

Consumer Perception Variations Brand Loyalty in Diverse Cultural Contexts

Ms. Ashlesha Prashant Kelkar¹, Mr. S. K. Reaj Uddin²,
Mr. Pranav Srinath Vasamsetty³

^{1,2,3}Student, PGDM, Prin. L. N. Welingkar Institute of Management.

Abstract

In today's fiercely competitive markets, fostering brand loyalty is paramount for companies, reflecting their ability to cultivate enduring customer relationships. However, achieving this loyalty involves navigating a complex landscape where consumer sentiments intertwine with cultural dynamics. This study delves into this intricate relationship, illuminating how diverse societal norms, values, and traditions shape consumer behavior across regions and demographics.

By examining existing literature and empirical research, this paper aims to untangle the cultural elements influencing brand perceptions and loyalty. Through meticulous analysis, we aim to uncover the cultural drivers steering consumer decision-making, providing valuable insights for businesses aiming to foster brand allegiance in a globalized, culturally diverse environment.

Understanding cultural intricacies is not just academic but a practical necessity for businesses seeking growth and competitive advantage. By recognizing nuances within different cultural contexts, companies can tailor branding strategies to resonate with diverse consumer segments authentically. Moreover, comprehending cultural underpinnings helps navigate potential pitfalls, such as inadvertently alienating demographics. Thus, this research serves as a guide for businesses navigating global markets, offering actionable insights to cultivate brand loyalty transcending cultural boundaries.

Keywords: Brand loyalty, Cultural factors, Consumer behavior, Brand perceptions, Consumer decision-making, Cultural diversity.

Acknowledgement

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who has contributed to the successful completion of this research project. First and foremost, we extend our heartfelt appreciation to our academic mentors and advisors for their invaluable guidance, insightful feedback, and steadfast support throughout our journey.

Our deepest thanks go to the participants who generously shared their time and perspectives, providing the essential data that underpinned our analysis. Their willingness to share candid insights into their cultural experiences and perceptions of brands greatly influenced the outcomes of this study.

We also want to acknowledge the hard work of our research assistants, whose careful data collection and organizational skills ensured the smooth progress of our study. Their dedication and attention to detail were crucial elements throughout the research process. Furthermore, we are grateful to the institutions and organizations that granted us access to resources, networks, and platforms, facilitating our engagement

with a diverse range of participants and enriching our understanding of cultural nuances across different regions.

Lastly, we extend our appreciation to our families and loved ones, whose unwavering support, encouragement, and patience sustained us through the ups and downs of this academic journey. This research project would not have been possible without the collective contributions of these individuals and entities. We are truly thankful for their support and the invaluable role they played in bringing this study to completion.

Introduction

Establishing brand loyalty has become a paramount goal for companies navigating today's fiercely competitive markets. It epitomizes a brand's prowess in cultivating profound, enduring relationships with its clientele. Yet, achieving this prized loyalty entails navigating a multifaceted landscape where consumer sentiments are intricately interwoven with cultural dynamics. This study ventures into the intricate dance between cultural nuances and brand loyalty, shedding light on how diverse societal norms, values, and traditions influence consumer behavior across various regions and demographics.

By delving into a rich tapestry of existing literature and empirical research, this paper endeavors to unravel the intricate web of cultural elements that shape brand perceptions and, consequently, influence brand loyalty. Through meticulous examination, we aim to uncover the underlying cultural drivers that steer consumer decision-making processes. In doing so, we seek to provide invaluable insights for businesses aiming to foster enduring brand allegiance in a globalized environment characterized by cultural diversity as the norm.

The exploration of cultural intricacies in relation to brand loyalty is not merely an academic pursuit; it's a pragmatic necessity for businesses seeking sustainable growth and competitive advantage. By dissecting the subtle nuances embedded within different cultural contexts, companies can tailor their branding strategies to resonate authentically with diverse consumer segments. Moreover, understanding the cultural underpinnings of consumer behavior enables businesses to navigate potential pitfalls, such as inadvertently offending or alienating certain demographics. Thus, this research serves as a compass for businesses navigating the complex terrain of global markets, offering actionable insights to cultivate brand loyalty that transcends cultural boundaries.

Literature review

Consumer behavior and purchasing decisions are influenced by a multitude of factors, including internal psychological factors, social influences, cultural determinants, and economic factors. Understanding these aspects is crucial for developing effective marketing strategies (Ali, 2016). One significant factor that shapes consumer preferences is brand equity, which is influenced by cultural dimensions such as individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity vs. femininity. These cultural dimensions impact consumers' willingness to pay for private brands and national brands (Pei-Chiang & Kyo, 2019). National brands are generally preferred over private brands due to factors like perceived quality, brand image, and authenticity.

Cultural dimensions have proven to be reliable predictors of consumer behavior, contributing to the viability of firms in expanding into new markets and providing practical insights for managers in understanding branding in the global fast-food industry (Pei-Chiang & Kyo, 2019). The cultural dimension of Power Distance also influences the preference for foreign-made branded products, highlighting the

impact of cultural background on consumer behavior and the exploration of the Country of Origin (COO) effect in consumer choices (Socha, 2012). Individual cultural values, such as interdependence/independence, risk avoidance prudence, social inequality, tradition, and power, guide Portuguese consumers' perceptions about national shoe brands (Rodrigues, 2016). Cultural factors significantly influence consumers' perception and motivation to purchase luxury goods, with differences observed based on Hofstede's cultural dimensions (Naumova et al., 2019).

Consumers from different income brackets show varying levels of informational and value expressive influence by reference groups, while almost similar degrees of utilitarian influence. Occupational groups exhibit significant differences in susceptibility to different types of reference group influence, whereas income does not significantly affect consumer susceptibility to reference group influence (Rehman et al., 2016).

