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# Brand Personality and Consumer Behavior for Laptop Purchases in Nepal

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## Abstract

**Purpose:** The study's objective was to examine the impact of brand personality dimensions on consumer behavior for laptop purchases in Nepal. **Research Materials and Methods:** The study included descriptive and explanatory research designs. A structured questionnaire with a purposive sampling method was employed to gather the necessary information for the study. The survey data were analyzed using a quantitative approach. The study used descriptive statistics to characterize the response conditions. Correlation analysis was used to investigate the relationship between brand personality dimensions and consumer behavior. Regression path analysis was employed to identify the effect of brand personality dimensions and consumer behavior. **Results:** The result of regression path analysis showed that the three dimensions - competency, ruggedness, and sophistication, have a significant effect on consumer behavior, and the two dimensions- sincerity and excitement do not have a substantial impact on consumer behavior in laptop buying in Nepal. **Conclusions and Implications:** Such findings can serve as pioneering empirical evidence and provide a framework for marketers and future studies in various scenarios. The study's findings can help marketing managers in handling information management. Manufacturers, wholesalers, and retailers can also use the results in formulating marketing strategies, and marketers need to be aware of such considerations for influencing consumer behavior.

**Keywords:** Competency, Excitement, Marketing, Ruggedness, Sincerity, Sophistication

**JEL Classification Code:** C12, L96

## 1. Introduction

What makes a product or service look like a living, breathing person is what marketers call the brand's personality. Customers' perceptions of the brand, the company's dedication to building its image, and the quality of the product are the primary components of a brand's personality. Customers may find that a brand's personality influences consumer behavior. In addition, customers' tastes in brands often show what kind of people they are. So, brand

personality is a way to show who you are and what you stand for (Keller, 1993). Brand personality is the foundation that ties the brand image together (Batra, 1999). Establishing brand preference among customers is the cornerstone of effective brand management (Nilson, 2000).

Consumer brand preference refers to how people feel about a particular brand and how that feeling influences their purchasing behavior. Brand awareness significantly affects how consumers assess and select products, and brand preference is essential in selecting goods (Keller, 1993). The

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phrase "customer brand preference" refers to the decision made by consumers to purchase a product based on their preference for a specific brand. According to Singh et al. (2008), brand preference encapsulates the consumer's priority hierarchy for a particular brand among various brands. The intense rivalry regarding product similarity has led marketers to investigate the undiscovered factors influencing customers' brand-choice behavior. It is essential to cope with the competitors and evolving consumer preferences and tastes (Das, 2012).

In the contemporary marketing environment, consumer tastes and preferences constantly change, and consumers exhibit various behaviors, including unexpected and surprising consumer behavior in buying (Nakmongkol, 2009). Businesses must now more than ever take into account the varied demands, wants, desires, and product preferences of consumers (Batra, 2015). Market segmentation and the development of distribution channels, development of marketing strategies depend on understanding consumer preferences (Horskyet al., 2006). A business cannot create effective marketing plans without knowing what brands its customers favor. In these circumstances, this study focuses on the brand personality and consumer preferences in purchasing laptops by university students in Nepal. It has been oblivious to the aspects influencing consumer behavior and preference while choosing between several laptop brands. There haven't been many attempts to study how brand personality affects consumer preference.

Globalization has necessitated the implementation of a common educational standard. In addition, due to information technological advancement, the methods for obtaining and providing quality education have changed. For example, a modern student's study kit for a good education includes computers and digital diaries. Furthermore, after the Covid-19 pandemic, most universities started their teaching and learning through an online platform. As a result, the laptop has evolved into the learning tool that university students depend on the most at this pivotal time. Therefore, the researchers must examine the factors influencing brand preference in laptop purchases.

Numerous types of research have been conducted to identify what influences consumer behavior and why consumers choose one brand over another in a specific product category. Different product categories may be preferred for a variety of reasons. However, the effect of brand personality dimensions on consumer behavior while purchasing laptops are rarely investigated. Diverse academics from various socio-economic backgrounds and countries have come to conflicting conclusions and findings. Balakrishnan et al. (2009) and Hardjono and Teng (2019) found a substantial impact of brand personality on the brand preference of consumers, while Rai (2021) discovered that

there is no significant effect of whole brand personality on purchase intention. As a result, no one researcher has come to consistent conclusions about the study. Some researchers discovered that all brand personality dimensions significantly influence brand preference, whereas others found that some significantly affect brand preference and others do not. Most research on brand personality is done in Western countries, not Nepal. Therefore, the study has set the following objectives.

