

BRAND LOYALTY OF SELECTED SPORT SHOE BRANDS IN JALANDHAR

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ABSTRACT

This research paper compares brand loyalty of selected sports shoe brands. It examines seven factors which affect Brand Loyalty namely product quality, brand name, price, style, promotion, store environment and service quality. A sample size of 400 physical education students was taken from the Jalandhar province. This study used kruskal wallis, games howell test and mean scores for analysis. It also examined that significant difference lies between loyalty towards brands and its important factors which affect brand loyalty such as promotion, style, product quality and service quality. It found out that some brands have better product quality, promotion and style as compared to the others.

Keywords: Brand, Brand Loyalty, Athletic Footwear Industry

INTRODUCTION

Brand Loyalty is defined as the favorable attitude of the customer towards a particular brand which is a due to the repurchase of the same brand consistently over time (Assael 1998).

Brand Loyalty is very important due to the fact that the customers can pay higher prices for the brand to which they are brand loyal. Moreover brand loyal customers can convince other customers through word of mouth. Brand Loyalty can be facilitated if pressure is exerted by the businesses. Initially, Brand Loyalty was considered as a repeat purchase by the consumer through which quantification of loyalty could be done by the company.

The quantification of Brand Loyalty could be made through the perception that the customer has towards loyalty. Brand loyalty reduces the advertising and marketing costs and also enhances the profit of the whole organization. Also, the marketing efficiency of the organization increases manifold with the help of Brand Loyalty.

CONSTITUENCIES OF BRAND LOYALTY

A conceptual framework of Oliver was developed in which the cognitive, affective, conative (behavioural intent) and action (repeat purchase behaviour) were taken into consideration.

Brand loyalty has been described as a behavioural response and as a function of psychological processes (Jacoby, 1973). That is, brand loyalty is a function of both attitude

and behaviour. Attitudinal Brand loyalty includes cognitive, affective and behavioural dimensions whereas behavioural loyalty includes the repurchase behaviour. (Dick and Basu,1994). Repurchase is not a sufficient evidence of brand loyalty but the purchasing practice should be intentional.

Behavioural intent which is the intention to act in the buying decision process is considered as an intermediary between attitudinal and behavioural loyalty. (Mittal and Kamakura, 2001).Behavioural intent is considered as the commitment to repurchase a current brand or predisposition to buy a brand for the first time.The repurchase commitment should be maintained and augmented to convert the behavioural intent into an actual purchase. This can be considered as a good strategy.(Oliva and Oliver,1992)

The prerequisite for behavioural loyalty is attitudinal brand loyalty(Baldinger and Robinson (1996)).If the customers have a positive attitude towards a brand then they tend to stay loyal to the brand while the switching buyers might turn into loyal buyers more easily.

SUGGESTIONS TO IMPROVE BRAND LOYALTY

Organizations can take various steps to increase the Brand Loyalty of sports shoes.

- **Best customers need to be focused**

Athletic footwear companies should build their products for the Brand Loyals. They can ask their existing customers to give new ideas and inculcate those ideas in the building of these products. Companies should try to focus on product quality, service quality ,promotion and style.

- **Special offers to the loyal customers**

This study differentiates the brand loyal customers and the Brand switchers. The brand loyal customers which are the best customers should be given certain offers which are different from the rest of the customers. This is will make them feel important and happy.

- **Surprise your Loyal Customers**

Companies can find out ways to surprise their loyal customers and increase the wow factor. Many companies send free gifts, random gifts and even handwritten notes to its customers.

- **Focus on the best thing your Brand does**

Know the strengths of your Brand and try to strengthen it even more. No organisation can be good in everything it does. So, the sport shoe companies should focus on the main factors affecting Brand Loyalty.

- **Deliver the promises that you have done with the customers**

Organisations should be dedicated to fulfil the promises that they have done with their customers. This helps in building Brand Loyalty. The Brand should inspire the customers. The strategy and marketing of the Brand should be such that it inspires the customers to purchase the brand. For Example: Nike tries to focus on the inner champion in all of us. Its Brand strategy also focuses on the internal enemy of its customers i.e laziness.

- **Deliver value to customer**

Organisations need to refine their products and services on a continuous basis in order to deliver value to customers. Companies need to focus on the unique selling proposition as this will help the company to enhance Brand Loyalty.

- **Enhance customer Experience**

The organisation must provide good service quality to their customers. This can be done by training the salesperson and making them competent enough to answer the queries of the customer. A good salesperson needs to have full knowledge about the products he is selling

and must have knowledge about the competition as well.

