BUILDING BRAND EQUITY FOR PRIVATE FOUR BY FOUR WHEEL MOTOR VEHICLE MODELS AT TOYOTA KENYA LTD.

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A Management Research Project Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA), school of Business, University of Nairobi

NOVEMBER, 2011

DECLARATION

I, Nehemiah Kipyegon Mutai declare that I am the sole author of this research project and that during the period of study, the project has not been registered for any other academic programme, nor has any of the material been submitted wholly or partly for any other award. This research project is a result of my own research, and where other researchers have been cited, they are duly acknowledged.

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Approval

This research project has been submitted for examination with my approval as the supervisor

Dr. Raymond M. Musyoka

DEDICATION

The project is dedicated to my dear wife.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Many thanks go to almighty God for enabling and guiding me through my academic life. I also pass my gratitude to Dr. Musyoka for his effort in guiding me through this study. Finally I thank my wife and family for their great support during the period of study.

ABSTRACT

This is a case study of building brand equity for private four by four vehicle models in Toyota Kenya (formerly Toyota East Africa) Ltd. The brand equity factors that shall be studied include brand name awareness, brand loyalty, perceived quality, brand image, and brand association.

The objective of the study is to determine brand awareness, brand loyalty, how perceived quality is applied in the four by four motor vehicle market, brand personality and brand association strategies.

Primary data was collected by use of a structured questionnaire. The target population of the study was 100 individual customers of Toyota Kenya ltd selected randomly. The researcher used email to deliver and collect the questionnaires. Telephone calls were used to follow up in order to increase the response rate. There was use of content analysis for presentation of results using tables, charts and graphs. A high percentage of the respondents are aware of Toyota models. They also strongly agree that the four wheel mechanisms of Toyota vehicles work to the required standards. The respondents go ahead to state that Toyota models have very strong brand image and even go ahead to explain the high level of success, distinctive positive characteristics, compliance to customer required standards and a trustworthy model that is durable, easy to repair and that it has elegant fashionable design. What is outstanding is the knowledge that almost all of the four by four models are on tarmac road on a cumulative terms on related trips and activity. The respondent's ownership stands over half while a still larger number of customers would still purchase Toyota brand.

Based on the above results, it is clear that the functionality of four by four models has been overcome by brand equity factors. As much as quality of the Toyota models being appraised highly, the usage confirms the opposite in terms of low usage of the same. The manufactures or dealers are therefore supposed to focus on model output that is easy to maintain, of good quality, durable and easy to maintain in order to win the customers support. A very strong brand image can only be achieved by communicating the attributes to the customers.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION	ii
DEDICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS	
ABSTRACT	
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Background of study	1
1.1.1 The concept of Brand Equity	
1.1.2 Motor Vehicle Industry in Kenya	7
1.2. Statement of the Problem	
1.3 General Objective	11
1.3.1 Research Questions	11
1.3.2 Specific Objectives	11
1.4. Significance of the Study	12
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	13
2.0 Introduction	13
2.1 Brand Equity	13
2.1.1 Brand Name Awareness	14
2.1.2 Brand Loyalty	15
2.1.3. Perceived Quality	
2.1.4 Brand Image	18
2.1.5. Brand Associations	19
2.2 Proprietary Brand Assets	20
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	22
3.1 Research Design	22
3.2 Study Population	
3.3 Data Collection	22
3.4 Data Analysis	23

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION	24
4.1 Introduction.	24
4.2 Characteristics of respondents	
4.2.1 Gender of the respondents	24
4.2.2 Occupation of the respondents	25
4.2.3 Number of years with four by four vehicle model	25
4.2.4 Percentage on off road	26
4.2.5 Engine capacity	27
4.3 Information about Brand Awareness	28
4.3.1 Information on any four by four models	28
4.3.2 The brands (Classes) of Toyota four by four models	29
4.3.3 Four wheel mechanisms that work well	
4.4 Information about Brand Image.	31
4.5 Information about Perceived Quality	32
4.5.1 Rating of the Toyota four by four model	32
4.6 Information about Brand Association	33
4.7 Brand Loyalty	34
4.7.1 Previously owned four by four vehicle	34
4.7.2 The brand to go for	35
CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND	
RECOMMENDATIONS	36
5.1 Introduction	36
5.2 Summary of Findings	
5.3 Discussion and Conclusions	37
5.4 Recommendations	38
5.5 Recommendations for Future Research	39
REFERENCES	40
APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE	43

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of study

The picture on global growth is increasingly split. Big emerging economies are in the best shape, with strong growth in domestic demand and scant spare capacity. Countries such as India and Brazil have largely put the downturn behind them. Given the scale of its government-directed lending binge, China's economy is vulnerable to a sudden clampdown by bureaucrats, (The economist, Feb, 2010). The rich world economies must therefore spur productivity, encourage investments and foster competition. That points to a renewed focus on freeing trade, cutting spending rather than raising taxes and agreeing on new financial regulations. It is noted that ten years ago rich countries dominated the world economy, contributing around two thirds of global Gross Domestic product (GDP) after allowing for differences in purchasing power. Since then that share has fallen to just over half. In another decade it could be down to 40%. The bulk of global output will be produced in the emerging world (The Economy, Oct 2010). The sign proves that there are increasing chances in the emerging markets for improvements and in many areas such as mining, tourism, agriculture among others.

Kenya remains vibrant yet fragile. The gap between the rich and the poor, as well as between ethnic groups competing for abundant resources but dwindling usable land, is frightening. (The economist, Oct 2010). It goes on to say that politics is combustible but with the new constitution in place the country can be more or less respected if the

election of 2012 pass off without violence, then the future as the regions leader could be assured. Despite the bloodshed of early 2008, which frightened away tourist and investors in Kenya alike, Kenya's position vis-à-vis its neighbors is stronger than ever. The growth is predicted by both the prime minister and the president to be between 7-10%. The motor vehicle manufacturers are therefore targeting the Kenyan market and beyond. Competition will increase over time with it being based on pricing, and technology among others.