- To examine the effect of competency on consumers' brand preference while purchasing laptops.
- To investigate the effect of excitement on customers' brand preference while purchasing laptops.
- To evaluate the impact of sincerity on the brand preference of laptop buyers.
- To examine the influence of sophistication on the brand preference of laptop buyers.
- To explore the effect of ruggedness on consumers' brand preferences when purchasing laptops.

As discussed above, there are contradictory findings of further research on the factors influencing brand personality dimensions on consumers' brand preferences. There is a lack of current knowledge concerning consumer brand preference. Therefore, this study may contribute to minimizing these gaps in the knowledge regarding consumer brand preference. Based on the findings, it can be derived that there are many practical implications for marketing managers in the market. Based on the results, the company can meet the expectation of the consumers and can make marketing strategies, and provides valuable insights that allow the policymakers and marketers to understand the factors that influence consumer brand preference. These findings can be pioneer empirical evidence and contribute as a foundation for future studies under different contexts.

## **2. Literature Review**

The study of brand personality in relation to consumer behavior is a complex phenomenon. The brand personality framework is more directly linked to the user's disclosure of their personal information and facilitates brand connection with consumers (Sharahi & Heshmat, 2020). Wu et al. (2020) found that brand personality, subjective norms, brand image, and corporate reputation significantly impacted brand attitude. Furthermore, Wu et al.'s (2020) study noticed that brand awareness, brand trust, perceived quality, and perceived behavioral control have a substantial impact on consumer behavior; brand attitude has a significant impact on brand loyalty; and brand equity has a substantial influence on the consumers' behavioral intention.

Consumer behavior and preference have been measured using a wide variety of criteria. Aaker (1997) developed a

theoretical framework for brand personality, identifying its dimensions and describing how each dimension functions as a collection of personality traits. The framework asserted that the numerous characteristics that make up a person's personality could be broken down into a small number of classes or latent dimensions using factor analysis measures, which indicate that a person's structure typically consists of five major sections, namely honesty, competence, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness. Aaker's (1997) framework made it simpler to conduct additional research into other facets of brand personality in the American context and resulted in the development of a valid, reliable, and generalizable assessment scale. Based on the literature, the study was confined to assessing brand personality with consumer preferences.

### 2.1. Competency

Akin (2017) observed a significant relationship between brand personality and brand loyalty and the impact of competency on consumer loyalty. Thongthip and Polyorat (2015) found that only three personality traits, sincerity, sophistication, and competence, have a noticeable positive impact on the perceived value and quality of the services. Brand personality substantially impacts consumers' purchasing decisions, loyalty, and brand selection (Balakrishnan et al., 2009). Sharahi and Heshmat (2020) observed that among Iranian insurance consumers in Tehran, brand personality dimensions and brand love significantly impact customer loyalty, the desire to pay, active interaction, and positive word-of-mouth. Customers consider the personality of a brand as a determinant in brand selection (Phau & Lau, 2000). Aaker (1996) observed that dimensions of brand personality considerably affect competitive advantage and brand loyalty, while Plummer (1985) discovered that brand personality dimensions significantly influence customer behavior. Brand personality is a fundamental aspect of brand distinctiveness that strongly affects customer purchasing decisions (Aaker, 1997).

**H1:** Competency positively influences consumer behavior and preference in laptop buying.

### 2.2. Sincerity

Brand personalities like sophistication and competence promote emotional loyalty, and sophistication, sincerity, and competence greatly improve action loyalty (Lin, 2010). Yao et al. (2015) conducted a study on the subject of how brand personality promotes brand attachment and how consumer personality is consistent with consumer personality. The study noticed that the participants' brand attachment was significantly influenced more favorably by consistency in the personality traits of sincerity, coolness,

and youth than by consistency in the traits of simplicity, sensitivity, dependability, and competence. Mulyanegara and Tsarenko (2009) noticed that brand choice and brand personality dimensions are strongly correlated, and Kim et al. (2011) noted that brand personality dimensions have a substantial direct effect on hotel marketing consumer decisions. The brand personality dimensions substantially impact the brand preferences of consumers (Banerjee, 2016).

**H2:** Sincerity positively affects consumer behavior and preference in laptop buying.

### 2.3. Excitement

Bozbay and Ozkan (2016) explored how brand personality affects customer preferences. They found that the four brand personality dimensions—competence, sincerity, enthusiasm, and traditionality have a substantial impact on brand choice when used as independent variables to measure brand preference. In Sri Lanka, Riyas and Herath (2016) performed research on how brand personality affects customers' intentions to purchase branded umbrella items. Researchers found that excitement and toughness significantly positively affect buying intention, but competence, sophistication, and honesty do not.