- **Enhance customer engagement culture**

Organisations need to solve the problems of the customers as quickly as possible and engage them in the decision making of the organization by asking them to provide with new ideas for launching innovative products for the organisation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Various authors have studied the factors affecting Brand Loyalty. Singh (2016) found out the impact of selected factors on brand loyalty in footwear industry. Out of the fourteen variables, twelve variables had a positive relationship with brand loyalty. Two variables namely number of outlets & their accessibility and trendy & fashionable design of the brand had no significant relationship with brand loyalty. In addition to this, Bapat (2015) found that there is relationship between Primary Bank and demographic factors. The results found out that a Brand loyal customer can be convinced in case of up-selling and cross selling of the products. Also, convenient location, better rates, service, technology, safety, salary pension account and long time dealing were considered as the important. It stated that the relationship between a primary bank and demographic variables were not significant. Moreover, Anitha (2014) found out the various factors which are related to Brand Loyalty. Style was not considered as an essential factor by women. Moreover, the three factors which were considered important were promotion, service quality and comfort. Furthermore Krishnakumar et al (2014) found out the main factors which influence Brand loyalty towards footwear brands in case of younger consumers in Salem. The study found out that manufactures must provide different styles of footwear to be able to have brand loyal customers. According to the study, the manufactures must make the customer brand loyal at an early stage i.e when they are students so that there is more possibility to retain them for the future. Rizwan (2014) also studied the perceived quality, brand equity, consumer satisfaction, brand credibility, brand commitment and brand trust for building brand loyalty. The study demonstrated that all the variables had a significant and positive affect on brand loyalty. Hashmi (2014) discussed different types of Brand Loyalty which are switchers, Shifting loyals, Split Loyals and Hard Core Loyals. Different variables discussed in this study are service quality, customer satisfaction, brand credibility, brand trust and Brand Image. The results found out that all of these variables have a positive affect on Brand Loyalty. Dawes (2009) found out the brand loyalty in the UK sportswear market. The main findings were that sportswear brands enjoyed polygamous brand loyalty from their buyers. Kita (2009) defined the concept of Brand Loyalty and explained Brand Loyalty on the basis of consumer behaviour. The research results show that the relation between consumer and brand is connected with some behaviour dimensions and unique character or brand loyalty. Yee et al (2008) explained that respondents were influenced by the various factors of brand loyalty towards sportswear brands. It stated that the seven factors of brand loyalty were brand name, product quality, style, price, promotion, service quality and store environment. It stated Brand name and brand loyalty are highly correlated. It has also been examined that there is positive and significant relationship between factors of brand loyalty towards brand loyalty of sportswear. Punniyamoorthy et al (2007) developed a model to measure brand loyalty in English newspapers. This study tried to find the loyalty behaviour of customers from the perspective of Indians, and also measured the brand loyalty score of the English newspapers with the developed model. Lao (2006) found out that the imperative factors which effect brand loyalty in Sportswear. This study found that brand loyalty can be classified in two ways

that is hard core brand loyals and brand switchers. Sales promotion effected brand switching but Brand name and style impacted Brand loyalty. It found out that It is essential for the marketers to continually improve their marketing programs to attract and retain consumers. On the basis of the literature review the objectives have been developed which include:

Objective

- To compare the brand loyalty of the selected sports shoe brands.

A questionnaire which has 25 statements was used in this paper. Proportion of purchase method of Brand Loyalty was used to distinguish between brand loyals and brand switchers. The sampling technique used in this research paper was convenience sampling .400 physical education students from private universities of Jalandhar namely DAV University and Lovely professional university filled the questionnaires. This study used mean scores and nonparametric tests like Kruskal Wallis, Games Howell and post hoc analysis for analysis. The statements used in the study were given by Lau (2006).

These statements include:

S1	This sport shoe brand is one of the reputed brand
S2	The Brand name and image of the sport shoe brand attract me to purchase from it
S3	This sport shoe brand name is selected regardless of price
S4	This sports shoe brand reflects my personality
S5	The size of this sports shoe fits me
S6	This sports shoe brand is comfortable to wear
S7	This sports shoe brand provides sufficient color choices
S8	This sports shoe brand have good quality
S9	This sports shoe of this brand are durable
S10	The increase in price of this shoes brand would not hinder my purchase intention
S11	This sports shoe brand provides value for money
S12	This sports shoe brand's style are suitable to me
S13	This sports shoe brand comes in wide variety of styles
S14	This sports shoe brand have distinctive features
S15	This brand of sports shoe have styles which are very trendy and fashionable
S16	This brand of sports shoes have easy to access store locations
S17	This sport shoe brand has sufficient number of store outlets
S18	This sports shoe brand's store have attractive interior display and colour combinations
S19	This sports shoe brand's store have feel good music
S20	This sports shoe brand's advertisement are attractive
S21	This sports shoe brand's advertisement attract me to purchase shoes more frequently
S22	The stores of this sports shoe brand have attractive window displays
S23	The salespersons of this sports shoe brand's store are trained and knowledgeable
S24	The salespersons of this sports shoe brand's store are willing to help me
S25	The salespersons of this sports shoe brand's store are friendly and courteous
S26	The salespersons of this brand's store have neat appearance

ANALYSIS

It calculates the mean scores of all the statements which constitute the seven factors.

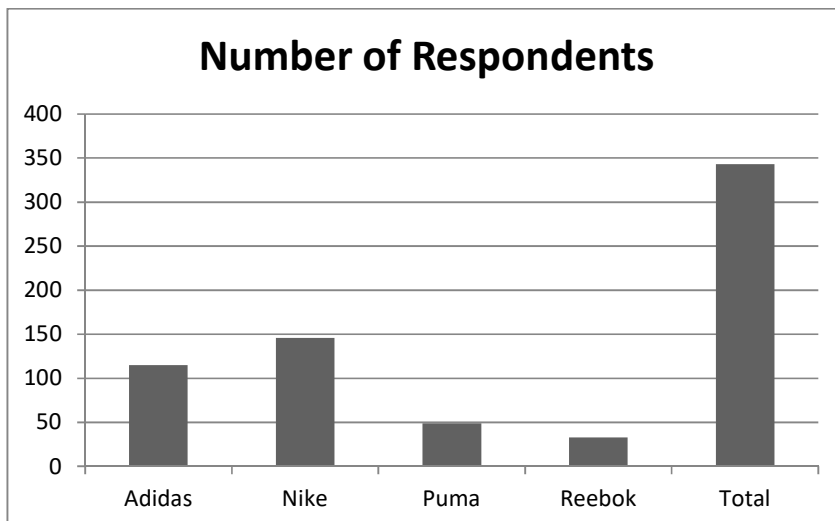
COMPARISON OF BRAND LOYALTY

This paper compares the brand loyalty of selected sports shoe brands that are Nike, Adidas, Puma and Reebok. Out of 400 respondents, 57 are brand switchers and are not used by any of the brand to analyze and compare Brand Loyalty.

Table 1: Number of respondents loyal to the particular brands

Loyalty towards Brands	Number of Respondents
Adidas	115
Nike	146
Puma	49
Reebok	33
Total	343

Figure 1: Number of respondents loyal to the particular brands



Out of 343 Brand Loyal respondents, 115 respondents are loyal to Adidas, 146 are loyal to Nike, 49 are loyal to Puma and 33 are loyal to Reebok. This means that Nike has the maximum number of brand loyal respondents followed by Adidas, while Puma and Reebok have considerable lesser number of brand loyal respondents.

Also, Hypothesis have been formed to compare the loyalty towards brands and factors which affect brand loyalty.

LOYALTY TOWARDS BRANDS

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and Brand Name.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and Brand Name.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and product quality.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and product quality.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and price.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and price.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and style.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and style.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and store Environment

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and store Environment.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and promotion.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and promotion.

Null Hypothesis: There is no significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and service Quality.

Alternate Hypothesis: There is significant difference between Loyalty towards Brands and service Quality.

Table 2: Significant differences between Loyalty towards brands and factor which affect Brand Loyalty.

Test Statistics a, b							
	Mean scores for Brand Name	Mean scores for Product Quality	Mean scores for Price	Mean scores for Style	Mean scores for Store Environment	Mean scores for Promotion	Mean scores for Service Quality
Chi-Square	3.128	8.284	4.647	10.872	3.07	13.411	9.473
Df	3	3	3	3	3	3	3

Asymp. Sig.	0.372	0.041	0.197	0.012	0.381	0.004	0.024
a. Kruskal Wallis Test							
b. Grouping Variable: Loyalty towards Brands							

There is significant difference in Brand loyalty towards brands and factors which affect Brand Loyalty which are product quality, promotion, style and Service Quality as the significant values for these factors are 0.04, 0.01, 0.00 and 0.02 respectively which is less than 0.05 and the null hypothesis is rejected in all the four cases.

