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CONSUMERS' INCLUSIVENESS AND MIGRATION: EVALUATION OF SELECTED BRANDS THROUGH THE BRAND IDENTITY PRISM

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ABSTRACT:
Brand identity management is central to brand building which prompted our evaluation on two master brands – *Coca Cola* and *CloseUp* – using the Brand Identity Prism. It explored how consumer inclusiveness and socio-economic migration have affected consumers' identification with the select brands. A survey based on the projective technique that deconstructed the six facets of the BIP as items in the questionnaire was applied to a cross national consumer-base of sample size 2,881 arrived at using 95% confidence level, 80% expected response rate and loss of sampling efficiency at 1.5. Data collected was analysed using the simple percentage and the Two-Way ANOVA Statistics to ascertain if there had been any significant difference among the means of the timeline. We argue that a brand might not have consistent strong identification with consumers over all the facets every time, and that with consumer inclusiveness and socio-economic migration, it is likely that consumers will stick with existing brands irrespective of lifestyles, new tastes and choices especially if majority of the brands' facets through the prism are optimised. It is concluded that consumer inclusiveness and socio-economic migration have positive effects on consumer identification with identified brands despite the existence of inclusion and migration over a timeline.

KEY WORDS:
brand communication, Brand Identity Prism, consumers, inclusiveness, migration

1 Introduction

The notion of "consumer inclusiveness" suggests that marketing processes should not only include all items of costs or services as needed, but also accommodate all target groups. This is one challenging point that the study strives to attend to. Branding, the distinctive and differential setting-apart of a product from its competitors and providing appropriate identification is being challenged by first, the need to include as many relevant consumer targets as possible, and then by the ease with which consumers move across product type and physical space. In the effort of including as many relevant target consumers as possible that are needed, the threshold of *niche* marketing is eroded, and the arguments for it are equally defeated. Therefore, as inclusive as marketing communications might want to be especially as they involve creating a brand identity, there is the danger of creating multiple identities of brands across time, class and space.

Interbrand noted that for a product to thrive in an otherwise saturated market, *"brands need to build connection with all consumer groups in order to differentiate themselves"*.[1] It is the drive for inclusiveness among consumers that often triggers the variations of marketing and advertising campaigns around central themes. At the extreme of the scaling is diversity and exclusivity, which are no longer fashionable, but are feared to be very inclusive in all human activities. This is because, with attempts to be more inclusive come tendencies to be divisive.

Marketing communication messages are becoming more inclusive for brands as evidenced in the choice of music, texts, pictures, casts, language, signs, codes, colours, and all the persuasive elements deployed towards its attainment. *"Brands need to transform in step with society to maintain relevance in the marketplace."*[2] Inclusivity of the brand suggests that the messages should create environments for consumers to have feeling of belongingness. Consumer inclusiveness ensures that the consumers see themselves 'within' and intricately part of the evolving brand, not by mere identifying with race, ethnicity, class or space.[3] The connection must be mutual, as such connections can create repeat purchase and turn strangers into friends, and then customers. This connection gives room to the word-of-mouth approach which is a mark of strong brand equity and relevance. The connection should resonate at the mental, emotional, spiritual or psychological plane and make the consumer to feel like they are heard, seen, felt and respected.

However, a huge contention is *"can brands target diverse groups with meaningful content, without making assumptions, and without polarizing audiences?"*.[4] While other demographic items may seem like a stack-up on the data rung, the issue of culture, religion and political affiliation becomes an albatross with the likelihood of polarisation.

For consumer migration, this suggests a shift of consumers from one segment to the other. Accordingly, the old debate of labelling customers and prospects is re-echoed within the market field.[5] There is no point where the consumer is fixated as either customer or prospect; the constantly evolving challenging environment is most likely to shift them from one segment to the other. There are migration patterns across class, from economy to business class which ultimately will affect taste, choice, and preference. There is migration from one product to another as a result of relocation, displacement, scarcity or dissatisfaction, while migration may occur by changing lifestyles as a result of new association with consumers of new products and new income levels. Such migration patterns could result in further labels such as inactive, occasional and loyal consumers.

Consequent on the argument above, and with the need to locate this study, the text contends itself with social-economic migration patterns, since the studied brands are consumer-inclusive; the argument is that with a socio-economic-migration gear activated, there is the tendency to identify with new products/brands that align with such class.

In Nigeria, master brands including *Coca-Cola* and *CloseUp*, have, over time, reconstructed their messages to create unique identities across regions, but has this effort created multiple identities for the identified brands across all regions in Nigeria? Apéria and Back maintained that the whole frames of brand identity are such that organisations appreciate them because they contribute to profitability, for consumers they reduce uncertainty, and for distribution channels they enable the creation of sales outlets.[6] The brands

