

Factors Affecting Brand Experience of Passenger Cars in Nepal

Bharat Rai, PhD¹, Ajaya Kumar Khadka², Indira Shrestha³

¹Principal Author

Tribhuvan University, Faculty of
Management,
Nepal Commerce Campus, Kathmandu,
Nepal
Email: bharat@ncc.edu.np
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8338-0824>

²Corresponding Author

Tribhuvan University, Faculty of
Management,
Nepal Commerce Campus, Kathmandu,
Nepal
Email: ajaya.khadka@ncc.tu.edu.np
<https://orcid.org/0009-0009-1140-6309>

³Co-author Author

Tribhuvan University, Faculty of
Management,
Nepal Commerce Campus, Kathmandu,
Nepal
Email: indirastha@ncc.edu.np
<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8449-7509>

Received on : September 5, 2023

Revised on : September 30, November
25, 2023

Accepted on: December 7, 2023

Published on : December 17, 2023

Cite this paper

Rai, B; Khadka, A.K. & Shrestha,
I. (2023). Factors Affecting Brand
Experience of Passenger Cars in Nepal.
The International Research Journal of
Management Science, 8(1), 40-56.

Copyright©Authors

Abstract

Purpose- The major goal of the research was to examine the influence of car's attributes, car's price, car's appearance, brand personality of car and self-congruity on brand experience toward passenger cars.

Design/Methodology/Approach- Positivist epistemology with predetermined hypotheses was used in the study. A six-point Likert scale structured questionnaire was used for collection the primary data. The population of the study was all passenger car users in Nepal. The sample size was 411 passenger car users. A judgmental sampling technique was used. A causal research design was used for the study. The effect of independent variables on dependent variables was identified through path analysis using Structural Equation Modeling.

Findings- The result of the study showed that attributes, brand personality and self-congruity have significant positive impact on brand experience but price and appearance have no significant influence on brand experience for passenger cars in Nepal.

Originality/Value-The study's findings offer a guideline for future researchers and business people for development of market. The conclusive findings of the research will contribute to brand experience theory. The study offers valuable insights to manufacturers and sellers for understanding the consumer behavior and brand experience of customers regarding passenger cars.

Implications- The findings of the study help for designing of marketing strategies to manufacturer and sellers towards the passenger cars. The findings have implications for developing and implementing brand experience strategies. Theoretically, it infers that consumers are more emotional than rational for buying prestigious products.

Keywords: Attribute, Price, Appearance, Brand Personality, Self-congruity

JEL Classification Codes: C12, L94, M31

Introduction

Most business organizations today make their plan for marketing strategies to obtain competitive advantages, protrude their products in competition, and thereby increase profits. The main aim of marketing within its theoretical and objective premises was to succeed the company in all terms of business goals it embraces and create a name with a higher fame that differentiates it from other companies, which ultimately creates its brand with a virtuous reputation. Creating such a virtuous brand can thus bring in consistently higher sales and ensure its product roll-out to be more successful because consistent marketing, as a business strategy, leads to trustworthy brand identity and consistent sales.

A brand, therefore, is any name, term, word, symbol, or other distinctive aspect of a company that identifies its goods and sets them apart from those of other companies (Rai et al., 2023; Sharma et al., 2023; Solomon & Stuart, 2002). Some business organizations use their brand name to position themselves in a competitive market. Marketing businesses can carry out a variety of crucial tasks to set one particular company's products and services apart from those of its rivals. People who purchase a certain brand may rely on the items to generate the maximum revenue, but they may also use the product's symbolic value to express their identity in the market (Slaughter et al., 2004). A strong brand can aid in establishing and identifying the brand in a cutthroat marketplace, resulting in a larger profit margin, lowering vulnerability to competitive actions, increasing intermediary cooperation, and aiding in establishing a successful brand image to the public, all of which increase the likelihood that consumers will buy the brand (Aaker, 1996).

According to Brakus et al. (2009), a brand's visual identity, packaging, verbal and written communications, and environment all have an impact on the feelings that consumers have about it and the actions that they do. Brand experience refers to a consumer's familiarity with a brand (Dahal, 2021; Ha & Perks, 2005; Rai et al., 2022). Customers are said to have a brand experience when they use a brand and form an opinion about it. Palmer (2010) defined brand experience as the sentiments, emotions, and experiences that prevent thinking and participation in what is happening, as opposed to an abstract reflection on an event.

In marketing practice, brand experience has received a lot of attention. Marketing professionals now recognize the importance of comprehending consumer perceptions of products when creating specific goods and service marketing strategies (Davis, 2010). Effective branding in marketing can boost sales of related products as well as just the primary product (Lassar et al., 1995). According to Wulandari (2016), a customer's perception of a brand is based on their brand ties. According to Ishida and Taylor (2012), brand experience has four dimensions: sensory brand experience, emotional brand experience, behavioral brand experience, and intellectual brand experience.

Brakus et al. (2009) incorporated information from various academic disciplines. They argue that a brand experience was developed and computed distinctly from other brand-related ideas. Before brand consumption, consumer experience begins with the brand and progresses through the phases until it is recorded as memorable occurrences (Tynan & McKechnie, 2009). Schitt (1999) defined a brand experience as an occasion that frequently results from close observation and participation in the occasion. The brand experience refers to the events (sensory and emotional) and behavioral responses from the standpoint of the consumer's subjective and internal reactions. Brand-related stimuli, including branding, packaging, advertising, and recognition, cause these reactions (Brakus, 2009).

