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Brand Image and Its Impact on Consumer Purchasing Decisions in Retail Outlets at the University of Maiduguri

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ABSTRACT: This research examines the effect of brand image on consumer purchasing decisions within retail outlets at the University of Maiduguri. The study specifically considers four dimensions of brand image: brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand associations, and the retail shop environment. Employing a qualitative research design, data were gathered from 320 respondents drawn from the university community through structured questionnaires. The collected data were analysed using multiple regression analysis to assess the strength and significance of the relationships between the independent and dependent variables. Results indicate a strong positive correlation between brand image and consumer purchasing decisions, with an R value of 0.798 and an R^2 of 0.638, suggesting that approximately 63.8% of the variation in consumer buying behaviour is accounted for by the examined brand image variables. ANOVA results further confirmed the statistical significance of the model ($F = 111.113$, $p < 0.05$). The study concludes that brand image plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer purchasing behaviour in retail outlets at the University of Maiduguri. Consequently, it is recommended that retailers and brand managers prioritize strategies that enhance brand awareness, maintain consistent product quality, cultivate positive brand associations, and optimize the retail shop environment to positively influence consumer buying decisions.

KEYWORDS: Brand Image, Consumer Purchase Behaviour, Retail Environment, Brand Awareness, Brand Perceived Quality, Brand Associations

INTRODUCTION

Brand image is a pivotal concept in marketing, exerting a substantial influence on consumer purchasing decisions. It encompasses the constellation of beliefs, perceptions, and impressions that consumers hold regarding a particular brand (Keller, 2003). A well-established brand image communicates signals of quality, reliability, and prestige, which in turn shape consumer preferences and purchase intentions. This influence is particularly pronounced in competitive retail environments, such as university campuses, where students are highly exposed to diverse brands through digital platforms, social networks, and peer interactions, making brand image a key determinant of consumer behaviour.

The assessment of brand image typically involves several critical dimensions: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and store image or retail atmosphere. Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers can recognize or recall a brand, serving as a foundation for other brand-related evaluations (Keller, 2008). Perceived quality reflects consumers' assessment of a brand's overall excellence or superiority, often affecting their willingness to pay a premium (Aaker, 1996). Brand associations encompass the mental connections and attributes that consumers link to a brand, including emotional, functional, or symbolic meanings. Furthermore, the retail atmosphere, including store layout, design, and ambiance, can reinforce brand identity and positively shape the consumer shopping experience (Alakwe & Okpara, 2017).

Empirical evidence from the Nigerian context supports the influence of these brand image dimensions on the purchasing behaviour of university students. Osueke, Oyekola, Olatunde, Ibenyenwa, and Ogundoyin (2024) reported that digital advertising via platforms such as TikTok, Facebook, and the Internet significantly enhances brand awareness and associations among students. Similarly, Adebayo, Asumadu-Boateng, Onuchukwu, and Ifeyinwa (2024) observed that online promotions contribute to improved brand recall and stimulate impulse purchases among university students. Additionally, Alakwe and Okpara (2017) demonstrated that a compelling retail atmosphere directly affects consumer satisfaction and purchasing decisions in Nigerian retail contexts.

Despite this growing body of literature, few studies have specifically investigated how these dimensions of brand image influence consumer purchasing decisions within university retail outlets in Nigeria. Existing research predominantly examines urban retail markets and the general consumer population, often overlooking the distinctive behavioural traits of students, such as price sensitivity, brand consciousness, and strong reliance on peer influence and digital media. In response, this study seeks to examine the influence of brand image across its core dimensions on consumer purchasing behaviour at the University of Maiduguri, thereby providing targeted insights to inform branding strategies within academic retail environments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptual Review

Consumer Buying Decisions

Consumer buying decisions encompass the process by which individuals select, purchase, utilize, and dispose of products or services to fulfil their needs and desires. This process is shaped by a combination of psychological, social, cultural, and economic factors (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Understanding consumer decision-making is essential for organizations, as it informs the development of marketing strategies that align with consumer preferences and enhance competitive advantage.

A major determinant of consumer buying decisions is brand perception, which includes brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand associations. Consumers typically prefer brands they recognize and trust, often equating strong brand images with superior quality and reliability (Solomon, 2018). Moreover, digital influences have increasingly shaped consumer behaviour, with online reviews, social media engagement, and peer recommendations significantly affecting purchase decisions, especially among younger demographics (Smith, 2021).

