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Brand Relationship-Loyalty Link among Detergent Consumers in Nairobi City County, Kenya: The Mediatory Role of Customer Satisfaction

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Abstract:

A topical trend in marketing has been the development of long-term brand relationships in building loyalty, as opposed to transaction based relationships which are deemed superficial in nature, in the fast moving consumer goods market. Brand relationships are key in building lasting consumer-brand bonds that result in loyalty. However, empirical studies focussing on brand relationships and their effect on loyalty and the role of satisfaction in the development of these relationships are scarce especially in developing countries and more so in Kenya. Therefore, to fill this gap this study first sought to investigate the effect of brand relationship on loyalty and then establish the mediating effect of customer satisfaction on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty in the detergent industry. This research adopted the positivistic philosophy, the explanatory research design and was cross-sectional in nature. The target population was households, as detergent consumers, in 11 sub-counties in Nairobi City County, Kenya, from which a sample of 400 households consumers were selected using cluster and simple random sampling, and the Kish grid at the household level. A household was regarded as a single detergent purchase and consumption unit. Primary data was collected using a self-administered questionnaire and analysed using SPSS 25. Based on the data analysis, brand relationship, as a composite value of brand trust, brand communication and emotional attachment, was found to have a positive effect on loyalty, while customer satisfaction was also found to have a partial mediating effect on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty. The study thus concluded that customer satisfaction has a significant mediating effect on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty. The study findings can be applied in the development of customer satisfaction programs to nurture brand relationships and consequently increase loyalty to laundry detergent brands.

Keywords: Brand relationship, loyalty, customer satisfaction, detergents

1. Introduction

In many markets, particularly in the fast moving consumer goods market, the relationship between consumers and brands plays a crucial role it helps consumers in minimising costs of information search concerning available brands to choose the best brand that satisfies their needs, while it helps organisations in increasing the probability of rebuy by consumers as attracting new consumers is a transitional phase in the marketing process making long-term brand-relationships key in brand management (Tarus&Rabach, 2013; Veloutsou, 2015). However, few empirical studies have focussed on brand relationships, even though such relationships are the cornerstone for robust brand relationships and loyalty (Fritz, Lorenz & Kempe, 2014) and is evident in in developing countries (Ghani&Tuhin, 2018) and especially in Kenya. In their study, Tarus and Rabach (2013) limited their investigation on the drivers of loyalty in the telecommunication industry and viewed satisfaction as an independent variable while Wangari (2012) limited her study to the business customers of one detergent producing company. Both studies by Wangari (2012) and Tarus and Rabach (2013) did not look at brand relationship as a predictor of loyalty nor the role of customer satisfaction as a mediator of the relationship in the Kenyan context. Further, this study was spurred by the increased competitiveness of the Kenyan market for detergents as seen from the extensive range of brands produced and marketed by different companies, in which indigenous companies face stiff competition from foreign based companies which import and sell their brands (Kamau 2013) while others set up manufacturing and distribution facilities in the country (Wangari, 2012). In this highly competitive market, companies are compelled to develop consumer loyalty building strategies(Rundle-Thierry & Bennett, 2001) to penetrate and capture a slice of this expanding market.

Customer satisfaction has continued to occupy a central position amongst marketing researchers and practitioners as it is viewed as a fundamental outcome of marketing activity which links processes that result in loyalty (Churchill & Suprenant 1982), thus companies must satisfy consumers' needs and wants when building and maintaining lasting loyalty. Currently, the significance of customer satisfaction in shaping consumer behaviour has broadened into the realms of loyalty, since simply satisfying the needs of new customers does not guarantee continual brand success (Tarus & Rabach, 2013). Therefore, attaining a good brand relationship through satisfaction of consumer needs is vital as it positively impacts the re-buy behaviour of consumers by promoting positive word of mouth and consequently nurturing loyalty (Ou, Shih, Chen & Wang, 2011). As mediator, previous studies on loyalty have shown that satisfaction mediates between loyalty and its determinants (Kaura, Prasad & Sharma, 2015; Mwencha, 2015; Hussain, 2016).

