

Analysis Of The Relationship Between Brand Loyalty And Market Share : A Comparative Study Of Durable And Non-Durable Products In Delhi

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THE CONCEPT OF 'A BRAND'

According to Kotler (1994), a Brand is any name, symbol, term, design or blend of any of them for the purpose of recognizing or identifying any goods or services of a service or product provider or a group of them, which can also help them in differentiating from all other brands which compete with them. Therefore, in short, a brand helps to recognize the manufacturer or it can be a seller. Till now, if you thought a brand to be only the name of a product or service, then surely you are missing an important concept. Vital challenges posed in front of branding is to improve the deep set of meanings for a brand. Well, the distinguishing factor of any marketer is to form, protect or augment a brand. The level of success of any brand lies in making a identifiable (it could be a consumer, as well as an industrial brand) ; it could be a person, a place, a product, or services. Branding is amplified in a way that the customer who buys this product or a consumer who will use this product would be satisfied by the product. If the product succeeds in providing utility over many years, then it extracts the advantage of familiarity and reliability. The added utility comes from the experience which the consumer has formed by using the product; and in the process, reliability, character formation, familiarity and risk reduction are also formed. (Bradley 1995; Leslie de Chernatony , McDonald, 1992; Doyle, Jones ,1986).

Often, consumers' feelings are expressed in the form of picking of the brand; the brand defines customers as they associate themselves with the brand. To get success in this objective, we must form an appealing brand personality by associating a brand with human characteristics, so that it looks more attractive to consumers. The reason which makes this thought strong is generally, a personality is seen as a group of different traits like responsibility, friendliness, etc., which differentiates one person from another. Apart from this, a personality of a brand also differentiates a brand into various categories of a product; it also works as the central accelerator of preference of a consumer and their usage, finally also making the brand work in cross culture areas. (Aaker, 1997; Keegan, Moriarty & Duncan, 1995).

BRAND EQUITY AND ITS CONSTITUENTS

Brands can do wonders - they can put in invaluable value and create a positive image in the minds of the customers. This very thing adds up to a term called '*Brand Equity*' - being intangible in nature, it adds value to goods which otherwise would not have had any value. What is brand equity then? it is the power of a brand which is derived from over a period of goodwill , name and acknowledgment that it has extracted over time, finally resulting into higher sales volume and ,therefore, increases the profit margins when compared to competing brands. The awareness of a consumer of a brand forces manufacturers and advertisers to adopt correct remedies for marketing any brand. Firms create a brand by following the strategy of aggressive marketing, for instance Pepsi and Reebok, whose logos are recognized the world over and can be distinguished from other brands.

David A. Aaker (1991) defined the brand equity concept as a complex system which includes various sets of awareness

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of the brand, its perceived quality, loyalty and its associations. In addition to that, he also designed the system of brand equity measurement- the “*brand equity ten*”- this measurement contains ten analytical dimensions, which are needed for describing the equity of a brand.

Kevin Lane Keller (2008) suggested that the real measurement of brand equity could be done from the perspective of the customer, which requires knowledge of a brand, which is necessary to have differential effects over consumers' feedback. Keller in his brand equity model has included two general scopes - one is brand image and the next is brand awareness, which finally composed of brand association. He also quoted that the conclusion of a strong brand always turns into loyalty towards the brand and results in greater market share for the brand.

Brand equity works on the thought that a brand has greater value than compared to all the tangible assets and equity of the brand. Once a customer uses a product and the product doesn't yield into any side effects (probably negative), the customer would re-buy that product, this is what brand equity is.

MEASURING BRAND EQUITY

Equity of a brand is an asset (intangible), and it depends on how you associate with the consumer. To measure this, we have three levels on which we measure the equity of a brand.

✿ **Financial/Firm Level:** Analyze the price premium of the brand that it holds on a standard product. For instance, if a consumer agrees to pay ₹ 500 more for a branded television when compared to non-branded one, this premium of ₹ 500 is crucial to know the value of the brand. Apart from this, we need to consider the promotional cost as well while measuring equity.