When choosing an automobile, middle-class people prioritize price over all other considerations. When consumers are shopping for cars, price is a crucial factor that is first compared among various car brands

(Kwok et al., 2006). Alternatively, an elite class of individuals primarily considers the quality, performance, brand personality, brand image, self-congruity, features, etc. of the car and brands. The majority of customers engage in the products that are expensive and have a significant impact on their lives (Van Rijnsoever et al., 2009). It indicates that consumers choose expensive goods that influence their lives. Consumers typically compare their perception of themselves with the brand image of passenger cars, and expensive products may increase the image of brand users. Marketers historically did not prioritize the brand experience; instead, they prioritized consumer reasoning and characterized the brand as a collection of criteria (Brakus et al., 2009; Dahal, 2022; Gentile et al., 2007).

To evaluate the influence of these factors on brand experience while purchasing a passenger car, very little systematic research has been done. However, none of that research looked into the availability of automobile items in Nepal. Aforementioned are the major issues that the research is focusing on in particular.

The objective of the research paper is to identify the factors influencing brand experience toward passenger cars and the specific objectives of the research is to examine the impact of product attributes, product price, product appearance, self-congruity and brand personality on the brand experience toward buying passenger cars.

The factors influencing brand experience were defined as a variety of variables, including sales promotion, point of purchase, media advertisements, product features, function, price, country of origin, social factors, brand image, consumer satisfaction, brand personality, self-congruity, the customer's economic status, etc. In this study, car's attributes, car's price, car's appearance, brand personality of car, and self-congruity have been used as independent variables. The following framework has been established to conduct the analysis in a systematic manner based on a review of the brand experience literature.

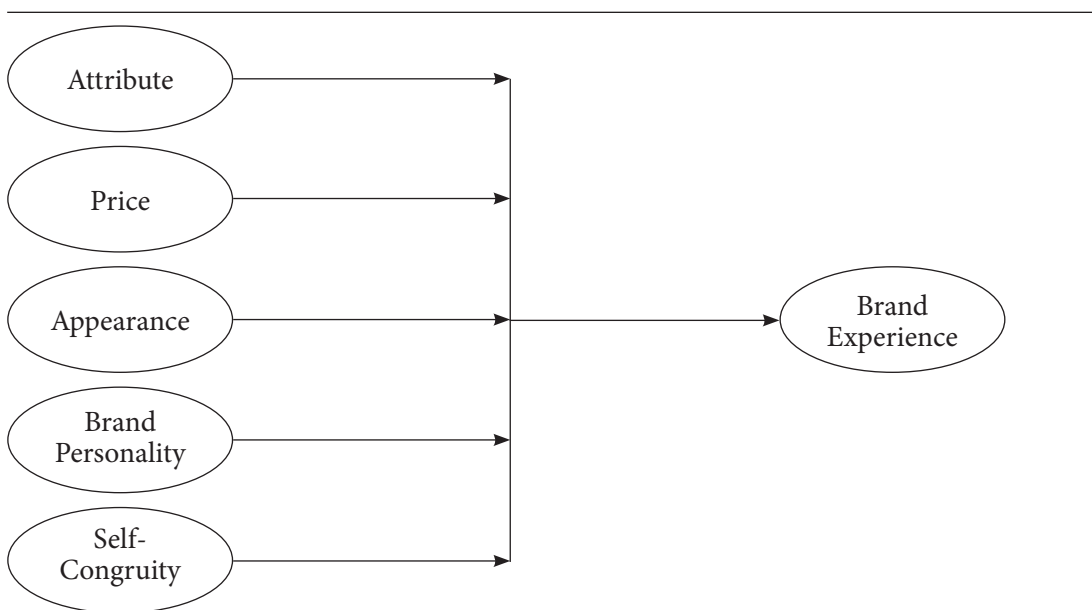


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Literature Review

Product Attribute

Park and Chang (2022) conducted research to determine how product features affect consumers' decision-making processes. It was discovered that only customers with significant brand usage experiences give a company's perceived superiority over competitors more weight when it comes to that particular quality.

Balamurugan and Selvalakshmi (2021) conducted a research in comparative analysis of consumer experience for the automobiles in the India. The results presented that the after sale services, quality of cars, attribute of cars, brand name of cars influence the customer satisfaction and customers' experience.

Dharmaraj (2020) carried out a study in behavior for Maruti cars in Tamilnadu. The finding displayed that most of the consumers in India prefer the Maruti car due to the attributes such as after sale service, price, interior decoration, color, design etc.

Phoung et al. (2020) did a study in factors affecting intention to purchase of car in Vietnam. The result of research showed that the brand of car has the strongest contribution for buying decision of consumers and then after safety and security features lower influence on the buying decision of passenger car.

Elammari and Cavus (2019) conducted study on the variables influencing students' smartphone purchase decisions. The study indicated that social considerations, brand image, and product qualities all had a substantial impact on consumers' purchasing decisions about Smartphone, but that price had no such impact. Additionally, Fathima (2019) discovered that the brand experience is significantly influenced by the mobile phone's look, price, and features.

Lavuri et al. (2019) carried out a research in brand experience for branded mobile and they found that there is significantly influenced by the features, cameras, style, and appearance of the mobile device. Rakib (2019) conducted a research in factors affecting university students' intentions to acquire mobile phones in Bangladesh, the cost; features, brand name, and social influence of the phones all have a major impact on those intentions.

In order to determine the variables influencing brand experience among students in colleges in Tamil Nadu, Saranya and Yganandan (2019) conducted a study. Researchers discovered that consumers' brand experiences when purchasing Smartphone are significantly affected of product's price and the characteristics of the Smartphone with the most cutting-edge technology. Sengar (2019) carried out a research in identifying factors influencing the purchaser's choice of vehicle, with a study carried out in the Pune. The study's findings indicated that factors including spare parts availability, capacity loading, mileage, and after-sales service have a significant influence on consumer experience for light commercial vehicles.

