



## The Impact of Brand Image and Brand Trust on Consumer Buying Behavior

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**ABSTRACT**

This study aims to examine the impact of brand image on consumer purchasing behavior, while also exploring the mediating role of brand trust in this relationship. Data was collected through a questionnaire survey, resulting in 142 responses among the students of Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology within the period of three weeks. The data are analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics 21 program. The findings indicate a strong and significant positive relationship between brand image, brand trust, and consumer buying behavior.

### I. INTRODUCTION

In a market characterized by intense competition, investors dedicate considerable efforts to enhance the value of their companies. Marketing studies recognize that this value largely hinges on the relationship between the company and the market, especially between the brand and the consumer.

The brand serves as a mental representation stemming from the product, experience, communication, and the image of those who purchase it. It plays a crucial role in distinction and differentiation, constituting a promise made by the seller to the buyer. Over time, the proliferation of brands has become prevalent, dominating the consumer market. This is primarily due to the increasing number of competitors and the ever-changing, fickle behavior of consumers who are faced with similar products meeting identical needs.

Consumers, as complex beings, have become more demanding, particularly when confronted with products that fulfill the same needs. Given the diversity of consumer products and the multitude of choices available in the market, consumers have become attentive to the brand, its values, and the message it conveys. In this perspective, companies must create and master their brand image to positively influence the perception of their target audience.

Brand image is an indispensable element for a company to differentiate itself and stand out from competitors. In its broadest sense, the brand image encompasses everything the consumer associates with the brand. Several studies are conducted to understand what drives a consumer to choose one brand over others, providing insights crucial for shaping effective marketing strategies.

Purchase decision as the final consumer action before making an actual purchase and brand selection. This phase is critical for producers' business continuity. Therefore, it is important to do research on this. So, what is the role of brand image and brand trust on the purchase decision of costumers?

### II. LITERATURE REVIEW

#### II.1 Brand Image

Brand image is the overall perception that consumers, prospects, and the general public have of a company or person. This perceived image is the result of a complex blend of brand-related elements, including the logo, product or service quality, and customer service interactions (Fazal Ur Rehman, Ali Zeb, 2022).

### **II.1.1 Benefits of important brand image:**

Having a strong brand image offers several advantages. It contributes to increased brand recognition, making it easier for customers to identify and remember the company. This, in turn, reduces the costs associated with brand awareness. A strong brand image also creates a competitive edge, as consumers often choose products based on the values a brand represents (Bereket, 2019). A positive reputation leads to increased customer loyalty, retention, and profitability. Understanding these factors motivates business owners to work on building a strong brand image, which is impossible without developing a brand identity.

### **II.1.2 Brand pictures 'concern:**

Negative product images can have detrimental effects on a company. When a brand has an unfavorable or negative image, it becomes challenging to change that perception over time. The negative associations stick with the product or service until efforts are made to improve the image

(Gupta, Sahil, & Gupta, Sharad, 2020). Additionally, if a product or service experiences a negative event, it can further damage the product's reputation. It's important to address and rectify any negative aspects to maintain a positive product image.

### **II.1.3 Brand's image improvement:**

Improving a company's brand image is a continuous process that requires a multifaceted approach (Seymour M. Guliyev 2023), here are key steps to achieve this goal:

- Understand your target audience: Firstly, understand who your potential customers are. Conduct market research to identify their needs, preferences, and buying behaviors.
- Evaluate the current brand image: Use tools like customer satisfaction surveys, social media analysis, and market research to assess the existing brand image and identify areas that need improvement.
- Define a clear value proposition: What unique value does your product or service bring to your customers? This value proposition should be clearly communicated in all your communication materials.
- Provide exceptional customer experiences: Focus on delivering outstanding customer experiences at every touchpoint. This includes customer service, product quality, and post-purchase support.
- Build strong brand partnerships: Collaborate with strategic partners or influencers who share your brand values to increase credibility and visibility.
- Leverage digital platforms: Utilize social media and other online platforms to promote your brand, engage with customers, and share relevant content.
- Monitor and respond to customer feedback: Listen to customer feedback and use it to continuously improve your brand and products.

By implementing these strategies, you can not only improve your brand image but also increase awareness and reputation in a competitive market.

