Branding and Consumer Preference for Distilled Alcoholic Liquor in Abeokuta

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between branding and consumer preference for distilled alcoholic liquor produced by Intercontinental Distillers Limited (IDL) in Abeokuta, Ogun State. The specific objectives were to determine the influence of brand positioning on consumer preference, assess the effect of visual style on consumer preference, and examine the impact of customer experience on consumer preference. The research adopted a survey design. Primary data were collected using self-administered questionnaires distributed to a sample of 218 consumers of IDL products in Abeokuta, selected from a population of 480 using Yamane's formula and convenience sampling. The questionnaire was structured into two sections, with Section A addressing demographic data and Section B focusing on study variables. Key constructs measured included branding, brand positioning, visual style, customer experience, and consumer preference, all rated on a four-point Likert scale. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences. Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, and percentage were used to summarize responses, while Pearson correlation and multiple regression analysis were employed to test relationships and measure the direct effects of brand positioning, visual style, and customer experience on consumer preference. Findings revealed that brand positioning, visual style, and customer experience significantly influenced consumer preference for IDL distilled alcoholic liquor. Based on these results, the study recommends that IDL strengthen its brand identity through engaging campaigns, innovate its visual style with modern packaging and promotional materials, and enhance customer experiences across retail, online, and social media platforms through loyalty programs and improved service delivery.

Keywords: *Branding, Brand Positioning, Visual Style, Customer Experience, Consumer Preference, Distilled Alcoholic Liquor*

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Background to the Study
Branding plays a pivotal role in the consumption of goods and services, acting as a bridge between the producer and the consumer. It influences consumer perception, loyalty, and ultimately, purchasing decisions (Keller, 2003). In today's competitive markets, especially in sectors like the alcoholic beverage industry, a robust brand can significantly differentiate a product from its competitors (Aaker, 1991). This study focuses on the relationship between branding and consumer preference specifically for IDL (Industry Distillers Limited) distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta, Ogun State, an area known for its unique sociocultural dynamics and consumer behavior (Olaniyi, 2020).

The Nigerian alcoholic beverage market has witnessed exponential growth over the decades, fueled by changing lifestyles, increased disposable incomes, and the diversification of consumer tastes (Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, 2021). Brands like IDL have become prominent in this landscape; however, understanding what drives consumer preference toward these brands is crucial for sustained market presence (Ogunleye, 2019). The unique attributes of IDL, including its branding strategies, packaging, marketing communications, and customer experiences, could all serve as catalysts in shaping consumer preferences (Akinyemi & Olagunju, 2018). Brand positioning, as one of the main aspects of this study, refers to how a brand occupies a distinct position in the minds of consumers relative to competing brands. It encapsulates the unique values, benefits, and essence of the brand that resonate with target customers (Trout & Ries, 2001). For IDL, effective brand positioning can gravitate consumers towards its offerings, ensuring that the brand consistently meets their expectations and preferences.

Visual style is another critical element in establishing brand identity. The aesthetics of packaging, including colors, design, fonts, and imagery, can instantly convey messages about quality, reliability, and luxury associated with the product (Hagtvedt & Brasel, 2016). In the context of IDL, examining how visual styles influence consumer preferences will provide insights into which design elements are most appealing to customers in Abeokuta. Moreover, customer experience has become an integral aspect of brand loyalty and preference in contemporary marketing practices. It encompasses the entirety of interactions between a consumer and a brand, including pre-purchase, purchase, and post-purchase experiences (Lemon & Verhoef, 2016). A positive customer experience can lead to repeat purchases and favorable word-of-mouth, while a negative experience can deter potential customers. By examining how IDL distills such experiences in its branding strategies, we can measure the impact of customer interactions on overall consumer preference.

This study aims to explore the dynamic relationship between branding and consumer preferences for IDL distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta. By understanding the influence of brand positioning, visual style, and customer experience, the research will contribute to the theoretical and practical understanding of branding's role in consumer choice within the Nigerian alcoholic beverage market (Olowookere, 2022). Brand activity in Abeokuta's spirits market, evidence-based clarity is limited on which branding dimensions most strongly drive consumer preference for IDL's distilled liquor. Outlet-level studies in Abeokuta confirm

abundant availability and marketing touch points, yet we do not know whether brand image (design, symbolism), perceived quality (taste/packaging authenticity), or reputation (credibility/responsibility) is the primary determinant of perceived This study aims to address a significant gap in the understanding of how branding elements influence consumer preferences for alcoholic beverages, specifically IDL distilled liquor in Abeokuta, Ogun State. Despite the vibrant growth of the alcoholic beverage market in Nigeria, there is limited empirical research that delineates the specific factors within branding that sway consumer choices (Eke & Ukuji, 2020).

