In a probability sample, each population element possesses an equal, nonzero probability of selection. The four types of probability sampling are simple random sampling, systematic sampling, stratified random sampling, and multi-stage cluster sampling. Non-probability sampling encompasses three types: convenience sampling, snowball sampling, and quota sampling. A convenience sample is easily accessible to the researcher based on its convenience. (Hussey J. & Hussey R. 1, 1997).

Despite the problematic feature of non-probability sampling, namely its inability to generalize results, convenience sampling is a more significant technique than commonly assumed. Moreover, as Sekaran (2003) asserts, this technique is superior to sample-based probability sampling in the business and management fields.

Due to time and monetary limitations, it is impractical to conduct a comprehensive survey on a specific study's entire populace. Consequently, one must examine a representative portion of the population to forecast the entire population's tendencies. Therefore, as stated earlier, the student

researcher employed a simple random sampling technique to choose three of the six obtainable zones in Addis Abeba.

3.4.2 Sample size

384 sample size was selected to respond to the instrument and it is calculated as follows:

Necessary Sample Size = $(Z\text{-score})^2 * StdDev*(1-StdDev) / (\text{margin of error})^2$

Confidence level = 95%

standard deviation = 0.5

Margin of error (confidence interval) = +/- 5% So,

= $((1.96)^2 * .5(.5)) / (.05)^2$

= $(3.8416 * .25) / .0025$

= $0.9604 / .0025$

= 384.16

= 384 respondents needed.

The research commenced with an initial sample size of 384 clients from the entirety of Addis Abeba. However, in an effort to enhance response rates, the investigator allocated a total of 400 questionnaires, with 133 being distributed to each of the three study zones (namely, NAAZ, CAAZ, and SAAZ).

3.4.3 Sampling techniques

With the assistance of a straightforward random sampling technique, the researcher selects three out of the six zones in Addis Ababa. Consequently, the researcher designates three of the overall identified zones in Addis Ababa to function as the analytical entity. The student researcher also employs a purposive sampling approach to select Amharic and English speakers from these three zones. Notably, convenience sampling was solely based on being a customer of Ethio telecom when selecting population members.

3.5. Data Gathering Instruments

The researcher utilized both primary and secondary data sources in the study. The secondary information was acquired from published journals, articles, and other relevant materials, which were solely used for literary purposes. The primary data was generated and presented through well-suited structured questionnaires in this study.

To create a useful and effective instrument, the questionnaire was developed and distributed in accordance with recommended guidelines (Singh, 1995). The initial draft of the questionnaire was examined by two native English speakers and subsequently translated back into Amharic to ensure that it was identical to the English version (Brisling R.W., Lonner W.J., and Robert M., 1973).

The development of the questionnaire was executed with utmost care to ensure that it is lucid, concise and comprehensible to the respondents. According to Fisher (2007), it is highly recommended to curtail the length of the questionnaire and provide it with a logical and sequential format to facilitate the respondent's understanding of its objectives and themes. Hence, the questionnaire comprised of three integral sections. The first segment solicited general information about the participants, while the second segment was focused on the fundamental details of the respondents' mobile phones. The third and most significant section encompassed five variables which measured the factors that affect the consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands.

3.6 Data Analysis Technique

The utilization of the statistical software SPSS, specifically the version 25, was employed to input the data gathered through questionnaire and to scrutinize, deliberate, and present the findings in this particular study. The evaluation of the internal consistency and reliability of the items was performed through the application of Cronbach's alpha. Subsequently, both descriptive and inferential techniques were implemented to examine the data.

The attributes of the participants, including frequency, percentage, and mean, were succinctly summarized through the utilization of descriptive analysis. In addition, descriptive analysis encompasses the quantitative depiction, amalgamation, and exhibition of pertinent constructs or relationships between them.

Inferential statistics are statistical procedures utilized to deduce conclusions about associations between variables. They are distinct from descriptive statistics as they are explicitly designed to scrutinize hypotheses (Bhattacharjee, 2012).

3.7. Validity & Reliability

There exist two significant indices which are utilized to appraise the caliber of a research work. These are the parameters of validity and reliability.

Validity can be evaluated through either theoretical or empirical procedures. Theoretical evaluation of validity is concerned with how proficiently the notion of a theoretical construct can be translated or represented in an operational measure (Anol, 2012). Consequently, the correlation coefficients for the independent and dependent variables, among others, were computed in order to examine the construct validity. The factors that impact consumers' purchase decisions are classified as independent variables, while mobile phone brand purchase decision is the dependent variable.

Reliability pertains to the non-existence of fortuitous error, thereby enabling subsequent researchers to derive analogous insights if they were to conduct the study along the same procedures once more (Yin, 2003). In this particular investigation, Cronbach's alpha was employed to evaluate the internal consistency of the variables in the research instrument. Cronbach's alpha is a reliability coefficient that is utilized to assess the internal consistency of a scale; it is represented as a numerical value ranging from 0 to 1. Scales possessing a coefficient alpha of 0.7 denote moderate reliability. Consequently, a Cronbach's alpha score of 0.7 or greater will be deemed acceptable for determining reliability in this study.