Economic conditions also critically influence consumer purchasing behaviour. During economic downturns, consumers tend to prioritize essential goods over luxury items, whereas periods of economic growth encourage higher spending and discretionary purchases (Schiffman & Wisenblit, 2019). Cultural factors further shape consumer evaluations, with individualistic societies focusing on personal preferences and collectivistic cultures emphasizing group opinions and social validation (Hofstede, 2020).

Brand Image

Brand image represents the overall perception that consumers hold regarding a brand, derived from experiences, interactions, and exposure to marketing communications. It encompasses the beliefs, emotions, and associations consumers attach to a brand, which significantly influence purchasing behaviour and brand loyalty (Keller, 2013). A strong brand image fosters trust, enhances customer preference, and serves as a vital asset in competitive markets.

Recent studies have highlighted the influence of brand image on consumer behaviour. Hosseini and Behboudi (2023) reported that a positive brand image enhances customer satisfaction and loyalty, particularly in service-oriented sectors such as tourism. Nandan (2023) emphasized that brand image is a multidimensional construct shaped by cognitive and emotional factors, brand symbolism, and consumer attitudes, underscoring the need for businesses to manage multiple brand elements to maintain favourable perceptions.

Within higher education, brand image plays a crucial role in shaping students' enrolment decisions. Smith and Turner (2024) found that students are more likely to choose institutions with strong, positive brand associations, highlighting the importance of cultivating and maintaining a compelling institutional brand identity. To develop and sustain a strong brand image, organizations must consistently deliver high-quality offerings, implement effective communication strategies, and align branding initiatives with core values that resonate with their target audience, thereby enhancing satisfaction, loyalty, and competitive advantage.

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness reflects the extent to which consumers recognize and recall a brand, serving as a critical determinant in purchase decisions. High brand awareness increases the likelihood that a brand will be considered during the buying process, as familiarity fosters trust and preference for recognized brands (Chen, 2024).

Empirical evidence underscores the significance of brand awareness in influencing consumer behaviour. Chen (2024) demonstrated that higher brand awareness is associated with increased purchase intentions, while Zhao, Butt, Murad, Mirza, and Al-Faryan (2022) reported that effective advertising enhances brand recognition, positively impacting both consumer buying behaviour and brand loyalty. Additionally, Azzahra, Febrian, Pratama, Na'im, and Mawardi (2023) observed that brand awareness, alongside perceived quality, contributes significantly to building brand loyalty among young consumers. These findings suggest that firms should prioritize strategies to enhance brand awareness to cultivate a loyal customer base and strengthen market position.

Perceived Brand Quality

Brand perceived quality denotes consumers' overall evaluation of a product or service's excellence or superiority, significantly influencing purchase decisions and loyalty. It constitutes a core component of brand equity, shaping consumer preferences and willingness to pay premium prices (Aaker, 1996). High perceived quality enhances brand reputation, fosters trust, and strengthens competitive advantage.

Empirical studies highlight the importance of perceived quality. Bakalo and Amantie (2023) found that brand awareness and perceived quality positively influence purchase intentions in the Ethiopian mobile phone market. Similarly, Kukreti and Yadav (2023) showed that brand personality affects perceived quality, which in turn influences online purchase intentions. Mangestuti and Kussudyarsana (2024) demonstrated that brand attachment, perceived quality, and consumer satisfaction strongly correlate with customer loyalty in the Chinese skincare market. Furthermore, Alenazi, Almotairi, and Al-Meshal (2015) reported that while price and promotions may negatively affect perceived quality, quality guarantees can mitigate such effects. These studies collectively suggest that maintaining high perceived quality is essential for customer satisfaction, loyalty, and competitive positioning.

Brand Associations

Brand associations refer to the mental links consumers form between a brand and specific attributes, emotions, or concepts, which contribute to brand image and differentiation (Aaker, 1991). These associations develop through marketing efforts, customer experiences, and external influences such as word-of-mouth, and they influence brand recall, trust, and purchase decisions.

