I Know Why I Choose Private Label Brands - Brand Equity Analysis in Organized Retailing

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Abstract

Private label brands (PLB), also referred to as 'store brands,' are termed to be saviors of the organized retail stores. As the retail revolution is taking place in India, consumers are finding private label products to be high-quality items that offer them a smart way to save money. Retailers see them as a way to improve their financial performance and create consistent store traffic. As both sides place more and more value on private labels, PLBs are fuelling the growth options for the retailers. The present study analyzed the brand equity of PLBs by identifying exclusive 23 various factors underlying brand equity preferences by the consumers. This study elaborated the major reasons behind the consumers' preference of PLBs over the national brands. This study examined 407 respondents from East and South Bangalore city. Furthermore, the study analyzed significance of each factor - Brand Association, Perceived Value, Brand Loyalty, Perceived Quality, Perceived Risk, and Brand Awareness in consideration of the Aaker's model of brand equity. The interpretation was conducted by analyzing each factor impacting brand equity of PLBs using factor analysis. The regression results strongly articulated that Perceived Quality and Store Associations were the major factors influencing brand equity.

Keywords : retailing, hyperstores, private label brands, brand equity, perceived quality

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The concept of retail is to trade products and services to the preferred users or end users from the business or individuals. Retailers are one of the parts of integrated systems of supply chain management. Retailing is a process where individual consumers purchase goods and services from producers for their personal consumption. Majority of the Indian consumers have utmost interest in the buying and selling process ; whereas, kids enjoy playing in huge organized retail stores. Direct trade is a stronger value chain with very few intermediaries in the supply chain. In this process, the retailers buy directly from the manufacturers.

Retailing is the bridge between manufacturers and consumers. It acts as a direct interface with consumers and helps in collecting feedback on products and other offerings. Retailing has emerged as a coordinating business interface and as an end to end activity. It has evolved as a critical player right from the concept, design stage of products or services to sale, delivery, and post sales services to the consumer.

A 60% increase is expected in the Indian retail market, which is estimated to reach US $ 1.1 trillion by 2020. The major reasons backing the growth include lifestyle changes by middle class, increased digital connectivity,

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and anonymous rise in income levels (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2019). In the Global Retail Rankings, India emerged as the second largest country after China among both developing as well as developed nations. India also bagged the fifth place as a global destination in the retailing space. With very low economic risk, reasonable political risk, and humongous market potential, India is rising as a destination for the retail sector. India holds significant net sales among developing and developed countries. Retail sales contribute to almost 10% of India's GDP. The retail segment also provides 8% of the employment globally (India Brand Equity Foundation, 2018). The organized retail market in India is valued at $60 billion. This organized sector contributes to only 9% of the total retail sales in the country. This clearly shows that 91% of the sales in India are still in the unorganized sector, which highlights the potential of Indian markets. The incredible feature of the Indian retailing is its numbers and various forms of retail stores. This phenomenon is highlighted by numerous researchers of Indian as well as foreign origin.

A hypermarket is referred to as huge retail space accommodated with numerous product lines of groceries and other merchandise. It is the combination of a supermarket and a departmental store, where a wide variety of merchandise is displayed. Consumers can purchase an enormous range of merchandise under one roof for their daily/weekly/ monthly shopping needs in one visit. The general focus of hypermarkets dwells in large volume sales and low margins. Discounts and offers play a vital role in attracting consumers towards hyperstores in the Indian scenario. Hypermarkets mostly sell food, fast moving consumer goods (FMCGs), apparel, footwear, electronics, and home appliances. In the Indian context, stores over and above 50,000 square feet are termed as hyperstores. These stores' average billing is generally five times larger than a supermarket. Assortment and availability in stock is the key dimension of a retail store. INR 4.5 crores is the minimum investment required to set up a hypermarket. The hyperstores accommodate more than 25,000 stock keeping units and break even happens only after 3 – 5 years (Sharma & Bhardwaj, 2015).

Private label brands (PLB) are the store own brands. These are the brands manufactured by the retailer or packed by the retailer under the store brand. Retailers generally have more than one store brand. These store brands typically compete with the national brands (MNC companies or popular manufacturers) and generate income for the brand as well as the store. Private label brands are established in grocery, FMCG, apparel, footwear, electronics, and home care products. According to Euromonitor International (2019), consumers' focus on price is dominated by the quality issues of a product. The development of quality focus is fuelling the growth of PLBs.

