

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA

**THE IMPACT OF MARKETING ACTIVITIES ON REPURCHASE INTENTION AND
THE MEDIATION ROLE OF BRAND EQUITY IN THE GHANAIAN MOBILE
TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY**

BY

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**THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING AND
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DEGREE**

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DECLARATION

I do hereby declare that this work is the result of my own research and has not been presented by anyone for any academic award in this or any other university. All references used in my work have been fully acknowledged.

I bear sole responsibility for any penalty that will be associated with this work

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CERTIFICATION

I hereby certify that this thesis was supervised in accordance with procedures laid down by the university.

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DEDICATION

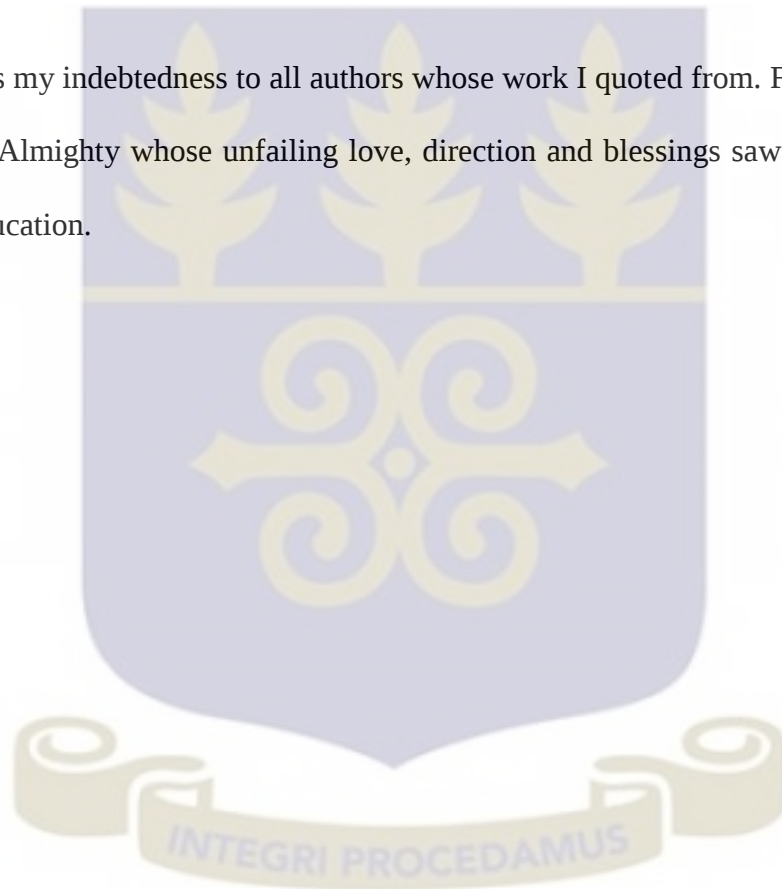
To my family for their guidance, love and support.



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ABSTRACT

Over the years, the use of marketing activities has been seen as very essential to firms and has had a lot of attention not only from academic scholars but also industry experts as most firms seek to use it as a means of gaining brand equity and to get consumers to buy more of their products. This study therefore sought to find out the effects of marketing activities in gaining brand equity and in turn leading to a repurchase decision. Based on this, the study objectives were to determine the effects of marketing activities on customer based brand equity in the Ghanaian mobile phone industry and its effect on customers' repurchase decision. As it is noted that marketing activities (product; price; distribution; and promotion) drive brand equity, the study conceptualises that it has an effect on customer based brand equity (perceived quality; brand awareness; brand image; brand loyalty; differentiation; relevance) and its effect on repurchase intention of consumers. The study adopted a positivist approach using a survey strategy. The quantitative approach was employed with the use of a questionnaire for data collection. Data was collected from 340 respondents who were selected on a purposive basis on the University of Ghana campus. Data was coded using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS V.20). Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) was used in analysing the data through a two-stage approach where the measurement and structural models were assessed. Findings from the study showed that, although marketing activities could lead to customer's intention to re-buy, it is best when marketing activities achieves brand equity. Marketing activities must therefore lead to brand equity in order for customers to have repurchase intents. Therefore, firms can use their marketing activities to leverage brand equity in order to best influence consumers' repurchase intentions. The study recommends the framework to be further tested in other industries as well as using other methodologies to further authenticate its applicability.

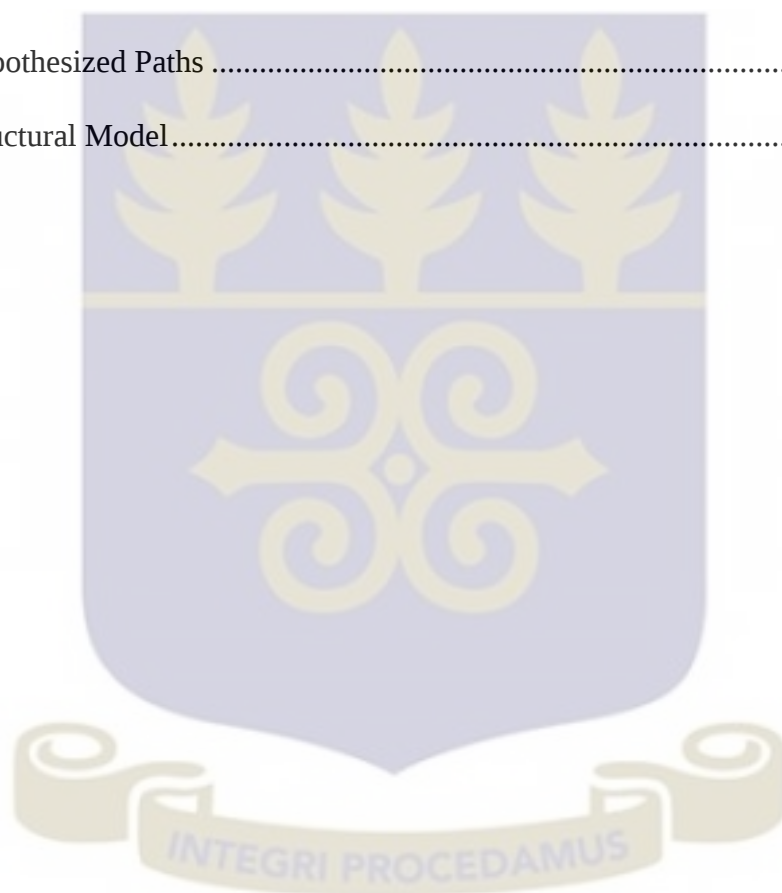
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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

The continuous growth in technology and its sophistication especially in the mobile phone industry (Aker & Mbiti, 2010) has pushed many firms in the industry to build strong brands utilizing marketing activities to the maximum in order to influence consumers' repurchase intentions. An increasing number of high-technology companies have therefore undertaken marketing activities (e.g. "Built for Africa Initiative") aimed at brand-building under the premise that these initiatives can create an asset that generates long-term profits for them (Aaker & Jacobson, 2001). Marketing activities are the marketing choices and conditions within the market such as advertising, pricing, and distribution (Keller, 2013). Scholars have argued that one major outcome of marketing activities is that it drives brand equity and Customer Lifetime Value (Stahl, Heitmann, Lehmann & Neslin, 2012). Studies such as Ailawadi, Lehmann, and Neslin (2003) have shown the link between marketing activities such as advertising and brand equity. As such, a strongly refined brand offers the firm a sustainable competitive advantage that drives loyalty (Jing, Parsons & Sheau-Fen, 2013), which could lead to possible consumer repurchases.

Furthermore, there has been much discussion about the effects of branding and building brand equity. Brands, as posited by Aaker (1996), are pivotal in generating and sustaining a competitive advantage, and not only help in minimizing quality gaps but also serves as a source of strong and favourable differentiator for a firms' products or services. Scholars have argued that one major outcome of branding efforts is the equity that it creates in the market place (Aaker, 1996; Keller, 2009; Hatch & Schultz, 2003; Jing, Parsons & Sheau-Fen, 2013).

Brand equity has been defined as “outcomes that accrue to a product with its brand name compared with those that would accrue if the same product did not have the brand name” (Ailawadi, Lehmann & Neslin, 2003, p. 1) indicating the benefits a product attains as a result of the influence of its brand name compared to other competing brands. A strong brand, according to Harris and de Chernatony (2001) and Hatch and Schultz, (2003) offers intangible values that are difficult for competitors to duplicate. Kim (1990: 65) contends that brands have no tangible properties, and ‘it is a mental translation, an abstraction of that object or service. It exists solely as a “mental construct”, a “typification”, an “idea” in the minds of those who behold it’. This definition holds particular relevance when examining the concept of the brand outside of the traditional marketing framework. A brand is a form of physical stimulus harnessed by sellers to denote ownership, offer a means of differentiating products and provide a guarantee of quality. However, Keller and Lehmann (2003) delineate three approaches for assessing brand equity: customer mind-set (e.g., Aaker 1996; Keller 2009); product market (e.g., Park & Srinivisan, 1994); and financial market (e.g., Mahajan, Rao & Srivastava, 1994).

Keller (1993) thus defines brand equity as marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand – for example, when certain outcomes result from the marketing of a product or service because of its brand name, which would not occur if the same product or service did not have that name. An increasing number of high-technology companies have therefore undertaken brand-building initiatives under the premise that these initiatives can create an asset that generates long-term profits for them (Aaker & Jacobson, 2001). Brand equity therefore seems to be an important element in the product and service markets today because it adds value to both the firm as well as to the customers. As Aaker (1991) suggests, the value it can provide consumers

with include easier processing of information, confidence in the purchase decision and usage satisfaction.

1.2 Problem statement

Past studies have indicated that marketing activities such as advertising, distribution, and sponsorship, are the driving force behind brand equity (Stahl, Heitmann, Lehmann & Neslin, 2012; Keller, 2007; Ailawadi, Lehmann & Neslin 2003), which creates awareness, link associations to brand image and favourable brand feelings (Keller, 2009). Several scholars have also exhibited the effects of marketing activities on brand equity using different frameworks (Stahl et al., 2012; Slotegraaf & Pauwels, 2008; Kadabayi, Agun, & Cipli, 2007; Sharma, Rao & Popli, 2013; Macdonald, Sherlock & Hogan, 2015; Srivastava 2009; Oliveira-Castro, Foxall, James, Pohl, Dias & Chang, 2008; Rajh, 2005) in developed economies. Little however seems to have been done in the African context (Asamoah, 2014). Literature indicates a relationship between brand equity and repurchase intentions (Bojei & Hoo, 2012; Huang & Xiong, 2009; Chen & Chang, 2008), but yet it seems that the vast majority of brand equity studies have failed to examine this relationship. Other studies have similarly highlighted the effects and significance of marketing activities on profitability, though causalities remain untapped (Stahl et al., 2012; Blattberg, Malthouse, & Neslin, 2009). Further studies are therefore needed to help identify the link between marketing activities and repurchase intentions. Of the several studies conducted, fairly little or no studies directly examine the effects of marketing activities on customer repurchase intention from the customers' perspective. This is quite surprising given that there is a notion that, because marketing activities have an effect on brand equity, it can in one way or the other have an effect on customer repurchase intention and possibly increase a firm's profitability. This study therefore seeks to investigate the impact of marketing activities

on repurchase intention with brand equity as a mediator in the Ghanaian mobile telecommunications industry.

1.3 Research objectives

- a) To determine the relationship between marketing activities and customer based brand equity (CBBE) in the mobile phone industry in Ghana;
- b) To examine the effects of CBBE on repurchase intention in Ghana; and
- c) To determine the relationship between marketing activities, CBBE and repurchase intention.

1.4 Research questions

- a) What is the relationship between marketing activities in terms of product, price, place and promotion and CBBE in the mobile phone industry in Ghana?
- b) Do the activities of CBBE have a negative or positive effect on consumers' repurchase intention?
- c) What is the relationship between marketing activities, CBBE and repurchase intention?

1.5 Significance of the study

It is the aim of this study to come out with findings that would help shape the understanding of marketing activities, brand equity and customer repurchase intention. The study immensely contributes to academia and serves as a basis for further studies as it seeks to find answers to unanswered questions of academics and practitioners on marketing activities, brand equity and repurchase intentions. Undoubtedly, the findings of this work significantly contributes to the existing literature on marketing activities, customer based brand equity and customer repurchase decision. Findings and recommendations are also of importance to managers of

mobile phone firms on how they can effectively use marketing activities to create equity for their brands and ensure repeat purchases.

1.6 Scope of the study

The study's scope covered issues relating to marketing activities, customer based brand equity and its effects on customer repurchase decision. Data was collected from users of mobile phone brands who carry out marketing activities in the Ghanaian market.

1.7 Organisation of the study

The organization of the study is as follows:

Chapter One: this chapter comprises research background; research problem; research purpose; objectives of the study; research questions; research significance; scope and limitation of the work; and the chapter synopsis/organization of research. Chapter Two: this chapter contains a review of the relevant literature on branding, brand equity and consumer behaviour and repurchase intension. Chapter Three deals with the study context, whilst the methodological approaches which were employed, source and study population, sampling techniques and sample size, data collection instrument and method, data processing and mode of analysis was presented in Chapter Four. Chapter Five comprises of data analysis and presentation of results and the sixth chapter contains the summary, conclusions and recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter delves into the review of relevant existing literature in relation to the various concepts and theories that underpins the research. The chapter discusses branding and its importance, effects of brand equity and branding on repurchase intention in the mobile phone industry. Various discussions held in this context were used in the formation of a conceptual framework.

2.1 The Branding Concept

The American Marketing Association (AMA) defines a brand as “a name, sign, symbol or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods and services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of the competition”. Another research scholar, Kafferer (2004), describes a brand as a set of mental associations held by the customer, which add to the perceived value of a product or service. These associations should be unique (exclusive), strong (salient), and positive (desirable). Aaker (1991) notes that brand is used to differentiate ones product from that of competitors. To the customer, the brand helps them to answer, “what’s different?” among the competing products in the same category.

The likes of Fournier (1998) contends that brands may possibly be perceived as a relationship partner, and a way to legitimize the brand-as-partner view is to highlight ways in which brands are custom-made, vibrant and improved. Southgate (1994) also posit that a brand is not only a name, logo or graphic device, but also a set of intangible values in the mind of consumers,

while Feldwick (1996) sees a brand as a distinguishable symbol of origin and an assurance of performance. According to Schilhanek (2008), it is a picture of a product or service anchored in the minds of the consumer resulting from both direct (purchase, usage,) and indirect (advertising, promotion) experiences with the brand. The idea of a brand leads to the concept of brand equity.

2.2 Definitions and Dimensions of Brand Equity

The idea of brand equity has remained the theme of much recent research. Brand equity, which alludes to the incremental worth supplementary to an item by ideals of its image, has been wholly theorized (see; Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Yoo & Donthu 1997) yet an all-around acknowledged brand equity measure has not been inevitable. Looking into the present writings related to brand equity, there are abundant brand equity definitions and measurements. There are currently two important and particular viewpoints that have been taken by scholastics in the study of brand equity, which are money related and client based. Ailawadi, Lehmann and Neslin (2003) define brand equity as “outcomes that accrue to a product with its brand name compared with those that would accrue if the same product did not have the brand name” positing that, the advantages a product attains as a result of the power it’s brand name has. Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) also describe it as “the difference in consumer choice between the focal branded product and an unbranded product given the same level of product features”. Yoo and Donthu (1997) additionally tended to the estimation query by constructing and testing the psychometric properties of an arrangement of scales trying to gauge customer based brand equity. Aaker (1991) delineates it “as a set of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand, its name and symbol that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm’s customers”.

Some scholars have looked at branding from the monetary point of view, which spotlights on the aggregate estimation of the brand and answers the issues of how well the organization performs in the business sector. This is deemed as the principal viewpoint of brand equity (Farquhar Han & Ijiri., 1991, Simon & Sullivan, 1990).

The financial point of view permits organizations to extricate the budgetary brand esteem from the aggregate estimation of the organization. Simon and Sullivan (1993) were among the main creators to introduce an approach to scientifically figure brand equity. They based their calculations on the Tobin's Q and indicate that, in the event that the outcomes demonstrated a Q-esteem above 1, the organization had unimportant resources relating to its brand. The purpose behind utilizing financial estimations as the premise is this quality speaks to an impartial perspective on the future income of the organization. Subsequently, the outcome uncovers brand equity in view of the business sector's desire without limits to income. As per Simon and Sullivan (1993), this philosophy has three critical components: (1) brand equity is dealt with as an advantage to the firm and is subsequently isolated from different resources of the firm; (2) brand equity is figured with a forward-looking point of view; and (3) the estimation of the organization changes when new data achieves the business objectives.

As opposed to the financial viewpoint of brand equity, a more consumer situated methodology bloomed as an option. The point of the customer based brand equity is to quantify how purchasers respond to a brand (Keller 1993; Shocker, Srivastava, & Ruekert 1994). Inside of this point of view, brand equity has been characterized as the differential impact of brand learning on shopper reaction to the promoting of the brand (Lassar, Mittal, & Sharma 1995). Consequently, the shopper based point of view determines separately for each and every buyer,

and customer based brand equity emerges when a customer considers a brand to be understood by method for positive, solid, and exceptional brand affiliations.

To have the capacity to comprehend the establishment of the buyer based point of view, there are five contemplations that must be considered. To start with, brand equity alludes to shopper recognitions, instead of any goal gages. Second, the worth connected with a brand alludes to the worldwide quality. Third, the worldwide worth connected with the brand gets likewise from the brand name, and not just from physical viewpoints. Fourth, mark value is not supreme, but rather in respect to the present rivalry in the business sector. Lassar et al. (1995) posits that, in the long run, brand equity absolutely impacts upon money related activities. Gummesson (2002) clarifies that there is a typical conviction that connections are something that expressly happens between people. This is, in any case, not by stretch of the imaginations validity since there could be connections that include articles, images, and other insignificant wonders.

Another point of view on brand equity radiates from the perspective of the advertising association and spotlights on the benefit estimation of the brand within the firm. Yoo and Donthu (1997) composed a measure to gauge client based brand equity rather than the money related estimation of the brand. According to Keller (1993), an intensive comprehension of client based brand equity is vital for fruitful brand administration since “the substance and structure of memory for the brand will impact the viability of future brand techniques” (p.2).

