

## ABSTRACT

Brand-related research has been interested by both marketing practitioners and academic researchers during the past two decades. In the brand-related literatures, brand equity and its value have been a main stream of studies and researches for many years (e.g. Wood, 2000; Keller and Lenman, 2002; Raggio and Leone, 2006). Price deals and product quality are considered as the most important marketplace cues and the very first information for consumer evaluation of a product or service for experienced customers. This study aimed to investigate the impact of price deals and perceived quality on the consumers' mindset in the context of brand. Furthermore, this study extends the previous literature on brand equity, focusing on how a consumer perceives brand in high involvement products.

Eighteen face-to-face interviews were conducted to identify the product category for high involvement product. The results indicated that the focused brand and product category is SONY HD TVs. Four hundreds and four consumers who have experience purchasing a SONY HD TV were asked to complete the questionnaire survey. This resulted in 386 sets of usable questionnaires. In particular, the key informants of this study are the current consumers of SONY HD TV who are in Bangkok.

The results of structural path analysis indicated that seven of nine hypotheses are statistically significant and positive. Six hypotheses are supported and significance and three hypotheses are not support. Price deals and perceived quality influence brand equity through brand associations and brand knowledge. The results shows that price deals and perceived quality increase the functional benefits (brand attributes, and brand benefits) and emotional benefits (brand attitude) which influence perceived brand value through brand knowledge. This value chain process is consistent previous.

The findings show statistical evidence that price deals and the perception of quality send information about the brand to the mind of a consumer to create brand associations. Thus, the findings support that price deals and perceived quality are the important factor which creates the associations that consumers make with a brand. These associations induce what the firm wants the brand to stand for in the consumers' mind (brand image) and how deeply the firm wants the consumers to remember the brand (brand recall and brand recognition).

Finally, a more positive brand image and brand recall lead to a stronger brand equity which contributes to consumer loyalty, consumer beliefs and willingness to search for the brand. Furthermore, positive brand equity will help consumers to view the brand favorably and create a halo effect to resist competitors' marketing activities (Keller, 1993; Leuthesser, et al., 1995).

