Ferdinand E. Abangma.

Recognition of Brand Equity and Advertising in the Banking Industry in Cameroon. Case study Citibank N.A.

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Abstract

PURPOSE
The main purpose of this research is to determine the consumer level approach of brand equity in Citibank N.A using empirical information based on its brand awareness. The awareness of a brand would show the level of the brand recognition. A telephone interview was conducted to explain the different aspects that constitute the recognition of brand equity and brand awareness of Citibank N.A-Cameroon in addition to its ads.

RESEARCH QUESTION
How can Citibank N.A, Cameroon subsidiary, measure the level of its brand equity from its brand awareness?

RESEARCH APPROACH/METHODOLOGY
In order to answer the research question and achieve the research objective established for this research, a structured research method was required. In this research a qualitative research approach was applied to suit the content of the research. A telephone interview was conducted to give a qualitative view of this research.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS
Awareness (aided, unaided), contributes to the recognition of brand equity. In the empirical part of the thesis brand recognition and awareness can be facilitated by Citibank-Cameroon subsidiary being participative in its social corporate responsibility plan to develop the community by planting trees and organizing football competition every summer holidays. This brand strategy has been used for several years to keep a positive brand image of the bank.

VALUE OF RESEARCH

KEY WORDS: Brand Equity, Brand Awareness, Citibank N.A-Cameroon, Telephone interview
DEDICATION

This thesis report is dedicated to my elder sisters, Abangma Elisabeth, Laurentia Abangma and Patricia Abangma.
UNIVERSITY OF GÄVLE
Master Of Business Administration in Marketing Management

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

I would like to thank and acknowledge the following persons who contributed in one way or the other to assist me go through this Master of Business Administration in Marketing (M-MBA) programme:

The lecturing team for the M-MBA programme at Gävle University in Sweden, more precisely my supervisor Dr. Aihie Osarenkhoe.
Mr. Gerald Tataw, the deputy marketing manager of Citibank N.A Cameroon
My parents Mr. Abangma Edward Ncha and Mrs Abangma Agnes Eta.
My elder brother Mr. Abangma Maurice Atem and my younger sisters, Miss Claudine Abangma, Miss Cerise Abangma, Miss Forcha Gwendoline Taku and to my nephew Ghislain Ashu Abangma.
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INTRODUCTION

Given the high degree of intangibility, consumer’s dependence on experience and perceived qualities and high levels of perceived risk, branding can play a key role in the marketing process for services. Reputation may be seen as an ingredient to enhance branding (Ehab et al)\(^1\). Veloutsou et al\(^2\) investigated the determinants of bank’s loyalty and found out that many retail banks have discovered that increased customer retention rates can have a substantial impact on profits. Retention is a concept that becomes a prerequisite of profitability and thus is very important to retail banks, which have to ensure that their customers are loyal.

1.1 BACKGROUND

Twedt investigated the awareness-attitude of brands towards marketing and found out that in order to determine the degree of consumer awareness related to a specific brand and consumer attitude, an effective brand strategy has to be planned\(^3\). Keller conducted a research on multidimensionality of brand knowledge\(^4\). According to Keller in the field of marketing management and decision making, consumer research has contributed a vital role especially in advertising, pricing, channel strategies. Similarly the study of branding has enlightened practicing managers to understand theories and concepts from consumer research\(^5\). According to a research conducted by Noble\(^6\) a firm can easily be identified from its brand and this allows customers (individuals or other firms) to recognize the


products that are sold by the firm. Consumer taste for a brand is usually enhanced by passed experiences and familiarity with the product. Special features that are associated with a brand identity is the fact that brand facilitates inventory stocktaking and accounting inventory records, providing the firm with a legal protection for unique characteristics found on the brand. Kotler and Keller\(^7\) defined a brand (from the definition of the American Marketing Association) as a `name, term, sign, symbol, or design, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and to differentiate them from those of competitors’. Kotler and Keller\(^8\) defined brand equity as `the customer’s subjective and intangible assessment of the brand, above and beyond its objectively perceived value’. Similarly Kotler and Keller\(^9\) used Aaker Model to define `brand equity as a set of five categories of brand assets and liabilities linked to a brand that add to or subtract from the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or to that firm’s customers. These categories of brand assets are brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations and other proprietary assets such as patents, trademarks, and channel relationships’. Many international and local commercial banks have seen the need to protect their brand name(s). In so doing these banks have to work hand in hand with its consumers, media, and other stake holders to improve on the value of their brand(s). Aaker\(^10\) in his research, measuring brand equity across products and markets, brand equity can be measured using company level, product level and consumer level.

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1.1.1 COMPANY LEVEL
According to research conducted by Aaker\(^{11}\) a company values a brand as a financial asset and is recorded in the balance sheet as an intangible asset. It can be calculated thus, if the value of a firm, as ascertained by its market capitalization less tangible assets and "measurable" intangible assets- the residual would be the brand equity.

