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Effect of Retailer Brand Equity on Consumers' Purchase Intention: Evidence from Selected Supermarkets in Addis Ababa

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to explore the effect of retailer brand equity on supermarket consumers' purchase intention. We quantitatively measured the effect of brand equity dimensions (i.e., brand awareness, brand image, brand quality and more of brand loyalty) on the purchase intentions of supermarket consumers. A total of 384 questionnaires were distributed to conveniently available consumers and 323 usable questionnaires were used for analysis. The findings revealed that retailer awareness, perceived retailer quality, retailer image and retailer loyalty have a significant positive effect on consumers' supermarket purchase intentions, retail awareness being the highest influencer of purchase intention. The practical worth of the study is that it would help supermarket managers to direct their focus on brand equity dimensions while designing marketing strategies and making decisions in order to enhance market share and gain a competitive advantage through raising consumers' purchase intention. In addition, the study assists all businesses in the retail sector to recognize the contributions of creating a strong brand as a means of getting a competitive advantage.

Keywords: Brand Equity, Retailer Awareness, Retailer Image, Perceived Retailer Quality, Retailer Loyalty, Consumer Purchase Intention

Background of the Study

For long periods branding has been used as a way to distinguish the products of a manufacturer from other producer. A brand is stored in clients' memories and exerts a lasting influence. It is a fundamental point for all the positive and negative impressions created by the buyer over time as he or she comes into contact with the brand's products, distribution channel, personnel, and communication (Kapferer, 2008). Differentiating a product from other related companies who provide similar service is the main goal of a brand, which can affect customers' product choice over the other (Kotler & Keller, 2016). The differences often can be related with the product brand performance or to what the brand express.

Currently, according to Hoyer and MacInnis (2008), consumers have the options to manage where to buy, how to consume and also dispose of a product. They also can conduct product purchases simply through the internets, by mail, single call or by directly going to the store. To make a decision for single purchase consumers made a comparison of not less than eight brands using their memory. As stated by Hoyer and MacInnis (2008), brands are recognized as an image of evoked set. During the internal search, consumers differentiate brands which are familiar to them due to the strong association of the brand that help them to recall.

Customer behaviour can be influenced by their perception of the specific brand and the type of brand (Verhoef, Lemon, Parasuraman & Rogge, 2009). Consequently, if one brand is more attractive or dominant than the others, making a choice does not require much effort. A brand is a bridge between the marketing investment in the company's products to create the brands and the customers' brand knowledge (Kotler & Keller, 2006).

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According to Hoyer and MacInnis (2008), brand equity is the most important factor in the retail industry due to the fact that the retail industry uses low-involvement purchases with simple decision-making processes. When consumers lack the will to exert high mental and emotional energy, the decision-making process is characterized by low effort judgment (Hoyer & MacInnis, 2008). Most retail marketers focus on how to create positive brand equity as, a brand having positive customer-based brand equity could result in consumers realizing new brand extensions, less price sensitivity, or more readiness to seek the brand in a new distribution channel (Keller, 1993; Keller, 1998). Specific brand loyal customers buy more, be ready to pay higher prices, and build positive word of mouth (Reichheld, 1993).

As illustrated by Pappu and Questar (2006), retailer equity is a value associated by the consumer with the retailer's name which causes a major influence on purchasing decisions. Retailer equity is indicated through retailer loyalty, retailer associations, retailer awareness and retailer perceived quality. Consumer perception and store selection are positively influenced by retailer branding. Thus, consumer-based retail brand equity creates shortcuts in consumers' minds and enables them to remind suitable pieces of past shopping experiences and satisfaction with product purchases.

The retail sector has been witnessing a gradual uprising for the last few decades as stated by Shamsher (2016), while the traditional markets have made ways for new retail formats with the development of supermarket culture, which creates an exciting and unique shopping experience amongst retail shoppers all over the world. A supermarket is one of the retail businesses which provide a service by collecting from suppliers and manufacturers who can offer relevant products, good quality, and may also hold strong brands (https://www Marketingstudyguide.com) Moreover, a supermarket is a large, low-cost, low-margin, and high-volume self-service that contain a wide variety of grocery and household (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012).

Mostly, supermarket exists in a competitive environment, where it acts as a value-added intermediary between geographically dispersed supplier companies and the scattered individual consumers' who eventually buy their products (Steeneken & Ackley, 2012). Consistent with the World Bank (WB) definition hypermarkets are considered as large stores covering more than 1,000 sq. meters, and merchandise of different brands; however, supermarkets have a leaser size which is between 500 and 1,000 sq. m and has a broader selection of products and retail household materials than groceries but lower than hypermarkets (Yebel et al., 2018).

According to previous research conducted by Yadam (2019), various retail outlet exist in Ethiopia, including Gulit[1], small shops, consumer cooperatives, grocery, minimarts, supermarkets, hypermarkets and department stores.

As per the data obtained from the Ethiopian Trade and Industry Bureau (2019/2020), 474 total numbers of legally registered supermarkets are found in Addis Ababa. Among these, the highest number is found in three sub-cities, namely Kirkos (102 supermarkets), Nifas silk (98 supermarkets), and Bole (61 supermarkets). The distribution of supermarkets in Addis Ababa among sub-city is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Supermarket Distribution in Addis Ababa

List of Sub-Cities	*Total Number*	*Percentage Share*
Kirkos	102	22%
Nifas silk	98	21%
Bole	61	13%
Addis ketema	43	9%
Kolfe	38	8%
Yeka	31	7%
Gulele	33	7%
Lideta	28	6%
Akaki	23	5%
Arada	17	4%
Total	474	100%

Source: Ministry of Trade and Industry (2019/2020).

