Quest Journals
Journal of Research in Business and Management
Volume 2 ~ Issue 1(2014) pp: 01-08
ISSN(Online) :2347-3002
www.questjournals.org

Research Paper

Risk Reduction and Trust Building Strategy for Consumers: An Explanatory Power of Branding

Sunday S. Akpan[1] and Samuel G. Etuk[2]

[1]*Department of Banking and Finance/Insurance, University of Uyo, Nigeria*
[2]*Department of Marketing, University of Uyo, Nigeria*

Received 20 December, 2013; **A**ccepted 06 January, 2014© The author(s) 2013. Published with open access at **www.questjournal.org**

ABSTRACT:- *The paper examines branding as a risk reduction and trust building strategy for consumers. When consumer uses a brand and his/her need is not satisfied, then he/she may not use same brand again, and in that case the consumer has experienced risk from buying the product and lost his/her trust on not only the product, but also on the company that produces it. Loosing trust is a grave risk for the company. Trust in a product is different from interpersonal trust because a brand is a sign. Unlike a salesperson, this sign is not capable of reacting to the customer. To make it react and survive in today's marketplace, there is need to structure and sustain trust in its customer relationship as an antidote for consumer risk. This being the imperative for this investigation lays on the fact that business practices especially marketing are moving away from a purely product-based to customer-based as such reducing consumer risk and keeping them closer to the company and its offer is a sine-qua-non for success. The paper employed a desk top research method and drew information from past literatures. From the investigation, it was found that brand reduces risk and increases trust through hedonic and utilitarian dimensions of the brand. The paper concludes that with brand trust, risks are reduced and consumer's problem moves away from what to buy to when to buy. The recommendation was that trust increase and risk reduction are bilateral, firms should seek consumers' opinion via market research by which means the hedonic and utilitarian dimensions/requirements would be discovered and built-in in brand development process*

Keywords:- *Brand, Branding, Brand loyalty, Insurance, Risk reduction, Trust building.*

I INTRODUCTION

The present day development in technology has opened many economies and companies to global competition and changes in business practices with numerous attendant risk burdens. The development has made risk ubiquitous even in consumption. Consumers share their brand usage experience with others. This kind of data sharing can also create new consumers who may also try to use that brand. Brand characteristics are main aspects of brand which can satisfy needs of customers. Business firms must try to build their brand image through customer's needs satisfaction. Customer's needs satisfying ability of brand is also capable of building consumer trust in brand. When brands fail to satisfy customers' needs they may switch to other brands and this is indeed an important risk that has been overlooked in risk management framework of many organizations. Consumption risk or consumer risk is one of the many risks in business that are uninsurable but need to be managed. Consequently, many countries and companies have experienced mind-boggling whirr of changes in business and especially in marketing which according to Kotler (2006) is what drives businesses. One area of such change is in the area of product branding. In countries like Nigeria, consumers are flooded with plenty of brands, both national and international. The new brands offer innovative features with better quality, but from the perspective of Nigerian manufacturers, these new entrants are major threats (Samudhra, Rajakumar and Sritharan, 2004). In this context, redefining the role of marketing as creating, communicating and delivering value to customers (Kotler, 2006), and constant tracking of consumer preferences are a must to evolve some strategies to maintain market presence; and one of the strategies is creating brand that is capable of reducing consumers risks and enthroning consumer trust on the company and its products.

*Corresponding Author: Sunday S. Akpan
Department of Banking and Finance/Insurance, University of Uyo, Nigeria

Brand is a term used to describe the tendency that consumers have to stick with the products or services bearing brand names they know and trust. A well cherished brand translates to repeat sales, so it is in the best interest of the company that carries the brand to maintain its reputation and recognizability in order to reduce risk and maintain profit. Altering the look and feel of a brand can have disastrous consequences for a company, as it runs the risk of alienating brand-loyal consumers who may not recognize or trust the product or service under different packaging. This was the case with Coca-Cola in 1985 as reported by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) thus:

