

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

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ABSTRACT: This study explores how key elements of brand storytelling, such as reliability, emotional appeal, and authenticity, influence consumer trust and loyalty. The research examines how consumers perceive these storytelling elements and how they affect consumer behavior, emotional responses, evaluative judgments, and cognitive processing. This study employed a mixed-methods approach, using a case study of a specific fast-food chain. A total of 20 participants based in Roxas City, Capiz, were selected through a purposive sampling technique. The findings reveal that relatability is the most significant element of brand storytelling in fostering consumer trust and loyalty. Emotional appeal emerged as a very important aspect, as people said that the storytelling made them happy, nostalgic, and feel comfortable, transforming their view of the brand from merely transactional to deeply personal. Authenticity, while less impactful, was crucial for credibility and for aligning brand values with consumer expectations. The discussion of this study centers on how brand narratives shape consumer trust, forge emotional connections, and encourage long-term commitment. The study emphasizes that brands may prioritize relatable narratives that reflect consumers' experiences and values, foster emotional engagement by evoking joy, nostalgia, and comfort, and ensure authenticity through honest, transparent storytelling. Additionally, brands are encouraged to create timely, relevant narratives and assess their effectiveness to strengthen customer bonds and stand out from competitors.

KEYWORDS-Brand Storytelling, Relatability, Emotional Appeal, Authenticity, Emotional Responses, Evaluative Judgments, Cognitive Processing, Consumer

I. INTRODUCTION

In the competitive arena of modern marketing, brands are constantly struggling to keep pace in a highly dynamic landscape. Branding, as described by Kotler and Keller (2016), is the process by which companies create market value through perceived quality, loyalty, awareness, and associations. To thrive in an increasingly challenging environment, the ways the brand communicates and makes noise must evolve with the technological advancements and innovations present in today's landscape. Progressing through adaptation can catalyze effective branding by fostering innovation, enhancing market relevance, and building stronger connections with target audiences. This evolution is not merely an option but a necessity, as new technologies and digital trends continually shape consumer preferences and behaviors. Brands that fail to innovate risk becoming irrelevant to their target audience. Consequently, the ability to adapt to and embrace change is a cornerstone of long-term success in the ever-evolving marketing ecosystem.

Effective branding is a crucial foundation for maintaining brand sustainability and ensuring long-term success. Kotler and Keller (2016) illustrate that effective branding is measured by a brand's ability to communicate its values, thereby influencing purchasing decisions consistently. They also elaborated on how strong customer relationships can be fostered by evaluating consumer needs, positioning the brand appropriately, and delivering brand promises. However, challenges in achieving consistency and differentiation threaten the ability to attract customers and maintain brand loyalty.

As modern marketing evolves, the methods of conveying brand identity are also transforming. The emergence of sensory marketing is one significant example, with sound advancing as a powerful tool for brand differentiation. In their research, Sagha et al. (2022) discuss how different sensory cues—such as scent, music, and visuals—affect consumers' emotions, willingness to purchase, and overall shopping experience, emphasizing the importance of sensory congruence and affective primacy in shaping consumer reactions.

Audio branding, also known as sonic branding, uses distinct auditory elements such as jingles, sound logos, and signature melodies to create an emotional connection between the brand and its consumers (Jackson & Fulberg, 2015). This technique not only enhances the overall brand experience but also plays a crucial role in brand recall by embedding auditory cues in consumers' memories. There has been existing research on sensory marketing and the impact of sensory stimuli on branding.

However, few sources discuss the effects of audio branding techniques on specific factors such as brand recall and customer retention, which are crucial to understanding how sound associations correlate with successful marketing.

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

The milk industry, particularly the infant formula and powdered milk segment, plays a significant role in the lives of families, especially mothers who rely on these products for their children's nutrition. Globally, the industry is marked by intense competition, with brands striving to differentiate themselves through innovative marketing strategies. In the Philippines, infant milk products are a staple in many households, especially among mothers who either supplement breastfeeding or rely on formula as their infants' primary source of nourishment. In this context, branding becomes critical as mothers tend to develop strong loyalty to specific products based on perceived quality, trust, and emotional connection.

Given this competitive landscape, audio branding offers largely untapped potential to strengthen brand identity in the milk industry. Unlike visual branding, auditory elements such as jingles or sound logos can create lasting impressions through repeated exposure, ultimately influencing purchasing behavior. By embedding auditory cues into advertisements, packaging, or digital platforms, brands can forge a stronger emotional connection and improve brand recall among consumers, especially within a market segment as important and discerning as mothers of infants.

Reaching a market volume of \$1,249 million by 2029, the baby food market in the Philippines is projected to grow by 4.22% annually from 2024 to 2029 (Statista, 2024). This growth highlights the increasing importance of effective branding strategies in the infant formula segment. The role of audio branding in shaping perceptions and behaviors, and the emotional impact of sound on consumer behavior, have been clearly established and well reported (Pangyarihan, 2022). By thoroughly examining the interconnections among various factors affecting consumer behavior, this study aims to provide notable findings on the effectiveness of audio branding in modern marketing, specifically among milk consumers. The lack of empirical studies focusing on this aspect of sensory marketing limits the scope of advancing and transforming different branding tools. In relation to that, this study has delved into the milk consumers' industry, focusing specifically on mothers of infants who rely on formula or powdered milk. Given the gap in knowledge regarding audio branding in the milk industry, this research was undertaken. This study was conducted to determine the effects of audio branding techniques on brand recall and customer retention, focusing on milk consumers in Roxas City, Capiz.

II. METHODOLOGY

A. *Methodological Perspectives*

This study adopted a Mixed-Methods Sequential Research Design, using a case study approach to explore consumer trust and loyalty through brand storytelling. Focusing on a specific fast-food chain known for its storytelling efforts enabled the study to have an in-depth exploration of consumer perceptions and experiences in a real-world context. Using Frey, Botan, and Kreps' (1999) Codebook Thematic Analysis, recurring themes, patterns, and insights were identified in participants' narratives, revealing how storytelling elements shaped trust and loyalty. Frey, Botan, and Kreps described Codebook Thematic analysis as a methodological framework for analyzing and interpreting textual data in research. This approach thoroughly examined language, symbols, and narratives to identify underlying meanings, patterns, and themes. It emphasized exploring the structure and function of messages in texts, with a focus on understanding the broader context and implications of communication. To support the qualitative findings, the Osgood Semantic Differential Scale is used to verify and quantify consumers' attitudes toward the effectiveness of storytelling elements in building trust and loyalty. This methodology provided valuable insights into how brand storytelling fostered long-term consumer trust and loyalty. The findings of this study were expected to guide marketers and brands in crafting impactful storytelling strategies that deepened emotional connections and strengthened consumer relationships.

B. *Context of the Study*

The study involved consumers who had developed loyalty to a specific fast-food chain based in Roxas City, Capiz. The participant pool was narrowed to those who consistently demonstrate loyalty to the brand, as evidenced by their ongoing engagement with the fast-food chain. They were selected through purposive sampling, using predetermined inclusion and exclusion criteria for this study. Data were collected through one-on-one interviews with these selected loyal consumers, who provided invaluable insights into how brand storytelling strategies influenced their continued loyalty and trust in the brand.

