



MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

**AN EVALUATION OF CORPORATE BRAND IDENTITY
MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AT EQUITY BANK UGANDA**

BY:

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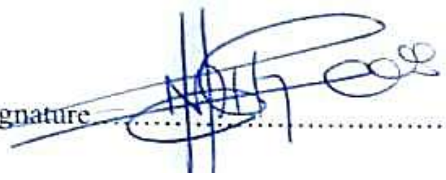
**A RESEARCH REPORT SUBMITTED TO MAKERERE UNIVERSITY
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PLAN B.

NOVEMBER, 2025

DECLARATION

I, Mugambe Hassan, affirm that this research report is my original work and has not been presented to any institution known to me for an academic prize.

Signature:  Date: 18.11.2025

MUGAMBE HASSAN

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APPROVAL

This certifies that this research report has been presented with our endorsement as university supervisors.

Signature.....

Date.....18/11/2025

Assoc. Prof. Ahmad Walugembe

Signature.....

Date.....18th/11/2025

Mr. Ssenoga Douglas

DEDICATION

With the utmost love, I dedicate this research to my wife, kids, and all of my friends for their love, sacrifice, support, strength, and wisdom, which have motivated me to reach my full potential.

May God continue to bless them.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I give thanks to the All-Powerful God who has made it possible for me to conduct this research and complete my academic career.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CBIM	-	Corporate Brand Identity Management
CSR	-	Corporate Social Responsibility
CVI	-	Content Validity Index
CVI	-	Corporate Visual Identity
IMC	-	Integrated Marketing Communication
SEO	-	Search Engine Optimization
SMEs	-	Small and Medium-Sized Businesses
SPSS	-	Statistical Package for Social Scientists

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity management techniques' efficacy. The study concentrated on the methods utilized to manage corporate brand identity, the difficulties encountered in doing so, and possible approaches to enhancing corporate brand identity at Equity Bank Uganda. A quantitative technique using a cross-sectional design was used. Questionnaires were used to gather data from 175 respondents; 128 of them returned them, resulting in a 73% response rate. Version 23 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences was used to analyze the data. The results of the study showed that in order to establish a strong brand identity, Equity Bank Uganda uses tactics including digital branding, integrated marketing communication, strategic brand positioning, visual identity development, and corporate social responsibility. Nonetheless, issues like staff disengagement, leadership's lack of emphasis on branding, a lack of a thorough brand strategy, and trouble sustaining brand consistency were noted. Transparent communication, improved security, creative service delivery, and more funding for digital branding are some of the suggested enhancements. According to the report, Equity Bank Uganda should keep enhancing its brand management plans with a focus on staff engagement, digital branding, and strategic positioning. Additionally, the bank should conduct frequent brand audits and train employees to align with brand values. The government ought to foster an atmosphere that encourages financial firms to improve their branding initiatives. Corporate brand identity management in other industries, including retail or telecommunications, could be the subject of future research.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Corporate Brand Identity includes a set of features and dimensions which determine how the brand acts, providing the purpose of a brand and directions to follow (Perera & Yatigammana, 2021). Corporate brand identity management serves as a strategic instrument and a vital source of enduring competitive advantages, offering numerous benefits to firms (Buil et al., 2016). Corporate brand identity is a unique method by which an organization represents and differentiates itself from others (Melewar & Skinner, 2018). Corporate brand identity establishes and upholds norms inside the system, serving as the most effective means for a firm to convey its uniqueness to the public (Kaplan, 2017). The proficient administration of corporate brand identity significantly influences an organization's sales by enhancing the appeal to customers, staff, and investors (Kim et al., 2011). A favorable view of corporate brand identity management can foster a robust commitment to the business and instill pride in affiliation with the company (Bravo et al., 2015).

Efficient management of corporate brand identity fosters a robust attachment and pride among employees towards the firm, while also facilitating positive perceptions, attitudes, and actions among other stakeholders (Bravo et al., 2017). Consequently, corporate brand identity management is a crucial internal factor influencing employee identification with the firm (Wang et al., 2019). Organizations that promote employee engagement and brand allegiance, while emphasizing brand knowledge, foster emotional connections with the brand and inspire employees to embody the brand identity (Chung & Byrom, 2021). Effective management of corporate brand identity helps mitigate the substantial expenses associated with developing and sustaining customer interactions by fostering positive perceptions of the organization and

conveying messages to stakeholders regarding the corporate brand and its delivered values (Ozdemir et al., 2020).

Globally, banking institutions have demonstrated a growing interest in cultivating robust corporate brand identity management (Bravo et al., 2015). This sector has been significantly impacted by the economic and financial crisis (Buil et al., 2016). The decline in customer confidence and credibility in banking institutions has engendered suspicion regarding their brand management strategies, particularly concerning their social responsibility efforts (Wallace, 2015). A survey in the UK indicated that around 40% of customers were completely disengaged with their banks, while 69% reported no discernible distinctions across the banks (McEwen, 2010). In this setting, it is imperative to reestablish customers' trust and confidence, presenting a good and cohesive image that embodies the organization's core. Corporate brand identity management and the participation of workers are essential within this intricate process (Buil et al., 2016).

In Uganda, the banking sector has experienced steady growth, with increased emphasis on digitalization, financial inclusion, and customer-centric services (Bank of Uganda, 2023). Despite these advances, the challenge of low brand differentiation persists across the industry (Uganda Bankers Association, 2022). Many Ugandan banks face difficulties in articulating a distinctive corporate brand identity, which affects customer loyalty and engagement (Kakembo et al., 2021). With intensified competition from both traditional and digital financial service providers, banks are under pressure to not only deliver consistent services but also build strong, trustworthy brands (KPMG, 2021). Within this environment, the role of strategic brand identity management becomes vital (Chung & Byrom, 2021).

Equity Bank Uganda introduced a new brand identity In December 2020 to align with Equity Group Holdings, aiming to restore its corporate reputation and attain sustainable growth and

service delivery in the evolving financial services landscape (Equity Bank Uganda, 2020). The new brand aims to create a sustainable growth trajectory and improve service delivery in the current dynamic financial services landscape (NilePost, 2020). From an identification standpoint, the new logo prominently displays “Equity” devoid of an entity designation, such as “Bank”, to denote a comprehensive solution and an integrated business model for its complete array of financial services. The bank stated that the new appearance symbolizes Equity's dedication to an improved customer experience (Equity Group Holdings PLC & Subsidiaries Integrated Report, 2020). In establishing its corporate brand identity, Equity prioritized customer-centricity, aiming to ensure that it is adequately equipped to address the needs of its stakeholders efficiently and effortlessly (Equity Bank, 2020).

However, Equity Bank Uganda continues to face challenges in strengthening its corporate brand identity. This is evident from the fact that 30% of customers with Equity accounts still struggle to recognize the bank's brand. Furthermore, the consistent failure to deliver value to customers has negatively impacted their perceptions of the brand experience (Annual Report, 2019/2020). Equity Bank Uganda has used strategies to maintain its brand identity. For example, it introduced innovative items and focused on customers through customer relations management. It also stressed employee and client involvement, strengthened its visual identity with the Equity logo, developed brand personality campaigns, communicated with clients via social media, and established human resource initiatives (Equity Bank, 2019/2020).

Although Equity Bank Uganda has made deliberate efforts to manage its corporate identity effectively, it continues to face challenges in maintaining client loyalty and a consistent brand image. These challenges include communication gaps, reduced customer loyalty, difficulties in customer retention, and the complexities of managing an expanding customer base while fostering a sense of community and belonging (Equity Bank Uganda, 2023). Evidence shows that Equity Bank Uganda has encountered difficulties, including a 46.8% decline in profit to

Shs 45.75 billion in 2022, primarily due to an increase in non-performing loans amounting to Shs 277.75 billion, resulting in a 17% NPL ratio—the second-highest in Uganda's banking sector (Business Focus Uganda, 2023). Additionally, while 94% of transactions are conducted digitally, the total value of in-branch transactions remains significant at Shs 694 billion, indicating a need to enhance brand recognition and customer perception (Daily Monitor, 2023).

