FACTORS INFLUENCING BRAND LOYALTY OF SPORTSWEAR AMONG BUSINESS STUDENTS: A CASE STUDY OF HYDERABAD, SINDH, PAKISTAN

Ikramuddin Junejo
Dr Khizer Hyat Khuhawar
Dr Imdad Hussain Sahito

ABSTRACT

In this study factors influencing brand loyalty on business students in sportswear in Hyderabad Sindh are examined from 200 business administration university students. We have studied the various variables which influence brand loyalty factors, such as, service quality, style, price, brand name, store environment and promotion. Data has been collected with help of questionnaire and analyzed through number of statistical techniques in SPSS that include the factor analysis, reliability test, and linear regression is applied. The results indicate two variables, style and brand name, are found significantly impacting on brand loyalty, which store environment, service quality and product quality has insignificant impact on consumers towards brand loyalty in sportswear in Hyderabad. Based on the findings, sportswear companies can enhance the brand loyalty by the introduction of new styles and brand names on timely basis for higher rate of return on investment.

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Keywords: Brand loyalty, Service quality, Store environment and Style.

INTRODUCTION

In Pakistan market there are few brands in sportswear which are quite famous, such as, Reebok, Puma, Adidas and Nike etc. Young people are highly influenced in sportswear and at the same time intensive competition among firms has been observed in the Pakistan marketplace. For capturing value from customers, firms are offering long run value and brand loyalty for attracting and retaining customer. High industry growth rate and market share are recorded in Pakistan and companies are making maximum profit through enhancing brand loyalty.

It has been noticed that among universities the students prefer sports shoes during their studies. This trend has shifted from less developed cities to developed cities; it is an opportunity for sports firms to capture it for maximum shareholders value. Hyderabad city and its surroundings has number of universities and 6 months back brand a renowned brand Adidas opened its outlet at Boulevard mall. There is need to understand the key factors that are counted by Hyderabad's customers while buying sports shoes. This study will help the sports companies for better

understanding factors while opening new sports outlet in the city of Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan.

LIMITATION OF STUDY
    This research paper has two limitations. First, we have focused only business students' perception while buying sports shoes; second, due to limited number of business students in Hyderabad the sample size consists of 200. The sample size is limited due to small number of business students in Hyderabad, Sindh, Pakistan and convenience sampling too.

LITERATURE REVIEW
    Brand Loyalty: Brand loyalty leads to positive behavior of customers in terms of re-purchase of goods and services and it is kind of asset for companies. Customers also willing to pay more as compared to competitors (Sasser, 1990).
    Brand Name: Band name helps customer for differentiation of product and most of time end users recall brands through effective advertisement (Keller, 2013).
    Product Quality: Quality of product evaluated by customers in terms of performance of products which are as per requirements of end-customers and they compare the amount with respect to benefits. So, required level of performance of goods and services according to expectations of customers is called product quality (Russell, 2006).
    Price: According to study conducted by Cadogan (2000), price is counted by customers but at same time the brand loyalty influence to the consumer behavior. The end customers may get ready to pay more or high as compared to competitors.
    Style: There are lot of things considered by customers in style that includes design, colors, shapes and positive customer's perception towards a good brand (Frings, 2005).
    Environment of Store: According to research of Omar (1999), good number of customers believes store environment is important before making final decision of purchase and mostly store layout, color and store location impact on consumer brand loyalty.
    Promotion: Promotion develops positive image in the mind of customers and final consumer can easily make difference among brands such as advertising (Maloney, 1999).
    Service Quality: It is an intangible element with regard to interaction between buyers and sellers, and consumer may become loyal with brand due to acceptable service quality.

METHODOLOGY
In this study we have investigated the brand loyalty in Hyderabad, Sindh market. Aim of this study is to observe key variables that impact on brand loyalty for sportswear market place.

Research Hypothesis
H_01:   Brand name does not significantly impact brand loyalty in Hyderabad, Sindh sportswear market.
H_02:   Product quality does not significantly impact brand loyalty in Hyderabad, Sindh sportswear market.
H_03:   Style does not significantly impact brand loyalty in Hyderabad, Sindh sportswear market.
H_04:   Service Quality does not significantly impact brand loyalty in Hyderabad, Sindh sportswear market.
H_05:   Store environment does not significantly impact brand loyalty in Hyderabad sportswear market.