PLBs are giving a very tough fight to the manufacturing brands and have witnessed impressive growth over a decade. PLBs are picked up by 90% of the consumers who visit the store (Kumar & Steenkamp, 2007). The share of private label in U.S. was 19.3% amounting to 128.8 billion U.S. dollars ; whereas, Switzerland stood with the highest (45%) contribution of sale from PLBs for the year 2018 (Statista, 2019).

Retailers earn around 25 – 50% of profit when they sell private label brands when compared to national brands (Choi & Huddleston, 2014). Martos - Partal and González-Benito (2011) claimed that private label brands are growing rapidly in the modern retail world across retail formats. The estimated private label sales are expected to reach 50% of the total retail sales in the organized segment. Private labels are also estimated to reach a figure of 15% of the total retail sales in India by 2025 including both organized and unorganized sales (Kumar, 2019). India, being one of the fastest growing retail markets in the world, has intensified rivalry in sales between private label brands and national brands (Wahi, 2017). Private label brands can create a stable base of consumers and reduce the risk factors of the retailers (Pande & Narayan, 2019).

The Indian retail scenario is emerging as a dynamic platform with new players and new platforms entering the retail industry. Private label brands in India offer a competitive advantage to the retailers in terms of brand loyalty, differentiation, cost, and supply chain management affairs (Rathod & Bhatt, 2014). Retail legends in India like Future Group, Reliance Retail, Aditya Birla Retail, Avenue Markets, etc. are counting huge on private label brands across all the segments in the retail sector like grocery, non food, FMCG, apparel, footwear, electronics, general

merchandise, etc. In adherence with the study conducted by India Brand Equity research, the percentage of food in the total expenses of an Indian consumer increased to 69%, which opens an encompassing range in private label brands in grocery, including fruits and vegetables sections. To tap the consumer spending in this segment, leading retailers introduced private label brands to increase the productivities of retail stores. A retailer can communicate its image through private label brands (Floor, 2006).

Store loyalty can be magnificently improved by the private label brands (Jayasankaraprasad & Vijaya Kumar, 2012). Private label brands will help in enhancement of the retailer's image and draw customers to the store (Kiran & Jhamb, 2011). Though private label brands may be sold at prices lower than the national brands by the retailers, they can still provide an opportunity to the retailers to earn higher gross margins. However, the retailers have to make significant investments in designing the merchandise, managing the vendor firms who would manufacture the products sold under private label brands, creating customer awareness, and developing an impressive image for the private label brands. Hence, it is the responsibility of the retailers to make a proper mix of private label brands and national brands in product assortment categories.

Enhancing consumer familiarity on these private label brands will help in building strong store loyalty (Jha & Balaji, 2015). Leading Indian retail brand, Future Group uses the private label brands like 'Premium Harvest' in grocery categories like pulses and rice ; in snacks, it has 'Tasty Treat' ; and 'Fresh and Pure' in food categories and staples. The Future Group has captured a very strong share of 25% in the overall revenue generated from the FMCG business.

Another legend in the retail industry is Reliance, which has a significant share of private labels in its business. Reliance private label brands include Select, Reliance Value, Healthy Life, Good Life, and Dairy Pure ; 25% of the sales only come from these private label brands of the total food sales. Another retailer, More Pvt. Ltd, now into Amazon Flagship, offers more than 300 brands as its private label brands in the stores. Some of these brands include Fresh-O-Dent toothbrushes, Feaster noodles, and so on (Manikandan, 2012).

Pricing is the most advantageous feature for the consumers to pick private label brands, but quality is also given equal priority as explained in a study by Dawes and Nenycz - Thiel (2013). Product value and quality considerations trigger the consumer to choose private label brands (Eroğlu, 2013). Quality standards are highly considered in the marketing plan of the retailers to attract consumers and convert them into loyal consumers (Thomas, 2013). The availability of the merchandise, price of the product, value proposition, brand image, and its quality directly influence consumers' selection of products (Frempong & Martey, 2015). Store loyalty is often impacted by the quality of the private label brands, number of product lines available, the price gaps between national brands and private label brands, and store promotions (Goswami, 2012). Store loyalty affects the brand loyalty of the private label brands with the factors considering store brand positioning and the quality of the products (González - Benito & Martos - Partal, 2012). Assortment in various product lines is also a very impactful factor of brand loyalty.