The Corporate Identity Theory, as proposed by Balmer and Gray (2003), best explains this study, as it emphasizes how organizations strategically develop and manage their brand identity to influence stakeholder perceptions. This theory aligns with the study's focus on evaluating Equity Bank Uganda's brand identity management strategies, identifying challenges, and proposing improvements to strengthen brand recognition and enhance customer value.

Amidst this situation, the strategies for effective corporate brand identity management at Equity Bank Uganda are unclear. Therefore, this study examined the corporate brand identity management strategies, challenges, and possible improvements for corporate brand identity at Equity Bank Uganda.

1.2 Problem statement

Despite deliberate efforts to bolster its corporate brand identity through initiatives such as reinforcing its visual identity with the Equity logo, launching brand personality campaigns, and engaging clients via social media (Equity Bank, 2024), Equity Bank Uganda faces persistent challenges in effectively managing its corporate brand identity. For instance, in 2019, the bank's corporate brand identity was significantly undermined by economic, financial, digital transformation, and social crises, including the impact of Covid-19 (Equity Bank Annual Report, 2019/2020). Additionally, Equity Bank Uganda encountered issues related to liquidity and solvency, leading to a decline in consumer trust and confidence, as well as a broader erosion of stakeholders' perceptions of the bank's brand image (Equity Bank Uganda, 2023).

In 2023, the bank reported a net loss of Shs18.8 billion, a sharp decline from the Shs45.75 billion profit recorded in 2022, driven largely by internal fraud incidents (Business Focus Uganda, 2024). Furthermore, non-performing loans surged to Shs363.9 billion in 2023 from Shs277.75 billion in 2022, indicating a weakening loan portfolio (Equity Bank, 2024). The bank also suffered reputational damage from multiple fraud cases, including a customer's loss of Shs47 million in December 2022 (Pulse Uganda, 2024) and another incident involving Shs10 million in October 2023 (Pulse Uganda, 2024). If unaddressed, these challenges may lead to a decline in customer base, tarnished reputation, and hindered growth. Therefore, this study evaluated the corporate brand identity strategies employed by Equity Bank Uganda, identify challenges in their management, and recommend actionable improvements.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to evaluate the corporate brand identity management strategies at Equity Bank Uganda

1.4 Research Objectives

- i. To examine the corporate brand identity management strategies used at Equity Bank Uganda
- ii. To examine the challenges that Equity Bank Uganda faces in managing their corporate brand identity
- iii. To suggest possible ways of improving corporate brand identity at Equity Bank Uganda

1.5 Research Questions

- i. What are the corporate brand identity management strategies used at Equity Bank Uganda?
- ii. What are the challenges that Equity Bank Uganda faces in managing their corporate brand identity?

- iii. What are the possible ways of improving corporate brand identity at Equity Bank Uganda?

1.6 Scope of the study

1.6.1 Subject scope

The study covered the corporate brand identity management strategies at Equity Bank Uganda, the challenges that Equity Bank Uganda faces in managing their corporate brand identity and possible ways of improving corporate brand identity at Equity Bank Uganda

1.6.2 Geographical scope

The research was conducted at the Equity Bank Uganda headquarters situated at Plot 34, Church House, Kampala Road, P.O. Box 10184, Kampala, Uganda and also from other branches around Kampala like Wandegaya, Oasis, Bugolobi, Kawempe, Kabalagala, Katwe, Ndeeba, Nakulabye, Ntinda, New Taxi Park and Market Street Branches. Equity Bank Uganda Limited was chosen because it has the current information as regarding corporate brand identity management practices.

1.7 Significance of the study

As can be seen below, this study may benefit several stakeholders from various perspectives:

- i. The study may provide information related to corporate brand identity strategies used at Equity Bank Uganda and how the bank can improve their corporate brand identity management.
- ii. This study elucidated the significance of effective corporate brand identification strategies and their impact on the performance of banks in Uganda. This aided in raising awareness among the government, policymakers, and commercial bank proprietors regarding the establishment of a conducive atmosphere for efficient corporate brand

identity management, ultimately leading to enhanced performance of commercial banks.

- iii. The results of this study may assist in establishing the corporate reputation of commercial banks by using effective corporate brand identity management strategies. It may also reveal the limitations and propose the methods for effective corporate brand identity management. Furthermore, the results of this study may be beneficial to future researchers interested in examining the impact of corporate brand identity management on commercial banks in Uganda or related topics.
- iv. From an academic standpoint, would the study's findings may contribute to the existing literature on corporate brand identity management, particularly in private universities? The study may aid academic scholars by contributing to the existing body of knowledge regarding the maintenance of corporate brand identity within the banking industry.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Theoretical Review

The Corporate Identity Theory proposed by Balmer and Gray (2003) provides a framework for understanding how organizations strategically develop and manage their brand identity to shape stakeholder perceptions. This theory asserts that corporate identity is a multidimensional construct encompassing corporate communication, culture, behavior, and symbolism, all contributing to an organization's reputation and brand equity (Balmer, 2023). The theory posits that a well-managed corporate identity leads to stronger brand recognition, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage. Prior studies support this notion, demonstrating that firms with coherent brand identity strategies experience enhanced stakeholder trust and financial performance (Melewar & Saunders, 2021). In order to ensure that employees and consumers have a consistent perception of the company, corporate identity management is also essential for coordinating internal values with external brand message (Hatch & Schultz, 2015). In the context of Uganda's banking sector, where customer trust has been eroded due to fraud and economic challenges, Corporate Identity Theory is particularly relevant for aligning internal banking practices with external brand promises to rebuild stakeholder confidence (Bank of Uganda, 2023).

Corporate Identity Theory is evident in the current study's evaluation of Equity Bank Uganda's brand identity management practices, which involve strategic positioning, integrated marketing communication, and digital branding. Previous studies indicate that financial institutions leveraging corporate identity strategies achieve higher customer engagement and brand differentiation in competitive markets (Kapferer, 2020). Moreover, research on branding within the banking sector highlights that institutions reinforcing their corporate identity through employee engagement and social responsibility initiatives improve customer loyalty

and public trust (Ind, 2007). Therefore, this study evaluates how Equity Bank Uganda employs corporate identity management strategies to enhance its brand perception, address challenges, and identify areas for improvement in alignment with corporate identity principles.

2.2 Corporate Brand Identity Management

The concept of brand identity has attracted a lot of interest, leading to a wide range of definitions and conceptual frameworks (Liu et al., 2020). It is "a distinct set of brand associations that the brand strategist aspires to create or maintain," according to Liu et al. (2020). On the other hand, De Chernatony (2010) described brand identity as the unique idea behind a brand and the way it is conveyed to different stakeholders. In summary, however, brand identity is the combination of tangible and intangible elements that determine how a brand is known (Helmi et al., 2020). In a similar vein, brand image represents how the company wants its customers to perceive it (Ranfagni & Rosati, 2023). The explanation given highlights the critical role of brand identity and confirms that managing a brand's identity is a crucial task for all kinds of organizations, including small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs), large corporations, and various business models like B 2 C and B 2 B (Vrontis, 2024). In Uganda's banking sector, where financial inclusion remains a priority, effective brand identity management helps institutions like Equity Bank Uganda differentiate themselves in a market with diverse customer needs and expectations (Bank of Uganda, 2024).

The actions businesses take to improve their reputation with consumers and other stakeholders are referred to as corporate brand identity management, or CBIM (Bravo et al., 2017). Additionally, they claimed that the intentional steps a firm takes to improve its reputation and perception among internal and external stakeholders are referred to as brand identity management (Bravo et al., 2017). According to Balmer and Grey (2003) in Iglesias et al. (2020), corporate brand identity has historically been viewed as a distinct collection of consistent associations, qualities, or values that managers have chosen to characterize what a

corporate brand represents. Similar definitions of corporate brand identity were provided by Micelotta and Raynard (2011), who emphasized that these activities typically entail managing visual identity, which includes handling symbolic representations and modes of self-expression like the company name, logo, typography, graphics, corporate style, buildings, cars, and dress codes. A business creates its brand identity to symbolize the unique traits and attributes it wants to exhibit (Vrontis, 2024). In Uganda, where visual branding plays a significant role in building trust in banking services, Equity Bank Uganda's consistent use of its logo and corporate style is critical for reinforcing its identity in a competitive market (Equity Bank Uganda, 2023).