Bukhari (2018) conducted research to understand how Pakistani consumers buy western imported foods and discovered that factors such as product pricing, brand personality, self-concept, product characteristic, and brand trust significantly influence consumers' intentions to repurchase the imported foods.

Nadzri et al. (2016) looked into the national automotive industry's antecedents of brand experience. The study's major goal was to determine how service, brand perception, and automobile brand features

affected brand experience. The study's findings indicated that the service has no appreciable impact on consumer perception of the brand. The next step is to identify the car's attributes and brand image that have a major impact on the brand experience.

H1: Product attributes significant positive impact of on brand experience.

Product Price

In Nepal, Rai (2021) studied the variables influencing consumers' intentions to buy Smartphone. The result revealed consumers' intentions to buy Smartphone was not influenced by brand personality. Additionally, it was discovered that the price of the Smartphone and its features have a significant influence customers' intentions to acquire a Smartphone in Nepal. Smartphone buyers are mostly influenced by price and product characteristics, not by the brand's personality.

In his study on Tamilnadu consumers' attitudes toward Maruti cars, Dharmaraj (2020) discovered that product characteristics play a significant effect in consumers' decisions to buy Maruti vehicles. The Maruti car is preferred by the majority of Indian buyers because of features like after-sale support, cost, interior design, color, and so forth.

The impact of price awareness, environmental awareness, health awareness, and hedonic shopping on the intention to purchase organic food in the United States was examined by Katt and Meixner (2020). They found that purchase intentions for organic food are negatively correlated with price concern in the USA. Furthermore, it has been found that hedonic purchasing value, health consciousness, and environmental awareness all have a strong beneficial impact on the desire to purchase organic food. According to Fathima's (2019) research, brand experiences for mobile phones are significantly influenced by a phone's features, cost, and design.

Mustafa and Al-Rifat (2019) performed study on the variables influencing client purchase decisions for mobile phones in Bangladesh. The researchers discovered that the social element has the largest significant positive influence on these decisions. According to the research, social factors, followed by advertising, brand and pricing, had the greatest positive effects on satisfaction. Rai (2020) conducted study on the variables influencing brand preference when purchasing an automobile in Nepal. He discovered that while brand choice for the purchase of a passenger car is significantly influenced by brand impression of the brand's exterior and brand personality rather than price.

Rakib (2019) carried out a research in factors influencing university students in Bangladesh's intention to purchase mobile phones. The researcher discovered a substantial relationship between cell phone brand, features, price, and social influence and the university's propensity to get a cell phone.

Kim et al. (2018) examined how perceived service fairness affects brand trust, experience, and citizen behavior in Korea. They found that price significantly affected brand experience and trust.

Price is the commodity cost generating experiential marketing experiences, and consumer expectations of a fair price are what determine the customer experience (Brakus et al., 2009). It is a strong indicator of the consumer experience, according to Verhoef et al. (2009). The sort of client brand experience is influenced by price (Brakus et al., 2009).

H2: There is a significant positive influence of product price on brand experience.

Product Appearance

Kharat et al. (2018) examined the causes and effects of brand experience. The study's major goal was to determine what influences brand experience and what affects the brand experience has on durable consumer products. The brand experience is influenced by a variety of aspects, including the product's look, usability, marketing communication, attractiveness, and social values.

The role of customer experience in brand experience research and the intention to repurchase was examined by Ebrahim et al. (2016). The study's goal was to determine how the brand choice for Smartphone was affected by product price, product attribute, appearance of the product, car's brand personality, and self-congruity. The researchers discovered that brand choice in the purchase of Smartphone is directly influenced by product price, product attribute, appearance of the product, car's brand personality, and self-congruity.

Sheng and Teo (2012) investigated about role of customer experience to ascertain the impact of product qualities and brand equity in the mobile space. The researchers discovered that perceived mobile usability, perceived utility, entertainment, and aesthetics had a favorable and significant influence on customer experience.

The aesthetics of a product or how customers perceive beauty has a major beneficial impact on their experiences, according to empirical research by Sheng and Teo (2012). Lee et al. (2011) found that a product's appearance has a direct, positive influence on customers' affective responses, and affective responses play a mediating function between product features and consumer behavior.

The aesthetics of the product are thought to be stimuli that support the consumer's perception for the brand (Brakus et al., 2009). The product's aesthetics have an impact on the brand experience. Gentile et al. (2007) investigate whether the aesthetic of a product influences consumers' experiential reactions and found that the sensory elements of trademarks in a variety of categories have a high value and influence to the brand experience. Pullman and Gross (2004) likewise validated the beneficial impact of sensory design on the emotional experience, but they contest the mediation function of affective experiences between the sensory and behavioral loyalty of visitors in hospitality marketing.

H3: There is a significant positive impact product appearance on brand experience.

Brand Personality

Anantachart and Tangsritrakul (2019) examined brand personality and customer brand experiences in a Thai Apple case study. The study examined how Apple's brand personality affects Thai consumers' emotional attachment, satisfaction, and brand loyalty. The study found that brand personality and experience positively affect Apple buyers' emotional attachment, satisfaction, and loyalty.

Recent research has examined how brand personality affects consumer experience, however Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou (2013) found no empirical evidence. Self-congruity and brand personality boost brand experience, according to Brakus et al. (2009). Consumers experience brand personality. Brand personality is important in brand identity (Kapferer, 2008).

The brand personality reveals how consumers conceptualize the brand and heightens the emotional reactions it elicits in them (Aaker, 1997; Phau & Lau, 2000).