**H3:** Excitement positively influences consumer behavior and preference in laptop buying.

### 2.4. Sophistication

Munasinghe (2018) noticed that certain brands are preferred by upper-class individuals and those with down-to-earth, humble views. Hardjono and Teng (2019) described that the selection of sportswear is positively impacted by brand personality characteristics, including honesty, integrity, sophistication, and ruggedness. In Nepal, brand personality dimensions have no obvious effect on consumers' desire to purchase a Smartphone (Rai, 2021). De la Paz Toldos-Romero and Orozco-Gómez (2015) discovered that all aspects of brand personality traits, including hipness/vivacity, success, honesty, and sophistication, have a substantial effect on customers' propensities to purchase. Vahdati and Mousavi Nejad (2016) discovered that brand equity, e-WOM, and brand personality was a significant predictor of consumers' intent to purchase. Brand personality dimensions sincerity, and ruggedness are found to have a significant impact on brand trust; excitement and sophistication are found to be more important for brand effect; competency was found important for both brand trust and effect (Sung & Kim, 2010).

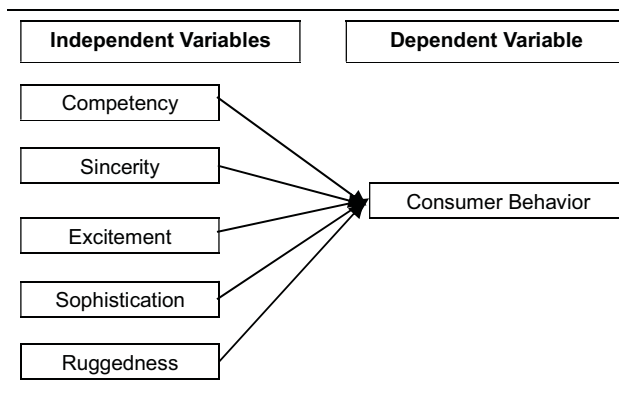
**H4:** Sophistication positively influences consumer behavior and preference in laptop buying.

## 2.5. Ruggedness

Hardjono et al. (2019) discovered that brand personality attributes such as competence, honesty, sophistication, and ruggedness substantially affect brand choice behavior. Personality attributes like vitality, class, skill, sincerity, and toughness are significant predictors of brand loyalty, brand preference, and satisfaction (Lee & Oh, 2006). According to Bairrada et al. (2019), brand personality dimensions had a marginally positive and statistically significant influence on brand loyalty, brand love, word-of-mouth, and self-disclosure but little to no influence on willingness to pay and active involvement. Brand personality dimensions considerably affect brand preference when buying smartphones, but pricing has no discernible impact (Kocak & Ruzgar, 2017). Maehle et al. (2011) discovered that companies that are recognized as strong on particular personality qualities have more in common than merely a particular product category.

**H5:** Ruggedness positively influences consumer behavior and preference in laptop buying.

Numerous factors might influence consumer brand preference in laptop buying, such as promotion, distribution, price, word-of-mouth, country of origin, brand image, etc. Based on the above literature review, brand personality traits-competency, excitement, sincerity, sophistication, and ruggedness have been used as independent variables to measure consumer behavior and preference in laptop buying. The following conceptual framework has been developed for undertaking the analysis in a systematic way.



**Figure 1:** Conceptual Framework

## 3. Research Methods and Materials

### 3.1. Research Approach

The study aimed to examine how brand personality traits affect customer behavior regarding laptop purchases. Competency, ruggedness, excitement, sincerity, and sophistication are the dimensions of brand personality. The study has been grounded in post-positivist epistemology, which seeks objectivity through logical reason and has an organized method with predetermined hypotheses. The quantitative research method has been used in the study.

### 3.2. Research Design and Type of Data

The study used a descriptive and causal research design. This study has used survey methodology to conduct a quantitative analysis of Nepalese consumers' behavior and preferences toward laptops. The primary data from laptop users have been gathered using 6-point Likert scale questionnaires to investigate the effect of brand personality dimensions on consumer brand preference.

### 3.3. Instruments Development

For a quantitative investigation, a self-administered close-ended questionnaire with distinct parts for competency, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, ruggedness, consumer preference, and use of personal information has been constructed, as presented in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Questionnaire Structure

| Group and Area                   | Qs | Measurement Scale    | Remarks                                        |
|----------------------------------|----|----------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Group A: Demographic Information | 2  | Various Options      | 1 = strongly disagree to<br>6 = strongly agree |
| Group B: Competency              | 3  | 6-point Likert Scale |                                                |
| Group C: Sincerity               | 3  |                      |                                                |
| Group D: Excitement              | 3  |                      |                                                |
| Group E: Sophistication          | 3  |                      |                                                |
| Group F: Ruggedness              | 3  |                      |                                                |
| Group G: Consumer Behavior       | 3  |                      |                                                |
| Total                            | 20 |                      |                                                |

### 3.4. Data Collection Procedures

The respondents in the Kathmandu Valley received 600 surveys. Only 420 questionnaires were submitted, and 384 of those were received to be usable. The study's target population was anyone who had just bought a laptop among the students of universities. Users and owners of laptops who have bought and are well familiar with the laptop were

designated as the study's target population. The purposive sampling method has been used for choosing the sample in the study. The Nepalese market was the study's sampling location.