Research highlights the complexity of brand associations. Du Plessis, D'Hooze, and Sweldens (2023) introduced the Continuous Trinity Model (CTM), categorizing associations into expectations, meaning, and affect, corresponding to predictive learning, referential learning, and direct affect transfer. John, Loken, Kim, and Monga (2006) developed Brand Concept Maps (BCM) to visualize association networks and understand how they shape consumer perceptions. Mangestuti and Kussudyarsana (2024) noted that corporate identity-related associations can negatively influence consumer perception if mismanaged. Alenazi, Almotairi, and Al-Meshal (2015) highlighted that quality guarantees can mitigate adverse effects of

price and promotions on brand associations. These findings underscore the need for strategic management of brand associations to maintain favourable brand images, enhance loyalty, and gain competitive advantage.

Retail Shop Atmosphere

Retail shop atmosphere refers to the deliberate design of a store's physical environment to elicit specific emotional responses, influencing consumer behaviour. Elements such as lighting, music, scent, layout, and signage collectively shape the shopping experience (Bitner, 1992). A well-designed atmosphere can increase customer satisfaction, extend shopping duration, and boost sales.

Empirical evidence supports the impact of store atmosphere on consumer behaviour. Hulten (2022) found that sensory marketing elements, including aesthetics and ambient stimuli, significantly affect emotional engagement and purchase decisions. Turley and Milliman (2020) demonstrated that environmental factors such as lighting, scent, and music tempo shape perceptions of quality and influence shopping duration. Mari and Poggesi (2013) used the servicescape framework to highlight how ambient conditions, spatial layout, and symbolic cues influence customer behaviour. Orth, Wirtz, and McKinney (2021) observed that temporary retail environments with unique atmospheric designs create heightened customer excitement, promoting impulse purchases and brand loyalty. Retail shop atmosphere is therefore critical for creating engaging shopping experiences that enhance satisfaction and drive sales.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Several Nigerian studies corroborate the influence of brand image on consumer behaviour. Anyanwu and Ohwobevughe (2020) examined chain fast-food outlets in Umuahia, Abia State, using a survey of 200 respondents. Regression analysis revealed that brand communication, trust, and perceived quality positively affected brand loyalty, with adjusted R^2 values of 0.725, 0.3996, and 0.652, respectively. The study recommended fulfilling service promises, building trust, and enhancing service quality to strengthen loyalty.

Fakayode (2021) investigated branding effects on consumer behaviour in the Nigerian banking sector, focusing on Access Bank customers in Osogbo. Survey results from 150 respondents indicated that brand image and brand awareness significantly influenced consumer behaviour, suggesting that strong brand identities foster trust and loyalty.

Elle, Ojeleye, Tunde, and Taiwo (2023) examined brand image and purchase intentions in Nigeria's telecommunications industry with 1,500 respondents, using structural equation modelling. Their findings indicated that a positive brand image significantly influences purchase intentions, emphasizing brand trust and credibility.

Martins and Martins (2023) studied perceived quality's mediating role between country-of-origin image and consumer buying behaviour in Nigerian supermarkets ($n = 1,272$). Results showed that perceived quality mediates the impact of country-of-origin on purchase decisions, highlighting the importance of managing product quality to enhance consumer confidence.

Ogbuji, Anyanwu, and Onah (2011) explored the effect of branding on consumer choice for regulated bottled water in Southeast Nigeria. Their study revealed that corporate reputation and packaging strongly influenced consumer decisions, more than brand name and logo, and recommended strengthening these elements to improve loyalty and preference.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

This study is anchored on two key theoretical frameworks that elucidate the relationship between brand image and consumer buying decisions: Brand Equity Theory and the Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model.

Brand Equity Theory

Brand Equity Theory explains the additional value a brand contributes to a product or service, shaping consumer perceptions, preferences, and loyalty. Originally proposed by Aaker (1991), the theory conceptualizes brand equity as a multidimensional construct comprising brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. Collectively, these elements enhance consumer trust, differentiate the brand from competitors, and contribute to long-term business success. Keller (1993) further developed this framework through the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, emphasizing the role of consumer perceptions and experiences in determining brand value.

