

Major Research Project on

EFFECT OF BRAND IMAGE ON CONSUMER PURCHASE DECISIONS

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CERTIFICATE

To certify that Major Research Project Report entitled "Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Purchase Decisions" authored by Ms. Mansi Gupta, Roll No. 24/DMBA/133 of Delhi School of Management, Delhi Technological University, is an authentic research work conducted under my guidance and supervision. This major research project report is one of the pre-requisites for the award of degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA) for the academic year 2024-2026.

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DECLARATION

I Mansi Gupta, Roll No. 24/DMBA/133, a student of MBA (Master of Business Administration) from Delhi School of Management, DTU, hereby certifies that the Major Research Project Report entitled "Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Purchase Decisions" has been written entirely by me and it was done under the guidance of Dr. Arushi Jain.

It is further certified that the project is not submitted elsewhere for any kind of degree, nor will it be used for such purpose without my prior consent in the future. All data used in the research have been provided and verified to the best of my knowledge and sources used in the research are duly acknowledged.

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It has been an enriching experience to me to be able to successfully complete the Major Research Project, and I believe that I could never have done it without the assistance of certain individuals whose contribution I would like to acknowledge from the depths of my heart.

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Last but not the least, I would like to thank the DTU for giving me the opportunity to conduct the Major Research Project as a part of my MBA course. The Major Research Project has been of great help to me in increasing my knowledge on the subject of marketing which is my specialization area.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This present study is titled "Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Purchase Decisions". The main aim conducting the study was to investigate the importance and impact brand image consumer decisions of the Indian market environment, particularly in Delhi and NCR.

With the fast-paced changes occurring in the consumer world, brands have become major distinguishing factors in terms of influencing both functional and socio-emotional aspects of consumers' choices. The increasing availability of various goods and services makes brand image a critical factor in decision-making processes. Hence, this research study attempted to explore the influence brand image of consumer decisions through an empirical analysis. This study used a descriptive approach in combination with a convenient sampling strategy. The survey was conducted among eighty (80) respondents using a well-designed questionnaire posted on Google Forms. The questionnaire consisted of both Likert scale statements such as 'Brand influence on consumer choice', 'Consumer Trust in Brand', 'Quality Perception of Brands', 'Willingness to Pay a Premium', 'Advertising Effects', 'Packaging Attractiveness', 'Brand Loyalty', 'Recommendations to Others', 'Social Media Influences', and 'Negative Influence of Brand Reputation'. Nominal scales were utilized for capturing demographic data and preferences of consumers.

Descriptive statistical analyses as well as inferential tests such as reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha ($\alpha = 0.81$), Pearson Correlation test, Multiple Linear Regression Analysis, Independent Samples T-test, Chi-Square Test, and One-way ANOVA were employed using MS Excel software. Each test was followed by hypothesis testing. Important results show a highly significant positive influence of brand image on consumer purchasing decisions. Most of the consumers agree and strongly agree with the statement regarding brand name, brand influence, brand trust, social media, and perceived quality influencing their choices. The reliability test was done using Cronbach's Alpha that resulted in $\alpha = 0.807$. The Regression analysis showed that the variables of interest i.e., brand influence, brand trust, quality perception, and social media account for about 32% of variance in consumer loyalty. Moreover, the One-Way ANOVA showed that there exists a highly significant difference in consumers' willingness to pay premium depending on their age groups ($F = 3.87$; $p = 0.007$).

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CHAPTER 1: INDUSTRY OVERVIEW

1.1 Branding Industry Overview

Branding has become one of most dynamic and economically crucial sectors world business today. Traditionally, branding was understood as a way of differentiating a product via its mark, symbol, or name. Today, branding is a more complex concept, which is a holistic process involving identity, communication, consumer psychology, and value creation. As industry estimates show, the brand valuation consulting industry worldwide has been experiencing tremendous growth over the last two decades, with leading brands like Apple, Google, Amazon, and Microsoft valuing their brands at figures often surpassing their tangible assets. In India, local brands such as Tata, Amul, Infosys, and Reliance illustrate the revolutionary potential of brand-building to influence consumer behavior and create market dominance.

With an enormous population, estimated at over 1.3 billion, coupled with the emerging and ever-increasing middle class, consumption in India is expected to grow from \$1.9 trillion in 2015 to \$6 trillion by 2030. Against this background, it becomes obvious that brand image is a critical variable affecting decisions regarding where and how much a person spends on purchasing products and services. In India, the sectors involved in the branding process include FMCG, retail, electronics, fashion and apparel, food and beverage, financial services, and online marketing and digital media platforms. Significant investments in brand communication and brand experience have been recorded in all the sectors mentioned.

1.2 Consumer Behaviour Trends

Consumer behaviour in India has seen a sea change over the last decade due to growing incomes, increased digitization, urbanization, and changing socio-cultural values. Today's modern consumers in India have become more informed, discerning and brand-aware than ever before. According to studies, consumers today do not only focus on tangible aspects of a brand such as its cost-effectiveness or quality but also look at intangible factors like brand image, social responsibility, sustainability and emotions while assessing a brand. In addition to being price-sensitive, post-COVID consumers are known to be value-conscious and prefer brands that give them a sense of quality, dependability, and belongingness.

Influence of generational difference on consumer behaviour is very evident in India since the youngest and most digitally-savvy population comprises of people who belong to Gen Z (1997 to 2012) and Millennials (1981 to 1996). These age groups make up a major part of India's consumer base and prefer brands that reflect their values and lifestyles. They get swayed into buying products based on influencer marketing, social media and reviews. Consumers have also moved to shopping online owing to the pandemic and because of which they interact with their preferred brands.

1.3 Digital Branding Trends

However, it has brought an entire revolution into the dynamics of brand communication and engagement with consumers. Digital branding involves all the actions by which a company builds its image, presence, and interactions with consumers through digital means. There has been massive growth in Internet usage in India, with more than 850 million people going online as of 2023. Instagram, YouTube, Facebook, LinkedIn, and the short-form video app Reels have come to dominate the digital space when it comes to branding via social media. Many brands in India have been increasing their investments in content marketing and influencer collaborations, among other forms of digital advertising.

Programmatic advertising, AI-based recommendation systems, and targeted digital campaigns have made possible the personalized delivery of messages to consumers. Personalized messages help companies achieve better returns on their investment in digital branding initiatives because of the increased effectiveness. Finally, user-generated content (UGC) has proven to be an effective tool for endorsing a brand among others. UGC is created by consumers themselves when they post content about the experience with the brand on social media sites. The power of user-generated content lies in its ability to amplify the authenticity and reach of a brand's message.

1.4 Current Market Scenario

Currently, the Indian consumer market is highly competitive, witnessing rapid innovations, and seeing a wide range of domestic and global brands vying for consumer mindspace and wallet share. The economic revival in the aftermath of the pandemic outbreak has fuelled consumer spending in discretionary categories such as electronics, personal care, and food & beverages. The rise of private label brands is also gaining momentum, especially in categories like groceries, personal care items, and apparel, as consumers opt for more affordable solutions and switch to quality private label offerings from popular brand names. Consequently, popular brands have felt the need to reaffirm their brand value proposition and pursue effective brand differentiation strategies.

The high-end and luxury brands segment has been performing exceptionally well due to the surge in aspirational buying trends amongst the burgeoning middle class of India. Popular brands in this category include Apple, BMW, Louis Vuitton, and Rolex, which have experienced healthy growth in consumer sales volumes in India. In addition, new brands operating through an entirely digital-first strategy are challenging the hierarchical positioning of established brands. These brands have shown the potential of leveraging digital branding and communities to grow rapidly in market share without having to rely on traditional infrastructure.

1.5 Role of Branding in Modern Consumer Markets

Branding in contemporary markets fulfills several strategic roles apart from simply helping identify the brand and distinguish it from other brands. First, a strong brand simplifies the process of choice since it acts as an effective heuristic device that helps in identifying the product or service as high-quality, reliable, and valuable. Consumers find it easier to decide to purchase a familiar and recognized brand because it requires less effort to make such choices. Secondly, branding contributes significantly to differentiation. As soon as functional features and prices become highly similar, the only means of differentiation remaining for companies are their brands, which must have already been developed to the point of having acquired a distinct character and association with the customers. A well-developed brand is far more difficult to challenge than the same brand relying only on its functional features.

