



The Impact of Attitude Toward the Region on Preference for Regional Products: Mediating role of Perceived Value

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Abstract

In today's world, regional marketing is a crucial strategy for enhancing local economies and fostering cultural connections. However, numerous challenges exist regarding the impact of attitudes toward a region on the intention to purchase regional products. Many consumers lack a positive attitude due to insufficient knowledge of the features and benefits of these products, leading to decreased purchase intention and sales. Weak branding and the inability to highlight unique benefits are significant challenges. Many regional producers fail to properly introduce their products to the market, resulting in negative consumer attitudes. Concerns about quality, stemming from inadequate standards or lack of guarantees, also deter purchases. Research shows that perceived value and consumer preferences are critical factors influencing attitudes and purchase intentions. Managing these factors is a fundamental challenge. Regional products must compete with non-regional products, which often have more recognized brands and greater marketing resources, weakening consumer attitudes toward regional products. Rapidly changing consumer preferences require regional products to adapt quickly. Failure to align with these preferences can decrease purchase intention. Cultural differences among consumers lead to varying attitudes and may directly impact purchase intention. Trust in local producers plays a vital role in purchase intention; if consumers do not trust local producers, their intention to buy regional products decreases. Understanding the quality and price of regional products compared to non-regional ones significantly influences purchase intention. Therefore, the aim of this research is to examine the Impact of attitude toward the region on preference for regional products with the mediating role of perceived value. In this regard, papers that are related to this field are going to be reviewed properly.

Key words: Attitude towards the region, Preference for regional products, Perceived value of regional products.

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۱. Introduction

The importance and necessity of understanding consumer behavior in the context of regional products can be explored from several critical perspectives, all pointing to essential and positive reasons. Gaining a deeper insight into how the relationship between consumers' attitudes towards a region and their intention to purchase products from that region is not direct but rather mediated by factors such as perceived value and preference, offers a better understanding of the elements influencing consumer decision-making. These insights can assist producers and marketers in crafting more effective marketing strategies, leading to increased sales of regional products [۱]. For local producers, the ability to enhance the perceived value of their products and emphasize the unique benefits of regional offerings can significantly sway consumer preferences in favor of their products. An increase in consumer preference for regional products can lead to the strengthening of the local economy and the creation of more job opportunities [۲]. Emphasizing the cognitive and emotional pathways that link consumers' attitudes towards a region to their purchase intentions allows marketers to tailor their advertising messages to appeal to both the logical and emotional aspects of consumers. This strategy can improve communication effectiveness and increase the impact of advertising efforts [۳]. Contributing to the broader field of regional marketing, empirical data and scientific evidence on the mediating role of perceived value and consumer preference can help establish a stronger theoretical foundation for future research. This can lead to the development of new knowledge and insights in the domains of marketing and consumer behavior [۴]. From a policy-making perspective, the outcomes of such research can guide the development of programs and policies aimed at strengthening the production and marketing of regional products. These policies might include financial support, infrastructural facilities, and educational programs for local producers [۵]. Furthermore, the development of marketing strategies that specifically highlight the unique characteristics and benefits of regional products can encourage consumers to buy local products, reducing reliance on imported goods [۶]. Promoting a better understanding of the advantages of regional products, such as high quality and the use of local resources, can foster a culture of more responsible purchasing and support for local producers [۷]. The positive impact on the local economy is also of particular importance. Increased sales of regional products can boost the income of local producers, thereby strengthening the local economy and increasing employment. This, in turn, can improve the quality of life in local communities [۸]. Moreover, the development of supportive policies and government programs aimed at assisting local producers and enhancing the regional supply chain can further contribute to these goals [۹]. Overall, understanding the factors that influence consumer behavior not only enhances the knowledge of consumer decision-making but also strengthens the local economy, improves marketing strategies, and advances scientific knowledge in the field of regional marketing. The potential for positive and widespread impacts across various domains underscores



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the high value of such research. Studies show that a positive attitude towards a region can strengthen purchase intentions, but this effect is mediated by factors such as perceived value and consumer preference [1]. By better understanding these mediators, more effective marketing strategies can be developed, leading to increased sales and preference for regional products.

