

International Journal of Marketing Strategies (IJMS)



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Article history

Submitted 04.04.2024 Revised Version Received 06.05.2024 Accepted 14.06.2024

Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to assess the role of emotional branding in consumer decision making in Brazil.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: The study found that emotions heavily influence how consumers perceive brands and make purchasing decisions. Brands that successfully establish emotional connections with their target audience tend to enjoy higher levels of customer loyalty, repeat purchases, and positive word-of-mouth recommendations. Emotions such as joy, excitement, trust, and belonging are often associated with successful emotional branding strategies. These emotions not only

create memorable brand experiences but also contribute to building strong relationships between consumers and brands. Moreover, emotional branding can differentiate a brand from its competitors in a crowded marketplace, leading to increased brand preference and market share. Overall, understanding and leveraging emotional branding can significantly impact consumer behavior and drive business success.

Implications to Theory, Practice and Policy: Cognitive appraisal theory, self-concept theory and affective disposition theory may be used to anchor future studies on assessing the role of emotional branding in consumer decision making in Brazil. Businesses are encouraged to implement personalized emotional branding strategies that are tailored to different consumer segments. There is a need to advocate for ethical and responsible emotional branding practices within the industry.

Keywords: *Emotional Branding, Consumer, Decision Making*

INTRODUCTION

Emotions play a significant role in consumer decision-making processes, impacting everything from purchase decisions to brand loyalty. Research by Luce, Payne and Bettman (2015) highlights that emotions can influence consumers' evaluations and preferences during decision-making. For instance, positive emotions such as happiness or excitement can lead to higher willingness to pay and increased brand loyalty. In developed economies like the USA, this is evident in the tech industry, where Apple leverages emotional branding to create a strong connection with its customers. Apple's marketing strategies, focusing on the emotional benefits of its products, have contributed to its loyal customer base and high brand value over the years.

Similarly, in Japan, emotions play a crucial role in consumer decisions. A study by Chang and Wu (2019) emphasizes the impact of emotional responses on purchase intentions. For example, in the automotive sector, companies like Toyota have integrated emotional appeal into their advertising campaigns, emphasizing safety, reliability, and family values. This emotional connection has contributed significantly to Toyota's success in maintaining a dominant position in the Japanese automobile market while fostering customer loyalty and repeat purchases.

In China, emotions also play a crucial role in consumer decision-making. Studies by Zhang and Kim (2021) emphasize the influence of emotional responses on luxury brand consumption. Luxury brands like Louis Vuitton and Gucci strategically use emotional branding to appeal to Chinese consumers' desires for status, prestige, and self-expression. This emotional connection fosters brand loyalty and drives consumer decisions in China's rapidly growing luxury goods market.

In Brazil, research by Silva and da Silva (2019) highlights the impact of emotions on consumer behavior, particularly in the food and beverage industry. Companies like Ambev, a major player in the Brazilian beverage market, have successfully utilized emotional branding strategies to connect with consumers. Through emotional appeals focusing on social connections, celebrations and joy, Ambev has strengthened brand loyalty and increased market share in Brazil.

In Germany, emotions significantly impact consumer behavior, particularly in the automotive industry. Research by Schütte, Butollo and Lins (2019) highlights the role of emotional branding in driving customer preferences and brand loyalty. Companies like BMW and Mercedes-Benz use emotional appeals related to luxury, innovation, and driving experience to connect with German consumers, leading to strong brand loyalty and market share in the automotive sector.

In South Korea, emotional factors play a crucial role in consumer decision-making, especially in the beauty and skincare industry. Studies by Kim and Choi (2022) emphasize the impact of emotional branding on purchase intentions and brand loyalty. Korean beauty brands such as Innisfree and Etude House leverage emotional appeals related to natural ingredients, self-care, and beauty trends to resonate with South Korean consumers, driving repeat purchases and brand advocacy.

Moving on to developing economies, emotions continue to shape consumer behavior and decision-making processes. In countries like India, research by Mishra and Mishra (2020) indicates that emotional factors strongly influence consumer choices, especially in the fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) sector. Brands like Hindustan Unilever (HUL) strategically use emotions in their marketing campaigns to establish strong connections with consumers, leading to increased brand preference and market share. This emotional branding approach has been instrumental in HUL's success in the competitive Indian market.