H4: There is a significant positive influence of brand personality on brand experience.

Self-congruity

Salimi and Khanlari (2018) found that brand personality congruence affects brand emotional attachment. Self-image and brand image match to drive consumers' emotional attachment to products. Brand stimuli activate brand knowledge and directly apply brand personality knowledge to self-congruity evaluation, making it successful (Aguirre-Rodriguez et al., 2014; Dahal, 2019). Although self-congruity and brand experience are directly related, brand experience can demonstrate how they affect one other.

Ebrahim (2013)'s Brunel University London doctoral dissertation examined brand experience experientially. The study found that brand knowledge aspects such product attribute perception, pricing perception, appearance perception, brand personality, and self-congruity greatly affect brand experience and Smartphone purchase.

Image congruence, which involves buyers mentally comparing a company's image to their self-image, leads to good brand sentiments (Chang & Chieng, 2006). Self-congruity predicts brand experience and benefits customers.

H5: There is a significant positive effect of self-congruity on brand experience.

Empirically, very little study has been conducted so far in measuring the effect of product price, product appearance, product attributes, car's brand personality and self-congruity on brand. Ebrahim et al. (2016) conducted research to measure brand experience for mobile phone products. Price perception, car's attributes, brand personality, appearance perception, and self-congruity were utilized for measuring brand experience. The research was done on a Smartphone, and this study has attempted to employ this model to measure the brand experience on passenger cars in the Nepalese context, as such types of research have not been conducted in the Nepalese context so far.

No empirical passenger automobile research has been done in Nepal. This study aims to contribute to the present knowledge on how brand knowledge elements affect brand experience in the Nepalese passenger car market.

Thus, this study examined how brand knowledge elements (attribute perception, appearance perception, pricing perception, brand personality, and self-congruity) affect brand experience.

Research Methodology

This research utilized survey methodology and utilized quantitative approach for vehicle buyers' brand experiences in Nepal. In this study, brand experience was considered as dependent variable that was influenced by independent variables such as attribute, appearance, price, self-congruity, brand personality.

A descriptive type of research design was utilized in quantitative approaches to explain the phenomenon of variables and define the demographic profile and dependent variable, and a causal research design was utilized to explore the impact of various independent variables, such as appearance, attribute, brand personality, price, and self-congruity on a dependent variable such as brand experience. The study has employed both descriptive and causal approaches based on primary data. The "structural equation modeling (SEM)" has been utilized to assess the influence of independent variables on the dependent variable.

To gather primary information from car users and identifying the factors affecting brand experience, the study used perceptual data from closed-ended 6-point Likert scale questionnaires.

For the study, a self-administered closed-ended questionnaire was used, with sections for appearance, attribute, pricing, self-congruity, brand personality and brand experience and personal information on automobile users.

Table 1. Questionnaire structure

Group and area	Questions	Measurement scale	Remarks
Group A: Demographic information	2	Various options	1=strongly disagree
Group B: Attribute perception	4		to
Group C: Price perception	5		6=strongly agree
Group D: Appearance perception	4	6-point Likert scale	
Group E: Brand personality	4		
Group F: Self-congruity	4		
Group B: Brand experience	4		
Total	27		

The car users were given 700 questionnaires were distributed and was gathered to carry out the suggested study, among them only 411 questionnaires were received and among them only 385 were usable responses. Therefore, the sample size was the 411 in the study. The study's population was the passenger car users in the Nepalese market. Table 2 shows the general information of 411 respondents who correctly completed the survey questionnaires and provided feedback on the study.

Table 2. The respondents

Variables	Categorization	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	343	83.5
	Female	68	16.5
Age Groups	Below 20	1	.2
	21-30	54	13.1
	31-40	131	31.9
	41-50	170	41.4
	Above 50	55	13.4
Total of each section		411	100

The sample for this study was chosen the purposive sampling method which is non-probability sampling. The sampling location of the study was the Nepalese market. Therefore, the study's target population was car users in the Nepalese market, the market served as the study's sampling site.

With the use of mean and standard deviation has been used to explain the phenomenon of variables and define the demographic profile and dependent variable. Correlation has been used to identify the relationship of independent and dependent variables and regression path analysis through "structural equation modeling" was used to explore the effect of brand personality, attribute, appearance, price, and self-congruity on a dependent variable such as brand experience. "Confirmatory Factor Analysis" (CFA) confirmed exploratory factor analysis. To assess model fit, CFI, GFI, RMSEA, IFI, AGFI, and NFI were used. Model fit indices were determined. Table 3 shows that all model fit values meet Byrne (2010) standards. Thus, the structural model conclusion can be assessed.

Table 3. An overview of model fit

Fit Indices	Suggested range of fit by Byrne(2010)	Model Value	Results
CMIN/DF	<5	2.235	Good
CFI	>0.9	0.946	Good
GFI	>0.9	0.900	Good
AGFI	>0.8	0.874	Good
IFI	>0.9	0.968	Good
NFI	>0.9	0.944	Good
RMSEA	<0.08	0.055	Acceptable

The independent latent variables' "convergent validity" was examined using "Composite Reliability" (CR) and "Average Variance Extracted" (AVE). Hu and Bentler (1999) recommend that the CR value exceed 0.7, the AVE value exceed 0.5, and the CR value exceed the AVE value to establish convergent validity. Therefore, Table 4 demonstrates that all values are within suggested ranges. Based on Hu and Bentler (1999), the value of AVE must exceed the "Maximum of Shared Variance" (MSV) value and the inter-construct correlations to show discriminant validity. Thus, all values are within the recommended ranges. It means the study model is valid and has no validity issues. Therefore, the overall measurement model is fit for further processing of the model.

