

BRAND IMAGE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY OF DEPOSIT MONEY BANKS IN PORT HARCOURT.

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ABSTRACT

This study centered on brand image and customer loyalty of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. The correlational research design was adopted as well as census study of entire twenty-six deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. Two research questions and two hypotheses guided the study. Questionnaire was major instrument for data collection. Data collected were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was adopted in testing the hypotheses formulated with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 26. The study found and held that there is significant relationship between brand familiarity and revisit of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. There is significant relationship between brand resonance and trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt. It was therefore recommended that banks should make known their service offering using available electronic and social media and various promotional tools, striving meeting and exceeding customer expectations to satisfy customers and gain loyalty. To gain trust banks generally and deposit money banks in particular should maintain personalize customer relationship, offer needed confidences by providing security or customer privacy, with reliability, and ethical practices that promotes customer emotional attachment, loyalty and positive word-of-mouth.

Key Words: Brand image, Customer loyalty, Revisits, Trust, Deposit money banks

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The role of brand image in shaping customer loyalty has become increasingly significant in the banking industry. Deposit Money Banks (DMBs) in Port Harcourt operate in a highly competitive and dynamic environment, where customers' perception of a bank's brand significantly influences their decision to remain loyal. A strong and well-managed brand image enhances customer trust, fosters differentiation, and promotes long-term relationships (Adebayo & Oke, 2021). Given the growing competition in the financial sector, banks that invest in brand image management tend to have a higher customer retention rate and improved financial performance.

Brand image is a multidimensional construct that reflects the overall perception of an organization based on its marketing efforts, service quality, corporate social responsibility, and customer interactions (Osei & Mensah, 2020). The perception that customers hold about a bank can determine their level of trust, satisfaction, and willingness to continue patronizing its services. In the Nigerian banking sector, brand image is largely shaped by factors such as financial stability, digital banking innovations, customer service quality, and corporate reputation. Uchenna and Nwoko (2019) noted that banks that successfully

build and maintain a strong brand image enjoy greater market share and customer loyalty.

Customer loyalty is a measure of the extent to which customers remain committed to a bank despite the availability of competitive alternatives. It is often indicated by repeat patronage, positive word-of-mouth recommendations, and resistance to switching to other banks (Mensah & Agyapong, 2021). In Nigeria, fostering customer loyalty in the banking industry has become increasingly challenging due to factors such as service failures, high transaction fees, inconsistent banking policies, and the rising influence of fintech companies offering alternative financial solutions (Eze & Obiora, 2022). Despite the importance of brand image in influencing customer loyalty, many Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt struggle with maintaining a positive and consistent brand perception. Poor customer service, security breaches, reputational risks, and inadequate communication strategies have contributed to negative brand perceptions and customer dissatisfaction. It has been found that many customers in Nigeria switch banks due to perceived inefficiencies, unfavorable banking policies, and lack of customer-centric approaches (Chukwuma & Okoro, 2021). They held that banks that demonstrate transparency, offer personalized services, and engage in corporate social responsibility initiatives tend to enjoy higher levels of customer loyalty. On the other hand, banks that fail to strategically manage their brand image risk losing their competitive advantage and market share.

No doubt, effective brand image management can serve as a strategic tool for overcoming these challenges. By creating a strong and appealing brand identity, banks can enhance customer emotional attachment, build trust, and ensure long-term patronage (Adegbite & Lawal, 2020). Research suggests that customers are more likely to stay loyal to banks that align with their values and expectations (Chukwuma & Okoro, 2021). The Nigerian banking industry has witnessed several reforms aimed at enhancing operational efficiency, customer experience, and financial inclusion. However, challenges such as bank failures, fraud, poor service quality, and a lack of innovative branding strategies continue to affect customer loyalty. In response, banks need to adopt effective brand management practices that emphasize customer trust, service excellence, and innovative marketing communication strategies. According to Adebayo and Oke (2021), the integration of digital banking services, customer relationship management, and brand repositioning strategies can enhance brand perception and customer retention.