> *One of the most memorable examples of the ramifications that can happen when a company dismisses brand trust and loyalty occurred in 1985, when The Coca-Cola Company launched "New Coke." A reformulation of the company's eponymous soft drink, Coca-Cola; "New Coke" was launched in the market to replace Coca-Cola after several focus groups gave it mostly positive reviews. Amidst disappointing sales and a backlash from consumers, which included public protests in the streets of certain States, the Coca-Cola Company withdrew New Coke from the shelves and reissued their original soft drink under the new brand, "Coca-Cola Classic." The Coca-Cola Company then directed their marketing efforts toward assuaging consumers by running a campaign with the slogan "Red White and You," in an effort to reflect the brand trust, loyalty and national pride felt by consumers toward their product (p.81).*

The above excerpt is a pointer to how important brand trust and loyalty are to both consumers and companies and perhaps the much reason why brand that is capable of reducing consumers' risks and building their trust is most sought for by companies. It also implies that when consumers trust and become loyalists to the brand it means the brand has reduced any conceivable risk the consumer may be exposed to. At that point, even the companies have little or no control over that product anymore. Therefore, it is not surprising that creating and maintaining strong brands and loyal customers albeit difficult have become increasingly demanding in today's competitive business environment.

The reliance on brand by many companies as a risk reduction mechanism has been justified on many grounds. According to Aaker, (1991) brand has been shown to be associated with higher rates of return on investment through increases in market share. It is also a mark which signifies that companies have distinguished their product offerings from those of their competitors. Explaining further, Rao *et al*. (2004), Srivastava *et al*. (1998) Delgado-Ballester and Munuera-Aleman (2005), Gounaris and Stathakopolous (2004), Homburg and Giering (2001) and Dick and Basu (1994) in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, (2001) said:

> *…brand is a central aspect in product management. It has been shown that brands are valuable intangible assets. Building a strong brand with loyal customers is of strategic importance for marketing managers because it provides substantial competitive and economic benefits to a firm, such as less vulnerability to competitive marketing actions, reduced marketing costs, better cooperation with intermediaries, favorable word of mouth and greater extension opportunities, risk reduction and trust building (p.38).*

From the above it follows that, in an attempt to create brand loyalty; marketers develop their products into brands which attain a unique identity. By developing a unique identity, branding permits customers to develop an association with it and trust it. Once this trust is developed, consumer risks are reduced and by extension loyalty to the brand evolve and this ultimately lead to high sales, ability to charge price premiums and the power to resist distribution of power. Of all the functions of brand, there is therefore a greater interest in 'brand-trust-risk' (BTR) continuum but quite unfortunately, the idea of trust and risk reduction in consumer marketing is largely unexplored.

In this paper, focus is on finding how brand can reduce risks and build trust for consumers. The paper therefore evaluates the constructive effects of brand on reducing consumption risk and building trust. Specific objective of the study are:

a. to examine the concept of brand within risk management and trust building framework
b. to identify the types of risks that brand can reduce
b. to identify the dimensions by which brand reduces consumer risk and build trust for consumers.
c. to develop a risk management framework for companies using a non insurable and non probabilistic mode of reason approach to risk reduction.

The paper is structured as follows: section one is the introductory part focusing on the contextual issues as presented above; section two focuses on some relevant conceptual and theoretical issues; section three presents empirical review; section four present some findings and section five contains conclusion and recommendations.

II THEORETICAL AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Reviewing some relevant concepts and theories is prima facie for implanting thorough appreciation and ensuing adequate comprehension of the sequence and logic of this presentation and the thrust of this paper as well. Such concepts and theories as brand, consumer risk and trust require a definitive clarification. The essence is to establish the possible linkages that bound these concepts together. Thus the section that follows dwelled tensely on concepts and theories supporting this paper.

2.1 Brand, Trust and Consumer risk: A Conceptual and Theoretical Review

Brand is defined by different researchers and authors in different ways. Kotler (2006) defined Brand as a name, logo, trademark, and symbol. A seller is granted exclusive right to use brand. Basically it is different from patents and copyright (other assets), which have expiry date (Kotler and Armstrong, 2004). Owners sell their brand in market at their own will and cost on competitive basis. According to Einwiller (2001) a brand creates difference with other generic products.

Brand is considered as a reflection of the spirit and soul of an organization. This proclamation proposes that brand is not representation of a company's product; it is name, logo, trademark, and symbol of firm that distinguishes it and that is where the core of brand loyalty, the aftermath of risk reduction and trust building takes its position. Brand show trust and loyalty of end users. After continuous usage of brand, consumers feel it as part of them (Aaker, 1991).

