

Chapter 10

Findings and Conclusion

Contents	10.1	<i>Introduction</i>
	10.2	<i>Findings of the Study</i>
	10.3	<i>Conclusion</i>

10.1 Introduction

In India, the financial services sector is the powerhouse and foundation of the country's economy. The financial sector is essential for the well-being of the economy since every transaction has a financial component. Ahmed and Ansari (1998) observed that an economy's expansion and prosperity are supported by an efficient financial market. Similarly, economic development is essential for raising societal standards of living and the advancement of the nation as a whole. Dreese (1974) identified that the financial system, which is vital for the smooth functioning of the whole economy, depends heavily on banks. However, the economy of the nation is influenced by the financial sector's volatility. In India, economic growth and banking stability are strongly associated since banks mobilise a large share of the resources required to support the country's economic activities (Dhal et al., 2011). Likewise, banks also facilitate the growth of the economy by allocating the required funds for economic sustainability (Alam et al., 2021).

India's banking sector have several noteworthy accomplishments during the past three decades. The way in which services are provided to customers has undergone dramatic shifts in the banking sector. Further, Indian banks are attempting to differentiate themselves through their marketing, branding, and customer relationship management strategies (Whelan et al., 2010). Therefore, banks are concentrating on their distinct competitive advantage to enhance their market presence. Leijerholt et al. (2019) pointed out that most Indian banks now recognise the importance of branding and marketing initiatives. Through different brand building practices, banks influence the perceptions of their customers towards their brand. Banks strengthen brand loyalty, confidence, and positive relationships

by putting forth efficient brand-building practices. This would increase customer engagement and provide banks with a competitive edge in the market. The present study makes an effort to evaluate the effectiveness of various brand building practices used by commercial banks in Kerala based on customer perception. Further, the study also assessed how much a bank's brand building efforts contributes to its successful attainment of distinctive positioning, brand equity, and favourable behavioural intentions. Furthermore, the study also aims to investigate the moderating effect of the type of banks as well as the mediating influence of customer-based brand equity and customer satisfaction. The main findings of the study are presented in this chapter, along with conclusion.

10.2 Findings of the Study

10.2.1 Customers Perception Towards Brand Building Practices Adopted by the Commercial Banks in Kerala

- Brand building practices employed by the commercial banks in Kerala are perceived differently by their customers and have a moderate effect on them. It highlighted that commercial banks operating in Kerala employed a wide range of brand building practices that had the potential to influence customers. However, it has also been implied that there are several areas where the brand building practices could further strengthen its effects. Therefore, the banks have to identify the areas and devise strategies to elevate their overall effectiveness. As a result, it can enhance brand communication, strengthen the company's value proposition, and improve the customer experience to withstand the competition.

- Among the different brand building practices, the most positively perceived brand building practice among the customers of commercial banks in Kerala on the basis of their mean score was corporate social responsibility, which had a high mean score, followed by internal branding, customer relationship management, advertisement, promotional offer and discount schemes, and social media, which were found to be the least influenced brand building practices. This indicates that customers were happy and proud when their bank supported community groups and addressed local issues. On the other hand, banks have not fully embraced the potential of social media when compared to other brand building practices.

- It was observed that the brand building practices adopted by the commercial banks in Kerala have a mean value greater than 3, which reveals that customers perceive the banks' initiatives positively and considered them influential. It is implied that the banks were successful in building a strong reputation and convincing customers about their value propositions. This high mean value illustrates the effectiveness of brand building practices in influencing customer perceptions, establishing credibility, and creating loyalty.

- With regard to the advertisements, there exists a difference in perception among the commercial bank customers in Kerala. It is also revealed that advertisements moderately influence their customers. It means that the bank's advertisements catch their attention, provide updated information, promote brand awareness, and solidify the brand name in the minds of potential customers by succinctly stating the unique benefits and attributes of their product or service.

- Regarding gender, it has been determined that male and female customers had significant differences in their perceptions of the bank's advertisements. Additionally, it was observed that advertisements had a greater impact on female customers than male customers. It was also identified that the bank's advertisements were more effective in grabbing the interest, attention, and purchase decisions of female customers.

- It was observed that there exists no statistically significant variance among the age groups of customers of commercial banks with respect to their perception of advertisements. This indicates that advertisements have an equivalent effect and influence on customers of all age categories. It means that advertisements are consistently successful in attracting customers' attention and stimulating their interest.

- In the case of educational qualifications, there exists a significant disparity in terms of educational background among the customers of commercial banks. It illustrates that customers with various educational backgrounds respond to advertising messages differently. It implies that the intended customer's level of education influences the efficacy and effectiveness of advertisements.

- With regard to advertisements, the results of the post-hoc test revealed that customers with graduate degrees differ from customers with postgraduate degrees. The study points out that customers with graduate degrees are more receptive to and engaged with advertising messaging than those with postgraduate degrees. It means that customers with graduate degrees are more influenced by advertisements than those with postgraduate degrees.

- It has been found that there is no statistically significant difference in perception of a bank's advertisements among customers with various occupations. The findings revealed that customers from various occupational backgrounds have similar opinions and convictions about the influence of advertisements. It implies that occupation does not significantly influence the perception of bank customers.

- Results indicate that there exists no statistically significant disparity among how customers of public and private commercial banks in Kerala perceive bank advertisements, indicating that both customer groups have a similar perspective on advertisement messages. This implies that customers' opinions regarding advertisements aren't significantly influenced by the type of bank (public or private).

- Customers perceive and assess advertisements differently with respect to the bank's brand. As evidenced by the fact that there exists significant variance between the different brands of commercial banks in Kerala with regard to customer perception of advertisements. This reveals that customers' perceptions of each bank's advertisements are influenced by their messages, strategies, and overall reputation.

- The findings further identified that customers of South Indian Bank were more influenced by advertisements than those of customers of State Bank of India, CSB, and HDFC Bank, which indicates that South Indian Bank's advertising campaigns were more successful in attracting and retaining their intended customer base. It indicates that South Indian bank advertisements resonated strongly with their target customers, having a greater impact and influence on their attitudes and behaviours.

- Customers' duration of banking experience in commercial banks does not have a significant impact on how they perceive advertisements. It further

indicates that customer feelings about a bank's advertisement remain unchanged regardless of how long they have been associated with the bank. Regardless of customers' duration of banking experience, the advertisements' efficacy appears to be consistent.

- The effectiveness of customer relationship management (CRM) at commercial banks in Kerala was found to be moderate. This indicates that most of the customers had a better experience with their bank's customer relationship management. This indicates that existing CRM practices meet the expectations of customers, maintain long-lasting relationships with them, and provide quality services.