3.10. Ethical Consideration

The researcher provides a firm assurance that confidentiality of information shall be upheld and that data shall be exclusively used for its intended purposes. The study's participants were approached with full consent, and were duly informed to respond to questionnaires with confidence, understanding the purpose of the thesis. The participants were also made aware of their freedom to withdraw from participation at any time without negative consequences, and that their participation or lack thereof shall not cause them harm. Consequently, the participants' involvement in the project is entirely voluntary.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS PRESENTATION

4. Introduction

This particular section hereby presents the primary discoveries and analyses of the sample population, which are founded upon data that have been gathered from respondents of Ethio telecom customers. These respondents visit the selected three Ethio telecom residential shops in Addis Abeba for their respective telecommunication necessities.

4.1 Rate of Sample and Response

The distribution of the standard questionnaire was conducted across three distinct zones and was made available in both English and Amharic. A total of 384 customers were initially selected from those present in the Addis Abeba area, although in order to achieve a higher response rate, the researcher dispersed a total of 400 questionnaires to respondents. Ultimately, 383 questionnaires were acquired, representing a response rate of 99.7%. These respondents were then selected as a sample from three separate zones, namely NAAZ, CAAZ, and SAAZ, with the employment of a simple random sampling method. The response rate achieved in this study was exceptional, as a 50% response rate is typically deemed satisfactory (Sekaran, 2003). In terms of individual zone responses, NAAZ received 120 responses (31%), CAAZ received 152 (40%), and SAAZ received 111 (29%).

The present chapter is devoted to the discussion of the findings obtained from the study, which are analyzed using the SPSS version 25 software. The discussion is presented in two distinct parts, namely descriptive and econometric analysis. The former part concentrates on the demographic profile of the respondents and other general information, while the latter part is concerned with the application of numerous statistical tests to the data. Furthermore, the dependability and validity of the data were also subjected to scrutiny.

4.2 Descriptive Analysis

4.2.1 Demography statistics

The presented information regarding the respondents' demographics, encompassing gender, age, educational attainment, occupation, and income, serves to facilitate comprehension of their distinctive attributes.

Table 4.1: The respondent's demographic information

CHARACTERSTICS	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE SHARE	COMMULATIVE PERCENT
Gender Of Respondants	Male	228	59.5	59.5
	Female	155	40.5	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	
Age of Respondants		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE SHARE	COMMULATIVE PERCENT
	Below 20	31	8.1	8.1
	21-30	79	20.6	28.7
	31-40	149	38.9	67.6
	Above 40	124	32.4	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	
Educational Level		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE SHARE	COMMULATIVE PERCENT
	Less than high School	47.0	12.3	12.3
	High School	48.0	12.5	24.8
	Diploma	83.0	21.7	46.5
	First Degree	79	20.6	67.1
	Masters Degree	114	29.8	96.9
	Others	12	3.1	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	
Occupation		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE SHARE	COMMULATIVE PERCENT
	Public	117	30.5	30.5
	Private	113	29.5	60.1
	Self Employed	84	21.9	82.0
	Others	69	18.0	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	
Respondants Monthly Income		FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE SHARE	COMMULATIVE PERCENT
	Under 2000 Br	8	2.1	2.1
	2001-5000 Br.	44	11.5	13.6
	5001-10000 Br.	71	18.5	32.1
	10001-15000 Br.	86	22.5	54.6
	15001-20000 Br.	87	22.7	77.3
	Above 20000	87	22.7	100.0
	Total	383	100.0	

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

As indicated by Table 4.1, the gender composition of the respondents was such that 59.5% of the respondents were male while 40.5% were female. This observation suggests that both male and female respondents had an almost equal opportunity to participate in the survey, thereby indicating that both genders visit Ethio telecom residential shops in Addis Ababa for their telecommunication needs.

Table 4.1 also revealed that the age group between 31 and 40 years of age constituted the majority of respondents, accounting for 38.9% of the total population. The second-largest group of respondents were those aged over 40, accounting for 32.4% of the total population. The age category of 21-30 accounted for 20.6% of the total respondents. This observation implies that the majority of branded mobile phone customers are young and active adults within the age range of 21-40.

In terms of the level of education, the majority of participants (29.8%) possess a Master's degree, while diplomas and first degrees constitute the second and third ranks with 21.7% and 20.6%, respectively. The study also incorporates 12.3% of students from primary schools and 12.5% of students from high schools. The remaining 3.1% is categorized as "others." Consequently, it can be inferred that a significant portion of the participants in this study consists of Masters and degree holders belonging to this group.

As presented in table 4.1, 30.5% of the respondents were employed in the public sector, 29.5% in the private sector, and 21.9% were self-employed. The remaining 18% of the respondents are classified as "others." The aforementioned outcome indicates that the distribution of respondents from all sectors is nearly uniform. Thus, it can be comprehended that individuals from all sectors visit Ethio telecom residential shops situated in Addis Ababa for their telecommunication needs.