Aaker (1991) characterized brand equity as “an arrangement of brand resources and liabilities connected to a brand, its name and image, that add to or subtract from the quality given by an item or administration to a firm and/or to that association's clients” (p. 1 5). Aaker (1991) further clarifies that the benefits and liabilities of brands added to its value, might contrast

depending on association, and can be gathered into five classes: brand dedication; name mindfulness; perceived quality; brand affiliations; and other restrictive resources. Predictably Keller (1993) and Aaker (1991) proposed that brand equity gives value to the firm (e.g., by means of viability of promoting projects, brand reliability, cost premiums, great environment for brand augmentations, and so forth.) and quality to the client (e.g., through upgraded data preparing, buy choice certainty, and expanded use fulfilment). The writing talks about a few strategies for measuring the budgetary quality to the firm (Bello & Holbrooke, 1995), however little consideration is dedicated to how we measure worth to the client. The significance of comprehension brand equity from the client's point of view is clarified by Keller (1993): "However the inevitable objective of any advertising project is to expand deals, it is first important to build up learning structures for the brand with the goal that buyers react positively to showcasing exercises for the brand" (p. 8). Keller further expressed that, while positive client based brand equity can prompt more noteworthy income, lower expenses and higher benefit, it has direct ramifications for the association's capacity to order higher costs, clients' eagerness to search out new circulation channels, the adequacy of promoting correspondences, and the achievement of brand expansions and permitting opportunities. As it were, the level of customer based brand equity adds to the viability of the company's advertising blend.

Yoo and Donthu (1997) received four of the five brand resource classifications that, as per Aaker (1991), involve brand equity. Aaker (1991) depicted brand dependability, name (or brand) mindfulness, perceived quality, and brand relationship as speaking to client recognitions and responses to the brand, measurements that can promptly be comprehended by buyers. Aaker (1991) further portrayed the fifth brand resource, other restrictive brand resources, as comprising of licenses, trademarks, and channel connections. This measurement is not applicable to the shopper perspective, client based (or "purchaser based" per Yoo & Donthu,

1997) brand equity measure set forth by Yoo and Donthu (1997). In this manner, Yoo and Donthu (1997) concentrated on the four Aaker (1991) measurements that contain the development of consumer based brand equity: brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand associations. On this premise, Yoo and Donthu (1997): 1) planned five particular brand devotion things to catch the attitudinal impact of being faithful to a brand; 2) characterized brand mindfulness as brand acknowledgment (instead of brand review) (Keller, 1993) and utilized four brand acknowledgment measures from past examination (i.e., Alba & Hutchinson, 1987; Nedungadi & Hutchinson, 1985; Rossiter & Percy, 1987); 3) measured perceived brand quality as buyers' subjective judgment of a brand's general perfection taking after Zeithaml (1988) by utilizing seven things from Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991); and 4) verbalized brand relationship as comprising of six new things taking into account Keller's (1993) work to gauge both the amount and nature of data handling. Therefore, Yoo and Donthu (1997) utilized an aggregate of 22 things to catch the four measurements that include customer based brand equity. Yoo and Donthu (1997) at last created two unmistakable brand equity scales - Overall Brand Equity and Multidimensional Brand Equity. The Overall Brand Equity scale (in the future alluded to as OBE) was lessened utilizing element examination to a last arrangement of four things from an underlying pool of 18 OBE markers. This scale was created fundamentally to assess the focalized legitimacy of the Multidimensional Brand Equity scale (in the future alluded to as MBE) and, as indicated by Yoo and Donthu (1997), finished this with reliably high connections. The centre of Yoo and Donthu's (1997) endeavours was adding to the MBE scale. In a pilot study, Yoo and Donthu (1997) diminished the underlying 22 things to a sum of 17 things in view of examination of the scale's unwavering quality through Cronbach's alpha coefficient. For more detail on this technique, please allude to Yoo and Donthu's (1997) distribution.

In the previous decade, analysts had centred a huge measure of consideration on brand equity development, which alludes to the incremental utility or worth added to an item by its image name. Utilizing a purchaser based behavioural perspective of brand equity, we characterize brand equity as customers' diverse reaction between a central brand and an unbranded item when both have the same level of showcasing boosts and item properties. The distinction in purchaser reaction might be ascribed to the brand name and shows the impacts of the long haul showcasing put into the brand.

Researchers have found that an item's image value emphatically influences future benefits and long haul income (Srivastava & Shocker, 1991); a customer's readiness to pay premium costs (Keller, 1993); merger and securing choice making (Mahajan et al., 1994); stock costs (Simon & Sullivan, 1993; Lane & Jacobson, 1995); economical upper hand (Bharadwaj, Varadarajan & Fahy, 1993); and advertising achievement (Ambler, 1997). Practically every advertising action works, effectively or unsuccessfully, to fabricate, oversee, and misuse brand equity (see Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). Notwithstanding, in spite of this significant measure of interest, research that distinguishes and endeavours to comprehend brand equity marvels has been hampered in light of the fact that there has been no assertion in regards to what brand equity is and, more critical, how it ought to be measured.

Albeit a few studies have inspected brand equity, their principle aim was not on adding to a brand equity measure. As of now, researchers utilize impromptu measures, for example, value premium (Aaker, 1991); conjoint break down estimation of the brand name (Rangaswamy Burke, & Oliva, 1993; Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, & Donthu, 1995); composite multi-attribute weighted scores of the brand name (Park & Srinivasan, 1994); an accumulation of consumer based measures (Agarwal & Rao, 1996); and a scanner information based measure (Kamakura

& Russell, 1993). Other specially appointed measures incorporate financial estimations of a brand, for example, future income (Aaker, 1991); incremental income (Simon & Sullivan, 1993); levelling value (Swait, Erdem, Louviere & Dubelaar, 1993); and force bookkeeping based quality (Farquhar et al., 1991).

Interestingly, for firm-based measures, specialists gather budgetary market, bookkeeping, and store-level scanner information without reaching buyers; these then distinguish dollar metric and monetary brand equity at the firm or brand level. Brand equity has numerous definitions and structures, for example, great impressions, attitudinal demeanours, and behavioural inclinations (Rangaswamy et al., 1993); brand devotion, brand mindfulness, perceived quality, brand affiliations, and other restrictive brand resources (Aaker, 1991); brand information, for example, brand mindfulness and brand affiliations (Keller, 1993); faithfulness and picture (Shocker & Weitz, 1988); the additional worth invested by the brand name (Farquhar et al., 1991); incremental utility (Kamakura & Russell, 1993); the distinction between general brand inclination and multi-credited inclination taking into account impartially measured characteristic levels (Park & Srinivasan, 1994); and general quality and decision goal (Agarwal & Rao, 1996). One essential agreement among the definitions is that brand equity is the incremental estimation of an item because of the brand name (Srivastava & Shocker, 1991).

Brand equity comprises of four measurements: brand dedication, brand mindfulness, perceived nature of brand, and brand relationship, as proposed by Aaker (1991, 1996) and Keller (1993). These measurements might be utilized to investigate the discoveries of showcasing and customer conduct research in connection to brand equity (see Barwise, 1993); along these lines, we add to a brand equity measure that gains by these measurements.

Aaker (1991, p. 39) characterizes brand confidence as “the connection that a client has to a brand”. Interestingly, some past exploration has concentrated on the behavioural parts of brand devotion (e.g., Guadagni & Little, 1983; Gupta, 1988). Brand mindfulness is “the capacity for a purchaser to perceive or review that a brand is an individual from a specific item classification” (Aaker, 1991, p. 61). In this way, mark mindfulness comprises of both brand acknowledgment and review (Rossiter & Percy, 1987; Keller, 1993). Perceived quality is “the buyer’s judgment around an item’s general fabulousness or prevalence” (Zeithaml, 1988, p. 3). In this manner it depends on shoppers’ or clients’ (i.e., not supervisors’ or specialists’) subjective assessments of item quality. Aaker (1991, p. 109) characterizes brand relationship as “anything connected in memory to a brand” and brand picture as “a set of [brand] affiliations, more often than not in some significant way”. The affiliations have a level of quality (Aaker, 1991; Aaker & Keller, 1990; Keller, 1993), and a connection to a brand will be more grounded when it depends on numerous encounters or exposures than when it depends on a few (Aaker, 1991). Perceived quality is outlined as things to evaluate buyers’ subjective judgment around a brand’s general magnificence (Zeithaml, 1988) on the grounds that apparent quality speaks to general quality instead of individual components of value (Petroshius & Monroe, 1987; Aaker & Keller, 1990; Boulding & Kirmani, 1993). Also Dodds et al. (1991) planned brand affiliations as things to gauge “the quality of association with a brand hub as an element of both the sum and amount of preparing the data got at encoding and the nature or nature of the handling of the data got at encoding” (Keller, 1993, p. 5).

Regardless of the significant assemblage of brand equity models (Leone, Rao, Keller, Luo, McAlister, & Srivastava, 2006), most brand equity models do not have an adequately thorough hypothetical premise (Raggio & Leone, 2006). Specifically, business approaches scarcely exhibit a theoretical system for clarifying the determination and weighting of their

determinants. Literature such as Zeithaml (1988), Aaker (1992), Pitta and Katsanis (1995), Yoo and Donthu (2002), and Ovidiu (2005) argue that CBBE is made up of brand image, awareness, perceived quality and loyalty, which is quite different from industry models like Young and Rubicams (Y & B) BAV (Brand Asset Valuator), Millward Brown's BrandZ, and Research International's Equity Engine. Aaker (1992) developed a very broad brand equity model made up of five different assets, which leads to the creation of value. The assets are made up of brand loyalty; perceived brand quality; brand name awareness; brand associations as well as perceived quality; and supplementary exclusive brand assets such as patents, trademarks, and channel relationships. Aaker (1996) points out the essence of perceived brand quality and loyalty as key dimensions in the brand equity model. Keller (2003) stresses that brand equity consists of strong brand awareness and a positive brand image in the consumers' memory in terms of strong, favourable, and unique brand associations. To better understand how to create brand equity, he uses the brand-knowledge concept in his CBBE-model. He believes that the strength of the brand is dependent on what the consumers have experienced and remember of the brand, therefore the knowledge of the brand. Keller (2013) visualizes brand knowledge as a network of nodes. The bigger the network is the greater the knowledge of the brand. The nodes are like hooks where the consumers put up their different memories and the links are connections between the different memories. These links together represent the brand equity. The consumers' knowledge of the brand consists of brand image (types, strength, grade of uniqueness and favourable associations) and awareness (recognition and brand recall).

Brand awareness is a process from where the brand is just known to a level when the consumers have put the brand on a higher rank; the brand has become the "top of mind" (Aaker, 1991). Keller (2013) describes brand awareness as consumers' ability to recall the brand through the identification of its elements such as logo, name, symbol packaging and slogan among others.

Some scholars also argue brand equity on the basis of revenue premium (Ailawadi et al., 2003) as a price premium measure (Holbrook, 1992; Randall, Ulrich, & Reibstein, 1998), and in measure of brand extendibility (Randall et al., 1998). Anderson (2007) argues that brand equity is the monetary incentive that a firm gains from customer's reaction to their marketing efforts.

2.3 Dimensions of Brand Equity

2.3.1 Brand Awareness

Awareness is a key determinant recognized in all brand equity models (Aaker, 1991; Kapferer, 1991; Keller, 1992; Agarwal & Rao, 1996; Krishnan, 1996; Na, Marshall & Keller, 1999; Mackay, 2001). Keller (2003, p.76) characterizes mindfulness as "the clients' capacity to review and perceive the brand as reflected by their capacity to distinguish the brand under various conditions and to interface the brand name, logo, image, et cetera to specific relationship in memory". Aaker (1996) recognizes other more elevated amounts of mindfulness other than acknowledgment and review (Aaker, 1991). He incorporates top-of-psyche, brand predominance, brand information and brand supposition. Brand learning is the full arrangement of brand affiliations connected to the brand (Keller, 1993).

As indicated by Aaker (1996), for new or specialty brands, acknowledgment can be essential. For surely understood brands, review and top-of-psyche are more delicate and significant. Brand learning and brand conclusion can be utilized as a part to improve the estimation of brand review. Comparable measures are utilized by the Y&R and Total Research endeavours. Aaker conceptualizes that brand mindfulness must go before brand affiliations. That is the place a buyer should first know about the brand, keeping in mind the end goal to add to an arrangement of affiliations (Washburn & Plank, 2002).

Brands fluctuate in the measure of force and esteem they have in the commercial world. At one compelling end are brands that are not known generally by consumers; while on the other, there are brands for which consumers have a genuinely high level of brand awareness. Aaker (1996) characterizes brand awareness as the strength of a brand that is implanted in the client memory. Along these lines, brand awareness will be made by continuous perceivability, upgrading nature and intense relationship with related offerings and purchasing encounters (Keller, 1998). Yoo et al. (2000), Pappu and Quester (2006), and Tong and Hawley (2009) exactly accepted brand mindfulness as one of the measurements of brand equity. The profundity and expansiveness of a brand's awareness decides brand equity (Keller, 1993). Besides, mark mindfulness is connected as quality of the brand in the brains of consumers, which give a company's a worth that can be utilized as a part of the future to draw in and advance items or administrations (Kim & Kim, 2005). Scientists have found brand awareness as a key measurement (Yoo et al., 2000; Marinova et al., 2011; Pappu & Quester, 2006; Motameni & Shahrokhi, 1998; Kumar, Dash, & Purwar, 2013).

2.3.2 Brand Associations

A brand association is the most acknowledged part of brand equity (Aaker, 1992). Affiliations speak to the premise for buyer's choice and for brand devotion (Aaker, 1991, p. 109). Brand affiliations comprise of all brand-related considerations, emotions, observations, pictures, encounters, convictions, and states of mind (Kotler & Keller 2006, p. 188); and is anything connected in memory to a brand. Different analysts (Farquhar & Herr, 1993; Chen, 1996; Brown & Dacin, 1997; Biel, 1992) distinguish diverse sorts of affiliation that add to the brand equity. Chen (2001) identified two sorts of brand affiliations - item affiliations and hierarchical affiliations.

Product Associations

Product associations incorporate practical traits affiliations and non-utilitarian affiliations (Chen, 2001). Practical traits are the substantial components of an item (Keller, 1993; Hankinson & Cowking, 1993; de Chernatony & McWilliam, 1989). While assessing a brand, buyers interface the execution of the practical credits to the brand (Pitta & Katsanis, 1995; Lassar et al., 1995). On the off chance that a brand does not perform the capacities for which it is outlined, the brand will have a low level of brand equity. Execution is characterized as a purchaser's judgment around brand's without issue and enduring physical operation and faultlessness in the item's physical development (Lassar et al., 1995).

Non-utilitarian characteristics incorporate typical properties (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 1993; Farquhar & Herr, 1993; Chen, 1996; Park et al., 1986) which are the impalpable elements that address customers' issues for social endorsement, individual expression or self-regard (Pitta & Katsanis 1995, Keller 1993, Hankinson & Cowking 1993, de Chernatony & McWilliam 1989). Customers connected social image of a brand, trustworthiness, perceived value, differentiation and country of origin to a brand (Keller, 1993).

Perceived Value

Esteem showed up in a few brand equity models (Feldwick, 1996; Martin & Brown, 1991; Lassar et al., 1995). Lassar et al. (1995) characterize perceived value as the apparent brand utility with respect to its expenses, surveyed by the buyer and in light of concurrent contemplations of what is gotten and what is offered up to get it. A consumer's decision on a brand relies upon an ostensible harmony between the cost of an item and every one of its utilities (Lassar et al., 1995). A consumer is willing to pay premium costs because of the higher brand worth.

Trustworthiness

Brand equity models (Martin & Brown, 1991; Lassar et al., 1995) view trustworthiness of an item as a vital characteristic in evaluating the qualities of a brand. Lassar et al. (1995) characterize trustworthiness as the certainty a consumer places in the firm and the association's correspondences and in the matter of whether the association's activities would be to the buyer's advantage. Buyers put high esteem in the brands that they trust.

2.3.3 Perceived Quality

Aaker (1991) characterized quality as “consumer’s view of the general quality or prevalence of an item or administration regarding its proposed reason, with respect to options”. Quality from a purchaser's point of view is alluded to as “perceived quality”. Quality, in the consumer’s connection, is not specialized but rather discernments about the items, substantial and elusive, that the customer watches. This makes consumer loyalty and worth by reliably and productively addressing client’s needs and inclinations for quality, and impacts its buying choice (Ha, Janda, & Muthaly, 2010). Perceived quality is seen as a measurement of brand equity and is emphatically identified with the brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Kamakura & Russell, 1993; Feldwick, 1996; Motameni & Shahrokhi, 1998; Yoo et al., 2000). It is troublesome for consumers to make a balanced judgment of the quality. Boulding and Kirmani (1993) contended that quality is straightforwardly impacted by discernments. Zeithaml (1988) states that apparent quality can go about as a key impacting variable in deciding shopper's decisions.

Perceived quality is seen as a measurement of brand equity (Aaker 1991; Kapferer 1991; Kamakura & Russell, 1991; Martin & Brown, 1991; Feldwick, 1996) as opposed to being a part of the general brand affiliation (Keller, 1992; Gordon, di Benedetto & Calantone, 1994).

Perceived quality is the client's judgment around an item's general incredibleness or prevalence that is not the same as target quality (Zeithaml, 1988, pp. 3 and 4). Target quality alludes to the specialized, quantifiable and undeniable nature of items/administrations, procedures and quality controls. High target quality does not, as a matter of course, add to brand equity (Anselmsson et al., 2007). Since it is incomprehensible for buyers to make finish and right judgments of the goal quality, they utilize quality properties that they take up with quality (Olson & Jacoby, 1972; Zeithaml, 1988; Ophuis & Van Trijp, 1995; Richardson, Dick & Jain., 1994; Acebron & Dopico, 2000). Perceived quality is subsequently shaped to judge the general nature of an item/benefit. Boulding and Kirmani (1993) contended that quality is straightforwardly impacted by discernments. Customers utilize the quality ascribes to “derive” nature of a new item. It is subsequently essential to comprehend the applicable quality credits to brand equity.

Zeithaml (1988) and Steenkamp (1998) characterize the idea of perceived quality in two gatherings of elements that are natural traits and outward properties. The inherent ascribes are identified with the physical parts of an item (e.g. shading, flavour, structure and appearance); then again, extraneous credits are identified with the item, yet not in the physical part of this one (e.g. brand name, stamp of value, value, store, bundling and generation data) (Bernués, Olaizola & Corcoran, 2003). It is hard to sum up characteristics as they are particular to item classes (Olson & Jacoby, 1972; Anselmsson et al., 2007).