In spite of the belief that brand relationships are more profitable than individual consumer-brand transactions, the quest for a model to measure and describe the nature of brand relationships has been an elusive undertaking (Hess & Story, 2005). Therefore, in light of the above background, the study aimed to determine the effect of brand relationship on loyalty and the role of satisfaction as a mediator on the brand relationship- loyalty link in the detergent market in Nairobi City County, Kenya. This paper is composed of four sections. This paper begins by laying theoretical foundation of relevant theories and concepts of the study and submitting the proposed hypotheses and conceptual framework. Thereafter, it highlights the research methodology utilised. Next it provides the results of diagnostic tests, hypotheses tests done and a discussion of the findings. Lastly, it closes by providing a summary of the conclusions, recommendations for policy implementation and areas of further study.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Theoretical Foundations

This study was underpinned by the theories of the attachment, social exchange, expectation-confirmation (ECT) and Hierarchy of effects to help in understanding the variables under study. The theory of attachment advocated by J. Bowlby (Bretherton, 1992) proposes consumers bond to a brand and form a relationship based on how trustworthy, dependable and consistent the brand is in responding to needs for safety and security (Patwardhan & Balasubramanian, 2011), thus a strong attachment is an outcome of the satisfaction of the needs for security, support, consistency and comfort when dealing with familiar brands that will not disappoint (Partwardian & Balasubramanian, 2011; Velascou, 2015). To further aid in understanding consumer-brand relations, the theory of social exchange was adopted as it advocates for social interaction, between partners in a relationship, to be regarded as an exchange process (Emerson, 1976). Blau (1964) concurs that social exchange is a consumer's personal and non-coerced actions that are driven by the positive benefits they expect to gain from others. Thus a person performs a good deed to another with the general anticipation of gaining an unspecified and unknown benefit in the future (Blau, 1986). Therefore, Cook and Rice (2003) point out that any behaviour that results in positive consequences has a high chance of being repeated in similar situations by either party in an exchange relationship (Homans, 1961). Consequently, this theory infers that brand relationship is founded on the rewards and costs that can be enjoyed and incurred, respectively, by the consumer, and thus by repeatedly buying and consuming the brand over time, the consumer is assured of benefits by the brand, and consequently, becomes satisfied and loyal to the brand.

The ECT is a marketing theory that was developed by Richard Oliver in 1980 to help in understanding customer satisfaction and post purchase behaviour and holds that a customer's satisfaction determines his or her intention to repurchase a brand (Churchil & Suprenant, 1982), which is key in the building of enduring consumer-brand relationships and loyalty. According to the ECT, satisfaction is attained when consumers evaluate a brand's perceived performance based on their original expectation, and determine the degree to which the expectations have been confirmed and, it is based on the level of confirmation and expectations on which that confirmation is founded on (Bhattacharjee, 2001). Consequently, the satisfied consumers form intent to repurchase while consumers who are not satisfied subsequently discontinue consumption and purchase of the brand (Lin, Tsai & Chiu, 2009; Susanto, Chang & Ha, 2016). This theory views repeat purchase behaviour as reasoned and intentional ignoring the role that emotions play in repeat purchase. Lastly, the Lavidge and Steiner's hierarchy of effects theory asserts advertising, the communication component of marketing, influences the purchase decisions of consumers (Mokhtar, 2016). This theory proposes that the progression of learning and decision-making a consumer experiences in brand purchasing is as a result of advertising, based on six specific and progressive objectives of a brand communication program; namely awareness, knowledge, liking, preference, conviction and purchase (Mokhtar, 2016). These objectives build upon each previous objective until the consumer makes a purchase and thus assist advertisers in developing and communicating effective advertising messages (Sadeghi, Khani & Hosseini, 2013). This theory assumes rationality of the consumer, the linear progression of the six objectives and does not consider impulse purchasing.

2.2. Conceptual Background

2.2.1. Brand Relationship

To understand brand relationships, marketers introduced human based personal relationships as a metaphor to elucidate on the formation and maintenance of consumer-brand relations and bonds and in explaining overall consumer behaviour (Story & Hess, 2006). Therefore, in developing a brand relationship, consumers view the brand as a collaborative partner during the course of their interactions over a certain period of time (Peng, Chen & Wen, 2014) from

whom emotional, psychological and socio-cultural benefits can be derived (Aurier&Lanause, 2012). Current research on brand relationship shows it has been conceptualised in different dimensions by different scholars. These include two-way communication and emotional exchange (Veloutsuo, 2007); brand attachment and brand identification (Peng, Chen & Wen, 2014); interdependence, passion, relationship duration, satisfaction, actual behaviour, brand trust, brand commitment, equity, and intimacy, (Frintz, Lorenz & Kempe, 2014) and brand trust, brand affect and perceived consumer reorganisation of the relationship (Michel, Merk&Eroglu, 2015). From the above dimensions, brand trust, brand communication and emotional attachment have arisen as significant brand relationship constructs thus, this study will focus on them in determining their individual as well as their composite effect, as brand relationship, on loyalty.