✿ **Brand Extension/ Product Level :** When a brand gets successful, then it serves as a platform to launch other related products. It works in extension of brands and thus leverages the existing brand and ,therefore, reduces the cost involved in the advertisement, and results in risk reduction from the consumer point of view. In addition to that brand, extension can improve the core brand. Nevertheless, a brand value extension is not easy to quantify when compared to direct measures of equity of a brand.

✿ **Consumer Based Level :** Customer attitude strength builds around a strong brand and the products which are associated with that brand. Experience of a product builds the attitude strength of a customer towards the brand. This lays the importance of an actual experience, so trail samples are more successful in comparison of an advertisement in the initial stages for building a strong brand. The level of awareness which a consumer is having works for perceived quality, which finally converts into loyalty towards a brand.

✿ **Benefits of Brand Equity :** The benefits extracted from strong equity of brands are:

✿ We get facility of prediction of income stream;

✿ There is increment on cash flow, since there is an increment in the market share and reduction in promotional costs, which helps to get premium pricing;

✿ This equity of a brand is an asset which cannot be sold and leased.

✿ **Negative Vs Positive Brand Equity:** Brand equity works as a positive effect over a brand and the differences between the prices which a consumer agrees to pay when the known brand is compared to the value of the advantages gained. Two schools of thoughts exist when we discuss about negative brand equity. One school states that equity of a brand cannot be negative and in theory, positive branding is created by all marketing activities like advertising, promotion, etc. while the second thought states that there could be negative elements due to tragic events for a brand; these events promote negative attention of the press and due to this, a brand garners negative brand equity. The negative intangible assets related to a brand can be assessed with surveys, where consumers depicted the need of discounts to buy branded products when compared to generic products.

✿ **Building And Managing Brand Equity :** To form a strong brand, Peter H. Farquahar outlaid the following three thoughts to be covered; the first one is *Introduction*, where a quality product is introduced with a thought of taking advantage of a brand as a platform, which would help to serve the launch of future products. The next stage is *Elaboration*, in this stage, the main idea is to form a consistent image of the product; this procedure would form a relationship with the consumer, and would help him in recalling the positive or negative image of the brand. The final stage is *Fortification*, in this stage, it is endeavored to keep the image of the product consistent for developing a good

relationship with the consumers. This could be done with the help of brand extension as well. To build the equity of a brand, companies need to put special effort, some companies try to use different alternatives for getting higher brand equity. For instance, equity of a brand can be rented with the help of extending the brand name to the extended product line in the particular brand line in a common product category, or even in different categories. Well, in few cases, where we need to share a perpetual connection between two products, such type of extensions can prove to be helpful. In rest of the cases, it can dilute the equity of a brand, and can prove to be unsuccessful.

✿ **Protecting Brand Equity:** The prime aim of the marketing mix should be to build and safeguard the equity of a brand - if a brand is positioned as a premium product or service, it needs to have a consistent quality so that consumers would be satisfied with the brand; the most important element is to check the distribution of the product, since people expect this with a premium product. The leftover part would be completed by promotional activities to build consistent association with customers. Inconsistent diluteness of perception of consumers should be avoided, and extensions are also to be avoided in case if brands are not strong.

CONCEPT OF BRAND AWARENESS

Brand Awareness means the likelihood that consumers recognize the existence and availability of a company's product or service. Creating brand awareness is one of the key steps in promoting a product. Brand awareness is an important way of promoting commodity-related products. This is because for these products, there are very few factors that differentiate one product from its competitors. Therefore, the product that maintains the highest brand awareness as compared to its competitors will usually get the most sales.

For example, in the soft drink industry, very little separates a generic soda from a brand-name soda in terms of taste. However, consumers are very aware of the brands Pepsi and Coca Cola, in terms of their images and names. This higher rate of brand awareness equates to higher sales and also serves as an economic moat that prevents competitors from gaining more market share.