1.1.2 PRODUCT LEVEL
Aaker\(^{12}\) explained the knowledge behind product level brand measurement and concluded that, to compare the price of a private label product to an "equivalent" branded product. The difference in price, assuming all things being equal, is due to the brand. Recently a revenue premium approach has been devised to calculate product brand equity.

1.1.3 CONSUMER LEVEL
Aaker\(^{13}\) described consumer level of brand equity as a method that seeks to measure the awareness and brand image (The total impression that a consumer has and its functional and emotional associations).

1.2 PROBLEM DISCUSSION
How can Citibank N.A, Cameroon subsidiary, measure the level of its brand equity from its brand awareness?

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1.3 RESEARCH PURPOSE

The main purpose of this research is to determine the consumer level approach of brand equity in Citibank N.A using empirical information based on its brand awareness. The awareness of a brand would show the level of the brand recognition. A telephone interview was conducted to explain the different aspects that constitute the recognition of brand equity and brand awareness of Citibank N.A-Cameroon in addition to its ads.

1.4 DELIMITATIONS

In this research study, certain limitations have been taken into consideration. However, it is believed that some of these limitations should be looked upon as possible areas of future research. The delimitations of this research are those characteristics that limit the scope of the inquiry of the research. Among these are the choice of objectives and questions. Only one aspect of brand equity has been considered in this research, the consumer level of assessing brand equity. Secondly the qualitative part of this thesis was conducted using telephone interview. This form of data collection could be quite tiring in the course of communicating. Telephone interview are often shorter than face-to-face interviews. Phone interviews at a person’s office can involve many potential distractions like colleagues interference during conversation, calls on other lines, background noise, during the phone interview.
1.5

THESIS DISPOSITION

Research Framework

Chapter One: Introduction
- Background
- Problem Discussion
- Research Purpose
- Delimitations

Chapter Two
Theoretical Framework

Chapter Three
- Methodology

Chapter Four: Analysis and Reflection

Recommendations & Conclusion

References
CHAPTER TWO

2.1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Much research has not been done in the study of brand equity recognition and awareness. The theoretical framework will be organised according to headings that suits the topic.

2.2 BRAND EXTENSION

Blichfeldt\textsuperscript{14} conducted a theory-building multiple case study research on the development of brand and line extensions in 14 Danish companies and many other interviews with retailers and advertising agencies. The study was focused on fast-moving consumer goods. He discovered in his findings that in order to increase retailer’s and consumer’s acceptance of new products, most manufacturers of basic consumer goods should rely on strong brands. Nijssen and Agustin\textsuperscript{15} jointly conducted a research in the area of brand extensions. A survey carried out pertaining to marketing manager’s opinion on brand extension and found out that very little consideration has been given to the mental models used by brand extension decision managers. Based on the research of Nijssen and Agustin\textsuperscript{16} their results explains that their mental model for successful brand extension is influenced by variables such as the consumer’s judgement between parent brand and extension, the positioning of the brand, and the level of added value of the extension product. Nijssen and Agustin\textsuperscript{17} also explained that the use of an existing brand name (parent brand) on new products brings about one of the most successful means for firm to


maximize their intellectual capital. The original brand name serves as a back-up advertising trade mark for the new products that are to be introduced in the market and thus increases the rate of acceptance by consumer’s and retailers. Nijssen and Agustin explained some of the factors that influence the success of brand extensions such as consumer response, retailer acceptance, brand portfolio, risk considerations. Taylor and Bearden explored the effects of information about ad spending on brand extension evaluations over different levels of similarity. Taylor and Bearden concentrated on the effects of perceived ad spending on perceived quality of brand extensions and on purchase intention during their experiment. From their evaluation of brand extension almost half of new products introduced failed with five years so they recommended that one way to hedge the risk associated with new products is to introduce them under an existing brand name. According to Taylor and Bearden new brand extension should be accompanied with large ad campaigns so as to leverage parent brand equity. Usually when a new product is introduced in the market, consumers are always uncertain about the quality but if the product is lined to brand (brand extension) then most probable, consumers would have a high probability of assessing the quality of the product since consumers are always risk averse especially for new products in the market. Also consumers can judge the quality or confidence of the new product not linked to the parent brand from the ad. This may result to consumer skepticism (doubt for ad claims) and in most situations consumers will probably be more skeptical of large ad expenditures supporting the introduction of a dissimilar rather than a similar extension.