1 INTERBRAND: *Building a Powerful and Enduring Brand: The Past, Present and Future of the ENERGY STAR® Brand.* New York : Interbrand, 2007. [online]. [2007-09-29]. Available at: <www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/downloads/ENERGY_STARBndManf508.pdf>.
2 DIVERSITY BEST PRACTICES: *Building Brand through Diversity & Inclusion Best Practices: DBP RESEARCH REQUEST.* [online]. [2020-10-23]. Available at: <https://www.diversitybestpractices.com/sites/diversitybestpractices.com/files/attachments/2019/01/brand_.pdf>.
3 This is our own conceptualisation of inclusivity of the brand, aggregated from several thoughts.
4 MCEACHERN, R.: *To Target Diverse Consumers, Inclusion Is Key*. Released on 16th September 2015. [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at: <https://www.huffpost.com/entry/to-target-diverse-consume_b_8149290>.
5 HUGHES, A. M.: *Customer Migration.* [online]. [2020-10-23]. Available at: <http://www.dbmarketing.com/2010/03/customer-migration/>.
6 See: APÉRIA, T., BACK, R.: *Brand Relations Management: Bridging the Gap between Brand Promise and Brand Delivery.* Malmö : Copenhagen Business School Press, 2004.

could be argued to be consumer-inclusive and have witnessed consumer migration over time. This work is focused on these two brands because they offer everyday consumables that touch on the lifestyle of almost all consumers in the country. From drinks to water, tooth-needs, and entertainment, these brands have some identification. Their choice does not exclude the importance and place of other brands, but enables this study to have a base. Choosing them was the authors' bias.

For instance, on its website, *Coca-Cola* noted that *"changing retail landscape provides incredible new opportunities to create stronger relationships with our retail customers and shoppers"*, [7] and went on to identify eight significant trends. These trends are an openness to new cultures and senses; a love for local products, services and people who support neighbourhoods and communities; and a revival in folk traditions and rituals – from food and beverages to music, art and spirituality. Other trends are a passion for singular and unique experiences that express our identity; an increased interest in managing the food and beverages that enter our bodies, as well as a burning desire to be hyper-productive, especially in how we shop and navigate across retail and communication channels. Other identified trends are a yearning to match productivity with more leisure and moments of pleasure, and even indulgence, and an expectation to engage with brands through new experiences and conversations. In its 2017 inclusion and diversity update, the company is noted to have embraced the *"brand promise to promote inclusion, celebrate diversity and champion equality"*.[8] It does so by an approach anchored on the workplace, marketplace, community and partners pillars. The company was named the most inclusive brand in Italy for 2018.[9]

For *CloseUp*, its major rival Oral-B is giving it great competition across several continents. Studies have indicated that it is very inclusive with 'sticky consumer loyalty', having done business in Nigeria for over forty years, unlike Oral-B that ventured into the Nigerian business space in 2011. The report noted that *"most consumers who prefer CloseUp are die hard loyalists who have been with the brand for generations"*,[10] although it never talked about the effects from class migration. This is where this study takes its root.

2 Literature and Theoretical Framework

Brand building relies on the brand message which is all the information and experiences that create impact on the perceptual frame of the consumers on the brands. It could be about product, the organisation, the price, place, or promotion.[11] *Interbrand* viewed "brand" as *"a mixture of tangible and intangible attributes symbolised in a trademark, which, if properly managed, creates influence and generates value"* for the organisation.[12] These polarised views see the brands as deliberate attempts and are geared at setting products and services apart from the competition. It has to be worked out and earned from satisfying the consumers. A great brand provides roles for dimensioning the product along several brand metric lines such as loyalty, identity, and consumption mobility. From the consumers' perspectives, Kapferer's categorisation provides more understanding of brands.[13]

Attempts have been made to establish varying degrees of effects arising from advertising activities, strategies, management and communication by several scholars using several models. Some of these models include Attention, Interest, Desire and Action [AIDA]; Burnett and Moriarty's Customers' Awareness Model, Hierarchy of Effects Model, Colley's DAGMAR model, McGuire's Information Processing Model, Petty and

7 THE COCA COLA COMPANY: *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*. [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at: <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/shared-future/diversity-and-inclusion>.
8 THE COCA COLA COMPANY: *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*. [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at: <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/shared-future/diversity-and-inclusion>.
9 THE COCA COLA COMPANY: *Diversity, Equity and Inclusion*. [online]. [2020-03-09]. Available at: <https://www.coca-colacompany.com/shared-future/diversity-and-inclusion>.
10 AKOLISA, U.: *Brand Contest: Close-Up vs Oral-B.* [online]. [2020-10-24]. Available at: <http://www.hallmarknews.com/brand-contest-close-up-vs-oral-b/>.
11 See: DUNCAN, T.: *Principles of Advertising and IMC.* 2nd Edition. New York : McGraw-Hill/Irwin, 2005.
12 INTERBRAND: *Building a Powerful and Enduring Brand: The Past, Present and Future of the ENERGY STAR® Brand.* New York : Interbrand, 2007. [online]. [2007-09-29]. Available at: <www.energystar.gov/ia/partners/downloads/ENERGY_STARBndManf508.pdf>.
13 See: KAPFERER, J. N.: *Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 1997.

Cacioppo's Elaboration Likelihood Model, Push/Pull Communication Model, Foote, Cone and Belding [FCB] Grid, Think/Feel/Do [TFD] variants and Moriarty's Domains Model. However, the Brand Identity Prism proposed by Kapferer clearly provides a template for evaluating a brand's identity from both the internal and external dimensions. How the brand is communicated across regions and cultures thus becomes a metric for maintaining a strong identity across time and place.

