Implications of Brand Awareness on Repeat Purchases in the Refined Palm Oil Sector in Cameroon

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Research Article

Abstract

Purpose: In highly competitive commodity markets like Cameroon's refined palm oil industry, brand awareness is often assumed to drive customer retention. However, empirical evidence remains inconclusive. This study investigates whether brand awareness significantly influences repeat purchases in such homogeneous markets, addressing a critical gap in the literature while offering practical insights for marketers.

Methods: Using a quantitative cross-sectional design, data were collected via an online survey from 423 consumers, selected through convenience sampling. Brand awareness was measured through recall, image, association, and trust, while repeat purchases were assessed via frequency, loyalty intention, switching resistance, and advocacy. Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression and Maximum Likelihood Structural Equation Modeling (ML-SEM) were employed to analyze the relationships, controlling for demographic variables like age, income, and education.

Results: The study reveals a strong positive relationship (β = 0.649, p < 0.001) between brand awareness and repeat purchases, with brand association and image emerging as the most influential drivers. Price sensitivity also significantly impacted repeat purchase behavior, while demographic factors showed negligible effects.

Implications: The findings validate the role of brand awareness in commoditized markets, suggesting that marketers should prioritize cognitive brand awareness, particularly through consistent messaging and trust-building, despite product homogeneity. Policymakers can leverage these insights to support local brands through quality certifications and consumer education.

Limitations: The cross-sectional design limits causal inferences, and convenience sampling may affect generalizability. Future longitudinal or experimental studies could strengthen these findings.

Keywords: Brand awareness, Repeat purchases, Commodity markets, Maximum Likelihood Structural Equation Modeling, Cameroon

1. Introduction

In markets characterized by high competition, brand awareness has emerged as a critical determinant of customer retention, yet its operationalization in commodity-driven sectors remains understudied. Cameroon's refined palm oil industry, an FCFA 170 billion market with several domestic brands, presents a unique laboratory to examine this relationship (Tening *et al*., 2023). With homogeneous products (Azur,

Mayor, Cle'or, Prima, Star) competing on near-identical price points and functional attributes, brand awareness becomes the decisive battlefield for customer loyalty demonstrated in repeated purchases (Arslan & Altuna, 2010; Thomassen, 2006).

Brand awareness refers to a consumer's ability to recognize or recall a brand under different conditions (Keller, 1993). It is measured through constructs such as brand recall (the ability to retrieve the brand from memory), brand association (mental linkages tied to the brand), brand image (perceptions about the brand's identity), and brand trust (confidence in the brand's reliability) (Aaker, 1996; Esch et al., 2006). These cognitive markers become crucial in shaping purchase decisions in commoditized markets like refined palm oil, where functional differences are minimal. Meanwhile, repeat purchases which is a key indicator of customer retention are assessed through purchase frequency (how often consumers rebuy the brand), loyalty intention (willingness to repurchase), switching resistance (reluctance to choose alternatives), and advocacy (recommending the brand to others) (Oliver, 1999; Wijiastuti & Cantika, 2021).

The relationship between brand awareness and repeat purchases hinges on cognitive dominance; when a brand occupies top-of-mind awareness, it is more likely to be repurchased (Keller, 1993; La et al., 2023). However, in homogeneous markets, this link becomes paradoxical. While strong brand recall and trust may foster loyalty (Cheverton, 2002), the lack of perceptual differentiation can render branding efforts ineffective (Subawa et al., 2020). Emerging research suggests that even marginal awareness advantages can disproportionately boost retention (Wijiastuti & Cantika, 2021). Nevertheless, Cameroon's refined palm oil market presents a counterpoint: despite aggressive branding (billboards, radio jingles, symbolic packaging), 72% of consumers still view competing brands as interchangeable (Ministry of Commerce, Cameroon, 2020). This raises a critical question: *Does branding drive repeat purchases in a market context characterized by limited differentiation?* This study is an effort to answer this question.

