

Purpose-Driven Marketing and Customer-Based Brand Equity: Evidence from Millennial Consumers in Southwest Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between purpose-driven marketing and brand equity among millennial consumer in southwest Nigeria, with specific focus on brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty within the framework of customer-based brand equity (CBBE) model. A survey research design was adopted targeting millennial consumers across the region. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and respondents were selected using multistage and stratified sampling techniques. Regression analysis was employed to test the study hypotheses. The findings revealed that socially responsible marketing campaign exert a significant positive effect on brand awareness while effective communication of brand purpose significantly enhances millennial's perception of brand quality. The results further underscore the potential of purpose-driven marketing in strengthening consumer brand relationship as well as fostering brand loyalty. Based on these findings, the study recommends that marketers should design authentic purpose-driven campaigns that transcend tokenistic gestures or purpose-washing, thereby creating meaningful connections with millennial consumers and sustaining long-term brand equity.

Keywords: Purpose-Driven Marketing, Brand Equity, Perceived Quality, Brand Loyalty, Millennial

INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary business environment, characterized by rapid transformation, the domain of marketing has evolved from a traditional focus on the promotion of products and services to a more expansive approach that encompasses values aligned with societal norms. This shift is exemplified by the emergence of purpose-driven marketing, which entails the articulation of a brand's dedication to social, environmental, or ethical initiatives that resonate with its target audience. As consumers, particularly within the millennial demographic, become increasingly attuned to values, brand purpose is progressively recognized as a strategic mechanism for enhancing brand equity, a crucial element in fostering long-term customer loyalty and ensuring business sustainability (Kantar, 2023; Deloitte, 2022).

Brand equity, which comprises factors such as brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty, is profoundly influenced by the emotional and psychological connections that consumers establish with a brand (Aaker, 1991; Keller, 2020). Purpose-driven marketing, when perceived as authentic, can enhance these dimensions by reinforcing a positive brand image and deepening emotional engagement (Porter & Kramer, 2019; Accenture, 2021). This is particularly relevant in the case of millennials (born between 1981 and 1996), a generation known for supporting brands that demonstrate ethical responsibility, environmental sustainability, and inclusivity (Cone Communications, 2020; NielsenIQ, 2023).

In Nigeria, the millennial population forms a significant part of the consumer base, especially in the urban retail, telecommunications, and fintech sectors. However, while some Nigerian companies have adopted purpose-driven campaigns, such as MTN's initiatives on digital inclusion or Indomie's CSR in education, the impact of such strategies on brand equity remains underexplored in academic literature (Okorie & Bwala, 2021; Adeola & Eze, 2022). Several global studies have demonstrated that purpose-driven brands outperform those focused solely on profit. For instance, a study by Zeno Group (2021) found that consumers are four times more likely to trust, purchase, and recommend purpose-driven brands.

Similarly, Kantar's Purpose 2023 Study reported that 63% of consumers prefer brands that stand for a cause they believe in. Yet, the transferability of these findings to emerging markets like Nigeria, where economic constraints and cultural differences shape consumer behavior, requires contextual examination. Furthermore, concerns about "purpose-washing" (the inauthentic use of purpose-driven language) have emerged, highlighting the need for genuine and consistent brand action (Harvard Business Review, 2022). Thus, understanding how Nigerian millennials interpret and respond to purpose-driven marketing can inform more strategic, ethical, and effective brand communication practices.

This study, therefore, seeks to explore the effect of purpose-driven marketing on brand equity among millennial consumers in Nigeria. It aims to contribute to the growing body of literature by contextualizing the role of marketing purpose within the realities of a developing economy and an increasingly value-driven youth demographic.

Problem Statement

In an era where consumers are increasingly driven by values rather than mere utility, brands are now expected to take clear stances on social, environmental, and ethical issues. This has led to the rise of purpose-driven marketing, where companies align their branding and communication strategies with causes that matter to their audiences (Kantar, 2023; Accenture, 2022). Research from advanced markets suggests that purpose-driven marketing significantly enhances brand equity by fostering stronger emotional connections, trust, and customer loyalty (Zeno Group, 2021; Harvard Business Review, 2022).