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2.3 *BRAND AWARENESS*

George\textsuperscript{22} investigated some of the branding lore compatibility with trademark laws. Trademark laws have been traditionally used to support branding. So many laws are involved in branding such as the laws propounded by the state and punishable with penalties or fine by defaulters. Branding laws can always be affixed to the ad content. Trademark laws regulate branding by controlling the use of signs that distinguish the goods or services of one trader from those of another in the minds of consumers. The legal content of trademarks penetrate so much into different aspects of advertising such as laws prohibiting tobacco advertising, laws regulating offensive advertisements, and laws explaining how certain products or services may be advertised such as pharmaceuticals, alcohol and junk food. Laws prohibiting false trade descriptions when promoting one’s brand. Noble\textsuperscript{23}, a member of the British Brands Group investigated the commercial perspectives that differentiate a brand from a trade mark. In legal terms brands are similar to trade marks but in commercial perspective there is a significant difference. Many people working in organizations understand brands differently. In the course of the research Noble\textsuperscript{24} sees brands as what the consumer perceives in his or her mind. This perception is built over time and also as a result of experience that an individual has with a product or service. According to Noble\textsuperscript{25} other opinions that can influence a consumer’s perception on a particular brand can be advertising, word of mouth, press comments. Further, research has been done on the description of brands comparing it to the way bird would build its nest. The brand manager should ensure that a


brand is designed such that consumers should have a consistent, accurate, and positive interest for the selection of their product over competing alternatives. Once these properties are built in an individual’s mind even after a long time the brand would still react profitably in the market. For example if a product remains relevant, brands can last a long, long time

“[Gordon’s gin has been going since 1769 and Colgate since 1873]” Noble. Some differences between Brands and Trade Marks can be seen below:

► A trade mark is a national (or regional) right, while a brand is personal to an individual
► A trade mark must be capable of graphical representation, a brand is abstract, immensely complex and certainly cannot be represented
► A trade mark is held on a register, a brand is held in the mind
► A trade mark is valid in perpetuity (if the registration is renewed), as is a brand (if it is continually refreshed)
► A trade mark is a legal instrument, while a brand is a consumer weapon
► A trade mark can be bought, sold and licensed, a brand cannot be traded.

From the above differences between brands and trade marks companies would prefer to carry on with a branding strategy as opposed to trade marks. The fact that some extra quality or taste or value must be added to a product to win more customers and their impression about that particular product over existing offers would lead to an increase in demand for that product.

2.4 BRAND ATTITUDE AND PERSONALITY

Keller and Richey together carried out a research on the importance of corporate brand personality traits to a successful 21st century business. In their research, investigations


were conducted based on the recent developments that would keep a company’s relative position in the industry such as corporate culture and corporate citizenship. In recent survey and studies firms would not only succeed based on their products and services and offer but would also depend on its corporate brand personality. There researchers explained corporate brand personality as a form of brand personality specific to a corporate brand. Keller defined brand personality as personality that is understood as the human characteristics or traits that can be attributed to a brand. Omar and Williams conducted a join research in managing and maintaining corporate reputation and brand identity. According to Omar and Williams firms should manage their corporate reputation in relation to trustworthiness and credibility, which are depends on the past achievement of the firm. Corporate reputation has been salient in modern management. From a customer’s perspective, a healthy reputation may act as a risk suppressor. It is accepted that corporate reputation provides firms with competitive advantages. Such reputations can be felt by the firm if the firm distinguishes itself from competitors in many situations such as producing higher quality products to customers, attract more investors, keep up with a coherent and consistent image to the public, produce and distribute a unique offering to its consumers. Alongside these qualities the organization should create a medium for communication such as using a public relation medium to disseminate vital information to its stake holders, involve the community as a concern to the growth of the firm. Spears et al conducted a research based on the assessment of corporate associations using the Unique Corporate


Association Valence (UCAV) as a measure. Research has shown that each stakeholder group affects corporate performance through their conception and responses about the way things are done in the corporation. Gylling and Lindberg\textsuperscript{32} conducted an investigation to show the difference between a corporate brand and a customer brand. Corporate branding has to do with many stakeholders interacting with the employees of the company. International companies have increased their investment in corporate and brand identities in order to have a positive image and reputation. Familiar corporate transactions could be globalisation, mergers and acquisitions, deregulation. The focus of the branding effort shifts from the product to the corporation. Product and corporation are related in that corporate brands add economic value to the variety of products and services offered by the company. However, the broader scope of the corporate brand facilitates brand thinking considerably beyond the product and its relationship with the consumer or customer. Another contrast between product and corporate branding is a difference in who the brand relates to in terms of both attraction and support. While product brands mainly target consumers or customers, corporate brands also contribute to the images formed and held by organizational and community members, investors, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders and privatization have prompted the need for corporate identities and images. Corporate branding differs from product branding in several aspects.