Given the retail sector is highly competitive in nature, in general, and supermarket stores, in particular, retailers located in Addis are required to understand and predict consumers' purchase behaviour and retail store choice. Moreover, retail store marketing managers need to give attention to the customers' retail brand equity to stay competitive in the market.

In this regard, the study aims at analyzing the consequences

[1] It is an open retail market for diverse products around residential areas; it is usually visited by low-income consumers.

of retail brand equity on consumers' purchase intention in a retail business sector of a supermarket in Addis Ababa by investigating whether supermarket consumers' purchase intention is associated with retailer awareness, retailer image, of retailer quality perception and retailer loyalty. Hence, the study addressed the following questions: What is the effect of awareness of supermarket retail activities on consumers' purchase intention in supermarkets? Does retailer image influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarkets? Does perceived retailer quality influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarkets? What is the effect of perceived retailer loyalty on consumer's purchase intention in supermarkets? Which factor is the most important to influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarkets?

Review of Related Literature

Theoretical Foundation

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) argues that consumers' behavioural intentions are shaped by the combined effect of attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control. In other words, the intention to act, for example, to buy products from supermarkets, can be predicted from attitudes toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude is the predisposition of people toward a phenomenon (e.g. supermarkets); subjective norms are our views of the ideas of other persons about a specific behaviour (e.g. purchase of goods from supermarkets), and perceived behavioural control is the extent to which we believe we can control our behaviour-the more control we think we have over our behaviour (e.g. the beliefs to afford supermarket items), the stronger our intention to perform the behaviour (e.g. intention to buy from supermarkets).

Another similar model that can be used to explain consumers buying intention is the Hierarchy of Effects (HOF) model. The model argues that firms should systematically transform consumers from ignorance of a product or supermarket retail practices to the actual purchase behaviour or buying items from a supermarket (Smith et al., 2008). The process involves three stages: cognitive, affective, and conative where the cognitive component emphasizes awareness of the characteristics of supermarkets and the advantages and disadvantages of buying products from them; affective is the stage where consumers form an impression of supermarkets and the desire to buy from them; and the action stage is the stage where consumers take action or actually buy products from supermarkets. The theory can tell us that consumer's awareness of supermarket activities and forming a positive emotion in their mind about supermarkets are important sequential activities to bring the desired consumer actions (i.e. buying items from supermarkets) (Zhu, Mou & Benyoucef, 2019). Based on the arguments of the two models, we take the view that awareness, image, perceived quality, and retailers' loyalty are determinants of purchase intention.

Review of Empirical Literature

Consumers Awareness of Retailers and Purchase Intention

Awareness of a supermarket brand refers to the extent to which customers access its name or other attributes of the brand from memory (Keller, 1991). Brand awareness is also defined as the ability of a customer to recognize a brand under a variety of conditions; it is the knowledge level of consumers about a product to recall or recognize a brand such as the supermarket brand (Jamil & Wong, 2010).

As illustrated by Pappu and Quester (2005), the retailer awareness dimension adds value to 'dimensions of retailer' (Yoo & Dontu, 2001) and it is also similar with (Arnet, Laverie & Meires, 2003) 'Knowledge of name' element. However, it includes more discriminant indicators for measuring retailer awareness compared to Yoo and Donthu (2001) and considers it as a retailer equity distinct dimension. As the hierarchy of effects model pointed out consumers can act or intend to act (e.g. intention to buy from a supermarket) after they are sufficiently exposed to the product or a supermarket brand (Smith et al., 2008). Based on this, the following hypothesis can be posited:

H1: Retailer awareness has a significant direct effect on the consumers purchase intention.

Retailers Brand Image and Consumers' Purchase Intention

While buying items, consumers give attention to factors like store lay out, assortments of items, location, price and the services rendered by the functional attribute and they also compare the store attractiveness and luxury features which signify the unique character of the store (Martineau, 1958). The store name and the product quality in the store have an effect on store's perceived image (Grewal, Krishnan, Bake & Borin, 1998).

According to studies conducted by Rana, Osman, and Othman (2015), the brand image has the highest impact on the purchase intention of customers followed by the quality of products sold at the stores and influence of social. Wu, Yeh and Hsiao (2011) investigated the direct effects of store image and service quality on brand image and purchase intention for a private label brand (PLB) using 360 sample customers and the study reveals that store image has a direct and positive effect on the purchase intention of private labelled brands. Based on the above arguments, the researcher arrived to the following hypothesis:

H2: Retailer image has a significant direct effect on the consumers' purchase intention.

Retailer Perceived Quality and Consumers' Purchase Intention

Perceived quality is defined as "a consumer's judgment about the superiority or excellence of a product" (Zeithaml, 1998). Arnett, Laverie and Meiers (2003) conceptualize perceived quality as 'service quality' which considered as a dimension of retailer brand equity. Perceived retailer quality is the consumers' perception of the quality of the retailer not the objective quality of the retailer (Zeithaml, 1998).

Perceived quality is considered a separate dimension of brand equity on literatures on brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Yoo et al., 2000). According to the argument of Aaker (1991), 'perceived quality is a brand association that is elevated to the status of brand asset' on the goods-services continuum, a product can be a good or a service (Kotler & Armstrong, 2012). As a result, Pappu and Quester (2005) concentrated on the retailer's perceived quality as well as the quality perception of offerings (goods or services). The quality perceptions of consumers vary because of extrinsic (i.e. non-product related) and intrinsic (i.e. product related) cues provided to them (Konuk, 2018).

