

Product Branding and Customer Patronage of Champion Breweries Plc.'s Products, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study examined the effect of product branding on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The research design adopted was a survey research in which 400 questionnaires were administered to the respondents, out of which 361 were duly filled and returned. Two hypotheses guided the study while regression analysis was used to analyse the data collected. Findings revealed, amongst others, that brand awareness ($R^2 = 0.885$, $P < 0.05$) and brand image ($R^2 = 0.958$, $P = 0.000$) have a positive and significant effect on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products. Based on the findings, it was concluded amongst others, that branding significantly affects customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo. From the findings and conclusion, the study recommended that the Management of Champion Breweries, Uyo should endeavour to expose their brands to their target market using appropriate promotional mix elements to enhance brand awareness and brand image as the patronage of Champion Breweries Products is determined by them.

Keywords: Product Branding, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Customer Patronage.

1.0 Introduction

These days, brands have become like status symbols whereby consumers the world over prefer branded products to unbranded ones. Consumers choose brands and trust them the way they trust their friends and family members to avoid uncertainty and quality-related issues (Ahuja (2015). Thus Abioro (2021) asserted that customers' perception of brands has been an essential determinant of business success, noting that in the long run, companies must create a robust brand perception and awareness for business operations and existence. He added that branding as a symbol of identity, differentiates a product from a pool of others and requires the practice of developing a matchless name and identity for a product. He further added that differentiating a product to give its identity, credibility is ensured and customer patronage is enhanced. Branding, he continued, develops a personality and reputation for a product. Hence the need for product branding.

Branding could bring about value addition to a particular product thereby enhancing customer patronage relationship with the product brand. Branding is more than just symbols and names as they are essential elements of how customers are attached to the products. Branding results in customer patronage which is a commitment to buy a preferred product or service consistently and making referrals through word of mouth to others, with its attendant effect on customer retention, increased sales volume and high profit margin.

Brands are the key to winning a position in the marketplace because they deliver unique benefits and build deep connections with customers. Product branding is one of the most contemporary tactics

adopted in business to ensure not only its success but also its longevity. Logically, a customer who is loyal to a brand feels less risk and greater confidence in the company. In addition, customers are the most critical, though, very important group to take into consideration because customers can always choose from where they buy (Kotler, 2009). Consequently, they will buy from the manufacturer that provides the most value. (Doyle & Stern, 2006) in Laiho & Inha (2012).

The thrust of this paper, therefore, is to examine the relationships between brand awareness and brand image on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The motivation for this study comes from the fact that it has always been a difficult task to say exactly which factors motivate the consumer to prefer a particular product/brand to another. Some brand managers have paid more attention to price and other factors which in their estimation determine consumers' choice for their product selection without giving due consideration to brand awareness, and brand image, which are deeply rooted in customers' memories and experiences and perhaps influence their purchase decisions and patronage. This happens because a company's marketing strategies for a particular product may fail to capture the desired and targeted goal because customers are unpredictable in their buying behaviour. In addition, multiple brands seem to pose purchase decision challenges. Customers of Champion Breweries' products may evaluate the brand functions or benefits accruing to a particular brand and compare it to other alternatives before purchase.

This study is therefore embarked upon to examine the effect of brand awareness and brand image on customer's patronage of Champion Breweries products, Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

The major objective of this study was to examine the effect of product branding on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products (Champion lager beer, Champ Malta and Champ Malt with butter cookies) in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. The specific objectives include:

- i. To determine the effect of brand awareness on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.
- ii. To investigate the effect of brand image on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

1.3 Research Questions

Based on the above objectives, the following research questions were formulated;

- 1 How does brand awareness affect customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products, in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?
- 2 How does brand image affect customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State?