2.3 Corporate Brand Identity Management Strategies

Strategic Brand Positioning; Strategic brand positioning involves differentiating a company's identity from competitors by defining unique value propositions and key brand attributes (Keller, 2012). A well-positioned brand clearly communicates its purpose, values, and competitive advantages, ensuring strong market recognition (Mogaji & Mogaji, 2021). Businesses achieve effective positioning by aligning their offerings with customer needs and industry trends. This practice requires extensive market research to identify target audiences and assess brand perceptions. Organizations that consistently reinforce their positioning through marketing campaigns and brand messaging can establish a dominant presence in their industry (Islami et al., 2024). In Uganda's banking sector, strategic brand positioning is vital for banks like Equity Bank Uganda to differentiate themselves in a market characterized by low financial literacy and growing competition from mobile money providers (FinScope Uganda, 2023).

Integrated Marketing Communication (IMC); IMC ensures that all brand communications advertisements, social media, public relations, and direct marketing are harmonized to deliver a consistent message (Aaker, 2012). A fragmented communication approach can confuse customers and weaken brand credibility. IMC strategies streamline messaging across multiple

platforms, ensuring coherence in brand narratives (Comiche & Gonçalves, 2024). By unifying traditional and digital media efforts, companies can build stronger brand recall and trust among stakeholders. In order to maintain continuity, corporate communications convey the company's philosophy and vision and cultivate positive connections with stakeholders (Waithaka, 2014). For example, a financial institution that integrates its print, digital, and in-person marketing initiatives can reinforce brand authenticity and reliability. In Uganda, where digital platforms are increasingly used for banking services, Equity Bank Uganda's IMC strategies are critical for maintaining consistent messaging across rural and urban customer segments (Equity Bank Uganda, 2024).

Visual Identity Development; An organization can be represented by its corporate visual identity (CVI), which is a material asset (Vasconcelos et al., 2023; Waithaka, 2014). The corporate name, logo, tagline, color, stationery, printed materials (including brochures and pamphlets), advertisements, websites, cars, buildings, interiors, corporate apparel, and architectural structures are all important components of a company's visual identity. Generally speaking, an organization's values, goals, operations, and traits are expressed in a CVI. A strong visual identity consists of logos, typography, color schemes, and design elements that define a brand's aesthetic appeal (Balmer, 2023). This practice ensures that customers instantly recognize and associate the brand with its core values. Consistency in visual branding across all corporate materials—business cards, packaging, websites, and advertisements—strengthens brand recognition. Many organizations periodically update their visual identity to stay modern and relevant while maintaining key brand elements for continuity. Effective visual branding also influences emotional connections, making brands more memorable and relatable to their audiences. In Uganda, where brand recognition is crucial in a market with low financial literacy, Equity Bank Uganda's consistent visual identity, such as its logo and branch aesthetics, plays a key role in building customer trust (Bank of Uganda, 2024).

Internal Branding and Employee Engagement; Corporate brand identity is not just about external marketing; it also involves internal branding efforts that ensure employees embody the brand's values (Ind, 2007). Employees become powerful brand ambassadors when they comprehend and share the firm's objective. Companies achieve this through regular training, internal communication strategies, and leadership reinforcement of brand culture. Organizations that invest in employee engagement programs foster a workplace environment where staff members feel connected to the brand's vision, enhancing customer interactions and brand authenticity (Sultan, 2022). In Uganda's banking sector, where customer-facing staff are critical to service delivery, Equity Bank Uganda's focus on internal branding ensures employees align with the bank's mission of financial inclusion and customer-centric services (Equity Bank Uganda, 2023).

Digital Branding and Customer Experience; As digital transformation reshapes branding practices, businesses must leverage digital channels to enhance their brand identity (Kapferer, 2020). Digital branding includes website design, social media presence, content marketing, and search engine optimization (SEO) (Celestin et al., 2024). An optimized online presence ensures that brand messaging reaches a wider audience while maintaining engagement. Companies that personalize digital interactions, such as chatbots, targeted email marketing, and customer feedback platforms, strengthen relationships with consumers (Nasti et al., 2024). Moreover, a seamless digital experience, from mobile apps to e-commerce platforms, reinforces brand professionalism and reliability. In Uganda, where mobile banking and digital platforms are rapidly growing, Equity Bank Uganda's investment in digital branding, such as its mobile app and social media engagement, is essential for reaching tech-savvy customers and enhancing brand visibility (Bank of Uganda, 2024).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Ethical Branding; CSR initiatives contribute to corporate brand identity by positioning a company as a socially responsible entity (Hatch &

Schultz, 2015). Ethical branding strategies include sustainability efforts, charitable contributions, and fair-trade practices. Customers increasingly prefer brands that demonstrate environmental and social consciousness. For example, financial institutions that support community projects or promote financial literacy programs enhance their corporate reputation. CSR-driven branding fosters emotional connections with stakeholders, making the brand more relatable and trustworthy in the long term (Rustam & Ishrat, 2025). In Uganda, where financial inclusion and community development are key priorities, Equity Bank Uganda's CSR initiatives, such as its Wings to Fly program, strengthen its brand identity by demonstrating commitment to social impact (Equity Bank Uganda, 2024).

Reputation and Crisis Management; Reputation is a core component of corporate brand identity, and businesses must proactively manage their public image (Melewar & Saunders, 2021). Crisis management strategies help protect a brand's credibility during negative incidents such as financial fraud, legal disputes, or customer dissatisfaction. Companies should implement transparent communication policies, respond promptly to crises, and establish trust-building initiatives. A strong brand reputation enhances customer loyalty and stakeholder confidence, preventing long-term damage to corporate identity (Lee, 2023). In Uganda's banking sector, where fraud and mistrust have impacted public perception, effective crisis management is critical for Equity Bank Uganda to restore confidence and maintain its brand reputation (Bank of Uganda, 2023).

2.4 Challenges Faced in Managing Corporate Brand Identity

Managing corporate brand identity in business settings presents unique challenges. Companies that directly interact with end consumers, must navigate complex stakeholder relationships, including suppliers, business clients, and investors (Melewar & Karaosmanoglu, 2021). One of the key challenges is maintaining brand consistency across multiple markets and business units. Large corporations often struggle with decentralized brand management, leading to

inconsistencies in messaging and visual identity (Guzmán & Davis, 2017). The following are some of the challenges faced in managing corporate brand identity:

Brand Consistency Issues: Maintaining a uniform brand image across different business units and geographical locations is a challenge for many firms (Keller & Kotler, 2022). Inconsistent messaging and visual branding can dilute corporate identity, leading to a fragmented brand perception (Vrontis, 2024). This issue is exacerbated in multinational corporations where regional offices may adopt independent branding strategies that deviate from the company's central vision (Guzmán & Davis, 2017). In Uganda, where Equity Bank Uganda operates across urban and rural branches, ensuring consistent brand messaging is challenging due to varying customer expectations and regional differences (Bank of Uganda, 2024).

Reputation and Crisis Management: Corporate reputation is highly susceptible to scandals, financial downturns, and negative press (Yang et al., 2023). In the financial industry, fraud cases and governance issues can significantly tarnish a brand's image, leading to customer distrust (Vieras et al., 2025). For example, when financial institutions like Equity Bank Uganda face fraud allegations, the resulting negative perception can undermine the bank's corporate identity (Melewar & Saunders, 2021). In Uganda, recent fraud incidents reported in 2022 and 2023 have heightened the need for robust crisis management strategies to protect Equity Bank Uganda's brand image (Pulse Uganda, 2024).

