

# Cultural Branding and Consumer Buying Behavior toward Papier-Mâché Products in Paete, Laguna

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## Abstract

This study examined the relationship between cultural branding and consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products in Paete, Laguna. It focused on brand heritage, cultural design, community engagement, and customer recognition, as well as purchase intention, brand preference, perceived value, and repurchase intention. The study used a quantitative approach supported by qualitative interviews with purposively selected consumers in Paete, Pakil, Siniloan, Lumban, and Pagsanjan. The study analyzed data using descriptive statistics, the Chi-Square Test of Independence, and Spearman Rank-Order Correlation. The findings revealed no significant relationship between respondents' demographic profiles and either cultural branding or consumer buying behavior. However, cultural branding was positively and significantly related to consumer buying behavior, with customer recognition showing the strongest relationship, followed by community engagement, cultural design, and brand heritage. Overall, the study concluded that cultural branding plays an important role in consumer buying behavior. Strengthening customer relationships, community involvement, and cultural identity while preserving traditional craftsmanship may help sustain consumer interest and support the long-term sustainability of Paete's papier-mâché industry.

**Keywords:** cultural branding; consumer buying behavior; papier-mâché products; cultural design

## 1 Introduction

Local crafts play an important role in preserving cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, artistic practices, and community identity. In the Philippines, handcrafted products also provide livelihood opportunities for artisans and local communities.

Paete, Laguna, known as the Carving Capital of the Philippines, is recognized for its rich artistic heritage, including its papier-mâché industry. These products reflect Filipino culture and traditional craftsmanship while supporting local livelihoods. However, traditional crafts face challenges from mass-produced alternatives and changing consumer preferences.

Cultural branding communicates the heritage, authenticity, and cultural significance of traditional products. Through brand heritage, cultural design, community engagement, and customer recognition, local artisans can distinguish their products and strengthen relationships with consumers. These factors may influence purchase intention, brand preference, perceived value, and repurchase intention.

However, limited research has examined the relationship between cultural branding and consumer buying behavior toward Paete's papier-mâché products. Further investigation is needed to identify

which cultural branding dimensions are most strongly associated with consumer purchasing behavior in the local market.

This study examines the relationship between cultural branding and consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products in Paete, Laguna. Specifically, it assesses brand heritage, cultural design, community engagement, and customer recognition in relation to purchase intention, brand preference, perceived value, and repurchase intention, providing evidence to help local artisans develop effective branding strategies while preserving cultural identity and maintaining market relevance.

## 2 Methods

This study used a mixed-methods approach, combining a descriptive-correlational quantitative design with a qualitative component, to examine the relationship between cultural branding and consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products in Paete, Laguna. According to Miksza et al. [3], descriptive research describes existing variables, while correlational research examines relationships between variables without manipulation. This design enabled the researchers to describe consumers' perceptions and purchasing behavior and determine the relationships between variables without establishing cause and effect.

The study measured cultural branding in terms of brand heritage, cultural design, community engagement, and customer recognition, alongside consumer buying behavior in terms of purchase intention, brand preference, perceived value, and repurchase intention.

We collected data through a structured survey questionnaire administered to 120 consumer respondents from selected municipalities in Laguna, supplemented by guided interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using frequency, percentage, weighted mean, ranking, the Chi-Square Test of Independence, and Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation. The qualitative component provided additional insights into respondents' experiences and perspectives, supporting a more comprehensive interpretation of the findings.

## 3 Results and discussion

### 3.1 Profile of the respondents

The findings showed that most respondents were aged 21–30, with males outnumbering females. Most belonged to the ₱12,851–₱23,950 monthly family income group, followed by those earning ₱23,951–₱38,700. Full-time workers comprised the largest occupational group, followed by unemployed respondents. These findings summarized the respondents' demographic characteristics and socioeconomic backgrounds.

The least represented groups included respondents aged 61 and above, households earning above ₱94,500 monthly, and part-time workers. The findings indicated that the respondents were predominantly young adults, male, from lower- to middle-income households, and employed full-time. However, the unequal distribution did not indicate differences in cultural branding perceptions or consumer buying behavior. Overall, the results provided a descriptive overview of the consumers included in the study and context for understanding their responses toward papier-mâché products in Paete, Laguna.

