

Consumer Behavioural Model and the Mediating Role of Branding Concept on Consumer Willingness to Purchase Electronics Products

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Abstract: This study ascertained the impact of the consumer behavioural model and the mediating role of the branding concept on consumer willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand in South Africa. This objective is motivated by the highly competitive and dynamic nature of the electronics market, where various factors influence consumers in their decision-making processes. Consequently, additional conceptual variables may also affect consumers' willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand. To achieve the study's objective, a quantitative research method was employed, involving data collection from 150 students at a university in Mthatha. Inferential statistical analysis was conducted through structural equation modelling to elucidate the relationships between variables, utilising SmartPLS and SPSS software as analytical tools. The findings of this study revealed a positive and significant impact of individual factors and branding concepts on consumer willingness to purchase the Samsung family brand. In contrast, social factors and the purchase situation exhibited a positive impact but were deemed insignificant regarding consumer willingness to purchase the brand. Therefore, it is established that, in addition to the positive impact of the consumer behavioural model on consumer willingness to purchase a Samsung

family brand, the branding concept also plays a mediating role in this willingness. This study recommends that dealers and marketers of the Samsung family brand place greater emphasis on consumer-valued aspects of both social factors and the purchasing situation, with a particular focus on individual factors and the branding concept, to attract more consumers, particularly rural university students in South Africa.

Keywords: Consumer behaviour, branding concept, willingness to purchase, electronics products.

1. Introduction

In the dynamic landscape of consumer behaviour, comprehending the intricate relationship between consumer preferences and purchasing decisions is essential for success in the market. The study of consumer behaviour extends beyond the mere act of purchasing products and encompasses an examination of how the presence or absence of possessions affects quality of life, self-perception, and interpersonal relationships (Solomon et al., 2019). Consumer behaviour significantly influences decision-making processes, including the willingness to purchase electronic products (Jisana, 2019). A notable area of interest is the impact of branding on consumer behaviour, particularly in the context of electronic products. Branding not only differentiates products but also plays a pivotal role in shaping consumer perceptions, preferences, and purchase intentions (Bard, 2018). According to Laroche et al. (2020), brand personality, brand image, and brand trust are critical elements that affect consumers' purchasing decisions. Previous research has established that brand awareness and knowledge are vital factors influencing customer purchasing intentions, with a substantial link between awareness and purchasing behaviour (Bashir et al., 2019). Brand awareness pertains to consumers' familiarity with the brand, whereas brand knowledge refers to their understanding of the brand's features, benefits, and characteristics (Zia et al., 2021). These aspects of branding are fundamental in shaping consumer behaviour, as consumers often confront complex decisions when

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selecting electronic devices, taking into account factors such as functionality, design, and perceived value for money. This renders the decision-making process rational, as consumers may develop attachments to brands that resonate with their lifestyles and values (Tae et al., 2020). By investigating how branding influences consumer perceptions and attitudes, this study aims to enhance understanding of its impact on purchase intentions and decision-making processes.

The consumer electronics market is characterised by a high level of competition and dynamism, with consumers' decision-making processes influenced by a myriad of factors. The consumer behavioural model has been extensively employed to investigate the determinants that affect consumer behaviour and purchase intentions (Cheng & Tseng, 2019; Solomon et al., 2019). Samsung, as a leading brand within the consumer electronics sector, relies on its capacity to attract and retain consumers to maintain its market position. The concept of branding has been identified as a crucial element in shaping consumers' perceptions and attitudes towards a brand (Keller, 2018). Accordingly, it is imperative for Samsung to comprehend the mediating role that branding plays in the relationship between consumer behaviour and purchase intention. Mthatha, located in the Eastern Cape Province of South Africa, represents an emerging market for consumer electronics, with Samsung being one of the predominant brands in the region.

Despite the increasing significance of comprehending consumer behaviour, previous studies underscore the importance of branding in influencing consumer preferences and behaviours. Research conducted by Tasci (2021) reveals that robust brand equity enhances consumer loyalty and the propensity to pay premium prices. Furthermore, Kapferer and Valette-Florence (2018) accentuate the role of branding within the consumer decision-making process, demonstrating how brand associations and perceptions can impact purchase intentions. Notwithstanding these insights, there exists a paucity of empirical research specifically addressing how branding concepts mediate consumer willingness to purchase electronic products. Existing literature often tends to generalise findings and predominantly focuses on either consumer behaviour or branding, thereby neglecting the intricate relationship between branding and consumer willingness to purchase electronics (Huang & Kuo, 2018).