Kenya and the region as a whole have received less attention in terms of legal restrictions that are geared towards improving the four by four industries. Since it falls under motor vehicle, some of the restrictions that are coming up are to do with environment for instance pollution and related emission controls. Toyota is however trying to apply international regulation and developments into their products. Toyota Motor Corporation released Sustainability report 2010 on September the 29th. This year's edition aims to properly disclose information pertinent to the quality issue, clarify mid-and-long term environmental actions for Carbon emission reduction and other programs (Team Toyota, 2010). It goes ahead to describe how Electronic control systems in Toyota vehicles have brought about many benefits to customers, including greater safety, more comfort, better environmental performance, and improved fuel efficiency.

Underlying any economic environment is its technical base and equipment that affect the way an economy's resources are converted to output. Technological developments affect marketing in two ways; with new products and with new processes (ways of doing

things), (McCarthy and Perrealt, 1993). The four by four motor vehicle Industry comes in with a lot of technological advancements including height adjustments, Auto Locking, load sensing, Crawl sensing capabilities among others. The four by four models have also been improved with a lot of accessories that actually match or even supersede the luxury models. Various sensors have been incorporated to assist in the operation of four by four systems. The four by four Electronic Control Unit (ECU) controls the amperage that is applied to the electric control coupling, in order to transmit drive torque to the rear wheels needed, and in the amount needed. (Toyota Tsusho, 2009)

The cultural environment is made up of institutions and other forces that affect a society's basic values, perceptions, preferences, and behaviors. People grow up in a particular society that shapes their basic beliefs and values. People vary their attitude towards the natural world. Some feel ruled by it, others feel in harmony with it, and still others seek to master it. A long term trend has been people growing a mastery over nature through technology and the belief that nature is bountiful. Love of nature is leading to more camping, hiking, boating, fishing and other outdoor activities. Business has responded by offering more products and services catering to these interests. Tour operators for instance are offering more wilderness adventures (Kottler, 2001). There is need to understand why a customer should drive a four by four model to an office located just a few kilometers in an all tarmac road from point of origin whereas the same customer has a smaller two wheeled drive model. Perhaps the above scenario should help explain the reason for the preference.

When a company succeeds in creating more value for customers than its competitors, that company is said to enjoy competitive advantage in an industry. Competitive advantage is measured relative to its rivals in a given industry. (Keegan, 2008). Organizations with strong brands fare better in gaining market share that those without strong brands. Thus, firms who are brand leaders will become particularly aggressive if they see their position being eroded by other brands. Managers are particularly interested in measuring equity that has been built up by their brand. Brand equity is an evolutionary, rather than static, concept. Understanding the dynamics of this concept enables managers to consider helping grow their brands. (Chernatony, 1998)

Brand equity is a set of assets. Thus the management of brand equity involves investment to create and enhance these assets. Brand equity generates value for customers which provide competitive advantage as compared to other brands. (Aaker, 1996). It is therefore an understanding and the application or compliance to the macro-environments factors above together with other marketing activities that will indeed lead to success. Brand equity is a set of assets(and Liabilities) linked to a brand's name and symbol that adds to(or subtracts from) the value provided by a product or service to a firm and/or that firm's customers (Aaker, 1996). Brand equity incorporates brand name awareness, brand loyalty, Perceived quality, brand personality and brand association.

Awareness refers to the strength of brand's presence in the consumers mind (Aaker, 1996). Awareness is how fast one can be able to remember a brand. This is one of the most important aspects that are linked to purchase of particular products. People like the

familiar and are prepared to ascribe all sorts of good attitudes to items that are familiar to them. (Aaker and Joachimsthaller, 2000).

Brand loyalty in marketing consists of a consumer's commitment to repurchase the brand and can be demonstrated by repeated buying of a product or service or other positive behaviors such as word of mouth advocacy(Allan and Basu, 1994). This is one aspect where consumers let go their desires that can be supported by persuasion and decide to go to a particular brand. True brand loyalty exists when customers have a high relative attitude toward the brand which is then exhibited to repurchase behavior. (Allan etal 1994).

A brand has a personality of its own. By communicating, it gradually builds up character. The way in which it speaks of its products or services shows what kind of person it would be if it were human. (Kapferer, 1999). It is now accepted that consumers personify brands and when looking at the symbol values of brand, they seek brands which have very clear personalities and select brands that best match their actual desired self-concept (Chernatony, 1998)

There is a special type of association, partly because it influences brand associations in many contexts and partly because it has been empirically shown to affect profitability. Brand associations can be anything that connects the customer to the brand. It can include user imagery, product attributes, use situation, organizational associations, brand personality, and symbols. Much of brand management involves determining what

associations to develop and then creating programs that will link association to the brand (Aaker and Joachimsthaller, 2000).

The importance of brand equity cannot be underestimated considering the current changing systems, economies, as well as markets. The Macroeconomic setup is the key in looking at how to put into task the brand equity strategies.

1.1.1 The concept of Brand Equity

More and more companies and other organizations have come to realize that one of their most valuable assets is the brand names associated with their products or services. (Keller, 2008). Branding has been around for centuries as a way of distinguishing the goods of one producer from those of another. In fact, the word brand is derived from the Old Norse word *brandr*, which means 'to burn' as brands were, and still are, the means by which owners of livestock mark their animals to identify them. (Interbrand group, 1992) . Brands identifies the source of maker of a product and allows consumers to assign responsibility to a particular manufacturer or distributor. Most important, a brand takes on a special meaning to consumers. Because of the past experiences with the product and its marketing over the years, consumers learn about brands. They find out which brands satisfy their needs and which ones do not. As a result, brands provide a shorthand device or means of simplification for their product decisions. (Jacob, 1971)

If consumers recognize a brand and have some knowledge about it, then they do not have to engage in a lot of additional thought or processing of information to make a product decision. Thus from an economic perspective, brand allow consumers to lower search costs of a product both internally (in terms of how much they have to think) and externally (in terms of how much they look around). (Keller, 2008)

Brands also provide a number of valuable functions for firms. (Leslie, 1989). Fundamentally they serve an identification purpose to simplify product handling or tracing. Operationally, brands help to organize inventory and accounting records. A brand also offers the firm legal protection for unique features or aspects of the product. A brand can retain intellectual property rights, giving legal title to the brand. (Keller, 2008).