In Mexico, emotions play a crucial role in shaping consumer preferences and behaviors. Research by Lopez-Moreno, Cervantes and Ruiz (2018) highlights the impact of emotional branding on consumer choices, particularly in the hospitality industry. Companies like Grupo Posadas, through their emotional branding strategies focusing on comfort, relaxation, and memorable experiences, have successfully attracted and retained customers in Mexico's competitive hospitality market.

In the Middle East, emotional factors also significantly influence consumer decisions. Studies by El-Banna and Fayed (2022) emphasize the role of emotional branding in the retail sector, particularly in countries like the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Retail giants like Majid Al Futtaim use emotional appeals related to luxury, exclusivity, and personalized experiences to connect with consumers in the UAE, leading to increased brand loyalty and customer satisfaction.

In Australia, emotional branding is a key driver of consumer engagement and loyalty. Research by Cheah, Phau and Poon (2020) highlights the impact of emotional factors on consumer perceptions and purchase intentions, especially in the fashion industry. Brands like Cotton On leverage emotional appeals related to individuality, affordability, and style trends to resonate with Australian consumers, driving repeat purchases and brand advocacy.

In South Africa, emotional factors significantly influence consumer decision-making processes. Research by Ngqangweni and Fatoki (2020) emphasizes the impact of emotional branding on consumer preferences, particularly in the fashion and beauty industries. Companies like Woolworths South Africa strategically use emotional appeals related to sustainability, ethical practices, and lifestyle aspirations to resonate with South African consumers, leading to increased brand loyalty and market share.

In Nigeria's banking sector, emotions play a crucial role in shaping customer perceptions and behaviors. Studies by Ogunnaike, Ajayi and Adewale (2021) highlighted the importance of emotional connections in building trust and loyalty among banking customers. Banks like Access Bank Nigeria leverage emotional branding through campaigns that emphasize financial empowerment, security, and convenience, contributing to enhanced customer loyalty and retention in the competitive banking industry.

In Sub-Saharan economies, such as Nigeria, research by Okpara and Wynn (2018) emphasizes the impact of emotions on consumer behavior. Emotional appeals are widely used by companies operating in sectors like telecommunications and banking. For instance, MTN Nigeria's marketing campaigns often evoke emotions such as happiness, togetherness, and success, resonating with consumers and influencing their purchase decisions. This emotional connection has helped MTN maintain its market leadership and customer loyalty in Nigeria's telecommunications industry.

In Sub-Saharan economies, such as Kenya, emotions continue to shape consumer behavior. Research by Kiprono, Jepkorir and Chemwei (2018) highlights the significance of emotional factors in influencing purchasing decisions, especially in the retail sector. Companies like Nakumatt Holdings, through their marketing strategies focusing on family values, convenience, and trust, have built strong emotional connections with Kenyan consumers, leading to brand loyalty and competitive advantage in the retail industry.

Emotional branding strategies, such as storytelling, emotional appeals in advertising, experiential marketing, and cause-related marketing, have a profound impact on influencing consumer decision-making processes, particularly in purchase decisions and brand loyalty. Storytelling as an emotional branding strategy involves creating narratives that resonate with consumers' emotions,

beliefs, and values, fostering a deeper connection with the brand (Biehl-Missal, 2018). Through compelling stories, brands can evoke emotions such as nostalgia, excitement, or empathy, influencing consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards the brand, which in turn can lead to increased purchase intentions and loyalty.

Emotional appeals in advertising are another effective strategy that directly targets consumers' emotions to drive desired behaviors (Labrecque, vor dem Esche, Mathwick, Novak & Hofacker, 2019). By using emotional triggers such as humor, fear, or joy in advertisements, brands can create memorable experiences that leave a lasting impact on consumers, shaping their decision-making processes. For instance, advertisements that evoke positive emotions like happiness or inspiration can enhance brand likability and create positive associations, ultimately leading to higher brand loyalty and repeat purchases. Overall, emotional branding strategies play a crucial role in tapping into consumers' emotional responses, influencing their perceptions, preferences, and behaviors towards brands.