Empirical studies highlight the dynamic nature of brand equity in response to evolving market conditions. Agaba and Emenike (2019) examined the influence of brand equity dimensions on consumer purchasing behaviour and found that perceived quality and brand loyalty are the most influential factors. Additionally, the rise of digital marketing and social media has become integral to sustaining brand equity. Smith (2023) observed that brands with strong online presence and interactive engagement strategies maintain higher consumer loyalty and perceived value. These findings underscore the need for organizations to adapt brand equity strategies to contemporary consumer behaviours and technological advancements.

In the retail sector, particularly within competitive university retail environments, brand equity significantly influences consumer decision-making. Johnson and Lee (2022) reported that students are more likely to purchase from brands recognized for their positive attributes, highlighting the importance of brand awareness and associations in shaping buying decisions. To sustain consumer trust and foster long-term loyalty, retailers must focus on consistent product quality, cultivating emotional connections, and implementing strategic marketing initiatives, ultimately enhancing sales and market competitiveness.

Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) Model

The Stimulus-Organism-Response (S-O-R) model, developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974), provides a framework for understanding how external stimuli affect individual behaviour through internal cognitive and emotional processes. The model comprises three components: Stimulus (S), representing environmental cues such as marketing messages or brand elements; Organism (O), encompassing the individual's internal state, including emotions, attitudes, and perceptions; and Response (R), denoting behavioural outcomes such as purchase intentions or brand loyalty. This framework is particularly valuable in consumer behaviour research, as it explains how brand-related stimuli shape evaluation and decision-making processes.

Several studies have applied the S-O-R model in modern consumer contexts. Wu and Lai (2022) demonstrated that augmented reality (AR)-based stimuli in retail settings significantly influenced consumer perceptions and purchase intentions. Similarly, Zhao and Teo (2023) found that visually appealing social commerce platforms evoke positive emotional responses, resulting in increased engagement and spending. These findings highlight the model's relevance in contemporary marketing, where strategically designed store atmospheres, advertisements, and digital experiences influence consumer emotions and behaviour.

Within retail environments, the S-O-R framework is instrumental in examining how brand image and store atmosphere affect consumer buying decisions. Yang, Ye, and Wang (2021) applied the model to investigate the effects of retail stimuli, including store layout and customer service, on consumers' psychological responses and purchasing behaviour. Their study revealed that well-designed retail environments enhance satisfaction and increase the likelihood of repeat purchases. Overall, the S-O-R model provides critical insights into how brands and retailers can craft engaging experiences that effectively drive consumer actions.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a survey research design to investigate the influence of brand image on consumer buying decisions, with a specific focus on retail shops within the University of Maiduguri.

The research population comprised all consumers of retail products within the University, encompassing a diverse demographic profile, including variations in age, gender, income levels, and educational attainment. To select respondents, a convenience sampling technique, a type of non-probability sampling, was employed. This approach was considered appropriate given the accessibility and availability of participants within the university retail environment.

A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed to consumers, of which 320 were returned and deemed valid for analysis, ensuring adequate sample size for reliable and representative findings. The data collection instrument was a structured questionnaire designed to capture qualitative and quantitative information regarding consumer buying decisions in relation to brand image. The questionnaire specifically addressed four dimensions of brand image: brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and retail shop atmosphere. Responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree," facilitating standardized data analysis.

Collected data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. Descriptive statistics, including means and standard deviations, were employed to summarize respondents' perceptions, while inferential statistics, such as correlation and multiple regression analyses, were used to examine the strength and significance of relationships among variables. All analyses were performed using SPSS Version 24, ensuring rigorous and systematic data evaluation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Description of Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

This section presents the socio-demographic profile of the study participants, including gender, age, educational level, frequency of purchase, and product preferences. These characteristics provide important contextual insights into the consumer base at the University of Maiduguri and help in interpreting the study's subsequent analytical outcomes. The demographic distribution of respondents is summarized in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent Demographics

VARIABLES	ATTRIBUTES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE (%)
Gender	Male	191	59.7
	Female	129	40.3
	Total	320	100
Age	Less than 18 years	18	20
	18 to 24 years	71	22.2
	25 to 34 years	48	15
	35 to 44 years	44	13.8
	45 years and Above	93	29.1
	Total	320	100
Educational Level	Undergraduate	70	21.9
	Postgraduate Student	72	22.5
	Academic Staff	46	14.4
	Non-Academic Staff	45	14.1
	Others	87	27.2
	Total	320	100
Frequency of purchase	Daily	111	34.7
	2-3 times a week	86	26.9
	Once a week	55	17.2
	Once a month	24	7.5
	Occasionally	44	13.8
	Total	320	100

