EXPLORING THE IMPACT OF BRANDING ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR AND LOYALTY AMONG MALE CUSTOMERS OF HUAWEI GHANA

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Abstract: *Branding serves as a strategical tool which functions as a base upon which business organizations and their offerings thrive. The purpose of this study is to explore the impact of branding on customer buying behavior and customer loyalty among male customers of Huawei Ghana. Using a cap age bracket of 18-40years, the study gathered data using questionnaire. A random sampling technique was employed to gather data from 136 respondents who filled the questionnaire accurately. The data was coded, errors corrected, processed, and analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 26.0). Findings indicates that branding (brand name, brand awareness and brand image) have a significant impact and a positive relationship with customer buying behavior and customer loyalty. Male customers of Huawei Ghana buying behavior and loyalty are influenced by brand name, brand awareness and brand image.*

Key Words: *branding, brand name, brand awareness, brand image, consumer buying behavior, customer loyalty.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Branding has become a matter of concern for almost all business organizations in the face of the stiff competition hovering around the business fraternity. Branding of the company, its product, and services is deemed to be an underlying factor that contribute to the fortunes of the organization. A branded company, product or service is said to raise the trust and confidence of customers to patronize and use offers from such brands. Due to this, successful business entities are relaxing their stands when it comes to matters relating to branding. They assemble a strong brand, represent it in a consistent and clear way (Egan, 2014).

Branding is regarded as a practice in marketing whereby organizations comes out with a name which could be a word or phrase, a sign, symbol, or design which gives the company an identity and help customers recognize services and products emanating from the organization. It is believed that branding creates a memorable impression in the minds of customers and helps businesses to know their customer's expectations. In business, branding serves as an appropriate way of distinguishing a company from its rivals and gives clarity as to what a business entity offer that makes it an ideal choice. A company's brand is a true reflection of who the company is and how it wants customers and competitors to perceive it (Elizabeth, 2015).

According to Ashraf et al., (2017) the behavior or buying pattern of a customer is defined by the kind of brand that is being offered to the customer by an organization. The brand also defines their purchasing pattern and persistent demand for a product or service emanating from the business organization. A customer buying behavior is said to be the critical thinking and analysis a consumer puts to bear to plan, make purchases and consume a good or service. Per the conclusion of the same study, customer buying behavior runs through a seven-whole process. It begins by recognizing a brand, product, or service. Searching for detailed information, make pre-purchases evaluation and subsequently make a choice from the list of alternatives. Purchase consumption, do post consumption evaluation and derive a feedback. Malik et al., (2013) indicated that branding is a device through which customer attraction and competitive advantage could be achieved. Per the study, brand is an important asset of a company which has the capacity to change the buying behavior of individuals which inversely translates into business expansion and gives an upper edge over competitors.

Currently, the prevailing war in the existing and emerging markets worldwide is not just about the prices of products but also how to attract, satisfy and create a loyal customer for the organization. Businesses are now conscious about how to establish a bond between their customers and the organization. This is because several companies who are successful still are in disbelief about the loyalty of customers to a brand (Kapferer, 2011; Rundle-Thiele, 2005) [5]. Additionally, the recent spree of new, related and substitute products in the market have given consumers a lot of alternatives to choose from. Branding, however, is said to be a pillar when it comes to fulfilling customer loyalty. The

branding attracts customers to a company and its offerings and has the tendency of keeping them (Ballantyneet et al., 2011).

With the recent marketing dynamics and consumer swift changes in taste and preferences, it should be a must for companies who wants to survive to consistently differentiate their products from that of competitors. According to Wheeler, (2013) brand is the name, term, symbol, or any other features that differentiate one product from other companies' products. Customers these days mostly look out for branded products or services because they believe they are reliable. The brand name, awareness, and image among others all contribute to altering the purchasing pattern of consumers and creates loyal customers for the organization as indicated by (Heding et al., 2020).

This study therefore wants to investigate the impact of branding (using parameters such as the brand name, awareness, and image) on the buying behavior and loyalty of males who deal with Huawei Ghana. The study wants to find out how the buying pattern and loyalty males who visit Huawei Ghana is influenced by the brand name, the brand awareness, and the brand image of the company.

Aims of the research.
1. To determine the impact of branding (brand name, brand awareness and brand image) on male customer buying behavior.
2. To establish the impact of branding (brand name, brand awareness and brand image) on male customer loyalty.

Research questions.
1. Does branding influence males customer buying behavior?
2. Does branding influences male customer loyalty?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:

2.1 Branding
The process through which companies use to distinguish themselves, their products, and services from all others within the same industry is known as branding. It explains a company's position or space in the market through the selling of the advantages and benefits customers would gain as against that of competitors. It is said to be a medium through which a business identity could be created and managed (Stein, 2008). According to Deanna, (2019) branding is a practice in marketing which serves as a breakthrough tool for companies to enter into a competitive market environment and attract a customer's attention. It has the tendency of converting first-time customers into a life time customers and convert customers to be brand evangelist. Brand is mostly referred to as the already created identity of a company or a product which is shown in the perception of the public or customers. Simply put, your brand is the set of perceptions people have about your company whereas branding is the set of activities needed to be in place to create or cultivate that brand (Deanna, 2019). How customers engage or patronize from the entity is influenced by these perceptions. It is therefore important to make sure customers mentality about a company's offerings relates to what the company stands for. Branding also throws more light on company's ideologies and content of their work. Positioning a company, a product or service in the minds of customers requires a holistic approach and therefore the need for branding (Benedicta, 2015).

