
Impact of Brand Identity and Brand Image On Fashion Entrepreneurs: A Case Study of Greater Accra Metropolis

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ABSTRACT: *Over the years branding has been the concern of many businesses across the globe, however the fashion world has not been exempted, many studies has also been carried out to investigate relationship that exist between fashion and branding. Brand images and identity has been the major point for competition among fashion customers, clients, investors and brand owners. This call for this research to find out impact of brand image and brand identity has on fashion entrepreneurs. The population was drawn from Accra metropolis covering areas such as McCarthy hill, and North-Kaneshie, Accra. Purposive sampling was used to select 50 respondents made up of fashion entrepreneurs (14), fashion students (18) and consumers (18). The questionnaire was the main tool used for this study. Four research questions were tested in this study using simple percentage, piecharts and frequencies respectively. The results show that the essence of branding on fashion entrepreneurs is inseparable. Logo, symbol/ colors of a fashion enterprise contribute to the progress of fashion entrepreneurs. It was also discovered that brand name has an influence on purchase decision of their clients and that brand identity increases investors and customer awareness and customer loyalty. It was concluded that the impact of brand image and identity such as logo, symbols, colors among others, contribute significantly to customers and loyalty. This study recommends that fashion entrepreneurs should give adequate time to come up with brands that speak for them anytime and anywhere, fashion entrepreneurs should cultivate the habit of setting fund aside for their business needs, as funds will be required to enhance their businesses, relying on government, non-governmental organization or others for loans may not always be available, creativity should be the focus of fashion entrepreneurs, because we live in a world where change is constant.*

KEYWORDS: branding, brand identity, brand image, branding strategies, fashion, consumers, entrepreneurs

INTRODUCTION

Branding is the process involved in creating a unique name and image for a product. Branding is a must for any company or brand be it big or small. This is because branding will help establish a significant presence in the market to attract and retain customers. Fashion entrepreneur is a person who has possession of a fashion enterprise, venture or idea, and assumes significant accountability for the inherent risks and outcome. Brand identity and Brand image are the two most essential components that define a success of a brand in a market. These terms determine what the brand speaks about, and what is being heard by the customers. Brand identity confines all the visual aspects that you have created to make your brand out. It contains the logo, style, colors, typography and anything else that helps the customer to differentiate your brand from others. In layman's terms, brand identity is who you are, and what you do and how you do it. It depicts your brands desires and what the reality is. Consumer trends today have been changing frequently. They tend to prefer brands that share their beliefs and reflect their values. Brand identity components are diverse in nature and are unified to solidify a brands personality and appeal in the customer's memory. Brand image is a feeling or what the customers think about your brand. It is a basic impression of your brand, which is created through brand messaging and brand awareness and always aligns with your brand identity to create the desired perspective of your brand. A brand image is developed over a certain period of time during which the customer gets to experience and interact with your brand. A strong brand image ensures the customer chooses your brand over others and increases the brand awareness. A firm finds it difficult to attract consumers to a new product due to certain factors such as consumer uncertainty, competitor's marketing and competitive pricing. When a firm has a strong brand image in the market, it becomes easier to introduce a new products and focus lesser on marketing them as the consumer already has a positive perception about your brand. Due to this, they would not be hesitant to try new products, which enhances brand promise and increases brand awareness.

Odessa Paloma Parker (Fashion Editor, The Globe and Mail. January,22,2023) opined that ‘ ‘ Branding is important because it helps tell the story of your product. It communicates what your values are, your perspective, and helps illuminate small character elements that are part of the bigger picture of your business’’. Branding is the defined personality of a product, service, company or individual. Many people confuse ‘ ‘having a logo’ ’ for an ongoing branding process, but in fact a good logo is an extension of a defined identity for a venture in the same way that a flag or national anthem may represent a country. A well designed brand personality can be seen in everything from the customer service to the actual products a company may offer. Branding conveys your ideas and views to the world and helps you connect with the potential customers. A strong brand can affect more and more people, and can convert your effort into greater success and growth. Branding as a whole affects the business as well as the consumers and their purchasing behavior.

Statement of the Problem

Roy & Banerjee (2007) state that in order to have a strong brand, the brand identity needs to be congruent with the brand image. Brand identity refers to what a company stands for or more precisely, how it wants to be perceived (Melin, 1997). The importance of having a strong brand within the market has gone from ‘unimportant’ to ‘crucial’ in a short amount of time, due to the new competition. It is in the light of the above that this study is embarked upon to investigate the impact of brand identity and brand image on fashion entrepreneurs in the Greater Accra Metropolis. The pertinent questions to address, therefore, are, what is the essence of branding on fashion entrepreneurs? What is the impact of brand identity and brand image to fashion entrepreneurs and consumers? What are the importance of brand identity and brand image to fashion entrepreneurs? What is/are the challenges (if any) of fashion entrepreneurs? The present study therefore sought to identify answers to these pertinent questions in order to deliver a clear message, provide credibility, connect with customers emotionally, motivate the buyer and create user loyalty.

Purpose of the study

The study’s purpose is to explore how brand identity and brand image has impacted fashion entrepreneurs and consumers in the Greater Accra Metropolis as well as find out the role played by brand image and brand identity in facilitating the fashion firms to gain competitive advantage.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the under listed research questions;

1. What is the essence of branding on fashion entrepreneurs?
2. What is the impact of brand identity and brand image on fashion entrepreneurs and consumers?
3. What are the importance of brand identity and brand image to fashion entrepreneurs?
4. What is/are the challenges (if any) of fashion entrepreneurs?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is hinged on the theory of Alexander, R. et al (2010). They opined that brand awareness is created by the familiarity of the brand, meaning that the consumer should be exposed to it repeatedly through, for example, advertisement campaigns. However, it is important to note that a brand develops over time, and can be divided into levels of progress. Alexander, R. et al posited that for newly established companies there are three levels particularly interesting. At the first level, the brand owner seeks to express its identity; in the form of different labels that can be associated with the company. At the second level, the brand owner aims to provide the customers with a point of differentiation. The brand seeks to establish a desired perception in the mind of it’s the customers. Finally, at the third level, the brand wants to establish

an emotional connection with its customers to become a distinguished alternative. They argued that an organization with a strong brand, clearly associated with specific benefits, can attract high-quality personnel. This is agreed in the article 'Better than Brand X (2007) where it is stated that a strong brand does not only benefit a company through attracting customers. In a market where companies are competing over employees it can also have the potential of attracting the best employees available. The review examined the following strands;

Concept of Branding

Since marketing is an intricate phenomenon, impacted by society, business environment, customers conduct, an institutionalized worldwide way to deal with marketing may not generally be relevant for a brand's local attractiveness. In many businesses, branding is an instrument that passes on item advantages to clients as names or images to which interesting and persuading affiliations are appended. Branding is a process that is used by the businesses to utilize marketing strategies to enhance their product or service image so that it is more readily recollected by the customer. Branding helps the product or service to make a favorable impact on the target customer while the branding concepts help in outlining the guidelines that should be followed during the branding process. The three most important branding concepts that are the basis of all branding processes are brand promise, brand attributes and brand personality.

Importance of Branding

A branded product ensures that there is accuracy when searching and selecting products and also helps in its evaluation. When companies have strong brand, they have the privilege of charging higher prices even when facing stiff competition. Noting the increasing understanding of branding as a means of creating competitive advantage by providing intangible and tangible benefits, more organizations are expected to embrace the benefits that branding brings, (Anabila & Awunyo-Vitor, 2014). The brand itself is not just a product with a sign or symbol: the brand is rather an idea that for example turns the product into something of value (Ind. 2003). It provides uniqueness, and it is the identifiable factors that one can link to the specific brand. The brand exists to a large extent due to customers, in particular loyal customers. It is not only organizations that makes up a brand (Ind, 2007). This is agreed by Randall (2000) who states that the brand is defined by the customers' point of view and that the brand always need to deliver value. It is therefore pivotal that the organization realize the customer's perception of its brand (Ind, 2007).