- The perceptions of male and female customers with regard to the customer relationship management (CRM) practices of commercial banks were statistically different. It revealed that gender influences customers' perceptions and evaluations of their particular banks' CRM activities. This discrepancy implies that male and female customers may have different expectations, preferences, and experiences.

- Customers of different age categories perceive CRM practices differently, indicating that customer opinions and evaluations of CRM activities are impacted by their age. It implies that different age categories have varying requirements, interests, and expectations with regard to the bank's CRM initiatives, resulting in differences in their perspectives.

- The post-hoc test results for CRM reveals that customers perceptions under the age of 30 differ from those of customers between the age of 31 and 50, as well as those above 50, indicating that customers under the age of 30 have a more positive experience with CRM than other age categories. This finding indicates that young customers consider the bank's CRM activities to be more effective and gratifying. However, existing CRM strategies fail to address the distinct preferences or wants of customers in other age categories.

- Customers with varied educational backgrounds have distinct perspectives on CRM initiatives. This finding indicates that customers' educational qualifications may impact their expectations, preferences, or demands with regard

to CRM practices. It implies that customers' levels of education affect their critical and analytical perspectives on assessing CRM activities.

- According to the results of the post hoc test, it was found that there exists a significant difference in the perception of customers with graduate degrees and post-graduation degrees. This result indicates that customers with graduate degrees have a better experience with CRM activities than customers with postgraduate degrees. This indicates that banks' CRM efforts fall short when it comes to serving customers with postgraduate degrees.

- It has been revealed that there exists a significant variation in the way customers perceive the customer relationship management practices used by commercial banks based on their occupational background. This shows that customers from different occupational backgrounds have different opinions and assessments of CRM activities. It implies that the intended customer's nature of work, engagement in financial matters, and specific requirements related to their occupations contribute to these differences in perception.

- Further analysis revealed that customers who are employed in the private sector have a superior perception of the customer relationship management of commercial banks in Kerala compared to those who are employed in government sector. As per the result, customers employed in the private sector felt that banks' CRM activities were more effective at addressing their requirements and expectations. At the same time, government employees felt that CRM practices were not so effective.

- According to the findings, there is no statistically significant difference between how public and private commercial bank customers perceive their banks' CRM practices. This demonstrates that customers from both the public and private sectors evaluate banks' CRM activities similarly, without any meaningful difference.

- Customers' perceptions of CRM practices across various brands of commercial banks in Kerala vary significantly. It indicates that customers have different viewpoints and evaluations of the quality and efficacy of the CRM

initiatives used by various banks. Further, this means that the way banks interact with and manage their customer relationships is different among the bank brands.

- CRM is perceived with greater appreciation by South Indian Bank (SIB) customers than the customers of State Bank of India, CSB, HDFC Bank, and Union Bank of India. This illustrates that SIB has used successful CRM strategies and approaches that connect effectively with its customers, resulting in a higher level of engagement and positive emotions. Additionally, South Indian Bank's outstanding personalised services, quick resolution of problems, proactive interaction, and intense emphasis on addressing customer demands make it an appreciable brand among customers.

- It has been identified that there exists no significant variance in how customers perceive CRM across different durations of banking experience in commercial banks. This implied that customers consistently felt satisfied with the quality of CRM practices regardless of how long they had been associated with the bank. This suggests that when customers maintain their banking relationship over time, their engagement with CRM activities does not alter considerably. It means that the banks in Kerala have continuously implemented robust and effective CRM approaches that consistently satisfy the demands and expectations of their customers, regardless of how long they have been customers.

- The findings reveal that social media had a moderate effect on commercial bank customers. It indicates that banks social media platforms provide unique, interesting information about their brand's products or services. It also makes it possible to exchange opinions, which establishes long-lasting relationships with customers.

- The way male and female customers of commercial banks perceive social media differs significantly. This pointed out that experiences about the usage of banks' social media by male and female customers are different. Further, it indicates that social media users would have different interests, varied expectations of banks' social media presence, or diverse interactions and experiences with social media platforms.

- The research findings identified that female customers of commercial banks are more influenced by the social media platforms of banks compared to male customers. This revealed that female customers are more inclined to engage with and respond to the information and messages shared through banks' social media platforms. Additionally, female users perceive social media sites to be more favourable for searching and sharing information.

- Among all age categories of commercial bank customers, there were significant variations regarding the way social media is perceived. This revealed that customers' opinions and attitudes about the social media platforms employed by the banks vary across age categories. Moreover, it revealed that banks were not providing customised information to different age categories that attracts social media platforms to increase customer engagement and enable customers to meet their requirements and expectations.

- It was further inferred that customers under the age of 30 were more influenced by the social media platforms employed by commercial banks than those between the age of 31 and 50 and those above 50. In comparison to other age groups, it was observed that young customers are more engaged and influenced by social media platforms. Customers under 30 appeared to be more engaged on banks' social media sites. In contrast, other age categories rely more on alternative sources for information related to banking decisions.

- The findings of the study illustrated that commercial bank customers from various educational backgrounds have differing opinions on social media platforms. This outlined that customers interactions with and understanding of social media information significantly depend on their level of education, which would affect their general perception of commercial banks.

- Customers with graduation degrees have a higher level of impact and involvement on social media platforms than customers with postgraduate degrees. This result revealed that customers with graduate degrees are actively engaged and are impacted by social media discussions and content. However, it is further pointed out that commercial banks did not employ specialised social media strategies to

interact and resonate with all distinct customer groups by taking into account their educational backgrounds.

- The investigation identified that there is no statistically significant distinction between the perceptions and attitudes expressed by customers from different occupational backgrounds regarding the social media platforms adopted by commercial banks. This established that customers with different occupational backgrounds had identical experiences while using social media. Furthermore, it has been found that customers on social media platforms exhibit similar levels of interest and involvement, regardless of their occupational background.

- It has been revealed that customers of public and private commercial banks do not differ significantly regarding the way they interact with social media sites. This indicates that customers of both type of banks shared identical perception regarding social media experiences. It was observed that social media platforms are equally effective for customers of both public or private sector banks since they exhibit equivalent levels of interest and engagement while using social media.

- The statistical investigation observed that customer perceptions of social media varied significantly among commercial bank brands. This highlighted that depending on the particular bank with which they collaborate, customers have different experiences and perceptions of social media platforms. Additionally, it was found that different banks have diverse social media presences, social media content of varying quality, and customer interaction levels.

- The findings indicate that customers perceive significant differences in the use of social media platforms between the State Bank of India and the South Indian Bank. Additionally, the perception of customers of CSB Bank is also differs significantly from that of the State Bank of India.