As competition intensifies among various alcohol brands, companies like IDL must strategically position themselves to appeal to their target demographics effectively (Adeoti, 2021). However, without a comprehensive understanding of the relationship between brand positioning, visual style, and customer experiences, IDL may struggle to establish and sustain its market share (Imediegwu, 2019). Furthermore, the lack of localized studies examining the perceptions of consumers within Abeokuta results in a knowledge void that may hinder effective marketing strategies (Ogunseye, 2022). Factors such as cultural preferences, economic conditions, and social influences can create unique consumer behaviors that are not addressed in broader market analyses. This research will investigate these gaps by providing insights into how branding impacts consumer preferences and informing strategic decision-making for the enhancement of IDL's market presence.

Objectives of the Study
The main objective of this study was to examine the relationship between branding and consumer preference for IDL distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta, Ogun State.
Specific Objectives:
1. Determine the influence of brand positioning on consumer preference of IDL distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta.
2. Assess the effect of visual style on consumer preference with IDL distilled alcoholic liquor.
3. Examine the impact of customer experience on consumer preference for IDL distilled alcoholic liquor

Research Questions
This study therefore attempts to answer these research questions:
1. How does brand positioning influence consumer preference of IDL distilled alcoholic liquor among consumers in Abeokuta?
2. To what extent does brand quality affect consumer preference with IDL distilled alcoholic liquor?
3. What is the effect of brand reputation on consumer preference for IDL distilled alcoholic liquor?

Research Hypotheses
H_{01}:   Brand positioning has no significant effect on consumer preference in the distilled liquor market in Abeokuta.

H$_{02}$:   Visual style has no significant effect on consumer preference.
H$_{03}$:   Customer experience has no significant effect on consumer preference.

Scope of the Study
The study is delimited to IDL distilled alcoholic products sold and consumed in Abeokuta, Ogun State (e.g., Chelsea London Dry Gin, Squadron Dark Rum, Seaman's Schnapps), covering retail and on-trade outlets (bars, clubs, supermarkets) where outlet density and marketing exposures are high. Constructs include brand positioning visual style customer experience (independent variables) and consumer preference (dependent variables). The geographic scope excludes other Ogun State cities and non-IDL brands.

Literature Review
Conceptual Review
Branding
Kotler, Doyle, and the American Marketing Association provide foundational definitions that remain relevant: branding is the use of identifiable elements such as a name, symbol, design, or combination thereof to distinguish a firm's product or service from others (Kotler & Armstrong, 2020; Doyle, 2002; AMA, 2011)

In the study, Abioro et al. (2021) and Attih (2021) emphasise that branding comprises the brand name (verbal identifier), brand mark (visual symbol), and trade name (legal entity), all of which aim to create a lasting impression and signal superiority in the market (Attih et al., 2023; Jatto, 2023). A more imaginative framing defines branding as the process of creating a unique, relevant, and harmonious combination of name, symbol, term, or design to identify and differentiate the firm's product imbuing it with meaning and facilitating recognition (Okpara, 2012).

The brand concept refers to the abstract, unique meaning that firms craft to differentiate themselves in consumers' minds. It comprises: How it delivers that value (Park et al. 1991; Lafley & Martin 2013) For example, a "third-place" concept like Starbucks identifies who it's for (people seeking a communal space), what it provides (a relaxed social environment), and how (through atmosphere, design, and service)

Brand Positioning
Brand positioning is a crucial component of strategic marketing, as it defines how a brand is perceived in a customer's mind and differentiates it from competitors. According to Aaker (2020), effective brand positioning is about finding a specific niche in the market that resonates with a targeted audience, thus delivering a tailored, impactful message that meets consumer needs. This process begins with market research, where brands assess consumer preferences, competitive offerings, and market trends to discover gaps that can be addressed. A compelling example of brand positioning is the way premium brands differentiate themselves by emphasizing quality and exclusivity. For instance, companies in the alcoholic beverage industry often leverage the heritage and craftsmanship of their products to appeal to consumers seeking authenticity and status. IDL (Industry Distillers Limited) in Abeokuta

can adopt a similar strategy by highlighting its unique production methods, local sourcing, and community connections (Nkhata et al., 2022). This may involve constructing narratives around brand heritage and local culture, creating emotional connections that enhance consumer affinity and loyalty.

Visual Style

Visual style serves as the forefront of brand identity and is an essential element of a brand's communication strategy. It encompasses everything from logo design, color schemes, typography, and packaging to advertising visuals. These visual elements play a vital role in influencing consumer emotions, perceptions, and decision-making processes. Research indicates that up to 90% of snap judgments made about products can be based on color alone, showcasing its significant impact on consumer preferences (Henderson & Cote, 2019).

For IDL, the visual style should reflect the brand's identity and values, creating an emotional connection with consumers. Packaging, in particular, is a powerful tool; an aesthetically pleasing design can catch consumers' attention while also conveying information about the brand's quality and target market (Chikwe et al., 2021). For example, using elegant designs and high-quality materials can suggest that a product is premium, aligning with the positioning strategy of targeting upscale consumers in Ogun State. Furthermore, visual consistency plays a critical role in brand recognition. When IDL maintains a consistent visual style across all mediums print, digital, and in-store it helps consumers easily identify the brand, fostering stronger brand recall and loyalty. As Neil et al. (2020) point out, brands that invest in strong visual identities are often more successful in building customer engagement and shareability through social media platforms, which are essential for reaching younger audiences.