Impact of Branding on Consumer Behavior

Consumer behavior refers to the mental and emotional process and the observable behavior of consumers during searching, purchasing and post consumption of a product or service. It involves study of how people buy, what they buy, when they buy and why they buy. The factors which drive the customer behavior vary according to the type of brand, the consumer decides to buy. Consumers can be loyal to a specific brand according to the dimensions of consumer behavior. Loyal consumers help in gaining a high market share. Loyal consumers can provide the

competitive edge against competitors which is a significant factor for success. The word loyalty usually refers to the association and recognition. When a consumer is loyal to a brand, she/he will always prefer that brand upon other brands and she/he is purchasing that product for many years. Consumers now use the expensive and branded products in order to show status. The brands which are used for showing off the luxury, power and wealth are known as status brands. The wish to have a high status is the factor which compels the people to use brands as status symbol. Brands are consumed to show that the person who used it is highly status conscious, trendy and wealthy and these brands can be categorized as status brand. As the wish increases, the usage of brands increases. Consumers should have Brand awareness. It basically includes awareness of brand and the information or image of brand in the mind of consumer. Awareness of brands help consumers to recall the brand easily and to create positive image about the brand in consumers' mind. Awareness of brand leads to the creation of brand image in consumers' mind which helps in future purchases of the same product. Relationship with the brands build through trust and satisfaction provided by the brand to consumers and satisfaction and trust leads to the attachment with the brand. It is said that consumer behavior towards branded products or services according to their age, gender and personality traits and people get social according to their gender. So gender is the basis of determining the consumer behavior. It is explored that females are more innovative, enthusiastic and interested in fashion industry and introducing new brands than males. Female feel pleasure in show off and display of their wealth, power and status. It is proposed that consumers tend to become more loyal to brands with their growing age. But attitudes towards purchasing are almost similar among older and younger age group because of the factor of low income. As both the groups (younger and older) have low income and due to the low income, they have to bargain which decreases their loyalty level.

Impact of Brand Identity on Fashion Entrepreneurs and Consumers

The outward expression of the brand, including its name, logo, tone, tagline, symbols and visual appearance is a brand's identity. It is the most fundamental means of consumer recognition and symbolizes the brand's differentiation from competitors. Brand identity can consist of traits, benefits, values, differentiation and personality; it can be seen as everything the owner wants the consumers to associate with the brand (Roy & Banerjee, 2007). According to Melin (1997) brand identity is what the brand stands for, what gives it meaning and what makes it unique: it is the fingerprint. Saaksjarvi & Samiee (2011) propose another definition of Brand identity, describing it as a unique set of brand associations that firms aim to create or maintain. Brand identity is a reflection of the promise, from the company to its customers, assuring them of true value. It's how customers look at the brand and how to identify the brand. It helps in distinguishing the aspects and characteristics of one company from the other. It is in fact a bridge built on trust and credibility between the company and the consumer. Understanding a particular brand and perceiving its value can be achieved by building a strong brand identity of the product. It is very important to create an identity that is in par with its image and to produce a perfect brand identity it is imperative that an organization takes stock of the following.

1. The company's strength and weaknesses
2. The various opportunities it can cash into
3. The market towards which the company is working at
4. Their own goals and values

It is necessary to attach a particular sentiment with the identity of the brand, as it will echo the personality and value of the product. For example, if a particular brand like Pantene comes into mind it will always depict long and thick hair. The brand deals in hair & care products and its brand identity is in direct relation with its image projecting its advantages. Building a brand identity is difficult and requires a lot of time as well as investments in promotional and brand building activities. To entice the consumers, the brand associates itself with numerous famous personalities. These celebrities help in making an instant impact on the perception of the people for the brand, by creating a unique brand identity for the products. When someone thinks of Michael Schumacher, it reminds us of Ferrari. These memories go hand in hand into building a brand identity and hence result in better sales and revenues. Brand identity echoes the message that a company wants to send to its clientele. Recognition in the customers' mind is instant with the right brand identity and association. It is also beneficial in building and maintaining customer loyalty. In order to create the right atmosphere for selling a product, it is imperative that the brand identity should be unique and distinguished while portraying its true characteristic.

Impact of Brand Image on Fashion Entrepreneurs and Consumers

Brand image is the picture that is formed about the company in the customer's eyes. It describes the feelings and emotions that the brand evokes in customers' mind when he or she thinks about the brand. These are the basic features, which enables the company to develop a competitive advantage for their business. Understanding these fundamental characteristics can bring significant competitive advantage for the company, and is a primary concern for the brand management in the long run. It is also critical for the companies to understand how consumers shape and reshape the picture of the brand image, and what kind of relationship is formed between the brand and the consumer. (Roy & Banerjee, 2008). According to Aaker (1996) brand image illustrates the overall image how the consumers and others perceive and see the brand. (Aaker, 1996). Based on Faircloth et al. (2001) definition of brand image "the customer forms an image through a synthesis of all the signals emitted by the brand". Also, Faircloth et al. (2001) determined that brand image is a result of a process where customer decodes, extracts and interprets the signals that are sent by the brand. Brand image consists of various associations in consumers' mind namely; attributes, benefits and attitudes.

Attributes: Brand attributes are the functional and mental connections with the brand that the customers have. Attributes are "descriptive features that characterized a product or service- what a consumer thought the product or service is or has and what is involved with its purchase or

consumption” (Keller, 1993). He classified attributes into product-related attributes and non-product-related attributes. Product-related attributes are the attributes which are basis for the proper functioning of the products and services. Hence, they relate to a products physical composition or services requirements. They determine the nature and level of product performance. Non product-related attributes (i.e. price, packaging or product appearance information, user imaginary i.e. what kind of person use the product or service and usage imagery i.e. in what situations the product or service is used) are the external attributes of product or services which are purchase and consumption related. They may affect the purchase or consumption processes but do not directly affect the product performance.

Benefits: Benefit is the rationale for the purchase decision. Keller (1993) classified benefits into functional, experiential and symbolic benefits. Functional benefits are related to the intrinsic advantages derived from the consumption of product or services usually because of the product related attributes (example: hunger satisfaction from food). These benefits often are linked to the basic motivations, such as physiological and safety needs. Experiential benefits answer the question; what it feels like after using the product or service (example: happy, contented, excited etc.). These benefits satisfy experiential needs such as sensory pleasure. Symbolic benefits are the extrinsic benefits derived from product or service use and non-product attributes (example: satisfaction of social needs or self-esteem needs).

Attitudes: Attitudes are consumers’ overall assessment of a brand. Brand attitudes are important because they often form the basis for actions and behavior that consumers take with the brand (e.g., brand choice). Consumers brand attitudes generally depend on specific considerations concerning the attribute and benefits of the brand.

Challenges on Fashion Entrepreneurs

According to Burke (2008) entrepreneurs do not operate in vacuum, they work within a company, within an industry and within a particular market sector. The industry specific challenges are split into three categories: Industry conditions, Economics of the industry and Early finance

Industry conditions

Stone (2008) wrote in her book: “Fashion is, in many ways, like a river. A river is always in motion continuously flowing- sometimes it is slow and gentle, at other times rushing and turbulent. It is exciting and never the same. It affects those who rest on its shores. Its movement depend on the environment”.

To be an entrepreneur in the fashion sector is not easy. It demands a lot from fashion start-ups, as it is hard to overview the entire industry. The fashion designer Karl Lagerfeld expressed it in this way: “I make, I unmake and I remake. The fashion industry is unpredictable and hypercompetitive market with short product life cycles. In addition, the fashion sector can be seen as a saturated and volatile market. To gain market share fashion companies have to take customers of their

competitors. A fashion company needs an innovative business idea and a unique design language to capture the attention of customers that have an infinite choice of different products from upcoming fashion companies

Economics of the industry

One of the most powerful elements in fashion is time. Apparel is developed for different seasons, special events and for different times of the day. High fashion designers are working according to the traditionally fashion industry calendar, which is divided into two major seasons-spring/summer and autumn/winter. 'The whole fashion industry has arranged its business around this standard, it is visible for instance in the timing of fashion shows, which take place two times a year. Every company has naturally its own fashion cycle, whereby fashion design entrepreneurs mostly follow the international rhythm presenting two major collections a year to be part of the fashion business on a professional base. Managing the cash flow is especially a challenge in the fashion industry with its seasonal schedule. Due to the seasonality, the forecasting of the order volume is another challenging schedule. If a designer is new on the market, it is difficult to indicate how many clothing pieces will be sold.

Early finance

According to the experts contacted in the context of this research, getting finance for their start-ups is one of the major issues fashion entrepreneurs are facing. Difficulties in financing a new venture condition the growth opportunities of a company. The barriers to entry depend of course on the dimension of the venture, but for a small label it is possible to start basically with a sewing machine, compared to the clothing business where expensive machines are required.

There are two possible sources of external finance: debt and equity. Debt is borrowing money from an outside source with the promise to return the principal, in addition to an agreed-upon level of interest. Whereby equity occurs when a company gives away part of the ownership of their business. Source of external finance can be financial institutions, venture capital, business angels, grants and of course friends and family. Early finance for fashion start-ups is very limited and mostly only available for companies in a mature stage. New ventures need an adequate amount of capital to survive. A large number of businesses fail due to lack of enough finance backing the venture.

