

**BRAND NAME AND PRICE PERCEPTION AS
CORRELATES OF ONLINE PURCHASE INTENTIONS
AMONG UNDERGRADUATES OF NNAMDI AZIKIWE
UNIVERSITY, AWKA**

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ABSTRACT: This study examined brand name and price as correlates of online purchase intentions among undergraduates at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. A total of 200 participants consisting of 108 females and 92 males participated in this study. The participants ranged from 18 to 29 years, with a mean age of 21.30 years and standard deviation of 2.63 years. Three self-report survey instruments were utilized for the study: the brand name scale by Yee and Yahyah (2008), the price perception scale by Sanchez et al., (2006) and the online purchase intentions by Zarrad and Dababi (2012). A correlational design was adopted for the study, while the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient was used for data analysis. Two hypotheses were tested and the results showed that both brand name and perceived price had a positive significant relationship with online purchase intentions. Based on the findings of this study, the researchers, therefore, recommend that marketers and business owners to focus on competitive pricing strategies.

Keywords: Brand Name, Price Perception, Online Purchase Intentions, Undergraduates

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of internet technologies led to the emergence of e-commerce in businesses which has been on increased over the past ten years. The benefits of e-commerce include reducing costs, increasing business opportunities, reducing lead time and providing a more personalized services to the consumers (Singh, et al., 2018). Electronic commerce is a process of purchasing, selling, transferring, saving, or exchanging products, services, or information via computer networks, including the internet (Omotayo & Omotope, 2018, Ezeanya et al., 2023).

Scholars have offered different definitions of online purchasing, also known as internet shopping, electronic shopping, or internet buying. Rahman (2018) defined online purchasing as an exchange of time, effort and money for receiving products or services through the internet. For Olasanmi (2019), online shopping is the process of examining, searching for, browsing for or looking at a product to obtain more information with the possible intention of purchasing on the internet. Online purchasing today serves as an alternative to traditional shopping inconveniences of battling crowds, standing in long checkout lines and fighting for parking spaces at the shopping mall. Muhammed, et al., (2023) observed that customers are now able to compare the available products and their prices from different outlets through the internet without spending much time searching.

Interestingly, the internet is rapidly penetrating the Nigerian business environment. Online shopping is now a modern means of trading that is pervading every marketing activity among Nigerians (Okoye et al., 2021). Social media invention has further made consumer purchasing processes easier as consumers can now start and complete their transaction from anywhere and at any time (Bereprebofa et al., 2022). However, Nwakaji and Goh (2021) observed that despite the increase in internet adoption and its usage in Nigeria, online shopping is still low in some parts of Nigeria. In this regard, investigating the underlying factors that influence consumers' decisions to accept online purchasing is crucial. On this basis, this research considered the associations between brand name and price perception and online purchase intentions in Nigeria.

The brand name is regarded as an essential part of the brand and the foundation for making purchase decisions (Muhammed, et al., 2023). Brand names not only help identify the products but also acquire a rich set of symbols and meanings embodied by-products (Muljani, & Koesworo, 2019). Brand name creates value and quality in the minds of consumers, which greatly influences their decisions (Balatsou & Dimitriadis, 2020). It also refers to the reputation, recognition, and overall perception that consumers associate with a particular brand (Udonde & Etuk, 2024). It embodies various aspects such as brand image, brand loyalty, and brand equity, which significantly impact consumers' preferences and purchase intentions (Siddiqui, et al., 2021). Marketing practices, as well as theoretical and empirical research, have suggested that good brand names are easier to remember and recall (Mramba, 2015).

Price perception represents the monetary value assigned to a product or service, which often serves as a primary consideration for consumers when making purchase decisions, and the price is set at a level that indicates the perceived value agreement between the producer and the purchaser (Santoso, et al., 2019). The price is set by balancing many factors, including supply and demand, cost, desired profit, competition, perceived value, and what the market is willing to exchange for the product (Kusdiyah, 2012). For Santana (2011), price is what is given up or sacrificed to obtain a product or service. Bei and Chiao (2001) indicated that the price is defined as what is given up or sacrificed to acquire a service or product.

Price is the amount of money charged for a product or a service. Research has been established that the decision to purchase, to a large extent, depends on the perceived price of a product or service (Danes, et al., 2012). In most cases, individuals tend to match the price of a product to the perceived value of the product to determine whether the price is fair and this helps in making decisions to buy or not. The fairness of the price will influence individuals' willingness to purchase a product or service whether online or offline (Kusdiyah, 2012).

