

# Influence of brand image on customer perceived quality



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Casual wears have always been an important and popular category as it gives a relaxed and comfortable lifestyle to the youths today. According to the United Nations, the youth's age is ranging from 15-24. In fact, nearly half of the population on earth is under the age of 25 (UNFPA, 2005). Most of the youth are students in colleges, universities or in the working environment, and they will soon command significant purchasing power in the market place as they not only have more time and money to spend on the discretionary items than other older or younger generation.

In the world of businesses today, brands have always played an important role. It is said that brand has huge influence on customer buying decisions and therefore, big amount of money are thrown into developing a strong brand image. One could notice that the famous brands had always survived in the storms of changing marketing environments. There is an increased recognition of the brand image, as there are indications showing that a good brand image can enhance the customer satisfaction and experience for long term commitment.

This study seeks to extend a research on the influence of brand image on customer perceived quality and satisfaction in Malaysia. While evidence show that brand image do impact on customer perceived quality and satisfaction, there are still lack of empirical study's findings on the implication and outcomes of customer perceived quality and satisfaction. Theoretically saying, perceived quality and customer satisfaction will lead to customer loyalty. However, this assumption is yet to be tested in Malaysia. As it is very likely to find a study within this knowledge across the Western countries, but there are very less empirical study on Malaysia which is a <https://assignbuster.com/influence-of-brand-image-on-customer-perceived-quality/>

developing country with a population of 26 million (World Developing Index, 2010).

In line with above, this study will emphasize on a few objectives:

To examine whether the public understand what is brand images

To understand the consumers' perception on brand loyalty

To explore the impact of brand image on customer loyalty with particular emphasis on the casual wear industry

To critically analyze the how brand name affects buying behavior

## **2.0 Literature Review**

In the book Great American Brands, Clearly (1981) have a thinking that without the trademark brands, the existence of a trustworthy marketplace is near impossible (as cited in Rooney, 1995).

It is then mentioned by Porter & Claycomb (1997) that a well-recognized and accepted brand image is one of priceless assets an organization possesses.

There are numerous retailers involved in clothing industry today, and under current competitive business environment, the creation of brand loyalty has become the main strategic marketing plan of the marketers to gain the market share, as the consumers have been exposed to uncountable choices of alternatives.

It is common to have different brands of a similar product in the marketplace, and the buyers have to choose one of these brands. Thus, the

brand image created is directly affecting the retail store image as well as brand loyalty. For instance, in the soft drinks industry, famous brand like Coca Cola, Pepsi, F&N etc are building their own brand image in order to fight in increasing the sales volume respectively.

## 2. 1 Brand Image

One of the major concern faced by the brand managers are how to develop a better understanding of the appropriate relationship between brand image with customer loyalty and commitment, particularly to the innumerable of known antecedents to customer loyalty.

What is a brand? According to Pelsmacker et. al (2001), a brand is a name, term, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of any mentioned above, to establish an identity of the goods or services offered. It is meant to constitute the distinction between the brand and the competitors. Whereas according to Bates (2007), a brand is defined as the collection of perceptions in the mind of consumers. Brand image is the “ reasoned or emotional perceptions consumers attach to specific brands” (Low and Lamb, 2000, cited in Ogba & Tan, 2009), and therefore, it can be describe as a mental picture developed in the consumers themselves.

Besides, Ginden (1993) believes that a brand suggests the best choice for consumers (cited in Rooney, 1995), while some may see it as something the customer knows and will react to (The Economist, 1998, cited in Rooney, 1995). The brand image can also be defined as customers’ perceptions of the brand associations held in their memory (Herzog, 1963; Keller, 1993a, b, cited in Ogba & Tan, 2009). Keller (1993a, b) argued that this association <https://assignbuster.com/influence-of-brand-image-on-customer-perceived-quality/>

could originate from the consumers experience or from the facts obtained on a market offering (cited in Ogba & Tan, 2009). Indeed, a favorable image of brands positively influence the patronage decisions and purchase behavior, while an unfavorable image could adversely influence such decisions and behaviors (Porter & Claycomb, 1997).

Brand image could lead to customer loyalty when the customer is satisfied with the brand. According to Ogba & Tan (2009), customer satisfaction is the feeling of pleasure or disappointment as a result of comparing the product/service perceived's quality in relation to their expectations. Therefore, when the customer did not obtain what is ideal for them, brand image can somehow be damaged in their mind.

## 2. 1. 1 Functions of brand image

According to Olshavsky (1985), brand image also serves as an informational cue for the customers to form inferences about a store's merchandise quality (cited in Porter & Claycomb, 1997). Thus, a positive brand image will not only would influence the retail store image in a good way, but also to strengthen the position of the store in its marketplace. It is well accepted that, over time, consumers form own thoughts and idea associated with stores, and influencing their shopping behaviors (Porter & Claycomb, 1997).