Thus, in evaluating master brands across space and time, especially with regards to how consumers identify the brands, it becomes pertinent to look through some of the strategies deployed so far. There are the four branding strategies of line extension, brand extension, multi-brands and new brands, the improved brand life cycle model where the value of a product is seen to rise from time to time according to the intensity of the marketing activities,[14] as well as the Brand Asset Valuator model,[15] where four distinctive components of energised differentiation, relevance, esteem and knowledge are seen to be strategically effective. All models presented are strategic in understanding the position of the brand and possibilities for the future. The brand life cycle shows that in order to keep the position in the market and in consumers' minds, the brander has to employ branding strategies along the continuum of the current stage of the brand life cycle which are then utilised as index for making assets out of the value of the brand from consumers' preferences and perceptions. Hence the question will always arise that when consumers travel along space and time, what are the likely effects that might occur in terms of identifying with the brand?

In an evaluation of the strategic use of lighting as a means of brand identification, Scheer's evaluation of the Volkswagen branding exercise[16] as well as Krautter and Schielke's analysis provoke the contention that the *"value of a lighting system for salesrooms is therefore no longer seen solely in terms of how attractive it is in the sense of a good general sales lighting for generating more sales turnover but also in terms of how well it conveys the brand image"*[17] such that when uniform design guidelines are employed consistently over time it can ultimately stand as strategic component of companies' corporate identity. What if this was not employed consistently across time and space? How often is the contention from consumers that a product has not met the standard it holds in another clime and *vice versa*?

There are contentions on the place of digital media in helping the branding processes, as well as the overwhelming roles of the organisation as to the authenticity of claims made. Pavitt argued that *"the prevailing view is that the corporate world cannot be trusted to be left to its own practices in focusing its decisions based on profit, often without considering ethical values"*[18] such that *"organizations which claim a string of ethics-based values as the foundation of their business practice, decisions and actions taken will frequently be those that create the best result for the bottom-line"*.[19] His conclusions were that with the technological aid and speed of social media, the abilities to connect individuals should be of great concern to all stakeholders, while enthusing as well that companies exhibit new forms of behaviour[20] that will make them more pronounced in the marketplace across time and space.[21]

In their own contributions, Chattopadhyay, Dutta and Sivani analysed how the media mix elements, which are used as strategic branding communication, approach and affect brand identity, clearly contending that each of the various media categorisations have indexical effects on the overall equity and by extension, brand

14 MODI, S.: *Brand Equity = Strategic Asset.* [online]. [2010-08-28]. Available at: <http://www.scribd.com/doc/21351717/brand_equity>.

15 GERZEMA, J., LEBAR, E., RIVERS, A.: Measuring the Contributions of Brand to Shareholders Value and How to Maintain or Increase Them. In *Journal of Applied Corporate Finance,* 2009, Vol. 21, No. 4, p. 78-88.

16 See: SCHEER, T.: *Die Volkswagen Architektur: Identität und Flexibilität als Konzept*. Ostfildern-Ruit : Hatje Cantz, 2001.

17 KRAUTTER, M., SCHIELKE, T.: *Light Perspectives.* Lüdenscheid : ERCO, 2009, p. 79.

18 PAVITT, H.: No Place to Hide: New Technological Advances in Web 2.0 and Social Media May Force Organisations to Improve Their Corporate Social Responsibility. In *Social Alternatives*, 2012, Vol. 31, No. 2, p. 25.

19 PAVITT, H.: No Place to Hide: New Technological Advances in Web 2.0 and Social Media May Force Organisations to Improve Their Corporate Social Responsibility. In *Social Alternatives*, 2012, Vol. 31, No. 2, p. 27.

20 See: BURKE, E. M.: *Managing a Company in an Activist World: The Leadership Challenge of Corporate Citizenship.* Westport : Praeger, 2005.

21 Compare to: MILLER, D. et al.: *Qantas Twitter Campaign Takes a Nosedive*. Released on 22nd November 2011. [online]. [2020-08-24]. Available at: <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2011-11-22/qantas-twitter-hashtag-backfires/3686940>; WOOD, A.: *Qantas Makes Hash of Tweet Campaign.* Released on 22nd November 2011. [online]. [2020-08-24]. Available at: <https://www.smh.com.au/sport/qantas-makes-hash-of-tweet-campaign-20111122-1v0dc.html>; MAGNER, M.: *Poisoned Legacy*. New York: St. Martin's Press, 2011.

equity.[22] Drawing on earlier works, they corroborated findings that brand choice probability is enhanced with the dimensions of brand equity in much the same way that advertisement frequency is a builder of brand equity.[23] In the efforts above it is suggested that not a single medium can fully help in the attainment of equity identification for the product in much the same way as not just one of the marketing communications tools can be so effective. A full complement of media mix and a synergy of marketing communication tools will attract its own audience at specific times.

Some master brands have built identity alongside corporate reputation. *Coca-Cola* and *CloseUp* are among such brands. The concept of "corporate reputation" has provided challenges for scholars[24] especially in trying to place definite borders for its operations. Corporate reputation is the general perception of stakeholders regarding any corporation. Some in the Public Relations discipline tend to locate it as exclusively a Public Relations affair while advertising practitioners locate it within the frame of corporate branding. The argument is that without a distinct corporate brand, and one with value and equity, an organisation would not have a reputation. Fombrun noted that corporate reputation is *"a collective assessment of a company's attractiveness to a specific group of stakeholders relative to a reference group of companies with which the company competes for resources"*.[25] This plank of thought conveys the three ideas of corporate reputation as seeing a firm having multiple reputations, depending on which stakeholders are being considered; as corporate reputation in the realm of comparative construct where the firm is always judged in relation to something else – in this case, the firm's competitors; and as using the firms' reputations as a source of competitive advantage or disadvantage. Holding to a definition in this regard does not in any way make the approach monolithic but more compact.