Table 1 summarizes the extent of cultural branding across its four dimensions.

**Table 1.** Extent of cultural branding.

| Aspect               | Mean | SD   |
|----------------------|------|------|
| Brand Heritage       | 3.64 | 0.24 |
| Cultural Design      | 3.57 | 0.21 |
| Community Engagement | 3.50 | 0.20 |
| Customer Recognition | 3.45 | 0.19 |

Based on the results, Brand Heritage received the highest mean score (3.64, SD = 0.24), indicating that consumers strongly associate papier-mâché products with Paete's cultural heritage. Cultural Design followed, with a mean of 3.57 and a standard deviation of 0.21, indicating appreciation for culturally inspired designs. Community Engagement obtained a mean of 3.50 and a standard deviation of 0.20, while Customer Recognition received the lowest mean of 3.45 and a standard deviation of 0.19. Overall, the results showed favorable consumer evaluations of cultural branding across all four dimensions, with Brand Heritage rated highest and Customer Recognition lowest.

The results of the Extent of using Cultural Branding in terms of Brand Heritage can be seen in [Table 2](#).

**Table 2.** Extent of cultural branding in terms of brand heritage.

| Statement                                                                                                | Weighted mean | Interpretation        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <i>I...</i>                                                                                              |               |                       |
| 1. Acknowledge the role of historical background in shaping the cultural value of papier-mâché products. | 3.61          | Strongly Agree        |
| 2. Value the traditional craftsmanship involved in producing papier-mâché items.                         | 3.64          | Strongly Agree        |
| 3. Link papier-mâché products to the cultural identity of Paete, Laguna.                                 | 3.63          | Strongly Agree        |
| 4. Regard papier-mâché production as an important local tradition.                                       | 3.63          | Strongly Agree        |
| 5. View these products as symbols of local artistic heritage.                                            | 3.73          | Strongly Agree        |
| <b>Overall mean</b>                                                                                      | <b>3.64</b>   | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |

[Table 2](#) shows the extent of cultural branding in terms of brand heritage. The highest mean (3.73) indicates that respondents view papier-mâché products as symbols of local artistic heritage. The second-highest mean (3.64) highlights the importance of traditional craftsmanship. Other factors, such as recognizing Paete's cultural identity and valuing local traditions (3.63), also contribute to brand heritage. The lowest mean (3.61) indicates that historical background remains a relevant aspect of cultural value. Overall, the mean of 3.64 suggests that brand heritage is an important aspect of cultural branding for Paete's papier-mâché products.

The results of the Extent of using Cultural Branding in terms of Cultural Design can be seen in [Table 3](#).

**Table 3.** Extent of cultural branding in terms of cultural design.

| Statement   | Weighted mean | Interpretation |
|-------------|---------------|----------------|
| <i>I...</i> |               |                |

| Statement                                                                | Weighted mean | Interpretation        |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| 1. Notice the presence of Filipino cultural elements in product designs. | 3.61          | Strongly Agree        |
| 2. Appreciate the artistic features that reflect cultural expression.    | 3.64          | Strongly Agree        |
| 3. Distinguish the uniqueness of locally made designs.                   | 3.63          | Strongly Agree        |
| 4. Favor products that emphasize cultural authenticity.                  | 3.63          | Strongly Agree        |
| 5. Judge product appeal based on cultural and artistic relevance.        | 3.73          | Strongly Agree        |
| <b>Overall mean</b>                                                      | <b>3.57</b>   | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |

Table 3 shows the extent of cultural branding in terms of cultural design. Product appeal based on cultural and artistic relevance received the highest mean of 3.73, highlighting the importance of meaningful designs. Artistic features reflecting cultural expression ranked second, with a mean of 3.64, emphasizing the value of cultural representation. Locally made designs and cultural authenticity both obtained a mean of 3.63, reflecting the importance of uniqueness and authenticity. Meanwhile, recognizing Filipino cultural elements received the lowest mean of 3.61, indicating room to strengthen cultural visibility. Overall, the mean of 3.57 suggests that cultural design is an important aspect of cultural branding for Paete's papier-mâché products.