Brand images are vital to any organizations because they create value for them in several ways. Porter & Claycomb (1997) suggest that it helps the consumers retrieve and process information on the brand. For instance, the Nike's development of the slogan " Just Do It" has created an image that helped the consumers' process additional information they know on Nike.  
<https://assignbuster.com/influence-of-brand-image-on-customer-perceived-quality/>

Besides, brand images play an important role in differentiating and positioning of a product or service (Porter & Claycomb, 1997). Brand image also create associations that produce a positive feelings that are transferred to the brands.

Porter & Claycomb (1997) mentioned that the product/service inferences do impact on the consumers' thoughts and feelings about a store. Thus, it could be viewed as one of key variable that influences retail image. However, it is impossible for the consumers to know about everything about the products and this is when they access to the brand image as a store information cue when shopping (Porter & Claycomb, 1997). According to Stokes (1985), brand image communicates a great deal of facts to any consumers because it has become associated with a bundle of information created by any kind of promotional mix and previous usage of the brand (as cited in Porter & Claycomb, 1997).

## 2. 2 Brand Loyalty

Indeed, branding is essential to build an image that will increase the brand's equity to the customer, leading to brand loyalty (The Economist, 1008, cited in Rooney, 1995). On top of that, Rooney (1995) states that branding is a technique to build a sustainable, unique advantage by playing on the nature of human beings. This is supported by O'Malley (1991) saying that human could attach their feelings to inanimate objects which consist of a collection of symbols. When consumers are used to a particular brand, they do not readily accept substitutes and this is when the organization take up the

chance to fully utilize this advantage of human natural personality (Ginden, 1993, cited in Rooney, 1995).

What is brand loyalty? Oliver (1999b, p. 34) believes that loyalty is a like an obligation to re-buy or re-patronize a product or service that is used, consistently in the future and therefore leading to repetitive same-brand purchasing (cited in Taylor et al, 2004). In addition, Oliver (1993b) argued that “ the ultimate customer loyalty is a function of perceived product superiority, personal fortitude, social bonding, and their synergistic effects” (cited in Taylor et al, 2004). As there are many sayings there is a connection between customer loyalty and brand image, there still remains uncertainty to what customer loyalty truly is. Ehrenberg (1988) and Jacoby (1971) suggest that loyalty is when customer intends to repeat purchase; in another word, customer loyalty only exists whenever customer embarks on a second buying journey again.

However, Ogba and Tan (2009) claimed that this view does not provide a deep understanding on the customer loyalty concept, due to a repeat purchase do not necessarily mean they intend to stay with the brand. Indeed, it could be due to limited alternatives present in the market such as a monopoly market.

In addition, another researcher Keller (1998) has a thought that the brand loyalty had not been measured via the correct way for the past (cited in Taylor et al, 2004). Keller believes that the customer loyalty can be viewed more broadly, rather than by repetitive purchase behaviors. Similarly, Morgan (2000) suggests that the term ‘ loyal’ can be interpreted in various

ways like the affective loyalty and behavioral loyalty (cited in Taylor et al, 2004).

On the other hand, Meyer and Allen (1991) writes on their studies that loyalty can be referred in three perspectives; where loyalty is referred to as favorable attitudes for a particular brand, and therefore seem to be an emotional attachment to the brand. Besides, loyalty can be seen as a behavioral factor or as an accident approach that presumes the correlation between attitudes and behavior (as cited in Ogba & Tan, 2009).

After all, Ogba and Tan (2009) believe that brand loyalty exist as a result of the connection between a consumers' attitude to a particular brand, and also the repeat purchase behavior for the brand. Wood (2000) proposed that brand image is often altered to suits into the environment to facilitate brand loyalty (cited in Ogba & Tan, 2009). It is the customers' involvement in repeat purchase behavior on a brand and the commitment determines the degree of brand loyalty.

### 3. 0 Methodologies

The purpose of this research is to find out the influence of brand image on the customer loyalty and commitment among the young adults in casual clothing industry. Researcher first uses secondary data such as books and academic journal articles to provide a basic understanding to the background of research topic. The study also uses primary data-collecting approach where first-hand data will be collected.



Primary research is all about collecting data about a given subject directly from the reality. It is collected specifically for the study at hand and can be obtained either by observation, or communicates directly or indirectly with the subject. Examples of qualitative direct communication techniques are in-depth interview, focus group and projective techniques, where as quantitative techniques are such as telephone or surveys.

### 3. 1 Questionnaire

The primary data will be gathered through survey by using the questionnaire since it can be use for descriptive research to identify and describe the variability in different phenomena (Saunders et. al, 2007). One of the advantages of using primary research method is that it enables the researchers to collect information according to their needs. Besides, the data is up to date and can be considered accurate at the time for the research project. Chisnall (2005) mentioned that a questionnaire is a method of getting specific information about a defined problem. The reasons questionnaire is chosen as a tool is because questionnaire is often the lowest-cost method as compared to other such as telephone interview or focus group. Furthermore, administrated questionnaire enable researcher to clarify any doubts on the spot so that any unwanted errors or incomplete answers can be avoided.