Customer Experience

Customer experience (CX) has profoundly emerged as a key differentiator in today's highly competitive markets. It encompasses every interaction a consumer has with a brand, from browsing online and purchasing in-store to customer service engagements and post-purchase communications. Improving CX requires a holistic understanding of consumer behavior and preferences, as consumers today expect seamless, personalized, and meaningful interactions (Lemon & Verhoef, 2020).

For IDL, creating a positive customer experience is vital in developing deep emotional connections that drive brand loyalty. This includes providing excellent customer service, easy purchasing channels, and engaging promotional strategies that speak directly to consumer interests (Guo et al., 2022). The importance of personalization in enhancing customer experience cannot be overstated; brands that leverage data analytics to understand their customers better can create tailored experiences that resonate with individual preferences. A noteworthy aspect of customer experience is its interconnectedness with the brand's positioning and visual style. For instance, if IDL positions itself as a premium brand, the customer experience must reinforce that identity. This alignment includes everything from the ambiance of stores, quality of interactions, and even the online purchasing journey. Meyer

and Schwager (2021) emphasize that a cohesive experience across touchpoints enhances perceived brand value and encourages repeat engagement.

Consumer Preference
Consumer preference is shaped by a blend of psychological drivers' motivation, perception, learning, and attitudes which mediate responses to marketing stimuli (Rosário & Raimundo, 2021; Sheth, 2021) Motivation reflects the internal drivers of need and desire, while perception influences how marketing messages are decoded based on prior exposure and expectations. Learning adjusts attitudes over time through experiences, and attitudes themselves guide predispositions toward certain products or brands. The interplay of these factors forms the basis of preference formation (Kotler & Keller, 2016; Ajzen & Fishbein, 2022; Rosário & Raimundo, 2021)

Marketing strategies that leverage conditioning mechanisms such as emotional appeals, brand storytelling, endorsements, and authentic messaging can shape or reinforce preferences (Barari et al., 2025). For instance, repeated exposure to authentic narratives or socially validated content (e.g., influencer endorsements) can pair positive emotional responses with the brand, leading to conditioned preferences in favor of that brand (Pavlov, 1927; Aaker, 1991; Gen Z authenticity preference).

Theoretical Review
This study was centrally built on Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) – Ajzen (1991) and Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB).

Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)
The Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), proposed by Icek Ajzen (1991), is a well-established framework in social psychology that explains how human intentions lead to specific behaviors. It builds on the earlier Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) by adding the concept of perceived behavioral control. TPB posits that an individual's behavioral intention is the most immediate determinant of behavior, and that this intention is shaped by three key components: attitude toward the behavior, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control.

Attitude refers to an individual's overall evaluation of performing a particular behavior. It is shaped by behavioral beliefs the perceived consequences of performing the action and the evaluation of these consequences. In the context of branding and consumer preference for distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta, attitude would be influenced by perceptions of brand image, brand quality, and brand reputation. If a consumer believes that a specific liquor brand, such as Intercontinental Distillers Limited's products, is high quality and socially prestigious, the resulting positive attitude will increase their purchase intention.

Signaling Theory
Signaling Theory, originally developed by Michael Spence in 1973 within the context of job market signaling, has since been widely applied in marketing, branding, and consumer
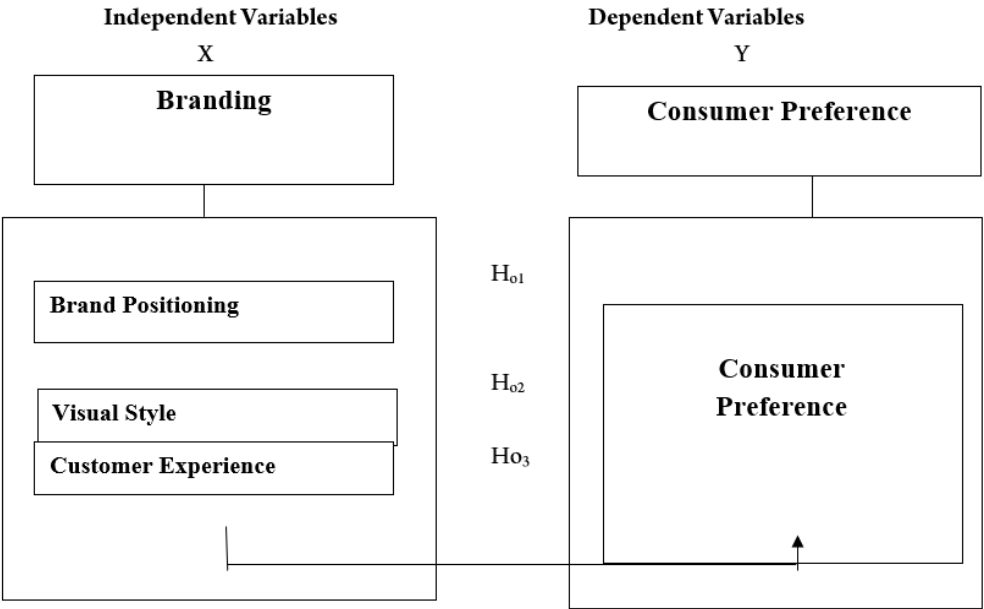
behavior research. The theory addresses the problem of information asymmetry, which occurs when one party (such as a seller) has more or better information about a product than the other party (such as a buyer). In markets for goods and services, consumers often cannot fully assess a product's quality before purchase. Instead, they rely on signals observable attributes or actions taken by the seller that communicate unobservable qualities. In branding, these signals include brand image, brand quality indicators, and brand reputation, which influence perceived value, customer satisfaction, and purchase intention (Connelly et al., 2011; Kirmani & Rao, 2000).

