Chapter 12
A Consumer–Based Branding Process

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ABSTRACT

The branding process can be classified as business- and consumer-based branding. The current study introduces a model proposal to the consumer-based branding process. The model focuses on identifying and analyzing the process between consumers' perceptual benefits and emotional brand attachment. The related process focuses on the relationship between product performance, brand preference, subjective brand knowledge, self-based brand engagement and emotional brand attachment factors. The basic assumption of the model is that a consumer first benefits on the basis of brand performance, this benefit triggers brand preference, then this preference turns into subjective brand knowledge, brand knowledge supports consumer's self-based brand engagement, and eventually leads to emotional brand attachment. The analysis is based on the assumption that the consumer performs five main factors modeled in branding perception in the chain / sequential order.

INTRODUCTION

Product and product performance is the first phase where consumers interact with the brand. Consumers want to get their needs satisfied and to be pleasant with the product performance (Keller, 2001). Consumers attribute psychological value to the brand that overlaps with anticipations and individual expectations of them, thus this causes the consumer to choose and buy that branded product (Ebrahim, 2013). When studies are examined, it is seen that those who have more knowledge about the brand are formed from those who use the brand longer and more frequently, and positive information about the brand is formed according to the level of benefit and satisfaction obtained from use (Mattila,Writz, 2002). Past product use experience influences the objective and subjective knowledge of the consumers. Research shows that the experience of subjective knowledge is more powerful than objective knowledge (Park, 1994). It is also seen that in purchasing behaviors of consumers, subjective knowledge is related to the perceptions of the individual. Consumer accepts perceptions as consumer subjective knowledge more powerful than objective knowledge (Brucks, 1985).

There are some writers who argue that positive information about consumer-branded products supported by the celebrities or experts in that field will be positively reflected in the image of that brand in the mind of the consumer (Biswas,Biswas,Das, 2006). Messages sent by a brand to consumers via advertisements will create positive information about the brand, which in turn, will translate into a positive brand image in the mind of the consumer (Cobb-Walgren, Ruble, Donthu, 1995). Dodd et al. (2005) established a positive relationship between subjective brand knowledge arising in the consumer and self-based brand engagement. They were of the opinion that consumers' purchase decision is based on brand knowledge and self-based brand relationships.

Moreover, consumers gain experience through sharing and interacting with brands, and these experiences have a positive effect on brand engagement(Vivek, 2012). Consumers are more inclined to engage in and build links with brands that are compatible with their personality (Escalas-Bettman, 2005). For this reason, it is thought that self-direction brand engagement and brand engagement act together (Sprott, 2009). Jamal (2001) suggested that the harmony of the branded product and the self-image makes the consumer emotionally satisfied . In such situations, brands that establish harmonious relations with consumers will develop an emotional relationship with brands. These emotional relationships influence brand attachment as they link consumers to brands and show emotional brand connections as a buying motive (Kressmann, Sirgy, Herrmann, Huber, Huber, Lee, 2006). Ball (1992) suggested that based on the degree to which the brand reflects the consumer self-concept, consumer attachment to the brand arises.

This study aims to gain a consumer-based perspective of branding and its effect on businesses. It aims to reveal the basic dimensions of the consumer-based branding process. Based on the literature review, the author proposed five main factors of consumer-based branding in the chain order (as shown in Figure 1). These are as follows:

1. Product Performance
2. Brand Preference
3. Subjective Brand Knowledge
4. Self-Based Brand Engagement
5. Emotional Brand Attachment

In the first section, the basic elements of consumer-based branding are defined. The concept of product performance is examined in the context of the consumer's utility expectation. In this context, concepts such as product qualities, reliability, resilience, quality, design and price are explained. The concept of brand preference is examined in two parts: consumer-based and brand-based. While the consumer-based brand preference is related to the psychological structure of the consumer as an internal factor, external factors explain brand preferences related to the consumer's interaction with the environment. The brand-based

Figure 1. A chain model of consumer-based branding process
Source: Own conclusions based on the literature review.
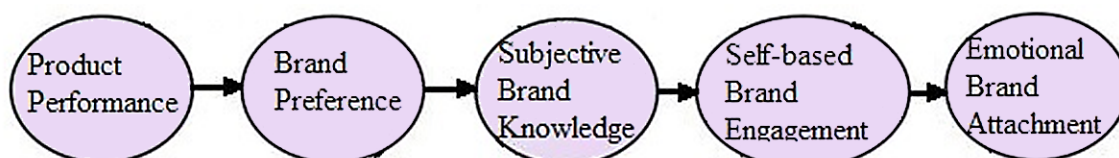
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