This study is situated within the context of examining the significance of the consumer behavioural model and the mediating role of the branding concept on consumer willingness to purchase the Samsung family brand in Mthatha. Therefore, the primary research objective of this investigation is to analyse the significance of the consumer behavioural model and the mediating role of the branding concept on consumer willingness to purchase the Samsung family brand in Mthatha.

This study is anticipated to yield both academic and practical contributions. Practically, the findings are expected to be relevant to electronics brand owners and marketers operating in Mthatha, focusing on the significance of the consumer behavioural model and the mediating role of the branding concept on consumer willingness to purchase the Samsung family brand in the rural township of Mthatha within the Eastern Cape Province. Additionally, the study findings are expected to contribute to the generation of new academic insights within the existing body of empirical literature, particularly in the context of South Africa's consumer electronics industry.

1.1 Theoretical background and justification

Two theories underpinning this study are the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) and the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA). In 1985, Icek Ajzen proposed the Theory of Planned Behaviour (Yong, 2020). According to Ajzen (2020), this theory holds that an individual's behaviour is influenced by their attitude towards the behaviour, their perception of the social norms associated with that behaviour, and their perceived control over it. In this context, attitude refers to a person's positive or negative evaluation of their behaviour, subjective norm refers to the social pressure to perform or not perform that behaviour, and behavioural control refers to the perceived ease or difficulty of performing it

(Ajzen et al., 2020). In the context of this study, TPB plays a critical role as the branding concept significantly influences customer behavioural decisions regarding brand awareness and perceived benevolence. Consumers make these decisions based on their moral and personal convictions (Qonongo, 2021). TPB is adopted for this study because consumers' willingness to purchase a Samsung Family brand in Mthatha is based on their behavioural decisions, and their awareness of the brand also matters. It is believed that if consumers are aware of the brand, possess sufficient knowledge about it, and perceive it as benevolent, they are more likely to be willing to purchase it (Cheng & Tseng, 2019).

Ajzen and Fishbein's 1980 Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) emphasises attitudes, subjective norms, and behaviours directed towards a specific focus (Sok et al., 2021). According to the theory of reasoned action, behavioural intentions are the most reliable predictor of an individual's actions (Yong, 2020). A behavioural intention is an anticipated behaviour that conveys expectations regarding various types of behaviour in a specific context. It is also regarded as the likelihood of acting in a particular manner (Pattanayak et al., 2022). Individuals' emotions, whether positive or negative, impact the formation of behavioural intentions (Nawjin & Fricke, 2015; Gupta et al., 2021). TRA is essential for this study as it acknowledges the significance of attitudes and social factors while applying them specifically to the behaviour of interest.

As mentioned, the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) emphasises the role of attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioural control in predicting behavioural intention. However, this study delves deeper into the branding concept, which acts as an external factor influencing consumer behaviour. TPB does not fully capture this external aspect, which is where the Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) comes in. TRA focuses on attitude and subjective norms as determinants of intention (Sok et al., 2021), allowing the researcher to incorporate the influence of brand image (attitude) and the social perception of the brand (subjective norm) (Kapferer & Valette-Florence, 2018).

TPB and TRA provide valuable insights into human behaviour and explanations for an individual's intentions and actions. These theories have been validated through numerous studies. For instance, a study by Ajzen (2020) found a significant relationship between individuals' intentions and their behaviour; this finding is supported by research conducted by Chen et al. (2021), which showed that individuals who perceived social norms favouring a particular behaviour were more likely to engage in that behaviour.

The researcher adopted these theories together because TPB assumes that individuals have the opportunity and resources to perform the intended behaviour. TRA focuses solely on intention formation, enabling the researcher to examine the mediating role of branding on consumer willingness to purchase—a stage that precedes the actual purchase. This approach illustrates how branding influences the decision-making process. A study by Bamberg et al. (2020) indicates that these two theories are not only effective in highlighting and predicting intentions and human behaviour, but they also offer clear and concise frameworks for academic studies. This allows researchers to gain a deeper understanding of the factors influencing individuals' decisions and actions.

