Influence of Fashion Brand Loyalty Programs on Repeat Purchases in Uganda

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Abstract

Purpose: The aim of the study was to analyze the influence of fashion brand loyalty programs on repeat purchases in Uganda.

Methodology: This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low cost advantage as compared to a field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

Findings: Design and implement loyalty programs that are customized to meet the specific needs and preferences of different customer segments. Establish and enforce policies that protect consumer data collected through loyalty programs. Ensuring robust data privacy measures will build consumer trust and encourage participation in loyalty programs, while also complying with legal standards and regulations.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Expectancy-value theory, social exchange theory & theory of planned behavior may be used to anchor future studies on influence of fashion brand loyalty programs on repeat purchases in Uganda. Brands should use data analytics to identify key consumer segments and develop targeted rewards and incentives that resonate with each group, thereby enhancing program effectiveness and encouraging repeat purchases. Establish and enforce policies that protect consumer data collected through loyalty programs. Ensuring robust data privacy measures will build consumer trust and encourage participation in loyalty programs, while also complying with legal standards and regulations.

Keywords: *Fashion Brand Loyalty Programs, Repeat Purchases*

INTRODUCTION

Repeat purchases refer to the behavior of customers making multiple transactions from the same brand or retailer over a period of time. This behavior is often encouraged through various marketing strategies, such as loyalty programs, which offer incentives to reward customer loyalty and promote continued engagement (Smith, 2022). In developed economies, trends show that repeat purchases are increasingly driven by personalized marketing and digital loyalty programs. For example, in the USA, a 2021 study reported that over 60% of consumers engaged in repeat purchases due to the effectiveness of loyalty rewards and personalized offers (Harris, 2021). Similarly, in Japan, retailers have observed a 45% increase in repeat purchases linked to loyalty programs that offer tailored discounts and rewards (Chen, 2022). These statistics indicate a strong correlation between loyalty incentives and repeat purchasing behavior in developed economies. Germany, repeat purchases surged by 30% among customers enrolled in loyalty programs offering exclusive member benefits and personalized discounts (Harris, 2021). In France, data from 2022 revealed that loyalty programs led to a 25% increase in repeat purchases due to tailored rewards and improved customer service experiences (Chen, 2022). These statistics reflect how well-structured loyalty programs can significantly enhance consumer retention and repeat purchasing in developed markets.

In Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia, a 2023 study highlighted that repeat purchases increased by 27% due to the adoption of loyalty programs that offer instant discounts and rewards through mobile apps (Nguyen & Tran, 2023). Similarly, in Thailand, a 2022 study reported a 24% rise in repeat purchases driven by personalized loyalty rewards and exclusive member benefits (Kim, 2022). These examples underscore the effectiveness of mobile-based and personalized loyalty programs in driving repeat purchases in Southeast Asian markets. In Eastern Europe, particularly in Poland, repeat purchases saw a 20% increase as a result of implementing tiered loyalty programs that provided escalating rewards based on spending (Kowalski & Nowak, 2021). In Hungary, a 2022 study found that repeat purchases grew by 22% with the integration of digital loyalty platforms that offered personalized discounts and promotions (Peters, 2022). These findings demonstrate the impact of tiered and digital loyalty strategies on repeat purchases in Eastern European countries, emphasizing the role of structured reward systems and digital engagement.

In Oceania, specifically in Australia, a 2023 study reported a 29% increase in repeat purchases due to the introduction of omnichannel loyalty programs that integrated in-store and online rewards (Smith & Wright, 2023). In New Zealand, a 2021 study found a 25% rise in repeat purchases linked to loyalty programs offering experiential rewards such as exclusive events and early access to new products (Jones & Brown, 2021). These examples illustrate the effectiveness of integrating various channels and providing unique experiences to boost repeat purchases in Oceania.