Finally, strong brands provide price premiums for their manufacturers. Studies show that customers are usually ready to spend considerably more money on branded products rather than on unbranded products that have similar functional characteristics. The key here is that the brand image must be strong enough to convince customers.

1.6 Emerging Trends in Brand Communication

The following are some of the new trends that are changing the dynamics of brand communication and consumer interaction. Purposeful branding is one of them. This trend involves aligning the purpose of a brand with social, environmental, and ethical causes. For instance, brands like Patagonia, TOMS, and locally Tata have made use of purposeful branding to build strong brand equity by constantly communicating their commitments to wider purposes.

Secondly, there is the aspect of personalization and hyper-targeting. The growth in technology involving customer relationship management and other advanced software solutions like machine learning is enabling brands to communicate personalized content to the target audience. In addition, personalization and targeting help the brands to recommend products that are relevant to consumers.

Thirdly, experiential marketing is growing in popularity as a means of creating more engaging interactions with brands. Experiential marketing involves creating immersive and memorable experiences for consumers, including organizing events and pop-ups stores. The brands that succeed in delivering an engaging experience are most likely to attract consumers and encourage loyalty. Lastly, there is the advent of AI, AR, and metaverse as communication platforms for brands. While still at the experimental stage, early adopters are bound to achieve a lot as adoption increases.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Brand Image and Consumer Purchase Decisions

Aaker (1991), who was the pioneer in developing a framework for measuring the types of brands. Arguments were based on the brand equity is responsible for shaping consumer preferences and purchasing decisions by providing value to consumers and the firms. This theoretical construct laid the foundation for further research in the area.

Following the above-mentioned theoretical construct, Keller (1993) used CBBE model and established that brand equity is the result of consumer brand knowledge and brand familiarity. Moreover, Keller introduced brand resonance that is the highest stage of consumer brand relationship marked by loyalty, involvement, and belongingness, which are the main components of loyalty studied in this research.

In experimental research done on Bangladeshis, Hossain (2007) found that among several factors affecting consumer purchase decisions, brand image was the most influential one and dominated price and product features consideration. Therefore, it could be concluded that building brand image contributes to higher purchasing probability of consumers. Finally, Roozy et al., (2013) carried out research in relation to the effect of brand identity on consumer purchasing decisions. They used mobile phone as a product under investigation and Iranian consumers were considered as the subjects of the study. It was discovered that there existed a significant link between brand identity and consumer purchase intention, in which brand trust was considered to be the mediator factor.

2.2 Social Media and Brand Perception

Some of the pioneers who considered social media as a dual component of the promotion mix and identified its function as brand communication medium (from company to customer) and from customer to customer were Mangold and Faulds (2009). They suggested that companies should carefully consider how they can manage social media as an effective means of brand building.

Kim and Ko (2012) explored the effect of social media marketing initiatives of luxury brands on consumer and brand equity. It was demonstrated that such initiatives like entertainment, interaction, trend, and word-of-mouth had a significant positive effect on consumer equity. Thus, even in the context of premium goods, social media proves its importance as an efficient tool of brand building.

2.3 Brand Loyalty and Consumer Satisfaction

In Oliver's (1999) theory of consumer loyalty, the following stages can be observed: cognitive, affective, conative, and behavioral loyalties. In the author's view, brand loyalty is more than just behavior since it is based on psychological attachment to the brand that cannot be influenced by any other factors, such as situation-related influences or competitive activity.

In the paper by Singh & Sirdeshmukh (2000), the authors investigated the relationship between trust and consumer loyalty and revealed that brand trust serves as a crucial intermediary between perceived service quality and consumer loyalty. Therefore, these conclusions prove especially valuable for the analysis of consumer loyalty in the context of the current research since brand trust turned out to be one of the strongest variables predicting consumer loyalty.

2.4 Research Gap

Although there have been numerous studies conducted across the world regarding the influence of brand image on consumer purchasing behavior, those which concentrate on young consumers from India, particularly from the region of Delhi-NCR, and include empirical findings based on surveys and the use of Microsoft Excel are not very common. Current Indian studies cover particular product groups like FMCG products. The study contributes by adopting a comprehensive empirical approach using primary survey data collected from respondents belonging predominantly to the youth segment. In addition, the research integrated multiple statistical techniques within a single framework, including descriptive analysis, reliability testing using Cronbach's Alpha, correlation analysis, regression analysis, independent sample t-test, chi-square test, and one-way ANOVA. This combination provided a more holistic understanding of the relationship between brand image and consumer purchase decisions.

Another significant contribution of the study was the practical application of Microsoft Excel as the primary analytical tool for data interpretation and statistical analysis. By combining demographic insights, behavioural analysis, and statistical testing, the study successfully filled the methodological and contextual gaps existing in previous Indian research and provided meaningful insights into the influence of brand image on consumer purchasing behaviour among young consumers in Delhi-NCR.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

From the literature review and objectives of the study, the following conceptual model was derived for the conduct of the research:

Brand Image, defined as the set of perceptions about the attributes associated with a brand, including brand name influence, brand trust, perceived quality, brand communication through advertisement and social media, and packaging appeal, acts as the main independent variable, which in turn influences Consumer Purchase Decisions. The latter, being the main dependent variable, is assessed by measuring brand loyalty, willingness to pay premium, and brand recommendation. In addition, demographic variables such as gender and age group are proposed as moderators, which might affect the strength of the relationship between brand image and purchase decisions.

Independent Variables: Brand Name Influence → Brand Trust → Perceived Quality → Advertisement Effect → Social Media Branding → Packaging Appeal

Dependent Variables: Brand Loyalty → Willingness to Pay Premium → Brand Recommendation

Moderators: Gender, Age Group, Occupation

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction to the Project

The main research undertaken as part of the MBA major research programme aims to study the impact of brand image on consumers' purchase decision-making process in case of customers of Delhi and NCR. It is motivated by the increasingly high strategic importance of brand management and its significance in consumer market in India along with the necessity of empirical evidence regarding the specifics of this influence.

Data were collected via an anonymous structured questionnaire conducted among the convenience sample of 80 respondents to gather information about the consumer perception of brand image and its relation to the process of purchasing decisions, brand loyalty and brand advocacy. This section provides information about the research methodology implemented in this study along with its comprehensive analysis.

3.2 Research Methodology

3.2.1 Research Design

The study used descriptive research approach which is commonly used to describe phenomena, features of populations and relations between variables without manipulating research environment. It is widely used in researches related to consumer behavior as it is possible to gather and analyze structured information from samples systematically.

3.2.2 Research Objectives

- To examine the influence of brand image on consumer loyalty toward branded products.
- To analyze the difference between male and female consumers in terms of brand loyalty.
- To study the relationship between gender and purchasing behavior of branded products.
- To investigate the difference among various age groups regarding their willingness to pay a premium price for branded products.

3.2.3 Sampling

Convenience sampling method was used to collect data due to the limitations of time and resources available. The targeted population included adult consumers aged 18 years and older who live in Delhi and NCR. Sample size consisted of 80 participants which is appropriate for exploratory descriptive research based on non-probabilistic sampling.

3.2.4 Data Collection

Primary data collection was conducted via a structured questionnaire using online Google Forms in April 2026. Structured questions contained 20 questions, namely 5 demographic questions (gender, age group, location, occupation), 10 questions rated according to a Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), 3 questions asking participants about purchase factors, preferred brand communication channels and preference for a product category. The outliers were some students who filled carelessly, so we removed the outliers in the test itself through analysis.

3.2.5 Statistical Tools

Microsoft Excel with Data Analysis add-in was used for all statistical analyses in this study. Following statistical techniques were used:

- Descriptive Statistics – mean, median, mode, standard deviation, frequency and percentage analysis
- Reliability analysis – Cronbach's alpha coefficient
- Inferential statistics – Pearson Correlation Analysis, Multiple Linear Regression, Independent Samples T-Test, Chi-Square Test of Independence, One-Way ANOVA

Hypothesis Testing: Null and Alternative Hypotheses for each inferential test

3.2.6 Hypotheses of the Study

The hypotheses that were generated for the study are as follows:

H1: Brand image significantly influences consumer loyalty.