Empirical Review

Ciani, Fabbri & Sarti, (2021). "The Role of Brand Positioning in Shaping Consumer Preference.". This study explores the critical role of brand positioning in influencing consumer preferences, particularly in competitive markets. Employing a quantitative approach, the research surveyed 500 consumers across various industries to identify how brand attributes, perceptions, and differentiation impact consumer choices. Findings reveal that a clear and distinctive brand position significantly enhances consumers' emotional and cognitive connections with brands, which in turn affects their purchase intentions. Additionally, the study highlights the importance of aligning brand positioning with consumer values and identities to foster loyalty and long-term engagement. The implications of these insights suggest that marketers should focus on developing unique value propositions that resonate with target audiences to effectively influence consumer behavior.

Ko, Kim, & Lee (2023). The Influence of Visual Style on Consumer Preference in the Alcoholic Beverage Market. This study investigates the relationship between visual style and consumer preferences in the alcoholic beverage market, particularly focusing on packaging design and branding elements. Analyzed through consumer surveys and comparative product analysis, findings reveal that visually appealing packaging significantly drives consumer choice, particularly when elements such as color, typography, and imagery align with consumers' emotional and psychological appeal. The results further indicate that products with cohesive visual identities are more likely to foster brand loyalty, suggesting that marketers should prioritize the development of aesthetically distinct and emotionally resonant packaging to enhance consumer engagement and preference within this competitive sector.

Figure 1: Conceptual Model

Independent Variables
X

Branding

Brand Positioning

Visual Style

Customer Experience

H_{o1}

H_{o2}

H_{o3}

Dependent Variables
Y

Consumer Preference

Consumer
Preference

Sources: The Researcher's, 2025

Methodology
This section comprises of the research design, target population, sample size, sampling technique, data sources, data collection methods, data collection instruments, validity and reliability, data collection procedure, data analysis, ethical considerations, limitations of the study.

Research Design
Research design is a framework that is used by researchers to conduct research. This study employed a cross-sectional study design. A cross-sectional study involves looking at people who differ on one key characteristic at one specific point in time. This study prefers cross-sectional design because it is usually relatively inexpensive and allow researchers to collect a great deal of information quite quickly. Data is often obtained using self-report surveys and researchers are then able to amass large amounts of information from a large pool of participants. Furthermore, the study used quantitative approach to gain better knowledge and understanding of the results. Quantitative research relies on deductive reasoning with the help of questionnaires. In addition, the study will supplement quantitative approach using qualitative approach where the use of key informant interviews will be employed.

Target Population
The study target employees from the among the consumer of Intercontinental Distillers Limited product in Ogun State because they were considered more informed of the study

topic (i.e. branding, and consumer preference). The researcher used systematic sampling to select target population of 480 respondents from the consumer of Intercontinental Distillers Limited products). The sample employees include final consumer, distributor and markers etc. The population is all consists of consumers in Abeokuta Ogun State.

Sample Size
Quantitative Sample Size
Sample size is a smaller set of the larger population. The authors argued that if well in the, a sample of between 10-30% of the population is adequate for generalization of findings to the whole population. In this study, sample will be determined using Taro Yamane formula;

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n=sample size; N=target population; α=level of significance at 0.05.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

N = Population
E = Limit of error = 0.05
Applying the formula above to a population of 281 employees
n =?
N = 480
e = 0.05
N = $\dfrac{480}{1+480\,(0.5^2)}$
n = $\dfrac{480}{1+480\,(0.0025)}$ = $\dfrac{480}{2.2}$ = 218.
= 218 respondents

Sampling Technique
The researcher will use simple random sampling to select the consumer within Abeokuta. The entire process of sampling was done in a single step with each subject in the independently of the other members of the population. This method was preferred because of its non-biasness and inclusiveness. It gives every respondent equal opportunity to participate in the study without any special considerations. The purposive technique was used to select the consumer. This is because this category of participants is considered more informed about the research topic and therefore provide relevant and in-depth information. Posits that purposive sampling permits the selection of a sample with bias to warrant inclusion of those informants who are most suitable in providing important information to the study.

