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EFFECT OF PERCEIVED BRAND QUALITY ON PERFORMANCE OF MEDIUM-SIZED RESTAURANTS IN KISUMU CITY, KENYA

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ABSTRACT

Perceived quality is how a customer evaluates the overall excellence or superiority of a product. Many companies nowadays place a high value on perceived brand quality, and actions taken to increase brand equity may be impacted by it. The majority of the reviewed studies did not look at non-financial performance aspects like customer satisfaction, acquisition, retention, sales growth, and effective and efficient marketing programs. Moreover, even the studies that looked at perceived brand quality, did not consider it in the context of restaurant industry. However, most of the reviewed studies demonstrated that perceived brand quality, has a considerable effect on organizational performance. The current study was anchored on Aaker brand equity theory. The correlation study design and the quantitative paradigm research philosophy helped the researcher in testing hypothesis. The study obtained a sample of 52 respondents, which comprises owners/managers of selected restaurants from a population of 60 registered restaurants using a saturated sampling technique. Results revealed that perceived brand quality (β=.114, p=0.000) has statistically and significant positive effect on non-financial performance of restaurant enterprises in Kisumu city. The study concluded that perceived brand quality, significant predictors of non-financial performance of restaurants; R^2=0.672; F (2, 49) =20.170, p<0.000. The study recommended that firms should consistently improve perceived brand quality among restaurants customers to bring passionate attachment and lasting brand feelings among prospective customers. The academic community, businesses, government authorities, and the general public will find the study's findings useful.

Key Words: *Perceived Brand Quality, Non-Financial Performance, Restaurants*

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INTRODUCTION

Perceived quality, in accordance with Aaker (1992), increases value by giving customers a cause to purchase, differentiating the brand, attracting channel members' attention, paving the way for line extensions, and justifying a higher price. In contrast to actual quality, perceived quality relates to the consumer's subjective evaluation of the product (Zeithaml, 1988). According to Zeithaml (1988), perceived quality is how a customer evaluates the overall excellence or superiority of a product. Many companies nowadays place a high value on perceived brand quality, and actions taken to increase brand equity may be impacted by it. The terms internal qualities and external features were used by Zeithaml (1988) and Steenkamp (1997) to divide the concept of "perceived quality" into two categories. Extrinsic qualities, on the other hand, like brand name, quality seal, price, and location. In contrast, a product's physical characteristics, such as its color, flavor, form, and appearance, are tied to its inherent traits. It is difficult to generalize attributes because they are distinctive to particular product categories (Olson and Jacoby, 1972; Anselmsson at el 2007). According to Aaker (1991), the aspects of perceived brand quality are the intention to buy, differentiation position, pricing, channel member interest, and brand extension.

Marketing Challenges Associated With Restaurant Enterprises

Although emerging economies account for up to 40% of global GDP, restaurants encounter a wide range of difficulties, including an absence of markets (18%), a lack of clients (15%), an abundance of competitors (4.5%), and an 85% lack of marketing knowledge among managers. The current satisfaction level of restaurant customers stands at 29.6%, customer acquisition rate 17.9%, customer retention rate 14.3%, and sales growth at 12.6%, compared to the 38% average performance of the worldwide restaurant business. Demonstrates that each of the aforementioned non-financial performance measures is below the suggested industry level. Majority of the reviewed studies did not look at non-financial performance aspects like customer satisfactions, customer acquisition, customer retention, sales growth and effective and efficient marketing programs. Moreover, even the studies that looked at perceived brand quality did not consider it in the restaurant industry. However most of the studies considered demonstrated that the effect of perceived brand quality on organizational performance has a considerable effect. However, the bulk of the studies reviewed found that perceived brand quality had a positive and significant impact on organizational performance. Even while a sizable amount of study has been done in industrialized nations whose circumstances does not relate to Kenya’s hospitality industry, very little of it has been done in Africa, and none specifically in Kisumu, Kenya. Although inevitable, it is unknown whether perceived brand quality affects the non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurants in Kisumu City, Kenya. The current study's goal is to examine how perceived brand quality affects the non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurants in Kisumu City, Kenya.

