The Effect of Brand Awareness Used by FMCG's Manufacturers in Improving Support of Local Products: A Zambian Perspective

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Abstract:- **Many countries have created buy local campaigns to encourage local customers to become ethnocentric towards local brands. In order to enhance the buy local campaign's effectiveness, many countries have created a logo to be used by all campaign members. The motivation to develop buy local campaigns by many states has been to improve the economies and create employment. Zambia unemployment rate has been on a rise at 20.17% in 2020, hence the need to improve local brand advocacy. Quantitative research was conducted which involved the sample size of 295, and the data was collected using a questionnaire and data analysis was done using SPSS to produce the descriptive information.**
The results indicate that many respondents were not aware of the logo used by the buy local campaign, as there is more than one logo used by the industry players. The results also show that the majority of respondents prefer buying imported products other than the local FMCG's. This therefore renders the branding strategy used by the buy local campaign ineffective. There is need for all industry players to use one logo as branding brings emotional connection between the products and the customers.

Keywords:- Branding, Brand equity, FMCG's, Perceived quality, Positioning.

I. INTRODUCTION

When evaluating the effectiveness of marketing promotional tactics, branding is one of the factors taken into account. With the passage of time, the definition of branding has changed, including the understanding. Branding should be understood to be beyond just identifying and differentiating a product or service from those of competitors. Weinewski (2011[1]) defines branding as all things that has to do with the whole organization which includes the tangibles and intangible attributes of the firm. A brand could be everything about an organization which can include the logo, the product, the name, what the company believes in, what you say, what you do and how the product looks like. Aaker (1991[2]) agrees with this position on branding stating that a brand is anything that brings uniqueness to the product or service through a logo, name, signs, color, terms or designs that differentiates the product from competitors. Branding builds an emotional connection between an organization and customers. Branding has the ability to change the purchase intentions of customers as it also fosters the emotional connection between the product and the customer. Aaker (1991[2]) states that brand equity is determined by how customers view a brand in terms of brand associations, brand loyalty, name recognition, perceived quality, and other proprietary brand assets.

➢ *Problem Statement*

The Zambian market are inundated with a mixture of products from both local and international markets out of which citizens are fronted with a challenge of choice as to which product they would select at a particular time, and this is supposedly driven by patriotism, ethnocentrism and intentionality. World Bank (2015[3]) states that a significant number of FMCGs in Zambia are imported from other countries such as South Africa (SA) and Zimbabwe. Further, Ziba and Phiri (2017[4]) also posit that about 80% of FMCG's sold in Zambia, especially from one of the leading retail outlets like Shoprite Zambia, Pick N Pay are mainly imported from South Africa. Faced with a heavy influx of imported products from South Africa, branding is one of the important elements that might influence the support of local FMCG's. As Zambia is importing 80% of FMCG's, the rate of unemployment is arguably said to have reached an alarming level of 12.17% in 2020, 13.20% in 2019 from 11.40% in 2018 (Zamstat, 2020[5]). The question is, how effective is the branding strategy used to support the buy local campaign in Zambia?

➢ *Objectives*
- To identify the branding strategy used by manufacturers of FMCG's in support of the buy local campaign.

- To establish the influence of branding strategy used by the Proudly Zambian Campaign to attract support from local consumers.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

De Charnatony, McDonald, & Wallace (2011[6]) brand is just a collection of emotional and functional values that firms employ to develop their promises to customers about what they are delivering and the distinctive experience they should have. Coleman (2011[7]) described branding as a concept that helps offer value to consumers through the facilitation of reciprocal advantages between the buyer and the supplier, which is largely founded on passionate and purposeful values.

According to Karan and Saydam (2015[8]) a brand provides an emotional reason for why a consumer should buy a certain product or service. According to Kotler and Keller (2016[9]), a brand is all a product means to customers. As a result, a brand should refer to everything that adds value to consumers. From the positive image built for the product value is built and this increases brand recall and hence brand loyalty. Ultimately from the brand associations made by consumers this creates brand equity for the firm, employees and consumers (Aaker, 1991[2]).

A. The logos as brand element used by manufacturers in support of buy-local campaigns

According to Salehudin (2016[11]), buy local campaigns in different nations have chosen different symbols. Customers will be able to relate to the brands more easily as a result of this. This creates brand awareness and the needed brand recall. As part of these campaigns, governments typically produced a logo to show that a commodity is local to that country. The logo is frequently encouraged to be used on products by local businesses (Saffu, Walker, and Mazurek (2010[12]).

According to Alter, Bridger, and Frumento (2012[13]), manufacturers are expected to support purchase local initiatives by utilizing the agreed-upon logo to help local businesses thrive. Here are some logos that have been used in purchase local campaigns (Indonesia, Australia, United Kingdom, South Africa, and Zimbabwe).

Fig 1

B. The value of branding to customers

The perceived value of the brands by the targeted consumers also influences the success of promotional efforts. The notion of branding, according to Kotler and Keller (2016[9]), has the potential to effectively developing mental structures that boost the consumer's ability to gather enough information or knowledge about the items and services. When clients have the ability to readily recognize their favorite goods, De Charnatony, McDonald, & Wallace (2011[6]) asserts that this minimizes the cost of searching and further eliminates the risks in the purchasing process.