The results of the Extent of using Cultural Branding in terms of Community Engagement can be seen in Table 4.

**Table 4.** Extent of cultural branding in terms of community engagement.

| Statement                                                        | Weighted mean | Interpretation        |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|
| <i>I...</i>                                                      |               |                       |
| 1. Show support for local artisans through purchasing decisions. | 3.61          | Strongly Agree        |
| 2. Take part in events that promote local craftsmanship.         | 3.43          | Strongly Agree        |
| 3. Share or recommend papier-mâché products to others.           | 3.49          | Strongly Agree        |
| 4. Participate in initiatives that preserve local artistry.      | 3.35          | Strongly Agree        |
| 5. Encourage continued patronage of cultural products.           | 3.63          | Strongly Agree        |
| <b>Overall mean</b>                                              | <b>3.50</b>   | <b>Strongly Agree</b> |

Table 4 shows the extent of cultural branding in terms of community engagement. Encouraging continued patronage of cultural products had the highest mean (3.63), highlighting the importance of sustained consumer support. Supporting local artisans through purchasing decisions received a mean of 3.61, while sharing or recommending products obtained a mean of 3.49. Participating in local craftsmanship events received a mean of 3.43, while joining initiatives to preserve local artistry recorded the lowest mean of 3.35. Overall, the mean of 3.50 suggests that community engagement plays an important role in promoting local craftsmanship and sustaining Paete's papier-mâché industry.

The results of the Extent of using Cultural Branding in terms of Customer Recognition can be seen in Table 5.

**Table 5.** Extent of cultural branding in terms of customer recognition.

| Statement                                                                                                                         | Weighted mean | Interpretation           |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|--------------------------|
| <i>I...</i>                                                                                                                       |               |                          |
| 1. Recognize the value of purchasing papier-mâché products to support and preserve local culture.                                 | 3.56          | Strongly Agree           |
| 2. Recall recognized papier-mâché brands or artisans when considering future purchases.                                           | 3.34          | Strongly Agree           |
| 3. Recommend recognized papier-mâché products to others because of their cultural significance and quality.                       | 3.43          | Strongly Agree           |
| 4. Prefer papier-mâché products from artisans or brands that have established a positive reputation for quality and authenticity. | 3.49          | Strongly Agree           |
| 5. Continue purchasing papier-mâché products from artisans or brands that consistently meet your expectations.                    | 3.45          | Strongly Agree           |
| <b>Overall mean</b>                                                                                                               | <b>3.45</b>   | <b>To a Great Extent</b> |

Table 5 presents the findings on cultural branding in terms of customer recognition. Recognizing the value of purchasing papier-mâché products to preserve local culture had the highest mean (3.56), highlighting the importance of cultural awareness. Preferring products from artisans with established reputations had a mean of 3.49, while continued purchasing from brands that meet expectations had a mean of 3.45. Recommending recognized products to others had a mean of 3.43, while recalling recognized brands or artisans had the lowest mean at 3.34. The overall mean of 3.45 indicates that customer recognition is an important aspect of cultural branding for Paete's papier-mâché products.

Presented below are the summarized responses gathered from the papier-mâché producers during the interview regarding cultural branding and consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products in Paete, Laguna:

- **PP1:** The participant highlighted the background and history of papier-mâché to help customers understand the product and appreciate its cultural value.
- **PP2:** The participant emphasized quality and fair pricing as important factors in achieving customer satisfaction and encouraging repeat orders.
- **PP3:** The participant emphasized providing livelihood opportunities to help sustain the papier-mâché industry in its town of origin.
- **PP4:** The participant emphasized maintaining the authenticity of papier-mâché products through high-quality craftsmanship to ensure customer satisfaction and encourage repeat orders.
- **PP5:** The participant highlighted unique cultural designs and workshops as ways to introduce papier-mâché and help sustain the local industry.