### 3.5. Analytical Tools

Descriptive statistics have been used to identify the conditions of responses. Correlation analysis has been used to analyze the relationships between brand personality traits and consumer preference in buying laptops. Regression path analysis has been used to identify the effect of brand personality traits on consumers' brand preferences in laptop buying.

### 3.6. Respondents' Profile

Table 2 shows the personal characteristics of the sample. These variables are age and gender.

**Table 2:** Respondents' Profile

| Variables | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Age       | 26        | 6.8        |
|           | 209       | 61.2       |
|           | 113       | 90.6       |
|           | 36        | 6.8        |
| Gender    | 177       | 46.1       |
|           | 207       | 53.9       |
| Total     | 384       | 100        |

### 3.7. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The validity of all constructs was examined by using EFA. The factor loading for each construct was discovered to range from 0.630 to 0.849. Hair et al. (2010) described that the factor loadings values of each construct must be greater than 0.5 and were all found to be more than 0.5. The KMO value must be more than 0.6, and the p-value must be smaller than 0.05, according to Kaiser and Rice (1974). Therefore, factor analysis was suitable because the KMO

value was 0.888, which is more than 0.6, and the p-value was 0.000, which is less than 0.05.

### 3.8. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

To validate the findings of the EFA, CFA was used. By using SPSS AMOS 23, CFA was conducted. The GFI (Goodness of Fit Index), CFI (Comparative Fit Index), AGFI (Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index), and RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error Approximation) were introduced by Byrne (2010) and Hair et al. (1998) as model fit criteria for the measurement model. SEM (Structural Equation Modeling) has been applied to test the hypotheses. Before putting the hypotheses to the test, the model fit indices were examined. For evaluating the entire model, various fit indices have been offered in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Summary of Overall Model Fit

| Fit Indices | Suggested level by Byrne (2010) and Hair et al. (1998) | Model Value | Result     |
|-------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------|------------|
| CMIN/DF     | <3.0 = Good, 3 – 5=Acceptable                          | 3.141       | Acceptable |
| GFI         | > 0.9= Good, > 0.8= Acceptable                         | 0.883       | Acceptable |
| AGFI        | > 0.9= Good, > 0.8= Acceptable                         | 0.843       | Acceptable |
| CFI         | > 0.9= Good, >0.8= Acceptable                          | 0.919       | Good       |
| RMSEA       | < 0.05= Good, < 0.08= Acceptable                       | 0.074       | Acceptable |

Table 3 shows that all the model fit indices were in the acceptable ranges, as suggested by Byrne (2010) and Hair et al. (1998), promoting forward to analyze the structural model as a consequence.

### 3.9. Validity and Reliability

SEM has been used to examine the data and structural model. Before the model was put to the test, the accuracy of the AVE (Average Variance Extracted), the CR (Composite Reliability), instrument reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity were evaluated. The test's findings are as follows:

**Table 4:** Overview of Reliability and Validity Measures

|     | CR    | AVE   | MSV   | MaxR(H) | SIN          | COM          | SOP          | EXC          | RUG          | CB           |
|-----|-------|-------|-------|---------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| SIN | 0.830 | 0.620 | 0.458 | 0.832   | <b>0.787</b> |              |              |              |              |              |
| COM | 0.772 | 0.550 | 0.262 | 0.893   | 0.277***     | <b>0.742</b> |              |              |              |              |
| SOP | 0.779 | 0.540 | 0.467 | 0.781   | 0.677***     | 0.375***     | <b>0.735</b> |              |              |              |
| EXC | 0.769 | 0.526 | 0.422 | 0.769   | 0.571***     | 0.512***     | 0.519***     | <b>0.725</b> |              |              |
| RUG | 0.754 | 0.507 | 0.445 | 0.767   | 0.491***     | 0.321***     | 0.518***     | 0.650***     | <b>0.712</b> |              |
| CB  | 0.773 | 0.532 | 0.467 | 0.774   | 0.555***     | 0.478***     | 0.684***     | 0.615***     | 0.667***     | <b>0.730</b> |

Table 4 shows that all of the AVE and CR values were more than the acceptable range of 0.5 and 0.7, respectively,

as recommended by Bagozzi and Baumgartner (1994), and satisfied the convergent validity issues. According to

Fornell and Larcker (1981), if the value of AVE is bigger than the maximum shared variance (MSV), discriminant validity is legitimate. Table 4 reveals that the values of AVE were found higher than MSV. Therefore, there was no problem with the study's measuring model.