In today's digital era, social media, online reviews, and customer testimonials play a critical role in shaping brand image and influencing consumer decisions. Many customers rely on online platforms to assess the reputation and credibility of banks before making financial decisions. A strong and positive digital brand presence can, therefore, serve as a powerful tool for improving customer engagement and loyalty. Osei and Mensah (2020) emphasized that banks that actively engage with customers on digital platforms, respond to inquiries promptly, and address complaints effectively tend to experience stronger customer loyalty. Given these considerations, this study aims to examine the impact of brand image management on customer loyalty among Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt.

Statement of Problem

In today's competitive banking sector, maintaining a strong brand image is essential for fostering customer loyalty. Deposit Money Banks (DMBs) in Port Harcourt operate in an environment where customer expectations are constantly evolving, and the ability to

retain loyal customers has become increasingly challenging. Despite the efforts of banks to enhance their brand perception through marketing, service quality improvements, and digital innovations, customer attrition rates remain high, with many clients switching to competitors due to perceived service failures, trust issues, and inconsistent brand messaging (Adebayo & Oke, 2021). A major issue facing DMBs in Port Harcourt is the inconsistency in their brand image management. Some banks struggle with negative public perceptions arising from poor customer service, unethical banking practices, and reputational risks linked to fraud or financial mismanagement (Chukwuma & Okoro, 2021). These factors erode customer confidence and reduce long-term commitment to the bank. Furthermore, the rise of digital banking and fintech companies has intensified competition, making it more difficult for traditional banks to maintain a compelling brand identity that resonates with customers (Eze & Obiora, 2022).

Another challenge is the gap between customer expectations and actual service delivery. While many banks invest in advertising and branding initiatives to project a strong corporate image, the reality of customer experiences often falls short. Long wait times, inefficient complaint resolution mechanisms, and a lack of personalized customer interactions weaken the impact of brand image on customer loyalty (Mensah & Agyapong, 2021). This inconsistency leads to customer dissatisfaction, increased complaints, and ultimately, loss of market share. Customer loyalty in the banking sector is significantly influenced by trust and emotional connections. Many customers prefer to bank with institutions they perceive as financially stable, transparent, and customer-centric. However, frequent policy changes, hidden charges, and security concerns regarding online transactions have led to skepticism and reduced trust in banks (Adegbite & Lawal, 2020). Without a strong brand management strategy that aligns with customer needs and expectations, banks risk losing their competitive advantage. Given these challenges, there is a need to examine the impact of brand image management on customer loyalty among Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt.

Conceptual framework

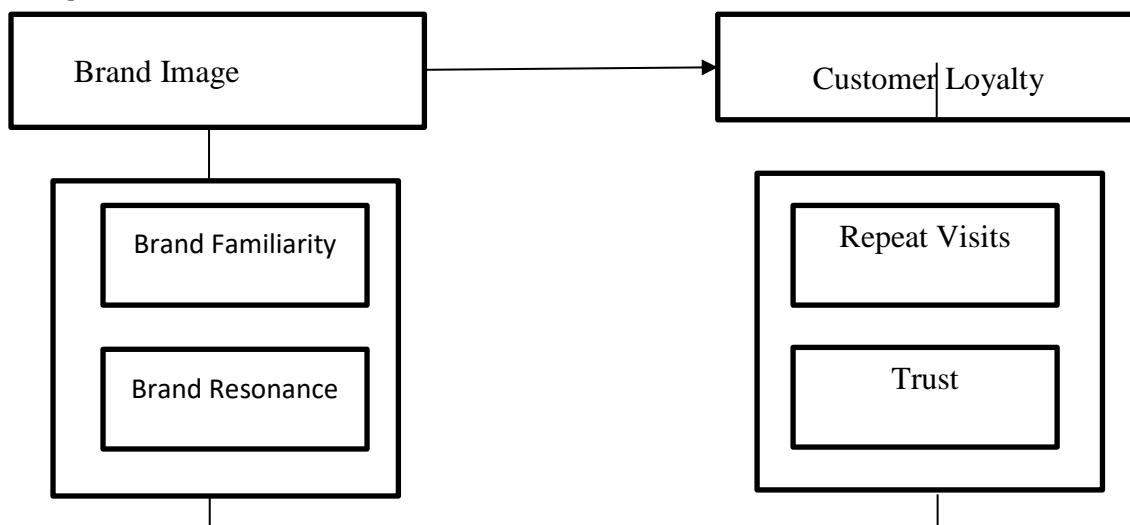


Fig 1: Conceptual frame work showing the relationship between brand image management and customer loyalty of money deposit banks in Port Harcourt.