Cameroon's refined palm oil sector is a fiercely contested space, with domestic brands vying for dominance in a market where price and product attributes are nearly uniform (Moki et al., 2023). Unlike differentiated industries where branding can command premium loyalty, consumers here exhibit low switching costs and minimal emotional attachment to brands (Amiri, 2016). This commoditization undermines traditional branding strategies, creating a gap between awareness and actual repurchase behavior. The Ministry of Commerce (2020) notes that while brand recognition is high, it rarely translates into sustained loyalty—a disconnect that demands empirical scrutiny.

This study is pivotal for both theory and practice. Academically, it challenges prevailing assumptions about brand awareness's universal efficacy, particularly in commoditized, low-involvement markets (Sutaguna, 2023). It offers practitioners actionable insights into whether and how branding investments can yield retention payoffs in Cameroon's refined palm oil industry. Given the sector's economic significance (FCFA 170 billion annually), resolving this impasse could redefine marketing strategies for commodity producers across emerging markets. This paper aims to deliver evidence-based recommendations for sustaining loyalty in seemingly indifferent markets by examining the subtle interplay between brand awareness metrics and repeat purchase behaviors.

2. Literature Review

Several studies have examined the nexus between brand awareness and customers' repeat purchases. Several of them found that increased brand awareness positively and significantly impacted repeat purchases. Murugan & Kirubakaran (2025) conducted a study on electronics in Vellore District, revealing that brand awareness, driven by advertising, social media, and word-of-mouth, significantly boosts repeat purchases. Analysis of 100 consumers highlights product quality, competitive pricing, and reputation as trust-builders, reinforcing loyalty. The research advocates integrated traditional-digital strategies to

strengthen brand recognition and retention in competitive markets, emphasizing awareness's pivotal role in consumer decision-making for smartphones, laptops, and TVs.

Macdonald & Sharp's (2000) replication of Hoyer & Brown's study reaffirms brand awareness as a dominant heuristic in repeat-purchase contexts. Using a larger, mixed-experience sample, subjects prioritized high-awareness brands despite quality/price differences, deciding faster and sampling fewer alternatives. Awareness-driven choices exhibited a U-shaped pattern across trials, suggesting inertia rather than gradual heuristic abandonment. Contrary to the original, no significant shift toward quality emerged in final trials, underscoring awareness's persistent influence on habitual consumer decisions.

Alfian *et al* (2024) conducted a study to determine the influence of Brand Awareness, Brand Loyalty, and Brand Reputation on Purchase Decisions of merchandise from the RRQ e-sports team. Their research used quantitative descriptive methods and purposive sampling with the criteria that the respondent involved in the research was someone who knew and had purchased e-sports merchandise products directly at Rex Regum Qeon (RRQ) with a purchase range of March 2023 - March 2024. A total of 100 respondents were involved in the research. They used Partial Least Squares as data analysis in the research and processed it using the Smart PLS analysis tool version 3.3.9. A Google Form questionnaire was distributed to respondents. Research results showed that Brand Awareness does not influence Purchasing Decisions.

In the study by Abonyi, Nwaizugbo, and Oparah (2024), the authors investigated the relationship between customers' intention to repeat purchases, brand loyalty, and overall customer loyalty regarding selected hand-held phones in Owerri, Nigeria. Utilizing a structured questionnaire, they surveyed 320 respondents drawn from customers of four major phone brands, achieving an 84% response rate. The data were analyzed using multiple correlation techniques via SPSS version 22.0. The findings revealed that brand awareness, brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty significantly influence customer loyalty. The study concluded that brand equity positively impacts repeat purchases, recommending that companies enhance brand awareness and improve service levels to foster increased repeat purchase behavior.

On their part, Munyoro and Sithole (2023) explored the role of brand recognition in enhancing customer retention for tea products in Zimbabwe, focusing on Tanganda Tea Company, through a questionnaire survey involving customers, marketing managers, and employees of Tanganda, the research aimed to assess brand familiarity and its impact on customer loyalty. The findings revealed that customers recognized the Tanganda brand as high-quality and distinct from competitors, with many expressing satisfaction and a willingness to pay a premium for its products. The study highlighted the effectiveness of traditional and social media in promoting brand recognition, which contributed positively to customer retention. Ultimately, the authors concluded that brand recognition significantly influences repeat purchases, recommending that Tanganda Tea Company implement further strategies to enhance brand awareness and customer engagement.

