Impact of Brand Awareness and Brand Attributes on Consumer Buying Behavior: A Study of Shoe Industry

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate how shoe brands can influence consumers' buying decisions. The present paper is an attempt to understand the impact of brand awareness and brand attributes on consumer buying behavior in case of shoe industry. The study of the existing literature highlighted a research gap between branded shoes and purchase decision. The paper tries to explore the impact of brand awareness on consumer behavior in case of shoe industry through primary data collection via questionnaire. The finding of the paper shows Brand awareness and attributes of branded shoes like quality, comfort, etc. have a significant impact in influencing their purchase decision. The paper also shows association between gender and brand awareness. Similarly, the present paper also examines the link between family income and promotion of various shoe brands. The findings have been validated through various statistical tools like chi square, Annova, factor analysis, frequency distribution and pie charts.

Keywords: Brand awareness, Consumer buying behavior, Shoe industry, brand attributes, purchase decision.

INTRODUCTION

In the present situation, organizations influence utilization of different techniques to attract new customers, retain existing customers and differentiate their products from those of their competitors. Perhaps, most critical and viable methodology to impact customer behavior in the product selection is focusing on the "brand name" of the products. Brands are the

foremost common rule of thumb within the modern marketplace. They facilitate many purchase decisions and offer reassurance as they connect current and future decisions to experiences, satisfactions, and knowledge .The most important steps in ensuring the success of product brands includes making and building brand awareness, reaching consumers' minds, and inspiring them to develop a preference for the brand Thus , Brand awareness is the crucial first stage in buyer readiness to develop a brand preference and move closer to the point of purchase .Brand awareness refers the ability of a consumer to recognize and recall a brand in different situations . It consists of brand recall and brand recognition. Brand recall refers to a situation when consumers see a product category, they can recall a brand name exactly, and brand recognition means consumers has ability to identify a brand when there is a brand cue. That is, consumers can tell a brand correctly if they ever saw or heard it.. Hence, brands play an important role in consumer decision-making and guide consumers in the process of making a purchase decision.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Ahuja, P. (2010) in his paper explained the role of brand commitment and brand trust. The advertising visuals have greater impact on consumer than trough text. The paper written by G.Raghu. (2013) highlighted the dimensions of brand perosnality which do have an impact on consumer buting behavior. Amara, N., & Loken, B. (2017) highlighted that Luxury brand manufacturers are concerned not only by lost sales, but also for the losses in their luxury brands' most valuable assets, including changes in consumer perceptions of status and prestige of the brand and the brand symbols themselves. Subhani, D. M., & Osman, A. (2010) Reveals the relationship between brand awareness and brand loyalty. Also dimensions like brand recognition and consumer perception. Bhat, D. K., & Bhatt, K. (2012) in his paper explained some linkages between brand preference and gender. The paper also shed a light on the role of sales promotion in choice of a particular brand. Zaware, D. N. (2015) in his paper shed a light on the relation between product quality and branded products. Schroeder, J. E. (2013) explained the role of word of mouth on purchases of branded products.

Existing literature on brand awareness was reviewed and over 50 research papers from different sources like Google Scholar, SSRN, Proquest etc. were studied. Few papers talked about the dimension of brand personality and their influence on consumer buying behavior while some of them highlighted a relationship between brand loyalty and brand awareness. Some papers also shed a light on role of product attributes in selection of branded products. Regression analysis, Structure Equation Modeling (SEM), factor analysis and correlation

have been prominently used in most of the papers. But in spite of this, none of the paper talks specifically with regard to shoe industry.

After the detailed analysis of literature using NVIVO software, following findings have been found:

1. There is a positive relationship between brand awareness and purchase behavior of the customers

2. Marketing managers should concentrate their efforts primarily on brand equity components which, if increased, will contribute positively to their firm's brand equity and as a result increased intention to purchase a specific brand

3. Consumer Perception has more influence on Consumer Buying Behavior instead of Brand Image and Consumer Awareness.

OBJECTIVES

Use of Nvivo software also helps us in identifying the various dimensions and aspects of Branding. The research gaps help us in framing the research objectives which are as follows: -

➢ To understand how the individual personality (age, status, class) influences in the selection of branded shoe products.