According to Chrostodoulides and De Chernatony (2009[10]), consumers of products usually identify with the product's symbolic device, perceived quality, and function in meeting the customer's wants. According to Chovanova, Korshunov, and Barbcanova (2015[14]), branding serves as a memory cue for customers, allowing them to recall key information and make an informed purchase decision. According to Alizade, Hoseini, and Naiej (2014[15]) branding as a concept also involves effective communication, positioning, personality, and value identity. Allaway, Huddlestone, Whipple , and Ellinger (2011[16]) suggest that the information acquired could be about the customers' brand experience, brand association, and brand image. If a corporation wants to succeed, especially in a competitive business environment, it has been suggested that branding is the most crucial element of the business strategy Allaway, Huddlestone, Whipple , and Ellinger (2011[16]).

C. Considering brand equity in the buy local campaign

In all notable definitions, brand equity is thought to be a factor that contributes to increased profits, improved communications, and brand expansion opportunities, as well as enhancing consumers' preferences and intentions to buy a specific product, which affects customer loyalty Allaway, Huddlestone, Whipple , and Ellinger (2011[16]). According to Chrostodoulides and De Chernatony (2009[10]) the idea of brand equity covers how customers think, feel, and react to brand messages such as price, product or brand needs, product profitability, customer base, and market share.

D. Customers and company brand equity

Aaker (1991[2]) suggests that there are three types of brand equity namely, consumer based brand equity, employee based brand equity and firm based brand equity. Researchers have mostly examined and analyzed brand equity from two perspectives: customer brand equity and corporate brand equity perspectives Chrostodoulides and De Chernatony (2009[10]). Customer-based brand equity, as espoused by Chrostodoulides and De Chernatony (2009[10]) is based on customers' perceptions of the value they receive from the brand, whereas firm-based brand equity is based on the firm's capacity to influence product demand, grow market shares, and profitability. Keller (2013[17]) posits that the customer-based brand equity method, measures customers' thinking, brand image, how they perceive the brand, beliefs, and how they feel about the brand, as well as how they react to brand communications.

Chinomona and Maziriri (2017[18]) conducted a study in South Africa, and discovered that brand trust, familiarity, and experience had a favorable effect on customer brand attachment, which enhanced the support of the proudly South African campaign. According to Laforet (2010[19]), today's customers don't consume or buy products but buy brands, and this ranges from convenience products to high involvement products like clothing. Roustasekehravani and Hamid (2014[20]) postulate that if brands are well managed, a firm's market share and profitability would improve.

Hence, a well-executed Buy Local campaign, such as the Proudly Zambian campaign, would increase brand trust and familiarity in the local market. This would result into increased demand for the local products thereby sustaining manufacturing and contributing to employment creation. Customers who are made loyal to a brand as a consequence of effective branding are always willing to spend more because of the company's trust and quality Ahmed, Rizwan, Ahmad, and Haq (2014[21]).

E. Buy local campaign brand awareness

Brand recognition is the most important and first feature of consumer brand equity, and it is frequently overlooked as a component of brand equity Tong and Hawley (2009[22]). It's a key indicator of a customer's brand awareness, the frequency with which the brand appears in their minds, and the ease with which that knowledge may be recalled from memory (O'Guinn, Allen, and Semenik, 2009[23]). If consumers are aware of a company's product or service, they are more likely to accept its presence and availability (Mowen and Minor, 2011[24]). According to Huang and Sarigollu (2012[25]), brand recognition comes before brand equity in the perspective of customers.

There are two types of brand awareness: aided or assisted awareness and top of mind awareness (Farris, Bendle, Pfeifer, and Reibstein, 2010[26]). When a customer is presented a variety of brand names and must choose one from a list, aided recognition occurs, whereas 'top of mind awareness' occurs when the brand name is immediately recognized since the consumer easily correlates the brand with the product category Keller (2013[17]).

Despite the fact that individuals in Ghana did not seem to be as aware of the local campaign (branding) as they did in South Africa, Darku and Akpan (2020[27]) discovered that the Ghanaian campaign was more popular. On a scale of "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," respondents were asked to rate their level of awareness, with lower mean scores indicating higher awareness. The average awareness score in both campaigns was 3.14. South Africa had a lower awareness level than the rest of the world (2.18), whereas Ghana had a higher awareness level (4.05).

F. Brand awareness and brand performance in the market

Kilei, Iravo, and Omwenga (2016[28]) investigated the impact of brand awareness on product and service market brand performance. Brand recall and brand recognition were found to be positively and significantly related, suggesting that brand recall and overall brand knowledge are critical

determinants of consumer brand success. With the achievement of this success the resulting brand loyalty would create value for the firms in terms of profitability. Huang and Sarigollu (2012[25]), investigated how brand awareness connects to market result, brand equity, and the marketing mix in their study by combining survey data with real-market data. As a measure of brand market performance, the study looked at increases in brand sales and market share. To see if brand awareness is an antecedent of market outcome, the researchers utilized regression and cross-prediction studies. According to Huang and Sarigollu (2012[25]), study, they found that brand awareness and brand market performance are linked. This would suggest that if the Zambia Buy Local Campaigns are successful the market demand for local products would be high and that is the ultimate goal of these campaigns.

