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Research Paper Commerce

Brand Loyalty on Footwear

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ABSTRACT

This study intended to examine the factors influencing by brand loyalty towards footwear brands among the younger consumer in Salem. The questionnaires were distributed hundred university students by using convenient sampling techniques. Simple percentage and one sample't' test were used in this study. The results revealed that students are always searching to wear in different style of footwear for different occasions to show their fashionable aspects and these type customer segments are easy to change their brand because they are variety seeking in nature. In these situations the manufacturers and marketers are in a position to fulfill the requirements of student's categories in all regards. If the manufactures acquired a strong brand loyal customer group at the stage of students there will be a possibility of retain them for a long period.

KEYWORDS : Brand Name, Style, Price, Product Quality, Store Environment.

Introduction

Brand loyalty is a crucial goal and result of successful marketing programs. Sales initiatives and product development efforts. Moreover brand loyalty is the consumer's conscious or unconscious decision expressed through intension or behaviour to repurchase a brand continually. It occurs because the consumer perceives that the brand offers the right product features, image or level of quality at the right price. The image surrounding a company's brand is the principle source of its competitive advantage and is therefore a valuable strategic asset. (Bilal MustafaKhan2009)

Statement of the problem

Wearing footwear is part and partial of everyone's life. The footwear manufacturers are always looking for market their products at a maximum level**.** Nowadays there are plenty of local and multinational brands are available to meet the expectation of customers of footwear. The customers are always looking for most desirable and comfortable footwear for them. They are always seeking for the brand which is most suitable for them in all aspects including economical. Due to hectic competition in the footwear market there are varieties of brands and products are available in various ranges. In this circumstances footwear usage pattern among the higher education students are different. They wanted to wear trendy and fashionable footwear. Therefore, it is essential to identify the brand loyalty of footwear among the higher education students.

Objectives of the study

- To know the socio –economic characteristics of higher education students.
- To analyze the factors influencing by brand loyalty towards footwear brands.
- To offer suggestions based on the results of the study.

Methodology

The research has been conducted in order to find out the brand loyalty of footwear. For this purpose the questionnaires were distributed hundred university students by using convenient techniques. Simple percentage and one sample't' test were used in this study.

Factors of brand loyalty

Lau et al. (2006) Yee and Yahyahsidek (2008) in his article mentioned that there were seven factors that influenced consumers' brand loyalty towards certain sportswear brands. The factors were: brand name, product quality, price, style, store environment, promotion and service quality.

Product quality:

According to Frings (2005), the components of product quality of fashion merchandise include size measurement, cutting or fitting, material, colour, function and the performance of the merchandise. Fitting is a crucial aspect in garment selection because some fitted garments such as swimsuits and aerobic wear can ideally enhance the consumers' general appearance. Material is important in product quality because it affects the hand feel, texture and other performance aspects of the product. Further, consumers relate personally to colour, and could select or reject a fashion because of colour. If the colour does not appeal to them or flatter their own colour, they will reject the fashion (Frings, 2005).

Functional attributes in sportswear include quick-dry, breathable, waterproof, od our-resistant, lightweight, and antimicrobial and finally, durability which is the use life of garments. For instance, some consumers wear their sportswear for heavy work and some for leisure and sports, as they need a lot of movement, while durability is an important consideration in purchasing sportswear (Garvin,1988).Perfectionist or quality consciousness is defined as an awareness of and desire for high quality products, and the need to make the best or perfect choice versus buying the first product or brand available (Sproles and Kendall, 1986)

Brand Name

Famous brand names can disseminate product benefits and lead to higher recall of advertised benefits than non-famous brand names (Keller, 2003). There are many unfamiliar brand names and alternatives available in the market place. Consumers may prefer to trust major famous brand names. These prestigious brand names and their images attract consumers to purchase the brand and bring about repeat purchasing behaviour and reduce price related switching behaviours (Cadogan and Foster, 2000).

Price

According to Cadogan and Foster (2000), price is probably the most important consideration for the average consumer. Consumers with high brand loyalty are willing to pay a premium price for their favoured brand, so, their purchase intention is not easily affected by price. In addition, customers have a strong belief in the price and value of their favorite brands so much so that they would compare and evaluate prices with alternative brands (Evans *et al.*, 1996; Keller, 2003). According to Bucklin *et al.* (1998), price significantly influences consumer choice and incidence of purchase. He emphasized that discount pricing makes households switch brands and buy products earlier than needed. Price is described as the quantity of payment or compensation for something. It indicates price as an exchange ratio between goods that pay for each other. Price also communicates to the market the company's intended value positioning of its product or brand. Price consciousness is defined as finding the best value, buying at sale prices or the lowest price choice (Sproles and Kendall, 1986).

