



Addis Ababa University
College of Business and Economics
Department of Management

Bottled Water Consumers' Perception in view of Brand Equity Dimensions

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By: Seifu Alemayehu

Advisor: Gemechu Waktola (PhD)

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By: Seifu Alemayehu

Approved By Board of Examiners

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Adviser	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
Examiner	Signature	Date

_____	_____	_____
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Declaration

I, undersigned declare that this thesis is my original work. Furthermore, all sources of materials used for the thesis had been duly acknowledged.

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Place: Addis Ababa University

Certification

This is to certify that Seifu Alemayehu Masresha has done a study on the topic

“Bottled Water Consumers’ Perception in view of Brand Equity Dimensions”

This study is of his original work and all the sources of materials used for the study had been duly acknowledged.

Advisors

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Place: Addis Ababa University

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgment	v
List of Tables	viii
List of Figures.....	ix
Acronyms	x
<i>Abstract</i>	xi
Chapter One: Introduction	1
1.1. Background	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3. Research Questions.....	4
1.4. Objectives of the Study.....	4
1.4.1. General Objective.....	4
1.4.2. Specific Objectives	4
1.5. Significance of the Study	4
1.6. Scope of the Study	5
1.7. Organization of the Research Report	5
1.8. Operational Definition of Terms	6
Chapter Two: Literature Review	7
2.1. Concepts and Definition	7
2.2. Brand Equity.....	12
2.3. Theoretical and Empirical Review	12
2.4. Conceptual Framework of the study	21
2.5. Summary of Literature Review	23

Chapter Three: Research Methodology	25
2.1. Research Design	25
2.2. Data Type and Source.....	25
2.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques	25
2.4. Data Collection methods.....	26
2.5. Reliability Test Techniques	27
2.6. Validity Analysis.....	28
2.7. Data Analysis Techniques.....	28
Chapter Four: Analysis and Discussion.....	30
2.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents	30
2.2. Brand Popularity and Bottled Water Consumption	34
2.3. Brand Popularity based on Educational Background	36
2.4. Determinants of Brand Equity	37
Discussion	43
Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation	45
5.1. Summary	45
5.2. Conclusions	46
5.3. Recommendations	47
Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study	48
Bibliography	49
Appendices	53
Questionnaire.....	53
Statistical Reports	57

List of Tables

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of respondents

Table 4.2: Reliability Test of Variables

Table 4.3: Brand Awareness Analysis

Table 4.4: Brand Association analysis

Table 4.5: Perceived Quality analysis

Table 4.6: Brand Loyalty Analysis

Table 4.7: Overall Brand Equity Analysis

Table 4.8: Summary of the overall Brand Equity determinants

List of Figures

Figure 2.1: Consumer decision making process

Figure 2.2: Conceptual Framework of the Consumer-Based Brand Equity

Acronyms

FMCG - Fast Moving Consumer Goods

ECAE - Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise

EQSA - Ethiopian Quality and Standard Authority

CBBE - Customer Based Brand Equity

Abstract

Although the Ethiopian Bottled water producing different bottled water brands has been booming fast in a less than a decade time, the types of brands penetrated in the market, the state of the brands in the consumers' mind have become the prime concern of business owners. The Purpose this research study aims to test the bottled water customers' perception in view of brand equity dimensions, which are Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Brand Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty and other proprietary assets and how these dimensions are influencing brand building in the customers' mind in Addis Ababa Market through the application of a well-known conceptual framework of brand equity model developed by Aaker. As to the methodology, design and approach, the sampling techniques used, sample size was selected to be 134 and data gathered from randomly selected respondents and analyzed on the bottled water brands towards, assessing the perception of consumers on the dimensions of brand equity. The findings revealed that the customers' perception is highly influenced by Brand Perceived Quality followed by Brand Awareness. The study concluded that Brand Perceived Quality is the influential dimension than the other dimensions of brand equity. Besides, recommendations were given for the managers to give priority to those influencing brand equity dimensions in line with the customers' perception while most companies go through different marketing activities.

Key Words: *Brand Equity, Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Brand Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty*

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1. Background

Bottled water is the fastest growing drink choice in the United States, and Americans spend billions of dollars each year to buy it (Beverage Marketing Corporation, 2004) Some people drink bottled water as an alternative to other beverages; others drink it because they prefer its taste or think it is safer than their tap water. Whether it travels through a pipe to your home or comes packaged in a bottle, safe drinking water is essential to good health. All our drinking water comes from similar sources, either from sources we can see, such as rivers and lakes, or from sources we can't see, such as underground aquifers.

In the same way that tap water's taste and quality may vary from place to place, so too does bottled water's taste and quality vary among and even within brands. The taste and quality of both bottled water and tap water depend on the source and quality of the water, including its natural mineral content and how, or if, the water is treated. Drinking water (both bottled and tap) can reasonably be expected to contain at least small amounts of some contaminants. The presence of contaminants does not necessarily indicate that the water poses a health risk. For example, minerals such as magnesium and calcium give water a distinctive flavor, and are essential to the body.

At high levels, however, these and other contaminants, such as pesticides or microbes from human wastes, can cause adverse effects or illness. (USA Food and Drug Administration, Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition, College Park, www.cfsan.fda.gov). Likely to the United States of America, bottled water is readily available as a convenient and healthy beverage in a wide range of formats and packaging materials in our Country, Ethiopia. In the history of bottled water, Ambo Mineral water stood first since 1930 enjoying a larger volume of sales through which leads the market followed by other mineral water bottling companies. In less than a decade time, there has been different bottled water producers entering into the business, some of them failed to continue and some of them continue as successful as the few existing mineral water producers accompanied by new bottled water producers penetrating the market.

Presently there are more than fifty seven mineral and bottled water producers, majority of them passed through a thorough certification process mandated by the Ethiopian Quality and Standards Authority (EQSA) and the Ethiopian Conformity Assessment Enterprise (ECAE), (Source: Bottled Drinking Water Specification, ES 597:2001).

According to the two most influential pioneers of brand equity conceptualizations, Aaker and Keller, there are two principal and distinct perspectives that have been taken by academics to study brand equity. The first one is financial and the second one is customer based. The first perspective of brand equity is from a financial market's point of view where the asset value of a brand is appraised (Farquhar 1990). CBBE is evaluating the consumer's response to a brand name (Keller 1993, Shocker et al. 1994). The CBBE is made up of five dimensions that helps measurement of brand equity through which the Brand Equity Model is envisaged: Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty and other proprietary brand asset, Aaker, 1991.

The brand equity construct contributes in both theoretically and practically on CBBE, measurement and assisting managers in a way that it impacts organizations' business performance and profitability at high level. Based on this, attainable brand strategies can be devised and initiates further studies and elaboration of the theory and practice. This study has mainly focused on the customers' perspective in a way that how the existing bottled water companies used to be mentally available in the consumers' mind and how Aaker's CBBE model is applicable in turn to secure long term and sustainable markets. The existence of bottled water competitive markets offer wide range of opportunities to the customers to choose own favorite brands from shelves among different shops based on the brand equity set in mind.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Every day consumers make purchase decisions by choosing among large sets of related products available for sale in outlets. What factors might systematically affect how consumers make decisions among an array of products? Within the same outlet, one may be searching for a different brand from similar types of products to meet an immediate need, while others may simply choose any of the brands. Just as they can have different taste and selection when they enter an outlet, individual consumers may approach purchase decisions with different *mind sets* that can affect how they purchase.

The existence of varied customers' tastes and selection of a brands defines how customers percept a product on shelves that is reflection of customers' cognitive processes and judgmental criteria, once activated, can carry over to unrelated tasks and decisions. In other words, if you get a consumer *thinking a certain way*, that way of thinking, that mindset, can influence his or her subsequent purchase behavior, which is of his/her perception.

For the case of the Addis Ababa bottled water market, in the past eight months, from September 2015 to April 2016, three new brands have entered the market, 'One', 'Gift' and 'Diamond', which are products of different private limited companies. From this we can observe that the market is facing a stiff competition. On the other hand, there is no theoretical evidence for the application of CBBE contributing or ensuring sustainable market share in the Ethiopian bottled water market. So that the gap observed that is found to be an initiation to conduct the study is lack of theoretical evidence that can be used as an insight to understand customers' perception towards building a brand through the use of brand equity dimensions. Besides, the current composition of above fifty bottled water brands in the industry have not been clear which dimension of the brand equity strongly influences the customer's perception to prefer a brand.

1.3. Research Questions

In line with the above general introduction on the subject matter and description of statement of the problem, the main research question of this paper were

- What are the key factors that determine CBBE of bottled water Market in Addis Ababa?
- Do factors determining CBBE of bottled water markets in Addis Ababa vary based on demographic characteristics of respondents?

1.4. Objectives of the Study

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this paper is mainly to understand what key factors are there determining CBBE in the bottled water market.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this study are:

- To identify factors that determines consumers' perception in view of brand equity dimensions
- To identify the most influential brand equity dimension

1.5. Significance of the Study

Brands stand out of the other marketing mix elements owing to the fact that they are capable of incorporating the positive effects of all marketing activities, and by this they become effective signals of quality for the experience and credence attributes (Erdem et al. 2006, Goldfarb et al. 2009). The importance of this study is to provide bottled water manufacturing brand managers an insight about CBBE based of Aaker's Brand Equity Dimensions Model.

This significance is emanated from how vital and helpful for managers to understand the relationship between the factors determining CBBE and the dimensions of brand equity in turn building brand equity will be worth contributing to the success of the business.

1.6. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study is encircled with the subject matter of customers' perception in view of CBBE upon the Brand Equity Dimension of Aaker's Brand Equity Model. The geographic concentration was Addis Ababa bottled water market, particularly selected markets. The duration in which data was collected through employing developed questionnaires was in between April 2016 and May 2016. Research design was selected to be descriptive and data gathered was quantitative and analyzed use of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) application.

1.7. Organization of the Research Report

This research is organized into five chapters comprising Introduction entailing background and theoretical introduction to the study, Review of Related Literature, Research Design & Methodology, Results and Discussion, and finally Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations.

The first chapter provides a general introduction of the study including background of the study, statement of the problem, the research questions, and objectives of the study, significance of the study and scope of the study.

Chapter two covers the literature review part of the study, which are relevant to the study. It includes concepts and theoretical framework as well as discussion on the customer-based brand equity model.

Chapter three elaborates the type and design of the research. It also includes research method, sampling technique, data collection method and method of data analysis that are used in the study.

Chapter four discusses in detail the findings of the study on the result of the data collected and analysis made using the statistical tools stated in the research methodology part.

Finally chapter five summarizes the findings, conclusions, recommendations and limitations of the study.

1.8. Operational Definition of Terms

Brand: Any name, term, design, style, words, symbols or any other feature that distinguishes the goods and services of one seller from another.

Brand Identity: It is the representation of the company's reputation through the conveyance of attributes, values, purpose, strength and passion.

Brand Image: It is a set of beliefs held about a specific brand.

Brand Preference: It is a measure of brand loyalty in which a consumer will choose a particular brand in presence of competing brands, but will accept substitutes if that brand is not available.

Brand Equity: Set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand name and symbol, which add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service.