#### 4. Results

The descriptive analysis of all the study's variables was highlighted in this part. According to the research

framework, competency, excitement, sincerity, ruggedness, and sophistication were the independent variables, and consumer behavior was the dependent variable. Independent variables such as COM represent competency, SIN represents sincerity, EXC represents excitement, SOP represents sophistication, RUG represents ruggedness, and dependent variable CB represents consumer behavior. The general constructs were first identified by descriptive analysis.

**Table 5:** Descriptive and Correlation Analysis

| Variables | Mean | S.D | COM    | SIN    | EXC    | SOP    | RUG    | CB |
|-----------|------|-----|--------|--------|--------|--------|--------|----|
| COM       | 4.42 | .76 | 1      |        |        |        |        |    |
| SIN       | 4.04 | .76 | .410** | 1      |        |        |        |    |
| EXC       | 3.95 | .79 | .444** | .777** | 1      |        |        |    |
| SOP       | 3.83 | .80 | .358** | .660** | .749** | 1      |        |    |
| RUG       | 3.94 | .79 | .329** | .587** | .707** | .754** | 1      |    |
| CB        | 3.30 | .66 | .415** | .626** | .676** | .722** | .740** | 1  |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).  
 \* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

All the variables were rated on the consumer preference scale, indicating 1 for strongly disagree, 2 for disagree, 3 for somewhat disagree, 4 for somewhat agree, 5 for agree, and 6 for strongly agree. According to Table 5, the average scores for competency, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, ruggedness, and consumer preference are 4.42, 4.04, 3.95, 3.83, 3.94, and 3.30, respectively. The average score of all variables was higher than the neutral value of 3. This indicates that most respondents were inclined to agree with consumer preference. Therefore, it can be said that these five independent variables have a significant effect on consumer preference. Additionally, the data was consistent, as evidenced by the fact that the standard deviation of competency, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, ruggedness, and consumer preference was less than 1. It shows that the data were not more scattered, and it is said that it can be used for further analysis.

Karl Pearson's correlation coefficient analysis was employed to examine the relationship between the brand personality dimensions and consumer brand preference. The correlation shows the relationship between all variables, including their intensity, direction, and importance. Pearson's correlation might have a value between 0.00 and 1.00. A correlation score of 0.00 indicates there is none, while a correlation value of 1.00 indicates a complete correlation. Table 5 shows the correlation between constructs used to measure consumer preference for buying laptops in Nepal. It was found that there is a moderate positive correlation between competency and consumer

brand preference ( $r = 0.415$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). Likewise, it was also found that there was a high positive correlation between sincerity and consumer brand preference ( $r = 0.626$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It was also found that there was a high correlation between excitement and consumer brand preference ( $r = 0.676$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). It was also found that there was a strong high positive correlation between sophistication and brand preference of consumers ( $r = 0.772$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), and it was also found that there was a positive, strong high correlation between consumer brand preference and ruggedness ( $r = 0.740$ ,  $p > 0.05$ ). It is concluded that brand personality traits variables have a positive, strong relationship with the brand preference of consumers in the buying of laptops among the students of Nepalese universities.

#### 4.1. Structural Model for the Study

The structural model was used to empirically measure the relationship between constructs. Two indexes have been examined in the structural model. The first one was the path coefficients ( $\beta$ ), which depict the relationship between dimensions of brand personality and consumer brand preference, and the second was the value of  $R^2$ , which reveals the proportion of variation that can be explained by independent variables and reveals how well the model predicts the future. The multivariate test's results of the structural model show that competency, sincerity, excitement, sophistication, and ruggedness explained 68 percent of the variance in consumer behavior and preference

for purchasing a laptop in Nepal; the remaining 32 percent would be explained by other remaining variables.

An estimated path diagram from a structural model is given in Figure 2. The computed parameters are standardized path coefficients, and three of them are

significant at the 95 % level, while the fourth is not. Three of the standardized path coefficients, the computed parameters, are significant at the 95 % level, while the fourth is not. Figure 2 shows the final revised measurement model's path diagram.