Designers and investors/banks have to understaff each other in order to gain a common ground for a business connection. Since investors and banks evaluate the business idea and the possibilities of the idea, it is firstly important to have a business plan and secondly to present it in an adequate manner. This seems to be a challenging for most designers. Bank refrains from financing fashion entrepreneurs when they determine that the business and entrepreneurial skills of a designer are insufficient. In general designers are afraid of owing money to banks

METHODOLOGY

The study used the quantitative method to determine the impact of brand identity and brand image to fashion entrepreneurs. According to Bryman (2012, p.20) that quantitative research approach is the research that places emphasis on numbers and figures in the collection and analysis of data. According to Creswell (2009; p.4) and Bryman (2012, p.408), it may perhaps guarantee respondent anonymity. For the purpose of this study a research design that was deemed more appropriate for the study was descriptive survey which is used to describe the characteristics of a population whereby the researcher directly examines the samples of that population. Adzahlie-Mensah, Agordah, & Gyamfua-Abrefa (2017).

Sample and Sampling Techniques

Purposive sampling was used to select 50 respondents made up of fashion entrepreneurs (14), fashion students (18) and consumers (18). Purposive sampling aided the researcher to select a sample that happens to be representative of the population under study. According to Mugenda (2003) when carrying out a study, 10% of the target population is a sufficient sample size to carry out study. This influenced the researcher's choice of 50 respondents out of the 500 population in the Greater Accra metropolis.

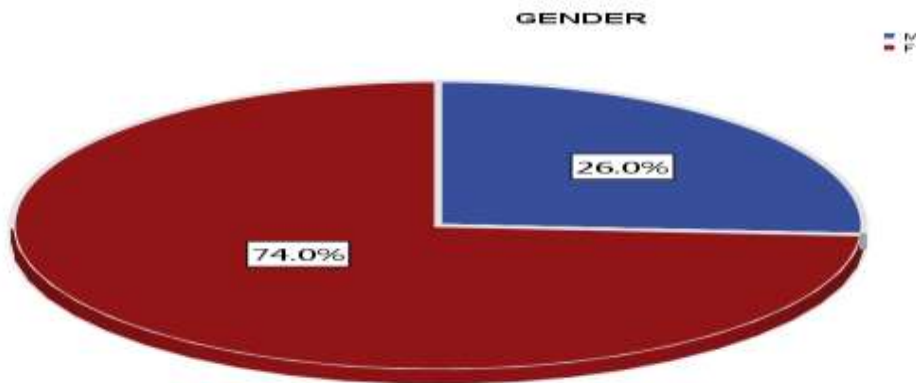
Research Instrument

Open ended questionnaires were used to gather data for analysis. The author worked with a survey in the form of an online self-completion questionnaire. A survey in this form was chosen because that technique allows collecting data from a relatively large number of people that represents wider population. Therefore, it is easier to generate findings since the gathered data is more generable (Rowley, 2014). Moreover, an online self-completion questionnaire enabled me to reach respondents in more effective and efficient way than other methods. The data are collected quickly and easily, and it is also very simple to administer them (Blaxter, Hughes and Tight, 2010).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Features

Figure 1: Pie Chart showing Respondents Gender



More than two thirds of the respondents 37(74.0%) are females while 13(26.0%) respondents are males

Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

Socio-Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Age in years		
18 – 30	32	64%
31 – 44	11	22%
45 and above	7	4%
Total	50	100%
Profession		
Unemployed	45	90%
Employed	5	10%
Total	50	100%

Majority of the respondents 32 (64%) are within the age group of 18-30 years while 7 (4%) are within the age range of 45years and above. More than two thirds of the respondents 45 (90%) are unemployed while 5(10%) of the respondents are employed.

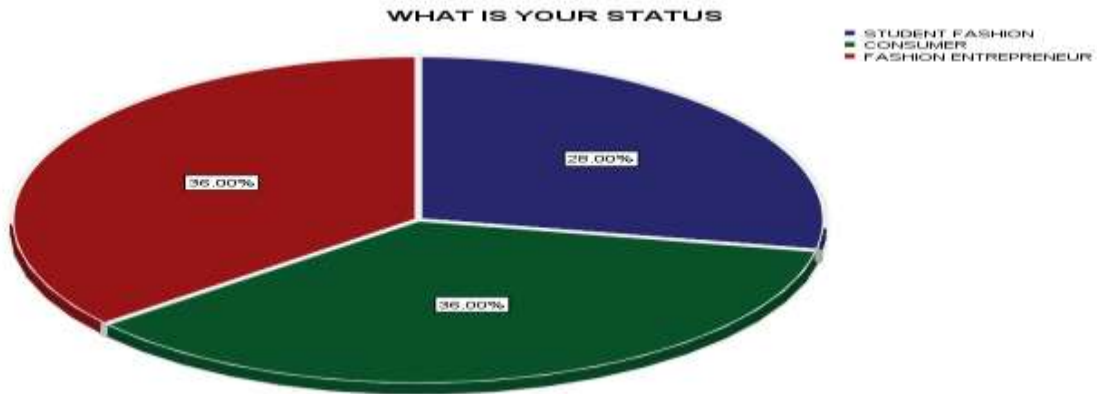


Figure 2: Pie Chart showing Respondents Status

More than One-third of the respondents 18(36.0%) are fashion entrepreneurs while only 14 (28.0%) respondents are fashion students.

Fashion Students Responses

Is the name, logo, symbol/ colors of a fashion enterprise a contributing factor to the progress of a firm?

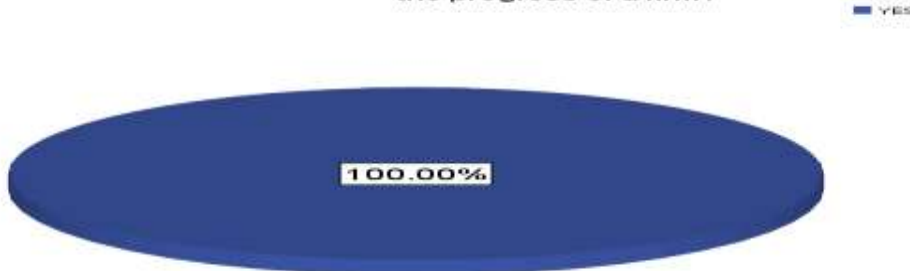


Figure 3: Pie Chart showing the contributing factors to the progress of a firm

All the respondents 14(100%) agreed that name, logo, symbol/ colors of a fashion enterprise are contributing factors to the progress of a firm



Figure 4: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on customers' complaints about the name of the enterprise

All the respondents 14(100%) opined that customers do not complain about the name of the enterprise

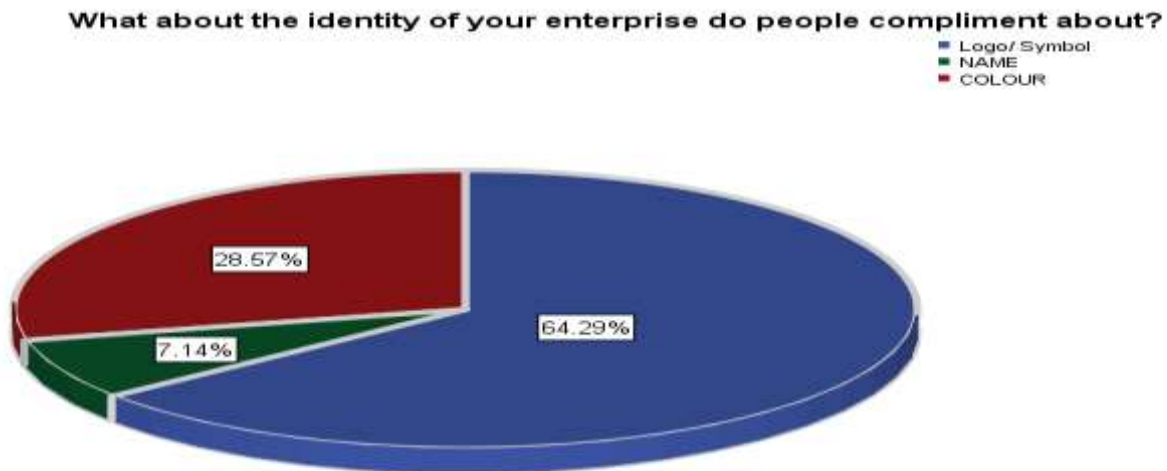


Figure 5: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on identity of people compliment

More than two thirds of the respondents 9(64.3%) asserted that people compliment logo of an enterprise while only 1(7.1%) of the respondents agreed that people compliment name of an enterprise.