Brand Equity Dimensions: A framework through which brand equity is built in with the components of brand awareness, brand association; brand perceived quality, brand loyalty and other proprietary assets.

Brand Awareness: It is the strength of the brand node or trace in memory, as reflected by consumers' ability to identify the brand under different conditions.

Brand Association: It is about brand-related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, attitudes and is anything linked in memory to a brand

Brand Perceived Quality: It is the customer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority that is different from objective quality

Brand Loyalty: It is the attachment that a customer has to a brand.

Customer Based Brand Equity: It is the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

This chapter provides an insight to the readers about the theoretical view of the topics under study. In line with the objectives of the study, it covers topics related to brand, brand equity, customer based brand equity and brand preference. Furthermore, the conceptual framework of this study is presented at the end of the chapter.

2.1. Concepts and Definition

Concept of Branding

This study aims to test customers' perception towards building brand equity, which is described as dimensions of brand equity extending Aaker's Brand Equity Model (1991). Before deep dive into the detail concepts of brand equity, the meaning of brand and its origin needs to be defined. The word "brand" derived from the Old Norse "brander", meaning "to burn"-recalling the practice of producers burning their mark (or brand) onto their products. (Marketing Magazine.co.uk, 2006). The idea or concept of branding was essentially to depict ownership of things which had value. For instance, livestock branding was adopted to differentiate one person's cattle from another's by means of distinctive symbol burned onto the animal's skin with a hot branding iron. Ancient Egyptian brick-makers drew symbols on bricks to identify their products (Farquhar, 1990), shop keepers in the ancient Roman and Greek times used symbols to identify their shops.

The transit of using branding for the purpose of "I own it" to "I made it, so buy it" started to evolve in the 1800s during the great industrial revolution. A brand consists of any name, term, design, style, words, symbols or any other feature that distinguishes the goods and services of one seller from another (A Brief Definition of Brand, Boundless Business. 2015). Branding gives greater meaning to a company's name and its products. Companies build brands using memorable names, symbols such as logos and other images and phrases catchy slogans, for instance, sometimes become strongly connected to a brand so that people can easily recall the brand from hearing the slogan. Consumers distinguish one product or service from another by its brand. According to Hammond (2008) brand is defined as the total emotional experience a customer has with a company and its product or service. In furthering this author describes brand as the emotional connection planted in the mind of customers who had an interaction with a

company, its staff, product or service. Kapferer (2008) states a brand is a name that influences people and commands their attention.

Brands are important valuable intangible assets for companies (Kotler, 2006) which can convey positive or negative message about a product, along with indicating the company or its service to the consumer. A successful brand can create and sustain a strong positive and lasting impression in the mind of a consumer. Building a strong brand will enable companies to be able to command higher prices, market share penetration by advertising, speeding up new product acceptance and resisting price erosion. In addition to these, companies with strong brands have the advantage of easily attracting dedicated employees who are loyal to the company and the brand.

As one of several important concepts in marketing a business, a brand is a source of competitive advantage which companies should benefit by employing effective brand strategy. Strong brand increases the company's sales volume, create great awareness and introduces the product or the service that the company is offering.

Brand Identity

Brand identity is the representation of the company's reputation through the conveyance of attributes, values, purpose, strength and passion. It is the aggregation of what the organization does. Brand identity is an organization's mission, personality, promise to the consumers and competitive advantages. It is a basic means of consumer recognition and represents the brand's distinction from its competitors (Management Study Guide, 2013). Brand identity consists of various elements that are closely related. This includes not only the promise that the brand makes, but also the means of communication, the brand positioning, the image (logo) and the way in which the product is designed. Other attributes of a brand include brand culture, corporate image, investment made by a firm towards building brands and enhancing brand awareness through communication in various media.

Brand identity is the noticeable elements of a brand, for instance-trademark color, logo, name, symbol, that identify and differentiate a brand in target audience's mind. It is a crucial means to grow the company's brand.

An organization communicates its identity to the consumer through its branding and marketing strategies. Every brand has a unique chronology and experience built over time through strong and consistent communication. (Rajagopal, 2007). As it represents how an organization wants to be perceived in the market, creating effective brands and brand communication requires commitment. Organizations should understand that development of corporate reputation is a process which integrates communication, identity and trust in raising brands.

Brand Image

Brand image is a set of beliefs held about a specific brand. It is the manner in which a specific brand is positioned in the market. Brand image is the accumulation of contact and observation by people external to an organization. Positive brand image is exceeding the customers' expectations, the main element of positive brand image are-unique logo reflecting organization's image, slogan describing organization's business in brief and brand identifier supporting the key values (Management Study Guide, 2013).

Brand image is the objective and mental feedback of the consumers when they purchase a product. It enhances the goodwill and brand value of an organization. The idea behind brand image is that the consumer is not purchasing just the product/service but also the image associated with that product/service. Brand image can be strengthened using brand communications like advertising, packaging, word of mouth publicity, other promotional tools, etc.

The brand image consists of various associations in consumers' mind-attributes and benefits. Brand attributes are the functional and mental connections with the brand that the customers have. They can be specific or conceptual. Benefits are the rationale for the purchase decisions. Brand image is actually brand content. When the consumers purchase the product, they are also purchasing its image associations of the product, such as power, wealth, sophistication, and most importantly identification and association with other users of the brand.

Brand Preference

Business Dictionary defines brand preference as measure of brand loyalty in which a consumer will choose a particular brand in presence of competing brands, but will accept substitutes if that brand is not available. In another definition, brand preference reflects a desire to use a particular company's product(s) or service(s) even when there are equally-priced and equally-available alternatives. In fact, it indicates a desire to seek out a specific product or service even when it requires paying more or expending more effort to obtain it. (Study.com, 2015.)

According to Anselmsson (2008), brand preference is the sum of unique assets captured by the consumers and measured by the brand strength experienced by the consumer. One of the most commonly used metrics of brand performance and brand strength, brand preference characterizes which brand/product/service is preferred under assumptions of equal price and availability. Brand preference can be considered an indicator of the effectiveness of the company's marketing strategies, customer loyalty, and heterogeneity of consumer choices. (MBASkool.com, 2014).

Brand preference can be further seen as a consumer's predisposition towards a brand that varies according to the cognitive, effective and conative effects that the brand has had on the consumer. In simple words, it implies consumer's biasness towards a certain brand as a result of the consumer's rational, emotional or behavioral responses towards the brand proposition and marketing strategy. Brand preference is important to companies because it provides an indicator of their customers' loyalty, the success of their marketing tactics, and the strength of their respective brands.

Corporate Branding

Corporate branding involves marketing various products or services under the name of a company. Product branding, on the other hand, is a marketing strategy wherein a business promotes and markets an individual product without the company name being front and center in the advertising campaigns or even on the product labeling.

Corporate branding employs the same methodology and toolbox used in product branding, but it also elevates the approaches a step further into the board room, where additional issues around stakeholder relations can help the corporation benefit from a strong and well-managed corporate branding strategy.

Corporate branding is a particular type of branding that seeks to link the name of the corporation with the overall advertising efforts in the mind of the consumer. It is a key element in gaining recognition for a product or family of products and establishing a long-term reputation in the marketplace. (The advantages of Corporate Branding, Dennis Hartman. 2015). Corporate branding is not limited to a specific mark or name. It can incorporate multiple touch points like logo, customer service, treatment and training of employees, packaging, advertising, stationery, and quality of products and services. When applying corporate branding to a product or products, companies need to follow a few guidelines. A corporate brand should be easy to recognize and attract attention. It should also be legally protectable and suggest the company or product image.

A strong corporate branding strategy can add significant value in terms of helping the entire corporation and the management team to implement the long-term vision, create unique position in the market place of the company and its brands, and not the least to unlock the leadership potential within the organization. Hence a corporate branding strategy can enable the corporation to further leverage on its tangible and non-tangible assets leading to Branding Excellence throughout the corporation.

Corporate branding has the ability to make a product very successful. If the brand name has track record of a guarantee of quality, then there are huge amounts of money to be made by suing the name and vice versa. Moreover, corporate branding helps customers relate to a business and identify a wide range of product offers over time. Effective branding minimizes the need for large marketing initiatives for every new product as the consumer has a pre-set understanding of the product's quality, reliability and purpose. As products with new technology and feature are emerging rapidly into the market, corporate branding is the only tool to gain the trust and values of consumers (Rajagopal, 2007), if existing and older products are to stay in the market.

2.2. Brand Equity

Brand equity is the tangible and intangible value that a brand provides positively or negatively to an organization, its products, its services, and its bottom-line derived from consumer knowledge, perception, and experiences with the brand.

D. Aaker defines brand equity as a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand name and symbol, which add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service. In another definition, brand equity is the positive differential effect that knowing the brand name has on customer response to the product or service. (Philip Kotler, 2006). Moreover, as per the Official Marketing Science definition, brand equity is the set of associations and behaviour on the part of a brand's customer, channel members and Parent Corporation that permits the brand to earn greater volume or greater margins that it could without the brand name (Kapferer, 2008).

Brand equity is just one way of saying that a product or service has superior features and is therefore profitable for the company that owns the brand. This profitability may be due to market share and/or to the price commanded by the product because of its brand equity. There are two perspectives from which brand equity can be viewed. One is customer-based, which focuses exclusively on the relationship customers have with the brand (from total indifference to attachment, loyalty, and willingness to buy and re-buy based on beliefs of superiority and evoked emotions). The other relates to suppliers, by which brand equity is viewed as a financial asset. It aims at producing measures in monetary values. (Kapferer, 2008). According to Keller, (2004) brand equity is generated by consumers, who base their (re)purchase behaviours on the judgement of a brand's value to themselves.

2.3. Theoretical and Empirical Review

Customer-Based Brand Equity - the Aaker's Model

The concept of Customer-Based Brand Equity has been given a detailed analysis by Keller, (2003). He came up with a justifiable recommendation on how it is structured and how we can make use of many variables in order to build strong brand equity.

The determinants of customer-based brand equity were conceptualized by Aaker (1996) as five elements namely Brand Awareness, Perceived Quality, Brand Association, Brand Loyalty and other proprietary brand assets. The elements are discussed in detail as follows.

Brand Awareness

The first dimension distinguishing brand knowledge is brand awareness. It is related to the strength of the brand node or trace in memory, as reflected by consumers' ability to identify the brand under different conditions (Rossiter and Percy 1987). In other words, how well do the brand identities serve their function? In particular, brand name awareness relates to the likelihood that a brand name will come to mind and the ease with which it does so.

Brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall performance. Brand recognition relates to consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when given the brand as a cue. In other words, brand recognition requires that consumers correctly discriminate the brand as having been seen or heard previously. Brand recall relates to consumers' ability to retrieve the brand when given the product category, the need is fulfilled by the category, or some other type of probe as a cue. In other words, brand recall requires that consumers correctly generate the brand from memory. Rossiter and Percy (1987) also argued that the relative importance of brand recall and recognition depends on the extent to which consumers make decisions in the store (where they potentially may be exposed to the brand) versus outside the store.

