



ADDISABABA UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF COMMERCE
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETINGMANAGEMENT

**DETERMINANTS OF PARENTS' LOYALTY TO BABY CARE BRANDS
WITH THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND TRUST: EVIDENCE FROM
BUYERS OF BABY DIAPER IN ADDIS ABABA.**

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JULY 2023

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES OF
ADDIS BABA UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF COMMERCE IN PARTIAL
FULFILMENT THE REQUIREMENT FOR MASTER OF ARTS DEGREE
IN MARKETING MANAGEMENT**

JULY 2023

ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA

Approval Sheet

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

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Declaration

I, Gashaw Tadesse, declare that this research paper entitled “**Determinants of Parents’ Loyalty to Baby Care Brands with the Mediating Role of Brand Trust: Evidence from Buyers of Baby Diaper in Addis Ababa**” is my original work and has not previously been submitted for other requirements.

I also declare that all information sources and literatures used by this thesis have been properly acknowledged.

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Acknowledgments

Let me give God the first and greatest praise for providing me the courage and health to complete my education as well as all blessings that come into my life. I would also like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation to all those who have supported me throughout my thesis work and my life journey in general.

I want to thank my parents Tadesse Debela & Yirgalem Regassa for helping me in reaching the bottom step of the ladder and climb it. I want to express my gratitude to my advisor Dr. Mesfin Workineh for his constructive comments, guidance and swift response even in a short notice.

I am grateful to my beloved wife, Rediet Fikre for her exceptional contributions. It is due to her unwavering support, reminders, and advice that I have successfully accomplished my objective.

Last but certainly not least, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to Dr. Jemberu Alemu, Dejene Tesfaye, and Dr. Goitom Ademnur, as well as my former and current colleagues, for their invaluable support throughout the duration of my thesis project.

May God Bless You All!

Gashaw Tadesse

July 2023

Acronyms/Abbreviations

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
AS	Association
AW	Awareness
BL	Brand Loyalty
BT	Brand Trust
CBBE	Customer Based Brand Equity
CSA	Central Statistics Agency
DF	Degree of Freedom
FMCG	Fast Moving Consumer Goods
PBQ	Perceived Brand Quality
R	Overall Correlation
R ²	Correlation Coefficient
Sig	Significance
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VIF	Variance Inflation Factor
ZPRED	Standardized predicted values
ZRESID	Standardized residuals or errors

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Abstract

The aim of the present paper is to study the determinants of parents' brand loyalty towards baby diaper in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The study focused on the effect of brand awareness, brand association, perceived brand quality and brand Trust on parents' loyalty to baby diaper brand. Further it investigated whether brand trust mediates the relationship of brand awareness, brand association and perceived brand quality with brand loyalty. Convenient sampling technique was applied and data were collected using survey method by administering 384 questionnaires. The data were analyzed by running multiple regression using SPSS Version 23. From the results of this study it is observed that brand awareness, brand association and perceived brand quality had significant and positive influence on parents' loyalty to baby diaper brand. Moreover, the parents' trust on the diaper brand had significant positive influence on their loyalty towards baby diaper brand and had partial, and positive mediating role in brand awareness-brand Loyalty, perceived brand quality-brand loyalty and brand association-brand loyalty relationships. This paper discovered that trustful, reliable, and safe baby diaper brand was the major factor that determines parents' loyalty to baby care brands in Addis Ababa. The baby diaper brands that possess good and consistent quality as well excellent features enhance the parents' loyalty to the brand. Thus, the baby diaper manufacturer/supplier that give due attention to brand quality and maintain trusted brand can build brand loyalty by winning the hearts of its customer.

Keywords: *Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Perceived Brand Quality, Brand Trust, Brand Loyalty, Baby Diaper and Mediation.*

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The chapter one of this paper is dedicated to inform the readers about the subject area and the target of the research. The chapter also gives an insight regarding the research problem (research gap) which is the reason behind this study. It also covers what objective to achieve and its significance to different parties. The limitation and scope of the study are presented for further consideration to readers/researchers.

1.1 Background of the Study

Recently there is a shift from transactional marketing approach to relationship marketing approach due to the competitive marketing environment (Keller, 2013; Morgan and Hunt, 1994 ; Peck et al., 1999). The shift in the approach helps marketers and academics to realize the importance of loyalty in marketing (Kim, Morris, and Swait, 2008). Researchers (Ballester and Aleman, 2005; Morgan and Hunt, 1994) further view the emerging approach by linking with trust.

According to Kim, Morris and Swait (2008); Hawkins and Mothersbough (2010), differentiation over other brand, strong & positive association with the brand, satisfaction, risk reduction and trust are among the reasons consumers become loyal to a brand.

As Hawkins and Mothersbough (2010); Keller (2013) point out consumer involvement with a brand could be high or low depending on the type of product and due to factors related to time pressure as well as even brand loyalty. Keller (2013) further explained the importance of developing marketing programs that simplify consumer purchase decision and satisfying their needs and wants.

According to Kotler and Keller (2012) for a company retaining its customers and changing them loyal to the brand loyal is related to its existence.

Tawseef and Mushtaq (2021); Shrestha (2018) observed that in a fierce competition market acquiring new customers as well as retaining, maintaining, and satisfying existing customers often challenge companies because consumer can get various alternative brands.

These days consumers can get information from a variety of sources and use this information to pick the best brand amid the alternatives. Getting more information give more opportunity for consumer's to well recognize the available brands (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). According to Aaker, (1991), a familiar brand considered by many people as reliable and possesses reasonable quality.

Besides discussing the concept of brand loyalty it is also important to look into the research area. i.e. baby care brands (baby diaper)in Ethiopia and other parts of the world context. As Pavithra, Niththiya and Shivani (2016) stated disposable diaper is a recent phenomenon and become familiar after 1950's. The advancements of technology in the raw materials contribute for the growth in disposable diaper market.

Recently several imported or locally-manufactured baby diapers brands are joining the market of Ethiopia. According to my preliminary survey on retail shops of Addis Ababa among the baby care brands found in the market include ABC (produced by Lilac Sanitary Napkins & Baby Diapers Manufacturing Enterprise), Bonbaby, Canbebe (ONTEXT Hygienic Disposables PLC in partnership with Tracon Trading PLC), Coco (Hangzhou Coco Healthcare Products Co., LTD), Dr. S, Goodbaby, Michot (Michot Diaper Manufacturing PLC) and Pampers (The Procter & Gamble Company). The report of Addis Fortune Newspaper shows that in 2017 the amount of imported diapers from China, Egypt and Turkey to Ethiopia accounts 4.9 million kilogram (Temesgen, 2019).

The demand of baby diaper in Ethiopia could not satisfied by the existing local companies. There is a high potential for an increase in demand for diapers and the existing local companies are not enough to meet the demand (Temesgen, 2019). There are factors that drive the demand of baby care products to grow. Among the factors population growth is the major one. According to Central Statistics Agency (CSA) 2013 projection by 2037 the Ethiopian population is projected to reach 128 million (by low variant) to 143 million (by high variant). As the UNICEF report shows, in 2015 the number of babies born in Ethiopia was 3,200,000 in other words there is approximately 8,700 new born every day.

The other driving factor is related to the effect of urbanization (Temesgen, 2019). According to Central Statistics Agency population projection (2013) the urban population of Ethiopia show a substantial increase and will reach 42.4 million in 2037(about 3.5 times the number in 2007). Government policies on infrastructure improvement contribute to faster urbanization.

It is evident that the increasing number of new born in combination with the usage frequency is the major factor the demand of diaper to boost. The increasing in demand makes the industry attractive and invites more companies to enter the market. This gives parents get choices while companies put to competition.

Hence, to gain a competitive advantage it is important that the manufactures expected to understand how to meet the demands of the customer and convert them into loyal customer.

Limited empirical studies are conducted in the baby diaper market of Ethiopia. The research results of Timnit (2020) ; Mentesenot and Mohammed (2019) found product quality the most important determinant of the brand choice for diaper products in Addis Ababa.

A research conducted in India diaper market by Shrestha (2018) discovered that product related attributes including product quality and product design as well as brand attributes such as brand image were the determinants of brand loyalty in baby diaper products.

Thus, the purpose of this research is to study the direct effects of brand equity dimensions (these are brand awareness, brand association and perceived brand quality) on parents' loyalty in baby diaper brands as well as its effect through brand trust.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

As more and more baby care products are keeping joining the market it is inevitable that consumers exposed to information about different brands of baby care products while they listen to the radio, watch television, chat with friends and browse the internet. In spite of spending huge amount of money to achieve a competitive advantage, marketers could identify what attributes attract customers. Brand loyalty is an important marketing strategy to stay in a competitive market. As Kotler & Armstrong (2012) stated successful brand positioning involves associating with pertinent brand benefits and engage customer to deep emotional level. Making consumers loyal to a brand is one of challenges marketers usually faced because it needs understanding of what consumers think, feel, perceive and beliefs toward brand (Keller, 2013).

A review of literatures illustrated that numerous researches for instance Shrestha (2018); Pavithra, Niththiya & Shivani (2016) investigated the effect of the product functional attributes and other studied the demographic (Sharma & Singh, 2019; Pradhan, & Misra, 2015) effect on brand loyalty in baby care products. It is also equally important studying other attributes to get the full picture of the determinants of brand loyalty. Parents consider several factors while

making a purchase in order to provide happiness and comfort for their babies, to keep them clean, safe, and healthy. According to Lau and Lee (1999) brand characteristics influence customers towards brand trust.

As babies under the age of 3 need diapers every day, parents must spend a significant portion of their income on them. In Addis Ababa, a pack of diapers (32 to 44 pieces) can cost up to 450 - 700 Birr. Parents have high expectations on the quality of their brand choice given the money they spend on it. They become committed customers if the brand lives up to their expectations; otherwise, they switch to another brand.

Parents want to choose a reliable diaper brand from a large selection. Most of them prefer to remain with a brand until there is an issue that forces them to switch to prevent risks related to the use of diapers. After they identify the brand that best meets their needs, they typically stick with it until their babies learn how to use the toilet training seat.

There is shortage of studies that investigate brand loyalty on consumer goods specifically in the baby diaper market of Ethiopia. Among few of the recent studies conducted in this sector include Mentesenot & Mohammed (2019); Timnit (2020); Frehun (2019). Those previous researches are focused on the direct influences of product and brand related attributes on parents purchase decision, brand preference and brand choice of diaper products.

Moreover, empirical evidences (Su and Chang, 2018; Raza, Akram and Asif, 2021) have proved the existence of positive relationship between brand equity constructs (i.e. between brand awareness, brand association, perceived brand quality and brand loyalty). The research findings of Aydin, Akdeniz and Taskin (2014); Srivastava and Mohan (2022) found that the customers' trust on baby care products influences their brand loyalty and purchase intention.

What makes this paper peculiar is beside observing the direct influence of brand equity constructs on the loyalty of parents to baby care brand it involve seeing the mediating role of brand trust between brand awareness-brand loyalty, brand association-brand loyalty and perceived brand quality-brand loyalty relationships particularly in the context of Ethiopia.

My literature review shows that limited attention is given to the mediating role of brand trust between consumer brand equity perception and their loyalty to a particular brand. As Ballester & Aleman (2001) stated brand trust helps to build and maintain successful relationship between consumer and brand. Aydin, Akdeniz and Taskin (2014) observed the importance of brand trust

to consumers when they purchase products that involve uncertainty and risk including baby care products.

Thus, my study looks into the extent to which consumer brand equity perceptions (brand awareness, brand association and perceived brand quality) affect parents' loyalty to baby care brands and the mediating impact of brand trust between those consumer brand equity perceptions and the loyalty of parents to baby care.

1.3 Research Questions

The current research tried to answer the following main and sub research questions.

1.3.1 Main Research Question

What are the determinants of parents' loyalty to baby care brands in the city of Addis Ababa?

1.3.2 Sub-research Question

- Does brand awareness have a significant effect on the loyalty of parents to baby care brands in Addis Ababa?
- To what extent do brand association predict the loyalty of parents to baby care brands in Addis Ababa?
- Is perceived brand quality significant and positive influence on the loyalty of parents to baby care brands in Addis Ababa?
- To what level does brand trust affect the brand loyalty of parents to baby care brands in Addis Ababa?
- Does brand trust mediate the impact of brand awareness on the loyalty of baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa?
- Is there the mediating impact of brand trust on the relationship between brand association and loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa?
- Does brand trust mediate the perceived brand quality and loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa?

1.4 Objectives of the Research

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of the research was to study the determinants of loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

1.4.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were presented as follows:

- To study the effect of brand awareness on the loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.
- To examine the extent to which brand association influence loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.
- To assess the influence of perceived brand quality on loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.
- To identify the size of the brand trust effect on loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.
- To find out the existence of brand trust mediating role on the relationship of brand awareness and loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.
- To explore whether brand trust mediate brand association and parents loyalty to baby care brands in the city of Addis Ababa.
- To find the mediating effect of brand trust in the impact of perceived brand quality on parents loyalty to baby care brands in the city of Addis Ababa.

1.5 Significance of the Study

The present research tried to study the determinants of parents' loyalty to baby care brands in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. It has relevant contribution to different bodies including marketing practitioners and academic researchers.

This study provides valuable input to marketing managers which is helpful in designing effective marketing strategy and tactics which could fulfil the needs and wants of customers. It revealed important brand characteristics in which customers are interested.

In the fierce business environment gaining competitive advantage is an inevitable for the survival and profitability of companies. One way of achieving competitive advantage is understand the weakness and strength of ones product as well as competitor's product. Thus, knowing the interests of consumer is helpful for manufactures and importers of baby diaper to win the head and hearts of consumers.

A number of researchers explored the influence of satisfaction on brand loyalty of the consumer market. However, they seldom explored the influence of brand trust and its mediating role between brand equity constructs and brand loyalty.

Therefore, this paper try to give an insight to other researchers on the importance of the mediating impact of brand trust between consumer perception brand equity and brand loyalty relationship particularly in baby care brands.

1.6 Scope of the Study

From a review of literature the student researcher found that brand loyalty is affected by several factors. Among the factors brand and product related attributes influence the loyalty of customer to a particular brand. There are no uniform and consistent factors that impact brand loyalty. Factors that influence brand loyalty may differ between industries.

The current research tried to look into the brand equity dimensions using the evidence obtained from parents who use baby diaper brands and resides in the city of Addis Ababa. However, other proprietary brand assets factor included in Aaker (1991) brand equity dimension is not studied in this paper. In other words, this study was focused on the four consumer perception of brand equity dimensions (brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association variables) to assess the determinants of brand loyalty in baby care brands. This research examined the perceptions of brand equity dimensions rather than the actual functional brand attributes. In addition to those variables, the research include brand trust variable to investigate the direct effect and its mediating role between brand equity dimensions. As the name signifies brand trust dimensions included in present research are related to the trust and reliance customers on the brand as well as the safety of the brand/product. Customers might build trust with brands even without recognizing the manufacturing company. Although what companies promises in its marketing programs (the trustworthiness of the company) might has possible affects the relationship of customers with the brand. Thus, the trust the customer maintain with the company is beyond the scope of this research.

Despite the fact that brand loyalty has behavioral and attitudinal dimensions, the present study focuses on the latter dimension. To describe in precise way it measure the parents' intentions (their inclination to keep buying the brand), the respondent's interest to recommend the brand to people whom they know (recommendation)and their willingness to pay a premium for the brand compared to other brands.