Regression Research Model
$$BL = \beta_0 + \beta_1(PQ) + \beta_2(BN) + \beta_3(SQ) + \beta_4(S) + \beta_5(SE) + \varepsilon t$$
Whereas:
BL = Brand loyalty, PQ= Product quality, BN=Brand name, SQ= Service quality, S= Style, SE= Store environment & error in research model.

Questionnaire Research Instrument: The data has been collected with help of questionnaire from two research articles. This research questionnaire consists of total 33 questions on 5 point Likert scale.

Convenience Sampling: In this study convenience sampling has been used for data collection from respondent due limited time and 200 business administration university students are respondents.

DATA ANALYSIS
Test of Reliability

TABLE-1
TEST OF RELIABILITY

Value of Cronbach's Alpha	Total of items
0.739	16

Source: Estimation by Author

Test of reliability has been conducted in order check the reliability of questionnaire which is adopted from previous research studies and total numbers of items were 16 that include both dependent and independent variables. In our case Cronbach's alpha is 0.739 or 74% that is greater than 50%, hence instrument is reliable for this study.

Test of Factor Analysis

TABLE-2
K.M.O AND BARTLETT'S TEST

Kasier-meyer-olkin measure of sampling adequacy	0.667
Significant	.000

Source: Estimation by author

Table 2 explains the variance of independent variable with help of KMO value that is 0.667 or 66.7%. It is also greater than 0.50 or 50% similar to value of Cronbach's alpha.

TABLE-3
ROTATED COMPONENT MATRIX

Question #	Cronbach's value	Variable					
		Service Quality	Brand loyalty	Store environment	Style	Product quality	Brand name
Question # 25	.795	.761					
Question # 26		.847					
Question # 27		.883					
Question # 28		.565					
Question # 29	.772		.732				
Question # 30			.795				
Question # 31			.688				
Question # 33			.754				
Question # 18	.653			.771			
Question # 19				.849			
Question # 16	.616				.766		
Question # 17					.848		
Question # 07	.467					.72	
Question # 08						.813	
Question # 02	.274						.72
Question # 03							.813

Source: Estimation by Author

Multiple Regression Analysis

TABLE-4
REGRESSION COEFFICIENT

Independent Variable	Value of coefficient (β)	Value of Probability (p-value)
Constant	2.028	.375
Brand name	.794	.007
Style	.394	.059
Product quality	.398	.118
Service quality	.111	.275
Store environment	-.006	.968

Dependent variable: Brand loyalty
Source: Estimation by Author

In the above Table 4 all independent variables value of coefficient and value of probability are given. The β (beta) shows the relationship between dependent and independent variables and p-value shows impact of dependent variable on independent variable. Results indicate that two variables brand name and style has significant impact on brand loyalty because p-value is less than 0.05 and other three variables are found insignificant p-value greater than 0.05.

β values are used for multiple model is:

Brand Loyalty = 2.093 +.794 (Brand Name) + .394 (Style) + .398 (Product Quality) +.111 (Service quality) + -.006 (Store environment)

CONCLUSION AND FUTURE RECOMMENDATION

This study is based on factors influencing brand loyalty of sportswear in business students of the city of Hyderabad, Pakistan's marketplace. We have adopted questionnaire as research instrument, the test of multiple regression revealed results. On basis of these results, two variables: brand name and style has shown positive and significant impact on brand loyalty but the other three variables: product quality, service quality and store environment are found to have a trivial effect on the brand loyalty. Apparently, the results seem inverse to suggestions in theory but the main reason for it can be explained by the relatively meager number of customers in Hyderabad. Also, due to the expensive brands such as Adidas, Nike and Reebok, the customer's buying power also accounts for the incongruity of theory and practice. Hence, a very small number of business students are found brand loyal in terms of product quality, service quality and store environment.

FUTURE RECOMMENDATION

- The buying power of customers related to sportswear should be studied.
- Based on results, firms should more focus on latest shoes rather than store environment etc in Hyderabad in sportswear market.
- Other than business students should be considered as a respondent (sample) for further results confirmation.

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