Brand trust can be described as the sense of security that the consumer holds that their expectations will be met with respect to their consumption needs, centred on the belief that the brand is reliable and has good intentions towards the consumer as it will not exploit his or her vulnerability (Delgado-Ballaster&Manuera-Aleman 2001). Aurier and Lanause (2013) defines trust as, the conviction that one partner in an exchange relationship has that the other partner, will meet their long-term expectations and interests and maintain them at the same level of performance over time. Here trust can be viewed as the confidence that a consumer has in a brand in an exchange relationship, that it is truthful, will deliver on the promises made and offer a peace of mind (Chalal& Rani, 2017) in their brand choice selection. The above definitions view the key ingredients of trust in an exchange relationship as delivery of promises and fulfilment of expectations by all parties. In terms of conceptualisation, brand trust is composed of two dimensions namely, brand reliability and brand intentions, whereby the former concerns the capability and willingness of the brand to keep its promises and meet consumer's needs, while the latter comprises of the favourable intentions the brand has regarding the consumers' interest and wellbeing (Delgado-Ballaster&Munuera-Aleman, 2005). This study adopts the conceptualisation of brand trust by Delgado-Ballaster&Munuera-Aleman (2005).

BahriAmmari, Van Niekerke, Ben Khelil and Chtioui (2016) define emotional brand attachment as an enduring relationship that anticipates a consumers' commitment to a brand. Levy and Hino (2016) define emotional attachment as a concept which reflects the psychological state of feeling joined to a brand. Theng So, Parsons and Yap (2013) opine that emotional attachment helps to explain the strength of the connection between a brand and a consumer. Fournier (1998) defines brand attachment as an emotionally loaded consumer-brand connection. Past research shows that consumers have a relationship with a brand in the same way that they do with their fellow human beings, and thus it can be inferred they develop an emotionally loaded bond with a brand which helps in ascertaining their loyalty to a brand (Levy & Hino 2016; Thomson, MacInnis& Park, 2005). These bonds enhance the emotional attachment consumers have for the brand, and result in loyalty development (Levy & Hino, 2016; Manyiwa, Priporas, & Wang, 2018). In the brand choice and loyalty development processes, the emotional bonds between brands and consumers are formed when consumers favour brands that exceed their utility (Aurier&Lanause, 2013) and are nurtured when consumers' needs are met, as they view the brands favourably regarding reliability (Velascou, 2015) and consequently, when consumers view the brand as dependable, they intensify their emotional dependence and it is highly probable that they will maintain closeness to the brand (Theng So, Parsons &Yap, 2013; Thomson, MacInnis& Park, 2005). Thus, Thomson *et al* (2005) posit that, consumers who are emotionally attached are inclined to be exceedingly committed in upholding long standing brand relationships, stimulating positive word of mouth and extension of support for the brand (Levy & Hino 2016). Therefore, this study will conceptualise emotional attachment as per Thomson, MacInnis and Park, (2005) in terms of the dimensions of affection (the warm feelings for a brand), connection (the feelings of merging with a brand) and passion (the strong positive feelings towards a brand).

Brand communication is crucial in managing brand relationships with consumers as it boosts loyalty in a brand, by persuading consumers to strengthen their attachment to a brand thereby reinforcing brand relationship over time (Etemadifard, Kafashpoor&Zendehdel, 2013; Zehir, Sahin, Kitapki&Ozsahin, 2011). Brand communication also creates strong consumers-brand links which are fundamental to developing brand relationships (Sahin, Zehir, &Kitapci 2012) and enabling current brand relationships (Zehiret *al* 2011). To build these relationships, it is essential that a brand's communication focus on nurturing positive brand attitudes as they encapsulate the meaning that a consumer bequeaths a brand and impact the consumer's purchasing behaviour and a brand's competitiveness (Sahinet *al*2012). Therefore, brand communication should be purposed at formation and maintenance of positive brand attitudes (Zehiret *al*2011) as well as encourage consumers to be cognisant of a brand and to purchase brands they are able to recall faster (Chinomona, 2016).In conceptualising brand communication different dimensions have been espoused. These are, one-way communication and two-way communication (Sahinet *al*2012), two-way communication (Velotsou, 2007); controlled communication, uncontrolled communication and brand names (Grace &O'Cass, 2005). This study will conceptualise brand communication as per Sahinet *al* (2012) and Veloutsou (2007) as adapted and used in previous studies on brand communication.