Preference	Food & Beverages	48	15
	Clothing & Accessories	50	15.6
	Electronics & Gadgets	25	7.8
	Personal Care & Beauty products	37	11.6
	Stationery & Books	138 22	43.1
	Others	320	6.9
	Total		100

Source: Author's Field work (2025)

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The distribution shows that 191 respondents (59.7%) were male, while 129 (40.3%) were female, indicating that males constituted a larger proportion of the study sample.

Regarding age, 64 respondents (20%) were below 18 years, 71 (22.2%) were between 18 and 24 years, 48 (15%) fell within the 25–34 age category, 44 (13.8%) were aged 35–44 years, and 93 (29.1%) were 45 years and above. This distribution reveals that respondents aged 45 years and above formed the largest age group in the study.

In terms of educational attainment, 70 respondents (21.9%) were undergraduate students, 72 (22.5%) were postgraduate students, 46 (14.4%) were academic staff, 45 (14.1%) were non-academic staff, while 87 (27.2%) indicated “others.” This reflects a diverse educational composition drawn from various segments of the university community.

The findings also show varied purchasing frequency: 111 respondents (34.7%) reported making daily purchases, 86 (26.9%) purchased items two to three times weekly, 55 (17.2%) made purchases once a week, 24 (7.5%) purchased once monthly, and 44 (13.8%) purchased occasionally. This indicates that daily shoppers formed the largest proportion of the sample.

Concerning respondents' product preferences, 48 (15%) preferred food and beverages, 50 (15.6%) preferred clothing and accessories, 25 (7.8%) frequently purchased electronics and gadgets, 37 (11.6%) preferred personal care and beauty products, 22 (6.9%) opted for stationery and books, while 37 (11.6%) favoured other miscellaneous products. This shows a relatively balanced spread across various retail categories, with clothing and accessories ranking slightly highest.

Description of Variables

This section provides a summary of responses to both the independent and dependent variables in the study. A five-point Likert scale was employed: Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1). In interpreting the mean values, a mean score greater than 3 indicates general agreement with the questionnaire items, while a mean score below 3 suggests disagreement among respondents.

Table 2: Consumer buying decision

STATEMENTS	SD	D	U	A	SA	MEAN
Consumers are more likely to Purchase a product from a retail shop if it carries brands which they trust.	4 (1.3%)	17 (5.3%)	33 (10.3%)	129 (40.3%)	137 (42.8%)	4.18
Consumers often make repeat Purchase from retail shops that offer brands with a strong reputation.	5 (1.6%)	21 (6.6%)	37 (11.6%)	139 (43.4%)	118 (36.9%)	4.08
Overallshopping experience in retail shop influences consumer final purchase decision.	5 (1.6%)	26 (8.1%)	22 (6.9%)	118 (36.9%)	149 (46.6%)	4.13
Consumers consider both brand image and retail shop atmosphere before making a purchase.	1 (0.3%)	21 (6.6%)	41 (12.8%)	130 (40.6%)	127 (39.7%)	4.13
Average	3.75 (1.2%)	21.3 (6.7%)	33.5 (10.4%)	129 (40.3%)	132.8 (41.5%)	4.15

Source: Author's Field work (2025)

Interpretation of Table 2

Table 2 reports an overall mean score of 4.15 out of 5, which reflects a strongly positive evaluation of consumer buying decisions among retail consumers at the University of Maiduguri. This high mean value indicates that the majority of respondents consistently agreed with the statements measuring consumer buying behaviour.

The distribution of responses further supports this conclusion: 41.5% of the respondents strongly agreed and 40.3% agreed with the statements. Conversely, only 1.2% strongly disagreed and 6.7% disagreed, while 10.4% remained undecided. These results suggest a generally favourable perception of consumer buying decision factors, with minimal opposition or neutrality among the sampled population.