➢ To explore the role of product attributes, price sensitivity, packaging and advertisement on the selection of branded shoe products.

➢ To identify the role of gender in selection/ preference of branded shoe products.

➢ To understand the major factors which leads to switching of brand in shoe industry.

➢ To explore the reasons for choosing unbranded shoe products.

➢ To explore the strategies adopted by shoe companies on increasing or retaining the degree of brand awareness.

Research Methodology

In the present paper, primary data from 160 respondents has been collected from the students within the age group of 18-28 years. Being an exploratory research, questionnaire method has been used to collect the valuable responses from the respondents. The paper adopts the purposeful sample collection technique and statistical tools like t-test, Chi square test, Annova and factor analysis for the data validation.

Findings and Discussion

The results from the survey highlighted the growing awareness of branded shoes among the respondents within the age group of 18-30 years. It showcases that the penetration to buy branded shows is high enough among the respondents. But approximately one fifth of respondents among the target respondents of 160 still buys non-branded shoes which shows the potential untapped target audience for the marketers. Marketers need to adopt strategies like building a strong consistent brand culture, word of mouth strategies, etc.

Around 64% of the respondents prefer Nike followed by Reebok and Bata. In other words, Nike is a market leader among the respondents and Reebok and Bata are the market challengers which throws a light that these Companies needs to be more customer focus in order to compete with Nike.

The results also showed that most of the respondents are satisfied with their existing shoe brands. But companies should also try to the understand the reasons of dissatisfaction and should develop necessary strategies to increase the satisfaction level towards their brand.

The next question tried to indentifies the degree of popularity of brands like Gucci, Berluti , etc which are newer in India but already had established market in the western world. The results revealed that around 121 respondents are aware of Gucci shoe brand followed by Jimmy coo and burberry.

Relationship between Awareness and Gender
Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	2.229^a	3	.526
Likelihood Ratio	2.973	3	.396
Linear-by-Linear Association	.528	1	.468
N of Valid Cases	16		

a. 7 cells (87.5%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is .88.

The above table tries to analyze the relation between awareness and gender. As per the results generated after testing the data it can be concluded that gender and awareness are not associated with each other as significance value is greater than 0.05. Thus, we accept our null hypothesis that gender and awareness of brands are independent. In other words, brand awareness don't vary among the male and female. Hence it can be concluded that gender has an equal impact on the awareness of the brands.

Medium of Awareness Regarding Different Shoe Brands

The paper also tried to identify the medium of awareness regarding different brand of shoes. Approximately for 110 respondents, medium of awareness is social media followed by television and friends. It shows the growing importance and relevance of social media among the youth especially when it comes to purchase of branded shoe products. Thus, marketers need to leverage this tool more and more in order to stimulate and influence the potential customer to buy the product.

Relationship between Brand Purchase and income

Chi square test also tried to analyze the relation between brand purchase and income. As per the results generated after testing the data it can be concluded that income and brand purchase are associated with each other wherein Null Hypothesis assumes that these two variables are dependent. . Respondents with higher income tend to buy branded shoes more frequently. Thus, penetration to buy branded shoes is more among the high family income respondents. The reasons for this could be status, to flaunt wealth, etc. Hence, these two variables are not independent.