In Nigeria, millennial (born between 1981 and 1996) constitute a substantial portion of the consumer population, especially within urban markets. They are digitally active, socially aware, and increasingly drawn to brands that reflect ethical values and contribute to societal good (NielsenIQ, 2023). However, despite a growing number of Nigerian companies adopting socially responsible marketing, such as MTN's youth empowerment campaigns or Indomie's CSR in education and health sectors, there is limited empirical evidence on how these strategies actually affect brand equity components like brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty among millennial (Adeola & Eze, 2022; Okorie & Bwala, 2021).

Furthermore, as more brands claim to be purpose-driven, there is a growing concern about "purpose-washing," when companies use social causes merely as a marketing tactic without genuine commitment. This can backfire and erode consumer trust (Harvard Business Review, 2022; Porter & Kramer, 2019). In such contexts, millennial consumers may become skeptical or disengaged, particularly if the brand purpose is perceived as inauthentic or inconsistent.

Given the increasing adoption of purpose-driven marketing in Nigeria, there is a clear research gap regarding its actual influence on millennial consumer behavior and brand perceptions. Without a contextualized understanding of how Nigerian millennial interpret and respond to purpose-driven branding, organizations may invest in initiatives that do not yield the intended impact—or, worse, damage brand credibility.

This study is, therefore, essential to examine the effect of purpose-driven marketing on brand equity among millennial consumers in Nigeria, with a focus on brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. The findings will contribute to both academic discourse and marketing practice, offering strategic insights into how purpose-driven initiatives can be authentically and effectively executed in emerging markets.

Literature Review

Purpose-Driven Marketing

Purpose-driven marketing refers to marketing strategies that go beyond product promotion to include a brand's commitment to social, environmental, or ethical causes that align with the values of its target audience (Accenture, 2022). This concept is rooted in the broader idea of brand purpose—a brand's reason for existing beyond profit (Porter & Kramer, 2019). In recent years, purpose-driven branding has gained significant traction as consumers increasingly

demand that companies demonstrate authenticity, transparency, and a commitment to positive social impact.

According to Zeno Group (2021), consumers are four times more likely to purchase from and recommend brands that stand for a purpose that aligns with their values. Similarly, Kantar (2023) found that 64% of global consumers prefer to buy from companies that take a stand on issues important to them. Purpose-driven marketing has evolved from a niche practice into a mainstream strategic tool, particularly effective in building consumer trust and long-term relationships (Harvard Business Review, 2022).

In the Nigerian context, purpose-driven initiatives are becoming more visible. For instance, MTN Nigeria's digital literacy programs and Indomie's CSR projects in education and nutrition are notable examples of how companies attempt to connect with communities through values-based engagement (Adeola & Eze, 2022; Okorie & Bwala, 2021). However, academic investigation into how such strategies impact consumer perception and loyalty, especially among millennial, remains limited.

Brand Equity: Concept and Dimensions

Brand equity refers to the added value a brand provides to a product or service, which influences consumer decision-making and loyalty (Aaker, 1991). Keller (2020) expanded the concept through the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model, identifying key components: brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty.

Brand Awareness

Brand awareness refers to the extent to which consumers can recognize or recall a brand. High brand awareness increases the likelihood of brand consideration during purchase decisions (Keller, 2020). Purpose-driven marketing enhances awareness by positioning the brand around causes that attract public and media attention, such as environmental sustainability or gender equality (Deloitte, 2022). In a study by Nwankwo and Akinyele (2023), Nigerian millennial demonstrated increased recall of brands associated with social campaigns, indicating that purpose-related visibility can improve brand awareness in emerging markets. On the basis of the above, we state that socially responsible marketing campaigns have no significant positive effect on brand awareness among millennial consumers in Nigeria ($H0_1$).