1.7 Limitation of the Study

The finding of this research had contribution to marketers and academics. Despite its contribution, it has its own limitations which arise from insufficiency of resources. As explained in the objective of the research part of this paper, the present study had tried to explore determinants of parent's loyalty in baby diaper brands among parents of Addis Ababa. To be generalizable, further research is required in other baby care items and in different demographic context. The target of this research was parents who buy baby diaper and who lived in the city of Addis Ababa. There could be other factors for instance the level of income, life style, literacy and other demographic factors inherent to rural and urban dwelling parents that affect their intention to buy, recommend to friends and relatives, and willingness to pay price premium.

To some customers buying national brands is associated with showing once dedication and love to a nation (patriotism). Because of this they prefer national brands over multinational brands. On the other hand, to some others perceiving global brand as a sign of good quality. Thus, further investigation is needed in to get the full picture of the determinants of parent's loyalty towards baby care brands in urban and rural as well as national and international setting.

According to Burns & Burns (2008) applying both quantitative and qualitative research methods in marketing discipline provide comprehensive information which is useful for effective decision making. However, this study merely applied quantitative method due to its suitability for hypothesis test. In spite of the method achieve the research objective; it might have limitations in describing the research in detail.

Regarding the sampling procedure each sampling method has its own limitation. To select sample we either apply probability on non-probability sampling. This research employed convenient sampling technique which is common in most marketing research. This method is used when there is difficulty of arranging samples for selection. Thus, it involves limitation in equal chance of selection.

Due to the present research is cross- sectional in nature it is difficult to observe the respondents' pattern of purchase behaviour in a one-time research. As a result, it is advisable for subsequent researchers to employ longitudinal research, which is deemed as the appropriate research method to investigate the behavioural dimension. This method would involve cross-checking whether respondents maintain consistency in their actions and words.

In general, the focus of the research is limited to among several variables brand awareness, brand association and perceived brand quality as predictor variable, brand trust as mediating variable and brand loyalty as the dependent variable.

1.8 Organization of the Paper

This paper was organized in five chapters. The first chapter introduces the subject and target of the study. Next to the introduction part problem of the statement that initiate this research, the general and specific research questions that the research aims to answer, the specific and general objectives, significance of the study, the delimitation (scope) and limitation of the study, organization of the study and definitions of important terms followed respectively. The second chapter begin with reviewing related literature on brand loyalty. Afterward, the chapter discussed the brand loyalty theory/model and selecting the model that fit to the research area, conceptualization of the research variables comes next. The third chapter introduces what research method employed. The chapter four presents descriptive and inferential statistics along with the analysis of primary data and discussion of the research results.

In the last chapter the major research findings, the conclusion made and recommendations suggested are presented.

1.9 Definition of Terms

Brand: It is a method of expressing a company or product using name, term, sign, symbol, design, color and other elements which help buyers to differentiate the products of one seller from the other (American Marketing Association; Keller and Swaminathan, 2020).

Brand Loyalty: According to Aaker (1991); Lau and Lee (1991), it is referred to as the attachment that customer build with the brand expressed in among others repeat buying behaviour, positive words mouth and willingness to pay price premium.

Brand Equity: It is referred as a set of elements such as perceived quality, brand associations, and brand (name) awareness and other proprietary brand asset (Peter & Donnelly, 2011) which are sources of value to firms and customers (Aaker, 1991)

Baby Diaper: According to Britannica Dictionary definition it is a type of hygiene keeping material that enables a child stay dry and feel comfortable by absorbing fluids and holds body waste.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The second chapter of this paper begins by discussing the theoretical review of branding, brand loyalty and brand equity concepts and related models. Previous empirical researches on brand awareness, brand association, perceived brand quality, brand trust and brand loyalty were reviewed and discussed as well. Additionally, it introduces comprehensive brand loyalty model and the conceptual framework adhere in this study is presented at the end of the chapter.

2.1 Theoretical Review

2.1.1 The Concept of Brand, Branding and Brand Loyalty

It is evident that describing brand in similar and consistent way is a difficult task as several scholars described differently. According to Peter and Donnelly (2011) a brand is a name, term, design, symbol, or any other distinguishable characteristics which serves as differentiating one supplier offering from those of other suppliers. Keller and Swaminathan (2020) argued that the concept of brand extends far beyond the mere creation of a new logo, name, or symbol for a new product. It involves creating awareness, reputation, prominence, and other related factors in the market arena.

Lau and Lee (1999); Ballester and Aleman (2005) conceptualize brand in a brief and precise way as it serves as a primary means of establishing relationship between the consumer and the company. According to Keller (2013) successful brand has the potential to create robust, favourable and distinctive brand associations to both functional and symbolic benefits.

As Kotler and Armstrong (2012) explained the production of goods involves mechanization and created in industries while the formation of brand is the outcome of cognitive associations that take place within the minds of consumers. Thus, researchers Romaniuk and Sharp (2002) suggested marketing professionals work on brand recall in order to establish a strong connection between their brand and consumers' cognitive memory, thereby ensuring the salience of their brand.

According to Aaker (1991) Brand has utmost importance for both the consumer and the producer, as it serves as a means of recognizing the origin of the product and protects both

parties from competitors who may try to offer comparable products. Particularly for firms it has great potential in achieving a competitive advantage (Kotler and Keller, 2012).

Credible and renowned brands are established based on the provision great offering, which are evaluated by customers based on a broad range of quality attributes, such as features, price, and other relevant factors (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

Branding has been practiced in the business world for a considerable period of time for the purpose of differentiating one's company offerings from those of its competitors (Keller and Swaminathan, 2020). In the contemporary time, it can be observed that the vast majority of products and services have been endowed with a distinctive branding identity (Kotler and Keller, 2016). Even ordinary consumer goods, such as salt and perishable products, are packaged in a way that highlights brand identity (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012).

Brand loyalty, a fundamental concept within the realm of marketing, serves as a measure of the customer attachment towards a particular brand; it underscores the probability of a customer switching to another brand (Aaker, 1991).

Brand loyalty manifests when consumers deliberately assess a brand or service, determine that it satisfies their needs more comprehensively than other options, and subsequently choose to consistently purchase that brand (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2008). Brand loyalty is a crucial concept that must be distinguished from brand preference, as many consumers show a preference for a specific brand or supplier based on their purchasing habit (Baker, 2003).

Scholarly research on brand loyalty in the past was centred on the unidimensional concept, with specific emphasis on behaviour (Akarawita, 2022). In this sense past researchers had assumed that the concept of loyalty could be adequately described by patterns of repeat purchasing (Oliver, 1999). However, according to Pickton & Broderick (2005) brand loyalty is a distinct phenomenon from mere repeat purchase behaviour, as it involves commitment by consumers to a particular brand in a given product category, regardless of its availability in a specific outlet.

Researches such as Oliver (1999) have indicated the importance of studying brand loyalty in two dimensions (both behavioral and attitudinal). As Oliver (1999) suggests the loyalty development process passes through four stages. This process starts with the establishment of cognitive loyalty, which subsequently evolves into affective loyalty, conative loyalty and ultimately arrived to action loyalty.

Consumers initially develop loyalty through cognitive processes, followed by affective processes, then subsequently through conative processes, and ultimately through behavioral processes what Oliver (1999) referred to as "action inertia."

Kotler and Armstrong (2012) argued that the attitude development process does not pass through Oliver's belief-attitude-behavior sequence for most low cost and frequently purchased products. Consumers simply go to the store and pick a brand. If they keep reaching for the same brand, it is out of habit rather than strong brand loyalty (Kotler and Armstrong, 2012). It is worth noting that the level of commitment to a specific brand distinguishes brand loyalty from a mere habit (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2008).

In other way researchers Li and Petrick (2016) also argued that Oliver's the four-dimensional loyalty conceptualization is more inclined towards an attitudinal development process. They proposed almost the same loyalty construct with Oliver four-dimensional loyalty. However, the difference lies in the first three dimensions of the independent components of attitudinal loyalty namely cognitive loyalty, affective loyalty, conative loyalty. It is attitudinal loyalty that leads to action or behavioral loyalty (Li and Petrick, 2016)

Li and Petrick (2008) study revalidates the conventional two-dimensional conceptualization of loyalty in the context of restaurant dining. The traditional view suggested that the brand loyalty constructs comprises customers' behavioral consistency, attitudinal inclination toward purchasing a brand, or both.

2.1.2 The concept of Brand Equity

The concept of brand equity has emerged as a primary area of interest for the field of marketing management, effectively increasing the importance of a brand (Rio, Vazquez and Iglesias, 2001; Keller and Swaminathan, 2020). Brand equity offers significant benefits to both customers and firms by improving the customer's interpretation and processing of information, increasing their confidence in purchase decisions, and enhancing their overall satisfaction with product usage. Furthermore, brand equity provides value to firms by optimizing marketing programs, brand loyalty, pricing and margins, brand extensions, enabling trade leverage, and competitive advantage (Peter and Donnelly, 2011).

The components of brand equity include perceived quality, brand associations, and brand (name) awareness and other proprietary brand asset (Peter and Donnelly, 2011). Brand loyalty is both

one of the dimensions of brand equity and is affected by brand equity and there exist similar interrelationships among the other brand equity dimensions (Aaker, 1991).

Building brand equity depends on three main factors: The selection of appropriate brand elements, designing comprehensive marketing activities and the utilization of secondary associations. Because, the likability of brand elements can increase awareness and associations, marketing activities reinforce the brand promise and associating the brand to other information in memory conveys meaning to consumers (Kotler and Keller, 2016). A brand possessing substantial equity is associated with high brand awareness, and higher perceived quality. This fosters customer loyalty, making advertising and other promotional strategies more efficient (Crawford and Benedetto, 2011).

Marketers can reinforce brand equity through the persistent communication of the brand's significance in relation to the products it represents, the core benefits it provides, and the needs it satisfies, and how the brand makes products superior and which strong, favorable, and distinctive brand associations exist in consumers' minds (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

Both consumer products and organizational products can possess brand equity. Brand equity is determined by the consumer and is the culmination of the consumer's assessment of the product, the company responsible for its production and marketing, and all other variables that impact on the product between manufacture and consumer consumption (Peter and Donnelly, 2011).

According to Keller (2013) the three key drivers of brand equity namely customer brand awareness, customer brand attitudes, and customer perception of brand ethics.

Although marketers agree about basic branding principles, a number of models of brand equity offer some differing perspectives (Kotler and Keller, 2012). At various stages of the marketing process, brand equity models are utilized to build marketing strategies (Getie, 2022).

Over the last two decades there have been noteworthy changes occurred with respect to concept of brand equity. The notion of brand equity can be seen through three different perspectives namely customer-based brand equity, employee-based brand equity and financial- based brand equity (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015). The focus of this study was customer focused brand equity and related dimensions.

The noteworthy aspects of the CBBE model provide much additional substance and insight. Particularly its emphasis on brand salience and breadth and depth of brand awareness as the

foundation of brand building and the importance it places on brand resonance as the culmination of brand building and a more meaningful way to view brand loyalty (Keller, 2012).

2.1.3 Aaker's and Keller's Customer Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model

Keller's and Aaker's CBBE models are the most notable brand loyalty models in marketing. Both the conceptualization by Aaker and Keller was customer focused (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015).

According to Keller (2013); Kotler and Keller (2012) the customer-based approaches of brand equity recognize that the power of a brand lies in what customers' perceptions, emotions, and observation of the brand which they have accumulated through their prolonged interactions with the brand. Customer-based brand equity occurs when the consumer has a sense of recognizing the brand and holds some robust, favorable, and distinctive brand associations in memory (Keller, 2013).

The original Aaker model took a little different approach by incorporating the market related outcomes like market share and revenue in his model. This led to a new grown interest in financial perspective of brand equity (Kapoor and Rani, 2021).

Brand equity dimensions namely awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and other proprietary brand assets can enhance brand loyalty. The perceived quality, the associations, and the well-known name can provide reasons to buy and can affect use satisfaction (Aker, 1991).

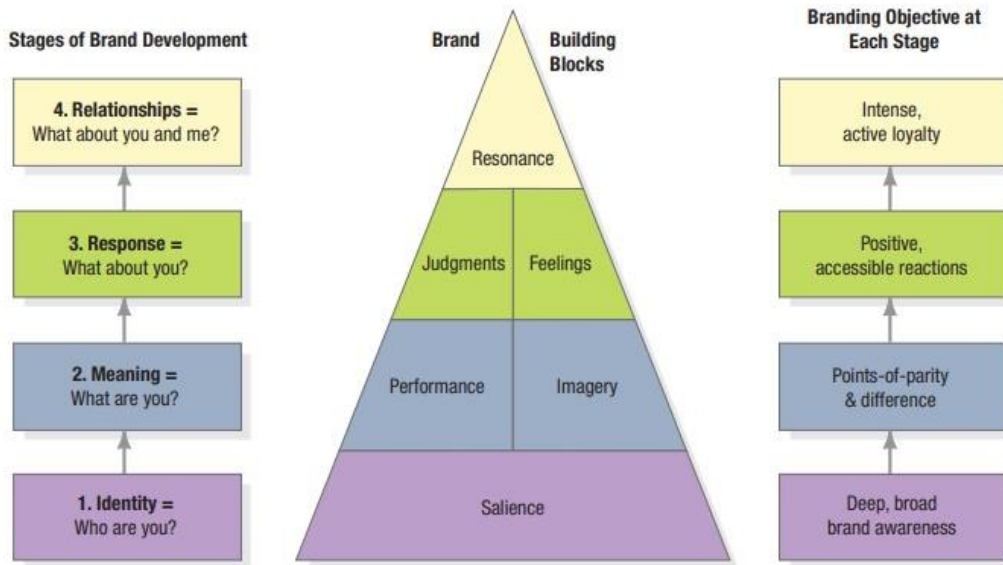
The brand loyalty of the customer base is often the core of a brand's equity. As brand loyalty increases, the vulnerability of the customer base to competitive action is reduced (Aaker, 1991).

Keller's Brand Equity/ Brand Resonance model considers how intense, active loyalty relationships are created with customers (Keller, 2013).

As Kotler and Keller (2016) explained key ingredients of customer-based brand equity arises from differences in consumer response. Second, differences in response are a result of consumers' brand knowledge, all the thoughts, feelings, images, experiences, and beliefs associated with the brand. Brands must create strong, favorable, and unique brand associations with customers. Third, brand equity is reflected in perceptions, preferences, and behavior related to all aspects of the brand's marketing.

A brand has positive customer-based brand equity when consumers react more favorably to a product and it has negative customer-based brand equity if consumers react less favorably (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

Figure 1 Brand Resonance Pyramid



Source: Kotler and Keller (2012,p.249)

There is a critic on the brand equity models of Aaker and Keller. Two different approaches could be applied to measure brand equity with in an array of financial and non-financial perspectives. These approaches consist of direct and indirect approaches whereby the former seeks to evaluate the added value of the brand and the latter endeavours to identify the prospective sources of brand equity. Notably, the approach adopted by Aaker and Keller represents a variety of indirect approach. To measure brand equity it is very important assessing the value of brands (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015).