Brand positions a company and its products in the minds of consumers such that whenever a particular industry is mentioned, the product that is known to offer adequate satisfaction and take the lead is replaced with the name of the industry. For example, when one refers to soft drink industry Coke or Pepsi comes to mind; Vicks Vaporub comes to mind as a solution for cold; and Dettol as an antiseptic for everyday nicks and cuts. Brand plays a vital role in consumers' buying behavior. Some brand images remain in the consumers' mind forever (e.g. Cadbury's, Pear's, Pond's, etc.) and they come to stand for an entire range of ideas, sentiments, etc. Thus a brand is created by augmenting a core product with distinctive values that distinguishes it from its competitors and for purpose of attracting customers and making them loyalists

Trust means confidence on exchange partner's reliability and integrity. Trust shows consumer commitment and satisfaction with particular brand. Trust can also be considered as goodwill and willingness that enables the consumer to take risk. Goodwill is developed on the bases of past experiences. Trust is an expectation, which may cause a positive outcome, despite the possibility that it may cause a negative outcome (Worchel, 1979). So expectation of groups or teams in an event is called trust (Deutsch 1958). Trust is not a mere predictability but confidence in the face of risk (Lewis and Weigert, 1985). Trust is a psychosomatic state comprising the intention to recognize susceptibility based upon constructive prospect of the intentions or behavior of another person (Rousseau *et. al.,* 1998). For making a strong relationship between buyer and seller, creation of trust is a very important factor in business environment. Trust is a feeling about satisfaction because of its ability to moderate risk in the buying process (Anderson and Narus, 1990; Dawyer, Schurr and Oh, 1987). As said earlier, trust in person is different from trust in product brand.

According to O'Shaughnessy (1992), "faithfulness is everlasting wish, a readiness to do something with no computation of instant expenses and profit." Hence, faithfulness to a brand engages trust in it. In business marketing, the idea of faith is sound to develop (e.g. Doney and Cannon, 1997) and a great deal of endeavor has been used up in discovering methods to construct and keep it. In that background, trust is constructed on the basis of person-to-person dealings. Moreover, Lewis and Weigert (1985) said that trust is not mere certainty but assurance in the expression of risk. Many other researchers have followed this idea (Deustch, 1960; Schlenker *et. al.*, 1973; Boon and Holmes, 1991). Boon and Holmes (1991) defined trust as a condition linking certain optimistic opportunity about another's intention with respect to oneself in risky state of affairs.

Consumer risks are the uncertainties that are likely going to arise in the form of disapproval of any purchases made by a consumer. Bauer (in ULSM, 2010), said that consumers would, often times, prefer to choose between competing brands according to the extent to which they perceive least risk. Therefore consumer risk arises when there is fear for buying a product brand that will result in un-satisfaction. As outlined by ULSM (2010), consumer perceives risk could be performance, financial, time, social, or psychological risk.

2.2 The Brand -Trust - Risk Continuum

According to Doney and Cannon (1997), "An organization uses trust in brand as a risk-reduction mechanism." Trust from this standpoint is considered an expectation from others on specific task, and expectations vary between high and low rating scale. "Variation of expectations is called risk" (Worchel, 1979). Trust is the dependency on other parties at the level of risk with their own willingness. Trust is built up on the bases of past experiences. Trust is based on ending results. A positive ending result enhances trust and negative results on the other hand will cause the trust to drop (Deutsch, 1958)

Trust has to be considered as the corner stone and as one of the most desirable qualities in the relationship both between a company and its customers and in the relationship between a brand and its consumers. The focus on brand trust is based on findings that there is a strong positive relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). In branding literatures, the concept of brand trust is based on the idea of a brand-consumer relationship, which is seen as a substitute for human contact between the company and its customers (Sheth and Parvatyar, 1995). Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) defined brand trust as "the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to perform its stated function". Across disciplines, there is also agreement that trust only exists in an uncertain and risky environment. Trust is only relevant in a risky situation when the outcomes of a certain decision are uncertain and important for the individual, (Mayer *et al.* 1995).