2.3.4 Brand Loyalty

Loyalty is a central measurement of brand equity. Aaker (1991, p. 39) characterizes brand faithfulness as the connection that a client has to a brand. Grembler and Brown (1996) depict distinctive levels of loyalty. Behavioural confidence is connected to consumer conduct in the

market place that can be shown by the number of repeated purchases (Keller, 1998) or duty to re-buy the brand as an essential decision (Oliver, 1997, 1999). Subjective faithfulness, which implies that a brand comes up first in a customers' brain, when the need to settle on a buying choice emerges, that is the shoppers' first decision. The intellectual faithfulness is firmly connected to the most elevated amount of mindfulness (top-of-psyche), where the matter of interest additionally is the brand, in a given classification, which the shoppers reviews first. Along these lines, a brand ought to have the capacity to wind up the respondents' first decisions (psychological unwaveringness) and is in this way obtained over and over (behavioural devotion) (Keller, 1998). Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) notice that brand loyalty is directly identified with brand cost. Aaker (1996) distinguish value premium as the fundamental marker of loyalty to a brand. Value premium is characterized as the amount a consumer will pay for the brand in examination with another brand offering comparative advantages and it might be high or low and positive or negative contingent upon the two brands included in the comparison. Brand loyalty has also been described as either attitudinal or behavioural and choice perspectives (Javalgi & Moberg, 1997) with Aaker (1991) noting that it is the circumstance which reflects the likelihood that a customer will switch from one brand to another notably in situations where there are changes in product features or pricing. This study adopts Keller's (2003) description of brand loyalty, which he studies under the context of "brand resonance" and refers to as "the nature of customer-brand relationship and the extent to which customers feel that they are "in sync" with the brand. According to Atilgan, Aksoy and Akinci (2005), customers who depict genuine brand resonance, have a higher degree of loyalty, vigorously pursuing means to interact and share the experiences they have had with the brand to others.

2.3.5 Brand Image

Brand image has been a subject of concern studied by many scholars in branding literature (Gardner & Levy, 1955; Keller 1993). Aaker (1991) refers to brand image as "a set of associations, usually organized in some meaningful way" (p. 109). Herzog (1963) and Newman (1957) stresses that brand image is consumers' perceptions about a brand, as replicated by the brand associations held in their memory. However, brand image is defined by Biel (1992) as "a cluster of attributes and associations that consumers connect to the brand name" (p. 8). Keller (2013) conceptualized brand image as one of two sources of gaining brand equity and defines it as "perceptions about a brand as reflected by the associations held in the consumer's memory". These associations (favourability, strength and uniqueness) play a significant role in consumers' decision making, especially when it comes to goods of high involvement (Keller, 1993). "A successful brand image enables consumers to identify the needs that the brand satisfies and to differentiate the brand from its competitors, and consequently increases the likelihood that consumers will purchase the brand" (Hsieh, Pan & Setiono, 2004; p. 252). Additionally, various empirical studies have established that a favourable brand image does lead to brand equity (Aaker, 1991; Biel, 1992; Keller, 1993; Faircloth, Capella, & Alford, 2001), customer loyalty (Nguyen & LeBlanc, 1998; Kandampully & Suhartanto, 2000; Koo, 2003), brand performance (Roth, 1995) and purchase behaviour (Hsieh et al., 2004). Keller (2001) connotes that brands gain superiority based on the degree of unique brand associations it is able to build based on the intensity of the relationships it has with consumers.

2.3.6 Differentiation

The Marketing Science Institute (Leuthesser, 1988) states that the hidden determinants of consumer based brand equity are that brands give advantages to customers by separating items, as they encourage the preparing and recovery of data (Hoyer & Brown, 1990). Some marketing

literary works (Ries & Trout, 1985; Kapferer, 1991) likewise push the significance of the unique character of brand positioning in adding to the accomplishment of a brand. Uniqueness is characterized as the extent to which the buyer sees that a brand is particular from its rivals (Kapferer, 1991). A brand can have a value premium on the off chance that it is seen as being not quite the same as its rivals.

Keller (2008) indicated that differentiation is the extent to which a brand is perceived as different, distinct or unique. Stahl et al. (2012) in their findings show that firms have increased profits based on differentiation of their brand.

2.3.7 Relevance

Aaker (2011) in his recent book focus on brand relevance. Stahl et al. (2012) in their study found that relevance has an impact on customer acquisition and retention. Customer retention therefore, can be perceived to take place in this manner. The differentiation of a brand is of little value except the consumer sees the brand to be relevant thus conceptualizing that brand equity should include the facet of its appropriateness (Mizik & Jacobson, 2008). Brand relevance, according to Young and Rubicam's measure of brand equity, links up with differentiation to create brand strength. Keller (2013) defines it as "the measure of the appropriateness of a brand to consumers". Without personal relevance, brands cannot attract or keep consumers, especially in great numbers. Brand relevance, according to Aaker (2011), is an oft-used phrase, but it usually has not been properly clarified or explained. Therefore, Aaker (2011) in defining brand relevance, states that three conditions must occur: "A product or service category or subcategory as defined by some combination of attributes, applications, user groups, or other distinguishing characteristics exists or emerges; there is a perceived need or desire on the part of a customer segment for the category or subcategory; and the brand is in the set that the segment considers to be material to the product category or subcategory".

2.4 Marketing Activities

Brand equity is greatly affected by the elements of the marketing mix (Herrmann, Huber, Shao & Bao, 2007). Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) precludes that every marketing action has potential to affect brand equity since it is an accumulation of investments in marketing of the brands. There is, therefore, the need to strategically maintain the brands consistency and protect its sources of equity whiles making the right choices on how to fortify and leverage the brand, and fine-tune marketing programs that support it (Keller, 2003). Various academic scholars convey that marketing choices and conditions within the market such as; public relations, slogans or jingles, symbols, and packages (Aaker, 1991) warranties (Boulding & Kirmani, 1993); company image, country of origin, and promotional events (Keller, 1993) affect brand equity. Also, advertising expenditures, sales force and marketing research expenditures, age of the brand, advertising share, order of entry, and product portfolio (Simon & Sullivan, 1993); brand-naming strategy (Keller, Heckler, & Houston, 1998) have desirable effects on brand equity.

The price of a brand more often communicates with consumers on the benefits or quality they stand to get from acquiring the brand. High-priced brands, according to Dodds et al. (1991) and Kamakura and Russell (1993), are perceived to be of higher quality and are not as vulnerable to price reductions as lower priced brands. Careful use and monitoring of price promotional activities is therefore empirical to the survival of a brand. Kabadayi, Aygun, and Cipli (2007) indicates that price is the most often investigated marketing strategies that is associated with quality as there lies a positive relationship between consumer's perceived quality and price. This can generally be due to the fact that high prices may be associated with advances in design, performance and esteem. Consumers, as posited by Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) and Agarwal and Teas (2002), perceive price as a precursor to the quality of the product.

Therefore, gaining consumers' perception on the price of goods can be of much importance as perceived quality is a major dimension in the concept of brand equity. Rajh (2005) found that the higher the price of a brand, the higher the levels of brand equity gained. All the same, findings from the study also showed that frequent price deals has an adverse effect on brand equity as it begins to dwindle.

Kabadayi, Aygun, and Cipli (2007) state that consumers' perception of intensity deals with how often they get into contact with the brands through adverts and how large their advertising campaigns are in relation to the brand. Boulding, Lee and Staelin (1994) and Chay and Tellis (1991) demonstrate that most often advertisements generate brand equity while sales promotions more or less reduces a brands equity. Also, Simon and Sullivan (1993) and Cobb-Walgren, Beal, and Donthu (1995) realised advertising has encouraging effects on brand equity and its dimensions. Heavy advertising consequently indicates that the firm is investing a lot into the brand implying superior quality (Kuramani & Wright, 1989). Ramos and Franco (2005) and Yoo and Donthu (2000) demonstrate that advertising has effects on brand awareness and brand image. Advertising plays a critical role in creating brand awareness and brand associations. Furthermore, consumers' perception about quality as found by Barone, Taylor and Urbany (2005) is increased based on advertising spending done for the brand. Hauser and Wernerfeldt (1990) found that repetitive advertising schedules increase the likelihood that the brand will be top of the mind and be considered during brand choice, thus making it habitual to buy that brand more often. Intensity of advertising therefore positively relates to brand equity as well as repurchase intentions.

Distribution intensity is when products are placed in a large number of sales outlets in order to cover the market (Yoo et al., 2000). Brand equity can be increased based on distribution when

consumers can easily locate a brand in several stores where it is stocked giving consumers readily available access when needed (Aaker, 1996; Ferris et al., 1989; Smith, 1992). Distribution, as stipulated by Yoo et al. (2000), enhances a products image more through exclusive or selective techniques rather than intensively. However, Ferris and De Kluyver (1989) and Smith (1992) suggest that consumers will be satisfied in any way when products are widely available in stores since they can get the product they prefer more easily. Distributing products intensively will therefore reduce search time and cost, while increasing convenience. Yoo et al. (2000) posit that, as distribution is intensified, customers have more time and convenient locations, perceived value is increased. Consequently, this could also lead to an increase in the frequency of purchase as the product becomes easily accessible. Also higher distribution intensity and its associated value brings about increment in customer satisfaction, perceived quality, and brand loyalty and subsequently, greater brand equity (Yoo et al., 2000).

Literature indicates that sponsorship is a highly efficient way of improving on a firm's brand awareness and brand image (Gardner & Shuman, 1988; Keller, 2003). Although there exists some indication as to the impact of sponsorship on brand equity (Bennett, 1999; Javalgi, Traylor, Gross, & Lampman, 1994), further studies needs to be conducted to authenticate this assertion empirically (Henseler, Wilson & Hautvast, 2007). Sponsorship has been perceived as an extension of advertising to a brand viewpoint (Cliffe & Motion, 2005) although it does much more than that. Findings from Cornwell, Roy and Steinard, (2001) indicates that "as perceived by managers, sponsorship under active management can contribute to the difficult task of differentiating a brand from its competitors and adding financial value to the brand". Other studies have been conducted on sponsorship on brand equity (eg. Cornwell, Roy & Steinard, 2001; Becker-Olsen & Hill, 2006; Henseler, Wilson & Hautvast, 2007; Ruth & Simonin, 2003).

Effectiveness of sponsorship can be seen as an essential brand building tool in the tobacco and liquor industries because, as it was barred from orthodox promotional means, it was obliged to discover alternative ways to instil positive associations for their brands in the memory of their target market (Quester & Farrelly, 1998). Over the years many major events as well as national sports groups have been sponsored by firms such as Coca-Cola, Emirates airline, Getorade, Adidas, Gold Fields, Nokia, Samsung, MTN among others. Consumer relations literature indicates that there are advantages in firm's sponsorship arrangements such as to broaden and expand their relationship with their target (Keller, 2001), increase brand awareness and establishment of strength or changes in brand image.

2.5 Repurchase Intentions

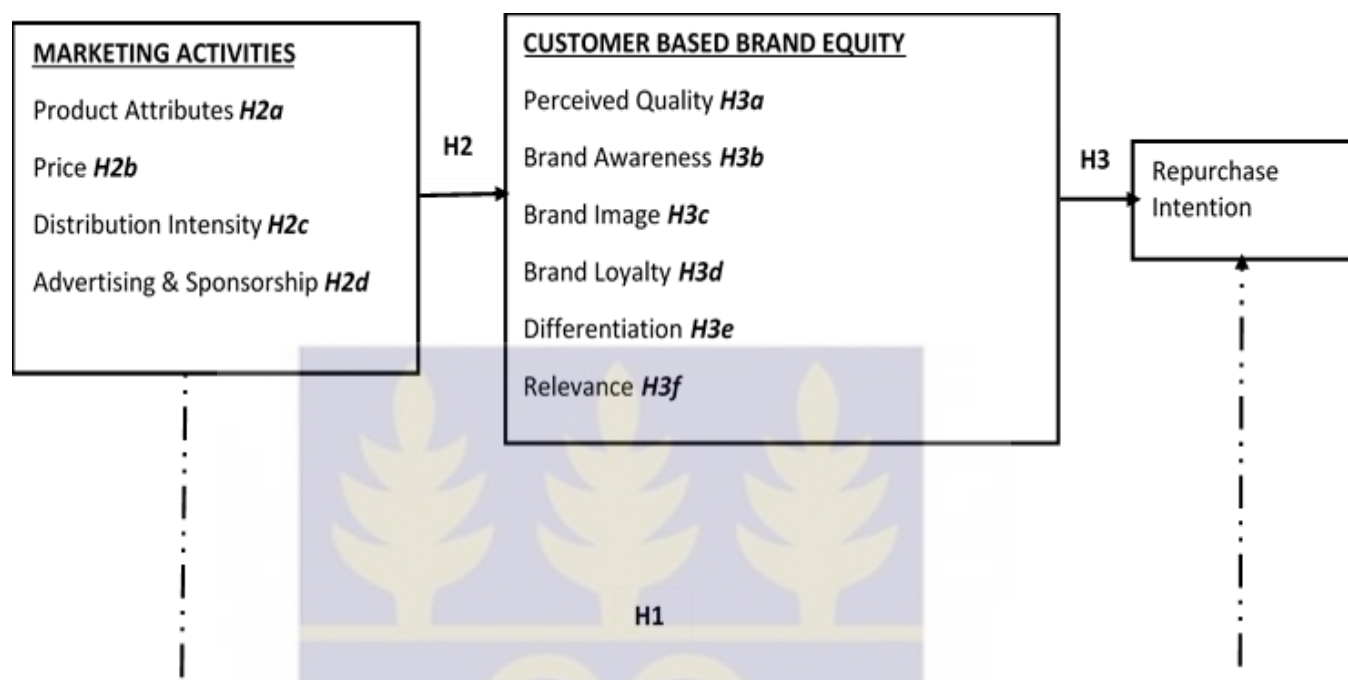
Hellier, Geursen, Carr, and Rickard (2003) define repurchase intention as “the individual's judgment about buying again a designated service from the same company, taking into account his or her current situation and likely circumstances”. Rust, Zahorik and Keiningham,. (1995) contend that customers' personal opinions on their behavior in the future are not always transformed into actual repurchase intentions. Most prominently, “repurchase intentions are the most widely used indicator of customer loyalty in firms' customer feedback systems” (Morgan & Rego, 2006, p. 436). Marketing managers most often relay on purchase intentions to predict sales in diverse marketing activities: e.g., service management (Pérez, Abad, Carrillo & Sánchez, 2007), and demand forecasting for existing products. Butcher (2005) postulates that one service outcome of perception of quality, value, brand equity, brand preference, among others influences is customers' repurchase intention. Academic scholars recurrently rely on intention to purchase as a proxy for purchase behavior (Morwitz, Steckel & Gupta, 1997; 2007). Bojei and Hoo (2012) provide empirical evidence to show that brand awareness and brand association have a significant relationship with customer repurchase intentions. Zhou

(2011) studied the effects of brand equity on revisit intentions of hotels and found that brand equity has a significant effect on customer revisit (repurchase) intentions in terms of perceived quality, brand loyalty and brand awareness.

Personal actionable tendencies that relates to a product, according to Bagozzi, Baumgartner and Yi (1989), transmits to purchase intention. Eagly and Chaiken (1993) strike a clear difference between attitude and intention by indicating that evaluative summaries of a product by consumers are their attitudes towards it; whereas the motivation based on plans to execute behaviour is the intention. Bojei and Hoo (2012) stress that repurchase intention shares some similarities with purchase intentions only that it comes with an experience element. Studies by Cobb-Walgren, Ruble and Donthu (1995) on hotel and detergent choices shows that higher levels of brand equity has a positive effect on purchase intentions within the product and service category respectively. Chen and Chang (2008) also found that brand equity relates positively with intention to buy although it was moderated by low switching cost. This study proposes consumers' repurchase intention as the dependent variable.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

The proposed conceptual framework examines the relationship between marketing activities, brand equity and repurchase intentions. The model is presented in Figure 2.1. The rest of the sections are used to explain the relationships among the variables of the model.

Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework for the Study

2.6.1 Marketing Activities Repurchase intention

Marketing managers most often rely on purchase intentions to predict sales of diverse marketing activities: e.g., service management (Pérez et al., 2007), and demand forecasting for existing products (Cobb-Walgren, Ruble & Donthu, 1995). Huang and Sarigöllü (2012) indicate that factors, including shopping environment, product placement, and on-the-spot promotion, are very likely to have an influence on the decision to purchase as well as other consequent market outcomes. Findings by Smith and Park (1992) shows that distribution (shelf visibility) alone generates brand awareness and trial for frequently purchased products. Trials provide consumers with personal experience of products; and in turn, consumers' usage experience further growing consumers' willingness to purchase (Huang & Sarigöllü, 2012). From Pérez et al., (2007) even when consumers have not had contact with some brands prior their visit to the store, their purchase behavior can be induced by shelf visibility. This behavior supports the proposition that consumers form behaviors to acquire products and services based

on marketing actions (Bojei & Hoo, 2012). Further findings from Huang & Sarigöllü (2012) posit that distribution and in-store promotion induce brand purchases from consumers. Marketing activities from these perspectives can have effects on repurchase intention thus the need to establish the extent to which this takes place. Thus the study proposes that:

H1: Marketing activities have a positive significant effect on repurchase intention.

2.6.2 Marketing activities and Brand equity

Keller (2013) states that marketing activities in one way or the other affect brand equity and suggests how firms can leverage on it to build brand equity. Marketing activities has long been established to have an effect on brand equity by scholars such as Stahl et al. (2012); Ailawadi, Lehmann and Neslin (2003); Pauwels, Currim, Dekimpe, Hanssens, Mizik, Ghysels and Naik (2004); Srinivasan, Park and Chang (2005); Ataman, Van Heerde and Mela (2010); and Slotegraaf and Pauwels (2008). Marketing research and consumer behaviour literature argues that consumers respond to marketing stimuli (Lehman, Keller & Farley, 2008). Particularly, research findings from Haugtvedt, Herr and Kardes (2008) shows that consumers' response to marketing activities can differ from equally lower levels of brand awareness or familiarity to highly involved brand loyalty relationships based on affective, cognitive, and behavioural considerations. Rajh (2005) studied the effects of marketing activities on brand equity and concluded that a right combination of marketing activities (advertising, price, distribution and sponsorship) with the right intensity has a great effect on brand equity. He also finds that over reliance on factors such as too much price reduction activity dwindles the equity of a brand. Kabadayi, Aygun, and Cipli (2007) studied the effects of marketing activities specifically price, sponsorship, distributing intensity and advertising on brand equity and found that they are positively related. Yoo et al. (2000) have explored the relationships between some chosen marketing efforts and brand equity. They established that, when brand assets are articulated as

the measurements of brand equity, it has an effect on a customer's general acuity of brand equity. Furthermore, their findings revealed that some marketing mix elements such as frequent usage of price promotions would have negative consequences on brand equity, whereas supplementary elements such as high advertising spending, premium price, retail distribution through stores with good image, and higher distribution concentration would help build brand equity. It is therefore essential to harness the marketing activities (integrated marketing, product strategy, distribution strategy and pricing strategy) to gain desirable brand equity (Keller, 2013). This study thus proposes that:

H2: Marketing activities positively influences brand equity.