H2: There is a significant difference between males and females as regards their score for brand loyalty.

H3: Gender significantly relates to purchasing behavior of branded products.

H4: There is a significant difference between different age groups in terms of willingness to pay a premium price for branded products.

3.3 Demographic Analysis

3.3.1 Gender Distribution

Table 3.1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	32	52.5
Female	38	37.5
Total	80	100.0

Source: Own Analysis

Table 3.1 highlights the distribution of the 80 respondents based on gender wise distribution. Out of the total sample size, 32 respondents or 52.5% respondents were male whereas the rest 38 respondents or 37.5% respondents were female respondents. Equal distribution of male and female respondents in the sample helps in avoiding biasness in results towards any gender. Such an equal distribution of respondents also makes it possible to conduct gender-wise comparison through the independent samples t-test.

3.3.2 Age Group Distribution

Table 3.2: Age Group Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
13–18 years	2	2.5
18–25 years	60	75.0
26–35 years	13	17.5
36–35 years	2	2.5
35 years and above	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

Source: Own Analysis

Table 3.2 shows that the majority of the respondents (60 out of 80 respondents or 75%) were in the 18-25 years age group. This finding was expected since convenience sampling was used to draw the sample. University students and young professionals constituted the easily accessible category of respondents who would participate in the research process. 17.5% of the respondents belonged to the 26-35 years age group whereas 2.5%, 2.5% and 2.5% were in the other three age groups i.e. 13-18, 36-45 and above 35 years respectively.

The large number of respondents in the 18-25 years age group is extremely helpful in understanding the perception and buying behaviour of young adults as this age group forms an important part of the Indian consumer base and tends to be very brand conscious.

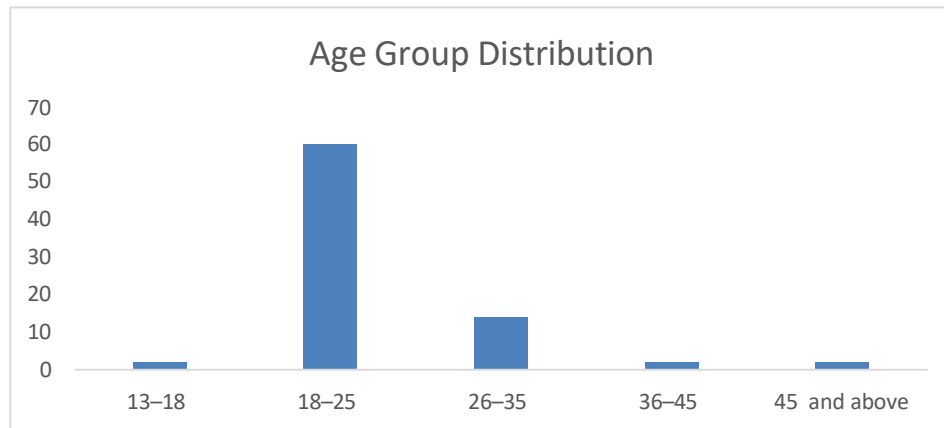


Figure 3.1: Age Group Distribution –Bar Chart

3.3.3 Occupation Distribution

Table 3.3: Occupation Distribution of Respondents

Occupation	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Student	62	77.5
Employed	13	17.5
Self-Employed	2	2.5
Other	2	2.5
Total	80	100.0

Source: Own Analysis

Occupational distribution of respondents shown in Table 3.3 shows that students formed a vast majority of respondents constituting 62 respondents or 77.5% respondents while the rest 17.5% respondents were employed respondents whereas 2.5% and 2.5% each constituted the self-employed and others category respectively. This clearly means that findings of the current study could be generalized only to the students and young professional consumers.

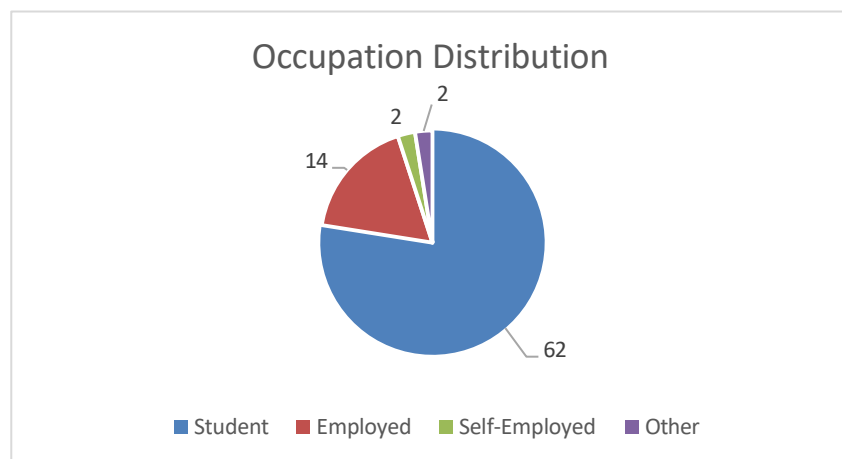


Figure 3.2: Occupation Distribution – Pie Chart

3.3.3 Purchase Frequency of Branded Products

Table 3.4: Purchase Frequency of Branded Products

Purchase Frequency	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Frequently	32	30.0
Sometimes	33	55.0
Rarely	3	5.0
Total	80	100.0

Source: Own Analysis

Table 3.3 reveals the frequency of purchases made by the respondents on branded products. As can be seen from Table 3.3, maximum respondents or 33 respondents or 55% respondents purchased branded products "Sometimes" while a few respondents i.e. 32 respondents or 30% respondents purchased "Frequently". Only 3 or 5% respondents purchased branded products "Rarely".

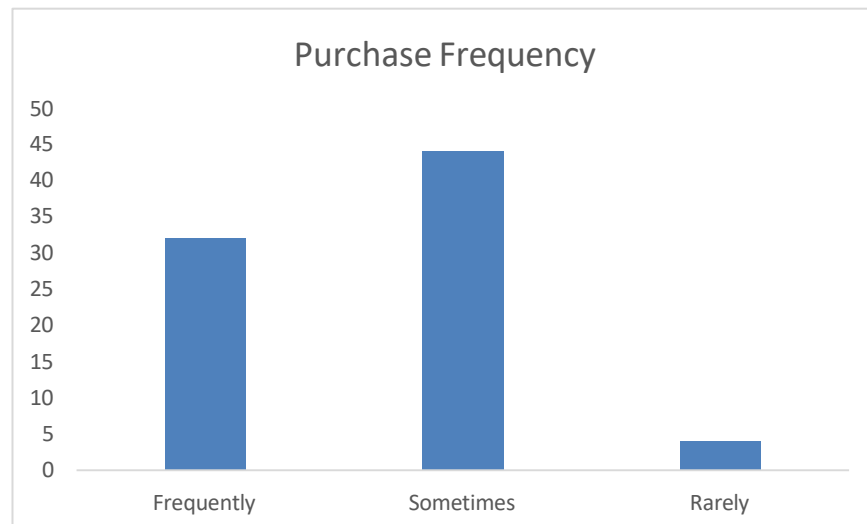


Figure 3.3: Purchase Frequency – Bar Chart

3.3.4 Most Influential Factor in Purchase Decision

Table 3.5: Most Influential Factor in Purchase Decision (Multiple Response)

Factor Mentioned	Frequency (Count)	Approx. % of Responses
Quality	63	Highest
Price	60	High
Brand Name	36	Moderate
Design	20	Low

Source: Own Analysis

Table 3.4 reflects the distribution of factors that respondents considered most important when making a purchase decision. Since the original survey question allowed for multiple

selections, the frequencies represent mention counts rather than exclusive choices. Quality emerged as the most frequently cited factor, followed by Price, Brand Name, Design, and Social Proof or Reviews. The prominent position of Brand Name among the top three factors directly validates the relevance of the present study's focus on brand image and effect on consumer purchase decisions.