Keller, 2008 continues to say that branding is about creating differences. Fundamentally, the brand equity concept stresses the importance of the role of the brand in marketing strategies. The concept of brand equity clearly builds on the principles of brand management. By virtue of the fact that it adopts theory and research advances to address the challenges in brand management created by changing marketing environments, the concept of brand equity can provide potentially useful insights.

1.1.2 Motor Vehicle Industry in Kenya

Motor vehicle invention, manufacturing and sale did not originate from Kenya. The researcher will therefore give a general view of its beginning. Automobile as we know was not invented in a single day by a single inventor. The history of automobile reflects an evolution that took place worldwide. It is estimated that over 100000 patents created

the modern automobile. The first theoretical plans for motor vehicle were drawn by both Leonardo da Vinci and Isaac Newton. (Bellis, 2010)

Historians seem not certain who invented four wheel drive cars. Somehow the history of four by four motor vehicles is not well recorded. The first four by four vehicle was designed by Ferdinand Porsche the founder of Porsche cars in 1900. (www.4x4.com, 2010)

Toyota started manufacturing four by four cars much later starting with FJ40 Model in 1960 with the use of petrol engine. A developed type came up in 1973 with a 6 piston 3.6 liter engine. In 1976 they even fitted disc brakes on the front axles to aid in stopping. In 1979 power steering was introduced to ease in the steer capability. The modern four by four model is 'fully loaded' with power steering, disc brakes, air conditioners, CD changers, I phones, Air bags, ABS(Antilock Braking Systems) to name but a few. Toyota has since developed and expanded to even new markets including Kenya. Toyota Tsusho Corporation established a Nairobi Liaison office in 1962.

In 1963 Toyota business started in Westland Motors in Westland as a small petrol station. Lonhro bought the shares of Westlands motors and relocated the Toyota business to Uhuru Highway Opposite Nyayo Stadium as one of the divisions of Motor Mart Group, named Toyota Kenya. In 1995, Motor Mart changed its name to Lonhro Motors East Africa (LMEA). Toyota East Africa Ltd (TEAL) was established in 1999 as a joint venture company with equal shareholding held by Lonhro Africa PLC and Toyota Tsusho

Corporation (TTC) to become the sole distributor of Toyota in both Kenya and Uganda. In the year 2000 LMEA, the company with a dealership of Toyota as well as distributor of Yamaha, Fuso, and Massey Ferguson among others was put under receivership. After a long and difficult negotiations with the receivers, TEAL successfully acquired the land and the building from LMEA and became the new TEAL with 100% share owned by TTC in the year 2001, bringing into new company over 300 employees from retail sales and service operations of Toyota and Yamaha. Assembly of Toyota cars started in 1976 and 37780 units have so far been assembled. Toyota East Africa currently assembles Toyota land Cruiser and Pick up vehicles only.

TEAL is proud with having two major products; Toyota cars and Yamaha Motorcycles. It has dealerships in 7 towns among which it has 100% ownership of the three. Two of the branches were opened last year (2011'). It has plans to open two new more branches in the city of Nairobi based in Westlands and Gigiri soon. The Introduction of Hino Product, a mid tonnage truck is at an advanced stage.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

The first step towards globalization has enlightened many firms to investigate what brings in competitive advantage. Building brand equity is a very important activity to any local or international organization. Nevertheless, it has received little or no attention to many firms. The perceived risk is greater once the unit price is higher or the repercussions of bad choice are more severe. (Kapferer, 1997)

A number of changes within the Kenyan motor industry are strengthening the need for competitiveness in the sale of off-road vehicles. The entrance of Chinese and Indian competitors whose sale prices are much lower creates the need for more strategies that are directed to the consumers. It is therefore critical for the management to understand and take advantage of building brand equity as a competitive strategic tool for the off-road motor vehicle within the market.

Past research papers have touched on brand equity and strategies affecting both customers and organizations. None of the researches has concentrated in the motor vehicle industry or related field. (D'Silva, 2009) researched on factors affecting Brand Loyalty in the packaging industry while (Murage, 2002) researched on the extent of wage relationship marketing strategies to enhance brand loyalty of industrial customers. Mbiuki, 2007 researched on the effects of perceived quality on brand choice, a case study of lubricants for passenger cars in Westlands, Nairobi. Close to this study is one that Mbau, 2000 focused on. The research focused on an Empirical investigation of creation and application of brand equity in Kenya, the case study of the pharmaceutical sector. Kamiri 2007 also did a survey of the creation and application of brand equity by insurance companies in Kenya. No known researchers have focused on the brand equity in the motor Industry in Kenya.

The study is therefore meant to shed more light on brand equity and its importance to motor vehicle dealers in Kenya. The research intends to answer the following important

question. How can functional brand equity strategies be put in place for the four by four Models in Kenya.

1.3 General Objective

The main objective of the study is to determine brand equity building strategies in the motor industry for four by four motor vehicle models

1.3.1 Research Questions

- (i) What level are respondents aware of Toyota Model?
- (ii) What brand loyalty strategies are applied in the sale of four by four models?
- (iii)How is perceived quality applied to create or maintain existing brands in the market?
- (iv) How is brand personality strategies put into force?
- (v) What brand association factors influence the purchase of four by four models?

1.3.2 Specific Objectives

- (i) To determine brand awareness strategies
- (ii) To determine brand loyalty strategies
- (iii) To establish how perceived quality is applied in the four by four market.
- (iv) To determine brand personality strategies.
- (v) To determine brand association strategies



1.4. Significance of the Study

The study will be beneficial to a number of stake holders in the industry and out of the industry as follows; buyers, manufacturers, government and academicians.

This study will help customer appreciate the importance of brand equity and in watching out its power in line with quality. This will assist in the day to day shopping activity and in the selection of products from a wide range of brands. It will help customers assign responsibility as to which particular manufacturer or distributor should be held accountable (Keller, 1998)

Manufactures who are out to build brand equity for their own competitive advantage will find this project of good use. The research will aid in the product design, manufacturing, and related communication to the customers. These investments in the brand can endow a product with unique associations and meanings that differentiate it from other products. Brand knowledge and application signals a certain level of quality so that satisfied buyers can easily choose the product again.