2.6.3 Product Attributes and Brand equity

Products attributes include any aspect of a product or its use that can be used in making comparisons with alternative products (Grunet, 1989). The characteristics of the products that are relevant and useful from the consumers perspective is most often neither physical nor objective (Zhang et al., 2010). Product attributes therefore are the required features that consumers expect the product to possess. Kotler and Armstrong (2005) point out that consumers view products as the blend of its attributes, which have the ability to satisfy their requirements. According to Zhang, Rau and Zhou (2010), the attributes of a product have influence on consumer mindset and can therefore influence purchase behaviour. Findings from Bahn, Lee, Lee, and Yun (2007) (who looked at how the colour, feel of product material, shape and tactile oneness of a passenger car's crash pad influences satisfaction) indicate that aspects of product attributes positively influences consumer satisfaction. Also Seva, Duh, and Helander, (2007) studied the marketing implications of affective product design and found that pre-purchase behaviour of mobile phones is strongly affected by product attributes. They further stressed that slimmer phones are often related to feelings of gratification and

reassurance whiles those with larger screens come with a feel of bewilderment and encouragement. Product attributes in this manner can influence consumers' love and affection for a brand. These factors all indicate the possibility of a link between product attributes and brand equity, hence the following hypothesis is made:

H2a: Product attributes has a significant positive effect on brand equity

2.6.4 Price and Brand Equity

Price has been found to be a poignant indicator of product quality (Yoo et al., 2000). Products which are often priced high are perceived to be of higher quality and less exposed to competitive cuts (Kamakura & Russell 1993; Dodds, Monroe, & Grewal 1991). Likewise, products of low price are often perceived to be of lower quality. Pricing is thus recognized as an incentive often used in encouraging purchases of products or services. Kotler (2003) is of the view that pricing is often used as a means of attracting new customers, rewarding loyalty and increasing repurchases of products. Consumers' willingness to pay price premium for a product has been established as an antecedent of brand equity (Keller, 1993). Generally pricing creates various associations in the consumers' mind (Keller, 2001). The price on a product can have a direct effect on brand equity but most often this is not desirable (Yoo et al., 2001). They indicate that most often promotional prices are easily copied and counteracted and only enhances short term performance, thus after the price deal ends consumers lose interest in the brand. However, Kim and Hyun (2011) stress that, with sustained product quality, higher pricing could also have a negative influence on brand loyalty as it doesn't posit an increase in the quality of the product but only an indication for more money to be paid. Different findings have been related to pricing especially in the purchase of industrial goods (Jensen & Klastrup, 2008; Cretu & Brodie, 2007). In their study, Kim and Kyun (2011) indicated that value pricing

has a positive effect on brand awareness and associations. Kabadayi, Aygun and Cipli (2007) also found a significant positive relationship between price and brand equity. The following hypothesis is thus developed:

H2b: There is a significant positive relationship between price and brand equity

2.6.5 Distribution Intensity and Brand Equity

Distribution is essential to the success of every marketing programme (Keller, 2013). Independent suppliers/structures that make products available to consumers wherever and whenever they want, constitute a distribution channel (Kotler, 2003). According to Aaker (1996) and Smith (1992), the extent to which a product is distributed can create considerable brand equity when consumers can easily find it in several stores where they are easily recognizable. Bojei and Hoo (2012) indicate that perceived quality and brand equity is enhanced when the product is widely distributed using authorized channels. Distribution intensity has been found to increase perceived quality, loyalty and overall brand equity as intensive distribution gives consumers the chance to buy the brand wherever and whenever they want to (Yoo et al., 2000). Shirivasan et al. (2005) indicate that higher perceived intensity of product distribution has an effect on brand image leading to brand equity. This is supported by Yoo et al. (2007) and Kabadayi et al. (2007) who found statistically significant positive relationships between distribution intensity and brand equity. These findings could be attributed to how easily accessible the products are to consumers. Following from that the following hypothesis is projected:

H2c: Brand equity is positively affected by distribution intensity

2.6.6 Advertising and Sponsorship and Brand Equity

Promotions as a marketing activity cannot be underestimated with its ability to create and build brand equity. The strength of advertising and its effect on building strong brand equity has been established by Eagle and Kitchen (2000) who found that it has a positive influence on sales. The hierarchy of effects model indicates that the more consumers are exposed to a brand advertising, the more they tend to believe the message on the products proposed performance (Richins, 1995). Thus, consumers do not only develop brand awareness of a brand when exposed to pervasive advertising, but also they perceive the product to be of high quality. According to Yoo et al. (2000), advertising is a major platform that helps in shaping and managing a brand image. Aaker (1991), Cobb-Walgreen et al. (1995) and Keller (2002) indicate that advertising across different media and sponsorship of events are very effective strategies in building brand equity. Perception of advertising spend and intensity was found by Barone, Taylor and Urbany (2005) and Yoo et al. (2000) to have a positive influence on perceived quality and brand loyalty. Barone, Taylor and Urbany (2005) found that advertising expenditure had a significant positive effect on brand perceived quality, reputation and differentiation. Kabadayi et al. (2007) established a positive significant relationship between sponsorship of events and brand equity. In view of this, it is safe to hypothesize that:

H2d: Advertising and sponsorship has a significant positive effect on brand equity

2.6.7 Brand Equity and Repurchase Intention

Keller (1993) indicates that, in the measurement of customer based brand equity, there are two main approaches: the direct approach, which is focused on customer's responses to various marketing programs; and the indirect approach paying attention to the identification of possible sources from which such equity is derived. This therefore suggests that responses from the consumers in respect to brands are accurate and thus reflects in the performance of the brand

in the market place. Although there are several brand equity constructs in literature, this study adopts/modify customer based brand equity (Lehmann, Keller & Farley, 2008) using a combination of Aaker's (1991, 1996) constructs which include brand awareness, brand loyalty, and perceived quality; Keller's (1993) brand image and an introduction of two constructs from Young and Rubicam's Brand Asset Valuator (BAV), which are relevance and differentiation. Lehmann, Keller and Farley (2008) found that "no single measure captures the richness of a brand" thus marketers must employ multiple sets of factures and measures in their exploits. Studies by Bendxen et al. (2004), Roberts and Merrilees (2007), and Taylor, Hunter, and Lindberg (2007) indicate that strong positive brand equity results in repurchases.

H3: Brand equity has a significant positive effect on repurchase

2.6.8 Perceived Quality and Repurchase Intention

Gaining high levels of perceived quality has become more challenging due to continuous product innovation over the years that has brought about over expectations from consumers (Sherman, 1992). According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived quality is "the customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service with respect to its intended purpose, relative to alternatives". Aaker (1996) and Farquahar (1989) posit that the perceived quality of a brand is the "core/primary" feature of the customer based brand equity model. This is not necessarily the actual quality of the product but that which exist in the consumer's mind-set (Zeithaml, 1988). This consumer-driven quality, according to Atilgan, Aksoy and Akinci (2005), has become a competitive tool of which many firms today rely upon as a strategic weapon by continuously meeting customers "needs and preferences" profitably for satisfaction and value. A brand's perceived quality serves as an inspiration to purchase, and serves as a means of product extension and support for higher pricing (Aaker 1992). Studies by Cobb-Walgren, Ruble and Donthu (1995), Ambler (2003), and Lehmann, Keller and Farley

(2008) shows that there is a significant relationship between consumer purchases and perceived quality. Yasin, Noor and Mohammad (2007) perceived quality is high when consumers' realize the brand is superior as compared to its competitors. Consumers, according to Kotler (2000), believe that characteristics of quality, which influence their attitude and activities for a brand, include product reliability, durability and serviceability; and style and design. It can therefore be said that perceived quality as a component of brand equity, which leads to the selection of one brand over the other (Yoo et al., 2000) can influence consumers' repurchase intention. Therefore, it is proposed that;

H3a: Perceived quality has a significant positive effect on repurchase intention

2.6.9 Brand Awareness and Repurchase Intention

The amount of power and value a brand has within a particular market place varies. At an extreme point lies brands, which are known by many users; while on another end there are those that consumers have a slight knowledge of (Ahmad & Sherwani, 2015). In making a distinction with brand knowledge, the very first dimension that comes up is that of brand awareness (Keller, 1993). This, according to Rossiter and Percy (1987), is the strength of the brand in the consumers' memory based on their ability to recognize the brand under different circumstances or situations. Brand awareness in this manner reflects consumers' ability to recognize and recall the brand and the ease in which that is done (Keller, 1993). Brand awareness, as indicated by Tong and Hawley (2009) is a very essential construct in the measurement of brand equity. It therefore serves as a point of contact within the inner most self of the consumer, which ensures that a particular brand comes first whenever a certain product category is mentioned. Aaker (1991) stresses that it can serve as a sign of superiority and assurance thereby aids in consideration during purchase. A brand's equity based on awareness is determined by its breadth and depth (Keller, 1993). Keller (1998) stresses that a brand's

awareness is created through continuous visibility and improvement of familiar key points of reference together with strong associations to associated products and purchasing experiences. Hoyer (1990) and Nedungadi (1990) indicated that the higher a brand's level of awareness the more likelihood that it will be among consumers' consideration set when making purchases. Brand awareness in this context is the consumer's ability to recall and recognize their preferred brand. Findings from Cobb-Walgren, Ruble and Donthu (1995) indicate a significantly positive relationship between brand awareness and purchase intentions. Having continuous contact with a brand therefore could cause repurchase based on good experiences with that brand. The following hypothesis is therefore drawn:

H3b: Brand awareness has a positive significant effect on customer repurchase intention

2.6.10 Brand Image and Repurchase Intention

Keller (2008) connotes that brand image consist of the extrinsic characteristics of a product or service which includes the manner in which it tries to meet the psychological and social needs of consumers. Brand image is considered as consumers' assurance and views in the quality of the products produced by their preferred brand (Keller, 2003). These, according to Herzog (1963) and Newman (1957), are various memorable associations that consumers' perceived about a brand, as reflected in their memory. Keller (2013) puts it in other words as "brand associations are the other informational nodes linked to the brand node in memory and contain the meaning of the brand for consumers". Brand images can be tremendously tacky, and once strong associations have formed, they may be challenging to modify thus, brands that are well known must do well to carefully manage what they represent; that is, their image (Pullig, 2008). The image of a brand is more or less the information that is processed based on consumers' continuous contact with the brand. Keller (2013) indicates that brand image consists of the several attributes and benefits (familiarity, uniqueness and strength) that give personal meaning

and description to the brand as these help in the choice of a brand during purchase. This therefore indicates that brand image has the strength of placing a brand amongst the consideration set when making purchases. Thus the following hypothesis:

H3c: Brand image has a significant positive relationship with repurchase intention

2.6.11 Brand Loyalty and Repurchase Intention

Brand loyalty, according to Aaker (1991), is a central measure of brand equity, which looks at how attached a consumer is to a brand. Atilgan et al. (2005) notes that the difficulty in clearly defining brand loyalty construct and measuring it continues to exist in research. Brand loyalty can be distinguished as either an attitude or a behaviour (Hallowell, 1996; Oliver, 1999) and choice perspectives (Javalgi & Moberg, 1997). Behavioural loyalty encompasses actual behaviour responses gained by the firm, which however, does not consider latent or spurious customers whereas attitudinal loyalty provides real value, which include the repurchase intent of consumers (Aaker, 1991). This study empirically tests brand loyalty under attitudinal or choice approach. In this view, Keller (2003) defines brand loyalty as “brand resonance which is the extent to which customers feel they are in sync with a brand.” Customers who have pure brand resonance for a brand, according to Atilgan et al. (2005), in this instance have greater degrees of loyalty and vigorously pursue ways in which to interact with the brand and share their involvements of the brand with others. Empirical studies by Smith and Wright (2004) and Punniyamoorthy and Mohan (2007) prove that a significant positive relationship exists between product connection, functional value, price value, mental worth, societal worth, trust, satisfaction, assurance and repeat purchase. Aaker (1992) further stresses that loyalty is an operational means of crafting brand equity as it leads to customer satisfaction and repeat buying acts which are often meters of a healthy brand. This view is also shared by Keller (2013) who indicates that a reasonable proportion of customers’ total spending on a particular brand

category is as a result of loyalty and therefore places it at the topmost part of his CBBE model. Based on these and Singh (2004), brand loyalty is defined on the basis of consumers' attitude based on choice (Oliver, 1997; Tong & Hawley, 2009). Based on the above the following hypothesis is developed:

H3d: *Brand loyalty has a positively significant relationship with repurchase intention*

2.6.12 Brand Differentiation and Repurchase Intention

The differentiation of a brand as pointed by Motameni and Shahrokhi (1998), is the base-line characteristic of a brand: "if a brand is not perceived as being different, then it will have a difficult time supporting a price premium". The difference of a brand if it can have an effect on price premium, could lead to modifications in consumers' repurchase behaviours. Mizik and Jacobson (2008) implied that a central component in conceptualizing the value of a brand is its capability to stand out among competing brands. Motameni and Shahrokhi (1998) found brand differentiation indicators from the perspective of the consumer by posing questions such as: "is this brand different from competing brands? Or is this brand basically the same as competing brands?" When brand difference is higher, its relevance tends to stand out and it gains much more attention within the market (Keller, 2013). Consumers must therefore be able to tell how distinct or unique a brand is to them. Consumers' perception on differentiation is vital, as it is a needed condition for building the profitability of the brand due to its relation to pricing (Keller, 2013). Stahl et al. (2012) found that differentiation, as previously conceptualized by Lehmann, Keller and Farley (2008), has a statistically significant effect on Customer Lifetime Value (CLV) components i.e., acquisition, retention and profit margin. The study therefore hypothesizes the following:

H3e: *Brand differentiation is positively related to consumers repurchase intention*

2.6.13 Brand Relevance and Repurchase Intention

The differentiation of a brand is of pintsized value, except the consumer see the brand to be relevant thus conceptualizing brand equity should include the facet of its appropriateness (Mizik & Jacobson, 2008). Brand relevance, according to Young and Rubicam (2000) links up with differentiation to create brand strength. Keller (2013) defines it as “the measure of the appropriateness of a brand to consumers”. Without personal relevance, brands cannot attract or keep consumers especially in great numbers. In measuring the construct of brand relevance researchers (Lehmann, Keller & Farley, 2008) in their study of “survey-based brand metrics” use BAV and Millward Brown scales on how the brand is relevant to consumers as well as their family and friend, and how it fits their lifestyle. Since it is established that brand equity has an overall impact on CLV as found by Stahl et al. (2012), and that brand esteem (image) together with relevance has a positive effect on customer acquisition and purchases, it will therefore be noteworthy to see if relevance has a direct impact on repurchase intention. Thus, it is hypothesized that:

H3f: There is a significant positive relationship between relevance of a brand and repurchase intention

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed literature related to answering the objectives set. The concept of marketing activities was discussed extensively with highlights on the concepts of product attributes, pricing, distribution intensity and advertising & promotion. Brand equity was discussed in detail drawing out the elements. The chapter discussed the relationships that exist between marketing activities and brand equity as well as repurchase intention. Following the review of literature, a conceptual framework, which is going to guide the study, was developed. This helped in formulating hypothesis which were suitable for the study.

CHAPTER THREE

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a description of the setting in which the study was undertaken. It gives a brief overview of the Ghanaian mobile phone industry and how it has developed over the years. It details some challenges and regulatory changes within the industry and how it has affected the industry.

3.1 Brief Historical Background

Ghana had its first mobile telecommunications network in 1992 with Mobitel transmitting through the analogue system (African Telecom News, 2015). It is therefore prudent to say that the first mobile phone devices arrived in the country within that year. The mobile telecommunications industry in Ghana has since experienced fast growth with the country more or less skipping what some may call the “landline stage” to the digital age (Pew Research Center, 2015) due to its wide adoption. According to Keelson and Cooper (2009), the mobile phone is one elementary product that has shed its exclusive label in Ghana and the world at large, with devices being a very expensive and scarce commodity in the early 90's in the country. Mobile phones are pervasive in Sub-Saharan Africa, with roughly one-in-ten people owning a mobile phone in Tanzania, Uganda, Kenya and Ghana as at 2002 (Pew Research Center, 2015). Mobile handset ownership has grown exponentially since then. In the Ghanaian industry, the number of mobile phone users jetted to 26.09 million as at end of January 2013 from 25.62 million the previous month, according to the National Communications Authority's (NCA) comparison. As at 2002, mobile phone ownership stood at 8% but a recent study by Pew Research Center (2015) indicates that mobile handset ownership among adults, stands at

83% today in Ghana compare to 89% of American adults. This therefore shows how extensively mobile phones have developed in Africa over the years.

3.2 Mobile Phone Use

Generally, mobile phones make life much easier for users in any part of the world. It is therefore not a strange concept that the mobile phone has become an integral part of our daily lives and its use in sub Saharan African has grown dramatically over the last decade (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). Due to this it is only a marvel today to realize the mobile phone is absent among people (North, Johnston & Ophoff, 2014). Mobile devices has been found to be more populous among young people (Ezemenaka, 2013) most notably university students (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012). Mobile/smart phone use has been high with consumers most notably using it for money transfers (banking the unbanked) (Aker & Mbiti, 2010), social media messaging, as well as calling and text messaging (Pew Research Center, 2015). In Ghana, farmers are able to make use of mobile phones by sending text messages in order to be informed about the prices of goods such as tomatoes and corn in the capital (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). Furthermore, they indicate that the use of mobile phones has brought about a great reduction in costs of communication promoting cheap access to a variety of economic, social and political activities. Nonetheless, it has been noted that there is still much to be done especially when it comes to development of locally relevant apps and utilities, which will allow users to make full use of their powerful devices (Tagoe, 2014). Although mobile phones have been found to have several benefits to society, there are some undesirable effects of its wide spread and usage (North, Johnston & Ophoff, 2014). For example, students using their devices during lecture time (Walsh, White & Young, 2008), using mobile phone while driving (Walsh et al., 2008; Hong, Chiu, & Huang, 2012) and others such as addiction, destruction of relationships and stress caused by over dependency (Balakrishnan & Raj, 2012).