C. *Context of the Study*

The participants in this study were identified through the main Facebook page of a particular fast-food chain. A total of 20 participants were selected for their loyalty to a specific fast-food chain and willingness to participate in the study. The participants in this study were diverse in age, gender, and years of engagement with a particular fast-food chain to capture the most relevant insights into brand storytelling.

In addition, participants in this study were carefully selected using modified inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure relevance and reliability. The inclusion criteria required participants to be between 18 and 59 years old, demonstrate consistent loyalty to the brand for 2 to 5 years, and be familiar with the brand's storytelling through advertisements or social media content. Participants also needed to accept informed consent for interviews and expressed a willingness to share their experiences with the brand. Moreover, they were required to have the ability and availability to participate in one-on-one interviews. Conversely, the exclusion criteria disqualified individuals under 18 or over 59, customers who had not regularly visited the fast-food chain in the last 2 to 5 years, and

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

those unfamiliar with the brand's storytelling commercials. Additionally, participants who refused to provide informed consent, were unwilling to share their experiences, or were unable to commit time to the interview were excluded from the study. This systematic selection ensured that only relevant and qualified participants contributed to the research.

D. Data Gathering Procedures

The data collection method used in this study employed key elements to capture relevant information on consumer trust and loyalty through brand storytelling. Participants were selected through purposive sampling, with specific inclusion and exclusion criteria applied to ensure that respondents were frequent consumers of the fast-food brand under consideration. The researcher identified the participants who frequently engaged with the brand, specifically those who followed and liked the brand's Facebook page, as this represented a baseline level of loyalty and familiarity.

Before data collection, participants were provided with an informed consent form that explained the study's nature, interview format, procedures, and confidentiality assurances. All interviews were conducted within a week to ensure a consistent and manageable data-collection timeframe. It was conducted one-on-one, primarily in person, to gather participants' experiences and perceptions of the brand. A specific storytelling campaign or commercial associated with the brand was presented during each interview to assess participants' perceptions of brand storytelling. Online video interviews were also available to participants who could not attend in person, ensuring flexibility. Interview forms, such as informed consent and waiver forms, and an answer sheet for the Osgood Semantic Differential Scale selection were also provided via Google Forms.

After obtaining participants' permission, audio recordings were made during all interviews to facilitate transcription and analysis. The Osgood Semantic Differential Scale selection is accompanied by open-ended questions to ascertain and verify consumers' attitudes toward the effectiveness of storytelling elements in building trust and loyalty. Other questions and further clarification were also requested for better insight into consumers' perceptions.

E. Data Analysis Procedures

In this study, the Codebook Thematic Analysis of Frey, Botan, and Kreps' framework helped categorize and interpret the data allied with the Osgood Semantic Differential Scale selection to gain an in-depth understanding of participants' attitudes regarding brand storytelling. There was a verbatim transcription of every interview, capturing every word spoken by each respondent in detail to preserve nuances of expression and underlying emotions.

Transcriptions were coded using code-generating software to group data into themes highlighting the broad concepts of participants' attitudes toward brand storytelling. It involved developing codes based on the specific words and phrases respondents used to indicate positive or negative sentiment towards the brand. This approach captured how respondents positioned themselves and the dimensions measured by the Osgood Semantic Differential Scale. Grouping these codes into broader themes revealed how participants perceived the brand's storytelling efforts and how these narratives affected their trust and loyalty. Central themes were categorized based on the patterns found in responses to both interview questions. These themes were differentiated by various dimensions of brand storytelling, including appeals, message clarity, and relatability, among other areas, and the impact these had on creating consumer trust and loyalty.

F. Subjectivity of the Researcher

The researcher in this study were third-year students enrolled in the Bachelor of Science in Business Administration, major in Marketing Management, at Capiz State University-Main Campus. Their academic knowledge of marketing and interest in different brand stories have motivated them to conduct this study. The researcher were interested in investigating how brand storytelling influences consumer loyalty and trust, aiming to contribute to the development of solid and lasting business-customer relationships. The academic knowledge they had gained through their marketing courses and their curiosity about the role of brand storytelling in fostering consumer trust and loyalty shaped their approach to this research. This provided them with a solid understanding of the consumer's behavior in today's highly competitive market landscape. However, the researcher acknowledged that their practical knowledge in applying these approaches was still developing, which might lead to biases in interpreting the effectiveness of brand storytelling in the actual marketing landscape. It was vital for them to stay fair and to recognize any biases they might have held as aspiring marketers.

Despite the academic insights they had gained, the researcher aimed to remain unbiased and produce accurate results that could benefit not only businesses but also enhance understanding of consumer behavior. They aimed to provide theoretically sound knowledge and deliver practical insights for marketers, businesses, and consumers.

Additionally, they believed that studying their own experiences might have affected the understanding and insight into consumer trust and loyalty dynamics. For these reasons, they intended this study to remain sensitive to how these factors might have influenced interpretations throughout the research process.

G. Ethical Considerations

In conducting the study, the researcher adhered to essential ethical principles to protect and respect participants throughout the research process. The participants provided informed consent; a corresponding consent form was provided that explained the

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

purpose, procedures, and nature of their involvement in the study. The informed consent also outlined the risks, benefits, and confidentiality measures. Participation was voluntary, and participants were informed that they could withdraw without repercussions. This created an environment where participants felt fully aware of their involvement. The researcher also maintained confidentiality and anonymity; the final report was anonymized and kept confidential, ensuring all information gathered remained private. Any potentially identifiable information was excluded from the publication, with people referred to by undercover names or general terms.

For online interviews, extra measures were taken using secure, trusted platforms to safeguard participants' privacy and confidentiality.

The researcher also respected the participants' right to withdraw. Participants were informed they could withdraw from the study without consequences, even after consenting. This autonomy reinforced that participation was optional and encouraged an open research environment. Since personal interviews were included in the study, in which issues such as brand loyalty and trust were discussed, the researcher prioritized avoiding harm to participants. Although the topics were generally low-risk, there were instances where participants shared sensitive or emotional experiences with brands. The researcher ensured a comfortable, supportive setting, allowing participants to skip any questions that made them uncomfortable, thereby avoiding undue psychological stress.

Furthermore, the researcher minimized biases and maintained respect at every stage of the research. Participants were selected for their loyalty to a specific fast-food brand, and each response was evaluated objectively, without personal judgment or assumptions. This approach fostered an atmosphere of openness and honesty, encouraging candid answers.

The researcher also followed strict data handling and storage practices to ensure data security. All collected data, including audio recordings, transcripts, and online session records, were stored securely, with access restricted to the research team only. Physical data was stored securely, while digital data was encrypted. The researcher communicated clearly with respondents about how their data would be used. Participants were informed that their contributions might be included in academic reports, publications, and study presentations.

A debrief was also provided at the end of each interview, allowing participants to ask questions or express concerns. This final communication helped clarify the study's goals, dispelled misunderstandings, and ensured a positive research experience for each participant. In conducting the study, the researcher upheld ethical standards to make each participant feel respected, protected, and valued. This commitment to ethics enhanced the study's overall quality and credibility.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS.