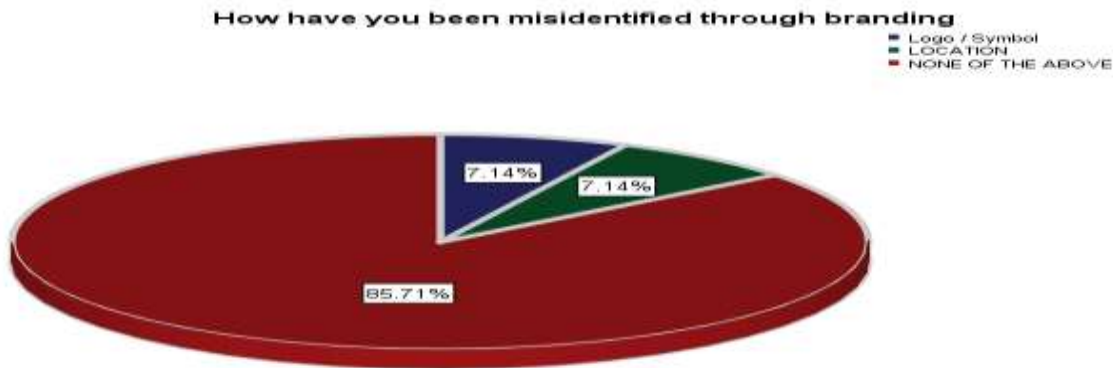


Figure 6: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on misidentified through branding
Majority of the respondents 12(85.7%) asserted that they have never been misidentified through logo or name while only 1(7.1%) of the respondents agreed that have been misidentified through location.

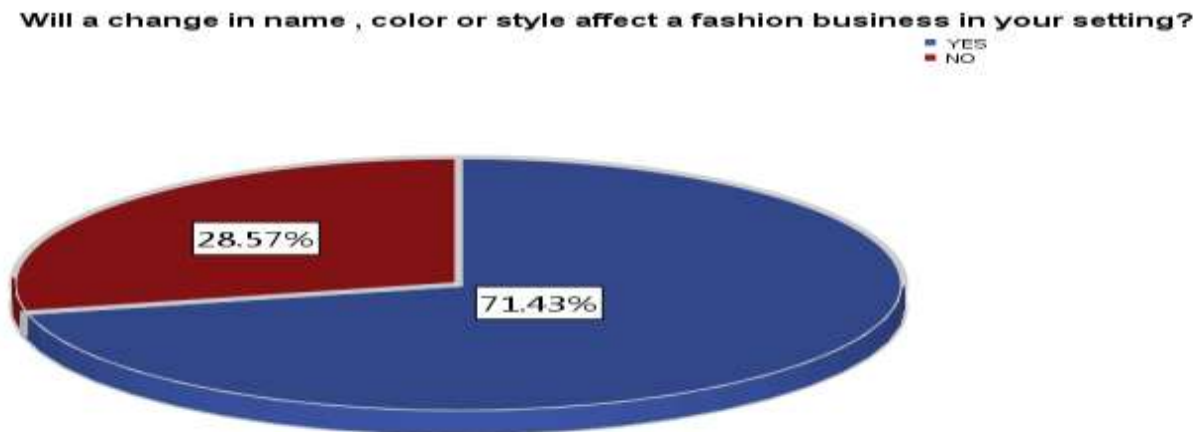


Figure 7: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on changes in name, color or style that affect fashion business.

About two thirds of the respondents 10(71.4%) agreed that a change in name, color or style does not affect a fashion business in their setting while only 4(28.57%) of the respondents agreed that a change in name, color or style affect a fashion business in their setting.

Fashion Entrepreneurs Responses

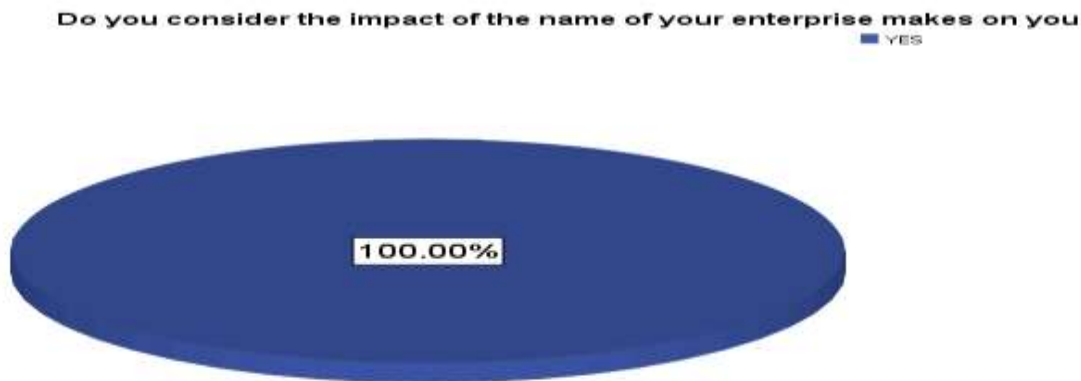


Figure 8: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on impact of the name on the enterprise

All the respondents 18 (100.0%) agreed that the name of their enterprise has a positive impact on them.

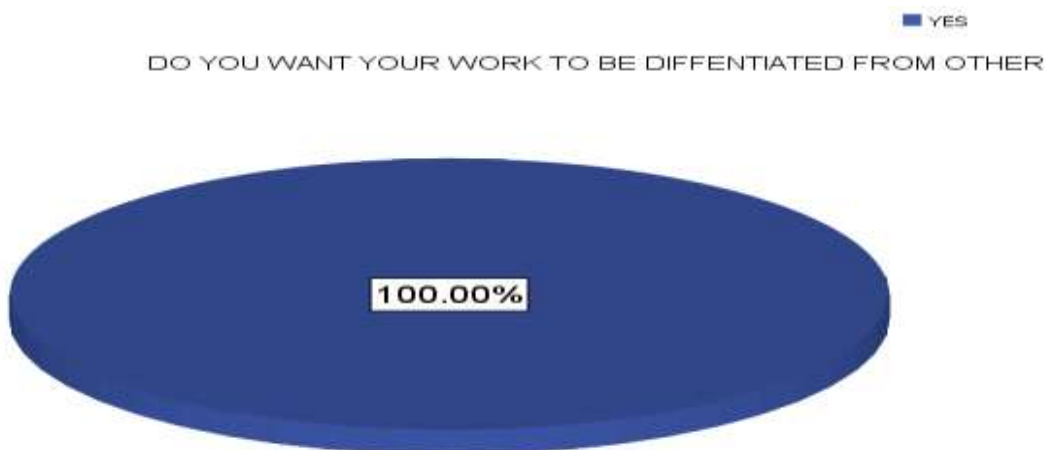


Figure 9: Pie Chart showing Respondents expectation of their work

All the respondents 18 (100.0%) agreed that they want their work to be differentiated from others

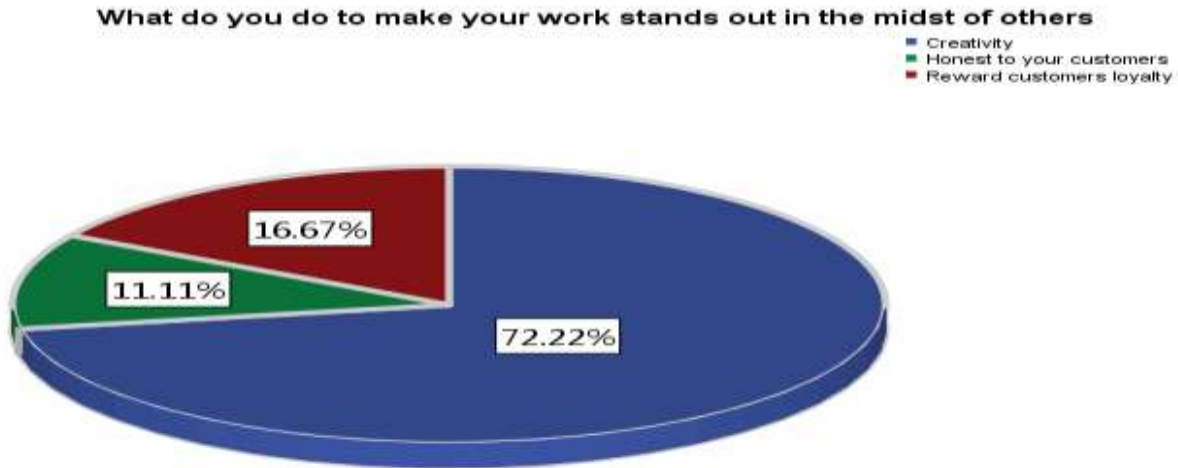


Figure 10: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on what to do to make their work stand out
Majority of the respondents 13 (72.0%) agreed that creativity makes their work to stand out from others while only 3(16.6) agreed that rewarding customer loyalty makes their work to stand out from others.