The questionnaire consists of three sections. Section I comprises questions regarding demographic characteristics to explore how respondents' perception and behavior differ from the attribute variable. Section II is used to test whether the respondents were user or non-user of the casual wears.

<https://assignbuster.com/influence-of-brand-image-on-customer-perceived-quality/>

Besides, questions concerning the degree of dependent towards casual wear clothing would be asked to examine how frequent does the respondent wear casually. It consists of questions asking mainly on respondents' opinion and attitude towards brand images.

Whereas Section III is including questions concerning factors that influencing the brand loyalty. Respondent are required to choose among the factors listed that will impact on the brand loyalty based on their own mind set. Then, questions on brand image would be asked to examine the respondents' understanding on brand loyalty.

The questionnaire made up of open-ended questions which are used to collect qualitative data and closed-ended questions which are to collect quantitative data. Open-ended questions allow the respondents in their words, whereas close-ended questions provide alternatives for them to choose the most accurate answer according to them. Besides, nominal scale and likert scale will be utilized where nominal scale is used to measure demographic information such as the gender, race, education level etc. whereas a five point likert scale will also be applied to find out whether the brand image is affecting brand loyalty or not.

Since there will be certain amount of the respondents, who may not have an opinion on or experience in the related topics, options like " no idea" or " do not know" are available for the respondents. On top of that, the questionnaire consists of two versions, one in English and another in Mandarin. This is necessarily as to make sure every respondent can really understand the questions given and answer them since Malaysia is a

multiracial country. Besides, the questionnaire would be pilot tested through all the stages of development such as rewriting questions and re-composition the sequence of questions (Chisnall, 2005).

### 3. 2 Sampling

The questionnaire would be distributed directly to 150 respondents which fall between the age ranges of young adults. The questionnaire would be distributed in the main shopping mall around the Selangor state, namely 1 Utama, The Curve, Ikano Power Centre, KLCC and Sunway Pyramid. The target audience is assumed either studying or working during the day time. Therefore, it would be distributed at the night since this is the time where the most of the target audience are free. On top of that, plenty of time is given to the respondent to let them complete the questionnaire to reduce the response error.

Convenience sampling is selected in this research as researcher can easily access to the respondents, and therefore able to complete the research within the time frame given. This sampling technique is the fastest and yet most efficient ways of getting raw data needed for the study in order to answer the research objectives set earlier.

### 3. 2 Data Analysis

After data have been collected, statistic analysis of data is needed in this research to generate quantitative data. Data analysis will first undertake an exploratory data analysis, which is a method emphasizing the use of pie charts, table and bar chart to have a better and clearer understanding of the

data collected. By using these diagrams, readers can easily understand and make comparison between the variables in the research proposal.

Apart from that, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) is being adopted for this research to analysis the data statically. Before the data being analyzed, every data will be recorded using numerical codes. This is to make the data enter more quickly and ensure fewer errors occur (Saunders, et al., 2007). Independent t-test and ANOVA test are also employed to analysis the data. These two tests are useful to examine whether two or more categories are different (Saunders, et al., 2007). Thus, the purpose of undertake these two tests is to analysis the attitudinal difference based on gender, age, income level, ethnic groups and so on.

#### 4. 0 Limitation

There are number of limitations when conducting this research. One of the limitations is financial constraints. Since research is still a college student, only a limited questionnaire could be printed as more printing leads to a higher budget. Besides, manpower is another problem as it's difficult for one person to send out 150 questionnaires alone. Therefore, friends of researcher are asked to help in sending out the questionnaire. This is the cheapest but efficient way to conduct the research and meanwhile meet the research objectives.

Besides, some of the respondents are not willing to take some time to answer the questionnaires. They chose to simply answer the questionnaire, rather than sitting down and think deeply about the answers. So, it might cause the information that is collected insufficient and inadequate for the <https://assignbuster.com/influence-of-brand-image-on-customer-perceived-quality/>

research. Furthermore, the survey only conducted to 150 respondents in the city, yet the 150 questionnaire cannot fully represent the opinion of all youths in the city.

## 5. 0 Research Ethics

Before distributing the questionnaires to the respondents, researcher will introduce himself/herself to them. Besides, respondents will be debriefed by explaining to them what the research all about is and the reasons of having this research. This is to ensure the respondents trust and believe in the research and increasing the confidence level. Respondent inquiries would be answered truthfully in order to let them have a better understanding of this research paper. Blumberg et al (2008) believes that after debriefing, respondents would have a positive attitude towards the value of research.

Apart from that, respondents' confidentiality will be ensured and protected. They will not be forced to contribute their personal information if they are not willing to. Besides, they have rights to refuse answering the questions as item non-response will be accepted. The privacy rights will also be protected as they have rights not to reveal information such as names, contact numbers, income level or other details to ensure the validity of research.

Last but not least, references are from reliable sources such as researches and published journal articles. Proper in-text referencing is included to show no sign of plagiarism of other works of other in this research. In addition, it is vital to show respect and acknowledgement to the author by making those references.

GC. png