Table 4. Model validity measures

	CR	AVE	MSV	MaxR(H)	PRI	APP	BRPA	ATTR	SCO
PRI	0.921	0.695	0.041	0.974	0.834				
APP	0.905	0.696	0.085	0.977	0.164**	0.834			
BRPA	0.888	0.653	0.170	0.968	0.063	0.150**	0.808		
ATTR	0.874	0.621	0.107	0.986	0.203***	0.283***	0.209***	0.788	
SCO	0.801	0.456	0.170	0.829	0.154**	0.292***	0.412***	0.327***	0.675

No validity concerns here.

** and *** refer to the statistical significance level at 0.01 and 0.001.

PRI = Price, APP= Appearance, BRPA = Brand personality, ATTR= Attributes, SCO = Self-congruity

Results

The study used descriptive and inferential statistics. Table 5 presents the mean analysis, standard deviation, and correlation.

Table 5. Descriptive and correlation insights

Variables	Mean	SD	ATTA	PRI	APA	BRPA	SCO	BEP
ATTA	4.88	.692	1					
PRI	5.03	.717	.198**	1				
APP	5.09	.741	.282**	.179**	1			
BRPA	4.81	.720	.221**	.054	.149**	1		
SCO	4.34	.707	.311**	.158**	.253**	.394**	1	
BEP	4.51	.783	.182**	.052	.144**	.422**	.381**	1

** indicate the statistical significance level at 0.01

The brand experience and all the independent factors were identified by using a 6-point Likert scale, where one equals "strongly disagree," and six means "strongly agree". According to the data shown in Table 5, the average scores for all the variables i.e., car's attributes, car's price, car's appearance, brand personality of car, self-congruity with car, and brand experience are 4.88, 5.03, 5.09, 4.81, 4.34, and 4.51, respectively, which are more than the mid-point 3. This means most responses were inclined toward brand experience in buying passenger cars in Nepal. As well as the values of the standard deviation of all variables were below 1. This indicates that data were more consistent with the minimum value of 1 and maximum value of 6.

The relationship between independent and dependent variables was analyzed using the correlation coefficient. Table 5 shows there is positive relationship between product attributes and brand experience ($r=.182$, $p<0.05$), appearance and brand experience ($r=.144$, $p<0.05$), brand personality and brand experience ($r=.422$, $p<0.05$), and self-congruity and brand experience ($r=.381$, $p<0.05$), but there is not positive significant relationship between price factor and brand experience ($r=.052$, $p>0.05$) in the passenger car buying.

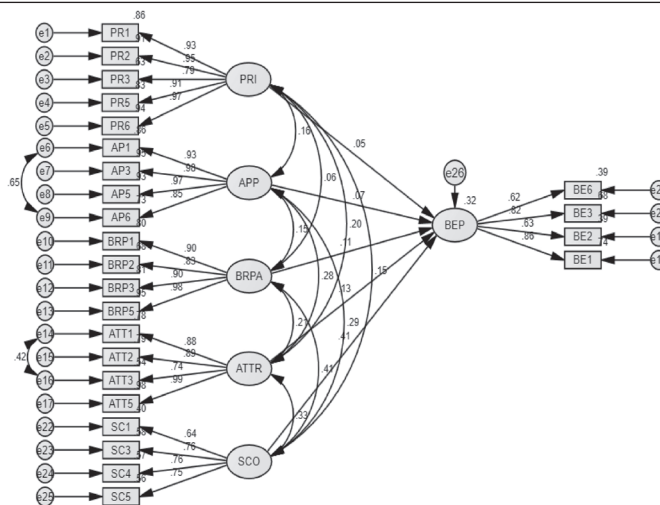


Figure 2: Path diagram of the final measurement model

“Structural Equation Modeling” was used for measuring the predefined hypothesized association between independent variables and brand experience. The model was analyzed using two indices. First is R², which shows the independent variables' variance explained and the projected model's prediction power. Second, is a path coefficient (β) indicating the impact of independent factors on the dependent variable?

Brand experience is affected by product features, pricing, look, brand personality, and self-congruity, as shown in Table 6. The five independent variables explain just 32% of brand experience for buying a passenger car in Nepal. This means all independent variables predict brand experience well. The remaining variables will explain the remaining 68% of variance.

Table 6: Variance Explained of Independent Variables on Dependent Variables

S.No.	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Squared Multiple Correlations (R ²)
1.	Brand Experience	Attributes, price, appearance, brand personality, self-congruity	0.32

Table 7: Relationship between Independent variables and Brand Experience

Hypotheses	From	To	Standardized Path Estimates	S.E.	P-value	Results
H1	ATTR	Experience	$\beta_1 = 0.176$	0.069	0.011	Supported
H2	PRI	Experience	$\beta_2 = 0.067$	0.065	0.302	Not Supported
H3	APP	Experience	$\beta_3 = 0.084$	0.062	0.171	Not Supported
H4	BRPA	Experience	$\beta_4 = 0.152$	0.071	0.032	Supported
H5	SCO	Experience	$\beta_5 = 0.620$	0.103	0.000	Supported

The path analysis derived from the structural model was to examine the influence of car's attributes, car's price, car's appearance, brand personality of car, and self-congruity with car on the brand experience for the passenger car. ATTR indicates the attributes, PRI indicates the price, APP indicates the appearance, BRPA indicates the brand personality, SCO indicates the self-congruity and BEP indicates the brand experience which are presented in Table 6. The outcome of testing hypothesis shows that the attribute significant positive effect on brand experience ($\beta = 0.176$; $p = 0.011$), which supports the hypothesis (H1). This finding revealed that the attributes of the passenger car influence the brand experience.