Finally, Hutabarat and Surya (2023) investigated the relationships among brand popularity, brand awareness, perceived quality, and repurchase intention among consumers of Hyundai electric cars. Employing a quantitative research approach, the study utilized purposive sampling to gather data from 203 Hyundai car owners through an electronic questionnaire distributed via Google Forms over three months. The data analysis was conducted using SmartPLS software, which tested the validity and reliability of the variables, as well as the research model using metrics such as R^2, Q^2, and RMS theta. The findings revealed that brand popularity did not significantly influence brand loyalty, and brand awareness did not directly affect repurchase intention. However, brand awareness and perceived quality were found to impact brand loyalty, while brand popularity, perceived value, and brand loyalty collectively influenced purchase intention. The study concluded that positive experiences with Hyundai vehicles enhance consumer interest in repurchasing Hyundai electric cars, underscoring the importance of perceived quality and brand loyalty in driving repurchase intentions.

3. Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study examines the relationship between brand awareness and repeat purchases, incorporating key dimensions of each construct while controlling for relevant external factors. Brand awareness is operationalized through four critical components: brand recall, brand image, brand association, and brand trust. These elements collectively determine a brand's cognitive prominence in consumers' minds (Keller, 1993; Aaker, 1991). On the other hand, repeat purchases are measured through purchase frequency, loyalty intention, switching resistance, and advocacy, reflecting sustained customer loyalty (Oliver, 1999; Bhagat et al., 2018). The framework also accounts for control variables—price sensitivity, education level, age, income, and residence—to isolate the distinct impact of brand awareness on repurchase behavior (Chiu et al., 2012). By analyzing these interconnected dimensions, the framework provides a comprehensive lens to assess how brand awareness drives repeat purchases in Cameroon's refined palm oil market, where product homogeneity makes cognitive brand equity particularly decisive. Figure 1, which follows, captures this.
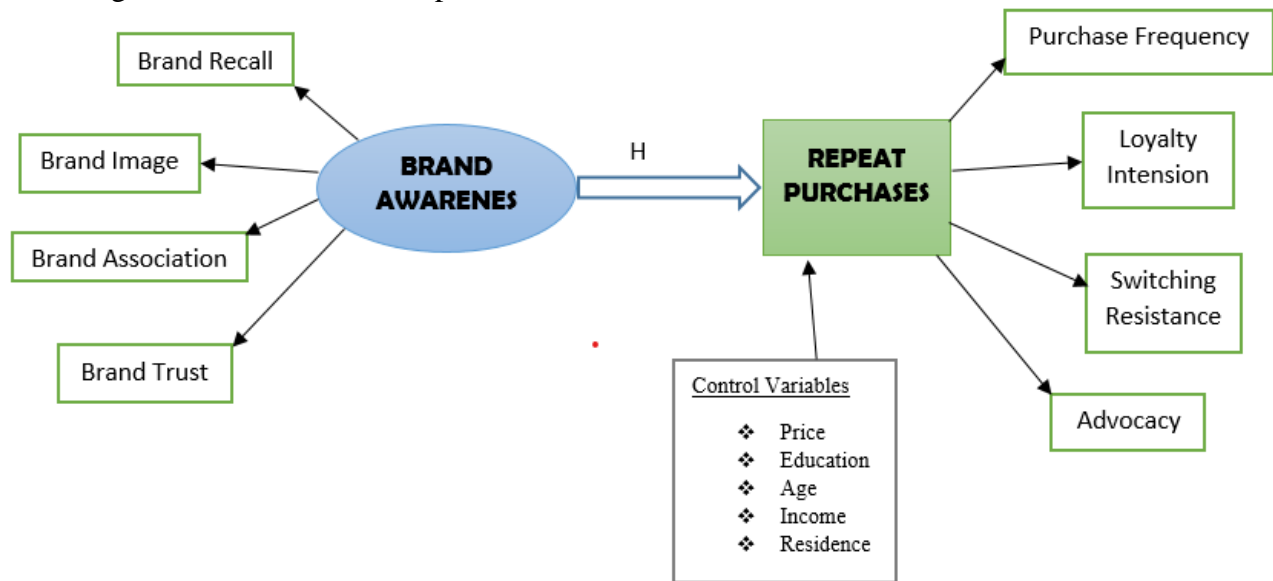