Governments will benefit from the research since they will gain on areas such as legislation, governance issues and in amending trade agreements in favor of their markets. Future researchers will gain from this by acquiring the necessary information and skills for farther research on brand equity and related studies in the motor industry. It is important to note that Kenyan academicians will have a beginning point in understanding brand equity in relation to motor vehicle products, customers, markets and in particular in relation to four by four models.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter introduces the literature review to provide theoretical understanding of the study. It also identifies the research issues to be addressed. It also provides the conceptual framework and the detailed outline of the underlying concepts and variables.

2.1 Brand Equity

Brand equity falls under Branding in the large field of marketing. It represents the total value that accrues to a product as a result of a company's cumulative investments in the marketing of the brand. Brand equity can also be thought as an asset representing the value created by the relationship between the brand and the customers over time (Warren 2008). In general sense, most marketing observers agree that brand equity is defined in terms of the marketing effects uniquely attributable to the brand. That is, brand equity relates to the fact that different outcomes result from the marketing of a product or service because of its brand name or some other brand element, as compared to outcomes if that same product or service did not have that brand identification. (Keller 1998).

The customer-based brand equity framework incorporates recent theoretical advances and managerial practices in understanding and influencing consumer behavior. Specifically, customer-based brand equity is defined as the differential effect that brand knowledge has on consumer response to the marketing of that brand. A brand is said to have positive

customer based brand equity when customers react more favorably to a product and the way it is marketed when the brand is identified as compared to when it is not.

In marketing of automotive products there is an element of brand equity which is normally important. This is the country of origin as a brand element. One of the facts of life in global marketing is that perception about and attitudes towards particular countries often extended to products and brands know to originate in those countries. Such perceptions contribute to the country-of-origin effect; they become part of brand's image and contribute to brand equity. (Warren, 2008)

2.1.1 Brand Name Awareness

Brand awareness reflects the salience of a brand and facilitates consumers' abilities to identify the brand with a specific product category. (Chernatony, 1998). Brand awareness is related to the strength of the resulting brand node or trace in memory, as reflected by consumers' ability to identify the brand under different conditions. In other words, how well do the brand elements serve the function of identifying the product? (Keller, 1998). Keller 1998 continues to explain that brand awareness involves giving the product an identity by linking brand elements to a product category and associated purchase and consumption or usage situations. From a strategic standpoint, it is important to have high levels of brand awareness under a variety of conditions and circumstances.

Brand awareness consists of brand recognition and brand recall performance. Brand recognition relates to consumers' ability to confirm prior exposure to the brand when

given the brand as a cue. (Keller 1998) In real life situation a customer is supposed to discriminate between brand components that they have come across previously. Brand recall on the other hand is the consumers' ability to retrieve the brand from memory when given the product category, the needs fulfilled by the category, or a purchase or usage situation as a cue. (Keller 1998)

Aspects of brand awareness can be measured through Brand Recognition which refers to the consumers' ability to recall previous exposure or experience with the brand, Brand Recall which refers to the consumer's ability to retrieve the brand memory when given the product category as a cue, Brand dominance which identifies the most important brand in a specific product category and Brand Knowledge that evaluates the consumers interpretation of the values linked to a brand.(Chernatony, 1998)

2.1.2 Brand Loyalty

Brand loyalty has aroused an enormous interest among academics as well as practitioners within the field of marketing and consumer behavior. Firms with large groups of loyal customers have been shown to have large market shares, in turn has been displayed to be associated with higher rates of return on investments. Brand loyalty is a key consideration when placing a value on a brand that is to be bought or sold, because a highly loyal customer base can be expected to generate very predictable sales and profit stream. It is suggested that the impact of brand loyalty on marketing costs is often substantial: It is simply much less costly to retain customers than to attract new ones. A common and

expensive mistake is to seek growth by enticing new customers to the brand while neglecting existing ones. (Aaker, 1996)

There are numerous measures of loyalty, for example measuring actual purchasing behavior over time which reflects the degree of satisfaction existing customers have with the brand. Brand loyalty is closely related to brand equity but is a distinct concept. Brand loyalty is often measured in a behavioral sense through the number of repeat purchases. The bottom line is that repeat buying is a necessary but not sufficient condition for being a brand loyal buyer in an attitudinal sense: someone can repeat-buy but not be brand loyal in a lateral sense. (Keller 1998). Aaker, 1996 says that focus on loyalty segmentation provides strategic and tactical insights that will assist in building strong brands. A market can usually be divided into the following groups: Noncustomers (those who buy competitors brands or are not product class users), price switchers (those who are pricesensitive), the passively loyal (those who buy out of habit rather than reason), fence sitters (those who are indifferent between two or more brands), and the committed. The challenge is to improve the brand's loyalty profile: increase the number of customers who are not price switchers, to strengthen the fence sitters' and committed's ties to the brand, and to increase the number who would pay more(or endure some inconvenience) to use the brand or service. (Aaker 1996)

Consumers have varying degrees of loyalty to specific brands, stores and other entities (Kottler, 2000). He goes ahead to group them into four loyalty status as Hard-core Loyals, Split Loyals, Shift Loyals and Switchers.

2.1.3. Perceived Quality

Just what do consumers look for in a product? The answer is easy: they want quality and value especially because of foreign competition. Claims of product quality have become strategically crucial to maintaining a competitive advantage (Jacobson and Aaker, 1987). Kirmani and Wright Dec, 1989 suggest that consumers use a number of cues to infer quality, including brand name, price and even their own estimates of how much money has been put into a new product's advertising campaign. Perceived Quality has been defined as a customer's perception of the overall quality or superiority of a product or service relative to relevant alternatives and with respect to its intended purpose. (Keller 1998). Thus, perceived quality is a global assessment based on customer perception of what they think constitutes a quality product and how well the brand rates on those dimensions. Achieving a satisfactory level of perceived quality has become mere difficult as continual product improvements over the years have led to heightened consumer expectations of product quality.

