Brands help to identify and differentiate goods and services of one organisation from those of another. They simplify shopping, aid in the processing of information about products and let the buyer feel confident of purchase decision. Powerful brands maintain interactions that repeatedly result in high value experiences. Such brands allow organisations to capitalise on the strong long term customer relationship leading to brand equity. No doubt, rapid changes taking place in the global market and the increased competition among firms made “Brand Management” an important strategic task. Good brand management brings about clear differentiation between products, ensures consumer loyalty and preferences and may lead to a greater market share. Noticeably, how branding affects the Brand Purchase Behaviour (BPB) of customers and how they react and respond towards brands are normally strange to companies. Similarly, the perception and response of the customers towards branding, the degree of their satisfaction, how branding affects the customers’ loyalty, how the loyalty affect Customers’ Brand Equity (CBE) and finally, how the customers’ brand equity affect Brand Extension (B.EXTN) are normally not predictable. This study analyses the impact of branding on BPB, CBE and B.EXTN of different categories of consumer products in Kerala.

The consumer product industry in India, which includes design, development, manufacturing, and sale of different categories of consumer products has witnessed an upsurge over the last few years and continues to boom even today. India's consumer product industry is one of the largest in the world. The consumer products market is always highly competitive due to the availability of a number of alternatives and substitutes. In a highly populated country like India there is a potential market for the consumer goods. Hence, the researcher has chosen consumer products under three categories for the present research. The attitudes, responses and perceptions of the customers of the consumer products towards branding are identified and measured under the title “BRANDING IN MODERN MARKETING - A STUDY OF ITS IMPACT ON MARKETING OF CONSUMER PRODUCTS”. This research thesis has utilised selected brands of consumer durable products
in Kerala under three categories - convenience goods, shopping goods, and speciality goods.

The findings of the study show that the customers in Kerala are brand conscious and brand loyal to their brands. Customers of convenience goods showed a product preference of personal care products and soap and detergents, and their favourite brand was Colgate. The shopping goods customers indicated their product affinity with home appliances with brand preference of Samsung and the speciality goods customers revealed their product preference for passenger car with Maruti as their favourite brand. But Colgate proved to be the most favourite brand while considering the whole categories of goods.

The MDS (prefscal) model indicates that ‘ease to use’ and ‘attractive advertisements’ are the factors that motivate customers of convenience goods, and ‘ease to use’ and ‘better after sales service’ are the motivating factors for shopping goods. But the ‘quality and performance’, and ‘value for money’ influenced customers of speciality goods to buy their speciality goods brands.

The main thrust of the study revealed that the brand purchase behaviour is high and positive among the customers of speciality goods staying in rural areas. The effect of various identified factors such as BA, BSP, BAWARE, BK, BP, PQ, and BI on BPB is measured and it is revealed that all the factors have a significant impact on BPB of the customers of speciality goods. The customers of speciality goods irrespective their area of residence showed high level of brand equity perception and the identified factors such as BI, BASSN, BS, BATTACH, BT, and BL have a significant impact on customer-based brand equity of speciality goods. Customers are willing to accept the extension of brands of those having more brand equity. The customers of speciality goods living in semi-urban area expressed more acceptance on brand extension than did the customers of convenience goods and shopping goods. All these findings are proved by applying sound statistical modelling.

Key Words: Branding, Customer-based Brand Equity, Brand Purchase Behaviour, Consumer Products