This research can generally contribute to a better understanding of consumer behavior towards regional products and the factors influencing the preference and purchase of these products. By analyzing consumers' attitudes, preferences, and perceived value, this study can assist local businesses and producers of regional products around the world in designing more effective marketing strategies and increasing their sales. Additionally, the results of this research can be beneficial for local policymakers, helping them support and strengthen regional production, thereby facilitating the economic and cultural development of the region. This research discusses the need for further research on the impact of regional attitudes on the intention to purchase regional products, particularly among customers who face a wide range of choices between regional and non-regional products. Key challenges include accurately measuring consumer attitudes toward specific regions, influenced by factors like culture, history, and quality of regional products. Effective marketing strategies must be developed to encourage consumers to choose regional products over well-known non-regional brands. Without effective marketing strategies, regional producers may struggle to compete, losing consumer trust and market share, ultimately hindering regional economic and cultural development.

۲. Methodology

The methodology employed in this study is a comprehensive literature review, which aims to synthesize existing research and theoretical frameworks on the impact of attitude toward the region on preference for regional products through perceived value. By systematically collecting and analyzing relevant journal articles, books, and research papers, this study identifies key concepts, relationships, and gaps within the existing body of knowledge. The literature review focuses on understanding how consumer attitudes toward specific regions influence their perceived value of regional products, ultimately affecting their purchasing preferences. This approach allows for a detailed exploration of the interplay between these variables and provides a solid foundation for further empirical research in the field.

۳. Theoretical Background

۳.۱ Attitude Toward the Region



The concept of "attitude toward the region" is a fundamental element of the conceptual model and refers to the inclination or predisposition that consumers have toward a particular region, which they respond to either positively or negatively [۱۰]. More specifically, this concept relates to the consumer's connection and relationship with a specific geographic area and can have significant impacts on their purchasing behavior. Research has shown that a positive consumer attitude toward a region can increase the demand for local products. For example, studies have indicated that when commitment and attachment to a region are high, the tendency to purchase products from that region also increases [۱۱]. Other studies have reached similar conclusions, stating that a positive attitude toward a region can strengthen the preference for that region's products [۱۲].

Research has demonstrated that attitude toward the region can have direct impacts on consumers' purchase intentions. For instance, studies have shown that consumers with stronger regional tendencies are more inclined to buy local products [۱۳]. In these studies, attitude toward the region is considered a multidimensional concept that includes both cognitive and emotional factors. The cognitive aspect of attitude toward the region can significantly influence purchase intentions, while the emotional component of this attitude plays a crucial role in purchase decisions [۱۴].

Overall, the concept of attitude toward the region enables a deeper understanding of the complex relationships between consumers and specific geographic areas and allows for the examination of how these relationships influence consumer purchasing behavior. This concept has been studied extensively and has been shown to play a critical role in enhancing the demand for local and regional products.

۳،۲ Preference for Regional Products

The concept of "preference for regional products" refers to consumers' tendency and inclination to purchase products produced in a specific geographic area. This concept is closely tied to the emotional and cognitive inclinations of consumers toward regional products and can significantly influence their purchasing behavior. Preference for regional products largely stems from consumers' positive feelings about the quality, authenticity, and unique characteristics of regional products. Studies have indicated that consumers who have a strong emotional connection to a region are more likely to prefer purchasing products from that region [۱۵]. This preference for regional products can be driven by various factors, such as trust in product quality, connection to the region's culture and history, and support for local producers.

A critical aspect of preference for regional products is the perceived value that consumers assign to these products. Zeithaml stated that perceived value, in this context, refers to consumers' overall evaluation of the benefits and costs of a product, which can significantly influence their preference



and purchase intentions [۱۶]. This perceived value can include aspects such as the quality, authenticity, and health benefits of regional products.

Research has also shown that consumers with stronger regional tendencies are more inclined to buy local products [۱۷]. This preference can be due to emotional reasons, such as attachment to the region or a desire to support the local economy. For example, other studies have highlighted that preference for regional products can be an important factor in consumer decision-making [۱۳]. Additional research has explored the impact of preference for regional products on consumer purchasing behavior. For instance, the studies by Aurier & Fort indicated that consumer preference for local products could be influenced by shared cultural and social values with the producing region [۱۸]. These studies suggest that preference for regional products can act as a mediating variable between attitude toward the region and purchase intentions for regional products.

Thus, the concept of preference for regional products allows a deeper understanding of the complex connections between consumers and local products, as well as how these connections affect consumer purchasing behavior. This concept plays a critical role in enhancing the demand for local and regional products.

۳,۳ Perceived Value of Regional Products

The concept of "perceived value of regional products" refers to the consumer's overall assessment of the benefits and costs of regional products. This concept can encompass various aspects, such as quality, authenticity, health benefits, and the connection to the geographic region where the product is produced. Perceived value plays a crucial role in consumer purchase decisions and can act as a mediating variable between attitude toward the region and preference for regional products.