Fig. 1: Conceptual Framework
Source: Created by Authors (2025)

4. Methodology

This study used the non-probability convenience sampling technique to select 423 participants through an online survey, targeting a vast population of over 10 million refined palm oil consumers (Mbodiam, 2024). This approach was deemed appropriate due to its practicality, allowing for rapid data collection without the constraints of predefined quotas or demographic stratification. By selecting participants based on their availability and willingness to respond, a diverse range of consumer perspectives was obtained while minimizing sampling bias by carefully considering varying demographics such as age, gender, and socioeconomic status. The substantial sample size enhances the reliability of our findings, making them more reflective of the overall consumer experience.

This study employed Cochran's (1963) sample size formula to determine a statistically robust participant threshold, ultimately enrolling 423 respondents, 10% above the calculated minimum of 384, to account for potential non-responses and regional accessibility challenges. The formula was strategically selected for its capacity to handle indefinite population sizes, while maintaining precision through a 95% confidence level (Z=1.96) and 5% margin of error. By setting proportional variability at p=0.5, the design conservatively

accommodated the nation's diverse consumption patterns across multiple socioeconomic strata. This methodological approach balanced statistical rigor with field practicality.

4.1. Research Design and Method of Data Collection

This investigation employed a quantitative cross-sectional design to test the hypothesis empirically: "There is no significant impact of brand awareness on repeat purchases of refined palm oil brands in Cameroon" [H_0: βBrand Awareness→Repeat Purchases = 0]. Utilizing a structured questionnaire validated through pilot testing (n=45, α=0.84) and expert review, data were collected from 423 systematically sampled consumers, exceeding Cochran's minimum sample requirement (n=384) for 95% confidence. The instrument operationalized brand awareness through 5-point Likert scales on brand recall, brand image, brand trust, and brand association. At the same time, repeat purchase behavior was measured using 5-point Likert scales on repeat purchase frequency, loyalty intention, brand switching resistance, and advocacy. Demographic covariates, including gender, educational level, residence, household income, price, and age, were incorporated to control for confounding variables, with data anonymization protocols and real-time consistency checks ensuring methodological rigor. This design enabled simultaneous testing of cognitive brand equity components and behavioral loyalty patterns through regression analysis, while maintaining ecological validity through nationwide geographical coverage.

The study implemented a digital-first data collection strategy, utilizing email and WhatsApp platforms to administer the survey to targeted consumer segments across Cameroon via shareable survey links containing embedded demographic screeners. The questionnaire, optimized for mobile completion through Google Forms' responsive design interface, incorporated IP duplication safeguards to ensure data integrity. Over an 8-week collection period, 587 initiated responses were recorded, with 423 valid completions (72.1% retention rate). Ethical compliance was maintained through electronic informed consent protocols, GDPR-aligned anonymization of personally identifiable information, and automatic deletion of abandoned partial responses after 72-hour inactivity periods.

4.2. Model Specification

The model in this study was influenced by some researchers (Zhao et al., 2022; Chauhan, 2023; Abbas et al., 2021), Brand Recognition (BRG), Brand Recall, Brand Image (BI), Brand Association, and Brand Trust. These models have given the basis for understanding the factors determining repeat purchases. The model used in this study is based on these earlier investigations and looks like this:

$Repeat\ purchase\ (RP) = f\ (Brand\ awareness\ ) \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots..(1)$

Consequently, the functional association between the variables in the model has the following form:

$RP = f\ (BRG, BR, BI, BA, BT, P, I, A, LE, G, R) \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots…..(2)$

More specifically, the economic model is specified in equation 3 below:

$$RP_t = \beta_0 + \beta_1\ BRG_i + \beta_2\ BR_i + \beta_3\ BI_i + \beta_4\ BA_i + \beta_5\ BT_i + \beta_6\ P_i + \beta_7\ I_i + \beta_8\ A_i + \beta_9\ LE_i + \beta_{10}\ G_i + \beta_{11}\ R_i + \mu_i. \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots…..(3)$$

RP represents the Repeat purchase, *BRG*=Brand recognition, *BR* represents Brand recall, *BI* represents Brand Image, *BA* represents Brand association, *BT* represents brand trust, *P* represents Price, *I*=represents Income, *A*=represents Age, *LE*=represents Level of education, *G*=represents Gender, and *R* represents Residence (urban and rural) are the explanatory variables in the multivariate analysis and the choice of these variables relies on the measurability of psychological well-being in Cameroon. The β_0 is a constant term, and β_1 to β_{11} are estimated parameters in the model, and u_i is an error term.