Technological Adaptation and Digital Branding: As digital transformation reshapes industries, companies must continuously innovate their branding strategies (Li, 2020). Many organizations struggle to keep pace with evolving digital branding tools, leading to outdated brand identities (Makrides et al., 2020). Additionally, resistance to change among employees can hinder the implementation of new digital branding techniques (Balmer, 2023). In Uganda's banking sector, where digital adoption is growing but uneven across urban and rural areas,

Equity Bank Uganda faces challenges in aligning its digital branding strategies with the diverse technological capabilities of its customer base (FinScope Uganda, 2023).

Aligning Brand Identity with Organizational Culture: A misalignment between brand identity and corporate culture can result in internal brand inconsistencies (Chung & Byrom, 2021). Employees who do not fully understand or embrace the brand's values may fail to reflect them in their interactions with clients. A strong corporate brand identity requires an internal culture that resonates with the brand's mission and values (Urde, 2022). In Uganda, where employee engagement is critical for delivering customer-centric banking services, Equity Bank Uganda must ensure its workforce fully embodies its brand values to maintain authenticity (Equity Bank Uganda, 2023).

2.5 Possible Ways of Improving Corporate Brand Identity

To enhance corporate brand identity, companies should implement an integrated brand strategy that aligns internal and external communication (Aaker, 2023). Consistency is key in building a strong corporate brand; therefore, businesses should establish clear brand guidelines to ensure uniformity in messaging and visual representation (Nguyen, 2020). Regular brand audits can help identify inconsistencies and address them proactively (Keller, 2020). In Uganda's banking sector, where trust and consistency are critical, Equity Bank Uganda can benefit from regular brand audits to ensure alignment across its diverse operations (Bank of Uganda, 2024).

Developing a Unified Brand Strategy: Establishing a centralized brand management framework can ensure consistency across all business units (Burmah et al., 2023). Companies should create detailed brand guidelines that outline messaging, tone, and visual elements, ensuring uniformity in all corporate communications (Aaker, 2022). In Uganda, where Equity Bank Uganda operates in a competitive market, a unified brand strategy can help maintain a cohesive identity across its urban and rural branches (Equity Bank Uganda, 2024).

Reputation Management through Transparency and Crisis Response: Companies should proactively manage their reputations by implementing transparency policies and crisis response strategies (Moses Alabi, 2024). Financial institutions, for example, should invest in fraud prevention measures and communicate openly with stakeholders during crises to mitigate reputational damage (Melewar & Saunders, 2021). In Uganda, where fraud incidents have impacted Equity Bank Uganda's reputation, transparent communication and proactive fraud prevention are essential for rebuilding customer trust (Pulse Uganda, 2024).

Leveraging Digital Branding Innovations: Companies should embrace emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and big data analytics to enhance their digital branding strategies (Nalbant & Aydın, 2023). Personalized customer experiences and data-driven marketing efforts can significantly strengthen brand perception. Social media platforms can also be leveraged for real-time customer engagement and brand storytelling (Kapferer, 2020). In Uganda, where mobile banking is rapidly growing, Equity Bank Uganda can leverage digital innovations like AI-driven customer service to enhance its brand identity and customer engagement (Bank of Uganda, 2024).

Internal Brand Alignment and Employee Engagement: Employees play a crucial role in reinforcing corporate brand identity (Iglesias et al., 2020). Companies should invest in employee training programs to ensure that staff members embody the brand's values in their daily operations. Internal branding campaigns can enhance employee engagement and encourage them to act as brand ambassadors (Ind, 2007). In Uganda, where customer interactions are critical for banking services, Equity Bank Uganda's investment in employee training can strengthen its brand authenticity and customer trust (Equity Bank Uganda, 2023).

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) as a Branding Tool: CSR initiatives can enhance brand perception by demonstrating a company's commitment to social and environmental causes (Lu

et al., 2020). Engaging in community programs, sustainability projects, and ethical business practices can positively influence public perception and strengthen corporate identity (Hatch & Schultz, 2015). In Uganda, where financial inclusion is a national priority, Equity Bank Uganda's CSR programs, such as financial literacy initiatives, can enhance its brand reputation and foster stronger community ties (Equity Bank Uganda, 2024).

Continuous Innovation and Market Adaptation: To remain competitive, companies should continuously evolve their brand identity strategies in response to market trends (Natashen et al., 2025). Financial institutions like Equity Bank Uganda, for example, can differentiate themselves by prioritizing transparency, security, and customer-centric innovations. Investing in digital transformation can enhance customer trust and brand loyalty (Balmer & Gray, 2023). In Uganda's dynamic banking sector, continuous innovation in areas like mobile banking and fraud prevention can help Equity Bank Uganda maintain a competitive edge and strengthen its corporate brand identity (Bank of Uganda, 2024).

2.6 Literature Summary and Gaps

The literature highlights that corporate brand identity management is a multidimensional strategy encompassing strategic positioning, integrated marketing communication, visual identity, internal branding, digital branding, CSR, and crisis management (Balmer & Gray, 2003; Keller, 2012; Hatch & Schultz, 2015). These strategies enhance stakeholder trust, customer loyalty, and competitive advantage, particularly in Uganda's banking sector, where Equity Bank Uganda leverages visual identity and CSR to build trust amid low financial literacy and fraud challenges (Kapferer, 2020; Equity Bank Uganda, 2024). However, challenges such as brand inconsistency, reputational damage from fraud, and digital adaptation persist, necessitating robust brand management to align internal culture with external perceptions (Melewar & Saunders, 2021; Bank of Uganda, 2024).

Despite these insights, the literature lacks specific studies on how Ugandan banks, like Equity Bank Uganda, address corporate brand identity challenges in a context marked by fraud, economic volatility, and digital transformation. There is a gap in understanding how these institutions integrate localized strategies to restore customer trust and align employee engagement with brand values in a low-trust environment (FinScope Uganda, 2023). This study aims to fill these gaps by evaluating Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity strategies, identifying implementation challenges, and proposing tailored solutions to enhance brand perception and stakeholder confidence.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

The research design used in this study was cross-sectional and quantitative. This research methodology made it possible to investigate the topic of study, namely assessing Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity management procedures. Information based on data collected during a predetermined time period was captured using a cross-sectional design (Saunders et al., 2017). The quantitative approach was used because of its ability to provide measurable data on brand perception and performance metrics, and this involved structured surveys to gather numerical data for statistical analysis (Amin, 2005).

3.2 Population Study

The study covered a population of 323 employees in Uganda (Equity Bank Uganda Company Profile & Staff Directory, 2024) and they were chosen from all levels of management in the institution.

The unit of analysis was Equity Bank Uganda Limited and unit of inquiry were individual employees from the from the senior management, middle management and operations). Employees, as primary implementers and internal stakeholders, provide authentic insights into the practical application and effectiveness of brand identity strategies.

3.3 Sample size and sampling technique

A sample of 175 respondents were chosen, as established by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The Krejcie and Morgan table (1970) indicates that a sample size of 175 is suitable for a population of 323. The employees were selected from the senior management, middle management and operations). A stratified sampling technique was used according to the employee rank. To select respondents on each stratum, simple random sampling was used and this was done by allocating numbers for each respondent, which numbers were picked at random. To obtain

representative opinions from various Equity Bank Uganda staff, a simple random sampling technique was also be employed (Creswell, 2014).

Table 3.1: Sample size computation

Strata	Population of each stratum	Strata sample size
Senior management	18	10
Middle management	65	35
Operations	240	130
Total	323	175

Source: primary data

3.4 Data Source

Primary data was used in the investigation. The researcher used a questionnaire with closed-ended questions based on a 5-point Likert scale to gather primary data.

3.5 Data collection instrument

Self-administered questionnaires with a few open-ended questions to allow respondents to contribute to the study and a number of closed-ended questions was used to collect primary data from the chosen participants. The questionnaire was created in accordance with the study's goals, and answers were based on a five-point Likert scale that goes from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This were used since it makes it possible to gather data on the study's goal in a methodical manner.

3.6 Measurement of variables

Corporate brand identity management strategies were conceptualized through strategic brand positioning, integrated marketing communication, corporate visual identity development, internal branding and employee engagement, digital branding and customer experience, corporate social responsibility, and reputation and crisis management. These same attributes received prominence in several studies (Mogaji & Mogaji, 2021; Aaker, 2012; Comiche & Gonçalves, 2024; Balmer, 2023; Sultan, 2022; Kapferer, 2020; Hatch & Schultz, 2015;

Melewar & Saunders, 2021) where they were recognized as appropriate strategies for evaluating corporate brand identity management.