H3: Perceived retailer quality has a significant direct effect on the consumers' purchase intention.

Retailers' Loyalty and Consumers Purchase Intention

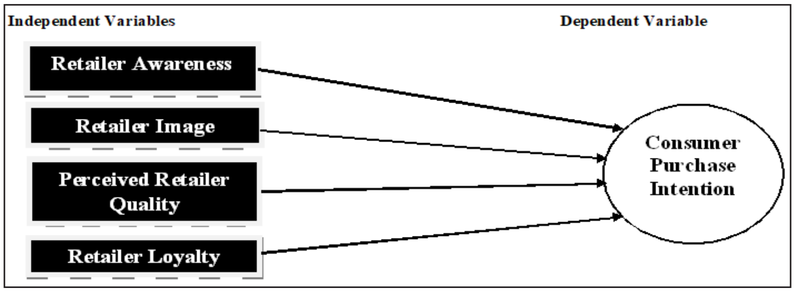
Consumers' purchase intent is strongly linked to both brand loyalty and brand association (Rungsrisawat & Sirinapatokin, 2019). A study conducted by Hanzaee and Andervazh (2012), on Iranian buyers of ladies cosmetics, shows that elements of brand loyalty (brand name, product quality, price, design, promotion, service quality, and store atmosphere) have a positive and substantial link with cosmetics purchase intention.

Loyality is the main factor/key for purchase intention. According to Roozy, Arastoo and Vazifehdust (2014), to increase purchase intention, the most important factor is loyalty, which has a positive and meaningful relation with the three components of purchase intention: considering to purchase, willing to purchase and recommend to others.

Brand equity and purchase intention are directly affected by the brand loyalty (Yoo, Donthu & Lee, 2000). Based on this, the following hypothesis can be posited:

H4: Retailer loyalty has a significant direct effect on the consumers' purchase intention.

Conceptual Framework



Source: Adapted from Lee and Lee (2018).

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Research Approach

Researchers applied exploratory, descriptive, and causal or explanatory research approaches based on their research purpose. This study follows an explanatory research type and tries to examine the effect of retailer awareness, retailer image, perceived retailer quality, and retailer loyalty on supermarket consumers' purchase intention (Taguchi, 2018). The reason is that explanatory research is ideal to describe the characteristics of the variables and at the same time it helps to investigate the cause and effect relationship between variables.

The study also employed a cross-sectional field survey method, since, in a cross-sectional survey design, independent and dependent variables have been measured at one point in time using a single questionnaire (Creswell, 2009).

Research Design

There are three basic research design types: quantitative, qualitative and mixed (Schoonenboom & Johnson 2017; Creswell, 2009). Quantitative research includes the generation of data in a quantitative form which can be subjected to rigorous quantitative analysis formally and rigidly. Quantitative surveys are designed to fit a questionnaire schedule. That is the most commonly used technique in research (Veal, 2006). A qualitative approach to research is concerned with the subjective assessment of attitudes, opinions, and behaviour.

According to Creswell (2009), quantitative research is critical to show the cause and effect relationship between dependent and independent variables. Based on the objectives and the accessibility of relevant information, this research is conducted using a quantitative research approach hence it examined and measured the effect of retail brand equity on the purchase intention of consumers to shop at a retail store of supermarkets in Addis Ababa.

Target Population

This research was conducted to identify the effect of retail brand equity on the purchase intentions of supermarket consumers in Addis Ababa. Therefore, the population of interest in this study is consumers of supermarkets in Addis Ababa city.

Thus, the target population for this study consists of all supermarket consumers in Addis Ababa includes both male and female whose age is above 18 years and has an income or source of income to do shopping. Consequently, the population is expected to be large but, it is difficult to accurately set the number of total population for this study since the purchase intention is the future action of customers. Therefore, it needs to drown a suitable sample size for the study from this population.

Sampling

The population is infinite in light of the actual act to get factual data that rundown or even estimates the number of consumers who have intentions to visit supermarkets in Addis Ababa. A formula is adopted by researchers to determine the sample size for a large or unknown population. Accordingly, the total sample size for this study is 384.

The study used the formula; $n = \frac{Z2pq}{e2'}$

Data Collection Instrument

A structured questionnaire is adopted, made with simple modifications and utilized to collect primary data from consumers of supermarkets in Addis Ababa. Moreover, the researcher reviewed Secondary data such as books, journals, previous researche, and other online data sources. Measurement items were adopted from the following sources

Table 2: Sources of Primary Data

Construct	*Sources*	*Number of Items*
Retailer awareness	Solomon (2018) and Tesfaye, 2019	Four items used to measure variables
Retail image	Porral et al. (2015)	Four items used to measure variables
Perceived retailer quality	Porral et al. (2015)	Four items used to measure variables
Retailer loyalty	Porral et al. (2015)	Four items used to measure variables
Purchase intention	Chao & Liao (2016) and Fauzi & M.A.H.B (2016)	Five items used to measure variables

Items in each dimension are measured using a five-point Likert Scale, which going through Strongly Disagree (measured as 1), Agree (measured as 2), Neutral (measured as 3), Disagree (measured as 4), and Strongly Agree (measured as 5) and respondents asked to rate their level of perception.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics which covers correlation and multiple regression analysis. Descriptive analysis is used mainly to organize and summarize the demographic data of the respondent. Pearson Correlation analysis was used to determine the existence of any relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable retailer awareness, retailer image perceived retailer quality and retailer loyalty, and dependent variable purchase intention.

$$Y= \beta 0+\beta 1\ X1+\beta 2\ X2+\beta 3\ X3+\beta 4\ X\ +e,$$

where Y = Overall Purchase Intention, which is the continuous response (dependent) for X1, X2, X3 and X4 where X1, X2, X3 and X4 are a set of an explanatory (independent) variables or covariates, whereas β0 is a constant term and β1, β2, β3 and β4 are the regression coefficients. E is the residual or error term.

