

Mediating role of perceived quality in the association between brand equity and consumer purchase intention of fast-moving consumer goods in Chattogram metropolitan city

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Abstracts

The study aims to investigate whether perceived quality mediates the relationship between brand equity components and consumer purchase intention of fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG), specifically shampoo, in Chattogram Metropolitan City. The study used primary data collected through a structured closed-ended questionnaire. The survey targeted 375 shampoo consumers in Chattogram Metropolitan City, Bangladesh between January and March 2024, and used purposive sampling to ensure responses from relevant consumers. The study employed quantitative and explanatory research methods, and structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze how perceived quality mediates brand equity components of purchase intentions. The data were analyzed using principal component analysis (PCA), factor analysis, and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) to ensure reliability. Cronbach's Alpha validated internal consistency, and SEM was conducted via IBM SPSS AMOS 22, with model validity assessed through Chi-square/df, CFI, IFI, TLI, NFI, RFI and RMSEA fit indices. The study's results exhibited that brand awareness, brand association, and packaging positively influence purchase intention both directly and through perceived quality. However, celebrity endorsement did not significantly mediate purchase intention through perceived quality, suggesting that while endorsements can draw attention, they do not necessarily enhance consumers' perceptions of product quality.

Keywords Mediation effect, Structural equation model, Perceived quality, Purchase intention.

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

According to Kotler and Keller (2016), the Fast-Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG) refer to goods that are traded rapidly with comparatively truncated costs having high turnover rates, and the consumer purchases them frequently for daily or regular utilization. Such goods are nondurable, meaning that they are used up or consumed within a little timeframe. Owing to their low cost and high demand, FMCGs rely on mass production, extensive distribution networks, and strong



branding to influence consumer choices (Kotler & Keller, 2016). Kumer and Reinartz (2018) argued that the FMCG industry is highly competitive and that the companies in this industry invest heavily in marketing, promotions, and shelf visibility to drive impulse purchases and brand loyalty. Due to high competition and a lack of differentiation among brands, the different named products play an important role in the branding for customers. Here, brand equity- the value a brand adds to a given product is a significant factor for preference and loyalty (Aaker, 1996). Brand equity is often determined through brand awareness, brand image, perceived value, and brand loyalty (Keller, 1993).

In the present age, perceived quality is a fundamental element of brand equity, signifying any subjective notion of a product's general excellence or being better than any other product (Zeithaml, 1998). Unlike actual quality, which is objective and measurable, perceived quality is, from the customer's perspective, influenced by marketing and other promotional issues ranging from word-of-mouth to past experience (Steenkamp, 1990). Research has shown that perceived quality actually increases brand equity and directly influences consumer purchase intention the likelihood of a consumer ordering a product on a purchase in the near future (Yoo, Donthu, & Lee, 2000). Purchase intention, which is largely dependent on such things as brand trust, perceived value, and product attractiveness, directly influences actual buying behavior (Spears & Singh, 2004).

Due to the rise of disposable income and brand awareness, the FMCG sector is expanding fast in developing markets like Bangladesh, predominantly in big cities like Chattogram Metropolitan City (Islam & Rahman, 2016). The Chattogram, being the country's commerce capital, has a very heterogeneous consumer base with widely varying brand preferences. Consequently, it offers an appropriate context in which to examine the interconnections among brand equity, perceived quality, and purchase intentions. Unlike Western markets where these concepts have been extensively examined, there is limited literature about the mediating role of perceived quality on brand equity and purchase intention in the FMCG sector in Bangladesh.

The shampoo market in Bangladesh has exhibited a remarkable rise with a yearly progress rate of 8.5% (Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, 2022). As disposable incomes rise and urbanization accelerates, personal care products like shampoo have transitioned from luxuries to daily necessities. This shift makes it crucial to understand consumer behavior in this specific product category. The shampoo market features include dominance of multinational brands (Unilever, P&G0 controlling 65% of the market share), emerging local brands (like Tibet and Keya) gaining 25% of the market share and unbranded or low-cost alternatives holding

10% of the market share (Bangladesh Brand Forum, 2023). This competitive landscape creates a need to understand how brand equity operates differently.

Hence, this study has the objective of examining the process through which consumers' perceived quality especially the shampoo market of Chattogram mediates the relationship between brand equity and purchase intentions in FMCG. If this dynamic can be understood by marketers, then they will be able to design better branding strategies to change consumer preferences, communicate these changes, and affect a purchase decision in a highly competitive environment.

Objectives of the study

The objective of this research is to examine the mediating effect of perceived quality on the relationship between brand equity components brand awareness, brand association, celebrity endorsement, and packaging and consumer purchase intention for shampoo products in Chattogram Metropolitan City. This includes evaluating the direct impact of each brand equity component on purchase intention and assessing how perceived quality influences these relationships to provide insights for effective marketing strategies.

Literature review

To learn more about why people want to buy specific products or services, one may look at two behavior theories. This refers to two theories: (i) Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) and (ii) Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB). It was in 1980 when Ajzen and Fishbein (1975) created the TRA. People with a positive outlook are more likely to make a purchase, according to the TRA. Furthermore, TRA has its limits. Sometimes, the TRA cannot pin down why someone has little to no interest in buying a product or service. In 1991, Ajzen created the TPB to address the shortcomings of the TRA. The perceived level of behavioral control is an extra factor that Ajzen introduced to the TPB. The perceived level of behavioral difficulty carrying out the behavior of interest was defined by Ajzen. In response to the TPB's shortcomings, the TRA proposed an explanation for why individuals do not act in a given way, even when faced with strong positive attitudes and apparent societal pressures to do so. Ajzen (1991) cites the TPB as saying that the purchasing motive is the major signal that affects consumer buying behavior.

The rationale for using the TPB is that customers' subjective norms, beliefs, and attitudes are the primary factors that impact their purchase motivation, which in turn influences their actual purchasing behavior. This study builds on prior research on shampoo product purchases to

examine, within the theoretical framework of the TPB, how consumers feel about and perceive branding, and how branding influences their motivation to buy shampoo. Additionally, various demographic parameters, brand awareness, perceived quality, packaging, celebrity endorsement, and brand linkage may be determined using the TPB. These actions could involve communicating with customers, providing information, or even physically touching the products, as stated by Ajzen (1991).