In terms of their monthly earnings, the preponderant majority of the respondents (22.7%) reported an income bracket ranging between 15,000 and 20,000 ETB, with an additional segment earning above 20,000 ETB. The remaining proportion of respondents (22.5%) reported an income bracket ranging between 10,000 and 15,000 ETB. A noteworthy 18.5% of respondents reported an income bracket ranging between 5,001 and 10,000 ETB, while 13.56% reported an income bracket ranging between 2,001 and 5,000 ETB. Respondents earning less than 2000 ETB

were found to comprise 2.1% of the list of earners. Thus, it can be inferred that the majority of respondents earn a monthly income within the range of 15,000 and above 20,000 ETB.

4.2.2 Basic information on mobile phone

I. What is the brand of your current mobile phone?

Table 4.2: Current mobile phone brand used by the respondents.

	No. of Respondants	Share (%)	Cumulative Share (%)
Nokia	18	4.7	4.7
Iphone	17	4.4	9.1
HTC	13	3.4	12.5
Tecno	68	17.8	30.3
LG	37	9.7	39.9
Samsung	111	29.0	68.9
Huawei	39	10.2	79.1
Smadle	3	0.8	79.9
Motorolla	16	4.2	84.1
ZTE	46	12.0	96.1
Geotel	8	2.1	98.2
Blackberry	7	1.8	100.0
Total	383	100.0	

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

Almost 69% of respondents own four phone brands: Samsung, Techno, ZTE, and Huawei. Samsung leads the pack with 29%, followed by Techno 17.8%, ZTE 12%, and Huawei 10.2%. LG, Nokia, and iPhone account for 9.7%, 4.7, and 4.4% of all respondents, respectively.

II. Mobile phone handset wish to change by the respondents?

Table 4.3: The Mobile phone handset wish to change by the respondents.

	No. of Respondants	Share (%)	Cumulative Share (%)
Nokia	38	9.9	10
Iphone	100	26.1	36
HTC	10	2.6	39
Tecno	23	6.0	45
LG	50	13.1	58
Samsung	124	32.4	90
Oppo	6	1.6	92
Huawei	13	3.4	95
ZTE	19	5.0	100
Total	383	100.0	

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

Again, respondents were asked which mobile phone brand they would buy if they decided to switch devices, and the results show that 32.4% chose Samsung. 26.1% of those polled chose iPhone as their next phone brand. LG, Nokia, Techno, ZTE, Huawei, HTC, and Oppo have respective market shares of 13.1%, 9.9%, 6%, 5%, 3.4%, 2.6%, and 1.6%.

4.2.3 Descriptive Analysis of the Variables

To assess the degree to which the variables exert an impact on the determinants that shape the purchasing choices of mobile phone brands by consumers, five inquiries were formulated for each variable drawing from diverse research literature.

As stated by Lind DA, Marchal WG, Wathen SA (SA, 2003), the measure was assessed utilizing a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1, which indicates strong disagreement, to 5, which indicates strong agreement. The outcomes of the 5-point Likert scale were construed as follows:

Table 4.5: Scoring range of Likert scale

Mean Score Range	Agreement	Classification
1.00-1.80	Strongly disagreed	Negative
1.81-2.60	Disagreed	
2.61-3.20	Neutral (Neither agreed not disagreed)	Neutral
3.21-4.20	Agreed	Positive
4.21-5.00	Strongly Agreed	

4.2.3.1 Price

All of the price items presented in Table 4.6 below are situated within the range of agreed and strongly agreed values. Specifically, the item pertaining to the continued purchasing of mobile phones from brand "X" despite other brands having matching prices, yielded the highest mean score of 4.21, with a standard deviation of 0.98. Correspondingly, respondents also expressed agreement with the items, "I am still willing to buy 'X' even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitors," and "The price factor to shift from brand 'X' is very insignificant for me," which garnered mean values of 4.02 (SD: 1.06), and 3.97 (SD: 1.16), respectively. Notably, the

item "Product X would have very good price" exhibited the minimum score with a mean value of 3.75 (SD: 1.29). Broadly, the results indicate that price does indeed exert an influence on purchase decisions of mobile phone brands.

Table 4.6: Price descriptive statistics

Price Item	N	Mean	SD
Product X would have very good price	383	3.75	1.29
I will keep on buying mobile phone from brand "X" even if the other brands have the same price.	383	4.21	0.98
I am still willing to buy "X" even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitors	383	4.02	1.06
The price factor to shift from brand "X" is very insignificant for me	383	3.97	1.16

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

4.2.3.2 Quality

From the product quality item table presented below, all items pertaining to the trustworthiness of the quality of products from "X" have garnered a strongly agreeable rating. The mean values for the items "I trust the quality of products from 'X'," "Products from 'X' would be of very good quality," and "Products from 'X' offer excellent features" are 4.39, 4.41, and 4.38, respectively. The corresponding standard deviations for these items are 0.85, 0.82, and 0.90. Notably, the item "Products from 'X' would be of very good quality" received the highest mean score of 4.41 (SD: 0.82), whereas the item "Products from 'X' offer excellent features" received the lowest mean score of 4.38 (SD: 0.90). Thus, it may be inferred that respondents are in agreement regarding the impact of product quality on their decision to purchase mobile phone brands.