Style

A research conducted by Duff (1999) investigated the niche market in women's sportswear, and the results showed that sportswear shoppers were becoming more fashion conscious and were demanding products with more style; furthermore, consumers have a tendency to wear dif-

ferent attires for different occasions. According to Sproles and Kendall (1986), fashion consciousness is generally defined as an awareness of new styles, changing fashions, and attractive styling, as well as the desire to buy something exciting and trendy. Littrell (1995), a composite list of apparel attributes has been generated and one of the conceptual categories is style

Promotion

Promotion is a marketing mix component which is a kind of communication with consumers. Promotion includes the use of advertising, sales promotions, personal selling and publicity. Advertising is a non-personal presentation of information in mass media about a product, brand, company or store. It greatly affects consumers' images, beliefs and attitudes towards products and brands, and in turn, influences their purchase behaviours (Evans *et al.*, 1996). This shows that promotion, especially through advertising, can help establish ideas or perceptions in the consumers' minds as well as help differentiate products against other brands. According to Rowley (1998), promotion is an important element of a firm's marketing strategy. Promotion is used to communicate with customers with respect to product offerings, and it is also a way to encourage purchase or sales of a product or service. Sales promotion tools are used by most organizations in support of advertising and public relations activities, and they are targeted toward consumers as final users. She also states that promotion has a key role in determining profitability and market success and is one of the key elements of the marketing mix which includes advertising; direct marketing; sales promotion; public relations and publicity; personal selling and sponsorship.

Table - 1 Demographic Information of Samples

Particulars		No. of Respondents	Percentage
Place of the Residents	Urban	35	35%
	Semi- urban	28	28%
	Rural	37	37%
	Total	100	100
Gender	Male	27	27%
	Female	73	73%
	Total	100	100
Age	Below 23	75	75%
	24-26	18	18%
	Above 27	7	7%
	Total	100	100
Educational Qualification	PG	66	66%
	M.Phil	22	22%
	Ph.D	12	12%
	Total	100	100
Monthly Income	Below 20,000	23	23%
	10,000-20,000	66	66%
	20,000Above	11	11%
	Total	100	100
Family Size	Upto-2	26	26%
	3 -5	42	42%
	Above 5	32	32%
	Total	100	100

Table - 2 Brand of footwear List do you Prefer Most

Brand Name	Frequency	Percentage
Khadhims	15	15
VKC	33	33
Paragon	9	9
Bata	25	25
Action	17	17
Puma	01	01

The above table says that out 100 respondents, 15% of the respondents are preferring Khadhims, 33% of the respondents are preferring VKC,9% of the respondents are preferring Paragon, 25% of respondents are preferring Action and 1% of the respondents are preferring Puma. Therefore, most of the Younger consumers to prefer to buy the VKC footwear.

Table - 3 One-Sample Statistics of Product Quality of footwear

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
The size of the footwear fit for me	100	4.3200	.58396	.05840
Nice quality Material	100	4.0900	.42865	.04286
Different Colour	100	3.9700	.70288	.07029
Characteristics of brand very good	100	4.3100	.59789	.05979

From the above table it is found that the mean values of four variable of product Quality of footwear range from 3.97 to 4.32 with consistent standard deviation less than 1. The significance of the mean values of the variables are explained in the table given below.

Table – 4 One sample't' Test for Product Quality for Footwear

	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Footwear size fit for me	73.978	99	.000	4.32000	4.2041	4.4359
Nice quality Material	95.417	99	.000	4.09000	4.0049	4.1751
Different Colour	56.482	99	.000	3.97000	3.8305	4.1095
Characteristics of brand very good	72.087	99	.000	4.31000	4.1914	4.4286

The't' test value of the four variables 73.978, 95.417, 56.482, and 72.087 are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. It stand for the consumer while select the footwear, the consumer are giving more importance to size of the footwear, and the consumer selected or rejected footwear based on the fittings quality of material and colour.

Table - 5 One-Sample Statistics of Style of footwear

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Wide variety of style	100	4.0300	.68836	.06884
Brand style fits for me	100	4.1800	.73002	.07300
Distinctive features	100	3.7900	.93523	.09352
The brand is very stylish	100	3.6900	1.30031	.13003

From the above table it is found that the mean values of four variables of style of footwear range from 3.69 to 4.18 with consistent standard deviation less than 1.except stylish of the brand (1.30). The significance of the mean values of the variable are explained in the following table.

Table – 6 One sample't' Test for Style of Footwear

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Wide variety of style	58.545	99	.000	4.03000	3.8934	4.1666
Brand style fits for me	57.259	99	.000	4.18000	4.0351	4.3249
Distinctive features	40.525	99	.000	3.79000	3.6044	3.9756
The brand is very stylish	28.378	99	.000	3.69000	3.4320	3.9480

The't' test values of the four variables 58.545, 57.259, 40.525, and 28.378 are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The above table reveals that today's consumers are variety seeking buyers. Particularly younger consumers have like to wear different attires for different occasions. Therefore, younger generation always searching to buy something exciting and trendy footwear

Table – 7 One-Sample Statistics of Brand Name of footwear

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Brand is reputed	100	4.1500	.70173	.07017
Brand name impress to buy	100	4.1400	.73882	.07388
Brand Reflect my personality	100	3.8400	.76171	.07617
Neglectful of Price	100	3.6400	.85894	.08589
Brand is famous	100	3.8200	1.22582	.12258

From the above table it is found that the mean values of five variable of brand name of footwear range from 3.64 to 4.15 with consistent standard deviation less than 1 except the brand is very famous. The significance of the mean values of the variables are explained in the table given below.