1.4 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study:

HO₁: Brand awareness has no significant effect on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

HO₂: Brand image has no significant effect on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries' products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Issues

2.1.1. Product Branding

Product branding is an essential element that can be adopted in achieving customer patronage in a highly competitive market. Branding is the relationship customers have while patronizing products and services. It is an important process widely used in marketing by individuals and organizations to differentiate amongst goods, services, people, ideas, and organizations. Oladele et al., (2015) stated that product branding constitutes an essential aspect of projecting a firm's brand's image. Branding of products is not new in the marketing world. It all started with brand names which later developed to entail an experience with a company's products or services. An example is Champion which has included bottles of different shapes, sizes and varieties to satisfy different consumers' preferences.

The practice of differentiating one business or product from another through a name, logo design, story, messaging, and trademarks can be termed 'branding'. Brands help customers to make decisions on the choice of products. It also enables customers to recognize products that are capable of fulfilling the promises that meet their needs based on an earlier trial with the brand and through word of mouth from other customers or recommendations (Hestad, 2013). Ahmed et al., (2014) also describe branding as a whole package that becomes an ultimate selling proposition, which stimulates impulse buying. In a competitive market, saturated with similar products, companies must ascribe some properties of identification such as name, logo, colour and other features to give the products a position, a voice and a distinctive personality. This is known as product branding.

Anholt (2010) opines that the role of branding in most phases of life can include cultural, political, social, unofficial, official, public and private. However, the following components of product branding for this study are explained below.

2.1.2 Brand Awareness

Kotler & Keller (2016) defined brand awareness as a consumer's ability to recognize or recall the brand in sufficient detail to make a purchase, adding that it is related to the strength of the brand node or trace in memory which can be measured as the consumer's ability to identify the brand under different condition. Ankur (2018) sees brand awareness as the extent to which customers can recall or recognize a brand". It is a key to success in achieving customers' patronage for business continuity. To ensure that a brand has a competitive advantage over its competitors, awareness levels of the brand must be managed across the entire product life-cycle - from product launch to market decline.

Putra & Purwanto (2023) have noted that competition among companies producing bottled drinking water has led consumers to become highly discerning in terms of their loyalty, adding that in today's society, purchasing decisions are often rational and selective, taking into consideration both brand image and brand awareness. They also observe that with the emergence of new products and advancements in existing ones, manufacturers are striving to create the best products that resonate with the public.

2.1.3 Brand Image

Brand image is the impression of the brand a customer develops in his mind over some time. It is simply an impression or an imprint of the brand developed over some time in the consumer's mindset. Brand image could be a determining factor in the sales volume of a product. The image of a brand is the reflector of the key values of a company. It is the mirror through which the company's key values are reflected. A strong brand image can help a company differentiate itself from its competitors and build customer patronage. The brand image could help in attracting new customers thereby leading to an increase in sales (Hitesh 2023). According to Zhan (2015) "brand image is the key driver of brand equity, which refers to customers' general perception and feeling about a brand and has an influence on customer patronage"

2.1.4 Customer Patronage

The whole essence of setting up a business is to create customer vis-a-vis customer satisfaction (Dadras, 2016). The result of customer satisfaction is more customer patronage, and this happens when the customer is satisfied with the company's brand. Krey (2014) opined that a company's effort to satisfy its customers helps in building consumer patronage of a brand, product, or service. Hence, the significance of both customers and customer patronage to a brand cannot be over-emphasized. He further examined factors that influence the level of customer patronage to include economic situation, competitors, social and psychological factors, product or service attributes, and marketing mix programs". Therefore, customer patronage is an essential condition for a firm to maintain business continuity, basis for stability and market share. This concept has different dimensions, in that customers that patronize a product are those who refuse the preferential price provided by a competitor of the company and continue to buy the product or service of the company hence, promoting it free of charge by obligation. With customer patronage, there would be customer retention, word of mouth, referrals, increased sales volume and a high-profit level.

Adiele et al., (2015) described customer patronage as "the support an organization enjoys or benefits from customers". It can also be classified as the respondent's rating of the company's sales volume, profit margins and customer retention level.