The subjective norm is the second part of the TPB. Perceived opinion serves as the basis for subjective norm, and this perception is necessary for decision-making to be completed. Norms can be anybody—spouses, relatives, coworkers, friends, and acquaintances—who has an effect on customers' motivation to buy (Ajzen, 1991). Consumers' decisions to engage in behavior are influenced by what is believed to be perceived as social pressure. We assign moral weight to people's spending habits based on the extent to which they conform to societal norms. Some contend that the buying motivation of items based on branding is more influenced by social influence. Subjective norms favorably impact buying motivation, according to Ajzen (1991). In addition, Fishbein (1975) noted that social effects might impact both subjective norms and buying motives.

The third component of purchasing motivation is behavioral control. Behavioral control is the process by which individuals attempt to alter their behavior in response to their own perceptions of potential negative outcomes. Prior research has utilized the TPB to characterize the extent to which customers impression that they have behavioral control over the products they buy, and how this perception influences their motivation to buy (Frewer, 1998). According to Ajzen (1991), one way to gauge a customer's branding-based buying motivation is by their perception of their own behavioral control. The study went on to say that perceived behavioral control influences purchasing motivation. That is to say, brand loyalty is a stronger motivator for customers who report higher levels of perceived behavioral control. This may be due to customers' increased product knowledge and familiarity with the company's identity, as elaborated by Ajzen (1991). Although the TPB is useful for studying customers' purchase motives, there are cases where just attitude, perceived behavioral control, or subjective norms impact purchase motives. When evaluating consumer behavior, prior research has relied on the TPB and evidentiary data pertaining to these elements (Ajzen, 1991). The vendor is able to address ethical concerns and understand customer behavior with the aid of TPB. It also aids researchers in studying how various variables affect the motivation and behavior of purchasing (Ajzen, 1991). Brand recognition, brand associations, perceived quality, packaging, demographic impacts, and celebrity endorsement are the factors used to create the TPB

in this study. The target market in Chittagong Metropolitan City is fast moving consumer goods.

There are five areas into which the empirical literature has been classified. The first part of the paper reviews the research on the topic of the connection between brand recognition and the wish to purchase. In the second part, we review the research on the topic of how consumers' mental representations of brands affect their propensity to buy. Section three reviews the research on the topic of how consumers' impressions of a product's quality affect their decision to buy. The literature on the correlation between product packaging and consumer motivation is presented in the fourth section. Studies on the association between celebrity endorsement and the motivation to buy are covered in the last section.

It is often acknowledged that establishing a brand's awareness (BA) is a crucial initial stage in the branding process. The ability of a consumer to identify a brand in various contexts and to remember that brand when asked about a product or service is known as brand awareness (BA) (Aaker, 1991, 1996, 2009). Both Keller and Rossiter et al. (1987) defined brand awareness as consumers' capacity to recognize and identify a brand, but Keller also included recall and recognition in his definition of brand awareness. Customers' capacity to recognize and remember a brand in response to a trigger is known as brand awareness (BA), according to Berry (2000).

According to Nedungadi (1990), people's knowledge of a brand influences their choice to buy that brand in the market. Radder and Huang (2008) stated that the level of knowledge of a consumer can have a critical effect on their purchasing decision, especially industries where competition is very high. According to Keller (1993), BA influences the intention to buy since people are more likely to buy well-known brands. According to several studies (Aaker, 1991; Dodds et al., 1991; Percy & Rossiter, 1992), customers are more inclined to acquire a reputable brand due to its ease of recognition and differentiation from rival brands. An important part of consumer decision-making is BA, which includes equally includes brand recognition and brand recall (Keller, 1993; Keller et al., 2012). Building BA makes it easier for consumers to remember enough information about the brand to make a purchase, according to Kotler and Keller (2016).

According to Aaker (1991) and (2009), BA relates to the degree to which people recall a brand. Kim and Kim (2004) stated that BA occurs when consumers think about a product category. BA is defined by Ukpebor and Ipogah (2008) as the level of customer knowledge of a brand as measured by top-of-mind awareness, brand recall, and brand recognition. The term "brand recognition" refers to the extent to which

customers can recollect a particular brand when presented with visual cues such as a logo, slogan, tagline, advertisement, or packaging. The capability of customers to mentally recollect a category's brand name in the absence of any cues or reminders is called brand recall. Positioning the brand in the minds of consumers is the goal of brand recall. As a result of BA, customers are more likely to associate a positive experience with a brand and give it serious consideration when making a purchase (Tang & Hawley, 2009). Lin and Chang (2003) stated that awareness of a brand is the single most important factor influencing a customer's choice to buy. Chi, Yeh, and Yang, (2009) revealed that consumers tend to buy popular and relevant items. According to Chi, Yeh, and Yang, (2009), people are more likely to buy well-known brands, particularly if they have good experiences with the product in the past (Keller, 2013). In keeping with the theoretical underpinnings and results of other studies, this study aims to ascertain the effect of the degree of brand awareness on the purchase motive.

Furthermore, changing the packaging is a simple way to enter new markets. Additionally, studies have shown that consumers with smaller families do not prioritize large packs and view them as waste products because the amount of product exceeds their needs (Agariya, Johari, Sharma, Chandraul, & Singh, 2012;). This is because larger sizes are not always reliable. Research indicates that innovative container designs can establish a distinctive brand image in consumers' thoughts by distinguishing themselves amidst market clutter (Agariya, Johari, Sharma, Chandraul, & Singh, 2012). This occurs because consumers' perceptions of a product's packaging influence their treatment of the product. Moreover, research indicates that consumers are more inclined to purchase products with packaging that is both visually appealing and practical. Furthermore, Rita, Aiste, and Laura, (2009) concluded that packaging is among the most effective forms of modern marketing communication; this calls for a closer examination of the packaging's constituent parts in order to ascertain how they influence consumers' final purchasing decisions. According to research by Farooq et al. (2015), packaging has the potential to be one of the most effective marketing communication tools for influencing consumer decisions. The evidence also suggests that package components influence, in fact, buyers' decisions.