Table 4.7: Quality Descriptive Analysis

Quality Item	N	Mean	SD
I trust the quality of products from “X”	383	4.39	0.85
Products from “X” would be of very good quality	383	4.41	0.82
Products from “X” offer excellent features	383	4.38	0.90

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

4.2.3.3 Brand Awareness

From Table 4.8, it can be observed that the item pertaining to the ability to recognize "X" quickly among other competing brands exhibits the highest mean value of 4.31 with a standard deviation of 0.84. Furthermore, the statements relating to the rapid recollection of certain characteristics of "X" fall within the strongly agreed range with a mean value of 4.23 (SD: 0.81). Finally, the statement concerning familiarity with the brand "X" falls within the agreed range with a mean value of 4.10 (SD: 1.10). Consequently, it can be deduced that two brand awareness questions are situated in the strongly agreed area while one item is discovered in the agree range on the Likert scale.

Table 4.8: Brand Awareness Descriptive Analysis

Brand Awareness Item	N	Mean	SD
Some characteristics of “X” come to my mind quickly	383	4.23	0.81
I can recognize “X” quickly among other competing brands	383	4.31	0.84
I am familiar with the brand “X”	383	4.10	1.10

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

4.2.3.4 Brand Loyalty

The items pertaining to brand loyalty, namely 'I would love to recommend "X" to my friends' and 'When buying a mobile phone, brand "X" would be my first choice', have received a high mean value of 4.38 (SD: 0.81) and 4.36 (SD:0.89) respectively, falling within the strongly agree range. On the other hand, the remaining items have received a mean value of 3.97 and 3.93, falling within the agree range. Therefore, it can be inferred that the respondents have reached a consensus on the impact of brand loyalty on purchase decisions for mobile phone brands.

Table 4.9: Brand Loyalty Descriptive Analysis

Brand Loyalty Item	N	Mean	SD
I consider myself to be loyal to “X”	383	3.97	1.05
When buying a mobile phone, brand “X” would be my first choice	383	4.36	0.89
I will keep on buying mobile phone from brand “X” even if the other brands has the same functionality	383	3.93	1.17
I would love to recommend “X” to my friends	383	4.38	0.81

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

4.2.3.5 Social Influence

From Table 4.10 below, it is observed that all items pertaining to social influence elicit responses predominantly in the strongly agreed and agreed categories. Notably, the items 'I would not purchase a "X" mobile brand phone without first seeking the advice of my family and friends' and 'I place significant value on the opinions and advice of my acquaintances and loved ones regarding the "X" mobile brand' record the highest mean scores of 4.49 (SD:0.76) and 4.27(SD:0.81) respectively. Additionally, respondents exhibit agreement with items such as 'It is crucial for me that my peers approve of the "X" mobile phone brand I am using', 'The recommendations of others significantly influence my decision to purchase an "X" mobile phone', and 'I tend to purchase the same mobile phone brand as my friends', with respective mean values of 4.19 (SD: 0.99), 4.13 (SD: 0.81), and 3.93 (SD:1.17). The findings of the study indicate that Social Influence exerts a significant impact on the decision-making process of consumers when it comes to purchasing mobile phone brands.

Table 4.10: Social Influence Descriptive Analysis

Social Influence Item	N	Mean	SD
I would not buy a "X" mobile Brand phone without first consulting of my family and friends.	383	4.49	0.76
I believe my friends and family's opinions and advice about the "X" mobile brand.	383	4.27	0.81
It is critical that my friends like the brand "X" mobile phone that I am using.	383	4.19	0.99
I frequently buy the same mobile phone brand as my friends.	383	3.93	1.17
The advice of others has an impact on my decision to buy "X" mobile phone.	383	4.13	0.81

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

4.2.3.6 Purchase Decision

In the context of the dependent variable, namely the Purchase decision, all three items pertaining to the statement "'X' is more than a product to me", "Even if another brand has the same features as 'X' I would prefer to buy 'X'", and "If another brand is not different from 'X' in any way, it seems smarter to purchase", exhibit agreement within the mean scores of 4.18, 4.11, and 4.11, respectively. Additionally, their corresponding standard deviations are 1.94, 1.09, and 1.01.