Source: Ndubisi, N. O. (2007);

Aim and Objectives

This study aims at investigating the relationship between brand image management and customer loyalty of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt with the following specific objectives to:

1. Examine the relationship between brand familiarity and revisit of deposit money bank in Port Harcourt.
2. Examine the relationship between brand resonance and trust of deposit money bank in Port Harcourt.

Research Questions

1. How significant is brand familiarity to revisit of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt?
2. How significant is brand familiarity to trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt?

Research hypotheses

HO₁: There is no significant relationship between brand familiarity and revisit of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

HO₂: There is no significant relationship between brand resonance and trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The Concept of Brand Image Management

Brand image management is a strategic process that involves shaping and maintaining the perception of a brand in the minds of customers. It encompasses all efforts made by an organization to create a strong, positive, and consistent identity that influences customer trust, preference, and loyalty. In the banking sector, where service delivery and reputation play a crucial role in customer retention, brand image management becomes a critical aspect of sustaining long-term success. Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt operate in a highly competitive environment where customer decisions are often influenced by how they perceive a bank's reliability, credibility, and overall identity. A well-managed brand image creates a sense of assurance, making customers feel confident in their banking choices. When customers associate a bank with integrity, stability, and excellence, they are more likely to remain loyal, engage in repeat transactions, and even advocate for the brand through positive word-of-mouth.

Brand image is not simply about logos, slogans, or advertising campaigns; it is a reflection of a bank's commitment to delivering value to its customers. It is formed through direct and indirect experiences, including customer interactions, digital presence, public relations, and the general impression the brand leaves on its audience. This means that every aspect of the bank's operations, from customer service to corporate social responsibility, contributes to the way the brand is perceived. A strong brand image differentiates a bank from its competitors by creating an emotional connection with customers. In an era where financial institutions offer similar services, customers often base their loyalty on the trust and goodwill associated with a particular brand. A bank that consistently delivers on its promises fosters a deeper relationship with its customers, ensuring they choose the brand not just for its services but for the confidence and reliability it represents. Managing a brand's image requires continuous effort, as

perceptions can change over time due to internal and external factors. Negative publicity, poor service delivery, or financial instability can damage a brand's reputation, leading to a decline in customer trust and loyalty. Conversely, a well-structured brand management strategy ensures that a bank remains relevant, appealing, and reputable despite market challenges. With the rise of digital banking and increasing customer expectations, brand image management has expanded beyond traditional branding efforts. Banks in Port Harcourt must now integrate digital strategies, maintain a strong online presence, and actively engage with customers across multiple platforms to reinforce a positive perception. Effective brand management in the modern banking landscape involves responsiveness to customer needs, transparency in operations, reliable and the ability to adapt to evolving industry trends while maintaining a consistent brand identity.

Moreover, banks that fail to manage their brand image effectively may struggle to retain customers, especially in an era where customer expectations are increasingly shaped by digital interactions and personalized experiences. The presence of numerous banking alternatives means that customers can easily switch if they perceive a bank's image as weak, unreliable, or inconsistent. Therefore, banks must consistently reinforce their identity through strategic communication, excellent service delivery, and ethical business practices. Brand image management has implications beyond customer loyalty; it also affects investor confidence, regulatory compliance, and corporate sustainability. Financial institutions with strong brand images tend to attract better investment opportunities and maintain positive relationships with stakeholders. As such, Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt must recognize that their brand image is not only a reflection of their current market position but also a determinant of their future growth and expansion.