According to Ghosh (2016), one of the most effective marketing tools for communicating with customers is packaging. The study found that packaging significantly affects how people perceive a product. Customers will be pleased with your product if you choose the proper packaging. According to Cahyorini and Rusfian (2011), all of these details and features of packaging help attract consumer attention. Brand loyalty

affects consumers' propensity to buy, and packaging plays a major role in this process (Khraim, 2011). According to Ares and Deliza (2010), packaging not only provides producers with a chance to convince customers to buy their products but also molds their expectations and views of the product. According to Labbe, Pineau, and Martin (2013), visual perception is the primary one used while making a purchase.

The purpose of this study is to ascertain, in accordance with the theoretical underpinnings and results of prior studies, the impact of packaging on the purchase motive.

"A person who is recognized to the public for his or her accomplishments in areas other than that of the product endorsed" is what Kamins (1989) meant when he said a celebrity endorser. On the other hand, "a famous person who uses public recognition to recommend or co-present with a product in an advert" is how Stafford, Spears, & Hsu, (2003) described a celebrity endorser. In order to give a product or brand with a more recognizable face, many famous people are employed by advertising agencies (Kaikati, 1987). A celebrity is someone who is well-known to the public eye and who possesses unique qualities, such as being trustworthy and physically appealing. (2004, Silvera and Austad). It can include actors, actresses, athletes, politicians, businesspeople, artists, and military personnel (McCracken, 1989). In contrast, celebrities in the current era of advertising might be anything from a cartoon figure like Fred Flintstone to an actual animal (Miciak and Shanklin, 1994).

According to Ohanian (1990) and Chi, Yeh, and Yang, (2009), customers' propensity to buy is significantly influenced by celebrities. Dodds et al. (1991), found that consumers' purchase intentions can predict the likelihood that they would actually acquire a product or service. Timely analysis of the relevant literature (Zeithaml 1988, Dodds et al., 1991;) reveals that consumers' intent to buy is influenced by their past experiences, preferences, and the external environment.

According to Shukre and Dugar (2013), one of the most common strategies used in fast-moving consumer goods (FMCG) is celebrity endorsement. When consumers are in the midst of making a purchase, marketers rely on celebrity endorsements to help them remember the brand. The authors concluded that endorsements from famous people are becoming increasingly common. Image, style, attitude, popularity, physical attractiveness, performance, product compatibility, and so on are some of the significant aspects of celebrity endorsement that the authors outlined. Because it is a significant consideration for the customer, marketers should pay attention to the gender of the celebrity promoting the product. Currently, advertising is the most effective means of informing consumers. A study by Chi, Yeh, and Yang, (2009) found that advertising endorsers, such as celebrities, can influence customers' purchase

intentions through mediating effects. According to the research of Goldsmith et al. (2000), the trustworthiness of celebrities directly affects customer reactions, which in turn influence their purchase intentions. Companies with a global reach are increasingly enlisting the help of famous people to promote their wares in hopes that the public will take notice and make a purchase (Randhawa & Khan, 2014). Wei and Wu (2013) found that when a celebrity is interesting and beautiful, individuals are more likely to behave positively toward endorsement. Having a beautiful and well-looking endorser will automatically make consumers feel good about the endorsement. A large portion of the target audience believed that seeing their favorite celebrity in an advertisement would raise the profile of the advertised brand and encourage more people to make a purchase.

Using a famous person in an advertisement boosts consumers' trust in the product and their propensity to buy, according to research by Chan et al. (2013). A study conducted by Balakrishnan and Kumar (2011) found that when celebrities advocate products, it improves the product information and raises customer awareness. On top of that, people think it will help them remember product names, which is huge for their propensity to buy. Once used as a means of dissemination of information, celebrity endorsements today serve as powerful persuasive forces in the purchasing decisions of the general public.

Radha and Jija (2013) looked at how celebrity endorsements affect consumers' buying decisions. The findings indicate that most respondents consider product quality to be the paramount factor in purchasing decisions. When celebrities promote a product, consumers are more likely to recognize it. When asked whether they would buy the product if their favorite celebrity was commercial, most people said yes. According to Kumar and Velavan (2014), students' inclinations to buy cold drinks are influenced by celebrity endorsement.

According to Hayat (2014), the employment of celebrities in marketing influences consumer decision-making. A customer's purchasing choice is significantly impacted by celebrity endorsements and similar considerations. In order to get a large portion of the market, marketers might use well-known celebrities. There may be a favorable correlation between celebrity endorsement and brand acceptability, according to the study. Researchers Turley and Shannon (2000) discovered a significant correlation between the frequency of ads exposure, purchase intention, recollection, and actual buying behavior when they examined the impact of celebrity endorsements on purchase intention. Furthermore, the study discovered that both recall and purchasing behavior are significantly affected by repeated exposure. People are more likely to listen to recommendations from people they trust because they believe these

people have more information about the product. This, in turn, increases the likelihood that consumers will make good purchasing decisions. When people trust an authoritative figure or organization, they are more likely to believe what they say about products and services. According to Escalas and Bettman (2009), this leads to an optimistic view of brands. Positive attitudes and inclinations to buy are stimulated when there is a great degree of resemblance between the endorsers' personalities and the qualities of the recommended brands. People try to draw connections between the characteristics of the advertised brand and those of the celebrities portrayed in the ads. Customers will have a favorable impression of a brand if they can identify with its endorsers' character quirks. According to Fleck, Korchia, and Le Roy (2012), when consumers perceive a mismatch between the personality features of the endorsers and the attributes of the brand, it leads to confusion in the commercial and weakens their purchase intentions.

There is a robust association between the perceived product match-up, the efficacy of advertisements, and consumers' inclination to purchase, according to many studies (Abirami & Krishnan, 2015; Escalas & Bettman, 2009; Mishra, Roy, & Bailey, 2015). Consumers, conversely, tend to draw parallels between the endorsers' personalities and their own or those of people they know personally. According to Anwar and Jalees (2017), consumers are more likely to make a purchase after seeing a favorable comparison. Strong brands are associated with higher levels of brand awareness, which in turn influences consumers' propensity to make a purchase, according to Macdonald and Sharp (2000). While their research did find a weak link between celebrity endorsements and the intent to buy, it did find that these endorsements had a favorable influence on consumers' intentions to buy, suggesting that celebrities may be a useful marketing tool for brands. A study by Pugazhenthii and Ravindran (2013) revealed that consumers are captivated by celebrities. The objective of a celebrity endorsement is to enhance a product's popularity for improved recognition. The presence of these celebrities makes the product more memorable to consumers. When doing right, celebrity endorsement helps the company stand out and gets people notice it right away. A customer's purchasing choice is significantly impacted by celebrity endorsements and similar considerations. In order to get a large portion of the market, marketers might use well-known celebrities.