The result showed in Table 6 shows that the price factor has not positive significant effect on brand experience ($\beta = 0.067$; $p = 0.302$), the hypothesis (H2) is not supported by the result. This finding shows that brand experience is not influenced by the price factor of passenger cars. The hypothesis (H3) has not been verified by the finding of the study ($\beta = 0.084$; $p = 0.171$), which means the brand experience is not influenced by the appearance of passenger cars. But, the finding of the research indicated the brand personality factor of passenger cars highly influences brand experience ($\beta = 0.152$; $p = 0.032$) and hypothesis (H4) was accepted. Lastly, the hypothesis (H5) was also accepted ($\beta = 0.620$; $p = 0.000$) and it reveals that the self-congruity factor of passenger car affect brand experience.

Discussion

Many factors might influence brand experience. But in this study, car's attribute, car's price, car's appearance, brand personality of car, and self-congruity with car's image were used independent variables for measuring brand experience. The finding of the research showed that car's attributes has a significant positive effect on brand experience. This finding was similar with the other's findings of (Nadzri et al., 2016; Sheng & Teo (2012), which shows that attributes of car have a positive, significant influence on brand experience. Therefore, when purchasing cars in the Nepalese market, brand experience is a key predictor of product attribute influence.

Once more, the brand experience was evaluated using the pricing perception of the product. The study's findings indicate there is no significant correlation between product pricing and brand experience when purchasing passenger cars. The study's findings indicated that pricing perception had no favorable, significant impact on the brand experience when purchasing an automobile, contradicting the hypothesis (H7). This finding conflicts with earlier research by Kim et al. (2018) and Ebrahim et al. (2016), which discovered that price perception significantly influences brand experience. Therefore, when purchasing automobiles in the Nepalese market, there is no substantial positive effect of car's price on brand experience.

The sense of appearance is another independent variable that was utilized to gauge brand experience. Based on the result of the study product appearance has no favorable, significant positive effect on the brand experience when purchasing an automobile. This finding does not confirm the hypothesis (H8) that brand experience in the purchase of an automobile is significantly and positively influenced by perceptions of appearance. The finding was dissimilar with earlier research by Kharat (2018) and Ebrahim (2016), which showed that aesthetic perception significantly impact brand experience.

Brand personality of the car was used to measure the brand experience. Based on the study's results, brand personality plays a big part in the brand experience when people are buying passenger cars. This result supports the hypothesis (H9) that brand personality significantly influence brand experience. This result was consistent with that of other's findings (Anantachart & Tangsritrakul, 2019; Brakus et al., 2009; Chang & Chieng, 2006) all of whom discovered that brand personality had a significant impact on brand experience.

Lastly, self-congruity was employed in the study to measure brand experience. This study discovered that self-congruity significantly influences the brand experience while purchasing an automobile. The study's results are in the line of those other's studies (Ebrahim et al., 2016; Salimi & Khanlari, 2018) showing self-congruity with car's image has a considerable impact on brand experience. Thus, it can be concluded that buying a passenger car in the Nepalese market has a favorable and considerable impact on the brand experience.

Conclusions and Implications

The major goal of research was to explore factors affecting brand experience in the buying of passenger cars in Nepal. The study was conducted to identify the impact of car's attributes, car's price, car's appearance, brand personality of car, and self-congruity to measure brand experience.

The functional attributes of the passenger car are not strongly considered by consumers when choosing a passenger car. It shows that the addition of passenger cars' functional attributes might not guide to

boost up in consumer brand experience in Nepal. The visual appearance of a passenger car includes non-functional attributes that are not considered important factors in the selection of a passenger car. It reveals that the visual appearance of the passenger car may not lead to an increase in the brand experience of consumers over passenger cars in Nepal. The price of the passenger car has not been considered an important factor in shaping brand experience of passenger cars. It indicates the price level may not guide to boost up in brand experience in choice of passenger cars in Nepal.

The brand personality of the passenger car is accorded higher importance by consumers when selecting the brand of a passenger car. It shows that personality factors might lead to an increase in the brand experience of consumers toward passenger cars. Normally, Nepalese customer purchases their passenger cars based on the equity of the brand name which influences brand experience. Consumers want to connect emotionally with reputed brands. The brand is considered a very important factor for high-involvement products.

Moreover, self-congruity has been perceived as a strong reason in the shaping of brand experience in the time of choosing a passenger car. The higher degree of consistency between self-image of consumers and the passenger car's brand image may lead to brand experience. It means consumers of passenger cars try to match their self-image with brand image of the passenger car. It may be so because the consumers want to enhance their self-image through brand image of the passenger car and want to be in a position where their self-concept is so strong. It means that passenger cars are regarded as a prestigious product in Nepalese society because the price is not considered for the prestigious products rather than brand image of passenger car. It is also concluded that the rational factors are less focused rather than the emotional factors.

On top of that, consumers match the brand personality with their own perceived personality. It shows that the income and status of Nepalese car users overshadow other factors influencing brand experience in passenger car buying. Thus, it is concluded that changes in attributes, brand personality, and intervention in passenger car products with the changing personality targeting consumers' psyche may help to retain consumers and goad them for repurchase. The conclusion, however, is concurrent with many explanations provided for high-involvement products.