Brand awareness plays an important role in consumer decision making for three major reasons. First, it is important that consumers think of the brand when they think about the product category. Raising brand awareness increases the likelihood that the brand will **be a** member of the consideration set (Keller 1993), the handful of brands that receive serious consideration for purchase. Second, brand awareness can affect decisions about brands in the consideration set, even if there are essentially no other brand associations. For example, consumers have been shown to adopt a decision rule to buy only familiar, well established brands. In low involvement decision settings, a minimum level of brand awareness may be sufficient for product choice, even in the absence of a well-formed attitude (Park and Lessig 1981).

Brand Associations

A brand association is the most accepted aspect of brand equity. Associations represent the basis for purchase decision and for brand loyalty (Aaker 1991). Brand associations consist of all brand-related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, attitudes (Kotler and Keller 2006, p. 188) and is anything linked in memory to a brand. Other researchers (Farquhar 1990) identify different types of association that contribute to the brand equity. Chen (2001) categorized two types of brand associations - product associations and organizational associations.

A) Product Associations

Product associations include functional attribute associations and non-functional associations (Chen 2001). Functional attributes are the tangible features of a product (Keller 1993). If a brand does not perform the functions for which it is designed, the brand will have a low level of brand equity. Performance is defined as a consumer's judgment about a brand's fault-free and long-lasting physical operation and flawlessness in the product's physical construction (Lassar et al. 1995).

Non-functional attributes include symbolic attributes which are the intangible features that meet consumers' needs for social approval, personal expression or self-esteem. These include trustworthiness, perceived value, differentiation and country of origin of the brand. (Keller 1993).

B) Organizational Associations

Organizational associations include corporate-ability associations, which are those associations related to the company's expertise in producing and delivering its outputs and corporate social responsibility associations, which include organization's activities with respect to its perceived societal obligations (Chen 2001). According to Aaker (1996), consumers consider the organization that is the people, values, and programs that lies behind the brand. Brand-as-organization can be particularly helpful when brands are similar with respect to attributes, when the organization is visible (as in a durable goods or service business), or when a corporate brand is involved. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) must be mentioned as another concept that is influencing the development of brands nowadays, especially corporate brands as the public

wants to know what, where, and how much brands are giving back to society. Both branding and CSR have become crucially important now that the organizations have recognized how these strategies can add or detract from their value. CSR can be defined in terms of legitimate ethics or from an instrumentalist perspective where corporate image is the prime concern.

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is viewed as a dimension of brand equity rather than as a part of the overall brand association (Keller 1992). Perceived quality is the customer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority that is different from objective quality (Zeithaml 1988). Objective quality refers to the technical, measurable and verifiable nature of products/services, processes and quality controls. High objective quality does not necessarily contribute to brand equity (Anselmsson et al. 2008). Since it's impossible for consumers to make complete and correct judgments of the objective quality, they use quality attributes that they associate with quality.

Perceived quality is hence formed to judge the overall quality of a product/service. Boulding (1993) argued that quality is directly influenced by perceptions. Consumers use the quality attributes to 'infer' quality of an unfamiliar product. It is therefore important to understand the relevant quality attributes are with regard to brand equity. Zeithaml (1988) and Steenkamp (1997) classify the concept of perceived quality in two groups of factors that are intrinsic attributes and extrinsic attributes. The intrinsic attributes are related to the physical aspects of a product (e.g. colour, flavour, form and appearance); on the other hand, extrinsic attributes are related to the product, but not in the physical part of this one e.g. brand name, stamp of quality, price, store, packaging and production information (Bernue's et al.2003).

Brand Loyalty

Loyalty is a core dimension of brand equity. Aaker (1991) defines brand loyalty as ignition of terms. Grembler and Brown (1996) describe different levels of loyalty. Behavioural loyalty is linked to consumer behaviour in the marketplace that can be indicated by number of repeated purchases (Keller 1998) or commitment to re-buy the brand as a primary choice. Cognitive loyalty which means that a brand comes up first in a consumers' mind, when the need to make a

purchase decision arises, that is the consumers' first choice. The cognitive loyalty is closely linked to the highest level of awareness (top-of-mind), where the matter of interest also is the brand, in a given category, which the consumers recall first. Thus, a brand should be able to become the respondents' first choices (cognitive loyalty) and is therefore purchased repeatedly (behavioural loyalty) (Keller 1998).

Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001) mentioned that brand loyalty is directly related to brand price. Aaker (1996) identifies price premium as the basic indicator of loyalty. Price premium is defined as the amount a customer will pay for the brand in comparison with another brand offering similar benefits and it may be high or low and positive or negative depending on the two brands involved in the comparison.

The Keller Model

A major contribution to branding theory was that made by Kevin Keller (1993; 2001; 2003) with his introduction of the concept of customer-based brand equity and the brand hierarchy (Keller, 2003). Brand equity, according to Keller, is the effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of a brand, with the effect occurring when the brand is known and when the consumer possesses favorable, strong and unique brand associations (Keller, 1993). The Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model identifies four steps which denote questions asked by customers, and represent a 'branding ladder', with each step dependent on achieving the previous one (Keller, 2001).

These steps consist of six brand building blocks, with a number of sub-dimensions (Keller, 1993). To build a strong brand, the aim is to reach the pinnacle of the pyramid where a harmonious relationship exists with customers. Briefly overviewed, the first step of the CBBE model is to ensure the correct 'brand identity'. Answering the first question customers ask about brands - Who are you? The purpose is to create an identification of the brand, and an association with a specific product class or need (Keller, 2003). The initial step consists of the brand building block, 'salience'.

The second step answers the customer question - What are you? By establishing 'brand meaning' in their minds, and linking brand associations with certain properties (Keller, 2001), two brand building blocks make up this step - 'performance' and 'imagery'.

1. Identity (Who are you?)
2. Meaning (What are you?)
3. Response (What about you?)
4. Relationships (What about you and me?)

The next step is 'brand response' whereby the proper customer responses to the brand identification and meaning are elicited (Keller, 2003). This step is achieved with the 'judgments' and 'feelings' building blocks, and answers the question - What about you? 'Brand relationships' constitutes the final step in the CBBE pyramid where brand response is converted to an intense, active loyalty relationship between customers and the brand (Keller, 2001). Addressing the customer question of what about you and me? The final brand building block and the pinnacle of the pyramid is 'resonance'.

Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior involves the thoughts and feelings people experience and the actions they perform in consumption processes. It also includes all the things in the environment that influence these thoughts, feelings, and actions. According to The American Marketing Association (2014), consumer behavior is the dynamic interaction of affect and cognition, behavior, and the environment by which human beings conduct the exchange aspects of their lives. In another definition, consumer behavior is the study of individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes they use to select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these processes have on the consumer and society.

Marketers expect that by understanding what causes the consumers to buy particular goods and services, they will be able to determine-which products are needed in the marketplace, which are obsolete, and how best to present the goods to the consumers. Knowing what makes customers to

prefer between brands will make the manufacturer to adapt strategies based on the influential factors.

Understanding the behavior of consumers before they made purchase decision will help for product manufacturers and service providers to develop strategies in line with customers' actions. Particularly knowing what makes customers to prefer between brands will make the manufacturer to adapt strategies based on the influential factors. Unable to analyze the antecedents hinder companies from being competitive. Hence, understanding the behavior of consumers specially their brand preference has to be a critical issue and concern for strategic developers.

Consumer Buying Decision Process

The buyer decision process is the decision making process used by consumers regarding market transaction before, during and after the purchase of a good or service. Marketers need to focus on the entire buying process rather than on just the purchase decision. The purchase is only the visible part of a more complex decision process created by the consumer for each buying decision the consumer makes. There are factors influencing the choice of product purchase by the consumer.

- a) **Need recognition:** According to Jobber D. (2007), the need recognition is essentially functional and recognition may take place over a period of time. This occurs whenever the consumer sees a significant difference between his or her current state of affairs and some desired or ideal state. The need can be triggered by internal stimuli or by external stimuli. Internal stimuli can trigger a need when one of the individuals' normal needs like hunger, thirst shelter raises to a level high enough to become a drive. From previous experience, the individual has learnt how to cope with this drive and is motivated towards objects that will satisfy the need. External stimuli can also trigger a need. In this instance, the marketer needs to determine the factors and situations that usually trigger consumer need recognition. The marketer should research consumers to investigate what kind of need or problem arises and what brings a consumer to prefer one brand over the other. In this stage of the consumer buying process the consumer perceives there is a problem to be solved, which may be large or small, simple or complex. In this case, the factories

should research what their customers want from a bottled water brand so that they can cater to their needs.

- b) **Information search:** the information search begins with the identification of alternative ways of gathering information about the product consumer intend to purchase (Jobber D., 2007). It is the process by which the consumer surveys his or her environment for appropriate data to make a reasonable decision. Normally, the amount of information searching activities of a consumer depends on the type of product which either require high involvement or low involvement. For a product that requires high involvement there might be a significant differences between brands which require an immense effort or insignificant differences between brands which leads to dissonance reducing buying decisions.

The consumer can acquire information regarding a particular product from various sources. These sources include personal sources like family and friends, commercial sources like advertising, salespeople or displays, public sources like mass media and social networking sites and finally experiential source like handling, examining and using of product. The relative influence of these information sources varies with the product and the buyer. For this research, the source of information for the various bottled water brands can be collected based on their previous experience on usage as well as external source like friends, colleagues, neighbors, several published Medias and so on.

- c) **Evaluation of alternatives:** The process of evaluating alternatives involves comparing the information gained in the information search process for alternative products and brands to the product–judging criteria or standards the consumer has developed. For purchase decisions, the choice alternatives are the different product classes, product forms, brands, or models the consumer considers buying (J. Paul Peter and Jerry C. Olson, 2010).. Usually only a subset of all possible alternatives, called the consideration set, is evaluated. Some brands in the **consideration set** may be activated directly from memory; this group is called the **evoked set**. For highly familiar decisions, consumers may not consider any brands beyond those in the evoked set. If consumers are confident they already know the important choice alternatives, they are not likely to search for additional ones (J. Paul Peter and Jerry C. Olson, 2010).

Consumers' evaluations of the choice alternatives in the consideration set are based on their beliefs about the consequences of buying those products or brands. The specific consequences used to evaluate and choose among choice alternatives are called evaluation criteria. Evaluation criteria are the dimensions used to judge the merits of competing brands.

- d) **Purchase decision:** A purchasing decision usually follows strong purchase intentions. In this stage the consumer actually buys the product they have chosen. Generally, the consumer's purchase decision will be to buy the most preferred brand. A consumer's decision to change, postpone or avoid a purchase decision is influenced heavily by perceived risk. Many purchases involve some risk and the amount of perceived risk varies with the amount of money at stake, the amount of purchase uncertainty and the amount of consumer self-confidence. A consumer takes certain actions to reduce risk, such as avoiding purchase decisions, gathering more information and looking for national brand names and product warranties (Jobber D., 2007).

- e) **Post-purchase evaluation/behavior:** in this stage the consumers take further action after the purchase decision by evaluating their satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Consumer satisfaction or dissatisfaction is determined by the overall feelings, or attitude, a person has about a product after it has been purchased. Consumers engage in a constant process of evaluating the things they buy as they integrate these products into their daily consumption activities (Jobber D., 2007).

