

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT ON BRAND PERFORMANCE: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF CUSTOMER-BASED BRAND EQUITY (CBBE).

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Abstract

This study assessed the mediating role of customer-based brand equity on customer engagement and brand market performance in the alcoholic Bitters industry in Ghana. Specifically, the study; examined the relationship between customer engagement and brand performance; determined the relationship between customer engagement and brand equity; and evaluated the mediating effect of brand equity on the relationship between customer engagement and brand performance. Primary data was collected from 410 consumers of alcoholic Bitters across three (3) regions in Ghana drawn through a combination of purposive, simple and systematic random sampling techniques. Field data for the study was analyzed using descriptive statistics, Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA), Pearson's correlation and hierarchical multiple regression. The study revealed high level of awareness of the alcoholic bitters which they got to know generally through conventional medium. The overall consumption rate for the alcoholic Bitters among respondent surveyed was estimated at 89%. The study further revealed that customer engagement has significant positive impact on brand performance; and showed that customer-based brand equity variables such as brand loyalty, brand awareness and brand association play a significant role in positively mediating customer engagement to impact on brand performance. In line with the findings, researcher recommend that marketing managers should find a **more innovative ways of engaging their customer through building an enduring brand awareness**, promotions, and undertaking aggressive brand recall initiative. Furthermore, managers should incorporate brand loyalty as an important element of customer engagement by operationalizing strategies that influence customers to wholeheartedly invest their time, energy, money and other resources in brands beyond those expanded during purchase or consumption of the brand. Finally, firms should strive to establish strong and positive brand associations as fundamental elements of brand image building.

Keyword: Customer engagement, brand equity, brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty, perceived quality and brand performance.