3.3 Economic Development

Mobile phones have come a long way and impact on economic development. Several scholars have written on the essence of the mobile phone in economic activities (Tarasewich et al., 2002; Turban, King, Lee, & Viehland, 2002; Stanoevska-Slabev, 2003; Zeng, Wen, & Yen, 2003; Boateng, Hinson, Galadima & Olumide, 2012). Aker and Mbiti (2010) indicate that, although mobile devices can be used transversely in all population segments, a larger percentage of sub-Saharan African households use it for listening to the radio. This could suggest some pretty good spending in the media industry as firms continuously compete for customers. Porteous (2006) indicates that, because mobile phones are becoming part of our daily lives, they have the potential to serve as a channel for financial information, services and transactions, thus gradually serving as a platform for getting the unbanked society access to easy banking activities such as M-pesa in Kenya (Duncombe & Boateng, 2009) and Mobile Money in Ghana (Dzokoto & Appiah, 2012; Etim, 2014). They stress that expansion of mobile networks, especially across previously unserved areas in developing states, has driven the belief that mobile phones can drive financial services.

3.4 Mobile and Smart Phone Industry in Ghana

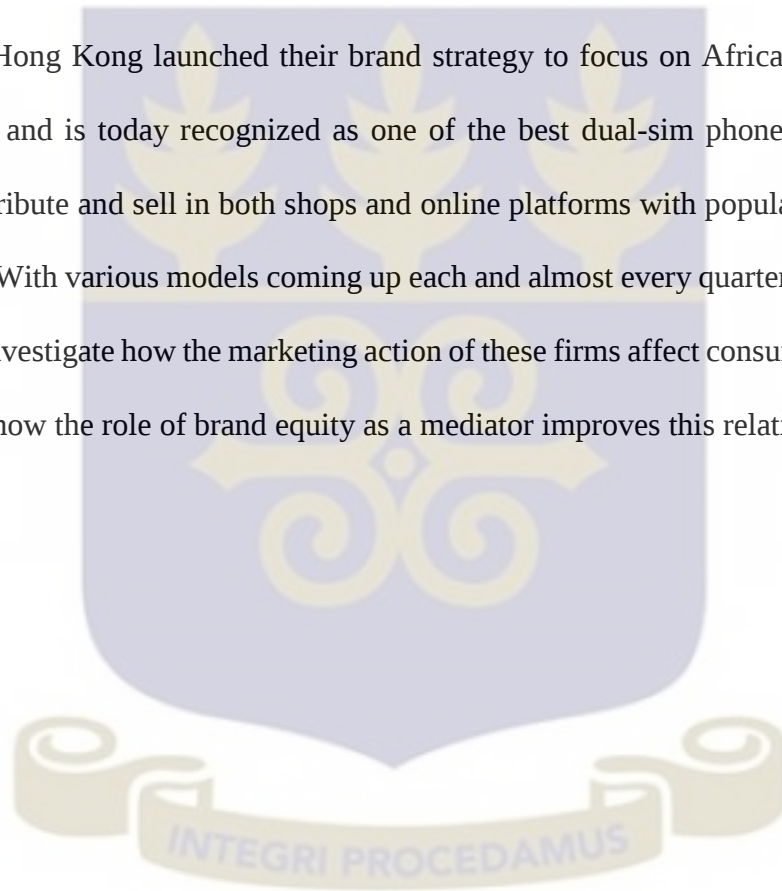
Mobile phones have evolved from 1st generation to third-generation (3G) and fourth-generation (4G) today with much more advanced and inexpensive but sophisticated phones becoming available to cater for the scope and impact of mobile applications and services (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). Gfk Roper Report (2014) indicates that young adults have an appetite for technology as they use it for online surfing, social media communication and product search. Most mobile phone adoption results are more often limited or based on the number of subscriber rather than individual handset ownership thus there is limited data in the industry (a

precursor for serious errors in measurement) (Aker & Mbiti, 2010). Although statistics are hard to come by in the African context, Samsung with its “Built for Africa Initiative” (adapting global products to suit African conditions) is leading the Ghanaian smartphone market with its user-friendly and inexpensive handsets with about a 43% share and 68% of revenues (Ghanaweb, 2014). Kuseh (2014) point out the expansion of mobile telecommunications networks in Ghana and expected growth in data usage, based on the lifting of import duties off smart phone devices in order to bridge the digital divide. This is evident in the study by Dasgupta, Thomas, and Wheeler (2009) who indicate that the probability of having a network tower closer to people strongly relates to high adoption rates. Thus more and more opportunities seems to be coming up, thus the smartphone industry is booming with some great investments with bringing in new-comers such as Infinix who partnered with Google to launch the first smartphone with Android One operating system (OS) in Africa (Ameyaw-Debrahh, 2015). Elliott (2015) in a 5 country report indicates that the Ghanaian mobile handset brand market is dominated by Samsung and Nokia with share of 34% and 17% respectively. These indices also indicate that the industry creates a plausible number of employment opportunities from sales down to repairs. Mobile telecommunications networks have supported the growth of the mobile phone industry very well as it is the backlog for its wide development as coverage increases. For example, within the African sub-region, mobile phone subscriptions increased from 16 million in year 200 to over 370 million in 2008 (Aker & Mbiti, 2010), while in Ghana recent NCA reports have indicated that there are over 20 million mobile network subscribers in the country.

3.5 Availability of Mobile Phones

The mobile phone market in Ghana is undoubtedly saturated, especially with what is popularly referred to as “china” phones. A major hub in Ghana, specifically Kwame Nkrumah Circle

(Circle) in Accra, is where the mobile phone business continues to grow and can be easily acquired (Keelson & Cooper, 2009). Although the prices of mobile phone devices are not cheap (Aker & Mbiti, 2010) at Circle, almost every mobile phone brand can be purchased, especially from the black market, along with some industry leaders such as Samsung and Nokia having authorized sales and repair points within the suburb. Finnish giants Nokia intensified its media campaign on its Lumia brand in the Ghanaian market in 2013 after it had opened the Nokia Care center in 2008 in their bid to better serve the market (Ghanaian Chronicle, 2008). Techno Telecom from Hong Kong launched their brand strategy to focus on Africa in 2008 using a unique strategy and is today recognized as one of the best dual-sim phones on the market. Today they distribute and sell in both shops and online platforms with popular brands such as the Phantom 5. With various models coming up each and almost every quarter, it is of so much importance to investigate how the marketing action of these firms affect consumers' repurchase intentions, and how the role of brand equity as a mediator improves this relationship.



CHAPTER FOUR

METHODOLOGY

4.0 Introduction

This chapter gives a detailed description of the various methods employed in conducting the research. It discusses the process in which the study was carried out in order to arrive at conclusions for the research based on the set objectives of the study. Diverse methodological issues ranging from the philosophy underpinning the study, research approach and strategy, to data collection and analysis techniques used are all discussed in detail in this chapter.

4.1 Research Philosophy and Paradigms

Research philosophy is the development of knowledge in a particular field and the nature in which that knowledge is propounded. Proctor (2005) stress that research philosophies are the basis on which every academic study is grounded. Saunders, Thornhill and Lewis (2007) are of the view that research philosophy is a signal of how the researcher views the world and that the conjectures made will drive the strategy and methods for the research. Therefore, one cannot overlook research philosophy as it will have an adverse effects on the quality of work that will be produced. Saunders et al. (2007) placed research philosophies into three main perspectives: epistemology, ontology and axiology. Malhotra and Birks (2006) define research paradigms as “a set of assumptions consisting of agreed-upon knowledge, criteria of judgment, problem fields, and ways to consider them”. Paradigms as defined by Kuhn (1970) are “a set of beliefs, values and techniques which is shared by members of a scientific community, and which acts as a guide or map, dictating the kinds of problems scientists should address and the types of explanations that are acceptable to them”. Saunders et al (2007) define a paradigm as “a way of examining social phenomena from which particular understandings of these phenomena can be gained and explanations attempted”. Accordingly, paradigms serve as an

aid in the clarification and summarization of epistemologies and ontologies (Burrell & Morgan, 1979).

Epistemology has to do with what is acceptable, adequate and legitimate knowledge within a field of study and the researcher is distant or independent from what is being studied (Saunders et al., 2007; Blakie, 2010). Under this perspective are positivist, realist and interpretivist philosophies (Saunders et al., 2007). Positivist, according to Remenyi et al. (1998, p.32). involves “working with an observable social reality and that the end product of such research can be law-like generalisations similar to those produced by the physical and natural scientists”. Ontological perspectives relate to the nature of reality based on the assumptions researchers make and their commitment to certain views (Saunders et al., 2007) as well as types of social phenomena that exist and conditions under which they exist and how they relate (Blakie, 2010). Saunders et al. (2007) group ontological perspectives as “Objectivism (that social entities exist in reality external to social actors), Subjectivism (that social phenomena are created from the perceptions and consequent actions of social actors) and Pragmatism”. On the other hand axiology is concerned with “studying judgment about value” (Saunders et al., 2007) and in this perspective Heron (1996) posit that one’s values guides all human actions. Downward and Mearman (2007), Beverland and Lindgreen (2010), and Jernigan (2010) point out that, amongst the several existing philosophical views, the major paradigms that dominate and reflect the most theoretical guidelines in social science research are critical realism, interpretivism, positivism, realism and relativism approaches. Malhotra and Birks (2006) also acknowledge that empiricism (source of all knowledge is based on experience) and more specifically positivism are the most dominant perspectives in the development of new theories in marketing research.

Positivism, as described earlier, shares the view that consumer and marketing studies should be 'scientific' in the manner of the natural sciences (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). The positivistic approach is founded on a belief that the study of human behaviour should be conducted in the same way as studies conducted in the natural sciences (Collis & Hussey, 2003, p.52). This approach attempts to establish causal links and relationships between the different elements (or variables) under study and relate them to a particular theory or practice (Neville, 2007). This, therefore, makes the researcher independent of the study, thus becoming less biased. Realism views that there is truth, which is very independent from the human mind (Saunders et al., 2007). Bickerton (2000) holds that social phenomena is understood through the development and testing of hypothesis to establish relationships between variables. This is similar to the positivist approach as it also "assumes a scientific approach to knowledge development" (Saunders et al., 2007).

4.2 Research Purpose

Robson (2002) indicates that the main purpose for conducting research is exploratory, explanatory and descriptive. Malhotra and Birks (2006) categorizes research purpose into exploratory design and conclusive design. Social sciences research however also classifies research purpose as exploratory, descriptive and explanatory (Saunders et al., 2007). Descriptive research attempts to systematically describe a situation, problem, or phenomena by providing facts about living conditions or a depiction of people's attitudes towards issues (Kumar, 2011). Bhattacharjee (2012) indicates that research is directed at making careful observations and detailed documentation of a phenomenon of interest. The researcher of this perspective observes and vividly describes the observations made, which is expressed either quantitatively or qualitatively (Babbie, 2004). Boateng (2014) indicates that, in systematically describing a situation or phenomena, it is usually as the question "what".

Exploratory research is undertaken purposely to explore an area where little knowledge has been acquired and usually a small scale study is undertaken to find out the possibilities of carrying out a detailed one (Kumar, 2011). According to Bhattacharjee (2012), exploratory studies are mostly carried out to: “(1) to scope out the magnitude or extent of a particular phenomenon, problem, or behaviour, (2) to generate some initial ideas (or “hunches”) about that phenomenon, or (3) to test the feasibility of undertaking a more extensive study regarding that phenomenon. It serves as a valuable effort in discovering “what is happening; to seek insights to ask questions and to assess phenomena in new light” (Robson, 2002). Saunders et al. (2007) posit that it has advantages of being “flexible” and “adaptable” to change. On the other hand, explanatory research seeks to find cause and effects by establishing relationships between variables (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). It endeavours to “connect the dots” in research, by detecting instrumental factors and consequences of the target phenomenon (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Explanatory research seeks to find or clarify how and why a relationship exist between two facets of a situation (Kumar, 2011). Inherently it uses an independent variable and dependent variables, which are manipulated in one way or the other and measured to deduce causality (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). This study therefore adopts an exploratory approach based on the above discussions to investigate the effects of marketing activities of mobile phone firms on customer repurchase intention mediated by customer based brand equity.

4.3 Research Approach

Researchers over the years have discussed two general approaches that are widely used in business and management research describing them as quantitative and qualitative research (Khotari, 2004; Dezin & Lincoln, 2000; Kumar, 2011). Saunders et al. (2007) as well as Creswell (2014) groups research approaches into mono, multi and mixed methods. They argue that mono methods uses a single data collection technique conducting the study whilst a multi

method would employ more than one data collection technique from quantitative or qualitative research but not a combination of the two. However, the mixed method employs a combination of the both quantitative and qualitative approaches to make an enquiry. Kumar (2011) describes quantitative research approach as a structured enquiry where objectives and questions that are planned to ask respondents are predetermined. Qualitative approach conversely, is more often used to explore the nature of an issue or phenomena and allows for the flexibility to describe the situation (Cooper & Schindler, 2006). Researchers such as Saunders et al. (2007) from the above perspectives describe quantitative and qualitative studies as deductive and inductive approaches respectively. The major differences may also lie in the number of respondents from which data is collected and analysed. These research approaches (qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods) are further delineated below.

Qualitative Approach

Qualitative research has been defined by Malhotra and Birks (2006) as “an unstructured, primarily exploratory design based on small samples, intended to provide insight and understanding”. This, they postulate, is made up of various methods that can be flexibly applied in order to allow respondents to “reflect upon and express their views or observe their behaviour”. Such an approach aims at determining underlying motives and desires through the use of in-depth interviews (Kothari, 2004) and is most important in behavioural sciences in discovering underlying motives of human behaviour (Saunders et al., 2007). According to Amarantunga et al. (2002) and Herington et al. (2005) it involves having a close interaction with a small purposive sample over a lengthy time period. Arguments by Malhotra and Birks (2006) and MacDonald and Headlam (2008), stands that qualitative research’s effort is to increase understanding of the essential motives and drives for actions and establishes how

people interpret their experiences and the world around them generating ideas and/or hypotheses.

Quantitative Approach

This research approach is based on the measurement of amount or quantity (Kothari, 2004) using numeric data such as scores and metrics and is amenable to statistical analysis such as regression and correlational analysis (Bhattacharjee, 2012). According to Creswell (2014), it is a method of testing objective theories through the examination of the relationship between variables. It is more structured as it uses statistics to confirm or contradict conclusions or hypothesis drawn from theories on previous research (Kumar, 2011; Boateng, 2014). Kumar (2011) further states that it “helps you to quantify the magnitude of an association or relationship, provide an indication of the confidence you can place in your findings and help you to isolate the effect of different variables”. It is predominantly used in instances where data collection tools such as questionnaires are used in the research process (Saunders et al., 2007). In literature, quantitative research is mostly associated with positivism or empirism paradigm (Smith, 1983). A quantitative approach will therefore be testing the relationships among variables using statistical data collection tools and analysis techniques from which deductions will be made to either accept or reject hypotheses based on theory. Although it employs a larger sample sizes some critics have argued that generalizations does not apply to all issues and that it lacks in-depth understanding to situations (Wiskers, 2001; Yin, 2003).

Mixed Method Approach

Generally, the term mixed method is used to refer to research, which employs both the qualitative and quantitative approaches (Saunders et al., 2007). Although scholars have the option of choosing between qualitative and quantitative approaches, Bhattacharjee (2012)

views that it is an approach that leads to generating unique insights in the scientific community. This is emphasized by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) and Creswell (2014), in that the overall quality is greater than studies that employ a single approach in its investigations. Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) argue that it is essential when it provides greater opportunities in answering research questions and allows for better evaluations on the extent to which findings can be trusted and inferences be generated from. Boateng (2014) and Creswell (2009) indicate that the mixed methods approach can take three major forms, which are sequential, concurrent and transformative. Saunders et al. (2007) points that mixed method approach uses both the quantitative and qualitative simultaneously or in a sequential manner but does not combine them.

From the above discussions, this study will adopt a quantitative approach as it will be more appropriate in achieving the set objectives. In the bid to establish the effects of marketing activities and customer based brand equity on customer repurchase intention, the quantitative approach is deemed more suitable as it will test to establish relationships among variables from the formulated hypothesis.

4.4 Research Strategy

Research strategy is the procedures followed in order to gain understanding and provide answers to the research questions being asked. Saunders et al. (2007) indicates that there is no one best research strategy. Although some of the strategies belong to the inductive or the deductive approach (Saunders et al., 2007) each of the strategies can be employed in exploratory, explanatory and descriptive research (Yin, 2003). Some major research strategies include the case study, experiment and survey.

Case study

The case study as defined by Robson (2002) is “a strategy for doing research which involves an empirical investigation of a particular contemporary phenomenon within its real life context using multiple sources of evidence”. The issue of context in this manner is also highlighted by Yin (2003) noting that, in a cases study, the confines amid the phenomenon being studied and its context are not very clear. According to Morris and Wood (1991), it is essential when the researcher wishes to gain in-depth understanding of the research setting and procedures being enacted. It has the capabilities of providing answers to questions of ‘why?’, ‘what?’ and ‘how?’ and can be in the form of a single case or multiple cases (Saunders et al., 2007).

Experiment

The purpose of experiment, according to Hakim (2000), is to study casual relationships to find out if a change in one independent variable causes a change in another dependent variable. It provides a logical and systematic means of providing an answer to the question “What will happen if this is done when certain variables are carefully controlled or manipulated?” (Kothari, 2004). According to Bhattacharjee (2012), it is one of the most rigorous strategies employed in research and best for conducting explanatory studies. Saunders et al. (2007) indicates that more often experiments are carried out in laboratories rather than in the field and is more expensive to conduct.

Survey

This is a deductive approach which is used to answer the questions of “who”, “what”, “how much” and “how many” using a large amount of data from a “sizable” population (Saunders et al., 2007). They indicate that it allows you to gather quantitative data, which can be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Survey research uses standardized questionnaires to gather data about people and their preferences in a systematic manner and has inherent

strengths compared to other research techniques (Bhattacharjee, 2012). Survey strategy is best used when the study population of interest is very large and cannot be observed directly. Babbie (2004) indicates that it reflects the views of a larger populace using cautiously developed structured questionnaires to draw data from them in a similar manner. Malhotra and Birks (2006) indicate that, though it most often uses questionnaires, other data collection instruments such as structured observations and interviews can be employed. In view of these arguments, the study employed a survey strategy as it seeks to gain direct responses from a cross-section of mobile phone consumers on their views on how marketing activities mediated by customer based brand equity affect their repurchase intentions.