Kim and Kim, (2013[29]) found that brand awareness has a positive relationship with market performance in the hotel industry, and that substantial differences in brand awareness exist between high and low market performance hotels in other similar studies of the relationship between brand awareness and brand performance. Baldauf, Cravens, and Binder, 2013[30]) investigated the impact of brand equity management on the tile industry's sales and profit performance results in another study. The study discovered a substantial link between brand awareness and brand sales and profitability. Many researchers have studied the impact of branding on customer purchase intention in other countries such as Ghana and South Africa (Darku and Akpan, 2020[27]). However, there is still a gap in knowledge as branding used by the buy local campaign is yet to be appreciated in Zambia.

III. METHODOLOGY

Langos (2004[31]) defined methodology as the structure related with a specific arrangement of paradigmatic suppositions that one uses to conduct a study, for example, the scientific method, ethnography and activity research. For this study, the researcher used a survey. According to Check and Schutt (2012[32]), survey research is the collection of information from a sample of individuals gotten from a large population. For this study, the population of interest was the consumers of FMCG's in Lusaka. The questionnaire was used to collect the data. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS to come up with descriptive information.

A. Sampling Strategy

Sampling is a process of choosing a representative group of people or items from the population of interest in order to generalize the findings (Etikan and Bala, 2017[33]). For this study, the researcher used probability (systematic) sampling method, of which quantitative data was collected from consumers of FMCG's in Lusaka District of Zambia. The sample involved 295 respondents.

IV. DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

A. The FMCG's customers prefer

Table 1: Brand Preferences

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Local	61	20.9	20.9	20.9
	Foreign	231	79.1	79.1	100.0
	Total	292	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 above shows the descriptive statistics on which FMCG's the consumers buy the most. 61 out of 292 respondents representing 20.9% prefer buying local brands and 231 out of 292 respondents representing 79.1% prefer buying foreign or imported FMCG's. According to the study by Van den Berg (2017[34]) in South Africa, 24% of the respondents strongly disagreed to a statement that buying foreign brands is un- South African, 38% disagreed and 24% neither disagreed nor agreed. Both studies seem to show that consumers in both countries support imported brands as compared to local FMCG products.

B. Branding strategy (Logo) used to support the the buy local campaign

Table 2: Logo used for branding

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Agree	9	3.1	3.1	3.1
	Agree	63	21.6	21.6	24.7
	Neutral	59	20.2	20.2	44.9
	Disagree	19	6.5	6.5	51.4
	Strongly Disagree	142	48.6	48.6	100.0
	Total	292	100.0	100.0	

Branding Strategies (Logo) of the Local Fast Moving Consumer Goods

The descriptive findings of the branding strategy (logo) used by the buy local campaign are shown in the table above. 3.1% strongly agreed that the campaign has a specific logo that can be seen, and 21.6% strongly agreed that the buy local campaign has a specific logo that can be seen in Zambia. 20.2% neither agreed nor disagreed, 6.5% disagreed and 48.6% strongly disagreed. This shows that Zambian consumers are not aware of the Buy Local logo. If this is the case then it would suggest that the campaign is failing to create the needed awareness needed to change behavior. Saffu, Walker, and Mazurek, 2010[12]) argued that in order for a buy local campaign to be successful, a common logo must be used to solicit support from local buyers. According to Darku and Akpan (2020[27]), the buy South African campaign has a distinct message and a well-known logo that is used by all manufacturing members. According to a study by Salehudin (2016[11]), the Indonesian government has approved the use of one logo in the buy local campaign to represent that the product is native.

V. CONCLUSION

According to the findings, the respondents were unaware of the campaign's branding strategy. Many respondents (48.6%) expressed a lack of knowledge about the logo brand element used in the buy local campaign used in Zambia. Local campaigns in different countries have adopted different symbols Salehudin (2016[11]). Customers will be able to easily relate to the brands as a result of this. MCTI (2018[35]) states that more than one logo has been used as an identifier in support of the buy local campaign.

Fig 2: Logos for Buy local in Zambia

According to Darku and Apkan (2020[27]), the buy South African campaign adopted only one logo that it is associated with. The usage of a well-known logo makes it easier for buyers to recognize and recall the products and would easily help customers become ethnocentric (Chovanova, Korshunov, and Barbcanova, 2015[14]). The usage of a logo help to strengthen the campaign's identification. The logos used by industry players in Zambia as evidenced by figure 2 above where there is more than one logo might be confusing to local buyers. The industry players should begin using the one agreed logo in support of the buy local campaign. Results indicate that the majority of respondents have challenges recognizing the logo used to support the campaign, therefore, this confirms that the branding strategy is not effective.

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