Table 3: Comparison of various brands on the basis of product quality

Dependent Variable	(I) Loyalty towards Brands	(J) Loyalty towards Brands	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Product Quality mean score	Adidas	Nike	-0.06	0.06	0.79
		Puma	0.18	0.09	0.20
		Reebok	-0.00	0.09	0.99
	Nike	Adidas	0.06	0.06	0.79
		Puma	0.25	0.09	0.03
		Reebok	0.06	0.09	0.92
	Puma	Adidas	-0.18	0.09	0.20
		Nike	-0.25	0.09	0.03
		Reebok	-0.19	0.11	0.35
	Reebok	Adidas	0.00	0.09	0.99
		Nike	-0.06	0.09	0.92
		Puma	0.19	0.11	0.35

There is a significant difference between Nike and Puma towards product quality as the significant difference between them is 0.03. Also, the mean difference between the two brands is 0.25. This means that Puma is perceived to have better product quality as compared to Nike.

Table 4: Comparison of various brands on the basis of style

Dependent Variable	(I) Loyalty towards Brands	(J) Loyalty towards Brands	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Style mean score	Adidas	Nike	-0.12	0.07	0.40
		Puma	0.25	0.13	0.24
		Reebok	0.16	0.14	0.65
	Nike	Adidas	0.12	0.07	0.40
		Puma	0.37	0.13	0.02
		Reebok	0.28	0.13	0.18

	Puma	Adidas	-0.25	0.13	0.24
		Nike	-0.37	0.13	0.02
		Reebok	-0.08	0.17	0.95
	Reebok	Adidas	-0.16	0.14	0.65
		Nike	-0.28	0.13	0.18
		Puma	0.08	0.17	0.95
		Puma	-0.00	0.20	1

It signifies that Nike has better product quality as compared to Puma. There is a significant difference between Puma and Nike towards style as the significant difference between them is 0.02. Also, the mean difference between the two brands is -0.37. It means that Nike is perceived to have more stylish shoes as compared to Puma.

Table 5: Comparison of various brands on the basis of promotion

Dependent Variable	(I) Loyalty towards Brands	(J) Loyalty towards Brands	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Promotion mean score	Adidas	Nike	-0.26	0.09	0.02
		Puma	0.10	0.13	0.86
		Reebok	-0.22	0.15	0.49
	Nike	Adidas	0.26	0.09	0.02
		Puma	0.37	0.13	0.03
		Reebok	0.04	0.15	0.99
	Puma	Adidas	-0.10	0.13	0.86
		Nike	-0.37	0.13	0.03
		Reebok	-0.32	0.18	0.29
	Reebok	Adidas	0.22	0.15	0.49
		Nike	-0.04	0.15	0.99
		Puma	0.32	0.18	0.29

There is a significant difference between Adidas and Nike towards promotion as the significant difference between them is 0.02 which is less than 0.05. Also, the mean difference between the two brands is -0.26. It means that Nike is better in promotion as compared to Adidas. Also, there is a significant difference between Nike and Puma towards promotion as the significant difference between them is 0.03. which is less than 0.05. Also, the mean difference between the two brands is 0.37. It means that Nike is perceived to be better in promotion as compared to Puma.

Dependent Variable	(I) Loyalty towards Brands	(J) Loyalty towards Brands	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
Service Quality mean score	Adidas	Nike	-0.22	0.08	0.02
		Puma	-0.00	0.12	0.99
		Reebok	-0.12	0.13	0.79
	Nike	Adidas	0.22	0.08	0.02
		Puma	0.22	0.11	0.23
		Reebok	0.10	0.13	0.87
	Puma	Adidas	0.00	0.12	0.99
		Nike	-0.22	0.11	0.23
		Reebok	-0.11	0.16	0.88
	Reebok	Adidas	0.12	0.13	0.79
		Nike	-0.10	0.13	0.87
		Puma	0.11	0.16	0.88

There is a significant difference between Adidas and Nike towards service quality as the significant difference between them is 0.02 which is less than 0.05..Also, the mean difference between the two brands is -0.22. It means that Nike is perceived to have better service quality as compared to Adidas.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

According to this study Nike has most Brand Loyal customers. This is due to better product quality, service quality, stylish shoes and promotion provided by Nike as compared to its competitors. It is extremely important for the Athletic footwear firms to improve on all these factors if it wants to increase its Brand loyal customers in future. Increase in Brand loyals will increase in the efficiency and profitability of the firm. Also, loyal customers become the brand ambassadors of the firm and promote the products through word of mouth marketing. They reduce the costs related to marketing.

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