Drawing on conceptualizations of trust in the social psychology literature, many researchers differentiate cognitive and affective/emotional trust. Cognitive trust is based on "good rational reasons why the object of trust merits trust" (Lewis and Weigert, 1985). It is thus based on evaluating the competence, reliability, and predictability of the trusted object and reflects the economic understanding of trust as a rational choice (Riegelsberger *et al.,* 2005; Johnson and Grayson, 2003). Affective trust on the other hand, is the emotion-driven form of trust that is based on immediate affective reactions on attractiveness, aesthetics, and signals of benevolence. Frequently, trust-based behavior results from a mix of affective and cognitive trust (Riegelsberger *et. al.,* 2005; Corritore *et. al.,* 2003).

Brand can reduce risk and build trust by means of hedonic and utilitarian value it has for the consumer. The hedonic and utilitarian values of products as drivers of brand trust have been investigated in past literatures. In the consumer research literatures (Mano and Oliver, 1993 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001), it was suggested that consumer evaluation of a consumption object is placed on both a utilitarian dimension of instrumentality (e.g. how useful and beneficial the product is), and on a hedonic dimension measuring the experiential affect associated with the product (e.g. how pleasant and agreeable these associated feelings are). The concept of hedonic value reflects the experiential paradigm in consumer behavior theory, which – in contrast to the information-processing paradigm – pursues the more subjective, emotional, aesthetic and symbolic aspects of consumption (Holbrook and Hirschmann, 1982; Mano and Oliver, 1993; Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) define hedonic value as the pleasure potential of a product, whereas utilitarian value is conceptualized as the ability of a product to perform functions in the everyday life of a consumer. Both aspects of utilitarian and hedonic values contribute, in different degrees, to the overall evaluation of a consumer. Concerning the relationship between product value and brand trust, it can be assumed that cognitive trust toward a specific brand is greater when the utilitarian value of the product in terms of quality or convenience, for example, is high (Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). On the other hand, products with a high pleasure potential provide non-tangible, symbolic benefits and are likely to hold a greater potential for evoking positive emotions and affect-based brand trust in a consumer.

2.3 Consumer perception of risk and Brand as risk reduction strategy

According to Kotler (2006) people often feel reluctant before making a purchase of a product or service online since they cannot be confident that their buying goals will be fulfilled after the purchase. In other words, people perceive a certain level of risk in most purchase situations (Cox and Rich, 1967 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). In trying to understand perceived risk, research has focused on consumer risk perception on almost all of the new types of products launched into the marketplace. For example, telephone shopping and perceived risk (Cox and Rich, 1967), the selection of tangible products (Cunningham, 1967 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001), services and perceived risks (Garner, 1986), direct marketing and perceived risks (Akaah and Korgaonkar, 1988), as well as perceived risks of online shopping (Tan, 1999).

These studies suggest that the types of risk that are usually associated with buying of products and services are: financial, performance, physical, psychological, social, and time risks (Garner, 1986; Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972; Kaplan *et al.,* 1974; Kim and Lennon, 2000; Shimp and Bearden, 1982 all in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Social risk is the perception that buying a particular product may result in negative opinions from friends and family (Dowling and Staelin, 1994 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Financial risk refers to the perception that money may be lost in buying the product (Garner, 1986). Physical risk is the perception that using a product or service may be harmful to one's health (Roselius, 1971). Performance risk is perceived as the situation in which the product or service does not function properly (Kim and Lennon, 2000 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Time risk refers to the perception that one's time may be wasted once the product purchased must be repaired or replaced (Bauer, 1967 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Psychological risk results in negative effects on a consumer's peace of mind because of a defective product (Jacoby and Kaplan, 1972 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

A number of factors are believed to reduce consumers' risk perception. These are: money-back guarantee, the manufacturer's name, product cost, distributor's reputation, frees sample/trial offer, endorsement by a trusted friend, brand experience, product newness (Akaah and Korgaonkar, 1998 in Chaudhuri and

Holbrook, 2001), brand reputation (Taylor and Rao, 1982 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001), and brand loyalty (Mitchell and Greatorex, 1990 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Yeung and Yee (2003 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) argued that using brand can be an important strategy for reducing consumer risk perception. They claim that consumers are able to assess the uncertainty and the negative consequence of a perceived hazardous risk, and take action to reduce their exposure to the perceived risk.