2.5 \textit{BRAND VALUATION}

Ranga and Robert\textsuperscript{33} conducted a research in the future of the brand management structure of fast moving consumer goods in New Zealand. Ranga and Robert\textsuperscript{34} chose


New Zealand because it has one of the highest levels of retail concentration in the developed world. Investigations were carried out in the current status and future of brand management and category management within a single major category from two major perspectives, the manufacturer on one hand and the retailer (supermarket chain) on the other. Retailers, especially those trading in the supermarket sector have been seen as a powerful force in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG). Sjödin\textsuperscript{35} conducted a research in the financial assessment of brand extensions. Sjödin\textsuperscript{36} investigated themes that integrates considerations for theoretically informed valuation of brand extensions into a unified framework, and discusses the ideal role of financial assessment in organisational decision making on brand extension. Extending brand is a very important decision making process in a firm’s marketing strategy because it can sustain and develop the capacity to meet consumer desires. It can help brands stay relevant and create new business. According to Sjödin\textsuperscript{37} introducing new products is both risky and expensive especially without the complement of an established brand. Many firms have considered brand extension as a crucial part of their marketing strategies of which it can facilitate the sustenance and development to meet customers demand. Also the initiative to use an already established brand can motivate consumer interest for the brand extension. Sjödin\textsuperscript{38} tried to link financial and marketing evaluation on the revenue and cost of capital using the share holders’ value creation approach. Generally a brand extension can be said to create shareholder value if it creates a future cash flow. This requires the product introduced through brand extension to generate sales in excess of its costs, including the cost of capital. The surplus cash in coming years is discounted to reflect


that money today is worth more than money in the future. Bass\textsuperscript{39} conducted an empirical research on branding extensions- stretching to communicate. According to Bass\textsuperscript{40} analysis conducted from OC&C in 1990 brand extensions scored better than new brands on trial rate, conversion rate and loyalty rate. Brand managers are usually ambitious to develop short term targets towards range extension such as new flavours, new sizes, new designs. The cost of developing increased competencies goes along with associated risks that can frustrate the brand such as asymmetry, cost, failure and confusion. Brand extension may result in loyal consumer feeling that their chosen brand has changed and lost its core values. If the extension overlaps the parent brand too closely, the parent brand loses its value and its strategic position is weakened. Desmet et al\textsuperscript{41} conducted a research on the end of voodoo brand management. It is factual that brands constitute a very significant portion of the value of many profitable companies. The research was done using the dynamic brand value management (DBVM) approach, a holistic and fact based- approach to brand management studies which consist of four stages. The first stage consist of identifying and quantifying the resources influencing brand value that could be tangible, for example different distribution outlets of a brand and also intangible value, such as the knowledge and strategies applied by the marketing function. The second stage consist of understanding and how mapping there resources interact with each other. The quantity of brand stocks that can be stored in a store is controlled by the management and experience of the sales force and the number of customers that are willing to consume the products. The third stage is to build a business dynamics computer model that determines the main resources involved. This model uses market information and interview results to analyze there links. The fourth stage deals with the


use of the model to carry out simulations. This model explains the short and long run effects of earnings from brand strategies. This is as a result of management assessment. Whan et al\textsuperscript{42} conducted a marketing research in strategic brand concept-image management. An activity such as communicating brand image to a target segment is a major marketing activity and a properly communicated brand image would facilitate a brand’s position and protect the brand from competitors. Whan et al\textsuperscript{43} also analysed that the brand image is seen to be the understanding consumers derive from the total of brand-related activities involved in the firm. The research goes deeper into seeking long term framework for managing the image over time. The management of the brand image over time requires communicating and coordinating solutions with sales activities. More over the brand image can be managed using market driven forces that provide for consumer needs, and competitors rivalry information in the short term. Kalpesh and Keller\textsuperscript{44} conducted a research on the effects of ingredient branding strategies on host brand extendibility. From Kalpesh and Keller\textsuperscript{45} analysis marketers have developed interest in ingredients branding through the linking of a number of firms who have accepted to establish brand agreements via their products and other vital aspects of their marketing operations. From Kalpesh and Keller\textsuperscript{46} research analysis ingredient branding facilitates motivating effects to consumers about the complimentary effects of two quality brands in one. Moore et al\textsuperscript{47} carried out a research and investigation on passing the torch:


intergenerational influences as a source of brand equity. Many firms realize and profit from brand equity values with respect to growth and profit as a result of increased customer loyalty levels. Studies have not been carried out to find the extension of loyalties from one generation to the other as an added value and benefit of a brand. Lemon and Nowlis\textsuperscript{48} carried out a research survey to investigate the developing synergies between promotions and brands in different price-quality tiers. The objective was to find out the link between the brands and the types of promotions that the brands yield. Effective management of a brand can be implemented using promotion as a strategy. Specific promotions should be used for different combinations and to brand a product. Promotion and product mix can facilitate the synergies and competitive advantage of a brand. Three promotional strategies were analysed that can be used to harmonize the synergies of brand choice. There promotional strategies identified were advertising, displays and price discounts. A decision based on consumer suggestions of two types of brands, high-tier brands and low tier brands to come out with comparison. Certain promotional strategies motivate consumers to make direct comparisons between two or more branded products. The research was analysed that high-tier brands will benefit more than low-tier brands from price promotions, displays, or feature advertising when these promotional tools are done separately. Veloutso et al\textsuperscript{49} conducted a research analysis to find out if the determinants of bank loyalty brand are specific and that research study shows that retail banking was considered to yield profit as a result of increased customer retention. Veloutso et al\textsuperscript{50} defined customer loyalty is the vital influence that promotes retention and profitability to retail banks. Analysis of the research shows that loyalty could be seen as cognitive, affective and behavioural. These three forms of loyalty as