Table 4.11: Purchase Decision Descriptive Analysis

Purchase Decision Item	N	Mean	SD
Even if another brand has the same features as "X", I would prefer to buy "X"	383	4.11	1.09
If another brand is not different from "X" in any way, it seems smarter to purchase	383	4.11	1.01
"X" is more than a product to me	383	4.18	1.04

Source: Computed data from own survey 2023

4.3 Inferential Analysis

4.3.1 Reliability Test

The assessment of reliability is crucial in determining the interrelatedness of questionnaire items. By utilizing a reliability measure, an overarching index of repeatability and internal consistency of the scale can be obtained, thereby facilitating the assessment of the internal consistency of the scale item incorporated in the questionnaire. Cronbach's alpha coefficient serves as a reliable instrument to measure dependability, with a range typically falling between 0 and 1. A higher level of internal consistency among the scale's items is indicated if the Cronbach's alpha coefficient approaches 1.00. Various techniques for reliability assessment have been identified by Gandhi (2012).

Table 4.12: Reliability Scale acceptable range

Alpha Value	Reliability Scale
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

Based on the aforementioned measurement, the dependability of the explanatory and dependent factors, as delineated in the subsequent table, is being assessed.

Table 4.13: Reliability test result

Variables	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Price	4	0.77
Quality of the mobile devices	3	0.84
Brand Awareness	3	0.80
Brand loyalty	4	0.84
Social Influence	5	0.84
Purchase Decision	3	0.76

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

Based on the findings presented in Table 4.13, it can be observed that the Cronbach alpha coefficient for one dependent variable and five explanatory variables was deemed satisfactory. This conclusion is drawn in light of the acceptable range of reliability scale, as outlined in Table 4.12. More specifically, following Gandhi's (2012) suggestion for acceptable threshold values, it was determined that price and purchase decision constitute acceptable variables. On the other hand, the quality of mobile devices, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and social influence were deemed good.

4.3.2 Multi-Collinearity Test

A linear association is present between two explanatory factors in the context of multi-collinearity. Multi-collinearity, as per Shrestha's (2020) findings, arises when a multiple linear regression analysis involves various factors that are significantly linked with both the dependent factor and each other. Marcoulides and Raykov (2006) argue that the existence of multi-collinearity in regression analysis signifies that a factor is utilizing redundant information in the model, leading to unstable regression coefficient estimate. The investigator employed the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) approach in conjunction with other examination techniques for multi-collinearity, utilizing the value of tolerance. It is imperative that the tolerance value exceed 0.1 and that the VIF value remain below 10 to avert multi-collinearity. Consequently, for all variables outlined in table 4.14, the Tolerance value is greater than 0.1 (tolerance > 0.1) and the VIF value is less than 10 (VIF10). Hence, we may confidently assert that no issue with multi-collinearity arises among the explanatory variables.

Table 4.14: Reliability test result

Collinearity Statistics		
Variables	Tolerance	VIF
Price	0.296	3.375
Quality	0.348	2.876
BA	0.251	3.984
BL	0.172	5.817
SI	0.097	10.349

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

4.3.3 Normality Test

According to Shukla (2015), it is imperative to establish the normal distribution of data prior to conducting any parametric tests. For larger data sets, especially those exceeding 300 observations, the Skewness and Kurtosis methods are deemed reliable for normality testing (Shukla, 2015). Kurtosis measures the "peakedness" of a distribution, while skewness measures its asymmetry. To confirm normality for sample sizes greater than 300, an absolute skewness value of less than 2 or an absolute kurtosis value of less than 7 must be observed (Kim, 2013).

Table 4.15: Reliability Test Result

	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Price	383	-0.710	0.125	0.061	0.249
Quality	383	-1.840	0.125	4.432	0.249
Brand awareness	383	-0.753	0.125	0.073	0.249
Brand loyalty	383	-0.979	0.125	0.682	0.249
Social Influence	383	-1.242	0.125	1.709	0.249

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

According to the data presented in table 4.15 above, it is observed that the absolute values of both Skewness and Kurtosis are less than 2 and 7, respectively. From this, it can be deduced that the data conforms to normality.

4.3.4 Correlation Analysis

A correlation coefficient is a numerical assessment employed in statistics to evaluate both the magnitude and direction of the tendency to fluctuate jointly. The researcher, in this instance, employed Pearson's correlation coefficient to examine the correlation between variables. Pearson's r ranges between +1 and -1, where +1 signifies a perfect positive correlation and -1 represents a perfect negative correlation. A value of zero denotes the absence of any linear correlation. The interpretation of Pearson's r value measurements follows a general rule of thumb: a value ranging from 0.00 to 0.10 is deemed to have negligible correlation, 0.10 to 0.39 is considered to have weak correlation, 0.40 to 0.69 is considered to have moderate correlation, 0.70 to 0.89 is regarded as having strong correlation, and 0.90 to 1.00 is deemed to have a very strong correlation.