Dimensions of Brand Image Management

Brand Familiarity

Brand familiarity refers to the extent to which consumers recognize, recall, and have knowledge about a brand based on their prior experiences, marketing exposure, and interactions. It represents the level of awareness and recognition a brand holds in the minds of consumers, influencing their purchasing decisions and preferences. It covers what customer knows about quality of the bank service (Morgan, Fajardo & Townsend, 2021). In the banking sector, brand familiarity plays a crucial role in determining customer choices, as individuals tend to engage with brands they recognize and trust. For Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, brand familiarity is a significant factor in attracting and retaining customers in a highly competitive market. Customers are more likely to engage with banks they have prior knowledge of, either through advertisements, word-of-mouth recommendations, or past transactions. This familiarity reduces uncertainty, making customers more confident in their banking decisions. The more a bank maintains a visible presence, the more likely it is to be chosen by potential customers.

Brand familiarity is built over time through repeated exposure to a brand's identity, including its name, logo, services, and overall reputation. Effective marketing campaigns, customer interactions, and corporate visibility contribute to establishing a strong presence in consumers' minds. Consistency in communication, service delivery, and customer engagement helps banks reinforce familiarity and build trust among their target audience. However, mere familiarity with a brand does not always translate into customer loyalty or long-term engagement. While customers may recognize a brand, their decision to transact with it depends on the perceived value and reliability of its services. A well-known bank

that fails to meet customer expectations may struggle to convert recognition into loyalty. Therefore, banks must ensure that brand familiarity is accompanied by positive customer experiences and service excellence.

Digital banking and social media have further enhanced brand familiarity by providing banks with multiple platforms to engage with their customers. Banks that actively participate in online conversations, respond to customer inquiries, and provide valuable financial insights increase their familiarity among consumers. Through consistent branding and digital engagement, banks in Port Harcourt can establish a strong presence and attract a larger customer base. Customer referrals and positive word-of-mouth also play a crucial role in strengthening brand familiarity. Satisfied customers who share their banking experiences with others help reinforce the brand's credibility and reach. As customers continue interacting with a bank's services, they develop a deeper sense of trust, making them more likely to recommend it to friends, family, and colleagues.

However, a bank with a familiar name but a poor reputation may struggle to attract new customers. Negative publicity, inconsistent service delivery, or financial instability can tarnish a brand's image, leading to a decline in trust and patronage. To mitigate such risks, banks must maintain high service standards, exceeding customer expectations and ensuring customer satisfaction at all levels. Brand familiarity is a foundation for customer acquisition, but it must be nurtured through continuous engagement and service innovation. Banks that successfully establish and maintain a strong brand presence can leverage familiarity to build long-term relationships with their customers. Ultimately, brand familiarity is a powerful marketing asset that shapes consumer behavior and decision-making. Banks that invest in creating a recognizable and trustworthy brand position themselves for long-term success. Through effective communication, exceptional service, and continuous engagement, they can strengthen their presence and establish themselves as leading financial institutions in the industry. A well-managed brand familiarity strategy ensures that a bank remains top-of-mind for customers, increasing its market share and sales performance. By fostering a strong identity, banks can attract new customers, retain existing ones, and build a sustainable competitive advantage.

Brand Resonance

Brand resonance refers to the deep emotional connection and engagement that customers develop with a brand, leading to long-term loyalty, advocacy, and repeat patronage. It signifies a strong psychological bond where customers feel a sense of attachment, trust, and identification with the brand. In the banking sector, brand resonance is a key determinant of customer retention and overall business performance. For Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, achieving brand resonance means more than just being recognized or familiar; it involves creating meaningful experiences that drive customer commitment. When customers resonate with a brand, they perceive it as an integral part of their lives, making them less likely to switch to competitors. This deep connection fosters brand loyalty, increased patronage, and positive word-of-mouth marketing. Brand resonance develops through consistent and positive interactions between customers and a bank. These interactions include superior customer service, personalized financial solutions, and trust-building measures that enhance the customer experience. A bank that delivers on its promises, addresses customer concerns efficiently, and creates value-driven services is more likely to establish strong brand resonance.