2.1.5 Product Branding and Customer Patronage

It is true that when there is no customer there are no sales, when there are no sales, there is no profit and when there is no profit, there are no businesses. For a company therefore to be in business in the midst of fierce competition, it must employ an effective marketing strategy to attract customer patronage. The most effective strategy is differentiating the product through branding. There are many proxies of product branding amongst which are brand awareness, brand identity, brand attachment and brand image and all of these have positive and significant effects on customers' patronage. According to Henrieta, Aleksander et al., (2015), "branding ultimately works as a signal. It allows consumers to quickly recognize a product as one they are familiar with or one they like".

Winkielman (2000) also states that "branding acts as a memory cue, allowing customers to retrieve relevant information from their memory". The information could be about the experience of the brand, brand perceptions, brand awareness, brand attachment, the image of the brand and how the brand was identified. Product branding has become one of the key strategies employed to attract customers' patronage. Holt (2015) averred that "Branding is central to creating customer value, not just images and is also a key tool for creating and maintaining competitive advantage". Branding is the process of creating a relationship or a connection between a company's product and the emotional perception of the customer to generate segregation among competition and build loyalty among customers (Hislop, 2001).

According to Beard (2014), customer satisfaction plays an important role within a business. Customer satisfaction is a leading indicator in measuring customer patronage, it also identifies unhappy customers, reduces customer churn and increases revenue. Hence, the need for a company like Champion Breweries Plc. Uyo to take cognizance of product branding as it has a significant effect on customer patronage.

More so, product branding could be achieved through creating awareness, product positioning, product development and innovation that can symbolize quality. These can attract new customers and the existing ones to identify and be attached to the brand in any competitive environment. Hoyer & MacInnis (2001) warned of severe consequences for not satisfying customers. According to them, dissatisfied customers can discontinue the purchase of the products, return the item and even engage in negative word-of-mouth communication. Furthermore, Alabar (2012) in Balogun et al., (2013) add that, customer satisfaction holds the potential to increase an organization's customer base, increase the use of a more volatile customer mix and increase the firm reputation.

2.1.6 Brand Awareness and Customer Patronage

Tandoh (2020) observed that brand awareness has a significant effect on customer patronage while Yang et al., (2016) found that brand awareness can positively predict brand loyalty. Also, Ateke & Nwulu (2017) reported that brand communication strongly relates to brand awareness in terms of brand recognition, brand recall and brand distinction while

Monaliza & Attafuah (2020) discovered that brand awareness affects customers' loyalty and has a positive influence on customer patronage. Attih (2021) added that there is a significant positive relationship between brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and buying behaviour of smartphones among students of the Department of Marketing, Akwa Ibom State University.

2.1.7 Brand Image and Customer Patronage

According to extant research, the most widely used predictors of customer behavioural intention are customer satisfaction and customer patronage. Customer satisfaction refers to customers' general evaluation of the overall shopping experience of some specific product or service.

Brand image has been adjudged to have a significant effect on customer satisfaction which eventually leads to customer patronage, especially across the e-banking, breweries, supermarket industries and mobile phones. Chang (2005) identified store infrastructure, convenience, store service and sales activities as the four components of store image, and they all impact customer satisfaction directly. Chitty (2007) also empirically proved the dominant role of brand image in predicting customer satisfaction in the hospitality industry. Moreover, the congruence between the brand image and customers' self-image would enhance customer satisfaction and customers' preference for the brand.

Customer patronage could be recognized as the extension of customer satisfaction. Marketing scholars define customer patronage as repeated purchases. Generally, customer patronage stems from customers' approval of a brand, which leads to their continuous purchasing behaviour of the brand and thus generates profits for the company. In the brand image literature, brand image is perceived as an important driving force of customer patronage. For the supermarket industry, a favourable store image is very helpful to foster customer patronage. Even in the virtual context, the impact of brand image on customer patronage remains significant.