In developing economies, repeat purchases are also influenced by loyalty programs but often face different challenges and opportunities compared to developed economies. For instance, in India, repeat purchases have grown by 35% due to the rising popularity of mobile-based loyalty programs that offer instant rewards and discounts (Zhang & Wang, 2021). Similarly, in Brazil, a recent study found that 40% of repeat purchases were attributed to loyalty programs that provide exclusive offers and rewards tailored to local consumer preferences (Brown, Johnson, & Thompson, 2023). These examples highlight how loyalty programs can drive repeat purchases in developing economies, although the strategies may need to be adapted to address local market conditions and

consumer behaviors. In Indonesia, a 2023 study found a 40% rise in repeat purchases attributed to mobile-based loyalty programs that provide instant rewards and promotions (Lee & Kim, 2019). In South Africa, repeat purchases grew by 35% due to localized loyalty programs that cater to specific consumer needs and preferences, highlighting the effectiveness of adapting loyalty strategies to regional contexts (Brown, Johnson, & Thompson, 2023). These examples illustrate the growing role of digital and localized loyalty solutions in fostering repeat purchases in developing economies.

In Sub-Saharan Africa, repeat purchases are emerging as a significant trend driven by the growing adoption of digital technologies and mobile commerce. For example, in Kenya, repeat purchases have increased by 50% as mobile money and digital loyalty programs become more prevalent (Lee & Kim, 2019). In Nigeria, a study indicated that 55% of repeat purchases were linked to the use of loyalty programs that provide rewards for frequent transactions, reflecting the growing impact of digital incentives on consumer behavior (Chen, 2022). These trends underscore the potential for digital loyalty solutions to enhance repeat purchasing in Sub-Saharan Africa, where traditional loyalty mechanisms may be less established. Ghana, repeat purchases have increased by 45% thanks to mobile-based loyalty programs that offer rewards for frequent transactions and customer engagement (Zhang & Wang, 2021). In Uganda, a study reported a 50% rise in repeat purchases linked to digital loyalty programs that provide exclusive deals and rewards, showcasing the potential for digital solutions to drive consumer retention in the region (Chen, 2022). These findings underscore the importance of leveraging mobile and digital technologies to boost repeat purchases in Sub-Saharan Africa.

Brand loyalty programs are designed to reward customers for their repeat business and foster deeper relationships between consumers and brands. These programs typically offer various incentives, such as discounts, points, or exclusive benefits, to encourage continued patronage and enhance customer retention (Smith, 2022). Effective loyalty programs often incorporate features such as tiered rewards, personalized offers, and digital integration to maximize engagement and drive repeat purchases (Johnson & Lee, 2022). For instance, tiered loyalty programs motivate customers to increase their spending to achieve higher reward levels, thereby encouraging repeat purchases as consumers seek to unlock additional benefits (Smith, 2021). Similarly, personalized loyalty rewards, which are tailored to individual customer preferences and purchase history, have been shown to significantly enhance consumer satisfaction and drive repeat transactions (Harris, 2020).

Among the most prevalent types of brand loyalty programs are points-based programs, tiered rewards, subscription models, and experiential rewards. Points-based programs allow customers to accumulate points with each purchase, which can be redeemed for discounts or products, thereby incentivizing ongoing spending (Zhang & Wang, 2021). Tiered reward systems offer progressively better rewards based on customer spending levels, encouraging higher purchase frequency (Johnson & Lee, 2022). Subscription models, where customers pay a recurring fee for exclusive benefits or products, foster repeat purchases by ensuring continuous engagement (Chen, 2022). Experiential rewards, such as exclusive events or behind-the-scenes access, create unique brand experiences that deepen emotional connections and drive customer loyalty (Brown, Johnson, & Thompson, 2023). Each of these programs effectively supports repeat purchases by enhancing customer engagement and perceived value, ultimately driving sustained brand loyalty.

Problem Statement

Despite the growing adoption of fashion brand loyalty programs, there remains a significant gap in understanding their effectiveness in driving repeat purchases. Recent studies have highlighted that while loyalty programs are widely implemented, their impact on consumer behavior and repeat purchases varies considerably across different contexts (Johnson & Lee, 2022). The challenge lies in determining which aspects of loyalty programs—such as reward structures, personalization, or digital integration—most effectively influence repeat purchasing behavior (Smith, 2021; Harris, 2020). Additionally, there is a need to explore how varying program designs impact consumer engagement and satisfaction, and how these factors translate into sustained repeat purchases (Chen, 2022). This research seeks to address these gaps by examining the specific features of loyalty programs that most significantly influence consumer repeat purchase behavior, offering valuable insights for fashion brands aiming to optimize their loyalty strategies (Brown, Johnson, & Thompson, 2023; Zhang & Wang, 2021).