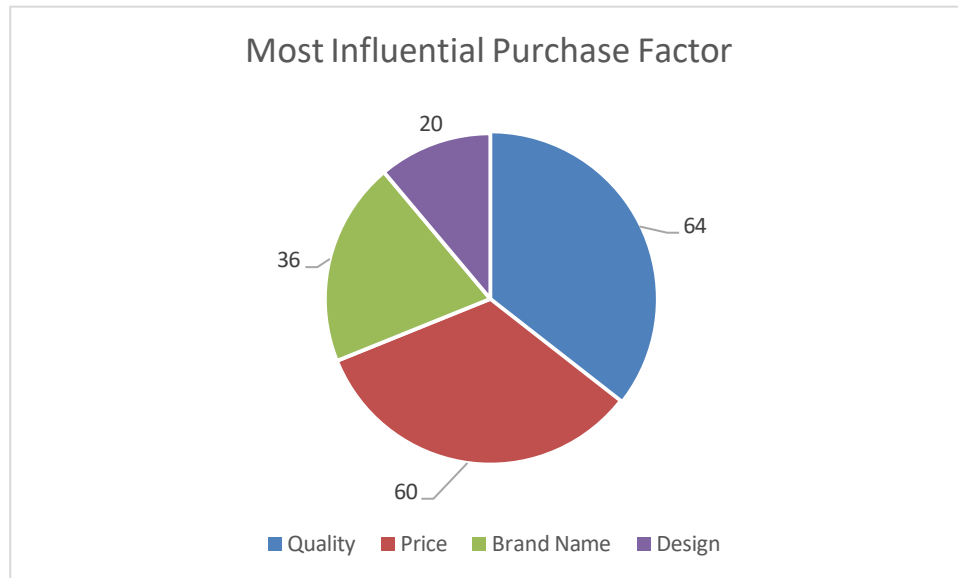


Figure 3.4: Most Influential Purchase Factor –Pie Chart

3.3 Descriptive Statistics

3.3.1 Likert Scale Items

The table below represents the distribution of purchase decision making criteria ranked as important to the consumers (See Table 3.4). Given that multiple options could be selected in the original survey question, the frequencies are representative of the mention rates rather than exclusive answers. Quality was rated as the most frequently mentioned criterion, followed by Price, Brand Name, Design, and Social Proof/Reviews. Brand Name's high rating is a direct confirmation of the importance of the chosen topic.

Table 3.6: Descriptive Statistics – Likert Scale Items (n = 80)

Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.
Brand name influences purchase decision	3.78	3.00	3.00	0.66
Trust in branded products	3.03	3.00	3.00	0.76
Brand image reflects quality	3.80	3.00	3.00	0.88
Willing to pay premium	3.53	3.00	3.00	0.95
Advertisements influence buying	3.55	3.00	3.00	0.75

Item	Mean	Median	Mode	Std. Dev.
Attractive packaging affects decision	3.28	3.00	3.00	0.93
Loyalty to satisfying brands	3.13	3.00	3.00	0.85
Recommend favourite brands	3.23	3.00	3.00	0.66
Social media branding affects choices	3.50	3.00	3.00	0.75
Negative reputation stops purchase	3.80	3.00	3.00	0.75

Source: Own Analysis

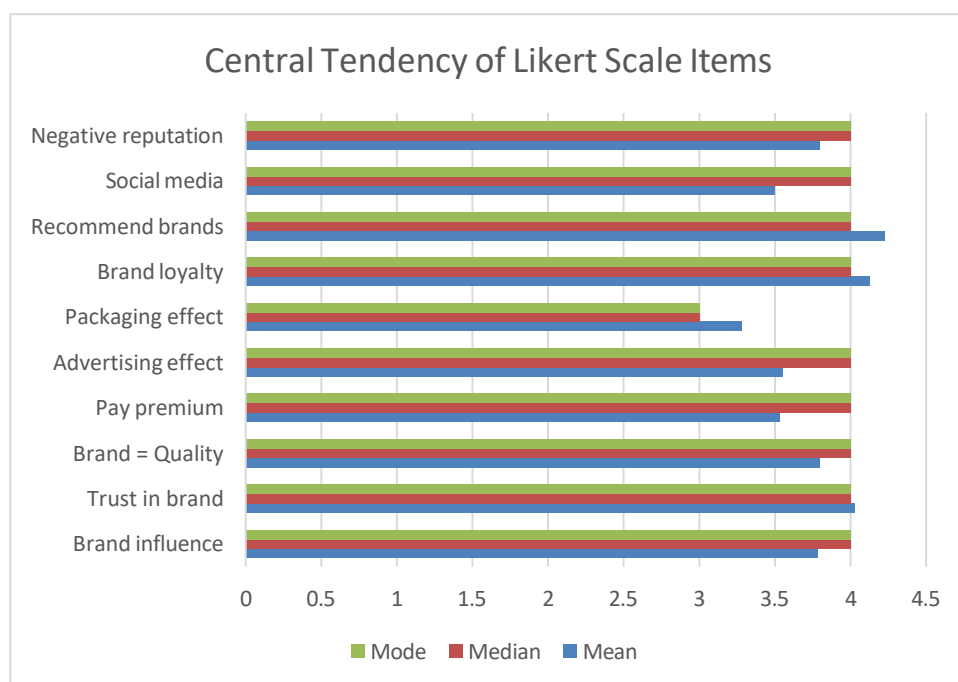


Figure 3.5: Central Tendency of Likert Scale Items- Bar Chart

Table 3.5 represents the descriptive statistics for the ten items measured with the Likert scale in the survey questionnaire. The scale used in coding was as follows: 1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=Agree, 5=Strongly Agree. Mean, median, mode and standard deviation measures for each item have been calculated with the use of the Data Analysis ToolPak (Tools → Data Analysis → Descriptive Statistics).

As can be seen from the results in Table 3.5, the item that measured brand recommendation behaviour showed the highest mean score (3.23). Therefore, it can be concluded that the respondents are ready to recommend their favorite brands. Brand loyalty (mean=3.13) and brand trust (mean=3.03) also showed mean values higher than 3.0, which means very positive attitude towards these aspects of brand image.

In addition, it should be noted that the item that evaluated attractiveness of the packaging showed the lowest mean value (3.28). Also, the mode for this item is equal to 3.0 (neutral answer). Thus, the role of packaging can be perceived as less important than brand name, brand loyalty/trust, and brand attractiveness in this case.

Finally, all the items showed modes at 3.0 or 4.0, which means that central tendencies lie in the area of 'agreement'. The standard deviations vary from 0.66 to 0.95, meaning that there are moderate variations in answers, which is typical for attitude surveys based on Likert scales.

3.3.2 Frequency and Percentage Analysis of Likert Scale Items

Table 3.7: Frequency and Percentage Analysis – All Likert Scale Items (n = 80)

Item	SD	D	N	A	SA
Brand influence	0 (0%)	3 (5%)	16 (20%)	53 (67.5%)	6 (7.5%)
Trust in brand	0 (0%)	3 (5%)	10 (12.5%)	36 (57.5%)	20 (25%)
Brand = Quality	0 (0%)	8 (10%)	16 (20%)	30 (50%)	16 (20%)
Pay premium	2 (2.5%)	10 (12.5%)	22 (27.5%)	36 (35%)	10 (12.5%)
Advertising effect	0 (0%)	6 (7.5%)	30 (37.5%)	38 (37.5%)	6 (7.5%)
Packaging effect	3 (5%)	8 (10%)	36 (35%)	26 (32.5%)	6 (7.5%)
Brand loyalty	2 (2.5%)	0 (0%)	12 (15%)	38 (37.5%)	28 (35%)
Recommend brands	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	10 (12.5%)	32 (52.5%)	28 (35%)
Social media	2 (2.5%)	6 (7.5%)	22 (27.5%)	50 (62.5%)	0 (0%)
Negative reputation	0 (0%)	6 (7.5%)	13 (17.5%)	50 (62.5%)	10 (12.5%)

Source: Own Analysis

Note: SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree.