cognitive loyalty is the intention to express repeated behaviour in the future, affective loyalty is the attitude to supplying firms, while behavioural loyalty is the actual repeat behaviour exhibited by customers’’ (Veloutso et al)\textsuperscript{51}. Some banks have devised an extra means and strategy to satisfy their customers thus increasing their customer loyalty. Some factors such as the level of customer satisfaction, perceived service quality and brand image are influences that develop a loyal customer base. Moreover further analysis was that the perceived service quality motivates the consumer’s awareness to buy a specific brand of products and brands provided by a given organisation. Other researches suggest that perceived quality influences consumer behaviour and intention. Evaluative judgements of service quality could significantly influence service loyalty and bank loyalty. Court et al\textsuperscript{52} did a research on branding leverage. The research was focused on the returns and differences of more and less leveraged stronger brands. Three basic factors influence the economic returns of superior brand image. The first factor was to leverage a brand so as to increase brand management support costs. The second factor deals with the horizontal integration of separate industries resulting to new market entrants and opportunities. The third factor is customer relationship management that is influenced by loyalty, quality of products and service. Kirmani et al\textsuperscript{53} conducted a research on the ownership effect in consumer responses to brand line stretches. The research was extended on parent brand image and branding strategy. Kirmani et al\textsuperscript{54} explained that researchers have seen the essence of line extension to be similar to the parent brand because the extension behaviour has a high perceived suitability. Calkins et


\textsuperscript{52} Court, D. C.; Leiter, M. G.; Loch, M A. (1999) BRAND LEVERAGE. McKinsey Quarterly, Issue 2, p100-110


al\textsuperscript{55} conducted a research on the usage of return on investment and analysed that return on investment (ROI) enables financial measures to evaluate marketing initiatives with the same approach used in evaluating capital expenditures and acquisitions. The ROI calculation will be used as a method to deduce the brand equity value for Citibank N.A in the consolidated financial statements for the year ended 2006 and 2007.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 DATA COLLECTION

The process of data collection requires the researcher to choose what methods to collect his or her data. Yin\textsuperscript{56} states that there are two ways of collecting data, the primary and secondary sources. Primary data are usually collected by the researcher for a particular purpose through interviews, questionnaire. Secondary data are usually prepared information that the researcher collects to support his research findings, secondary data could comprise of text books, articles in journals, magazines, annual reports.

3.2 RESEARCH APPROACH

In order to answer the research question and achieve the research objective established for this research, a structured research method was required. In this research a qualitative research approach was applied to suit the content of the research. A qualitative research approach was used, as it provided a valuable means to collect and capture the main theme needed to give this research a substantial position in responding to the research question (Strauss and Corbin)\textsuperscript{57}. Taylor and Renner\textsuperscript{58} conducted a research on analyzing qualitative data in program development and evaluation. The research states that


qualitative data consist of words and observations not numbers. As with all data analysis and interpretation, it is necessary to bring order and understanding. This requires creativity, discipline and a systematic approach of which there is no single or best way. A telephone interview was conducted to give a qualitative view of this research. The empirical study was conducted using telephone interview to the deputy Marketing Manager of Citibank N.A- Douala, Before the telephone interview was conducted questions were prepared and sent to the corporate banking manager and the deputy marketing manager of Citibank, Douala- Cameroon by e-mail but only the deputy marketing manager responded and proposed an appointment day and time to be effected by a telephone interview. The interview process took 15 minutes even though the interview was scheduled for 20 minutes. I recorded the interview, even though the record quality was not good I also wrote the response as the conversation was going on to act as a backup should in case the quality of the interview was poor. The deputy marketing manager of Citibank, Douala-Cameroon was a suitable interviewee for this study because as a senior staff of the marketing department in the bank, he is conversant with marketing responsibilities to develop and execute marketing programs that increase brand identity and awareness for the bank. Below are there questions and response from the telephone interview.

3.3 LIMITATIONS OF THIS STUDY APPROACH
The increasing popularity of the telephone interview as a research method may be a reflection of broader use and acceptability of telecommunications support in research findings.

3.4 ADVANTAGES OF CONDUCTING AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH USING TELEPHONE INTERVIEW
1. Phone interviews are relatively inexpensive
2. Phone interviews can have a shorter data collection period than face-to-face interviews
3. Phone interviews may have a better response rate than mail surveys
3.5 **DISADVANTAGES OF CONDUCTING AN EMPIRICAL RESEARCH USING TELEPHONE INTERVIEW**

1. Phone interviews can be quite tiring, so they are often shorter than face-to-face interviews.
2. Phone interviews can be difficult if the interviewer or interviewee has a strong accent.
3. Phone interviews are not as good as face-to-face interviews when you are dealing with complex issues.
4. Phone interviews are often conducted at times that are convenient to the participant, but not for the interviewer.
5. Phone interviews at a person’s office or home can involve many potential distractions like colleagues stopping by, calls on other lines, background noise.