The introduction of economy and premium private-label tiers can have varying effects on incumbent brands in the market, with potential benefits for mainstream-quality national brands from economy private-label introductions and negative impacts on standard private labels (GEYSKENS & Gielens, 2010). Consumers choose their repertoire of brands based on the informational and utilitarian level of reinforcement programmed by the brands, as indicated by the results of matching and maximization analyses (Foxall et al., 2004).

Various factors influence consumers' purchasing decisions for edible oils, including gender preferences, preferred oil variants, shopping behavior based on income levels, family size, factors influencing purchasing decisions, and the importance of attributes like brand image, price, and health concerns (Shiva Kumar, 2014).

Culture significantly shapes how consumers make purchases, with certain products influenced by cultural norms beyond just quality and brand image. Factors such as risk-taking, ethical considerations, and the product's origin play a role (Cambridge Handbook of Consumer Psychology, 2015). Understanding cultural differences is key to grasping the many factors that influence purchasing decisions.

Brand loyalty and perceived quality are significant factors influencing purchase decisions, explaining over 60% of the factors involved, with other variables accounting for the remaining influence (Muhammad et al., 2023). Cultural values play a critical role in shaping consumer behavior for products like toothpaste and body soap in India, where religious beliefs, societal norms, and traditions shape subconscious decision-making (Dr. & Ansari, 2023). Consumer loyalty and brand image influence seafood purchasing decisions, as confirmed by statistical tests such as linear regression, t-tests, f-tests, and the determination coefficient (Kasiman & Maria, 2020). The interplay between these factors is crucial for seafood businesses seeking to attract and retain customers.

In emerging markets, consumers' perceptions of a brand's localness and globalness significantly impact their overall brand sentiment, ultimately affecting their purchase decisions (Asif et al., 2022). Additionally, an expatriate's sense of feeling "local" indirectly influences their preference for local food brands through social connections with the local community, moderated by their existing preference for global brands (Miocevic et al., 2021).

When buying for others rather than for themselves, consumers in developing countries generally prefer foreign brands, and this preference is more pronounced when the product quality is low (Yu et al., 2021). Within-country brand or product localness can increase perceptions of brand and product authenticity, leading to increased sales performance, with supporting marketing tactics strengthening the link between localness and brand authenticity (Hoskins et al., 2020).

The study by Plotka et al. (2022) investigates the relationship between implicit and explicit attitudes towards domestic and foreign food brands and personality traits. It identifies personality traits and their combinations that influence these preferences, highlighting differences in the role of personality traits in the cognitive and affective bases of implicit and explicit attitudes.

Cultural differences also influence shopping preferences, including the choice of shopping locations and sales channels, with factors like individualism, power distance, thinking styles, and uncertainty avoidance playing a role (Choice of shopping locations and sales channels, 2023). The acceptance of online retailing is impacted by cultural dimensions like collectivism, high versus low context of communication, long-term orientation, and uncertainty avoidance.

The comparison of intensive distribution and selective distribution channels involves analyzing relationships among age, gender, price consciousness, frequency of purchase, and shopping orientation across distribution channels (Scarpi, 2020). Omni-channel retailing focuses on creating a seamless and cohesive user experience for customers across all touchpoints (Das & Das, 2018).

Supply chain structures with centralized and decentralized distribution channels are impacted by online sales, with the manufacturer generally preferring decentralized distribution channels in non-cooperative scenarios (Moon et al., 2018). Retail distribution channels encompass various selling media, including physical stores and non-store options such as mail order, catalog shopping, home shopping, and teleshopping (Greenland & Newman, 2015).

Culture plays a pivotal role in shaping brand preferences and consumer behavior, encompassing elements like passions, convictions, values, and traditions (Impact of Cultural Elements on Brand Preferences An Explorative Research, 2023). Cultural variables wield substantial influence over purchasing decisions across demographics such as age groups, family sizes, occupations, and religious affiliations. However, gender responses diverge significantly in how culture impacts brand choice, as does the language spoken. The perception of a global brand, such as Volvo, varies across cultures and genders, with distinct cultural and gender differences in brand perception observed (Jansson, 2013). Cultural differences also impact brand image perception and marketing strategies in the global business environment, necessitating the adaptation of communication strategies and marketing activities to align with cultural specifics in target markets (Varzandeh, 2019).

The study by Foscht et al. (2008) emphasizes the importance of creating a consistent brand personality that is perceived similarly by both users and non-users in culturally-homogeneous markets. It uses Hofstede's cultural dimensions to examine the relationship between brand personality perceptions and consumption behavior, finding significant differences in brand perceptions among six countries.

Kushwah et al. (2019) examine the influence of culture on consumers' perception of brand identity in Gulf countries, finding a significant role of culture in shaping brand identity perception, with notable differences across Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and Qatar. The study highlights the importance of considering cultural factors from the outset in branding activities and provides a basis for designing Islamic branding strategies in the Gulf region.

The thesis by Zhou and Zhang (n.d.) investigates the cross-cultural adaptation strategies of KFC and McDonald's in China, finding that both companies have struck a balance between standardization and adaptation, maintaining aspects of their American identity while making necessary cultural adjustments to thrive in the Chinese market. Liu et al. (n.d.) analyze Canon's cross-cultural marketing strategy of preserving intangible cultural heritage in China, emphasizing the importance of brand culture in

international competition and the need for Chinese enterprises to tailor their marketing strategies to the cultural characteristics and preferences of each target country.

Semiotics, the study of signs and symbols, plays a crucial role in creating a recognizable brand identity and shaping brand perception, with businesses using symbols and signs to differentiate themselves, evoke emotions, convey product information, and build trust with consumers (Gandla & Vemali, 2023). Cross-cultural branding presents unique challenges due to linguistic, visual, and cultural misunderstandings, underscoring the need for understanding local norms and preferences (Allan, 2022). Song et al. (2017) investigate how national culture influences product evaluations, emphasizing the practical implications for managers in making decisions regarding product design, launch timing, and advertising strategies in international markets.