Empirical Review of Brand Quality on Non-Financial Performance

Leting (2015) investigated how the perceived quality of a brand affected the non-financial performance of Kenyan mobile phone manufacturers. 322 respondents were used as the sample size for data collection. Multiple regression analysis, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), and correlation were performed. The reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Coefficient (). The results show that brand quality considerably and favorably impacts non-financial performance of Kenyan mobile phone brands. The study's findings suggest that businesses interested in branding mobile phones should concentrate on increasing the value of the perceived brand quality. The survey, however, did not include medium-sized restaurant operations; it was exclusively centered on the Kenyan mobile phone industry. As a result, it is unknown how brand equity affects a medium-sized restaurant's non-financial performance.

According to Jraisat's (2015) analysis of the Jordanian Dead Sea tourist zone, the perceived brand quality of the Dead Sea as a travel destination has a positive and significant effect on nonfinancial performance. The Dead Sea tourism area used 237 self-administered, standardized surveys to gather data from foreign visitors.

To assess the dimensions, numerous exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses were carried out. Construct reliability and composite reliability were used in the research instrument. According to the structural findings, perceived brand quality, which has an R-square of 0.48, was responsible for 48% of the variation in the nonfinancial performance of the Dead Sea tourist destination. Tourism must develop in order to attract international visitors both now and in the future. Notably, the study employed structured questionnaires that limited respondents' ability to react, making it unsuitable for generalization. In the same vein, the study was focused on a specific area and industry.

Based on Marx's theory, Qiao (2022) produced a thorough study on the effect of perceived brand quality on non-financial performance of branded goods in China. A self-administered questionnaire from 310 Chinese consumers of branded items was employed in the study's cross-sectional research technique to gather data. The results showed that perceived brand quality had no discernible influence on branded goods' non-financial performance in China ($t = 0.350$, $p = 0.726$). By improving product design, clearly communicating the benefits of the product, and utilizing efficient advertising strategies, firms can use the study's findings to raise the perceived value of their products. Nevertheless, Qiao (2022) employed a cross-sectional research methodology that does not prove a cause and effect link and examined a specific behavior over an extended period of time. In the UK Brazilian restaurant industry, Ribeiro (2019) conducted research using the cognition-affect-behavior response method on three variables of perceived brand quality (service quality, food quality, and restaurant atmospheres) and nonfinancial performance in ethnic restaurants. The study used a sample size of 665 customers in Brazilian restaurants in the United Kingdom (UK). Data were gathered using a survey sent through email. The results showed that perceived brand quality and non-financial performance have a statistically significant link. The findings encourage British diners to explore Brazilian restaurants and have significant theoretical and managerial consequences for service providers. Notwithstanding, the study did not capture all generally accepted facets of perceived brand quality creating a serious limitation while generalizing the findings. Likewise, Ribeiro (2019) deployed cognition-affect-behavior response system in measuring service experience and not SEVQUAL which is a generally accepted service quality measure creating a serious limitation on dimensionality and conceptualization of the study.

Vera (2015) examined the impact of perceived brand quality on the financial results of various product categories in Mexico in a related study. Analyses were done on data from 1,029 Mexican consumers in seven distinct product categories. Individual responders received self-administered questionnaires. Based on perceived quality, value, and brand performance metrics, the selected brands were evaluated. The findings demonstrated that in Mexico, perceived brand quality had a favorable and significant impact on non-financial performance of various product categories. It is believed that perceived brand quality is a tactic for increasing price disposition through customer value. In order to increase prices, the study advises managers to improve service quality qualities. Despite this, the study was limited to a specific area and industry, making it difficult to generalize. Additionally, it is unknown how brand equity affects the non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurant operations in Kisumu, Kenya.

In order to increase prices, the study advises managers to improve service quality qualities. Despite this, the study was limited to a specific area and industry, making it difficult to generalize. Additionally, it is unknown how brand equity affects the non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurant operations in Kisumu, Kenya. The study's findings are crucial for brands that want to grow and participate in the sports sector of the online retail market, which is expanding as a result of technological advancements and is becoming more important for building enduring customer loyalty. The relationship between the research variables was still examined by Akoglu (2022) using the brand resonance model rather than the less well-known Aaker's brand equity. Also rendering the data unreliable is the fact that it was gathered online using several social media platforms.