Data Source
This study based on only primary source of data collection. This is because primary data are likely to be more up-to-date than data obtained from published source.

Primary Source
The primary source was collected using questionnaires.

Data Collection Methods
The study adopted survey questionnaires as the data collection methods.

Surveys
The study used survey method of data collection. The researcher prefers survey method because it is good for gathering descriptive data, relatively easy to administer, cost effective and time saving. This method will be used to get information about branding, brand positioning, visual style and customer experience, consumer preference of the selected manufacturing company's products in Ogun State Nigeria.

Questionnaires
The researcher used closed ended questionnaires to collect data from the consumer Intercontinental Distillers Limited (IDL) Product in Abeokuta, Ogun State. The researcher preferred to use questionnaires because large amounts of information can be collected from a large number of people in a short period of time and in a relatively cost-effective way. A five Likert scale was used to assess the extent to which a respondent agrees or disagree with a statement of an attitude, belief or judgment; where 5=strongly agree, and 1=strongly disagree. The questionnaire was structured into three sections; the first section captured information regarding the demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of gender, age, education level and work experience; the second section captured information about branding and consumer preference for distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta which was measured using: brand positioning (4 items), visual style (4 items), and customer experience (5 items) The section captured information regarding consumer preference which was measured with (5 items).

Validity and Reliability
This section contains information on how validity and reliability of the instrument were ensured.

Validity
Quantitative Data: This study will used Content Validity Index (CVI) so as to establish the degree to which a sample of items, taken together, constitutes an adequate operational definition of a construct. To examine the content validity, professional subjective judgment is required to determine the extent to which the scale was designed to measure a trait of interest. This is because content validity is a subjective judgment of experts about the degree of relevant construct in an assessment instrument. However, inclusion of at least five experts (mostly

senior lecturers, associate professors, methodologists and professors) in that field or five to ten experts would be useful to judge the content domains of a scale through use of rating scales. The researcher will achieve this by involving experts in the field of marketing, specifically two (2) methodologists from two statistics department. Their suggestions, expert opinions and recommendations were adjusted accordingly and the following formula was used to substantiate it.

$$CVI = \frac{items\,declared\,relevant\,by\,expert}{total\,number\,of\,items}$$

Where CVI = Content Validity Index
According to Amin (2005) if the CVI is ≥0.70, the items are considered valid.

Reliability
In order to ensure that the research instrument is reliable and can consistently produce reliable data when administered, the researcher determined its reliability by measuring the internal consistency of the instrument. This reliability analysis will be conducted on the piloted survey instruments prior to official data collection so as to ensure that the instruments provide reliable data for the study. Test-retest method of measuring reliability was used to conduct the pilot study by the researcher to ensure that the instruments can provide consistent measurements. Twenty (20) different samples (the staff) from the industry were in the and the instruments were administered on them. If the results of the pilot study are found to be consistent, the instruments are assumed as reliable.

Cronbach's alpha will be used in the actual study to determine the reliability of the instruments. Cronbach's alpha measures the internal consistency that is, how closely related a set of items are as a group. The higher the α-value, the more reliable the instruments were considered. A commonly accepted rule for describing internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha is as follows (Kline, 2000): table below gives the summary.

Table 1: Interpretation of Cronbach's Alpha Results

Cronbach's alpha	Internal consistency
$\alpha \geq 0.9$	Excellent
$0.9 > \alpha \geq 0.8$	Good
$0.8 > \alpha \geq 0.7$	Acceptable
$0.7 > \alpha \geq 0.6$	Questionable
$0.6 > \alpha \geq 0.5$	Poor
$0.5 > \alpha$	Unacceptable

Data Analysis
Data analysis is the process where collected data is reduced to a more controllable and convenient size, and a researcher can start to identify trends or patterns, apply statistical

techniques and give a summary of the data. Collected data will be sorted and coded. Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS Version 24.0) will be used to analyze data. Descriptive and inferential research will be used to analyze data. The researcher will use frequencies, mean, and standard deviations to analyze descriptive research. Inferential statistics is a technique used by researchers to study samples and make generalizations about the population. The study was analyzed using inferential statistics using regression analysis in order to determine the influence of brand positioning on consumer preference of IDL distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta, assess the effect of visual style on consumer preference with IDL distilled alcoholic liquor and examine the impact of customer experience on consumer preference for IDL distilled alcoholic liquor. Multiple regression analysis will be done to determine the variance of the predictor variables on the dependent variable.