2.2 Brand Name
The brand name is the most basic indicator of a brand or an existence of a company. Brand names contributes in creating awareness for the company and communicates their offerings to the general public. Most often serves to define the kind of brand and the things customers are to expect from the brand. Choosing a name for a brand should be done with all ingenuity because it stipulates the central them and the important associations of a company's offering in a reasonable fashion (Asiamah et al., 2013). To make communication of business offerings less complex and successful, brand names could be used as that medium. Some organizations give brand names to their products such that it catches attention, easy to memorize and sometimes sing with. Brand name should be unique, unambiguous, attractive, easily differentiated from competitors and easy to recollect in the mind. Brand names can be made up of just about any word or series of letters (Keller, 2003). Additionally, the source of a product is also sometimes determined through the brand name. Brand name contributes to brand images and awareness which assist in differentiating products from competitors. Sometimes, consumers do not lament in paying for high prices for products just because of the brand name and the prestige it confers on them. Brand name cures the challenge of struggling by consumers in making a choice. The quality of products is also communicated through brand names, sellers of the company's products also benefit from it and establish a legal basis to preserve the uniqueness of the features of the products in other not to be copied by other competitors (Marjit & Kabiraj, 2007).

2.3 Brand Awareness

The process through which organizations cultivate and create recognition for their company, products and services is what we term brand awareness. Brand awareness could be undertaken through messaging, designs, advertisements, social media and many more (Vranicar, 2020). According to Juneja, (2019), brand awareness consists of the brand recognition and the brand recall. The study states that brand recognition is the tendency for customers to have prior information on a brand when quizzed about that specific brand. The brand recall manifest when customers immediately recollect specifically a name of brand form memory when he or she encounters the brand or when given a clue. However, recognizing a brand is quite easier than recalling from memory. Kopp, (2019) states that products and services with much awareness has the tendency of generating more income to the organization. It is easier for customers to opt for a brand they know than an unknown one. Maintaining brand awareness is a move to promote a new product or revive a declining product. Ideally, awareness of the brand may include the qualities that distinguish the product from its competition.

2.4 Brand Image

The perception of customers about a brand and its related associations is what is termed as brand image. The physical features of a product or delivery of service communicates to the customers a company deals with and customers forms a high or low perception in their minds regarding the brand. Most times brand images are improved through brand associations which helps to introduce the strength, quality, and uniqueness of the brand to their consumers and create in the minds a strong and desired brand image (Neupane, 2015; Andreani et al., 2012). The brand image also incorporates the visible elements of a company's offerings which are mostly communicated through marketing channels. These visible elements of the brand have the tendency of stimulating a desire within a customer to patronize a brand and form in their minds what they should think about the brand. Brand image is the positioning of the corporate brand in the minds of customers which defines their impression about a company's product or service (Torres & Tribó, 2010). A business entity could employ brand image to distinguish their brand from that of competitors. A corporate entity with a strong brand image has the capacity to dominate sector it operates within and an example is Coca Cola. Brand image reveals the character of the business entity. it is defined by external people who deal with the organization through observation and contact. Brand image should reflect the reason for the existence of the organization i.e. mission and vision to all (Nischay et al., 2014).

2.5 Customer Buying Behavior

The emotional and metal process, actions and decision made by consumers during the period of searching, purchasing and after the product or service has been consumed is described as consumer buying behavior. consumer buying behavior takes into consideration how people engage in purchasing, what and when to buy and the rationale behind their decision to buy. Assertions have been made that customer buying behavior incorporates elements such as sociology, psychology, anthropology, economics and socio-psychology (Rana & Paul, 2017). This concept is said to ascertain the impact of elements such as families, friends, neighbours, reference groups and the entire society on the buying behaviors of consumers. Customer buying behavior is said to be influenced by countless factors which are broadly categorized into social, psychological, and personal factors. The external force which comes from other individuals which combines to influence an individual are the social factors which also affect the customer purchasing behaviors. Example of such factors includes the social class, responsibilities to family and friends, culture, and the subculture. The internal factors which consist of things such as perception, motives, attitude, and the total makeup of an individual constitute the psychological factors which also influences buying behavior. Elements which are unique to an individual such as the lifestyle, demographic factors and situational factors makes up the personal factors which influences the buying pattern of a person (Ahuja, 2015).

2.6 Customer Loyalty.

Maseviciute et al, (2015) explained that customer loyalty is decision for a customer to prefer or favour one brand over any other brand as a result of how convenient it is to acquire, performance of the product or how comfortable one feels in using or enjoying a product or service from a company. It continues by stating that customer loyalty is behavior. The research also states that how consistent customers patronize a brand and their willingness to buy from for a long time. In the face of stiffer competition, they are still glued to the company and can give testimonies about the qualities of products and services offered by the company. Customer loyalty influences a customer to buy more frequently, have a positive experience in patronizing a brand, eager to spend much on the product and become ambassadors to a product or service thereby assisting to attract potential customers to company. Past studies such as Guillén et al., (2011) categorized customer loyalty into two which are consumer attitude and consumer behavior. Rauyruen & Miller, (2007) also indicates that customer loyalty could be influenced by emotional or relational elements. The emotional elements emanate from the feelings of a customer and the relational is thorough the features of the products or services being offered. Customer loyalty is a critical issue which is mostly assessed among businesses daily (Vesel & Zabkar, 2009).