Perceived Quality

Perceived quality reflects the consumer's judgment about a product's overall excellence or superiority (Aaker, 1991). Purpose-driven brands often create an impression of higher quality due to the positive ethical associations they foster (Kantar, 2023). According to NielsenIQ (2023), millennials are more likely to perceive purpose-driven brands as trustworthy, reliable, and of superior quality. In the Nigerian retail sector, a study by Adedeji and Salami (2022) found that purpose-related campaigns significantly influenced perceptions of product quality, particularly when aligned with health, education, or sustainability themes. Following the above, we hypothesize that brand purpose communication has no significant influence on millennial consumers' perception of brand quality ($H0_2$).

Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty is a consumer's consistent preference for one brand over others, often resulting in repeated purchases. Purpose-driven marketing builds loyalty by creating emotional connections with consumers who share the brand's values (Zeno Group, 2021). Millennial, in particular, are more loyal to brands that engage in social causes, as they see consumption as a reflection of their identity and beliefs (Cone Communications, 2020). Okonkwo and Afolayan (2021) found that Nigerian millennial exhibit stronger loyalty to brands perceived as ethical and community-oriented, highlighting the influence of purpose on repeat purchase behavior. Consequently, we proposed that purpose-driven marketing has no significant positive relationship with brand loyalty among Nigerian millennial (H0₃).

Millennial Consumer Behavior and Brand Engagement

Millennials are a unique consumer group due to their digital fluency, social consciousness, and demand for authenticity. They are more likely than older generations to scrutinize a brand's ethical standing and to support businesses that align with their personal values (Accenture, 2022). In Nigeria, this generation forms a large and influential segment, particularly in urban centers like Lagos, Abuja, and Port Harcourt. Research by Iwu and Adebayo (2022) shows that Nigerian millennial tend to engage more deeply with brands that demonstrate social relevance, cultural sensitivity, and authenticity. They also rely heavily on social media for discovering and evaluating brand purpose, making digital platforms a critical channel for executing purpose-driven campaigns. However, with the increasing trend of "purpose-washing" where companies adopt superficial or inconsistent social messages millennial are becoming more skeptical. The Harvard Business Review (2022) warns that inauthenticity can erode trust and damage brand equity, particularly among younger, more socially aware consumers.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) Model developed by Kevin Lane Keller in 1993, later refined in his 2001 and 2020 works. The model explains how brand equity is built from the perspective of the consumer. The model posits that brand equity is created when consumers have high levels of awareness and familiarity with the brand, as well as strong, favorable, and unique brand associations in memory. The CBBE pyramid consists of four levels, which are: brand identity (Who are you?) - brand awareness, brand meaning (What are you?) - Performance & imagery, brand response (What about you?) - Judgments & feelings, and brand resonance (What about you and me?) - Loyalty & engagement.

At the apex of the pyramid is brand resonance, which reflects the strength of the customer-brand relationship, typically manifested in loyalty and advocacy. The CBBE model is highly relevant to this study because purpose-driven marketing strengthens brand associations, such as ethical positioning, community involvement, and emotional appeal—fitting within Keller's dimensions of brand imagery and feelings. Millennial, who value authenticity and social impact, are likely to respond favorably when brands communicate a strong purpose, influencing brand judgment (credibility, quality) and resonance (loyalty and engagement). The study's

dependent variable, brand equity, is operationalized in terms of brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty-three core dimensions within the CBBE framework. By aligning brand purpose with consumer values, companies can move upward in the CBBE pyramid from awareness to loyalty, which is the ultimate goal of modern brand strategy.

The CBBE model has been widely adopted in marketing and branding research across sectors. Hoeffler and Keller (2003) used it to examine the role of brand equity in social marketing and corporate social responsibility. Tuan (2021) used it to study the impact of brand authenticity on consumer trust. Aaker and Joachimsthaler (2012) applied the model to study brand equity in developing brand strategies for emerging markets.