At a very basic level, the relationship between a continuous response variable (Y) and a continuous explanatory variable (X) may be represented using a line of best-fit, where Y is predicted, at least to some extent, by X. If this relationship is linear, it may be appropriately represented mathematically using the straight-line equation $Y = \alpha + \beta X$. In this study, Consumer Preference (CP) was predicted by Branding (BG);

$$CP = \alpha + \beta BG + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Objective one: To determine the influence of brand positioning on consumer preference of IDL distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta.

$$CP = \alpha + BP + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots (2)$$

Objective two: To assess the effect of visual style on consumer preference with IDL distilled alcoholic liquor and $CP = \alpha + VS + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots (3)$

Objective three: To examine the impact of customer experience on consumer preference for IDL distilled alcoholic liquor. $CP = \alpha + CE + \varepsilon \dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots\dots (4)$

Where;
α=the value of CP when BG is equal to zero (also known as the intercept)
β= the slope of the line (also known as the regression coefficient)

The regression coefficient β describes the change in FP that is associated with a unit change in BG.
ε=Error Term [this is the error or disturbance term of an observed value which is a surrogate for all the omitted variables in the regression model]
CP: Consumer Preference

BG: Branding
BP: Brand Positioning
VS: Visual Style
CE: Customer Experience

Decision Rule: The p-value will be set at 0.05. If the $p<0.05$, the null hypothesis will be rejected, otherwise it will be accepted. Furthermore, if the $p<0.05$, the effect of the IV on the DV was considered significant, otherwise not.

Qualitative data was manually done by identification and transcription of recorded data into the qualitative findings. There after analysis is conducted to identify categories and themes that emerged from the data. The themes on each of the variables will be coded and conceptually organized, analyzed, evaluated and aligned to the researcher's objectives from which interpretations were drawn, whereas the analysis of data will be done concurrently with data collection and the findings will be used for further sampling, data collection, processing and analysis. The researcher respected the confidentiality and anonymity of the research respondents by involving them in the study in their own terms and place of convenience and coding their names in the final report of the study.

Data Presentation and Analysis
The researcher distributed 218 copies of questionnaire, out of which 170 copies were received from the field. This represented an overall successful response rate of 78%. The rest 46 (22%) of the copies consisted of those questionnaires that were never returned.

Analysis of Research Questions
***Decision Rule if mean is ≤ 1.49 = strongly Disagree; 1.5 to 2.49 = Disagree; 2.5 to 3.49 = Agree; 3.5 to 4=strongly Agree

Table 2: Respondents' View on Brand Positioning

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The brand clearly communicates its unique value proposition compared to competitors.	3.35	.90633
2	I can easily identify the brand's target market through its advertising and messaging.	3.32	.99468
3	The brand differentiates itself effectively in a crowded marketplace.	3.35	.90633
4	I believe the brand's positioning aligns well with my personal values and preferences.	3.68	.52851
	Grand Mean	**3.43**	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 2 above shows the means and standard deviation of respondents' views on Brand Positioning. Firstly, the mean score for item 1 is 3.35 (S.D=. 90633) and indicates that majority of the respondents agree that brand clearly communicates its unique value proposition compared to competitors. Secondly, the mean score for item 2 is 3.32 (S.D=. 99468) which indicates that majority of the respondents agree that they can easily identify the brand's target market through its advertising and messaging. Also, the mean score for item 3 is 3.35 (S.D=. 90633) and indicates majority of the respondents agree that brand differentiates itself effectively in a crowded marketplace. Also, the mean score for item 4 is 3.68 (S.D=. 52851) and indicates majority of the respondents strongly agree that they believe the brand's positioning aligns well with my personal values and preferences. The implication of this is that the grand means score of 3.43 indicates that majority of the respondents claimed they is a well brand positioning in the organization.

Table 3: Respondents' View on Visual Style

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	The visual elements of the brand (logo, colors, and packaging) are appealing to me.	3.15	1.03582
2	The visual style of the brand is consistent across different marketing channels.	3.32	.90104
3	The design choices effectively represent the brand's identity and values.	3.44	.81376
4	I am drawn to brands that have a strong and recognizable visual style.	2.32	.93330
	Grand Mean	**3.06**	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 3 above shows the means and standard deviation of respondents' views on Visual Style. Firstly, the mean score for item 1 is 3.15 (S.D=. 1.03582) and indicates that majority of the respondents agree that visual elements of the brand (logo, colors, and packaging) are appealing to me. Secondly, the mean score for item 2 is 3.32 (S.D=. 90104) which indicates that majority of the respondents agree that visual style of the brand is consistent across different marketing channels. Also, the mean score for item 3 is 3.44 (S.D=. 81376) and indicates majority of the respondents agree that design choices effectively represent the brand's identity and values. Also, the mean score for item 4 is 2.32 (S.D= 93330) and indicates majority of the respondents disagree that they are drawn to brands that have a strong and recognizable visual style. The implication of this is that the grand means score of 3.06 indicates that majority of the respondents 'claimed they receive good recognition in the organization.