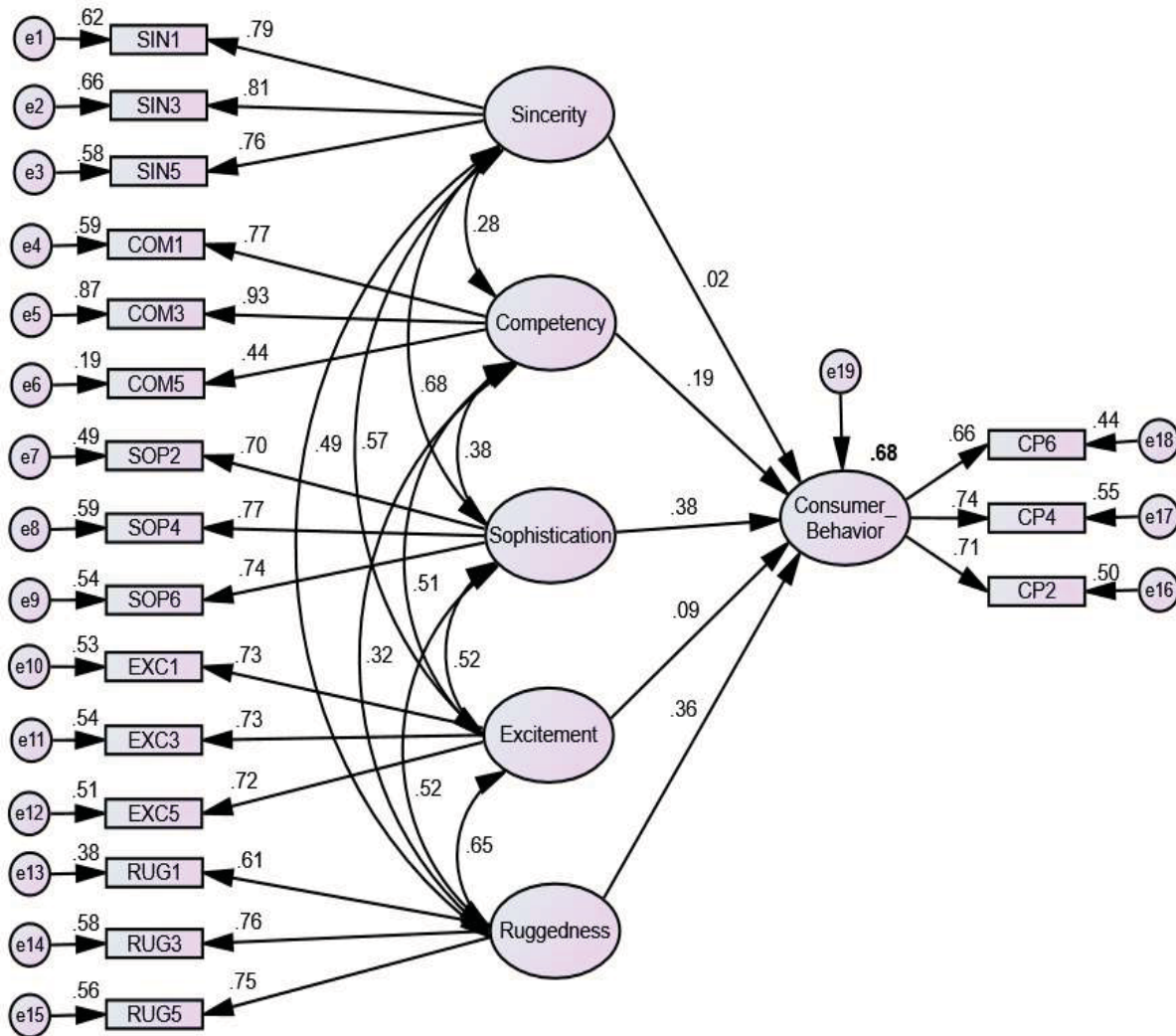


Figure 2: Structural Model

Regression path analysis has been used to explore the level of effect of brand personality's dimensions, such as competency, excitement, sincerity, ruggedness, and sophistication, on brand preference of consumers in laptop buying among the students of Nepalese universities. Table 6 shows the parameter estimates of each model's path. The

effects of brand personality traits on the brand preference of consumers are assessed by calculating regression coefficients of SEM. Table 6 shows the results of the hypotheses testing of independent variables on consumer behavior.