A brand can be a sign or name or a symbol which can trigger the consumers to identify a service or goods of a manufacturer or a seller and can also be distinguished from its competitors (Shah, 2017). A brand is an intangible feature which communicates with the manufacturers or sellers a promise of benefits and guarantee to the consumers. A brand is consistently associated with branding marked levels of convenience and quality (Davcik, Da Silva, & Hair, 2015). Aaker (1991) also explained brand equity as assets and liabilities which are linked to a brand that highly influence the value of a product in the consumers' mindset. He elaborated the attributes of brand equity as : Brand awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand association, perceived risk, and perceived value. Brahmbhatt and Shah (2017) also studied brand equity and defined it as the brand knowledge on consumer behavior, which is essential for marketing a brand. Harmonizing Aaker's (1991) and Keller's (1993) study on brand equity, it is identified that both describe brand equity as the consumers' perceptions of a brand and its features. Perceived quality and value enhance consumers' satisfaction towards purchases (Kumar & Menon, 2017). Bhagat

and Ravi (2018) in their study emphasized that consumer preferences are extensively influenced by brand loyalty. For marketers to design strategies, brand equity attributes play an essential role (Sathish, 2018).

Methodology

The study conducted is an empirical study on complete primary data collected from 407 organized hyperstore customers in East and South Bengaluru city in South India. The hyper stores considered in the research are : More Megastores (Amazon), FVRL (Big Bazaar), Avenue Markets (DMart), Max Hyper (SPAR), Tesco (Star Bazaar), Vishal Mega Mart, and Reliance. This research was performed during the time frame of February – March 2019 ; 0 – 5-point Likert scale was used to collect the consumers' preferences on brand equity. The consumers were given choice between *strongly agree* to *strongly disagree* towards 23 various intentions of private label brands. The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. The data thus collected is tested using statistical tools like mean, factor analysis, and multiple regression analysis in SPSS.

Analysis and Results

Table 1 demonstrates the demographic factors of the respondents. KMO test measures the sampling adequacy. If the KMO value is less than 0.5, it cannot be considered to proceed for a satisfactory factor analysis. Kaiser (1974)

Table 1. Demographic Factors

Variables	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	174	43
Female	233	57
Total	407	100
Age Group		
< 25 years	56	14
26–40 years	183	45
41–60 years	107	26
Over 60 years	61	15
Total	407	100
Income Level (Per Month)		
Below ₹25,000	82	20
₹25,000 – ₹45,000	152	37
Above ₹45,000	173	43
Total	407	100
Occupation		
Profession	126	31
Service	149	37
Business	87	21
Others	45	11
Total	407	100
Respondents' Count per Hyperstores		
More Mega Store	97	24
Big Bazaar	114	28

DMart	70	17
SPAR	57	14
Start Bazaar	29	7
Vishal Mega Mart	22	5
Reliance	18	4
Total	407	100
Average Monthly Purchase in ₹		
<200	69	17
200 – 1000	67	16
1000 – 3000	182	45
3000 and above	89	22
Total	407	100

recommended that if the KMO value close to 0.5 is minimum, then between $0.7 - 0.9$ is considered to be acceptable, and more than 0.9 is exceptionally well. In the study conducted, the value of KMO measure is 0.877, which is in between $0.7 - 0.9$, and can considered to be an acceptable value to proceed for a satisfactory factor analysis (Table 2). The depicted chi-square value in the Bartlett's test of sphericity is 7,223.556, which therefore can be accepted. Another indication to examine the relationship among the variables is Bartlett's test. The null hypothesis is tested if the correlation matrix is an identity matrix in Bartlett's test. When all the diagonal elements are 1 and off diagonal elements are close to zero (see Table 2), then such a matrix is considered as an identical matrix. From Table 2, we can also observe that the sphericity is significant (0.00), which is less than 0.05.