In view of the above identified brand relationship variables, this research will involve their study as inadequate studies have been done on them and more so from a Kenyan context. This study will first look at their individual effects and then their composite effect on loyalty.

2.2.2. Loyalty

Jacoby and Chestnut (1978) define loyalty as the consumer's subjective behavioural reaction, based on their mental processes and conveyed over time, regarding one or more brands out of a brand-set. Here Jacoby and Chestnut views loyalty as non-random, behavioural and inconsiderate to situational influences. In agreement, Oliver (1999) views loyalty as an internally driven commitment to unfailingly repurchase a favoured product or service over time resulting in

repetitive purchasing of the same brand or same brand-set regardless of competitors' marketing activities and situational stimuli purposed at encouraging brand switching behaviour. This repetitive purchasing of the same brand over time regardless of competitor activities and situational influences is based on the development of strong consumer-brand bonds (Levy & Hino 2016). Therefore, to an organisation, loyalty can also be viewed as an asset (Leckie, Nyadzayo & Johnson, 2018) as it acts as an entry barrier to competitors, nurtures a customer base that is oblivious to competitor marketing activities, reducing the risk of failure of a new brand and minimising marketing expenditures as enticing new consumers is more costlier than maintaining loyal consumers (Ruparelia, White & Hughes, 2010; Kaura, Prasad & Sharma, 2015). Loyalty has been examined from the attitudinal and behavioural perspectives. The attitudinal perspective measures loyalty on the basis of surveys in terms of the consumer's commitment, purchase intention, preference and their overall feelings about a brand, while the behavioural perspective uses measures such as actual purchases made and frequency of purchases (Jensen, 2011; Parahoo, 2012; Goncalves & Sampaiao, 2012). This study will conceptualise loyalty in terms of the attitudinal approach which provides definite reasons of repeat rebuy as opposed to behavioural approach (Krystallis, 2013). Further, this study will operationalize loyalty as repeat purchase, price tolerance, positive word of mouth, and the preference to purchase a particular brand consistently (Kaura *et al*, 2015; Chinomona, 2016; El Mastrly, 2016; Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2017).

2.2.3. Customer Satisfaction

Oliver (1999) defines satisfaction as a gratifying fulfilment of needs in which a consumer gauges, a brand in terms of if it provides pleasure or not after consuming it. Darzi and Bhat (2018) view satisfaction as the degree of pleasure consumers feel resulting from the fulfilment of their expectations and needs. Makanyenza and Chikazhe (2017) view satisfaction as a consumer's sense of pleasure or displeasure based on a comparison of their expectations and their perceptions about a brand's performance. Kim (2011) states that satisfaction is the immediate state of mind a consumer is in caused by the merging of the feelings of fulfilment of expectations and his or her previous feelings about their brand consumption experience. Therefore, satisfaction is a product of purchase and consumption of a brand founded on consumer's appraisal of benefits and losses associated with the purchase relative to the anticipated consequences of consumption (Churchill & Suprenant, 1982). Cater and Cater (2009) and Kaura, Prasad and Sharma (2015) view customer satisfaction as composed of two dimensions, transaction specific and overall (cumulative) where the former relates to the assessment of a particular brand on a range of diverse attributes, while the latter is the overall evaluation of a brand in terms of the consumers' prior expectations and serve as a cognitive base (Veloutsou, 2015). Overall satisfaction is founded on the aggregate assessment of the whole brand experience when making rebuy decisions, while transaction specific satisfaction is based on one encounter with a brand (Cater & Cater, 2009). This study will adopt transaction specific and overall satisfaction dimensions as they are post-consumption assessments.

2.3. Research Hypotheses

On the basis of the theoretical foundations and conceptual background presented above, it is therefore reasonable to assume that in the context of the detergent industry that brand relationship has an effect on loyalty and customer satisfaction has a mediatory effect on this relationship. Thus, this study proposes the following null hypotheses:

- H₀₁: Brand trust has no significant effect on loyalty.
- H₀₂: Brand communication has no significant effect on loyalty.
- H₀₃: Emotional attachment has no significant effect on loyalty.
- H₀₄: Combined effect of Brand relationship has no significant influence on loyalty.
- H₀₅: Customer satisfaction has no significant mediating effect on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty.