**Table 6:** Regression Weights

|    | Path |     | Estimate | S.E.  | C.R.  | P     | Results  |
|----|------|-----|----------|-------|-------|-------|----------|
| CB | <--- | SIN | 0.022    | 0.068 | 0.464 | 0.642 | Rejected |
| CB | <--- | COM | 0.187    | 0.079 | 2.962 | 0.003 | Accepted |
| CB | <--- | SOP | 0.377    | 0.086 | 4.302 | ***   | Accepted |
| CB | <--- | EXC | 0.094    | 0.092 | 0.996 | 0.319 | Rejected |
| CB | <--- | RUG | 0.363    | 0.098 | 4.166 | ***   | Accepted |

From Table 6, the regression coefficients of competency on consumer behavior and preference have been found statistically significant ( $\beta_1 = 0.187$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.003$ ), and hypothesis (H1) was accepted. It means competency has a significant positive effect on the brand preference of consumers in laptop buying of students of universities. The second variable was sincerity in measuring consumer behavior. Furthermore, Table 6 shows the regression coefficients of sincerity on consumer preference were not statistically significant ( $\beta_2 = 0.022$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.642$ ), and hypothesis (H2) was not supported. It indicates that sincerity has no significant positive effect on the brand preference of consumers in laptop buying by students of universities in Nepal.

The third independent variable was the excitement to measure consumer behavior and preference. The regression coefficients of excitement on consumer behavior have been found no statistically significant ( $\beta_3 = 0.094$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.319$ ), and hypothesis (H3) was not supported. It indicates that excitement has a not positive significant effect on the brand preference of consumers in buying a laptop. The fourth independent variable was the sophistication to measure consumer behavior and preference. The regression coefficients of sophistication on consumer preference have been found statistically significant ( $\beta_4 = 0.377$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ), and hypothesis (H4) was supported. It means there was a significant positive influence of excitement on consumer preference for buying laptops. The last and fifth independent variable was ruggedness to measure consumer behavior and preference. The regression coefficients of ruggedness on consumer preference have been found statistically significant ( $\beta_5 = 0.363$ ,  $p\text{-value} = 0.000$ ), and hypothesis H5 was supported. It means there was a significant positive effect of ruggedness on consumers' brand preference in buying laptops in Nepal.

## 5. Discussions

The major objective of the research work was to look into how the brand personality's dimensions, like competence, honesty, excitement, ruggedness, and

sophistication, influence consumer brand preference when university students are purchasing laptops in Nepal. The effect of the dimensions of brand personality on customer brand preference for laptop purchases in Nepal is little understood from an empirical standpoint. By employing these five aspects of brand personality traits as the factor impacting consumer behavior and preference, no empirical research has yet been done on the laptop product in the Nepalese environment. Therefore, the study aimed to advance our understanding of how consumer preferences for laptop products in the Nepalese market are influenced by brand personality traits like excitement, honesty, sophistication, competency, and ruggedness. In these consequences, a study in Nepal is required to identify how brand personality factors affect consumer behavior.

The first independent variable utilized to assess customer choice was competency. The study's initial premise was that the competency component significantly positively impacts consumers' behavior and preferences for laptop purchases. The statistical findings of the research supported the hypothesis (H1) that consumer preference for laptop purchases is significantly influenced by competency. Such a result was also consistent with earlier research showing a strong impact of the brand personality's competency element on consumer preference (Akin, 2017; Hardjono et al., 2019; Lin, 2010). This finding is consistent with Thongthip and Polyorat (2015) that three personality traits such as sincerity, sophistication, and competence, have a significant positive impact on the perceived value and quality of the services. To improve consumer preference, the competency factor of brand personality is important for buying a laptop in the Nepalese market; therefore, it must be considered in the selling of laptops.

Sincerity was another independent variable used to measure consumer behavior and preference. According to hypothesis (H2), sincerity significantly affects consumers' brand preferences. The statistical findings of the investigation did not support the H2. This result was inconsistent with earlier research showing that sincerity significantly impacts consumer preference (De la Paz Toldos-Romero & Orozco-Gómez, 2015; Hardjono et al., 2019; Thongthip & Polyorat, 2015). Sincerity is not an important factor of brand personality to develop the consumer brand preference in the buying of laptops. The

sincerity of the brand personality factor does not improve the consumer brand preference in the buying of laptops in the Nepalese market.

Finding the effect of excitement on consumer preference was another goal of the research. The excitement element was shown to have no discernible impact on consumer behavior and preference, and the result does not support the hypothesis (H3). In contrast with the previous findings (Akin, 2017; Maehle et al., 2011), brand personality's dimension of excitement is not considered in consumer preference. The consumer does not consider the excitement factor of brand personality in formulating consumer brand preference in buying laptops. Excitement has not significant role in the improvement of consumer brand preference in the buying of laptops in the Nepalese market.