One approach to customer satisfaction, known as the Kano-model, operates with three kinds of expectation. The first includes the implicit and taken for granted qualities expected from a product. If these are not satisfied, the product will never be able to live up to the customer's requirements, but even if fulfilled, they do not profile the product because the qualities are taken for granted as a minimum. For the performance expectations satisfaction is proportional to how well the product lines up to the expectations. Such quality requirements are often specified and articulated by the customers. As for enthusiasm-related product features, it is wrong to call them

expectations since their essential character is that they are not expected by the customer. Therefore, such positive surprises can lead to a very great feeling of satisfaction, since the product quality was even better than expected (Bailom etal, 1996)

Perceived quality goes along with perceived risk. Where the latter is high the purchase intention goes down. When consumers evaluate competing brands, not only do they have an overall view about how risky the brand purchase is, but they also form a judgment about why the brand is a risky purchase (Chernatony 1998). He thus gives the dimensions of risk such as, Financial risk explains the risk of money being lost when buying an unfamiliar brand, Performance risk is the risk of something being wrong with the unfamiliar brand, Social risk is the risk that the unfamiliar brand might not meet the approval of a respected peer group, Psychological risk as the risk that an unfamiliar brand might not fit well with one's self image and Time risk as the risk of having to waste further time replacing the brand.

2.1.4 Brand Image

Warren 2008, goes on to say that customers integrate all their experience of observing, using or consuming a product with everything they hear and read about it. Information about products and brands comes from a variety of sources and cues including advertising, publicity, word of mouth, sales personnel and packaging. Warren, 2008 indicates that perception of service after the sale price, and complex mental image about both the product itself and the company that manufactures it.

A positive brand image is created by marketing programs that link strong, favorable, and unique association to the brand in memory. (Keller, 1998). Keller continues to say that brand equity does not distinguish between the source of brand associations and the manner in which they are formed; all that matters is the resulting favorability, strength, and uniqueness of brand association.

Making sure that associations are linked sufficiently strongly to the brand will depend on how the marketing program and other factors affect consumer's brand experiences. Associations will vary in the strength of their connections to the brand node. Strength is a function of either the amount or quantity of processing that information receives and the nature or quality of that processing (Keller 1998).

2.1.5. Brand Associations

Making sure that associations are linked sufficiently strongly to the brand will depend on how the marketing program and other factors affect consumers' brand experiences. Associations will vary in the strength of their connection to the brand node. Strength is a function of both the amount and quantity of processing that information received and the nature of quality of that processing, (Keller, 1998). Two factors facilitating the strength of association to any piece of information are the personal relevance of the information and the personal relevance of the information and the consistency with which the information is presented overtime.

Favorability of Brand association

Choosing which favorable and unique associations to link to the brand requires careful analysis of the consumer and competition to determine the optimal positioning for the brand. In the most basic sense, favorable brand associations are created b convincing consumers that the brand possesses relevant attributes and benefits that satisfy their needs and wants such that they form a positive overall brand attitude. (Keller 1998) The most important thing to note is that associations must be favorable to the consumer and are communicated to the consumer effectively though communication and the product attributes provided.

Uniqueness of brand Associations

To create the differential response that leads to customer-based brand equity, it is important that some of the strongly held brand associations are not only favorable but also unique. Unique brand associations are distinct associations not shared with competing brands. Beliefs about unique attributes and benefits that consumers value more favorably than for competing brands can lead to more favorable brand evaluations and a greater likelihood of choice. Thus it is important to associate unique, meaningful "points of difference" to the brand to provide a competitive advantage and a reason why consumers should buy it. (Keller 1998)

2.2 Proprietary Brand Assets

A strong brand often has associations that may be desirable in other categories. To capitalize on this value, a firm may choose to license its name or Logo or other trademark

items to another company for use on their products and merchandize. The rationale for the company obtaining the rights to use the trademarks is that consumers will pay more for a product because of the recognition and image lent by trademark. The rationale for the licensor relates to profits, promotion and legal protection. (Keller, 2008)

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study is a case study of building brand equity for four by four model vehicles a case study of Toyota East Africa ltd, Kenya. The case study design has been chosen owing to its appropriateness in giving a better understanding of this issue and can add or extend experience to what is known through past related or unrelated researches. A qualitative research method was used to capture and examine the real life situations and provide the basis for the application of ideas and extension of methods.

3.2 Study Population

The target population of the study was 100 individuals of current Toyota East Africa Limited customers. The 100 individual customers were randomly selected. 50 of the respondents were women and the other 50 were men. The population had an even range of a 10 year purchase of only four by four models.

3.3 Data Collection

Survey method was used to collect the pertinent primary data. The data was collected using a semi-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained both open ended and close ended questions. The researcher made use of email to deliver the questionnaires to the respondents. The use of telephone calls for introduction to respondents and follow up to increase the response was used. The questionnaire was administered to the customers who were randomly selected.

3.4 Data Analysis

The data obtained from the interview guide will be analyzed using qualitative analysis. Qualitative data analysis makes general statements on how categories or themes of data are related (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). The qualitative analysis will be done using content analysis. Content analysis is the systematic qualitative description of the composition of the objects or materials of the study (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003). It involves observation and detailed description of objects, items or things that comprise the object of study. The themes (variables) that are to be used in the analysis are broadly classified into six parts: Demographic Information, Information about Brand Image, Information about Brand awareness, and Information about Perceived Quality, Information about Brand associations and Brand Loyalty.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Introduction

The research objective was to determine brand building strategies in the motor industry for four by four models. This chapter presents the analysis and findings with regard to the objectives and discussion of the same. The findings are presented in percentages and frequency distributions, mean and standard deviations.

4.2 Characteristics of respondents

A total of 100 questionnaires were administered. The completed questionnaires were edited for completeness and consistency. Of the 100 questionnaires 73 were returned. The remaining 27 were not returned, representing a response rate of 73%, which the study considered adequate for analysis.

4.2.1 Gender of the respondents

Table 4.2.1.1

SEX	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY	
Male	41%	year while the rest 15,1 (30	
Female	59%	43	

According to the table 4.2.1.1 above 59% of the respondents are female, while 41% are male. This implies that majority of the respondents are female.

4.2.2 Occupation of the respondents

Occupation of the respondents indicated that 82% are self employed while12% are employed, while the remaining 6% did not indicate their occupation. This indicates that most people with four by four models are self employed.