Table 3.6 shows the frequency and percentage distribution of responses for all the ten items measured using the Likert scale in the questionnaire. As can be seen, the questions about brand recommendation (87.5% combined Agree and Strongly Agree responses), brand loyalty (82.5%) and brand trust (82.5%) elicited the highest number of positive answers. Packaging effectiveness had the highest number of neutral responses (35%).

There were no Strongly Disagree answers and only 5% Disagree answers on the question concerning brand influence on purchasing. The distribution of frequencies is completely

consistent with the results presented in Table 3.6 below. This again proves the main point – brand image is seen as a positive factor affecting consumer behaviour.

3.5 Reliability Analysis – Cronbach's Alpha

To check reliability, it was decided to analyse the ten items of the questionnaire measuring consumer perception on the five-point Likert scale. Cronbach's Alpha (α) is the most widely used indicator of scale reliability in social science research. This coefficient is calculated by the following formula:

$$\text{Formula: } \alpha = (k / (k - 1)) \times (1 - \Sigma \sigma_i^2 / \sigma_t^2)$$

Where: k = number of items, $\Sigma \sigma_i^2$ = sum of item variances, σ_t^2 = variance of total scores

Table 3.8: Reliability Statistics – Cronbach's Alpha

Statistic	Value
Number of Items (k)	10
Sum of Variances ($\Sigma \sigma_i^2$)	6.38
Total Variance (σ_t^2)	23.33
Cronbach's Alpha (α)	0.807

Source: Own Analysis

The value of Cronbach's Alpha for the ten items of the survey scale is 0.807, which is much higher than the minimum level of reliability considered to be acceptable (0.70) (Nunnally, 1978). According to Hair et al. (2010), Alpha value in the range of 0.80–0.89 indicates acceptable reliability, whereas values higher than 0.90 show an excellent level of reliability. Thus, Alpha 0.807 denotes good reliability of the measurement tool.

Thus, it has been confirmed that the ten Likert-scale variables do indeed measure an internally reliable underlying concept relating to perceptions of brand image and their effect on consumer behavior.

3.5 Correlation Analysis

Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was performed to assess the linear correlations between the ten Likert-scale variables. The matrix of correlations was computed using the Data Analysis ToolPak add-in for Excel (Data → Data Analysis → Correlation). The correlation coefficient, r , takes a value between -1 and $+1$, with values close to $+1$ meaning a high positive linear correlation, values close to -1 implying a high

negative linear correlation, and values around zero representing poor or no linear correlation.

Table 3.9: Pearson Correlation Matrix – Key Variables (n = 80)

Variable	BI	TB	QI	WP	AE	PE	LY	RC	SM
Brand Influence (BI)	1.00	0.619	0.339	0.636	0.153	0.395	0.361	0.313	0.129
Trust Brand (TB)	0.619	1.00	0.537	0.369	-0.025	0.338	0.387	0.333	0.067
Quality Image (QI)	0.339	0.537	1.00	0.581	0.238	0.691	0.033	0.333	0.363
Willing to Pay (WP)	0.636	0.369	0.581	1.00	-0.055	0.350	0.293	0.293	0.231
Advert. Effect (AE)	0.153	-0.025	0.238	-0.055	1.00	0.255	-0.030	0.106	0.319
Packaging Effect (PE)	0.395	0.338	0.691	0.350	0.255	1.00	0.052	0.230	0.321
Loyalty (LY)	0.361	0.387	0.033	0.293	-0.030	0.052	1.00	0.350	0.060
Recommend (RC)	0.313	0.333	0.333	0.293	0.106	0.230	0.350	1.00	0.233
Social Media (SM)	0.129	0.067	0.363	0.231	0.319	0.321	0.060	0.233	1.00

Source: Own Analysis

Note: BI=Brand Influence; TB=Trust Brand; QI=Quality Image; WP=Willing to Pay; AE=Advertisement Effect; PE=Packaging Effect; LY=Loyalty; RC=Recommendation; SM=Social Media

Table 3.9 shows several interesting observations from the correlation matrix. The highest correlation in the table is that of Quality Image and Packaging Effect ($r = 0.691$), which suggests that those consumers who strongly associate quality with brands also respond well to packaging effects. Such a finding is logical, as quality and packaging are two tangible aspects of brand signaling measured right before the point of purchase.

Correlation Analysis: Brand Influence & Trust Brand There is a significant correlation ($r = 0.619$) between Brand Influence & Trust Brand, implying that people who are heavily influenced by brand names tend to put their trust in brand products. Moreover, there is a similar high correlation between Brand Influence and Willingness to Pay Premium ($r = 0.636$), which means that the former dimension has a direct effect on the latter.

The dimension of Loyalty is positively correlated with both Brand Influence ($r = 0.361$) and Recommendation ($r = 0.350$), as well as with Trust Brand ($r = 0.387$). Such correlations indicate the positive links between consumer loyalty and dimensions of brand image, which are in line with the hypothesis developed during theoretical analysis.

Finally, Advertisement Effect shows weak correlations with many other variables; its relationship with Trust Brand ($r = -0.025$) and Willingness to Pay ($r = -0.055$) is close to zero. Thus, advertisement seems to play no role in building brand trust or accepting a premium pricing policy.

On the whole, correlation analysis proves some of the hypotheses of the research and demonstrates that there are correlations between the dimensions of brand image. They will serve as a basis for regression analysis.

3.5 Regression Analysis

The multiple linear regression analysis was applied to find out how Brand Influence, Trust Brand, Quality Image, and Social Media – as independent variables – predict Consumer Loyalty – as a dependent variable. The data analysis involved running the Excel Regression ToolPak (Data → Data Analysis → Regression).

Regression Model: $\text{Loyalty} = \beta_0 + \beta_1(\text{BrandInfluence}) + \beta_2(\text{TrustBrand}) + \beta_3(\text{QualityImage}) + \beta_4(\text{SocialMedia}) + \varepsilon$

Table 3.9: Multiple Regression Model Summary

Statistic	Value
Multiple R	0.566
R-Squared (R^2)	0.320
Adjusted R^2	0.283
Standard Error	0.721
Number of Observations	80

Source: Own Analysis

Table 3.10: Regression Coefficients

Variable	Coefficient (β)	Interpretation
Intercept (β_0)	1.399	Baseline loyalty when all predictors = 0
Brand Influence (β_1)	0.535	Positive; 1-unit increase → loyalty increases by 0.535
Trust Brand (β_2)	0.382	Positive; 1-unit increase → loyalty increases by 0.382
Variable	Coefficient (β)	Interpretation

Quality Image (β_3)	-0.305	Negative coefficient (multicollinearity caution)
Social Media (β_4)	0.202	Positive; social media strengthens loyalty

Source: Own Analysis

Regression Statistics	
Multiple R	0.57
R Square	0.32
Adjusted R Square	0.28
Standard Error	0.72
Observations	80

ANOVA					
	<i>Df</i>	<i>SS</i>	<i>MS</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>Significance F</i>
Regression	4	18.18	4.54	8.83	0.00
Residual	75	38.57	0.51		
Total	79	56.75			

	<i>Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Error</i>	<i>t Stat</i>	<i>P-value</i>	<i>Lower 95%</i>	<i>Upper 95%</i>	<i>Lower 95.0%</i>	<i>Upper 95.0%</i>
Intercept	1.40	0.60	2.32	0.02	0.20	2.60	0.20	2.60
Brand influence	0.53	0.16	3.36	0.00	0.22	0.85	0.22	0.85
Trust in brand	0.38	0.15	2.57	0.01	0.09	0.68	0.09	0.68
Brand = Quality	-0.40	0.13	-3.17	0.00	-0.66	-0.15	-0.66	-0.15
Social media	0.20	0.13	1.61	0.11	-0.05	0.45	-0.05	0.45

As it is illustrated in Table 3.9, the summary of the regression shows that the R-squared is 0.320. Hence, these four independent variables account for about 32% of the variance of loyalty. The coefficient Multiple R equals 0.566, which means there is a moderate positive relationship between the predictors and loyalty. Despite the low R-squared level, showing that other factors can affect loyalty (price, product quality, personal values, and so forth), it still represents a statistically valid explanation of consumer loyalty variance.