Empirical Reviews: Underlying factors of Customer Based Brand Equity and Brand Preference

Brands must be developed and maintained constantly in order to secure a set of loyal consumers. Keller et al. (1996) stated that the loyalty of consumers lies with brands, rather than the products.

There were several researches done on the Customer Based Brand Equity of different products. To name a few, Abad (2012) studied The Customer Based Brand Equity in the Banking sector of Iran aiming to conceptualize the customer based brand equity in the financial service sector with respect to its effect on perception of brand. After employing Aaker's (1996) CBBE model, they found out that Perceived quality, brand loyalty, brand awareness and brand association are influential criteria of brand equity that enhances perception of brand in financial service sector.

Among the four mentioned dimensions, brand association appears to have the most influence on brand equity.

Also Hossien (2012) studied The Customer Based Brand Equity in the Chocolate industry of Iran with the intention of identifying which factors are influential in building brand equity and also to measure the relationship among the dimensions of CBBE in the Iranian chocolate industry. After employing Aaker's CBBE model, the researcher found out that the brand equity of chocolate products is directly made up of two dimensions, namely brand loyalty and brand image. These two dimensions have a medium direct impact on brand equity. Other dimensions have a very small and indirect impact on brand equity that in chocolate industry of Iran.

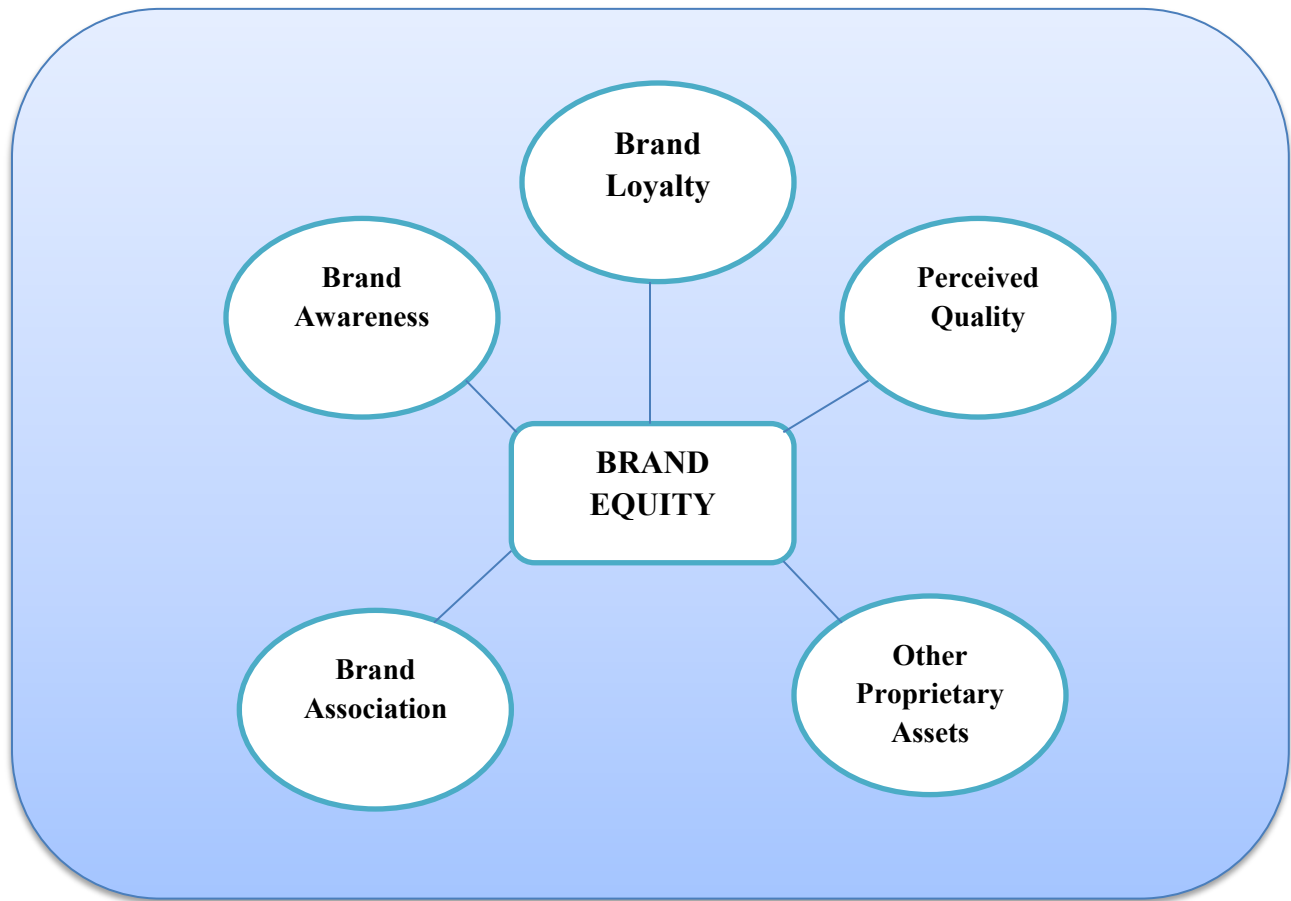
To quote a third article, Tong and Hawley (2009), researched about measuring Customer Based Brand Equity in the Sportswear market in China. Based on Aaker's conceptual framework of brand equity, they employed structural equation modeling to investigate the causal relationships among the four dimensions of brand equity and overall brand equity in the sportswear industry. The study used a sample of 304 actual consumers from China's two largest cities, Beijing and Shanghai. The research's findings concluded that, brand association and brand loyalty are influential dimensions of brand equity and weak support was found for the perceived quality and brand awareness dimensions. Thus implying that sportswear brand managers and marketing planners should consider the relative importance of brand equity in their overall brand equity evaluation, and should concentrate their efforts primarily on building brand loyalty and image.

In summary, although no literature was found with regards to the Ethiopian Bottled Water Industry all the above literatures reviewed in this chapter and others give insight about the dimensions of CBBE in different industries. Accordingly, this research is designed in line with these dimensions. Figure 2.1, of the next section portrays the conceptual framework of the study.

2.4. Conceptual Framework of the study

The main purpose of this study is to have a detailed analysis about the Customer Based Brand Equity in the Ethiopian Bottled Water Industry. Based on the above related literature review and concepts the conceptual frame work for this study is developed.

Figure 2.2 Conceptual Framework of the Consumer-Based Brand Equity



According to the initial model proposed by Aaker (1991), other proprietary assets were the fifth variable. For the purpose of this study this dimension was not found relevant by the researcher. This is because other proprietary assets do not measure Brand Equity from consumers perspective, instead other proprietary assets measure Customer Based Brand Equity from company perspective Hence, other proprietary assets was substituted with brand Preference, the degree in which a customer definitely prefers one brand over competitive offerings and will purchase this brand if it is available (Dibb et al., 2006).

2.5. Summary of Literature Review

In the detailed part of the literature review, core points with regards to brand, brand identity, brand image, brand preference, branding, customers, brand equity, brand equity dimension, consumer behavior, consumer buying decision and the underlying conceptual framework were discussed.

These various terms and concepts were defined clearly to provide strong conceptual grounds in the context of the subject area studied. The first part discussed about a brand consists of any name, term, design, style, words, symbols or any other feature that distinguishes the goods and services of one seller from another. This representation conveys attributes, values, purpose, strength and passion of a brand, which helps a consumer to recognize and distinctively identifies a brand from its competitors. The other context of the review revealed that when a customer buys one's brand, the brand image gives an objective and mental feedback so as to purchase a product and the purchase is not only a product, but also image associations of the product, such as power, wealth, sophistication, and most importantly identification and association with other users of the brand (Asia Market Research Dot Com, 2015).

The conceptual framework of the study revolved around brand equity, which is the tangible and intangible value that a brand provides positively or negatively to an organization, its products, its services, and its bottom-line derived from consumer knowledge, perception, and experiences with the brand. The dimensions of this brand equity are the bases for understanding how customers perceive a product in relation to how they are aware of the brand, the association set in consumers' mind from the organization and product perspective that eventually give a brand to be loyal and preferred to others competing brands.

Depending on the nature of a company's brand, customers' preference, functional benefits of a brand and the associations made with a brand, the intensity towards using the dimensions while building brand equity will be varied and the result as well. The brand equity is about the reflection of consumers' behavior through activating the brand equity dimensions. Consumers' Behavior reveals that individuals, groups, or organizations and the processes use to select, secure and dispose of products, services, experiences or ideas to satisfy needs and the impacts that these

processes have on the consumer and society. Consumers' behavior determines the purchasing decision to take upon how a brand is preferred with its features, functional benefits, the level of brand awareness and association.

The conceptual framework depicted showed that based on Aaker, Brand Equity Dimensions Model (1991), the dimensions of brand equity mainly of brand awareness, brand association, brand perceived quality and brand loyalty are discussed. However, did not consider the dimension of other proprietary assets, because it does not measure Brand Equity from consumers' perspective; instead other proprietary assets measure Customer Based Brand Equity from company perspective.

Chapter Three: Research Methodology

This chapter presented detailed discussion of the research methodology employed in the study. Hence, topics related to research design, data type and source, target population, sampling technique and sample size, data collection procedure and method of data analysis are covered. Explanation about the reliability and validity of the study is also included in this chapter.

2.1. Research Design

Having the Customer Based Brand Equity frame work as a base for this study, a research framework is designed to test the research questions need to be answered in relation to the bottled water market in Addis Ababa Market. The effect of the four variables on the overall brand equity of the consumers is tested.

Taking this into account, the research type is a causal research type and was surveyed through structured questionnaires that the quantitative data was analyzed to test the effect of the brand equity dimensions on consumer based brand equity.

2.2. Data Type and Source

Both primary and secondary sources of data have been employed in the study. Primary data is collected by the administered questionnaires that were distributed to randomly selected respondents while the secondary data is collected from publications including books, researches, journals and various materials that had relevance to this study.

2.3. Sample and Sampling Techniques

As stated in the scope of the study, the research has tried to test the determinants of customer-based brand equity in the bottled water market only in Addis Ababa due to limitations of location, time and financial resources. Hence, the populations of the research was all persons in Addis Ababa who consume bottled water of different brands though difficult to estimate the total population who use to consume bottled water.

To make the samples representative of the population, the sample frame from which samples drawn from different locations for bottled water consumers in the city were included. Thus, the

sample frame designed is made to be mainly employees in various organizations and customers in some shops and super market who use to buy bottled water for their consumptions on regular basis. Since the bottled water market is mainly characterized by its availability anywhere in offices, shops, kiosks, mini-markets, super markets, hypermarkets and these are selected as to gather data.

Though the factors to identify member of the population who use to drink bottled water is difficult to estimate the total population size of the consumer groups, the sample size is determined based on estimates of confidence level 95%, margin of error $\pm 5\%$ and standard deviation of 0.30, made to be the sample size 134. So that respondents are selected randomly from office staffs, shops and super markets where most of bottled water consumers are found.