Reliability Test

Reliability is one of the major criteria for the evaluation of the study's instrument. It is used to measure the internal consistency (reliability) of a research instrument (Cronbach, 1951). Grounding on (Hair et al., 2006), if α is > 0.7, it means that it has high reliability, 0.5 is sufficient, and if α is smaller than 0.3, then it shows that there is low reliability. Thus, the α coefficient results for all factors are greater than 0.7, which shows that the internal consistency is good. The Cronbach's α result of each item used in the questionnaire is shown in Table 3. Thus, α coefficient was calculated for all variables, almost all constructs were between 0.716 and 0.992. As a result, all constructs were accepted as being reliable for the research.

Results and Discussion

In order to make the collected data suitable for the analysis, all questionnaires were screened to be complete. All unreturned and returned incomplete questionnaires were considered errors and removed from the survey data. Out of the 385 distributed 323 were found to be usable and used for final analysis. Thus, an 83.8% response rate had been obtained.

Testing of the Research Instruments

Before undertaking the analysis, the researcher undertook the validity and reliability test to assure the research instruments were valid besides reliable.

Validity and Reliability Test

As specified by Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2009), the test of validity shows the extent of measuring instruments to measure what is intended to be measured. Reliability refers whether the data collection techniques and analytical procedures would reproduce consistent findings if they were repeated on another occasion or if they were replicated by another researcher (Sekaran & Bougie, 2009).

Reliability is one of the major criteria for the evaluation of the study's instrument. It is used to measure the internal consistency (reliability) of a research instrument (Cronbach, 1951). If $\alpha > 0.7$, grounding on (Hair et al., 2006), it implies it has high reliability, if it is 0.5 it is sufficient and if $\alpha < 0.3$, then it indicates low reliability. Thus, the α coefficients result for all factors are greater than 0.7 which shows that the internal consistency is good. For the Cronbach's α, result of each item used in the questionnaire (see Table 3).

Table 3: Cronbach's α Test for Reliability

Reliability Statistics		
Variables	*Cronbach's Alpha (A)*	*No. of Items*
Retailer awareness	0.716	4
Retailer image	0.796	4
Retailer loyalty	0.992	4
Perceived retailer quality	0.936	4
Purchase intention	0.864	5
Overall Reliability	**0.915**	**21**

Source: Survey, 2021.

As shown in Table 3, α coefficient was calculated for all variables, and almost all constructs were between 0.716 and 0.992. As a result, all constructs were accepted as being reliable for the research.

Descriptive Statistics

General information about the respondents.

Table 4: General Information about the Respondent

Variable	*Category*	*Frequency*	*Per cent*
Gender	Male	155	48.0
	Female	168	52.0
	Total	323	
Age	18–24	31	9.6
	25–34	80	24.8
	35–44	93	28.8
	45–54	61	18.9
	55–64	37	11.5
	65 and above	21	6.5
	Total	323	
Marital	Single	98	30.4
	Married	172	53.3
	Divorced	38	11.7
	Widowed	15	4.6
	Total	323	
Education	Primary School	13	4.0
	Secondary School	37	11.5
	Diploma	87	26.9
	Bachelor	124	38.4
	above Bachelor	44	13.6
	other	18	5.6
	Total	323	
Occupation	Government Employee	58	18.0
	Private Company Employee	91	28.2
	NGO or international organization	50	15.5
	Business Owner	86	26.6
	other	38	11.8
	Total	323	
Income	Below 3,000	36	11.1
	3,001–6,000	69	21.4
	6001–9,000	86	26.6
	9,001–12,000	33	10.2
	12,001–15,000	58	18.0
	Above 15,000	41	12.7
	Total	323	

Source: Survey, 2021.

Descriptive Analysis of the Study Variables

To present quantitative descriptions, the researcher used descriptive statistics. Each descriptive statistic reduces lots of data into a simpler summary (Gelman & Hill, 2007). The mean scores have been computed for all the four retail brand equity variables by equally weighting the mean scores of all the items accordingly.

The Likert scale was used to measure the contribution of attributes for retail brand equity. On a five-point scale, respondents were asked to choose the number that best represented their point of view. The degree of agreement towards each attribute was set from 1 to 5 (where 5 is the highest/strong agreement, and 1 is the highest/strong disagreement).

Accordingly, the translation of level ranking is analyzed based on the following criteria of Field (2013), The mean scored value within the range of 1.00–1.80 is considered as the lowest agreement, 1.81–2.81 considered as neither agree nor disagree, 2.82–3.40 average agreement, 3.41–4.20 good (high) agreement, and 4.21–5.00 mean very good (highest) agreement. In addition, standard deviation shows the variability of an observed response. Below, the results are discussed one by one. The results of the analyses are presented as follows.

Retailer Awareness

Brand awareness defined by Aaker (1991), as consumers/potential buyers' specific brand recall and recognition ability that a specific brand is a member of a certain product/service category.