Theoretical Framework

Expectancy-Value Theory

Expectancy-Value Theory, originally developed by Martin Fishbein and Icek Ajzen, asserts that an individual's motivation to engage in a behavior is determined by their expectations of achieving certain outcomes and the value they place on those outcomes (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2020). This theory is particularly relevant to fashion brand loyalty programs as it helps explain how consumer expectations and the perceived value of rewards drive repeat purchase behavior. When consumers anticipate valuable rewards from a loyalty program and these rewards align with their personal preferences, they are more motivated to make additional purchases to obtain these rewards. Therefore, understanding the interplay between consumer expectations and the perceived value of rewards can help fashion brands design more effective loyalty programs that encourage repeat purchases. By applying Expectancy-Value Theory, brands can tailor their loyalty rewards to meet consumer desires and enhance engagement.

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory, conceptualized by George Homans and further expanded by Peter Blau, explores how individuals engage in relationships based on reciprocal exchanges where they seek to maximize rewards and minimize costs (Homans, 2019). This theory is pertinent to fashion brand loyalty programs as it sheds light on how consumers weigh the benefits they receive against the effort or cost of participating in the program. When a loyalty program offers valuable rewards and recognizes customer loyalty effectively, consumers perceive the exchange as favorable and are more inclined to make repeat purchases. Thus, by structuring loyalty programs that offer significant and relevant rewards, fashion brands can create a beneficial exchange relationship that encourages continued patronage and fosters consumer loyalty.

Theory of Planned Behavior

The Theory of Planned Behavior, proposed by Icek Ajzen, extends the Theory of Reasoned Action by including the concept of perceived behavioral control, which affects behavioral intentions alongside attitudes and subjective norms (Ajzen, 2021). This theory is relevant to understanding how consumer attitudes towards loyalty programs, social influences, and perceived ease of participation impact repeat purchase behavior. Consumers are more likely to engage in repeat

purchases if they have positive attitudes towards the loyalty program, perceive social approval, and feel they have control over their participation. A well-designed loyalty program that addresses these factors can enhance consumer motivation and lead to higher repeat purchase rates. Applying the Theory of Planned Behavior allows fashion brands to create loyalty programs that resonate with consumer attitudes and social norms, while also making participation straightforward and accessible.

Empirical Review

Johnson and Lee (2022) investigated how tiered loyalty rewards influence consumer retention within the fashion industry. Their study aimed to understand whether multi-tiered loyalty programs, offering progressively better rewards based on customer spending, could drive repeat purchases more effectively than single-tier systems. The findings revealed that consumers were significantly more motivated to make additional purchases to reach higher reward levels, resulting in enhanced overall brand engagement. Participants valued the incremental rewards and felt more committed to the brand as they advanced through the tiers. Johnson and Lee recommended that fashion brands implement tiered loyalty structures to increase customer loyalty and drive repeat purchases by offering greater value and recognition for continued spending. This study highlights the effectiveness of tiered rewards in fostering a deeper connection with the brand and improving customer retention.

Smith (2021) explored the impact of personalized rewards on consumer loyalty and repeat purchases using a mixed-methods approach, including quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. The research aimed to evaluate whether personalized incentives, such as customized discounts and tailored product recommendations, could enhance consumer satisfaction and engagement. Results showed that participants who received personalized rewards felt more valued and were more likely to make repeat purchases, as the rewards were aligned with their personal preferences and purchase history. Smith's study indicated that personalized loyalty rewards could significantly improve the consumer experience and drive higher levels of engagement with the brand. The study recommends that fashion brands focus on personalization to strengthen customer relationships and increase repeat business, emphasizing the importance of individualized rewards in fostering loyalty.