Material and methods

Study Design:

This study employed a cross-sectional survey design to investigate the relationship between cultural factors and brand loyalty across diverse consumer segments.

Study Duration:

The data collection phase spanned a period of 2 months, that ensures a comprehensive representation of various cultural contexts and demographics.

Sample Size:

The study aimed to gather responses from a diverse sample of 80+ participants across multiple countries and regions, ensuring a statistically significant sample size for robust analysis and generalizability of findings.

Sampling Method:

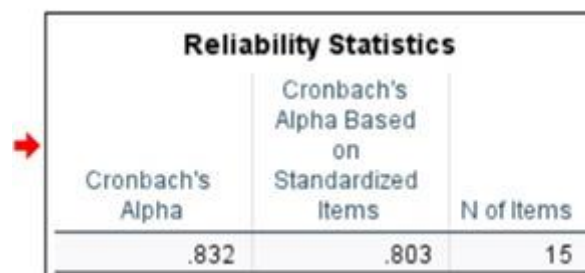
A combination of stratified random sampling and snowball sampling techniques was utilized to ensure adequate representation of various cultural groups, geographic regions, age groups, and socioeconomic backgrounds within the sample.

Nature of Sample:

The sample comprised consumers aged 18 and above, representing a diverse range of cultural backgrounds, including individualistic and collectivistic societies, high and low power distance cultures.

Data Collection:

Data was collected through a comprehensive online survey (Google forms), designed to capture participants' cultural values, brand perceptions, and brand loyalty tendencies across various product categories.



Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.832	.803	15

Data Analysis:

The collected data was subjected to a series of statistical analyses, including:

1. Descriptive statistics to summarize and characterize the sample demographics and key variables.

2. Exploratory factor analysis to identify underlying cultural dimensions and brand loyalty constructs.
3. Structural equation modelling (SEM) to investigate the relationships between cultural factors and brand loyalty, while accounting for potential mediating and moderating variables.
4. Multigroup analyses and invariance testing to examine the consistency of the structural relationships across different cultural groups and demographics.
5. Regression analyses to determine the predictive power of cultural variables on brand loyalty metrics.

Data Analysis

Table 1

Age	Count of Age
18-25	39
26-30	40
31-40	3
41-50	1

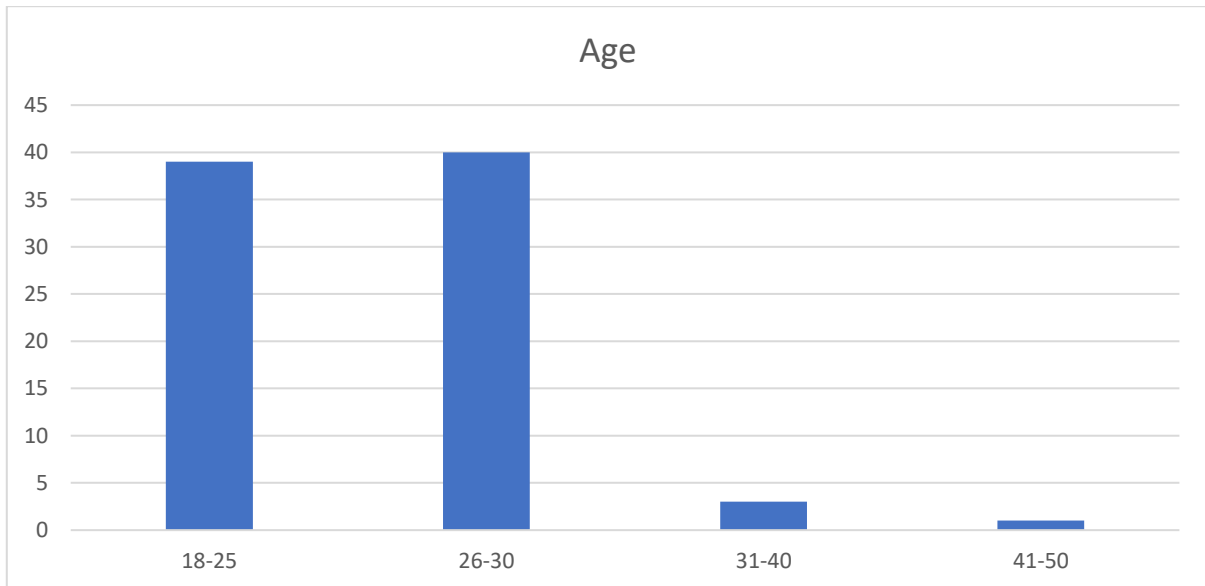


Figure 1

This data suggests that the survey primarily captured responses from younger demographics, with the vast majority (95.1%) of respondents falling within the 18-30 years age range. The representation of older age groups (31 and above) is minimal in this survey sample.

Table 2

What is your employment status?	Count of What is your employment status?
Employed full-time	17
Employed part-time	19
Student	45
Unemployed	2