2.7 The relationship among branding (brand name, attitude, and image) and customer buying behavior.

Consumers in an attempt to make purchases takes into consideration the kind of brand to acquire. People on their own accord prefer to deal with a brand with higher prices than those whose brands are not known because it is believed that once the prices are high, the quality and authenticity of the product or brand is assured (Khasawneh & Hasouneh, 2010). Branding integrates all marketing arsenals to entice, stimulate and influence consumer choices and purchase decisions since it would effectively communicate the value of the offering (Nepalia., 2011). According to Del Rio et al., (2001), consumers consider the value they would obtain before engaging a brand. Branding is therefore said to have a positive relation with consumer buying behavior. Doostar et al., (2012) also indicated that branding elements such as the brand name and image also influence the decisions made by consumers to patronize a brand. According to Pahwa, (2019), customers decision to purchase a brand could be influenced through brand awareness. This is because organizations mostly spend millions to sell their brands to customer. Decker, (2019) also indicates that brand awareness provides consumers with information and value relating to a brand of a business. This allows customers to assess the information before deciding to buy. The study therefore puts out the following hypothesis:

H1 – brand name has impact on customer buying behavior.
H2 - brand awareness has impact on customer buying behavior.
H3 - brand image has impact on customer buying behavior.

2.8 The relationship among branding (brand name, attitude, and image) and customer loyalty.

It is to be noted that branding is able to differentiate a company or a brand from competitors, create significant demand by buyers, demonstrate superior value and build customer loyalty according to (Ranade, 2012). Branding is also said to be a guiding force which incorporates a comprehensive strategy of the company, the intellectual capital of the company, efficient production methods and a well-tested marketing measures which seeks to focus on attracting, sustaining and stimulating customer's continuous patronage of a company and its affiliated services or products. Branding innovations and persistent improvement in customer relationships are two critical investments which results in value creation and promotes customer loyalty (Dumitriu, 2012). A respectable brand with higher customer loyalty possesses a higher market share and capacity to imply higher cost for their products or services (Mohammadian & Mohammad, 2010). Decker, (2019) stated that once customers are aware of an existing brand, they can get access to them without struggle and delay. They continue to make purchases because of the value they get and would choose the brand over all other brands. This brings into place loyalty which is not limited to just purchases but also communicates the company's brand to friends and families. A brand name which sounds positive and makes a customer goose, wanting to obtain a product of the brand leads to creating a loyal customer. A company with a strong brand image will also get customers attached to it because these customers are willing to patronize frequently and spend more money on the company's offering and become brand ambassadors (Nichay & shiplap, 2014). On this basis, the study formulates the following hypothesis:

H4 - brand name has impact on customer loyalty.
H5 - brand awareness has impact on customer loyalty.
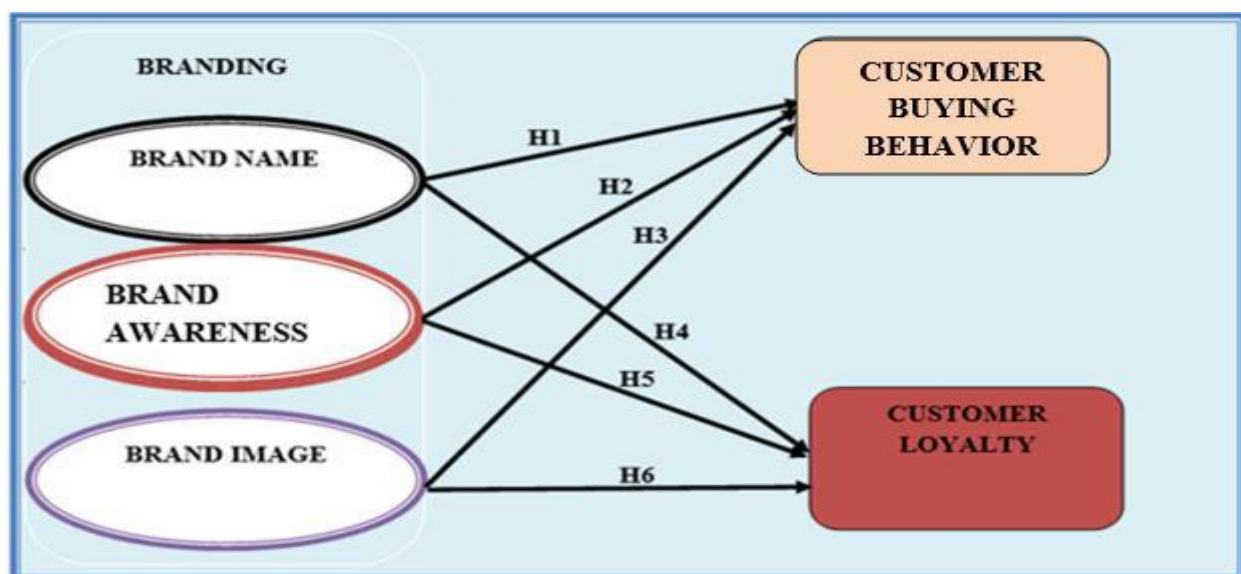*H6 - brand image has impact on customer loyalty.*

Figure 2.1 conceptual framework

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The study sort to determine the impact of branding (using elements such as brand name, awareness, and image) impact on customer buying behavior and loyalty. To ascertain the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variables, the study opted for the qualitative and quantitative research approach.