Table 4: Respondents' View on Customer Experience

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	My interactions with the brand's customer service have been positive and satisfying.	3.45	.82176
2	The brand provides a seamless and enjoyable shopping experience.	3.41	.93952
3	I feel valued as a customer when I engage with the brand.	3.47	.72305
4	The brand effectively addresses my inquiries and concerns promptly.	3.36	.86726
	Grand Mean	**3.40**	

Source: Field Survey, 2025**.**

Table 4 above shows the means and standard deviation of respondents' views on Customer Experience. Firstly, the mean score for item 1 is 3.45 (S.D=. 82176) and indicates that majority of the respondents agree that their interactions with the brand's customer service have been positive and satisfying. Secondly, the mean score for item 2 is 3.41 (S.D=. 93952) which indicates that majority of the respondents agree that brand provides a seamless and enjoyable shopping experience. Also, the mean score for item 3 is 3.47 (S.D=. 72305) and indicates majority of the respondents agree that feel valued as a customer when I engage with the brand. Also, the mean score for item 4 is 3.36 (S.D=. 86726) and indicates majority of the respondents agreed that they brand effectively address my inquiries and concerns promptly. The implication of this is that the grand means score of 3.40 indicates that majority of the respondents 'claimed they have an absolute control over their customer experience.

Table 5: Respondents' View on Consumer Preference

S/N	ITEMS	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	I prefer this brand over its competitors when making purchasing decisions.	3.31	.93098
2	I believe this brand offers better value for the price compared to others.	3.40	.85934
3	My loyalty to this brand influences my buying habits.	3.44	.84934
4	This brand aligns well with my lifestyle and personal preferences.	3.57	.74442
5	I actively seek out this brand when shopping for products in its category.	3.46	.89777
6	I often choose this brand when it is available, regardless of other alternatives.	3.45	.86354
	Grand Mean	**3.45**	

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

Table 5 above shows the means and standard deviation of respondents' views on Consumer Preference. Firstly, the mean score for item 1 is 3.31 (S.D=. 93098) and indicates that majority of the respondents agree that they prefer this brand over its competitors when making purchasing decisions. Secondly, the mean score for item 2 is 3.40 (S.D=. 85934) which indicates that majority of the respondents agree that they believe this brand offers better value for the price compared to others. Also, the mean score for item 3 is 3.44 (S.D=. 84934) and indicates majority of the respondents agree that they actively seek out this brand when shopping for products in its category. Also, the mean score for item 4 is 3.57 (S.D=. 74442) and indicates majority of the respondents strongly agree that they brand aligns well with my lifestyle and personal preferences. Also, the mean score for item 5 is 3.46 (S.D= .89777) and indicates majority of the respondents agree that they actively seek out this brand when shopping for products in its category Also, the mean score for item 6 is 3.45 (S.D=. 86354) and indicates majority of the respondents agree that the often choose this brand when it is available, regardless of other alternatives. The implication of this is that the grand means score of 3.45 indicates that majority of the respondents 'claimed they are derived absolute satisfaction from consumer preference.

Test of Hypotheses
Hypothesis One
H_{01}: Brand Positioning has no significant effect on consumer preference in the distilled liquor market in Abeokuta.

Table 6.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.426ᵃ	.181	.176	4.43464

a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Positioning

ANOVAᵃ

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	731.765	1	731.765	37.210	.000ᵇ
	Residual	3303.888	168	19.666		
	Total	4035.653	169			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Preference

b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Positioning

Coefficientsᵃ

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	9.674	1.828		5.292	.000
	Brand Positioning	.799	.131	.426	6.100	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Preference

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

R-square (R^2) indicates the extent or percentage that the IVs can explain the variations in the DV. Based on the model summary table, the R-square for this research is 0.181. This means that 18.1% of the variation in the DV (Consumer Preference) can be explained by the IV (Brand Positioning). However, 81.9% (100% - 18.1%) of the variation in the DV is unexplained in this study. In other words, there are other additional variables that are important in explaining consumer preference that have not been considered in this study.

From the Anova table, an F-value $(F_{(1,168)} = 37.210, p=.0.000)$ was obtained which was found to be significant at p (0.000) less than (0.05) alpha level of significance. This indicates that brand positioning significantly affects consumer preference.

As refer to the coefficient table above, brand positioning has the significant value of 0.000 which is p<0.05. Thus, this means that the null Hypothesis one would be rejected. Conclusion therefore would be that brand positioning significantly affects consumer preference.

Hypothesis Two

$H_{02:}$ Visual style has no significant effect on consumer preference.

Table 7.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.621[a]	.386	.382	3.84007

a. Predictors: (Constant), Visual style

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1558.303	1	1558.303	105.675	.000[b]
	Residual	2477.350	168	14.746		
	Total	4035.653	169			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Preference

b. Predictors: (Constant), Visual style

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.144	2.042		-.070	.944
	Visual style	1.698	.165	.621	10.280	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Preference

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

R-square (R^2) indicates the extent or percentage that the IVs can explain the variations in the DV. Based on the model summary table, the R-square for this research is 0.386. This means that 38.6% of the variation in the DV (Consumer Preference) can be explained by the IV (Visual style). However, 61.4% (100% - 38.6%) of the variation in the DV is unexplained in this study. In other words, there are other additional variables that are important in explaining consumer preference that have not been considered while carrying out this study.