1.2 Consumer behavioural model

In 1969, J.A. Howard and Jagdish Seth proposed a model of buyer behaviour. According to Howard and Seth (1969), this model aims to explain the consumer's brand choice behaviour and its influence on purchase decisions. In the field of consumer behaviour, a consumer behavioural model can be defined as a theoretical framework for explaining how and why consumers make purchase decisions (Horner & Swarbrooke, 2021). Employing the consumer behavioural model allows researchers to outline an overview of consumer decisions that can be predicted up to the moment of conversion, thereby enabling them to guide each step of the buyer's journey accurately (Han, 2021).

The components of the model include individual factors, which are the characteristics of the individual consumer that influence their decision-making. Secondly, social factors refer to external influences on consumer behaviour, including cultural, societal, and family factors (Kotler et al., 2017). Lastly, the purchase situation pertains to the specific circumstances or context in which a consumer makes a purchase (Jisana, 2019). These factors can all influence the consumer decision-making process, which is the central component of the model. This is essential for this study because understanding consumers is not an easy task. It can be asserted that it is almost impossible to predict exactly how they will act in a particular situation, specifically regarding their willingness to purchase the brand (Verma, 2021). Thus, individual factors, social factors, and purchase situations are key elements discussed under the Consumer Behavioural Model, as illustrated in Figure 1.

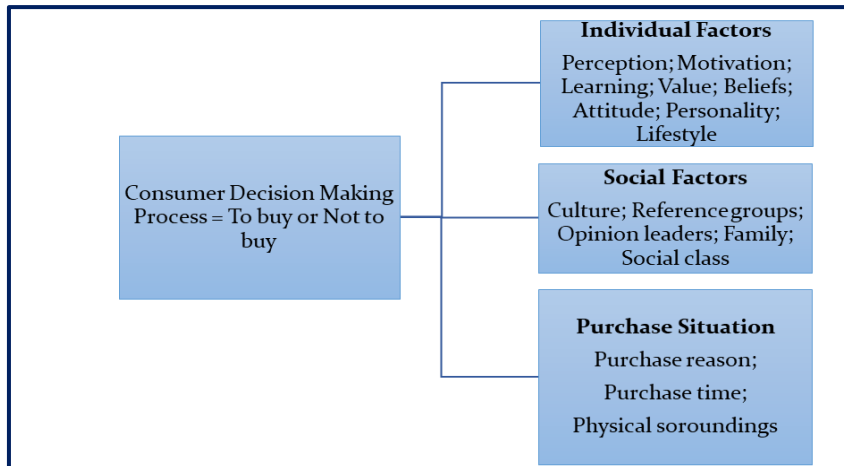


Figure 1: Consumer Behavioural Model (Howard-Sheth Model, 1969)

As shown in Figure 1, individual factors refer to consumers' personal characteristics that influence their purchasing behaviour and decision-making (Gajjar, 2019). One of the individual factors scholars have identified is consumer attitude. Consumer attitude refers to consumers' positive or negative feelings and evaluations towards a product or brand (Qazzafi, 2020). Consumer attitude towards a brand significantly impacts their willingness to purchase that brand (Bae & Hyun, 2022). Consumers are more likely to purchase Samsung family brands if they have a positive attitude towards them.

Social factors also impact consumers' buying behaviour. Social factors refer to external influences on consumers' behaviour, including cultural, societal, and family factors (Kotler et al., 2017). These include reference groups, family, role, and status (Gajjar, 2019). According to Chao and Chen (2021), social factors such as reference groups, family, and social status significantly impact consumers' purchase intentions towards the Samsung family brand. Reference groups, for example, can influence consumers' perception of the brand and their willingness to buy it (Valenzuela, 2018). Similarly, family members can influence each other's purchasing decisions, and social status can affect consumers' desire to be associated with certain brands (Verma, 2021). A study by Hafstrom et al. (2021) found that social surroundings, such as the presence of family or friends, can influence consumer behaviour. Consumers tend to engage in consumption behaviours that align with their social identity. In contrast, time pressure can lead consumers to make quick purchase decisions, resulting in impulse buying behaviour.