3.1 Research population, Sampling and Sample Size.

The population for this research is the male customers who are between the age bracket of 18-40years who patronize from the Huawei brand in Ghana specifically focusing on residents living in the capital city Accra where Huawei has its head office and other subsidiaries. The research adopted random sampling approach to gather information where all male customers of Huawei are given the opportunity to respond to the questions being asked. Since there is an unknown figure relating to the population, the researcher opted to use 136 samples who have had an engagement with the Huawei company in Ghana for over a year and have purchased from the brand.

3.2 Data collection.

The research adopted the survey approach using questionnaire to solicit for information from target population. Questionnaires were categorized into two sections with the first sector capturing the demographic nature of the respondents such as age, income level, education level and their perceptions about branding on consumer buying behavior and loyalty which was measured using a nominal scale. The second section incorporates questions which relates to brand name, brand awareness, brand image, consumer buying behavior and customer loyalty measured using the 5-point Liker scale which varied from 1(strongly disagree) to 5(strongly agree). 155 questionnaires were sent out via online to male respondents of which 136 was completely filled which represented 88% response rate which was used for the study.

3.3 Data Analysis.

The data gathered was analyzed using the Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS 26). For the benefit of proper analysis and clarity, data was processed into mathematical tables and charts. All errors were identified, corrected, and coded in order to ensure proper processing of the data gathered in this case the questionnaire collected from the respondents. This enabled the study to also test for the reliability, validity, and accurateness of the answers. The gathered data will be analyzed quantitatively. Correlation analysis would be done to determine the correlations or relationships that exist between independent variables and dependent variables. Additionally, multiple regression analysis would be initiated to define relationships among constructs being studied.

Model specification

The multiple linear regression models used for this research is indicated in mathematical terms as follows:

$$CBB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BN_1 + \beta_2 BA_2 + \beta_3 BI_3 + \mu_i \qquad \text{Eq (1)}$$
$$CL = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BN_1 + \beta_2 BA_2 + \beta_3 BI_3 + \mu_i \qquad \text{Eq (2)}$$

Where CBB = Customer buying behavior (DV), CL= Customer Loyalty (DV), BN = Brand Name (IV), BA = Business Awareness (IV), and BI = Brand Image (IV).

4. DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics.

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Customer Buying Behavior	136	4.3471	.49843
Customer Loyalty	136	4.3640	.44082
Brand Name	136	4.3480	.57787
Brand Awareness	136	4.3505	.51050
Brand Image	136	4.3578	.48114
Valid N (Listwise)	136		

Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

The table 4.1 above highlights the descriptive statistics of the data which indicates the mean, the standard deviation, and the number of observations which in this case is 136. Among the variables, customer loyalty is reported to have the largest mean value of 4.3640. Additionally, the statistics data also shows that the independent variables for this study which are brand name, brand awareness and brand image recorded mean values of 4.3480, 4.3505 and 4.3578 and a standard deviation of 0.57787, 0.51050 and 0.48114 respectively. This shows that brand name, awareness and image have a positive relationship with customer buying behavior and loyalty. Respondents believes that branding influences their loyalty and buying patterns.

The demographic features of all the 136 respondents were all males since the research focuses on male customers. 13.2% of the respondents are between the ages of 18-25years, 48.5% are between 26-30years, 20.6% are between 30-35years and 17.6% are between 36-40years. Additionally, 17.4% of the respondents indicated they are employed, 2.9% are unemployed, 36.8% are self-employed and 41.9% are students. Also, 7.4% of the male customers have obtained HND certificate, 47.8% have bachelor degree, 36.8% have master degree, 5.1% are PHD holders and 2.9% have informal education. Furthermore, the figure 4.1 below, reports the income levels of respondents with 11.03%, 38.97%, 41.18%, 5.88% and 2.94% indicating their income within the ranges GHS 100-500, GHS 600-1000, GHS 1100-1500, GHS 1600-2000, and GHS 2100 and above respectively.
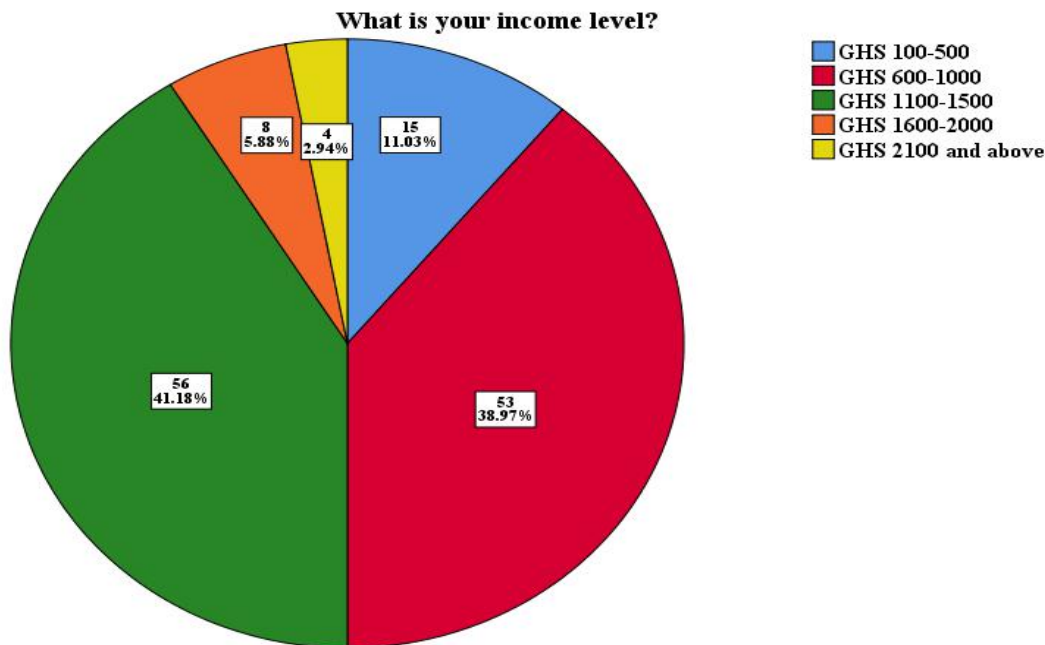