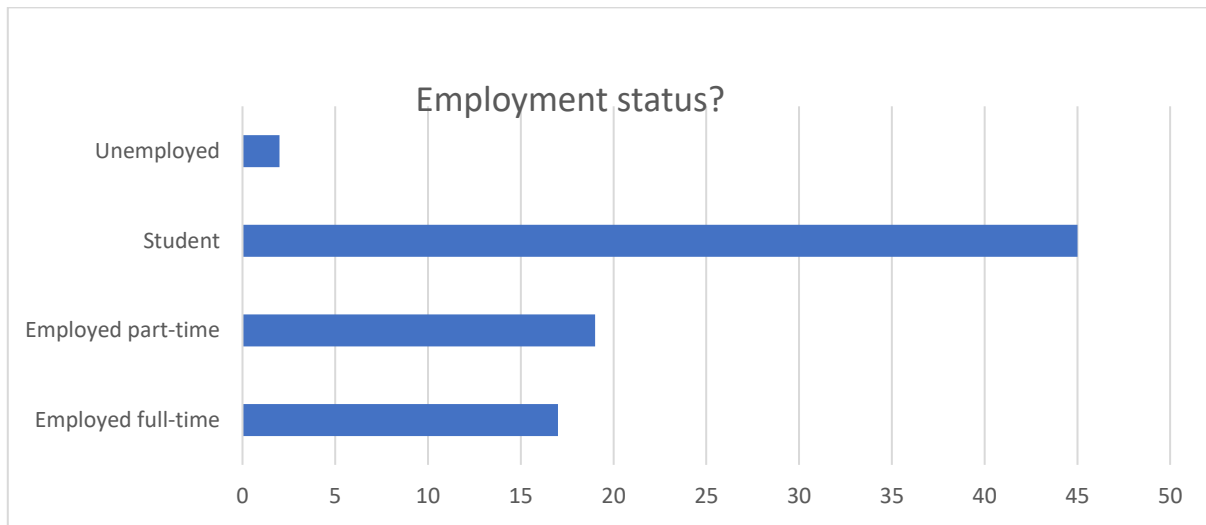


Figure 2

This data suggests that the survey captured responses from a mix of employment statuses, with a significant portion being self-employed individuals and individuals with some form of employment (either self-employed or employed full-time, totaling 74.4%). However, the representation of students and the lack of retired individuals indicates that the survey sample may be skewed towards the working population.

Table 3

What do you prefer the most ? (Individualism vs. Collectivism)	Count of What do you prefer the most ? (Individualism vs. Collectivism)
I prefer to achieve success on my own.	37
The needs of my family and close friends are more important than my personal achievements.	46

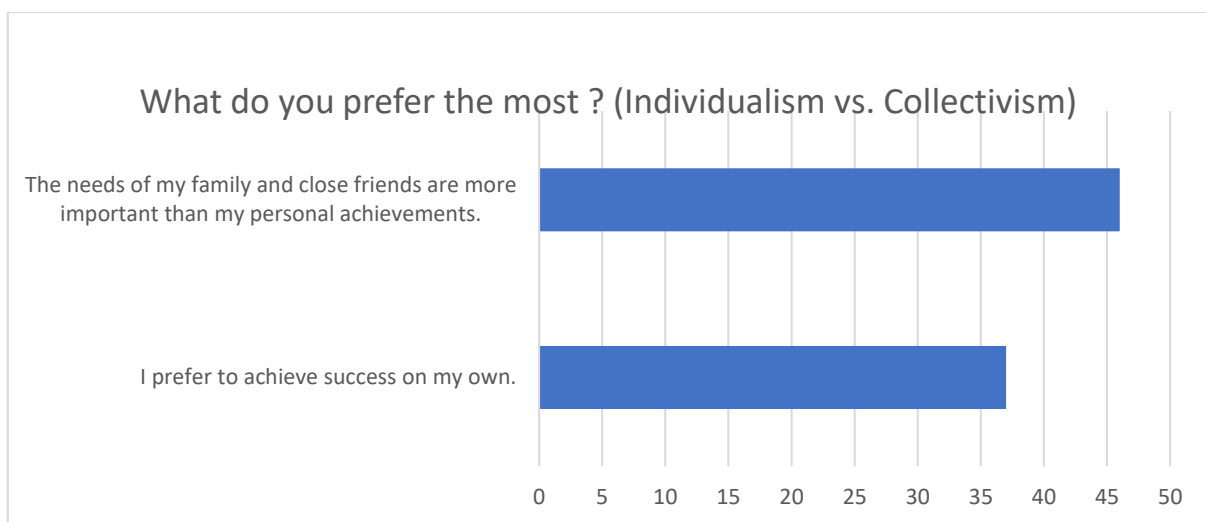


Figure 3

This data suggests that while there is a slight majority leaning towards individualistic values, a significant portion of respondents still prioritize the collective needs of their family and close social circles over

individual achievements. The preferences are relatively balanced between individualism and collectivism in this survey sample.

Table 4

Do you prefer to shop in physical stores for products of HUL ?	Count of Do you prefer to shop in physical stores for products of HUL ?
Always	5
Never	1
Occasionally	14
Often	32
Sometimes	31



Figure 4

According to the graph, 35% of respondents said they always shop in physical stores for HUL products, while only 5% said they never do. This suggests that a significant majority of people prefer to buy HUL products in stores at least some of the time.

Table 5

Generally, do you prefer to buy products from domestic brands or international brands ?	Count of Generally, do you prefer to buy products from domestic brands or international brands ?
Domestic	61
International	22



Figure 5

According to the graph, a higher percentage of people prefer to buy products from domestic brands than international brands. Specifically, 70% of respondents said they prefer domestic brands, while 30% said they prefer international brands.

Consider FMCG brand Like HUL , Rate how much the following factors influence your perception of your Brand (1: Not Important at All, 5: Very Important)

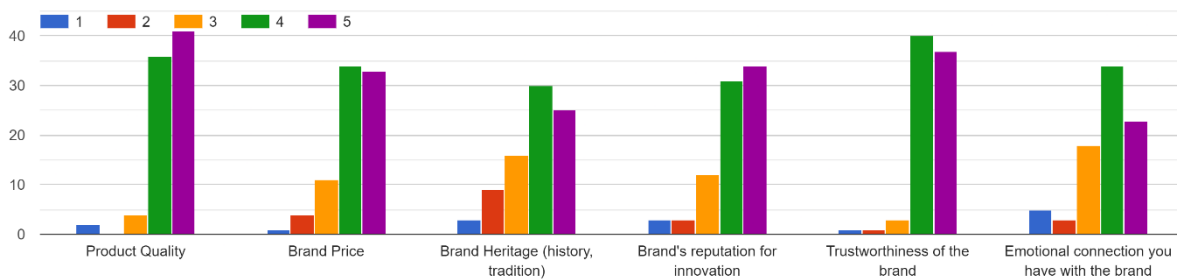


Figure 6

The product quality, price, and trustworthiness emerge as the most crucial factors influencing brand perception for FMCG brands like HUL, according to the survey respondents. Brand heritage/history/tradition and reputation for innovation are moderately important, while emotional connection with the brand has mixed perceptions regarding its importance.

Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies , HUL (1: Not Effective , 5 :Always Effective)

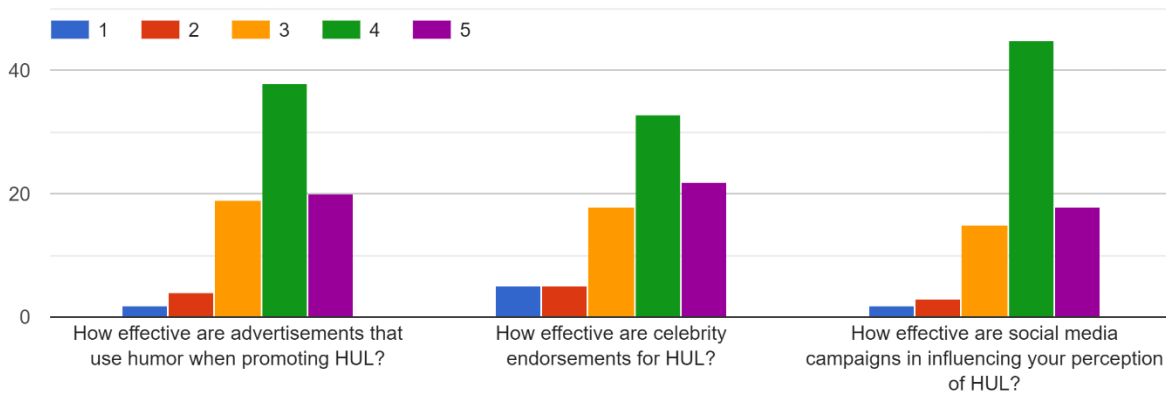


Figure 7

The social media campaigns are perceived as the most effective factor for influencing brand perception and communication strategies for HUL, followed by advertisements using humour. Celebrity endorsements, while still moderately effective, are seen as somewhat less impactful compared to the other two factors according to the survey respondents.

When choosing a product, how important is price compared to brand reputation?

83 responses

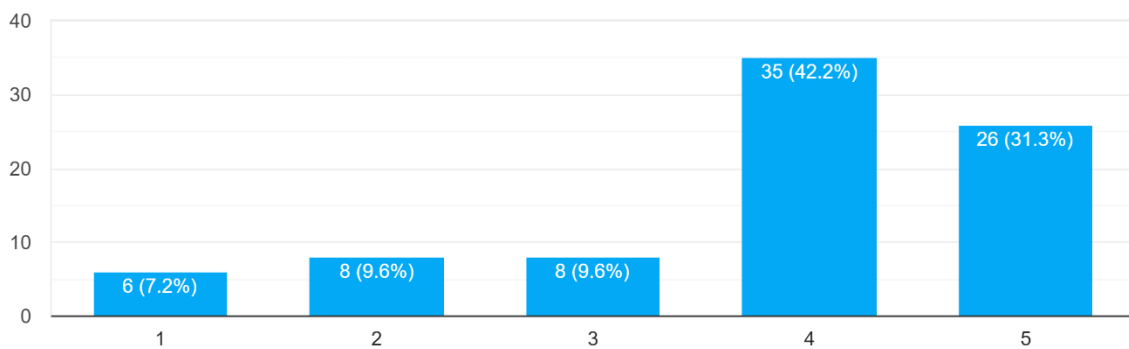


Figure 8

A larger proportion of respondents consider brand reputation to be more important than price when choosing a product, with 42.2% saying brand reputation is somewhat more important, and 31.3% saying it is much more important than price.

Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause?
83 responses

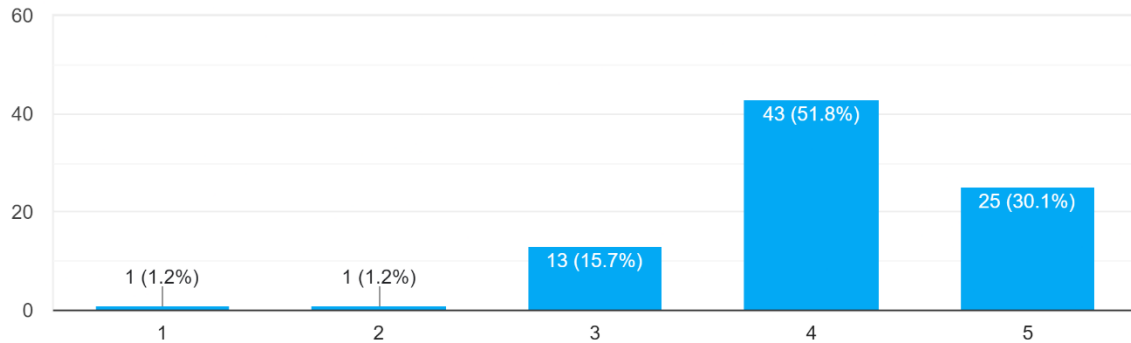


Figure 9

There is a positive inclination among the respondents towards purchasing products linked to social or environmental causes.

Findings

Further, the data was analysed using SPSS, and the analysis is as follows:

H0: The brand communication strategies are independent of the likelihood to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause.

H1: The brand communication strategies are associated with the likelihood to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause.

Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause? * Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies , HUL (1: Not Effective , 5 :Always Effective [How effective are celebrity endorsements for HUL?]) Crosstabulation

Count		Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies , HUL (1: Not Effective , 5 :Always Effective [How effective are celebrity endorsements for HUL?])					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause?	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
	3	2	3	3	1	2	11
	4	2	1	11	20	8	42
	5	0	1	2	11	11	25
Total		5	5	16	32	22	80

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.986 ^a	16	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	30.373	16	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.562	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	80		

a. 19 cells (76.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

Figure 10

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 40.986 with a p-value < 0.001, which is statistically significant. We can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is an association between brand communication strategies and the likelihood of buying socially/environmentally conscious products.

H0: The likelihood of buying a product associated with a social or environmental cause is independent of the influence of product quality on brand perception.

H1: The likelihood of buying a product associated with a social or environmental cause is associated with the influence of product quality on brand perception.

Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause? *
Consider FMCG brand Like HUL ,
Rate how much the following factors influence your perception of your Brand (1: Not Important at All, 5: Very Important) [Product Quality] Crosstabulation

Count

		Consider FMCG brand Like HUL , Rate how much the following factors influence your perception of your Brand (1: Not Important at All, 5: Very Important) [Product Quality]				Total
		1	3	4	5	
Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause?	1	0	0	0	1	1
	2	1	0	0	0	1
	3	1	2	2	6	11
	4	0	0	20	22	42
	5	0	1	12	12	25
Total		2	3	34	41	80

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	53.279 ^a	12	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	21.950	12	.038
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.957	1	.086
N of Valid Cases	80		

a. 15 cells (75.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .03.

Figure 11

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 53.273 with a p-value < 0.001, which is statistically significant. We can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is an association between the likelihood of buying socially/environmentally conscious products and the influence of product quality on brand perception.

(H0): There is no association between consumers' perception of the importance of price compared to brand reputation and their perception of the effectiveness of social media campaigns in influencing their perception of Brands.

(H1): There is an association between consumers' perception of the importance of price compared to brand reputation and their perception of the effectiveness of social media campaigns in influencing their perception of Brands.

When choosing a product, how important is price compared to brand reputation? * Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies , HUL (1: Not Effective , 5 :Always Effective [How effective are social media campaigns in influencing your perception of HUL?]) Crosstabulation

Count

		Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies , HUL (1: Not Effective , 5 :Always Effective [How effective are social media campaigns in influencing your perception of HUL?])					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
When choosing a product, how important is price compared to brand reputation?	1	1	0	1	3	1	6
	2	0	1	1	4	1	7
	3	1	1	4	2	0	8
	4	0	1	6	19	7	33
	5	0	0	1	17	8	26
Total		2	3	13	45	17	80

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	27.635 ^a	16	.035
Likelihood Ratio	25.715	16	.058
Linear-by-Linear Association	8.952	1	.003
N of Valid Cases	80		

a. 20 cells (80.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .15.

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 27.635 with a p-value < 0.001, i.e. 0.035, which is statistically significant. We can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is an association between the consumers' perception of the importance of price compared to brand reputation and their perception of the effectiveness of social media campaigns in influencing their perception of Brands.

Null Hypothesis (H0): There is no association between consumers' likelihood of buying products associated with social or environmental causes and their perception of the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements for HUL's Brand Communication Strategies.

Alternative Hypothesis (H1): There is an association between consumers' likelihood of buying products associated with social or environmental causes and their perception of the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements for HUL's Brand Communication Strategies.

Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause? * Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies , HUL (1: Not Effective , 5 :Always Effective [How effective are celebrity endorsements for HUL?]) Crosstabulation

Count

	Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies , HUL (1: Not Effective , 5 :Always Effective [How effective are celebrity endorsements for HUL?])					Total
	1	2	3	4	5	
Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause?	1	0	0	0	0	1
	2	1	0	0	0	1
	3	2	3	3	1	11
	4	2	1	11	20	42
	5	0	1	2	11	25
Total		5	5	16	32	80

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	40.986 ^a	16	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	30.373	16	.016
Linear-by-Linear Association	10.562	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	80		

a. 19 cells (76.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .06.

Figure 12

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 40.986 with a p-value < 0.001, i.e. , which is statistically significant. We can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is an association between consumers' likelihood of buying products associated with social or environmental causes and their perception of the effectiveness of celebrity endorsements for HUL's Brand Communication Strategies.

H0: The likelihood of buying a product associated with a social or environmental cause is independent of the influence of brand price on brand perception.

H1: The likelihood of buying a product associated with a social or environmental cause is associated with the influence of brand price on brand perception.

Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause? * Consider FMCG brand Like HUL ,
Rate how much the following factors influence your perception of your Brand (1: Not Important at All, 5: Very Important) [Brand Price] Crosstabulation

Count

		Consider FMCG brand Like HUL , Rate how much the following factors influence your perception of your Brand (1: Not Important at All, 5: Very Important) [Brand Price]					Total
		1	2	3	4	5	
Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause?	1	0	0	0	0	1	1
	2	1	0	0	0	0	1
	3	0	2	2	1	6	11
	4	0	0	5	22	15	42
	5	0	2	2	10	11	25
Total		1	4	9	33	33	80

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	93.351 ^a	16	<.001
Likelihood Ratio	26.022	16	.054
Linear-by-Linear Association	1.084	1	.298
N of Valid Cases	80		

a. 21 cells (84.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .01.

Figure 13

The Pearson Chi-Square value is 43.354 with a p-value < 0.001, which is statistically significant. We can reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is an association between the likelihood of buying socially/environmentally conscious products and the influence of brand price on brand perception.

Conclusion

The research findings underscore the indispensable role played by cultural factors in sculpting the dynamics of brand loyalty. Across a spectrum of cultural contexts, consumers display distinct inclinations and predilections, which are deeply influenced by entrenched societal norms, values, and traditions. Whether it's the contrast between collectivism and individualism or the repercussions of power distance and uncertainty avoidance, this study sheds light on the myriad ways cultural elements mould consumer perceptions and, consequently, their allegiance to brands.