Table 3: Brand Awareness

STATEMENTS	SD	D	U	A	SA	MEAN
Consumers easily recognize Brands sold in retail shops within University of Maiduguri.	13 (4.1%)	27 (8.4%)	22 (6.9%)	121 (37.8%)	137 (42.8%)	4.07
Consumers are very familiar with most of the brands available in the retail shops.	14 (4.4%)	17 (5.3%)	16 (5.0%)	115 (35.9%)	158 (49.4%)	4.21
Consumers often see advertisements of different brands of products sold in retail shops at the University of Maiduguri.	10 (3.1%)	19 (5.9%)	35 (10.9%)	145 (45.3%)	111 (34.7%)	4.03
Consumers do recall specific brand names when shopping in University of Maiduguri retail shops.	6 (1.9%)	22 (6.9%)	22 (6.9%)	79 (24.7%)	191 (59.7%)	4.33
Average	10.8 (3.4%)	21.3 (6.6%)	23.8 (7.4%)	115 (35.9%)	149.3 (46.7%)	4.16

Source: Author's Field Work (2025)

Table 3 shows an average mean of 4.16 out of the maximum of 5. This is a strong indication of the respondents' positive evaluation of Brand Awareness in the University of Maiduguri. It also clearly shows that the majority of the respondents, 46.7% and 35.9%, strongly agreed and agreed with the statements, respectively. On the other hand, 3.4% and 6.6% strongly disagreed and disagreed with the statements, respectively, while 7.4% were undecided.

Table 4: Brand Perceived Quality

STATEMENTS	SD	D	U	A	SA	MEAN
Consumers believe that the products sold in these retail shops are of good quality.	13 (4.1%)	19 (5.9%)	16 (5.0%)	145 (45.3%)	127 (39.7%)	4.11
Consumers trust the durability of the brands available in the University of Maiduguri retail shops	4 (1.3%)	18 (5.6%)	22 (6.9%)	108 (33.8%)	168 (52.5%)	4.31
Consumers consider products from well-known brands in these shops to be superior to lesser-known brands	5 (1.6%)	12 (3.8 %)	28 (8.8%)	139 (43.4%)	136 (42.5%)	4.22
Consumers prefer purchasing from retail shops that sell brands with a good reputation for quality.	9 (2.8%)	5 (1.6%)	25 (7.8%)	121 (37.8%)	160 (50.0%)	4.31
Average	7.8 (2.5%)	13.5 (4.2%)	22.8 (7.1%)	128.3 (40.1%)	147.8 (46.2%)	4.24

Source: Author's Field Work (2025)

Table 4 reveals an overall mean score of 4.24 out of 5, demonstrating a strong positive perception of Brand Perceived Quality among respondents at the University of Maiduguri. The distribution further indicates that a substantial proportion of participants expressed favourable views, with 46.2% strongly agreeing and 40.1% agreeing with the statements presented. Conversely, only a small minority—2.5% and 4.2%—strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, while 7.1% of respondents remained neutral.

Table 5: Brand Associations

STATEMENTS	SD	D	U	A	SA	MEAN
Consumers associate themselves with the brands in University of Maiduguri retail shops because of its reliability and trust.	6 (1.9%)	18 (5.6%)	9 (2.8%)	88 (27.5%)	199 (62.2%)	4.43
Consumers feel connected to certain brands available in these retail shops because of past experiences.	8 (2.5%)	7 (2.2%)	21 (6.6%)	167 (52.2%)	117 (36.6%)	4.18
Consumers perceive brands in these shops as having a good reputation.	7 (2.2%)	25 (7.8%)	17 (5.3%)	121 (37.8%)	150 (46.9%)	4.19
Certain brands in these retail shops reflect consumers personal lifestyle and preferences.	1 (0.3%)	17 (5.3%)	22 (6.9%)	127 (39.7%)	153 (47.8%)	4.29
Average Mean	5.5 (1.73%)	16.8 (5.23%)	17.3 (5.4%)	125.8 (39.3%)	154.8 (48.4%)	4.27

Source: Author's Field Work (2025)

Table 5 presents an overall mean score of 4.27 out of 5, indicating a strong positive perception of Brand Associations among respondents at the University of Maiduguri. The results further reveal that a substantial majority—48.4% and 39.3%—strongly agreed and agreed with the statements, respectively. In contrast, only a small proportion of respondents expressed negative views, with 5.5% strongly disagreeing and 5.23% disagreeing. Additionally, 5.4% of the participants remained undecided.