2.1.4 Brand Dynamics Model

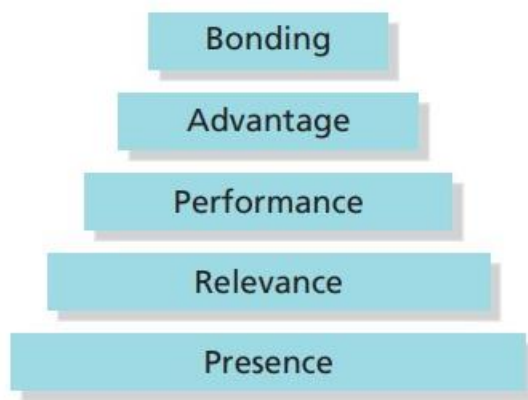
This model is introduced by marketing research consultants Millward Brown and WPP. As stated by Koller and Keller (2012) the model adopts a series of brand building steps (BrandDynamics pyramid) that determine the strength of relationship a consumer has with a brand. When we move from the bottom to top of the pyramid we get presence, relevance, performance, advantage and bonding in ascending order where the relationship also goes from weak to strong relationship (Koller and Keller, 2012).

According to Keller (2012), the model provides a comprehensive understanding of the emotional and functional strength of relationship consumers share with a particular brand. Consumers are placed into one of the five levels depending on their brand responses. By comparing the pattern

across brands, we can uncover relative strengths and weaknesses and see where brands can focus their efforts to improve their loyalty relationships (Keller, 2012).

The five hierarchical stages of the BrandDynamics model related to the four ascending steps of the CBBE model (identity, meaning, responses, and relationships) and specific CBBE model concepts (such as salience, consideration, performance or quality, superiority, and resonance).

Figure 2: Brand Dynamics graphical representation



Source: Keller (2013, p.352)

2.1.5 Brand Positioning Model

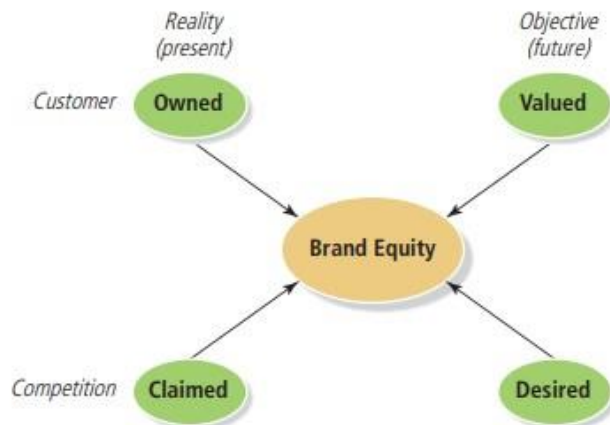
The brand positioning model describes how to establish competitive advantages via points of difference (associations unique to the brand that are also strongly held and favorably evaluated by consumers) and points-of-parity i.e. associations shared with other brands that are designed to negate competitors' points-of-difference, overcome perceived vulnerabilities of the brand, or establish category credentials (Keller, 2013).

Many marketing experts believe a brand positioning should have both rational and emotional components. In other words, it should contain points-of-difference and points-of-parity that appeal to both the head and the heart (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

John Roberts, one of Australia's top marketing academics proposed four brand positioning considerations. These are owned, valued, claimed and desired. These considerations are explained as what customers currently believe about the brand (and thus find credible), what

customers will value in the brand, what the firm is currently saying about the brand, and where the firm would like to take the brand (Keller, 2013).

Figure 3 Brand Positioning Considerations



Source: (Keller, 2013, p.259)

2.1.6 Yoo and Donthu CBBE Model

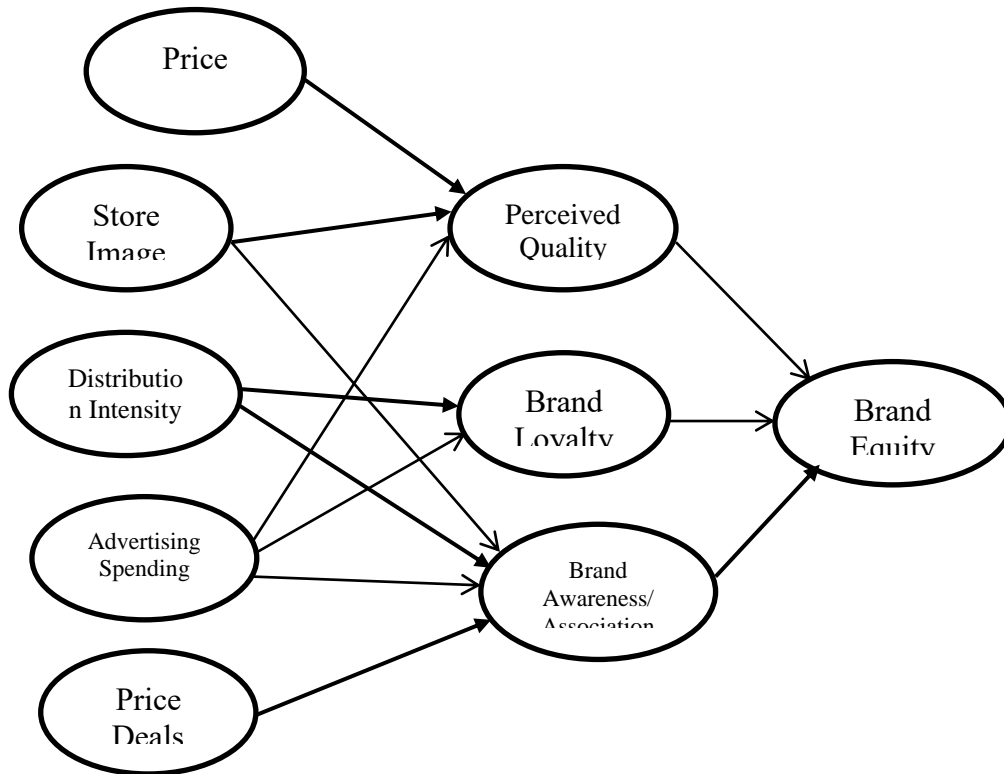
Yoo and Donthu develop multidimensional consumer-based brand equity. The model proposed, brand loyalty, perceived quality, and brand awareness/associations are positively related to brand equity (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000).

Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) investigate consumers' perceptions of five selected strategic marketing elements: price, store image, distribution intensity, advertising spending, and frequency of price promotions. The selected factors do not embrace all types of marketing efforts but are representative enough to demonstrate the relationships between marketing efforts and the formation of brand equity.

Yoo and Donthu (2001) developed and validated cross-culturally multidimensional consumer-based brand equity. Brand loyalty in their research demonstrated by the intention to buy the brand as a primary choice, in contrast other researches that relied on behavioral aspects of brand loyalty. They combined brand awareness and brand associations into one group and focused on three of assets; brand awareness/associations, perceived quality and brand loyalty (Farjam and Hongyi, 2015).

The model proved in different cultural and ethnic setting including Caucasian, African American, Hispanic, Asian and other ethnic groups. Furthermore, it tested in cloth and electronic product categories particularly athletic shoes, camera film, and television sets (Yoo, Donthu and Lee, 2000).

Figure 4: Marketing Mix Elements and Brand Equity



Source: Yoo, Donthu & Lee (2000, pp.198)

2.2 Empirical Review

2.2.1 Brand Loyalty

Previous research results revealed that there are several influences that affect the brand loyalty of consumers. The studies examined the influences from a behavioural, attitudinal and multidimensional perspective (Moolla, 2010).

Findings from Su and Chang (2018); Raza, Akram and Asif (2021) revealed that brand awareness, perceived quality, perceived value, brand uniqueness, and organizational associations have a positive relationship with brand loyalty.

Buil and Martiniz (2013) analysed the effect of overall brand equity on consumers' willingness to pay price premiums, consumers' attitudes towards brand extensions, brand preference and purchase intention. Their findings revealed that perceived quality, brand loyalty and brand associations all have a positive effect on overall brand equity, with the exception of brand personality associations. Although all these dimensions contribute to enhance brand equity, brand loyalty was found to have a dominant effect on brand equity.

Research has indicated that brand attributes are viewed as important elements in a consumer's decision making and researchers mentioned seven factors that influenced consumer's brand loyalty towards certain brands. The factors were brand name, product quality, price, design, store environment, promotion and service quality (Pradhan and Misra, 2015).

The empirical research results of Raza, Akram and Asif (2021) revealed the positive relationship of brand loyalty with perceived quality, brand awareness, perceived value and brand uniqueness as well as brand loyalty was positively related to the positive words of mouth (WOM).

According to Hoyer and MacInnis (2010) brand loyalty involves both repeat purchases and a commitment to the brand, purchase-only measures do not accurately distinguish between habitual and brand-loyal consumers. To truly identify the brand-loyal consumer, requires assessing both repeat-purchase behavior and brand preference.

The present study focused on behavioral intentions (intention to keep buying the brand), the respondent's interest to recommend the brand to others and the willingness to pay a price premium measurement

It is not feasible to measure the frequency of repeat purchase (behavioral brand loyalty dimension) using cross-sectional research. The brand loyalty measurement is adopted from Lau and Lee (1991); Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013).

2.2.2 Brand Awareness

Brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall performance (Keller and Swaminathan, 2020). When consumer purchase decision is made at the point of purchase where the brand name, logo, packaging and so on will be physically present and visible then brand recognition will be important. On the other hand, if consumer decision is made in a setting away from the point of purchase then brand recall will be important (Keller, 2013).

Consumer could get awareness from different sources then seeing the item in use, then a reminder of some type, then getting some professional endorsement from media, then a reminder of some sort, and then an opportunity to buy it which stimulates consideration of all the information previously gathered (Crawford and Benedetto, 2011).

Although researches show brands that are recalled are more likely to be chosen, a brand's simply being recalled does not guarantee that it will be in a consumer's consideration set because consumers can recall a number of brands and then reject undesirable alternatives (Hoyer and MacInnis, 2010).

According to Aaker (1996) brand awareness affect perceptions and attitude and can be measured on different levels including recognition, recall, graveyard statistic, top of mind, brand dominance, brand familiarity and brand knowledge or salience.

The current study applied measurement of brand awareness proposed by authors Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013) which include recognition, familiarity, top of mind and salience.

Su & Chang (2018) examine US college students' perceptions and loyalty toward fast fashion and the study findings reveals that brand awareness is the contributing factor to generating consumer's brand loyalty. Raza, Akram and Asif, (2021) studied the young consumers in Pakistan and find out brand awareness mostly affects brand loyalty in the sense that young customers' decision to buy a brand depends on their awareness of the product.

Authors Princy, Keerthanamala and Parasakthi (2022) studied customer attitude and preference towards baby products. Their findings show that parents collect information from different sources to try to figure out which product is going to be the best among the alternatives.

A recent empirical study conducted with in biscuit industry of Sri Lanka proved that there is a significant positive influence of brand awareness on brand loyalty (Akarawita, 2022).

Based on the above discussion the following hypothesis is proposed.

H 1: Brand awareness has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

2.2.3 Brand Association

Brand associations consist of all brand-related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, attitudes, and so on, that become linked to the brand node (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

Although brand associations come in many forms, we can usefully distinguish between product-related or performance-related versus non product-related or imagery-related attributes (Keller, 2013).

According to Keller and Swaminathan (2020) stronger brand association is created as a result of the more deeply a person thinks about product information and relates it to existing brand knowledge.

When faced with little difference in products within a category, a customer will tend to choose one brand that produces the most positive associations (Pickton and Borderic, 2005). Marketers create favorable brand associations by convincing consumers that the brand possesses relevant attributes and benefits that satisfy their needs and wants, such that they form positive overall brand judgments (Keller and Swaminathan, 2020)

Vazifehdooost and Negahdari (2018) studied the effect of brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality on brand loyalty and repurchase intention among consumers of fashion brands in Iran. They find out that brand association has a positive considerable impact on brand loyalty.

In the sports shoes market, Rio, Vazquez, and Iglesias (2001) observed that the association of the brand with the guarantee function favors the recommendation of the brand, the obtaining of a price premium and brand extension to other product categories.

Researchers Washburn and Plank (2002); Yoo and Donthu (2001) measure brand association using top of mind, recall and imagery related attributes. Researchers Yoo and Donthu (2001) studied the brand equity model by combining brand awareness and brand associations into one group. The current study utilized Washburn and Plank (2002) brand association measurement scales. Based on the empirical research results discussed above the following hypothesis is proposed.

H 2: Brand association has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

2.2.4 Perceived Brand Quality

The concept of perceived quality is not identical to objective quality in that its reliance on perception. It is the consumers' judgment about the superiority or excellence of product (Zeithaml, 1988).

Abubakar (2014) found that customers will more likely become loyal to a brand when the particular brand is perceived to provide the level of quality that can meet customers' expectations.

Perceived quality is being recognized as one of the most important aspects of brand equity, and has been shown to have a direct impact on a brand's ability to sustain a price premium (Pickton and Broderick, 2005).

The research studies of Yee and Mansori (2016) explored factors that influence consumers' brand loyalty towards cosmetic products with special focus on brand image, perceived quality, price and promotion unveiled that perceived quality plays a significant role in influencing consumers to be brand loyal customers.

Raza, Akram and Asif (2021) study in fashion clothing category find out that perceived quality has a positive relationship with brand loyalty. Perceived quality is a dominant factor in young consumer's purchase decision because consumers are more interested in fashionable styles and quality. Likewise, Su and Chang (2018) find out Perceived quality influences brand loyalty in the fast fashion context.

Akrawita (2022) examined the mediating effect of brand trust on the relationship between perceived quality and brand Loyalty. Akrawita's findings indicates that although there is no a significant influence of perceived quality on brand loyalty, there is a full mediation effect of brand trust on the impact of perceived quality on brand Loyalty.

With the discussion above the following hypothesis is proposed.

H 3: Brand perceived quality has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

2.2.5 Brand Trust

In the brand domain, a trust is a feeling of security held by the consumer that the brand will meet his/her consumption experience (Ballester and Aleman, 2001).

According to Ballester and Aleman (2001) consumers are looking for a trustworthy brand in order to avoid the inherent risk a product class holds. They also added that the source of trust is

emanated from the consumers experience with the brand and it will be influenced by the consumer's evaluation of any direct and indirect contact with the brand.

In the consumer market where a direct contact between consumers and companies are not possible, trust can be developed through consumer relationship with the brand (Ballester and Aleman, 2005).

According Lau and Lee (1991), when a consumer places his or her trust in a brand, and shows a willingness to rely on that brand, that consumer is also likely to form a positive buying intention towards the brand. Lau and Lee (1999) shows that trust in a brand lead to brand loyalty.

The conceptualization of trust suggested by Morgan and Hunt (1994) measured with reliability and integrity dimensions. Consumer belief trustworthy brands are reliable and have high integrity, which are associated with such qualities as consistent, competent, honest, fair, responsible, helpful, and benevolent.

Another measurement of trust is proposed by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) point out those beliefs about reliability, safety, and honesty are all important facets of trust that people incorporate in their operationalization of trust.

Li et al. (2008) proposed an alternative model in which overall brand trust is specified as a second-order factor determined by trust in a brand's competence and benevolence. Their findings support viewing brand trust as a second order factor which is empirically tested in six product category: detergent: bear: digital camera, laptop computer, car and wireless phone services. According to Li et al. (2008) consumers' trust in a brand can be measured either by a global measurement scale (measure of overall trust) or by a multidimensional scale. Overall trust in the brand and trust in specific aspects of a brand (multidimensional scale) such as performance, competence and benevolent intentions.

After reviewing pervious marketing researches a measurement scale suggested by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) found appropriate to the area of the present research and utilized to measure consumer trust in a brand. Based on the above discussion the present research proposes the following hypothesis.