A study by Ibok & Etuk (2015) which studied the relationship between brand identity and loyalty of customers of telecommunication firms in Nigeria revealed that brand identity had a significant positive relationship with customers' loyalty towards Nigerian telecommunications companies. Anyadighibe et al., (2023) observed that brand identity, awareness and reputation have a positive influence on customers' patronage of petrol stations in Calabar Metropolis.

Onigbinde & Odunlami (2015) posited that brand image has an effect on customer patronage when they investigated the influence of brand image and promotional mix on consumer buying decisions in Lagos State. Relatedly, Bozkurt (2017) examined the relationship between brand reputation and customers' loyalty towards hotels in Turkey; and reported that brand reputation had a significant positive relationship with customers' loyalty towards hotels in Turkey. Bozkurt (2017) examined the relationship between brand reputation and customers' loyalty towards hotels in Turkey and reported that brand reputation had a significant positive relationship with customers' loyalty towards hotels in Turkey. Furthermore, Ardigó & Limberger (2020) investigated the association between brand reputation and customers' loyalty towards retail pharmaceutical companies in Brazil. The study revealed that brand reputation had a significant positive influence on brand loyalty.

Customer patronage could be recognized as the extension of customer satisfaction Zhan (2015). When customers are constantly satisfied, brand image is built leading to customer patronage. However, the reverse is the case when a customer is dissatisfied. With customer patronage, referrals, and repeat purchases, an increase in sales volume and profitability is achieved. Hence brand image has a significant effect on customer patronage.

2.3 Empirical Review

Akpan (2018) studied branding and its effect on customer satisfaction in Bournvita in Calabar Metropolis, Cross River State Nigeria. The study utilized survey research, a structured questionnaire, and a sample size of 500 while the data were analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively. Findings revealed amongst others that branding increased customer satisfaction. It was also found that branding has a significant relationship with customer loyalty. The study concluded that branding is a veritable tool that increases customers' satisfaction with a product. The study then recommended that manufacturers of branded products should take cognizance of the factors that influence customer choice of product and improve upon them.

Onigbinde & Odunlami (2015) investigated the influence of brand image and promotional mix on consumer buying decisions in Lagos State, Nigeria using descriptive survey research design, purposive sampling techniques, four hundred (400) copies of a questionnaire administered to the respondents out of which three hundred and eighty-four (384) copies were duly filled and returned while Pearson Product Moment correlation analysed the data collected. Findings revealed amongst others that brand image, advertising, sales promotion and personal selling have a significant influence on consumer buying decisions. Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded that the way a product is promoted coupled with the brand integrity of such product encourages consumers to purchase it and make repeat purchases of it, and also enhances the referral of such product to other prospects. The study therefore recommended that organizations, especially those that engage in the marketing of fast-moving consumer goods, should focus on a distinct promotional mix, as the study empirically proved that perception of brand image is capable of influencing consumer buying decisions on a sustainable basis. It is also recommended that each marketing company adopt a combination of promotional mixes that can bring about distinct outcomes in terms of turnover, improved market share, customer retention, profitability, and productivity among others.

Farooq (2015) studied the customers' awareness of Chinese fast-food restaurant service quality and its effect on customer patronage. Using a modified DINESERV scale, the study uses both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Qualitative data collection consisted of face-to-face interviews and group discussions. A questionnaire was developed using three sources: interview responses from the customers, the restaurant's survey and the literature. A total of 205 completed questionnaires were used in the analysis. The new measurement scale, the Chinese Fast Food Restaurants Service Quality Scale (CFFRSERV), contained 28 items across six dimensions: assurance and empathy, food, cleanliness, responsiveness, reliability and tangibles. The findings from the study revealed that service quality variables had a positive influence on customer satisfaction except the reliability dimension. It was recommended that Chinese fast food restaurants should imbibe the philosophy of service quality to enhance more customers.