## **II.2 Brand Trust**

Brand trust is an emotional bond that buyers have with a brand. To earn trust, you must first offer a quality product at a reasonable price. If a customer purchases your product, this emotional connection with your brand can continue after the sale. Factors that can help buyers trust a brand include positive customer service experiences, reliable products, and alignment of personal and brand values. It's important for buyers to feel aligned with your brand's values because, in addition to trust, shared values can influence their purchasing decisions. By maintaining trust, buyers may be more willing to purchase products from your brand and share positive word-of-mouth about your brand (Dam Tri Cuong, 2020).

According to a study that was conducted by Dam Tri Cuong, (2020), it was discovered that trust in a brand has a favorable influence on the intention to make a purchase for national brands. This effect has been identified. The correlation between the trust that a consumer has in a brand and their intention to purchase from that brand is undeniable. An increase in brand trust leads to a corresponding increase in purchase intention. According to Sao mai dam, tri cuong dam, (2021), it is believed that trust in a brand can lead to an increase in purchase intention. Additionally, Dam Tri Cuong, (2020) state that effective and proactive communication in marketing can establish a positive connection between a brand and its customers, thus increasing trust and ultimately leading to higher purchase rates (Mohammad Djaelani, Didit Darmawan, 2021). Trust plays a significant role in determining a consumer's intention to buy a product. The level of trust a consumer has in a brand or product can greatly influence their possibility to make a purchase.

## **II.3 Consumer Buying Behavior**

The consumer is the person who consumes goods and services, whereas consumer behavior is the totality of consumer decisions regarding the acquisition, consumption, and disposal of goods, services, time and ideas by (human) decision-making units (Fazal ur Rehman, 2022). The process of purchasing goods and services to fulfill desires and necessities involves various stages of decision-making by human entities. Known as buying behavior, it includes the cognitive, emotional, and observable processes that consumers go through when searching for, selecting, buying, using, evaluating, and disposing of products. According to Adetunji, R. R., Rashid,

S. M., & Ishak, M. S, (2019), the study of buying behavior encompasses a range of factors such as what, when, how, and why consumers purchase a product, as well as their consumption patterns and habits. Understanding the underlying motivations and behavior of consumers is crucial for marketers to create effective advertising and promotional strategies. Advertisers are consistently interested in comprehending consumer buying behavior to develop captivating promotional campaigns.

The consumer made the purchase decision is influenced by a variety of factors according to Fazal ur Rehman, (2022) namely:

- Culture factors, which has the most influence and the most extensive in the behavior of consumers so that marketers need to understand the influence of culture, sub-culture, and social class of consumers.
- Social factors, which need to be considered when designing a marketing strategy because these factors can affect consumer response.
- Personal factors, which consists of the age and stage of life cycle, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle, personality, and self-concept affects the consumer on what is purchased.
- Psychological factors, include motivation, perception, learning and beliefs and attitudes also influence the selection of consumer purchases.

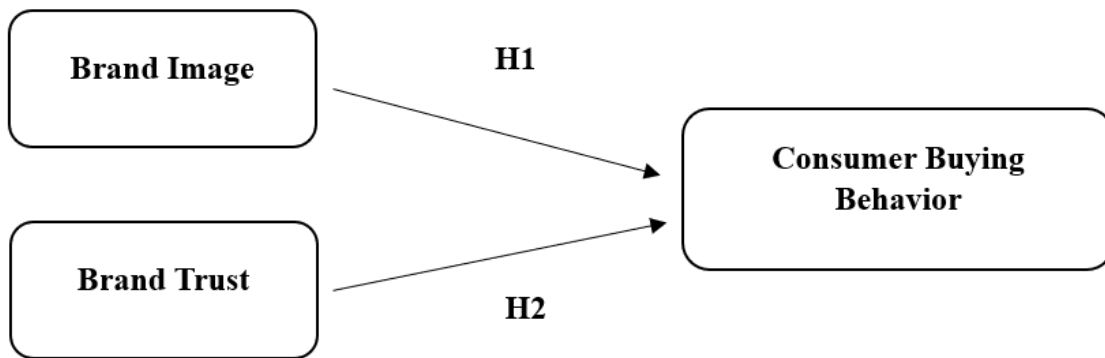
**II.4 Conceptual Framework**

There are two independent variables and one dependent variable in this study. Brand image and brand trust are independent variables, but consumer purchasing behavior is the dependent variable. all of these variables represent the main aspects that influence consumer purchasing behavior, so this framework can provide research directions.