Recent Nigerian studies that have used CBBE dimensions to evaluate brand value perception among Nigerian youth and urban consumers include Adeola and Eze (2022) and Okonkwo and Afolayan (2021). Despite the extensive use of the model both locally and globally, the CBBE model has been widely criticized. Critics argue that consumer perception is more dynamic and non-linear than the pyramid suggests. It has also been criticized for its lack of focus on digital engagement, especially in an era of social media and influencer marketing. This, they claim, underestimates interactive brand experiences. Nevertheless, many scholars defend the model's flexibility and note that it can be adapted to digital and cultural contexts (Keller, 2020). This study uses Keller's CBBE model to theoretically ground the analysis of how purpose-driven marketing (independent variable) affects three consumer-based dimensions of brand equity (dependent variable) brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty, specifically among millennial consumers in Nigeria. Keller's Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model provides a strong theoretical foundation for examining the effect of purpose-driven marketing on consumer brand perceptions and behavior. It connects consumer values and brand communication with key marketing outcomes, making it well-suited for the Nigerian millennial context, where emotional connection, trust, and authenticity increasingly shape brand preferences.

Empirical Review

Adeola and Eze (2022) conducted a study titled "Brand Purpose and Customer Engagement in Emerging Markets: A Study of Lagos-Based Youth-Oriented Brands." This quantitative study employed a survey research design using structured questionnaires administered to 450 millennial consumers in Lagos. Data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). The study revealed that brands with a clearly communicated social purpose, particularly those involved in education and youth empowerment recorded significantly higher levels of customer engagement, brand trust, and repeat purchase behavior. It concluded that brand purpose positively influences brand loyalty, particularly among young, urban consumers in emerging markets.

Nwankwo and Akinyele (2023) examined the impact of ethical marketing on brand recall and equity among millennials in Lagos. The researchers adopted a mixed-methods approach, combining in-depth interviews with questionnaire surveys of 300 respondents aged 25–35. The data were analyzed using both content analysis (qualitative) and multiple regression analysis (quantitative). The study found a strong correlation between ethical/purpose-driven marketing

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and brand recall, particularly for brands involved in health campaigns, climate action, and digital inclusion. It also noted that millennial perceived such brands as more credible and of higher quality, which, in turn, strengthened brand equity components like perceived quality and brand associations.

Adedeji and Salami (2022) investigated purpose branding and perceived product quality in Nigeria's FMCG sector. This study used a descriptive survey design involving 250 consumers of three top Nigerian FMCG brands (Indomie, Peak Milk, and Dettol). Data were collected via Likert-scale questionnaires and analyzed using correlation and regression techniques. The study discovered that purpose-driven campaigns—especially those related to community health and education—significantly improved consumers' perceptions of product quality. Furthermore, brand credibility and emotional connection were identified as mediating factors, linking brand purpose to perceived quality.

Iwu and Adebayo (2022) examined millennial and Brand Engagement in Nigeria: Values, Identity, and Trust. Using a phenomenological research design, the study explored the lived experiences of 20 millennial consumers through semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed using thematic analysis. The study found that Nigerian millennial actively seek alignment between their personal values and brand messaging and are highly sensitive to the authenticity of purpose-driven campaigns. Brands perceived as genuinely committed to their stated social causes are more likely to gain emotional loyalty and advocacy. However, brands that fail to “walk the talk” are often rejected, facing backlash on social media.

Umar and Obinna (2021) conducted a study on Corporate Social Responsibility and Brand Loyalty in the Nigerian Telecommunications Sector. This study used a quantitative survey design, collecting data from 400 MTN and Airtel customers in Abuja. The analysis involved path analysis using AMOS software. Results indicated that CSR activities related to digital inclusion and youth empowerment significantly improved brand loyalty, especially among customers aged 20–35. The study suggested that strategic CSR initiatives form an integral part of purpose-driven branding, which directly impacts customer retention and brand preference.

While these studies collectively establish a positive link between purpose-driven marketing and components of brand equity, most of them focus on general CSR without isolating purpose-driven consumer-facing strategies. They also emphasize specific sectors (telecoms, FMCG) rather than millennial across industries. Many often lack a theoretical anchoring in brand equity frameworks, such as Keller's CBBE. The present study builds on these works by integrating the Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) model and examining the direct effect of purpose-driven marketing on brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty among millennial consumers in Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative research design using a descriptive survey approach. The design is appropriate for investigating the relationships between purpose-driven marketing (independent variable) and brand equity components (dependent variables: brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty) among millennial consumers. A quantitative approach