Table 4.16: Pearson correlation coefficient

		Correlations					
		Price	Quality	BA	BL	SI	PD
Price	Pearson	1					
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
Quality	Pearson	.479**	1				
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
BA	Pearson	.718**	.570**	1			
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed)						
BL	Pearson	.812**	.607**	.725**	1		
	Correlation						
SI	Pearson	.714**	.784**	.834**	.858**	1	
	Correlation						
PD	Pearson	.669**	.599**	.844**	.784**	.878**	1
	Correlation						
**.							
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

Note: BA stand for brand awareness, BL stand for brand loyalty, SI stand for social influence and PD stand for purchase decision.

According to Pearson's r data analysis of the aforementioned table, price vs. quality (0.479) and price vs. purchase decision (.669**) have a statistically moderate relationship. Price and brand awareness, price and brand loyalty, and price and social influence all have strong positive correlations. The association between quality and brand awareness, brand loyalty, and purchase intent is moderate (.570), (.607), and (.599), respectively. Quality and social influence has strong correlation (.784**). Brand awareness is strongly related to brand loyalty, social impact, and

purchasing behavior, with correlation coefficients of (.725**), (.834**), and (.844**). Brand loyalty has strong correlation to social influence and purchase decision with correlation coefficient of (.858**) and (.784**) respectively. Lastly social influence has strongly related with purchase decision.

4.3.5 Regression Analysis

In this particular section, the utilization of multiple regression analysis was implemented so as to ascertain the correlation between the purchase decision of a mobile phone brand, which is deemed the dependent variable, and the factors that influence it, also known as the explanatory variables.

Model summary

In this specific segment, the application of multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the association between the purchase verdict of a mobile phone brand, considered the dependent variable, and the factors that affect it, otherwise referred to as the explanatory variables.

Table 4.17: Modal summary

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.907 ^a	0.824	0.821	0.36249
a. Predictors: (Constant), SI, Price, Quality, BA, BL				

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

Furthermore, in order to ascertain the adequacy of the model for the data, the ANOVA table presented below demonstrates that the p-value being less than 0.05 provides compelling evidence that the model is an exceptional fit for the data and significantly predicts the decision to purchase a mobile phone brand.

Table 4.18: Analysis of variance

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	231.200	5	46.240	351.901	.000 ^b
	Residual	49.538	377	0.131		
	Total	280.738	382			
a. Dependent Variable: PD						
b. Predictors: (Constant), SI, Price, Quality, BA, BL						

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

4.3.6. Coefficient Analysis and Hypothesis testing

Table 4.19: Coefficients analysis of the variables

Coefficients ^a							
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.	Result of Hypothesis
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	-0.247	0.121		-2.044	0.042	
	Price	-0.079	0.039	-0.080	-2.003	0.046	H1: Supported
	Quality	-0.169	0.042	-0.147	-4.001	0.000	H2: Supported
	BA	0.389	0.047	0.356	8.249	0.000	H3: Supported
	BL	0.135	0.055	0.128	2.457	0.014	H4: Supported
	SI	0.771	0.084	0.642	9.228	0.000	H5: Supported
a. Dependent Variable: PD							

Source: Computed from own survey data, 2023

As depicted in the table above, each of the explanatory variables exhibit p-values that are below the 0.05 significance level. Such a finding implies that the explanatory factors, namely price, quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and social influence, significantly influence the dependent variable of mobile phone brand purchase decisions. Consequently, the researcher accepts all hypotheses pertaining to the aforementioned variables, as outlined in chapter two.

4.3.6 Discussion

This study undertakes an examination of the factors that impact consumer choices of mobile phone brand on Ethio telecom residential sales in Addis Ababa. As indicated in the foregoing, all of the hypotheses were found to be correct. Based on the findings of the study, it was determined that price, quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and social impact were all found to significantly influence consumers' decisions to purchase mobile phone brands for residential use in Addis Ababa. The study established that all of the hypotheses exhibited statistically significant positive correlation.

From the Pearson correlation coefficient table (Table 4.16), it can be inferred that social influence had the largest effect, followed by brand awareness, brand loyalty, price, and quality. In general, the statistical analysis demonstrates that the findings of this study are consistent with the literature mentioned in chapter two.

The outcomes of this inquiry are additionally corroborated by a research undertaken by other scholars. In Dhaka, Bangladesh, a study by Mustafa and Al-Rifat demonstrated that the "social factor" exerts the most favorable influence on customers' decisions to procure mobile phones (Jasia Mustafa & Ahsan Al-Rifat, 2019). In Hong Kong, Wong's (2019) study on smartphone purchase intentions in the post-1990s indicated a positive and significant relationship between social impact and smartphone purchase intentions.

The study's findings provide robust support for brand awareness, revealing that enhancing brand awareness among Omani users has a positive effect on their decision to purchase cellphones (Renjith Kumar R and Diana Fernandez, 2020). According to Marumbwa's (2013) research in Zimbabwe, brand image has a beneficial impact on preference and increases customer satisfaction levels in selecting and utilizing mobile phones.

The findings of the current study gave strongest support for brand loyalty. Customers that are brand loyal are more likely to pay more for a product because they are aware of the superior quality, value, and uniqueness that only the brand can provide (Wel et al., 2011).