4.3. Estimation Technique

The study uses the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) technique as the estimation technique, which is well-justified for the objective of the study. OLS regression is a widely accepted and robust statistical method for analysing the relationship between dependent and exogenous variables (Burton, 2021). The justification for using OLS regression is further strengthened by the systematic data analysis process, which allows for

the necessary data preparation, diagnostics, and interpretation of the regression results to ensure the validity and reliability of the findings.

The researchers use systematic data analysis, including selection, categorization, comparison, synthesis, and interpretation, to provide insights beyond raw data. They use STATA version 14 for semi-structured questionnaire analysis, a widely accepted technique in social science research. This comprehensive analytical approach ensures the research findings are grounded in a rigorous methodological framework, allowing the researcher to explore the complexities of the relationship and providing insights that can inform policy and practice in the sector.

The researchers corroborate their analysis with maximum likelihood structural equation modelling (ML-SEM). This is equally a robust estimation technique suitable for analysing complex relationships between variables. It combines the benefits of factor analysis and regression, providing insights into the effects of brand awareness on repeat purchases (Hidayat & Wulandari, 2022).

5. Results
5.1 Summary of Descriptive Statistics
Table 1 presents the summary statistics of the variables in the study. The results comprised 423 respondents and provided insights into consumer behavior and demographics. On average, 22.4% of respondents are aware of the brand, while 19.9% have made repeat purchases, indicating low brand engagement. Price sensitivity, measured on a scale from 0 to 1, averages 0.22, suggesting moderate consumer pricing concern.

Table 1: Summary Statistics

Variable	Obs	Mean	Std. dev.	Min	Max
Brand awareness	423	.2244991	.2388699	0	1
Repeat purchase	423	.1994326	.2107888	0	1
price	423	.2239375	.1791997	0	1
male	423	.5579196	.4972221	0	1
female	423	.4420804	.4972221	0	1
No education	423	.1725768	.3783285	0	1
Primary education	423	.1631206	.3699131	0	1
Secondary education	423	.3427896	.4752039	0	1
Tertiary education	423	.321513	.4676102	0	1
age	423	34.02364	10.83917	18	56
Income	423	171576.8	124302.9	30000	430000
Rural residence dummy	423	.4420804	.4972221	0	1

Source: Constructed by authors from field data

The sample is slightly male-dominated, with 55.8% identifying as male and 44.2% as female. Educational attainment is fairly distributed, with 17.3% having no formal education, 16.3% with primary, 34.3% with secondary, and 32.2% with tertiary education. The average age of respondents is 34 years, ranging from 18 to 56 years, reflecting a predominantly young to middle-aged demographic. Income levels vary widely, with a mean of 171,577 FCFA and values ranging from 30,000 FCFA to 430,000 FCFA, indicating economic diversity. Additionally, 44.2% of the participants reside in rural areas, highlighting a balanced urban-rural representation.

5.2 Correlation Results
The correlation matrix in Table 2 reveals strong positive relationships between brand awareness, repeat purchases (r = 0.93), and price sensitivity (r = 0.86–0.85), suggesting that consumers who are more aware of the brand are likelier to repeat purchase and are also more price-sensitive. Gender shows no meaningful correlation with these variables, though male and female are perfectly negatively correlated (r = -1.00), as

expected for binary complements. Educational attainment appears to be inversely related to brand engagement, particularly secondary and tertiary education, which show negative correlations with brand awareness and repeat purchases. Age and income have weak or negligible correlations with most variables, indicating limited influence. Rural residence shows slight negative correlations with brand awareness, repeat purchase, and price sensitivity, suggesting rural consumers may be less engaged with refined palm oil brands.