✿ **The Concept Of Brand Loyalty :** Repurchase or rebuy of products - this behavior is depicted by a customer and his commitment in showing this character is loyalty towards a brand, what it leads to is positive advocacy of products and rebuy of a product again and again, which also turns up into positive word of mouth marketing. In this regard, the American Marketing Association (AMA) explains loyalty towards a brand as “ *the situation in which a consumer generally buys the same manufacturer-originated products or services repeatedly over time, rather than buying from multiple suppliers within the category.* ” It can also be stated that “ *the level or degree to which a customer re-buys the same brand* ”. In the same context, David A. Aaker (1991) explained brand loyalty to be a reflection of the probability of a customer to switch to another brand, in case the brand alters its marketing mix. He also stated that brand loyalty states the basis for brand equity. The loyalty towards a brand meant towards a situation when a customer gets committed to a brand and makes repeated purchases over the time. Consumer behavior forms loyalty towards a brand and is always affected by consumers' choices and beliefs. A loyal customer would always prefer the brand he always buys and would not bother much about the price, and inconvenience faced in buying the product. Since these people form a loyal set who would always buy the same product, so firms also try their level best by altering their marketing strategies to keep these sets of loyal customers with them. These alterations could be the introduction of loyalty programs which would provide customers incentives or rewards for using the products. Making customers loyal is not an easy task, but the companies who do so also focus on mounting a brand ambassador- this would be an effective means to promote the brand as well.

✿ **Factors That Influence Brand Loyalty:** Loyalty doesn't come alone, it comes with pre-dispositional commitment. Loyalty towards a brand is expected to be a multidimensional construct. The measure of loyalty is judged by various different psychological processes, and it also involves multivariate measurement. The key factors which are handy in influencing brand loyalty are satisfaction of consumers, re-buying of a product, the perceived value customers generate from a product. One of the great writers on brand loyalty, Fred Reichheld said that profits are improved dramatically by improvement in loyalty of customers. The benefits which a firm enjoys by having loyalty from customers are, longer period of a product to stay on floor, low sensitivity of a customer towards price. Although experiments have not been conducted to this thought, but few researchers in this arena have revealed less sensitivity towards a brand if they are loyal to a product.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN BRAND LOYALTY AND BRAND EQUITY

Brand loyalty enables a firm with competitive advantage that it possesses, the benefits which loyalty brings in are reduced marketing cost, and hence increment in revenue generated increases. For showing loyalty towards a brand, a customer can make it visible in several ways - staying with a provider or increasing the number or frequency of buying the product and, therefore, as a result, generate high revenue. Since the customers are satisfied with the product, they can spread positive word of mouth and advocate the product or brand and hence prove to be the decision makers for other people as well, without increasing the marketing cost of the firm. We all know that keeping customers with us costs us less than exploring new customers, and that too when the customers with us are loyal, and they are satisfied with the services they receive.

Bloemer and Kasper (1995) stated that loyalty towards a brand is deep-seated dedication to brands and there are very little differences in re-buying and loyalty towards the brand. In their research, they mentioned that re-buying is repurchase behavior depicted by customer loyalty, while loyalty acts as a reason behind re-buying. They also defined brand loyalty as "Spurious" and "true" brand loyalty. Spurious loyalty of brand loyalty is somewhat biased responsive behavior, which is expressed time to time and occurs at decision making, in comparison of two or more brands. The correct brand loyalty is the same as above, but replaces inertia imposed with a psychological thought, which ends up with commitment towards a brand. The benefits of loyalty are depicted in reduction of exposure of competitive attacks. A very low incentive does not bother a customer to switch different brands, and if they try to do so, then the time period for such an incentive is large enough to receive the information for such an incentive. This helps firms to combat that incentive, or the competitors' strategies.

A loyal brand customer wants his favorite products to be readily available, so this loyalty of customers provides trade leverages and provides incentives for the channels of distribution, which makes products available. Various researchers have shown that the customers who are loyal to a brand are very less price sensitive, and they also reduce the expense used to pursue new customers; this also helps in increment of profitability level, since these customers also agree to pay a premium price for their loyal brands and they are flexible in their approach and can increase their spending on the products. The expenditure on communication channels is also reduced since the loyal customers are confident of their purchase, and they also process the information more rapidly. Various marketing instruments like promotion or advertising are also not much needed.