Hence, four items related to brand awareness are asked to the respondents.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics of Retailer Awareness

	N	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
I am aware of "X" supermarket	323	4.07	1.503
Among other competing supermarkets I can recognize "X" supermarket quickly	323	3.41	1.778
When I think of shopping, "X" supermarket comes first to my mind	323	4.16	1.599
I know that "X" supermarket gives unique service	323	3.95	1.732
RAW	323	3.894	1.2175
Valid N (listwise)	323		

Source: Survey, 2021.

The results in Table 5 indicate that the majority of respondents agreed that aware of "X" supermarket (mean 4.07), recognize "X" supermarket quickly (mean 3.41), "X" supermarket comes first to my mind (mean 4.16) and know that "X" supermarket gives unique service (mean 3.95). The overall retailer awareness was good (mean 3.89) and it implies the commitment of supermarkets to brand awareness activities to gain customer intention is nice so, it needs to keep it.

Retailer Image

Brand image is a collection of beliefs, ideas, and impressions that a customer grasps concerning the brand. It is the perception of the brand in the mind of the customer (Aaker, 1991). Hence, respondents asked four items related to brand image.

Table 6: Descriptive Statistics of Retailer Image

	N	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
"X" supermarket offers a wide range of products	323	4.27	1.427
"X" supermarket has friendly personnel	323	2.98	1.747
"X" supermarket is located in a place where it can easily be reached	323	4.02	1.581
"X" supermarket sells well-known brands	323	4.06	1.568
RIM	323	3.8336	1.24782
Valid N (listwise)	323		

Source: Survey, 2021.

The results are shown in Table 6 the majority of respondents was strongly agreed that the supermarket offers a wide range of products (mean 4.27). Besides, they agreed on the supermarket is located in an easily reachable place (mean 4.02), the supermarket sells well-known brands (mean 4.06). However, they had doubts on friendly personnel (mean 2.98). the result implies, Basically, respondents had a good impression regarding to the supermarket product range, location and well-known products even though more efforts are required to elude the gap in sales personnel to increase the customer's intention to use the supermarket products. Overall consumers' awareness is good at (mean 3.833) creating customer satisfaction and enhancing intention to purchase.

Perceived Retailer Quality

Perceived quality is related to consumers' subjective perception of a product or brand attributes which is involved in the decision-making process (Aaker, 1991). Hence, four items related to the perceived retailer quality were asked to the respondents.

Table 7: Descriptive Statistics of Perceived Retailer Quality

	N	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
The products of "X" supermarket have a high quality	323	3.41	1.382
I trust the product quality of "X" supermarket	323	3.56	1.783
There is good customer-staff relations in "X" supermarket	323	3.26	1.516
I think the products of "X" supermarket have a reputation of high quality	323	3.46	1.784
RPQ	323	3.422	1.48896
Valid N (listwise)	323		

Source: Survey, 2021.

The results shown in Table 7 revealed that a majority of the respondents agreed that the supermarket have a high product quality (mean 3.41), trust the product quality (mean 3.56) and quality reputation (mean 3.46). On the other hand, they neither agreed nor disagreed on the good customer staff relation (mean 3.26). The result indicates some gap in employee and customer relationship. So it needs to work on customer service to improve. On the other hand, customers were satisfied with the quality of supermarket products (mean 3.42) enhances purchase intention.

Retailer Loyalty

Beyond marketing efforts and situational factors having potential which cause shifting behaviour, brand loyalty is intense consumers' future commitment to constantly purchase a favored product or service (Oliver, 1997). Hence, four items related to the brand loyalty were asked to the respondents.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics of Retailer Loyalty

	N	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
I would not buy in other store, if "X" supermarket is available	323	3.72	1.84
"X" supermarket would be my first choice	323	3.74	1.837
"X" supermarket offers better products than other competitors	323	3.76	1.846
I consider myself to be loyal to "X" supermarket	323	3.65	1.878
RLO	323	3.7144	1.82947
Valid N (list wise)	323		

Source: Survey, 2021.

The results shown in Table 8 indicate that customers would not buy in other store (mean 3.72), first choice (mean 3.74), offer better service (mean 3.76) and consider loyal (mean 3.65). Generally, consumers' loyalty to the supermarket is good (mean 3.71). The result has an implication of customers' good attitude regarding the supermarket and to be loyal. Thus, it is needed to continue doing on awareness, image and quality to build and keep customers loyalty towards the supermarket.

Purchase Intention

Dodds et al. (1991), the definition of purchase intention is consumers' shopping probability subject to willing, considering and recommendation to purchase. Hence, five items related to purchase intention were asked to the respondents.

Table 9: Descriptive Statistics of Purchase Intention

	N	*Mean*	*Standard Deviation*
I consider shopping at "X" supermarket when I want to purchase	323	3.45	1.462
In future, there is a high probability that I go to "X" supermarket to shop	323	3.70	1.476
I intend to purchase at "X" supermarket though there are various choices.	323	3.49	1.020
I would recommend others to shop at "X" supermarket	323	3.53	1.043
My willingness to become the customer of 'X' supermarket is high	323	3.50	1.029
PI	323	3.5313	0.98629
Valid N (listwise)	323		

Source: Survey, 2021.

Referring mean values the results shown in Table 9 show a majority of the respondents agreed that consider shopping in "X" supermarket (mean 3.45), high probability to buy in future (mean 3.70), and intend to purchase (3.49) recommend it to others (mean 3.53), and willingness to become the customer (mean 3.50). Overall respondents' purchase intention was perceived positively (mean 3.53), and it has an implication that majority of the respondents have the good attitude towards the supermarket to do purchase and rebuy and also have a tendency to recommend to others so as to motivate them to use or try it at least once.