Challenges in managing corporate brand identity included issues like brand consistency, reputation and crisis management, technological adaptation, digital branding, and aligning brand identity with organizational culture, among others. These challenges were identified by scholars such as Melewar & Karaosmanoglu (2021), Keller & Kotler (2022), Yang et al. (2023), Li (2020), and Chung & Byrom (2021).

Possible ways to improve corporate brand identity were measured in terms of developing a unified brand strategy, managing reputation through transparency and crisis response, leveraging digital branding innovations, aligning internal branding and engaging employees, utilizing corporate social responsibility (CSR) as a branding tool, and ensuring continuous innovation and market adaptation, among others, as highlighted in various empirical studies (Burmam et al., 2023; Moses Alabi, 2024; Nalbant & Aydın, 2023; Iglesias et al., 2020; Lu et al., 2020; Natashen et al., 2025).

The above measures were adopted for this study with modifications to suit the Ugandan environment. The measures will be operationalized using a questionnaire designed on a 5-point Likert scale with the 1-5 anchors where; 5= Strongly agree, 4=Agree, 3=Not sure, 2=Disagree and 1=Strongly disagree (Sarantakos, 2013). This scale enabled the researcher to measure perceptions of the respondents to statements relating to evaluation of corporate brand identity management strategies at Equity Bank Uganda

3.7 Reliability and Validity of data

The Content Validity Index (CVI) was used to assess the questionnaire's validity and ascertain how well the questions measure the variable (Campbell & Stanley, 1966). As advised by

Nunnally (1978), the researcher used Cronbach's alpha test to assess the questionnaire's reliability.

Table 3.2: Reliability and Validity Results

Details	Items	Cronbach Alpha	CVI
Corporate brand identity management strategies	28	0.706	0.801
Challenges faced in managing corporate brand identity	12	0.885	0.857
Possible ways of improving corporate brand identity	12	0.769	0.750

Source: Primary data

All of the Alpha coefficients and CVI results, as indicated in table 3.2, are over the.70 threshold, indicating the validity and reliability of the data.

3.8 Data Analysis and Presentation.

Questionnaires were used to gather data in the field. Information The Statistical Package for Social Scientists V23 was used to edit, code, and analyze the collected data (SPSS). The descriptive statistics, such as frequencies, mean, and standard deviation, were the main emphasis of the analysis. The results were given significance through appropriate interpretations.

3.9 Ethical Considerations

As a researcher, confidentiality of the respondents was ensured whereby the respondents were informed upfront that the information they give will be solely used for academic purposes and data obtained on private matters will be treated with confidence and indeed this was done. Before data collection exercise, an introduction letter was obtained from Makerere University Business School to help the respondents identifying the researcher.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE RESULTS

4.0 Introduction

In accordance with the goals of the research described in Chapter One, the results are presented, examined, and interpreted in this chapter. Examining Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity management tactics, determining the difficulties in maintaining their corporate brand identity, and offering potential solutions for enhancing their corporate brand identity were the goals.

4.1 Response Rate

A sample of 175 Equity Bank Uganda workers was the focus of the investigation. A 73% response rate was obtained from the 128 returned questionnaires out of the 175 that were sent. Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) state that a response rate of 50% is sufficient, 60% is good, and 70% or more is extremely good. This is further supported by Kothari (2004), who claims that a response rate of more than 70% is excellent. As a result, the study's 73% response rate is considered adequate and trustworthy for making meaningful inferences.

Table 4.1: Response Rate

Targeted respondents	Attained respondents	Response rate
175	128	73%

Source: Primary data

Employees of Equity Bank Uganda made up the 128 responders, guaranteeing that the data gathered is representative of the research population. This response rate is deemed adequate for the study by the researcher.

4.2 Background Information of the Respondents

Employees from different management levels of Equity Bank Uganda participated in the survey. Age, gender, level of education, length of employment with the company, and department were among the background data gathered. Table 4.2 provides a summary of the respondents' demographic attributes.

Table 4.2: Characteristics of the Respondents

Parameter	Variables	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	88	68.8
	Female	40	31.3
	Total	128	100.0
Age	20-24yrs	8	6.3
	25-29yrs	40	31.3
	30-34yrs	60	46.9
	35 and above	20	15.6
	Total	128	100.0
Education attained	Diploma	22	17.2
	Degree	90	70.3
	Masters	16	12.5
	Total	128	100.0
Period worked with the organisation	0-5yrs	41	32.0
	6-10yrs	76	59.4
	11-15yrs	11	8.6
	Total	128	100.0
Position	Operation	92	71.9
	Middle Management	28	21.9
	Senior Management	8	6.3
	Total	128	100.0

Source: primary data

According to the findings in Table 4.2, men made up the majority of respondents (68.8%), with women making up 31.3%. This suggests that male viewpoints within the company are the main source of the findings. In terms of age, the largest group (46.9%) was between the ages of 30

and 34, followed by those between the ages of 25 and 29 (31.3%), 35 and older (15.6%), and 20 and 24 (6.3%). This implies that the majority of responders are middle-aged, guaranteeing that all age groups are fairly represented. The fact that 70.3% of respondents had a bachelor's degree, 17.2% had a diploma, and 12.5% had a master's degree shows that they were well-educated and able to give thoughtful answers.

The majority (59.4%) had been employed by Equity Bank Uganda for 6–10 years, followed by 0–5 years (32.0%) and 11–15 years (8.6%). This suggests that the majority of responders have a great deal of experience with the company, which strengthens the validity of their opinions on corporate brand identity tactics. The majority of respondents (71.9%) were from operations, followed by middle management (21.9%) and senior management (6.3%). This suggests that the data represents the opinions of workers who are directly involved in day-to-day operations and brand-related tasks.

4.3 Descriptive Statistics Results

Tables 4.3, 4.4, and 4.5 provide descriptive statistics regarding Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity management practices, obstacles encountered, and potential enhancements. As advised by Field (2009) and Saunders et al. (2007), descriptive statistics such as means, standard deviations, minimum, and maximum values were employed to summarize the data. While a standard deviation (SD) below 1 implies consistency in responses, an SD above 1 indicates differing perspectives, and a mean above 3 indicates agreement with the assertions.

4.3.1 Corporate Brand Identity Management Strategies at Equity Bank Uganda

Examining Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity management tactics was the first goal. Based on a Likert scale (1 being strongly disagree and 5 being strongly agree), descriptive statistics were examined, and the findings are shown in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3: Corporate brand identity management strategies (N=128)

	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Strategic Brand Positioning				
The bank has a well-defined corporate brand identity strategy.	2	5	4.438	0.585
Customers associate positive attributes with the bank's brand.	2	5	4.422	0.583
Brand messaging is clear and consistent.	4	5	4.25	0.435
The bank's leadership prioritizes brand identity management.	4	5	4.391	0.49
			4.375	0.523
Integrated Marketing Communication				
Equity Bank Uganda maintains brand consistency across all platforms.	4	5	4.359	0.482
Branding efforts are regularly reviewed and updated.	4	5	4.344	0.477
The bank actively engages customers through social media.	4	5	4.313	0.465
Brand messaging is clear and consistent.	4	5	4.359	0.482
			4.344	0.476
Visual Identity Development				
Customers easily recognize the bank's visual identity.	4	5	4.375	0.486
The bank maintains a consistent logo, typography, and brand colors.	4	5	4.125	0.332
The bank's branding materials (e.g., brochures, website) are visually uniform.	4	5	4.359	0.482
Branding efforts are regularly reviewed and updated.	1	5	4.313	0.637
			4.293	0.484
Internal Branding and Employee Engagement				
Employees understand and align with the bank's brand values.	1	5	3.609	1.159
The bank invests in employee brand training programs.	1	5	4.156	0.567
The bank's leadership prioritizes brand identity management.	4	5	4.391	0.49
Internal branding efforts enhance customer interactions.	4	5	4.406	0.493
			4.141	0.677
Digital Branding and Customer Experience				
The bank effectively utilizes digital branding strategies.	2	5	4.391	0.655
The bank actively engages customers through social media.	4	5	4.313	0.465
Digital branding enhances trust and reliability in banking services.	4	5	4.391	0.49
A seamless digital experience is provided across all platforms.	4	5	4.422	0.496
			4.379	0.526
Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Ethical Branding				
The bank's CSR initiatives enhance its brand reputation.	2	5	4.406	0.581
The bank promotes financial literacy and community development programs.	1	5	4.016	0.823
Ethical branding strengthens customer trust and loyalty.	2	5	4.25	0.532
The bank engages in sustainability and fair-trade practices.	2	5	4.156	0.778
			4.207	0.679
Reputation and Crisis Management				
The bank has a well-defined corporate brand identity strategy.	2	5	4.313	0.707
The bank's CSR initiatives enhance its brand reputation.	4	5	4.25	0.435
The bank's leadership prioritizes brand identity management.	2	5	4.141	0.465
Crisis management strategies protect the brand's credibility.	1	5	4.094	0.808
			4.199	0.604
Valid N (listwise)			4.277	0.567