The findings of the current study gave strongest support for price; Price is the main element affecting a consumer's decision to buy a mobile phone, according to a study done in Hawassa Sidma, Ethiopia (Sata, 2013). A study by M.I.M. Riyath entitled "Factors affecting mobile phone

brand preference Sri Lankan University Students" found that those groups' brand preferences are affected by a number of variables, including price, style, quality, promotion and advertising, features, third-party recommendations, brand image, celebrity endorsement, and after-sale services.

The present study's findings provide robust backing for quality. To investigate the correlation between brand and mobile phones, the study entitled "Factors Affecting Brand Preference for Purchasing Mobile Phones-Evidence from Bangladesh" employs six factors. These factors comprise cost, value, special features, usability, brand perception, and marketing initiatives. As per the research conducted by Mahbubur Rahaman and Juhora Jamin Juha in 2022, the mobile phone's quality holds the highest rank among the selected sample. Khan and Rohi's (2013) study highlights that the phone's quality significantly influences consumers' preferences for mobile phone brands.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATION

This particular chapter comprises a succinct compendium of discernments and culminates with the proposal of recommendations or suggestions.

5.1. SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This paper was conducted with the aim of empirically assessing the factors that affect consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands, specifically in Ethio telecom residential sales in Addis Ababa. Through an intensive literature review, the researcher identified five variables, namely price, quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and social influence, as factors that influence consumer behavior. With a well-developed conceptual framework and questionnaire, a total of 383 respondents participated in this study.

The gathered data indicates that currently, almost 69% of the respondents own one of four phone brands: Samsung, Techno, ZTE, and Huawei. Samsung leads the pack with 29%, followed by Techno with 17.8%, ZTE with 12%, and Huawei with 10.2%.

Based on the provided demographic information, it can be observed that the male gender comprises the majority of the respondents, accounting for 59.5%. Furthermore, the age group of 31 to 40 years old constitutes 39% of the responders. In terms of educational attainment, most respondents hold a master's degree, while others possess a diploma and a degree. Public sector employment was the primary occupation for 30.5% of the participants, with private industry and self-employment following. It is noteworthy that the majority of respondents' monthly income falls within the range of 5000 to 20000 Br.

The regression analysis conducted revealed that the model explained 82.4% of the variables, and no multi-collinearity issue was detected in the data. Additionally, the data exhibited normal distribution.

Accordingly, all factors that provide explanation were identified as variables of significance which impact the procurement decisions regarding mobile phone brands. Within this set of variables, the price of the phone exerts a positive influence on the decision to purchase mobile phone brands. Additionally, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and social influence demonstrate an impact on the

dependent variable. The researcher concludes that a significant relationship is present between the explanatory variables and dependent variable.

5.2. CONCLUSION

The aim of this investigation was to discern the factors that impact consumers' decision-making process when purchasing mobile phone brands through Ethio telecom residential sales in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. These factors encompass the price of the mobile phone, quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and social influence. The outcomes of the correlation analysis demonstrated that the variables have a positive influence on the consumers' purchase decisions concerning mobile phone brands.

The researcher, after conducting a comprehensive literature review, selected five variables that play a significant role in influencing the purchase decisions of consumers. These variables include price, quality, brand awareness, brand loyalty, and social influence. Conclusively, the researcher established that there exists a significant correlation between the explanatory variables and the dependent variable.

5.3 RECOMMENDATION

In the contemporary era of intensifying competition, it is imperative to comprehend the needs of the customer and adeptly cater to them. In order to achieve this, marketers must identify the final consumers of commodities and amenities. Their marketing strategies and tactics ought to be grounded on the behavior of the ultimate consumer. To this end, marketing managers should prioritize elements that clients value most and allocate minimal efforts towards those that are deemed unimportant.

This study has identified the most significant characteristics that impact consumers' purchase decisions regarding mobile phone brands in Ethio Telecom residential sales. If Ethio Telecom and mobile handset providers effectively utilize these findings, they could potentially elicit a favorable response from consumers towards their marketing initiatives. In light of the study's findings, the marketers and producers of mobile phone handsets in Ethiopia are recommended to consider the following.

Based on the aforementioned findings and conclusions, the researcher has presented the subsequent recommendations:

- ✓ Manufacturers and marketers of mobile phone handsets ought to prioritize the production and marketing of mobile phone handsets that exhibit greater durability and superior quality.
- ✓ It is crucial to focus on enhancing the brand awareness of mobile phones since research indicates that respondents are significantly influenced by established brand awareness.
- ✓ Focusing on the price and social influence is a commendable practice as they exert a remarkable influence on the consumer's purchasing decision.
- ✓ Respondents were asked which mobile phone brand they would buy if they decided to switch devices, and the results show that 32.4% chose Samsung. iPhone was selected as the next phone brand by 26.1% of those surveyed. So that Ethio telecom should focused take a lesson and concentrate on these devices for its residential market.