Correlation Matrix[a]							
		DESIGN_NEW	PRICE_NEW	QUALITY_NEW	COMFORT_NEW	DURABILITY_NEW	NEABY_NEW
Correlation	DESIGN_NEW	1.000	-.546	-.746	.804	-.577	-.657
	PRICE_NEW	-.546	1.000	.522	-.518	.540	.551
	QUALITY_NEW	-.746	.522	1.000	-.814	.728	.688
	COMFORT_NEW	.804	-.518	-.814	1.000	-.701	-.650
	DURABILITY_NEW	-.577	.540	.728	-.701	1.000	.647

	NEABY_NEW	-.657	.551	.688	-.650	.647	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	DESIGN_NEW		.000	.000	.000	.000	.000
	PRICE_NEW	.000		.000	.000	.000	.000
	QUALITY_NEW	.000	.000		.000	.000	.000
	COMFORT_NEW	.000	.000	.000		.000	.000
	DURABILITY_NEW	.000	.000	.000	.000		.000
	NEABY_NEW	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	
a. Determinant = .013							

Factor analysis is possible only when there is high correlation between variables. The above table highlights a high degree of correlation between variables like design, price, quality, comfort, durability and availability.

KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.883
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	890.767
	df	15
	Sig.	.000

Larger value of Bartlett's test indicates the appropriateness of factor analysis. We reject the null hypothesis which states that variable are uncorrelated to each other. Similarly, KMO value comes out to be .883 which is higher than the threshold limit of 0.6. As per factor analysis, quality is the leading factor followed by comfort and design which encourages the respondents to buy the branded shoes. It shows that branded shoe companies must focus more on the quality and design of their product in order to create customer satisfaction. Quality is a leading factor when it comes to a choice between and unbranded shoes.

Preference for Shoe Brand

Among various shoe brands most of the respondents have a preference for Nike over other brands. It highlights the dominance of a company in the market especially among the youth. It's competitors like Bata, Woodland must closely monitor the Nike's strategies in order to out beat the company in branded shoes.

In the next section the focus was on the examination of purchasing decision i.e. who takes the final purchasing decision in branded shoes. Although most of the respondents took their purchase decisions themselves but, in few cases, it was their father and mother who takes the final decision. This demarcation is very much important for the marketers as it helps them to focus on their 'customer' in advertisements and various promotional events. The above graph also highlights the dependence of respondents on their parents in purchase decision of branded shoes.

Relationship between bargaining branded shoes and income

Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	1.890[a]	2	.389
Likelihood Ratio	1.910	2	.385
N of Valid Cases	98		

a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 7.16.

The above data tries to analyze that whether there is any relationship between the income and the bargaining power of respondents while buying branded shoes. As per the results generated after testing the data it can be concluded that these two variables are not associated with each other. Therefore, we accept our null hypothesis that these two variables are independent. Respondents while buying branded shoes irrespective of their income level are independent regarding bargaining

Relationship between bargaining unbranded shoes and income

The paper also analyzes that whether there is any relationship between the income and the bargaining power of respondents while buying unbranded shoes. As per the results generated the significance value came out to be greater than the limit of .05. Therefore, we accept our null hypothesis which states the dependence of these two variables. Hence, we can say that

bargaining tendency is popular in case of unbranded shoes. People who buy unbranded shoes tends to bargain more in comparison to the people who buys unbranded shoes.

ANOVA

ADVERTISEMENT

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.867	2	.934	.894	.412
Within Groups	99.163	95	1.044		
Total	101.031	97			

The above test depicts the analysis of variance between the advertisement and income and the result shows that there is no significant difference as it exceeds the threshold limit of .05 Therefore, we will accept the null hypothesis that is mean responses in regard with advertisement in case of branded shoes and income are equal.

This in turn reflects that advertisement of various shoe brands and income influences each other.

Door to Door Selling

The paper also depicts the analysis of variance between the door to door selling and income and the result shows that there is no significant difference as it exceeds the threshold limit of .05 Therefore, we will accept the null hypothesis that is mean responses in regard with door to door in case of unbranded goods and income are equal. Which in turn reflects that door to door selling of unbranded shoes and income influences each other.

After Sales Services

The paper also represents the analysis of variance between the requirement of after sales services and income and the result shows that there is no significant difference as it exceeds the threshold limit of .05. Therefore, we will accept the null hypothesis that is mean responses in regard with aftersales services in case of branded goods and income are equal. This reflects that after sales services in case of branded goods and income influences each other.