- Further analysis identified that customer perceptions of State Bank of India (SBI) significantly differ from customer perceptions of South Indian Bank (SIB) and CSB Bank customers with regard to their bank's social media platforms. This indicates that SBI's social media activities and content are more effective in influencing its customers perspectives, attitudes, and behaviours. Additionally, SBI's social media strategy is successful in attracting the attention and participation

of its intended customer base. Further, it was revealed that SBI's social media platform had a greater impact on customers' decision-making than SIB and CSB customers' social media activities.

- The duration of the banking experience and the way the customer perceived social media varied significantly. This revealed that customers' perspectives and attitudes regarding the social media platforms of various commercial banks differed. It means that customers' convictions and behaviours are influenced by their knowledge and exposure to social media.

- According to the mean value, it was revealed that customers with bank experience up to three years were more influenced by social media compared to those who had experience of six to ten years and more than ten years. This highlighted that customers who are relatively new to banking were more interested in and receptive to the social media efforts and strategies employed by commercial banks. This further indicates that the information and messages shared on social media platforms reached customers with a shorter banking experience. On the other side, the bank's social media platforms did not effectively reach customers with more banking experience.

- The findings suggested that the CSR initiatives of commercial banks in Kerala had a moderate effect on their customers. This implies that most of the customers accepted the banks' CSR initiatives and considered their banks to be socially responsible organisations. It also reveals that customers feel good when their banks engage in social and environmental issues.

- Customers' opinion regarding CSR were not significantly influenced by gender. The perceptions of male and female customers in Kerala about the CSR initiatives of commercial banks are similar. This indicated that when it comes to the CSR activities of the banks, male and female share the same opinions and judgements. This indicated that the levels of respect and appreciation for the CSR initiatives undertaken by commercial banks were similar for both male and female customers. The fact that the same customer perception shared by both male and female emphasises that the banks' CSR programmes influence and nurture good perceptions among their customer base.

- Customers' perceptions of the CSR of commercial banks vary significantly depending on the age category they belong to. This highlights that different age groups have varying perspectives and evaluations of the banks' CSR initiatives. Customers' perceptions of CSR are significantly influenced by age and depend on their life experiences.

- It was found that customers under the age of 30 had more favourable impressions of CSR than customers between the age of 31 and 50 and above 50. This revealed that young customers have a more positive perception of commercial banks' CSR initiatives, indicating that other age categories may not be aware of the bank's CSR activities.

- Customers of commercial banks in Kerala have similar views on CSR programmes, regardless of their educational background. This indicates that customers educational backgrounds do not significantly influence how they perceive commercial banks' CSR practices. It was also found that customers attitudes towards CSR initiatives remain consistent regardless of their educational qualifications.

- Customers from various occupational backgrounds have different perceptions of the CSR activities of commercial banks. This indicates that customers occupations have an impact on how they perceive and assess CSR activities. The discrepancies in their viewpoints could be due to variances in beliefs, priorities, and expectations in their occupational experiences.

- Customers who are employed in the private sector had a significantly higher positive perception of CSR initiatives employed by commercial banks than customers who are employed in the government sector. It implies that employees in the private sector are happy with and appreciative of the CSR activities carried out by commercial banks. All other customers exhibit similar perceptions towards the CSR initiatives of the bank.

- The findings indicate that there is no significant difference in how customers of public and private sector commercial banks in Kerala view CSR activities, revealing that both customer groups have a similar viewpoint on the CSR initiatives undertaken by their respective banks. It was also revealed that the

perception of CSR is influenced more by the activities carried out by banks than by their ownership structure.

- With regard to bank brands, customers have varying perceptions and evaluations of CSR initiatives. As illustrated by the fact that there is a considerable difference between the different brands of commercial banks in Kerala with regard to customer perception of CSR initiatives. This indicates that customers perceive and evaluate CSR practices differently depending on the specific bank they are associated with. Further, customers' perceptions may differ depending on how each bank addresses CSR, including the types of activities they undertake, how often they interact with the community, and how transparently they disclose their efforts.

- Customers of South Indian Bank had a higher positive impression of their bank's CSR initiatives than customers of CSB. It reveals that South Indian Bank has successfully communicated and initiated CSR activities that resonate with its customer base, resulting in increased awareness of its social and environmental activities, whereas the CSR initiatives of CSB have potential for development in terms of customer engagement and communication strategies.

- The duration of a customer's banking relationship does not have an effect on how they perceive their bank's CSR initiatives. This implied that regardless of how long a customer has been with the bank, their attitude and assessment of the bank's CSR initiatives remain the same.

- In Kerala, customers of commercial banks were moderately influenced by internal branding. This implies that bank employees provide prompt services, encourage them to do transactions, and assist them in choosing the right type of service by giving recommendations and updates about the services. This further means that bank employees are knowledgeable and skilled and act as brand ambassadors.

- Customer perceptions of the internal branding of commercial banks are significantly different for male and female customers. This indicates that when it comes to the performance and attitudes of bank employees, male and female customers have distinct perspectives and assessments. The variation indicates that

customers' expectations, preferences, and experiences may vary with respect to gender.

- Customers' evaluations of bank employees' performance in providing prompt services and serving as the bank's brand ambassadors vary significantly across different age groups. Further, it was revealed that customers under the age of 30 felt that bank employees were more helpful and supportive than customers between the age of 31 and 50. In contrast, customers who are between the age of 31 and 50 felt that the bank's employees were not so supportive towards them.

- Customers with varied educational backgrounds do not have distinct perspectives regarding the internal branding of their bank. This claim that bank customers with different educational backgrounds received equal levels of support from bank employees. Customers with varying levels of education evaluated the employees' support and assistance in resolving their questions, complaints, and service-related requirements as similar.

- Depending on customers occupation, commercial bank customers in Kerala have different perspectives on internal branding. Regarding the banks' internal branding initiatives, customers from different occupational backgrounds have varying perspectives and experiences. Customers have diverse perceptions of the ways in which the bank employees support and help them.

- Based on customers' professional backgrounds, their perceptions of internal branding vary significantly. The internal branding initiatives of commercial banks in Kerala have a higher influence on customers from private organisations when compared to customers who are from government organisations. Additionally, customers who are students are also highly influenced by banks' internal branding than government employees. It reveals that the attitude and thoughts of customers towards internal branding activities are influenced by their occupational background.

- The customer perceptions of the internal branding approaches used by private and public sector commercial banks varied significantly. It was observed that when it comes to the internal branding initiatives of these two type of banks, customers have contrasting opinions and experiences. When compared to customers

of public commercial banks, those of private commercial banks have a better perception of internal branding, according to the mean score.