5.3.1 Recommendation for further research

According to the theory of consumer behavior, it is evident that consumer attitudes are subject to change. As a result, it may not be prudent to apply these findings to all circumstances. It is therefore recommended that regular surveys be conducted to monitor shifts in consumer preferences for mobile phone brands. Conducting these surveys on an annual basis will prove beneficial to both academics and Ethio telecom in gathering useful data and enhancing user targeting. The conclusions drawn from this study are solely based on research conducted in the selected Addis Abeba zone and may not be applicable to other regions due to contextual considerations. To ensure that all customers from different regions are included, it is necessary to conduct a larger-scale poll on a national level. The researcher advocates for the duplication of this inquiry in supplementary regional zones in future endeavors to examine cross-regional resemblances and disparities. Furthermore, the magnitude of participants in this study is somewhat limited. As a consequence, the outcomes will differ from those of an extensive scale. A greater magnitude of participants would produce more precise findings.

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QUESTIONNAIRE IN ENGLISH

Addis Ababa University School of Commerce Department of Marketing Management

Dear Respondents;

I am a graduate student at Addis Ababa University School of Commerce and currently conducting a research for the completion of my Master's degree in marketing management. This questionnaire is designed to collect data on factors affecting consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands in Ethio telecom residential shops. Please take a few minutes of your time to answer this questionnaire about your view and experience with regards to Ethio telecom mobile phone market. Your willingness and cooperation in giving genuine information is well appreciated and the information you provide will be used for academic purpose and will be kept in strict confidentiality.

If you would like further information about this study, or have problem in completing this questionnaire please contact me at your convenient via 0911504144/0930109243 or email: adhanomesayas744@gmail.com.

Thank you for your cooperation!!!

Instruction: Please mark your answer with a tick (√) in the space provided, No need of writing your name.

PART 1: General information of the Respondents'

1. Gender: Male Female

2. Age below 20 21-30 31-40 above 40

3. Educational Level

A. Less than high school D. First degree

B. High school E. Master's degree

C. Diploma

F. Others

4. Occupation

A. Public sector

C. Self employed

B. Private sector

D. Other

5. Your monthly income

A. Under 2000 Br.

C. 5001 – 10,000 Br.

E. 15000 - 20000 Br.

B. 2000- 5000 Br.

D. 10,000 birr - 15000 Br.

F. Above 20000 Br.

PART 2: Basic information on mobile phone.

6. What is the brand of your current mobile phone?

Nokia

iPhone

HTC

Techno

Tana

LG

Samsung

Ericsson

Blackberry

Huawei

SMADL

Motorola

ZTE

Geotel

Blackberry

Other, specify

7. Which mobile phone handset do you wish to change to?

Nokia

iPhone

HTC

Techno

Tana

LG

Samsung

Ericsson

Oppo

Huawei

SMADL

Motorola

ZTE

Geotel

Blackberry

Other, specify

PART 3: Factors that affecting your purchase decision of mobile phone brands

The statements below are designed so that they give information on which factors affecting consumers' purchase decisions of mobile phone brands in Ethio telecom residential shops. The statements drawn (X) are referring to the brand you have selected in question 8 above. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each of the following statements and put (v) sign in the box to choose the number from 1 to 5 that best represents your level of agreement with the statement. 5 Point Likert Scale is used and (1= Strongly disagree, 2= Disagree, 3= Neutral, 4= Agree, 5= Strongly agree). The statements drawn (X) are referring to the brand you have selected in question 7 above.

Items	Scale				
	1	2	3	4	5
price					
1. Product X would have very good price					
2. I will keep on buying mobile phone from brand "X" even if the other brands have the same price.					
3. I am still willing to buy "X" even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitors					
4. The price factor to shift from brand "X" is very insignificant for me.					
Quality of the mobile devices					
1. I trust the quality of products from "X"					
2. Products from "X" would be of very good quality					
3. Products from "X" offer excellent features					
Brand awareness					
1. Some characteristics of "X" come to my mind quickly					
2. I can recognize "X" quickly among other competing brands					
3. I am familiar with the brand "X"					
Brand loyalty					
1. I consider myself to be loyal to "X"					

2. When buying a mobile phone, brand “X” would be my first choice					
3. I will keep on buying mobile phone from brand “X” even if the other brands has the same functionality					
4. I would love to recommend “X” to my friends					
Social Influence					
1. I would not purchase smartphone without consulting my family and friends					
2. I trust my friends and family about their opinions and advices of smartphone					
3. It is important that my friends like the brand of Smartphone I am using					
4. I tend to purchase the same smartphone brand that my friends purchase					
5. Others person’s suggestion has an influence on my smartphone purchase decision					
Purchase decisions of mobile phone brands					
1. Even if another brand has the same features as “X”, I would prefer to buy “X”.					
2. If another brand is not different from “X” in any way, it seems smarter to purchase					
3. “X” is more than a product to me					

Thank You!!!