2.4. Conceptual Model

To address the highlighted knowledge gaps, the conceptual model in Figure 1, below, was utilised in this study. It was based on the assumption that brand relationship has an effect on loyalty and satisfaction acts as a mediator on the hypothesised relationship, and is based on the interplay between the four theories highlighted earlier.

Figure 1: Hypothesised Conceptual Model

Source: Researcher (2018)

3. Research Methodology

3.1. Research Design, Sampling Design, Sample and Data Collection

This study adopted positivism and explanatory research design as it aimed to develop a model for further testing and confirmation in future studies (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009) and was cross-sectional in nature. The explanatory research design has been successfully used by Njuguna (2014), Mwencha (2015) and Mutinda (2016). The population of interest was households as consumers of laundry detergents in eleven sub-counties in Nairobi City County, Kenya, in which cluster sampling, simple random sampling and the Kish grid were utilised to arrive at a sample of 400 household consumers where one household was regarded as a single purchase and consumption unit. Self-administered questionnaires, with five-point Likert based scales, were administered and 368 complete questionnaires were obtained representing a 92 % response rate which was adequate for further analysis (Rogelberg, 2006). The data was analysed using SPSS 25 and presented in tabular format.

3.2. Empirical Models

Regression was considered suitable for this study and was utilised in testing the hypotheses stated in section 2.3, as recommended by Field (2009). The relationship between the individual and the composite effect of the brand relationship variables on the loyalty variable were linearised as shown below in models 1 to 4.

$$LOY = \beta_0 + \beta_1 BT + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

$$LOY = \beta_0 + \beta_2 BC + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

$$LOY = \beta_0 + \beta_3 EA + \epsilon \quad (3)$$

$$LOY = \beta_0 + \beta_4 BR + \epsilon \quad (4)$$

In order to ascertain the mediating effect of satisfaction on the brand relationship-loyalty link the following models 5 to 7, in addition to model 4 above, were utilised as proposed by Baron and Kenny (1986):

$$SAT = \beta_0 + \beta_4 BR + \epsilon \quad (5)$$

$$LOY = \beta_0 + \beta_5 SAT + \epsilon \quad (6)$$

$$LOY = \beta_0 + \beta_5 SAT + \beta_4 BR + \epsilon \quad (7)$$

Where:

LOY = Loyalty

β_0 = Constant

$\beta_1 - \beta_5$ = Regression coefficients

BT = Brand Trust

BC = Brand Communication

EA = Emotional Attachment

BR = Brand Relationship

SAT = Satisfaction

ϵ = Error term

3.3 Validity and Reliability

To ensure face and content validity, validated measures were adopted from previous studies on brand trust, brand communication, emotional attachment and loyalty. To test for reliability of the questionnaire, Cronbach alpha was used and the results indicated that Brand Trust (0.877); Brand Communication (0.784); Emotional Attachment (0.8930); Satisfaction (0.910) and Loyalty (0.776) met the threshold of 0.7 indicating the research instrument as reliable (Sekaran 2003). Thus, based on the use of validated measures and the reliability assessment, the data was deemed to be suitable for further analysis.

4. Research Results and Discussion

4.1. Diagnostic Tests

The current study performed the following tests to fulfil prerequisite of meeting basic assumptions of multiple linear regression so as to accurately estimate the proposed regression models (Gupta, 2005). The KMO test statistics for BT (0.812), BC (0.736), EA (0.851), SAT (0.775) and LOY (0.705) were greater than 0.5, thus, the sample was considered adequate and representative of the study population (Williams *et al*, 2012) and sufficiently large for further analysis. The results of the Shapiro-Wilks test for normality indicated that all study variables were normally distributed with p-values obtained as follows: BT (0.101>0.05); BC (0.307>0.05); EA (0.140>0.05); SAT (0.075>0.05) and LOY (0.426>0.05) indicating the data were normally distributed (Sekaran, 2003). The Levene test, for homogeneity of variances, results showed the variances for all independent variables were not significantly different; BT ($p = 0.237 > 0.05$); BC (0.368>0.05); and EA (0.747>0.05), thus as per Dansey and Reidy (2004), the homogeneity of variances assumption was achieved. The study further ascertained the assumption of linearity using correlation coefficients which indicated that all independent variables had a positive linear relationship with loyalty: (LOY and EA at 0.610; BT and LOY at 0.322; BC and LOY at 0.312). The study also tested for multicollinearity using tolerance levels (T.L) and variance inflation factors (VIF) and the test results showed: BT (VIF = 1.275, T = 0.784), BC (VIF = 1.290, T = 0.775), EA (VIF = 1.429, T = 0.700), and SAT (VIF = 1.231, T = 0.812) ruling out the possibility of multicollinearity as all study variables had a VIF<10 and a T.L>0.1, (Field, 2009). Therefore, based on the above tests all the study variables were retained and could be utilised for further regression analysis.