Communalities (Table 3) in the factor analysis are used to test to analyze the variance value. When the communality value exceeds 0.5, then it is considered for further analysis. If the communalities are not exceeding 0.5, then those variables should be removed in the further steps of factor analysis. From the table of communalities, it is observed that all the variables considered in the study exceed the minimum value of 0.5 and

Table 2. KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.877
	Approx. Chi-Square	7223.556
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	*df*	253
	Sig.	.000

Table 3. Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
Can recognize PLBs among competing products.	1.000	.745
Know how PLBs look like.	1.000	.835
Quickly recognize the symbol or logo of PLBs.	1.000	.814
By thinking of PLBs, some of their characteristics come to my mind.	1.000	.733
PLBs are very reliable.	1.000	.769
PLB products are poor quality (reversed).	1.000	.684
Quality of PLBs is consistent.	1.000	.806
PLBs have a positive image compared to competition.	1.000	.555
PLBs are established brands.	1.000	.802
I respect people who use PLB brands.	1.000	.734

I believe that PLBs offer good value for their price.	1.000	.637
Compared to other brands, I consider PLBs as a good buy.	1.000	.806
I get more money's worth in PLB purchases.	1.000	.781
I'm loyal to PLBs.	1.000	.826
PLBs would be my first choice.	1.000	.805
Will not buy other products of equal quality if PLBs are available.	1.000	.856
I would recommend PLBs to my family.	1.000	.770
I regularly buy PLBs for most of my grocery or household needs.	1.000	.719
PLB purchases are poor use of money.	1.000	.866
PLBs will not be as good quality as other brands.	1.000	.820
I'm concerned that PLBs are not safe.	1.000	.898
I'm concerned regarding what my friends will think of me when I buy PLBs.	1.000	.703
PLBs may not be consistent with my self image.	1.000	.656

Note. Extraction Method : Principal Component Analysis.

can be considered for further analysis (Table 3).

The variables are marked with different values in Table 4 and Table 5 reveals the combination of variables grouped under each factor. Variables like 'Can recognize PLBs among competing products,' 'Know how PLBs look like,' 'Quickly recognize the symbol or logo of PLBs,' and 'By thinking of PLBs, some of their characteristics come to my mind' are grouped with a single factor called Brand Awareness (Factor 1) as the variables have the factor loadings of 0.43, 0.896, 0.147, and 0.045. Factor 2 consists of three variables : 'PLBs are very reliable,' 'PLB

Table 4. Rotated Component Matrix

	Component					
	1	2	3	4	5	6
Can recognize PLBs among competing products.	.254	.156	.077	.052	.804	.043
Know how PLBs look like.	.116	.038	.119	.054	.036	.896
Quickly recognize the symbol or logo of PLBs.	.649	.181	.549	.133	.140	.147
By thinking of PLBs, some of their characteristics come to my mind.	.111	.837	.019	.135	.013	.045
PLBs are very reliable.	.141	.852	.112	.093	.020	.034
PLB products are poor quality (reversed).	.755	.230	.023	.080	.231	.028
Quality of PLBs is consistent.	.136	.088	.882	.016	.015	.041
PLBs have a positive image compared to competition.	.060	.060	.518	.242	.397	.253
PLBs are established brands.	.106	.851	.116	.158	.168	.021
I respect people who use PLB brands.	.091	.111	.003	.841	.071	.004
I believe that PLBs offer good value for their price.	.232	.249	.217	.586	.359	.042
Compared to other brands, I consider PLBs as a good buy.	.865	.150	.125	.084	.082	.075
I get more money's worth in PLB purchases.	.182	.044	.861	.032	.011	.059
I'm loyal to PLBs.	.656	.101	.188	.104	.157	.561
PLBs would be my first choice.	.858	.104	.113	.092	.158	.105
Will not buy other products of equal quality if PLBs are available.	.665	.192	.135	.189	.551	.137
I would recommend PLBs to my family.	.184	.069	.077	.103	.844	.058

I regularly buy PLBs for most of my grocery or household needs.	.817	.093	.153	.123	.055	.044
PLB purchases are poor use of money.	.115	.062	.081	.037	.076	.914
PLBs will not be as good quality as other brands.	.318	.794	.144	.135	.187	.124
I'm concerned that PLBs are not safe.	.186	.486	.700	.210	.254	.165
I'm concerned regarding what my friends will think of me when I buy PLBs.	.020	.117	.092	.824	.042	.024
PLBs may not be consistent with my self image.	.218	.136	.067	.723	.223	.113

Note. Rotated Component Matrix[a]

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.