The research studies two necessary factors of consumer purchasing behavior: Brand image and brand trust and related hypotheses are following:

**H1:** Brand image has significant influence on buying behavior

**H2:** Brand trust has significant influence on buying behavior



**Figure 1. Theoretical Research Framework of the Study.**

**III. METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH FINDINGS**

In order to study the impact of brand image and brand trust on consumer purchasing behavior, a survey method was used. The questionnaire we designed consists of two parts. The first part is the personal profile of the respondent, including age, gender, marital status and education level, measured on a nominal scale. The second part dealt with questions related to the variables, namely, brand image, brand trust and consumer purchasing behavior measured using a 5-point Likert scale.

We selected the educational institutes (Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology) as sampling frame of our study, from which we distributed questionnaire by adopting non probability convenient sampling technique. 142 questionnaires were correctly responded by respondents.

Below given tables clearly explain the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondent**

Demographic Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	84	59.2%
Female	58	40.8%
Total	142	100%
Age		
<20	34	23.9%
20-24	53	37.3%
25-30	28	19.7%

31-35	16	11.3%
>35	11	7.7%
Total	142	100%
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	137	96.5%
Married	5	3.5%
Widow/Divorced	0	0%
Total	142	100%
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor	57	40.1%
Master	58	40.8%
PhD	27	19%
Total	142	100%

The characteristics of the respondents in this study are shown in Table 1. 84 were filled by male and 58 filled by female respondents whose percentage is 59.2% and 40.8% respectively. Mostly respondents were between the age group of 20-24 years whose percentage is 37.3%.

Following to this 23.9% were of the age under 20 years old, 19.7% were of the age 25-30, 11.3% were of the age group 31-35 and 7.7% of the age below 35 years. Among these respondents 96.5% respondents were single and 3.5% respondents were married. Furthermore respondents were 40.1%,40.8% and 19% belonged to Bachelor, Master and PhD respectively.

To observe the impact of brand image and brand trust on consumer buying behavior we used the Cronbach's Alpha test to check the reliability of our study. In descriptive statistics, we calculated mean and deviation to check the inclination of our respondents. To measure the relationship between variables we used the multiple regression analysis and Pearson correlations. All these tests were conducted with IBM SPSS Statistics 21 program.

**Table 2. Reliability Test**

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	Status
Brand Image	0.719	Reliable
Brand Trust	0.663	Reliable
Buying Behavior	0.743	Reliable

The reliability test results of this study are shown in Table 2. The study variables were considered reliable if the Cronbach's alpha value was greater than 0.6. It can be seen from Table 2 that the Cronbach's alpha value of the brand image variable is 0.719, the Cronbach's alpha value of the brand trust variable is 0.663, and the Cronbach's alpha value of buying behavior variable is 0.743. These results indicate that all variables in this study are considered reliable as the Cronbach's value is greater than 0.6.

**Table 3. Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	,876 <sup>a</sup>	,767	,764	,19055	,180

**a. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Trust, Brand Image**

**b. Dependent Variable: Buying Behavior**

Table 3 indicates the entire summary of findings. R square shows the variation in the Consumer buying behavior (dependent variable) due to the influence of brand image and brand trust (independent variables). R square value is 0.767 it means that independent variables (brand image and brand trust) have 76.7 % influences on dependent variable (Consumer buying behavior). Durbin-Watson was calculated to examine the type of correlation among the study variables either correlation is positive, negative or zero. Durbin-Watson is 0.180 which is less than 2 and it demonstrates that the study variables have positive autocorrelation.

**Table 4. ANOVA**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	16,659	2	8,330	229,397	,000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	5,047	139	,036		
	Total	21,707	141			

**a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behavior**

**b. Predictors: (Constant), Brand Trust, Brand Image**

Table 4 shows the level of significance whether it is acceptable or not. Results shows that significant level is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. Thus is acceptable and shows strong impact of brand image and brand trust on Consumer buying behavior.