Then, the samples were selected using a non-probability (convenience) sampling technique to which the prepared questionnaires are distributed to be filled in a self-administered manner. Even though there were some risks in adopting a convenience selection such as a questionable representativeness, hence questionable credibility of the findings, (Bryman, 2002). However, the study has avoided this by composing of a diversified sample consisting of bottled water from different markets in order to have a representative sample with different backgrounds in terms of age, gender, education background and type of brand they consume.

2.4.Data Collection methods

Since the questionnaire was one of the most important research instruments for collecting primary data, structured close ended questionnaires were distributed to the respondents (Appendix I). The choice of using close ended questionnaire was based on Fisher's view on structured questionnaire. According to Fisher (2007) if the researcher wants to quantify the research material, then it is best to use a structured approach. He further noted that in order to compare the views and experiences of a great many people it is easier if the approach is used. Given that this study aimed to test determinants of Customer Based Brand Equity in the Addis Ababa bottled water Industry through employing a structured questionnaire.

The questionnaire was designed in a way that clear, brief and understandable to the respondents as well as covered the relevant aspects of the model used; in addition the questionnaire was made underlining on commonly employed questions for different brand equity related studies.

According to Fisher (2007) it is recommended to keep the questionnaire as short as possible and give it a logical and sequential structure so that the respondent can easily see what the questionnaire is about and can follow its themes as they go through them. Hence, the questionnaire is composed of three parts. The first part of the questionnaire consisted of demographic information of respondents; the second part, on questions related to bottled water brand choice and their consumption habits and finally the third part, variables that measured the factors that were considered to make up the respondents Brand Equity. The most important part of the questionnaire which was part three composed of five variables that reflected the Customer based Brand Equity in the bottled water market and measured using a five point Likert scale.

A pilot survey was conducted on 10 respondents prior to administrating the questionnaire to the selected sample size. The pilot survey was conducted to check if the questionnaire is clear, easy to understand and straightforward to ensure that the respondents could answer the questions with no difficulty. It was also commented by the Advisor on so as to refine the questions to be answerable by the respondent. Based on the feedbacks, necessary changes were made on the questionnaire before administering to the selected sample size.

The data was collected by a self-administered face to face survey throughout the offices, kiosks, shops and super markets. The researcher with some assisting friends, managed personally to distribute and collect the questionnaires in the selected areas. This was good time to meet most of the consumers of and also to ensure that the respondents were diverse. Since convenience sampling was employed, the researcher selected bottled water consumers from different areas with varying backgrounds and diverse walks of life.

2.5. Reliability Test Techniques

For this study Cronbach's alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of variables in the research instrument. Cronbach's alpha is a coefficient of reliability used to measure the internal

consistency of the scale; it represents number between 0 and 1. According to Zikmund et al., (2010) scales with coefficient alpha between 0.6 and 0.7 indicate fair reliability. Thus, for this study, a Cronbach's alpha score of .70 or higher is considered adequate to determine reliability. The result of the Cronbach's alpha is annexed in the Appendices part.

2.6.Validity Analysis

Validity is the extent to which differences found with a measuring instrument reflect true differences among those being tested, (C.R. Kothari, 2004). In other words, Validity is the most critical criterion and indicates the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. In order to ensure the quality of the research design content and construct validity of the research were checked.

According to C.R Kothari (2004) Content validity is the extent to which a measuring instrument provides adequate coverage of the topic under study. If the instrument contains a representative sample of the universe, the content validity is good. Its determination is primarily judgmental and intuitive. It can also be determined by using a panel of persons who shall judge how well the measuring instrument meets the standards, but there is no numerical way to express it. Based on this definition the content validity was verified by the advisor of this research, to look into the appropriateness of the questions and the scales of measurement.

2.7.Data Analysis Techniques

Before the analysis of the primary data that was collected through close ended questionnaires, analysis of the variables' reliability and validity of the constructs was done and verified. To ensure reliability of this research, the questionnaire was designed to measure the concepts in the theoretical model in a consistent manner. This implied that the research study could be conducted by other researchers to arrive at the same findings. The validity of the research was concerned with the measurement of the data collection process implemented regarding the quality of the study. It outlined the evaluation of the quality of both the primary and secondary data used in the research. To ensure the validity of this study, each question in the questionnaire was designed to represent the concepts that are used in the conceptual framework of the study.

The data collected using the questionnaire was coded and processed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) application. Out of the total 150 questionnaires distributed, 134 were filled and returned. The findings of the study were then analyzed by using SPSS application. This was done using descriptive data analysis tools to measure frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviation graphic and tabular representation that helped the data to be as accurately as possible.

It was also planned to run analysis of the Pearson's correlation coefficient and multi-linear regression analysis to test interdependence between the independent and dependent variables. The independent variables were the main four brand equity dimensions; Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Brand Perceived Quality and Brand Loyalty, and the dependent variable was assumed to be the market share or sales figure of the bottled water brands in the market. Mainly, as there was no readily available and well organized data about the bottled water brands in the industry, I visited the Industry Minister to get the necessary data, however, was not successful and I didn't able to find any dependable data from the source and due to these reasons, the correlation and regression analysis were not conducted.

Chapter Four: Analysis and Discussion

All collected data is analyzed as well summarized in order to achieve the aim or objective of the research. As mentioned earlier this study was held to analyze dimensions of customer Based Brand Equity specific to the bottled water industry. Hence, the demographic profile of the respondents, their choice of bottled water brands, rate of consumption and other associated sub topics are analyzed in detail. Finally, summarized findings followed by conclusions of the study are presented.

The total number of respondents selected was 150; hence questionnaires were distributed after reaching them based on convenience. Out of the total 150 questionnaires that were distributed 134 of them were filled and returned. Accordingly, the data was analyzed and interpreted here below using the possible options of descriptive statistics.

2.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

To observe what demographic trend the sample population had, the questionnaire started off with demographic characteristics of respondents. This part of the questionnaire requested limited amount of information related to personal and demographic status of the respondents. Accordingly, the following variables about the respondents were summarized and described in the subsequent tables. These variables included; Gender, Age and Educational Background.

Table 4.1 Demographic Profile of respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gender	Male	80	59.7	59.7	59.7
	Female	54	40.3	40.3	100
	Total	134	100	100	
Age	18-25	16	11.9	11.9	11.9
	26-35	60	44.8	44.8	56.7
	36-50	53	39.6	39.6	96.3

	Above 50	5	3.7	3.7	100
	Total	134	100	100	
Education Background	< 12 Grade	5	3.7	3.7	3.7
	12 Complete	14	10.4	10.4	14.2
	Diploma	11	8.2	8.2	22.4
	Bachelor Degree	78	58.2	58.2	80.6
	Master's Degree	26	19.4	19.4	100
	Total	134	100	100	

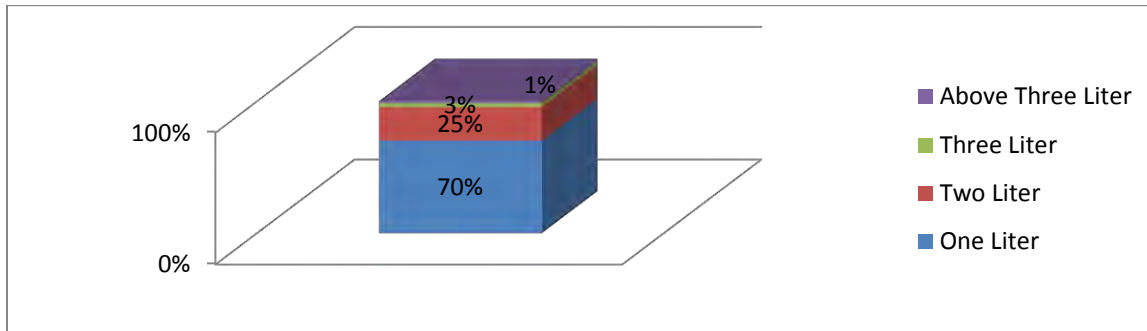
Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

The above table reveals that the respondents of the study are summarized and depicted in their respective demographic factors. From the total number of the respondents, 59.7% were found to be male respondents and 40.3 were female respondents while the data was looked via gender. In view of age distribution, it was taken by the age group of 26-35 with 44.8% followed by the age group of 36-50 by 39.6 and the other two 18-25 and above 50 age groups by 11.9 and 3.7% respectively. This implies that the major consumer age group is found to be the youngsters whose age fallen between 26-35.

When it comes to the findings, as to building brand equity to bottled water in the market, the first factor is checking how regular and how much liter per day a person use to consume. On this ground, the consumption level of the respondents is summarized in view of their demographic profile, gender, and age and education background.

Accordingly, the chart below represented the respondents' daily water consumption in liters.

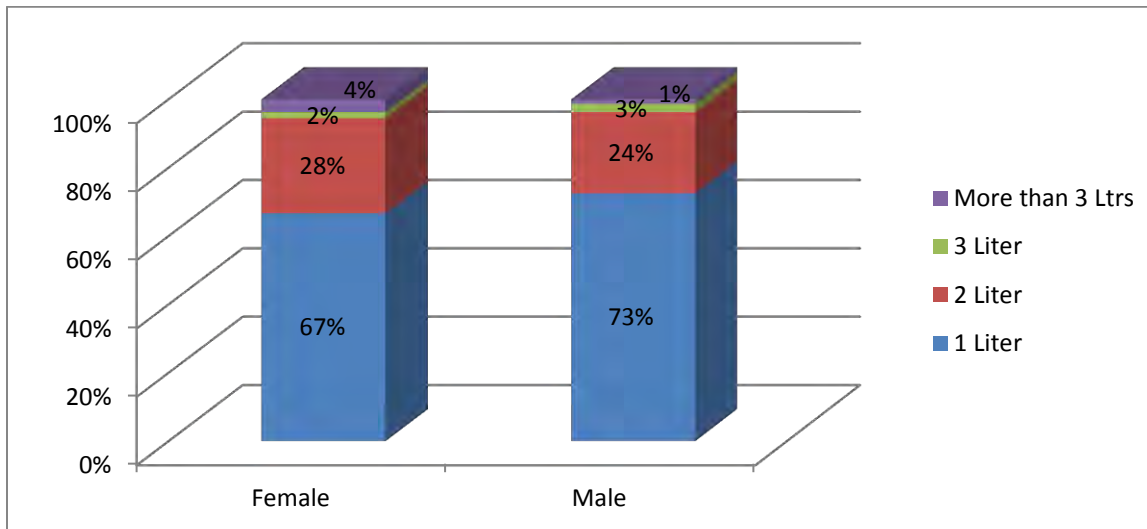
Chart 4.1: Respondents Total Water Consumption per day



Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Chart 4.1 shows that 70% of the total respondents used to consume a liter of water per day that reflects majority of the sample population drinks at least a liter of water per day.

Chart 4.2 Respondents' Daily Water Consumption by gender.