This study seeks to examine the influence of celebrity endorsement on the purchasing motive, in accordance with prior research and theoretical grounds. Derived from the aforementioned literature, the subsequent study question and hypotheses have been formulated.

Research question

How does perceived quality mediate the association between brand equity components (brand awareness, brand association, celebrity endorsement, and packaging) and consumer purchase intentions for shampoo products in Chattogram Metropolitan City?

Hypothesis 1

Null Hypothesis 1 (H_0): Perceived quality does not serve as a mediator in the association between brand awareness and the purchase intention.

Alternative Hypothesis 1 (H_1): Perceived quality serves as a mediator in the association between brand awareness and purchase intention.

Hypothesis 2

Null Hypothesis 2 (H_0): Perceived quality does not serve as a mediator in the association between brand association and purchase intention.

Alternative Hypothesis 2 (H_1): Perceived quality serves as a mediator in the association between brand association and purchase intention.

Hypothesis 3

Null Hypothesis 3 (H_0): Perceived quality does not serve as a mediator in the association between celebrity endorsements and purchase intention.

Alternative Hypothesis 3 (H_1): Perceived quality serves as a mediator in the association between celebrity endorsement and purchase intention.

Hypothesis 4

Null Hypothesis 4 (H_0): Perceived quality does not serve as a mediator in the association between packaging and purchase intentions.

Alternative Hypothesis 4 (H_1): Perceived quality serves as a mediator in the association between packaging and purchase intention.

Methodology

The study examines the mediating role of perceived quality in the association between brand equity components (brand awareness, brand association, celebrity endorsement, and packaging) and consumer purchase intention for shampoo products in Chattogram Metropolitan City. The present research is quantitative and explanatory, aiming to examine causal relationships and mediation effects using structural equation modeling (SEM). The target population comprises consumers of shampoo products residing in Chattogram Metropolitan City, Bangladesh. The sample frame includes individuals familiar with the selected brands and willing to participate in the study. A purposive sampling technique was employed to ensure responses from relevant consumers. Data were collected from 375 respondents between January and March 2024. The study primarily uses primary data collected through a structured questionnaire. The secondary data were sourced from previous studies,

journal articles, and brand-related literature to validate the conceptual framework. A closed-ended questionnaire based on a five-point Likert scale (1= Strongly Disagree, 5= Strongly Agree) was designed to measure key variables. The instrument was piloted with 10 experienced respondents and revised based on feedback. The following Table I shows the items for each of the variables selected from previous studies.

Table I

Survey questionnaire of construction to measure observed variable

Sl. Variable Name	Items	References
1. Brand Awareness	1) "I am aware of this brand". 2) "I am familiar of this brand". 3) "I can recognize this brand among other competing brands". 4) "I can quickly recall the symbol or logo of this brand". 5) "When I think of this product category, this brand is among the first brand that come to my mind".	Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000); Buil, Martinez and de Chernatony (2013),
2. Brand Association	1) "I can quickly recall some characteristics of this brand". 2) "This brand has a unique brand image compared to competing brands". 3) "I like the brand image of this brand". 4) "This brand provides a high value in relation to the price we pay for it". 5) "I like and trust the company which makes this brand". 6) "Features of this brand can fulfill my need".	Yoo, Donthu, and Lee (2000); Tong and Hawley (2009).
3. Celebrity Endorsement	1) "Brands endorsed by celebrities draw my attention easily". 2) "Brands endorsed by celebrities easily come to mind whenever I have to make a purchase". 3) "If my favorite celebrity endorsed a brand, I will buy it no matter what". 4) "Brands endorsed by celebrities are of very high quality". 5) "Brands endorsed by celebrities offer excellent features". 6) "Brands endorsed by celebrities are of very reliable".	Osei-Frimpong, Donkor and Owusu-Frimpong (2019)
4. Packaging	1) "When I buy Shampoo product, the packaging color is what first catches my attention". 2) "The attractive design of packaging of this brand influence my purchase motive". 3) "I prefer to buy this brand because	Gómez, Martín-Consuegra and Molina (2015)

Sl. Variable Name	Items	References
	of its easy to open and close packaging system”.	
	4) “The information elements in packaging of this brand help me to make right decision for product purchase”.	
	5) “The location of the information regarding this brand in packaging helps my purchasing decision”.	
5. Perceived Quality	1) “It is likely that this brand is of very high quality”.	
	2) “The likelihood that this brand would be functional is very high”.	
	3) “It is likely that this brand is very reliable”.	Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000);
	4) “It is likely that this brand is of very consistent quality”.	Tong and Hawley (2009).
	5) “I trust the quality of this brand”.	
	6) “It is likely that this brand offers excellent features”.	
6. Purchase Motive	1) “It is very likely that I would buy this brand”.	
	2) “I would buy this brand rather than any other brands available”.	Yoo, Donthu and Lee (2000);
	3) “I intend to purchase this brand in the future”.	Erdem, Swait, and Valenzuela (2006);
	4) “This brand would be my first choice when considering this product category”.	Netemeyer et al. (2004); Tong and Hawley (2009).

In order to get important feedback from clients in Chattogram Metropolitan City, Bangladesh, the completed questionnaire was sent to 400 individuals using purposive sampling strategy. The participants were contacted via email, WhatsApp, on hand-to-hand delivery. The final tally after screening and cleaning is 375 respondent opinions (since some respondents gave the same rating to every question and others did not answer many). Microsoft Excel 2016, IBM SPSS Statistics 26, and IBM SPSS AMOS 22 were used for additional analysis of the final data set. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the respondents’ demographics, normality tests were conducted via Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests. Factor analysis and Principal Components Analysis (PCA) were used to classify the variables into six factors which were validated using Cronbac’s Alpha, Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) was used to determine the factor structure, and SEM was applied to assess the mediating effects. Model validity was evaluated via the Chi-square/df, CFI, IFI, TLI, NFI, RFI, and RMSEA fit indices.