According to Alhaddad (2015), perceived brand quality considerably raises the non-financial performance of athlete goods in Damascus. 473 students from Damascus' Higher Institute of Business Administration made up the study sample. Survey questionnaires were used to acquire data from all sample sizes. Data were analyzed using both descriptive and regression approaches to further test the research hypothesis. The findings demonstrate that perceived brand quality influences athlete products' nonfinancial performance favorably and significantly in Damascus ($r = 0.58$, t-value = 13.361). The results of the study can be applied by the athlete market to develop brand loyalty through the employment of strategies that can do so. In any case, the study employed descriptive statistics to analyze the data, which is a poor strategy for determining causality. Additionally, there is no data on how brand equity affects the non-financial performance of medium-sized businesses in Kisumu, Kenya.

According to Taiwanese college students' perceptions of the quality of the HTC and iPhone brands in terms of non-financial performance, Moslehpour examined this in a study from 2014 on the subject. Data collected from 439 university students in Central Taiwan were examined using version 20.0 of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. The findings revealed a statistically significant positive correlation between perceived brand quality and the non-financial success of both HTC and iPhone mobile phones in Taiwan. The effect of PBQ on CPL for HTC is $\beta=.52$ (p.001), whereas the effect for iPhone is $\beta=.47$ (p.001). Additionally, this study demonstrates that, when comparing HTC with iPhone for Taiwanese university students, HTC's quality has a bigger impact on nonfinancial performance than iPhone. Consumers, on the other hand, believe that the iPhone has greater prestige than the HTC. In conclusion, due of HTC's perceived quality, Taiwanese customers will favor it and be willing to pay more for it. Despite this, Moslehpour (2014) solely employed a quantitative study strategy, which is poor at evoking emotions. Furthermore, the study did not include medium-sized restaurant businesses in Kisumu City, Kenya, and it was restricted to Taiwan and focused mostly on two smartphone brands.

In order to better understand how perceived brand quality affects K&N goods' non-financial performance in Pakistan, Ali (2013) carried out a survey. A total of 150 respondents were chosen to provide data for additional study. Techniques for regression analysis were used in the investigation. The results show that perceived brand quality and non-financial performance of K&N products in Pakistan have a strong and substantial positive association (beta=.409, p 0.01). According to the report, a company should put its attention on three things if it wants to prosper in the market: trust, customer satisfaction, and good perceived quality. Additionally, because the study was only conducted in one industry in Pakistan, it cannot be generalized.

In order to determine the impact of perceived brand quality on the non-financial performance of SMEs in Indonesia, Erlangga (2021) conducted a study. The study combined survey methodology with quantitative descriptive statistics. 243 clients of SMEs that sell goods participated in the survey as respondents in Tangerang City, Indonesia. Data for this inquiry were gathered using both questionnaires and interviews. The study's findings demonstrated that perceived brand quality had a sizable, favorable impact on Indonesian SMEs' non-financial performance ($t=2.665$, $p=0.001$). Erlangga (2021) employed descriptive statistics, which are a poor indicator of cause and effect relationships, to examine the data. Despite this, the poll did not pay particular attention to how brand equity affected a medium-sized restaurant's non-financial performance.

Lacap (2021) looked into the connection between nonfinancial performance and perceived brand quality in the Philippines' telecoms sector. Respondents in the province of Pampanga were handed questionnaires using the self-administered method and a cluster sampling technique. According to the survey's findings, perceived brand quality has a positive impact on nonfinancial performance ($r=0.698$, p 0.001). Despite this, the study used a causal-predictive methodology, which has been demonstrated to be biased in favor of causes that are already well-known. Additionally, the study was restricted to the Philippines' telecommunications industry solely.

Additional research was done on the impact of perceived brand quality on the non-financial performance of generic branded medications in India by Nath (2011). 392 doctors from six major cities in eastern India participated in the poll. The findings demonstrated that the non-financial performance of branded generic medications was significantly and favorably influenced by perceived brand quality (β=0.534, α=0.000). The study suggested that managers pay attention to internal indicators that increase brand equity and put effective marketing strategies into place. Nath (2011), however, neglected other significant aspects of perceived brand quality and generalized perceived brand quality into two internal and extrinsic cues.