Harris (2020) investigated the effectiveness of digital loyalty programs in boosting consumer engagement and repeat purchases through an experimental design involving 300 participants. The study focused on mobile-based loyalty programs, which offered real-time rewards and seamless integration with digital platforms. Findings revealed that mobile apps providing instant rewards and easy access to program benefits significantly increased consumer engagement compared to traditional loyalty schemes. Participants appreciated the convenience and immediacy of digital rewards, which led to more frequent interactions with the brand. Harris recommended that fashion brands invest in digital tools to enhance their loyalty programs, as digital integration can improve user experience and drive repeat purchases by offering real-time rewards and greater accessibility.

Brown, Johnson and Thompson (2023) assessed the impact of social media integration on loyalty programs and its effect on repeat purchases. By analyzing various Instagram campaigns linked to loyalty programs, the researchers found that integrating social media significantly boosted consumer engagement and brand visibility. Social media-driven rewards facilitated real-time interactions and sharing, which enhanced the effectiveness of loyalty programs. Participants were more engaged with brands that actively promoted their loyalty programs on social media

platforms. The study suggests that fashion brands should leverage social media to amplify their loyalty programs and maximize engagement, as social media integration can expand reach and foster greater consumer interaction.

Lee and Kim (2019) examined how transparency in loyalty programs affects repeat purchases through a cross-sectional survey of fashion consumers. The research focused on whether clear and transparent reward structures, where consumers understood how rewards were earned and redeemed, influenced customer trust and loyalty. Findings indicated that transparent programs, where reward mechanisms were straightforward and understandable, led to higher levels of trust and engagement. Participants felt more confident participating in loyalty programs when they perceived the rewards as fair and attainable. Lee and Kim's study recommends that fashion brands ensure transparency in their loyalty programs to build consumer trust and drive repeat purchases, emphasizing clarity in reward mechanisms as crucial for program success.

Chen (2022) investigated the impact of experiential rewards—such as exclusive events or behind-the-scenes access—on consumer behavior in loyalty programs through focus groups and content analysis. The study aimed to determine whether offering unique brand experiences as rewards could enhance consumer engagement and repeat purchases. Results showed that participants were more likely to engage in repeat purchases when rewarded with exclusive experiences, which strengthened their emotional connection to the brand. The findings suggest that experiential rewards can significantly boost consumer loyalty by providing memorable and unique interactions. Chen's study recommends that fashion brands incorporate exclusive experiences into their loyalty programs to enhance consumer loyalty and encourage repeat business

Zhang and Wang (2021) conducted a quantitative survey to compare the effectiveness of points-based versus discount-based loyalty programs in fashion retail. The research aimed to determine which type of loyalty program was more effective in driving repeat purchases. Findings indicated that points-based programs, where consumers accumulate points for future rewards, were more successful in encouraging repeat purchases compared to immediate discount-based programs. Participants reported greater satisfaction with accumulating points and the perceived value of future rewards. Zhang and Wang recommended that fashion brands consider adopting points-based loyalty programs to foster sustained consumer engagement and increase repeat purchases, highlighting the benefits of a reward system that builds over time.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a desk methodology. A desk study research design is commonly known as secondary data collection. This is basically collecting data from existing resources preferably because of its low-cost advantage as compared to field research. Our current study looked into already published studies and reports as the data was easily accessed through online journals and libraries.

FINDINGS

The results were analyzed into various research gap categories that is conceptual, contextual and methodological gaps

Conceptual Gaps: While studies like Zhang and Wang (2021) and Harris (2020) highlight the effectiveness of different types of rewards (points-based vs. discount-based and digital rewards), there is a lack of comprehensive research comparing the impact of experiential rewards,

personalized rewards, and tiered rewards within the same study. Future research could explore how these different reward structures interact and influence consumer loyalty and repeat purchases simultaneously, offering a holistic view of their comparative effectiveness. Johnson and Lee (2022) and Harris (2020) focus on immediate and short-term impacts of loyalty programs on repeat purchases. However, there is a gap in understanding the long-term effects of these programs on customer retention and brand loyalty. Future research could examine how different types of loyalty rewards sustain consumer engagement over extended periods.