Figure 1 shows the finalized conceptual model, which includes brand awareness, brand association, celebrity endorsement, and packaging as

exogenous variables, purchase motive as endogenous variables, and perceived quality as a mediator.

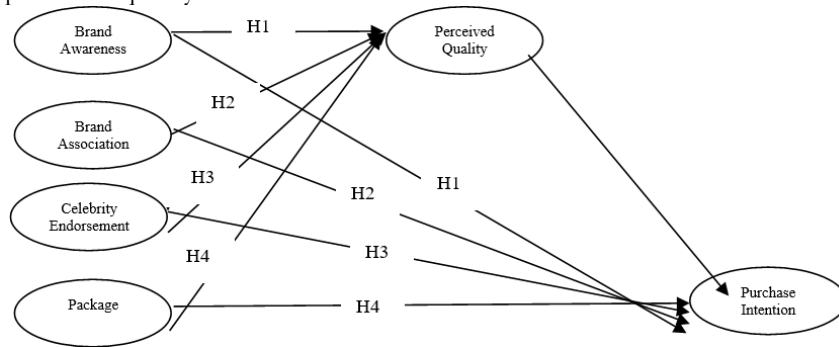


Figure 1
Purchase motivation conceptual model

After that, the factors are identified and validated using Cronbach's alpha value through the development of the CFA. Lastly, given the chosen buy incentive model, we compute the average variance expected (AVE) to test convergent validity, the maximum shared variance (MSV) to test discriminant validity, and model validity. The study tests the hypothesis when the structural equation model (SEM) is finalized.

Results

Descriptive statistics of the respondents

Of the total sample, 242 (64.5%) were men and 133 (35.5%) were women. Of them, 262 (69.9%) were from Sun Silk, 40 (10.7%) were from Pantene Prov, 24 (6.4%) were from Head & Shoulders, and 35 (9.3%) were from Clinic Plus.

Table II displays the descriptive statistics and normality test results for the following variables: brand awareness, brand association, product packaging, perceived quality, and purchase motive, as reported by the respondents.

Table II
Results of the normality test and descriptive statistics for the responses

Sl. No.	Questionnaire	Variable name	N	Min	Max	Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test (Sig)	Shapiro–Wilk Test (Sig)	Median
1. Brand Awareness								
1(a)	I am aware of this brand.	BAwar1	375	4	5	0.406 (0.000)	0.613 (0.000)	5
1(b)	I am familiar of this brand.	BAwar2	375	4	5	0.394 (0.000)	0.621 (0.000)	5
1(c)	Even among similar brands, I can tell this one apart.	BAwar3	375	4	5	0.391 (0.000)	0.623 (0.000)	5

Sl. No.	Questionnaire	Variable name	N	Min	Max	Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test (Sig)	Shapiro–Wilk Test (Sig)	Median
1(d)	The logo or emblem of this brand is easy for me to remember.	BAwar4	375	4	5	0.376 (0.000)	0.630 (0.000)	5
1(e)	This is one of the first brands that springs to mind whenever I consider this category of products.	BAwar5	375	4	5	0.405 (0.000)	0.614 (0.000)	5
2. Brand Association								
2(a)	I can quickly recall some characteristics of this brand.	BAAssos1	375	3	5	0.344 (0.000)	0.687 (0.000)	5
2(b)	This brand has a unique brand image compared to competing brands.	BAAssos2	375	4	5	0.347 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	5
2(c)	I like the brand image of this brand.	BAAssos3	375	4	5	0.351 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	5
2(d)	When weighed against the cost, this brand delivers excellent value.	BAAssos4	375	4	5	0.344 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	4
2(e)	The company behind this brand is one that I appreciate and have faith in.	BAAssos5	375	4	5	0.384 (0.000)	0.626 (0.000)	5
2(f)	This brand has the qualities I'm looking for.	BAAssos6	375	4	5	0.351 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	5
3. Celebrity Endorsement								
3(a)	I find it quite easy to pay attention to brands that celebrities advocate.	CelebEnd1	375	1	5	0.284 (0.000)	0.689 (0.000)	4
3(b)	Whenever I need to buy something, I immediately think about brands that celebrities have supported.	CelebEnd2	375	1	5	0.294 (0.000)	0.690 (0.000)	4
3(c)	I will purchase a product without hesitation if it is promoted by my beloved celebrity.	CelebEnd3	375	1	5	0.294 (0.000)	0.693 (0.000)	4
3(d)	You can trust that the brands that celebs recommend are top-notch.	CelebEnd4	375	1	5	0.304 (0.000)	0.685 (0.000)	5
3(e)	Great features are offered by brands that celebrities advocate.	CelebEnd5	375	1	5	0.303 (0.000)	0.681 (0.000)	5
3(f)	People put a lot of faith in brands that celebrities promote.	CelebEnd6	375	1	5	0.295 (0.000)	0.684 (0.000)	4
4. Packaging								
4(a)	When I buy Shampoo product, the packaging color is what first catches my attention.	Pack1	375	4	5	0.362 (0.000)	0.634 (0.000)	5
4(b)	The attractive design of	Pack2	375	4	5	0.342 (0.000)	0.637	5

Sl. No.	Questionnaire	Variable name	N	Min	Max	Kolmogorov–Smirnov Test (Sig)	Shapiro–Wilk Test (Sig)	Median
	packaging of this brand influence my purchase motive.						(0.000)	
4(c)	I prefer to buy this brand because of its easy to open and close packaging system.	Pack3	375	4	5	0.351 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	5
4(d)	The information elements in packaging of this brand help me to make right decision for product purchase.	Pack4	375	4	5	0.350 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	5
4(e)	The location of the information regarding this brand in packaging helps my purchasing decision.	Pack5	375	4	5	0.342 (0.000)	0.637 (0.000)	4
5.	Perceived Quality							
5(a)	It is likely that this brand is of very high quality.	PQuality1	375	4	5	0.342 (0.000)	0.637 (0.000)	5
5(b)	The likelihood that this brand would be functional is very high.	PQuality2	375	3	5	0.361 (0.000)	0.647 (0.000)	4
5(c)	It is likely that this brand is very reliable.	PQuality3	375	4	5	0.358 (0.000)	0.635 (0.000)	4
5(d)	It is likely that this brand is of very consistent quality.	PQuality4	375	4	5	0.353 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	4
5(e)	I trust the quality of this brand.	PQuality5	375	4	5	0.355 (0.000)	0.635 (0.000)	5
5(f)	It is likely that this brand offers excellent features.	PQuality6	375	4	5	0.347 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	5
6.	Purchase Motive							
6(a)	This brand is definitely one that I would purchase.	PMotive1	375	4	5	0.349 (0.000)	0.636 (0.000)	5
6(b)	This brand is the only one I would consider buying.	PMotive2	375	4	5	0.361 (0.000)	0.634 (0.000)	5
6(c)	This is a brand that I will be buying again.	PMotive3	375	4	5	0.366 (0.000)	0.633 (0.000)	5
6(d)	If I were to buy this type of goods, this brand would be at the top of my list.	PMotive4	375	3	5	0.383 (0.000)	0.638 (0.000)	5