The conclusive results of the research will contribute to brand experience theory. Theoretically, it infers that consumers are more emotional than rational when buying a passenger car because rational factors such as attributes, price, and appearance have no significant effect on brand experience but emotional factors such as brand personality and self-congruity have a significant influence on the brand experience in the selection of passenger car. The marketing manager and sellers should not consider the rational factors in the formulation of marketing strategies but emotional factors must be highly considered for the prestigious products.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study only included characteristics, pricing, look, brand personality, and self-congruity independent variables. Not captured were other brand experience elements. This study only included passenger cars. Thus, the findings may not apply to other items. Nepal, an underprivileged nation, hosted this study. Thus, the findings may not apply globally.

The study's shortcomings offer various future research directions. This study was in a developing nation. This research can be done in other developed and poor countries where consumers have different

perspectives, traits, customs, socioeconomic backgrounds, cultures, purchasing behaviors, attitudes, etc. This study approach can be applied to computers, Smartphone, two-wheelers, and other products besides autos. Demographic variables can moderate brand experience to study this model. Additional independent variables not recorded in the study may be used to identify consumers' true automobile brand experience.

References

- Aaker, D. A. (1996). *Building Strategy Brands*. (USA, Free Press).
- Aaker, D. A. (1996). Measuring brand equity across products and markets, California. *Management Review*, 38(3), 102-120.
- Aaker, J. L. (1997). Dimensions of brand personality. *Journal of Marketing Research*, 34(3), 347–356.
- Aguirre-Rodriguez, A., Bosnjak, M., & Sirgy, M. J. (2014). Moderators of the self-congruity effect on consumer decision-making: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 65(8), 1179-1188.
- Anantachart, S., & Tangsritrakul, N. (2019). Relating Brand Personality with Customers' Brand Experience: A Case of Apple Brand in Thailand. *Communication and Media in Asia Pacific (CMAP)*, 2(2), 27-54.
- Balamurugan, S., & Selvalakshmi, M. (2021). Comparative analysis of consumer experience and buying patterns -Evidence from Indian automobile industry. <https://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3835921>.
- Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: what is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty?. *Journal of Marketing*, 73(3), 52-68.
- Bukhari, S. F. H. (2018). Purchase behavior of western imported foods by Pakistani buyers. *Journal of Contemporary Islamic Research*, 1(1), 1-14.
- Byrne, B. M. (2010). Structural equation modeling with AMOS: Basic concepts, applications, and programming (multivariate applications series). *New York: Taylor & Francis Group*, 396, 7384.
- Chang, P. L., & Chieng, M. H. (2006). Building consumer–brand relationship: A cross-cultural experiential view. *Psychology and Marketing*, 23(11), 927-959.
- Davis, J. A. (2010). *Competitive Success: How Branding Adds Value*. Wiley. John Wiley & Sons.
- Dahal, R. K. (2019). Customer satisfaction in Nepalese cellular networks. *Tribhuvan University Journal*, 33(2), 59-72. <https://doi.org/10.3126/tuj.v33i2.33607>
- Dahal, R. K. (2021). Customer performance and non-financial organizational performance of the Nepalese cellular telecommunications industry. *Problems and Perspectives in Management*, 19(2), 132-144. [http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.19\(2\).2021.11](http://dx.doi.org/10.21511/ppm.19(2).2021.11)
- Dahal, R. K., Ghimire, B., & Rai, B. (2022). A balanced scorecard approach for evaluating organizational performance of Nepal Telecom. *Management Dynamics*, 25(1), 63–73. <https://doi.org/10.3126/md.v25i1.53288>
- Dharmaraj, R. (2020). A study on consumer behaviour for Maruti Cars in Vellore District, Tamilnadu. *Shanlax International Journal of Management*, 7(4), 80-85. <https://doi.org/10.34293/>
- Ebrahim, R. S. (2013). *A study of brand experience: An experiential view* (Doctoral dissertation, Brunel University Brunel Business School PhD Theses).

- Ebrahim, R., Ghoneim, A., Irani, Z., & Fan, Y. (2016). A brand experience and repurchase intention model: The role of consumer experience. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 32(13-14), 1230-1259.
- Elammari, H. A., & Cavus, N. (2019). Investigating the factors affecting students' smartphone purchasing behaviors in the context of mobile learning. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies in Learning*, 14(22).
- Fathima, A. A. (2019). A study on consumer brand experience for mobile phones. *Journal of the Gujarat Research Society*, 21(13), 687-693.
- Gentile, C., Spiller, N., & Noci, G. (2007). How to sustain the customer experience: An overview of experience components that co-create value with the customer. *European management journal*, 25(5), 395-410.
- Ha, H. Y., & Perks, H. (2005). Effects of consumer perceptions of brand experience on the web: Brand familiarity, satisfaction and brand trust. *Journal of Consumer Behaviour: An International Research Review*, 4(6), 438-452.
- Hu, L. T., & Bentler, P. M. (1999). Cutoff criteria for fit indexes in covariance structure analysis: Conventional criteria versus new alternatives. *Structural equation modeling: a multidisciplinary journal*, 6(1), 1-55.
- Ishida, C., & Taylor, S. A. (2012). Retailer brand experience, brand experience congruence, and consumer satisfaction. *Journal of Consumer Satisfaction, Dissatisfaction and Complaining Behavior*, 25, 63-79.
- Kapferer, J. N. (2008). *The new strategic brand management: Creating and sustaining brand equity long term*. Kogan Page Publishers.
- Katt, F., & Meixner, O. (2020). Is It All about the Price? An Analysis of the Purchase Intention for Organic Food in a Discount Setting by Means of Structural Equation Modeling. *Foods*, 9(4), 458.
- Kharat, M. G., Chikhalkar, R. D., Jha, M. K., & Kharat, M. G. (2018). Analyzing the Antecedents and Consequences of Brand Experience: An Exploratory Study in the Case of Consumer Durables in the Indian Context. *International Journal of Marketing & Business Communication*, 7(4), 12-31.
- Kim, M. S., Shin, D. J., & Koo, D. W. (2018). The influence of perceived service fairness on brand trust, brand experience and brand citizenship behavior. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. 30(7), 2603-2621.
- Kwok, S., Uncles, M., & Huang, Y. (2006). Brand experiences and brand choices among urban Chinese consumers: An investigation of country-of-origin effects. *Asia Pacific Journal of Marketing and Logistics*, 18(3), 163-172.
- Lassar, W., Mittal, B., & Sharma, A. (1995). Measuring customer-based brand equity. *Journal of consumer marketing*, 12(4), 11-19.
- Lavuri, R., Navulla, D., & Naik, M. N. (2019). Buying predilection of buyers for branded Mobile phones devices. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 8(3S3), 178-186.
- Lee, S., Ha, S., & Widdows, R. (2011). Consumer responses to high-technology products: Product attributes, cognition, and emotions. *Journal of Business Research*, 64(11), 1195-1200.
- Morgan-Thomas, A., & Veloutsou, C. (2013). Beyond technology acceptance: brand relationships and online brand experience. *Journal of Business Research*. 66(1), 21-27.