Quality assurance schemes, useful information, product origin are the other important strategies for reducing risk perception. Mitchell and Greatorex (1990 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) and Kanwar (1993 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) suggest a different perspective with relation to the generalization of a risk perception model across countries and cultures. They argued that, in general, non-nationals perceived more risk in product purchase and considerably more psychosocial loss than nationals; they also rated all risk relievers as significantly more useful than nationals. They suggest that marketers should consider the difference between home-consumers and foreign visitors in their perception of purchase risk when targeting the latter. Mitchell and Greatorex and Kanwar in Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001) however, agree that brand loyalty is the most useful risk reliever while saying celebrity endorsement is the least useful strategy.

Murray and Schlacter (1990 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) argued that services evoke heightened risk and product variability perception. They suggested that it is necessary to have a prolonged adoption and diffusion process for services and pointed to a need for marketing activities specifically carried out to reduce risk and that the "marketing mix strategy for services" should focus on increasing product uniformity. Clow, Baack, and Fogliasso (1998 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001) also supported the idea that service quality reduces consumers' perception of purchase risk.

2.4 Brand, Trust and Consumer Risk reduction: Empirical Review

Significant research efforts have been devoted to an understanding of brand trust, consumer perception of risk and risk reduction (Clow, Baack and Fogliasso, 1998; Dholakia, 2001; Laroche, Bergeron and Goutaland, 2003; Mitra, Reiss and Capella, 1999; Murray and Schlacter, 1990 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001). Brand plays a vital role for developing and maintaining trust. To maintain a market share and price elasticity, trust influences toward changing behavioral and attitudinal loyalty (Chaudhuri, and Holbrook, 2001). Trust is a belief which is focused on specific and appropriate boundaries and limitations. Consumers' trust in brand is a variable that generates customers' commitment, particularly high involvement situation, in which its effect is strong in assessment as a whole contentment (Moorman, Zaltman, and Deshpande, 1992; Morgan, and Hunt, 1994; Delgado and Munuera 2001 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

In business marketing, trust plays important role. Apart from change of aggressive modifications, industrial-marketing organizations adopt new methods to be competitive. Another method is by maintaining good links with the consumers. It is an easy and less expensive tactic because in the business market, small numbers of consumers buy large number of products. Different forms of trade in the market are distinguished by huge area of trust (Dwyer, Schurr and Oh, 1987; Morgan and Hunt, 1994). Owing to this, emphasis is laid on the strategic outcomes of the relationship (Ganesan, 1994); thus enhancing competitiveness and reducing transaction expenses (Noordewier, John and Nevin, 1990 in Chaudhuri and Holbrook, 2001).

The business and marketing literature reveals different ways to build trust. Trust is emphasized either as a part of linkage quality (Dwyer and Oh, 1987; Crosby, Evans, and Cowles, 1990; Anderson, Lodish, and Weitz, 1987), or as a determinant of relationship quality (Anderson and Narus, 1984, 1990; Parasuraman, Ziethaml, and Berry, 1985; Anderson and Weitz, (1990). Doney and Cannon (1997) presented apparent trustworthiness and kindness of the object as areas of trust. Apparent trustworthiness centers on the objective trustworthiness of the trade partner, the anticipation that the partner's word or paper declaration can be trusted. Kindness is the level to which one partner is actually interested in the other's benefit and forced to seek cooperative benefit. Evolution of trust is through a procedure of computation, the expenses and benefits of both sides leaving or being in the relationship.

Previously, trades in customer-product business faced larger issues as large amount of customers were faithful to transaction only (Donath, 1999). To triumph customer faithfulness and for imitating achievement of business, marketers started to hold the thought of making links with consumers to get their faith (Bennet, 1996). Idea of faith in the marketing text normally lacks. In the buyer market, there are number of unidentified buyers, which make it difficult to link with customers. The trade name becomes an alternate for personal link amongst the seller and buyer.

III METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This study is basically a phenomenal investigation. It is an examination of past literatures on branding that were not investigated from the perspective of risk management. The method employed in carrying out this study is therefore secondary research method. By this method, the researchers embarked on a qualitative rather than quantitative interpretation of findings from past literatures within the ambience of risk management. Information gathered are linked with the omitted dimensions in literature to bridge the gap that had been created. However, archival and document review technique was adopted to source for relevant information. The results are reported in such manner that conforms to the conventional research tradition and ethics.