A. Understanding Brand Storytelling Elements that Influence Consumer Trust and Loyalty

Authenticity narratives are a cornerstone of effective brand storytelling. Real-life scenarios featured in advertisements reflect the consumers' own experiences, making the brand appear more relatable and trustworthy. Participant 5 explained: "Based on the commercial, you can see that the story is authentic because it reflects real-life situations. I can truly say that people are loyal to the brand because they use a story that aligns with a real-life setting."

Authenticity is achieved when brands present narratives that align with the real-life contexts of their target audience, ensuring that consumers see themselves in the story. This connection makes the brand more credible and approachable, as it becomes synonymous with genuineness and familiarity. Furthermore, cultural alignment is another powerful form of authenticity.

Participant 15 highlighted: "The commercial showcases how Filipinos are family-oriented and highlights the culture we share, especially the values instilled in us by our mothers. It also emphasizes the joy and connection that comes from families sharing meals, reinforcing my trust in the brand."

By emphasizing values deeply rooted in cultural identity, such as respect for family and tradition, brands can position themselves not just as products or services but as integral parts of their consumers' lives. These culturally grounded narratives foster a sense of pride and belonging, encouraging consumers to stay loyal to the brand. Reliability narratives build trust by focusing on transparency, shared experiences, and milestone connections. Transparency in brand messaging ensures that the brand's values and goals align with its audience's expectations.

Participant 9 said, "What they portray is about family. So, it also has a significant impact on me that they show their target market is not just one person, but a family. The commercial portrays a family's bond, which leads me to build trust with them. They welcome not just individuals but families to their food chain."

By openly communicating their alignment with consumer values, brands demonstrate consistency and honesty, which are critical in fostering reliability. Shared experiences further deepen this trust by connecting with universal emotions and situations.

Participant 3 described: "The part where the child was always with her mother and how they always ate together in that fast food chain, that is something I can relate to." These narratives reinforce the idea that the brand understands and shares the consumer's experiences, which strengthens the emotional connection. Reliability is also bolstered by narratives that highlight the brand's role in significant milestones and traditions.

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

Participant 14 shared: “For me, based on the commercial, it is very relatable. I can see myself in it because the brand has also been present in every important milestone in my life. Whenever there is an event, we also eat at that brand. The emotions I experienced as a child came back to life because of the commercial you showed me”

These milestone-focused narratives are powerful because they embed the brand in consumers’ personal histories, building an enduring sense of trust and loyalty. Emotional appeal narratives add another layer to storytelling by focusing on familiarity, joy, and positive reinforcement. Familiarity is achieved by drawing on shared experiences and common memories, allowing consumers to relate deeply to the brand.

Participant 3 described: “The part where the child was always with her mother and how they always ate together in that fast food chain, that is something I can relate to.”

By invoking nostalgia and shared experiences, these narratives create a bond that goes beyond the transactional relationship. Bonding through joy and comfort is another critical element of emotional appeal.

Participant 1 noted: “I can also say that the commercial of the brand is very appealing because it can persuade you to buy from their brand. As a college student, whenever I get a high score on an exam, I consider going to the brand as a reward for myself.”

This connection ties the brand to positive emotions, reinforcing loyalty and creating a sense of satisfaction and happiness. Additionally, positive emotional reinforcement plays a key role in strengthening trust.

Participant 8 emphasized: “Based on what I said earlier... the emotional appeal in this commercial creates a connection with people, because many of us have experienced this, where a mother shows her love by comforting us, just like when we buy that brand. Moreover,... it feels very warm for me because it shows care, which makes the brand more trusted.”

By appealing to emotions such as comfort, love, and care, these narratives help consumers associate the brand with deeply personal, meaningful experiences, making it feel more relatable and trustworthy.

Together, these narrative types—authenticity, reliability, and emotional appeal—form the foundation of effective brand storytelling. Authentic narratives ground the brand in real-life relevance and cultural values, making it relatable and credible. Reliable narratives strengthen the bond between the brand and its consumers by emphasizing shared experiences, transparency, and the brand’s role in personal milestones. Emotionally appealing narratives deepen this connection by evoking nostalgia, joy, and comfort, creating a memorable and impactful experience for the consumer.

By integrating these narrative types, brands move beyond simply marketing their products or services. Instead, they create stories that resonate deeply with their target audience, fostering a sense of identity, pride, and emotional connection. These narratives position the brand as a trusted partner in the consumer’s life, ensuring long-term loyalty and advocacy. By embedding themselves into the personal, cultural, and emotional fabric of consumers’ lives, brands can ensure that their storytelling not only influences purchasing behavior but also creates lasting relationships built on trust and shared values.

The data reveals that relatability is the most influential factor in fostering consumer trust and loyalty. With a mean relatability score of 1.05, participants’ ratings indicate strong agreement that relatability is the element that resonates most. The data underscores that brands creating stories that are similar to the daily human experience, whether family relationships, personal milestones, or routine, create ties that are felt as authentic and meaningful. These stories evoke emotions but also create comfort, trust, and relevance that extend beyond the purchase transaction.

In this case, relatability in brand storytelling prioritizes crafting narratives that reflect consumers’ everyday lives and emotions. It reveals that when a brand portrays stories that reflect everyday human experiences, such as family dynamics, personal milestones, and routine behaviors, consumers create a bond that feels personal and meaningful to them. Additionally, brand stories that provoke emotions and resonate with a consumer’s experiences encourage a sense of comfort, trust, and relevance. This connection runs deeper, resonating with the consumers in ways that transcend mere product purchases. A high-reliability score indicates that, across the participant pool, this element is universally perceived as the key to building meaningful connections. Consumers, therefore, are more likely to form lasting emotional ties with brands that make them feel understood and valued (Hudson et al., 2015). This level of engagement fosters trust and preference, making it easier for consumers to stay loyal to the brand over time.

For example, Participant 3 noted: “The part where the child was always with her mother and how they always ate together in that fast food chain, that is something I can relate to.”

This is evident in how a brand’s storytelling can evoke personal memories and emotional reactions. This relatable content resonates with viewers because it taps into universal themes of family and togetherness experiences that most consumers can connect with on a deeply personal level. When a brand’s advertisement reflects scenarios that align with a viewer’s life, it breaks down the barrier between consumer and brand, fostering an emotional relationship beyond simple recognition of a product. This underscores that relatability is not just about mirroring experiences; it is about validating consumers’ lives and emotions and helping them feel understood. Pera, Viglia, and Furlan (2016) highlighted that when consumers feel that their experiences and values are reflected in the brand’s narrative, it enhances their commitment to the brand. It has now been drawn that relatability creates an emotional attachment beyond a one-time interaction and sets the foundation for long-term loyalty. This kind of connection also empowers the brand to influence consumer decisions and foster trust by showcasing stories that resonate with its consumers.

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

Similarly, Participant 14's reflection: "For me, based on the commercial, it is very relatable. I can see myself in it because the brand has also been present in every important milestone in my life. Whenever there is an event, we also eat at that brand. The emotions I experienced as a child came back to life because of the commercial you showed me."