H 4: Brand trust has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

2.2.5.1 Brand Trust, Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty Relationship

A recent empirical study by Ogawa and Cuandra (2022) conducted on imported instant Noodle brand shows that the existence of indirect relationship between brand awareness and brand loyalty. Brand awareness has a positive and significance influence on brand loyalty and successfully mediated by brand trust.

According to Getie (2022) brand trust has a larger direct and mediation influence between brand awareness (including other brand equity antecedents) and brand loyalty (brand equity outcomes). In the research conducted by Akarawita (2022) find out that the indirect relationship by brand awareness to brand loyalty has a positive and significant influence, and was successfully mediated by brand trusts. The above discussion leads to propose the following hypothesis.

H 5: Brand trust positively mediates the relation between brand awareness and brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

2.2.5.2 Brand Association, Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty Relationship

Filo et al. (2008) examined the mediation role of brand trust in the relationship between brand associations and loyalty within two separate contexts of managed sport brands versus a fitness brand. The authors utilized brand associations related to nostalgia, escape, community pride, management, logo attractiveness, vicarious achievement and popularity. Their findings revealed that for the managed sport brands and for the fitness brand thoughts related to a brand conjuring feelings from the past (nostalgia), the sense of accomplishment provided by the brand (vicarious achievement) and the success the brand enjoys in the marketplace (popularity) contributed to both brand trust and brand loyalty.

Naggar and Bendary (2017) explored the impact of brand equity dimensions on brand loyalty on mobile service customers in Egypt through empirical research and proved that brand association has effect on trust. While trust is a key point in building and maintain customer relationships in products, it is of much importance in service marketing. Loyalty and trust are key players if the aim to survive in a highly competitive market.

Madadi, Torres and Zúñiga (2021) findings support that brand association, perceived quality, and brand trust (especially for low-involvement products) positively affect brand love and brand loyalty.

Based on the above empirical evidences the following hypothesis is proposed

H 6: Brand trust positively mediates the relation between brand association and brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

2.2.5.3 Perceived Brand Quality, Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty Relationship

Authors Jadhav, Upadhyay and Bhatt (2021) study brand loyalty of consumers towards to baby care products, proved that perceived quality positively leads to perceived trust. They found that perceived quality has the most significant contribution in the construct people are more concerned regarding the kid's health and hygiene standards. Abubakar (2014) found out that the higher the feeling of trust in a brand the more the customer is loyal to the particular brand. His findings show that honesty is important dimension of brand trust that could enhance brand loyalty.

Cahyani, Welsa and Aji (2022) study on E-commerce revealed that perceived quality has a positive and significant effect on brand trust and likewise brand Trust has an effect on Brand Loyalty. However, their findings proved that perceived quality is not influential and not significant to brand loyalty. Naggar and Bendary (2017) empirical research demonstrated that perceived quality enhance brand loyalty through a reliable trustful relationship. Furthermore, Akarawita (2022) research concluded that brand trust positively mediates the impact of perceived quality on brand loyalty.

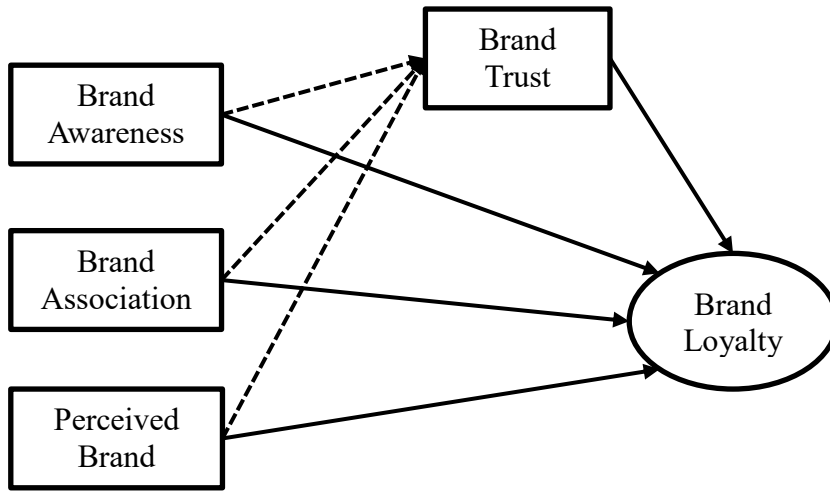
Madadi, Torres and Zúñiga (2021) findings highlighted the importance of perceived quality for enhancing brand loyalty through brand trust for high-involvement products rather than low-involvement products. Based on the above discussion the following hypothesis is proposed.

H 7: Brand trust positively mediates the relation between perceived brand quality and brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

2.3 Conceptual framework

Figure 4 shows the conceptual framework of this study. In this research model brand awareness, brand association and perceived quality are independent variables. Brand trust is the mediating variable whereas brand loyalty is the dependent variable.

Figure 5 Conceptual framework



Source: Adapted from Akarawita (2022, p.122) & Ogawa & Cuandra (2019, p.6)

—————> Direct effect

- - - - -> Mediating effect

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter three explains about the research method applied to answer the research questions presented in Chapter one. It covers the research approach, design, the type of data and sources used, the population and sample of the study, sampling techniques, and instruments used to gather information, data analysis techniques as well as the reliability & validity of the studies. There is no consistency when several researchers describe research approach and research design. Thus, this study follow the explanation given by Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill (2016).

3.1 Research Approach

The research employed descriptive approach to answer the research questions. The research followed deductive approach. Based on literature review first hypothesis is formulated then followed by the explanation of the phenomenon being studied and involve a prediction about the variables being studied. As suggested by Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger (2005) these predictions are then tested by gathering and analyzing data, and can be tested and on the basis of the results the initial hypothesis can be supported or rejected.

3.2 Research Design

This investigation adopted a cross-sectional research framework using quantitative methodology. The quantitative method was employed to quantify the correlation between dependent and independent variables, as per the proposed theoretical model. Quantitative research entails investigations that employ statistical analyses to derive their conclusions (Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger, 2005).

This research was carried out using the positivist paradigm. As Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2016) described, quantitative research is typically associated with a deductive approach that emphasizes the evaluation of theory through data analysis. Positivism ensures that scientific principles and practices are applied to the examination of human behavior and events (Burns and Burns, 2008).

3.3 Data types & Sources

Both primary and secondary data were used to meet objectives of the current study.

3.3.1 Primary sources

The primary data were collected from parents living in Addis Ababa who buy baby diaper. A structured questioner was applied in this research. It is a self-administered questioner first designed in English and translated to Amharic language while dispatching to respondents. The questioner has two parts. The first part includes questions related to demographic information and question related to identifying respondents brand choice. The second part includes questions related to the research variables. Respondents were approached at different mini and super markets found in Addis Ababa.

The data was collected from widely distributed imported and locally produced brands in the market of Addis Ababa. These are ABC, Bonbaby, Canbebe, Coco, Dr. S, Goodbaby, Pampers and Michot.

3.3.2 Secondary sources

The sources of secondary sources used were previous researches, books, newspaper, organization's report, statistics and publications. The organizational reports and statistics were found from Ethiopian Ministry of Health, Ethiopian Statistics Service, and UNICEF.

3.4 Population of the study

This study tried to examine factors affecting parents' loyalty to baby care brands in Addis Ababa. Thus the population of the study is parents living in the city of Addis Ababa who have babies and buy baby diaper. The most recent Ethiopia's census was conducted in 2007, which is the basis for estimating the current population of the city of Addis Ababa. According CSA, as of 2015 the total population of the city was estimated 3,273,000. The author select the city of Addis Ababa because of it's the largest Ethiopian city and the home of parents who use baby diaper. The research tried to include important characteristics of the population to make sure that it is well represented in the research.

3.5 Sample Size Determination and Sampling Procedure

To determine the size of the sample Cochran's sample size formula was applied in the research (Cochran, 1977). The number of parents with new-born living in Addis Ababa is infinite. Hence

sample size is calculated with $z = 1.96$ (a 5 % margin of error), $\hat{p} = 50\%$ (unsure about the population) and $\epsilon = 5\%$ (same value to get the z score estimate).

The sample size is calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{z^2 * \hat{p} (1 - \hat{p})}{\epsilon^2}$$

Where n is the sample size

z is the z score

\hat{p} is the population proportion

ϵ is the margin of error (the confidence level)

Therefore $n = \frac{1.96^2 * 0.50 (1-0.50)}{0.05^2}$

= 384

Therefore the size of the $n = 384$ respondents approached at mini & super markets, Schools and baby care centres found in Addis Ababa.

The current research applied convenient technique for identification of respondents based on the researcher own criteria including actual purchase, prior purchase experience (repetition) and purchasing decision making unit (either mother or father). Since the population was approached in different setting pre arranging is difficult hence convenient sampling is an appropriate sampling technique for this study.

According to Burns and Burns (2008) when participants are conveniently accessible groups for example to select consumers in the local super market, research can be carried out using convenience sampling.

3.6 Data Gathering Instruments

3.6.1 Questionnaire Survey

A survey which is one of the most familiar research tools applied in the present research. Close ended responses which asks consumers to use a rating scale or check marks applied. The survey instrument consisting of five constructs: Brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association, brand trust and brand loyalty. The Likert five scales (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree and 5=Strongly Agree) applied to indicate respondents' degree of agreement or disagreement with a number of brand equity related statements.

In addition, the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents including the gender category, age group, educational background, work status, brand choice, buying frequency, loyalty status, usage experience and monthly income all were addressed in the questionnaire.

3.6.2 Measurement Instrument

The research instruments used a total of sixteen items to measure the determinants of brand loyalty. The brand trust measurement (three items) is adopted from the works of Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001). In this research six items were applied to measure brand loyalty which were adopted from Lau and Lee (1991) and Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013). Brand awareness was measured with three items that assess recall, recognition and familiarity with the brand using measurements adapted from Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000); Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013). For the perceived brand quality (three items) the measurement scale is adapted from Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013) and for the brand association (three items) from Timnit (2020); Ghantous and Phan (2013).

Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) measurement was tested in three consumer product (including children wear and personal care products) category, Lau and Lee (1991) measurement was tested in personal care products, Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) tested in three product categories (athletic shoes, camera film & television sets) and Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013) is tested in sportswear, consumer electronics and cars product category. The present study took three brand awareness measuring items from Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2001); Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013). Some items are dropped this is due to the respondents are approached in store while actual purchase is done. They already know what the brand looks like. And the other reason is in Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) study some of the items mixed with brand association and already taken in brand association measurements.

From Buil, Martínez and De Chernatony (2013) perceived brand quality measurement one item is dropped since Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) proposed it as brand trust measurement.

3.7 Data Analysis Techniques

The data collected from primary sources were inputted into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Version 23. Frequency and percentage descriptive statistical techniques were

used in the current research to summarize and interpret the demographic profile, brand preference and usage experience of respondents. Measures of central tendency (or statistical averages) tell us the point about which items have a tendency to cluster. Such a measure is considered as the most representative figure for the entire mass of data. Mean (arithmetic average) were applied to measure central tendency. As suggested by Kothari (2004) measures of dispersion were calculated using range, mean deviation, and standard deviation in order to measure the scatter of the values of items of a variable.

According to Burns and Burns (2008) descriptive statistics involves the collection, presentation, summarization and description of data so the data can be more easily comprehended. Inferential statistics that include both correlations and regression were used in the current research. When there are two or more independent variables, the analysis concerning relationship is known as multiple correlation and the equation describing such relationship as the multiple regression equation (Kothari, 2004). Thus, the current research studied correlation through coefficient of multiple correlation whereas cause and effect relationship through multiple regression equations. Inferential statistics allow to measure whether a phenomenon could generalize the population and mainly concerned with two major types of problems: (i) the estimation of population parameters, and (ii) the testing of statistical hypotheses (Kothari, 2004).

The Pearson's coefficient of correlation 'r' was computed to identify the relationship, the direction of relationship & the strength of relationship (Kothari, 2004).

3.8 Model Specification

Multiple regression were run to identify the determinant variables that affect the brand loyalty of parents to baby care products.

For the mediation analysis the current research run sets of regression analysis based on the basic steps suggested by Baron and Kenny (1986). The first step involves regressing Y on X ($X \rightarrow Y$) to test the relationship of independent and dependent variables. Second, regressing the mediator variable on independent variables ($X \rightarrow M$) to check the independent variables predict the mediating variable. The third step involves regressing Y on M ($M \rightarrow Y$) to check the mediator

variable effect on the dependent variable. The significance of indirect effects was verified by using Sobel test (Sobel, 1982).

The aforementioned steps are computed using the following equations.

$$Y = i_1 + c_1 AW + c_2 AS + c_3 PBQ + e_1$$

$$M = i_2 + a_1 AW + a_2 AS + a_3 PBQ + e_2$$

$$Y = i_3 + c' AW + c' AS + c' PBQ + bBT + e_3$$

Where Y denotes the dependent variable (Brand Loyalty) and the independent variables AW, AS and PBQ denotes Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality) respectively. M represents Brand Trust (the mediator), i_1 , i_2 & i_3 represent intercepts, a, b, c and c' are the path coefficients and e represent the standard error.

3.9 Reliability and Validity

According to Burns and Burns (2008) reliability is the relative absence of errors of measurement in a measuring instrument. The reliability of the item was checked by computing the Cronbach's alpha.

The result of the reliability test of the pilot study is shown in the table 1 below. The alpha coefficients of Brand Awareness ($\alpha=0.776$), Perceived Brand Quality ($\alpha=0.836$), Brand Association ($\alpha=0.736$), Brand Trust ($\alpha=0.746$) and Brand Loyalty ($\alpha=0.741$) were above 0.7 which shows the measurements are reliable.

Table 1 Reliability test of the pilot study

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	Number of Items
Brand Awareness	.776	.789	3
Brand Association	.726	.725	4
Perceived Brand Quality	.836	.837	3
Brand Trust	.742	.775	3
Brand Loyalty	.793	.799	6

Source: Survey result (2023)

The primary purpose of all forms of research is to produce valid conclusions (Marczyk, DeMatteo, and Festinger, 2005). One way of ensuring validity is the convergent validity technique. This study applied the average variance extracted (AVE) validity to check construct validity. In addition, prior to dispatching the research question to the target respondents a pilot study was conducted on 40 (>10% of the sample) randomly selected parents in the city of Addis Ababa to check for the relevancy and clarity of the questions. For face validity the present research used expert judgment.

The primary purpose of validity is to increase the accuracy and usefulness of findings by eliminating or controlling as many confounding variables as possible, which allows for greater confidence in the findings of a given study (Marczyk, DeMatteo and Festinger, 2005).

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Any personal information collected from respondents are kept confidential which is reflected in the questioner. While gathering data, the research participants were properly informed of the research's goal. Subsequently, their informed consent was obtained.

Only legitimate and relevant data for the research were included and the researcher never used data by any circumstances in a way that mislead the research result. Only objective measurements were applied throughout the research.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion

In the fourth chapter the findings of the survey data presented in a way that gives meaning to the readers. It contains descriptive and inferential statistics with appropriate and sufficient explanation. The validity, reliability, model fit and normality of the research are proved using appropriate tools. Furthermore, based on the analysis using SPSS 23 the hypothesis is tested and find out important research findings.

4.1 Sample and Response Rate

For the pilot study 40 questioners were distributed for parents living in the city of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia who buys baby diaper. From the results of the pilot study the clarity and the relevance of instruments were checked. The researcher found that some items need clarity after asking the respondents comments. Thus, adaptation was made in the Amharic version to minimize the difficulty of technical terms. Based on the respondents comments additional range in usage experience and income level added in the demographic characteristics part.