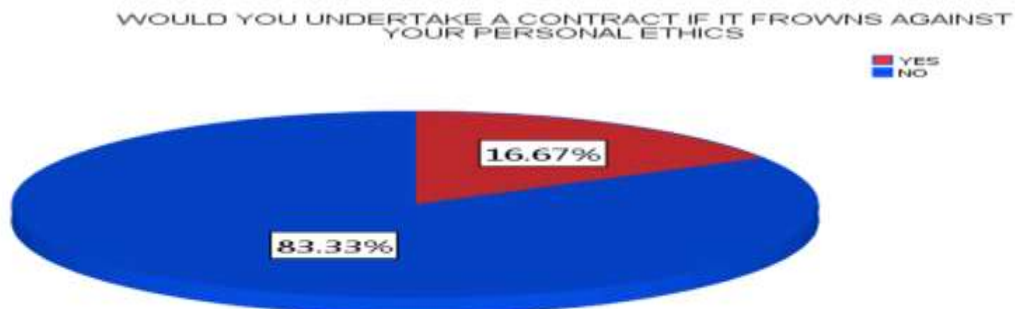


Figure 11: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on personal ethics
More than two-thirds of the respondents 15 (83.3%) opined that they cannot undertake a contract if it frowns on their personal ethics while 3 (16.7) could undertake a contract if it frowns on their personal ethics.

Would you take a skill to publicize your work

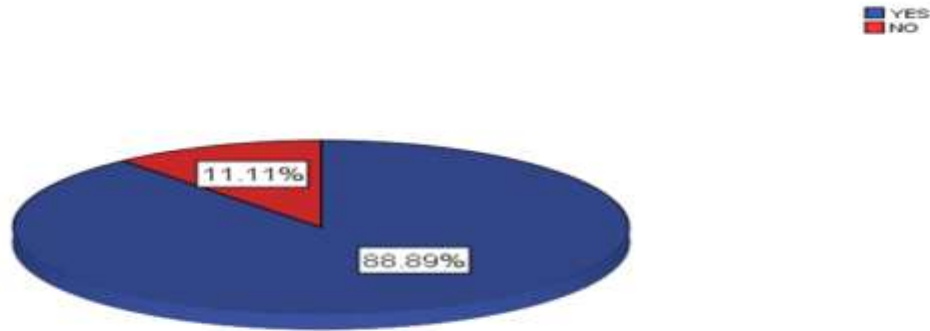


Figure 12: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on taken a skill to publicize their work

Majority of the respondents 16 (88.0%) asserted that they will like to take a skill to publicize their work while 3(11.1) disagreed

HAVE YOU UNDERGO ANY FORM OF BRANDING AS FASHION ENTREPRENEUR

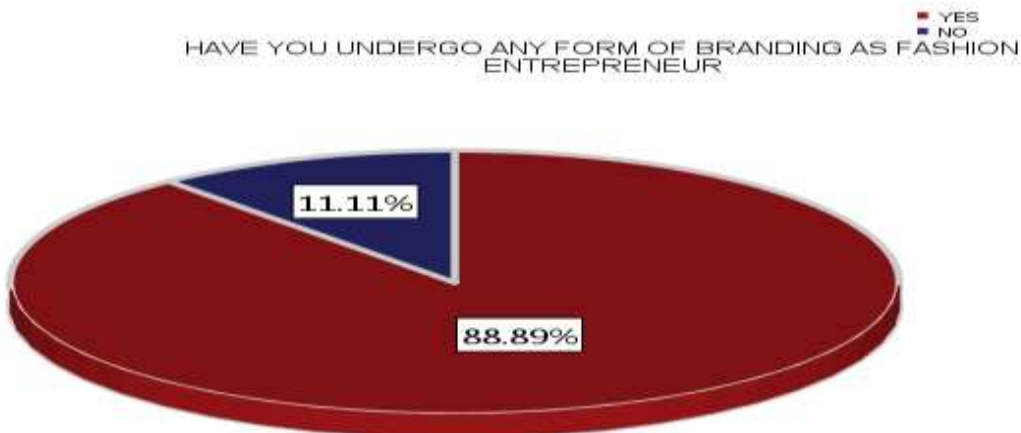


Figure 13: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on branding as fashion entrepreneurs

Majority of the respondents 16 (88.0%) agreed that they have undergone one form or the other in branding as a fashion designer while 3(11.1%) have not.

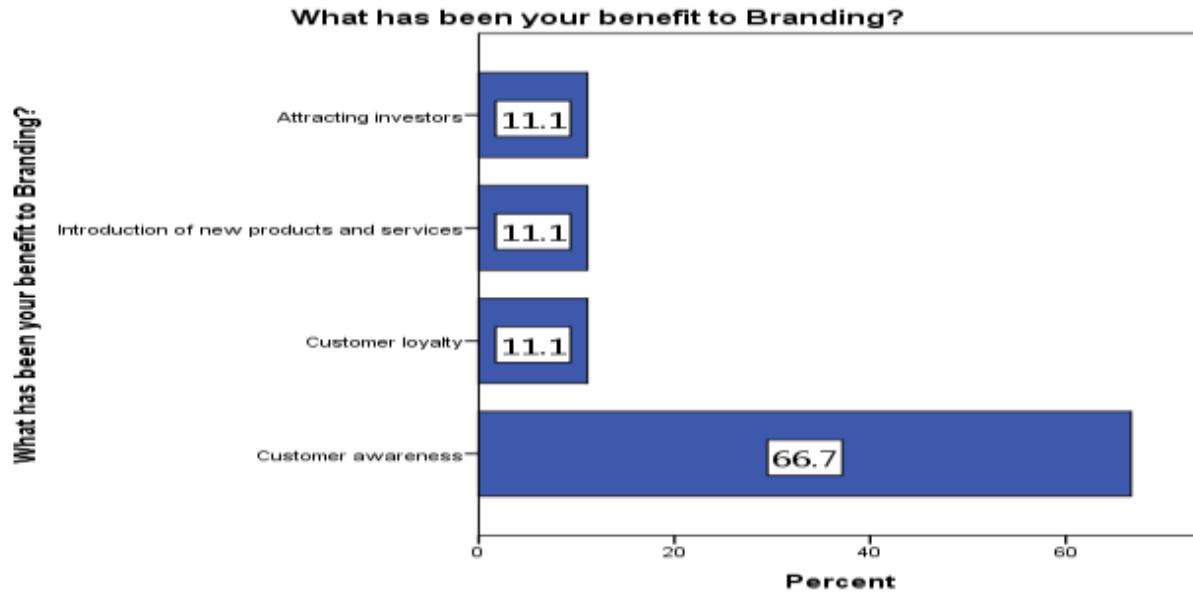


Figure 14: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on benefits of branding

More than two-thirds of the respondents 16 (38.0%) mentioned that customer awareness has been their major benefit to branding while 2(11.1%) of fashion entrepreneurs believes that customer loyalty, introducing new products and services and attracting investors are benefits of branding

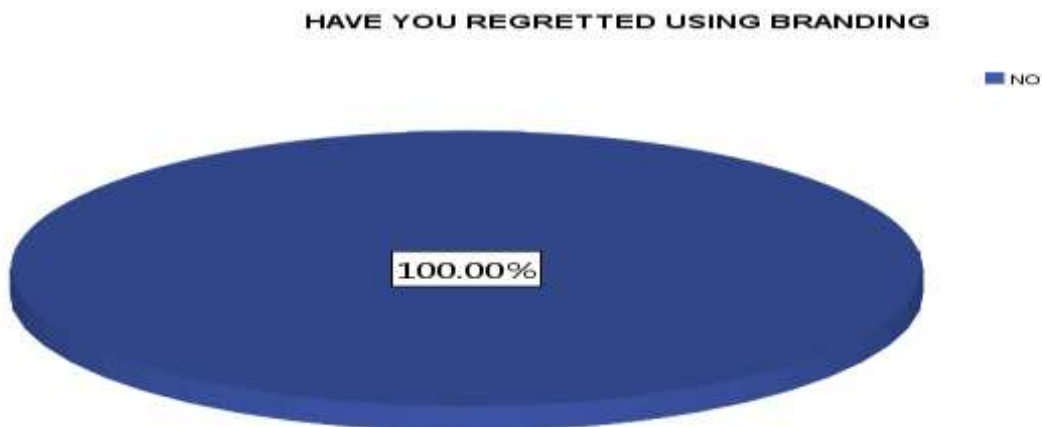


Figure 15: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on regret using branded materials

All the respondents 18 (100.0%) agreed that they have no regret using branded materials

Will you recommend branding to other people?