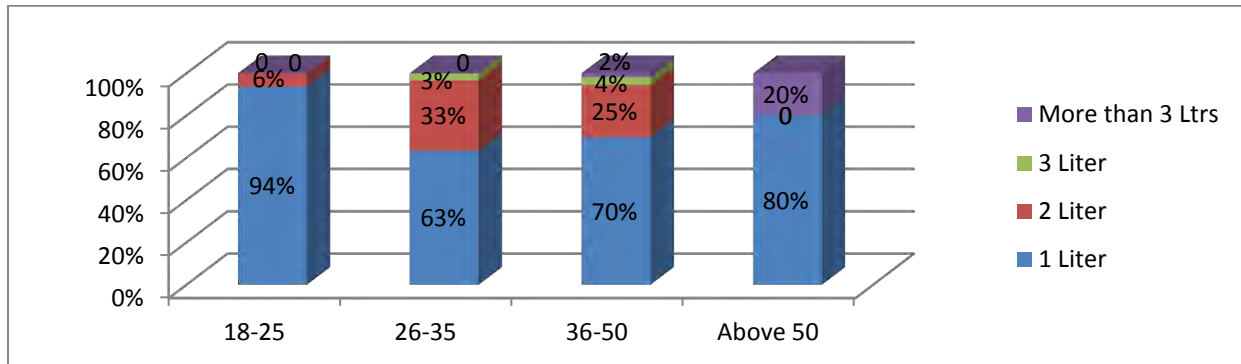


Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Chart 4.2 shows that upon the highest daily consumption of one liter per day, the male population took the larger share, which is 73% out of the male respondents whereas the female took 67% of the female respondents. The other consumption rate is represented by the rest of the population from both genders.

When it comes to age distribution of respondents, the result is depicted here below.

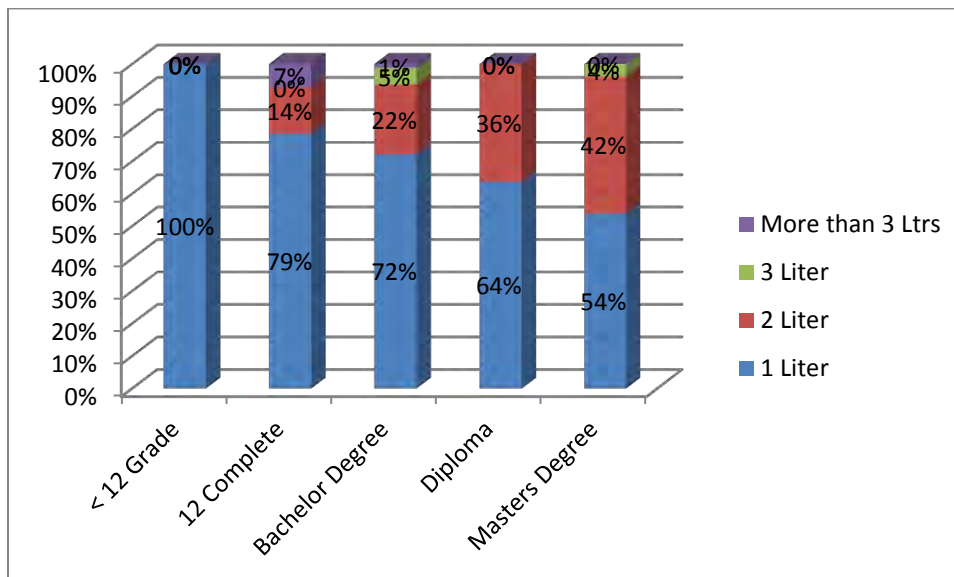
Chart 4.3: Respondents' Water Consumption by Age



Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Chart 4.3 shows that the highest daily water consumption level is found in all the age group is one liter per day and accordingly, the age group 18-25 took the largest share followed by the age group above 50, age group 36-50 and lastly the age group of 26-35.

Chart 4.3: Respondents' Water Consumption by Education Background



Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

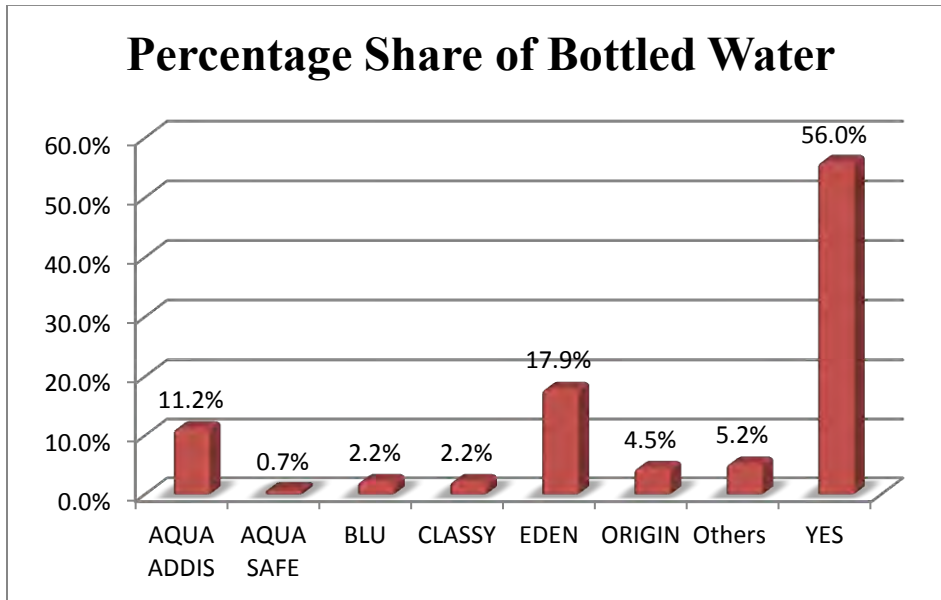
Chart 4.3 reveals that from each education background classification, the 12th grade consumer responded that 100% of them use to drink one liter water per day, whereas the other classifications fallen between 54-79% level of one liter consumption per day.

2.2.Brand Popularity and Bottled Water Consumption

Brand Popularity

The below chart illustrates the bottled water brand the respondents would like to consume with respect to the three demographic factors; Gender, Age and Education Background.

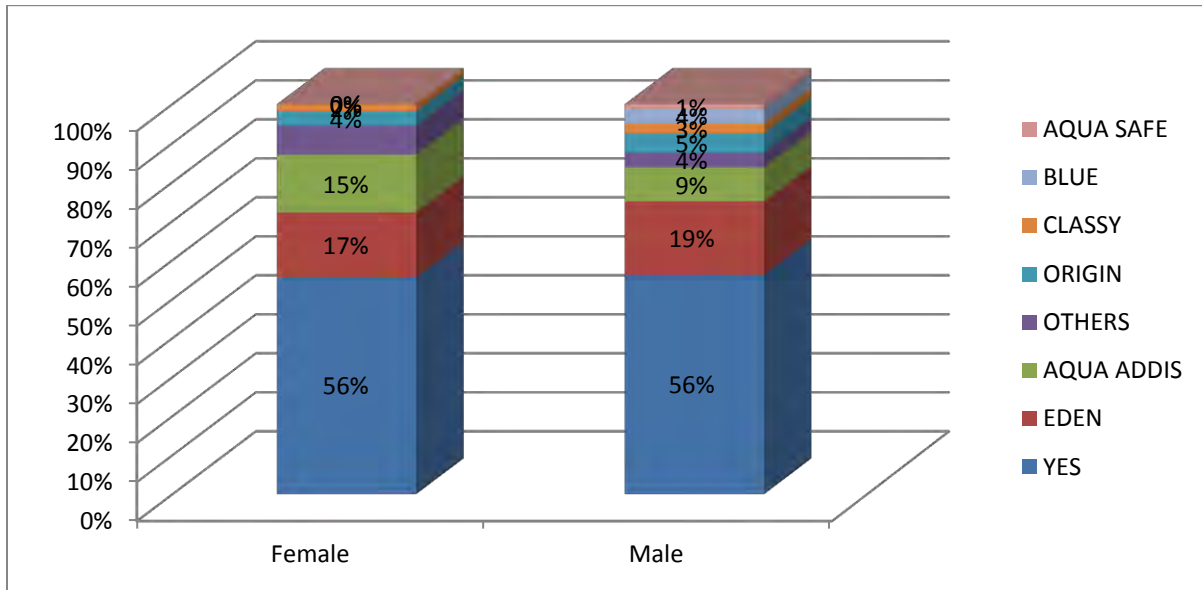
Chart 4.4: Respondents’ Bottled Water Share



Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Starting off with what brand the respondents go for was found necessary and from the findings one of the bottled water brand, YES took the highest consumers’ preference with 56% followed by EDEN and AQUA ADDIS by 17.9% and 11.2% respectively. Hence the top three brands that are being consumed are YES, EDNE and AQUA ADDIS.

Chart 4.5: Brand Preference by Gender

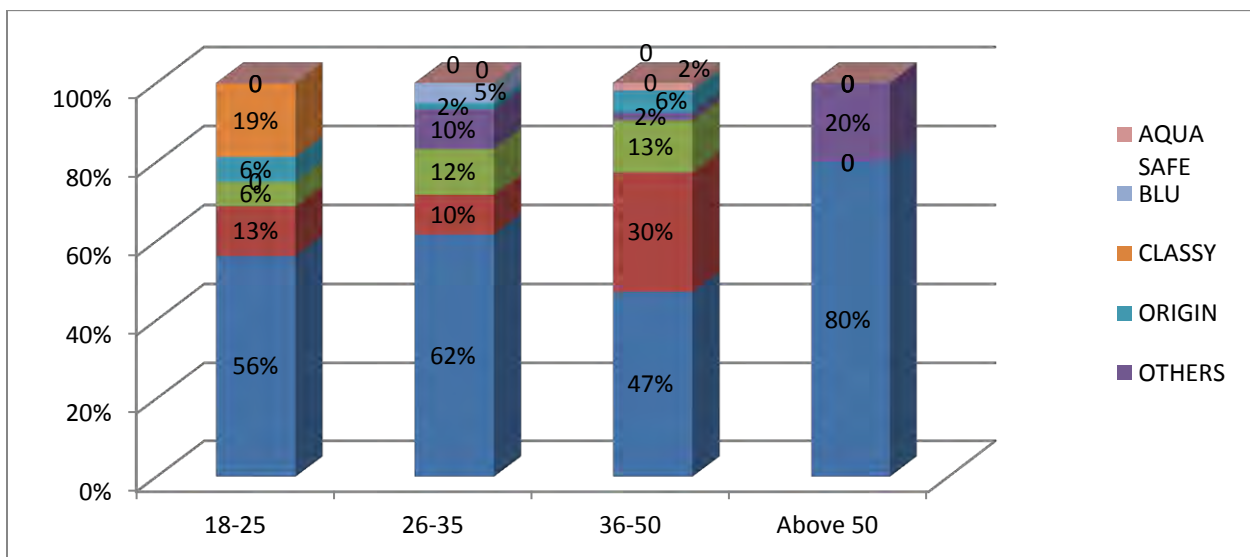


Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

When comparing their popularity with regards to gender: ‘Yes’ brand was the popular brand in both genders accounting for 56% share in both female and male category. This shows that the majority of the bottled water consumers prefer to drink the ‘Yes’ brand to other competing brands.

Below is presented the brand preference by age.