From the Anova table, an F-value $(F_{(1,168)} = 105.675, p=.0.000)$ was obtained which was found to be significant at p (0.000) less than (0.05) alpha level of significance. This indicates that visual style significantly affects consumer preference. As refer to the coefficient table above, visual style has the significant value of 0.000 which is p<0.05. Thus, this means that the null Hypothesis two would be rejected. Conclusion therefore would be that visual style significantly affects consumer preference.

Hypothesis Three
H03: Customer experience has no significant effect on consumer preference

Table 8.

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.964[a]	.930	.929	1.29915

a. Predictors: (Constant), Customer experience

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3752.106	1	3752.106	2223.099	.000[b]
	Residual	283.547	168	1.688		
	Total	4035.653	169			

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Preference

b. Predictors: (Constant), Customer experience

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	-.033	.449		-.073	.942
	Customer experience	1.509	.032	.964	47.150	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Consumer Preference

Source: Field Survey, 2025.

R-square (R^2) indicates the extent or percentage that the IVs can explain the variations in the DV. Based on the model summary table, the R-square for this research is 0. 930. This means that 93% of the variation in the DV (Consumer Preference) can be explained by the IV (Customer experience). However, 7% (100% - 93%) of the variation in the DV is unexplained in this study. In other words, there are other additional variables that are important in explaining consumer preference that have not been considered while carrying out this study.

From the Anova table, an F-value $(F_{(1, 168)} = 2223.099$, p=.0.000) was obtained which was found to be significant at p (0.000) less than (0.05) alpha level of significance. This indicates that customer experience significantly affects consumer preference. As refer to the coefficient

table above, customer experience has the significant value of 0.000 which is $p<0.05$. Thus, this means that the null Hypothesis three would be rejected. Conclusion therefore would be that customer experience significantly affects consumer preference.

Summary of Findings
This research work was conducted to find out the branding and consumer preference for distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta. Some of the major findings include:

i. Brand positioning significantly affects consumer preference. A study by Aaker (2019) demonstrated that brand positioning significantly influences consumer choice, indicating that brands that articulate clear and unique value propositions tend to attract more loyal customers.

ii. Visual style significantly affects consumer preference. Similarly, Johnson and Gustafsson (2020) found that visual elements, such as packaging and advertising design, play a pivotal role in drawing consumers' attention and facilitating brand recall, ultimately impacting their purchasing decisions.

iii. Customer experience significantly affects consumer preference. A study by Smith and Zook (2021) investigated customer experience across various industries, revealing that positive experiences lead to increased brand loyalty and preference. Their findings resonate with the current research, which underscores the importance of ensuring that customer interactions with the brand enhance overall satisfaction and preference.

Conclusion
The findings of this research indicate that brand positioning, visual style, and customer experience are significant factors influencing consumer preference for distilled alcoholic liquor in Abeokuta, particularly concerning Intercontinental Distillers Limited (IDL). The evidence suggests that consumers are more likely to select IDL products when the brand effectively communicates a clear value proposition that distinguishes it from competitors, demonstrating the critical importance of intentional brand positioning.

Furthermore, the visual style linked to IDL products significantly impacts consumer attraction and engagement. It appears that consumers are not only influenced by the product quality but are also swayed by appealing packaging designs and advertisements that reflect the brand's identity. This finding underscores the need for IDL to continually innovate its visual representation to maintain relevance in a competitive market. Additionally, the research highlights that customer experience plays a crucial role in shaping brand preference. A positive customer experience including aspects such as product availability, customer service quality, and overall interaction with the brand exerts a direct influence on consumer satisfaction and loyalty. The study emphasizes that consistently delivering excellent customer experiences can enhance brand loyalty, leading to repeat purchases and favorable word-of-mouth referrals.

In a broader context, these findings are aligned with global trends that illustrate how consumer preferences are increasingly shaped by qualitative attributes such as brand perception and customer relationships. As the distilled alcohol market continues to evolve with shifts in consumer behavior driven by lifestyle changes and technological advancements brands like IDL must remain agile, adapting their marketing strategies to meet emerging consumer needs. From the outcome of the research work, the following recommendations are made:

i. IDL should clearly define its brand identity and communicate its unique value proposition effectively. Engaging marketing campaigns that resonate with the target audience could enhance brand positioning.

ii. The organization should continually innovate its visual style, including packaging and promotional materials, to create a more appealing aesthetic that attracts consumers. Engaging graphic designers to explore new and trendy designs may help to update and modernize the brand's image.

iii. IDL must prioritize creating exceptional customer experiences across all touchpoints retail, online, and social media. Initiatives such as loyalty programs, customer feedback mechanisms, and enhanced service training for staff can lead to improved consumer interactions.

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