4.2.3 Number of years with four by four vehicle model

Table 4.2.3.1

PERIOD	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY	
Below 1 year	16.44%	learness read roads 12	
1-3 years	17.81%	13	
4-6 years	27.40%	20	
7-10 years	23.29%	17	
over 10 years	15.10%	11	

The results presented in the table 4.2.3.1 shows that the number of years with four by four vehicle model varies from a period of less than 1 year to over 10 years. 27.40% of the respondents have had the vehicle for 4-6 years, 23.29% have had it for a period of 7-10 years, 17.81% having it for 1-3yrs, 16.44% for less than 1 year, while the rest 15.10% for over 10 years.

Majority of the respondents have a four by four model vehicle for 4-6 years. This implies that generally four by four vehicles are brands which can be used for quite some time due to its positive attribute.

4.2.4 Percentage on off road

The below table 4.2.4.1 diagram indicates that their vehicles are off road between 0-10% of their drive (52.0%), then 27.4% of the respondent have their vehicles off road between 10%-20% of their drive, 9.6% have theirs 20%-30% drive on off road, 4.1% of the respondents have their vehicles 30-40% off road,5.5% of the respondents have their vehicles between 40% and 50% off road while the rest 1.4% of the respondents have their vehicles over 50% of their drive off road. This implies majority of the respondents rarely drive on off road, therefore they are mostly driven on tarmacked roads.

Table 4.2.4.1

% OFF ROAD	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY	
0-10%	52.0%	38	
10-20%	27.4%	20	
20-30%	9.6%	7	
30-40%	4.1%	3	
40-50%	5.5%	4	
Over 50%	1.4%	1	

4.2.5 Engine capacity

Table 4.2.5.1

ENGINE SIZE	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY	
Below 2.5cc	23.30%	17	
2.5-2.9cc	19.20%	14	
3.0-3.4cc	34.20%	25	
3.5-3.8cc	4.10%	3	
above 4.0cc	19.20%	14	

According to the above Table 4.2.5.1 is that 34.20% of the respondents have an engine capacity of 3.0-3.4cc, 23.30% of the respondents have their vehicles with an engine capacity of below 2.5cc, 19.20% and 19.20% of the respondents have an engine of capacity 2.5-2.9cc and over 4.0cc, while the rest 4.1% of the respondents have their vehicle engine capacity of 3.5-3.9cc. This implies that most of the four by four model vehicles on the roads have a reasonable engine capacity.

4.3 Information about Brand Awareness

4.3.1 Information on any four by four models

Table 4.3.1.1

MODEL	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY	
Toyota	63.00%	46	
Nissan	8.39%	6	
Landrover	12.30%	9	
Isuzu	5.50%	4	
Mitsubishi	6.80%	5	
Others	4.10%	at may that They are swam 3	

According to Table 4.3.1.1, 63% of the respondent say that They are aware of the Toyota model, 12.30% of the respondents are aware of the Landover, 8.30% of the respondents have an idea of how Nissan looks like, 6.80% have come across Mitsubishi, 5.50% are aware of Isuzu while the rest 4.10% of the respondents have come a cross other four by four models apart from the above mentioned models. This indicates that majority of the respondents have come across Toyota, therefore generally the respondents are aware of the Toyota four by four model vehicle.

4.3.2 The brands (Classes) of Toyota four by four models

Table 4.3.2.1

MODEL	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY		Ste. Bes	
Prado	47.30%	1.5.00	4.56	35	
Fortuner	8.21%	5.00	13.0	6	
Hilux	12.32%	5,00	3.3.4	9	
Rav 4	8.21%	5.00	2.8	6	
Lexus	4.11%	5.00	2.1	3	
Land cruser VX	19.86%	5.00	1.3	14	

According to Table 4.3.2.1, 47.30% of the respondent say that They are aware of the Toyota Prado type, 12.32% of the respondents are aware of the Toyota hilux, 19.86% of the respondents have an idea of how Toyota Land Cruiser vx looks like, 8.21% and 8.21% of the respondents are aware of Toyota Fortuner and Toyota Rav 4 types respectively, while the rest 4.11% of the respondents are aware of the Toyota Lexus four by four type. This indicates that majority of the respondents have come across Toyota prado, therefore on average all the respondents are aware of the Toyota Prado four by four model vehicle followed by Land Cruiser vx.

4.3.3 Four wheel mechanisms that work well

Table 4.3.3.1

conditions (mesm2.0-2.9). For ford tr	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Toyota	1.00	5.00	4.56	1.97
Isuzu	1.00	5.00	3.0	1.25
Nissan	1.00	5.00	3.3	1.43
Land rover	1.00	5.00	2.8	1.88
Mitsubishi	1.00	5.00	2.1	1.11
Ford	1.00	5.00	1.3	0.83

The respondents were to give their independent opinion on whether the four wheel mechanism that work well to the required standard in a five point Likert scale. The range was 'Strongly disagree (1)' to 'strongly agree' (5). The scores of strongly agree have been taken to present a variable which had mean score of 4.0 to 4.9 on the continuous Likert scale; (4.0≤ L.E <4.9). The scores of 'slightly agree' have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score of 3.0.to 3.9 on the continuous Likert scale: 3.0≤L.E. <3.9) and the score of 'neutral' have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 2.0 to 2.9 on a continuous likert scale; 2.0≤ S.E. <2.9). The scores of 'Disagree' have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score of 0.to 1.9 on the continuous Likert scale: 0.0≤M.E. <1.9). A standard deviation of >1.5 implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

According to the table above 4.3.3.1, the respondents agreed strongly that the four wheeled mechanism of the Toyota vehicle work well to the required standard, the respondents slightly agree that four wheeled mechanism of Nissan and Isuzu work well to

their required standards (mean 3.0-3.9). While for land rover and Mitsubishi, the respondents are neutral on the extent to which the vehicles work well to the required conditions (mean 2.0-2.9). For ford the respondents disagree that the vehicle work well to the required condition This implies that the respondents unanimously agree that all the vehicles have a four wheeled mechanism that work well to a very reasonable standard with Toyota being the most preferred vehicle.