Source: Calculated from the survey data

The answer variables for brand recognition, brand association, celebrity endorsement, packaging, perceived quality, and purchase incentives range from 4 to 5 on a five-point Likert scale, with 4 being the lowest and 5 the highest. Brand awareness (0.376 to 0.406) and brand association (0.344 to 0.384) and celebrity endorsement (0.284 to 0.304 and 0.681 to 0.690) and packaging (0.342 to 0.362 and 0.634 to 0.637) and perceived quality (0.342 to 0.361 and 0.635 to 0.647) and purchase motivation (0.349 to 0.383 and 0.633 to 0.638) were all determined at the 0.000 significance level by the

Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, respectively. As a result, the nonparametric test takes the median values into account for mean rank comparison when the survey answer values do not follow a normal distribution. Brand recognition has a median score of 5, brand association has a range of 4–5, packaging has a range of 4–5, perceived quality has a range of 2–5, and purchase motivation has a range of 5.

Factor analysis

With a p-value of 0.000, the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy in component analysis is 0.931. Consequently, we may use the factor analysis approach to categorize the values of the questionnaire responses into several categories (Table 3). The Factor loadings for the following categories of survey responses range from 0.718 to 0.844, for "celebrity endorsement" from 0.906 to 0.935, for "perceived quality" from 0.722 to 0.796, for "brand association" from 0.775 to 0.851, for "brand awareness" from 0.775 to 0.851, for "packaging" from 0.742 to 0.771, and for "purchase motivation" from 0.672 to 0.781. Here, every factor loading is greater than 0.400, suggesting that the measurements for each factor are very reliable.

Table III

Factor analysis, Cronbach's Alpha and Convergent Validity test result

	Rotated Component Matrix ^a						Convergent Square		
	Component						Cronbach's Validity	Root of	
	1	2	3	4	5	6	Alpha	(AVE)	of AVE
CelebEnd4	0.935						0.975	0.857	0.926
CelebEnd2	0.928								
CelebEnd5	0.926								
CelebEnd3	0.923								
CelebEnd1	0.919								
CelebEnd6	0.906								
PQuality4		0.796					0.913	0.635	0.797
PQuality2		0.780							
PQuality1		0.776							
PQuality6		0.762							
PQuality3		0.751							
PQuality5		0.722							
BAssos5			0.844				0.907	0.628	0.793
BAssos2			0.773						
BAssos6			0.766						
BAssos4			0.765						
BAssos3			0.739						
BAssos1			0.718						
BAwar5				0.851			0.919	0.697	0.835
BAwar1				0.807					
BAwar4				0.805					
BAwar3				0.799					

Rotated Component Matrix ^a							Convergent Square		
							Cronbach's	Validity	Root
Component							Alpha	(AVE)	of
	1	2	3	4	5	6		AVE	
BAwar2				0.775					
Pack1					0.771		0.892	0.622	
Pack4					0.766			0.789	
Pack2					0.764				
Pack3					0.758				
Pack5					0.742				
PMotive3						0.781	0.904	0.707	
PMotive4						0.750		0.841	
PMotive2						0.749			
PMotive1						0.672			

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.
 Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.
 Source: Calculated from the survey data

All of the component variables, including celebrity endorsement, perceived quality, brand association, brand awareness, packaging, and purchase incentives, had Cronbach's Alpha values greater than 0.7. This finding provides strong evidence that the survey's response criteria are trustworthy, accurate, and uniform. Using the results of the factor analysis as a guide, we can define the following factors: (1) Brand Awareness, which includes the following: (a) Being aware of the brand (BAwar1), (2) being familiar with the brand (BAwar2), (3) being able to recognize the brand among competing brands (BAwar3), (4) being able to quickly recall the symbol or logo of the brand (BAwar4), and (5) being one of the first brands that comes to mind when I think of this product category (BAwar5). (2) Brand Association is defined as follows: (a) I can name a few things about this brand with ease (BAssos1), (b) I perceive this brand as different from competing brands (BAssos2), (c) I like this brand's image (BAssos3), (d) the brand delivers good value for the money (BAssos4), (e) I have a positive impression of the company that makes this brand (BAssos5), and (f) the brand's features are able to meet my needs (BAssos6). (3) Brands Endorsed by celebrities are known to have the following characteristics: (a) They are more likely to catch my eye (CelebEnd1), (b) they are more likely to be the first brands I think of when I need to make a purchase (CelebEnd2), (c) I would buy a brand regardless of the price (CelebEnd3), (d) they are of high quality (CelebEnd4), (e) They have excellent features (CelebEnd5), and (f) they are very reliable (CelebEnd6). (4) Packaging is named in the following ways: (a) The color of the packaging is the first thing that grabs my eye when I see a shampoo product for sale (Pack1), (b) the appealing design of this brand's packaging influences my purchase motive (Pack2), (c) the brand's easy-to-open and close packaging system (Pack3) is a major selling

point for me, (d) the information elements on the packaging help me make an informed decision when I buy the product (Pack4), and (e) the placement of the brand's information in the packaging influences my purchase (Pack5). (5) Quality is described as follows: (a) I have faith in the quality of this brand (PQuality5), (b) I think it would work well (PQuality2), (c) I think it is reliable (PQuality3), (d) I think it is consistently good (PQuality4), (e) I think it has great features (PQuality6). (6) The following are the reasons why I would buy this brand: (a) I am highly likely to buy it (PMotive1), (b) I would choose this brand over all others (PMotive2), (c) I plan to buy this brand again (PMotive3), and (d) if I were to consider this category of products, this brand would be my first choice (PMotive4).