Problem Statement

Emotional branding has become increasingly prevalent in contemporary marketing strategies, aiming to create strong emotional connections between consumers and brands. However, the specific mechanisms through which emotional branding influences consumer decision-making processes remain a topic of ongoing research and debate. While studies have explored the impact of emotional appeals in advertising and storytelling on consumer behavior, there is a need for a deeper understanding of how these emotional branding strategies affect various aspects of consumer decision making, including purchase intentions, brand loyalty, and post-purchase behavior (Kim & Choi, 2022; Labrecque, vor dem Esche, Mathwick, Novak & Hofacker, 2019). Furthermore, the role of different emotions, such as joy, fear, nostalgia, or empathy, in shaping consumer perceptions and preferences towards brands requires further investigation (Biehl-Missal, 2018).

Moreover, with the rise of digital marketing and social media platforms, the dynamics of emotional branding have evolved, presenting new challenges and opportunities for marketers (Labrecque, vor dem Esche, Mathwick, Novak & Hofacker, 2019). Understanding how emotional branding strategies operate in the digital landscape and their impact on consumer decision making in online environments is crucial for businesses seeking to leverage emotional connections effectively. Additionally, cultural differences in emotional responses and the effectiveness of emotional branding across diverse consumer segments and markets necessitate comprehensive research to develop targeted and culturally sensitive emotional branding strategies (Ngqangweni & Fatoki, 2020; Schütte, Butollo & Lins, 2019). Addressing these gaps in the literature can provide valuable insights for marketers to optimize emotional branding strategies and enhance consumer engagement and loyalty.

Theoretical Framework

Cognitive Appraisal Theory

Originated by Richard Lazarus and Susan Folkman, Cognitive Appraisal Theory focuses on how individuals interpret and appraise events or stimuli in their environment, leading to emotional responses (Lazarus & Folkman, 2018). In the context of emotional branding in consumer decision making, this theory is relevant as it helps understand how consumers appraise emotional stimuli presented by brands. For instance, positive emotions elicited through emotional branding strategies

like storytelling or emotional appeals in advertising can lead to favorable appraisals, influencing consumers' purchase intentions and brand loyalty.

Self-Concept Theory

Originated by William James and expanded by Carl Rogers, Self-Concept Theory posits that individuals' perceptions of themselves influence their behaviors and interactions with the external environment (Rogers, 2019). In the context of emotional branding, this theory is pertinent as it helps examine how emotional branding strategies shape consumers' self-concepts and identities. Emotional branding can contribute to the formation of a positive self-image associated with a brand, leading to increased brand identification, loyalty, and preference in consumer decision making.

Affective Disposition Theory

Originated by Peter Salovey and John Mayer, Affective Disposition Theory focuses on individuals' abilities to perceive, understand, and regulate emotions, influencing their decision-making processes (Salovey & Mayer, 2018). In the context of emotional branding, this theory is relevant as it sheds light on how consumers' emotional dispositions, such as mood states or emotional intelligence, interact with emotional branding strategies to impact their decision-making behaviors. Understanding consumers' affective dispositions can help marketers tailor emotional branding efforts to resonate effectively with different consumer segments.

Empirical Review

Schütte, Butollo & Lins (2019) delved into the impact of emotional branding on consumer decision-making within the automotive sector. The study aimed to understand how emotional appeals affect perceptions and purchase decisions among car buyers. Using a mixed-methods approach involving surveys and interviews, the researchers uncovered significant insights. They found that emotional branding plays a pivotal role in shaping consumers' perceptions of automotive brands. Emotional appeals related to safety, prestige, and lifestyle factors were identified as key drivers influencing purchase intentions and brand loyalty. The study's recommendations centered on the integration of emotional branding strategies into automotive marketing efforts. By fostering stronger emotional connections with consumers, automotive companies could enhance brand loyalty and ultimately drive business success. This research contributes valuable insights into the role of emotions in consumer decision-making within the automotive industry, highlighting the importance of emotional branding strategies.