Source: Primary data

With a grand mean of 4.277 and a standard deviation of 0.567, the data demonstrate that Equity Bank Uganda uses a range of corporate brand identity management techniques. With a mean score of 4.379 digital branding and customer experience stood out as the most prominent, corporate brand identity management techniques used by the Equity bank. Most respondents concurred that the bank actively engages customers on social media ($M=4.313$, $SD=0.465$), builds trust through digital branding ($M=4.391$, $SD=0.49$), employs digital branding strategies effectively ($M=4.391$, $SD=0.655$), and offers a seamless digital experience across platforms ($M=4.422$, $SD=0.496$). This suggests that the bank's branding initiatives heavily rely on digital channels.

With a mean score of 4.375, strategic brand positioning came in second place in this category. Customers associate the bank with positive attributes ($M=4.422$, $SD=0.583$), brand messaging is clear and consistent ($M=4.25$, $SD=0.435$), leadership prioritizes brand identity management ($M=4.391$, $SD=0.49$), and respondents agreed that the bank has a well-defined corporate brand identity strategy ($M=4.438$, $SD=0.585$). This suggests that Equity Bank Uganda has a strong foundation for successfully establishing its brand in the marketplace.

With a mean score of 4.344, integrated marketing communication came in third place. Respondents concurred that the bank actively engages clients on social media ($M=4.313$, $SD=0.465$), consistently maintains brand consistency across platforms ($M=4.359$, $SD=0.482$), and periodically evaluates branding initiatives ($M=4.344$, $SD=0.477$). This implies that Equity Bank Uganda strengthens brand identification by using a unified approach to its communication efforts.

The method with the fourth-highest mean score, visual identity creation, was 4.293. The respondents concurred that the bank's visual identity is clearly recognizable to consumers ($M=4.375$, $SD=0.486$), that its logos, typography, and brand colors are consistent ($M=4.125$, $SD=0.332$), and that its branding materials, including brochures and websites, have a consistent

visual style ($M=4.359$, $SD=0.482$). This suggests that the visual brand presence of Equity Bank Uganda is still strong and identifiable.

With a mean score of 4.207, ethical branding and corporate social responsibility (CSR) came in fifth place. The respondents concurred that the bank's CSR efforts improve customer trust through ethical branding ($M=4.25$, $SD=0.532$), advance financial literacy and community development programs ($M=4.016$, $SD=0.823$), and improve the bank's brand reputation ($M=4.406$, $SD=0.581$). This suggests that the bank's brand management heavily relies on moral behavior and community involvement.

Finally, noteworthy tactics included internal branding and employee engagement (Mean=4.141), as well as reputation and crisis management (Mean=4.199). Although staff comprehension of brand values varied somewhat ($M=3.609$, $SD=1.159$), respondents generally agreed that the bank had procedures to safeguard its reputation in times of crisis ($M=4.094$, $SD=0.808$) and that internal branding initiatives improve customer interactions ($M=4.406$, $SD=0.493$). This suggests that even while these tactics are in place, more work needs to be done on internal alignment.

To sum up the findings for goal one, Equity Bank Uganda uses a variety of strategies to manage its corporate brand identity, including internal branding, reputation and crisis management, CSR and ethical branding, digital branding, integrated marketing communication, and strategic brand positioning. Strategic brand positioning was the most highly ranked strategy (Mean=4.375, $SD=0.523$), followed by customer experience and digital branding (Mean=4.379, $SD=0.526$), integrated marketing communication (Mean=4.344, $SD=0.476$), visual identity development (Mean=4.293, $SD=0.484$), CSR and ethical branding (Mean=4.207, $SD=0.679$), reputation and crisis management (Mean=4.199, $SD=0.604$), internal branding and employee engagement (Mean=4.141, $SD=0.677$). With mean scores

above 3.0 on a scale of 1 to 5, and standard deviations around or below 1, which indicate consistency in replies, Equity Bank Uganda is actively implementing all measures in light of these findings. Consequently, the study's primary goal was accomplished.

4.3.2 Challenges Faced in Managing Corporate Brand Identity

Finding the on the challenges Equity Bank Uganda has in maintaining its corporate brand identity was the second goal. Table 4.4 displays the descriptive statistics, which are followed by analysis and interpretation.

Table 4.4: Challenges Faced in Managing Corporate Brand Identity (N=128)

	Min	max	Mean	SD
The bank struggles with maintaining brand consistency.	1	5	3.875	1.108
Internal fraud has negatively affected the bank's corporate brand.	1	5	3.906	0.951
Negative customer perceptions hinder brand trust.	1	5	3.750	1.261
The bank faces challenges in differentiating itself from competitors.	1	5	3.758	1.135
Digital transformation has been difficult to integrate.	1	5	3.844	1.075
Economic fluctuations impact the brand's stability.	1	5	3.953	1.107
Employees are not fully engaged in brand initiatives.	1	5	4.047	0.946
Customer engagement strategies are ineffective.	1	5	3.992	1.068
Public scandals have harmed the bank's reputation.	1	5	3.305	1.084
There is a lack of innovation in brand identity management.	1	5	2.930	1.496
Leadership does not prioritize corporate branding.	1	5	4.156	0.943
The bank lacks a comprehensive brand strategy.	1	5	4.086	0.948
Valid N (listwise)			3.800	1.094

Source: Primary data

With a grand mean of 3.800 and a standard deviation of 1.094, the findings indicate that respondents largely agreed on the difficulties Equity Bank Uganda faces in maintaining its corporate brand identity. With mean ratings of 4.156, 4.047, and 4.086, respectively, the three biggest issues mentioned were the absence of a comprehensive brand strategy, employees not fully participating in brand activities, and leadership not placing a high priority on corporate branding.

Regarding these difficulties, most respondents concurred that a significant internal obstacle to successful brand management is indicated by leadership's lack of attention to corporate

branding (mean=4.156, SD=0.943). Employees' lack of full engagement in brand activities was also acknowledged by respondents (mean=4.047, SD=0.946), indicating that staff alignment with the bank's brand values is inadequate. The absence of a thorough brand strategy (mean=4.086, SD=0.948) suggests that the bank finds it difficult to keep up a consistent approach to managing its brand identity.

The findings also show that respondents were somewhat in agreement about other issues, including ineffective customer engagement strategies (mean=3.992, SD=1.068), economic fluctuations impacting brand stability (mean=3.953, SD=1.107), and internal fraud adversely affecting the brand (mean=3.906, SD=0.951). The respondents also mentioned that the bank's branding initiatives are hampered by challenges in integrating digital transformation (mean=3.844, SD=1.075) and maintaining brand consistency (mean=3.875, SD=1.108). A lack of innovation in brand identity management, however, did not seem to be a serious problem for the respondents (mean=2.930, SD=1.496).