4.2. Hypotheses Tests Results

The study was based on the premise that brand relationship (BR) influences loyalty (LOY) and this relationship is mediated by customer satisfaction (SAT). In order to establish the statistical significance of the hypothesised relationships, regressions were conducted at 95 % confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$). This section presents results of the hypotheses tests.

4.2.1 H₀₁: Brand Trust Has No Significant Effect on Loyalty

The relevant test results for Hypothesis One (H₀₁) are presented in Table 1.

Model Summary			
		Statistic	Sign.
Adjusted R ²		0.102	
R ²		0.104	
F (1,366)		42.481	0.001
Coefficients			
	β	t	Sign.
Constant	2.232	13.819	0.000
BT	0.322	6.518	0.001
Criterion Variable: LOY			

Table 1: Regression Results for Brand Trust on Loyalty
Source: Field Data (2019)

The results shown in Table 1 indicate an adjusted R² of 0.102, which implies brand trust variable has a low explanatory power on loyalty since only 10.2% of loyalty was explained by the trust variable, and the regression model is statistically significant at $F(1, 366) = 42.481$ and $p=0.001<0.05$. Subsequently, since the standardised coefficient results in Table 1 indicated a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($\beta= 0.322$, $p=0.001<0.05$), the study rejected H₀₁ and concluded that brand trust significantly affects loyalty.

4.2.2. H₀₂: Brand Communication Has No Significant Effect on Loyalty

The test results for Hypothesis Two (H₀₂) are presented in Table 2.

Model Summary			
		Statistic	Sign.
Adjusted R ²		0.095	
R ²		0.097	
F(1,366)		39.344	0.001
Coefficients			
	β	t	Sign.
Constant	1.990	9.686	0.000
BC	0.312	6.272	0.000
Criterion Variable: LOY			

Table 2: Regression Results for Brand Communication on Loyalty
Source: Field Data (2019)

The results shown in Table 2 indicate an adjusted R^2 of 0.095, implied that the brand communication variable has a low explanatory power on loyalty as only 9.5% of loyalty was explained by the brand communication variable, and the regression model was statistically significant at $F(1, 366) = 39.344$ and $p=0.001<0.05$. Thus, as the standardised coefficient results of brand communication and loyalty in Table 2 indicated a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($\beta = 0.312$, $p=0.001<0.05$), the study rejected H_{02} and concluded that brand communication significantly affects loyalty.

4.2.3.H₀₃: Emotional Attachment Has No Significant Effect on Loyalty

The test results for Hypothesis Three (H_{03}) are presented in Table 3.

Model Summary			
		Statistic	Sign.
Adjusted R^2		0.370	
R^2		0.372	
$F(1,366)$		216.365	0.001
Coefficients			
	β	t	Sign.
Constant	1.308	9.633	0.000
EA	0.610	14.709	0.000
Criterion Variable: LOY			

Table 3: Regression Results for Emotional Attachment on Loyalty
Source: Field Data (2019)

The results shown in Table 3 indicated an adjusted R^2 of 0.370, which implied that the emotional attachment variable has a moderate explanatory power on loyalty as only 37.0% of loyalty was explained by the emotional attachment variable and the regression model was statistically significant at $F(1, 366) = 216.365$ and $p=0.001<0.05$. Consequently, since the standardised coefficient results of emotional attachment and loyalty in Table 3 indicated a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($\beta = 0.610$, $p=0.001<0.05$), the study rejected H_{01} and concluded that emotional attachment significantly affects loyalty.

4.2.4. H₀₄: Combined Effect of Brand Relationship Has No Significant Influence on Loyalty

The test results for Hypothesis Five (H_{04}) are presented below in Table 4.