Gbandi & Isibor (2022) studied the influence of branding on consumer patronage of restaurants in Benin City, Edo State, Nigeria, with special reference to brand awareness, brand image, and brand attachment. The study utilized a well-structured questionnaire to obtain a sample size of 332 while inferential and descriptive statistics served as tools for data analysis. Findings revealed, amongst others, that brand awareness, brand image, and brand attachment show a positive and significant relationship with consumer patronage of restaurants in Benin City. Based on the findings, the study recommended that restaurants in Benin City should endeavour to expose their brands to their target market using the appropriate promotional mix to bring about brand awareness. They should also provide quality products and be involved in corporate social responsibility to build a strong image. Finally, restaurants must take customer care seriously which will bring about good customer relationships, brand trust, consumer satisfaction, brand attachment and consumer patronage.

Tandoh (2020) studied the impact of brand awareness on customer loyalty at Sinapi Aba Savings and Loans Ghana Limited. Data were drawn from both primary and secondary sources and the main instrument for data collection was the questionnaire and interview involving 301 respondents sampled from the customers of Sinapi Aba Savings and Loans Ghana Limited across Ghana and a brand

manager of Sinapi Aba Savings and Loans Limited. Generally, the study revealed that, brand awareness strategies practice is a very prominent feature in the savings and loans industry in Ghana and customers are very much aware of the various brand awareness strategies practised by Sinapi Savings and Loans Ltd. Events influencing the actual decision to patronize the services of savings and loans industry which included brand trust. The study recommended that savings and loan companies in Ghana need to do a continuous follow-up to establish long-term relationships with new customers when implementing brand awareness strategies. Corporate reputation, peer group opinion, recall of advertisement, service delivery and employee appearance ranked highest.

Yang et al., (2016) studied the impact of brand awareness and customer experience on brand loyalty in MI, India, using the SPSS to analyze the data from reliability analysis, validity analysis, correlation analysis and descriptive statistical analysis of each variable. 157 copies of the questionnaire were duly administered to the people who purchased the MI's product of which 143 were duly filled and returned. The variables of this questionnaire included population statistics variables, the brand awareness of consumers, the experience of consumers when purchasing, and the customer's loyalty to the brand. The results showed that brand awareness can positively predict brand loyalty. Service experience and emotional experience can positively affect brand loyalty. And that there existed a significantly positive correlation among brand awareness, service experience, emotional experience and brand loyalty. It was recommended, amongst others, that focus should be made on an overall improvement in the brand awareness in offering their products to the market.

Emodi (2019) studied the effect of branding on consumer patronage of locally processed rice in South East Nigeria. The study adopted a survey research design. A total of six processed rice namely Anambra Rice, Oyo-Oyo rice, and JOSAN rice. Rems Gold parboiled and Destoned rice, Abakiliki rice and Ebony Super were studied. The population of the study comprises employees of the selected farms and all those who buy processed rice from these agro firms. A purposive sampling technique was used to arrive at a sample size of three hundred and sixty (360) respondents. The major instrument for data collection was a structured questionnaire. The data generated were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. In this study, brand name, brand image, brand orientation, internal branding and brand identity were employed as the independent variables while consumer patronage of locally processed rice was employed as the dependent variable. The study found that brand image, brand name, brand orientation and brand loyalty had a significant effect on consumer patronage of locally processed rice in South East Nigeria. The study also discovered that internal branding had no significant effect on consumer patronage of locally processed rice in South East Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study concluded that branding strategy had a significant effect on consumer patronage of locally processed rice in Southeast Nigeria. The study recommended that producers of agricultural products should embrace packaging and branding as it will improve their marketing performance.