A key factor in building brand resonance is customer satisfaction. When customers feel valued and appreciated, they develop an emotional connection with the bank, strengthening their level of commitment. This commitment translates into higher engagement, increased product adoption, and long-term customer retention, all of which contribute to business growth. The role of emotional attachment in brand resonance cannot be overlooked. Customers who feel an emotional connection with a brand are more likely to remain loyal even in the face of competitive alternatives. Banks that establish strong relationships with their customers, understand their financial needs, and provide tailored solutions enhance their brand resonance. Digital engagement has become an essential tool for reinforcing brand resonance in the modern banking industry. With online banking, mobile applications, and social media platforms, banks can maintain constant communication with customers, providing real-time solutions and personalized services. Effective digital strategies help banks strengthen customer relationships and build a loyal customer base. Banks that focus on corporate social responsibility (CSR) can also strengthen their brand resonance by demonstrating their commitment to societal well-being. Engaging in community development programs, supporting financial literacy initiatives, and promoting sustainable banking practices create a positive brand perception that resonates with customers. While brand resonance leads to customer loyalty, it also creates brand advocates who actively promote the bank through recommendations and referrals. Satisfied customers who feel emotionally connected to a bank are more likely to share their experiences with others, contributing to increased brand awareness and customer acquisition.

Customer Loyalty

Customer loyalty refers to the commitment and repeated patronage of a customer toward a brand, product, or service over an extended period. It goes beyond mere satisfaction, as loyal customers consistently choose a specific brand despite the availability of competing alternatives. In the banking sector, customer loyalty is crucial because it determines long-term business sustainability, revenue growth, and competitive advantage. A loyal customer not only continues to use the bank's services but also recommends it to others, thus increasing its customer base. For Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, customer loyalty is a key determinant of business success. The competitive nature of the banking industry requires banks to implement strategies that enhance customer retention and reduce customer attrition. With numerous banks offering similar financial services, customer loyalty becomes a critical factor in maintaining market share and achieving sales performance goals. A loyal customer is less likely to switch to another bank, even when competitors offer slightly better incentives.

Customer loyalty is built over time through consistent positive experiences, trust, and service excellence. When customers feel valued and receive reliable banking services, they develop an emotional connection with the bank. This bond strengthens their willingness to continue engaging with the bank's products and services. Factors such as personalized banking solutions, efficient service delivery, and transparent financial dealings contribute to the development of loyalty among customers. Loyalty programs and reward schemes also play a vital role in maintaining customer loyalty. Many banks implement incentive-based programs, such as discounts on banking services, cash back offers, and exclusive privileges for long-term customers. These programs make customers feel appreciated and increase their commitment to the bank. However, such programs must be designed to

provide genuine value, as customers can easily recognize superficial loyalty schemes that do not offer substantial benefits.

Revisits

Revisit refers to a customer's willingness or intention to return to a particular brand, business, or service provider after an initial engagement. In the banking sector, revisit behavior is an essential indicator of customer satisfaction, service quality, and brand preference, and when customers revisit a bank, whether physically or digitally, it signifies a positive experience and a likelihood of continued patronage. For Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, revisit behavior is crucial in assessing customer retention and long-term relationships. Banks that provide seamless banking experiences, efficient services, and personalized customer interactions encourage clients to return for future transactions. Repeated visits lead to deeper engagement with the bank's products, fostering a strong customer-brand connection. Several factors influence revisit behavior, including convenience, service reliability, and customer experience. A bank that offers quick and hassle-free transactions, whether through physical branches or digital platforms, is more likely to encourage repeat visits. Customers tend to return to banks where they have experienced professionalism, prompt service, and easy accessibility to financial solutions. Digital banking has redefined revisit behavior, making it easier for customers to engage with their banks without physically visiting a branch. Online banking platforms, mobile applications, and automated services have increased customer interactions with banks. A well-designed and user-friendly banking app, for instance, can encourage repeat usage and enhance brand loyalty. Customer satisfaction is a key determinant of revisit behavior. If a customer encounters delays, unhelpful staff, or transactional difficulties during an initial visit, they may reconsider returning to the same bank. Conversely, when customers have positive experiences, they are more inclined to revisit and engage in additional banking services, such as savings plans, loans, or investment opportunities.

