

# Effects of Brand Perception, Brand Awareness and Brand Association on Consumer Behaviour towards Local Products of Nagaland

Rongsennungla Jamir, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Unity College Dimapur, India. rongsennungla.jamir@gmail.com

Dr. Tongpangkumla, Assistant Professor, Department of Commerce, Unity College Dimapur, India. tongpangkumla@unitycollegedimapur.com

**ABSTRACT** - Branding has gained its importance in a dynamic and complex market where differentiation and uniqueness of the product is a primary marketing objective. Branding also helps in creating a company's positive perception and image in the customers' mind. With many advocating the "Vocal for Local" campaign in India to be self-sufficient and self-reliant, there is a rise in the marketing of rural products. It becomes critical therefore to study how branding as a strategy can be implemented effectively to market the rural products. This paper attempts to study the effects of branding on Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB) towards rural products in Nagaland by evaluating three variables: Brand Perception (BP), Brand Awareness (BA) and Brand Association (BAS) of local branded products. This study is based on both secondary as well as primary data. Secondary data were collected from literatures relevant to the study. The primary data were collected through a well-structured questionnaire from the sample respondents, selected using simple random sampling method. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the reliability of the instrument used in data collection. The data collected were analysed using descriptive method of statistical analysis. The study reveals a favourable role that branding executes to influence the consumer buying behaviour of rural products. The highest impact on CBB is BAS, followed by BP and BA. For rural marketers, through effective implementation of branding as a strategy, they stand a greater chance of achieving brand image and brand loyalty and be able to attract and retain the sales of rural products.

**Keywords:** Brand Perception, Brand Awareness, Brand Association, Consumer Buying Behaviour, Rural Products.

## I. INTRODUCTION

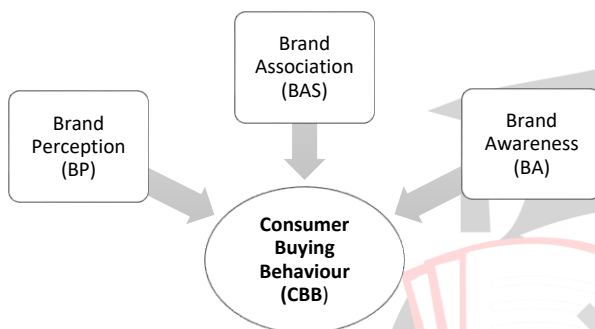
The dynamism and complexity of the competitive market necessitates for every marketer to put in all efforts to strategically implement marketing activities that will help in survival and success of the business. There are countless players in the market easily copying each other's products, having similar taste, looks and features. To outperform its competitors and to gain a competitive advantage, marketers should bring about differentiation and uniqueness of the product. Branding as a strategy plays a significant role that allows business to distinguish itself from competitors and to build customer loyalty. "Branding is endowing products and services with the power of a brand" (Kotler & Keller, 2015). American Marketing Association defines a brand as a name, term, design, symbol, or any other feature that identifies one seller's good or service as distinct from those of other sellers. Branding, therefore, is a strategy outlined by businesses to give meaning and identity to their products and to help consumers quickly identify and experience the

brand and influence their buying decision. A company's positive perception and image can be created in the customers' mind through effective implementation of a branding strategy.

The study of consumer behaviour is an integral part of any marketing activity. Understanding the behaviour of consumer has become a factor that has an impact on the overall performance of the businesses (Kotler and Keller, 2012). Consumers perceive differently for the same product and the brand, with many underlying factors that influence the process of making a purchase decision. These factors may be product-related attributes or emotional needs or situational needs. Considering any of the factors while performing the marketing activities helps to understand the different types of consumers buying behaviour. Marketers should analyse and take most advantage of all the factors that influences the purchase decision so as to provide value and satisfaction to the consumers and also to achieve the marketing objectives.

Prime Minister Narendra Modi emphasis on “Vocal for Local” campaign in India to be self-sufficient and self-reliant, has brought out the significance for the local and rural products to have a presence in the market. During the Covid-19 pandemic and its subsequent lockdowns, there was a realization for the value and usefulness of local products. The market witnessed the entry of many local ventures and also the demand for local products. Consumers are also becoming increasingly conscious about the products they buy. The challenge for a marketer is to attract and retain customers by delivering a product that is consistent with the brand image and brand promises.

Conceptualization of the study explains the relationship between independent and dependent variables. In the conceptual framework below, Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS) and Brand Awareness (BA) are considered as the independent variables and Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB) as the dependent variable.



Conceptual Framework

## II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Asif and Kaushik (2017) investigated the factors affecting buying behaviour of consumers on branded apparels and the impact of promotional activities on the buying decisions. The study revealed the increase in consumer becoming more brand conscious and the preference for branded apparels over non-branded apparels. The study concluded by identifying five main influencing factors: aesthetics, family, peer pressure culture, social media and celebrity endorsement.