Figure 2 shows the structural equation model of purchase motivation that was developed using the above factor analysis results as its basis. The model includes brand awareness, brand association, celebrity endorsement, and packaging as exogenous variables and perceived quality as a mediator. The following structural equation model found statistically significant ($p < 0.05$) regression weights for the following variables: brand awareness (0.96 to 1.12), brand association (1.00 to 1.21), celebrity endorsement (0.95 to 1.01), packaging (1.00 to 1.05), perceived quality (0.97 to 1.02), and purchase motivation (1.00 to 1.13). In the model, there are significant correlations ($p < 0.05$) between brand awareness and brand association (covariance = 0.07), brand awareness and package (covariance = 0.06), brand association and package (covariance = 0.07), package and celebrity endorsement (covariance = 0.05), e24 and e26 (covariance = 0.04), and e24 and e28 (covariance = 0.02).

The chosen model for purchase motivation has the following index values: χ^2/df is 1.676, which is less than 3; the comparative fit index (CFI) is 0.970; the incremental fit index (IFI) is 0.970; the Tucker Lewis index (TLI) is 0.967; the normed fit index (NFI) is 0.929; the relative fit index (RFI) is 0.922; and the root mean square error of approximation is 0.043, which is less than 0.08. The chosen model of consumer incentives to buy is a good fit since the model index values meet all of the survey's usual criteria.

Brand awareness (0.697), brand association (0.628), celebrity endorsement (0.857), packaging (0.622), perceived quality (0.635), and purchase motivation (0.707) are the variables tested for convergent validity in the purchase motivation model (Table 2). The convergent validity of the purchase motivation model is demonstrated by the fact that all of the AVE values are higher than 0.5. Now we may compute the maximum shared variance (MSV) (Table 4) to assess the discriminant validity.

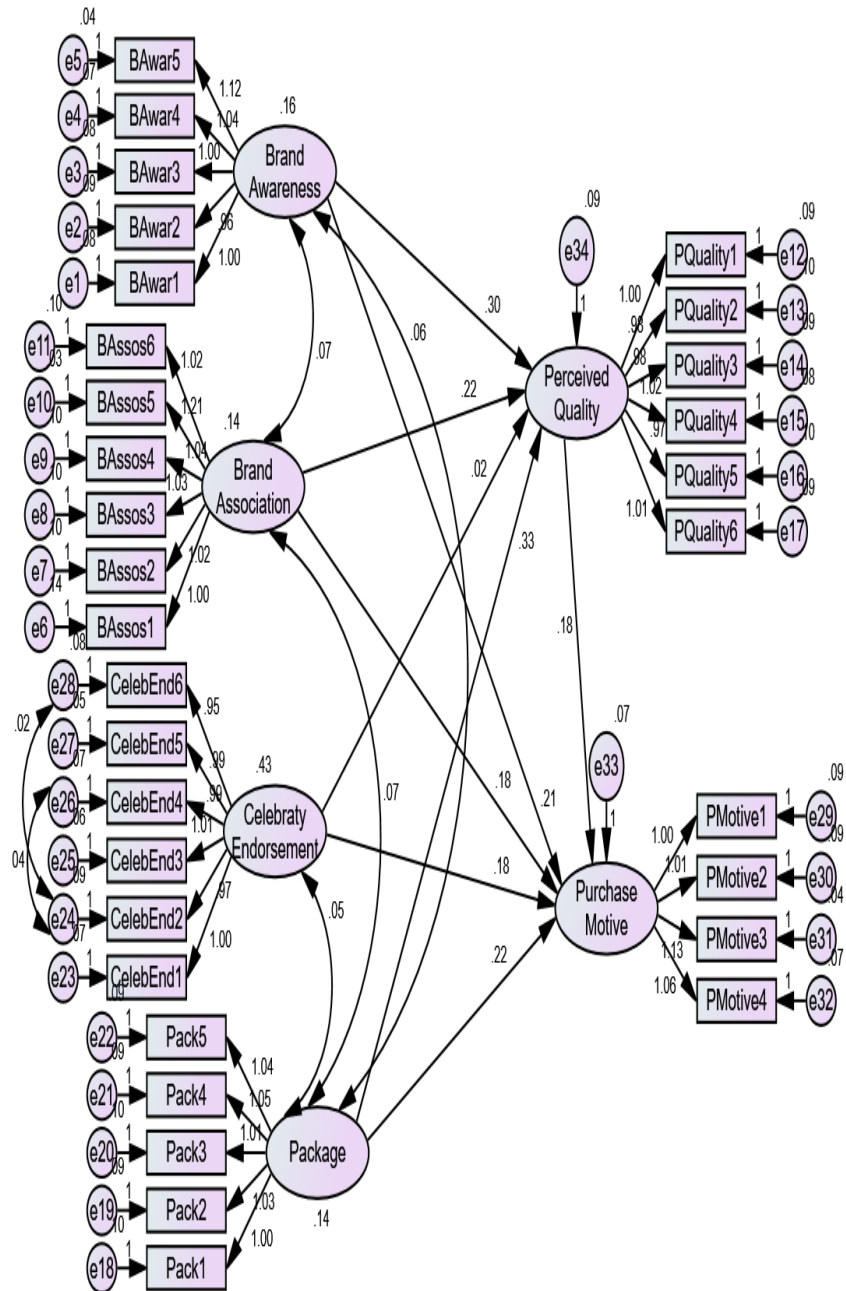


Figure 2
 Purchase motivation structure equation model
 Source: Constructed from survey data

Table IV
Discriminant validity and path coefficient result

Endogenous variable		Exogenous variable	Direct effect		Indirect effect of perceived quality		Estimate MSV (Correlation)
			Estimate	p-value	Estimate	p-value	
PMotive	<---	BAwar	0.210	***	0.053	0.003	0.538
PMotive	<---	BAssos	0.185	0.001	0.038	0.004	0.530
PMotive	<---	CeleEnd	0.183	***	0.004	0.323	0.470
PMotive	<---	Pack	0.216	***	0.059	0.003	0.578