Model Summary			
		Statistic	Sign.
Adjusted R^2		0.308	
R^2		0.310	
$F(1,366)$		164.106	0.000
Coefficients			
	β	t	Sign.
Constant	0.740	3.719	0.000
BR	0.556	12.810	0.000
Criterion Variable: LOY			

Table 4: Regression Results for Brand Relationship on Loyalty
Source: Field Data (2019)

The results shown in table 4 indicate an adjusted R^2 of 0.308 implied that the brand relationship variable has a moderate explanatory power on loyalty since only 30.8% of loyalty was explained by the brand relationship variable and the regression model as statistically significant at $F(1, 366) = 164.106$ and $p=0.001<0.05$. Therefore, since the standardised coefficient results of brand relationship and loyalty in Table 4 indicated a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($\beta = 0.556$, $p=0.000<0.05$) the study rejected H_{01} and concluded that brand relationship significantly influences loyalty.

4.2.5. H₀₅: Customer Satisfaction Has No Significant Mediating Effect on the Relationship between Brand Relationship and Loyalty

This study used the Baron and Kenny (1986) four conditions to establish mediation as per Hypothesis Five (H_{05}). The four conditions are:

- The independent variable must be shown to affects the mediator.
- The dependent variable must be shown to affect the independent variable.
- The mediator must have an effect on the dependent variable.
- The independent variable and the mediator must be shown to affect the dependent variable.

Condition one (1): The regression results for condition one are as shown in Table 5

Model Summary			
		Statistic	Sign.
Adjusted R ²		0.143	
R ²		0.145	
F (1,366)		62.076	0.000
Coefficients			
	β	t	Sign.
Constant	1.683	7.494	0.000
BR	0.381	7.879	0.000
Dependent Variable: SAT			

Table 5: Regression Results for Brand Relationship on Satisfaction

Source: Field Data (2019)

The results shown in table 5 indicate an adjusted R² of 0.143 implied that the brand relationship variable has a low explanatory power on satisfaction since only 14.3% of satisfaction was explained by the brand relationship variable indicating that brand relationship contributes significantly to changes in satisfaction. Hence, since the standardised coefficient results of brand relationship and satisfaction in Table 5 indicated a statistically significant positive linear relationship ($\beta = 0.381$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$), the study, concluded that brand relationship significantly affects satisfaction.

Condition two (2): As for condition two, upon performance of regression of brand relationship on loyalty, the results produced were similar to the results for hypothesis four discussed in the preceding section 4.2.4 above, and the standardised coefficient results showed that brand relationship significantly affects loyalty ($\beta = 0.556$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$).

Condition three (3): The regression results for condition three are as shown in Table 6.

Model Summary			
		Statistic	Sign.
Adjusted R ²		0.204	
R ²		0.206	
F (1,366)		95.217	0.000
Coefficients			
	β	t	Sign.
Constant	1.723	10.704	0.000
SAT	0.454	9.758	0.000
Dependent Variable: LOY			

Table 6: Regression Results for Satisfaction on Loyalty

Source: Field Data (2019)

The results shown in table 6 indicated an adjusted R² of 0.204 implying that the satisfaction variable has a moderate explanatory power on loyalty since only 20.4% of loyalty was explained by the satisfaction variable indicating that satisfaction contributes significantly to changes in loyalty. Thus, since the standardised coefficient results of satisfaction and loyalty in Table 6 indicated a statistically significant positive relationship ($\beta = 0.454$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$), the study concluded that brand relationship significantly affects satisfaction.

Condition four (4): The regression results for the fourth and final condition are presented in Table 7.

Model Summary			
		Statistic	Sign.
Adjusted R ²		0.375	
R ²		0.378	
F (2,365)		111.071	0.000
Coefficients			
	β	t	Sign.
Constant	0.269	1.326	0.186
BR	0.448	10.046	0.001
SAT	0.284	6.354	0.001
Dependent Variable: LOY			

Table 7: Regression Results for Brand Relationship and Satisfaction on Loyalty

Source: Field Data (2019)

The results shown in table 7 indicated an adjusted R² of 0.375 implying that brand relationship and satisfaction variables have a moderate explanatory power on loyalty since only 37.5% of loyalty was explained by brand relationship and satisfaction. Thus, since the standardised coefficients results of brand relationship and satisfaction on loyalty were statistically significant (brand relationship $\beta = 0.448$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$; satisfaction $\beta = 0.284$, $p = 0.001 < 0.05$) the study concluded that brand relationship and satisfaction have significant effect on loyalty.