Table 2: Pairwise correlations Analysis

Variables	BA	RP	price	male	female	No_edu	p_edu	s_educ	t_edu	age	incme	Rura dumm
BA	1.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
RP	0.93	1.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
price	0.86	0.85	1.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
male	0.12	0.12	0.09	1.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
female	-0.12	-0.12	-0.09	-1.00	1.00	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
no_edu	0.20	0.19	0.21	0.00	-0.00	1.00	--	--	--	--	--	--
p_edu	0.09	0.12	0.09	0.01	-0.01	-0.20	1.00	--	--	--	--	--
s_educ	-0.16	-0.15	-0.16	0.01	-0.01	-0.33	-0.32	1.00	--	--	--	--
t_edu	-0.07	-0.10	-0.08	-0.02	0.01	-0.31	-0.30	-0.50	1.00	--	--	--
age	0.01	0.04	0.04	-0.01	0.012	0.074	-0.007	-0.03	-0.02	1.00	--	--
incme	-0.03	-0.04	-0.05	0.05	-0.05	-0.004	-0.020	0.02	-0.0009	-0.05	1.00	--
Rura dumm	-0.13	-0.11	-0.11	0.04	-0.05	-0.03	-0.01	-0.02	0.07	-0.00	-0.00	1.00

Source: Computed by authors from field data

The result of the path diagram (Figure 2) derived from a structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, presented in Figure 1, shows the relationship between the inner model constructs as well as the relationships between the observed variables and constructs. The rectangles represent the construct, while the circles represent the observed or manifest variables used in the construction of the model. The model indicated that brand awareness is an exogenous construct. Age, male, primary education, secondary education, tertiary education, residence, and income were used as control observed exogenous variables in the model. Meanwhile, the intention of repeat purchase was an endogenous variable in the model.
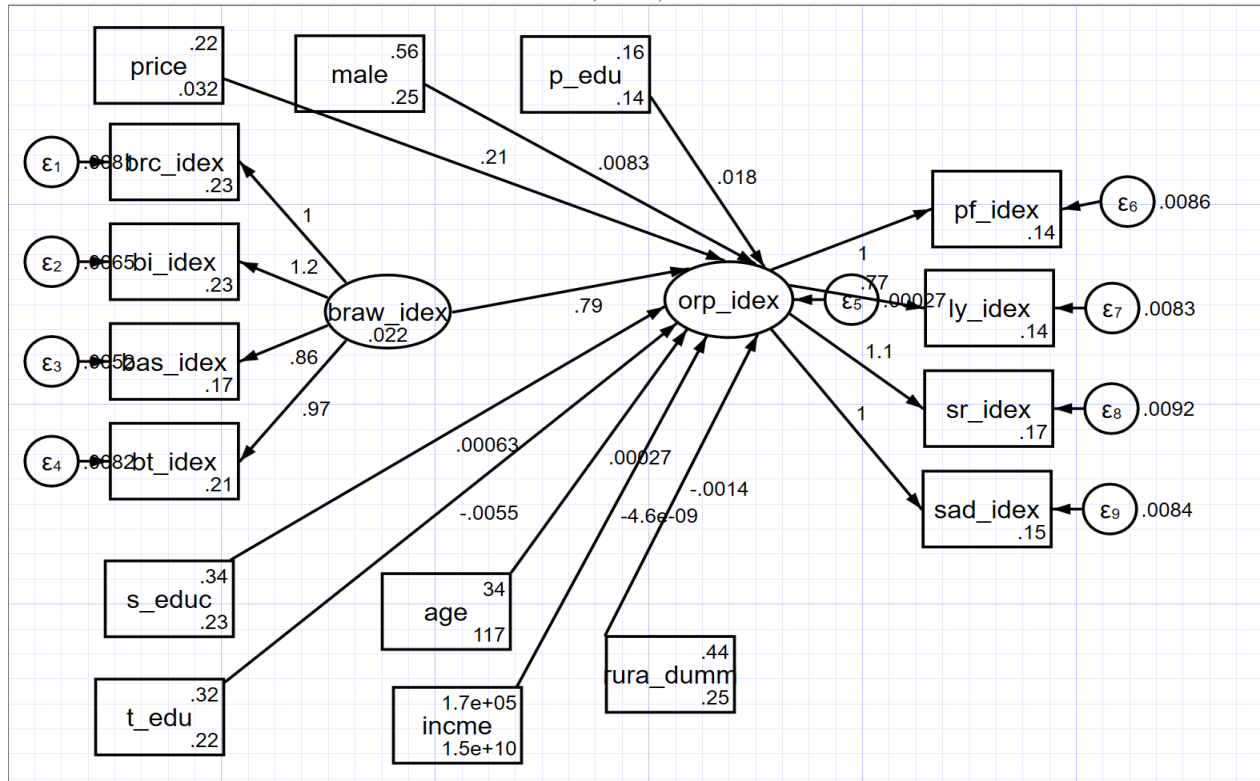
Fig. 2: Structural Model of Brand Awareness and Intentions to Repeat Purchases
Source: Generated by Authors using STATA 14 (2025)