a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

Table 5. Consolidated Factor Output

Factor No	Variables	Factor Name
F1	Can recognize PLBs among competing products. Know how PLBs look like. Quickly recognize the symbol or logo of PLBs. By thinking of PLBs, some of their characteristics come to my mind.	**Brand Awareness**
F2	PLBs are very reliable. PLB products are poor quality (reversed). Quality of PLBs is consistent.	**Perceived Quality**
F3	PLBs have a positive image compared to competition. PLBs are established brands. I respect people who use PLB brands.	**Brand Association**
F4	I believe that PLBs offer good value for their price. Compared to other brands, I consider PLBs as a good buy. I get more money's worth in PLB purchases.	**Perceived Value**
F5	I'm loyal to PLBs. PLBs would be my first choice. Will not buy other products of equal quality if PLBs are available. I would recommend PLBs to my family. I regularly buy PLBs for most of my grocery or household needs.	**Brand Loyalty**
F6	PLB purchases are poor use of money. PLBs will not be as good quality as other brands. I'm concerned that PLBs are not safe. I'm concerned regarding what my friends will think of me when I buy PLBs. PLBs may not be consistent with my self image.	**Perceived Risk**

products are poor quality,' and 'Quality of PLBs is consistent' with factor loadings of 0.034, 0.028, and 0.41. These variables are combined under (Factor 2) named as Perceived Quality. The variables like 'PLBs have a positive image compared to competition,' 'PLBs are established brands,' and 'I respect people who use PLB brands' have factor loadings of 0.253, 0.021, and 0.004 and are combined under the Factor 3 named as Brand Association.

The three variables : 'I believe that PLBs offer good value for their price', 'Compared to other brands, I consider PLBs as a good buy,' and 'I get more money's worth in PLB purchases' with factor loadings of 0.042, 0.075, and 0.059 are combined under Factor 4 named as Perceived Value. The variables like 'I'm loyal to PLBs,' 'PLBs would be my first choice,', 'Will not buy other products of equal quality if PLBs are available,' 'I would recommend PLBs

to my family,' and 'I regularly buy PLBs for most of my grocery or household needs' with factor loadings of 0.561, 0.105, 0.137, 0.058, and 0.044, respectively are grouped under the Factor 5 which is named as Brand Loyalty. The last five variables like 'PLB purchases are poor use of money,' 'PLBs will not be as good quality as others brands,' 'I'm concerned that PLBs are not safe,' 'I'm concerned regarding what my friends will think of me when I buy PLBs,' and 'PLBs may not be consistent with my self-image' with factor loadings of 0.914, 0.124, 0.165, 0.024, and 0.113, respectively are combined under variable 6 which is named as Perceived Risk. It is observed that six factors that were extracted together account for 76.6% of the variance as shown in Table 6.

The Eigen value actually reflects the number of extracted factors whose sum should be equal to the number of items which are subjected to factor analysis. The next item shows all the factors extractable from the analysis along with their Eigen values.

The Eigen value table has been divided into three sub-sections, that is, initial Eigen values, extracted sums of squared loadings, and rotation of sums of squared loadings. For analysis and interpretation purposes, we are only

Table 6. Total Variance Explained

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	8.589	37.342	37.342	8.589	37.342	37.342	4.487	19.508	19.508
2	2.425	10.543	47.885	2.425	10.543	47.885	3.344	14.541	34.049
3	1.934	8.409	56.294	1.934	8.409	56.294	2.824	12.276	46.325
4	1.782	7.749	64.042	1.782	7.749	64.042	2.545	11.065	57.391
5	1.562	6.790	70.832	1.562	6.790	70.832	2.272	9.877	67.268
6	1.328	5.773	76.605	1.328	5.773	**76.605**	2.148	9.337	76.605
7	.747	3.248	79.853						
8	.599	2.605	82.459						
9	.506	2.199	84.658						
10	.403	1.753	86.411						
11	.395	1.716	88.127						
12	.349	1.517	89.644						
13	.324	1.407	91.051						
14	.292	1.269	92.320						
15	.278	1.209	93.530						
16	.262	1.141	94.671						
17	.254	1.103	95.774						
18	.225	.978	96.752						
19	.204	.887	97.639						
20	.186	.807	98.446						
21	.151	.654	99.100						
22	.145	.632	99.732						
23	.062	.268	100.000						

Note. Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.