To encourage revisits, banks must maintain consistency in their service delivery. A one-time excellent experience is not enough; customers need to see reliability and efficiency in every interaction. Regular engagement through email newsletters, SMS alerts, and promotional offers also reminds customers of the bank's presence, prompting them to revisit for financial services. Revisit behavior is not limited to physical visits alone. Customers who repeatedly log in to their mobile banking app, use ATMs, or contact customer support demonstrate digital revisit behavior, which is equally important in today's banking environment. Banks must optimize their digital banking platforms to ensure smooth navigation, security, and ease of transaction to encourage frequent usage. Ultimately, revisit behavior is a strong predictor of customer retention and loyalty. Banks in Port Harcourt that invest in superior service delivery, convenience, and customer engagement will experience higher revisit rates, ensuring business sustainability and competitive advantage. A bank that can repeatedly draw customers back for its services stands a greater chance of achieving long-term profitability and market relevance.

Trust

Trust is the confidence and belief that customers have in a brand, business, or service provider based on past experiences, reliability, and ethical practices. In the banking sector, trust is one of the most critical elements influencing customer decisions and long-term relationships. Without trust, customers are unlikely to entrust their finances to a

bank, regardless of its marketing strategies or product offerings. To Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, building and maintaining trust is essential for customer loyalty, brand credibility, and business sustainability. Customers rely on banks to safeguard their money, process transactions securely, and provide transparent financial services. A breach of trust, whether through hidden fees, poor customer service, or security failures, can lead to customer dissatisfaction and attrition. Trust is built over time through consistent service quality, transparency, and ethical banking practices. Customers need assurance that their funds are safe, transactions are accurate, and their personal data is protected. When a bank demonstrates reliability by delivering on its promises, customers develop confidence in its operations.

A major factor influencing trust in banking is security. With the rise of digital banking and cyber threats, customers are highly concerned about the safety of their accounts. Banks that invest in strong cybersecurity measures, fraud prevention systems, and secure authentication processes earn the trust of their customers. Any security breach, such as unauthorized transactions or data leaks, can severely damage a bank's reputation and customer confidence. Transparency is another vital component of trust. Customers expect banks to be upfront about interest rates, fees, and terms of service. Hidden charges, misleading advertisements, or unclear policies can lead to a breakdown of trust. Banks that provide clear and honest communication foster stronger relationships with their customers.

Consistency in service delivery reinforces trust. Customers are more likely to trust banks that maintain high standards of professionalism and efficiency across all branches and service channels. If a customer experiences excellent service at one branch but poor service at another, it creates doubts about the bank's reliability. The reputation of a bank in the market also affects customer trust. Banks with a history of financial stability, ethical business practices, and positive customer reviews tend to attract more trust. Conversely, banks associated with scandals, financial mismanagement, or regulatory penalties may struggle to gain customer confidence. Trust is closely linked to customer loyalty. A bank that has earned the trust of its customers is more likely to retain them in the long run. Customers who trust their bank are also more likely to recommend it to others, enhancing the bank's reputation and customer base. Corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives contribute to trust by demonstrating a bank's commitment to ethical practices and community development. Customers tend to trust banks that invest in social causes, environmental sustainability, and financial inclusion programs. Engaging in responsible banking practices reassures customers that the bank operates with integrity.

Theoretical frame work

Signaling Theory: Signaling Theory, originally introduced by Michael Spence in 1973, provides a valuable framework for understanding how organizations communicate quality and reliability to potential customers in situations where direct evaluation is challenging. In the context of Deposit Money Banks in Port Harcourt, this theory becomes particularly relevant because banking services are inherently intangible. Customers cannot easily assess the quality or reliability of a bank's services before engaging in a transaction, which makes the signals sent by the bank—through its brand image—crucial for building trust and encouraging loyalty.

According to Signaling Theory, organizations use observable cues to convey information about unobservable qualities. In the case of banks, these cues can take many forms: from

consistent, professional communication and visually appealing branding to demonstrated reliability in service delivery and positive customer testimonials. When a bank effectively manages its brand image, it sends a clear signal to the market that it is committed to quality, stability, and customer satisfaction. These signals reduce the uncertainty faced by customers, enabling them to make more informed decisions about where to place their trust and money.