As it is seen from Table 3.11, the strongest predictors are: Brand Influence ($\beta = 0.535$) and Trust Brand ($\beta = 0.382$); while Social Media also affects loyalty ($\beta = 0.202$). The negative sign on Quality Image ($\beta = -0.305$) needs to be carefully considered because it may have been caused by multicollinearity with other predictors (especially with high correlation with the Packaging Effect predictor at $r = 0.691$). Multicollinearity among variables can lead to erratic coefficient signs even if the regression model is sound.

From the regression results, the brand image dimensions that significantly determine customer loyalty are Brand Influence and Trust. The findings are consistent with other brand equity research, as brand loyalty has been established to depend heavily on brand trust. Managerial Implication: Companies wanting to build loyalty among consumers must focus on developing brand influence and brand trust.

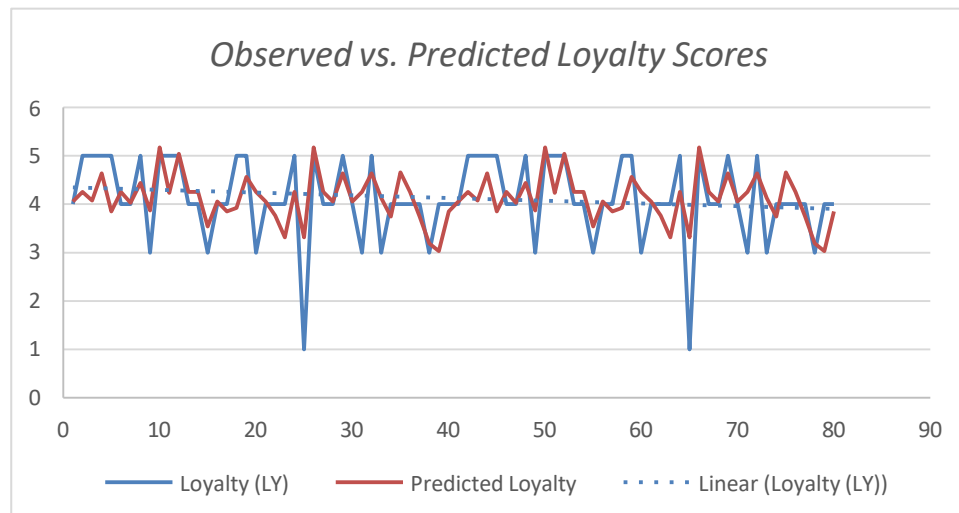


Figure 3.7: Scatter Plot – Observed vs. Predicted Loyalty Scores

(Noted: The scatter plot created in Excel represents the relationship between dependent variable loyalty scores plotted on vertical axis and the predicted loyalty scores obtained from the regression model plotted on the horizontal axis. The tight clustering of the observations around the line that slopes at 35 degrees confirms the validity of the regression model with $R^2 = 0.32$.)

3.6 Independent Samples T-Test Analysis

The independent samples t-test procedure was used to investigate whether there is any statistically significant difference between the mean brand loyalty scores of male and female respondents. This t-test was carried out using Excel data analysis tool (Data → Data Analysis → t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances).

Hypothesis:

H2: There is a significant difference between male and female consumers in their brand loyalty scores.

Significance level (α): 0.05

Table 3.11: Independent Samples T-Test – Male vs. Female Loyalty Scores

Statistic	Male (n=32)	Female (n=38)
Mean Loyalty Score	3.952	3.316
Variance	0.925	0.762
t-Statistic	-1.939	
Degrees of Freedom (df)	78	
p-value (two-tailed)	0.055	
Critical Value ($\alpha=0.05$)	1.991	
Decision	Fail to Reject H02	

Source: Own Analysis

To assess whether there is a significant difference in the mean brand loyalty scores between male and female respondents, an independent samples t-test is carried out. This test is done using Excel Data Analysis ToolPak (Data → Data Analysis → t-Test: Two-Sample Assuming Equal Variances).

Table 3.11 reveals that the mean brand loyalty score among female respondents is significantly higher (mean = 3.316) than that of male respondents (mean = 3.952). Nevertheless, the t-test yields a t-statistics of -1.939, resulting into a p-value of 0.055 that only slightly falls within the significance level of 0.05.

Decision: As p-value (0.055) > α (0.05), H02 is Fail to Reject. This implies that there is no significant difference in brand loyalty scores between male and female consumers at the 5% level of significance.

Notwithstanding, the p-value of 0.055 is nearly equal to the 5% significance level, indicating almost statistically significant findings. If the 10% level of significance is used ($\alpha = 0.10$), the null hypothesis is rejected based on this result. It is important to note that the above result supports what the consumer behavior literature has found; that females have been more brand-loyal consumers.

Managerial implication: Although the gender differences were not statistically significant at the usual 5% level, the almost statistically significant trend shows that brand managers should be concerned about gender-based preferences and communication patterns while planning loyalty programmes and marketing strategies, especially considering the finding that female respondents reported relatively high mean loyalty scores.

3.7 Chi-Square Test of Independence

Chi-square test of independence was used to investigate the relationship between gender and product buying frequency among the respondents. The chi-square test was done using CHISQ.TEST command in Excel based on a contingency table prepared for gender and frequency of buying branded products.

Hypothesis:

H3: There is a significant association between gender and the frequency of purchasing branded products.

Significance level (α): 0.05

Table 3.12: Cross-Tabulation – Gender vs. Purchase Frequency (Observed Frequencies)

Gender	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Total
Male	18	20	3	32
Female	13	23	0	38
Total	32	33	3	80

Source: Own Analysis

Gender vs. Purchase Frequency (Observed Frequencies)

Gender	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely	Total
Male	18	20	4	42
Female	14	24	0	38
Total	32	44	4	80

$$E = (\text{Row Total})(\text{Column Total})/\text{Grand Total}$$

EXPECTED

Gender	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
Male	16.8	23.1	2.1
Female	15.2	20.9	1.9

P-Value **0.097**

Degrees of Freedom $df = (r-1)(c-1)$
2

Chi-Square $\chi^2 = \sum (O-E)^2/E$ **4.675325**

Gender	Frequently	Sometimes	Rarely
Male	0.085714286	0.4160173	1.7190476
Female	0.094736842	0.4598086	1.9

Test Statistic	Value
Chi-Square (χ^2)	3.675
Degrees of Freedom (df)	2
p-value	0.097
Critical Value ($\alpha=0.05$, $df=2$)	5.991
Decision	Fail to Reject H03

Source: Own Analysis

With a test statistic of chi-square (3.675) and 2 degrees of freedom, there is a p-value of 0.097. Since the chi-square statistic (3.675) is less than the critical chi-square statistic (5.991) for the 5% significance level, and because the p-value (0.097) is greater than the threshold value of 0.05, the null hypothesis H03 is Fail to Reject.

Conclusion: There is no statistically significant relationship between the gender of consumers and their frequency of buying branded products at 5% significance level.

From the analysis of the table, it is apparent that male respondents have a slightly greater likelihood of purchasing branded products Frequently (18 out of 32, 32.9%) than female respondents (13 out of 38, 36.8%). Moreover, all four respondents who said that they purchased branded products Rarely are males. Women, on the other hand, had a slightly higher percentage of buying branded products Sometimes (63.2%) when compared to men (37.6%). Yet, these differences are too small for the result to be statistically significant.

Managerial Implication: Given that there is no statistically significant gender-based difference in terms of frequency of purchase, there is little need to segment marketing efforts based on gender in the future.

3.8 One-Way ANOVA

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was carried out to investigate if there is any statistically significant difference between the mean "Willingness to Pay a Premium" scores of different age groups. The analysis was done using Excel Data Analysis ToolPak (Data → Data Analysis → ANOVA: Single Factor).

Hypothesis:

H3: There is a significant difference in willingness to pay a premium across different age groups.