The next step of the research was administering the questioners for the main research following appropriate adjustment was made on the pilot study.

As shown in table 2 below, a total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to parents who buy baby diaper. Among this 349 (91%) questioners were returned while non-returned accounted to 35 (9 %). The elimination of incomplete response accounted to 15 (3.9 %). A total of 334(87%) usable questionnaires were used for analysis.

Table 2 Response rate

Sample	N	%
No. of Questioners administered	384	100
Returned	349	91
Non-returned Questioners	35	9
Incomplete Questioners	15	3.9
Usable Questioners	334	87

Source: Researcher Survey, 2023

4.2 Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

As shown in table 3, the gender of respondents from a total of 334 usable questioners the number of female respondents were 191 (57.2%) and male respondents were 143 (42.8%).

The 9.9 % respondents fall between below 25 year age group, the 41 % fall between 25 and 30 year, the 32 % fall between 31 and 35, and the 17.1 % above 35. The majority of the respondents were in the age group between 25 and 30 year.

A significant number of the respondents (38.9 %) replied that they attended BA/BSC education. Next to BA/BSC 17.4 % of the respondents attended College Diploma education.

Table 3 Gender, Age Group and Educational Background of the respondents

General Information	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	143	42.8
	Female	191	57.2
	Total	334	100
Age Group	Below 25	33	9.9
	25-30	137	41
	31-35	107	32
	Above 35	57	17.1
	Total	334	100
Educational Background	Under 10 th Grade	50	15
	High School	43	12.9
	College Diploma	58	17.4
	BA/BSC	130	38.9
	MA/MSc & Above	53	15.9
	Total	334	100

Source: Researcher Survey, 2023

Table 4 shows that regarding the work status of respondents 8.1 % of them were non employed 35.6 % were self-employed and the rest 56.3 % were salaried. To determine the type of baby diaper brand the respondents frequently used and to help them in answering the variable part of

the questioner, eight diaper brand choices and one other option were asked them to choose among the options. Regarding the loyalty status of respondents the majority of respondents (75.7 %) were non-split loyals or loyal to a single brand and the rest 24.3 % are split loyals (loyal to more than one brand).

Table 4 Work Status, Brand Choice and Loyalty Status of the Respondents

General Information	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Work Status	Not Employed	27	8.1
	Self Employed	119	35.6
	Salaried	188	56.3
	Total	334	100
Loyalty Status	Split Loyals	81	24.3
	Non split Loyals	253	75.7
	Total	334	100

Source: Researcher Survey, 2023

The respondents asked to identify their usage experience of baby diaper and 27.8 % replied below one year, 58.1 % replied between one to three years, 10.2 % between 4 and 6 years and the rest 3.9 % had 7 and above years experiences.

The majority of respondents which cover 31.7 % buy diaper every month 42.5 % two times per month and 25.7 % more than two times in a month. Regarding the respondents monthly income 11.4 % of the respondents get 0-2000 ETB, 17.4 % get a monthly income that falls 2001-4000 ETB and 21.3 % get a monthly income range from 6,001 to 8000 ETB and the rest 29.6 % of the respondents above 8,000 ETB per month.

Table 5 Years of Experience, frequency of buying and monthly income

General Information	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Years of Experience/Usage	Below 1 Year	93	27.8
	1-3 Years	194	58.1
	4-6 Years	34	10.2
	7& Above Years	13	3.9
	Total	334	100
Frequency of buying	Once a month	106	31.7
	Twice a month	142	42.5
	More than 2 times a month	86	25.7
	Total	334	100
Monthly Income in ETB*	0-2000	38	11.4
	2001-4000	58	17.4
	4001-6000	68	20.4
	6,001-8000	71	21.3
	Above 8,000	99	29.6
	Total	334	100

Source: Researcher Survey, 2023

*the exchange rate of 1 ETB=53 USD

4.3 Descriptive analysis of the variables

According to Marczyk, DeMatteo, and Festinger (2005); Kothari (2004) mean is perhaps the most widely used and relatively stable measure of central tendency that represents the typical or most representative value in the distribution.

On the other hand standard deviation measure the spread or the dispersion of values around the centre and provides with information about how tightly grouped the values are around the centre of the distribution (Marczyk, DeMatteo, and Festinger, 2005).

As indicated in chapter three, the respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement using the five points Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree and strongly agree.

a. Brand Awareness

As indicated in table 6, the mean score of Brand Awareness items (AW1, AW2 & AW3) were 4.07, 3.97, 3.84 and their standard deviation were 0.874, 0.895 and 1.057 respectively. Among the Brand Awareness items AW1 had the highest score (4.07) and AW3 had the least score (3.84). The parents' level of agreement with the brand recognition dimension of brand awareness had average of 4.07 which is the highest score. Likewise, familiarity with brand color, logo and other attributes had average of 3.97. The respondents' level of agreement with the brand recall dimension of brand awareness had average of 3.84. The average mean of brand awareness was 3.96. The standard deviation values vary between 0.874 (the lowest) and 1.057 (the highest).

Table 6 The mean and standard deviation of Brand Awareness

Brand Awareness Dimensions	Items Code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Brand recognition	AW1	334	4.07	.874
Familiarity with brand color, logo and other attributes	AW3	334	3.97	.895
Brand Recall	AW3	334	3.84	1.057
Average Mean			3.96	

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

b. Brand Association

As indicated in table 7, Brand Association items (AS1, AS2, AS3 & AS4) had the mean score 3.72, 3.73, 3.36 and 2.97 respectively. Their corresponding standard deviation mean score were 0.934, 1.007, 1.148 and 1.012. Items code AS2 had the highest mean score (3.73) whereas AS4 had the least score with 2.97. The average mean of brand association was 3.44. Among the Brand Association items the respondents' better agree with the uniqueness of the brand image and reputation. The standard deviation score varies between 0.934 and 1.007.

*Table 7*The mean and standard deviation of Brand Association

<i>Brand Association Dimensions</i>	Items Code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Has very unique brand image	AS1	334	3.72	.934
Has a good reputation	AS2	334	3.73	1.007
Reasonably priced	AS3	334	3.36	1.148
Offer innovative products	AS4	334	2.97	1.012
Average Mean			3.44	

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

c. Perceived Brand Quality

The Perceived Brand Quality items PBQ1, PBQ2 & PBQ3 had the mean score of 4.14, 4.02 and 4.01 respectively. In addition, their standard deviation score were 0.815, 0.914 and 0.838 respectively. The good quality (PBQ1) item had the highest mean score and PBQ 3 had the least mean score. This shows that most of respondents' had better perception and attitude on good quality of the brand than item related to the brand provide excellent feature. The average mean of perceived brand quality was 4.05. The standard deviation score vary between 0.815 and 0.914. Consistent quality item had higher standard deviation whereas good quality had the least score.

*Table 8*The mean and standard deviation of Perceived Brand Quality

Perceived Brand Quality Dimensions	Items Code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Good quality	PBQ1	334	4.14	.815
Consistent quality	PBQ2	334	4.02	.914
Excellent features	PBQ3	334	4.01	.838
Average Mean			4.05	

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

d. Brand Trust

As reported in table 9, the Brand Trust items BT1, BT2 & BT3 had the mean score of 3.97, 3.90 and 3.96 respectively. Relatively Trusted brand (BT1) had the highest mean and reliable brand had the lowest mean. The average mean of brand trust was 3.94. In addition, reliable brand (BT2) had the highest standard deviation and safe brand item (BT3) had the lowest standard deviation.

Table 9 The mean and standard deviation of Brand Trust

Brand Trust <i>Dimensions</i>	Items Code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Trusted brand	BT1	334	3.97	.850
Reliable brand	BT2	334	3.90	.871
Safe brand	BT3	334	3.96	.812
Average Mean			3.94	

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

e. Brand Loyalty

As shown in table 10, the Brand Loyalty items had the mean score of 3.95, 3.96, 4.04, 3.84, 3.90 and 2.75 consequently with their corresponding standard deviation .909, .935, .935, .888, .869, .915 & 1.207. The first choice of brand item (BL3) had relatively the highest mean. The mean values of “willingness to pay a higher price” had the lowest mean. This shows that the respondents better agree with “the first choice brand” item than with statement related to their willingness to pay a higher price. Regarding the standard deviation of brand loyalty dimensions “the first choice brand” had higher score whereas “Willingness to pay a higher price” had the lowest score. The average mean of brand loyalty was 3.74.

Table 10 The mean and standard deviation of Brand Loyalty

Brand Loyalty Dimensions	Items Code	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Considering oneself to be loyal	BL1	334	3.95	.909
Not buying other brands in the presence of the chosen brand	BL2	334	3.96	.935
The first choice brand	BL3	334	4.04	.888
The intention to keep buying	BL4	334	3.84	.869
Recommend other people	BL5	334	3.90	.915
Willingness to pay a higher price	BL6	334	2.75	1.207
Average Mean			3.74	

Source: Researcher Survey (2023)

4.4 Normality Test

According to Kothari (2014) Skewness is a measure of asymmetry and shows the manner in which the items are clustered around the average whereas Kurtosis is the humpedness of the curve and points to the nature of distribution of items in the middle of a series.

Table 11 Test of Normality

Studentized Residual	Skewness	Kurtosis
Statistic	.010	-.267
Std. Error	.133	.266

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As reported in table 11, the test of normality revealed that the value of Skewness is 0.010 and Kurtosis is -0.267. The statistic of skewness indicated that it is approximately symmetric. Since the Kurtosis value is negative it shows the distribution is slightly flatter (platykurtic). The values of both Skewness and Kurtosis show approximately the normal distribution of the data. Thus test of normality assumption is satisfied.

4.5 Reliability & Validity Test

Most of the literature considered Cronbach's Alpha as the most common measures of reliability. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016), Cronbach's Alpha is usually used to measure the consistency of responses to a set of questions (scale items) and consists of an alpha coefficient with a value between 0 and 1.

Table 12 Reliability & Validity Statistics

Variables	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Brand Awareness	3	.775	.875	.836
Perceived Brand Quality	3	.851	.911	.879
Brand Association	4	.648	.795	.7
Brand Trust	3	.879	.925	.897
Brand Loyalty	6	.855	.9	.773

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As shown in table 12 above, all the variables except brand association had an alpha coefficient of above 0.7 ranging from 0.648 to 0.879. According to according to Malhotra (2010), Cronbach's alpha coefficient (α) greater than 0.6 generally indicates satisfactory internal consistency reliability. The Composite Reliability (CR) of all of the variables had a value of above 0.7 ranging from 0.795 to 0.925. As rule of thumb, composite reliabilities of 0.7 or higher are considered good and estimates between 0.6 and 0.7 may be considered acceptable if the estimates of the model validity are good (Malhotra, 2010). The statistical values of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) were above 0.5 ranging from 0.7 to 0.897. According to Malhotra, (2010), AVE of 0.5 or more indicates satisfactory convergent validity. Thus, based on the above discussion the measurement is reliable and valid.

4.6 Inferential Analysis

4.6.1. Correlation Analysis between Variables

The present research applied Pearson's coefficient of correlation 'r' to measure the relationship of variables. Author Kothari (2004) suggested that the value of 'r' lies between +1 or - 1. Positive values of 'r' indicate positive correlation between the two variables whereas negative values of 'r' indicate negative correlation. A zero value of 'r' indicates that there is no association between the two variables.

Table 13 Correlations

		Brand Awareness	Perceived Brand Quality	Brand Association	Brand Trust	Brand Loyalty
Brand Awareness	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
Perceived Brand Quality	Pearson Correlation	.503**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000				
Brand Association	Pearson Correlation	.401**	.485**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000			
Brand Trust	Pearson Correlation	.507**	.728**	.564**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000		
Brand Loyalty	Pearson Correlation	.489**	.668**	.530**	.797**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.000	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

The scores of correlation for all variables were positive as shown in table 13 above. According to Field (2009) suggestion the cut off and the correlation coefficient value ± 0.1 represent a low relationship, ± 0.3 is a medium relationship and ± 0.5 is a large (strong) relationship.

Brand Awareness and Perceived Brand Quality had strong and positive correlation with r value 0.503 at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Brand Awareness and Brand Association was medium and positive with r value 0.401 at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Brand Awareness and Brand Trust was strong and positive with r value 0.507 at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty was medium and positive with r value 0.489 at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Association was medium and positive with r value 0.485 at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Trust was strong and positive with $r = 0.728$ at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Loyalty was strong and positive with $r = 0.668$ at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Brand Association and Brand Trust was strong and positive with $r = 0.564$ at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Brand Association and Brand Loyalty was strong and positive with $r = 0.530$, at $p < 0.01$, two tailed. The correlation between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty was strong and positive with $r = 0.797$ at $p < 0.01$, two tailed.

The highest correlation score was recorded between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty which is $r = 0.797$ and the lowest correlation score was recorded between Brand Association and Brand Awareness with $r = 0.401$.

4.6.2 Regression Analysis

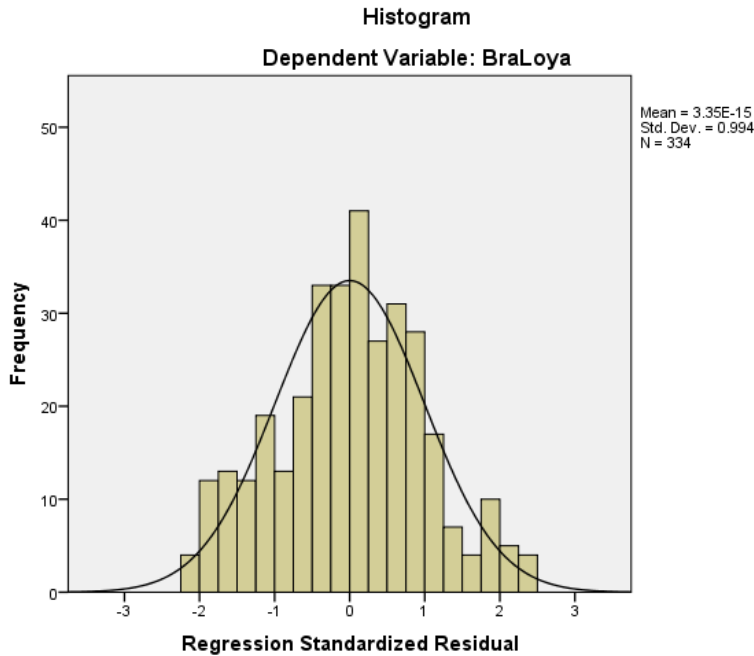
a. Assumptions of linear regression analysis

Several assumptions need to be fulfilled in order to run a linear regression analysis. The current research checked normality test, linearity, collinearity, homoscedasticity and test of outliers as shown below.

i. Normality Test

According to Kothari (2004) when the distribution of item in a series happens to be perfectly symmetrical as shown in figure 5, described as a normal curve and the relating distribution as normal distribution.

Figure 6 Distribution of items



Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

The present study used Kolmogorov–Smirnov and the Shapiro–Wilk for testing normality. For either statistic, a probability of 0.05 or lower show that the data are not normally distributed (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016).