4.4 Information about Brand Image

Table 4.4.1

	BEST	VERY GOOD	GOOD	FAIRLY GOOD	FAIR
Toyota	58.9%	36.9%	2.8%	0.0%	1.4%
Isuzu	9.6%	18.1%	39.2%	12.3%	20.8%
Mitsubishi	5.5%	9.8%	20.0%	46.0%	18.7%
Land rover	15.1%	57.4%	19.2%	2.8%	5.5%
Nissan	9.6%	12.3%	28.8%	21.9%	27.4%
Ford	0.0%	1.9%	12.4%	46.5%	39.2%

The above Table 4.4.1 shows that on average, majority for the respondents agree that Toyota four by four make has the best brand image, followed by Land rover which is perceived to have a very good brand image, then Isuzu which is said to have just a good brand image, Mitsubishi and Ford is said to have a fairly good brand image. This implies that the respondents are very much aware of the different brands of the four wheeled vehicles, therefore in a position to rank them according to their brand images.

4.5 Information about Perceived Quality

4.5.1 Rating of the Toyota four by four model

Table 4.5.1.1

any to report our man royal	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
Style and design	4.06	2.52
Performance	4.0680	2.52190
Feature	4.3129	2.52478
Conformance to quality	4.0306	1.54867
Reliability	4.1.9932	2.48483
Durability	4.3503	2.50189
Serviceability	4.3197	2.63989

The respondents were to give their opinion on how they could rate the Toyota four by four models based on their performance, features, conformance, reliability, durability, serviceability and style& design in a five point Likert scale. The range was 'strongly disagree (1)' to 'strongly agree' (5). The scores of strongly agree have been taken to present a variable which had mean score of 4.0 to 4.9 on the continuous Likert scale ; $(4.0 \le L.E < 4.9)$. The scores of 'Moderately agree' have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score of 3.0.to 3.9 on the continuous Likert scale: $3.0 \le M.E. < 3.9$) and the score of 'neutral' have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 2.0 to 2.9 on a continuous likert scale; $2.0 \le S.E. < 2.9$). The score of 'moderately disagree' have been taken to represent a variable which had a mean score of 0.0 to 1.9 on a continuous likert scale; $0.0 \le S.E. < 1.9$). A standard deviation of >1.5 implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

The above Table 4.5.1.1 shows that, the respondents unanimously strongly agree that Toyota four by four models have a high level of success, Distinctive positive characteristics comply with customer standards, is a trustworthy model that it is durable, easy to repair and that Toyota has an elegant and fashionable design. This shows that majority of the respondent have a positive attitude towards Toyota four by four model vehicles due to its perceived quality.

4.6 Information about Brand Association

Table 4.6.1

USE	MEAN	STD. DEVIATION
Holiday	1.0	1.23
Shopping	2.7	1.74
Office	3.3	1.64
Evening outing	3.0	1.75
Upcountry visits	1.4	1.53

The respondents were to give their independent opinion on the estimated percentage of trips associated with the holiday, shopping, office, and evening outings and up-country in a 4 point Likert scale. The range was '25% in use' (1) to '100% in use' (4). The scores of 100% in use have been taken to present a variable which had mean score of 3.0 to 3.9 on the continuous Likert scale; (3.0≤ L.E <3.9). The scores of '75% in used' have been taken to represent a variable with a mean score of 2.0.to 2.9 on the continuous Likert scale: 2.0≤M.E. <2.9) and the score of '50% in use' have been taken to represent a

variable which had a mean score of 0 to 1.9 on a continuous likert scale; $0 \le S.E. < 1.9$). A standard deviation of >1.5 implies a significant difference on the impact of the variable among respondents.

The respondents agreed that the vehicle is approximately a 100% used while going to the office and evening outings (mean 3.0 and 3.3 respectively), then the responds think that they used the vehicle 75% in used (mean 2.7), while the same respondents think the on average their vehicles are 50% in use for both holiday and upcountry visits (mean 1.0-1.9). The above findings indicate that the four by four models are flexible and therefore can be used in any trips, with majority of them using it for evening outings and going to their place of work.

4.7 Brand Loyalty

4.7.1 Previously owned four by four vehicle

The below findings shows that majority (52.10%) of the respondents previously owned a Toyota four by four model, 12.30% owned Nissan, 9.50% owned landdrover,8.20% had Mitsubishi,5.50% owned Isuzu, 4.20% owned none of the below mentioned four by four vehicle, while the rest of the respondents owned totally none of the four by four vehicle (8.20%). This implies that respondent treasure the most Toyota four by four vehicles, therefore most of the respondents value Toyota make four by four models.

Table 4.7.1.1

MODEL	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY	
Toyota	52.10%	38	
Nissan	12.30%	9	
Mitsubishi	8.20%	6	
Isuzu	5.50%	4	
Landover	9.60%	7	
Other Models	4.10%	ty is applied in the four by 3	
None	8.20%	o determine the brand as one 6	

4.7.2 The brand to go for

Table 4.7.2.1

MODEL	PERCENTAGE	FREQUENCY
Toyota	45.20%	33
Nissan	12.30%	9
Mitsubishi	15.10%	sicio, therefore giving ott-11
Isuzu	12.30%	9
Landrover	15.10%	11

From the above Table 4.7.2.1,majority of the respondents Would go for Toyota if they were to buy another a four by four model (45.20%), 15.10% and 15.10% of the respondents would go for Landover and Mitsubishi respectively, 12.30% and 12.30% would go for Isuzu and Nissan. This implies that Toyota industry have applied brand loyalty strategies which has enabled the public to appreciate in their products.



CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, DISCUSSIONS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The objectives of this study was to determine brand awareness strategies, determine brand loyalty strategies, establish how perceived quality is applied in the four by four market, to determine brand personality strategies and to determine the brand association strategies.

5.2 Summary of Findings

The respondents agreed that they were aware of the different four by four model vehicles and therefore they went to an extent of ranking them on how they work well to a very reasonable standard. Toyota was the most preferred vehicle, therefore giving other four by four models a challenge of building brand equity strategies. The respondents generally appreciate the brand image of the four by four Models vehicles. Therefore the respondents were able to rank ranging for the best to the least brand image. The respondents strongly felt that Toyota is the best when it comes to performance, feature, conformance, Reliability, Durability, serviceability, style and design.