Armah and Kofi (2017) in their case study to identify the effects of branding on the marketing of locally manufactured products in Ghana revealed that branding has a tremendous positive effect on company's image, sales and profit levels. The study suggested the need to improve branding continuously to serve as a motivation to the customers in their purchase decision, while making choices between products.

Lakshminarayan and Sreenivas (2018) study on consumer buying behaviour towards branded apparels identified the factors influencing the purchase decisions. Status symbol, durability, variety and quality makes people prefer branded apparels over non-branded apparels.

Selvalakshmi (2018) in her study on effects of branding on consumer buying behaviour tried to understand consumer perception and relatability to the brand. The study concluded that consumers give more importance to the brand rather than the price of the product. Consumers become loyal to the brand when it meets their expectations. The study also suggested that businesses can gain their sustainable growth in a competitive market through their brand image.

Gupta et al. (2021) evaluated the effect of brand image on customer buying behaviour. Their study concluded that brand image is a deciding factor in the purchase decision. A good brand image leads to a good customer perception on the brand. The key values of a company are also reflected on the brand image which then has a positive and significant relationship with the customer buying behaviour.

## Objectives of the Study

1. To evaluate how branding influences the consumer buying behaviour.
2. To examine the benefits of branding on both local marketers and consumers of locally produced products.

## III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper is an empirical study based on descriptive research design. The study was conducted in the Districts of Dimapur, Kohima and Mokokchung, Nagaland. Both primary and secondary sources were accessed for collecting data. The primary data were collected from the sample respondents using a well-structured questionnaire with Likert Type 5 Point Scale. The questionnaire was administered to 250 respondents selected on simple random sampling basis. Secondary data were collected from thesis, journals, books, internet, etc., relevant to the study. The duly filled up questionnaires were then collected, processed and analysed as per the requirement of the study. The collected data were then coded and classified into three dimensions: Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS) and Brand Awareness (BA). The classified dimensions were analysed using descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis to evaluate their effects on Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB) through SPSS Statistics 26. To assess the internal consistency of the questionnaire, Cronbach's alpha was used.

#### IV. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

##### 1. Reliability Test

The reliability test for the instrument used in collecting primary data have been conducted using Cronbach’s Alpha through SPSS Statistics 26. The test was performed through a pilot survey of 15 respondents. The results are shown in Table I and Table II.

		N	%
Cases	Valid	15	100.0
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	0	.0
	Total	15	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation:** Table I shows the case processing summary of reliability test on the instrument used for collecting the primary data. The table shows that no item has been excluded from the instrument. This indicates that all items in the questionnaire were worth responding. Thus, the instrument used in collecting data was adequately reliable.

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.789	20

Source: Primary Data

**Interpretation:** Table II shows the Cronbach’s alpha value. The value of .789 indicates that the measurement scales and the items that compose the scales in measuring both the independent and dependent variables is internally consistent.

##### 2. Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive statistics of the data set for all the variables are summarised in Table III.

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
BP	18.23	3.949	250
BAS	18.05	3.505	250
BA	18.46	3.551	250
CBB	17.44	3.119	250

Source: Primary Data

**Note:** Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS), Brand Awareness (BA), Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)

**Interpretation:** In the above Table III, the mean value and standard deviation for BP is 18.23 and 3.949. The mean value for BAS is 18.05 and for standard deviation 3.505. The mean value for BA is 18.46 and for standard deviation 3.551. For CBB, the mean value is 17.44 and standard deviation is 3.119.

##### 3. Correlation Analysis

To test the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable, correlation analysis is conducted. The result is shown in Table II.

		BP	BAS	BA	CBB
BP	Pearson Correlation	1	.767**	.841**	.737**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000	.000
	N	250	250	250	250
BAS	Pearson Correlation	.767**	1	.832**	.825**

	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	.000		.000	.000
	<b>N</b>	250	250	250	250
<b>BA</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	.841**	.832**	1	.764**
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	.000	.000		.000
	<b>N</b>	250	250	250	250
<b>CBB</b>	<b>Pearson Correlation</b>	.737**	.825**	.764**	1
	<b>Sig. (2-tailed)</b>	.000	.000	.000	
	<b>N</b>	250	250	250	250

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Primary Data

**Note:** Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS), Brand Awareness (BA), Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)

**Interpretation:** Table IV shows the correlation (r) between the three independent variables (BP, BAS, BA) with the dependent variable (CBB).

The analysis shows that the independent variables have a positive linear relation with the dependent variable. It indicates that there is a strong positive relationship between BP (r=.737), BAS (r=.825) and BA (r=.764) with CBB.

Therefore, consumer buying behaviour has a strong degree of association with the consumer brand preference, brand association and brand awareness.

#### 4. Regression Analysis

In order to analyse the effect of variance in independent variables on the dependent variable, regression analysis was conducted.