As depicted in Figure 1, the purchase situation refers to a specific circumstance or context in which a consumer makes a purchase (Jisana, 2019). One purchase situation identified is need recognition (Akoglu & Ozbek, 2022). The recognition of a need refers to the consumer realising that they have a problem or a need that can be satisfied by purchasing a product or service that will solve their problem or meet their needs (Bae & Hyun, 2022). According to Nwankwo and Hamidu (2018),

consumers are more likely to purchase a Samsung family brand product if they recognise a need for it, such as the need for an upgraded phone, TV, or any other electronic device.

The model in the figure is relevant to the study as it outlines an overview of the research. The variables and their components are clearly depicted. It provides a clear picture of the influences on consumers' decision-making processes that lead to purchasing that brand, which speaks to consumer willingness to purchase in this case. The model depicted in Figure 1 does not include the external variable (Branding Concept, which is the mediating variable) that the researcher now wants to introduce into the model to examine the relationships among the variables (individual factors, social factors, and purchase situation) with consumer willingness to purchase.

2. Literature Review

Branding is a strategic marketing activity that involves creating an identifiable name, design, symbol, or other feature (Solomon et al., 2019). This process helps to identify and distinguish a product or service from its competitors. According to Kim and Kim (2019), a positive brand image can enhance consumers' perceptions of quality, value, and trustworthiness, which can increase their willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand product. Another important aspect of branding is brand loyalty, which refers to the degree to which consumers remain committed to a brand and continue to purchase it over time (Akoglu & Ozbek, 2022). Nwankwo and Hamidu (2018) suggest that brand loyalty can be influenced by various branding strategies, including brand awareness, brand associations, and brand differentiation. If consumers perceive Samsung family brand products to be unique, reliable, and valuable, they are more likely to remain loyal to the brand.

Branding is significant because it helps companies differentiate their products from those of competitors, build customer loyalty, and create long-term value for the business (Bernarto et al., 2020). According to Ntobela and Mbukanma (2023) and Lee, Lee, and Yoo (2019), branding can also assist companies in establishing a strong market position, creating a positive brand image, and increasing brand equity.

The branding concept acts as a bridge between the consumer behavioural model and consumer willingness to purchase. It serves as a mediator; when a company effectively communicates its brand concept, it can influence how consumers process information, evaluate options, and ultimately become more willing to choose their brand. The branding concept guides consumers in navigating the brand and differentiating it from competitors.

Consumer willingness to purchase refers to a customer's inclination or intention to buy a product or service (Bashir et al., 2019). This concept is significant in consumer behaviour, as it helps businesses better understand the factors influencing consumers' purchasing decisions and develop more effective brand strategies (Kim et al., 2017). According to Anselmsson et al. (2021), consumers' willingness to purchase is influenced by their brand attachment, brand trust, and perceived value of the brand. Valenzuela (2018) conducted a study that found consumers' willingness to purchase is affected by both the identity of the brand and the social identity benefits derived from using it. Understanding consumers' willingness to purchase can help businesses or brands identify potential consumers' needs and preferences, ultimately increasing sales (Akoglu & Ozbek, 2022).

3. Research Methods

There are various approaches to conducting research, such as quantitative, qualitative, and a combination of both (mixed methods) (Taherdoost, 2022). The quantitative method focuses on analysing numerical data and utilising statistical analysis to address research inquiries. It involves identifying patterns, relationships, and trends within the data (Bryman, 2016). Surveys, experiments, and questionnaires are commonly employed in quantitative research. On the other hand, qualitative research employs a systematic and subjective approach to describe life experiences and assign

significance to them (Asenahabi, 2019). Qualitative studies aim to explore the ideas, perceptions, opinions, and beliefs of the individuals being studied, which cannot be quantitatively measured (Denzin & Lincoln, 2019). Lastly, the mixed-method approach combines elements from both quantitative and qualitative research methods. By utilising this approach, researchers can gain a more comprehensive understanding compared to using only one method. It is particularly useful when addressing research questions that require both numerical and non-numerical data (Stern et al., 2021). For the benefit of this study, the researcher employed a quantitative research method, which was advantageous as it aimed to prove a general assumption regarding the consumer behavioural model and the mediating role of the branding concept on consumer willingness to buy the Samsung family brand in Mthatha.