Table 6: Retail Shop Atmosphere

STATEMENTS	SD	D	U	A	SA	MEAN
The cleanliness and Organization of a retail shop influence Consumers decision to buy the products.	4 (1.3%)	10 (3.1%)	53 (16.6%)	124 (38.8%)	129 (40.3%)	4.14
Consumers prefer shopping in retail shops that provide a pleasant ambiance with good (lighting, air conditioning, and music).	7 (2.2%)	12 (3.8%)	21 (6.6%)	176 (55.0%)	104 (32.5%)	4.12
The arrangement of Products in the retail shops makes it easy for consumers to find what they need.	5 (1.6%)	11 (3.4%)	33 (10.3%)	168 (52.5%)	103 (32.2%)	4.10
The customer service in these retail shops influences consumers' willingness to buy certain brands.	5 (1.4%)	9 (3.9%)	22 (10.7%)	132 (52.1%)	152 (31.8%)	4.30
Average Mean	5.25 (1.63%)	10.5 (3.55%)	32.3 (11.1%)	150 (49.6%)	122 (34.2%)	4.17

Source: Author's Field Work (2025)

Table 6 reports an overall mean score of 4.17 out of 5, suggesting that respondents hold a strongly positive perception of the Retail Shop Atmosphere at the University of Maiduguri. The distribution further indicates that most participants expressed favorable views, with 34.2% strongly agreeing and 49.6% agreeing with the statements. Conversely, only a small fraction—1.63% and 3.55%—strongly disagreed and disagreed, respectively, while 11.1% of the respondents were undecided.

Table 7:

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics					Durbin Watson
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	
1	.798	.638	.633	.550	.639	111.113	5	314	.000	1.225

Source: Author's computation (2025)

- a. Predictors (constant), RETAILATM, BRANDPER, BRANDASS, BRANDAW
b. Dependent Variable: CONSBUY1

The model summary indicates a robust positive relationship between the independent variables—brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association, and retail shop atmosphere—and the dependent variable, consumer buying decision. The multiple correlation coefficient ($R = 0.798$) demonstrates a strong association between the predictors and the outcome variable. Similarly, the coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.638$) shows that the model accounts for approximately 63.8% of the variance in consumer buying decisions, signifying that these predictors substantially contribute to explaining consumer purchasing behaviour within retail outlets at the University of Maiduguri.

The adjusted R^2 value of 0.633 reinforces the model's adequacy by adjusting for the number of predictors, thereby indicating minimal risk of overfitting. The standard error of the estimate (0.550) implies that the predicted consumer buying decisions differ from the actual observations by an average of 0.55 units, which is relatively small and suggests strong predictive accuracy. Furthermore, the F-statistic of 111.113 at a significance level of 0.000 confirms that the overall regression model is statistically significant, meaning that the inclusion of brand image dimensions and retail atmospheric factors enhances the prediction of consumer buying behaviour.

Although the Durbin–Watson statistic of 1.225 indicates mild positive autocorrelation among the residuals, it does not reach a critical threshold. Overall, the regression analysis provides a robust explanatory framework for consumer buying behaviour and highlights the central role of brand-related attributes and retail shop atmosphere in influencing purchase decisions within the University of Maiduguri's retail context.

Table 8: ANOVA^a

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1 Regression	168.343	5	33.668	111.113	.000 ^b
Residual	95.145	314	.303		
Total	263.488	319			

Source: Author's computation (2025) a.

Dependent Variable: CONSBUY1

b. Predictors: (Constant), RETAILATM, BRANDPER, CONSBUY, BRANDASS, BRANDAW

The Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) output offers additional clarity on the overall statistical significance of the regression model assessing the effects of brand image components—brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association, and retail shop atmosphere—on consumer buying decisions in retail shops at the University of Maiduguri. The regression sum of squares is 168.343 with 5 degrees of freedom, while the residual sum of squares stands at 95.145 with 314 degrees of freedom. Together, these yield a total sum of squares of 263.488, representing the entire variability in consumer purchasing decisions.