- Customers' perceptions of internal branding across various brands of commercial banks in Kerala vary significantly. This indicates that customers have different viewpoints and evaluations of the internal branding initiatives, such as staff involvement, support, and how they represent the bank and serve as brand ambassadors.

- Regarding internal branding, the customer perception of the State Bank of India (SBI) is significantly different from that of the Federal Bank and the South Indian Bank (SIB). Further analysis revealed that SIB and Federal Bank customers experienced better employee service than SBI. Whereas customer perception of CSB's internal branding is significantly different from that of South Indian Bank. At the same time, South Indian bank customers perceptions differ significantly from those of the Union Bank of India. This indicates that SIB had well-equipped employees to provide the best service to their customers compared to CSB and Union Bank of India.

- The study identified that there exists no significant variance in how customers perceive internal branding across different durations of banking experience in commercial banks. This implied that customers consistently felt that their bank employees were supportive, regardless of how long they had been associated with the bank.

- The result revealed that the influence of monetary and non-monetary offer and discount schemes provided by the banks was moderate. This suggests that discounts were really attractive, beneficial, and designed according to customers' requirements. It also indicates that the bank's offers have the capacity to create a brand image, and customers perceived their bank as superior to its competitors.

- Male and female customers have different perceptions of commercial banks' promotional offerings and discount schemes. It demonstrates that the perspectives and reactions of male and female customers to the promotional strategies used by banks are different. Promotional offer and discount schemes

differ in their efficacy and appeal with respect to gender-specific preferences and demands.

- Compared to male customers, female customers exhibit a higher level of interest in the promotional offer and discount schemes provided by commercial banks. It also indicates that female customers have a higher propensity to interact with and take advantage of promotional strategies adopted by commercial banks.

- Customers of all age categories have diverse perspectives on the promotional offer and discount schemes offered by commercial banks. The perceptions and evaluations of these promotional strategies among customers of different age groups vary significantly.

- Young customers who are under the age of 30 are more attracted to and involved in promotional offer and discount schemes when compared to customers from other age categories. Promotional campaigns highly influenced the young customers, as they were more excited to save money, gain access to extra advantages, or explore new banking services and products. Their desire for financial freedom, cost savings, and the availability of several banking products and services may be responsible for their preference for the promotional offers.

- Customers with different educational backgrounds have diverse perspectives on the promotional offer and discount schemes offered by commercial banks. Customers with differing levels of knowledge perceive and evaluate those promotional strategies in different ways.

- Customers who possess a graduate degree have a better perception of promotional offer and discount schemes than customers who possess a postgraduate degree. This indicates that graduate customers are highly influenced by the promotional strategies of commercial banks' than postgraduate customers.

- Customers of commercial banks in Kerala have a comparable degree of perception when it comes to promotional offer and discount programmes with regard to their occupational background. This shows that the banks' promotional strategies appeal to all customer groups and are not particularly impacted by the customers' occupations. The lack of variance in perception across occupations indicates that commercial banks' promotional offer and discount schemes are

considered equally by customers with varying occupational backgrounds. This means that the banks strive to offer equal opportunities for customers regardless of their profession.

- Customers of both public and private commercial banks have similar opinions on discounts and promotional offers. Customers of these bank types experience the promotional strategies provided by the banks in a similar way. This highlights that regardless of the ownership structure of the bank, both public and private commercial banks are effective in developing promotional offer and discount schemes. Customers of both type of banks perceive these promotional schemes as having similar value and advantages.

- With respect to bank brands, customers have varying perceptions and evaluations of promotional offer and discount schemes. This implies that there is a considerable difference in customer perception of promotional offer and discount schemes employed by different brands of commercial banks. This indicates that customer perception of promotional strategies would depend on the specific bank.

- Considering promotional offer and discount schemes, the customer perception of CSB is significantly different from that of Federal Bank, Canara Bank, and South Indian Bank. Customers' perception indicates that Canara Bank delivers more robust promotional offerings than CSB. The promotional offerings of Canara Bank, Federal Bank, and SIB are viewed by their customers as more appealing, beneficial, and cost-effective than those of CSB. It implied that these banks had effectively developed and implemented promotional initiatives that had a positive customer impact.

- The duration of the banking experience and how the customer perceived the bank's promotional offer and discount schemes varied significantly. This revealed that various banks' customer perspectives and attitudes regarding the promotional strategies offered by commercial banks were different. The study further identified that customers who have been dealing with the bank for up to three years exhibited significant differences compared to those who have been customers for six to ten years and over ten years. Customers who are new to the bank are more likely to recognise the benefits and allure of promotional offer and discount schemes.

10.2.2 Customer-based Brand Equity, Customer Satisfaction and Behavioural Intentions of the Customers of the Commercial Banks in Kerala

- For the purpose of evaluating the overall effectiveness of the bank's brand equity, the study examined its dimensions, such as brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand associations, and perceived quality. The findings revealed that customers of commercial banks operating in Kerala exhibited a moderate level of brand equity and could recall and recognise their bank's brand. From this, it can be inferred that bank brands are well-known among their customers, and they have faith and confidence in their services. They also believed that the bank's products were of acceptable quality.

- It was observed that there were considerable differences in brand awareness level among customers of commercial banks in Kerala. This implied that customer awareness and recognition of their bank's brand are different. Further, it was inferred that the considerable disparity in brand awareness pointed to the fact that certain bank brands are more popular and recognised by customers than other brands. It illustrated that certain banks successfully applied branding strategies to increase their awareness and forge a significant market presence. These banks have been effective in communicating their brand message and product offers to customers, which has raised brand recognition.

- With regard to brand awareness across socio-demographic factors, both male and female customers of different age groups have the same level of awareness about their bank's brand. This implied that brand awareness level among commercial bank customers were similar across gender and age categories. This demonstrated that, regardless of their age, male and female customers have the same level of brand awareness of their banks. It further indicates that the bank brand has successfully reached both male and female customers with its branding messages. It also revealed that the bank's branding initiatives had a positive impact on customers of different age categories.

- When it comes to customers educational qualifications, there exists significant difference in their brand awareness, which indicates that customers with varying educational backgrounds have different levels of brand awareness. Customers with higher secondary education qualifications have a comparatively

lower level of brand awareness towards commercial banks than those with a graduate degree, who display a higher level of brand awareness. Customers with high educational backgrounds are more familiar with and knowledgeable about various bank brands.