Some of the limitations I eradicated using this empirical finding to conduct the research was time spent during the conversation, cost of telephone, distractions, strong accent, because:

- I am of the same nationality with the deputy marketing manager of Citibank, Douala-Cameroon
- We speak the same language with the same accent
- The appointment time was arranged two weeks before the interview was conducted to avoid distractions and disturbance and also to allow the interviewee to prepare for the questions
- The time spent for the interview was not much, thus not much money was spent on telephone cost.

3.6 **VALIDITY AND RELIABILITY OF THE RESEARCH**
The concept of validity in a research is considered in terms of explanatory strength. Validity is an indication of how clear one’s research is. It is often applied to both the design and the methods of one’s research. Validity in data collection conforms to findings that truly represent the thesis problem. Arbnor and Bjerke⁵⁹ defined data validation “as the process of determining, to the largest possible extent, if survey, interview or observation were conducted correctly and are free of fraud and bias”. Since the research relies on information from respondent, basic English grammar was used to avoid misinterpretation of the questions asked to the correspondent. The telephone interview was also designed to be simple and short to enable the respondent whom sometimes may be bored if the questions are not explicit enough or even lengthy. The respondent was briefed on the research objective two weeks before the telephone interview was conducted thus ensuring a valid and reliable response.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF EMPIRICAL FINDINGS

QUESTIONS AND RESPONSE FROM CITIBANK’S DEPUTY MARKETING MANAGER- DOUALA-CAMEROON.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>RESPONSE</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What are the various brands found in Citibank N.A. Cameroon?</td>
<td>There common brands that can be identified in Citibank N.A. Cameroon are Citi Cards, CitiFinancial, CitiMortgage, CitiInsurance, CitiPrivate Bank, CitiCapital, ATMs, Mastercard Paypass, Citivisa card</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What are the special qualities of service and banking packages rendered by Citibank Cameroon?</td>
<td>There are different banking services offered at Citibank-Cameroon. Citibank offers a wide range of checking, savings, CD and retirement products. Citibank offers banking services such checking accounts, each with its own unique benefits and balance requirements, savings accounts, certificates of deposit (CD) which offers a guaranteed and highly competitive interest rate, IRAs (Individual Retirement Accounts) and Rollovers (A Rollover IRA is an IRA that is used to hold assets that have been distributed from an employer's retirement plan, such as a 401(k) or Profit Sharing Plan), health savings account, and retirement products with other services such as online banking, convenient account access</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What is your brand awareness compared to competitors?</td>
<td>We built a new primary school at Ndobo village in February 2007, increasing our brand awareness to the public and</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
meeting our sustainability goal for the year. Our brand awareness involves high quality services like the Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) and Rollovers. This service is not common to other commercial banks in Cameroon because most commercial bank customers contribute to the national social insurance fund which is compulsory to employees. This discourages other commercial banks to operate in this service.

| How does Citibank create value for its brand? | We create value for our brand by increasing our customer brand awareness and offering special packages to our customers such as ATM cards; Citi Cards, Citivisa card, Certificate of Deposits, all of which facilitates cash transactions without visiting the teller. |
| How does Citibank measure its customer lifetime Value? | Well we measure our customer lifetime value by considering the Net Present Value (NPV) of future income expected over our customer’s foreseeable purchases. |
| Citibank is said to practice relationship equity in Cameroon. What are some of your secrets used in this domain? | Our customers are our lifeblood and at times we term them our assets. We participate in facilitating and sponsoring some local community projects such as tree planting in the local environment in which we operate, facilitate the construction of pipe borne water in nearby villages. We sponsor inter-quarter football competition every June- July each year because we know Cameroon is a football loving nation. |
| It is known in theory and practice that there are many ways of assessing and evaluating brand equity. What is the method applied by Citibank to recognize and ascertain the value of its brand equity? | Citibank adopts the market capitalization less tangible assets method in recognizing and evaluating its brand equity since brand itself is an asset we feel it is appropriate to apply market capitalization less tangible method to ascertain our brand equity. |
| Is the recognition process of brand equity recorded locally or is it the consolidated information that is done at the headquarters in New York? | The recognition process is done locally and also consolidated at the headquarters. It is done locally because each Citigroup operates so as to suit the demands of its local customers. |
| Citibank is said to practice target marketing. How has Citibank N.A. applied the same | Citibank has a banking practice of rendering banking services.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
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<tr>
<td>practice in the banking industry in Cameroon?</td>
<td>tailored to the needs and wants of its local customer groups. Our target marketing in Cameroon involves local corporations, financial institutions, utilities. Citibank N.A. Cameroon offers banking services such checking accounts, each with its own unique benefits and balance requirements, savings accounts, certificates of deposit (CD) which offers a guaranteed and highly competitive interest rate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In a single statement, what is Citibank’s brand promise?</td>
<td>I think I would say Citibank’s brand promise is to portray a sound and quality brand and to serve our customers with loyalty and respect</td>
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CHAPTER FIVE

ANALYSIS/REFLECTION

In this section the major theoretical and empirical concepts of brand equity recognition and awareness are applied to the case Citibank N.A Cameroon subsidiary. The main problem is how to measure the level of Citibank’s brand equity from its brand awareness?