In order to ascertain the effect of store brand perceived product quality on nonfinancial performance of store brands in Spain, Calvo-Porral (2017) undertook a study. Using simple random sampling procedures, a sample of 439 was obtained. According to the study's findings, Perceived brand quality has strong positive influences on store brand non-financial performance. Store brand managers and merchants could create market segmentation and marketing strategies based on the perceived quality of their customers. However, the researcher employed straightforward random sampling techniques, which results in a biased depiction of the overall population. Moreover, the study is based on store brands in Spain and not on non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurant enterprises in Kisumu city, Kenya making it unfit for generalization.

Despite being inconclusive, the aforementioned literature makes clear that there is a connection between perceived brand quality and non-financial performance. Leting (2015) looked at the connection between perceived brand quality and non-financial performance and found that it had a favourable and significant impact on the non-financial performance of Kenyan mobile phone companies. Similar to this, Jraisat (2015) discovered that the Dead Sea tourism destination's perceived brand quality had a positive and significant impact on non-financial performance. The results of (Ribeiro, 2019; Vera, 2015; Akoglu, 2022; Moslehpour, 2014; Ali, 2013; Erlangga, 2021; Lacap, 2021; Nath, 2011; Calvo-Porral, 2017) were compared favourably with those of (Leting, 2015 & Jraisat, 2015). On the other hand, Qiao (2022) revealed a negative correlation between the non-financial performance of branded goods in China and perceived brand quality.

Moreover, the above reviewed literatures are not without shortcoming. For instance, Qiao (2022) used cross-sectional research design which may not be relied on when generalizing a particular behavior over long time span. Akoglu (2022) used brand resonance model and not widely accepted Aaker's brand equity to explore the link between the study variables therefore limiting its conceptualization and dimensionality. What is more, data was collected over the internet through various social media platforms making it undependable. Consequently, (Ribeiro, 2019; Leting, 2015; Jraisat, 2015; Vera, 2015; Moslehpour, 2014; Ali, 2013; Erlangga, 2021) studied perceived brand quality on nonfinancial performance in different contexts, regions and used different data analysis methods and sample size hence demonstrating their ineffectiveness for generalization. Similarly, Alhaddad (2015) used descriptive statistics to analysis data which is a weak approach in establishing causal relationship. Their shortcoming nonetheless, the above studies have not revealed how brand equity affect non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurant enterprises in Kisumu city, Kenya.

METHOLOGY

The current study adopted correlational research design with a population of 52 restaurants. Multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the effect of perceived brand quality on performance of medium-sized restaurants enterprises in Kisumu city, Kenya.

Study Population and Sampling Techniques

A population, according to Mugenda & Mugenda (1999), is the entire set of individuals, objects, or events that exhibit specific observable traits. Medium-sized restaurants have been picked for the current study because they have a define management structure as compared to the small-sized restaurants making it easier for data collection and analysis. This study will employ saturated sampling techniques. In research, saturated sampling is a technique used to make sure that all pertinent data are included in the study. It is frequently employed when researcher think the amount of data they already have is complete or when they do not think more data collection would reveal any materially new insights. The main goal of saturated sampling is to accumulate enough data. When further knowledge about the research issue is no longer offered by new data, data saturation occurs. Researchers can now say that they have thoroughly examined and comprehended the phenomenon under study Ellis (2015). For an interview, one of the owners or managers or the supervisors was chosen at random. Saturated sampling was used to choose a sample size of 52 respondents from a target population of 60 restaurants. The remaining 8 respondents which is equivalent to 13% of the total population from 8 restaurants was used for pilot study.

Regression Model

The direct effect of brand equity on medium-sized restaurants' nonfinancial performance was modeled using multiple regression analysis. The present study will employ the regression model listed below to address its three specific objectives.

$\mathbf{Y} = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \varepsilon_i$..Equation 1

Where:

$\mathbf{X_1}$ = Independent Variable: Perceived Brand Quality

$\mathbf{Y_2}$= Dependent Variable: Non-financial performance

$\boldsymbol{\beta_0}$ = Constant or the y-axis's intersection with the regression line's intercept point

$\boldsymbol{\beta_i}$ **(*i*=1)** = Are each X_i's changes to Y's regression coefficients or vice versa.