The powerful impact of the element of relatability in brand storytelling conforms to this, as it taps into a consumer's memories and life stages. By linking its brand story to significant milestones, such as childhood memories or family traditions, the brand positions itself as a food provider and a part of its consumers' journey. As Viglia et al. (2016) emphasize, the relatability a brand crafts through its stories does more than foster individual connections; it also creates a sense of community among consumers, where they feel connected and accepted. In this way, making relatable brand stories serves as a keeper of memories for consumers. A brand that resonates with its narratives with key life stages strengthens its bond with its consumers. Such emotional connections established by consumers enhance long-term loyalty by making the brand feel like a reflection of memories that are constantly present and part of life's milestones. These memories become entwined with the brand's identity, making it a nostalgic anchor that consumers can return to time and time again, helping make the brand unforgettable.

Similarly, relatable brand storytelling resonates not only with past experiences but also with present-day behaviors.

Participant 18 stated: "The commercial reminded me of my own child who waited for her mom to bring food of that brand. I trust the brand because my child is still interested and happy when it is there. I can relate to the commercial because I see myself and my child in it."

This reveals familiarity in consumer behavior, which strengthens brand preference. The trust mentioned here stems from the consistent depiction of relatable moments in the brand narrative. This connection is rooted in daily life, particularly in the routine interactions of a consumer with a brand. When a brand showcases stories that many consumers may find familiar, it can significantly influence consumer behavior and foster trust as consumers recognize their own lives reflected in the brand's story. This familiarity can influence consumer preference by reinforcing that the brand understands the consumer's daily needs and values, making it a more attractive option in a competitive marketplace.

It is clear that when brands use relatable narratives, they make consumers feel that their personal experiences, values, and emotions are acknowledged and validated. This feeling of being understood fosters a deep emotional connection, which can evolve into stronger brand loyalty. When consumers see their own dynamics or everyday routines depicted in a brand's story, they feel the brand "gets them." Consumers, therefore, are naturally inclined to remain loyal to brands that reflect their identities, values, and experiences, as these brands make them feel that they belong. Japutra et al. (2014) suggest that when consumers perceive a brand as reflecting their self-identity, they are more likely to develop a deep emotional attachment, leading to favorable outcomes such as increased loyalty and advocacy. Moreover, when a consumer sees a brand acknowledging their culture or life stage through its story, they are more likely to view the brand as inclusive and attuned to their personal and collective experiences.

Relatability in brand storytelling, therefore, is more than just an emotional connection; it is a crucial strategic element that enhances consumer decision-making by influencing how they perceive a brand. By creating narratives that reflect everyday life and familiar behaviors, brands can foster a sense of belonging and trust. This alignment increases the likelihood that consumers will choose the brand over competitors, as it feels more relevant to their needs and lifestyle. In essence, relatability gives brands a significant edge by making them stand out as familiar, trusted, and emotionally resonant. As Escalas and Bettman (2017) state, the more customers feel understood and resonate with the brand's story, the more they will relate to and support it, thereby increasing brand loyalty.

After relatability, emotional appeal ranks second most significant in fostering trust and loyalty toward a brand, with a mean score of 1.24. The analysis of participant ratings reveals that brands that craft stories with moments of comfort, joy, and familial love can build deep emotional bonds that stand the test of time. The emotional connections constructed in a brand story create a foundation of trust and loyalty that transcends rational decision-making, forming a bond that personally ties consumers to the brand. Consumers now have a favorable impression of a brand that makes them feel good through various promotional content. Therefore, the emotional connection they formed through storytelling profoundly affects long-term brand loyalty, helping the brand remain significant in all aspects.

Such ties make the brand more memorable and ensure it remains significant to the consumer, even as external trends and preferences change. Emotional storytelling, therefore, enables brands to position themselves as indispensable in their customers' lives.

Participant 1 remarked:

"I can also say that the commercial of the brand is very appealing because it can persuade you to buy from their brand. As a college student, whenever I get a high score on an exam, I consider going to that brand as a reward for myself."

This indeed shows how emotional appeal in brand storytelling elevates the brand's role in a consumer's journey. In this case, the connection they form with the brand story transforms what might otherwise be an ordinary purchase into something meaningful and emotionally rewarding. The brand integrates itself into the consumer's life as a trusted companion, showcasing stories celebrating their victories and becoming part of their milestones. This deep association ensures that the brand is perceived as more than just a business; it becomes a valued partner in the consumer's personal life.

Furthermore, participant 7 stated:

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

“The commercial is emotionally appealing to me. You can see in the video how close they are, and how the mother is always there for her child, just like my mother is always there for me. My mom, raised by a single mother, is my pillar and strength at every stage of my life. That is why I can say that the brand story shown is very powerful. It makes me feel that this brand is worth trusting.”

It is evident how emotional appeal creates a profound connection between the brand and universal themes such as family, love, and support. Brands that align their storytelling with values that are deeply meaningful to consumers can build trust and emotional attachment. In this case, the participant's close relationship with their mother mirrors the values portrayed in the brand's narrative. This alignment fosters a strong emotional resonance that elevates the brand's status as a core of familial values and care. Such storytelling does not just appeal to one individual but speaks to shared human experiences, making the brand trustworthy on a broader scale.

This aligns well with the research by Thomson et al. (2020), emphasizing that emotionally driven narratives enhance brand recall and strengthen positive associations. It underscores that emotional storytelling uniquely builds strong, positive connections with consumers, making the brand more memorable and relatable. When a brand tells an emotional story, it humanizes itself in the eyes of the consumer. Consumers begin to align the brand story with their narrative, making it easier to connect and feel personally invested. Consequently, consumers trust the brand more deeply, and the brand becomes associated with a positive, emotionally charged experience. Such emotional alignment not only enhances brand memorability but also creates a sense of belonging that keeps consumers coming back.

Participant 8's reflection: “Based on what I said earlier... the emotional appeal in this commercial creates a connection with people, because many of us have experienced this, where a mother shows her love by comforting us, just like when we buy that brand. Moreover,... it feels very warm for me because it shows care, which makes the brand more trusted.”

This highlights the ability of emotional storytelling to evoke feelings of care and empathy. The brand creates a sense of warmth and connection by portraying moments that resonate with consumers' lived experiences. In this case, the commercial's narrative of maternal love and care reflects consumers' personal experiences, further deepening their trust in the brand. Emotional appeal in brand storytelling shifts the relationship from a transactional one to a bond grounded in trust and shared values. This sense of connection through brand narratives increases the likelihood of repeat purchases and of consumers recommending the brand to others, thereby amplifying its credibility. Consumer-Brand Engagement Theory by Brodie et al in 2019 further supports this, emphasizing the importance of emotional and social dimensions in creating lasting relationships and fostering deeper consumer interactions beyond mere transactions. This aligns with the idea that emotional connections and social bonds foster deeper, more meaningful engagement with a brand, ultimately building trust and loyalty in a lasting, sustainable way.