According to the main findings, the majority of respondents concurred that the main difficulties Equity Bank Uganda faces in managing its corporate brand identity are the lack of a comprehensive brand strategy (mean=4.086, SD=0.948), employee disengagement in brand initiatives (mean=4.047, SD=0.946), and leadership's failure to prioritize corporate branding (mean=4.156, SD=0.943). With mean scores above 3.0 on a scale of 1 to 5, respondents also acknowledged difficulties with internal fraud, economic volatility, ineffective customer engagement, brand consistency, and digital transformation. Standard deviations were near or above 1, suggesting some variation in respondents' perspectives. The respondents disagreed that a major obstacle is a lack of innovation. Consequently, the study's second goal was accomplished.

4.3.3 Possible Ways of Improving Corporate Brand Identity

The third goal was to make recommendations for potential enhancements to Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity. Table 4.5 provides a summary of the findings.

Table 4.5: Possible Ways of Improving Corporate Brand Identity (N=128)

	Min	Max	Mean	SD
The bank should invest more in digital branding.	4	5	4.469	0.501
Employee training should focus on brand engagement.	4	5	4.375	0.486
The bank should conduct regular brand audits.	4	5	4.406	0.493
Customer engagement strategies should be improved.	4	5	4.344	0.477
Transparent communication can enhance trust.	4	5	4.609	0.490
Fraud prevention measures can restore reputation.	4	5	4.141	0.349
CSR initiatives should be expanded.	4	5	4.203	0.404
Leadership should prioritize brand identity.	4	5	4.453	0.500
Branding efforts should align with customer expectations.	4	5	4.453	0.500
Innovation in service delivery can enhance brand image.	4	5	4.484	0.502
Consistency in messaging should be reinforced.	4	5	4.438	0.498
Enhanced security measures will improve customer confidence.	4	5	4.516	0.502
Valid N (listwise)			4.408	0.475

Source: primary data

A grand mean of 4.408 and a standard deviation of 0.475 show that all respondents agreed with the potential strategies for enhancing Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity. Transparent communication to build trust was the most popular tactic (Mean=4.609, SD=0.490). Then came increasing investment in digital branding (Mean=4.469, SD=0.501), innovation in service delivery (Mean=4.484, SD=0.502), leadership prioritizing brand identity (Mean=4.453, SD=0.500), and improved security measures to boost consumer confidence (Mean=4.516, SD=0.502).

Additionally, respondents ranked the following strategies as appropriate for enhancing corporate brand identity at Equity Bank Uganda: improving customer engagement strategies (Mean=4.344, SD=0.477), conducting regular brand audits (Mean=4.406, SD=0.493), expanding corporate social responsibility (CSR) initiatives (Mean=4.203, SD=0.404), and aligning branding efforts with customer expectations (Mean=4.453, SD=0.500).

Strong agreement and consistency in the thoughts expressed were indicated by the mean scores of above 4.0 and standard deviations below 1 for each of these tactics. Conclusion: With mean scores above 4.0 on a scale of 1 to 5 and standard deviations around or below 1, all of the suggested techniques for enhancing corporate brand identification at Equity Bank Uganda were accepted by respondents. In order to strengthen its corporate brand identity, Equity Bank Uganda should prioritize measures like transparent communication, improved security measures, innovative service delivery, increased investment in digital branding, and leadership prioritizing brand identity. These measures had higher mean scores. Consequently, the study's third goal was accomplished.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

Based on the data from Chapter Four, this chapter analyzes the study, makes inferences, and offers suggestions. Three sections make up the chapter's structure. The findings are examined in light of the study's goals in the first section, conclusions are presented in the second, and suggestions are made in the third. A concluding section identifies issues that require more investigation.

5.1 Discussion of Findings

5.1.1 Corporate Brand Identity Management Strategies at Equity Bank Uganda

Digital branding and customer experience, strategic brand positioning, integrated marketing communication, visual identity development, internal branding and employee engagement, corporate social responsibility (CSR), reputation and crisis management, and more are some of the corporate brand identity management techniques that Equity Bank Uganda uses, according to the study. A grand mean of 4.277 indicates that respondents highly agreed that these techniques were effective. Digital branding and customer experience stood out as the most prominent, corporate brand identity management techniques used by the Equity bank with a mean of 4.379. Respondents specifically attested to the bank's clear brand identity approach, the good traits that consumers connect with the brand, and the leadership's emphasis on brand management. Additionally, the bank regularly engages clients on social media, keeps its content consistent across platforms, and makes sure that its logos and branding materials are identifiable. The bank's reputation is further improved via CSR initiatives like financial literacy programs, and brand trust is preserved by crisis management techniques.

These results are in line with those of Aaker (2012), who emphasizes the significance of integrated marketing communication for consistent messaging, and Keller (2012), who stresses

that strategic brand positioning distinguishes a brand by expressing its unique value propositions. The study's conclusions are corroborated by Balmer (2023), who emphasizes the importance of visual identity in guaranteeing brand identification, and Hatch and Schultz (2015), who point out that CSR enhances brand reputation.

5.1.2 Challenges Faced in Managing Corporate Brand Identity

The survey revealed a number of issues Equity Bank Uganda faces in managing its corporate brand identity, with a grand mean of 3.800, which indicates moderate agreement among respondents. The absence of a thorough brand strategy, employees' lack of commitment to brand activities, and leadership's failure to prioritize corporate branding are major obstacles. Other obstacles include the detrimental effects of internal fraud on the brand, changes in the economy that undermine the stability of the brand, and issues integrating digital transformation and preserving brand consistency. Lack of creativity in brand management did not seem to be a major worry for the respondents.

These results are in line with Melewar and Karaosmanoglu's (2021) observation that it can be difficult to maintain brand consistency across different units, especially for banks like Equity Bank Uganda that operate in a variety of urban and rural markets (Bank of Uganda, 2024). The study's findings are supported by Yang et al. (2023), who emphasize the effects of fraud on brand reputation, and Makrides et al. (2020), who address the challenges of integrating digital branding with changing technological capabilities.

5.1.3 Possible Ways of Improving Corporate Brand Identity

With a grand mean of 4.408, respondents strongly agreed on a number of methods to enhance Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity. The most notable suggestions include more investment in digital branding, improved security measures to strengthen client confidence, innovative service delivery, and transparent communication to foster trust. There was also

strong support for leadership's emphasis on brand identification and matching branding initiatives to consumer expectations. Other recommendations included increasing CSR activities, enhancing customer involvement, and performing frequent brand audits.

These are in line with Moses Alabi (2024), who stresses transparency and crisis response for reputation management, and Aaker (2023), who supports a single brand strategy to guarantee consistency. While Iglesias et al. (2020) emphasize the importance of employee participation in bolstering brand identification, Kapferer (2020) advocates utilizing digital advances for improved branding. Equity Bank Uganda's CSR initiatives and digital transformation initiatives are essential for enhancing brand reputation in Uganda, where financial inclusion is a top objective (Equity Bank Uganda, 2024).

5.2 Conclusions

The study looked at Equity Bank Uganda's corporate brand identity management techniques, noted difficulties in maintaining its brand identity, and offered solutions. The results demonstrate that Equity Bank Uganda successfully develops a strong brand identity through the use of tactics including integrated marketing communication, internal branding, digital branding, crisis management, CSR, and strategic brand positioning. Survey results and earlier research on company branding support these initiatives. However, optimal brand management is hampered by difficulties including employee disengagement, leadership not prioritizing branding, and problems with digital integration and brand consistency. Respondents overwhelmingly supported the suggested changes as practical ways to strengthen the bank's corporate brand identity, including improved security, innovation, leadership emphasis, and transparent communication. The report makes suggestions to improve Equity Bank Uganda's brand management procedures in light of these findings.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings, discussions, and conclusions, the following recommendations are made:

- i. Equity Bank Uganda should continue to strengthen its corporate brand identity strategies, with a particular focus on strategic brand positioning, integrated marketing communication, and digital branding to enhance market differentiation and customer trust.
- ii. The bank should establish a planned, organized, and controlled brand management program to ensure that branding strategies are effective and consistent across all branches and platforms.
- iii. Regular training and engagement programs should be implemented to ensure employees understand and embody the bank's brand values, fostering a culture of brand authenticity and improving customer interactions.
- iv. The bank should strategically time its branding initiatives, such as leveraging CSR campaigns during key community events or festivals, to maximize brand visibility and customer engagement.
- v. Policymakers and the Ugandan government should create a supportive environment for financial institutions to implement branding strategies, such as reducing fees for participating in promotional events or exhibitions, to enable banks like Equity Bank Uganda to enhance their brand presence.