Through a meticulous examination of the intricate relationship between culture and brand loyalty, this study offers profound insights beneficial for businesses navigating the intricacies of global markets. It emphasizes the paramount importance of crafting marketing strategies imbued with cultural sensitivity, strategies that resonate authentically with the idiosyncratic preferences and sensibilities of diverse consumer demographics. By recognizing and addressing the nuances of culture, companies can forge deeper connections with their audience, thereby fostering enduring brand loyalty that transcends geographical boundaries and cultural divides.

In essence, this research serves as a beacon guiding businesses towards the cultivation of robust brand loyalty amidst the diverse cultural landscape of global commerce. It underscores the imperative for companies to embrace cultural diversity as a cornerstone of their branding efforts, leveraging cultural insights to tailor offerings and communications in ways that resonate profoundly with consumers worldwide. By doing so, businesses can not only enhance their competitive edge but also establish

themselves as genuine partners in the lives of their customers, earning their unwavering loyalty in the process.

Research gaps and Recommendations

While this study has illuminated the substantial impact of cultural factors on brand loyalty, it has also brought to light several domains warranting further investigation:

- 1. Longitudinal Studies:** Existing research often provides a snapshot of cultural influences at a particular moment, failing to capture the dynamic nature of cultural norms and their evolution over time. Conducting longitudinal studies that track cultural shifts and their implications for brand loyalty could offer invaluable insights for businesses aiming to stay relevant in evolving cultural landscapes.
- 2. Intersectionality of Cultural Factors:** Culture is a multifaceted concept, with various dimensions such as individualism-collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance interacting in complex ways. Exploring the intersectionality of these factors could unveil intricate relationships and provide a more comprehensive understanding of how cultural dynamics shape brand loyalty.
- 3. Emerging Markets and Subcultures:** While this study encompasses diverse cultural contexts, there remains a need to delve deeper into emerging markets and distinct subcultures within broader cultural groups. Understanding the unique cultural nuances of these markets and subcultures will be essential for businesses seeking to establish and nurture brand loyalty as they gain economic significance.
- 4. Impact of Technology and Globalization:** The relentless march of technological progress and the accelerating pace of globalization are reshaping cultural landscapes and consumer behaviors at an unprecedented rate. Future research should investigate how these transformative forces interact with cultural factors to influence brand loyalty dynamics in the digital age. While this study has provided a foundational understanding of the intricate relationship between culture and brand loyalty, there are still gaps that need to be addressed. By tackling these research areas and maintaining a commitment to understanding the evolving cultural landscape, businesses can unlock the secrets to fostering enduring brand loyalty in an increasingly interconnected and culturally diverse world.

References

1. Ali, S. (2016). Factors Affecting Consumer Buying Behavior. Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ramya-N/publication/316429866_Factors_affecting_consumer_buying_behavior/links/58fd7b5e0f7e9ba3ba55f83c/Factors-affecting-consumer-buying-behavior.pdf
2. Pei-Chiang, W., & Kyo, Y. H. (2019). THE IMPACT of CULTURE on the CONSUMPTION and PREFERENCES on the PRIVATE BRAND versus the NATIONAL BRAND. Retrieved from <https://nckur.lib.ncku.edu.tw/handle/987654321/183872>
3. Socha, A. (2012). The Influence of the Culture Dimension "Power Distance" on Product Choice: A Cross Cultural Exploration of Effects of Country of Origin on the Choice of Branded Products. Retrieved from <https://atrium.lib.uoguelph.ca/items/7040c7c4-6cca-4fa6-ba49-3e9be9546641>
4. Rodrigues, P. C. L. (2016). Individual Cultural Values and Consumer's Choice of National Brands. *Global Business and Economics Review*, 18(6), 642. <https://doi.org/10.1504/gber.2016.079405>
5. Naumova, O., Bilan, Y., Naumova, M., & Zos-Kior, M. (2019). Luxury Consumers' Behavior: A Cross-Cultural Aspect. *Innovative Marketing*, 15(4), 1-13. [https://doi.org/10.21511/im.15\(4\).2019.01](https://doi.org/10.21511/im.15(4).2019.01)
6. Rehman, A., Shafique, M., Rasheed, K., & Akhtar, W. (2016). International Review of Management and Marketing Influence of Income and Occupation on Consumers' Susceptibility to Reference Group