In sum, emotional appeal appeared to be another fundamental element that led consumers to brand advocates. When a brand successfully taps into emotions, it inspires consumers to share their positive experiences with their peers and social networks. Dessart, Veloutsou, and Morgan-Thomas (2015) highlight how emotional bonds lead to advocacy, with consumers actively endorsing the brand and amplifying its message. Emotional storytelling, thus, creates a ripple effect, transforming loyal customers into passionate ambassadors who champion the brand's values. By fostering these emotional connections, brands secure a loyal customer base and cultivate a community of advocates who ensure the brand remains relevant and competitive in an ever-evolving market.

Another brand storytelling element is authenticity. Based on the analysis, this element has the lowest resonance with consumers. Participant ratings indicate a mean score of 1.4, suggesting it is not the most vital driver of consumer trust and loyalty among storytelling elements. However, this does not neglect its role; instead, it highlights an opportunity to delve deeper into how authenticity in brand storytelling impacts consumer perceptions and behavior.

The significance of authenticity lies in creating brand stories that resonate deeply with consumers and align with their values and experiences. While it appears to be the last influential element, it reveals that genuine, transparent storytelling by a brand that reflects real-life scenarios and cultural relevance is a remarkable power for building trust. Authenticity in brand narratives fosters credibility and nurtures an emotional bond that results in long-term loyalty. When brands integrate authenticity into their narratives, they transcend transactional relationships and cultivate meaningful connections, promoting sustained trust and consumer engagement.

Participant 5 stated: “Based on the commercial, you can see that the story is authentic because it reflects real-life situations. I can truly say that people are loyal to the brand because they use a story that aligns with a real-life setting.”

It reveals that authenticity in brand storytelling enables consumers to see their own lives and experiences reflected in the brand's message. This reflection fosters a sense of recognition, belonging, and trust as the brand appears to validate the reality of consumption. Showcasing situations and genuine emotions helps brands ensure that their stories feel authentic and evoke a deep emotional response. In this context, authenticity in a brand story is not merely about factual accuracy but about creating emotional resonance, ensuring the brand's story feels honest and aligned with the consumer's personal experience. When consumers can identify with a brand's story and feel emotionally connected to it, they are more likely to view it as trustworthy, strengthening their loyalty and connection to the brand.

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

Participant 15 also emphasized: “The commercial showcases how Filipinos are family-oriented and highlights the culture we share, especially the values instilled in us by our mothers. It also emphasizes the joy and connection that comes from families sharing meals, reinforcing my trust in the brand.”

This shows that consumers can easily connect with a brand narrative that culturally aligns with them. Brands that reflect their customers’ cultural values can form a more profound connection, thereby making the brand more powerful (Holt, 2016). By adapting to shared cultural themes, traditions, and identities, brands demonstrate an understanding of what is significant to their consumers, thereby strengthening the perception of authenticity. For instance, in this context, the emphasis on family values, central to Filipino culture, represents a compelling illustration of how brands can leverage cultural relevance to resonate with their customers. When brands underscore culturally significant themes, they create an emotional bridge that cultivates a sense of bond among their consumers. Goh et al. (2019) suggest that authenticity contributes to consumer loyalty; thus, authentic presentation in brand storytelling should be emphasized, as most consumers today have less trust in advertising and are increasingly drawn to brands that express their core values authentically and transparently. It reveals that authenticity is particularly powerful when brands share vulnerable, transparent narratives, whether about efforts, struggles, or real-life scenarios. When consumers are inclined to adopt authentic brand narratives, the extent to which storytelling is employed in a brand’s marketing strategies enriches customers’ attachment to the brand and differentiates it from competitors. Therefore, by inviting consumers into their stories, brands are not just selling a product but also communicating with them through different stories that create a deep connection.

Participant 9 resonated with this sentiment, stating, “What they portray is about family. So, it also has a significant impact on me that they show that their target market is not just one person but also a family. The commercial portrays a family’s bond, which leads me to build trust with them. They welcome not just individuals but families to their food chain.”

This highlights that authentic storytelling that provides transparency directly influences consumer perceptions of trustworthiness. Transparency, therefore, becomes an essential part of a brand’s authentic messaging, allowing customers to see how the brand is honest and committed to its values. When consumers perceive a brand as transparent and trustworthy, they are more likely to trust it and choose it over competitors (Akroush et al., 2020). This reflects that trust leads to long-term loyalty, as consumers develop a deeper emotional bond with the brand and are more likely to support it, not only as a product provider but also as a safe brand they can rely on.

The authenticity of the brand narrative, therefore, is more than just a marketing strategy; it is also an essential element in building lasting trust and loyalty between brands and consumers. Brands that prioritize authenticity in storytelling engage in a genuine, ongoing dialogue by crafting narratives that resonate deeply with their customers. This alignment of values creates a bond that extends beyond commercial transactions, turning customers into loyal advocates who feel more deeply connected to the brand. Thus, it emphasizes that the authenticity of a brand’s message and values is a driving force that helps it stand out and remain relevant in the long term.

It is also evident that adopting an authentic approach to brand storytelling is more likely to gain attention and favorable notice in a competitive market that directly influences consumer decision-making. As Morhart et al. (2015) support, authenticity fosters emotional connections with consumers and serves as a differentiator in markets. Satisfied customers who feel an emotional bond with a brand are more likely to share their positive experiences with others, becoming vocal supporters of the brand.

As quoted by Participant 12: “I can say that the brand is truly trustworthy because the story shown connects to other customers. It is very unique! I want to buy more and engage with their product.”

While authenticity is the least influential brand storytelling element for consumers, it is still a practical element that makes storytelling more impactful. By fostering trust through transparency, cultural alignment, and clear communication, brands can remain relevant and dependable and establish a sense of loyalty beyond transactional relationships. While it suggests that authenticity is not the dominant influence in the commercial, it remains a foundational element in establishing long-term consumer relationships.

Brand storytelling, through its emphasis on relatability, emotional appeal, and brand authenticity, has proven to be a powerful tool in building consumer trust and loyalty. Relatable stories that reflect everyday experiences resonate deeply, enhancing emotional attachment and loyalty. Participants in the study noted how narratives tied to family values or life milestones built stronger bonds. This is consistent with Pera, Viglia, and Furlan (2016), who highlight that when consumers see their values and experiences reflected in a brand’s narrative, their commitment to the brand intensifies. On the other hand, emotional appeal strengthens these bonds by evoking universal feelings of care and warmth, making consumers feel understood and valued. As Thomson et al. (2020) assert, emotionally driven brand narratives enhance recall and positive associations, deepening consumer attachment. Lastly, authenticity can build trust, but without relatability and emotional engagement, it may not be enough to ensure long-term loyalty. Authenticity in brand storytelling relies on narratives that reflect real-life experiences and cultural values, creating meaningful connections, trust, and a sense of belonging among consumers. These elements transform a brand from a transactional entity into an integral part of consumers’ lives, driving long-term loyalty and advocacy.

However, despite the effectiveness of these strategies, it is important to recognize that not all consumers may connect equally with every brand narrative.