It is crucial to note that research design significantly impacts the quality and validity of any study (Bekele & Ago, 2022). This study adopted a deductive research design, which involves constructing hypotheses based on previous literature, designing the sampling process and questionnaire, and determining the data collection and analysis approach. The target population for this study comprised both undergraduate and postgraduate students at a university in Mthatha who use the Samsung brand. It was important for the target population to be sufficiently specific to avoid including participants who were not representative of the research needs, thereby preventing misrepresentation of the population of interest (Casteel & Bridier, 2021).

Probability sampling and non-probability sampling are the two types of sampling. Probability sampling is a method in which each member of the population has a known probability of being selected for the sample, whereas non-probability sampling involves the researcher selecting samples based on subjective judgement rather than random selection (Bhardwaj, 2019). The researcher opted for non-probability sampling as it facilitated the easy identification of the target audience, specifically individuals who use the Samsung family brand. Non-probability sampling involves selecting individuals or units from a larger population based on specific characteristics (Bekele & Ago, 2022).

According to a study by Kadam et al. (2019), determining sample size is a critical step in research design, and researchers should ensure that their sample size is adequate to achieve their study objectives. This study collected data from 150 students at one of the universities in Mthatha. The focus on these individuals as participants was based on their use of the Samsung family brand, with the anticipation that they would provide insights to help the study meet its objectives. The data collection technique employed was a questionnaire. Questionnaires can be distributed to many participants remotely, and respondents may be more likely to provide honest answers when they are anonymous, making this a convenient data collection technique for both researchers and participants (Christensen et al., 2020). This questionnaire measured consumers' attitudes towards electronic products and the effectiveness of branding strategies. The researcher utilised SPSS and SmartPLS, which assisted in discovering trends and forecasting models, leading to robust conclusions. To test reliability and validity, the researcher used Cronbach Alpha and Composite Reliability.

To uphold research ethical standards, the researcher obtained an ethics clearance certificate from one of the universities in the Eastern Cape Research Ethics Committee, with protocol number 2023/HN/EBS-6083. To statistically examine the significance of the consumer behavioural model and the mediating role of branding concepts on consumer willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand in Mthatha, South Africa, the following conceptual model (see Figure 2) was developed and tested:

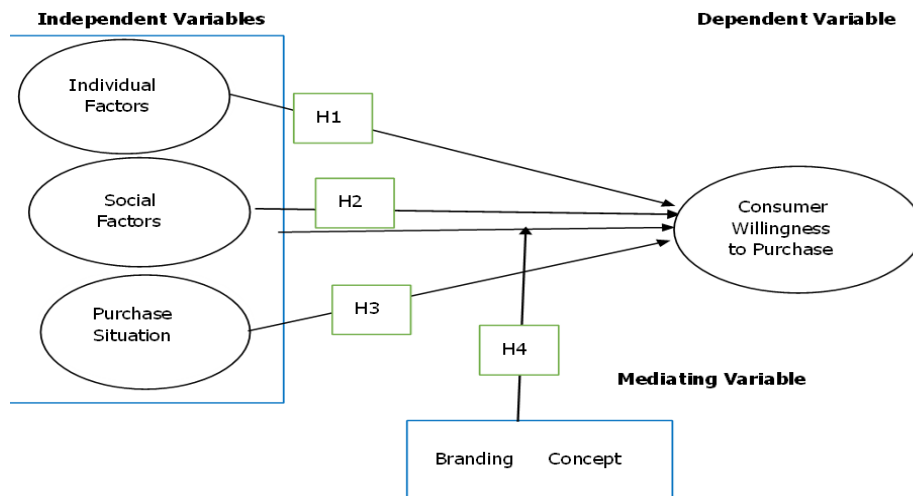


Figure 2: Conceptual model

The conceptual model presented in Figure 2 illustrates the assumed relationships between consumer behavioural factors and their impact on consumer willingness to purchase, as well as the mediating effect of the branding concept on consumer willingness to purchase. Accordingly, the following hypotheses were developed and tested:

- **H1:** There is a positive relationship between individual factors and consumer willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand in Mthatha.
- **H2:** There is a positive relationship between social factors and consumer willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand in Mthatha.
- **H3:** There is a positive relationship between the purchase situation and consumer willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand in Mthatha.
- **H4:** The branding concept mediates the relationship between the consumer behavioural model and consumer willingness to purchase a Samsung family brand in Mthatha.