In the process of getting new customers, loyalty proves to be handy and as a result, helps in generating market share. People who are satisfied with the brand provide exposure to the brand, and they act an assurance for new customers by their "word of mouth" marketing. On the other side, a loyal customer has a better knowledge of the brand and perceives a big customer base of the product. To measure brand loyalty, we need to work on the relationship which exists in dimensions of equity of a brand like awareness, its associations and awareness of the products. Firstly, the scope of equity of a brand can pull loyalty towards a brand; the reason to buy would be awareness of the brand, and perceived quality of the brand, and ultimately improvises satisfaction towards a brand.

The basic ingredient or essential one for equity of a brand is the loyalty of the customer. If we think who would be a better "consumer franchise", then it is the customer themselves, they select it as an alternative over other products, the more they purchase the product, the more price is determined among them. How brand equity is formed is explained in the Figure 1.

There is a direct link between equity of a brand and loyalty towards a brand. Loyalty towards a brand acts as the consumers' commitment to re-purchase that product or brand and on the other hand, equity of a brand refers to effects of the marketing of the product, which comes because a brand name is attached to it. It means that people would show more loyalty towards a brand if they have higher equity.

BRAND EQUITY MODEL

As per the previous followed or traditional point of view, a brand building process can be best defined by a model known as the *Brand Equity Model* given by Brandt and Johnson (1997), which is depicted in the Figure 2. As explained by Brandt and Johnson, "equity of a brand is the rare set of perceived or actual differentiation, which is attached to a brand crafter by customers." Equity of a brand survives only in the heart and mind of consumers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The paper aims to investigate and search the relationship which exists between brand dimensions (brand awareness, association of brand, loyalty of the brand, comparison of two market types which comes into product categories; durables (television) and non-durables (toothpaste). The explicit aim of the paper is to analyze the strength link and shared influence existing in loyalty of a brand, and what are the depicted reasons of brand repurchase and the commercial performance of a brand, and finally, the market share of a brand.

Figure 1 : Relationship Between Brand Loyalty And Brand Equity

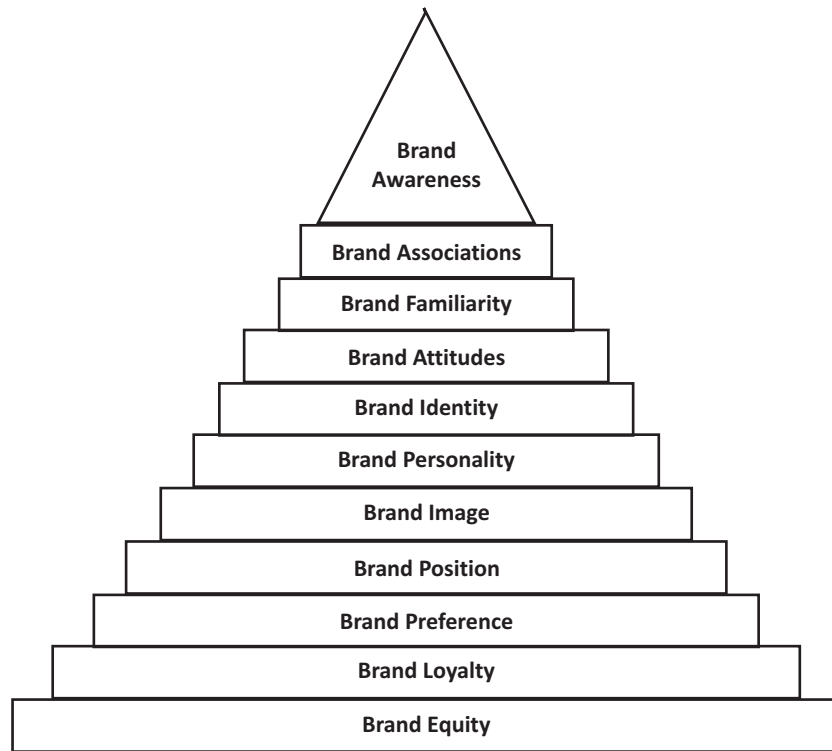
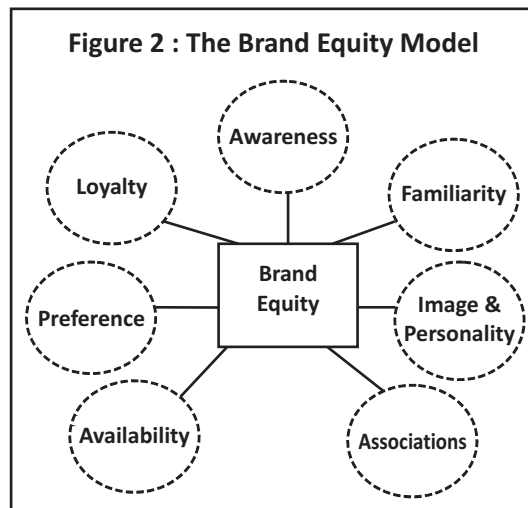