Overall retailer awareness, retailer image, and perceived retailer quality and retailer loyalty mean result shows good or high mean value shows the respondent's positive attitude towards to the specific supermarket and accordingly their intentions to purchase. However, to attain customers' high agreement supermarkets need to enhance the marketing activities on retail brand equity dimensions and improve their customer service.

Correlation Analysis

A correlation refers to a quantifiable relationship between two variables, and the statistic that provides an index of that relationship is called a correlation coefficient *r*, which is a measure of the relationship between two interval or ratio variables. Summarizing the associations between two variables with a single number ranging from –1 to +1 is a very useful means (Field, 2005). As per the guideline suggested by Field (2005), the strength of the relationship 0.1 to 0.29 shows a week relationship; 0.3 to 0.49 is moderate; > 0.5 shows the strong relation between the two variables. Hence, in this study correlation analysis was used to examine the relationship between dependent and independent variables.

Table 10: Correlation Analysis

	RAW	*RIM*	*RPQ*	*RLO*	*PI*
RAW	1	0.346**	0.375**	0.371**	0.654**
RIM	0.346**	1	0.315**	0.324**	0.522**
RPQ	0.375**	0.315**	1	0.198**	0.568**
RLO	0.371**	0.324**	0.198**	1	0.473**
PI	0.654**	0.522**	0.568**	0.473**	1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (two tailed).
Source: Survey, 2021.

The results in Table 10 showed that all retailer brand equity variables have a positive relationship with purchase intention. Retailer awareness was found to be significantly strong and have a positive relationship (r = 0.654, $p < 0.01$), followed by retailer perceived quality (r = 0.568, $p < 0.01$), then retailer image (r = 0.522, $p < 0.01$). Whereas, there is a positive and moderate relationship on loyalty (r = 0.473, $p < 0.01$) with purchase intention. Therefore, from the result, one can conclude that all the retail brand equity dimensions had a positive correlation with purchase intention.

Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

Multiple regressions analysis was conducted to see the extent of the overall independent variables effect on the dependent variable. In this regard, before conducting the regressions analysis testing of regression assumptions is a basic criterion. The regression assumptions are multicolinearity, normality and linearity.

Tests of Statistical Assumptions

Multicollinearity Test

Collinearity or multicollinearity for multiple variables refers to the situation when a high degree of correlation exists between one or more predictor variables (Kothari, 2004). If the dependent variable correlates with each other then it will be difficult to assess their unique contribution to the dependent variable. The multi-collinearity among the variables was measured to determine if any correlation existed among the independent variables. Multicollinearity can be detected by Collinearity statistics through checking the Tolerance or VIF (Variable Inflation Factor). Hair et al. (1998) cited that a tolerance value below 0.10 and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) value above 10 cause a multicollinearity problem.

Table 11: Collinearity Diagnosis

Coefficients[a]			
Model		***Collinearity Statistics***	
		Tolerance	***VIF***
1	RAW	0.742	1.348
	RIM	0.801	1.248
	RPQ	0.820	1.220
	RLO	0.818	1.222

[a]Dependent Variable: PI.

Source: Survey, 2021.

As it is shown in Table 11, all independent variables have a Tolerance value greater than 0.01 and VIF value less than 10. Therefore, there was no multicollinearity exists in this case.

Test of Normality

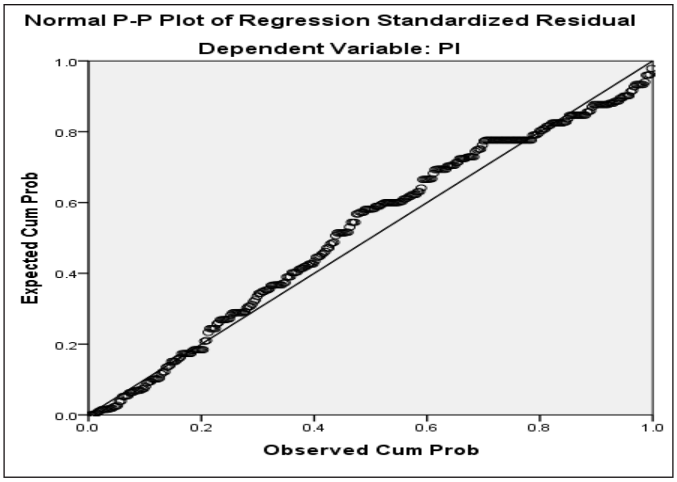
The two ways of testing normality are by using graphical or statistical methods. The normality test determines if the data in a normal distribution curve is normally distributed. Normality is tested by running descriptive statistics to obtain skewness and kurtosis, when the data are normally distributed, the kurtosis should be from +2 to –2 ranges (Field, 2005).

Table 12: Normality of Distribution using Descriptive Statistics (Skewness and Kurtosis)

	Skewness		***Kurtosis***	
	Statistic	***Standard Error***	***Statistic***	***Standard Error***
RAW	–0.884	0.136	–0.392	0.271
RIM	–1.067	0.136	–0.043	0.271
RPQ	–0.399	0.136	–1.470	0.271
RLO	–0.787	0.136	–1.347	0.271
PI	–0.230	0.136	0.280	0.271

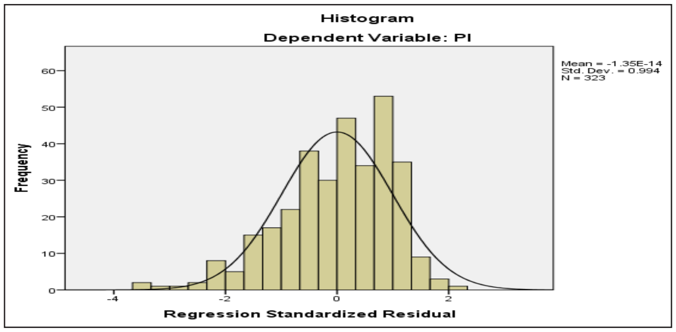
Source: Survey, 2021.