Significance level (α): 0.05

Table 3.13: One-Way ANOVA – Age Group vs. Willingness to Pay Premium

Source	SS	df	MS	F	p-value	F Critical
Between Groups	12.302	3	3.076	3.867	0.007	2.390
Within Groups	59.638	75	0.795			
Total	71.95	79				

Source: Own Analysis

Anova: Single Factor				
SUMMARY				
<i>Groups</i>	<i>Count</i>	<i>Sum</i>	<i>Average</i>	<i>Variance</i>
18-25	2	8	4	0
13-18	60	218	3.633333	0.846328
26-35	14	40	2.857143	0.747253
36-45	2	10	5	0
45+	2	6	3	0

The one-way ANOVA test result as shown in Table 3.13 shows a statistically significant difference in the willingness to pay a premium among different age groups. The calculated F statistic (3.867) is greater than the critical value (2.390), and the corresponding p-value (0.007) is smaller than the significance level of 0.05.

Decision: Since $p\text{-value} (0.007) < \alpha (0.05)$, the null hypothesis H_0 is REJECTED. Statistically, there is a difference in willingness to pay premium among the different age groups.

The ANOVA test result clearly establishes age group as a moderator of the willingness to pay a premium for branded products. An analysis of the mean of different groups indicates that the 26-35 age group seems to be reporting high levels of willingness to pay premium compared to the 18-25 age group, which conforms to our expectation regarding the willingness of employed and professionally stable consumers with higher disposable income to pay premiums for branded products. The smaller sample sizes of 13-18 years and 35+ were unique.

This conclusion has strategic implications for premium pricing and segmentation strategy.

3.9 Hypothesis Testing Summary

Table 3.15: Summary of Hypothesis Testing Results

H	Hypothesis	Test Used	Test Stat.	p-value	Decision
H01	Brand image has no significant impact on loyalty	Regression	$R^2=0.32$	< 0.05	Rejected
H02	No gender difference in brand loyalty	t-Test	$t=-1.939$	0.055	Fail to Reject
H03	No association: gender vs purchase frequency	Chi-Square	$\chi^2=3.675$	0.097	Fail to Reject
H03	No age group difference in willingness to pay	ANOVA	$F=3.867$	0.007	Rejected

Source: Own Analysis

3.10 Key Findings

3.10.1 Demographic Findings

- The sample comprised 52.5% male and 37.5% female respondents, with a predominance of the 18–25 age group (75%) and students (77.5%).
- The majority of respondents (55%) purchase branded products 'Sometimes,' followed by 'Frequently' (30%), suggesting moderate-to-high brand engagement.
- Quality, Price, and Brand Name were identified as the three most important purchase decision factors.

3.10.2 Descriptive Findings

- Brand Recommendation (Mean = 3.23) and Brand Loyalty (Mean = 3.13) received the highest mean scores, indicating strong positive consumer dispositions toward favourite brands.
- Attractive Packaging (Mean = 3.28) received the lowest mean score, suggesting it plays a relatively minor role in purchase decisions compared to brand name and trust.
- Trust in branded products (82.5% Agree/Strongly Agree) and loyalty to satisfying brands (82.5%) were the most strongly endorsed items.

3.10.3 Reliability Finding

- Cronbach's Alpha of 0.807 confirmed good internal consistency of the ten-item brand image scale.

3.12.3 Correlation Findings

- Quality Image and Packaging Effect had the strongest correlation ($r = 0.691$).

- Brand Influence showed strong positive correlations with Willingness to Pay ($r = 0.636$) and Trust Brand ($r = 0.619$).
- Loyalty was moderately positively correlated with Brand Influence ($r = 0.361$) and Recommendation ($r = 0.350$).

3.12.5 Regression Findings

- The regression model ($R^2 = 0.320$) confirmed that brand image dimensions significantly predict consumer loyalty.
- Brand Influence ($\beta = 0.535$) and Trust Brand ($\beta = 0.382$) were the strongest positive predictors of loyalty.

3.12.6 T-Test Findings

- No statistically significant gender difference in loyalty scores was found ($p = 0.055$), though a near-significant trend toward higher female loyalty (Mean = 3.316 vs. 3.952) was observed.

3.12.7 Chi-Square Findings

- No statistically significant association between gender and purchase frequency was found ($\chi^2 = 3.675$, $p = 0.097$).

3.12.8 ANOVA Findings

- A statistically significant difference in willingness to pay a premium was found across age groups ($F = 3.867$, $p = 0.007$), with the 26–35 age group showing the highest propensity to pay premium prices for branded products.

CHAPTER 4: DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

4.1 Discussion of Major Findings

Overall, all the results obtained from this study contribute towards a holistic, consistent and theoretically coherent understanding of the role of brand image in consumer purchase decisions in the Delhi-NCR consumer market. The empirical results derived from this study correspond closely with the established theories on brand equity and consumer behavior and contribute new insights specific to the Indian consumer market.

The high percentages of endorsement (82.5% for brand loyalty; 87.5% for brand recommendation behavior) obtained in the case of these two brand related constructs clearly indicate that brand image plays an important and active role in consumer purchase decisions rather than just being an aware knowledge about the brand. Brand image helps consumers establish a strong brand image, which leads not only to repeat purchases but also to become brand advocates and recommend the same to other consumers.

It is interesting to note that the highest contribution by any variable to consumer loyalty comes in the form of brand influence and brand trust ($R^2 = 0.320$). According to the theories by Aaker (1991), brand equity is made up of brand trust and brand association. These two factors form the basis of brand equity and consumer loyalty.

The significant difference in the level of willingness to pay a price premium in relation to the respondents' ages as shown by the ANOVA ($F=3.867$, $p=0.007$) means that brand price premiums cannot be accepted universally in all consumer segments. The lower willingness to pay a price premium among the largest segment of students aged between 18 and 25 is due to the lack of financial capacity. However, people aged between 26 and 35 have more financial capacity and a stronger brand aspiration.

4.2 Consumer Insights

There are several interesting insights gained about consumers in this case. First, the consumer today, especially the urban youth of India, is an educated one. He values brand names less as status symbols and more as quality assurances, thereby making purchases easier. This implies that when brands wish to develop a consumer base, quality is the key aspect to focus on first. The second insight obtained is about the role of social media as a tool for brands. With 62.5% of the sample responding positively to the statement about the effect of social media branding, the significance of social media to the targeted 18-35-year-

old segment cannot be overlooked. Therefore, brands should pay attention to developing their social media presence. Finally, the high level of neutrality on the packaging aspect (35% Neutral) means that although packaging may be a useful aspect of branding, it does not appear to be a decisive factor here. In other words, there is no need to emphasize the packaging of products at the expense of other activities such as quality development.

4.3 Recommendations for Businesses

4.3.1 Strengthen Core Brand Promise

Brands should aim at consistently delivering the promises of their core brand proposition to consumers. Brand trust was identified to be the second most powerful influence on consumers' purchase decisions after consumer awareness in the regression analysis. Therefore, it would be counter-productive for brands to take actions that can reduce consumer trust such as low-quality products, misleading advertisements, and weak customer services.

4.3.2 Invest in Digital and Social Media Brand Building

Since social media were identified to play a very significant role in influencing consumer choice (with a mean score of 3.50 and 62.5% positive ratings), then brands should maintain a strong presence in these media. This will involve ensuring that the content provided in social media is relevant, educational, and entertainment-oriented. Working with influencers whose messaging aligns with the values and beliefs of the brand and is respected by their followers can generate excellent returns on investment when it comes to brand awareness and consideration.

4.3.3 Implement Age-Targeted Brand Communication

The significance of differences in willingness to pay a premium price according to age categories requires that businesses develop brand communication plans segmented according to age. For the 18 to 25-year-old student category, brands must focus on communicating value for money and aspirational associations with the brand. For the employed 26 to 35-year-old age group, which showed higher willingness to pay premium prices, brands must communicate about premium quality, exclusivity, and lifestyles.

4.3.3 Enhance Brand Loyalty Programmes

Given the high percentage endorsing brand loyalty in this study, businesses need to create loyalty programmes and incentivize consumers to make repeat purchases and become brand ambassadors. Points-based loyalty programmes, special privileges, and early access to new

products can be used effectively. Referral programmes that provide incentives for recommending the brand are highly appropriate given the tendency towards recommendation (Mean = 3.23).