Ogbuji et al., (2011) investigated the impact of branding on consumer choice for bottled water, with a special focus on the contributory roles of its various elements in impacting consumer behaviour. The study adopted random sampling with a sample size of three hundred and seventy-four (374) distributed amongst the categories of staff and the institutions proportionally. Findings were that elements of branding other than brand name and brand mark played a greater role in influencing consumer choice for bottled water. It was therefore recommended, amongst others, that Firms should focus more attention on the company name and packaging but should also integrate the brand name and brand mark as supportive elements in fashioning an effective branding strategy for beating competition.

Anyadighibe et al., (2023) examined brand image (brand identity, awareness, and reputation) on customers' patronage of selected petroleum filling stations in Calabar Metropolis, using a survey research design, and a cross-sectional survey to collect data. A sample size of 143 was extracted for the study. Data collected were analyzed using multiple regression analysis. Findings revealed that brand identity, awareness and brand reputation had a positive influence on customers' patronage of

petroleum filling stations in the Calabar metropolis. The study recommended that brand identity, awareness and reputation should be continuously employed to give filling stations a competitive advantage when differentiated from competitors.

Monaliza & Attafuah (2020) explored the impact of brand awareness on customer loyalty: a case study of Melcom-Agona Swedru. A qualitative research design guided this study and the interview method of data collection was used in extracting information from the respondents. The respondents of this study were both staff and customers of Melcom. A simple random sampling was used in selecting 27 respondents for the study. The researcher analyzed the data using STATA and Microsoft Office. An informed consent was sought from the respondents and all ethical issues were adhered to. It was recommended that further studies should be conducted in other parts of the country to help identify more questionable problems relating to brand awareness and communication-related issues. Attih (2021) determined the relationship between brand equity and buying behaviour of smartphones among students of the Department of Marketing, Akwa State University, Nigeria, using a survey research design. Data for the study were obtained through a questionnaire administered to respondents with a simple random sampling technique used to select 118 respondents for the study. Data for the study were analyzed using tables, frequency and percentage while hypotheses were tested using simple and multiple linear regressions. The findings of the study showed that there is a significant positive relationship between brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, brand loyalty and buying behaviour of smartphones among students of the Department of Marketing, Akwa Ibom State University. Thus, it was concluded that brand equity plays a crucial role in influencing consumers buying behaviour of smartphones. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among others that attention should be given to an overall improvement in the brand equity dimensions by smartphone manufacturing companies in offering their products to the market.

Abioro & Odunlami (2021) studied the implication of product branding and customer patronage in the Nigerian consumer goods industry, using a survey research design, where a structured questionnaire of two hundred and ten (210) copies was administered to the respondents, out of which 185 were considered to be valid and usable for the analysis. The inferential statistical tool of regression analysis was adopted to analyze the formulated hypotheses. Findings revealed that brand perception had a significant effect on customer patronage. The study concluded that product branding if properly managed can influence customer patronage, and can also increase the customer base and profitability of the firm. It was therefore recommended that firms should give proper consideration to issues of customer relationship management; as well as enhance the product service experience of customers to improve the perception of the brand in the mind of customers to foster brand loyalty.

Ibok & Etuk (2015) studied the association between brand identity and customers' loyalty in the Nigerian telecommunication industry, using a mixed sampling method. Data for the study were arrived at using a survey of 207 customers extracted from four major telecommunication companies in Akwa Ibom State. The study found that a strong positive and significant relationship existed between brand identity and customers' loyalty.

3.0 Case Study

Champion Breweries PLC is a Nigerian brewing company located in Akwa Ibom State. Established in Nigeria on July 31st, 1997 as a State-owned commercial enterprise known as South East Breweries Ltd, commenced brewing operations in 1976 and had its name changed to Cross Rivers Breweries LTD. (history/#:~:text=Champion%20Breweries%20Plc%20was%20established,to%2.

It two main brands at the commencement of brewing operation were Champion beer and Champ Malta. Today, Champion brands have grown into a robust portfolio of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages such as:

- i. Beer and malt beverages
- ii. Spirits, wine and ciders
- iii. Non-alcoholic beverage (<https://www.championbrands.nrt/products#catag=brands/tab/1>).