- Customers with different occupational backgrounds and durations of banking experience have the same level of brand awareness. This indicates that customers' awareness of and familiarity with their bank's brand are not substantially influenced by their occupational background. In the case of duration of banking experience, the same level of brand awareness is displayed by customers who have shorter and longer banking relationships with a bank. This highlights that banks branding strategies consistently reach all categories of customers.

- In terms of the organisational properties of the bank, the type of commercial bank, and their brands, customers have the same level of brand awareness. Customers' awareness of the bank's brand remains the same irrespective of whether banks are public or private sector banks or individual bank brands within those sectors. This indicates that each category of bank employed strong branding strategies to communicate their brand value.

- The result demonstrates that customers of commercial banks in Kerala have a moderate level of brand loyalty and express a favourable attitude towards their bank brand. Customers' moderate brand loyalty to banks means that a substantial number of the customers would repeatedly select and prefer the services of a specific bank over those of its competitors.

- The results revealed that brand loyalty among customers of commercial banks varies significantly. This demonstrated that customers' levels of attachment, preference, and commitment to their bank brand varied significantly. Further, the findings indicated that brand loyalty among commercial banks' male and female customers differed significantly. Particularly, it was observed that male customers showed higher levels of brand loyalty than female customers. It implies that male customers are more satisfied with the services provided by their bank. Additionally, the bank may be better able to meet the special demands or expectations of male customers, fostering their loyalty.

- Customers of different age categories have the same level of favourable attitude towards their respective bank brands. This implies that customers of all age groups exhibit a higher degree of brand loyalty, which indicates that elements that affect loyalty, such as customer experiences, perceived value, and brand reputation, are valued by them. This implies that the bank's brand capabilities and marketing initiatives would effectively resonate with customers across all age groups.

- Depending on customers' educational backgrounds, their brand loyalty varies significantly. Customers with higher secondary education had lower levels of brand loyalty, whereas customers with graduate degrees had higher levels of brand loyalty. The level of education that a customer possesses impacts their feelings about and choice of bank. Graduate customers demonstrate a deeper affinity and preference for their bank.

- Brand loyalty among customers varies significantly depending on their occupational backgrounds. It reveals that customer preferences and impressions of their bank's brand are influenced by their employment background. Further, it was observed that customers who work for the government have lower levels of brand loyalty, whereas customers who work for private companies have higher levels of brand loyalty. It means that customers who work for private companies have more emotional connection and confidence in their brand.

- Based on the type of bank and different bank brands, customers had no appreciable differences in brand loyalty. This suggests that regardless of the type of banks or particular brand they are associated with, customers have comparable degrees of attachment, attraction, and referrals. This confirms that commercial banks would be delivering excellent service and maintaining emotional attachments with their customers.

- Customers with varying years of banking experience across different bank brands shared a similar attitude towards their bank. This implies that a customer's duration of engagement with a bank does not have a substantial influence on their brand loyalty. This also indicates that the duration of the banking experience is not an influential factor in brand loyalty.

- Customers of commercial banks in Kerala have a moderate level of association and exhibit customer recognition, familiarity, and relationship with the brand. It demonstrates that customers have an emotional relationship with the bank's brand. Although customers would continue to have favourable perceptions and experiences with their bank's brand, the moderate level of brand association indicates that this may not be the only factor influencing their choice.
- Among the customers of commercial banks in Kerala, there is no significant variation in brand association with respect to gender, which indicates that both male and female customers of commercial banks in Kerala have the same mental association with their bank's brand. This implies that male and female customers have the same level of association and relationship with their respective banks.
- Similar levels of brand association existed among customers of all age categories with respect to their bank's brand. This implies that customers perceive, identify, and relate to the brand of their particular banks in a similar way regardless of age. Since brand association levels across age groups are identical, it illustrates that the bank's reputation is strong and appealing to all age groups. Further, it reveals that the bank's branding strategies were effective and appealing to all customers.
- Based on customers' levels of education, there is a discernible variation in the extent of brand association. This points out that customers from various educational backgrounds identify and connect with their bank's brand in different ways. It means that knowledge, understanding, and proficiency affect how people think about and communicate with brands. Further, it was identified that customers possessing higher secondary qualifications exhibit comparatively lower levels of brand association, whereas those with graduation demonstrate higher levels of brand association. Customers with a higher level of educational qualification would be more knowledgeable about the bank's services, guidelines, and peculiarities of the market, which would strengthen their brand associations.
- Regarding occupational background, customers' levels of brand association with a bank differ significantly. This suggests that the extent of

connection and affinity of customers varies based on their occupational backgrounds. It indicates that the roles and responsibilities associated with their profession or job affect how customers perceive and engage with a brand. Customers may have varied demands, interests, or expectations depending on their profession, which would shape their brand associations.

- Further, it has been observed that customers who were government employees exhibited lower levels of brand attachment than customers who work for private companies, who exhibited higher levels of brand attachment. Higher levels of brand association among customers working for private companies imply a better affinity and connection with the bank's brand. Further, as the bank offers specialised services or experiences that fit their professional obligations and expectations, these customers would believe that the bank is more in tune with their demands.

- Customers' level of brand association varies significantly depending on the type of banks they are connected to. It indicates that private sector and public sector banks had differing degrees of affinity and attachment with their customers. This implies that the structure of the bank, the target market, and branding strategies all have an impact on how customers perceive and communicate with the brand.

- Further, it was observed that customers of private sector banks are inclined to have a high brand association, while those of public sector banks are more inclined to have a low brand association. This illustrates that customers of private sector banks have a high level of brand association, demonstrating a higher affinity and attachment to the brand. Customers believe that their banks were better suited to meet their demands by providing better services and having a better reputation and brand name.

- The extent of brand attachment among customers of various bank brands differs significantly. This shows that depending on the specific brand they are associated with, customers feel varying levels of attachment to bank brands. It implies that the bank's brand was different in appealing to and influencing its customers. Further, it revealed that customers of South Indian Bank (SIB) had higher levels of brand association, while customers of State Bank of India (SBI) had

lower levels of brand association. This points out that customers of SIB are better connected and attached to their bank than those of SBI.

- It was observed that there is no identifiable variation between the duration of banking experience and the level of brand association among customers of commercial banks in Kerala. This indicates that customers with varying years of banking experience have a similar attachment to their bank brand. This implies that banks are employing effective branding strategies and consistent brand messages to all customers, irrespective of their duration of banking experience.

- The findings revealed that customers quality expectations about the products and services offered by commercial banks in Kerala were moderate. It implies that the expectations of the customers with respect to the overall performance and durability of the products and offerings provided by commercial banks are moderate. This means that customers' expectations of the products and services their bank was offering were good.