It is in this light that we enlarged the idea to encompass not just particular firms but the corporate form itself where the industry and regulatory bodies for the organisation become critical in supporting or undermining the social acceptance of firms and products, and whose own reputations evolve in dynamic fashion with the firms they regulate.[26] Excellent corporate brands have been identified to facilitate or constrain market exchanges, deter malfeasance, and legitimise firms and the institutional web surrounding them. Nevertheless, this functioning dovetails into one another in the sense that to deter malfeasance may contribute to confidence building for the brand and ultimately reduce transaction costs and ease market exchanges as well as strengthen the legitimacy of firms.

Equally, the threat of a bad reputation can substantially aid in the enforcement of trading contracts through the use of reputation mechanisms which are an integral part of the phenomenon referred to as private ordering: the use of extra-legal mechanisms to induce compliance.[27] On the other hand, a good reputation confers legitimacy and induces preferences. Although the term "legitimacy" is linked to mean conformity with established patterns and standards, we sometimes identified contradictory qualities that accompany each of the constructs of legitimacy and illegitimacy.[28] For them, the qualities for legitimacy clashes with reputation-enhancing activities that aim to differentiate the firm from its competitors. Scholars, however, are still attempting to solve this dilemma by framing legitimacy and reputation as different stages of development in the life cycle of firms.

22 CHATTOPADHYAY, T., DUTTA, R. N., SIVANI, S.: Media Mix Elements Affecting Brand Equity: A Study of the Indian Passenger Car Market. In *IIMB Management Review*, 2010, Vol. 22, No. 4, p. 173-185.

23 YOO, B., DONTHU, N., LEE, S.: An Examination of Selected Marketing Mix Elements and Brand Equity. In *Academy of Marketing Science Journal*, 2000, Vol. 28, No. 2, p. 195-211.

24 See: BROMLEY, D. B.: Comparing Corporate Reputations: League Tables, Quotients, Benchmarks, or Case Studies. In *Corporate Reputation Review*, 2002, Vol. 5, p. 35-50; SANDBERG, K.: Kicking the Tires of Corporate Reputation. In *Harvard Management Communication Letter*, 2002, Vol. 5, p. 3-4.

25 FOMBRUN, C. J.: The Building Blocks of Corporate Reputation: Definitions, Antecedents, Consequences. In BARNETT, M. L., POLLOCK, T. G. (eds.): *Oxford Handbook of Corporate Reputation*. Oxford : Oxford University Press, 2012, p. 100.

26 OLEGARIO, R., MCKENNA, C.: Introduction: Corporate Reputation in Historical Perspective. In *Business History Review,* 2013, Vol. 87, No. 4, p. 643-654.

27 RICHMAN, B. D.: Firms, Courts, and Reputation Mechanisms: Towards a Positive Theory of Private Ordering. In *Columbia Law Review*, 2004, Vol. 104, No. 1, p. 2328-2367.

28 OLEGARIO, R., MCKENNA, C.: Introduction: Corporate Reputation in Historical Perspective. In *Business History Review,* 2013, Vol. 87, No. 4, p. 643-654.

Companies with superior reputations have been argued to have distinctive leads over their contemporaries in magnetising consumers[29] while other studies have applied multiple stakeholder approaches to corporate reputation and explored the influence of customers' behaviour regarding corporate reputations.[30] The focus is to establish a relationship between the reputation of the organisation and how the consumers see it and prefer its product. It is instructive to note that besides seeing consumers as one of the most essential stakeholder groups since they generate revenue flows for corporations, their satisfaction is a strong determinant of consumer loyalty suggesting that *"higher satisfaction level motivates consumers to adopt repetitive buying behaviour and recommending others to do the same"*, thus establishing preferences.[31]

Nevertheless, the classification of the corporate brand of over a hundred companies provoked the argument that the issue of corporate brand is now thought of as a mini-religion in the sense that the characteristics of faith; omnipresence, 'gurus', goodness, purity, places of worships, icons and miracles are self-evident in all of the brands.[32] Basically, reeling through the 100 top brands and what made them 'tick', he identified innovation, performance, competition, history, key influences, heavy investment in marketing, a belief in people and buzz, marketing communications, foresight, distribution, authenticity and appeal as instrumental.[33] Brands are personalities, and the stronger the personality, the stronger the brand. This personality trait could hedge it as either a 'then' brand or a 'now' brand or an 'always' brand or 'everywhere' brand. The successful brand therefore has no clear-cut path towards success, but a *"clear brand message combined with a clear point of difference is evidently the key to a successful brand"*.[34] Thus, managing the brand involves creating the taste for which it should be appreciated and ultimately loved – resonance.[35]

The Brand Identity Prism (BIP) as proposed[36] gives theoretical credence to this study. The BIP gives the full picture of how the brand owner wants the target groups to perceive the brand's identity. The interesting point here is that the brand owner did not consider the target audience as migratory or inclusive, but as a fixed group tied within a locale. It is within this purview that this study will attempt to push the BIP theory a step further to see how migration and inclusiveness have affected this 'picture' of the identity created by the owner. A powerful brand will have a positive brand image, and this will significantly affect its perceived quality, without which it would be virtually impossible to build customer loyalty and trust. However, when people move across class, place and time, do they still carry on with the brand or take to new brands? Is brand loyalty guarantee along cultural and regional divides? These are pertinent questions that occupy this study. The identified six facets of the prism as scholarly discussed are:

- **Physique**: The sum of a brand's basic, the underlying physical characteristics.
- **Personality**: This underlines the character of the brand that gives it a 'voice'.
- **Culture**: Each brand has a culture from which all products within the brand frame originate. The product is an embodiment of that culture.
- **Relationship**: The connection with its consumers and frequently offered possibilities for interpersonal exchanges.
- **Reflection**: Reflecting the customer's image and drives towards identification. Although *Coca-Cola*'s reflection is 'young', older people drink it as well.
- **Self-Image**: Self-image is the consumer's internal mirror created from attitude portrayal.[37]

29 See: GOTSI, M., WILSON, A. M.: Corporate Reputation Management: Living the Brand. In *Management Decision*, 2001, Vol. 39, No. 2, p. 99-104; GROENLAND, E. A.: Qualitative Research to Validate the RQ-Dimensions. In *Corporate Reputation Review*, 2002, Vol. 4, No. 4, p. 309-315.
30 See: DAVIES, G. et al.: *Corporate Reputation and Competitiveness*. London : Routledge, 2002.
31 ALI, I., ALVI, K. A., ALI, R. R.: Corporate Reputation, Consumer Satisfaction and Loyalty. In *Romanian Review of Social Sciences*, 2012, Vol. 3, p. 13.
32 HAIG, M.: *Brand Loyalty: How the World's Top 100 Brands Thrive and Survive*. London: Kogan Page, 2004, p. 317.
33 HAIG, M.: *Brand Loyalty: How the World's Top 100 Brands Thrive and Survive*. London: Kogan Page, 2004, p. 317.
34 HAIG, M.: *Brand Loyalty: How the World's Top 100 Brands Thrive and Survive*. London: Kogan Page, 2004, p. 317.
35 See: APÉRIA, T., BACK, R.: *Brand Relations Management: Bridging the Gap between Brand Promise and Brand Delivery*. Malmö : Copenhagen Business School Press, 2004.
36 See also: KAPFERER, J. N.: *Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 1997.
37 APÉRIA, T., BACK, R.: *Brand Relations Management: Bridging the Gap between Brand Promise and Brand Delivery*. Malmö : Copenhagen Business School Press, 2004, p. 64.

Relying on this theory, which provides the metrics for analysis, we can assume that when consumers have relationships with the brands, no matter the displacements occasioned from socio-economic migration, consumers are likely to identify with the brands. However, with the selected Nigerian master brands, *Coca-Cola* and *CloseUp*, is this the case?

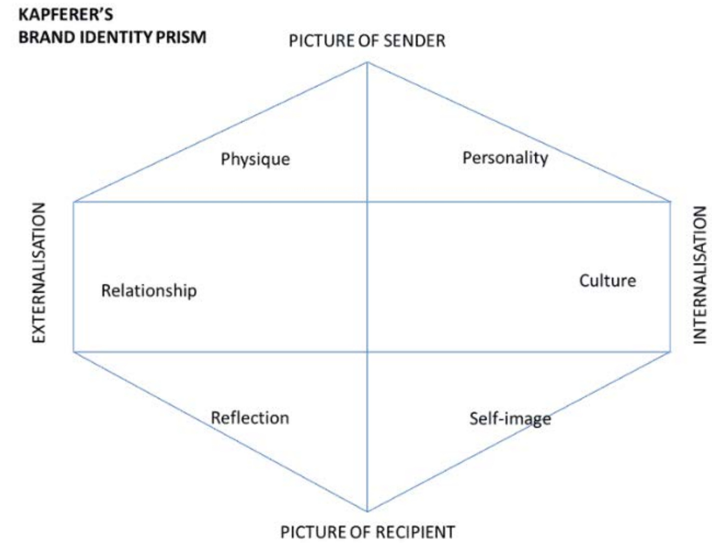

Figure 1: Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism
Source: ZIGA, A. Y.: Understanding Kapferer's Brand Identity Prism. Released on 9th February 2019. [online]. [2020-08-24]. Available at: http://www.ayzwriting.com/english/understanding-kapferers-brand-identity-prism/ .

3 Problem Statement, Objectives and Methodology

Even though marketing communication messages are inclusive of all target groups as well as provide deep connection with the brands, it is pertinent to investigate if migration across socio-economic class would affect brand identification. The tendency is that with consumer inclusiveness and migration, it is less likely that they will stick with existing brands as changes in lifestyles may trigger new tastes and choices. While most studies have focused on how consumers perceive brand images, this study looks within the Brand Identity Prism (BIP) to evaluate how this perception reeled across class, space and time, especially with the assertion that a brand's identity must precede its image.[38] This inquiry thus evaluates two known master brands – *Coca-Cola* and *CloseUp* – using the Brand Identity Prism to ascertain how well consumer inclusiveness, which is how consumers see themselves within the brands under study, and socio-economic migration, which depicts the extent to which consumers are willing to move from one social, economic and political strata to the other, have affected their identification with the select brands. With the notion of consumer inclusiveness and migration, we assume that the consumers are able to see themselves well represented within the brands, even when their socio-economic status offers them room for socio-economic migration. Such mobility is seen to happen across distinct areas such as race, ethnicity, class or space, and should be investigated to ascertain its extent of influence on those brands where consumers see themselves as well represented within them such as *Coca-Cola* and *CloseUp*. The major objective is to establish the existence of brand identification or inclusiveness among the selected brands when consumer inclusion and migration occur over a timeline period. It tested the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference among the mean responses consumers gave over the timeline period regarding identification with the selected brands.