The sophisticated aspect of brand personality was another independent variable utilized to measure consumer brand preference. According to the study's statistical findings, consumer preference for laptops has been significantly influenced by the sophistication factor of brand personality; hence the hypothesis (H4) was supported. Such a finding was similar to earlier research showing that the brand personality's sophistication component strongly influences consumer preference (De la Paz Toldos-Romero & Orozco-Gómez, 2015; Lin, 2010). Hardjono and Teng (2019) agreed that honesty, integrity, and sophistication are strongly considered in the selection of sportswear. Similarly, certain brands are preferred based on upper-class individuals and those with down-to-earth, humble views (Munasinghe, 2018). The good-looking, charming, prestigious, glamorous, upper-class laptop is the more important element for the development of the consumer brand preference in the Nepalese market because these factors are considered by the consumer in buying laptops.

Finally, it was noticed that the ruggedness component of brand personality influenced consumer brand preference. As a result, the study's findings support the hypothesis (H5). This result was consistent with earlier research showing that the brand personality's dimension ruggedness element has a significant positive impact on consumer preference (Hardjono et al., 2019). This finding is also consistent with Lee and Oh (2006) that the brand personality attributes like vitality, class, skill, sincerity, and toughness are significant predictors of brand loyalty, brand preference, and satisfaction. The ruggedness factors of brand personality, such as toughness, strength, masculinity, and ruggedness, are strongly considered in the consumer brand preference in buying laptops in the Nepalese market. Ruggedness has a significant role in the development of consumer brand preference in laptop buying.

## 6. Conclusions and Implications

The competency of brand personality refers to a competent, successful leader and a reliable brand. The competency factor of the brand personality has been strongly considered by consumers when choosing a laptop at the time of purchase. It shows that the competency of the laptop may lead to an increase in consumer preference among the students of universities in Nepal. The study concludes that the competency dimension of the brand personality of a laptop is an important factor affecting brand preference at the consumer level in the Nepalese market. The sincerity of brand personality consists of the sincere brand, sentimental, real, cheerful, wholesome, and friendly brand as human beings, which are not considered important aspects in the buying of a laptop by consumers in Nepal. Sincerity has not been considered by consumers at the time of buying laptops in Nepal. It reveals that sincerity may not lead to an increase in consumer preference for laptops in Nepal. It may be so because Nepalese consumers considered the competency factor of the laptop more important than sincerity.

The excitement of a laptop has not been considered an important factor in consumer behavior and preference in the purchase of a laptop. It shows that the level of excitement may not lead to an increase in consumer preference for laptop choices in Nepal. It means that excitement is not important in laptop buying; therefore, excitement doesn't influence consumer preference. Consumers consider sophistication in buying laptops. These sophistication factors may lead to consumers' brand preference in buying laptops in Nepal. Usually, University students make their purchase decision based on the sophistication factors of laptops. The study shows that ruggedness such as tough, rugged, strong, western, and outdoorsy, masculine might increase consumer preference toward laptop purchases in Nepal. Normally, people purchase their laptops based on the ruggedness of the brand. Nepalese consumers highly consider the ruggedness in buying laptops in Nepal. Thus, consumer preference for laptops is prominently affected by competency, sophistication, and ruggedness of brand personality in laptop buying among students of universities. But the sincerity and excitement do not significantly affect consumers' brand preference in laptop buying among Nepalese university students.

The conclusive findings of the study make a contribution to consumer behavior theory and the formulation of distribution strategies. It may be applicable to the market and improve the understanding of consumer preference. It outlines consumer preferences and how they may affect decisions in the future. Similarly, the study focuses on a number of variables that demonstrate consumer understanding as opposed to earlier studies and makes it

possible to identify key variables that shape preferences. Such findings can be pioneer empirical evidence and contribute as a foundation stone for future studies under different contexts. Furthermore, the study can be derived that there are many practical implications for marketing managers in the market. The manufacturer, wholesaler, and retailer must understand the factors that should be paid attention to increasing consumer behavior and preferences. The competency, sophistication, and ruggedness dimension of brand personality should be highly considered in the development of consumer preference, but the sincerity and excitement of the laptop should not be highly considered in the design of marketing strategies in the Nepalese market. Therefore, the company should meet the expectation of the consumers and should make marketing strategies.

There are several suggestions for the next research directions based on the study's limitations. As such, the study's conclusions may be constrained, and future research may need to concentrate on similar topics. To begin with, research for this topic took place in Nepal, a low-income country. So, similar studies can be conducted in other developed and underdeveloped countries where people have different socio-economic backgrounds and have different perceptions, characteristics, cultures, customs, behaviors, attitudes, etc. Second, the model used in the study can be applied to other products or sectors in defining brand personality factors. Third, the model further can be studied by using the demographic variables as moderating variables to measure consumer preference. Fourth, it is also suggested that the additional independent variables like personal factors, marketing channel, supply chain management, social factors, advertising, distribution information technology, word-of-mouth, sales promotion schemes, etc., which were not captured in the study, can be used for identifying the consumer behavior and preference towards purchasing the laptop.

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