Chart 4.5: Brand Preference by Age



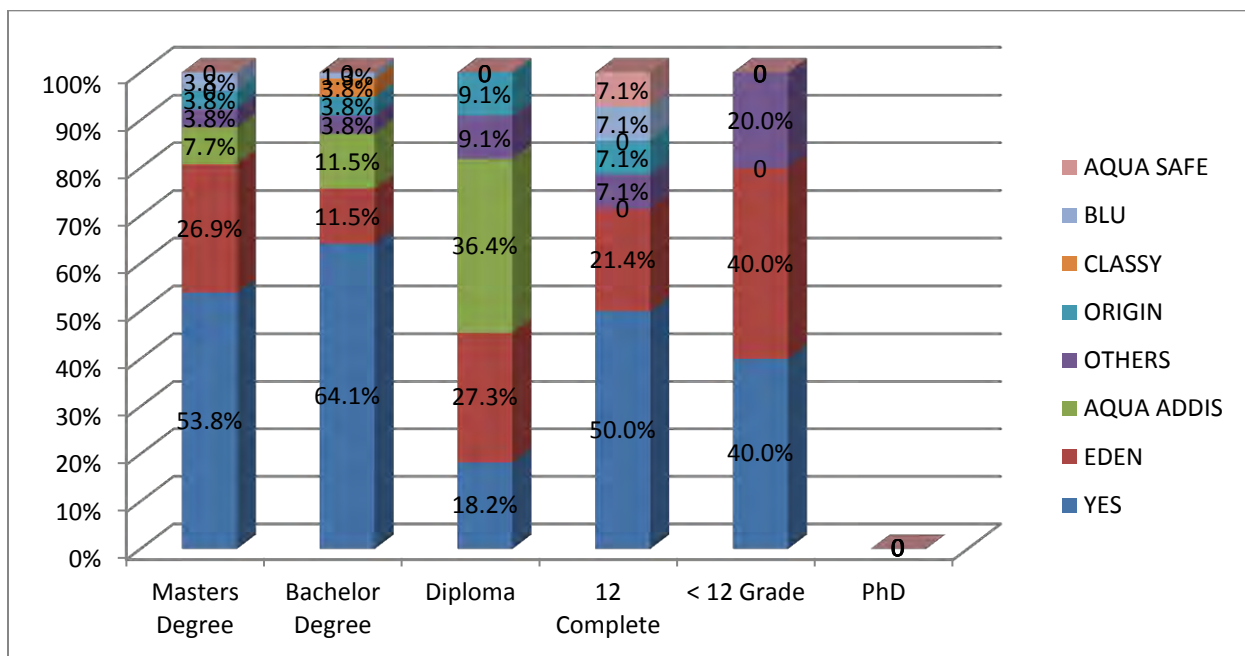
Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

When comparing the popularity of the brands with respect to age, ‘Yes’ was found to be the most popular in all age groups and also the brand accounted for 80% and 62% in two age groups, which are above 50 and 26-35 respectively. Results from the age group 18-25 showed that the popularity was split between 56% and 0% brand preference in all the age groups, in age group above 50, except ‘Yes’ and ‘Eden’ all others were not preferred. When it comes to the rest of the brands were being consumed with few of the respondents.

2.3.Brand Popularity based on Educational Background

The chart below shows that similarly with the other demographic factors, this Educational Background also has variability amongst different educational background.

Chart 4.6: Brand Popularity by Educational Background



Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

With the exception of respondents who are Diploma holder, it can be inferred that ‘Yes’ is the most popular bottled water brand within each educational group being followed up by ‘Eden’ brand. This goes in line with the previous finding which indicates that ‘Yes’ is the most favored bottled water brand in Addis Ababa.

2.4.Determinants of Brand Equity

In order to analyze the respondents overall Customer Based Brand Equity, a total of 19 questions were grouped into the five dimensions of Customer Based Brand Equity which were Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty and overall Brand Preference.

In order to compare the respondents brand equity in view of the dimensions, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation is used. The mean indicates to what extent the sample group averagely agrees or disagrees with the different statements. The higher the mean the more the respondents agree with the statement while the lower the mean the more the respondents disagree with the statement. In addition, standard deviation shows the variability of an observed response and the mean and standard deviation results are discussed here below the results is discussed.

The result of the Cronbach's alpha for this study's instrument was found to be in the acceptance range i.e. >0.7 . Thus showing as indication of acceptability of the scale for further analysis since all the five items of brand equity and customers attribute dimensions; brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and overall brand preference, measuring brand equity were above 0.7.

Table 4.2: Reliability Test of Variables

Variables	Cronbach's alpha coefficient	Number of items
Brand Awareness	0.76	4
Brand Association	0.70	5
Perceived quality	0.69	3
Brand Loyalty	0.69	4
Overall Brand Preference	0.75	3
All Variables	0.71	19

Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Brand Equity

Brand equity is a set of an asset and legal responsibility connected to the brand's name and figure that add to or take away from the value presented by the product or service to a company

and/or that company's customers. (Aaker, 1996). He has grouped and identified the main assets as the following: brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality and brand loyalty. In this section each element of brand equity results from the respondents was compared to show consumers brand equity for various bottled water brands.

Brand Awareness

According to (Keller,2004) brand awareness is the customers' ability to recall and recognize the brand as reflected by their ability to identify the brand under different conditions and to link the brand name, logo, symbol, and so forth to certain associations in memory. Accordingly, the respondents were asked 4 questions related to brand awareness. Table 4.2 presents respondents result of brand awareness with mean and standard deviation of values for each variable.

Table 4.3: Brand Awareness Analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
I know the symbol or logo of the brand "X" bottled water	4.22	0.570
Some features of Brand "X" come to my mind quickly	4.06	0.610
I can recognize the Brand "X" quickly among other competing brands	4.10	0.592
I am familiar with the brand "X"	4.13	0.618
Brand Awareness	4.13	0.598

Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Table 4.3 reveals that the list of items comprising of brand awareness, the mean score for the item "I know the symbol or logo of the bottled water from brand X" Scored the highest with a mean score of 4.22 While the item " Some features of Brand "X" come to my mind quickly" scored the lowest with a mean score of 4.06. The overall mean score for the Brand Awareness dimension is 4.13, which indicate that the respondents have a good brand awareness of the bottled water brand they consume.

Brand Association

Brand associations consist of all brand related thoughts, feelings, perceptions, images, experiences, beliefs, attitudes (Kotler and Keller 2006) and is anything linked in memory to a brand. Hence, three items related to brand association were placed for the respondents and the analysis is shown in the table below:

Table 4.4: Brand Association analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Brand "X" has a very unique brand image, compared to competing brands	3.66	0.849
I associate and admire people who drink Brand "X"	3.37	1.037
I like and trust the company, which makes Brand "X"	3.73	0.777
I like the brand image of "X"	3.91	0.677
Brand Association	3.67	0.835

Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Table 4.4 shows that the respondents scored the highest for the item "I like the brand image of brand "X". " with a mean score of 3.91 while the lowest went to the item which states "I associate and admire people who drink brand "X"." This implies that although the respondents have a good level of association with their chosen brand, their association doesn't go to the level of personal attachment with other people who drink the same bottled water brand.

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality is the customer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority that is different from objective quality Aaker (1996). Since it is impossible for consumers to make complete and correct judgments of the objective quality, they use quality attributes that they associate with quality. Perceived quality is hence formed to judge the overall quality of a product. Therefore, three items related to perceived quality were placed for the respondents and the result of the analysis is shown in the table below.

Table 4.5: Perceived Quality analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
I trust the quality of products from brand “X”	4.09	0.619
Products from brand “X” offer excellent taste and flavor	3.98	0.72
I think brand “X” has a reputation of high quality	4.08	0.716
Perceived Quality	4.05	0.685

Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Table 4.5 reveals that all of the variables of Perceived Quality scored relatively high with an overall mean score of 4.05. The respondents also gave the highest mean score to "I trust the quality of product from brand ‘X’ ” a mean score of 4.09 while they gave a low mean score of 3.98 to the item "Product from brand ‘X’ offer excellent taste and flavor”. The results indicate that the respondents have a high level of perceived quality towards their bottled water brand choice.

Brand Loyalty

Loyalty is a core dimension of brand equity. Aaker (1991) defines brand loyalty as the attachment that a customer has to a brand. Based on this definition four items related to brand loyalty was put to the respondents and the result is shown below:

Table 4.6 Brand Loyalty Analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
I consider myself to be loyal to brand “X” bottled water	3.74	0.875
When having a bottled water, brand “X” would be my first choice	4.11	0.679
I will keep on buying "X" as long as its offering satisfies me	4.05	0.675
I am still willing to buy brand “X” even if its price is	3.19	1.215

a little higher than that of its competitor		
Brand Loyalty	3.77	0.861

Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Table 4.6 reveals that "When having a bottled water, brand "X" would be my first choice" scored the highest among the list of items related to brand loyalty with a mean score of 4.11 while the respondents gave the least score of 3.19 to the item " I am still willing to buy brand "X" even if the price is a little higher than that of its competitors. This clearly indicates that their level or intensity of loyalty does not go up to 'I am not sensitive to price changes'.

Overall Brand Equity

In order to test the respondents overall brand equity, three items were given for the respondents to answer. Table 4.7 shows the analysis regarding the overall brand equity of the respondents.

Table 4.7: Overall Brand Equity Analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
If another brand is not different from brand "X" in any way, its seems not logical to purchase the other brand as well	4.00	3.571
Even if another brand has the same features as "X", I would prefer to buy brand "X"	3.61	0.949
Brand "X" is more than a brand to me	2.74	1.025
Overall Brand Equity	3.45	1.85

Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

As can be seen from Table 4.7, the respondents gave a low mean score of 2.74 to the item "Brand "X" is more than a brand to me" implying that they have a limit to the emotional attachment that they have with their choice of bottled water brand. The respondents also gave a relatively higher mean score to the remaining two items 4.00 and 3.61 respectively which means

that even though they have a limit on the emotional attachment, they would not want to replace their chosen brand with others.

From the above mean score and standard deviations represented, each of the brand equity dimensions are summarized here below

Table 4.8: Summary of the overall Brand Equity determinants

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Brand Awareness	4.13	0.598
Brand Association	3.67	0.835
Perceived Quality	4.05	0.685
Brand Loyalty	3.77	0.861
Overall Brand Equity	3.45	1.848

Source: Own Survey Result, 2016

Discussion

In this section, the major findings are laid out and the results of this research further elaborated.

By looking at the demographic profile of the respondents, which are gender, age and education background, the daily consumption of bottled water is found to be higher in male than female, which is by gender, in a one liter consumption rate, the male drinks higher than the female, i.e., represented 73% of the male respondents and 67% of the female against other respective consumption rates. When looking into age of the respondents within consumption rate of one liter, the age group 18-25 drinks from its own group 94%.

With regards to consumption rate of the total number of 134 respondents, 70% of them drink bottled water under a daily consumption rate of one liter.

With regards to the popularity of the bottled water brand Yes and Eden are the major players in the industry. A majority of the respondents (56%) stated that Yes is their first choice being followed up by Eden (17.9%). the others shared the remaining consumers' preference. This study also tried to assess the consumption rate of the respondents. The results showed that, the majority of the respondents consumed one liter of water per day.