Source: Calculated from the survey data

According to Table III, the maximum shared variance (MSV) of brand awareness and purchase motivation is 0.538, which is lower than the square root of the AVE for brand awareness (0.835) and the square root of the AVE for purchase motivation (0.841), respectively, suggesting that the item has discriminant validity. When comparing brand association (0.793) and purchase motivation (0.841), the maximum shared variance (MSV) of 0.530 was found (Table 3), which is lower than the square root of the average value (AVE) for both variables. Additionally, according to Table 3, the maximum shared variance (MSV) of celebrity endorsement and buy motivation is 0.470, which is lower than the square root of the average value (0.926) for celebrity endorsement and 0.841 for purchase motivation, respectively. In addition, according to Table 3, the maximum shared variance (MSV) of packaging and buy motivation is 0.578, which is lower than the square root of the average value expended (AVE) for packaging (0.789) and purchase motivation (0.841). Thus, achieving discriminant validity was a goal of the chosen buy motive model.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1

The structural equation model shows a direct route coefficient of 0.210 ($p < 0.000$) between brand awareness and buying motivation. Brand awareness, thus, significantly contributes directly to the motivation to buy. However, there is a 0.053 ($p = 0.003$) indirect route correlation between brand awareness and the purchase motive via perceived quality. Accordingly, there is a strong correlation between brand awareness and the desire to buy as a result of perceived quality. Perceived quality significantly contributes to the relationship between brand awareness and purchase motive, thereby rejecting null hypothesis 1 ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, in the relationship between brand awareness and the desire to buy, perceived quality acts as a partial mediator.

Hypothesis 2

A direct route coefficient of 0.185 ($p = 0.001$) from brand association to the purchasing motive is found in the structural equation model. As a

result, consumers' associations with brands significantly impact their propensity to buy. The brand linkage-to-buy motive through perceived quality has an indirect route coefficient of 0.038 ($p = 0.004$). So, in the link between brand and purchase motivation, perceived quality is a major factor. Since the p -value is less than 0.05, we may reject null hypothesis 2 and conclude that perceived quality significantly contributes to the relationship between brand and purchase motivation. As a result, there is a partial mediating effect of perceived quality on the relationship between brand association and purchase motive.

Hypothesis 3

The structural equation model reveals a direct route coefficient of 0.183 ($p < 0.000$), connecting celebrity endorsement to the purchase motivation. Thus, there is a robust relationship between the urge to purchase and endorsement from famous people. On the other hand, the indirect route coefficient of the purchase motive via perceived quality associated with celebrity endorsements is 0.004 ($p = 0.323$). Thus, when a famous person supports a product, perceived quality is not a major factor in the decision to purchase. Hence, we cannot reject null hypothesis 3 because the p -value is bigger than 0.05. Perceived quality does not play a considerable role in the link between celebrity endorsement and purchase motivation. Thus, perceived quality does not buffer the relationship between celebrity endorsement and purchase motivation.

Hypothesis 4

The direct route coefficient of the packing to buy motive in the structural equation model is 0.216 ($p < 0.000$). Thus, packaging has a direct and substantial impact on consumer motivation to buy. On the other hand, there is a 0.059 ($p = 0.003$) indirect route coefficient between the packaging motive and purchase motive via perceived quality. Thus, the packaging's perceived quality significantly contributes to the purchasing motive. Therefore, because the p -value is less than 0.05, we may reject null hypothesis 4 and conclude that perceived quality significantly contributes to the packaging's ability to motivate purchase. Therefore, in the packaging to purchase motivation process, perceived quality partially mediates.

The findings provide useful insights for both theory and practice. From a strategic standpoint, brands should focus on investing in building awareness and enhancing their packaging design, as these factors strongly influence purchase intentions. Interestingly, the limited effectiveness of celebrity endorsements points to a need for more genuine brand ambassador strategies. On a theoretical level, these results suggest that we should broaden traditional consumer behavior models to better capture how quality perception works in the fast-moving consumer goods sector.

For managers, this study emphasizes the importance of clearly communicating quality through product labels, certifications, and in-store demonstrations. Additionally, the findings reveal that local brands have a chance to compete with multinational companies by tapping into cultural relevance and heritage stories in their branding efforts.

Direction for future research

There are a few promising opportunities for further research in which the study's findings address consumer behavior in FMCGs in emerging economies. Other product categories could also be analyzed to check the applicability of the perceived quality mediation effect to broaden the scope of this study. Cross-cultural comparative research would aid in establishing testament branding principles which are global from those which are specific to the market. The increasing importance of social media marketing and marketing on e-commerce websites begs the question of how such platforms alter the perception of quality in comparison with traditional forms of marketing and therefore warrant further research. Tracking changes to a particular branding strategy over time would be useful in understanding the changing perceptions of consumers over time. Furthermore, the application of neuroscientific methods could assess consumers' responses toward self-branding and provide measures devoid of subjective interpretation. The influence of the sustainability of a product and its eco-friendly packaging on perceived quality also needs to be investigated, particularly in the context of consumers, who are environmental advocates.

Conclusion and recommendations

Perceived branding quality mediates the relationship between fast-moving consumer goods (shampoo products) buying motivation, brand awareness, brand association, celebrity endorsement, and packaging variables. According to the findings, there is a partial mediating impact of perceived quality on the relationships among brand awareness, brand association, packaging, and buying motivation. In the relationship between celebrity endorsement and buying motivation, however, perceived quality does not mediate. Marketers may use the study's results to their advantage by developing targeted strategies to meet client needs in the shampoo industry to increase the sales. The study result may also apply to other fast-moving consumer goods. Further study may be conducted with other brand equality and other consumer goods.

This research brings to light some practical recommendations. First, brands should really hone in on creating memorable marketing campaigns that boost brand awareness, along with packaging that is not just functional but also visually appealing. When it comes to celebrity

endorsements, brands need to think carefully—it is all about finding authentic alignments with products rather than just chasing popularity. On the regulatory side, policymakers can step up consumer protection by establishing clearer rules around product quality claims. For researchers, using mixed-methods approaches can provide richer insights into how people perceive quality. Local brands have a unique advantage with their cultural insights, allowing them to craft stories that resonate deeply, while international brands should strive to find a balance between maintaining global consistency and adapting to local markets. Lastly, all players in the market should prioritize consumer education initiatives that clearly communicate product quality and value, utilizing both traditional and digital channels effectively.

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