Table 14 Tests of Normality

Tests of Normality						
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statisti c	Df	Sig.	Statisti c	df	Sig.
Studentized Residual	.036	334	.200*	.990	334	.019
*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.						
a. Lilliefors Significance Correction						

Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

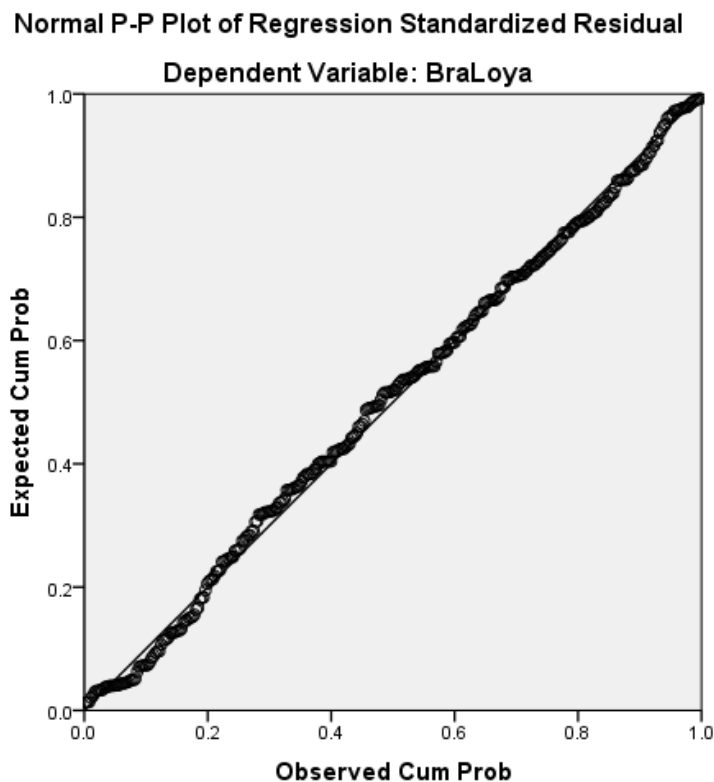
As can be seen in table 14, the value of both the Kolmogorov–Smirnov test and the Shapiro–Wilk were greater than 0.05 (0.036 for Kolmogorov-Smirnov and 0.19 for Shapiro-Wilk). Thus,

test of normality revealed that the P-value is greater than 0.05 and can be concluded that the residual variable is normally distributed.

ii. Test of linearity

Linearity can easily be examined through residual plots (Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill, 2016). As can be seen from the plot the data form almost a straight line. Meaning the data set is approximately normally distributed.

Figure 7 P-plot



Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

iii. Multicollinearity Diagnosis

The other assumption while running multiple regression is multicollinearity diagnosis. According to Burns and Burns (2008) Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) measures the impact of collinearity among the independent variables and the value is less than 10.0 to satisfy the regression assumption. According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) other common collinearity measures include Tolerance. A very small tolerance value (0.10 or below) indicates high collinearity.

Table 15 Multicollinearity

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Brand Awareness	.715	1.399
	Perceived Brand Quality	.651	1.535
	Brand Association	.732	1.366
2	(Constant)		
	Brand Awareness	.691	1.446
	Perceived Brand Quality	.442	2.264
	Brand Association	.658	1.520
	Brand Trust	.399	2.508

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

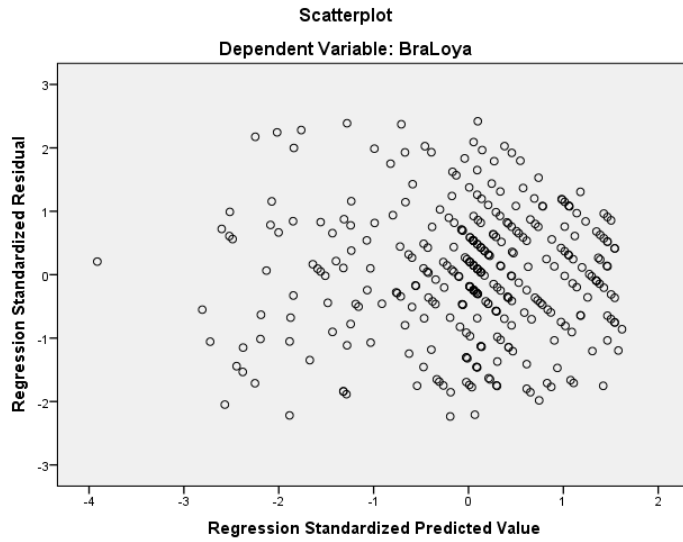
As shown in the Table 15 above the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) for Brand Awareness, Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Association are 1.399, 1.535 and 1.366 respectively. Whereas, the Tolerance values of Brand Awareness, Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Association are 71.5%, 65.1% and 73.2% respectively. Since all of the Tolerance values are greater than ten percent and the values of VIF are less than ten and conclude that there is no a problem of multicollnearity.

iv. Test of Homoscedasticity

According to Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2016) homoscedasticity shows the extent to which the data values for the dependent and independent variables have equal variance.

As it appears in in the scatter plot the spots are spread. This proves that there is no Heteroscedascity problem and satisfied the regression assumption.

Figure 8 Scatterplot

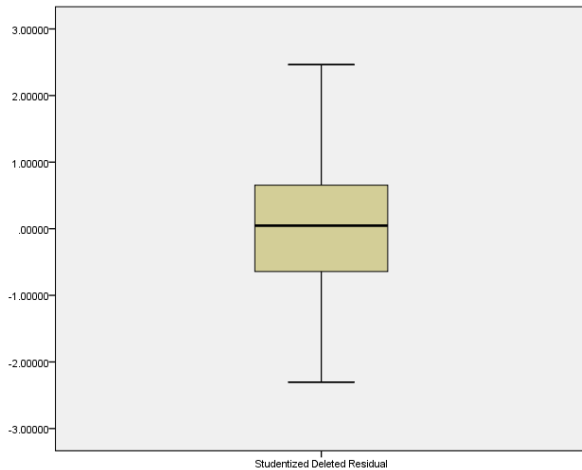


Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

v. Test of outliers

As shown in figure 8 below, there is no asterisks on both direction of the box plot. This proves that the absence of outliers and the regression assumption has been fulfilled.

Figure 9 Test of outliers



Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

b. Multiple Regression Analysis

When there are two or more than two independent variables, the analysis concerning relationship is known as multiple correlation and the equation describing such relationship as the multiple regression equation (Kothari, 2004).

i. The Size and Significance of the direct effect of the independent variables on the dependent variable

The study uses simple regression analysis to investigate the direct effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality on Brand Loyalty. As reported in the table 16, the value of R= 0.720 and the value of R Square is 0.519. The independent variables under study jointly account 51.9% for the variation in Brand Loyalty. The rest effect of the changes in the dependent variable brand loyalty is due to other variables not investigated in this research.

When the Durbin-Watson static close to 2 the regression assumption has been met (Field, 2009).

Table 16 Model Summary

Model Summary ^b					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.720 ^a	.519	.514	.50977	2.112
a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Association, Brand Awareness, Perceived Brand Quality					
b. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty					

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 17 ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	92.414	3	30.805	118.542	.000 ^b
	Residual	85.754	330	.260		
	Total	178.168	333			

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As can be seen from table 17, the F-value=118.542 at p-value < 0.05 implies that that the independent variables Brand Association, Brand Awareness and Perceived Brand Quality significantly explained Brand loyalty and the selected model fit for the current research. This indicates that there is no relationship between the residual variable and the independent variables. Hence, the one of regression assumptions is satisfied.

Table 18 Coefficients

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.459	.180		2.555	.011		
	Brand Awareness (AW)	.144	.042	.155	3.424	.001	.715	1.399
	Perceived Brand Quality (PBQ)	.462	.046	.475	10.039	.000	.651	1.535
	Brand Association (AS)	.242	.046	.237	5.318	.000	.732	1.366

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As shown in table 18 above, the standardized coefficient values of Brand Awareness, Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Association were 0.155, 0.475 and 0.237 respectively. Their respective p-values were 0.001, 0.000 and 0.000 and their corresponding t-statistics were 3.424, 10.039 and 5.318 respectively. All of the variables had $p < 0.05$ and based on the t-distribution table of Malhotra (2010) the t-statistics exceed the critical value 1.6449. Perceived Brand Quality was the first statistically strong predictor of brand loyalty with Beta coefficient 0.475 followed by Brand Association with a Beta value of 0.237. The last predictor was Brand Awareness ($\beta = 0.155$). Based on the above discussions the independent variables were a significant predictor of dependent variable. Thus, the first mediation test condition is satisfied.

ii. The Size and Significance of the direct effect of independent variables on mediator

The following tables show the degree of the direct effect Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality has on Brand Trust. As shown in table 19, the R square value was 0.601 implies all the three independent variables contribute 60 % of the change in Brand Trust.

Table 19 Model summary of Independent Variables & Brand Trust

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.775 ^a	.601	.598	.48074	1.897

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Perceived Brand Quality
Dependent Variable: Brand Trust

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 20 ANOVA of Independent Variables & Brand Trust

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	114.985	3	38.328	165.843	.000 ^b
	Residual	76.267	330	.231		
	Total	191.252	333			

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 21 Coefficients of Independent Variables & Brand Trust

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.314	.169		1.856	.064
	Brand Awareness	.132	.040	.137	3.329	.001
	Perceived Brand Quality	.543	.043	.539	12.515	.000
	Brand Association	.261	.043	.247	6.087	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Trust

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As reported in the table 21, Brand Association, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality significantly influence Brand Trust with Beta value 0.137, 0.247 and 0.539 respectively at $p < 0.05$. Hence, the second condition of mediation analysis is fulfilled.

iii. The Size and Significance of the direct effect of Brand Trust on Brand loyalty

As reported in the table 22, the direct effect of Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty had $R = .797$, $R^2 = 0.635$ and the adjusted $R^2 = 0.633$.

Table 22 Model Summary of Brand Trust & Brand Loyalty

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.797 ^a	.635	.633	.44287

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 23 ANOVA of Brand Trust & Brand Loyalty

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	113.050	1	113.050	576.384	.000 ^b
	Residual	65.118	332	.196		
	Total	178.168	333			

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 24 Coefficients of Brand Trust & Brand Loyalty

Coefficients ^a								
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
		B	Std. Error	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)	.707	.129		5.502	.000		
	Brand Trust	.769	.032	.797	24.008	.000	1.000	1.000

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As reported in the table 22, the R square value implies that 63.5 % of the variation in Brand Loyalty was as a result of the effects of Brand Trust. Table 24 shows Brand Trust had statistically significant influence on Brand Loyalty with the beta coefficient ($\beta=0.797$) and at p-value less than 0.05. Hence, the other condition of mediation analysis i.e the mediator significantly influence brand loyalty.

iv. **Estimate the direct effect of independent variables and the mediator on Brand Loyalty**

As shown in table 25, the effect of Brand Awareness and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty had $R=0.803$, R square 0.644. As reported in the model summary 64.4% of the variation in Brand Loyalty is the combined effects of brand Awareness and Brand Trust. The ANOVA table proved that the model fit at $p<0.05$.

Table 25 Model Summary of Brand Awareness & Brand Trust

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.803 ^a	.644	.642	.43763
a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Trust, Brand Awareness b. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty				

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 26 ANOVA of Brand Awareness & Brand Trust

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	114.774	2	57.387	299.637	.000 ^b
	Residual	63.394	331	.192		
	Total	178.168	333			

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 27 Coefficients of Brand Awareness & Brand Trust

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.507	.144		3.532	.000
	Brand Awareness	.106	.035	.114	3.000	.003
	Brand Trust	.713	.037	.739	19.416	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty						

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As shown in tables 27, Brand Awareness (β value=0.114, $t=3.00$) and Brand Trust (β value=0.739, $t=19.416$) had significant influence on brand Loyalty at p value less than 5%.

As shown in table 28, effect of Brand Association and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty had $R=0.803$, R square 0.644. As indicated in the model summary 64.4% of the change in Brand Loyalty is the combined effects of Brand Association and Brand Trust.

Table 28 Model Summary of Brand Association & Brand Trust

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.803 ^a	.644	.642	.43770
a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Trust, Brand Association b. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty				

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 29 ANOVA of Brand Association & Brand Trust

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	114.755	2	57.377	299.494	.000 ^b
	Residual	63.413	331	.192		
	Total	178.168	333			

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 30 Coefficients of Brand Association & Brand Trust

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.545	.138		3.943	.000
	Brand Association	.121	.041	.118	2.983	.003
	Brand Trust	.704	.038	.730	18.384	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As reported in table 30 above, Brand Association ($\beta = 0.118$, $t = 2.983$) and Brand Trust ($\beta = 0.730$, $t = 18.384$) had significant influence on brand Loyalty at p value less than 0.05.

As shown in table 31, the effect of Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty had R value = 0.807, R square = 0.651. As reported in the model summary 65.1% of the variation in Brand Loyalty is the combined effects of Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Trust.

Table 31 Model Summary of Perceived Brand quality and Brand Trust

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.807 ^a	.651	.649	.43339
a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Trust, Brand Quality				
b. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty				

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 32 ANOVA of Perceived Brand quality and Brand Trust

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	115.997	2	57.998	308.784	.000 ^b
	Residual	62.171	331	.188		
	Total	178.168	333			

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

Table 33 Coefficients of Perceived Brand quality and Brand Trust

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.487	.138		3.535	.000
	Perceived Brand Quality	.182	.046	.188	3.961	.000
	Brand Trust	.637	.046	.660	13.940	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Brand Loyalty

Source: Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

As reported in table 33 above, Perceived Brand Quality (β value=0.118, $t=3.961$) and Brand Trust (β value=0.660, $t=13.940$) had significant influence on brand Loyalty at p value less than 0.05. Thus the third mediation analysis condition is satisfied.

As presented in the model specification part of this research the equation used was

$$Y = i_1 + c_1 AW + c_2 AS + c_3 PBQ + e_1$$

$$M = i_2 + a_1 AW + a_2 AS + a_3 PBQ + e_2$$

$$Y = i_3 + c' AW + c' AS + c' PBQ + bBT + e_3$$

When we substitute the results in in the above equation the model of this this research could be expressed as follows:

$$BL = 0.459 + 0.155 AW + 0.237 AS + 0.475 PBQ + 0.180$$

$$BT = 0.314 + 0.114 AW + 0.118 AS + 0.188 PBQ + 0.169$$

$$BL = 0.277 + 0.269 AW + 0.355 AS + 0.663 PBQ + 0.797 BT + 0.152$$

c. Estimating the Size and Significance of the Indirect Effect

According to (Sobel, 1982), Soble test is among the method used to estimate the statistical significance of indirect effect in mediation analysis. Sobel test is computed using the following formula.

$$p\text{-value} = \sqrt{b^2 * s_a^2 + a^2 * s_b^2} Z\text{score}(t\text{-statistics}) = a * b / \sqrt{b^2 * s_a^2 + a^2 * s_b^2}$$

Where a = unstandardized regression coefficient for independent variable.

s_a = standard error of independent variable.

b = unstandardized regression coefficient for mediation variable.

s_b = standard error for mediation variable.

Therefore, the Soble test and the Z-score of the indirect effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality were calculated as follows:

For the p value of Brand Awareness = $\sqrt{0.713^2 * 0.046^2 + 0.489^2 * 0.037^2} = 0.03$. The p value of Brand Association is computed as $\sqrt{0.704^2 * 0.048^2 + 0.596^2 * 0.038^2} = 0.04$. The p value of Perceived Brand Quality is calculated as $\sqrt{0.637^2 * 0.038^2 + 0.734^2 * 0.046^2} = 0.04$.