- Customers of various banks exhibit diverse perceptions about the quality of products and services offered by them. This suggests that customer evaluations of the quality of the services offered by various banks were different. It indicates that customer experience affects how customers perceive and assess their bank's performance.

- The degree of perceived quality varies significantly between male and female customers. This suggests that the perspectives of men and women on the quality of products and services were different. Further, it reveals that male customers have lower levels of perceived quality, whereas female customers have higher levels of perceived quality. This indicates that male and female customers analyse and appraise the quality of the service differently depending on their gender.

- The customers of all age categories consider the quality of service of their bank's brand to be of the same standard. From this, it can be inferred that customers' assessment of the quality of service provided by a brand were not considerably influenced by their age. Customers of all age categories probably assess the brand with similar standards and expectations. This implies that their bank brand is providing good quality services to all age categories.

- Customers with different educational backgrounds have significantly different levels of quality expectations. This illustrates that customers from various educational backgrounds have different expectations of the quality of the products or services they receive. Further, it revealed that customers with higher secondary education had lower level of perceived quality, while customers with graduate degrees had higher level of perceived quality. It means that customers with higher level of education may have higher expectations and more complex parameters for evaluating quality than customers with lower level of education. The customer's knowledge, exposure, experiences, and capacity to assess and evaluate the quality of service are found to be influenced by their educational background.

- Customers from different occupational backgrounds perceive quality in different ways. This indicates that customers with different occupations have different opinions and assessments of the quality of the products or services they receive. Further, it revealed that customers who are students had lower level of perceived quality than customers who are private employees, who had higher levels of perceived quality. It implies that private employees have more experience and exposure to a variety of products or services and have a better awareness of standard practices. On the other hand, students have less exposure to and expertise in judging the quality of products or services.

- It was identified that customers evaluate different type of banks and levels of perceived quality differently. It means that when it comes to the level of services offered by various type of banks, customers have varied expectations and evaluations. Further, it was identified that customers of public sector banks generally have lower level of perceived quality, whereas customers of private banks have higher level of perceived quality. It highlights the fact that, in comparison to customers of public sector bank, private sector bank customers have higher expectations from their bank. It points out that private sector banks frequently try to differentiate themselves by providing innovative products and services and satisfying evolving customer expectations.

- Customers of commercial banks observed that there exist significant distinctions between bank brands and levels of perceived quality. This indicates that the quality of services and offerings provided by different bank brands is perceived

differently by customers. It indicates that the reputation of the brand, customer experiences, product and service offerings, means of communication, and overall brand image has an effect on how customers think about and evaluate the quality of services offered by various bank brands.

- It was further inferred that customers of Union Bank of India had lower expectations regarding perceived quality compared to the customers of South Indian Bank. It suggests that prior service encounters, brand reputation, and service capabilities have influenced their expectations. In light of favourable experiences, South Indian Bank customers are found to have higher expectations than customers of Union Bank of India.

- It was inferred that there is no significant difference between the duration of banking experience and the level of perceived quality, which indicates that commercial bank customers with different years of banking experience have a similar level of perceived quality. This suggests that a customer's assessment of the quality of services offered is not influenced by the duration of the banking experience.

- Customers of commercial banks in Kerala had a moderate level of satisfaction with their bank brands. This indicates that most customers have favourable perceptions of their banks and the services they offer. It also implies that, in terms of customer service, product offers, convenience, consistency, and overall banking experience, the banks have effectively met customer expectations to some extent. Further, it suggests that to meet customer expectations, banks need to constantly review and improve their services and products.

- It was observed that the customers of commercial banks have significantly different levels of customer satisfaction. This reveals that there is a considerable variation in the level of banking experience with their bank brands. High levels of satisfaction among customers signify that their banking demands are being addressed and that they are getting exceptional customer care. These customers were loyal and served as ambassadors for the bank, supporting the bank.

- Both male and female customers have the same level of satisfaction with their bank's brand. This illustrates that both male and female customers

evaluate their banking experiences similarly and with the same level of satisfaction. It reveals that the bank is effective in satisfying the demands and expectations of customers, irrespective of gender.

- Different age categories of customers express varying levels of satisfaction with their banking experiences. It indicates that there is a considerable difference in customer satisfaction levels across different age categories. It was further identified that customers who are under the age of 30 are more satisfied than customers who are above the age of 50. It reveals that customers who are under the age of 30 are adopting innovative products like mobile banking applications and online account management that increase their overall satisfaction.

- Depending on customers' educational backgrounds, their satisfaction level varies significantly. It highlights that educational qualifications play a significant role in the satisfaction level of customers. Further, it was found that the satisfaction level of graduate customers was high and that postgraduate customers exhibited a lower level of satisfaction. It points out that graduate customers may use the banking services more effectively, leading to increased satisfaction. On the other hand, postgraduate customers have greater expectations and more specialised demands, which may not be addressed by their bank.

- Customers with different occupational backgrounds have the same level of satisfaction. It indicates that there exist no significant difference in occupation and level of customer satisfaction with their bank brand. It further implies that customers' satisfaction levels were shown to be identical whether they worked for the government, the private sector, or self-employed.

- It was inferred that there was no recognisable difference in customer satisfaction level across bank customers from the public and private sectors, regardless of how long they had been banking. It indicates that customer satisfaction levels were consistent across public and private sector banks, regardless of whether they had shorter or longer banking experiences. This result implies that the type of banks and the duration of the banking experience do not significantly affect the satisfaction of customers.

- The level of satisfaction among customers of commercial banks varies significantly between bank brands. Customers' satisfaction levels with the particular bank brand they were affiliated with differed substantially. It was further revealed that customers of South Indian Bank showed higher levels of satisfaction than those of other bank brands. This illustrates that South Indian Bank has been effective in meeting and satisfying customers' expectations, which has contributed to a higher satisfaction level. In contrast, CSB Bank customers report a low level of satisfaction. It reveals that CSB have room for improvement when it comes to fulfilling customer expectations and providing a satisfying customer experience.

- The findings indicate a moderate degree of behavioural intentions among the customers of commercial banks. This implies that customers have shown a moderate level of interest in engaging in particular behavioural actions such as repeat purchases, referring friends and family, and continuing banking with the same brand. It was further inferred that there were significant variations in behavioural intentions among customers. This reveals that customers' desire and propensity to engage in particular behaviours would vary with respect to bank brands.

- With regard to behavioural intention across socio-demographic factors, both male and female customers of different age groups exhibited the same level of behavioural action towards their bank's brand. This points out that both female and male customers of different age categories had the same level of behavioural intention to engage with the bank. This result reveals that the bank's strategies and efforts were created to serve the interests of both male and female customers across all age groups.