Figure 2 : The Brand Equity Model



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In consonance with the paper's research objectives, certain particular indicators were established and used to measure brand loyalty and market share. To create an operation indication among loyalty of a brand, we need to work on the loyalty of a brand with probability that customers who purchased a brand within one of their last decisions would also choose the same product for their following decisions as well in the same conditions as was in the first buying case. The extension of the concept of loyalty of a brand towards the live participation of loyal customers proves to be beneficial in promotion of a brand through the recommendations of the brand to other real buyers.

Thus, the essential data which had to be summarized regarding the purpose of loyalty of a brand were the idea behind repurchase of the brand - "*Will you repurchase the same brand next time?*". The data regarding the two brand loyalty components mentioned above were implicitly collected in relation to the last purchased brand within each of the two market types, corresponding to a chosen durable and, respectively, a selected consumable product category. The indicators' values further used in the analysis were computed as further described. Firstly, respondents were asked to mention their most recent purchased brand, the market share of each brand being reflected by the percentage of respondents who mentioned that brand as being the most recent purchased one. Secondly, respondents were asked to evaluate their intention to repurchase the most recently purchased brand, on a Likert scale from 1 ("*most likely to repurchase*") to 5 ("*most unlikely to purchase*"). The repurchase intention of each brand was computed as mean of repurchase intentions mentioned by respondents who most recently bought that brand. Finally, each respondent evaluated his/her intention to recommend the most recently purchased brand on a modified Likert scale from 1 ("*most likely to recommend*") to 5 ("*most likely not to recommend*"). The recommend intention of each brand was quantified as the mean of repurchase intentions mentioned by respondents who most recently bought that brand. Thus, the indicators' values were depicted through computing simple percentages or means for each identified brand within each product category, i.e. toothpaste and colour television. The format of the main two questions for both the categories was as follows:

✿ If you are satisfied by the present brand of your choice, would you like to purchase the same brand next time?

Most Likely	Likely	Can't Say	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely
+5	+3	1	-3	-5

✿ In reference to the above question, would you like to recommend the brand you own, to your primary and secondary group members?

Most Likely	Likely	Can't Say	Unlikely	Highly Unlikely
+5	+3	1	-3	-5

HYPOTHESES

- ✿ Brand repurchase intention is a driving force of building a market share in case of non-durable products.
- ✿ Brand repurchase intention is a driving force of building a market share in case of durable products.
- ✿ Brand recommendation is a driving force of building a market share in case of durable products.
- ✿ Brand recommendation is a driving force of building a market share in case of non-durable products.