The perceived value of regional products depends on several factors. One of these factors is the perceived quality of the product. Zeithaml stated that perceived quality is the consumer's overall assessment of a product's superiority or advantage over other options [۱۶]. For regional products, this can include various factors such as taste, freshness, and naturalness. Perceived quality plays a critical role in shaping the perceived value of regional products and can have a direct impact on consumer preference for these products.

Furthermore, the authenticity of regional products is also a significant factor in determining perceived value. Bruwer & Johnson suggested that authenticity, as a characteristic that makes a product unique and genuine, can significantly influence the perceived value by consumers [۱۹]. The authenticity of regional products may be related to history, culture, and local production methods. In addition, health and environmental benefits can also impact the perceived value of



regional products. Research has shown that consumers who are attentive to health and environmental benefits assign greater value to regional products [۲۰]. These benefits may include the use of natural ingredients, reduced environmental impact, and support for sustainable agriculture.

The perceived value of regional products largely depends on both the cognitive and emotional aspects of consumers. Cognitive value includes logical and rational evaluations of the product, while emotional value is related to positive feelings and experiences of consumers. Millar & Tesser suggested that both types of value can have different impacts on consumer purchasing behavior [۲۱]. Research has demonstrated that perceived value can serve as an important mediating variable in consumer purchase decision models. For example, studies by Sweeney & Soutar indicated that perceived value plays a significant role in consumers' purchase intentions and can directly influence their preference for specific products [۲۲].

۴. Explanation of the Conceptual Model

The present conceptual model examines the impact of attitude toward the region on the preference for regional products, with the mediating role of the perceived value of regional products. This model is designed based on numerous studies in this field and aims to comprehensively and accurately investigate the complex relationships between these variables.

۴.۱ Attitude Toward the Region and Preference for Regional Products

Attitude toward the region refers to the positive or negative inclinations and predispositions that consumers have toward a specific geographic area. This concept includes factors such as interest in the culture, history, and people of the region [۱۱]. Research has shown that a positive attitude toward a region can have significant impacts on consumer purchasing behavior. For example, the studies by Merle and Piotrowski indicated that a positive attitude toward regional products leads to increased purchase intentions, with this effect being mediated by perceived value and preference [۱۲].

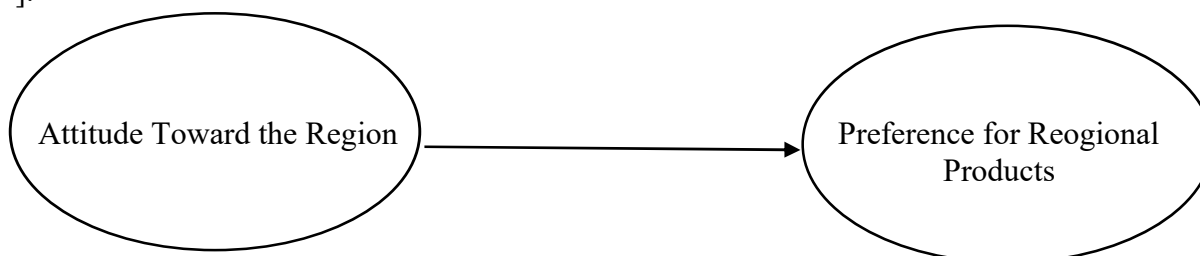




Figure ۱ : Attitude Toward the Region and Preference for Regional Products

۴,۲ Preference for Regional Products and Perceived Value of Regional Products

The perceived value of regional products refers to consumers' assessment of the benefits and quality of these products. This value encompasses various aspects such as quality, authenticity, and uniqueness [۲۳]. Research has shown that the perceived value of regional products plays a crucial role in enhancing consumers' preference for these products. For instance, the studies by Fernandez-Fern and Bande-Vilela demonstrated that regional biases significantly influence purchase intentions for regional products, with this effect being mediated by perceived value [۱۳].