5.3 Regression Results

As seen in Table 3, the regression results from both the ML-SEM and OLS models consistently show that brand awareness has a substantial and statistically significant positive effect on repeat purchases, with a coefficient of approximately 0.649 (p < 0.001). This suggests that consumers who are more aware of the brand are significantly more likely to repeat purchases. In the third OLS model, brand awareness is further broken down into subcomponents: brand recall, brand image, brand association, and brand trust, all of which positively and significantly influence repeat purchase behavior. Among these, brand association (0.363) and brand image (0.281) have the strongest effects, indicating that how consumers perceive and relate to the brand plays a critical role in encouraging loyalty.

Across all models, price has a consistently positive and significant effect on repeat purchases (coefficients ranging from 0.251 to 0.274, p < 0.001), which may indicate that consumers interpret a higher price as a signal of quality or that more committed consumers are less deterred by price. Demographic variables such as gender, education, age, income, and rural residence show no significant effect on repeat purchase behavior, implying that purchase decisions are driven more by brand perceptions than consumer characteristics. Additionally, high R-squared values (around 0.87) indicate that the models explain a substantial proportion of the variation in repeat purchases. The low VIF values suggest no major multicollinearity issues.

The regression results clearly show that brand awareness does impact repeat purchases in Cameroon's refined palm oil market, contradicting the null hypothesis. Both statistical methods (ML-SEM and OLS) reveal strong positive links: brand awareness increases repeat purchases by about 0.65 units (with very high certainty, p<0.001). Breaking this down, brand association and brand image matter most. Higher prices also boost repeat purchases (0.25–0.27 units), suggesting customers consider costly brands higher quality.

Personal factors like age, income, or where people live do not influence buying habits here, matching research from other essential goods markets.

Table 3: Regression Results

Variables	ML-SEM Repeat purchase	OLS Repeat purchase	OLS Repeat purchase
Brand awareness	.6488929***	0.649***	
	(0.101)	(.0405104)	
Brand_r_index	--	--	0.05283***
			(.0528302)
Bran image index	--	--	.280633***
			(.0411749)
Brand association	--	--	0.36251***
			(.05687)
Brand Trust Index	--	--	.158809**
			(.0751761)
Price	0.251***	0.251***	0.27353***
	(.0648159)	(.0648159)	(.0711541)
Male	0.0075541	0.0075541	.0114241
	(.0071593)	(.0071593)	(.0072953)
Primary education	.019911	.019911	.0189301
	(.0159696)	(.0159696)	(.0149927)
Secondary education	.000901	.000901	-.0034749
	(.0120409)	(.0120409)	(0116554)
Tertiary education	-.0093658	-.0093658	-.0103529
	(.0109897)	(.0109897)	(.010529)
Age	.0003644	.0003644	.0003362
	(.0003205)	(.0003205)	(.0003335)
Income	-6.63	-6.63	-4.05
	(2.62)	(2.62)	(2.73)
Rural residence	-.0002434	-.0002434	-.0020494
	(.0071017	(.0071017	(.0075291)
Constant	-.018384	-.018384	-.07591***
	(.0171277)	(.0171277)	(.0183155)
Observations	423	423	423
Prob > chi2 (hetter)	0.0000	0.0000	0.000
Prob > F	0.0000	0.0000	0.000
R-squared	0.8704	0.8704	0.8682
Vif	1.94	1.94	2.32