IV FIGURE

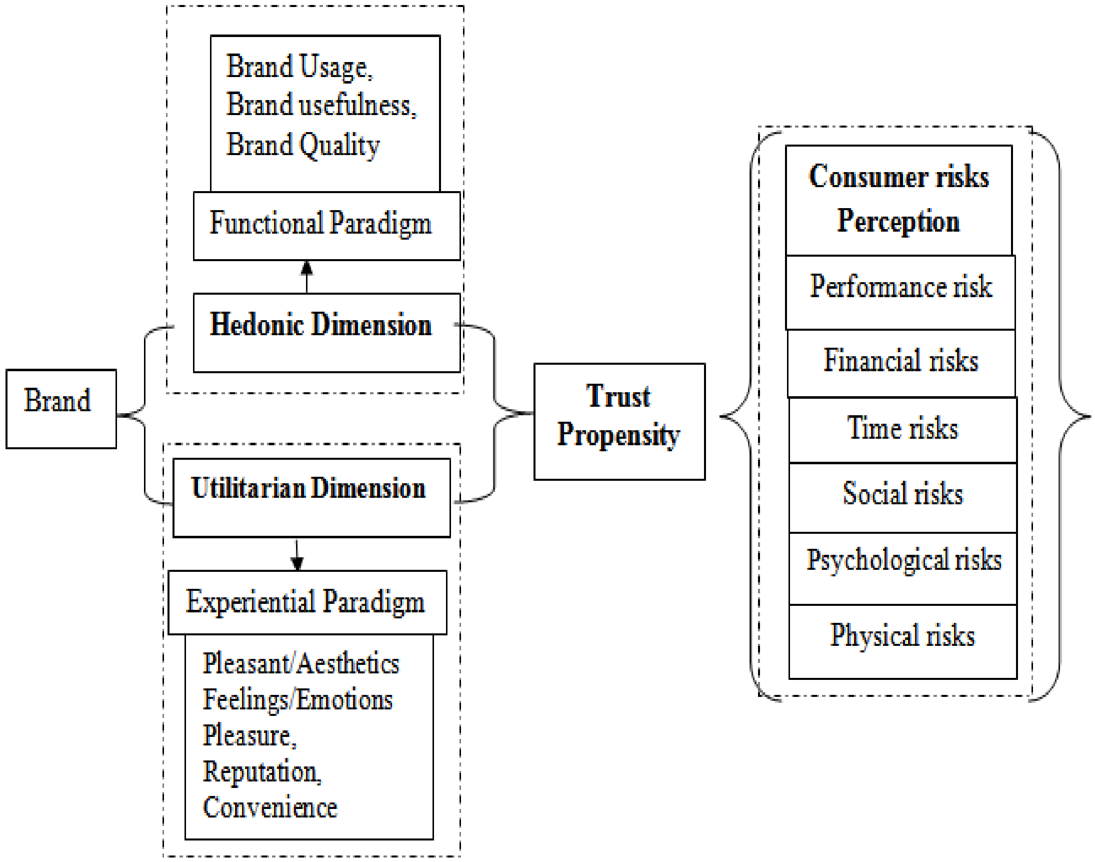

Fig. 1: A Model for trust building and consumer risk reduction via brand.
Source: Author's Findings in retrospect.

The investigation made so far into the issue of brand as a risk reducer and trust builder have resulted in some startling findings. However, a close perusal of the views, points, opinions, arguments and positions of the different scholars that have been reviewed in support of the researchers personal idea, knowledge and belief on the subject matter showed that brand can indeed, build trust and reduce risk in many ways. Such ways implicitly would include the trading partner's worthiness, the brand's worthiness and kindness by means of delivering on its promises, faith building features of the brand etc. The mental construct of the two ways a brand can reduce risk and increase trust are as captured in Fig. 1 above. From the model the following are deduced:

(i) Brand reduces risk and increases trust through its hedonic characteristics. These include all the functions that a brand provides. The wisdom is, the more stronger a brand lives up to its billings, the greater its chances of making customer have trust in it; and the greater the trust, the more certain the customers are and the less risky the customers would feel about the brand. This agrees with the assertions of earlier scholars such as Batra and Ahtola, (1990), and Mano and Oliver (1993).