- Customers from different educational backgrounds exhibited different behavioural intentions towards the bank. Customers' attitudes and expectations were influenced by their educational background, which in turn influenced their behavioural intentions. It was further revealed that customers who were graduates displayed more positive behaviour towards their bank's brand. However, postgraduate customers exhibited a lower level of behavioural intention. Customers with different levels of education have different priorities, opinions, and ways of thinking.

- Customers' behavioural intentions significantly varies depending on their occupational background while dealing with their banks. This reveals that the way customers respond to their banks are influenced by their occupational background. It was further identified that customers who are self-employed exhibited lower levels of behavioural intentions than customers who are private employees, who exhibited higher levels of behavioural intentions. This indicates that after dealing with the bank, customers from different occupations would have different levels of desire to engage in positive behaviours such as repeat purchases and recommending friends and family

- It was observed that there were no significant differences in the behavioural intentions of customers with respect to the type and brand of the bank. Customers have similar behavioural intentions after dealing with their bank brand, regardless of the type or individual bank brand they are associated with. It indicates that organisational structure and bank brands were not influential factors in deciding the behavioural actions of the customers. Further, it implies that customers would have a favourable behavioural attitude and a positive mental association with their bank brand and have a feeling that their bank's brand is superior to its competitors.

- Customers with varying years of banking experience showed a similar behavioural attitude towards their bank. This implies that a customer's duration of engagement with their bank does not have a substantial influence on their behavioural intentions. Irrespective of the duration of their banking experience, customers would engage in positive behavioural actions with their bank's brand if they are pleased with the performance of their bank.

10.2.3 Interrelationships among the Brand Building Practices, Customer-based Brand Equity, Customer Satisfaction, and Behavioural Intentions

- A Structural Equation Model was developed after testing the hypotheses, and the findings of those tests led to the creation of the model. This model provides evidence in support of hypotheses. According to the fit metrics, all of the CFA and SEM models provide a satisfactory level of fit. The present study explored six brand building practices adopted by commercial banks. The standardized beta coefficient of brand building practice on customer-based brand equity is 0.91 indicating that brand building efforts taken by the commercial banks

in Kerala have a positive, significant, and direct effect on attaining customer-based brand equity in the banks. The findings confirmed that the brand building practices of commercial banks in Kerala have the strength to increase customer-based brand equity. Brand building practices promote the brand to foster brand equity, relationship, loyalty, commitment and trust among customers. Additionally, it provides banks with a competitive edge in the banking sector, also improves their reputation, recognition, and maintains an emotional connection with the customers. Therefore, banks can use brand building practices as a effective tool to popularise their products and services.

- The coefficient of determination for customer-based brand equity, R^2 value is 0.83. This value indicates that the bank's brand building practices contribute to approximately 83 percent of the fluctuation in customer-based brand equity. This value helped in concluding that other independent variables can also predict 17% of the variation, which is not examined in this study. This points out that there are additional factors or variables that may affect customer-based brand equity which is left out of the present study. These variables would include brand performance, verdict, customer satisfaction, and the like.

- The standardized beta coefficient of customer-based brand equity on customer satisfaction is 0.91 indicates that customer-based brand equity has a positive, significant, and direct effect on attaining customer satisfaction. This implies that customer satisfaction increases by 0.91 for every unit of standard deviation in customer-based brand equity. This indicates that for a bank brand that had strong customer-based brand equity, the satisfaction level of their customers was also high. Further, this implies that fostering a favourable and positive impression of the bank brand in customers' minds, can increase customer satisfaction. Moreover, a bank brand that has high equity has the power to create a strong brand reputation, win the confidence of its customer, develop emotional relationships, and foster brand loyalty. Further, the bank resonates with customers and increases their level of satisfaction if it exhibits a favourable image that effectively communicates its values, and caters to their preferences. Customers are more satisfied when banks have strong brand equity as it influences their perception and experience of products or services strengthening their confidence and trust in the bank.

- The R^2 value of customer satisfaction is 0.83. This indicates that customer-based brand equity contributes to around 83% of the differences in customer satisfaction. Additional variables beyond the scope of this study contribute to the remaining 17% of the fluctuation in customer satisfaction. This reveals that customer-based brand equity is considered as an important predictor of customer satisfaction in banks, however, may not be the single factor that influences customer satisfaction.

- The standardised beta coefficient of customer satisfaction on the behavioural intentions of the customers is 0.88, which indicates that customer satisfaction had a positive, significant, and direct effect on behavioural intentions. Every unit of increased standard deviation in customer satisfaction would result in a 0.88 increase in behavioural intention. This reveals that customer satisfaction has a significant impact on behavioural intentions in the banking industry in Kerala, which implies how customers engage in certain behaviours like making repeat purchases, referring the bank to others, spreading positive word of mouth or maintaining a long-lasting relationship with the bank. Further, their future behaviour would be based on a satisfied banking experience.

- The coefficient of determination for behavioural intention, R^2 is 0.77. This value indicates that customer satisfaction contributes to approximately 77 percent of the variation in the behavioural intentions of the bank's customers. This implies that customer satisfaction has the ability to vary the behavioural intentions of customers. The remaining 23% of behavioural intention variance cannot be explained by this independent construct. This indicates that further studies can be conducted by including more relevant factors that would significantly influence the behavioural intention to increase the model's predictive capacity. This would offer a more precise knowledge of the elements influencing behavioural intention.

10.2.4 Customer-based Brand Equity and Behavioural Intention – Examining the Mediating Role of Customer Satisfaction

- The statistical analysis reveals that there is a direct and positive effect of customer-based brand equity and behavioural intentions of the customers of the commercial banks in Kerala as well as an indirect and positive effect of customer-based brand equity and behavioural Intention via customer satisfaction. Both of

these effects are statistically significant. Further, commercial banks operating in Kerala have strong customer-based brand equity, which enhances customer satisfaction and encourages customers to act positively. Additionally, commercial banks can achieve high brand equity and customer satisfaction through different brand building practices. Therefore, if the banks employ brand building practices to improve the level of customer-based brand equity and customer satisfaction it would result in positive behavioural intention. Further, brand building practices enlighten customers and provide information on the bank's principles and services. By following this, the bank brand can successfully communicate the message that it wants to spread. This allows the bank to achieve its goal of enhancing the behavioural intentions of its customers. Higher brand equity for banks can also result in higher customer satisfaction, which in turn influences positive behavioural intentions.