5.4 Limitations of the Study

- Some respondents were reluctant to divulge information because they were worried about confidentiality and corporate policies. This was lessened by the researcher by outlining the significance of the study and guaranteeing secrecy to promote truthful answers.

- The research design employed in the study was cross-sectional, which might not have adequately captured long-term changes.
- Some respondents expressed discomfort about the disclosure of sensitive information; future research should use a longitudinal method to offer a more comprehensive view over time. In order to allay participants' concerns that their answers would have an impact on their jobs, the researcher promised secrecy.
- Because Equity Bank Uganda was the exclusive subject of the study, its conclusions might not apply directly to other businesses in other industries.

5.5 Areas for Further Study

Future research, according to the researcher, should examine corporate brand identity management techniques in different industries, such retail or telecoms. Future research could use longitudinal and mixed-method designs to capture patterns over a longer period of time, perhaps providing deeper insights into brand management dynamics, given the constraints of the cross-sectional and quantitative methodology used in this work.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY

MAKERERE UNIVERSITY BUSINESS SCHOOL

Topic: An Evaluation of Corporate Brand Identity Management Strategies at Equity Bank Uganda

Dear Respondent;

I am Mugambe Hassan, you have been identified as a key informant, please spare a few minutes of your busy schedule to fill this questionnaire. Your opinions and views in this questionnaire are important for generating the findings that will lead to an award of Master Degree in Business administration of Makerere University Business School. The responses will be used for purely academic research. Your honest and sincere responses are highly appreciated and shall be treated with utmost confidentiality.

Section A: Background data (Please circle the appropriate response)

- 1) Gender: Male ☐ Female ☐
- 2) Age: 20 - 24 years ☐ 25 - 29 years ☐ 30 - 34 years ☐ 35 and above ☐
- 3) Highest education attained:
Diploma ☐ Degree ☐ Masters ☐ PHD ☐
- 4) Period worked with the organisation
0-5years ☐ 6-10years ☐ 11-15years ☐ 16years and above ☐
- 5) Your Position in the company
Operations ☐ Middle Management ☐ Senior management ☐

SECTIONS: B - D

The table below shows the alternative responses and the number assigned to each response. For In sections B – D, please evaluate the statement by ticking in the box with the number that best suits your response.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Not sure	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5

SECTION B: Corporate Brand Identity Management Strategies at Equity Bank Uganda

CODE	Corporate Brand Identity Management Strategies	Scale				
SBP	Strategic Brand Positioning	1	2	3	4	5
SPB1	The bank has a well-defined corporate brand identity strategy.					
SPB2	Customers associate positive attributes with the bank's brand.					
SPB3	Brand messaging is clear and consistent.					
SPB4	The bank's leadership prioritizes brand identity management.					
IMC	Integrated Marketing Communication	1	2	3	4	5
IMC1	Equity Bank Uganda maintains brand consistency across all platforms.					
IMC2	Branding efforts are regularly reviewed and updated.					
IMC4	The bank actively engages customers through social media.					
IMC4	Brand messaging is clear and consistent.					
VID	Visual Identity Development	1	2	3	4	5

VID1	Customers easily recognize the bank's visual identity.					
VID2	The bank maintains a consistent logo, typography, and brand colors.					
VID3	The bank's branding materials (e.g., brochures, website) are visually uniform.					
VID4	Branding efforts are regularly reviewed and updated.					
IBE	Internal Branding and Employee Engagement	1	2	3	4	5
IBE1	Employees understand and align with the bank's brand values.					
IBE2	The bank invests in employee brand training programs.					
IBE3	The bank's leadership prioritizes brand identity management.					
IBE4	Internal branding efforts enhance customer interactions.					
DBC	Digital Branding and Customer Experience	1	2	3	4	5
DBC1	The bank effectively utilizes digital branding strategies.					
DBC2	The bank actively engages customers through social media.					
DBC3	Digital branding enhances trust and reliability in banking services.					
DBC4	A seamless digital experience is provided across all platforms.					
CSR	Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) and Ethical Branding	1	2	3	4	5
CSR1	The bank's CSR initiatives enhance its brand reputation.					
CSR2	The bank promotes financial literacy and community development programs.					
CSR3	Ethical branding strengthens customer trust and loyalty.					
CSR4	The bank engages in sustainability and fair-trade practices.					
RCM	Reputation and Crisis Management	1	2	3	4	5
RCM1	The bank has a well-defined corporate brand identity strategy.					
RCM2	The bank's CSR initiatives enhance its brand reputation.					
RCM3	The bank's leadership prioritizes brand identity management.					
RCM4	Crisis management strategies protect the brand's credibility.					

SECTION C: Challenges Faced in Managing Corporate Brand Identity

No.	Challenges Faced in Managing Corporate Brand Identity	1	2	3	4	5
1	The bank struggles with maintaining brand consistency.					
2	Internal fraud has negatively affected the bank's corporate brand.					
3	Negative customer perceptions hinder brand trust.					
4	The bank faces challenges in differentiating itself from competitors.					
5	Digital transformation has been difficult to integrate.					
6	Economic fluctuations impact the brand's stability.					
7	Employees are not fully engaged in brand initiatives.					
8	Customer engagement strategies are ineffective.					
9	Public scandals have harmed the bank's reputation.					
10	There is a lack of innovation in brand identity management.					
11	Leadership does not prioritize corporate branding.					
12	The bank lacks a comprehensive brand strategy.					

SECTION D: Possible Ways of Improving Corporate Brand Identity

No.	Possible Ways of Improving Corporate Brand Identity	1	2	3	4	5
1	The bank should invest more in digital branding.					
2	Employee training should focus on brand engagement.					

3	The bank should conduct regular brand audits.					
4	Customer engagement strategies should be improved.					
5	Transparent communication can enhance trust.					
6	Fraud prevention measures can restore reputation.					
7	CSR initiatives should be expanded.					
8	Leadership should prioritize brand identity.					
9	Branding efforts should align with customer expectations.					
10	Innovation in service delivery can enhance brand image.					
11	Consistency in messaging should be reinforced.					
12	Enhanced security measures will improve customer confidence.					

Thank You for Your Corporation

Appendix 2: Krejcie and Morgan Table

Populati on size	Sampl e size	Populatio n size	Sampl e size	Populatio n size	Sampl e size	Populatio n size	Sampl e size	Populatio n size	Sampl e size
10	10	100	80	280	162	800	260	2800	338
15	14	110	86	290	165	850	265	3000	341
20	19	120	92	300	169	900	269	3500	246
25	24	130	97	320	175	950	274	4000	351
30	28	140	103	340	181	1000	278	4500	351
35	32	150	108	360	186	1100	285	5000	357
40	36	160	113	380	181	1200	291	6000	361
45	40	180	118	400	196	1300	297	7000	364
50	44	190	123	420	201	1400	302	8000	367
55	48	200	127	440	205	1500	306	9000	368
60	52	210	132	460	210	1600	310	10000	373
65	56	220	136	480	214	1700	313	15000	375
70	59	230	140	500	217	1800	317	20000	377
75	63	240	144	550	225	1900	320	30000	379
80	66	250	148	600	234	2000	322	40000	380
85	70	260	152	650	242	2200	327	50000	381
90	73	270	155	700	248	2400	331	75000	382
95	76	270	159	750	256	2600	335	100000	384

Krejcie, Robert V., Morgan, Daryle W., "Determining Sample Size for Research Activities",

Appendix 3: Plagiarism Report

HASSAN MUGAMBE

AN EVALUATION OF CORPORATE BRAND IDENTITY MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AT EQUITY BANK UGANDA

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