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

As Goh et al. (2019) suggest, consumer trust is complex and shaped by individual perceptions, meaning some may not resonate with a brand's approach. The diversity of consumer experiences highlights the need for brands to tailor their storytelling to resonate with a broad range of audiences, ensuring inclusivity and relevance. Ultimately, the findings underscore the importance of creating authentic, relatable, and emotionally compelling brand stories that foster lasting relationships with consumers while recognizing the complexity of individual preferences and experiences.

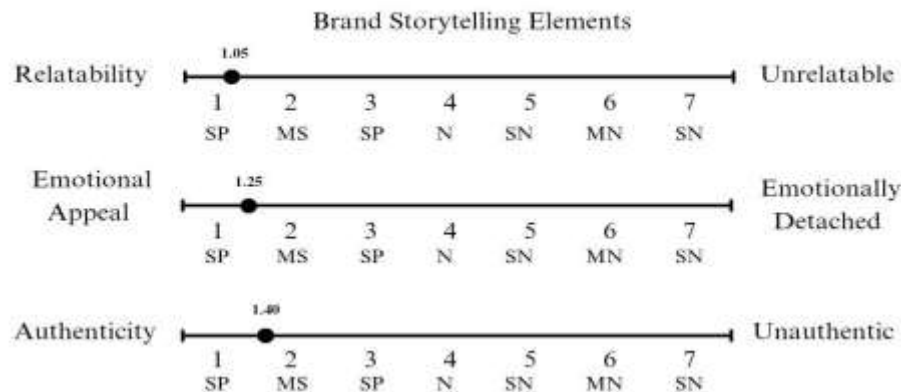


Figure 1. Most Influential Elements of Brand Storytelling

B. Understanding How Consumers Perceive Brand Storytelling in Building Trust and Loyalty

The emotional responses elicited by brand storytelling are fundamental to creating lasting bonds between consumers and brands. These emotions often stem from the depiction of relatable human experiences that consumers can relate to, especially when tied to personal memories and cultural traditions. The brand's master storytelling taps into these emotions by depicting family bonding, milestones, and universal feelings of love, joy, and nostalgia.

Participant 6 shared: "The commercial is very effective because I can relate to it. It reminds me of my mom coming home, and we always ate at that particular fast-food chain."

The brand's commercial is doing more than just showing food. They also work as a powerful way to bring up deep beliefs and emotions close to family traditions, cultural landmarks, and personal experiences. It goes far beyond the surface-level display of fast food; it taps into the emotional core of its audience, reminding them of cherished moments and crucial life events that have shaped personal and familial identities. Thus, by infusing these emotional triggers into its campaigns, the brand positioned itself as more than a mere meal provider. It has now become a vehicle that transmits practical, meaningful emotional experiences that strongly resonate with one's inner being.

Similarly, Participant 2 reflected: "I saw in the video how the mother and daughter continued to purchase the fast-food chain brand from the time the daughter was young until she grew up. Similarly, in my case, ever since I was young until now, we still buy the fast-food brand."

The sentiment expressed in this observation exemplifies the powerful role of nostalgia in shaping consumers' perceptions and emotional bonds with a brand, especially when that brand has been there for them through different stages of their lives. For many, the brand is more than just a fast-food chain; it is always present at key moments, such as family gatherings or everyday little pleasures. The emotional appeal of this brand goes beyond feeding people a meal; it touches on powerful childhood memories and family traditions, as well as the comfort that comes from routine.

According to Tajfel and Turner (1989), emotional ties are crucial to understanding why brands become so well-known and entrenched in consumers' self-concepts. According to SIT, part of identity is provided by groups, which mostly find common ground regarding shared values and experiences. In this instance, the brand is a symbol of all those values, especially those concerning family, togetherness, and shared Filipino cultural traditions. Through the resonance of personal experience with the stories, the brand becomes a cultural marker, representing a collective identity that consumers can relate to. This aspect aligns with what Tajfel and Turner pointed out, whereby group membership based on shared experiences can increase emotional attachment to and loyalty to the brand.

This, according to Fetscherin and Thies's 2015 theory of emotional branding, added another primary goal: creating an emotional relationship between the brand and the consumer based on positive emotions such as trust, comfort, or even nostalgia. Then, with an emotional connection, long-term relationships were established rather than merely engaging in a transaction. This emotional bond fosters consumer loyalty by directly connecting with their self-concept, cultural identity, and familial values. Emotional branding positions the brand as a source of comfort, warmth, and familiarity, thereby influencing purchasing decisions and overall brand loyalty (Louro et al., 2019).

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

Participant 9 also added:

“It is heartwarming, and it shows connectivity between people. It makes me feel connected to the brand.”

This connection stretches to a quality of family love and bonding; two strands masterfully worked into the narrative of this story that the brand successfully communicates. The production of a powerful emotional appeal through the repetition of advertisements featuring family relationships and shared moments of joy that transcended individual sentiment. It resonates with consumers at a much more collective, group level; it is an overinflating of the sense of unity that transcends personal experience and clashes with shared cultural values. Familial ties bring not only individual emotions but also a general sense of belonging, an important part of the puzzle in building long-term brand loyalty.

These emotional responses revealed that the brand is not only a product but also a strategic construct that positions itself within the consumer's emotional reality.

When consumers see these narratives entwined with family relationships and memories, that brand is no longer a commodity; it becomes a symbol of their social identity and a constitutive element of the narratives they will create daily. Thus, the emotional response to a brand's storytelling can be seen as very personal yet socially relevant, proof that compelling brand storytelling goes beyond just selling a product by forging a connection anchored in shared cultural values and personal experiences.

Beyond emotional responses, evaluative judgment matters most in assessing authenticity, trustworthiness, and relatability for consumers regarding the brand's storytelling. In the same way, consumers respond to a brand's story on an emotional level and evaluate its credibility and relevance to their lived experience. In this research, the creation of brand stories that reflect real-life experiences and elicit genuine emotions was consistently cited as a key characteristic that fosters trust and positive assessments. This judgment is vital to determining whether a customer wants to associate with, continue buying from, or remain loyal to a brand over time.

Participant 7 remarked:

“The story feels true-to-life, showing genuine emotions. It is something I can relate to in real life.”

Importantly, this authenticity check is significant since Schau and Gilly (2016) suggest that authenticity in storytelling builds stronger emotional ties and generates trust with consumers. Therefore, in the brand's advertising, conveying emotion and real-life experiences through its storytelling plays a significant role in creating long-term relationships with its consumers. When a brand story feels authentic, it enhances the sense of sincerity and transparency, which are otherwise crucial ingredients in establishing trust between the brand and its audience. Authentic storytelling can not only mirror reality but also present people with a version of reality that resonates deeply with their values, experiences, and identities.

Furthermore, Participant 19 commented: “I feel the need to keep coming back because I trust the fast-food chain brand.

The brand is different. The brand has always been consistent in quality. Even after trying other brands that came here, like those in malls, or other brands, I will not name, I always say, “Fast food chain brand's chicken tastes different, doesn't it?” Even my kids notice and say, “Yes, Mom, the brand is different.” I trust it because of its relatability; even when trying other brands, the taste is always different from that of the brand.