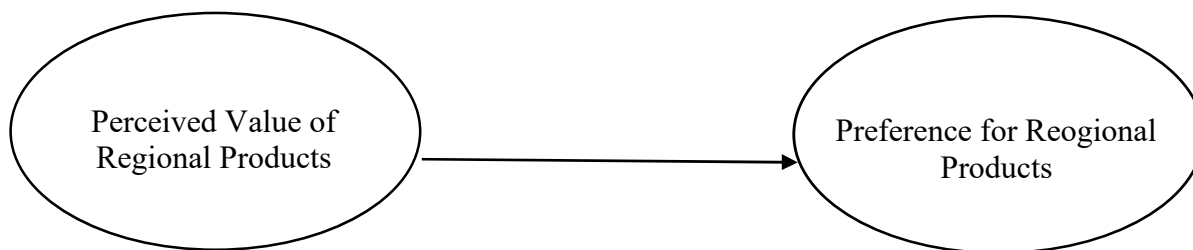


Figure ۲ : Preference for Regional Products and Perceived Value of Regional Products

۴,۳ Attitude Toward the Region and Perceived Value of Regional Products

Attitude toward the region pertains to the positive or negative inclinations and predispositions that consumers have toward a specific geographic area. Various studies have indicated that preference for regional products is influenced directly and indirectly through perceived value by the attitude toward the region. For example, research by Lee and Hwang showed that regional loyalty has a positive effect on product selection, with this effect being mediated through perceived value and emotional attachment to the region [۲۴].

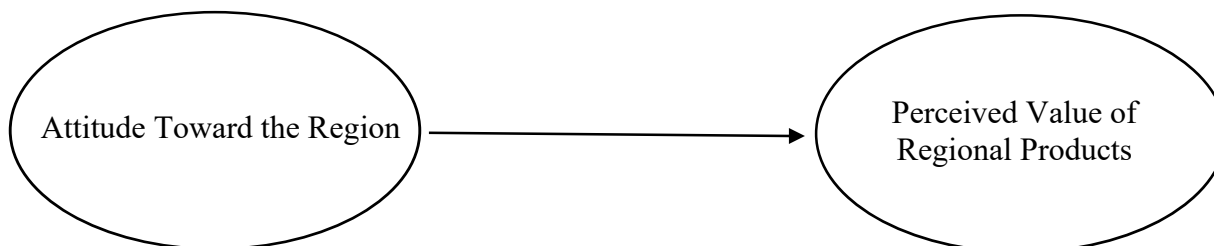




Figure ۳ : Attitude Toward the Region and Perceived Value of Regional Products

۴،۴ The Impact of Attitude Toward the Region on Preference for Regional Products Through Perceived Value

The conceptual model of the study is designed based on the relationships between these three variables. This model illustrates that a positive attitude toward the region can influence preference for regional products through two distinct pathways: one by increasing the perceived value of regional products and the other directly. In other words, consumers who hold a positive attitude toward the region typically assess the products from that region as having higher quality and greater authenticity, which in turn enhances their preference for purchasing these products [۲۵]. This conceptual model will be tested using collected data and appropriate statistical analyses (such as structural equation modeling or regression analysis) to evaluate the validity and strength of the hypothesized relationships. This approach allows researchers to accurately analyze the impact of attitude toward the region on preference for regional products through perceived value and to provide effective strategies for enhancing regional product marketing.

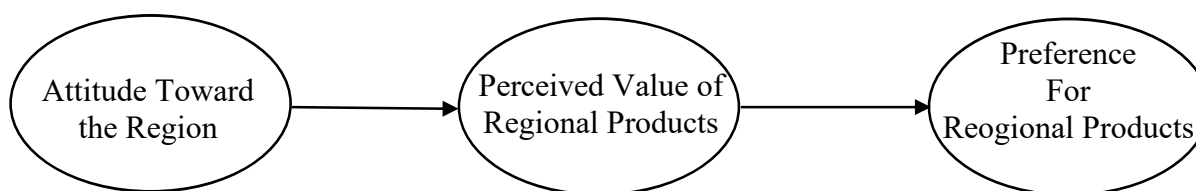


Figure ۴ : The Impact of Attitude Toward the Region on Preference for Regional Products Through Perceived Value

۵. Conclusion

The investigation into the impact of attitude toward the region on preference for regional products, mediated by perceived value, reveals significant insights into consumer behavior and regional marketing strategies. The conceptual model developed in this study elucidates the complex relationships between these variables, providing a comprehensive framework for understanding how regional attitudes shape product preferences. The model underscores the crucial role of consumer attitudes toward specific geographic areas in influencing their preferences for regional products. A positive attitude toward the region, characterized by appreciation for the area's culture, history, and people, can substantially enhance consumers' perceived value of regional products.