Brands are built by creating a strong set of brand values, and positioning the brand by creating a favourable perception in the minds of the target group. Succeeding to create brand awareness to a targeted group of customers is the best means of adding value to commercial bank’s brand equity thus increasing good customer relationship management and improved profitability (Saunders et al)\(^6\).

Based on my empirical findings I realised that Citibank in Cameroon has a strategy to develop its brand awareness by applying corporate social responsibility measures such as organising inter-quarter football competition every June- July each year because they know Cameroon is a football loving nation. This sporting activity sells the brand image and increases its brand reputation in Cameroon. They also assist in tree planting in the local communities where they have branch offices. This two supporting activities has led to a great recognition of the brand ‘‘Citi’’ in Cameroon and thus increased in value and brand awareness. In my personal opinion I see these aspects creating awareness to enhance the recognition and improvement of Citibank’s operations in Cameroon.

5.1. **BRAND VALUATION**

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From the telephone interview conducted to the deputy marketing manager of Citibank N.A. in Cameroon, it shows that there are many branded products in Citibank that are profitable in its operations. Examples include ATM cards; Citi Cards, Citivisa card, Certificate of Deposits. This increases the value of the brands. Noble\textsuperscript{61} a member of the British Brands Group investigated the commercial perspectives that differentiate a brand from a trade mark. In legal terms brands are similar to trade marks but in commercial perspective there is a significant difference. Many people working in organizations understand brands differently. Noble\textsuperscript{62} sees brands as what the consumer perceives in his or her mind. This perception is built over time and also as a result of experience that an individual has with a product or service and also other opinions that can influence a consumer’s perception on a particular brand can be advertising, word of mouth, press comments.

5.2 \textit{BRAND EXTENSION}

Citibank is applying the knowledge of brand extension to succeed in its diversified markets. The parent brand name Citibank is advertised on all its products more especially on its different ATM and internet cards. All there different Visa and master cards have the ads Citibank as the parent brand to support its brand extension. Taylor and Bearden\textsuperscript{63} explored the effects of information about ad spending on brand extension evaluations over different levels of similarity. Taylor and Bearden\textsuperscript{64} concentrated on the effects of perceived ad spending on perceived quality of brand extensions and on purchase intention during their experiment. According to Taylor and Bearden\textsuperscript{65} new brand extension should

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be accompanied with large ad campaigns so as to leverage parent brand equity. Usually when a new product is introduced in the market, consumers are always uncertain about the quality but if the product is lined to brand (brand extension) then most probable, consumers would have a high probability of assessing the quality of the product since consumers are always risk averse especially for new products in the market.

5.3 **BRAND ATTITUDE AND PERSONALITY**

The deputy marketing manager makes it known that Citibank has developed a strong brand attitude by keeping necessary communication objective reflecting the link between the brand and its benefit. Keller and Richey\(^{66}\) together carried out a research on the importance of corporate brand personality traits to a successful 21\(^{st}\) century business. In their research, investigations were conducted based on the recent developments that would keep a company’s relative position in the industry such as corporate culture and corporate citizenship. In recent survey and studies firms would not only succeed based on their products and services and offer but would also depend on its corporate brand personality. Keller and Richey\(^{67}\) explained corporate brand personality as a form of brand personality specific to a corporate brand. Keller\(^ {68}\) defined brand personality as personality that is understood as the human characteristics or traits that can be attributed to a brand. Omar and Williams\(^ {69}\) conducted a join research in managing and maintaining corporate reputation and brand identity. According to Omar and Williams\(^ {70}\) firms should

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manage their corporate reputation in relation to trustworthiness and credibility, which are depends on the past achievement of the firm. Corporate reputation has been salient in modern management. From a customer’s perspective, a healthy reputation may act as a risk suppressor. It is accepted that corporate reputation provides firms with competitive advantages. Such reputations can be felt by the firm if the firm distinguishes itself from competitors in many situations such as producing higher quality products to customers, attract more investors, keep up with a coherent and consistent image to the public, produce and distribute a unique offering to its consumers. Alongside these qualities the organization should create a medium for communication such as using a public relation medium to disseminate vital information to its stake holders, involve the community as a concern to the growth of the firm.