4. Findings and Discussions

Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values were used by the researcher to test the reliability. Cronbach's alpha should be greater than 0.7 to be considered credible, according to Adeniran (2019). All the Cronbach alpha values are greater than 0.7, with BC = 0.802, CWP = 0.874, IF = 0.919, PS = 0.862, and SF = 0.795. The threshold for composite reliability should be greater than 0.6 to be acceptable (Rani et al., 2021); all the variables tested in the study fall within the acceptable threshold.

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Branding Concept	0.802	0.817	0.858	0.505
Consumer willingness to purchase	0.874	0.876	0.906	0.616
Individual factors	0.919	0.923	0.937	0.714
Purchase Situation	0.862	0.872	0.898	0.597
Social Factors	0.795	0.812	0.856	0.546

A correlation statistical test was conducted to determine the pattern of relationships between the variables. The relationship between Branding Concept and Consumer Willingness to Purchase is (0.735), indicating a strong correlation. Individual Factors and Consumer Willingness to Purchase showed a strong relationship of (0.704). Purchase Situation and Consumer Willingness to Purchase also exhibited a strong relationship of (0.624). Social Factors and Consumer Willingness to Purchase had a relationship that is deemed moderate (0.588). In the table above, the strongest relationship exists between Branding Concept and Consumer Willingness to Purchase, while the lowest relationship is between Social Factors and Consumer Willingness to Purchase.

Table 2: Correlations matrix of the variables

	Branding concept	Consumer willingness to purchase	Individual factors	Purchase situation	Social factors
Branding concept	1.000				
Consumer willingness to purchase	0.735	1.000			
Individual factors	0.677	0.704	1.000		
Purchase Situation	0.702	0.624	0.730	1.000	
Social factors	0.622	0.588	0.710	0.705	1.000

To test and assess the multivariate causal linkage between independent, mediating, and dependent variables, the hypothesised model for the study was tested using the Structural Equation Model, and the output is presented below.