This heightened perceived value, in turn, strengthens the preference for purchasing these products. These findings are consistent with the existing literature, which suggests that favorable attitudes towards a region correlate with increased demand for its products [۱۲, ۲۴]. Furthermore, the model demonstrates that perceived value acts as a significant mediator in this relationship. Consumers who hold a positive attitude towards a region tend to perceive its products as higher in quality, authenticity, and uniqueness. This positive perception influences their purchasing decisions, leading to a stronger preference for regional products [۱۳, ۲۵]. The evidence presented highlights the importance of leveraging regional attitudes in marketing strategies. By understanding and enhancing the perceived value of regional products through targeted marketing efforts, businesses can effectively boost consumer preference and increase sales. This approach not only benefits regional producers by expanding their market reach but also supports local economies by fostering greater consumer support for regional products.

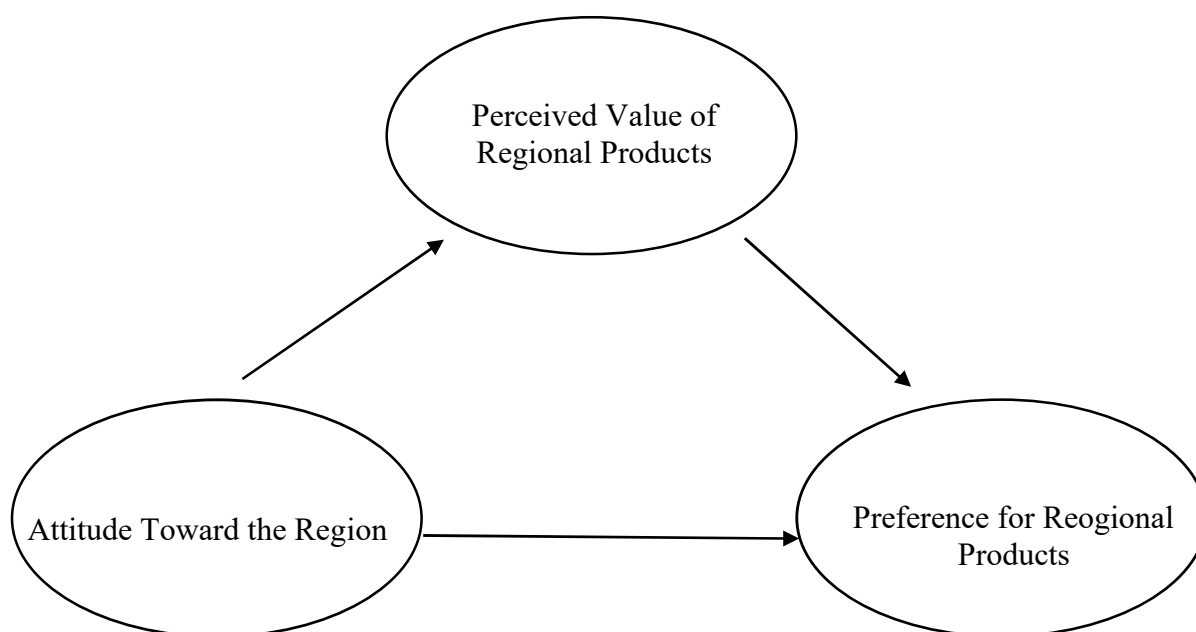


Figure ۵ : Conceptual Model

In summary, the conceptual model developed in this paper provides valuable insights into the interplay between attitudes toward the region, perceived value, and product preference. It offers a robust framework for future research and practical applications, emphasizing the need for marketers to consider regional attitudes as a critical factor in shaping consumer preferences. The model's findings contribute to a deeper understanding of consumer behavior and provide actionable strategies for enhancing the appeal of regional products in the marketplace.



This research offers valuable insights into understanding consumer behavior toward regional products and the factors influencing their preference and purchasing decisions. By analyzing consumer attitudes, preferences, and perceived value, the study provides practical guidance for local businesses and producers to develop more effective marketing strategies and boost their sales. Additionally, the findings can benefit local policymakers by supporting and enhancing regional production, thereby facilitating economic and cultural development in the area.

Future research could explore several additional dimensions to further enrich our understanding of regional product preferences. For instance, examining the impact of cultural and socio-economic variables on perceived value and regional attitudes could provide deeper insights into consumer behavior. Longitudinal studies could also assess how changes in regional development and marketing strategies influence consumer preferences over time. Furthermore, expanding the research to include diverse geographic locations could offer comparative insights and enhance the generalizability of the findings. These avenues for future research could contribute to more nuanced strategies for regional marketing and economic development.

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