Cheah, Phau & Poon (2020) explored the role of emotional appeals in advertising on consumer decision-making within the fashion industry. Through comprehensive content analysis of fashion advertisements and consumer surveys, the study aimed to examine how emotional branding strategies impact consumer perceptions and purchase intentions in the realm of fashion. The findings revealed that emotional appeals, particularly those related to self-expression, aspiration, and social identity, exert a significant positive influence on consumer perceptions and intentions to purchase fashion products. The study recommended that fashion brands strategically leverage emotional branding strategies to create authentic and relatable emotional connections with consumers. Such efforts would lead to increased brand engagement and loyalty, contributing to the long-term success of fashion brands in a competitive market landscape.

Lopez-Moreno, Cervantes & Ruiz (2018) investigated the effectiveness of storytelling in emotional branding within the hospitality sector. Using a combination of case studies of hotels and guest surveys, the research aimed to assess how storytelling influences guest engagement and brand loyalty. The comprehensive analysis revealed that storytelling plays a crucial role in enhancing guest engagement and emotional attachment to hotel brands. As a result, hotels experience increased repeat bookings and heightened customer loyalty. The study's recommendations emphasized the importance of hotels investing in compelling storytelling narratives. By creating memorable and meaningful connections with guests, hotels can elevate customer loyalty, leading to improved revenue generation and sustained business growth. This research underscores the power of storytelling as a potent tool in emotional branding strategies within the hospitality industry.

Silva, da Silva & Gonçalves (2021) delved into the influence of emotional branding on consumer purchase decisions within the e-commerce sector. Through rigorous online consumer behavior analysis and surveys, the study aimed to gain insights into how emotional appeals impact online shoppers' decisions and brand loyalty. The extensive research revealed that emotional branding elements such as trust, convenience, and personalization significantly influence online shoppers' purchase decisions and brand loyalty. The study's recommendations highlighted the importance of e-commerce companies prioritizing emotional branding initiatives. By fostering trust, simplifying the shopping experience, and personalizing interactions, e-commerce businesses can enhance customer satisfaction and retention, ultimately leading to improved business performance and competitiveness in the e-commerce market.

Silva & da Silva (2019) conducted a comprehensive study on the role of emotional branding within the food and beverage industry. Utilizing a combination of consumer surveys and content analysis of advertisements, the research aimed to assess how emotional appeals influence consumer perceptions and purchase intentions in this sector. The insightful findings indicated that emotional appeals related to sensory experiences and pleasure exert a positive impact on consumer perceptions and intentions to purchase food and beverage products. The study's recommendations underscored the importance of brands leveraging emotional branding strategies to create engaging advertisements and enhance consumer loyalty. By tapping into consumers' emotions, brands can establish stronger connections and foster long-term relationships with their target audience within the food and beverage industry.

Okpara & Wynn (2018) delved into the role of emotional branding in influencing consumer behavior within the telecommunications industry. Through extensive consumer surveys and data analysis, the study aimed to understand how emotional appeals impact consumers' choice of telecommunication services and brand loyalty. The comprehensive research revealed that emotional branding, particularly appeals related to connectivity, empowerment, and lifestyle enhancement, significantly influences consumer decision-making and brand loyalty within the telecommunications sector. The study's recommendations emphasized the importance of telecommunication companies focusing on emotional branding strategies. By building stronger emotional connections with customers and increasing brand advocacy, telecommunication companies can enhance their market position and drive sustained business growth.

Kiprono, Jepkorir & Chemwei (2018) investigated the impact of emotional branding on consumer behavior within the retail sector. Using a longitudinal study approach that included surveys and brand perception assessments, the research aimed to assess the effectiveness of emotional branding

strategies in retail settings. The comprehensive findings indicated that emotional branding initiatives, such as experiential marketing and personalized interactions, significantly influence consumer engagement, loyalty, and repeat purchases within the retail sector. The study's recommendations stressed the importance of retailers prioritizing emotional branding strategies. By creating immersive experiences, fostering emotional connections, and enhancing customer loyalty, retailers can drive sustained business success and competitiveness in the retail landscape.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

RESULTS

Conceptual Gap: While Schütte, Butollo & Lins (2019) provided valuable insights into the impact of emotional branding on consumer decision-making in the automotive industry, there is a conceptual gap regarding the specific emotions that drive consumer behavior. Future research could delve deeper into the emotional nuances such as fear of safety, desire for status, or aspiration for a certain lifestyle that influence purchase decisions. Understanding the specific emotional triggers can help automotive companies tailor their emotional branding strategies more effectively.