In an environment where multiple banks compete for the same clientele, the role of signaling becomes even more pronounced. A strong and consistent brand image serves as a competitive advantage by differentiating one bank from another. For example, when customers in Port Harcourt encounter a bank that consistently projects reliability, professionalism, and a customer-centric approach, they are more likely to perceive that bank as a safe and dependable option. This perception is critical in a sector where financial risk and trust are paramount.

Moreover, Signaling Theory highlights the asymmetry of information between the bank and its customers. Banks are in a better position to assess their internal capabilities and service quality, but customers must rely on external signals to gauge these aspects. By investing in robust brand image management strategies—such as quality customer service, transparent communication, and an active digital presence—banks can effectively bridge this information gap. When these signals are clear and consistent, customers feel more confident in their choice and are more inclined to exhibit loyalty by revisiting and recommending the bank to others. The theory emphasizes that the strength of a signal depends on its credibility. In the banking industry, this means that superficial branding efforts that do not match the actual service experience can backfire. If a bank projects an image of reliability but fails to deliver on its promises, the signal becomes weakened, and customer trust is eroded. Thus, for Signaling Theory to work effectively in this context, there must be an alignment between the communicated brand image and the actual customer experience.

By applying Signaling Theory to the study of brand image management and customer loyalty, we see that a well-crafted brand image does not merely act as a marketing tool—it functions as an assurance mechanism. It reassures customers that the bank adheres to high standards of quality and ethics, reducing perceived risks and encouraging repeat engagement. This dynamic is essential for fostering long-term customer loyalty in an environment characterized by high competition and significant customer skepticism.

Empirical Review

Aaker (1996) conducted a study on brand equity and found that brand image significantly influences customer loyalty. His research revealed that a strong and positive brand image enhances consumer trust, leading to repeated purchases and long-term relationships with the brand. The study emphasized that companies should invest in brand positioning strategies to maintain a competitive advantage.

Keller (2013) in his study on brand resonance and consumer loyalty examined how brand image impacts customer retention. He found that brands with strong, favorable, and unique associations in customers' minds create higher levels of brand attachment and advocacy. His study concluded that consistent brand communication helps strengthen brand loyalty.

Ghazizadeh, Besheli, and Talebi (2010) studied the impact of brand image on customer satisfaction and loyalty in the banking sector. Their findings showed that a positive brand image leads to higher customer trust and commitment, which ultimately enhances customer loyalty. They suggested that organizations should focus on building emotional connections with customers to sustain loyalty.

Erdem and Swait (2004) investigated brand credibility and its effects on customer loyalty in the retail sector. Their study demonstrated that customers are more likely to remain loyal to brands that maintain consistent quality, clear messaging, and a strong reputation. They emphasized that brand image plays a key role in influencing consumer purchasing behavior.

Nguyen and LeBlanc (2001) examined the relationship between corporate image and customer loyalty in service industries. They found that a strong corporate image positively affects customer perceptions of service quality and overall satisfaction, leading to increased loyalty. Their study recommended that firms consistently align their brand image with customer expectations.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study adopted the correlational research design. The population comprised of twenty-six (26) deposit money banks operating in Port Harcourt. The information was obtained from www.pencom.gov.ng. Sequel to the population of the study census approach was adopted. The census approach enabled the researcher to study the entire population with a focus on branch manager, relationship managers, and head branch service, head non-financial and head financial. To generate data for the study, the questionnaire was distributed in the frame of five (5) copies per bank. A total of one hundred and thirty (130) respondents were used as the study subjects. The non-probability convenience sampling technique was adopted. The data collected through the questionnaire was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was adopted to test the various hypotheses formulated with the aid of statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) version 26.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Research question 1: How significant is brand familiarity to revisit of deposit money bank in Port Harcourt?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation of significance of brand familiarity to revisit of deposit money bank in Port Harcourt