- Mustafa, J., & Al-Rifat, A. (2019). Factors influencing customers' buying decisions of mobile phone in Dhaka, Bangladesh. *The Business & Management Review*, 10(5), 199-205.
- Nadzri, W. N. M., Musa, R., Muda, M., & Hassan, F. (2016). The antecedents of brand experience within the national automotive industry. *Procedia Economics and Finance*, 37, 317-323.
- Palmer, A. (2010). Customer experience management: A critical review of an emerging idea. *Journal of Services Marketing*, 24(3), 196-208.
- Park, H.Y., & Chang, S.R. (2022). When and how brands affect importance of product attributes in consumer decision process", *European Journal of Marketing*, 56(13), 1-5.
<https://doi.org/10.1108/EJM-09-2020-0650>.
- Phau, I., & Lau, K. C. (2000). Conceptualizing brand personality: A review and research propositions, *Journal of Targeting, Measurement and Analysis for Marketing*, 9(1), 52-69.
- Phuong, H. L. C., Anh, L. H., & Ab Rashid, A. A. (2020). Factors Influencing Car Purchasing Intention: A Study among Vietnamese Consumers. *Journal of the Society of Automotive Engineers Malaysia*, 4(2), 229-252.
- Pullman, M. E., & Gross, M. A. (2004). Ability of experience design elements to elicit emotions and loyalty behaviors. *Decision Sciences*, 35(3), 551-578.
- Rai, B. (2020). Consumer Brand Preference: An Empirical Study of Car Buying in Nepal. *Archives of Business Research*, 8(7), 258-271. doi: 10.14738/abr.87.8611.
- Rai, B. (2021). Factors affecting Smartphone purchase intention of consumers in Nepal. *The Journal of Asian Finance, Economics, and Business*, 8(2), 465-473. doi:10.13106/jafeb.2021.vol8.no2.0465.
- Rai, B., Dahal, R. K., & Ghimire, B. (2022). Consumer behavior for cosmetics products in Kathmandu Valley. *Pravaha*, 28(1), 23-28. <https://doi.org/10.3126/pravaha.v28i1.57967>
- Rai, B., Dahal, R. K., & Ghimire, B. (2023). Brand personality and consumer behavior for laptop purchases in Nepal. *Journal of Distribution Science*, 21(4), 35-45.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.15722/jds.21.04.202304.35>
- Rakib, M. R. H. K. (2019). Factors influencing purchase intention of cellular phones among the university students in Bangladesh. *European Journal of Business and Management*, 11(2), 92-101.
- Salimi, M., & Khanlari, A. (2018). Congruence between self-concept and brand personality, its effect on brand emotional attachment. *Academy of Marketing Studies Journal*, 22(4), 1-21.
- Saranya, G., & Yoganandan, G. (2019). Brand Experience for Smartphones among College Students in Coimbatore City, Tamil Nadu. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering (IJRTE)*, 8 (4S2).
- Schmitt, B. (1999). Experiential Marketing. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 15(1-3), 53-67.
- Sengat, S. (2019). Quantifying the Factors Influencing Buyer's Purchase Decision in the Light Commercial Vehicle: A Study Conducted In the Pune Region. *International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering*, 8(1), 573-579.

- Sharma, B. B., Shahi, B. J., & Dahal, R. K. (2023). Customer loyalty and relationship marketing in the Nepalese telecommunications sector. *The Harvest*, 2(1), 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.3126/harvest.v2i1.54405>
- Sheng, M. L., & Teo, T. S. H. (2012). Product attributes and brand equity in the mobile domain: The mediating role of customer experience. *International Journal of Information Management*, 32(2), 139–146.
- Slaughter, J. E., Zickar, M. J., Highhouse, S., & Mohr, D. C. (2004). Personality trait inferences about organizations: Development of a measure and assessment of construct validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89(1), 85-103.
- Solomon, M. R., & Stuart, E. W. (2002). *Marketing: Real people, real choice*, (2nd ed.). Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.
- Tynan, C., & McKechnie, S. (2009). Experience marketing: a review and reassessment. *Journal of Marketing Management*, 25(5-6), 501-517.
- Van Rijnsoever, F., Farla, J., & Dijst, M. J. (2009). Consumer car experiences and information search channels. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, 14(5), 334-342.
- Wulandari, N. (2016). Brand experience in banking industry: Direct and indirect relationship to loyalty. *Expert Journal of Marketing*, 4(1), 1-9.