Table – 8 One sample't' Test for Brand Name of Footwear

	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Brand is reputed	59.140	99	.000	4.15000	4.0108	4.2892
Brand name impress to buy	56.035	99	.000	4.14000	3.9934	4.2866
Brand Reflect my personality	50.413	99	.000	3.84000	3.6889	3.9911
Neglectful of Price	42.378	99	.000	3.64000	3.4696	3.8104
Brand is famous	31.163	99	.000	3.82000	3.5768	4.0632

The't' test values of the four variables 59.104, 56.035, 50.413, 42.378 and 31.163 are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The above table shows that consumers may prefer to buy reputed brand products. Famous brand name can spread their products information and image of the brand impress the consumer to purchase same products even the product price increased

Table – 9 One-Sample Statistics of Price of footwear

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Price of the brand hinder me	100	3.4300	1.00760	.10076
Brand provides good value for money	100	3.7200	.81749	.08175

From the above table it is found that the mean values of two variable of Price of footwear range from 3.44 and 3.72 with consistent standard deviation less than 1 except increase of price of the not hinder me to purchase . The significance of the mean values of the variables are explained in the table given below.

Table – 10 One sample't' Test for Price of Footwear

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Price of the brand hinder me	34.041	99	.000	3.43000	3.2301	3.6299
Brand provides good value for money	45.505	99	.000	3.72000	3.5578	3.8822

The't' test values of the four variables 34.041 and 45.505 are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. (Yoon,S.J and Kim,J.H, 2000)Loyal consumer are ready to pay the premium price if the price has increased. Consumers' satisfaction can also be built by comparing price with perceived costs and values if the perceived values of the product are greater than cost, it is observed that consumers will purchase that product

Table -11 One-Sample Statistics of Promotion of footwear

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Ads is attractive	100	4.1000	.87039	.08704
Ads is Impetus	100	4.8000	5.63180	.56318
Window display attractive	100	3.8800	.67090	.06709

From the above table it is found that the mean values of two variable of Price of footwear range from 4.10 and 4.80 with consistent standard deviation less than 1 except increase of price of the not hinder me to purchase . The significance of the mean values of the variables are explained in the table given below

One sample't' Test for Promotion of Footwear

	Test Value = 0					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Ads is attractive	47.105	99	.000	4.10000	3.9273	4.2727
Ads is Impetus	8.523	99	.000	4.80000	3.6825	5.9175
Window display attractive	57.833	99	.000	3.88000	3.7469	4.0131

The't' test values of the four variables 34.041 and 45.505 are statistically significant at 5% level of significance. The above table reveals the footwear ads is impacts to buy the particular footwear.

Suggestion

1. Size of the footwear is most important aspects for users to select their brand. Therefore, the manufacturer should be very conscious in manufacturing footwear in proper size.
2. The materials and colors of footwear also important factors among higher education students selecting their footwear. Therefore, it is suggested that the manufacture should concentrate more on manufacturing footwear's with better materials and different colors.
3. Higher education students are looking for wide varieties of style. Therefore, the manufactures has to concentrate more on introducing different kinds of varieties of footwear. According to expectations of higher education students.
4. Nowadays there is an expectation among footwear users that footwear have distinguished features. Therefore, it is suggested that the manufactures should concentrate to develop the footwear model with distinguish features.
5. Almost all the users of footwear looking for buying reputed and famous brands. Because, a thought that reflected their personality and even the neglected price also for getting most suitable footwear. It is suggested that the manufacturing has to fulfill all the above said criteria.
6. Higher education students thought that branded items provides good values for money and even price rises of that brand don't change their attitude towards the purchase of their own brand. It is suggested the manufacturer has to create and keep loyal customer group.
7. Advertisement also another important factors which directly influence their purchase decisions of buyers. Particularly with reflect to footwear purchase of higher education studies advertisement highly influences them. Therefore, the manufactures has to create better advertisement.

Conclusion

Nowadays, youngsters are expressing their individuality by the way of wearing trendy and different attires including footwear. There are many local and multinational companies involved in manufacturing and marketing footwear all over the country for fulfilling the footwear requirements of various categories of buyers. Students are always searching to wear in different style of footwear for different occasions to show their fashionable aspects and these type customer segments are easy to change their brand because they are variety seeking in nature. In these situations the manufacturers and marketers are in a position to fulfill the requirements of student's categories in all regards. If the manufactures acquired a strong brand loyal customer group at the stage of students there will be a possibility of retain them for a long period.

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