- In the case of mediation, the effect is just partial because the direct effect still exists significantly. The partial mediation denotes not only the existence of a significant relationship between the customer-based brand equity and behavioural intention but also the existence of some indirect relationship between customer satisfaction and behavioural intentions. This indicates that customer satisfaction serves as a mediator and clarifies the relationship between customer-based brand equity and behavioural intentions. Further, the study points out the curial role played by the customer satisfaction in shaping customers positive behavioural actions. This also reveals that there is an emotional connection between customers and the bank brands, which means that if customers are satisfied with the products and services offered by their bank, they are ready to engage in positive behaviour such as repeat purchases, spreading positive feedback, recommendations and do not think about switching their bank brand.

10.2.5 Brand Building Practices and Behavioural Intentions: Mediating Role of Customer-based Brand Equity Factors and Moderating Effect of Type of Banks

- The findings of the statistical analysis of the moderated mediation effect reveals that moderated mediation effect exists between brand building practices and behavioural intentions. This indicates that the relationship between

brand building practices and behavioural intentions are influenced by the type of banks. Further, this implies that the indirect relationship between brand building practices and behavioural intentions through customer-based brand equity is not consistent across the type of banks. Moreover, the influence of customer-based brand equity may vary depending on the type of banks, which means that the effect of customer-based brand equity varies in private sector bank and public sector bank. The finding emphasises the significance of considering the mediating effect of customer-based brand equity and moderating influence of type of banks when examining the relationship between brand building practices and behavioural intentions and provides information about the complicated relationships that exists between branding and customer behavioural intentions in the banking sector.

- The private sector model indicates that all the direct effects between brand building practices and factors of customer-based brand equity are statistically significant. The statement suggests that the brand building practices employed by private sector commercial banks in Kerala have the potential to augment the banks' brand equity through brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand association, and perceived quality. However, while examining the mediating effect of factors of customer-based brand equity in relation to brand building practices and behavioural intentions, it was found that there is no significant direct effect for brand awareness on behavioural intentions. On the other hand, all other factors have a direct effect on behavioural intentions. The findings highlight that the effect of brand building practices can directly contribute to fostering the overall perception of the bank and its brand value. However, the specific mediating role of brand awareness is not effective between brand building practices and behavioural intentions which indicates that customers' mere understanding of the brand has no effect on their behavioural intentions. In addition, all other elements of brand equity, such as brand association, perceived quality, and brand loyalty, play a significant role in influencing customers' real behavioural intentions towards the brand.

- The public sector model reveals that all the direct effects between brand building practices and factors of customer-based brand equity are statistically significant, whereas the direct effects between customer-based brand equity and behavioural intentions of all paths are not statistically significant except for the path

of brand loyalty and behavioural intentions. The result makes it clear that the brand building practices employed by Kerala's commercial banks have the capacity to improve the banks' brand equity through brand awareness, brand loyalty, brand associations, and perceived quality, like those of private sector banks. However, with regard to the public sector model, brand loyalty is the only customer-based brand equity factor that enhances customers' behavioural intentions.

- The findings indicate that there is only one common brand equity factor, brand loyalty, which has an indirect effect on the relationship between customer-based brand equity and behavioural intentions. The moderated mediating effect analysis results indicate that brand loyalty works as a mediator in relation to brand building practices and behavioural intentions and the type of banks involved in the study serve as moderator of this relationship. This indicates that customers exhibit stronger behavioural intentions if they had high brand loyalty.

- The beta coefficient value for the relation between brand building practices, brand loyalty and behavioural intentions for public sector banks is 0.69 and for the private sector banks is 0.42. This indicates that public sector banks exhibit stronger relationship among brand building practices, brand loyalty, and behavioural intentions when compared to private sector banks in Kerala. In the relationship between brand building practices and behavioural intentions, brand loyalty plays a more prominent role in public sector banks than in private sector banks. Therefore, it can be assumed that if the banks use their abilities to leverage brand loyalty, it would influence customers to exhibit positive behaviours like repeat purchases, recommending the brand to friends and family, and exhibiting resistance to competing products when they feel a strong emotional bond, trust, and satisfaction with the brand.

10.3 Conclusion

Customers are the backbone of the banking industry, which further sheds light on the fact that the industry would not exist without customers. The main challenge confronting banks today is how to allocate financial and non-financial efforts to enhance the relationship between customers and brands. Therefore, it becomes critical for the banks to focus on effective brand building practices to create

a lasting impression in the minds of potential customers. However, the investments made by these banks in different brand building practices are often misguided, and this is mostly due to the absence of appropriate measures to assess the effectiveness of the brand building initiatives. The study also develops and validate an empirical model that could quantify how Kerala's commercial banks' brand building practices, customer-based brand equity, customer satisfaction, and behavioural intentions influence one another.

The present research studied the perception of the customers towards the brand building practices adopted by the commercial banks in Kerala, as well as the mediating role of customer-based brand equity, customer satisfaction, and the moderating effect of type of banks. The research included six parameters of brand building practices, such as advertising, customer relationship management, corporate social responsibility, social media, offers and discounts, and internal branding, to measure the perception of customers towards the brand. The findings revealed that brand building practices adopted by commercial banks in Kerala have the potential to enhance customer-based brand equity, customer satisfaction, and positive behavioural actions. The study further highlights that brand building strategies employed by the commercial banks in Kerala were considered differently by the customers and had a moderate effect on them. Among the six brand building practices, corporate social responsibility initiatives stand out among all the branding practices in influencing the perceptions of customers favourably. On the other hand, social media had the least effect on influencing the perception of customers. The study also found that customers perceived their brand as superior to its competitors, and it was confirmed that there existed a significant relationship between customer-based brand equity and behavioural intentions, which brought to light the incidence of an indirect relationship between customer-based brand equity and behavioural intentions mediated by customer satisfaction. It can also be concluded that a holistic model has been developed for Kerala to enhance behavioural intentions.

The findings brought out that brand building practices were perceived differently by customers of public sector banks and private sector banks. Further, brand equity parameters were directly influenced by the brand building practices adopted by private sector banks. Whereas brand building practices indirectly

influenced by brand loyalty in public sector banks. The study also highlights that the customers of public sector banks are more loyal compared to the customers of private sector banks. Further, it was revealed that customers had the ability to recall and recognise their bank's brand, which in turn provides insight on the significance of branding. This implies that branding had the power to build a strong emotional connection with the customers, thereby making them willing to make repeat purchases, spreading positive word, and recommending the brand to family and friends, thus reducing brand switching. Since banks strongly believe that it is more costly to acquire new customers than to retain and satisfy existing ones, it becomes crucial for them to engage customers continuously through different brand building strategies to enhance satisfaction and influence favourable behavioural intentions. This would ultimately help to maintain and enhance the customer base, resulting in more vibrant and dynamic banking institutions in the economy.