Total Variance Explained

Figure 1. Scree Plot
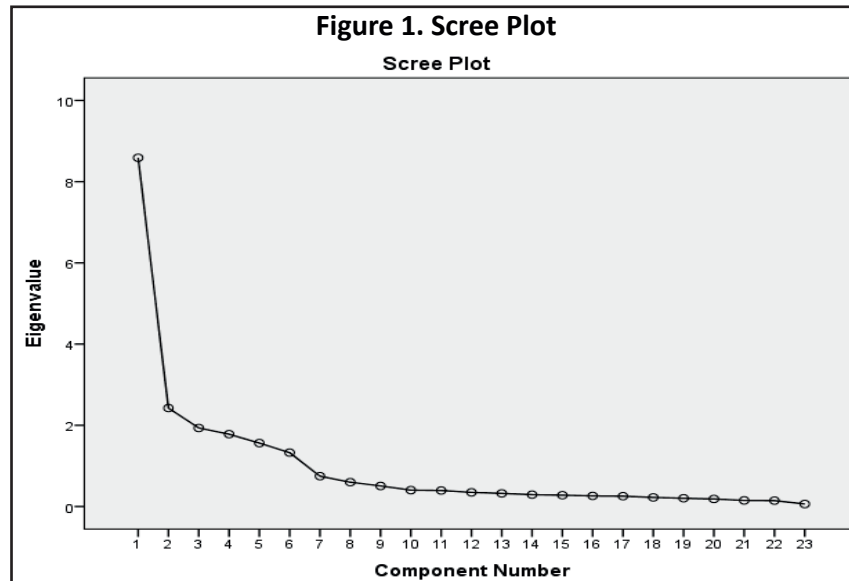
concerned with the extracted sums of squared loadings. The first factor accounts for 37.342% of the variance ; the second, 47.885% of the variance ; the third, 56.294% of the variance ; the fourth, 64.042% of the variance ; the fifth, 70.832% of the variance ; and the sixth, 76.605% of the variance. The total variation accounted for by these six factors is 76.6%, which is found to be satisfactory, and hence, it benefits the validity of the study (Table 6).

The scree plot (Figure 1) is a graph of the Eigen values against all the factors. The graph is useful for determining how many factors are to be retained. The point of interest is where the curve starts to flatten. It can be seen that the curve begins to flatten between Factors 6 and 7. It is also to be noted that Factor 6 onwards have an Eigen value of less than 1 ; so, only six factors have been retained.

Regression Analysis

Regression technique is used to evaluate the impact of six various factors influencing the brand equity of private label brands. Multiple regression analysis is used to identify the variance in the outcome, which is R-square. It is used in factor analysis when testing associations. The incremental validity evidence in psychometrics is tested.

Table 7. Results of Regression

		Model Summary		
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.855[a]	.731	.727	.443

Table 8. Results of Regression ANOVA Table

		ANOVA				
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
	Regression	206.994	6	34.499	146.612	.000
1	Residual	100.006	425	.235		
	Total	307.000	431			

Table 9. Results of Regression on Various Independent Variables

Independent Variables	Coefficients				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	*t*	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	6.592	.155		42.648	.000
Brand Awareness	.052	.064	.039	.807	.020
Perceived Quality	.412	.054	.340	7.643	.000
Brand Association	.309	.052	.263	5.947	.000
Perceived Value	.183	.060	.142	3.054	.002
Brand Loyalty	.103	.050	.090	2.048	.041
Perceived Risk	.334	.070	.242	4.783	.000

The primary goal is to test the credibility of the brand equity model for private label brands and also identify the most influencing variable of brand equity with respect to private label brands. The adjusted R - squared value is shown (Table 7) as 0.727, which is considered as significant as it exceeds 0.70. Table 8 depicts the F - value as 146.612 at significant value of 0.000. The study commands strong position in influencing the brand equity of private label brands.

It is evident from Table 9 that the most influencing factor on brand equity is Factor 2, which is Perceived Quality, having t - stat value of 7.643 and significance value of 0.000. This is contradicting the study results of Patil and Vedak (2011), which proves the acceptance of private label brands over time from price to quality. The next most impacting factor is Factor 3, which is Brand Association with the t - stat value of 5.947 and 0.000 significance. The next most important factor in the model stands as Perceived Risk (Factor 6) with a t - stat value of 4.783. Factor 4, Perceived Value and Factor 5, Brand Loyalty stand next in the order with t - stat values of 3.054 and 2.048. The factor which has the least impact is identified as Factor 1, which is Brand Awareness with a t - stat value of 0.807 as observed in Table 9, which is supported by the findings of Singh (2018).