4.5 Research Design

Research design is “the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure” (Selltiz, Deutsch & Cook, 1962). Saunders et al. (2009) purports that the “general plan” as to how you will answer your research objectives is what the research plan is about. It is basically about turning the research questions into a viable research project as indicated by Robson (2002). Maholtra and Birks (2006) connotes that the research design is the overall framework or blueprint, which serves as a guide giving details as to the processes necessary to obtain information to provide solutions to marketing research issues. Thus, the research design lays the foundation for carrying out a project (Kothari, 2004). According to Bhattacharjee (2012), research design is a “comprehensive plan for data collection in an empirical research project”. Bhattacharjee further indicates that it is an empirical process aimed at providing answers to specific research questions or testing hypotheses using at least three main procedures: (1) data collection process; (2) the instrument development process; and (3) the sampling process. Saunders et al. (2007) also stress that it must specify the sources from which data will be

collected and consideration given to constraints that will be inevitable such as data access, time, location and funds. A marketing research study needs a good research design, which will ensure it is conducted effectively and efficiently.

4.6 Research Design Adopted

From the various discussions held in the previous sections and grounded on Gill and Johnson (1997), the research clearly adopted a positivist approach using a methodology that was well structured with data collected on a quantitative basis and analyzed statistically. A review of existing literature helped in the formulation of research hypotheses, which were tested empirically to establish the relationship that exists between the dependent and independent variables. The study was explanatory in nature which sought to give clarification to a phenomena subject to the research situation by seeking to understand customers' perception and how marketing activities mediated by brand equity driving customers' intention to repurchase. A survey strategy was adopted (Saunders et al., 2007) in order to test the relationships between various latent variables and their importance of perception of marketing activities and repurchase intentions. Structured questionnaires were used in collecting information from respondents, which helped in providing statistical evidence of the role of marketing activities on customers' repurchase intentions. A cross sectional time horizon was adopted as it studied a specific phenomenon at a particular period (Saunders et al., 2007) employing the survey strategy (Easterby-Smith et al., 2002; Robson, 2002). In addition, survey strategy has been mostly employed by scholars using cross-sectional time horizon in their studies such as Wu (2011), Chahal and Bala (2012), and Mensah (2015).

4.7 Data Sources and Data Collection Techniques

To undertake a research there is the need to obtain the right/required data. This could sometimes be existing whereas in other cases data may not be available (Kumar, 2011). Saunders et al. (2007) indicate that, basically, there exists two main sources of data for conducting research, which are primary and secondary data. According to Maholtra and Birks (2007), primary data originates from the researcher for specific purposes of addressing a particular problem while secondary data consists of data gathered for other purposes than the current issue at hand. There are various ways of gathering primary data (Kumar, 2011). These include, and are not limited to, observation, questionnaires, and semi-structured, in-depth and group interviews (Saunders et al., 2007). Data collected from census, government and organisational publications, journals, magazines, newspapers, personal records among others constitute secondary data, which is information collected for purposes other than what is at stake (Kothari, 2004). This study adopted primary sources for data collection as it was deemed essential in obtaining direct responses on consumers' views on the effects of marketing activities on repurchase intentions and how this relationship is mediated by customer based brand equity.

Structured questionnaire was used, employing the survey strategy. Questionnaires were self-administered as the researcher sought to collect data that would be used to test the relationship between variables using quantitative techniques. The use of questionnaires was found to be more affordable as collection of data involved a large sample size. Saunders et al. (2007) stress that the use of structured questionnaires with its standardized nature makes it easier to collect data as compared to other alternatives. The questionnaire was essential as each respondent was made to respond to the same set of questions making it an efficient way of collecting responses from a large sample prior to analyzing it quantitatively (Saunders et al., 2007). Another advantage of using the questionnaire is the fact that it is easy and simple to tabulate and analyse

(Peterson, 2000). In order to minimize errors, misinterpretation and misconstruction it was pretested for reliability as stressed by Mitchel (1996). This was important as Saunders et al. (2007) opine that respondents may consistently interpret a question in a way that may be very far from what the researcher actually means.

4.8 Questionnaire Design and Administration

The questionnaire used in conducting the study was developed based on Saunders et al. (2007) who gives guidance on how to develop questionnaires for a survey, taking research questions and objectives into critical consideration. The early stages involved a careful blend of the relevant literature applicable to the ebb and flow of the study from which certain ideas in the current study model resulted from. The consequent activity involved developing new construct variables and their estimations in light of the literature that supports and underpins these ideas and variables. Thus, a first draft of the questionnaire was outlined after which a pre-test was conducted which comprised of thirty (30) undergraduate students of the University of Ghana Business School. The pre-test was based on Fink (2003) cited in Saunders et al. (2007) who recommends that a base of ten (10) individuals for pre-testing is satisfactory. The pre-test was completed with spotlight on the content, phrasing, groupings and difficulty of the questions in order to conclude on the applicability, appropriateness and unwavering quality of the questions, and to take out uncertainty after which last amendments and the supervisor's input were made by stating and clarifying the items measured.

In all, the questionnaire was designed in two parts. The first part of the questionnaire captures the demographic characteristics of the respondents (gender, age, education) and other information, which were relevant to the study. The second segment, which has three categories, focused on the variables under the conceptual framework: mobile phone firms marketing

activities; dimensions of customer based brand equity; and customer repurchase intentions. In regards to the constructs within the research framework, marketing activities were measured under four themes adapted from Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000) and Zhang, Rau and Zhou (2010). Customer based brand equity was measured with six items from Keller (2008), Aaker (1991), Lehmann, Keller and Farley (2008), and Tong and Hawley (2009). Repurchase intention was further measured with the willingness to buy even with price increment or similar features available elsewhere and satisfaction. The scales used were adapted from Cheng and Chang (2008). Overall, a total of 40 items were used and measured using a 5-point Likert scale with “1” being “strongly disagree” and “5” as “strongly agree”.

Data was collected on the campus of the University of Ghana by reaching out to people who were using any of the identified mobile phone brands in the questionnaire seeking their consent to help fill the questionnaire. This process lasted for four weeks between April 4th 2016 and May 9th 2016.

4.9 Population, Sample and Sampling Technique

The set of cases from which the sample used in a study is drawn from is called the population (Saunders et al., 2009). Maholtra and Birks (2006) indicate that the target population is made up of those people who possess the information needed to make inferences in a research. Kumar (2011) stress the need to clearly identify those who constitutes the study population in order to select appropriate respondents to provide the needed information. Specifically identifying and defining the study population therefore makes the data obtained very reliable for making judgments in a study. Attewell and Rule (1991) suggests that using theoretical sampling could be credible as sometimes the true population may not be reasonable enough. Using theoretical sampling helps in purposely selecting cases that have relevant information for the study. The

population of the study was identified as those people who use mobile phone brands to carry out marketing activities and have authorized sales points within the Accra Metropolis. The rationale behind this choice is because mobile brands who do not meet the criteria above are disadvantages on most issues raised in the study. For example, mobile phone brands without these activities will lack availability of price deals, promotion and distribution activities within the study area. Those firms cannot tell the actual value (e.g. sales/financial) they themselves capture from the consumers within the catchment area. Accra was selected as it has a strategic position as it houses all head offices of the mobile phone companies carrying out also most of their activities within the Metropolis.

Sampling is a key element of any research work (Malhotra & Birks, 2006). This study, unlike some other studies which had smaller interest groups serving as the target, thus the likelihood to obtain data from the entire population being high, has a very large population therefore there was the need to employ sampling techniques. Malhotra and Birks (2006), Saunders et al. (2007), and Kumar (2011) indicate that, generally, there are two major sampling techniques, namely, nonprobability and probability sampling methods. According to Saunders et al. (2007) probability sampling techniques are more often associated with survey and experimental studies; whereas the non-probability sampling techniques relates more to case study researches, and are used in quantitative research in scenarios where the population is large. Probability sampling involves giving each element within the target population the equal chance of being selected (Kumar, 2011). Probability sampling techniques, as indicated by Kumar (2011), is imperative as it allows each case to be selected without the consideration of the researcher's personal preferences. Saunders et al. (2007) associates this sampling procedure with survey-based strategies giving five main techniques: simple random; systematic; stratified random; cluster; and multi-stage.

In non-probability sampling, the chance of sample cases being equally selected is quite lean as there is no basis for estimating the probability that an element within the sample will be included (Kothari, 2004). The researcher in this situation deliberately selects cases that will be involved in the study. Malhotra and Birks (2006) underlined that also probability sampling procedures rely, to an extent, on personal judgments indicating it may not be entirely representative of the populace; however, generalizations could still be made from it. Some classifications of non-probability sampling include; quota sampling, purposive sampling, snowball sampling, and convenience sampling procedures. According to Malhotra and Birks (2006), quota sampling is a technique that involves a two-stage restricted judgmental sampling. They indicate that initial stages involve the development of control categories or quotas of the population cases, for example based on gender and elements selected based on some level of judgment or convenience. Purposive sampling techniques' primary concern is the use of judgments to select who can provide the best of information that will help achieve the objectives of the study (Kumar, 2011). Convenience sampling consists of selecting randomly those cases that are easiest to acquire for your sample (Saunders et al., 2007) with snowballing being used when the identification of members of the population is difficult to obtain (Saunders et al., 2009), with subsequent samples obtained through referrals (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). Non-probability sampling was used in this study to select samples as the population was large and data was being collected from specific mobile phone users whose brand conduct marketing and sales activities in Ghana. Data was collected within the Accra metropolis from users of five (5) mobile phone brands specifically employing convenience and purposive sampling techniques. This was because proportionality was not the primary aim but rather the availability of the respondents who would provide information in the administration of the questionnaire. Determination of sample size for research purposes involves various qualitative and quantitative techniques (Malhotra and Birks, 2006). The use of quantitative techniques in

selecting samples that are as large as possible is recommended by researchers such as Hair et al. (2009), Gray (2009), and Burns (2000). A sample size of at least 100 and over is considered reasonable enough in conducting a quantitative study (Hair et al., 2009). Academic scholars share the view that the larger the sample size for the study, the more accurate the data will be in reflecting the true situation at hand. Saunders et al. (2007) indicate that the larger the sample size, the lower the probability error in generalizing the results to the population. Based on these discussions as well as recommendations, and for the sake of achieving accuracy, it was deemed important to use a large sample size for the survey, thus 400 respondents were considered for eliciting information for the study on the campus of the University of Ghana Business School.

4.10 Mode and Instrumentation for Data Analysis

A deductive approach was used in the analysis of data for the study as the hypotheses, which were tested, were based on the review of existing literature on topics such as marketing activities, branding, consumer based brand equity and customers repurchase intentions. Consumers of mobile phone brands who carry out marketing activities in the Ghanaian market were the unit of analysis, which is in accordance with literature. This is especially so for brand equity as the “power of a brand lies in the heart and mind of the consumer”, thus in marketing and branding are best reflected from the perspective of consumers. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 20 and Amos version 22 were the analytical tools used in the analysis of data. The data was initially screened for any errors in giving responses such as wrong input, and issues of out of range scores were corrected.

A combination of descriptive statistics and multivariate data analysis techniques such as confirmatory factor analysis and multiple regression models were employed in the study. Firstly, descriptive statistics were used to measure the central tendency such as mean.

Confirmatory factor analysis was further conducted to verify reliabilities between the variables in the framework. Multiple regression analysis was subsequently used to test and establish the relationships between the constructs in the framework in order to achieve the stated objectives of the study. The multiple regression analysis was used on the basis that four main marketing activities were measure as independent variables (Product attributes (PA), Price (PR), Distribution Intensity (DI), Advertising & Sponsorship (AS)), and six moderating variables under brand equity (Perceived quality (PQ), Brand Awareness (BAW), Brand Image (BI), Brand Loyalty (BL), Differentiation (DIF) and Relevance (REL)), with the dependent variable Repurchase Intention (RI). Multiple regression, as indicated by Saunders et al. (2007), is used to “assess the strength of a relationship between one dependent and two or more independent variables”. Malhotra and Birks (2006) also indicate that it is used to test connections that exist between two or more autonomous variables and an interval-scaled dependent variable as it will determine how well a set of variables will be able to predict an outcome. The prime aim of multiple regression is to make a prediction about the dependent variable based on its covariance with all the concerned independent variables (Kothari, 2004), thus it was deemed appropriate to use this analysis technique for the survey.

4.11 Validity and Reliability

Reliability, according to Malhotra and Birks (2006), is the degree to which a dimension will replicate unswerving results if the procedures involved are repeated. Moser and Kalton (1989) claim that “a scale or test is reliable to the extent that repeat measurements made by it under constant conditions will give the same result”. Pallant (2011) indicates it is the degree to which a scale will be independent of random errors. Easterby-Smith et al. (2002) indicates it can be assessed by asking whether the measures yield the same results on other occasions; similar observations can be reached by other observers; and if there is transparency in how sense was

made from the raw data. The most generally used approaches in assessment of reliability, according to Malhotra and Birks (2006), include internal consistency and test-retest. Kumar (2011) found external consistency (test-retest and parallel forms of the same test) a measure of reliability. Internal consistency is the level to which the items making up the scales are evaluating the same core elements and test-retest is a reliability test that calculates the relationship between two scores using correlation after the administration of scales to the same groups of people at varying time intervals (Maholtra & Birks, 2006). The split-half technique is an internal consistency procedure, which is designed to correlate half of the items with that of other items (Kumar, 2011). Cronbach's alpha is the most widely used indicator of reliability and is considered by Ghauri and Gronhaug (2005) as a measurement of inter-correlations between the several items representing constructs. Hair et al. (2009) indicates that, to be able to reveal a suitable reliability, the calculated value for Cronbach alpha should not be anything less than 0.70 margin although this could decrease to 0.6 in exploratory studies. In order to test and confirm the degree of reliability for the instrument used in conducting the research Cronbach alpha was then employed.

Basically, validity has to do with the ability of an instrument to measure what it is designed to measure (Kumar, 2011). This according to Kerlinger (1973), it can be simply defined by asking the question: "Are we measuring what we think we are measuring?" Against this, Kothari (2004) indicates that the validity is the most vital benchmark for which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure. Validity is a very significant measure, which assesses the value of a study by verifying and clarifying the quality of the data and findings (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). According to Kumar (2011), there are three types of validity: face and content validity; concurrent and predictive validity; and construct validity. The study instrument was examined using the face and content validity procedure. The items or questions asked must

relate logically to the study objectives. This link is termed as face validity and assessing the items within the instrument in this note is content validity (Kumar, 2011). Kothari (2004) notes that it is the degree to which the instrument of measurement adequately covers the issues under study. Based on standards set by academic scholars who stress that the use of simple face validity test by asking for the views of people on the study (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005) and conducting pre-tests for content validity as postulated by Hair et al. (2009). The questionnaire was appraised by the supervising professor and pre-tested at the University of Ghana by students as indicated previously.

4.12 Ethical Considerations

In all professions, ethical guidance is of high value. Kumar (2011) indicates that over the years ethical codes have evolved in order to accommodate the dynamic ethos, values, needs and expectations. On this premise, the consent of all respondents were respectively sought with the aims and objectives of the study clarified to them. Ethical considerations were made a priority as participants were encouraged to willingly part-take in the study. Confidentiality was assured as the personal information of respondents were not revealed in the study since it was for academic purposes.

CHAPTER FIVE

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction

The previous chapter deliberated on the various techniques employed in conducting the study. This chapter goes on to discuss the output of collected data and presents the empirical results gathered through self-administered questionnaires on the University of Ghana campus. The early sections of this chapter deals with the demographic profiles of the respondents based on age, gender, educational level and type of mobile devices they purchase and use most often. The targeted respondents for the study were users of mobile phone brands who carry out marketing activities and have authorized sales points within the Accra metropolis. The results of reliability of scales items and descriptive statistics are also discussed. The chapter finally presents results on multivariate data analysis conducted to establish the relationship between the dependent and independent variables of the study.

5.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

The study took a look at respondents who responded to the questionnaires biographic data. This was done by profiling then according to gender, age, educational qualification and the mobile device brands they often purchase and use. Table 5.1 below illustrates the demographic data obtained from the research.

On gender of the respondents, male respondents outweighed females slightly, with males recording 51.5 percent of the total while females were 49.5%. This shows the study had a fair representation of gender. The study revealed the lowest number in an age group as those over the age of 36 years with 4.1 percent, which was followed by those between the ages of 32-36

and 27-31 at 12.6% and 16.2% respectively. Respondents with the highest representation were between the ages of 22-26 (48.8%) dominating, proceeded by 18-21 (18.2%).

Table 5. 1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Profile	Measurement	Frequency	Percent
Gender	Male	175	51.5
	Female	165	48.5
Age	18-21	62	18.2
	22-26	166	48.8
	27-31	55	16.2
	32-36	43	12.6
	Over 36	14	4.1
Education	Bachelor degree	242	71.2
	Master degree	78	22.9
	PHD	20	5.9
The brand you frequently purchase and use	Nokia	70	20.6
	Samsung	147	43.2
	Huawei	24	7.1
	Techno	26	7.6
	Infinix	73	21.5
N=340			

Source: Field Survey (2016)

In terms of respondents' educational level, the majority (71.2%) of the respondents either had or were pursuing a Bachelor's degree with 22.9 percent and 5.9 percent either pursuing or had Masters or Doctorate degree respectively. This indicates that the sample had the ability to grasp the issues at hand and provide responses that were precise for the study. Additionally respondents were asked to indicate the type of mobile devices often purchased and used. From the above table, the majority of the respondents (43.2%) were found to be regular buyers and users of Samsung mobile devices. This was followed by users of Infinix at 21.5%, Nokia 20.6%, Techno 7.6% and Huawei 7.1%. This was relevant as the study sought to examine some mobile phone brands, which had fully-fledged, authorized marketing and sales subsidiaries in the study area.

5.2 Descriptive Statistics

Over the years, scholars have suggested the need to subject data collected in studies involving human participants to descriptive analysis prior to any additional analysis (Malhotra & Birks, 2007). The study therefore did a descriptive analysis of the data presented in means, as seen in Table 5.2 below. The questionnaire for the study was scaled from 1-5 with 1 as strongly disagree 3 being neutral and 5 as strongly agree. The mean values therefore showed the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with the statements in the questionnaire. The study found the highest means being registered by “This brand is well known” and “Products from my brand is consistent in quality” with scores of 3.79 and 3.70 respectively. The lowest scaled items were “Special material is used in making my phone” (3.07) and “Frequent price deals are offered for this brand” (3.06).