ε = Error term/residual factor not explained by the X variables analyzed.

i =Number of respondents under consideration

Source: *Draper (1998)*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Regression model summary results from table 1 shows a strong positive correlation between perceived brand quality and non-financial performance of restaurants *(R=.67.2)*. It also shows that 45.2% of the variance in the non-financial performance of restaurants is explained by the perceived brand quality (R^2=.452, *p<.000)*. While the remaining variation on non-financial performance of .023% was explained by other external factors outside the current model of the study. The different between R^2=.452 and adjusted R^2=*.429* is *.023* indicating that the model generalize quite well since adjusted R^2 is closer to R^2. The shrinkage of less than *0.5* show that the validity of the model Field (2005).

Table 1: Regression Model Summary for Perceived Brand Quality

					Change Statistics					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change	Durbin-Watson
1	.672[a]	.452	.429	.53627	.452	20.170	2	49	.000	1.888

a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived_Brand_Quality, Brand_Awareness

b. Dependent Variable: Restaurants_Performance

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 2 displays the results of the computed model using an ANOVA. *F (2, 49) =20.170, p< 0.000,* which was the outcome of the data test, the results confirms that the overall regression model is significant or fits the study data well. The researcher can therefore draw the conclusion that the performance of medium-sized restaurants in Kisumu city is accounted for by perceived brand quality.

Table 2: ANOVA results of perceived brand quality on non-financial performance

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	11.601	2	5.800	20.170	.000[b]
	Residual	14.091	49	.288		
	Total	25.692	51			

a. Dependent Variable: Restaurants_Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived_Brand_Quality, Brand_Awareness

Source: Survey data 2024

The regression equation was in the form of $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \varepsilon_i$, therefore by adding regression coefficients as shown in table 3 below it later culminates into:

$Y = 1.776 + .114X_{1i}$……………....................................…………………………………Equation 2

R^2= 0.452 (45.2%)

Table 3: Estimated Regression Coefficients of perceived brand quality on restaurants performance

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
1	(Constant)	1.776	.350		5.069	.000	1.072	2.480
	Perceived_Brand_Quality	.114	.078	.204	1.451	.001	-.044	.271

a. Dependent Variable: Restaurants_Performance

Source: Survey data 2024

Table 3 above shows that perceived brand quality positively and significantly affects non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurants in Kisumu, City. Brand awareness perceived brand quality *(β=.114, p=0.000))* had positive significant effect on non-financial performance. The β statistics is interpreted by ranking measures of these independent variables, whereby the higher the magnitude of the β values, the more influence the variables have on the non-financial performance. The unstandardized β coefficient of perceived brand quality shows that units change in the level of brand awareness causes *.114* standard deviations in non-financial performance and the change is significant as shown by the *p=.0000* suggesting that it is statistically significant.

Perceived brand quality was found to have significant positive effect on performance *(β=.114, p=0.000)* thereby rejecting the null hypothesis H_o: $\beta_i = 0$ which stated that Perceived brand quality has no significant effect on non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurant enterprises in Kisumu city, Kenya while consequently failing to reject H_A: $\beta_i \neq 0$ which states that Perceived brand quality has significant effect on non-financial performance of medium-sized restaurant enterprises in Kisumu city, Kenya. This means that a unit change in perceived brand quality will cause *.114*-unit change in non-financial performance and the change is significant. This implies that perceived brand quality is a significant predictor of performance in the context of the study areas.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

The study finding further revealed that perceived brand quality exerts the great significant positive effect on performance of medium restaurant enterprises in Kisumu city, Therefore, it is a critical determinant of performance among the restaurants' performance. the study concludes that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between perceived brand quality and performance of medium restaurants in Kisumu City.

Based on the foregoing findings and conclusions the study therefore recommends the following. Because perceived brand quality exerts the positive significant effect on non-financial performance, more effort and resources should be focused on improving the product quality and differentiating the features of the products that will enhance organizational performance.

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