The Z score of Brand Awareness is computed as $0.489 * 0.713 / \sqrt{0.713^2 * 0.046^2 + 0.489^2 * 0.037^2} = 11.621$ and the Z score of Brand Association was found in the calculation $0.596 * 0.704 / \sqrt{0.704^2 * 0.048^2 + 0.596^2 * 0.038^2} = 10.489$. The Z score of Perceived Brand Quality = $0.734 * 0.637 / \sqrt{0.637^2 * 0.038^2 + 0.734^2 * 0.046^2} = 11.688$

Table 34 Sobel test

Effect	Z-score	p-Value
AW->BT->BL	11.621	0.03
AS->BT->BL	10.489	0.04
PBQ->BT->BL	11.688	0.04

Source: Survey Result (2023)

Table 34, shows the Sobel test results of Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality. As indicated in the table the Z-score of Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality were 11.621, 10.489 and 11.688. According to Sobel (1982) the mediation effect is statistically significant if the Z-score exceeds 1.96 at $p < 0.05$.

d. Summary of the Direct, Indirect and Total Effect

The total effect is simply the sum of the direct effect and indirect effect. As can be seen from the table 35, the direct effect of the relationship between Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Trust on Brand Loyalty were 0.155, 0.237, 0.475 and 0.797 respectively. The indirect effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Perceived Brand Quality on Brand Loyalty were 0.114, 0.118 and 0.188 respectively. The total effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality on Brand Loyalty was 0.27, 0.35 and 0.66.

Table 35 Summary of the direct, indirect and total effect

Variables	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
AW	.155	.114	.27
AS	.237	.118	.35
PBQ	.475	.188	.66
BT	.797		

Source: Survey result (2013)

4.7 Hypothesis Test

As shown in table 36, the relationship between Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty has a beta coefficient of 0.155, $t = 3.424$ at p value < 0.01 . The relationship between Brand Association and Brand Loyalty has a beta coefficient of 0.237, $t = 5.318$ and p value < 0.01 . The relationship between Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Loyalty had a beta coefficient of 0.475, $t = 10.039$ at p value < 0.01 . The relationship between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty had a beta coefficient of 0.797, t value = 24.008 at p value < 0.01 . The indirect relationship between Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty had a beta coefficient of 0.114, $t = 11.621$ and p value = 0.03. The indirect relationship between Brand Association and Brand Loyalty had $\beta = 0.118$, t value = 10.489 and p value = 0.04. The indirect relationship between Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Loyalty had a direct effect on had values $\beta = 0.188$, t value = 11.688 and p -value = 0.04).

Table 36 Summary of Hypothesis

Hypotheses	Relationship	Beta Coefficient	T (Z-score)	p-Value	Status
H1	AW->BL	.155	3.424	.001	Supported
H2	AS->BL	.237	5.318	.000	Supported
H3	PBQ->BL	.475	10.039	.000	Supported
H4	BT->BL	.797	24.008	.000	Supported
H5	AW->BT-> BL	.114	11.621	.03	Supported
H6	AS->BT-> BL	.118	10.489	.04	Supported
H7	PBQ->BT-> BL	.188	11.688	.04	Supported

Survey Result, SPSS (2023)

4.8 Discussion of Results

As presented the demographic parts of this chapter the gender category result shows that the majority of the respondents were females (57.2 %). The majority of the respondents (41 %) were in the age group between 25 and 30 year. This implies a substantial number of young parents were the respondents of this research.

A significant number of the research participants (38.9 %) replied that they attended BA/BSC education. The result implies that the respondents' could have almost the same level of

understanding on the issue. Since education is one of the sources of knowledge they are capable to learn about the differentiation of brands by searching different sources of information. Thus, this ensures consistency in response and we can get better result.

The large proportions of the respondents were self-employed (35.6 %) and salaried (56.3 %). And almost half of the respondents (21.3% monthly income range was 6,001 to 8000 ETB & 29.6% got above 8,000 ETB) had a monthly income higher than 6,001 ETB and above. From this we can infer that since they generate income and they are within purchase decision making unit. As far as they participate in buying process they were the right person to evaluate brands.

Regarding the loyalty status of respondents the majority of respondents (75.7 %) were loyal to a single brand. This indicate that despite baby diaper is a fast moving consumer goods it has important attributes that buyers looking for.

Regarding the usage/buying experience of baby diaper more than half of the parents (58.1 %) who participated in this research replied between the ranges of one to three years. It is appropriate time the respondents better experience what factors affect their brand choice.

As reported in the statistical description, among the Brand Awareness dimensions brand recognition related items had the highest score (4.07) and Brand Recall had the least score (3.84). The parents' level of agreement with the brand recognition dimension of brand awareness had the highest score. The respondents' level of agreement with the brand recall dimension of brand awareness had average of 3.84 which is the lowest one.

The respondents' perception about the brand has a good reputation had the highest mean score (3.73) whereas ``Offer innovative products`` item had the least score with 2.97. Among the Brand Association items the respondents' better agree with the uniqueness of the brand image and reputation.

The good quality item had the highest mean score and ``excellent features`` item had the least mean score. This shows that most of respondents' had better perception and attitude on good quality of the brand than item related to the brand provide excellent feature.

The Pearson correlation analysis result revealed that the correlation between Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty was significant positive ($r=0.489$, $p< 0.01$). From this we can concluded that recognizing and knowing the logo and other attributes of the baby care brand is positively related to parent's loyalty to baby care brands. The correlation between Brand Association and Brand Loyalty was significant positive ($r=0.530$, $p< 0.01$). It is possible to conclude that the image,

reputation, price and innovative idea of the brand positively related to the parents loyalty to baby care brand. Likewise, the correlation between Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Loyalty was also significant positive ($r=0.668$, $p < 0.01$). It shows that what parents perceive about the quality of the brand related to their loyalty to that brand.

The correlation between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty was significant positive ($r=0.797$, $p < 0.01$). This implies that the trust parents have on the brand related to their loyalty to that brand. The highest correlation score was recorded between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty which is 0.797 and the lowest correlation score was recorded between Brand Association and Brand Awareness which is 0.401.

The regression analysis result depicted that the independent variables Brand Awareness, Brand Perceived Quality and Brand Association in combination cause 51.4 % of the changes in Brand Loyalty.

From the results of coefficients it is possible to conclude that Brand Awareness had statistically significant positive effect on brand loyalty ($\beta=0.155$, $t= 3.424$ at p value < 0.05). Brand Association had statistically significant positive effect on brand loyalty ($\beta=0.237$, $t= 5.318$ at p value < 0.05). Perceived Brand Quality had statistically significant positive effect on brand Loyalty ($\beta=0.475$, $t= 10.039$ at p value < 0.05). Brand Trust had statistically significant positive effect on brand loyalty ($\beta=0.797$, $t= 24$ at p value < 0.01). From the results of the beta coefficients it is observed that Brand Trust had the largest statistically significant positive effect on brand loyalty compared with the effects of the other three independent variables. Brand Association had the second largest statistically significant positive effect on brand loyalty and Brand Awareness had the lowest direct effect on brand loyalty.

Based on the results of the present study the status of the seven proposed hypothesis were discussed as follows.

Hypothesis 1: Brand awareness has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

The results of multiple regression analysis for this hypothesis is $\beta = 0.155$ at P -value < 0.05 . This proves that brand awareness has a positive and significant relationship with brand loyalty. Hence, this hypothesis is supported. The result of this study is consistent with the recent empirical research conducted by Akarawita (2022).

Hypothesis 2: Brand Association has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

The results show that this hypothesis is accepted because the statistical value of the relationship between Brand Association and brand loyalty was $\beta = 0.237$ at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$.

The result of this study is consistent with the research findings of Vazifehdoost and Negahdari (2018) who studied the effect brand association on brand loyalty and repurchase intention among consumers of fashion brands in Iran. They find out that brand association has a positive considerable impact on brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived Brand Quality has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

The Beta coefficient of Perceived Brand Quality was 0.475 at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. This proves that Perceived Brand Quality has a positive and significant impact on brand loyalty. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted. The research results of Raza, Akram and Asif, (2021) and Su & Chang (2018) found the same result.

Hypothesis 4: Brand trust has a significant positive effect on brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

The coefficient of Brand Trust was 0.797 at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$. This proves that Brand Trust has a positive and significant impact on Brand Loyalty. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted. In consistent with this hypothesis a research conducted by Lau and Lee (1999) show that trust in a brand is positively related to brand loyalty.

Hypothesis 5: Brand trust positively mediates the relation between brand awareness and brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

The results of the Sobel test proved that Brand Trust mediate the impact of Brand Awareness on Brand Loyalty was statistically significant with the Z-score 11.621 which is greater than the critical value 1.96 at $p\text{-value} 0.03$ ($p < 0.05$). Due to this the hypothesis is accepted. The type of mediation is partial in that the effect of Brand Awareness on Brand Loyalty statistically significant as can see in the first hypothesis. The same findings are found by the study conducted on biscuit industry in Sri Lanka by Akarawita (2022) and on noodles products by Ogawa and Cuandra (2022).

Hypothesis 6: Brand trust positively mediates the relation between brand association and brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

As the Sobel test result indicated the mediating effect of Brand Trust between Brand Association and Brand Loyalty found statistically significant while the Z-score 10.489 exceed 1.96 at p-value 0.04 ($p < 0.05$). With 95 % confidence we can accept this hypothesis is accepted. Since Brand Association had statistically significant effect on Brand Loyalty the type of mediation is partial. In line with this study Naggar and Bendary (2017) explored the impact of brand equity dimensions on brand loyalty on mobile service customers in Egypt proved that brand association has effect on trust.

Hypothesis 7: Brand trust positively mediates the relation between perceived brand quality and brand loyalty to baby care brands among parents of Addis Ababa.

As reported in Sobel test table it is observed that the mediating role of Brand Trust in the relationship between Brand Perceived Quality and Brand loyalty with z-score 11.688 ($Z > 1.96$) at p value=0.04 was statistically significant. Hence, this hypothesis is accepted. In consistent with this study Akarawita (2022) research findings show that brand trust positively mediates the impact of perceived quality on brand loyalty. In addition, Jadhav, Upadhyay and Bhatt (2021) studied brand loyalty of consumers towards to baby care products, found that perceived quality has the most significant contribution in the construct people are more concerned regarding the kid's health and hygiene standards. The mediation is said to be partial because Brand Perceived Quality has a positive and significant impact on Brand Loyalty.

CHAPTER FIVE

Major findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

The final chapter of this paper presents summary of the major findings of the study that observe the determinants of parents' loyalty to baby care brands, conclusion and recommendations to different entities.

5.1 Major findings

The present study tried to investigate the determinants of parent's loyalty to baby care brands in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. A total of 334 useable questioners are used and analyzed using SPSS 23 software. According to the findings of the research females (57.2%) are the substantial group who are affected by the determinants of brand loyalty in baby care brands. Furthermore, young parents (41 of the respondents fall in the age group between 25 and 30 year) are greatly affected by the determinants of brand loyalty in baby care brands.

Since a significant number of the research participants (38.9 %) replied that they attended BA/BSC education implies that the respondents' could have almost the same level of understanding on the issue that ensures consistency in response to get meaningful result.

The large proportions of the respondents were self-reliant (self-employed-35.6 % and salaried-56.3 %) and almost half of the respondents (21.3% of them monthly income range was 6,001 to 8000 ETB & 29.6% was above 8,000 ETB) had a monthly income higher than 6,001 ETB and above.

The majority of the respondents (75.7 %) were loyal to a single brand shows that despite baby diaper is a fast moving consumer goods it has important attributes that buyers looking for. More than half of the parents (58.1 %) who participated in this research replied that they have one to three years buying experience of baby diaper which help the respondents better experience what factors affect their brand choice.

From the descriptive analysis of the study it is found that regarding the good quality of the brand in the dimension of the Perceived Brand Quality got the highest mean (4.14). This shows the parents' positive perception and attitude. On the other hand the lowest mean (2.75) is found in Brand Loyalty item which is related to the willing to pay a higher price. This shows that the parents' perception on the willingness to pay a higher price for the brand is negative.

By using the Pearson correlation analysis the research findings revealed that there was statistically medium and positive and correlation ($r=0.489$, $p < 0.01$) between Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty. The correlation between Brand Association and Brand Loyalty was statistically positive and strong ($r=0.530$, $p < 0.01$). The correlation between Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Loyalty was positive and strong ($r=0.668$, $p < 0.01$). It shows that what parents perceive about the quality of the brand related to their loyalty to that brand. The correlation between Brand Association and Brand Awareness was statistically positive and moderate $r=0.401$, $p < 0.01$. The highest correlation score was recorded between Brand Trust and Brand Loyalty which is 0.797 .

By running the regression analysis the findings depicted that the independent variables Brand Awareness, Brand Perceived Quality and Brand Association in combination cause 51.4 % of the changes in Brand Loyalty. Brand Awareness ($\beta=.155$, $t=3.4$ at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$), Brand Association ($\beta=.237$, $t=5.3$ at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$), Perceived Brand Quality ($\beta=0.475$, $t=10$ at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) and Brand Trust ($\beta=0.797$ at $p\text{-value} < 0.05$) statistically had strong and positive influence in predicting the dependent variable (brand loyalty). Brand Trust had the highest significant positive influence on brand loyalty compared with Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality.

The proposed hypotheses were verified by running multiple regression analysis and using Baron and Kenny (1986) mediation analysis method. The results of the analysis show that Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality had a positive and significant effect on brand Loyalty. Likewise Brand Trust had a positive and significant effect on brand Loyalty. Brand Trust mediates the impact of Brand Awareness, Perceived Brand Quality, Brand Association and Brand Loyalty. The results of this research were consistent with the findings of Vazifehdoost & Negahdari (2018), Akarawita (2022), Lau & Lee (1999) and among others that proved the direct effect of brand awareness, brand association and perceived brand quality on brand loyalty. The study results that observe the mediating role of brand trust is in line with the previous researches findings of Ogawa & Cuandra (2022), Naggar & Bendary (2017) and Jadhav, Upadhyay & Bhatt (2021).

5.2 Conclusion

The baby care industry has become an attractive business opportunity due to the impact of urbanization, lifestyle changes, migration, and other factors. As various companies running for a share in this industry, it is evident that competition is increasing, providing consumers with a wide range of options. To remain competitive in the market, it is essential to possess a competitive advantage by fulfilling the interests of the consumers.

Several empirical research results revealed that Brand attributes such as Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Perceived Brand Quality have the potential to influence the brand loyalty of customers. In addition to brand equity dimensions, trust plays a crucial role by bridging the brand attributes and customer loyalty to the brand due to the fact that parents prefer safe products to their babies. This study also proved that brand trust had positive and strong influence on the brand loyalty of consumers.

From the description analysis of the variables we can understand that among the Brand Association items the respondents' better agree with the uniqueness of the brand image and reputation. On the contrary to this they disagree with item related to the price reasonableness of the brand.

Based on the Pearson correlation analysis, it is evident the existence of strong and positive correlation between the independent variables Brand Awareness, Perceived Brand and Brand Loyalty implies that recognizing and knowing the logo and other attributes of the baby care brand is positively related to parent's loyalty to baby care brands. The strong and positive relationship between Perceived Brand and Brand Loyalty shows that what parents perceive about the quality of the brand positively influence their loyalty to that brand.