However, while previous research has explored the impact of brand name and price on consumer behaviour, there is a gap in understanding how these factors are specifically related to online purchase intentions among university undergraduates. This study aims to address this gap by examining the relationship between brand name and price as correlates of online purchase intentions among young university undergraduates.

Theoretical Framework

The theory of planned behaviour (TPB) is utilized as the theoretical framework in this research study, which examines the correlation between brand name and price and online purchase intentions among university undergraduates. TPB is a psychological theory that suggests that human behaviour is determined by three factors: attitude toward the behaviour, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control (Ajzen, 1991). Attitude toward the behaviour in the context of online purchase intentions, refers to an individual's positive or negative evaluation of purchasing products online based on brand name and price (Assali, 2016). Undergraduates may have different attitudes towards online shopping based on their past experiences, trust in online retailers, and perceived value of brand name and price. If they have a positive attitude towards online shopping and believe that brand name and price are important factors, they are more likely to have greater purchase intentions. Subjective norms refer to an individual's perception of social pressure to engage or not engage in a certain behaviour. With respect to online purchase intentions, undergraduates may be influenced by the opinions and recommendations of their peers, family members, or online influencers. If their social network values brand name and price as important factors in online purchases, they are more likely to develop greater purchase intentions themselves. Perceived behavioural control refers to an individual's belief in his or her ability to perform a behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980). In the context of online purchase intentions, undergraduates may consider their knowledge about brands, pricing strategies, and their ability to navigate online platforms as factors influencing their perceived control over their behaviour (Aggarwal & Rahul, 2018). This simply means that if they feel confident in their ability to make informed decisions based on brand name and price, then they are more likely to have greater purchase intentions.

METHOD

Participants

A total of two hundred students from Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, participated in the study. The participants included 92 male students (46.0%) and 108 female students (54.0%). The age range of the participants was 18 to 29 years, with a mean of 21.30 years and a standard deviation of 2.63 years. The participants were selected using a simple random sampling technique. The participants were selected from the faculties of social sciences, arts, biosciences, and law (100 to 500 levels).

Instruments

The brand name scale (BNS) was developed by Yee and Yahyah (2008). The scale measures consumer brand loyalty. It consists of three items that are measured by a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each of the statements on the scale. The higher the score is, the greater the brand loyalty level. It has a test-retest reliability of 0.73 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84.

The price perception scale (PPS) was developed by Sanchez et al. (2006). The scale measures consumer price perception risks. It consists of three items that are measured by a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree with each of the statements on the scale. The

higher the score is, the greater the brand loyalty level. It has a test-retest reliability of 0.65 and a Cronbach's alpha of 0.72.

The online purchase intention scale (OPIS) was developed by Zarrad and Dababi (2012). The scale measures consumer decision to purchase products online. It consists of four items that are measured by a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree (5) to strongly disagree (1). The participants were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each of the statements on the scale. The higher the score is, the greater the online purchase intentions. It has a test-retest reliability of 0.88 and Cronbach's alpha of 0.92.

Procedures

The researcher administered copies of the questionnaire to undergraduate students in the social sciences, arts, biosciences, and law faculties with the help of two trained research assistants. The researcher used a direct delivery method to administer the questionnaire to the students. The questionnaire was collected immediately after completion. For research instrument administration, appropriate research ethical research guidelines were followed. In this regard, the researcher engaged with participants to obtain their consent to participate in the study. All the information accessed from the participants was treated with maximum confidentiality. They were also informed that the findings of the study would be published in a journal. The questionnaires given out to each participant were monitored and obtained immediately after the participants had completed them. The data collection spanned a two-week period. The questionnaire was collected immediately after completion. Questionnaires that were inadequately completed were discarded, while 200 correctly completed questionnaires were retained for data analysis.

Design and Statistics

This study utilized a correlational design, and the Pearson-product moment correlation coefficient was used for statistical analysis.