When consumers perceive a brand as upholding high standards over time, it signals that the brand will always be there for them. This relatability attribute is synonymous with the trust that consumers place in the brand because, according to Tajfel and Turner (1986), identification with a strong group depends on consistency and predictability. When delivered consistently, the brand's quality products or services can help consumers establish a relationship of dependability that brings the brand closer to them emotionally. Predictability is always a boon when people's expectations can be consistently met, making them all the more confident in the reliability of the brand experience.

Therefore, it develops core trustworthiness based on the brand's credibility, rooted in its quality and consistency. It lays an excellent emotional bond with the consumer and fixes the company's long-standing position as a brand to be relied upon in due course.

Participant 12 stated: “The commercials are so touching. They make you want to return to the brand because of the emotions they evoke. The connection I felt became even stronger, and I am convinced to always buy from this brand.”

This underscores the profound influence emotional storytelling has on consumer behavior. Whenever a brand's narrative hits an emotional chord, it prompts consumers to act, compels them to revisit the brand, and strengthens their loyalty along the way.

According to Bennett & Rundle-Thiele (2019), good brand storytelling is beyond just the promotion of a product because it speaks to the consumer's emotional and social identity, further deepening the consumer-brand bond. This makes the brand a unique place not only in providing food but also as an emotional comfort and family-values brand. Such an attachment to the brand indeed strengthens the bond between the brand and the consumer, offering them a sense of belonging and allowing the brand to be viewed as part of their life and social identity. The emotional attachment is deepened to a significant extent; this means the brand is not just a choice; it is deeply rooted in consumers' culture and family experiences.

The evaluative judgment here indicates that authenticity, emotional resonance, and consistency of stories play a very important role in consumers' perception of a brand. When the brand is perceived as trustworthy and emotionally authentic, the likelihood of a positive evaluation increases directly with loyalty levels. This process mirrors how brands that resonate with consumers' emotional needs and values build trust and attachment. For the brand, storytelling effectiveness lies in narratives that are authentic and relatable,

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

tapping into universal family experiences and traditions. The repeated presentation of these stories reinforces the credibility of the brand. The brand is emotionally appealing and credible, so it becomes a consistent presence in the consumer's life. Authenticity helps build a deeper emotional connection with the audience, strengthening that bond between the consumer and the brand and, eventually, loyalty.

Therefore, a brand's success in using storytelling to build emotional depth and maintain authenticity is key to solidifying its place as a beloved and trusted brand.

The final dimension of consumer responses to brand storytelling pertains to cognitive processing, which is how consumers think about and evaluate the brand. While creating an emotional and evaluative experience for customers, brands also pass through a rational lens, where consumers consider how well the brand aligns with their personal and cultural values. For many consumers, the brand became more than a food provider but a symbol of family traditions and cultural milestones.

Participant 14 captured this sentiment by stating:

"The story shows that the brand is more than food; it is part of our family celebrations and milestones. It portrayed emotions and relationships, such as between the child and their milestones. It showed how the brand supported every milestone, always being there for them."

This statement underscores the brand's critical role as a cultural marker, seamlessly woven into the fabric of everyday life and essential family moments. The brand is beyond just a fast-food chain; it has become a symbol of connection and tradition. From birthdays and anniversaries to casual meals shared in the comfort of family, the brand is present at all pivotal moments, providing a backdrop to the reader's personal and collective experiences. That is why it transcends being merely a food provider and becomes what the brand represents: shared memories and cultural values resonating powerfully with consumers. This family life and traditional connection create a stronger sense of belonging, helping the brand stay in the consumer's emotional landscape. Thus, through this approach, the brand is already integrated into people's lives and becomes a companion in their everyday and noteworthy happenings.

Similarly, Participant 1 shared: "They really relate it to real-life stories, particularly about the connection of a mother's love for her daughter. Even in tough times, I choose the brand because it comforts me, just like the mother and daughter in the story."

This cognitive processing explains why the brand is perceived as a source of emotional and psychological comfort, particularly at times of high stress or difficulty. Its brand experience connects consumers' feelings to security, familiarity, and stability, making it a go-to for reassurance. For this reason, the brand's narrative finds resonance in the consumer's values because the brand evokes a personal sentiment through its storytelling, wherein people need to find comfort during distressing times. Stability and emotional ease contribute much more to conveying reliability and support in a product, thus becoming a criterion for maintaining one's association with a brand. Over time, the psychological attachment deepens, and the brand becomes an intrinsic part of their lives.

This alignment of the brand with consumers' cultural identity embodies a principle of Henry Tajfel and John Turner's 1989 Social Identity Theory, which holds that brands that align with consumers' preferred values and sense of self will enhance loyalty. When a brand 'represents' and reflects the consumer's cultural background, values, and shared experiences, it becomes part of the consumer's social identity, thereby 'embracing' the consumer through emotional bonding. This bond goes beyond the product itself to a sense of belonging and identity that the brand embodies. In the case of the specific fast-food chain, it speaks of family traditions, cultural values, and emotional milestones deeply connected with the consumer's self, thus making it more than a fast-food choice but a symbol of belonging. As consumers become identified with the brand's story, their loyalty grows as they see the brand as part of their own story and cultural heritage.

Participant 17 commented: "The connection I felt is that as long as this brand exists, my support for them will never change, even until I have grandchildren. I would not trade it for any other brand. It is like it is part of our family tradition."

This emphasizes how loyalty toward the brand is generational. The brand's storyline spans generations, ensuring continuous exposure that reinforces its position as a symbol of love and tradition among families. As a brand passed down from generation to generation, it transcends its role as a food provider and becomes part of family history and values. This generational loyalty illustrates how the brand creates long-lasting relationships, as families continue to love it not just for its products but for the emotional attachment it has fostered in their lives.

The continuity of the brand's presence in family traditions, from childhood celebrations to adult milestones, reinforces its deep integration into the consumer's cultural and familial identity. In that sense, the brand story is not solely based on individual experience but also serves as an entity that helps shape collective memory, making it a brand that crosses generations.

Finally, Puzakova et al. (2019) suggested that "brands which mirror well consumers' aspirations and self-concept are more likely to encourage loyalty." The portrayal of the brand's family values, cultural milestones, and shared experiences aligns fully with the consumer's sense of identity, leading consumers to engage much more firmly on the emotional level with the brand. The perception of the brand's story and the consumer's personal and cultural values ensure that the brand is more than a food provider, representing the consumer's own story and non-natural identity.

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

As consumers heed this, they are further motivated to integrate the brand into their lives, strengthening the emotional and psychological bonds that hold them to it. This reconciliation between what brands stand for and the consumer's idea of self reinforces the brand's status as credible, dependable, and loved: a long-standing loyalty builder.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings and statistical results, data were analyzed and interpreted. The following conclusions were derived:

The effect of audio branding techniques on brand recall is significant, demonstrating the powerful role that sound plays in creating memorable brand associations. This impact underscores the ability of auditory elements, such as sound logos and jingles, to activate both cognitive and emotional processes, which are critical for reinforcing brand identity and recognition. By engaging emotional and mnemonic pathways in the brain, as supported by Iglesias et al. (2020) and Bui et al. (2023), sound transcends the limitations of visual branding, ensuring that brands remain top-of-mind for consumers even when visual stimuli are absent. These findings highlight the strategic value of integrating audio branding into marketing efforts, especially in an increasingly competitive and multisensory marketplace. Emotional resonance achieved through sound not only strengthens brand recall but also fosters a deeper connection between the brand and its audience. This aligns with broader trends in consumer behavior, where emotionally engaging brand experiences often translate into higher loyalty and advocacy.