Based on the findings of this study we can conclude that in baby care brands Perceived Brand Quality, Brand Awareness, Brand Association and Brand Trust had significant and positive influence on brand loyalty. The mediation analysis results show that Brand Trust significantly mediates the relationship between Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty. Similarly it mediates the impacts of Brand Association on Brand Loyalty and the impacts of Perceived Brand Quality on Brand Loyalty. The mediation role of brand trust between Brand Awareness and Brand Loyalty,

between Brand Association and Brand loyalty, and Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Loyalty were partial mediation.

This paper discovered that Brand Trust enhances brand loyalty through trustful and reliable relationship, and providing safe products. This implies that Brand Trust is the determinant of brand loyalty in baby diaper industry. Similarly, perceived Brand Quality was the influential factor that determines parents' loyalty in Addis Ababa. Furthermore, the baby diaper brands that possess good and consistent quality as well excellent features enhance the parents' loyalty to the brand.

Brand recognition, familiarity with brand color, logo and other attributes had positive influence on the loyalty of parents to towards the baby care brand. In addition, the uniqueness of the brand image and reputation of the baby care brands positively influence parents' loyalty to baby care brands. The image, reputation, price and innovative idea of the brand enhances brand loyalty through brand trust.

In nutshell, all of the research questions were addressed. Thus, the research achieved its purpose.

5.2 Recommendations

In the current research the determinants of parents' loyalty to baby care brands in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia are investigated and come up with recommendations for practitioners and for further research. Thus, the current research suggested the following recommendations.

a) For Practitioners

The results of the study indicated that parents' loyalty to baby care brand is greatly influenced by Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Trust. It is predominantly important for marketing managers to understand what affects parents. Hence, Perceived Brand Quality and Brand Trust dimensions need due attention in the course of the design and implementation of marketing strategy and tactics.

The research findings show that a significant number of parents who participated in this research disagree with statements related to willingness to pay a price premium. In combination with the presence of split loyals a price increase may cause a switch of customers. Thus, companies take this in to consideration before taking any price related actions.

The manufacturers and importers of baby diaper focus on the quality of their brands in order to win the head and hearts of their customers.

b) Further Research

Despite brand loyalty is a multidimensional concept; due to the present study is cross sectional and focused on the attitudinal dimension. Longitudinal research is required to observe the pattern of purchase behaviour.

Researchers seldom observed the mediation roles of variables in Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) industry of Ethiopia. Thus, further study is required to investigate the mediation role of variables related to brand loyalty.

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Annexes

Questionnaire (English)

Addis Ababa University School of Commerce

Questionnaire designed for parents who buy baby diaper

Dear respondent!

First and foremost, I would like to thank you in advance for your time and cooperation. This questionnaire is developed and sent you to collect data as part of the partial fulfilment for the requirements for Masters of Arts Degree in the field of Marketing Management. My name is Gashaw Tadesse, a student at Addis Ababa University conducting a research entitled “*DETERMINANTS OF PARENTS’ LOYALTY TO BABY CARE BRANDS WITH THE MEDIATING ROLE OF BRAND TRUST: EVIDENCE FROM BUYERS OF BABY DIAPER IN ADDIS ABABA.*” The aim of this study is to investigate the determinants of parents’ loyalty to baby care brands.

I want to assure you that your response will be used solely for academic research purpose and confidential. Please feel free to fill this voluntary based questioner and you are not requested to write your name.

If you need more information don’t hesitate to reach me via mobile 0912858968 or Email: gashawtadesse2022@gmail.com.

Instruction: Please put “√” mark to your responses on the box beside to each question.

PART I General Information

1. Please specify your gender category: Female Male
2. Please select your age group: Below 25 Years 25-30 Years
31-35 Years Above 35 Years
3. What is the highest level of education you are completed? Under 10th Grade High School
College Diploma BA/BSC MA/MSc & Above
4. Your work status: Not Employed Self Employed Salaried
5. Which of the following is/are baby diaper brand you purchase frequently? (You can choose more than one brand)

ABC <input type="checkbox"/>	Bonbaby <input type="checkbox"/>	Canbebe <input type="checkbox"/>	Coco <input type="checkbox"/>	Other <input type="checkbox"/>
Dr.S <input type="checkbox"/>	Goodbaby <input type="checkbox"/>	Michot <input type="checkbox"/>	Pampers <input type="checkbox"/>	

6. For how many years you are buying the baby diaper brand you chose on question number 5?

Below 1 1-3 4-6 7 & Above

7. How frequently you buy baby diaper?

Once a month Twice a month More than 2 times a month

8. Your monthly income in ETB? 0-2000 2001-4000

4001-6000 6,001-8000 Above 8,000

PART II Determinants of Brand Loyalty

Instruction: Based on your own choice of diaper brand please encircle the number once for each to indicate the level of your agreement or disagreement by rating the following statements.

Note: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree & 5=Strongly Agree based on your level of choice. Please note that in the following statements ``My favourite/ My chosen brand'' represent the type of baby diaper brand you have already chosen in question number five.

Code	Questions	Level of Agreement				
		(1)Strongly Disagree,	(2) Disagree	(3)Neutral	(4)Agree	(5)Strongly Agree
AW1	I can recognize the diaper brand I chose among other competing brands	1	2	3	4	5
AW2	I know the color, logo and other attributes of the diaper brand of my choice	1	2	3	4	5
AW3	Whenever I think of baby diaper brand, my chosen baby diaper brand comes to my mind	1	2	3	4	5
PBQ1	My chosen brand of baby diaper has very good quality	1	2	3	4	5
PBQ 2	The baby diaper I chose has consistent quality	1	2	3	4	5
PBQ 3	My chosen brand of baby diaper has excellent features	1	2	3	4	5
AS1	My chosen brand of baby diaper has a very unique brand image compared to competing brands	1	2	3	4	5
AS2	My chosen brand of baby diaper has a good	1	2	3	4	5

	reputation					
AS3	My chosen brand of baby diaper is reasonably priced	1	2	3	4	5
AS4	My chosen baby diaper brand offers innovative products					
BT 1	The trust I have on my chosen baby diaper contributes to become a loyal customer	1	2	3	4	5
BT 2	I rely on in the diaper brand of my choice	1	2	3	4	5
BT 3	The diaper brand I chose is safe	1	2	3	4	5
BL1	I consider myself to be loyal to my chosen diaper brand	1	2	3	4	5
BL2	I will not buy other brands if my chosen baby diaper brand is available at the store	1	2	3	4	5
BL3	My chosen brand of baby diaper is my first choice	1	2	3	4	5
BL4	I intend to keep buying this brand of my chosen baby diaper	1	2	3	4	5
BL5	I would recommend other people to use my chosen baby diaper	1	2	3	4	5
BL6	I would be willing to pay a higher price for my chosen baby diaper brand over other brands	1	2	3	4	5

I thank you once again for filling out the questioner!

Sources: adopted from Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001), Lau & Lee (1991) and Buil, Martínez & de Chernatony (2013), Yoo, Donthu & Lee (2000) and Buil, Martínez & De Chernatony (2013), Timnit (2020) and Ghantous & Phan (2013).

Questionnaire (Amharic Version)

አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ የንግድ ስራ ት/ቤት

የህፃናት ዳይፐር ለሚገዙ ወላጆች የተዘጋጀ መጠይቅ

ውድ የመጠይቁ ተሳታፊ!

በቅድሚያ መጠይቁን ለመሙላት ውድ ጊዜዎን ስለሰጡኝ እጅግ በጣም አመሰግናለሁ። ይህ መጠይቅ የተዘጋጀውና እንዲሞሉ የተጠየቁት በገበያ አስተዳደር የትምህርት ዘርፍ ለሁለተኛ ዲግሪ ማሟያ ጥናት ግብዓት የሚውል መረጃ ለመሰብሰብ ነው። ስሜ ጋሻው ታደሠ ይባላል። አዲስ አበባ ዩኒቨርሲቲ ለሁለተኛ ዲግሪ ማሟያ የሚሆን አዲስ አበባ ውስጥ የሚገኙ ወላጆች የልጆች የንጽህና መጠበቂያ (ዳይፐር) ሲገዙ የብራንድ ታማኝነታቸውን የሚወስኑ ሁኔታዎች ለመለየት ጥናት እየሰራሁ እገኛለሁ። በዚህ መጠይቅ የሚሰበሰበው መረጃ ለትምህርት ዓላማ ብቻ የሚውል እና በሚስጥር የሚያዝመሆኑን አረጋግጥሎታለሁ። እባክዎን ስምዎን ሳይፅፉ መጠይቁን በነፃ ፈቃድዎ ይሙሉልኝ።

ለበለጠ መረጃ በስልክ ቁጥር 0912858968 ወይም በኢሜይል gashawtadesse2022@gmail.com ሊያገኙን ይችላሉ።

መመሪያ:- እባክዎ ከጥያቄዎቹ ፊት ለፊት በተዘጋጀው ሳጥን ውስጥ ለእያንዳንዱ ጥያቄ የ“✓” ምልክት በማድረግ ምላሽዎን ይስጡ።

ክፍል 1:- የመላሾች ሁኔታ

1. ጾታ:- ወንድ ሴት
2. ዕድሜ:- ከ25 ዓመት በታች 25-30 ዓመት 31-35 ዓመት ከ35 ዓመት በላይ
3. የት/ት ደረጃ:- ከ10ኛ ክፍል በታች 2ኛ ደረጃ ዲፕሎማ
የመጀመሪያ ዲግሪ ማስተርስና በላይ
4. የስራ ሁኔታ:- ስራ የሌለው የግል ስራ ደመወዝተኛ
5. ቀጥሎ ከቀረቡት የዳይፐር ብራንዶች ውስጥ እርስዎ አዘውትረው የሚገዙት የትኛው ነው? (የተለያዩ ብራንድ የሚገዙ ከሆነ ከአንድ በላይ መምረጥ ይችላሉ)

ኤቢ.ሲ./ABC <input type="checkbox"/>	ቦንቤቢ./Bonbaby <input type="checkbox"/>	ካንቤቤ./Canbebe <input type="checkbox"/>	ኮኮ/Coco <input type="checkbox"/> ሌላ <input type="checkbox"/>
ዶክተር ኤስ/Dr.S <input type="checkbox"/>	ጉድቤቢ./Goodbaby <input type="checkbox"/>	ምቾት/Michot <input type="checkbox"/>	ፓምፐርስ/Pampers <input type="checkbox"/>

6. ተራ ቁጥር 5 ላይ የመረጡት የህፃናት ዳይፐር ብራንድ ለምን ያህል ጊዜ ገዝተዋል?

ከ1 ዓመት በታች ከ1-3 ዓመት 4-6 ዓመት 7 እና በላይ ዓመት

7. የህፃናት ዳይፐር በየሰንት ጊዜ ይገዛል?

በወር አንድ ጊዜ በወር ሁለት ጊዜ በወር ከሁለት ጊዜ በላይ

8. ወራዊገቢዎ ምን ያህል ብር ነው? ከ0-2000 ከ2001-4000

ከ4001-6000 ከ6,001-8000 ከ8,000 በላይ

መመሪያ: ምርጫዎ የሆነው የዳይፐር ብራንድን መሰረት በማድረግ ለተከታዮቹ ጥያቄዎች መስማማትና አለመስማማትዎን ሰንጠረዥ ውስጥ የሚገኙትን ቁጥሮች በማክበብ ይመልሱ::

ክፍል II:- የደንበኞችን ታማኝነት የሚወስኑ ሁኔታዎች

ለተከታዮቹ ጥያቄዎች የመረጡትን የዳይፐር ብራንድ በሚመለከት መስማማትዎንና አለመስማማትዎን ይግለጹ:: ማስታወሻ: 1=በፍፁም አልስማማም፣ 2=አልስማማም፣ 3=ገለልተኛ፣4=እስማማለሁ እና 5=በጣም እስማማለሁ የሚሉ ደረጃዎችን ይወክላሉ:: በተከታዮቹ ጥያቄዎች ውስጥ “ምርጫዬ/የመረጥኩት ብራንድ” የሚሉ አገላለጾች ተ.ቁ 5 ላይ የመረጡትን የዳይፐር ብራንድ የሚወክሉ ናቸው::

መለያ/ ኮድ	ጥያቄዎች	መመዘኛ				
		(1) በፍፁም አልስማማ	(2) አልስማማ ም	(3) ገለልተኛ	(4) እስማማለሁ	(5) በጣም እስማማለሁ
AW1	የመረጥኩት የህፃናት ዳይፐር ብራንድ (የንግድ ምልክት) ከተወዳዳሪ ዳይፐሮች መካከል በቀላሉ ለይቼ አውቀዋለሁ	1	2	3	4	5
AW2	የመረጥኩት የህፃናት ዳይፐር ዓርማው፣ ቀለሙና ሌሎች መገለጫዎቹን አውቃለሁ	1	2	3	4	5
AW3	የመረጥኩት ዳይፐር ብራንድ፣ ዳይፐር መግዛት ሳስብ በቅድሚያ ወደ አእምሮዬ ይመጣል	1	2	3	4	5
PBQ1	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ የጥራት ደረጃ በጣም ጥሩ ነው	1	2	3	4	5

መለያ/ ኮድ	ጥያቄዎች	መመዘኛ				
		(1) በፍጹም አልሰማማ	(2) አልሰማማ ም	(3) ገለልተኛ	(4) እስማማለሁ	(5) በጣም እስማማለሁ
PBQ 2	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ ጥራቱ የማይዋዥቅ/ወጥ ነው	1	2	3	4	5
PBQ 3	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ በጣም ጥሩ መስፈርቶችን ያሟላል	1	2	3	4	5
AS1	የመረጥኩት የሀፃናት ዳይፐር ብራንድ ከተወዳዳሪ ብራንዶች በጣም የተለየ የምርት ገጽታ አለው	1	2	3	4	5
AS2	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ መልካም ስም አለው	1	2	3	4	5
AS3	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ ዋጋው ተመጣጣኝ ነው	1	2	3	4	5
AS4	የመረጥኩት ብራንድ ምርቶቹ ላይ አዳዲስ ፈጠራዎችን ያካትታል	1	2	3	4	5
BT 1	ምርጫዬ ያደረግኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ አስተማማኝ ነው	1	2	3	4	5
BT 2	ምርጫዬ ያደረግኩት ዳይፐር እምነቴን ልጥልበት የምችልበት ብራንድ ነው	1	2	3	4	5
BT 3	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ ላይ ደህንነት ይሰማኛል	1	2	3	4	5
BL1	ለመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ ታማኝ ደንበኛ ነኝ ብዬ አምናለሁ	1	2	3	4	5
BL2	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ መደብር ውስጥ ካለ ሌላ ዳይፐር አልገዛም	1	2	3	4	5
BL3	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ የመጀመሪያ ምርጫዬ ነው	1	2	3	4	5

መለያ/ ኮድ	ጥያቄዎች	መመዘኛ				
		(1) በፍጹም አልሰማማ	(2) አልሰማማ ም	(3) ገለልተኛ	(4) አስማማለሁ	(5) በጣም አስማማለሁ
BL4	የመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ መግዛቴን እቀጥላለሁ ብዬ አምናለሁ	1	2	3	4	5
BL5	የመረጥኩት ዳይፐር ሌሎችም እንዲጠቀሙት እመክራለሁ	1	2	3	4	5
BL6	ለመረጥኩት የዳይፐር ብራንድ ከሌሎች ብራንዶች በላይ ተጨማሪ ብር ለመክፈል ፈቃደኛ ነኝ	1	2	3	4	5

መጠይቁን ስለሞሉልኝ በድጋሚ አመሰግናለሁ!

Charts