RESULTS

The results of the statistical analysis of brand name and price as correlates of online purchase intentions among undergraduate students at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Table 1: Correlations among the variables Brand Name, Price and Online Purchase Intentions

	1	2	3
Online Purchase Intentions	1		
Brand Name	.11*	1	
Price	.21**	-.02	1

Note: **. The correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table reveals that there is a positive and significant relationship between brand name and online purchase intentions ($r = .11, p < .05$). There was also a significant positive relationship between price and online purchase intentions ($r = .21, P < .01$). This suggests that the price of a product is likely to determine undergraduates' decision to make online purchases. As the

price of a product increases, online purchase intentions also tend to increase among this group. Moreover, there was no significant relationship between brand name and price ($r = -.02$, $p > .05$).

DISCUSSION

This research considered the associations between brand name, price perception and online purchase intentions among university undergraduates. The purpose of this study was to determine the extent at which brand name and price perception associate with consumer online purchase intention.

The research findings showed that brand name was positively and significantly correlated with online purchase intentions among university undergraduate. This is in line with the study conducted by Santoso et al (2019) on factors influencing online purchase intentions. The results suggested that as long as the respondents were satisfied with a particular brand, they would repurchase the product with the same brand name. This means that brand image is very important to consumers as they make decisions on which product they want to purchase. It also shows that consumers are interested on the brand name they can trust that will give quality products for their money. In this vain, consumers are more likely to purchase those brand of products they trust that will give them better quality and greater satisfaction.

The second finding showed that price perception was significantly and positively correlated with online purchase intentions among university undergraduates. This is in line with the study conducted by Ninuk and Yulius (2019) on the impact of price on purchase intentions. Additionally, the study conducted by Faryabi et al. (2012) delved into examining the impact of price discounts and store image on consumer purchase intentions in the realm of online shopping. Price was an important consideration for the average consumer. That is to say that consumers can opt for online purchase when they believe that the price of the product is reasonable and affordable. In every transaction, consumers want to get the best value for their money and on that basis, they compare prices to find the best deal. In a nutshell, consumers can only make decisions to make an online purchase when they are convinced that the cost is reasonable and affordable.

Implications of the study

The research findings showed that and brand name and price perception had a positive and significant relationships with online purchase intentions among university undergraduates. This in line with conventional assumptions about the impact of brand name and price in online consumer behaviour. This strengthens the contributions of brand name as a factor that may drive consumers' decision to engage in online shopping behaviour. Practically, the results have implications for businesses targeting university undergraduates because pricing strategies could be a more effective lever for influencing online purchase intentions than emphasizing brand names. This points to the importance of setting competitive prices and offering attractive discounts or promotions to capture the interest and purchasing behaviour of this consumer segment. Additionally, businesses may benefit from investing in understanding other factors such as product quality, convenience, and online shopping experience, which could impact purchasing decisions more significantly than brand name.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study are as follows:

1. The sample size was too small to generalize the findings to the entire population because of the high cost of reaching a larger population
2. The study focused only on the impact of brand name and price on online purchase intentions and did not consider other factors that may influence online purchase behaviour.
3. The study used self-reported data, which may be subject to social desirability bias and other limitations associated with self-reported data.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the researcher may recommend the following to marketers and business owners:

1. Marketers and business owners should understand that branding is very crucial in winning customers and in that sense, should choose the best and attractive brand for their products.
2. Marketers and business owners should focus on competitive pricing strategies. Offering attractive pricing, or discounts, could enhance online purchase intentions among university undergraduates.
3. Marketers and business owners should focus attention on brand name pricing, product quality, and customer service, as these factors play important roles in shaping online shopping experience.
4. They should explore and emphasize other influential factors that could impact online purchase intentions, such as product quality, convenience, and user experience on their online platforms.

Suggestions for further studies

To address the limitations of the study, future research should:

1. Replicate the study with a larger, more diverse sample to increase the generalizability of the findings.
2. Incorporate additional constructs that may influence online purchase intentions, such as trust, perceived value, and perceived risk.
3. Examine the influence of brand name and price on specific product categories (e.g., luxury goods, fashion, or technology).

Conclusion

This study investigated brand name and price as correlates of online purchase intentions among university undergraduates. The study revealed that among university undergraduates, brand name did not exhibit a substantial correlation with online purchase intentions. In contrast, price showed a significant and positive correlation with online purchase intentions. This suggests that for this demographic, pricing may play a more influential role in shaping online purchase intentions than to brand name does. These findings underscore the

importance of revisiting marketing strategies to emphasize competitive pricing and explore factors beyond brand name to better align with the preferences and behaviours of university undergraduates in the context of online purchasing. Further research is warranted to validate and extend these findings to other populations and settings.

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