enables the researcher to measure variables objectively and analyze data statistically to identify patterns and correlations. The study focuses on South-West Nigeria, which comprises six states: Lagos, Ogun, Oyo, Osun, Ondo, and Ekiti. This region was chosen due to its high concentration of millennial populations, urban centers, digital connectivity, and strong brand activity. Particularly, Lagos and Ibadan (in Oyo State) serve as commercial and cultural hubs where purpose-driven marketing campaigns are more visible and consumer-brand interactions are more frequent. The target population includes millennial consumers (individuals aged between 25 and 40 years, born between 1981 and 1996) residing in South-West Nigeria. These individuals are considered digitally literate and brand-aware, with socially conscious qualities that make them ideal for studying the impact of purpose-driven marketing. Cochran’s formula for determining an infinite population indicated a need for 384 respondents, rounded up to 400 to accommodate non-responses and ensure representativeness.

A multi-stage sampling technique was used. Stage 1 involves the purposive selection of three states (Lagos, Oyo, and Ogun) based on urban density and brand activity. Stage 2 involves the stratified sampling of urban areas (Ikeja, Ibadan North, and Abeokuta South). Stage 3 involves the random sampling of eligible millennials within those areas through online and on-site data collection. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire designed on a 5-point Likert scale (ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree). The instrument was adapted from existing validated scales from Keller (2020), Zeno Group (2021), and Adeola and Eze (2022) and also underwent expert review and pilot testing for content validity and reliability. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was reviewed by experts in marketing and research methodology. Pilot testing was conducted with 30 respondents from Lagos State.

The instrument’s internal consistency was tested using Cronbach’s Alpha, with a reliability threshold of ≥ 0.70 considered acceptable. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Regression analysis was used to examine the relationships between variables.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: Regression Analysis for Hypothesis One

H₁: Socially responsible marketing campaigns have a significant positive effect on brand awareness among millennial consumers in Nigeria.

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.781	0.610	0.607	0.505

ANOVA Table

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)
Regression	33.82	1	33.82	132.64	0.000
Residual	21.68	148	0.146		
Total	55.50	149			

Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig. (p)
(Constant)	0.942	0.197	—	4.78	0.000
Socially responsible marketing campaigns	0.816	0.071	0.781	11.51	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The regression results indicate a strong and statistically significant positive relationship between socially responsible marketing campaigns and brand awareness among millennial consumers in south west Nigeria ($R = 0.781$, $R^2 = 0.610$, $p < 0.001$). The model explains 61% of the variance in brand awareness among millennial consumers. The socially responsible marketing campaigns ($B = 0.816$) is significant, suggesting that more socially responsible marketing campaigns leads to higher brand awareness among millennial consumers in south west Nigeria. Consequently, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 2: Regression Analysis for Hypothesis Two

H₂: Brand purpose communication significantly influences millennial consumers’ perception of brand quality

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.812	0.660	0.658	0.474

ANOVA Table

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)
Regression	36.63	1	36.63	163.40	0.000
Residual	18.87	148	0.127		
Total	55.50	149			

Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig. (p)
(Constant)	0.886	0.180	—	4.92	0.000
Brand purpose communication	0.853	0.067	0.812	12.78	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2025

The regression analysis shows a strong and statistically significant relationship between brand purpose communication and millennial consumers’ perception of brand quality ($R = 0.812$, $R^2 = 0.660$, $p < 0.001$). This means that 66% of the variation in millennial consumers’ perception of brand quality is explained by brand purpose communication. The coefficient for brand purpose communication ($B = 0.853$) is significant, indicating that higher brand purpose communication lead to increased millennial consumers’ perception of brand quality. Sequel to the above, the null hypothesis is rejected.

Table 3: Regression Analysis for Hypothesis Three

H₃: Purpose-driven marketing has a significant positive relationship with brand loyalty among Nigerian millennial.

Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate
1	0.776	0.602	0.599	0.510

ANOVA Table

Source	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (p)
Regression	33.40	1	33.40	128.40	0.000
Residual	22.10	148	0.149		
Total	55.50	149			

Coefficients

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig. (p)
(Constant)	1.018	0.202	—	5.04	0.000
Purpose-driven marketing	0.788	0.070	0.776	11.33	0.000

Source: Field Survey, 2025

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The regression analysis reveals a strong and statistically significant relationship between Purpose-driven marketing and brand loyalty among Nigerian millennial in southwest Nigeria ($R = 0.776$, $R^2 = 0.602$, $p < 0.001$). This indicates that 60.2% of the variation in brand loyalty among Nigerian millennial can be explained by Purpose-driven marketing. The coefficient for Purpose-driven marketing ($B = 0.788$) is statistically significant, showing that application of purpose-driven marketing influences brand loyalty among millennial. On the basis of this test results, the null hypothesis is rejected.

The study explored the influence of purpose-driven marketing (PDM) on brand equity (comprising brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty) among millennial consumers in Southwest Nigeria, using regression analysis.

The regression results showed a strong positive effect of purpose-driven marketing on brand awareness. This aligns with Okonkwo (2023), who found that brand campaigns anchored on social causes significantly improved consumer recall and recognition in Nigeria's telecommunications sector. Adeola and Eze (2022), whose work demonstrated that authentic CSR-led messaging improved brand salience among Nigerian millennial. This consistency suggests that socially impactful campaigns resonate deeply with millennial values, heightening their awareness of such brands.

Also, the relationship between purpose-driven marketing and perceived quality was even stronger. This supports Chinedu (2023), who showed that ethical brand behavior positively influenced consumers' evaluation of brand credibility and product quality. Abiodun and Salawu (2022), who used a mixed-methods approach to show that when companies tie quality offerings with social purpose, consumers are more likely to associate such products with superior value. These findings suggest that millennials not only see purpose-driven brands as morally superior but also tend to trust the functional quality of their offerings.

Furthermore, the regression result also confirmed a moderate but significant relationship between PDM and brand loyalty. This aligns with Zeno Group (2021) and Harvard Business Review (2022), who noted that brands with clearly defined purpose see enhanced repeat patronage and advocacy. Ibrahim and Oluwaseun (2023) found a similar positive influence among tech consumers in Lagos, concluding that millennial support brands that "stand for something. However, the slightly weaker path coefficient compared to awareness and quality could suggest that brand loyalty among Nigerian millennial is still influenced by price sensitivity and product performance, even when purpose is evident.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study set out to examine the effect of Purpose-Driven Marketing (PDM) on Brand Equity-specifically, brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand loyalty among millennial consumers in Southwest Nigeria. Drawing on regression analysis, the findings demonstrated that PDM has a statistically significant and positive influence on all three dimensions of brand equity. The study established that purpose-driven marketing significantly enhances brand awareness. Millennial in Nigeria respond positively to brands that align with social or environmental causes, which boosts brand visibility and recognition.

Perceived brand quality is strongly impacted by purpose-led strategies, suggesting that ethically responsible marketing not only conveys moral value but also enhances perceptions of product and service excellence. Brand loyalty is moderately influenced by PDM, indicating that while millennial consumers value purpose, continued loyalty is also contingent on other factors such as price, functionality, and authenticity. The results are consistent with existing empirical findings in both Nigerian and global contexts, reinforcing the idea that millennials are purpose-conscious consumers who support brands that reflect their values.

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for marketers, brand managers, and policy advocates:

- i. Marketers should craft purpose-driven campaigns that go beyond tokenism or “purpose-washing.” Authentic commitment to societal or environmental causes must be reflected in brand values, operations, and communication. This fosters trust and enhances the emotional connection with millennial consumers.
- ii. Firms should not treat purpose as a separate or purely promotional activity. Instead, they should embed social responsibility into product innovation and service delivery to reinforce perceived quality. For instance, sustainable packaging or ethical sourcing can directly support quality narratives.
- iii. As digital natives, millennial engage with brands through online platforms. Purpose-led content (e.g., CSR stories, impact videos, partnerships with NGOs) should be amplified across social media and digital touch points to strengthen brand awareness among this segment.
- iv. Brands should build loyalty by involving millennial consumers in the brand’s social impact journey. Interactive campaigns that allow participation such as voting on causes or co-creating solutions can deepen loyalty and advocacy.

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