■ YES

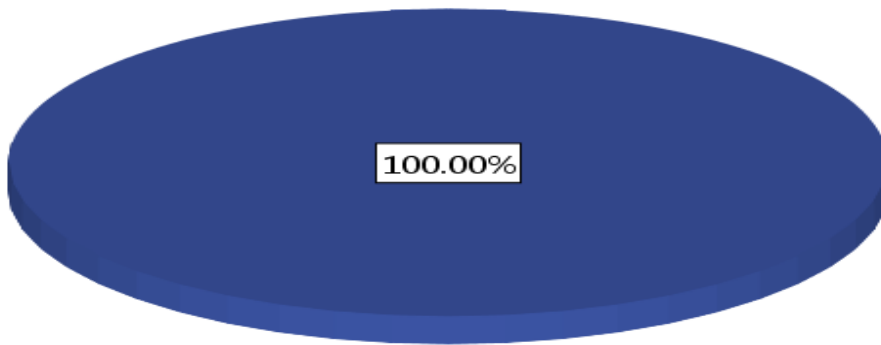


Figure 16: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on recommending branding to others

All the respondents 18 (100.0%) mentioned that they can recommend branded materials to other people.

DO YOU ENJOY YOUR BRAND AS A FSHION ENTREPRENEUR

■ YES



Figure 17: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on satisfaction on their brand as entrepreneurs

All the respondents 18 (100.0%) were satisfied with their brands as fashion entrepreneurs

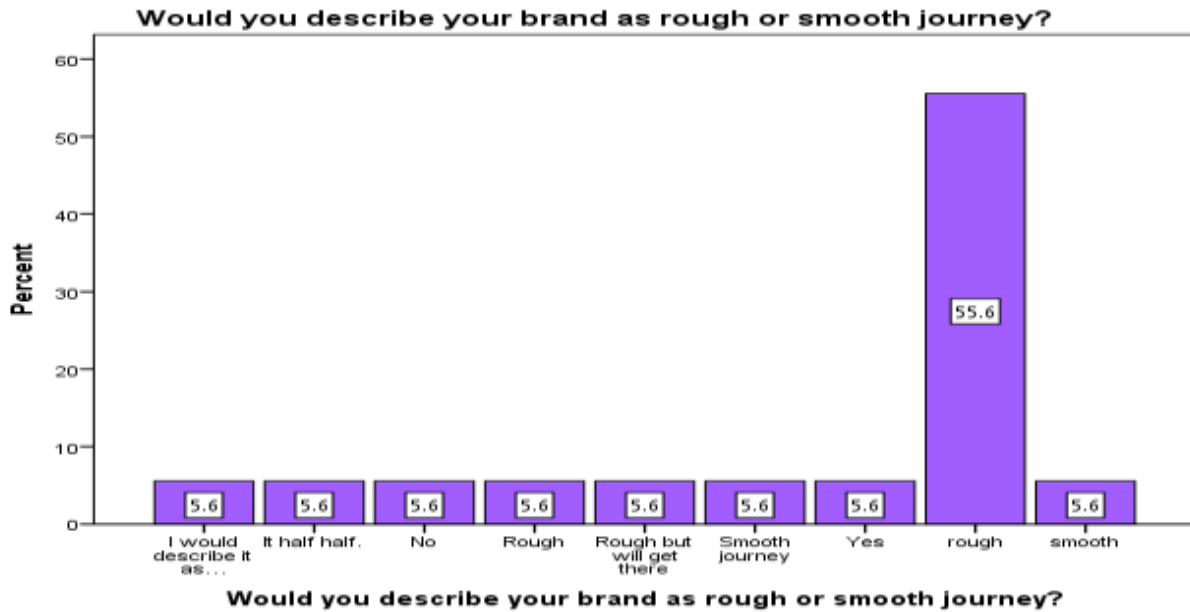


Figure 18: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on either their brand is rough or smooth
More than one-thirds of respondents 10 (55.6%) described their brand journey as rough, only 1(5.6%) described it as smooth.

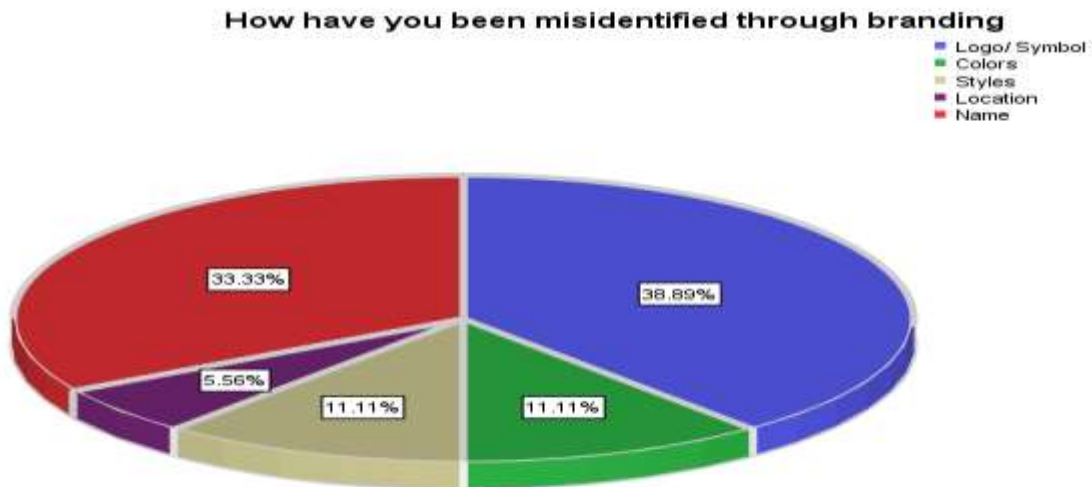


Figure 19: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on been misidentified through branding

One-third respondents 7 (38.9%) have been misidentified through logo/symbol, 6(33.3%) mentioned that they have been misidentified through names while only 1(5.5%) opined that they have been misidentified through location.

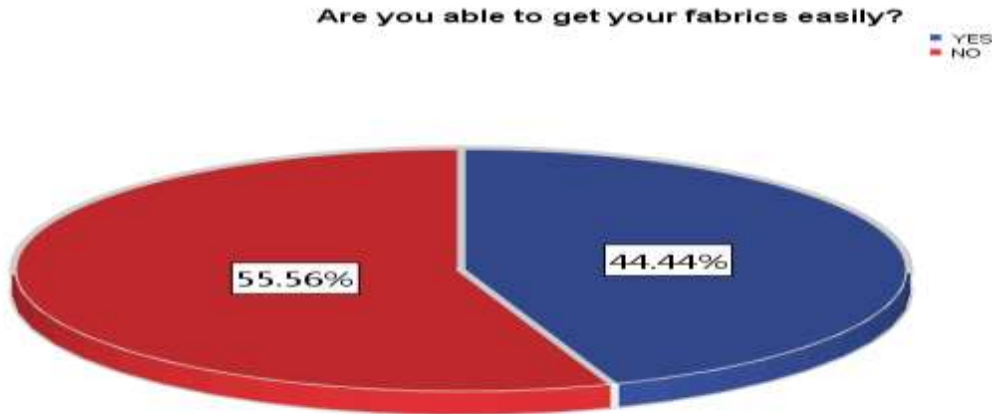


Figure 20: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on getting fabric easily

More than two-thirds respondents 10(55.56%) find it very difficult to get fabric easily for their production while 8(44.4%) find it easy to get fabric easily for their production.

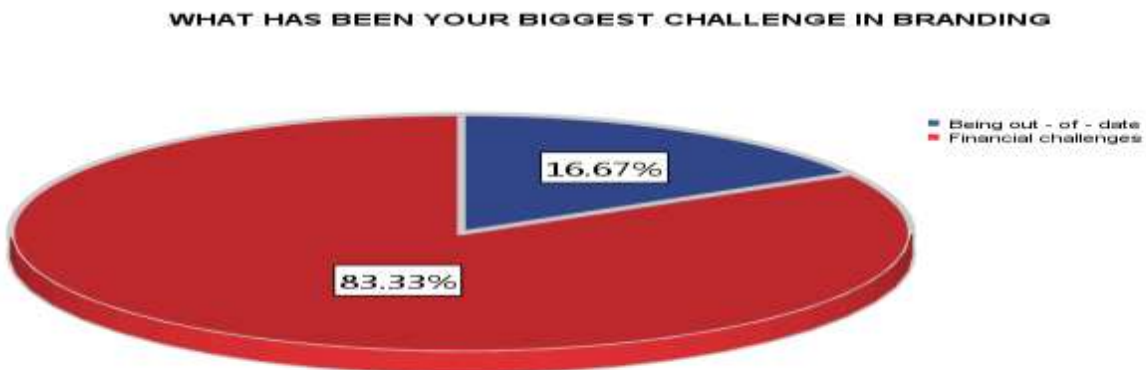


Figure 21: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on biggest challenges in branding

Majority of the respondents 15(83.56%) agreed that financial challenges has been the biggest challenge in branding while 3 (16.7%) agreed that being out -of-date has been their biggest challenge in branding