As it can be seen in Table 12, the skewness and the kurtosis values are between /–2 and +2/.



Source: Survey, 2021.

Fig. 2: Normal Point Plot of Standardized Residuals

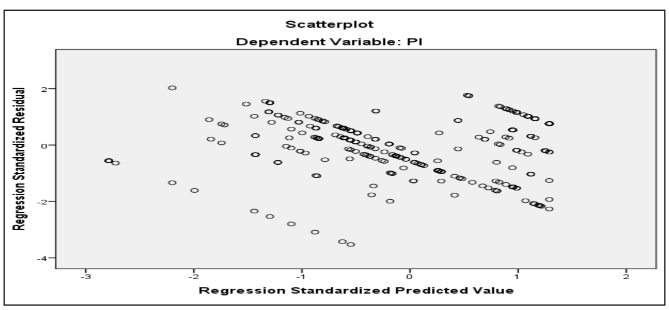


Source: Survey, 2021.

Fig. 3: Frequency Distribution of Standardized Residuals

Linearity Test

The linearity of the relationship between the dependent and independent variable represents the extent to which the dependent variable change is associated with the independent variable (Hair et al., 1998). In a simple meaning, linear models forecast or predict values falling within the line by keeping constant unit change (slop) of the dependent variable for the constant unit change of the predictor variable (Hair et al., 1998). The linearity assumption can be tested by using scatter plots or residual plots: plots of the residuals vs. either the predicted values of the dependent variable or against (one of) the independent variable(s).



Source: Survey, 2021.

Fig. 4: Frequency Distribution of Standardized Residuals

Regression Analysis

Multiple regression estimates the coefficients of the linear equation when there is more than one independent variable that best predicts the value of the dependent variable (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). In this regard, the regression analysis helps to know each independent variable (retailer awareness, retailer image, retailer perceived quality, and retailer loyalty) how far explain the dependent variables (purchase intention).

Model Summary

Table 13: Model Summary[b]

Model	*R*	R^2	*Adjusted* R^2	*Standard Error of the Estimate*
1	0.801[a]	0.641	0.636	0.59475

[a]Predictors: Constant, BLO, BPQ, BIM, BAW.
[b]Dependent Variable: PI.

Source: Survey, 2021.

The model summary table shows an R^2 value is 0.641 which shows that 64.1% of the purchase intention was explained by the variation of the four brand equity dimensions, (retailer awareness, retailer image, retailer perceived quality, and retailer loyalty). In other words, this means that 35.9% of the dependent variable i.e. purchase intention cannot be explained by these four variables and that there must be other variables that have an influence on the outcome.

Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Table 14: ANOVA[a]

Model		*Sum of Squares*	*df*	*Mean square*	*F*	*Sig.*
1	Regression	200.750	4	50.188	141.883	0.000[b]
	Residual	112.484	318	0.354		
	Total	313.234	322			
a. Dependent Variable: PI.						
b. Predictors: Constant, BLO, BPQ, BIM, BAW.						

Source: Survey, 2021.

The ANOVA table shows the overall significance/ acceptability of the model from a statistical perspective (Field, 2005). The above table shows the acceptability of the model. F = 141.883 and the p-value is less < 0.01 i.e. 0.000, which indicates the variation is explained by the model is not due to chance.

Regression Coefficients

How a one-unit change in the independent variable affects the average amount of change in the dependent variable could be illustrated by the regression coefficients. When the independent variable value of coefficients become increasing, then it became more evidence as it is a relevant determinant in predicting the dependent variable.

Table 15: Summary of Regression Coefficients[a]

Model		*Unstandardized Coefficients*		*Standardized Coefficients*	*t*	*Sig.*
		B	*Standard error*	*Beta*		
1	Constant	0.526	0.134		3.923	0.000
	RAW	0.313	0.032	0.387	9.910	0.000
	RIM	0.179	0.030	0.227	6.046	0.000
	RLO	0.105	0.020	0.194	5.234	0.000
	RPQ	0.207	0.025	0.313	8.422	0.000
a. Dependent Variable: PI.						

Source: Survey, 2021.

All predictors (independent) attributes have a statistically significant relationship with the criterion (dependent variable) for the fact that the p-value was found to be below/less than 0.01.

$$Y = \beta_{0+\beta_1}x_{1+\beta_2 X_2} + \beta_3 x_{3+\beta_4 X_4} + e,$$

where; Y = Overall Purchase intention, which is the continuous response (dependent) for X1, X2, X3 and X4 where X1, X2, X3 and X4 are a set of explanatory (independent) variables or covariates, whereas β0 is the constant term and β1, β2, β3 and β4 are thee regression coefficients, e is the residual or error term.

Thus, the regression equation can then be articulated as:

PI = 0.526 + 0.313BAW + 0.179BIM + 0.105BLO + 0.207BPQ

Keeping other variables constant, a one-unit increase in brand awareness, brand image, brand loyalty and brand perceived quality leads to 0.313, 0.179, 0.105, and 0.207 unit increase in purchase intention respectively. Among the predictors, retailer awareness took relatively the highest value ($\beta = 0.313$) followed by retailer perceived quality ($\beta = 0.207$), retailer image ($\beta = 0.179$) and retailer loyalty ($\beta = 0.105$).