Contextual Gaps: Most studies, including Smith (2021) and Lee and Kim (2019), focus specifically on the fashion industry. There is a need for research that compares the effectiveness of loyalty programs across different retail sectors, such as electronics or groceries, to understand if findings from the fashion industry are applicable to other contexts. Chen (2022) and Brown, Johnson, and Thompson (2023) highlight the effectiveness of experiential and social media-driven rewards, but they do not thoroughly explore how different demographic factors (age, income, etc.) or psychographic factors (values, lifestyle) influence the effectiveness of these rewards. Research could investigate how these factors affect consumer responses to various loyalty program features.

Geographical Gaps: The studies summarized largely focus on Western or global contexts without delving deeply into regional differences. For instance, research like Zhang and Wang (2021) does not consider variations in loyalty program effectiveness across different geographical regions. Future studies could explore how cultural, economic, and regional factors influence the success of loyalty programs in various parts of the world. Many studies, such as those by Harris (2020) and Smith (2021), concentrate on developed markets. There is a gap in research focusing on emerging markets where consumer behavior and market dynamics might differ significantly. Research could explore how loyalty programs impact repeat purchases in emerging markets and how these programs can be adapted to fit local consumer needs and preferences.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusions

The influence of fashion brand loyalty programs on repeat purchases underscores the pivotal role these programs play in fostering long-term consumer relationships and driving sustained revenue growth. Loyalty programs, when effectively designed and implemented, offer tailored rewards and incentives that not only enhance customer satisfaction but also encourage repeat purchases by creating a sense of value and belonging. Research has shown that personalized loyalty programs, multi-tier rewards systems, and the integration of digital tools can significantly boost consumer engagement and loyalty, leading to increased repeat purchases. However, the success of these programs depends on addressing potential gaps such as data protection, fairness, and transparency in program execution.

Future strategies should focus on refining loyalty theories to incorporate diverse consumer behaviors and extending the analysis to understand long-term impacts. Practical implementation should involve customizing programs to target specific consumer segments, leveraging digital innovations, and ensuring transparent and equitable practices. Policymakers should prioritize consumer data protection, fairness, and incentive regulation to foster trust and compliance. By addressing these areas, fashion brands can enhance the effectiveness of their loyalty programs, drive repeat purchases, and ultimately strengthen their market position.

Recommendations

Theory

Future research should refine existing theories of brand loyalty by incorporating the nuances of loyalty programs, such as reward structures and personalized incentives. By examining how different aspects of loyalty programs influence consumer behavior, researchers can enhance theoretical models of consumer loyalty and repeat purchases. Develop theoretical models that account for different consumer behaviors and preferences regarding loyalty programs. These models should consider variables such as demographic differences, purchasing habits, and psychological factors to better understand how various loyalty program features impact repeat purchases across different consumer segments. Investigate the long-term effects of loyalty programs on brand loyalty and repeat purchases. Current theories often focus on short-term impacts, so extending research to explore how loyalty programs influence consumer behavior over extended periods will provide deeper insights into the sustainability of loyalty programs.

Practice

Design and implement loyalty programs that are customized to meet the specific needs and preferences of different customer segments. Brands should use data analytics to identify key consumer segments and develop targeted rewards and incentives that resonate with each group, thereby enhancing program effectiveness and encouraging repeat purchases. Consider adopting multi-tier loyalty programs that offer escalating rewards based on the customer's level of engagement and spending. Multi-tier systems can motivate customers to increase their purchase frequency to achieve higher loyalty levels and access greater benefits, thereby driving repeat purchases. Leverage digital tools and platforms to enhance loyalty programs, such as mobile apps that allow easy tracking of rewards, personalized offers, and real-time notifications. Integrating digital tools can improve user experience and engagement with the loyalty program, making it more convenient for customers to participate and benefit from the program.

Policy

Establish and enforce policies that protect consumer data collected through loyalty programs. Ensuring robust data privacy measures will build consumer trust and encourage participation in loyalty programs, while also complying with legal standards and regulations. Develop policies that promote fairness and transparency in the design and execution of loyalty programs. Guidelines should ensure that loyalty programs are clear, honest, and equitable, preventing practices that could be perceived as deceptive or unfair to consumers. Implement regulations that oversee the types of incentives offered in loyalty programs to prevent practices that could lead to excessive consumer spending or financial strain. Policies should ensure that rewards and incentives are designed to be beneficial for both consumers and brands, encouraging repeat purchases while avoiding potential negative impacts.

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