S/N	Brand Familiarity	Responses					Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
	Items	SA	A	UD	D	SD			
1	I can easily recognize this brand among other competing brands.	80	31	5	9	5	4.32	1.08	Agree
2	I have a clear	73	27	8	5	17	4.03	1.40	Agree

	understanding of what this brand represents.								
3	I frequently come across this brand in advertisements and promotions.	73	25	9	6	17	4.00	1.41	Agree
4	I have been aware of this brand for a long time.	83	32	4	5	6	4.39	1.04	Agree
5	I can recall specific features of this brand without any prompts.	81	21	6	7	15	4.12	1.38	Agree
Grand mean							4.13	1.26	Agree

Source: Survey Data, 2024.

Table 1: shows that items (1 to 5) have means which were greater than the criterion mean (3.0). Moreover, the grand mean (**4.13**) was also greater than the criterion means. This established that brand familiarity significantly enhance revisit of deposit money bank in Port Harcourt.

Research Question 2: How significant is brand resonance to trust of deposit money bank in Port Harcourt?

Table 2: Mean and standard deviation of significance of brand resonance to trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

S/N	Trust Items	Responses					Mean	Standard deviation	Decision
		SA	A	UD	D	S D			
1	I believe this brand delivers on its promises.	68	32	7	9	14	4.00	1.35	agree
2	I feel safe and confident when using products/services from this brand.	77	35	11	5	2	4.38	.90	
3	This brand is transparent and honest in its dealings with customers.	81	19	14	8	8	4.20	1.22	agree
4	I trust this brand to provide consistent quality.	80	21	12	7	10	4.18	1.26	agree
5	If an issue arises, I am confident my brand will handle it fairly.	75	34	14	2	5	4.31	1.00	strongly agree
Grand mean							4.21	1.14	agree

Source: Survey Data, 2024

Table 2: shows that items (1 to 5) have means which were greater than the criterion mean (3.0). Moreover, the grand mean (**4.21**) was also greater than the criterion means. This unveiled that brand resonance affects trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

Test of Hypotheses

H0₁: There is no significant relationship between brand familiarity and revisit of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

Table 3: Correlations Analysis between brand familiarity and revisit of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

		brand familiarity	revisit of money deposit bank
brand familiarity	Pearson Correlation	1	.934**
Sig.(2-tailed)			0.000
N		130	130
revisit of money deposit bank	Pearson Correlation	.934**	1
Sig.(2-tailed)		0.000	
N		130	130

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 3 shows a correlation coefficient of .934 and probability value of 0.000 which is less than 0.00 significant level. Therefore, the obtained sig. value of 0.000 which is less than 0.01 significant level which warrant the rejection of the null hypothesis and the alternate hypothesis accepted. Meaning, there is a significant relationship between brand familiarity and revisit of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between brand resonance and trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

Table 4: Correlations Analysis between brand resonance and trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt

		brand resonance	trust of money deposit bank
brand resonance	Pearson Correlation	1	.909**
Sig.(2-tailed)			0.000
N		130	130
trust of money deposit bank	Pearson Correlation	.909**	1
Sig.(2-tailed)		0.000	
N		130	130

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.8 shows a correlation coefficient of .909 and probability value of 0.000 which is less than 0.00 significant level. The hypothesis test, the obtained sig. value of 0.000 which is less than 0.01 significant level warrant the rejection of the null hypothesis and the

alternate hypothesis accepted. Meaning, there is a strong relationship between brand resonance and trust of money deposit bank in Port Harcourt.

CONCLUSIONS

The study strongly held that there is significant relationship between brand familiarity and revisit of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

There is significant relationship between brand resonance and trust of deposit money banks in Port Harcourt.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on findings and conclusions thereof, the following recommendations are made:

1. Banks should make known their service offering using available electronic and various promotional tools, striving meeting and exceeding customer expectations to satisfy customers and gain loyalty.
2. To gain trust banks generally and deposit money banks in particular should maintain personalize customer relationship, offer needed confidences by providing security or customer privacy, with reliability, and ethical practices that promotes customer emotional attachment, loyalty and positive word-of-mouth..

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