5.4 BRAND AWARENESS

According to the deputy marketing manager of Citibank N.A- Cameroon, Citibank brand awareness involves high quality services like the Individual Retirement Accounts (IRA) and Rollovers. This service is not common to other commercial banks because most commercial bank customers contribute to the national social insurance fund which is compulsory to employees. This discourages other commercial banks to operate in this service. Lemon and Nowlis\textsuperscript{71} carried out a research survey to investigate the developing synergies between promotions and brands in different price-quality tiers. Lemon and Nowlis\textsuperscript{72} were interested to find out the link between the brands and the types of promotions that the brands yield. Effective management of a brand can be implemented using promotion as a strategy. Specific promotions should be used for different combinations and to brand a product. Promotion and product mix can facilitate the


synergies and competitive advantage of a brand. Lemon and Nowlis\(^\text{73}\) went further to
sought out three promotional strategies that can be used to harmonize the synergies of
brand choice. There promotional strategies identified were advertising, displays and price
discounts. A decision based on consumer suggestions of two types of brands, high-tier
brands and low tier brands to come out with comparison. Certain promotional strategies
motivate consumers to make direct comparisons between two or more branded products.
Lemon and Nowlis\(^\text{74}\) analysed that high-tier brands will benefit more than low-tier brands
from price promotions, displays, or feature advertising when these promotional tools are
done separately. Veloutso et al\(^\text{75}\) conducted a research analysis to find out if the
determinants of bank loyalty brand are specific. In this research retail banking was
considered to yield profit as a result of increased customer retention. Brand awareness
can be measured through brand recognition. Veloutso et al\(^\text{76}\) analysed that customer
loyalty is the vital influence that promotes retention and profitability to retail banks.
Veloutso et al\(^\text{77}\) claim that loyalty could be seen as cognitive, affective and behavioural.
Veloutso et al\(^\text{78}\) defined these three forms of loyalty as “cognitive loyalty is the intention
to express repeated behaviour in the future, affective loyalty is the attitude to supplying
firms, while behavioural loyalty is the actual repeat behaviour exhibited by customers’”.
Some banks have devised an extra means and strategy to satisfy their customers thus
increasing their customer loyalty. Some factors such as the level of customer satisfaction,


perceived service quality and brand image are influences that develop a loyal customer base. Moreover the research analyses show that the perceived service quality motivates the consumer’s awareness to buy a specific brand of products and brands provided by a given organisation.

CONCLUSION/ RECOMMENDATION

Awareness (aided, unaided), contributes to the recognition of brand equity. Twedt investigated the awareness-attitude of brands towards marketing and found out that in order to determine the degree of consumer awareness related to a specific brand and consumer attitude, an effective brand strategy has to be planned. In the empirical part of the thesis brand recognition and awareness can be facilitated by Citibank-Cameroon subsidiary being participative in its social corporate responsibility plan to develop the community by planting trees and organizing football competition every summer holidays. This brand strategy has been used for several years to keep a positive brand image of the bank. Just as Noble  analysed that other opinions that can influence a consumer’s perception on a particular brand can be advertising, word of mouth, press comments. Further, research has been done on the description of brands comparing it to the way bird would build its nest. According to Omar and Williams firms should manage their corporate reputation in relation to trustworthiness and credibility, which are depends on the past achievement of the firm. Corporate reputation has been salient in modern management. From a customer’s perspective, a healthy reputation may act as a risk suppressor. It is accepted that corporate reputation provides firms with competitive advantages. Such reputations can be felt by the firm if the firm distinguishes itself from competitors in many situations such as producing higher quality products to customers,

attract more investors, keep up with a coherent and consistent image to the public, produce and distribute a unique offering to its consumers. Alongside these qualities the organization should create a medium for communication such as using a public relation medium to disseminate vital information to its stakeholders, involve the community as a concern to the growth of the firm. Spears et al\(^{82}\) conducted a research based on the assessment of corporate associations using the Unique Corporate Association Valence (UCAV) as a measure. Research has shown that each stakeholder group affects corporate performance through their conception and responses about the way things are done in the corporation. Gylling and Lindberg\(^{83}\) conducted an investigation to show the difference between a corporate brand and a customer brand. Corporate branding has to do with many stakeholders interacting with the employees of the company. International companies have increased their investment in corporate and brand identities in order to have a positive image and reputation. Familiar corporate transactions could be globalisation, mergers and acquisitions, deregulation. The focus of the branding effort shifts from the product to the corporation. Product and corporation are related in that corporate brands add economic value to the variety of products and services offered by the company. However, the broader scope of the corporate brand facilitates brand thinking considerably beyond the product and its relationship with the consumer or customer. Another contrast between product and corporate branding is a difference in who the brand relates to in terms of both attraction and support. While product brands mainly target consumers or customers, corporate brands also contribute to the images formed and held by organizational and community members, investors, partners, suppliers and other stakeholders and privatization have prompted the need for corporate identities and images. The deputy manager of Citi bank Cameroon emphasized that the

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value of the bank’s brand is created by increasing its customer brand awareness and offering special packages to its customers, such as ATM cards, Citi Cards, Citivisa card, Certificate of Deposits.

In this research I conducted a telephone interview to give a qualitative approach of the research. The research was limited just to one level of measuring brand equity, which is the consumer level. I therefore recommend more findings to be carried on the other two levels of measuring brand equity (company and product levels).
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