38 See: KAPFERER, J. N.: *Strategic Brand Management*. London : Kogan Page, 1997.

A survey based on the projective technique that deconstructs the six facets in the Prism, applied to a cross national consumer-base of sample size 2,881, arrived at using 95% confidence level, 80% expected response rate and loss of sampling efficiency at 1.5. The six facets analysed were physique, relationship, reflections, personality, culture and self-image. The population is infinite as there are no documented populations of consumers for both brands. The only available data was sales figures which could not be scaled to consumer population because there are no metrics to interpolate sales figures and actual consumer population. A single consumer can make more purchase decisions than several other consumers put together. The sample size was purposively, proportionately and equally drawn from consumers across all six geopolitical bases in the country with the aid of research assistants, who were students of the researchers. The proportionate approach was without bias to the population distribution of the geopolitical zones, again which do not correlate with the consumer base. The six geopolitical bases are South-South, North-East, South-West, South-East, North-West and North-Central. Data was collected through a questionnaire that was structured along the six identified facets of the BIP prism and analysed using the simple percentage and the Two-Way ANOVA Statistics to ascertain if there had been any significant difference among the means of the timeline.

4 Data Analysis and Discussion

Of the 2,881 copies of the questionnaire that were equally distributed across the zones, 2,601 or 90.3% were valid for analysis. Higher return rates were recorded for the Southern states as a result of the willingness and accessibility of the respondents to participate in the study, while the issues in the Northern states were influenced by insecurity, although the research assistants who were from the area were able to appeal to them to attend to the items. The high mortality rate of 9.7% is attributed to the margin of error allowed in the study as well as the concerns of some of the respondents over the items raised concerning their socio-economic mobility over the timelines. The return rate according to zones are as presented in the table below:

Table 1: Return Rate of Distributed Questionnaire

Zones	Frequency	Percentage
South-South	476	18.3
South-East	473	18.2
South-West	480	18.5
North-West	403	15.5
North-East	380	14.6
North-Central	389	14.9
Total	**2,601**	**100**

Source: Own processing

The data distribution shows an almost even distribution among the zones. Since the sample size was purposive, it is important to state here that there was more willingness of respondents in the Southern part to participate than for those in the North, obviously as a result of the brands under study. *Coca-Cola*, for instance, has greater followership in the South-West areas than in the North, while *Close-Up* has greater patronage in the Northern part of the country than in the Southern part. This was proven from observation and interaction with the respondents. This distribution is spread among the demographics as presented below.

Table 2: Demographics of the Respondents

Age Distribution of Respondents		
Age Range	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
< 20 years	635	24.4
21 – 30 years	778	29.9
31 – 40 years	689	26.5
> 40 years	499	19.2
Total	**2,601**	**100**
Sex Distribution of Respondents		
Categories	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Male	1,133	43.6
Female	1,468	56.4
Total	**2,601**	**100**
Socio-Economic Distribution of the Respondents		
Income Category	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Upper Class	250	9.6
Middle Class	1,752	67.4
Lower Class	599	23.0
Total	**2,601**	**100**

Source: Own processing

The demographics show a higher number of female respondents of 56.4% as compared to the males. This could be as result of the brands under study, which are consumables, and are most likely patronised by females. Most of the respondents fell within the 21 – 30 years age brackets with a percentage of 29.9. Expectedly, those above 40 years of age were the least with 19.2%. in terms of socio-economic distribution, 67.4% of the respondents are within the middle-class group, with 23.0% at the lower class and only 9.6% at the upper class. The import of this distribution is not lost in the figures. One will contend that with the poverty rate in Nigeria, most of the respondents will be in the lower class as opposed to the middle class. However, since the sample was purposively drawn, it is important to state here that majority of those in the lower income class may prefer other forms of cleaning their mouths and quenching thirst as opposed to spending money on toothpaste and a bottle of coke, which for them are luxury. Alternatively, they might prefer using other less popular brands that are cheaper in price as compared to these established brands. The dynamics of brand substitution plays out here with likely substitutes for *Coca-Cola* being bigger bottles of *Pepsi*, the local *Zobo* drink and other flavoured drinks. Substitutes for *CloseUp* would be *Pepsodent* and chewing sticks or other local mouth cleaners. These are substitutes and not competitors.

The demographic distribution equally suggests the inclusive nature of the brands under study. A look at the age distribution, for instance, shows that almost all the age categories had representation. It supports claims made by the brands that even though appeals were targeted at the young population, the older population still identify with the brands. There is equally evidence of class migration in the socio-economic distribution seeing that more of the respondents are classed as middle class, not because they have all the wealth and determinants of the middle class, but because there is a deliberate ploy towards adopting the characteristics of the middle class by the respondents.