**Table 5. Coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1,580	,135		11,673	,000
	Brand Image	,174	,032	,236	5,491	,000
	Brand Trust	,472	,026	,775	18,027	,000

**a. Dependent Variable: Buying Behavior**

Table 5 shows beta values which mean individual independent variables influence on dependent variable. Result indicated that brand trust has the strong influence on consumer buying behavior with beta value 0.775. It explains that 77.5% variation in consumer buying behavior cause due to brand image which is significant at 0.000 and supported H2. Similarly brand image has also strong impact on Consumer buying behavior with beta value 0.236. It explains that 23.6% variation in consumer buying behavior cause due to brand image which is significant at 0.000 and supported to H1. It shows that H1 is partly and weekly supported as compare to H2.

**Table 6. Descriptive statistics**

Variables	Indicators	Mean		Standard Dev.	N
		Indicator	Variable		
Brand Image	Reputation	3.711	3.945	0.532	142
	Saliency	4.387			142
	Familiarity	4.127			142
	Trustworthy	3.901			142
	Service Excellency	3.599			142
Brand Trust	Reliability	3.803	3.863	0.644	142
	Intention	3.923			142
Buying Behavior	Willingness to pay more	4.718	4.086	0.392	142
	Willingness to support	4.035			142
	Willingness to recommend	3.507			142

According to Table 3, brand image’s average score is 3.739 and it closes to 4. What it means is most of the answers of respondents are positive and respondents’ reactions support the brand image on the five-point Likert scale. Standard deviation for the brand image is 0.532. On the other hand, mean value of brand trust is 3.863 and it also closes to 4. This mean value shows that majority of respondents consider brand trust as a positive factor having enough impact on their buying behavior. Standard deviation for the brand trust is 0.644.

**Table 7. Correlation Analysis**

		Brand Image	Brand Trust	Consumer Buying Behavior
Brand Image	P. Correlation	1	,306**	,473**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		,000	,000
	N	142	142	142
Brand Trust	P. Correlation	,306**	1	,847**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000		,000
	N	142	142	142
Consumer Buying Behavior	P. Correlation	,473**	,847**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	,000	,000	
	N	142	142	142

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

Correlation analysis shows that there is a positive connection between brand image and buying behavior with the value of 0.473 and 1% significance. Brand trust and consumer buying behavior are also positively correlated with each other, the value is 0.847, and significance of 1%.

#### IV. DISCUSSION

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the impact of brand image and brand trust on consumer buying behavior. After applying all necessary statistical tests results shows that a strong brand image can create a positive perception of the product or service in the minds of consumers. This perception often leads to increased trust in the brand, as consumers believe that the brand will deliver on its promises. When consumers trust a brand, they are more likely to make repeat purchases and recommend the brand to others. Trust plays a crucial role in building long-term customer relationships and loyalty. Moreover, a positive brand image and trust can influence consumers' buying decisions by reducing their perceived risk. If consumers trust a brand and have a positive perception of it, they are more confident in their decision to purchase, even if there are other alternatives available in the market. Overall, the positive results of this study can highlight the importance of cultivating a strong brand image and building trust with consumers. These factors have a significant impact on consumer buying behavior and can ultimately contribute to the success of a brand in the market.

#### V. CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

In conclusion, the research findings highlight the significant role of brand image and brand trust in influencing consumer buying behavior. A strong and positive brand image helps create a favorable perception of the brand in the minds of consumers, making them more likely to consider and choose the brand for their purchases. Additionally, establishing brand trust through consistent delivery of promises and excellent customer service builds confidence and loyalty among consumers, leading to increased purchase intentions and repeat purchases. These two independent variables, namely brand image and brand trust have a significant role in consumers purchasing decisions. This is a real picture of society that brand image playing a crucial role to change the people's buying behavior. Based on the results of this study, it is suggested that companies should focus more on developing their brand image because it was found that most of the consumers were influenced by it.

Although the results are interesting and confirm previous research, the study has few limitations. Limitations of this study include observing the impact of brand image on purchasing behavior and observe the mediating role of brand trust in the relationship between brand image and purchasing behavior. In the other side, this present study only focuses on foreigner students of Nanjing University of Information Science and Technology, this research only analyzed and examined the link between brand image and brand trust, future investigations should focus on other factors.

#### VI. SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings that indicate a relationship between brand image, brand trust, and consumer buying behavior, companies should focus on building a strong brand image that resonates with their target audience. By fostering brand trust through delivering on brand promises and providing excellent customer service, companies can establish a loyal customer base. Effective brand communication and reputation management are crucial in maintaining positive perception and influencing consumer preferences. Conducting market research to understand consumer behavior is essential for aligning brand image and messaging with customer values.

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