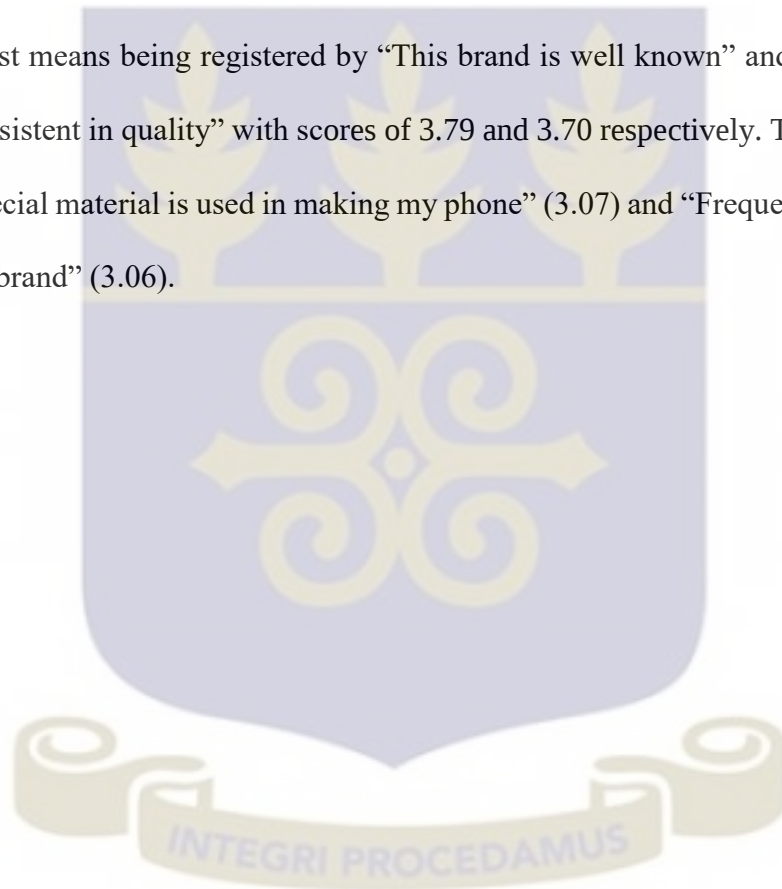


Table 5. 2 -Variables

	Code	N	Mean
My mobile phone brand has a special appearance	PA1	340	3.32
The design of my phone brand is unique	PA2	340	3.28
Special material is used in making my phone	PA3	340	3.07
Frequent price deals are offered for this brand	PR1	340	3.06
The price of this brand is always reasonable	PR2	340	3.16
This brand is affordable	PR3	340	3.24
Compared to competing brands, this brand is stocked in more stores	DI1	340	3.46
The number of stores selling this brand is higher than the number of stores selling competing brands.	DI2	340	3.38
This brand is distributed through the largest possible number of stores	DI3	340	3.41
This brand is intensively advertised	AS1	340	3.37
Advertising campaigns for this brand look more expensive than advertising campaigns for competing brands	AS2	340	3.24
I often notice this brand as a sponsor of various events	AS3	340	3.21
This brand seems to invest more in sponsorship of various events than competing brands	AS4	340	3.20
I trust the quality of products from this brand	PQ1	340	3.60
Products from my brand is consistent in quality	PQ2	340	3.70
My brands products are very reliable	PQ3	340	3.60
Products from the brand is very durable	PQ4	340	3.58
Some characteristics of this brand come to my mind quickly	BAW1	340	3.44
I can recognize this brand quickly among other competing brands	BAW2	340	3.58
I am familiar with this brand	BAW3	340	3.69
This brand is well-known	BAW4	340	3.79
This brand has very unique brand image, compared to competing brands	BI1	340	3.56
I respect and admire people who use this brand	BI2	340	3.52
I like the brand image of this brand	BI3	340	3.54
I like and trust the company, which makes this brands products	BI4	340	3.64
I consider myself to be loyal to this brand	BL1	340	3.41
This brand always comes as my first choice of mobile phones	BL2	340	3.33
This brand would be my best choice	BL3	340	3.31
I would love to recommend this brand to my friends	BL4	340	3.46
This brand stands out from its competitors	DIF1	340	3.47
The brand stands for something unique	DIF2	340	3.45
This brand is in a class of itself	DIF3	340	3.48
The brand is relevant to me	REL1	340	3.40
The brand is relevant to my family and/or close friends	REL2	340	3.30
My brand is a good one for me	REL3	340	3.48
This brand fits my lifestyle	REL4	340	3.54
I am still willing to buy this brand even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitors	RI1	340	3.34
Even if another brand has the same features as this brand, I would prefer to buy this brand	RI2	340	3.45
I will keep on buying this brand as long as it provides me satisfied products	RI3	340	3.61

Source: Field Survey (2016)

5.3 Analysis and Results of Structural Equation Modelling

The hypotheses formulated from the conceptual framework were tested using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM). As approved by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), a two stage model was adopted in this study. This was done in line with Hair et al. (2010) who indicated that the accuracy of represented reliability of each construct used is best directed in two stages in order to elude any interactions between the measurement model and the structural model.

5.3.1 Confirmatory Factor Analysis

The table below gives a summary of the Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) conducted to test the multidimensionality of the variables. All the factor loadings were within the acceptable range and satisfied the CFA condition of 0.50 threshold as indicated by Hair et al. (2010). In conducting CFA, R^2 must not be less than 0.20 as it's an indication of high level of error (Hooper, Coughlan, & Mullen, 2008). The t-values were all within satisfactory levels with the R^2 also falling within the acceptable range.

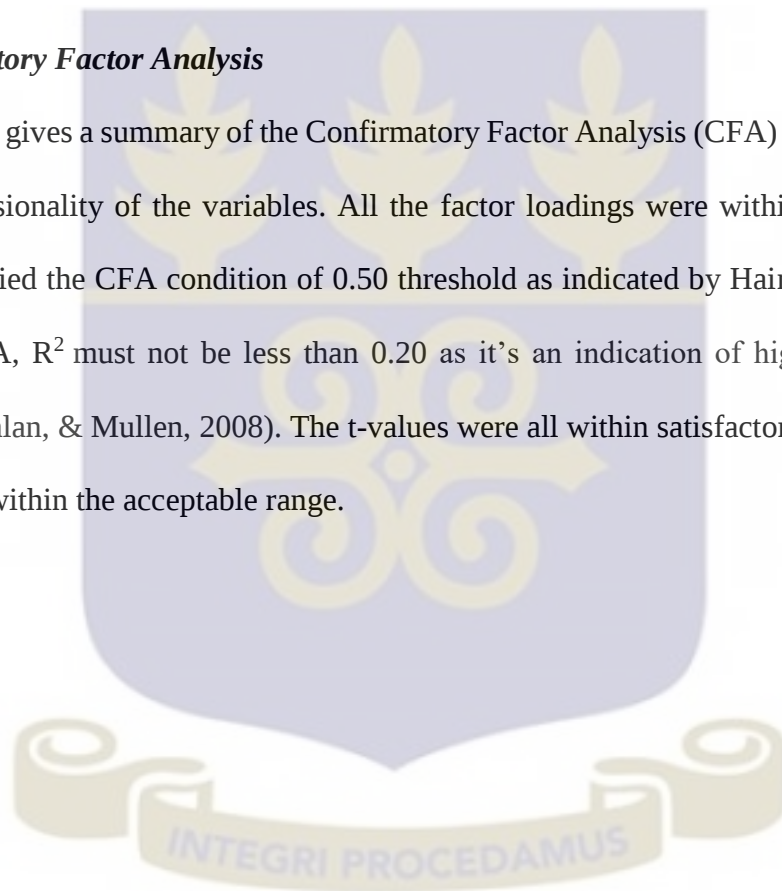


Table 5. 3 - Factor Loadings

Constructs	Variables	β	<i>t-value</i>	R^2	α	CR
Product Attributes	PA3	0.77	11.02	0.81	.891	0.89
	PA2	0.91	12.09	0.82		
	PA1	0.88	11.90	0.59		
Price	PR3	0.82	Fixed	0.45	.839	0.85
	PR2	0.92	16.79	0.84		
	PR1	0.67	12.93	0.67		
Distribution Intensity	DI3	0.86	Fixed	0.70	.891	0.89
	DI2	0.87	20.32	0.75		
	DI1	0.84	19.34	0.75		
Advertising & Sponsorship	AS4	0.78	Fixed	0.63	.873	0.87
	AS3	0.82	15.94	0.62		
	AS2	0.77	14.90	0.70		
	AS1	0.81	15.62	0.62		
Perceived Quality	PQ4	0.84	Fixed	0.75	.873	0.93
	PQ3	0.90	22.06	0.86		
	PQ2	0.92	22.76	0.83		
	PQ1	0.87	20.48	0.70		
Brand Awareness	BAW4	0.85	Fixed	0.53	.932	0.91
	BAW3	0.88	21.08	0.76		
	BAW2	0.89	21.36	0.78		
	BAW1	0.75	16.35	0.74		
Brand Image	BI4	0.85	Fixed	0.66	.903	0.91
	BI3	0.87	20.69	0.71		
	BI2	0.84	19.57	0.76		
	BI1	0.81	18.54	0.72		
Brand Loyalty	BL4	0.90	Fixed	0.65	.907	0.91
	BL3	0.88	23.80	0.71		
	BL2	0.85	22.09	0.76		
	BL1	0.81	20.22	0.81		
Differentiation	DIF3	0.89	Fixed	0.77	.917	0.91
	DIF2	0.88	22.66	0.77		
	DIF1	0.88	22.70	0.79		
Relevance	REL4	0.86	Fixed	0.71	.911	0.91
	REL3	0.87	21.44	0.62		
	REL2	0.79	18.09	0.74		
	REL1	0.84	19.99	0.71		
Repurchase Intention	RI3	0.83	Fixed	0.69	.904	0.89
	RI2	0.89	19.91	0.73		
	RI1	0.86	19.08	0.71		

Source: Field Survey (2016)

The CR as illustrated in the above table is the construct reliability, which in some instances is known as the composite reliability or internal consistency as indicated by Werts et al. (1974). Chin (1998) stress that it is a measurement of the constructs unidimensionality and is seen as a better gauge of Cronbach's Alpha. The values of the CR attained after the CFA were: product attributes 0.89; price 0.85; distribution intensity 0.89; advertising and sponsorship 0.87; and perceived quality 0.93. The constructs of brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand image, differentiation and relevance all had a CR of 0.91 with repurchase intention having a CR of 0.89. The range of the values were between 0.85 and 0.93 which were high enough to confirm the reliability of all the constructs. Evidence of unidimensionality was clear indicating that all constructs were appropriate for the study.

A report on the Cronbach alpha is seen in table 5.3 above with product attributes recording a value of 0.89; for price 0.84; distribution intensity 0.89; advertising and sponsorship 0.87; perceived quality 0.87; brand awareness 0.93; brand image 0.90; and brand loyalty 0.91. Reliability for differentiation was 0.92, with relevance having 0.91, and repurchase intention 0.90. The values attained were all within the acceptable range and thus indicated a very strong internal consistency. The coefficient for Cronbach's alpha reliability test usually ranges between 0 and 1 with the closer the coefficient is to 1 the greater the internal consistency of the items in the scale (Gliem & Gliem, 2003). Based on these results from the factor loadings table, it has been confirmed that there is convergent and discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

5.3.2 Measurement Fit

Bagozzi (1981), and Bagozzi and Yi (1988) indicate that the measurement model allows for the analysis of casual interactions between variables in a structural model. The initial stage of

the analysis in the study was performed through specifying the casual relationships between the dependent and independent variables of the study. This was mainly conducted to determine the reliability of the unidimensionality of the composite and latent variables. In so doing, it ensured that the items used achieved their objective of empirically determining a single dimension. The measurement model is presented in the table below.

Table 5. 4 - Measurement Fit

Measurement model fit Indices for the Proposed Model		
Goodness-of-fit Indices	Benchmark	Value
Absolute goodness of fit measure		
Chi-square (CMIN)	$P \geq 0.05$	0
Chi-square /degree of freedom	≤ 2	1.6
Absolute badness of fit measure		
Root mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	≤ 0.08	0.04
Incremental fit measure		
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	≥ 0.90	0.92
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	≥ 0.90	0.97
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	≥ 0.90	0.96
Parsimony fit measure		
Parsimony Comparative of Fit index (PCFI)	≥ 0.50	0.83
Parsimony Normed of Fit index (PNFI)	≥ 0.50	0.79

Source: Field Survey (2016)

As reported in Table 5.4 above the fitness model of the study was tested. Using at least three fit indices has been recommended as crucial in authenticating the fitness of the model. Hair et al. (2010) and Holmes-Smith (2006) demonstrate very popular indicators for use in structural equation modelling which are absolute, incremental and parsimonious measures. There measures were duly employed in the study. The table indicates that the various indicators in the fitness model were satisfied accordingly beyond doubt. The value for Chi-square was 0.000, which indicates it was statistically significant at $P \geq 0.05$. The second measure deployed was

the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which tested for the fitness of the model. The RMSEA value of 0.04 obtained was well within the acceptable range of 0.80 or less, further validating the fitness of the model (Byrne, 2010; Diamantopoulos & Sigauw, 2000).

Hair et al. (2010) indicates the importance of incremental fit measure, which provides a comparison between the proposed and null models. The first incremental measure reported on the table is the Normed Fit Index (NFI) of which a value of 0.92 was obtained. According to Hair et al. (2010), this is a near perfect fit. Further reported on the table to support the NFI was the Comparative Fit Index (CFI) as the NFI does not control for the degrees of freedom. The value for CFI obtained was 0.97. This was acceptable as it must fall within 0.90 or more to be fit. The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) value obtained was 0.96, which was well within the acceptable range of 0.90 or greater. All the indicators for the incremental fit measurements verified that the model was fit. Finally, Parsimonious' fit indice was performed to test the level at which the model achieved fitness for each of the estimated coefficients. Hair et al. (2010) indicates that in this measure the closer the values are to 1 the better the fitness of the model. Values of 0.83 and 0.79 were obtained which indicated that the models were certified to be fit.

Table 5.5 below shows the squares of the correlations of the individual constructs were less than the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), indicating its support for discriminatory validity. Several studies have validated this approach and certified that, in the assessment of the discriminant validity, each construct's AVE's must be compared with the squared correlations between each pair of the variables. Segars (1997) and Anderson and Gerbing (1988) indicate that AVE's which are greater than any squared correlation suggest discriminant validity has been achieved.

Table 5. 5 - Correlation

<i>Items</i>	<i>1.00</i>	<i>2.00</i>	<i>3.00</i>	<i>4.00</i>	<i>5.00</i>	<i>6.00</i>	<i>7.00</i>	<i>8.00</i>	<i>9.00</i>	<i>10.00</i>	<i>11.00</i>
Product attributes	0.74										
Price	0.45	0.65									
Distribution intensity	0.28	0.25	0.73								
Advertising & sponsorship	0.31	0.18	0.66	0.63							
Perceived quality	0.38	0.31	0.67	0.57	0.78						
Brand awareness	0.35	0.35	0.72	0.63	0.74	0.71					
Brand image	0.32	0.29	0.63	0.61	0.75	0.74	0.71				
Brand loyalty	0.38	0.29	0.57	0.60	0.78	0.69	0.76	0.74			
Differentiation	0.38	0.27	0.63	0.61	0.71	0.71	0.73	0.78	0.78		
Relevance	0.35	0.28	0.64	0.65	0.73	0.73	0.78	0.85	0.79	0.70	
Repurchase intention	0.33	0.29	0.51	0.54	0.69	0.63	0.65	0.78	0.67	0.77	0.74
Means	3.22	3.15	3.41	3.25	3.62	3.63	3.56	3.38	3.47	3.43	3.47
Std. D	1.15	1.04	1.12	1.02	1.04	1.00	1.01	1.06	1.09	1.02	1.11

Note: Average Variances extracted (AVE) are on the diagonal; squared correlations are off-diagonal. The AVEs for each construct are far greater than the corresponding inter-construct square correlations, thereby supporting discriminant validity.

Source: Field Survey (2016)

5.3.3 Structural Model

The structural model test was the second face of the SEM analysis that was conducted. According to Arbuckle (2005), a structural model is an aspect of modelling which shows how underlying variables interact and relate with each other. Structural models as posited by Byrne (2010), determines the assessment of hypothesized relationships between the latent variables, which enable the hypotheses of the study to be tested statistically. The results obtained for the second stage of the Structural Equation Modelling are presented in Table 5.6 below and indicates that all value achieved fell within the acceptable range.

Analysis of Hypothesized Relationships between Marketing Activities and Brand Equity

The study went on to examine the relationship between the individual constructs of marketing activities that affect brand equity. This was hypothesized as H2a-H2d on the conceptual framework. Findings can be seen in Table 5.6 below.

Table 5. 6 - Hypothesized Paths

			β	<i>P</i>	<i>t-value</i>
BRAND EQUITY	<---	PRODUCT ATTRIBUTES	0.13	***	3.29
BRAND EQUITY	<---	PRICE	0.10	0.007	2.68
BRAND EQUITY	<---	DISTRIBUTION INTENSITY	0.43	***	9.98
BRAND EQUITY	<---	ADVERTISING & SPONSORSHIP	0.36	***	8.35
REPURCHASE INTENTION	<---	PERCEIVED QUALITY	0.16	0.006	2.74
REPURCHASE INTENTION	<---	BRAND AWARENESS	0.04	0.518	0.65
REPURCHASE INTENTION	<---	BRAND IMAGE	-0.07	0.248	-1.15
REPURCHASE INTENTION	<---	BRAND LOYALTY	0.44	***	7.99
REPURCHASE INTENTION	<---	DIFFERENTIATION	0.01	0.928	0.09
REPURCHASE INTENTION	<---	RELEVANCE	0.44	***	7.89

Source: Field Survey (2016)

The study found the highest relationship between distribution intensity and brand equity with a β value of 0.43 ($p = 0.000$), which was statistically significant. Advertising and sponsorship, having a statistically significant effect on brand equity with an estimate of 0.36 ($p = 0.000$), was followed by that of product attribute with 0.13 ($p = 0.0009$). Price had the least significant relationship with brand equity with a β value of 0.10 ($p = 0.006$). Thus, hypothesis H2a - H2d are all accepted, as all the constructs of marketing activities have significant positive relationship with brand equity.