Respondents strongly felt have a four by four model vehicle are durable since most of the vehicles had been in use for 4-6 years, four by four vehicles are brands which can be used for quite some time due to its positive attributes. From the findings, the respondents opinion on the brand they would go for if they were to buy another vehicle showed that

the respondent treasure the most Toyota four by four model vehicles. Majority of the respondents are aware of the Toyota four by four model vehicles, therefore on average all the respondents are aware of the Toyota four by four model vehicle.

5.3 Discussion and Conclusions

It is important to note that a product is complete and will not stand the test of time until it is branded and in the proper manner. Brands, especially strong ones have a number of types of associations, and marketers must account for all of them in making marketing decisions. Perhaps the strongest and potentially most favourable association, however, result from actual product experience (Keller 2008). Toyota Kenya has tried to rely on brand heritage since the success started many years. The older successful models in the market have put Toyota ahead of the others. Thus having one favourable association with the past being one of the future success factors.

To avoid difficulties, companies sometimes elect to use new brand names to expand vertically. Many examples of this strategy exist, including Toyota, which expanded into the luxury category with the lexus brand because it was convinced that Toyota mark did not have the credibility to enter the luxury space (Aaker 1997). Currently the high end Toyotas have won the prime market in the luxury field. From the findings 'Prados and Vxs' are high end and are doing very well with a mean of 4.06 and standard deviation of 2.52 as good in style and design. The number of four by four models is another success story. The model range is wide including prado, VX, Fortuner, hilux and Rav four with Prado and VX leading in awareness ranking as the best four by four models.

Fundamentally the brand value chain assumes that the value of a brand resides with customers. Based on the insight, the model assumes that the value-creation process begins when a company invests in a marketing campaign aimed at actual or potential customers. The marketing activity associated with the campaign then affects the customer mindset with respect to brand-what customers know and feel about the brand (Keller 2008). Previous ownership, performance, word of mouth all put together confirms that a high value has been attached to the model under study.

The results from the study clearly show that the brand equity factors influencing customer decisions are not only concentrated on Toyota Models only but to the motor vehicle industry as a whole. The same is replicated for all other products that are on offer in the market. The purchasing of the product and the quality (real and perceived) are important in making a purchase decision. Customers are most likely to purchase a product for the first time or to remain loyal as long as they are satisfied with the product and its communication efforts. It is therefore very important for the manufacturers and dealers to understand the strength of brand equity factors and apply to their products and communicate the same to the customers. Retention of the existing customers is of high importance as the same customers are also able to convince others to the business if they are satisfied with the products they have encountered.

5.4 Recommendations

The study recommends that to be able to build strong brand equity for any product, there is need to understand the customer needs and be able to excel in the very sensitive

specification. This will lead to rewards coming in even if the services or products are not critically required. Strict specifications and pricing may not lead to loyalty. Brand factors such as quality, reliability, durability, serviceability may be essential while making purchase or repurchase decisions.

5.5 Recommendations for Future Research

The study was a case study of Toyota Kenya Ltd. The study recommends a wider focus to cover the whole motor vehicle industry without a bias of brand or class of automotive products.

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APPENDIX I

QUESTIONNAIRE

We wish to state that the data obtained by this questionnaire will be used solely for academic purposes and all information will be kept confidential.

Part.	A: Demographic Inf	formation				
1.	Name					
2.	Kindly indicate you	ir gender				
	Male	()	Female	()		
3.	Your Occupation, K	Kindly State				
4.	Number of years wi Below 1 year 1-3 years		r vehicle mo	del		
	4-6 years 7-10years Over 10 Yea	() () ars ()				
5.	Please estimate the	percentage of	being on off-	-road?		
	a) 0-10	b) 10-20	d) 20-30		40	
	f) 40-50	g) 50 and a				

a) Which category do the four by four car you are driving fall under

ENGINE CAPACITY IN LITRES	
Below 2.5 cc	
Below 2.5-3.0	
3.0-3.5	
3.5-4.0	
4.0 and above	

B) Information about Brand

6.	Kindly name all the four by four models that you have come across.

7.	WI	hat brands(Classes) of Toyota four by four models are you aware of
		Please Name them

8. To what extend do you agree or disagree that the following cars have four wheel mechanisms that work well to your required standards.

	Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Toyota				24	
Isuzu					
Nissan					44
Ford					
Mitsubishi					
Land					
Rover					

C) Information about Brand Image

9. Of the four wheel drive models below, rank them ranging from 1 to 5 starting from the best at No 1 and least at No 5.

Key - The best 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. The Least

Model	1	2	3	4	5	
Toyota						
Isuzu						
Mitsubishi						
Land rover				23.0		
Nissan				37.3		
Ford						

D) Information about Perceived Quality

10. Kindly rate Toyota four by four model as per the following parameters and how you agree to them

		Strongly Agree	Moderately Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Moderately Disagree	Strongly Disagree
-	Performance; Toyota level of success is high		un()	- Albashishi		
-	Features; Toyota has Distinctive characteristics	4.08	I Rover ()			
	Conformance quality: Toyota comply with customer standards					
-	Reliability; Toyota is a trustworthy model					-
-	Durability; Toyota lasts for long					
-	Serviceability; Toyota is easy to repair					
	Style & Design; Toyota has elegant and fashionable design		-	-		

E)	Information about Brand	associe	ations			
	What estimated percentage appropriate area.			ciated to	o the following trips? Ticl	k the
	7	25%	50%	75%	100%	
	YY 1: 1					

- Holiday () - Shopping () () () () - Office () () () () - Evening outings () () () () - Up-country visits () () () () If 100% is ticked, please briefly explain the reason(s)

F)	Brand	Loya	lty
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12. Previously	, which	four	by	four	model	did	vou	own
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- Toyota () Nissan () Mitsubishi ()
- Isuzu () Land Rover () None ()
- 13. If you were to buy another four by four Model, Which Brand would you go for?
- Toyota () Nissan () Mitsubishi ()
- Isuzu () Land Rover ()

 If any other, please
 specify.....