Fig. 4.1 Income levels of male customers.
Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

The figure 4.2 below also captures the products that the respondents have purchased from Huawei Ghana which is our focus of study. 32.35% of the respondents have acquired either a mobile phone or laptop, 21.32% have also patronized tablets, 31.62% have also acquired accessories from the brand and 14.71% have also obtained wearables from the company.
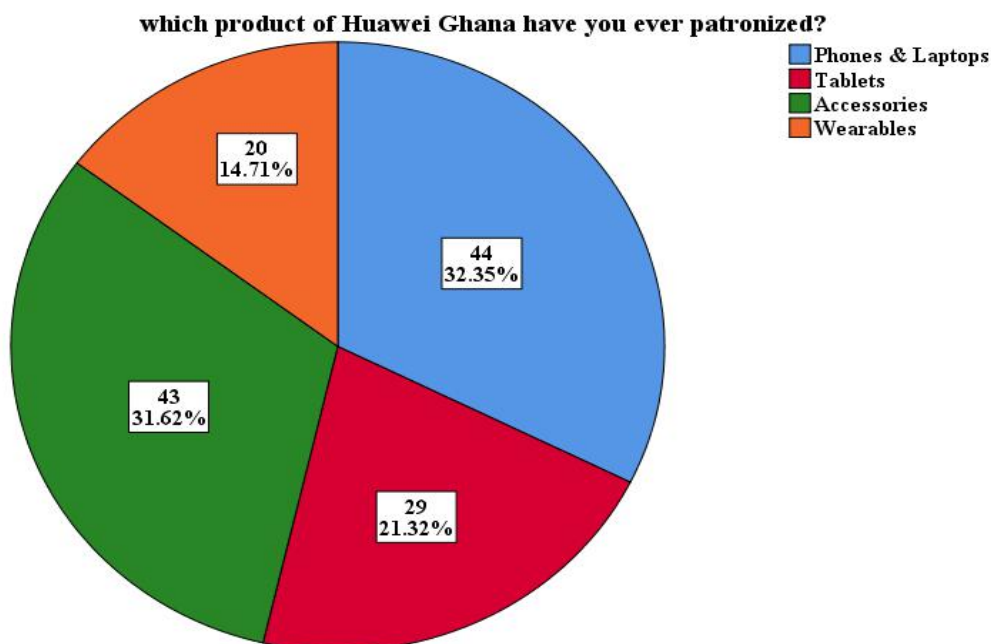

Fig 4.2 Products purchased from the company.
Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

5. CORRELATION ANALYSIS. :

Table 5.1 Correlations					
		Consumer Buying Behavior	Brand Name	Brand Awareness	Brand Image
Pearson Correlation	CBB	1.000			
	BN	.755	1.000		
	BA	.939	.660	1.000	
	BI	.922	.561	.947	1.000

Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

Table 5.1 stipulates the coefficient of the correlational analysis between the independent variables and the dependent variable. correlational values of 0.755, 0.939 and 0.922 shows there is a positive relationship between brand name, brand awareness, brand image and customer buying behavior respectively. Brand image indicates the highest correlational value with customer buying behavior. It can be said that brand image influences customer buying behavior the most. However, it could be said that customers are influenced by branding before making a buying decision.

Table 5.2 Correlations					
		Customer Loyalty	Brand Name	Brand Awareness	Brand Image
Pearson Correlation	CL	1.000			
	BN	.747	1.000		
	BA	.847	.660	1.000	
	BI	.799	.561	.947	1.000

Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

Table 5.2 stipulates correlational values of 0.747, 0.847 and 0.799 shows there is a positive relationship between brand name, brand awareness, brand image and customer loyalty respectively. Brand awareness indicates the highest correlational value with customer loyalty. It can be said that brand awareness influences the loyalty of customers the most. Conclusively, it could be said that customers loyalty is influenced by branding.