Contextual Gap: Cheah, Phau & Poon (2020) explored emotional appeals in fashion advertising and their impact on consumer decision-making. However, there is a contextual gap in understanding how cultural differences influence emotional responses in fashion branding. Future studies could compare emotional branding strategies across different cultural contexts to identify how cultural nuances shape consumer perceptions and purchase intentions in the fashion industry.

Geographical Gap: While Lopez-Moreno, Cervantes & Ruiz (2018) focused on storytelling in emotional branding within the hospitality sector, there is a geographical gap in understanding how these strategies vary across different regions or countries. Research that compares emotional branding practices in hospitality across diverse geographical locations can provide valuable insights into the cultural factors influencing guest engagement and brand loyalty.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

Emotional branding plays a significant role in consumer decision-making processes, influencing perceptions, preferences, and ultimately, purchase behaviors. Through emotional appeals in advertising, storytelling, and other branding strategies, businesses create meaningful connections with consumers, tapping into their emotions to drive engagement and loyalty. Research across various industries, including automotive, fashion, hospitality, e-commerce, food and beverage, telecommunications, and retail, consistently demonstrates the impact of emotional branding on shaping consumer choices and fostering brand relationships.

Understanding the role of emotions in consumer decision-making is crucial for businesses aiming to create lasting connections with their target audience. Emotional branding not only influences initial purchase decisions but also contributes to post-purchase behaviors such as brand advocacy and repeat purchases. However, there are ongoing research gaps that require further exploration,

including cultural influences on emotional responses, the role of ethical and sustainability appeals in emotional branding, and the impact of emotional intelligence on consumer receptivity to branding strategies.

In conclusion, emotional branding serves as a powerful tool for businesses to differentiate themselves, build strong brand identities, and forge lasting emotional connections with consumers. By aligning emotional branding strategies with consumer preferences and values, businesses can enhance customer loyalty, drive sales, and achieve sustainable business growth in competitive markets.

Recommendations

The following are the recommendations based on theory, practice and policy:

Theory

Further research is recommended to deepen the understanding of the specific emotional triggers that influence consumer decision-making processes across various industries and cultural contexts. This research should delve into the nuanced emotions such as fear, joy, trust, and empathy and their impact on consumer perceptions and behaviors. By exploring these emotional dimensions comprehensively, researchers can contribute to the advancement of theoretical frameworks in consumer psychology and decision-making models. Understanding the intricate interplay between emotions and cognitive processes will provide valuable insights into how emotions shape consumer preferences, purchase intentions, and brand loyalty.

Practice

Businesses are encouraged to implement personalized emotional branding strategies that are tailored to different consumer segments. Leveraging data analytics and consumer insights, companies can identify the emotional drivers that resonate most with their target audiences. This involves creating targeted emotional appeals in marketing campaigns, brand messaging, and customer experiences. By aligning emotional branding strategies with consumer preferences and values, businesses can foster stronger emotional connections with customers, leading to increased brand engagement, loyalty, and ultimately, higher sales and profitability.

Policy

There is a need to advocate for ethical and responsible emotional branding practices within the industry. This includes promoting transparency, authenticity, and integrity in emotional appeals used in advertising and marketing communications. Collaborating with regulatory bodies and industry associations, businesses can work towards developing guidelines and standards for ethical emotional branding. These policies should prioritize consumer well-being, ensure truthfulness in emotional messaging, and uphold ethical marketing practices. By promoting responsible emotional branding, businesses can contribute to a healthier and more trustworthy marketplace, building long-term trust and credibility with consumers.

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