Table 3: Duration of Brand Usage

Product Brand		< 5 years	6 – 10 years	11 – 15 years	> 16 years	Total
Coca-Cola		421	633	1,012	535	2,601
		16.2%	24.3%	38.9%	20.6%	100%
CloseUp		533	794	662	612	2,601
		20.5%	30.5%	25.5%	23.5%	100%

Source: Own processing

The distribution above shows the trend in brand usage over time. For *Coca-Cola*, 38.9% of the respondents said they have been using the brand within the last 11 – 15 years; 24.3% in the last 6 – 10 years; 20.6% for over 16 years and 16.2% had used it in less than 5 years. Instructive in this data set is that, except the majority within the 11 – 15 years usage brackets, the others had no significance difference as they fall within the ±5 degree of error.

For *CloseUp*, 30.5% of the respondents said they have used the brand within the last 6 – 10 years; 25.5% within the last 11 – 15 years; 23.5% had used it for over 16 years and 20.5% had used it for less than 5 years. The trend where smaller percentages had identified with the brand for less than 5 years is connected to the age of the respondents. Those who ticked this option were those who said their age brackets were within the less than 20 years. Also interesting in the distribution is that the duration of usage almost aligns with the age distribution of the respondents. It suggests that the consumers had been using the brands since they could identify with them. This shows that over time and space, there had been core issues of brand identification across class migration as well as demographics – consumers' inclusivity.

The distribution on usage of the brand equally signals the fact that there has been unique identification with the brands. It shows that there has been stability over the years in identifying with the brands and tends to push the bar of 'continuum of consumerism' further.[39]

Table 4: Timeline of Socio-Economic Class

Socio-Economic Class	Currently	5 years ago	10 years ago	15 years ago	Total
Upper Class	114	74	41	21	250
	45.6%	29.6%	16.4%	8.4%	100%
Medium Class	532	436	411	373	1,752
	30.4%	24.9%	23.5%	21.3%	100%
Lower Class	93	133	167	206	599
	15.5%	22.2%	27.9%	34.4%	100%
Grand Total	739	643	619	600	2,601

Source: Own processing

A breakdown of the socio-economic class along the timeline detailed out for the study showed that for the upper and middle classes, there has been a steady migration from a lower class to a higher one. For instance, in the distribution, 15 years ago, only 8.4% of the respondents were in the upper class. This steadily grew to 16.4% 10 years ago and then to 29.6% 5 years ago, while currently 45.6% of the respondents are in the upper class. This gives them enough leverage to use the product.

The steady growth was equally identifiable in the middle class where it grew strategically from 21.4% to 23.5% and 24.9% then 30.4% in that order. However, for the lower class, there has been a steady decline from the current time backwards, showing a regression. Currently, only 15.5% of the respondents are in the lower class as compared to the 22.2% who were there 5 years ago, the 27.9% who were there 10 years ago and the 34.4% who were there 15 years ago.

39 GOODYEAR, M.: Divided by a Common Language: Diversity and Deception in the World of Global Marketing. In *Journal of the Market Research Society*, 1996, Vol. 38, No. 2, p. 110-122.

But is maintaining that growth in socio-economic levels along the timelines significantly related to identification with the brands? The next distribution will provide some insight.

Table 5: Influences on Usage of Brands along Timelines

	Currently		5 years ago		10 years ago		15 years ago	
BIP Facets as Influencer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
Physical nature of the product	989	1,612	1,378	1,223	1,653	948	1,899	702
	(38.0%)	(62.0%)	(53.0%)	(47.0%)	(63.6%)	(36.4%)	(73.0%)	(27.0%)
The brand personality has been reliable, friendly, trustworthy	1,934	667	1,788	813	1,666	935	1,563	1,038
	(74.4%)	(25.6%)	(68.7%)	(31.3%)	(64.1%)	(35.9%)	(60.1%)	(39.9%)
The brand has been innovative, consistent in design, and standardised	2,012	589	1,663	938	1,563	1,038	1,743	858
	(77.4%)	(22.6%)	(63.9%)	(36.1%)	(60.1%)	(39.9%)	(67.0%)	(33.0%)
The brand has been successful, safe and provided personal touch	1,867	734	1,439	1,162	1,034	1,567	1,356	1,245
	(71.8%)	(28.2%)	(55.3%)	(44.7%)	(39.8%)	(60.2%)	(52.1%)	(47.9%)
The brand has shown who I am as a person and given me an identity	1,439	1,162	1,488	1,113	1,732	869	1,790	811
	(55.3%)	(44.7%)	(57.2%)	(42.8%)	(66.6%)	(33.4%)	(68.8%)	(31.2%)
It has made me feel connected to the brand and like the product	1,773	828	1,834	767	1,339	1,262	1,657	944
	(68.2%)	(31.8%)	(70.5%)	(29.5%)	(51.5%)	(48.5%)	(63.7%)	(36.3%)

Source: Own processing

In this distribution, the BIP facets were used to test the influences of usage and identification with the brands along the timelines. Significant is the fact that while currently 62% of the respondents think that the physical nature of the brands had no influence in their sticking with the brands, 15 years ago, 73% thought that the physical attribute was key to them identifying with the brands. The distribution showed a steady decline on this facet. The argument could be that with the brands resonating, the consumers are more preoccupied with other facets rather than the physique. It surely suggests that the physical nature of brands would entrench loyalty to the brand over time if the other facets were improved upon.[40]

In terms of the personality of the brands, 74.4% of the respondents currently say that the brands have been reliable, friendly and trustworthy. This has grown since the time when, 15 years ago, only 60.1% thought that the brands have great personality; 10 years ago where only 64.1% thought so and 5 years ago where only 68.7% thought so. The import of this data set is that overtime with migration and inclusion of the consumer into the brands, rather than lose out, the consumers are better identified with the personality of the brands today than they were 15 years back.