6. MULTIPLE REGRESSION ANALYSIS.

Table 6.1 Model summary

Model 1 – customer buying behavior					Model 2 – customer loyalty				
R	R^2	Adj. R^2	Std. Error	Sig	R	R^2	Adj. R^2	Std. Error	Sig
.969	.938	.937	.12518	.000	.885	.783	.778	.20749	.000
R square change .938					R square change .783				

a.   Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Name, Brand Awareness
b.   Dependent Variables: Customer Buying Behavior, Customer Loyalty

Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

The independent variables from the table 6.1 shows a high correlational value of 0.938 and 0.885 with the dependent variables i.e. customer buying behavior and customer loyalty. Having a look at the variations of the values of the R^2 of 0.937 and 0.783 which means that the independent variables (brand name, brand awareness and brand image) is able to explain 94% of customer buying behavior and 79% of customer and the remaining 6% and 21% of the two dependent variables unexplained respectively. These may be influenced by other factors which is not revealed by these models.

Table 6.2 ANOVA

Models ⟶	Model 1 – customer buying behavior				Model 2 – customer loyalty			
	Sum of squares	df	F	Sig.	Sum of squares	df	F	Sig.
Regression	31.470	3	669.464	.000	20.551	3	159.114	.000
Residual	2.068	132			5.683	132		
Total	33.539	135			26.283	135		

a.   Dependent Variables: Customer Buying Behavior, Customer Loyalty

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Name, Brand Awareness
Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

The ANOVA test was conducted to determine how good the models are. The ANOVA table records an F-value of 669.464 for model 1 and 159.144 for model 2 which is obtained at a probability level of p-value of 0.000 and 0.000 respectively. This is an indication that the model is highly fit and good because it is statistically significant with $p<0.05$. This also shows that brand image, awareness and image have significant influence on customer buying behavior and customer loyalty.

Table 6.3 Reliability Statistics

	Model 1 – customer buying behavior		Model 2 – customer loyalty	
	Cronbach Alpha	N	Cronbach Alpha	N
Brand Name	.939	8	.882	7
Brand Awareness	.967	8	.908	7
Brand Image	.964	8	.897	7

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Name, Brand Awareness
b. Dependent Variables: Customer Buying Behavior, Customer Loyalty
Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

The table 6.3 above indicates that all the independent variables in the model 1 & 2 have very strong reliability because their corresponding Cronbach Alpha exceeds 0.80. Brand awareness produces the highest reliability with a Cronbach Alpha of 0.967 and 0.908 in model 1& 2. We therefore conclude that all the variables fall good in the reliability scores. The thumb rule states that Cronbach Alpha coefficient represents as: $0.7 < 0.8$ is good and $0.8 < 0.9$ is very good.

Table 6.4 Coefficient

Variable	Model 1 – customer buying behavior			Model 2 – customer loyalty		
	B	t	Sig.	B	t	Sig.
(constant)	.168	1.602	.112	.804	4.617	.000
Brand Name	.256	9.934	.000	.270	6.330	.000
Brand Awareness	.265	3.540	.001	.376	3.032	.003
Brand Image	.517	7.178	.000	.172	1.444	.002

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Image, Brand Name, Brand Awareness
b. Dependent Variables: Customer Buying Behavior, Customer Loyalty
Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

Using a confidence interval of 95% to run the models, table 6.4 indicates the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variables. With model one which contains customer buying behaviours as a dependent variable, brand name, brand awareness and brand image records a B of 0.168, 0.256 and 0.517 which is significant at 0.000, 0.001 and 0.000 respectively. In the model one, brand image recorded the highest correlation coefficient of 0.517. With model two which contains customer loyalty as a dependent variable, brand name, brand awareness and brand image records a B of 0.270, 0.376 and 0.172 which is significant at 0.000, 0.003 and 0.002 respectively. In the model two, brand awareness recorded the highest correlation coefficient of 0.376. The coefficient values indicate a change in the dependent variable when there is a unit change in the predictors where all other variables are held constant. The results show that brand name, brand awareness and brand image influences customer buying behavior and customer loyalty. The outcome simply means male customers of Huawei Ghana are influenced to patronize and be loyal towards the brand because of the brand name, awareness, and the image the brand carries.

7. RESULT FINDINGS :

The study used an ANOVA to test for the validity of the results and outcome showed that the questionnaire items were valid and could be processed further for analysis. The reliability test was done using the Cronbach Alpha which also showed variable were reliable and had internal consistencies. The correlational and regression analysis of the study proved that branding influences the buying behavior and loyalty of male customer of Huawei Ghana. The research focused on males between the ages of 18-40years in determining the impact of branding (brand name, brand awareness and brand image) on customer buying behavior and loyalty. The results in table 5.1, 5.2, 6.1 and 6.4 shows that brand name, brand awareness and brand image have a positive and significant impact on customer buying behavior and customer loyalty. Due to this, the hypothesis H1, H2, and H3 which states that brand name, awareness and image

have a positive impact on customer buying behavior is accepted. Furthermore, the hypothesis which stipulates that brand name, awareness and image have a positive impact on customer loyalty is accepted. The study can therefore state that, male customers of Huawei Ghana decision to buy or remain loyal to them are influenced by branding.