Discussion and Conclusion

Due to a highly competitive environment in India, with the advantage of organized retail growth, markets have produced the need for repeat consumers for each store. In order to be competitive, retailers must identify the determinants of customer retention and the perceived importance of such determinants to the consumer. To compete in this cluttered business environment, the retailers are adopting the strategy of private label brands by communicating their positive image, which delivers the brand promise to the consumers of a store.

This study individually examines the brand equity factors of private label brands from the consumers' point of view. From the study, it is concluded that Perceived Quality has the highest influence on brand equity, which is also supported by the findings obtained by Nguyen, Barrett, and Miller (2011), who disclosed that purchase decisions were derived among consumers by quality perception. Cuneo, Milberg, Benavente, and Palacios - Fenech (2015) also obtained similar results. The factors included in Perceived Quality were reliability, trust, and consistency. The next most influencing factor on brand equity for PLBs is the Brand Association, which was also explained by Lederman and Klatzky (2009) that consumers' judgment of the brand preferences were based on their previous experience and knowledge about the brand. Consumers associate trust on the store brands/stores and use it as an instrument to create store differentiation and thereby influence store profitability. The factors involved in Brand Association are positive image, established brands, and respect towards the brand. The other following factors

include Perceived Risk, Perceived Value, Brand Loyalty, and Brand Awareness. As the marketing strategy is shifting from traditional to experimental style, advertisements of PLBs (Buil, De Chernatony, & Martinez, 2013 ; Shukla, 2007), which incorporate the product information can increase the brand awareness along with perceived value and loyalty.

Managerial Implications

It has become a challenging factor for the retailers to establish their own brand in the market to retain the customers and improve retailers' profitability. This paper aims to support the retailers in orchestrating their PLBs as new game changers in a vibrant retail industry. We strongly believe that this study will give solutions to the retailers to identify innovative and strategic means accordingly. The sudden surge of private brands in Indian markets has initiated a new strategic paradigm for the retailers to compete with the national brands for increase in market share. This research will be helpful for the organized retailers to penetrate into the market and position their PLBs appropriately. The retailers need to focus on quality positioning of PLBs primarily to attract the consumer markets. The next impactful favored factor is observed as Brand Association. The stores have to create strategies to develop a positive image, established brands, and strong respect towards the store brands. The other factors like Perceived Risk, Perceived Value, Brand Loyalty, and Brand Awareness are also to be captured in promoting the brand equity of PLBs.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Future Research

This study cannot be generalized for the entire brand equity assumptions as it only focuses on consumers' perceptions of private label brands. The study examines the hypermarkets while excluding supermarkets and other specialty stores in the retail industry. Furthermore, this study was conducted only in East and South Bangalore as a limited geographical area. As the next logical extension, this study can be extended to the entire consumer consumption patterns in hypermarkets as well as private label consumption in supermarkets in the rapidly growing organized sector of retailing.

Authors' Contribution

Ms. Shilpa Sarvani Ravi conceived and presented the idea. Ms. Shilpa developed the theory and performed logical computations. Dr. M.V. Ram Prasad supervised the idea and theory. Ms. Shilpa and Dr. Ram Prasad formulated the objectives of the study and the hypotheses. Ms. Shilpa identified the sample size and respondents for the data collection which were monitored by Dr. Ram Prasad. Ms. Shilpa executed the literature review. Ms. Shilpa and Dr. Ram Prasad together developed the questionnaire. Ms. Shilpa conducted a pilot study of 45 members and performed the reliability testing of Cronbach's alpha. Ms. Shilpa administered the questionnaire to 407 respondents in Bangalore South and East. Dr. Ram Prasad supervised the data acquisition. Ms. Shilpa identified the analytical methods and Dr. Ram Prasad verified the same. Ms. Shilpa performed the analytical calculations using statistical methods like mean, factor analysis, and regression using SPSS. Both Ms. Shilpa and Prof. Ram Prasad together discussed the results, findings, and interpretations in the data analysis. Both authors contributed equally in identifying the results of the study and the managerial implications.

Conflict of Interest

Both the authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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