Conclusion

After applying various statistical tools following conclusion have been derived: -

Income does have an impact in purchase of branded shoe products. Respondents with the higher family income tend to buy branded shoes more frequently. We also found that most of the respondents have preference for Nike shoe brand over others which are available in market. The findings of this paper highlights that there is an impact of gender in brand awareness. In other words, degree of brand awareness doesn't vary among male and female.

Social media is major brand awareness medium among the respondents thus showing its growing popularity among the masses. The results also show that It's the quality of branded shoes which encourages/influences the buyer to buy the branded shoes. We also found Branded shoes purchase decision often requires consultation from father, mother, etc. In some cases, they are the ones who take the final purchase decision. Similarly, this paper highlights that the bargaining tendency is popular in case of unbranded shoes while no such same results have been found in case of branded shoes. The paper also found that Advertisement, after sale services and incomes influences each other.

Recommendations

➢ Marketers of shoe brands must adopt various strategies in order to tap its potential customer base.

➢ Companies like Gucci, Burberry must expand their customer bases in India in order to become popular. (just like Nike and Bata)

➢ Companies like Woodland and Bata must develop appropriate strategies in order to compete more effectively with the market leader i.e Nike.

➢ Marketers of branded shoes must focus more on maintaining or improving the quality of their products. They must also focus on providing effective and efficient aftersale services.

Limitations

The present paper tries to uncover each piece of information but no one's work is beyond limitations. Small sample size, Non probability techniques and pan India study are the limitations which highlights the further scope of research.

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Annexure

Questionnaire

IMPACT OF BRAND AWARENESS AND BRAND ATTRIBUTES ON CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR - A STUDY OF SHOE INDUSTRY

Please set aside a few minutes today to fill out the attached questionnaire. Feel free to add additional remarks in the space provided. All comments will remain anonymous. The information provided by you will be kept confidential and will be use purely for academic research purpose.

Question 1(Filter Question)

Do you buy branded shoes.

- Yes
- No

Question 2

Which shoe brand you prefer? (Multiple options can be chosen)

- Nike
- Reebok
- Bata
- Hush Puppies
- Woodland
- Addias
- Liberty
- Puma
- Other

Question 3

Are you satisfied with the existing shoe brand? If not, specify the reason

- Yes
- No
- Other_____

Question 4

Which of the following brands you are aware about? (Multiple options can be chosen)

- Jimmy Choo
- Berluti
- Chanel
- Prada
- Gucci
- Burberry

Question 5

What is your medium of awareness regarding different brand of shoes?(Multiple options can be chosen)

- Television
- Radio
- Social Media
- Friends
- Others

Question 6

How often you purchase branded shoes?

- Once in 2-3 years
- Once in a year
- Twice in a year

- More than two times a year

Question 7

Suppose you want to purchase branded shoes. How will you consider following in this regard?(Highly important, important, neutral, less important, not important)

- Design
- Price
- Quality
- Comfort
- Durability
- Availability in nearby store

Question 8

Rank the various shoe brands

- Nike
- Reebok
- Bata
- Addidas
- Gucci
- Woodland

Question 9

Who takes the final purchasing decisions in your family?

- Father
- Mother
- Brother/sister
- Yourself

Question 10

Branded shoes are higher in price.

- Stongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Agree
- Stongly agree

Question 11

Do you bargain while purchasing branded shoes?
- Yes
- No

Question 12

Do you bargain while purchasing unbranded shoes?
- Yes
- No
- Cant say

Question 13

Advertisement of various shoe brands helps you in taking purchase decision.
- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Question 14

Door to Door selling is usually employed in case of unbranded shoes.

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree
-

Question 15

After sales services of branded shoes are much effective in comparison to unbranded shoes?

- Strongly disagree
- Disagree
- Neutral
- Agree
- Strongly agree

Personal Information

Name

Gender
- Male
- Female

Income
- Less than 250000
- 250001-500000
- 500001-10,00,000
- More than 10, 00,00