(ii) Brand reduces risk and increases trust through its utilitarian characteristics. This dimension include all the experiences the brand is capable of exposing the customer to. The convention here is that, the more favourably the experience customers get from the brand, the more trustworthy the customer will accord the brand, and the less risky the customers will feel about the brand. This also agrees with the earlier findings by Dwyer and Oh, (1987), Crosby, Evans, and Cowles, (1990), Anderson, Lodish, and Weitz (1987) Anderson and Narus (1984, 1990), Parasuraman, Ziethaml, and Berry, (1985), and Anderson and Weitz (1990)

(iii) The hedonic dimension nay functional paradigm through which brand reduces risk and increases trust include the easiness of using the brand, what the brand offers to the customer upon consumption, the quality that the brand has compared to competing brands etc.

(iv) From the utilitarian dimension, the factors through which brand reduces risk and increase trust were found in the experiences that brand offers. These were the pleasantness/aesthetics, feelings/emotions, pleasure, reputation, and convenience etc.
(v) While brand through the functional paradigm increases the affective type of trust, and through utilitarian dimension increases the cognitive type of trust, the ultimate types of consumer risks reduced include performance, time, financial, social, psychological, and physical.

V CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Brand is a powerful tool for, not only trust building and risk reduction, but for organizational marketing proficiency. With a strong, trusted and ascertained brand, a consumer's problem is when to buy rather than what to buy. This is true because the inherent risk that consumers often faced have through strong brand hedonic and utilitarian characteristics been reduces while trust is ensued.

We have extensively investigated this claim in this paper and have found that it is true. Brand is good. In whatever dimension one may think of it, it is good; nothing more than good both for the organizations and the consumers. Consumer holds brands as a part of product with value addition and that brand creates difference from other products. Basically consumers rely on brand with a level of risk, but reduce such risk by offering their trust and loyalty with the implicit understanding that the brand will behave in certain ways and provide them utility through consistent product performance and appropriate pricing, promotion, and distribution programs and actions. Brands can serve as symbolic devices, allowing consumers to project their self-image and increase their trust.

From the investigation, findings and conclusions made above, one, but all embracing recommendation suffices for any company anticipating risk reduction and increase in trust via its product brand: and that is knowing that trust building and risk reduction are bilateral processes that require mutual commitment and efforts; the firms should ensure that they develop the brand with inputs from the consumers through market research.

With market research, both the hedonic and the utilitarian dimensions of the brand would be identified and built in the brand development process. Also, additional features that are salient in the brand, but very affective would be discovered and explored to advantage.