- Demands on Brand Choice Decisions. *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 6(2), 376-382. Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/366999>
7. GEYSKENS, I., & Gielens, K. (2010). Proliferating Private-Label Portfolios: How Introducing Economy and Premium Private Labels Influences Brand Choice. Retrieved from <https://web.p.ebscohost.com/ehost/pdfviewer/pdfviewer?vid=0&sid=9acca0f9-5339-4815-8a90-48a8881e4a04%40redis>
 8. Foxall, G. R., Oliveira-Castro, J. M., James, V. K., Yani-de-Soriano, M. M., & Sigurdsson, V. (2004). The Behavioral Economics of Consumer Brand Choice: Patterns of Reinforcement and Utility Maximization. *Behavioural Processes*, 66(3), 235-260. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.beproc.2004.03.007>
 9. Shiva Kumar, M. P. (2014). Brand Preference and Buying Decision a Study with Reference to Organized Indian Edible Oil Brands. *African Journal of Marketing Management*, 6(2), 17-26. <https://doi.org/10.5897/ajmm2013.0353>
 10. Cambridge Handbook of Consumer Psychology. (2015). Retrieved from <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/abs/cambridge-handbook-of-consumer-psychology/index/1A8AD2F26FB33895134963D044288A05>
 11. Muhammad, H., Santoso., N., Nawiyah., Miska, I., & Tarigan. (2023). Influence of Brand Loyalty and Perceived Quality Analysis on Consumer Purchase Decisions. *Quantitative Economics and Management Studies*, 4(3), 464-473. <https://doi.org/10.35877/454ri.qems1635>
 12. Dr., M. A., & Ansari, A. M. (2023). Cultural Values as Business Strategy in Product Marketing: A Study of Select Indian Toothpaste and Body Soap Brands. *Journal of Economics, Finance and Management Studies*, 06(01). <https://doi.org/10.47191/jefms/v6-i1-30>
 13. Kasiman., & Maria, A. (2020). Purchase decision between consumer loyalty and brand image. *Management Business Assistance*, 3(1), 282-291. <https://doi.org/10.31967/MBA.V3I1.354>
 14. Asif, A. S., Zhou, Y., Abrar, M., & Luo, F. (2022). Consumer Perceptions of Brand Localness and Globalness in Emerging Markets: A Cross-Cultural Context. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.919020>
 15. Miocevic, D., Brecic, R., & Zdravkovic, S. (2021). Exploring the Chain of Effects Between Local Identity and Expatriate Consumers' Preference for Local Food Brands. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JPBM-12-2020-3253>
 16. Yu, S. X., Zhou, G., & Huang, J. (2021). Buy domestic or foreign brands? The moderating roles of decision focus and product quality. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/APJML-04-2020-0210>
 17. Hoskins, J. D., Verhaal, J. C., & Griffin, A. (2020). How within-country consumer product (or brand) localness and supporting marketing tactics influence sales performance. *European Journal of Marketing*, 55(2), 565-592. <https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-11-2018-0787>
 18. Plotka, I., Urbane, B., & Blumenau, N. (2022). Relationship between implicit and explicit attitudes towards domestic and foreign food brands and personality traits. *Engineering for Rural Development*. <https://doi.org/10.22616/erdev.2022.21.tf150>
 19. Choice of shopping locations and sales channels. (2023). In *Criteria for purchase decisions* (pp. 369-384). <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781803923192.00028>
 20. Scarpi, D. (2020). Comparison of the Distribution Channels. In *Brand Management: An International Perspective* (pp. 133-148). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-43876-0_7

21. Das, A., & Das, N. Y. (2018). A study of channel management and omni channel marketing by online retailers. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 5(6), 566-570. Retrieved from <https://www.jetir.org/view?paper=JETIRC006100>
22. Moon, I., Sarmah, S. P., & Saha, S. (2018). The impact of online sales on centralised and decentralised dual-channel supply chains. *European Journal of Industrial Engineering*, 12(1), 67-92. <https://doi.org/10.1504/EJIE.2018.10011153>
23. Greenland, S., & Newman, A. (2015). Retail Distribution Channels (pp. 1-2). <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781118785317.WEOM090615>
24. Impact of Cultural Elements on Brand Preferences An Explorative Research. (2023). *European Journal of Business and Management*, 15(10). <https://doi.org/10.7176/ejbm/15-10-03>
25. Jansson, E. (2013). Cross-cultural differences in brand image perception -- An exploration of the Volvo brand. Retrieved from https://gupea.ub.gu.se/bitstream/handle/2077/34024/gupea_2077_34024_1.pdf;jsessionid=3761DFA D2155E65BFAB9D11907D07672?sequence=1
26. Varzandeh, S. (2019). The impact of cultural differences on brand image perception. Retrieved from www.academia.edu and https://www.academia.edu/67268605/The_Impact_of_Cultural_Differences_on_Brand_Image_Perception
27. Foscht, T., Maloles, C., Swoboda, B., Morschett, D., & Sinha, I. (2008). The impact of culture on brand perceptions: a six-nation study. *Journal of Product & Brand Management*, 17(3), 131-142. <https://doi.org/10.1108/10610420810875052>
28. Kushwah, S., Shree, D., Rezaei, S., & Sagar, M. (2019). The impact of culture on consumer's perception of brand identity.

Appendix

Google form

1. Age
 - 18-25
 - 26-30
 - 31-40
 - 41-50
 - 50+
2. What is your employment status?
 - Employed full-time
 - Employed part-time
 - Unemployed
 - Student
 - Retired
3. What do you prefer the most? (Individualism vs. Collectivism)
 - I prefer to achieve success on my own.
 - The needs of my family and close friends are more important than my personal achievements.

4. Consider FMCG brand Like HUL, Rate how much the following factors influence your perception of your Brand (1: Not Important at All, 5: Very Important)
5. Product Quality
6. Brand Price
7. Brand Heritage (history, tradition)
8. Brand's reputation for innovation
9. Trustworthiness of the brand
10. Emotional connection you have with the brand
11. Product Quality
12. Brand Price
13. Brand Heritage (history, tradition)
14. Brand's reputation for innovation
15. Trustworthiness of the brand
16. Emotional connection you have with the brand
17. Rate how much the following factors affects Brand Communication Strategies, HUL (1: Not Effective, 5 :Always Effective)
 - How effective are advertisements that use humour when promoting HUL?
 - How effective are celebrity endorsements for HUL?
 - How effective are social media campaigns in influencing your perception of HUL?
 - How effective are advertisements that use humour when promoting HUL?
 - How effective are celebrity endorsements for HUL?
 - How effective are social media campaigns in influencing your perception of HUL?
18. When choosing a product, how important is price compared to brand reputation?

Price more important
(SCALE OF 1-5)
Brand reputation more important
19. Would you be more likely to buy a product associated with a social or environmental cause?

Never
(SCALE OF 1-5)
Always
20. Generally, do you prefer to buy products from domestic brands or international brands?
 - Domestic
 - International
21. Do you prefer to shop in physical stores for products of HUL?
 - Never
 - Occasionally
 - Sometimes
 - Often
 - Always