The producers highlighted the importance of cultural heritage, product quality, authenticity, and community contribution in consumer buying behavior. They emphasized that preserving papier-mâché's history and identity, maintaining traditional craftsmanship, and introducing meaningful cultural designs helped consumers appreciate the products' value. They also noted that fair pricing, livelihood opportunities, and community workshops supported customer satisfaction and the sustainability of Paete's papier-mâché industry. These findings align with Mencarelli et al. [1], who ex-

plained that authentic, meaningful heritage experiences can strengthen consumers' emotional connections with brands.

The results of the Level of Consumer Buying Behavior toward Papier-Mâché Products can be seen in Table 6.

**Table 6.** Level of consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products.

| Statement                                                                 | Weighted mean | Interpretation |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Take into account the cultural background of products when purchasing. | 3.49          | Strongly Agree |
| 2. Show preference for culturally inspired papier-mâché items.            | 3.46          | Strongly Agree |
| 3. Feel encouraged to buy products reflecting traditional craftsmanship.  | 3.44          | Strongly Agree |
| 4. Select products connected to local identity.                           | 3.48          | Strongly Agree |
| 5. Favor items with strong cultural design elements.                      | 3.54          | Strongly Agree |
| 6. Assess product design based on cultural representation.                | 3.49          | Strongly Agree |
| 7. Choose culturally meaningful designs over generic ones.                | 3.48          | Strongly Agree |
| 8. Intentionally support locally produced items.                          | 3.56          | Strongly Agree |
| 9. Recommend products to promote local culture.                           | 3.56          | Strongly Agree |
| 10. Maintain continued patronage of papier-mâché products.                | 3.58          | Strongly Agree |

The findings indicated that respondents generally viewed consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products favorably. Continued patronage received the highest mean, emphasizing the importance of sustained consumer support for local products. Respondents also highly valued supporting locally produced items, recommending products to promote local culture, and favoring strong cultural design elements, highlighting the role of cultural identity in purchasing decisions. Meanwhile, preference for products reflecting traditional craftsmanship received the lowest assessment, suggesting opportunities to strengthen consumer appreciation of traditional artistry. Overall, cultural relevance, distinctive designs, local support, and continued patronage were important considerations in consumer buying behavior toward Paete's papier-mâché products.

The following responses were gathered from face-to-face interviews with the papier-mâché entrepreneurs, sharing their insights and experiences regarding consumer buying behavior towards papier-mâché products in Paete, Laguna:

- **PP1:** The participant emphasized maintaining traditional papier-mâché craftsmanship and Filipino-inspired designs to help customers appreciate the cultural value of Paete's taka.
- **PP2:** The participant emphasized quality craftsmanship and diverse product designs as important in achieving customer satisfaction, encouraging repeat purchases, and strengthening market recognition.
- **PP3:** The participant highlighted innovative and sustainable papier-mâché craftsmanship as practices that can promote customer satisfaction, repeat purchases, and loyalty.
- **PP4:** The participant emphasized combining detailed craftsmanship with cultural storytelling to help customers recognize the authenticity and value of papier-mâché products.

- **PP5:** The participant highlighted the importance of supporting cultural heritage through experiential papier-mâché products to encourage customer appreciation and continued support for the local industry.

The producers highlighted traditional craftsmanship, product quality, and cultural identity as key factors in consumer buying behavior. They emphasized preserving traditional techniques while incorporating Filipino-inspired designs and innovations to improve product appeal. They also noted that unique designs, quality production, and cultural storytelling could strengthen customer appreciation and encourage repeat patronage. These findings align with Kumari et al. [2], who found that cultural elements in product design were significantly related to consumers' purchase intention and appreciation of heritage-based products.

The Relationship between the Profile of the Respondents and the Extent of Cultural Branding can be seen in Table 7.