The computed mean square value for the regression is 33.668, whereas the residual mean square is 0.303. The resulting F-statistic of 111.113 is notably high, indicating that the regression model accounts for a significantly greater portion of the variation in consumer buying decisions compared to a model without explanatory variables. The associated significance value ($p = 0.000$), which is well below the 0.05 threshold, confirms that the overall model is statistically significant. This signifies that the set of independent variables meaningfully predicts the dependent variable. Overall, the ANOVA findings affirm that brand image dimensions and the retail shop atmosphere exert a statistically significant influence on consumer buying decisions. These results validate the model and underscore the importance of further examining the individual contributions of each predictor within the retail environment of the University of Maiduguri.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings from the regression analysis indicate that brand image dimensions and the retail shop atmosphere exert a significant and positive influence on consumer buying decisions within retail outlets at the University of Maiduguri. The model establishes a strong relationship between the independent variables—brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association, and retail shop atmosphere—and the dependent variable, consumer buying decision. This is demonstrated by a multiple correlation coefficient (R) of 0.798, which reflects a high degree of association among the variables included in the model.

Moreover, the coefficient of determination (R Square) of 0.638 reveals that approximately 63.8% of the total variation in consumer buying decisions is accounted for by the predictors. This underscores the substantial role that brand-related attributes and the retail environment play in shaping purchasing behaviour among consumers within the university setting. The adjusted R Square value of 0.633 further supports the robustness of the model by confirming its suitability after adjusting for the number of variables considered.

The results from the ANOVA analysis reinforce the model's validity and significance. The F-statistic of 111.113, accompanied by a p -value of 0.000, signifies that the regression model provides a statistically significant explanation of consumer buying decisions. This implies that the combined effects of brand image elements and retail shop atmosphere meaningfully contribute to understanding consumer purchasing patterns.

Overall, the study's findings confirm that brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and the overall retail shop environment collectively and significantly predict consumer buying behaviour within the University of Maiduguri retail context. These insights highlight the importance for retailers to strategically enhance both brand-related factors and the shopping environment to positively influence consumer decisions.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

This study investigated the influence of brand image on consumer buying decisions within retail shops at the University of Maiduguri, focusing on four key dimensions: brand awareness, perceived brand quality, brand association, and retail shop atmosphere. The regression results

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demonstrated a strong and statistically significant relationship between these dimensions of brand image and consumer purchasing behaviour. Specifically, the model accounted for 63.8% of the variance in consumer buying decisions, indicating that brand-related factors and the retail environment play substantial roles in shaping purchasing tendencies among members of the university community.

The ANOVA results further confirmed the significance of the model, showing that the independent variables jointly exert a meaningful influence on consumer buying decisions. These findings highlight that consumers within the university setting are more inclined to purchase products from brands they recognize, perceive as high quality, associate with favourable experiences, and encounter in a well-organized and appealing retail environment. Overall, the study concludes that brand image is a critical determinant of purchasing behaviour in the retail context of the University of Maiduguri. Retailers and marketers must therefore adopt strategies that strengthen brand value and enhance the shopping experience to effectively attract and retain consumers.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

1. **Enhance Brand Awareness Through Targeted Communication**
Retailers and brand managers operating within the university should implement focused promotional strategies such as in-store displays, branded merchandise, digital advertisements, jingles, and social media campaigns tailored to both students and staff. Increased visibility will heighten brand recognition and trust, thereby positively influencing buying decisions.
2. **Maintain and Communicate High Perceived Quality**
Products sold in retail outlets should consistently meet high-quality standards. Retailers should collaborate with reputable brands known for durability and reliability. Efforts should also be made to highlight quality through improved packaging, clear labelling, and consumer testimonials. This will reinforce consumers' confidence in the value and performance of the products offered.
3. **Strengthen Positive Brand Associations**
Retailers should cultivate meaningful brand experiences that create emotional or psychological connections with consumers. This may involve supporting campus events, sponsoring student activities, or integrating storytelling approaches in marketing campaigns. Brands that reflect consumers' lifestyles or aspirations are more likely to influence their purchase behaviour.
4. **Improve Retail Shop Atmosphere**
Retail shops within the university should ensure that their physical environment is clean, visually appealing, and comfortable. Factors such as organized product displays, adequate lighting, good ventilation, and courteous customer service contribute significantly to a positive shopping experience. An inviting atmosphere encourages longer store visits and increases the likelihood of purchase.

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