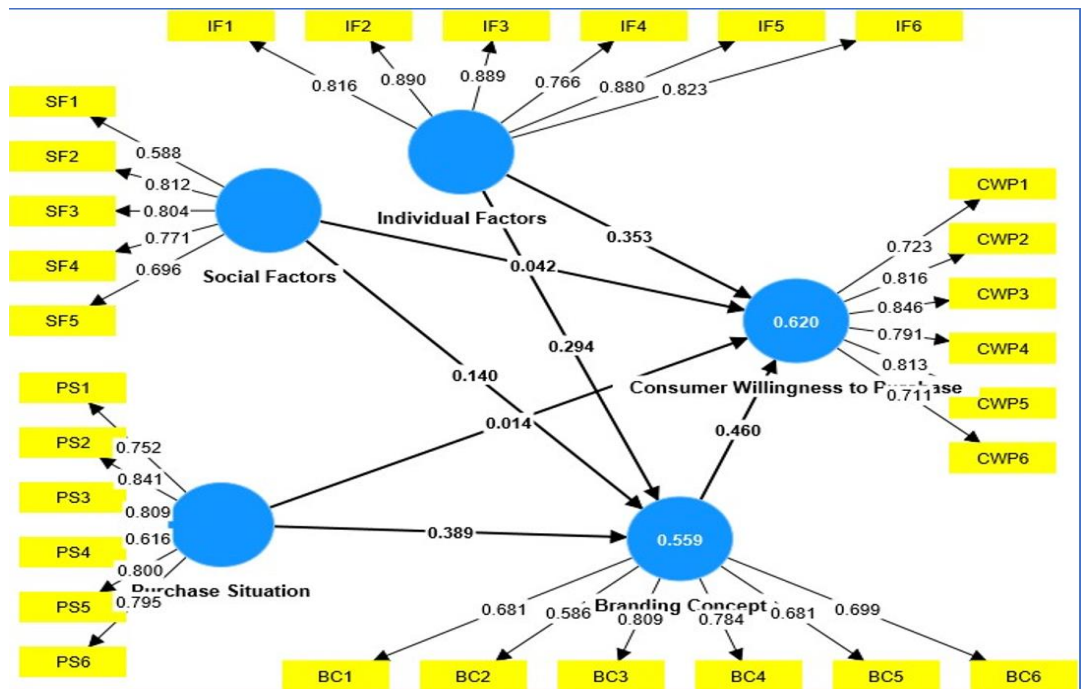


Figure 3: Structural equation model

All three tested independent variables have a positive relationship with Consumer Willingness to Purchase. Branding Concept has the strongest relationship with Consumer Willingness to Purchase, obtaining 0.460, followed by Individual Factors, which obtained 0.353, then Social Factors at 0.042, and lastly, Purchase Situation at 0.014, which is the lowest. All of these indicate a positive relationship with consumer’s willingness to purchase. To obtain and validate the directed dependencies among the variables, a Path Analysis was conducted, as shown in the table below.

Table 3: Path analysis output

Hypothesised relationship	Hypotheses	Path Coefficient	T-statistics	P-value	Outcome
IF - CWP	H1	0.353	3.865	0.000	Significant and supported
SF - CWP	H2	0.042	0.541	0.589	Insignificant and not supported
PS - CWP	H3	0.014	0.102	0.919	Insignificant and not supported
BC - CWP	H4	0.460	3.806	0.000	Significant and supported

In line with the objective of this study, which aimed to examine the impact of the consumer behavioural model and the mediating role of the branding concept on consumer willingness to purchase the Samsung family brand, four hypotheses were formulated. Individual path coefficients of H1, H2, H3, and H4 were 0.353, 0.042, 0.014, and 0.460, respectively. These results indicate that all hypothesised relationships have a positive relationship.

4.1 Discussion of findings

Findings from H1 supported the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between individual factors and consumer willingness to purchase. A study by Jang and Lennon (2019) found that income, education, and age were all positively related to consumer willingness to purchase smartphones. The path coefficient of 0.353 was obtained after testing H1. Results also showed that individual factors were significantly positively related ($t=3.865$, $p=0.000$) to consumer willingness to purchase. Therefore, personality, age, income level, and values influence consumers' decisions to purchase the Samsung family brand.

The findings from H2 supported the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between social factors and consumer willingness to purchase, with a path coefficient of 0.042 obtained. A study by Wang et al. (2021) found that consumers are more likely to purchase products recommended by their family and friends. It was also revealed that this hypothesis was influenced by a social theory stating that consumers are affected by the opinions and behaviour of others. The results indicated that the relationship between social factors and consumer willingness to purchase was positively related but insignificant ($t=0.541$, $p=0.589$). Therefore, family, friends, and reference groups do stimulate consumer willingness to purchase the Samsung family brand.

The findings from H3 supported the hypothesis that there is a positive relationship between purchase situation and consumer willingness to purchase, with a path coefficient of 0.014 obtained. A study by Kumar and Nayyar (2020) indicated that consumers who perceive a brand as having a strong image are more likely to purchase from that brand, even if the purchase situation is not convenient. As discussed, the purchase situation pertains to the context in which a consumer makes a purchase. The results obtained indicated that the relationship between purchase situation and consumer willingness to purchase was positively related but insignificant ($t=0.102$, $p=0.919$). From the results,

it can be inferred that location, the type of product being purchased, and the consumer's emotional state influence consumer willingness to purchase.

In the context of the consumer behavioural model, the branding concept acted as a mediator between the consumer behavioural model and consumer willingness to purchase. This is supported by a study by Park et al. (2019), which found that brand loyalty mediated the relationship between customer satisfaction and customer repurchase intention. This suggests that branding can influence consumer willingness to purchase by affecting the different stages of the consumer behavioural model. The findings of H4 supported the hypothesis that branding concepts mediate between the consumer behavioural model and consumer willingness to purchase, with a path coefficient of 0.460 obtained after testing H4. Additionally, the results indicated that brand loyalty was significantly positively related ($t=3.806$, $p=0.000$). This means that brand loyalty, brand awareness, brand trust, reliability, and uniqueness impact the mediation between the consumer behavioural model and consumer willingness to purchase.