**Table 7.** Relationship between the profile of the respondents and the extent of cultural branding (chi-square test of independence).

| Variable              | p-value | Relationship    |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Age                   | 0.668   | Not Significant |
| Sex                   | 0.536   | Not Significant |
| Monthly Family Income | 0.303   | Not Significant |
| Occupational Status   | 0.620   | Not Significant |

The findings showed that age, sex, monthly family income, and occupational status were not statistically significantly related to the extent of cultural branding. This indicated that respondents with different demographic profiles generally perceived Paete's papier-mâché products' cultural branding similarly. The results suggested that consumers may appreciate cultural branding regardless of their personal and socioeconomic characteristics. These findings emphasized the importance of communicating cultural heritage, distinctive designs, and community values to a broad range of consumers.

The Relationship between the Profile of the Respondents and the Level of Consumer Buying Behavior toward Papier-Mâché Products can be seen in Table 8.

**Table 8.** Relationship between the profile of the respondents and the level of consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products (chi-square test of independence).

| Variable              | p-value | Relationship    |
|-----------------------|---------|-----------------|
| Age                   | 0.873   | Not Significant |
| Sex                   | 0.881   | Not Significant |
| Monthly Family Income | 0.603   | Not Significant |
| Occupational Status   | 0.122   | Not Significant |

The findings revealed no statistically significant relationships between respondents' demographic profiles and their consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products. Age, sex, monthly family income, and occupational status were not significantly associated with buying behavior. This suggests that consumers with different demographic backgrounds reported comparable buying behavior

toward Paete's papier-mâché products. Overall, cultural appreciation, product quality, distinctive designs, and perceived cultural value may be important considerations in encouraging consumer interest and continued patronage.

The relationship between the Extent of Cultural Branding and Consumer Buying Behavior toward Papier-Mâché Products can be seen in Table 9.

**Table 9.** Relationship between the extent of cultural branding and consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products (Spearman's rank-order correlation).

| Variable             | Spearman's $\rho$ | $p$ -value | Relationship       |
|----------------------|-------------------|------------|--------------------|
| Brand Heritage       | 0.206             | 0.024      | Significant        |
| Cultural Design      | 0.247             | 0.006      | Significant        |
| Community Engagement | 0.270             | 0.003      | Significant        |
| Customer Recognition | 0.306             | <0.001     | Highly Significant |

The findings indicated that brand heritage, cultural design, community engagement, and customer recognition were significantly and positively related to consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products. Customer recognition showed the strongest relationship, followed by community engagement, cultural design, and brand heritage. These findings emphasized the importance of recognizing cultural value, strengthening community connections, maintaining distinctive designs, and preserving traditional craftsmanship in encouraging consumer support. Overall, these cultural branding dimensions were positively associated with consumer buying behavior toward Paete's papier-mâché products.

## 4 Conclusion

Based on the analysis and interpretation of the findings, the study arrived at the following conclusions:

1. The findings showed that the respondents' profiles in terms of age, sex, monthly family income, and occupational status had no significant relationship with the extent of cultural branding. The results indicated that these demographic characteristics were not significantly associated with Brand Heritage, Cultural Design, Community Engagement, and Customer Recognition. Therefore, the first null hypothesis was accepted. This suggested that the respondents generally had similar perceptions of cultural branding across the demographic groups represented in the study.
2. The findings also showed that the respondents' profiles in terms of age, sex, monthly family income, and occupational status had no significant relationship with consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products. These demographic characteristics were not significantly associated with Purchase Intention, Brand Preference, Perceived Value, and Repurchase Intention among the respondents. Therefore, the second null hypothesis was accepted. This indicated that the respondents generally demonstrated similar consumer buying behavior regardless of their demographic characteristics.
3. The study revealed a significant positive relationship between cultural branding and consumer buying behavior toward papier-mâché products among the respondents. All four dimensions of cultural branding—Brand Heritage, Cultural Design, Community Engagement, and Customer Recognition showed significant positive relationships with consumer buying behavior. Among these

dimensions, Customer Recognition had the strongest observed relationship, followed by Community Engagement, Cultural Design, and Brand Heritage. Therefore, the third null hypothesis was rejected, indicating that higher levels of cultural branding were associated with more favorable consumer buying behavior among the respondents studied.

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