Consumer Responses

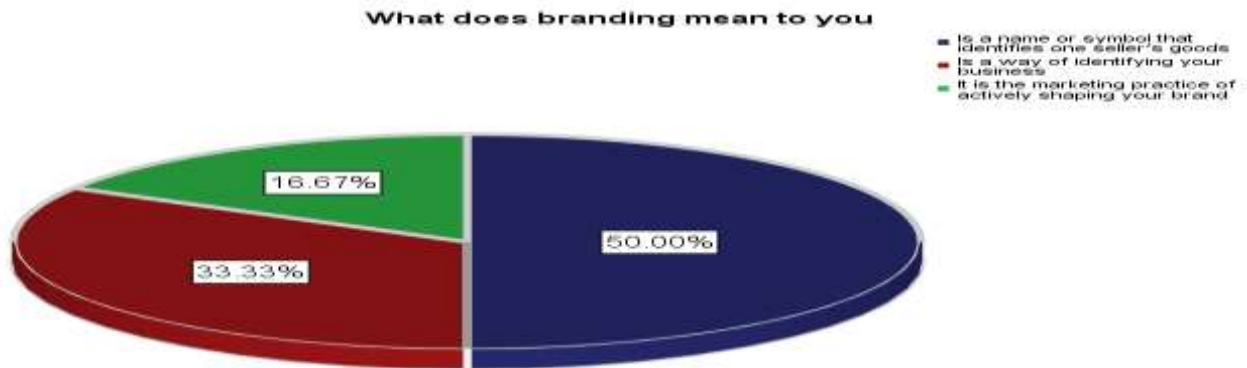


Figure 22: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on branding

More than one-thirds respondents 8 (44.4%) described branding as a name or symbol that identifies one seller's goods from another, 6 (33.3%) described branding as a way of identifying your business while only 3(16.6%) defined branding as marketing practice of actively shaping your brand

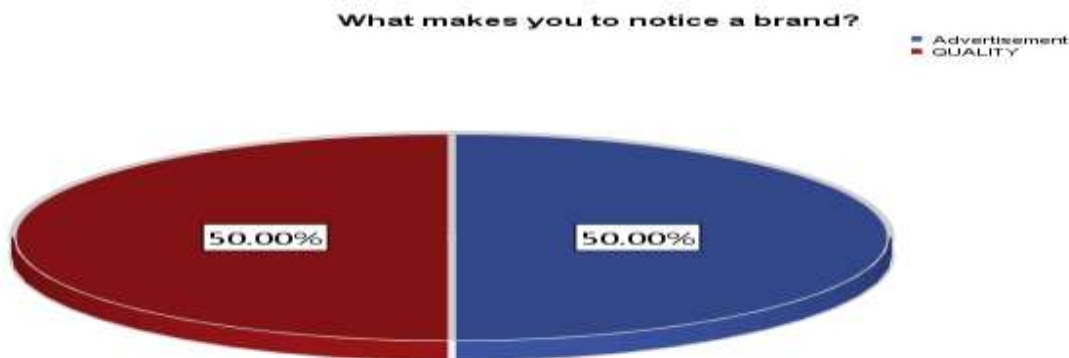


Figure 23: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on what makes them notice a brand

Half of the respondents 9 (50.0%) agreed that advertisement makes them to notice a brand while the other half 9 (50.0%) mentioned that quality makes them to notice a brand.

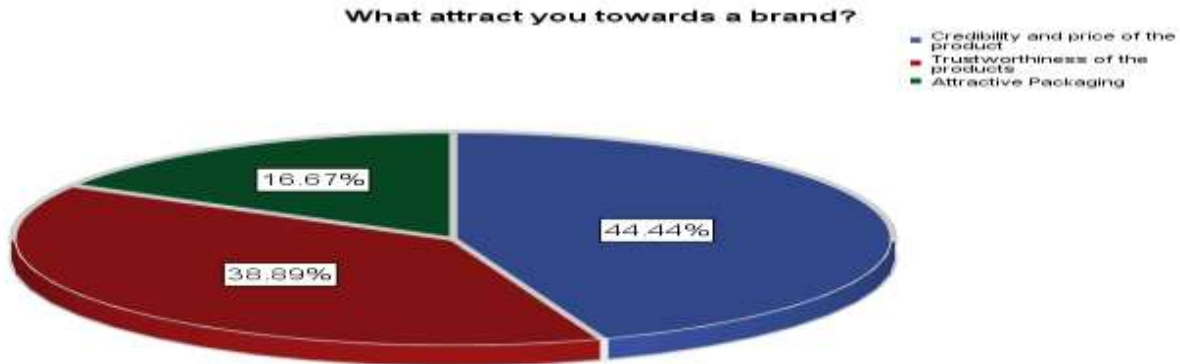


Figure 24: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on what attract them towards a brand

More than one third of the respondents 8 (44.4%) agreed that credibility and price of the product attract them towards a brand, 7(38.9%) of the respondent agree that trust worthiness of the products attract them towards a brand and only 3(16.6%) opined that attractive packaging attract them towards a brand.

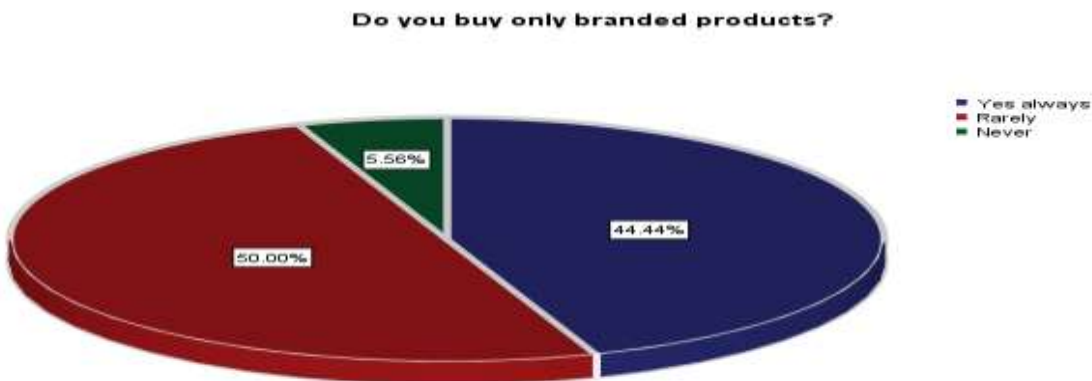


Figure 25: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on buying only branded product.

Half of the respondents 9 (50.0%) agreed that they rarely buy branded products, 8(44.4%) mentioned that they only buy branded products while 1 (5.6%) never buy branded products.

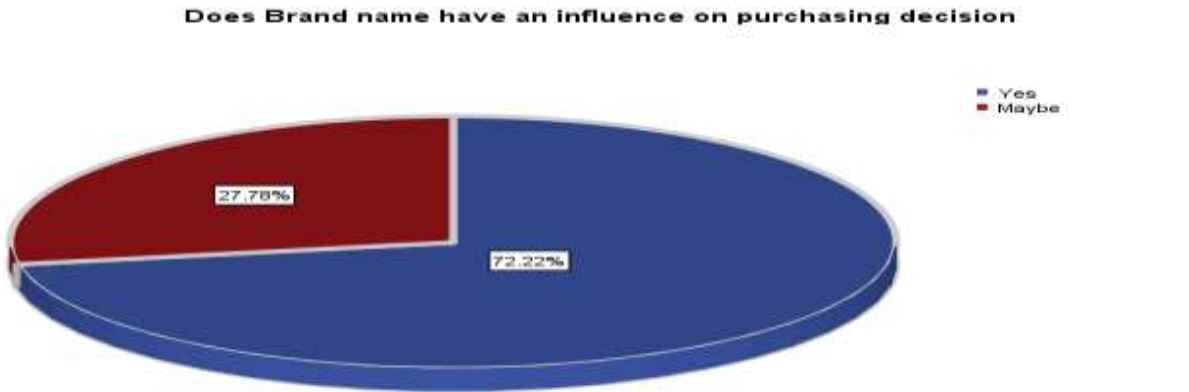


Figure 26: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on influence of brand name in purchasing decision

Majority of the respondents 13 (72.2%) opined that brand name has an influence on purchase decision while 5 (27.8%) are not sure of the statement.