7.1 Research question one (Does branding influence males consumer buying behavior?).

The results from the study in table 5.1 showed a correlational value of 0.755, 0.937 and 0.922 relating to the correlation between brand name, brand awareness, brand image and customer buying behavior. This means branding has a positive impact on customer buying behavior. Subsequently, indices from the multiple regression in table 6.4 recorded a B-value of 0.256, 0.265 and 0.517, t-value of 9.934, 3.540 and 7.178 which is significant at $p<0.05$ for brand name, awareness, and image respectively. This adds to the assertion that branding influences customer buying behavior and in support of Muturi et al., (2013) whose research findings showed that branding positively affects the purchasing behavior of consumers. According to Brassington & Pettitt, (2004) a strong brand image and name is capable of influencing consumers decisions and position organizations to dominate the market. when the male respondents were quizzed whether Huawei brand had any influence on them, 97(71.3%) of the respondents indicated "YES" and 39(28.7%) indicating "NO". Most of the respondent's decision to buy seem to be influenced by branding. Furthermore, in order to ascertain how true branding influences buying decisions as shown in figure 4 below, the respondents were asked if they would consider a brand name in deciding to buy something. 50(36.76%) of the respondents strongly agreed, 82(60.29%) agreed and 4(2.94%) remained neutral. However, the numbers from the agreed and strongly agreed arena shows that, before making any decision to buy one critical thing male customers looks out for is the brand. The study can therefore conclude that branding influences customer buying behaviors.
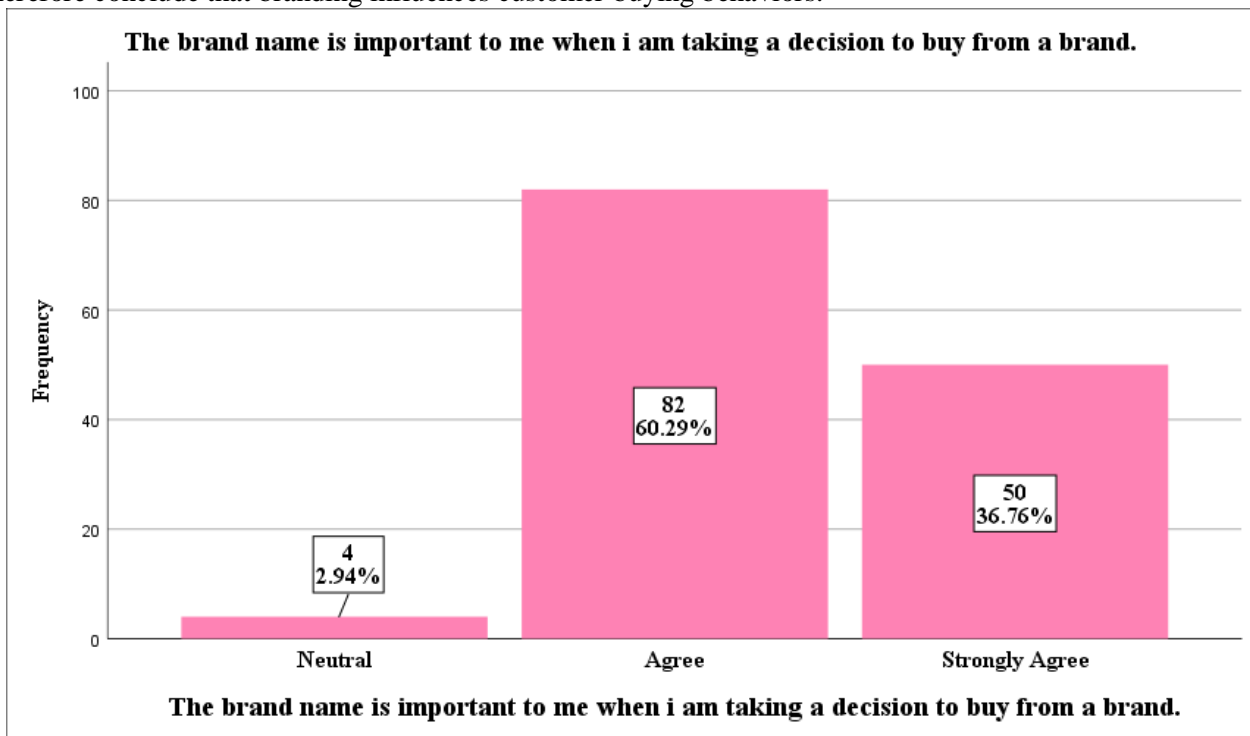

Fig. 4 branding impact on customer buying behaviors
Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

7.2 Research question two (Does branding influences male customer loyalty?).

Evidence from table 5.2 shows correlational values of 0.747, 0.847 and 0.799 for the relationship between brand name, brand awareness, brand image and customer loyalty respectively. The correlation shows there is a positive and significant relationship between the predictors and the dependent variable. Also, evidence from table 6.4 shows the coefficient values and how significant the independent variables influence the dependent variable. Brand name, brand awareness and brand image records a (B-value=0.270, t-value=6.330 and p-value=0.000), (B-value=0.376, t-value=3.032 and p-value=0.003) and (B-value=0.172, t-value=1.444 and p-value=0.002) respectively. The outcome shows they impact significantly customer loyalty. Asiamah et al., (2013) determined that, the loyalty of customers of the mobile telecommunication networks in Ghana were influenced by branding. Asomadu et al., (2009) investigated the factors which triggers an individual's loyalty towards a firm. The outcome of the study showed that, 50% of the respondents are committed to a company, product, or service due to branding. This study shares the same light as outcome from our research shows clearly male customers loyalty are influenced by elements such as brand name, awareness, and image. When respondents were quizzed about the tendency to be loyal based on branding, 130(95.6%)