Based on the above regressions in conditions 1, 2, 3 and 4, mediation was established as all conditions were met per Baron & Kenny (1986) and therefore, the study rejected H_{05} and concluded that satisfaction has a mediating effect on loyalty. The decision to reject H_{05} is also evidenced by the results in table 4 and table 7 which showed that the effect of brand relationship on loyalty reduced from $\beta = 0.556$ ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$) in condition 1, to $\beta = 0.448$ ($p = 0.001 < 0.05$) in condition 4 when satisfaction was introduced. Thus, the study concluded that satisfaction had a partial mediating effect on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty.

4.3. Discussion

This study had the broad objective of determining the effect of brand relationship on loyalty and the specific objective of ascertaining the mediating effect of satisfaction on this relationship. To achieve the broad objective the effect of the individual elements of brand relationship was first determined and then their composite effect was ascertained. The findings revealed that: Brand trust affects loyalty, consistent with studies by Paulssen, Roulet and Wilke (2014), Veloutsou (2015), Menidjel, Benhabib and Bilgihan (2017) who determined that brand trust is a predictor of loyalty and is essential in the development of loyalty, as it minimises perceived risks and fears of future consumer-brand transactions thus influencing the consumer's repurchase intentions: Brand communication affects loyalty, concurring with study findings of Odoom (2016), Hanninen and Karjaluo (2017) that brand communication increases loyalty to a brand through direct or indirect persuasion of consumers, but contradict the findings of Etemardifard, Kafashpoor and Zendehdel (2013) and Ngatno (2017) who determined that brand communication indirectly influences loyalty through trust and customer satisfaction thus explaining the low explanatory power of brand communication on loyalty: Emotional attachment affects loyalty, in agreement with studies by Levy and Hino (2016), Theng So, Parsons and Yap (2013) and Peng, Chen and Wen (2014) who established that emotional attachment positively drives consumers' loyalty to a brand by nurturing positive perceptions towards their lifelong commitment to the brand. Thus the study findings showed that brand relationship significantly affects loyalty. On the specific objective of satisfaction as a mediator, the study's findings revealed that satisfaction had a partial mediating effect on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty, which is consistent with research by Kaura, Prasad and Sharma (2015), Bapat (2017), Saleem, Zahra and Yaseen (2017) and Solimun and Fernandes (2018) who confirmed that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between its antecedents and loyalty and as a mediator it delivers a higher value to the customer which results in increased loyalty towards a brand, by driving word of mouth recommendations, preference and repurchase intention.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1. Conclusions

The researcher first sought to determine the influence of brand relationship on loyalty and then ascertain the mediating effect of satisfaction on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty among household consumers of laundry detergents. On the basis of the study findings, the study concluded that brand relationship has a significant positive influence on loyalty and that customer satisfaction had a partial mediating effect on the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty.

5.2. Theoretical Contribution, Managerial Implications and Suggestions for Future Research

Theoretically, the study has empirically confirmed an integrated brand relationship and loyalty model and created an understanding of the role of brand relationship on loyalty, as well as added to the discourse on loyalty by showing that customer satisfaction mediates the relationship between brand relationship and loyalty. Such an enquiry is essential as the role of customer satisfaction differs from one business scenario and context to another, thus occasioning a rethink on how managers allocate marketing resources in minimising switching behaviour among its customers, in addition to focussing on developing effective customer retention strategies. Also, this study contributes to the understanding of loyalty by examining both emotional and cognitive drivers of loyalty, as most studies on loyalty have concentrated on cognitive antecedents of loyalty.

Based on the findings of this study on satisfaction, the study recommends that managers in the detergent industry should invest in satisfaction programs that are aimed at producing detergents worth the price, meeting consumer expectations and ensuring positive overall brand experiences from the point of purchase, to unboxing and eventual use. This is because the study findings indicate that satisfaction affects the brand relationship-loyalty link and thus it can serve as a potent strategy in building long-term brand-consumer relations. Further, to positively increase the likelihood of future positive repurchase, detergent brands should provide consumers with perceived extra value with regards to its competitive brand set.

Finally, this study was limited to research on detergents as the product of interest and the use of brand trust, brand communication and emotional attachment as the key brand relationship variables. Therefore, this study suggests that future research can be conducted on other fast moving consumer goods such as personal use electronic goods and personal hygiene or enhancement products, in addition to future studies in different contexts, such as other counties in Kenya and in other countries, so as to compare the findings from the different contexts. Further, future research can include other brand relationship variables such as brand love, commitment, involvement and brand identification to get a better understanding of the connection between brand relationship and loyalty, as well as the use of other factors such as brand image, perceived risk, self-identity and self-concept as mediators.

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