The positive increase in customer retention among participants after the application of audio branding techniques demonstrates the dual benefit of sound in enhancing both brand recall and consumer loyalty. Audio branding achieves this by creating an emotional connection with the audience, fostering trust and satisfaction, which are essential to encouraging repeat purchases and long-term relationships. The ability of sound to evoke emotions and strengthen consumer-brand connections aligns with findings by Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Jackson & Fulberg (2016), who emphasize the role of emotional engagement in customer retention strategies. Elements such as consistent sound logos, catchy jingles, and tailored brand-specific music can reinforce the brand's identity while evoking positive emotional responses. By leveraging these auditory cues strategically, companies can not only boost immediate satisfaction but also establish enduring consumer relationships that contribute to sustained business success and competitive advantage.

The increase in brand familiarity among participants following the intervention underscores the audio branding strategy's ability to enhance consumer awareness and understanding of the brand. However, it is important to recognize that in this study, brand familiarity serves primarily as a control variable rather than a focal outcome. Its role is to ensure that the observed effects on brand recall and customer retention are not confounded by variations in participants' baseline familiarity with the brand. Nonetheless, the observed improvement in familiarity still holds implications for marketing strategies, as familiarity is inherently linked to greater trust, preference, and purchase likelihood. The findings complement previous research, including that of Gustafsson (2015) and Iglesias et al. (2020), which highlights the importance of auditory elements in fostering emotional and cognitive associations. This emphasizes the potential of sound as a secondary yet impactful benefit in reinforcing brand identity and encouraging deeper consumer engagement.

Furthermore, the significant difference in participants' brand recall before and after the intervention confirms the effectiveness of the audio branding techniques, as the results reject the null hypothesis that there was no difference. This outcome underscores the role of sound elements, such as jingles or sound logos, not merely as enhancements but as foundational components in strengthening brand recall. These auditory elements act as powerful mnemonic and emotional triggers, embedding the brand more deeply into consumer memory. The findings align with prior research, including Iglesias et al. (2020) and Bui et al. (2023), which emphasize the potential of sound in branding to engage both emotional and cognitive processes, thereby enhancing consumer connection and memorability. These results contribute to the broader understanding of multi-sensory branding strategies, showcasing how carefully designed auditory elements can drive significant improvements in brand recognition and establish a lasting presence in competitive markets.

Moreover, the statistically significant difference in customer retention, with post-test survey ratings improving after the audio branding intervention, suggests that sound-based branding fosters a deeper emotional connection with the brand. Emotional engagement plays a pivotal role in maintaining long-term customer relationships, as supported by Hollebeek et al. (2014) and Jackson & Fulberg (2016), who stress the importance of trust and satisfaction in driving consumer loyalty. These findings emphasize that integrating resonant, emotionally engaging sound elements, such as distinctive jingles or sound logos, can reinforce positive consumer perceptions, leading to repeat interactions. By enhancing emotional resonance, brands can ensure customer satisfaction, build loyalty, and achieve sustainable growth in competitive markets.

The findings of this study reveal that audio branding techniques hold significant potential to enhance brand communication and influence consumer behavior. In the specific context of milk consumers for preschoolers in Roxas City, the strategic use of sound has shown a marked positive impact on both brand recall and customer retention. The integration of distinct auditory elements, such as sound logos and jingles that align with the brand's identity and values, creates a more memorable and emotionally engaging experience for the target audience. This emotional connection is crucial, as research by Iglesias et al. (2020) and Bui et al. (2023) highlights the significant role of sound in boosting consumer recognition and engagement. By evoking emotions, these auditory

Exploring Consumer Trust and Loyalty through Brand Storytelling

cues strengthen brand recognition and foster long-term loyalty among consumers, providing a strategic edge for businesses in competitive markets. Therefore, audio branding techniques have a significant and positive effect on brand recall and customer retention.

V. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are suggested by the researcher:

Students, particularly in business, marketing, and related programs, are encouraged to explore in depth the impact of audio branding techniques on brand recall and customer retention, as this field bridges the gap between theoretical marketing concepts and their real-world applications. By analyzing case studies, conducting experiments, or examining consumer responses to audio branding, students can gain practical insights into how sound influences brand identity and fosters emotional connections with customers. This exploration not only enhances their understanding of consumer behavior but also equips them with innovative tools to address modern marketing challenges. By learning the use of auditory elements, students can develop creative strategies that resonate with target audiences, preparing them to excel in dynamic, competitive marketing environments.

Business Owners are advised to consider incorporating audio branding techniques into their marketing strategies seriously. By integrating elements such as distinctive jingles, sound logos, or carefully crafted background music into their brand communication, businesses can create a unique auditory identity that resonates with customers. This approach has the potential to strengthen customer loyalty, increase sales, and build a lasting emotional bond with the target audience. Moreover, adopting audio branding can set businesses apart from competitors by fostering a memorable and immersive brand experience. By doing so, business owners can achieve not only short-term marketing goals but also long-term sustainable growth in a competitive marketplace.

For Marketing Professionals, it is recommended that they explore incorporating audio branding techniques into their campaign strategies to drive more impactful consumer engagement. By leveraging sound, professionals can craft campaigns that go beyond visual appeal, tapping into auditory cues that evoke emotions, trigger memories, and enhance brand recall. For instance, a well-designed sound logo or theme song can become synonymous with a brand, making it instantly recognizable in crowded markets. Integrating audio branding can also boost retention rates, as consumers are more likely to associate positive auditory experiences with a brand. Ultimately, this strategic use of sound can provide a competitive edge, positioning the brand as innovative and consumer-focused.

Consumers can utilize the insights from this study to deepen their connections with brands that align with their personal preferences and needs. By understanding the role of sound in shaping brand identity, consumers can make more informed choices about the brands they support. For example, they may find themselves drawn to brands whose audio elements evoke nostalgia, joy, or relaxation. By recognizing these auditory influences, consumers can enhance their overall brand experience, fostering greater satisfaction and loyalty. This awareness also enables them to advocate for brands that use sound effectively to create meaningful connections.

For researchers, the findings of this study provide a robust foundation at the intersection of auditory elements and consumer behavior. By examining how sound influences brand recall and customer retention, researchers can contribute valuable insights to the field of sensory marketing. This study opens numerous avenues for future exploration, such as investigating the effectiveness of audio branding across various cultural contexts and industries, from technology to hospitality. Additionally, researchers are encouraged to analyze how emerging trends, such as immersive audio experiences and personalized soundtracks, can further shape consumer perceptions. Furthermore, other market segments should be explored, as this study focused only on the milk product industry. By building on this work, future studies can uncover innovative ways to leverage auditory branding for diverse marketing applications.

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