SAMPLING AND DATA COLLECTION

A well researched and administered designed questionnaire was prepared for collecting data with the help of surveys; open questions were also included in the surveys just to identify the brands which were purchased and there were closed questions with a modified Likert Scale for reviewing loyalty of the brand from the point of repurchase. The alteration of the classic Likert scale, specifically consisting in establishing six instead of five answering options, was intended to avoid neutral responses and force either positive or negative attitudes. The questionnaire based interviews

were conducted face to face, at the residence of 256 respondents of Delhi between January to March 2011. The respondents were selected on the basis of a systematic sampling scheme.

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

✿ In response to the question regarding repurchase of the same brand of toothpaste by the sample respondents, the responses were as follows (see Table 1).

Table 1 : Responses Regarding Repurchase Of Same Brand Of Toothpaste			
S.No.	Responses	No. of Respondents	Value of Responses
1.	Most Likely	198	990
2.	Likely	31	93
3.	Can't Say	12	12
4.	Unlikely	13	-39
5.	Highly Unlikely	02	-6
	Total	256	1050
Hence, the mean value is 4.1.			

✿ In response to the question regarding the recommendation of the brand of toothpaste the respondents were using toother people, the responses were as follows (see Table 2).

Table 2 : Recommending Your Brand of Toothpaste To The Other People			
S.No.	Responses	No. of Respondents	Value of Responses
1.	Most Likely	152	760
2.	Likely	68	204
3.	Can't Say	18	18
4.	Unlikely	13	-39
5.	Highly Unlikely	5	-15
	Total	256	928
Hence, the mean value is 3.62.			

✿ In response to the question regarding repurchase of the same brand of colour television by the sample, the responses were as follows (see Table 3).

Table 3 : Repurchase of Same Brand Of Colour Television By The Respondents			
S.No.	Responses	No. of Respondents	Value of Responses
1.	Most Likely	26	130
2.	Likely	73	219
3.	Can't Say	92	92
4.	Unlikely	39	-117
5.	Highly Unlikely	26	-78
	Total	256	441
Hence, the mean value is 1.72.			

✿ In response to the question regarding recommendation of the brand of colour television the sample respondents were using to the other people, the responses were as follows (see Table 4).

✿ The responses are summarized in the Table 5.

S.No.	Responses	No. of Respondents	Value of Responses
1.	Most Likely	87	435
2.	Likely	133	399
3.	Can't Say	16	16
4.	Unlikely	19	-57
5.	Highly Unlikely	1	-3
	Total	256	790
Hence, the mean value is 3.09.			

Brand / Response	Repurchase Intention (Mean value)	Recommendation Intention (Mean value)
Toothpaste (non-durable)	4.1	3.62
Colour Television (durable)	1.72	3.09

RESEARCH RESULTS

After analyzing the tables, one conclusion that can be drawn up is that in spite of our expectations, brand loyalty is a driving factor in gaining market share in the case of non-durable products (at least in the case of the product category analyzed in the study - Toothpaste). We might assume that in this case, brand loyalty is a fundamental factor in maintaining the actual customer base and market share, but in order to gain a bigger share of the market (increase purchasing frequency and quantity), focusing more or less exclusively on strengthening loyalty is not the best strategy. A better strategic option is rather a dual one, in which loyalty remains an obvious basis (so that market share should not be lost), but in order to increase the market share, sales marketing techniques like promotions, merchandising, sales force motivation, etc. should be emphasized. On the other hand, the research results make us conclude that in the case of durable products (or at least in the case of the investigated product category - Television), brand loyalty is not a driving factor in both maintaining and gaining the market share.

It is because as respondents maintained that consumer durables being the costly product, people are indecisive about repurchasing the same brand again after five years or beyond, may be because of technological changes or others. Respondents' view was that the company should modify, re-modify or launch new models time-to-time, keeping pace with the competitors so that customers may accept the brand of the same company again i.e. loyalty for the same company's products .

CONCLUSION

A brand is a promise made to its customers and to its owners. Promises kept yield loyal customers and will produce a steady stream of profits for years to come. Brand equity, is at its root, the aggregate value of the future purchases of its customers. And that is what brand marketing must maintain and grow.

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