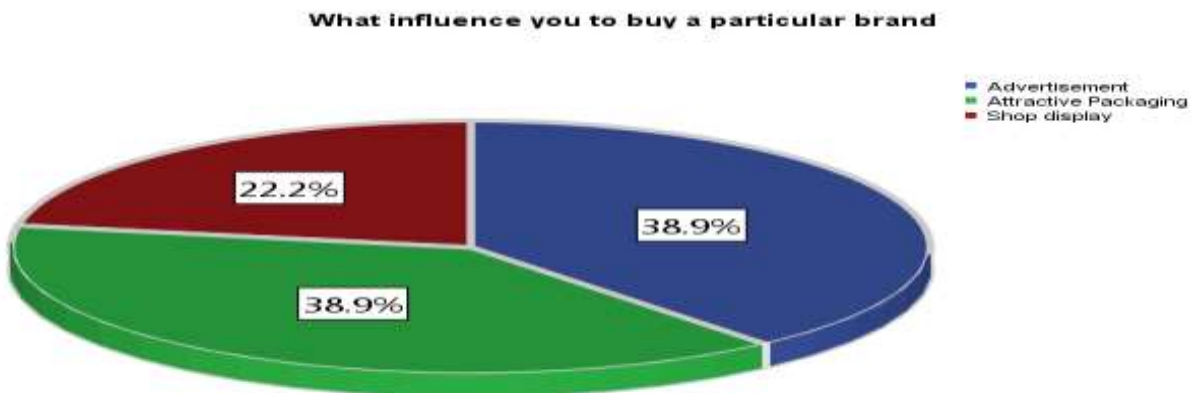


Figure 27: Pie Chart showing Respondents view on what influences them to buy a particular brand

More than One-third of the respondents 7 (38.0%) upheld the fact that advertisement influences them to buy a particular product. Also, more than One-third of the respondents mentioned that attractive packaging influences them to buy a particular product while 4(22.2) agreed that shop display influences them to buy a particular product.

Evidence from research

Evidence from this research study, as revealed through the responses obtained from each of the statements in the questionnaire is to know the impact of brand image and brand identity on fashion entrepreneurs.

In research question one, it was discovered that the essence of branding on fashion entrepreneurs are inseparable. Majority of the respondents agreed that name, logo, symbol/ colors of a fashion enterprise contribute to the progress of a firm. This was in agreement with Severi & Ling, 2013 who opined that, firms with high brand eventually gain greater competitive advantage and enjoy the opportunity for resilience against competitors' promotional pressure, and the creation of barriers to competitive entry. Logos can be quite concrete or pictorial in nature (example., the American Express centurion, Land o'Lakes butter Indian, the Morton salt girl with umbrella, and Ralph Lauren's polo player). Certain elements of the product or company can become a symbol (example., the Goodyear blimp, McDonald's golden arches, and the Playboy bunny) (Keller, 2003). Logos that convey meaning will be more readily remembered and recognized than will abstract logos. However, an abstract logo may be desirable, and even necessary, for multi-product companies that develop family or umbrella brands. Logos need not be as durable as brand names. They may (need to) be updated. However, when considering a change to a logo, it is best to assume that consumers may tolerate the change, but they will not necessarily embrace it. It is the old, familiar face that has earned their trust (Kohli & Leuthesser, 2001). Logos can be easily changed over time to achieve a more contemporary look. For example, Burger King, the United States' second-largest hamburger chain, added blue to its logo to make it more eye-catching and used slanted graphics to represent speed. It is worthy to note that when brand is strategically presented to clients, customers, investors and partners, this can improve the customer's loyalty.

Research question two was also answered by the respondents to determine the impact of brand identity and brand image to fashion entrepreneurs and consumers? Majority of the fashion entrepreneurs attest to the fact that they have considered the impact of their brand name on their enterprise, thirteen of the respondents 72.2% opined that brand name has an influence on purchase decision of their clients. On the other hand, fashion entrepreneurs mentioned that they have been misidentified through logo/symbol, names, colors, brand packages and location. This also is in agreement with Aaker, (2014) who stated that brand associations include product attributes, design, social program, quality, user imaginary, product breadth, being global, innovation, system solutions, brand personality, and symbols. Anything that connects the customer to the brand. They can be the basis for a customer relationship, purchase decision, user experience and brand loyalty.

As its' has been rightly outlined, brand identity and image has enormous impact on both fashion entrepreneurs and customers. In the world of fashion, every entrepreneur wants to outsmart their competitors, in lieu of this, they will sample quite a lot of brand, to identify the strength and weakness, usually in doing this, they come up with similar brands to what is in the market, which in most cases misinformed customers.

Research question three: what is the importance of brand identity and brand image to fashion? Two-third of the respondents mentioned that brand identity increases investors and customer awareness and customer loyalty. Brand Loyalty provides predictability and security of demand for the firm, and creates barriers to entry that make it difficult for other firms to enter the market. It can also translate into customer's willingness to pay higher price, often twenty percent to twenty-five percent more than competing brands (Keller, 2016). Brand Loyalty is the ultimate desired outcome of consumer learning. It consists of both attitudes and actual behaviors towards a brand. Attitudinal measures are concerned with consumers' overall feeling about the product or the brand. Behavioral measures are based on observable, factual behaviors regarding the brand, such as quantity purchase, purchase frequency, and repeated buying (Schiffman & Kanuk, 2010). Keller (2013) reveals that Brand Loyalty occurs when customers are engaged, or willing to invest time, energy, money, or other resources in the brand beyond those expended during purchase or consumption of the brand. Brand loyalty is the heart of any brand's value because, once it's obtained, loyalty is persistent. Customer inertia will benefit the brand that has earned loyalty (Aaker, 2014). Previous studies by Sasmita & Suki (2015) reveals that brand loyalty have an impact on brand equity among Malaysian young consumers who consume sportswear brands. Research by Atilgan et al (2005) shows that brand loyalty strongly influences brand equity on Turkey's beverage industry. Kotler & Keller (2016) define brand awareness as consumer's ability to recognize or recall the brand in sufficient detail to make a purchase. Brand Awareness is related to the strength of the brand node or trace in memory, which we can measure as the consumer's ability to identify the brand under different condition. Raising brand awareness increases the likelihood that the brand will be a member of consideration set, the handful of brands that receive serious consideration for purchase. It influences the formation and strength of the associations that make up the brand image and consists of brand recognition and brand recall performance. Creating brand awareness by increasing the familiarity of the brand through repeated exposure (for brand recognition) and forging strong associations with the appropriate product category or other relevance purchase or consumption cues (for brand recall) is an important first step in building brand equity (Keller, 2013). Brand Awareness is an often undervalued asset, has been shown to affect perceptions, liking, and even behavior. People like the familiar and are prepared to ascribe all sorts of positive attribute to item they find familiar. Brand awareness can affect whether a brand is recalled at a key time in the purchasing process and thus among the brands the customer considers (Aaker, 2014). Previous study by Sasmita and Suki (2015) reveals that brand awareness does have an impact on brand equity among Malaysian young consumers who consume sportswear brands. Research by Pouromid & Iranzadeh (2012) also shows that the relationship between brand

awareness and brand equity is positive and significant among Iranian female consumer of household products. However, research by Atilgan et al (2005) shows that brand awareness only has a weak influence on brand equity among Turkey's beverage consumers.

Research question four: What is/are the challenges of fashion entrepreneur, Majority of the respondents in this study agreed that financial challenges have been the biggest challenge in branding. According to Aaker (2014), a company creates a new brand; it needs a lot of money to Promote the brand in the market, when it uses the house of brand portfolio strategy as there are no connection between new brand and the parent brand. The new brand cannot use the parent brand image to promote itself, so the company has to pay a large amount of money for market communication. Usually in entrepreneurship space, fund is usually a hindrance to innovation, sales, promotional services and payment of wages. This led to taken loans which in paying back hinder the flow and progress of the business.

CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it was concluded that, there was a significant effect between brand image and brand identity on fashion entrepreneurs' business, this span through their different ages, years in service, local environment and profession. It was also clear that individual holds different perception on branding, some believe that name or symbol that identifies one seller's goods, another describe branding as a way of identifying your business others define branding as marketing practice of actively shaping your brand. Logo, Symbol/colors of a fashion enterprise are contributing factor to the progress of a firm, simply put fashion entrepreneurs should pay keen attention to brands identity for maximum turn up in their business. It was also discovered that client, customers and inventors compliment logo of an enterprise for business transactions. Some of the respondents also agreed that a change in name, color or style affect a fashion business in their local environment while others attest to the fact that a change in name, color or style affects a fashion business in their setting. In addition, the study entrepreneurs strongly agreed that fund has been a major setback for their business, in service delivery, innovation, promotional services and in wages payment. Perhaps its' was strongly recommended that soft loans, grants and government assisted programs should be implemented to cater for this needs.

Recommendation

1. Fashion entrepreneurs should pay more attention to the needs of their client and delivered as prompt as possible
2. Fashion entrepreneurs should give adequate time to come up with brands that speak for them anytime and anywhere.
3. Fashion entrepreneurs should cultivate the habit of setting fund aside for their business needs, as fund will be required to enhance their business, relying on government, non-governmental organization or others for loans may not always be available

4. Creativity should be the focus of fashion entrepreneurs, because we live in a world where change is constant.
5. Government should implement a sustainable system that rewards creativity in the world of fashion to keep fashion entrepreneurs on their toes to deliver something different, adorable and worth going for.
6. Consumers should communicate their desires to their loyal brands makers for mutual benefit.

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