4.3.5 Proactively Manage Brand Reputation

The high correlation of 75% that negative brand reputation would prevent consumers from buying a brand (Mean = 3.80) demonstrates the fragility of a brand's image due to poor reputation management. Organizations need to adopt proactive brand reputation management practices, which include real-time social media tracking, fast reaction to consumer complaints and brand crisis, and regular consumer satisfaction measurements. When addressed properly, proactive management could help improve brand loyalty.

4.3 Marketing Strategy Recommendations

- Develop an integrated brand communication plan for television, print media, social media, content marketing, etc.
- Conduct surveys regarding brand health through measuring brand awareness, brand perception, and Net Promoter Score to monitor trends in the brand's image and any gap perceptions.
- Adopt consumer insight programs using consumer panel research, focus groups, and consumer journey mapping methods to better understand their evolving needs.
- Engage in category-based branding, based on the findings about the different brands' popularity across categories such as electronics, cosmetics, food products, and clothing.
- Provide a consistent brand experience in various channels: brick-and-mortar stores, online shopping websites, social media platforms, and post-sale interactions with customers.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

This study with the title, "Effect of Brand Image on Consumer Purchase Decisions," was conducted with an aim to explore the empirical association between brand image and purchase behavior among consumers in the Delhi-NCR market. The primary data used in the study came from 80 randomly selected individuals through an online survey comprising ten questions based on a five-point Likert scale along with five demographic questions. All calculations involved in the study were done using Microsoft Excel. Several types of quantitative analyses were done in this study including descriptive analysis, Cronbach's Alpha, Pearson correlation, multiple regression, independent t-test, chi-square test, and ANOVA. This multi-method statistical analysis technique enabled me to carry out an extensive and multi-dimensional analysis of the effect of brand image on purchase decisions.

5.2 Overall Conclusions

Conclusions resulting from the analysis of findings are the following:

- Brand image influences positively and significantly on consumers' purchase behavior. Among the factors such as brand name influence, brand trust, and perceived quality, the former two are of crucial importance when shaping consumer purchase behavior.
- The research tool demonstrated high reliability in terms of Cronbach's alpha coefficient ($\alpha = 0.807$).
- Collectively, brand image dimensions accounted for approximately 32% of consumer loyalty variance ($R^2 = 0.320$). The factors of brand name influence and brand trust turned out the strongest individual predictors.
- Finding statistically significant differences neither in the levels of brand loyalty nor in purchasing frequency depending on consumer gender, one can state the trend toward higher brand loyalty among female customers.
- The factor of consumer age turned out a moderator of willingness to pay for branded products at premium prices ($F = 3.867$; $p = 0.007$). Middle-age employed people were willing to pay more.

- Using social networks for branding proved itself an important way of influencing Indian consumers. This finding applies primarily to consumers aged between 18 and 25 years.

5.3 Learning Outcomes

As far as the learning achieved through conducting this research project is concerned, a number of valuable insights have been gained in this regard from both the academic as well as professional point of view. The academic side includes increased comprehension on the concepts of consumer behavior theories, brand equity framework and the use of statistical research tools. On the professional side, the learning included gaining important insights related to the strategies involved in managing brands and studying consumers in an Indian market environment.

5.3 Career Relevance

The set of skills learned while working on this project can be very useful in any career related to brand management, market research, consumer insights, and marketing analytics. The hands-on experience with statistical analysis in Excel, questionnaire creation, and report writing will enable me to become successful in these professions.

5.5 Final Remarks

Finally, it can be concluded that the results generated by this study are consistent with the notion that brand image plays a very significant role in shaping up consumer purchases decisions in the Indian market environment. The competition is going to get fiercer in the coming time and more importantly, the consumers are likely to become more savvy. The brands, therefore, which will focus on building their brand images consistently, will stand to gain in the Indian market.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Despite the rigorous efforts taken to conduct this study, there are some limitations that are worth noting here:

- Selection bias due to convenience sampling: While the application of convenient sampling is a practical decision, however, the sample primarily consists of young consumers (age range of 18-25 years, comprising 77.5% of students). This makes the results not applicable to older segments of consumers or other geographic regions.
- Limitations of self-reports: Since this study uses a survey-based approach, hence the collected data is self-reported. Such surveys are often subject to issues like response bias, where respondents tend to give socially desirable answers or show acquiescent behavior, i.e., agree with the statements regardless of their true feelings.
- The design of the study being cross-sectional. As such, it provides a one-point-in-time measurement of consumer perceptions. Perceptions regarding brand image or purchase behavior could change in accordance with the dynamics of the brand, market forces, and stages of life.
- Small sample size: An 80 respondent sample size is appropriate for exploratory-descriptive studies but is inadequate for hypothesis testing.
- Geographical concentration: The present research uses a geographically concentrated sample from the region of Delhi and NCR. This is unlikely to reflect consumer brand image perceptions in the rest of India.
- Analysis limitations: Although Microsoft Excel can be effectively used for analysis, it is inferior to some extent to specialized statistical software like SPSS, R, Stata etc., especially for conducting advanced analysis including SEM and confirmatory factor analysis.

FUTURE SCOPE OF STUDY

The current study provides the scope for future research along different dimensions:

- Longitudinal studies: It is essential that future studies should use a longitudinal design, as it will help trace brand image perception and loyalty trends over time.
- Geographic expansion: Conducting this study in other Indian cities or even in rural areas will increase the scope of research and help conduct comparative studies in different geographic areas.
- Sector specific research: Future researchers may conduct similar studies in different business sectors to develop sector-specific results about brand image dynamics.
- Larger samples: Future research studies with bigger samples would generate more statistically powerful results.
- Structural Equation Modelling (SEM): With SEM, researchers will be able to explore theoretical models that include both mediating and moderating factors at once, which will offer a better perspective regarding the relationship between brand image and purchase decisions.
- Studies of Digital Brand Image: Research into the concept of digital brand image, including the presence of brands in social media and their impact through customer reviews and endorsements by influencers, must be conducted to identify how they affect purchase decisions.
- Cross-Cultural Comparisons: Researchers could conduct cross-cultural studies to investigate the differences between the effects of brand image in India and the West.

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ANNEXURE

Annexure I: Survey Questionnaire

The following questionnaire was used for primary data collection. It was administered online through Google Forms during April 2026.

Section A: Demographic Information

Q1. Name (Optional): _____

Q2. Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female ☐ Other

Q3. Age Group: ☐ 13–18 years ☐ 18–25 years ☐ 26–35 years ☐ 36–35 years ☐ 35+ years

Q3. Geographic Location: _____

Q5. Occupation: ☐ Student ☐ Employed ☐ Self-Employed ☐ Other

Section B: Purchase Behaviour (Single Choice)

Q6. How often do you buy branded products?

☐ Frequently ☐ Sometimes ☐ Rarely

Section C: Brand Image Perceptions (Likert Scale: 1=Strongly Disagree to 5=Strongly Agree)

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Q7. Brand name influences my purchase decision.	1	2	3	3	5
Q8. I trust branded products more than non-branded products.	1	2	3	3	5
Q9. Brand image reflects better product quality.	1	2	3	3	5
Q10. I am willing to pay more for a well-known brand.	1	2	3	3	5
Q11. Advertisements influence my buying behaviour.	1	2	3	3	5
Q12. Attractive packaging affects my purchase decision.	1	2	3	3	5

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA
Q13. I stay loyal to brands that satisfy me.	1	2	3	3	5
Q13. I recommend favourite brands to others.	1	2	3	3	5
Q15. Social media branding affects my choices.	1	2	3	3	5
Q16. Negative brand reputation stops me from buying.	1	2	3	3	5

Source: Own Analysis

Section D: Brand Preference (Multiple Choice)

Q17. Which factor matters most while purchasing?

☐ Brand ☐ Price ☐ Quality ☐ Design ☐ Reviews

Q18. Which branding medium influences you most?

☐ TV Ads ☐ Social Media ☐ Word of Mouth ☐ Celebrity Endorsement ☐ Online Reviews

Q19. Which product category do you prefer branded?

☐ Electronics ☐ Clothing ☐ Cosmetics ☐ Food Products ☐ Footwear