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.843 <sup>a</sup>	.711	.707	1.688

a. Predictors: (Constant), BA, BAS, BP

Source: Primary Data

**Note:** Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS), Brand Awareness (BA), Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)

**Interpretation:** Table V is the model summary of the prediction of CBB by BP, BAS and BA. The three predictors (BP, BAS, BA) accounts for 71.1% of variance on CBB. This indicates that the model has strong predictors to influence the consumer buying behaviour.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	
<b>1</b>	<b>Regression</b>	1720.643	3	573.548	201.286	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	<b>Residual</b>	700.957	246	2.849		
	<b>Total</b>	2421.600	249			

a. Dependent Variable: CBB

b. Predictors: (Constant), BA, BAS, BP

Source: Primary Data

**Note:** Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS), Brand Awareness (BA), Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)

**Interpretation:** Table VI shows the ANOVA F test associated with the model in Table V. The test is significant when BP, BAS and BA collectively serve as predictors,  $F= 201.2, p= .000$ . Therefore, the result indicates that the predictors, which are the independent variables can be used for variation of consumer buying behaviour which is the dependent variable.

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	3.431	.588		5.832	.000
BP	.148	.051	.188	2.886	.004
BAS	.512	.056	.575	9.065	.000
BA	.112	.066	.127	1.693	.042

a. Dependent Variable: CBB

Source: Primary Data

**Note:** Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS), Brand Awareness (BA), Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB)

**Interpretation:** The value of B in unstandardized coefficient indicates that for every unit increase in the independent variables, CBB will go up by .148 for BP, .512 for BAS and .112 for BA. The p- value (Sig.) signifies the significant impact of independent variables on CBB. The results of p- value shows 95% significance level for the impact of BP (.004), BAS (.000) BA (.042) on CBB because the values are less than 0.05.

## V. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

The current study analyses the effect of branding on consumer buying decisions on rural products in Nagaland. It is evident from the findings that the dependent variable, Consumer Buying Behaviour (CBB) is affected by the three independent variables: Brand Perception (BP), Brand Association (BAS) and Brand Awareness (BA). Among all independent variables, the highest impact on CBB is BAS, followed by BP and BA. With respect to branded rural products in Nagaland, local marketers need to bring about more awareness as the findings show that majority of the respondents (88.7%) are aware of some of the local brands but only 18.3% of the respondents can recall more than 5 local brands. Local marketers can make utmost use of social media promotions as 82.4% of the respondents' awareness of local brands is through social media. The study also found that 66.2% of the respondents are brand conscious when it comes to purchase decision, which makes the importance of branding as a strategy more evident. Local marketers should carefully execute both the brand name and brand logo for branding of local products as 56.3% of the respondents are attracted to both as a criterion for identification of products.

The current study pertains to the citizens of Dimapur, Kohima and Mokokchung. Hence, the findings may not be generalised for other areas other than the three Districts. The study also focuses only on three dimensions of

branding; Brand Perception, Brand Association and Brand Awareness in order to evaluate the effects of branding. Similar studies on other dimensions such as brand image, brand equity, brand loyalty, etc., can be undertaken for better understanding of the effects of branding on consumer buying behaviour.

Supporting and being vocal for local by buying and selling local products brings forth many value benefits such as, improving the local economy, providing local identity, preservation of culture and traditions and a healthy sustainable environment. Furthermore, through effective implementation of branding as a strategy, local or rural marketers have a favourable chance of achieving brand image and brand loyalty and also be able to attract and retain the sales of rural products.

## REFERENCES

- [1] Asif, S., & Kaushik, T. (2017). A study of consumer buying behavior for branded apparels in Gurgaon City. *Global journal of advanced research*, 4(10), 367-377.
- [2] Eric, A. B., & Ghorman, K. O. (2017) The Effects of Branding in the Marketing of Locally Manufactured Products in Ghana-A Case of Chocho Industrires Limited. *International Journal of Sales & Marketing Management Research and Development (IJSMMRD)*, 7(4), 77-88.
- [3] Gupta, A., Garg, A., Farhan, F., Chandna, M., Jain, R., & Kumar, S. (2021). Effect of brand image on consumer buying behaviour. Available at SSRN 3907928.
- [4] Kotler, P. and Keller, K.L. (2012) *Marketing Management*. 14th Edition, Pearson Education.
- [5] Keller, K. L., & Kotler, P. (2015). Holistic marketing: a broad, integrated perspective to marketing management. In *Does Marketing Need Reform?: Fresh Perspectives on the Future* (pp. 308-313). Routledge.
- [6] Lakshminarayana, S. (2018). A Study of Consumer Buying Behavior towards Branded Apparels in Selected cities of Karnataka. *International Journal of Advanced in Management, Technology and Engineering Sciences*, 8, 1129-1146.
- [7] Selvalakshmi, G. (2018). Effects of Branding on Consumer Buying Behavior. *Shanlax International Journal of Commerce*, 6(3), 93-96.