When having a look into what the respondents replied on the questionnaires, although they gave a more or less positive feedback for all the Brand Equity dimensions, questions relating to these results imply that out of the five dimensions, bottled water consumers are aware of the brand and have prior concern for the product quality but are not associated and loyal as long as it fulfills their needs.

This study is designed and carried out in order to analyze the applicability of customer based brand equity through its underlying dimensions in the bottled water industry. According to the study's findings, all the five dimensions: Brand Awareness, Brand loyalty, Perceived Quality, Brand Association and Brand Preference were identified as having an influence on the overall brand Equity of the respondents.

The influence of Perceived Quality and Brand Preference were found to be the most important. The findings of this research are consistent with that of Abad (2012) and Hossien (2012) who found out that Perceived Quality had a positive effect on the customer's overall brand equity, which was witnessed from the result of the mean score.

Moreover, Aaker (1996), views Perceived Quality as the “core or primary” factor across the customer based brand equity framework. Similarly, Zeithaml (1988) describes Perceived Quality as not the real quality of the product but the customer’s perception of the overall quality or superiority of the product or service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives. Nowadays, marketers across all product and service categories have increasingly recognized the importance of perceived quality in brand decisions.

The findings also revealed that even though there is a positive impact of Brand Loyalty on the overall brand equity of the respondents, its significance was very minimal. This might mainly be due to the high brand switching behavior of the consumers.

With respect to assessing the determinants of brand equity, the researcher had a plan to get the total bottled water production and market share of each producer from the Ministry of Industry, however, was not successful and not possible to proceed with this respect that were grounds to further analyze through the application of Pearson's coefficient of correlation and regression analysis. And the test was focused on the dimensions of brand equity and how they determine the consumers’ mind set towards building a customer based brand equity.

Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendation

In this chapter of the study, major findings are summarized and conclusion is presented.

5.1. Summary

The primary objective of this study was to assess Aaker's Customer-based brand equity model in the case of the bottled water industry. Nowadays the bottled water industry is composed of privately owned companies that are in stiff competition against each other to dominate the market. Hence, this study tried to identify which determinant has the highest influence on the overall brand equity of the bottled water consumers. In addition, this study also tried to answer the research questions raised in the first chapter of this study.

In order to measure the customer-based brand equity in the bottled water industry, the study considered four determinants namely Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty and the overall brand equity. A sample size was selected using convenience sampling technique. Based on the theoretical frame work and objectives of the study 19 items were provided in a 5 point Likert scale to the respondents. The gathered data was analyzed by descriptive analysis using descriptive and inferential statistics. Upon the result of the questionnaire, it was observed that perceived quality is found to be the mostly contributing brand equity dimensions.

The findings indicated that Yes and Eden bottled water were the top two most popular brands while the others are demanded at lesser rate. In relation to the consumption rate of the consumers, majority of them were found to consume one liter per day. The results also showed that both genders were similar but slightly varied use of bottled water. The results indicated that although all five variables had a positive influence on the overall brand equity of the consumers, most of the brand equity dimensions had been found influential factors on the consumers based brand equity and this might need further studies to empirically test well about its measurability and implication.

5.2. Conclusions

The determinants of consumer based brand equity (CBBE) in the bottled water industry were analyzed by testing the applicability of Aaker's CBBE model. The study found out that both genders consumed relatively similar but slightly different daily consumption of a brand.

This situation gives a good market for bottled water industries.

- Brand Awareness and Perceived Quality is the first and the second variables for consumers brand equity.
- Brand Preference takes the third place. Brand Association is regarded as the fourth important dimension of Brand Equity.

The study also found out that the most popular bottled water brand is Yes, which is dominating the market. But this domination would not last long because of the recent intense competition among existing and newly entering bottled water brands and various distribution factors in terms of consistent availability and consumers brand awareness.

One of the objectives of this study was to find out which dimension was the major determinant of the customer-based brand equity in the bottled water industry and the results of the analyzed questionnaires revealed that Perceived quality is the variable affecting than the others brand equity dimensions. However, the other remaining dimensions also influenced CBBE but their intensity is medium or small.

5.3. Recommendations

The Customer Based Brand Equity scale gives the bottled water producers a structured approach for formulating their branding strategies. It is a straight forward approach that illustrates how different components and their relations contribute to the company's branding strategy effectiveness. As managers have limited resources in terms of money, time and human resource, this framework helps them:

- To understand what attributes to include in releasing new brands, for instance the difference in consumption level among consumers, what customers prefer
- Since there exists high demand in the market that can be noticed from the existing market trends, in which none of the bottled water brands are available on shelf consistently, the one having greater preference, the bottled water producer should consider this variable as a major determinant in consumption pattern
- Prioritize and allocate resources across brand equity components. In this specific case, the researcher recommends managers of bottled water producing companies focus their marketing strategies towards increasing the Perceived Quality of their brands in their customer's minds.
- The current paradigm shift towards a high competitive market in the bottled water industry should be a wakeup call for the industry players. These companies should strive to meet and pass their customer's expectations.
- Innovative ideas are what the market will be asking in terms of supply, availability, packaging and so on, strong marketing activities to improve brands' availability in the minds of the consumers

Managers in the bottled water industry should concentrate their efforts primarily on developing the Perceived Quality of their brand in the customer's mind. If this dimension is increased, it will contribute positively to the brand's equity which in turn will give high market share, new customers and increase the overall value of the brand.

Limitations and Suggestions for Further Study

The study has some limitations. The major limitation of the study is that of the sampling area. The sampling was done only in Addis Ababa but in order to make the research more representative, samples should be collected at least from the major cities of the country. Since different consumption pattern might exist due to belongingness, habit, price etc.

The study has also limitations in the sense that although it added one dimension as a determinant of brand equity, mainly focusing on Aaker's four determinants is not enough. The research would have been more conclusive if it had considered more variables which are specific to the Ethiopian bottled water consumer

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Appendices

Questionnaire

A Questionnaire on Analysis of The Customer-Based Brand Equity in the Bottled Water Industry Market (The case of Addis Ababa)

Dear respondents:

I am a graduate student at Addis Ababa University, College of Business and Economics and currently conducting a research for the completion of my Executive Master of Business Administration (EMBA) degree. This questionnaire is designed to collect data on assessing the relationship between dimensions of brand equity (brand perceived quality, brand awareness, brand association and brand loyalty) and the Customer's preference towards the bottled water market specifically in Addis Ababa market. I kindly ask you to give me few minutes of your time to answer the questions here under about your personal experience with regards to consumption of bottled water. Your willingness and cooperation in giving genuine information is well appreciated and the information you provide me will be used for only academic purpose and will be kept in strict confidentiality.

If you would like further information about this study, or have problem in completing this questionnaire please contact me via +251-9 11-316-486

Thank you for your cooperation!

Instruction: Please mark your answer with a tick mark (√) in the space provided.

PART 1: General information of Respondents'

1. Gender Male Female

2. Age 18- 25 26-35 36-50 Above 50

3. Your Educational Background

<12th Grade Diploma Masters Degree

12 Complete Bachelor's Degree PhD

PART 2: Basic information on Bottled Water Consumption

4. Do you regularly consume Bottled Water? Yes No

If you have answered 'No' for question No. 4 above, this is the end of the questionnaire for you. Once again, many thanks for your support!

5. If your answer for question No. 4 is 'Yes', Which Bottled Water brand do you usually consume?

'YES' 'AQUA ADDIS' 'AQUA SAFE'

'EDEN' 'ABYSSINIA' 'BLU'

'ORIGIN' 'CLASSY'

Any other, please specify _____

6. How do you rate your consumption level in liters per day?

One liter two liters

Three liters more than three liters

PART 3: The statements below are designed to give information on, which dimensions affect Customer-Based Brand Equity. The statements drawn (X) are referring to the brand you have selected in question No. 5 above.

Please use tick (✓) mark in the table under the options given the brand you selected to reflect your rating.

A. Brand Equity

Brand Awareness	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I know the symbol or logo of the brand “X” bottled water.					
Some features of brand “X” come to my mind quickly					
I can recognize the brand “X” quickly among other competing brands					
I am familiar with the brand “X”					

Brand Association	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
Brand "X" has a very unique brand image, compared to competing brands					
I associate and admire people who drink Brand "X"					
I like and trust the company, which makes Brand "X"					
I like the brand image of "X"					
I like the brand with its involvement in corporate social responsibilities					

Brand Perceived quality	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I trust the quality of brand “X” products					
Products from brand “X” offer excellent taste					
I think brand “X” has a reputation of high quality					

Brand Loyalty	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
I consider myself to be loyal to brand “X” bottled water					
When having a bottled water, brand “X” would be my first choice					
I will keep on buying "X" as long as its offering satisfies me					

I am still willing to buy brand "X" even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitor					
--	--	--	--	--	--

Overall Brand Equity	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Indifferent (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
If another brand is not different from brand "X" in any way, its seems not logical to purchase the other brand as well					
Even if another brand has the same features as "X", I would prefer to buy brand "X"					
Brand "X" is more than a brand to me					

Thank You for Your Kind Response and Cooperation

Statistical Reports

Reliability

Scale: ALL VARIABLES

Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Valid	134	100.0
Cases Excluded ^a	0	.0
Total	134	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.762	4

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
BA1	4.22	.570	134
BA2	4.06	.610	134
BA3	4.10	.592	134
BA4	4.13	.618	134

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
BA1	12.29	2.133	.526	.723
BA2	12.46	2.039	.529	.722
BA3	12.41	2.063	.542	.715
BA4	12.39	1.863	.645	.657

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
16.51	3.334	1.826	4

Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Valid	134	100.0
Cases Excluded ^a	0	.0
Total	134	100.0

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.766	5

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
BAS1	3.66	.849	134
BAS2	3.37	1.037	134
BAS3	3.73	.777	134
BAS4	3.91	.677	134
BAS5	2.77	.840	134

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
BAS 1	13.78	5.649	.704	.662
BAS 2	14.07	4.912	.701	.658
BAS 3	13.71	6.298	.592	.707
BAS 4	13.53	6.777	.561	.722
BAS 5	14.67	7.561	.205	.829

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
17.44	9.211	3.035	5

Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Valid	134	100.0
Cases Excluded ^a	0	.0
Total	134	100.0

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.840	3

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
P1	4.09	.619	134
P2	3.98	.720	134
P3	4.08	.716	134

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
P1	8.06	1.575	.806	.692
P2	8.17	1.512	.667	.816
P3	8.07	1.537	.655	.827

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
12.15	3.211	1.792	3

Case Processing Summary

	N	%
Valid	134	100.0
Cases Excluded ^a	0	.0
Total	134	100.0

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.697	4

Item Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
BL1	3.74	.875	134
BL2	4.11	.679	134
BL3	4.05	.675	134
BL4	3.19	1.215	134

Item-Total Statistics

	Scale Mean if Item Deleted	Scale Variance if Item Deleted	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha if Item Deleted
BL1	11.35	3.944	.551	.590
BL2	10.98	4.548	.557	.610
BL3	11.04	4.623	.532	.623
BL4	11.90	3.291	.421	.733

Scale Statistics

Mean	Variance	Std. Deviation	N of Items
15.09	6.623	2.574	4