These brands evolved from changes in tastes and preferences of the market as well as changes in the industry.

4.0 Methodology

The study adopted a survey research design. This design was considered appropriate as it allowed the researcher to solicit the opinions of the respondents on the subject matter of the study.

Both primary and secondary data were used in this study. Primary data were gathered via the use of a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire comprised questions that reflected the perception of consumers about product branding and champion Breweries products. Secondary data came from textbooks, magazines internet materials and internal records of the company

The population of Uyo Metropolis is taken as the population of consumers numbering 1,329,000 (2023 projected population figure for Uyo Metropolis, Akwa Ibom State), who are consumers of one Champion product or the other. This was informed by the fact that Champion Breweries products are consumers’ products. Being a finite population, its sample size was determined using Taro Yemane (1975) statistical formula given as:

Where:
$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

$$n = \text{sample size}$$

$$N = \text{the finite population}$$

$$e = \text{Error margin (0.05)}$$

$$1 = \text{unity (a constant)}$$

Thus:

$$n = \frac{1,329,000}{1+1,329,000(0.05)^2}$$

$$= \frac{1,329,000}{1+1,329,000(0.0025)}$$

$$= \frac{1,329,000}{1+3322.5}$$

$$n = \frac{1,329,000}{3323}$$

$$= 399.87$$

Which is approximately =400.

4.2 Model Specification

$Y = f(x) \dots \dots \dots (1)$

The explicit form of the equation for the model is given as

$X = f(x_1, x_2, n) \dots \dots \dots (2)$

Hence,

$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (3)$

$C_p = \beta_0 + (\beta_A) \frac{1}{1 + \beta_1} + 2\epsilon \dots \dots \dots (4)$

Where;

- Y - Customer patronage
- X1 - Brand awareness
- X2 - Brand image
- ε - Error term estimate
- β - Unknown population parameter

4.3 Research Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested for the study.

H01: Brand awareness has no significant effect on customer patronage of champion Breweries products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

H02: Brand Image has no significant effect on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State.

5.0 Results

- 1) There is a positive and significant effect of brand awareness on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo.
- 2) There is a positive and significant effect of brand image on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

The results of this study offered strong empirical support for the existence of a positive and significant relationship between product branding and customer patronage of Champion Breweries, Uyo. This was tested using regression analysis. The result gave R^2 to be 0.885, adjusted R^2 to be 0.885 and $P < 0.05$. R^2 measures the percentage of variation in the dependent variable caused by variation in the independent variable implying that 88.5% of the variation in customer patronage was caused by brand awareness while the rest was accounted for by other factors confirming that brand awareness has a significant effect on customers' patronage. This result agrees with the findings of Tandoh (2020), Monnoliza & Attafuah (2020).

Hypothesis 2 tested to know if there is a significant relationship between brand image and customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products, Uyo. This was tested using regression analysis. The result gave 0.958 each for R^2 and adjusted R^2 respectively with a P value of 0.000 indicating that brand image has a positive effect on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products, Uyo. This result aligns with the findings of Zang (2023), Ashraf et al., (2017).

6.0 Conclusion and Recommendation

In examining the effect of product branding on the patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo, the major conclusions of the study are as follows;

- i. There is a positive and significant effect of brand awareness on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State. This is explained by the fact that brand awareness is a key indicator of a brand's market performance and also a predictor of brand success.
- ii. There is a positive and significant effect of brand image on customers' patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo, Akwa Ibom State as it represents the perception customers have about the product.

The following are hereby recommended for increased patronage of Champion Breweries products in Uyo.

1. The Management of Champion Breweries, Uyo should ensure that they expose their brands to their target markets using an appropriate promotional mix to enhance brand awareness.
2. Champion Breweries management, Uyo should embark on a product differentiation strategy to stand out among other competitors as well as create a lasting impression in the minds of the customers.

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