The same story could be told of the brand culture which equally had grown overtime from 67% 15 years ago to 77.4% currently. They were emphatic that the brands had been innovative, consistent in design, and standardised. However, in terms of the relationship with the brand, there were times where the respondents thought that the connection had not been there. For instance, 10 years ago, 60.2% of the respondents felt that the brands were not successful, were unsafe and did not provide the personal touch. This timeline would not be unconnected with the period where there were massive changes in the products approach in terms of size, contents etc. *Coca-Cola*, for instance, introduced diet coke and zero diet coke over this period which most persons did not like as they preferred

40 See: HAIG, M.: *Brand Loyalty: How the World's Top 100 Brands Thrive and Survive*. London : Kogan Page, 2004.

sugary cokes.[41] Except for that, all other years have recorded improvement, currently peaking at 71.8%.

In analysing the data for the reflection facets, the distribution shows that over time, the brands reflected less of the consumers and more of themselves. Currently, 55.3% maintained that the brands show who they are as compared to 68.8% who 15 years ago maintained that the brands reflected their identities better than now. For the self-image facets, there is a wavering of what the respondents thought made them connect to the product, and how it made them feel like the brands. 68.2% of the respondents currently thought that the brands reflected their self-image; 70.5% thought that this happened 5 years ago; 51.5% felt it happened 10 years ago while 63.7% thought the brands reflected their identities better 15 years ago.

Furthermore, an analysis of the difference in means of their responses using the ANOVA statistics is intended to statistically establish if the responses over the timelines on how the consumers have identified with the brands are different over time or not. The ANOVA test revealed that the critical value of 2.2485 is lower than the calculated value of 47, therefore the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, we could say that there is no significant difference among the mean responses of the consumers given over the timeline period regarding identification with the select brands. That is to say that the respondents readily identified with the brands despite socio economic migration as well as consumer inclusiveness.

Table 6: Summary Values of ANOVA Analysis

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	*SS*	*df*	*MS*	*F*	*P-value*	*F crit*
Rows	0	5	0	0	1	2.485143
Columns	4781924	7	683132	8.137161	7.29832E-06	2.285235
Error	2938324	35	83952.12			

Source: Own processing

5 Conclusion

Analysis using the BIP has revealed that a brand may not have strong identification or inclusivity with its consumers over all the facets, especially when the socio-economic nuances are factored into the consumer mapping matrix. While some facets may show stronger aspects of the brands inclusiveness across geopolitical migrations, others revealed weaker aspects that do not add to the overall image of the brand and provide no strong connection to drawing the consumers into the brand. The study found that with consumer inclusiveness and migration, it is likely that they will stick with existing brands, especially the studied master brands as changes in lifestyles are less likely to trigger new tastes and choices especially if the majority of the facets of the brands through the prism match up to their tasks. The *Coca-Cola* and *CloseUp* brands are seen as products that are least influenced by price variations since prices have remained almost static across differing economic schemes. Therefore, the brands are likely to find greater inclusivity among consumers despite their socio-economic migration indexes. What it presupposes is that if a consumer of *Coca-Cola* brand lives in the North-East geopolitical zone of Nigeria rather than the South-South which experiences different cultural orientations, the consumer is most likely to identify with the *Coca-Cola* brand because they see themselves within the brands rather than as mere consumers of the brands. The import is that they will see themselves as part of the brand, identifying with physique, relationship, reflections, personality, culture and self-image of the brands. Another scenario also played out in the findings was that even migration across economic classes never produced any significance difference across timelines of product use.

Perception and identification with brands are expected, from the corollary of data presented, to be so influenced by several issues such as class, space and time, especially with the assertion by that a brand identity must precede its image. Class connotes a movement across economic domains, space across geopolitical domains, and time across lifestyles, preferences, and audience segmentations. These elements are important variables in holistically defining and maintaining a scheme of migration. This study thus concludes that consumer inclusiveness and socio-economic migration have positive effects on consumer identification with the select brands, that despite the existence of inclusion and migration occurring over a timeline period, identification is very possible as little changes are likely to occur over time. Despite the challenging features associated with migration across space, time and class, consumer inclusiveness with master brands is likely to occur since the consumers see themselves within and not outside the brands. However, the case is that less defining brands might not enjoy similar levels of inclusivity as the master brands because of the variability of extent of identification to the brand facets of physique, relationship, reflections, personality, culture and self-image.

When the consumers begin to 'see' themselves within a brand, the argument would become strong in agreeing with the dictates of the brand equity model. The brands over time were seen to, at certain points, reflect more of themselves and less of the consumers, which implies that the consumers had been so entrenched in the colouration of brands that it becomes very difficult to isolate the brand form the consumers. Class migration somewhat defines that extent of inclusivity to the various facets of the prism.

41 See also: APÉRIA, T., BACK, R.: *Brand Relations Management: Bridging the Gap between Brand Promise and Brand Delivery.* Malmö : Copenhagen Business School Press, 2004.

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