Note: Robust standard errors in parentheses, *** p<0.01, ** p<0.05, * p<0.1
Source: Computed by authors from field data

6. Discussion

This study establishes a significant positive relationship between brand awareness and repeat purchases among refined palm oil consumers in Cameroon, with regression analysis confirming that heightened brand awareness strongly predicts repurchase intentions. The findings align with Aaker's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model, demonstrating that brand awareness fosters loyalty by enhancing brand associations, perceived quality, and emotional connections. Empirical support from Murugan & Kirubakaran (2025), Munyoro & Sithole (2023), and Abonyi *et al* (2024) further validates this linkage, emphasizing that familiarity and trust drive repeat purchases. However, Alfian *et al* (2024) contrasting findings in the electronics sector reveal a critical nuance: while brand awareness is necessary, it must be coupled with consistent product quality to sustain loyalty. This underscores the dual imperative for businesses, strategic brand-building and operational excellence, to convert awareness into long-term customer retention.

Theoretically, this research reinforces the CBBE model's relevance in commoditized markets, highlighting brand awareness as a cornerstone of equity. Practically, it urges Cameroonian palm oil brands to integrate aggressive awareness campaigns with robust quality control. Marketers must recognize that visibility alone is insufficient; delivering on brand promises is equally vital to cultivate advocacy and switching resistance. These insights offer a blueprint for achieving competitive advantage in homogeneous markets, where differentiation hinges on cognitive prominence and sustained consumer trust. Future studies could further explore cultural moderators or sector-specific dynamics to refine this framework.

7. Conclusion and Policy Implications

This study conclusively demonstrates that brand awareness serves as a critical driver of repeat purchases in Cameroon's refined palm oil market. The robust statistical relationship underscores how consumer familiarity with brands fosters trust, translating into sustained loyalty. These findings align with global brand equity frameworks, emphasizing that recognition acts as a heuristic for quality in markets with low product differentiation, such as Cameroon's refined palm oil sector. The absence of demographic influences further highlights the universal role of brand perception over socioeconomic factors in driving purchasing behavior.

For practitioners, strategic prioritization of brand visibility is imperative. Investments should focus on multichannel marketing campaigns (social media, television, community events) to enhance recognition and localized engagement to build emotional connections. Consistent branding through unified visual identity and messaging will reinforce long-term recall. Concurrently, firms must ensure product quality aligns with brand promises to avoid the pitfalls observed in markets where awareness alone fails to secure loyalty.

Policymakers are urged to strengthen regulatory frameworks by instituting enforceable quality standards, which would elevate consumer trust in local brands. Public education initiatives about palm oil's benefits and sustainable production practices could amplify brand relevance while addressing ethical consumption trends. Support for small-scale producers through subsidies or training programs would enhance market competitiveness and product consistency.

Consumers play a pivotal role in this ecosystem. They incentivize quality improvements and ethical practices by prioritizing certified, locally produced brands and actively participating in feedback mechanisms. Collective support for domestic producers bolsters economic resilience and ensures access to safer, higher-quality products.

8. Limitations and Directions for Further Studies

A key limitation of this study is its reliance on cross-sectional data, which captures brand awareness and repeat purchase behavior at a single point in time. While this approach provides a snapshot of consumer perceptions and actions, it restricts the ability to establish causal relationships or observe how brand loyalty develops over extended periods. To address this limitation, future research should adopt longitudinal designs, such as panel studies or repeated surveys, to examine how brand awareness influences repeat purchases over time. By collecting data at multiple intervals, researchers could assess the stability of brand-customer relationships, identify critical touchpoints in the loyalty journey, and distinguish between transient and habitual purchasing behaviors.

Authors' Contribution: Akwo Kelvin Ndofor conceived the idea and created the tools for data collection. Neba Neola Buwah wrote the introductory paragraphs and conducted the literature review. Mbu Daniel Tambi and Akwo Kelvin Ndofor collaborated on the methodology, data collection, and analysis. Mbu Daniel Tambi completed the first review of the draft manuscript, while Neba Neola Buwah performed the

second review. Akwo Kelvin Ndofor carried out the final review and submitted the manuscript for consideration.

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