REFERENCES

[1]. P. Kotler, Marketing Management (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 2006)
[2]. D. A. Aaker, Managing Brand Equity: Capitalizing on the Value of a Brand Name (NY: The Free Press, 1991)
[3]. E. Delgado-Ballester and J. Munuera-Alemán, Does brand trust matter to brand equity?" Journal of Product and Brand Management, 14 (3), 2005, 187-196.
[4]. A. Chaudhuri and M. Holbrook, The chain of effects from brand trust and brand affect to brand performance: The role of brand loyalty. Journal of Marketing, 65, 2001, 81-93.
[5]. S. Einwiller, The significance of reputation and brand for creating trust in the different stages of a relationship between an online vendor and its customers. Eighth Research Symposium on Emerging Electronic Markets. 2001
[6]. P. Worchel, Trust and distrust. In W.G. Austin and S. Worchel, Eds., The Social Psychology of Intergroup Relations. Wadsworth, Belmont, CA. 1986
[7]. J. Lewis and A. Weigert, Trust as a social reality. Social Forces, 63, 1985, 967-985.
[8]. G. Rousseau, Not so different after all: A cross-discipline view of trust. Academy of Management Review, 23, 1998, 393-404.
[9]. J. C. Anderson and A. Narus, A model of distributor firm and manufacturing firm working partnership. Journal of Marketing, 54, 1990, 42-58.
[10]. P. Kotler, and G. Armstrong, Principles of Marketing, 11th edn (Prentice Hall/Pearson Education, 2004).
[11]. F. Dawyer, P. Schurr, and S. Oh, Developing buyer-seller relationships. Journal of Marketing, 51, 1987, 11-27.
[12]. J. O' Shaugnessy, Explaining Buyer Behavior (Oxford University Press, 2000).
[13]. S. Ganesan, Determinants of Long-Term Orientation in Buyer-Seller Relationships. Journal of Marketing, 58, 1994, 1–19.
[14]. P. M, Doney,. and J. P Cannon, An Examination of the Nature of Trust in Buyer-Seller Relationships. Journal of Marketing, 4, 1997, 35–51.
[15]. M. Deutsch, Trust and suspicion. Journal of Conflict Resolution, 2, 1958, 265-279.
[16]. B. R. Schlenker, B. Helm and J. T. Tedeschi, The Effects of Personality and Situational Variables on Behavioral Trust. Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 25, 1973, 419–427.
[17]. S. D. Boon and J. G. Holmes, The Dynamics of Interpersonal Trust: Resolving Uncertainty in the Face of Risk. In R. A. Hinde and J. Groebel (Eds.), Cooperation and Pro-social Behavior, (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1991).
[18]. J. Sheth, and A. Parvatiyar, Relationship marketing in consumer markets: antecedents and consequences. Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science, 23 (4), 1995, 255-271.
[19]. R. C. Mayer, J. H. Davis and F. D.Schoorman. An integrative model of organizational trust. Academy of Management Review, 20 (3), 1995, 709 - 734.
[20]. D. Johnson and K. Grayson, Cognitive and affective trust in service relationships. Journal of Business Research, 58, 2005, 500-507.
[21]. C. L. Corritore, B. Kracher, and S. Wiedenbeck, Online trust : Concepts, evolving themes, a model. International Journal of Human Computer Studies, 58, 2003, 737-758.
[22]. R. Batra and O. Ahtola, Measuring the Hedonic and Utilitarian Sources of Consumer Attitudes, Marketing Letters, 2 (2), 1990, 159-170.

[23]. H. Mano and R. Oliver, Assessing the dimensionality and structure of the consumption experience: Evaluation, feeling, and satisfaction. Journal of Consumer Research, 20, 1993, 451-466.
[24]. M. B. Holbrook and E. C. Hirschmann, The experiential aspects of consumption: Consumer fantasies, feelings, and fun. Journal of Consumer Research, 9, 1982, 132-140.
[25]. J. Riegelsberger M. Sasse, and J. McCarthy, The mechanics of trust: A framework for research and design. International Journal of Human-Computer Studies, 6, 2005, 381-422.
[26]. T. G. Noordewier G. John and J. R. Nevin, Performance Outcomes of Purchasing Arrangements in Industrial Buyer-Vendor Relationships. Journal of Marketing, 54 (4), 1990, 80-93.
[27]. F. Dawyer and S. Oh, Output Sector Munificence Effects on the Internal Political Economy of Marketing Channels. Journal of Marketing Research, 24, 1987, 347–358.
[28]. L. Crosby, K. Evans and D. Cowles, Relationship Quality in Services Selling: An Interpersonal Influence Perspective. Journal of Marketing, 54, 1990, 68–81.
[29]. E. Anderson, L. Lodish, and B. Weitz, Resource Allocation Behavior in Conventional Channels. Journal of Marketing Research, 24, 1987, 254–262.
[30]. E. Anderson and B. Weitz, Determinants of Continuity in Conventional Industrial Channel Dyads. Journal of Marketing Research, 25 (2), 1990, 48-44
[31]. The use of pledges to build and sustain commitment in distribution channels. Journal of Marketing Research, 29 (1), 1992, 18-34.
[32]. P. M. Doney, J. P. Cannon and M. R. Mullen, Understanding the influence of national culture on the development of trust. Academy of Management Review, 23 (3), 1998, 601-620.
[33]. L. H., Donna, P. N. Thomas and P. Marcos, Building consumer trust online. Communications of the ACM, 42 (4), 1999, 80-85.
[34]. B. Donath, Consumer marketing trends. Marketing News. 28, 1999, 14-27.
[35]. R. Bennet, Relationship Formation and Governance in Consumer Markets: Transactional Analysis versus the Behaviorist Approach. Journal of Marketing Management, 12, 1996, 417–436.