Analysis of Hypothesized Relationships between Brand Equity and Repurchase Intention

The constructs of brand equity were each hypothesized with repurchase intention to see the effects of each individual constructs. As seen in the Table 5.6 above only three constructs had a statistically significant effect on repurchase intentions: perceived quality ($\beta = 0.16$; $p =$

0.006); brand loyalty ($\beta = 0.44$; $p = 0.00$); and relevance ($\beta = 0.44$; $p = 0.00$). However, brand awareness ($\beta = 0.04$; $p = 0.518$) and differentiation ($\beta = 0.01$; $p = 0.928$) had positive effects, but were not statistically significant. Brand image ($\beta = -0.07$; $p = 0.248$), however, had a negative effect on repurchase intentions. Based on these results H3a, H3b, H3c, H3e and H3f are accepted whilst H3d is rejected.

TESTS OF MEDIATION

An analysis of the hypothesized model was conducted with the structural model. This was to test constructs of marketing actions, brand equity and repurchase intention.

Table 5. 7 - Structural Model

	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
Goodness-of-fit Indices	Without Mediation	Partial Mediation	Full Mediation
Absolute goodness of fit measure			
Chi-square (CMIN)	26.469	28.65	29.062
Chi-square /degree of freedom	5.294	3.581	2.906
Absolute badness of fit measure			
Root mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.113	0.087	0.07
Incremental fit measure			
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	0.906	0.962	0.96
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.92	0.972	0.97
Tucker Lewis Index (TLI)	0.76	0.926	0.95
Parsimony fit measure			
Parsimony Comparative of Fit index (PCFI)	0.307	0.37	0.5
Parsimony Normed of Fit index (PNFI)	0.367	0.367	0.5

Source: Field Survey (2016)

As delineated by Mathieu and Taylor (2006), the study fit different models to examine the mediating effects illustrated in the study frame work. The study first fit the direct effect model estimating the direct path of marketing activities onto repurchase intentions without any paths

leading to the mediating variable. The fit indices indicated the value for Chi-square to be 5.29, which indicates it was statistically significant at $P \geq 0.05$. Secondly, the Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which tested for the fitness of the model was set up. The RMSEA value obtained was 0.113, which was well within the acceptable range of 0.80 or less, further validating the fitness of the model as indicated earlier.

Incremental fit measures were also reported with the Normed Fit Index (NFI) which obtained a value of 0.91 - a near perfect fit (Hair et al., 2010). Further on as it is known that the NFI does not cater for the degrees of freedom Comparative Fit Index (CFI) was also measured. The CFI value obtained was 0.92, which was acceptable as it must fall within 0.90 or more to be fit. A value of 0.76 was obtained for the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), which was not in the acceptable range as it fell below the range of 0.90 or greater. All the indicators for the incremental fit measurement verified that the model was fit enough for the hypothesis to be accepted. Finally, Parsimonious' fit indices was performed with the aim of testing the degree to which the model achieved fitness for each of the estimated coefficients. As indicated by Hair et al. (2010) we are looking for a value closer to 1 which indicates better fitness of the model. The values obtained were of 0.31 and 0.37 for Parsimony Comparative of Fit index (PCFI) and Parsimony Normed of Fit index (PNFI) respectively, which indicated that the model is not certified to be fit.

A Chi-square value of 3.58 was obtained, which was higher than the $P \geq 0.05$ achieved for the partial mediation model. The RMSEA obtained a value of 0.09 which was well within the acceptable range of 0.80 or less, but slightly higher than that of the indirect path thus cannot be accepted in this circumstance. The Incremental fit measures report on the Normed Fit Index (NFI) revealed a value of 0.96 similar to what was obtained in the indirect model. The CFI

value obtained was 0.97, the same as that of the indirect model and fell within the threshold of 0.90 or more. A value of 0.93 was achieved for the Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI), which was well within the acceptable levels - above the range of 0.90. All the indicators for the incremental fit measurement indicated that the model was not fit enough for the hypothesis to be accepted. The Parsimonious' fit indices revealed values of 0.4 for Parsimony Comparative of Fit index (PCFI) and Parsimony Normed of Fit index (PNFI) respectively, which indicated that the models were certified. Although some indices in the model were fit quite a number were not within the acceptable threshold therefore making the full model unfit. The figure below shows the factor loadings of -0.03 (7.2) for the full model (which cannot be accepted as it is not significant and does depict a relationship in the full model). It is, however, worthy to note that the dependent variables were controlled by demographic data collected, namely, gender and educational level.

The final test was for the full mediation model. The Chi-square value obtained was 2.91, which indicates it was statistically significant at $P \geq 0.05$. The RMSEA value obtained was 0.07, which was well within the acceptable range of 0.80 or less, further authenticating the fitness of the model as specified previously. The Incremental fit measures reporting first on the Normed Fit Index (NFI) obtained a value of 0.96, which is clearly a better fit than the previous direct model. The CFI value obtained was 0.97, which was acceptable as it must fall within 0.90 or more to be fit. Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) reported a value of 0.95, which was well within the acceptable levels as it was above the range of 0.90. All the indicators for the incremental fit measurement verified that the model was fit enough for the hypothesis to be accepted. The Parsimonious fit indices revealed values of 0.5 for Parsimony Comparative of Fit index (PCFI) and Parsimony Normed of Fit index (PNFI) respectively which indicated that the models were certified to be

fit. Thus, the full mediation model gives a better fitness as compared to the direct fit. Indicating that marketing activities must achieve brand equity in order to induce repurchase intentions.

5.4 Discussion of Results

As defined by Keller (2013), marketing activities are the marketing choices and conditions undertaken by firms within the market such as advertising, pricing, and distribution among others. Repurchase intention, according to Hellier et al. (2003), is “the individual’s judgment about buying again a designated product/service from the same company, taking into account his or her current situation and likely circumstances”. The study revealed that marketing activities could directly lead to repurchase intention although this is best done when it is mediated by customer based brand equity. This was indicated by the best model fitness lying within the full mediation model. The results posit that, as far as firms want consumers to rebuy or have repurchase intentions of their products, using only marketing activities is not the main way forward. By leveraging on brand equity with these marketing activities they can better influence consumers on the intention to repurchase their product when it come to the mobile phone industry in Ghana.

The first hypothesis was to verify if marketing activities has a positive effect on repurchase intention. Based on the structural modelling the study revealed that, with a direct contact of marketing activities on repurchase intentions, there is a significant relationship estimate, which goes on to confirm suggestions by Haugtvedt, Herr and Kardes (2008) and Pérez et al. (2007) that marketing activities can drive various levels of awareness familiarity and behavioural considerations, of which repurchase intention is no exception (Stahl et al., 2012). This is no longer surprising, and is why multinational mobile phone companies such as Samsung have instituted the “Build for Africa Initiative”, which is aimed at making the consumers within the

African sub-region connect their brand to themselves through marketing activities aimed at depicting the product attributes, and pricing among others as different and much more suitable for the conditions within this geographic area.

The second hypothesized relationship was very well supported indicating marketing activities significantly affects and leads to brand equity as suggested by previous scholars such as Keller (2013); Stahl et al. (2012); Ataman, Van Heerde and Mela (2010). Effective communication, greater product design and attributes along with sponsorship and distribution leads to brand equity. This comes as no marvel as most of these mobile phone firms have gradually turned the Accra suburb of Circle into a mobile phone hub which seems to be, more or less, housing the mobile phone industry in Ghana (Keelson & Cooper, 2009) with Nokia, Huawei, Samsung, Infinix and Tecno more or less leading the industry in that perspective. It goes on give an understanding as to why brands (such as Infinix) are leveraging on the already established brands Google to win consumers over as they would associate the tech giant's quality to that of the Korean firm (Infinix).

The third hypothesis, which allows the full mediation of brand equity as an indirect path for marketing activities to achieve repurchase intentions, was fully accepted as the best way firms should employ. Thus, the third hypothesis is accepted as the best path. This insight goes on to confirm Stahl et al. (2012) who found that marketing activities mediated by brand equity leads to CLV, which has elements of repurchase in it, as retained customers are more likely to buy more products from the brand they value most.

CHAPTER SIX

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Introduction

The preceding chapter presented the results of quantitative data analysis and a discussion of the study results. This chapter goes on to provide a summary of the major findings of the study and reach conclusions in accordance with the study objectives, and outlining implications for further studies and management.

6.1 Study Summary

The study investigated the effects of marketing activities on repurchase intentions. In detail, it inquired as to how marketing activities fully mediated by brand equity leads to repurchase intentions of mobile phone buyers in Ghana. It therefore looked at the relationship between the marketing activities and customer based brand equity and how this channels into repurchase intentions. The rationale behind this is the increase in various marketing activities posited to be a driver of brand equity in the mobile phone industry in Ghana.

In pursuit of the study objectives as outline in the first chapter, the study conducted a review of previous literature on marketing activities, branding, brand equity and customer repurchase intentions (Yoo, Donthu & Lee, 2000; Keller, 2003; Bojei & Hoo, 2012; Stahl et al., 2012) from which some major factors of marketing activities affecting brand equity and repurchase intents were drawn. From this a conceptual framework was developed using these factors in their bid to predict repurchase intentions of mobile phones by consumers thus formulating hypotheses applicable to the study. Tthe study's context was also discussed in relation to the mobile phone industry in Ghana.

The study was quantitative in nature adopting a survey strategy with structured questionnaires as the data collection instrument. The study framework and study objectives formed the basis for the questionnaire development. A total of three hundred and forty (340) respondents were selected purposively and with convenience at the University of Ghana campus in Accra as the study sample. An analysis of data was done using descriptive statistics, confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation modelling as quantitative data allows for numerical demonstration and operation of data for the purpose of gaining explanations of a phenomenon as depicted by the data. It also helped in the test of hypotheses and generalizing the study results.

6.2 Summary of Major Study Findings

This section discusses the finding from the data analysis based on the study objectives.

Objective 1: To determine the relationship between marketing activities and CBBE in the mobile phone industry in Ghana.

The first objective revealed that the major contributing factors of brand equity in the Ghanaian mobile phone industry are product attributes, distribution intensity and advertising & sponsorship. This suggests that, the way the products look and feel, how wide or well it is distributed within the market space and how well the mobile phone firm takes up advertising and sponsorship activities, has a major impact on consumer based brand equity, which is the value perception the consumer has of the brand, thus keeping it on top of the mind.

Objective 2: To examine the effects of customer based brand equity activities on repurchase intention of mobile phones in Ghana.

The second objective revealed a very strong positive relationship between brand equity and repurchase intentions. This suggests that brand equity is a strong predictor of repurchase intentions of mobile phones in Ghana. This makes a lot of sense, as even though consumers may purchase mobile phone mainly because they want to make calls (which is the basic function of the device), the probability of them having the intention of making further purchases in the near future is enhanced by them having a long term value for the brand they choose. Brand equity, which is generated from the firm's investment in marketing activities over a period of time, leads to consumer's intent to continuously own the same brand.

Objective 3: To determine the relationship between marketing activities, CBBE and repurchase intention.

A very strong relationship was established between marketing activities, brand equity and repurchase intention. This is an indication that time and money spent by firms in developing creative marketing strategies indeed creates brand equity for their products, which in turn leads to repurchase intentions. The ability to create brand equity truly lies at the heart of marketing activities and has favourable effects on customers' repurchase intentions.

6.3 Conclusions

From the various analysis and discussions the study established that marketing activities in generating brand equity has influence on repurchase intentions. This is essentially rational as a firm's ability to put together innovative products giving them unique attributes together with intensive distribution channels as well as creative advertisements and investment in sponsorships of events and various programmes can influence brand equity by battling for the

hearts and minds of consumers. The study further established six major dimensions of consumer based brand equity (Perceived Quality, Brand Awareness, Brand Image, Brand Loyalty, Differentiation and Relevance) that are very effective in influencing consumer's intentions to repurchase. With the competition becoming more intense and keen each day among mobile phone firms as they tend to invest so much in innovation and new product development, it is equally vital for firms to critically examine their marketing activities if they are able to create top of the mind effects on consumers for them to have much value for their brands. This goes on to establish the need to critically appraise marketing activities and their effects on the consumer in light of the continuous competition and sophistication of mobile phone devices.

6.4 Implications for Management and Practice

This study established that firms are better positioned if they have consumers' top of the mind consideration to repurchase their brands. This infers that firms must invest wisely and co-ordinate their marketing activities well to build brand equity so as to influence consumers' intentions to repurchase from them. In light of the significant results pertaining to brand loyalty and relevance on repurchase intentions, managers must put in place strategic plans aimed at driving loyalty and further make their products more relevant to consumers in their daily routines from work to play as consumers have been found to be more attached to their devices over the years.

By relating the study findings to firms brand-building strategies managers can improve the strength of their brands by spending more on advertising (social media/web ads), distributing through retail shops which have achieved images, and increase distribution intensity (online

stores). Gaining high brand equity may allow for high brand pricing but firms can sometimes run price deals as a means of rewarding customer loyalty.

Firms should not rely on only managing their brands or centre on customers, but must combine both thus eliminating the notion of brands managers working at one end with the aim of capturing customer mind-set and with customer relationship managers directing efforts at acquiring new customers. By fusing the two functions, firms can achieve superiority, thus the need for well-organized strategic tactical level management.

Practically it is logic to realize that customers accepting brands and their intentions to repurchase are essential to gaining higher market share. ‘Intentions to repurchase’ is a viable indicator in estimating the number of re-acquisitions of the customer. It is therefore essential for managers to need to balance the two very well in order to maintain their market share through repeat patronage. Managers can therefore create very smart marketing strategies with innovation, relying on new channels of distribution to capture the market while leveraging on brand equity to maintain their market share.

6.5 Theoretical Implications

The study’s principal aim was to establish the effect of marketing action with the mediation of brand equity on repurchase intentions in Ghana with respect to mobile phones. Empirical findings were found to be appreciable as they improve the worth of previous literature on the study area. Findings indicated that marketing activities does have a strong relationship with brand equity and through this, consumers’ intentions to repurchase brand are increased. The study contributes contextually on brand equity, marketing activities and repurchase intention concerns.

The outcomes of the study offer practical grounds to claims in the literature that well selected strategic marketing activities drive customer based brand equity, which leads to consumers' repurchase intentions. This is due to the fact that the study revealed that consumers have considerations to repurchase their frequently used mobile phone brands based on the value they have for them in their hearts and minds. The study also contributes by incorporating various brand equity constructs to see their effects on repurchase intentions.

6.6 Study Limitations and Future Research Implications

The study took place in a single area (University of Ghana) taking responses from users of some major mobile phone brands carrying out marketing activities in Ghana. Future studies could pursue other geographic areas (other academic institutions, corporate environment and rural communities); and by eliciting information from different demographic groups could help provide much greater insight in the area and permit for much better generalizations.

The framework could also be applied to other industries to authenticate its applicability. Further studies could try accessing secondary data in terms of sales, marketing investment and customer base information in order to test and verify the real financial effects. The study was cross-sectional in nature thus there is the need for future studies to consider longitudinal approaches. Qualitative studies could also be considered for further studies as quantitative studies have their own limitations.

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APPENDIX

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA BUSINESS SCHOOL
DEPARTMENT OF MARKETING & ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am an MPhil marketing student of the University of Ghana Business School. This survey seeks to elicit response on the topic “**THE IMPACT MARKETING ACTIVITIES ON REPURCHASE INTENTION AND THE MEDIATION ROLE OF BRAND EQUITY IN THE GHANA MOBILE TELECOMMUNICATION INDUSTRY.**” Information provided for the purposes of this research will be treated confidentially and used for academic purposes only. Please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire by ticking (v) where appropriate. For any questions, kindly contact me via my details provided below:
 Email: nanaomensah@gmail.com

Section A: Background Information

1. **Gender:** Male [] Female []
 2. **Age:** 18 – 21 [] 22 - 26 [] 27 – 31 [] 32 – 36 [] Over 36 []
 3. **Education:** Bachelor degree [] Master degree [] PHD []
 4. **Please select the brand you frequently purchase and use:** Nokia [] Samsung [] Huawei [] Techno [] Infinix []

Section B

Please kindly indicate (by ticking ✓) your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement below, ranking from the lowest **1 – Strongly Disagree (SD)**, **2 – Disagree (D)**, **3 – Neutral (Neutral)**, **4 – Agree (A)**, and to the highest **5- Strongly Agree (SA)**.

	MARKETING ACTIONS	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
	<i>Product Attributes</i>					
PA 1	My mobile phone brand has a special appearance					
PA 2	The design of my phone brand is unique					
PA 3	Special material is used in making my phone					
	<i>Price</i>					
PR 1	Frequent price deals are offered for this brand					
PR 2	The price of this brand is always reasonable					
PR 3	This brand is affordable.					
	<i>Distribution Intensity</i>					
DI 1	Compared to competing brands, this brand is stocked in more stores					
DI 2	The number of stores selling this brand is higher than the number of stores selling competing brands.					
DI 3	This brand is distributed through the largest possible number of stores.					

	<i>Advertising & Sponsorship</i>					
AS 1	This brand is intensively advertised.					
AS 2	Advertising campaigns for this brand look more expensive than advertising campaigns for competing brands.					
AS 3	I often notice this brand as a sponsor of various events.					
AS 4	This brand seems to invest more in sponsorship of various events than competing brands.					

	Customer Based Brand Equity	SD (1)	D (2)	N (3)	A (4)	SA (5)
	<i>Perceived quality</i>					
PQ 1	I trust the quality of products from this brand					
PQ 2	Products from my brand is consistent in quality					
PQ 3	My brands products are very reliable					
PQ 4	Products from the brand is very durable					
	<i>Brand awareness</i>					
BAW 1	Some characteristics of this brand come to my mind quickly					
BAW 2	I can recognize this brand quickly among other competing brands					
BAW 3	I am familiar with this brand					
BAW 4	This brand is well-known					
	<i>Brand image</i>					
BI 1	This brand has very unique brand image, compared to competing brands					
BI 2	I respect and admire people who use this brand					
BI 3	I like the brand image of this brand					
BI 4	I like and trust the company, which makes this brands products					
	<i>Brand loyalty</i>					
BL 1	I consider myself to be loyal to this brand					
BL 2	This brand always comes as my first choice of mobile phones					
BL 3	This brand would be my best choice.					
BL 4	I would love to recommend this brand to my friends					
	<i>Differentiation</i>					
DIF 1	This brand stands out from its competitors.					
DIF 2	The brand stands for something unique.					
DIF 3	This brand is in a class of itself.					

	Relevance					
REL 1	The brand is relevant to me					
REL 2	The brand is relevant to my family and/or close friends.					
REL 3	My brand is a good one for me.					
REL 4	This brand fits my lifestyle.					
	Repurchase Intention					
RI 1	I am still willing to buy this brand even if its price is a little higher than that of its competitors					
RI2	Even if another brand has the same features as this brand, I would prefer to buy this brand					
RI 3	I will keep on buying this brand as long as it provides me satisfied products					