Understanding consumer behaviour provides electronic brand owners with in-depth insights into consumer preferences, motivations, and decision-making processes. By leveraging this information, electronic brands can develop targeted marketing campaigns, position their products effectively, create compelling promotional strategies, and design products that resonate with consumers. Consequently, electronic brands within the South African context can maximise their marketing efforts and drive brand loyalty and sales. Furthermore, the findings of this study have successfully redefined the consumer behavioural model by incorporating the branding concept, highlighting its significance within the chain of consumer decision-making (see Figure 4).

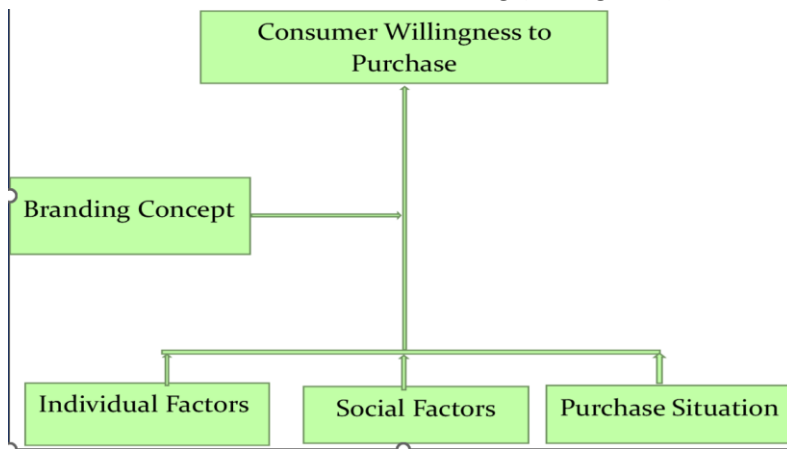


Figure 4: Redefined consumer behavioural model

The distinction between Figure 1 and Figure 4 is that Figure 4 illustrates the relationship among the dependent variables, the mediating variable, and the independent variable. In contrast, Figure 1 solely depicts the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. While previous research has examined existing consumer behavioural models, this study aims to introduce and test a new variable within that framework. Specifically, the research seeks to assess the impact of incorporating the branding concept as a mediating variable on the relationship between the dependent and independent variables. The findings of this study demonstrate that the branding concept enhances the relationship between the dependent and independent variables, a conclusion supported by the results presented in Figure 3. These results indicate a strong positive relationship among the variables following the introduction of the branding concept. Consequently, it is recommended that dealers and marketers of electronic brands focus not only on individual factors, social factors, and purchase situations but also on the branding concept in order to attract a greater number of consumers.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the significance of consumer behavioural models and the impact of branding concepts in mediating consumer propensity to purchase Samsung family brands at a university in Mthatha, Eastern Cape. Overall, the findings indicated that all of the hypotheses were corroborated. H1 ($\beta=0.353$), H2 ($\beta=0.042$), H3 ($\beta=0.14$), and H4 ($\beta=0.460$) demonstrated a positive relationship; however, only two variables were insignificant and not supported (H2 and H3). Consequently, the consumer behavioural model and the concept of branding, as a mediating variable, exhibited a positive association with consumer willingness to purchase. The findings of this study confirmed that individual factors, social factors, and purchase situations have a positive relationship with consumer willingness to purchase, while the branding concept mediates between the consumer behavioural model and consumer willingness to purchase.

Based on these findings, it is recommended that dealers and marketers of the Samsung family brand place greater emphasis on consumer-valued aspects of both social factors and purchase situations, but particularly on individual factors and branding concepts, in order to attract a larger consumer base, especially among rural university students in South Africa.

5. Declaration

Authors contributions: Conceptualisation (Z.N. & I.M.); Literature review (Z.N. & I.M.); methodology (Z.N. & I.M.); software (I.M.); validation (I.M.); formal analysis (Z.N. & I.M.); investigation (Z.N. & I.M.); data curation (Z.N.) drafting and preparation (Z.N. & I.M.); review and editing (I.M.); supervision (I.M.); project administration (Z.N.); funding acquisition (N/A). All authors have read and approved the published version of the article.

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Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Data availability: In accordance with ethical standards and the stipulations set forth in the consent agreement with participants, the data must be maintained as confidential. Nevertheless, individuals seeking further information may contact the corresponding author.

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