Summary of Hypotheses Testing

Table 16: Summary of the Research Hypothesis Test Result

Hypothesis	*Result*	*Reason*
H1: Retailer awareness has positive and significant effect on purchase intention.	Supported	β = 0.313, $p < 0.01$
H2: Retailer image has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.	Supported	β = 0.179, $p < 0.01$
H3: Retailer loyalty has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.	Supported	β = 0.105, $p < 0.01$
H4: Perceived retailer quality has a positive and significant effect on purchase intention.	Supported	β = 0.207, $p < 0.01$

Discussion of Results

Based on the results, the student researcher responds to the five research questions outlined in Chapter One.

How does retailer awareness influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarket business in Addis Ababa?

The variable perceived retailer quality has a significant and positive influence on supermarket consumers' purchase intention with a mean value of 3.8940 and β = 0.313 at $p < 0.01$. As the result indicates the better will be the brand's purchase intent when more consumers know and can be able to recall the supermarkets from memory. Retailer awareness, as stated by Pappu and Quester (2005), is a capability of consumers to distinguish the retail store as a member of the definite retailer classification. Hence, the more customers are aware of retail brands the greater the ability to identify a particular supermarket brand among competing supermarkets (Joshi & Rajan, 2016).

To what extent does retailer image influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarket business in Addis Ababa?

The variable retailer image has a significant and positive influence on supermarket consumers' purchase intention with a mean value of 3.8336 and β = 0.179 at $p < 0.01$. Research finding shows the more consumers get good insights into the retail store the more they will tend to purchase from it. The store image gives the impression to the customers that the store is unique due to the distinguishing characteristics it has (Martineau, 1958).

In what way perceived retailer quality influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarket business in Addis Ababa?

The variable retailer image has a significant and positive influence on supermarket consumers' purchase intention with a mean value of 3.4220 and $\beta = 0.207$ at $p < 0.01$. Findings implied the more quality perception obtained by the supermarket consumers the more they will tend to purchase from it. Perceived retailer quality is the consumers' perception of the retailer quality not the objective quality of the retailer (Zeithaml, 1998). Consumers, therefore, choose retail outlets based on how they perceive the retail services and brand attributes (Sharma & Vibhay, 2017).

How does retailer loyalty influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarket business in Addis Ababa?

The variable retailer loyalty has a positive and significant effect on supermarket consumers' purchase intention with a mean value of 3.7144 and $\beta = 0.105$ at $p < 0.01$. The result implies the more consumers are aware of the store, and have a positive perception of store quality and good store image the more they will tend to purchase in future. Retailer loyalty is the customers' preference to be loyal to a leading retailer as proved by the intention to buy from the retailer as a first option (Pappu & Quester, 2005). In other words, it means that the chosen retail brand has a share of mind and a share of heart (Phau & Lau, 2001).

Which factor is the most important one to influence the consumer's purchase intention in the supermarket business in Addis Ababa?

The research finding shows, in general, all selected customers based retail brand equity dimensions have a significant and positive effect on supermarket consumers' purchase intention.

To conclude, based on the findings of the study retailer awareness was found to be the first significant variable influencing supermarket consumers' purchase intention at $\beta = 0.313$, p = 0.000, Perceived retailer quality was the second factor at 0.207, $P = 0.000$, and brand image was found to be the third significant factor at $\beta = 0.197$, $p = 0.000$ and Brand loyalty found to be the last significant factor at the beta coefficient of 0.105, $p = 0.000$. Furthermore, the formulated hypothesis were checked using the regression output, and all of the hypotheses were supported. Hence, consistent with previous studies (e.g. Chao & Liao, 2016; Fauzi & M.A.H.B, 2016), brand equity elements are significant determinates of customers' purchase intention.

Conclusions and Managerial Implications

The study concludes that brand equity dimensions of supermarket brands have an effect on consumers' store choice and intention to buy. The finding is consistent with prior related studies which argue that retailer equity could influence consumers' future purchase intention and helps to minimize the risk of competitors' action (e.g. Reichheld, 1993; Shahid, Hussain & Zafar, 2017; Foroudi et al., 2018; Graciola et al., 2020). Store equity increases store utility and value (Yoo et al., 2000), creating a series of competitive advantages that offer a value proposition based on existing associations (Aaker, 1996; Anselmsson, Burt & Tunca, 2017).

In this regard, retailers' awareness, retailer image, perceived retailer quality, and retailer loyalty were selected as the brand equity dimensions. As indicated in the literature, the overall brand recall and recognition, the way the store is defined in the minds of consumers through their perceptions and feelings, and the overall perceived retailer quality are key tools to create store equity and, thus, differentiate from competitors (Gil-Saura, Ruiz-Molina, Michel & Corraliza-Zapata, 2013). Likewise, loyalty considered a dimension of brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Pappu et al., 2005).

Hence, the study has the following managerial implications: first, supermarket managers should create awareness with respect to the quality and affordability of items in the supermarket as most Ethiopians consider supermarkets as expensive retail outlets. Second, managers of supermarkets should work on their brand elements to facilitate brand awareness and ensure brand recognition and recall. Third, in order to achieve a good retail image, managers of supermarkets should improve perceived retail quality through improved retail services; and carry high-quality grocery items. Fourth, supermarket businesses can achieve sustainable competitive advantage through building high retail brand equity, which in turn is the result of greater customer awareness, good retail image, high perceived retail quality, and high retail loyalty.

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