indicated a "YES" and 6(4.4%) indicating a "NO". Furthermore, evidence from figure 5 also support the assertion that branding influences customer loyalty. 52(38.24%), 83(61.03%) and 1(0.74%) strongly agreed, agreed and neutral respectively. The study could therefore conclude that, branding influences the loyalty of male customers of Huawei Ghana.
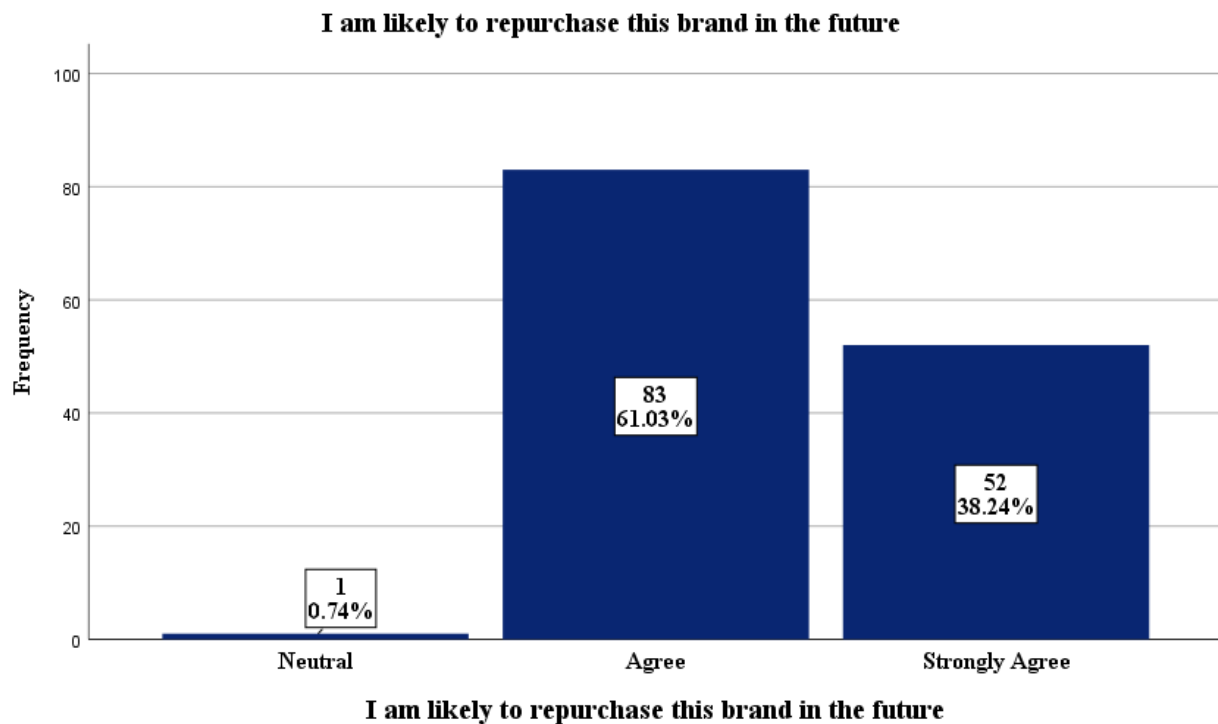

Fig.5 branding impact on customer loyalty.
Source: generated by researcher from data collected and analyzed using SPSS (version26.0)

8. CONCLUSION.

Branding is a means of assuring customers of quality about the offerings of a business organization. Branding focuses on occupying a space in the customers mind and not just a means to off-load a product. The goal of this study was to determine the impact of branding on customer buying behavior and customer loyalty. Using questionnaire to solicit for information from male customers of Huawei Ghana, it was then processed through SPSS to obtain results for discussion. The outcome shows that branding (brand name, brand awareness and brand image) has a strong and positive impact on customer buying behavior and customer loyalty. This implies that branding could change the buying behavior positively and create loyal customers if used judiciously.

9. PRACTICAL IMPLICATIONS.

The study provides knowledge and insight to business organizations about the essence of employing branding as a promotional and marketing tool to stimulate, influence and create the desire to patronize or to be loyal. Experts in the marketing fraternity should understand the need to have a good and desirable brand name and the need to make customers aware of an existing brand and its offerings. Positioning a brand based on brand name, brand awareness and brand image attracts consumers specifically males from the outcome of this research. The study would help brand managers to position their brands accordingly and establish appropriate marketing strategies. It would help marketing managers to measure the buying pattern and loyalty of customers to determine the performance of their products on the market.

10. LIMITATION AND RECOMMENDATION.

The sample size of the study was 136 which is small and it was as a result of time and resources constraints. Subsequent studies could focus on increasing the sample size to a large number. Also, the respondents for the study was limited to customers of Huawei Ghana, future studies could focus on adding customers from other business organizations to make the results more realistic and authentic. The age count for the study was also restricted to customers from the ages of 18-40 years. Subsequent researchers could expand the age bracket to capture other customers within other age bracket. The study also suggests that future researchers could include female customers in the sample size apply the concept of branding to different product categories or customer behaviours such as satisfaction and trust.

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