



Volume: 2, Issue: 9, 316-318
Sep 2015
www.allsubjectjournal.com
e-ISSN: 2349-4182
p-ISSN: 2349-5979
Impact Factor: 4.342

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Brand Preference towards Sports Apparels

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Abstract

Nowadays the branded sports apparels are increasingly used by men as many international brands have entered the Indian market. So many people have started buying the popular brands. With the result the unbranded sports apparels are facing a severe competition. The buying decisions of the respondents are influenced by different factors. The increases in demand for consumer goods and expendables have boosted the sale of branded sportswear. They select their branded sports apparels from single brand showroom or multi- branded showrooms. Keeping this in view research is carried out to know the objectives: (a) To study the consumers preference for branded sports apparels. (b) To study the factors influencing consumers brand preference. (c) To study the consumers satisfaction towards their preferred brand. (d) To give suggestions based on the findings of the study.

Keywords: sports apparels, demand, consumers

Introduction

Sportswear is clothing, including footwear, worn for sport or physical exercise. Sport-specific clothing is worn for most sports and physical exercise, for practical, comfort or safety reasons. Consumer preference and demand are the predominant drives for the sports apparel industry, but manufacturing costs are also a factor. Profitability in this industry is depended upon several factors as well: the focus given to certain locations, specialization of products, efficiency of operations and contracts with marketing professionals.

For most sports the athletes wear a combination of different items of clothing, e.g. sport shoes, pants and shirts. In some sports, protective gear may need to be worn, such as helmets or American football body armor. Sportswear is typically designed to be light weight so as not to encumber the wearer. The best athletic wear for some forms of exercise, for example cycling, should not create drag or be too bulky. Standardized sportswear may also function as a uniform. In team sports the opposing sides are usually identified by the colors of their clothing, while individual team members can be recognized by a back number on a shirt.

Statement of the Problem

Nowadays the branded sports apparels are increasingly used by men as many international brands have entered the Indian market. So many people have started buying the popular brands. With the result the unbranded sports apparels are facing a severe competition. The buying decisions of the respondents are influenced by different factors. The increases in demand for consumer goods and expendables have boosted the sale of branded sportswear. They select their branded sports apparels from single brand showroom or multi- branded showrooms. Keeping this in view research is carried out to know about the brand preference of customers regarding sports apparels.

Scope of the Study

The main scope of the study is that, it helps the organization to understand the customer psychology on choosing the product or service so that easily the product can be positioned. The study helps to know about customer's perception towards branded sports apparels. It also facilitates to meet out their expectation in future in turn that will increase the volume of sales.

Objective of the Study

1. To study the consumers preference for branded sports apparels.
2. To study the factors influencing consumers brand preference.
3. To study the consumers satisfaction towards their preferred brand.
4. To give suggestions based on the findings of the study.

Methodology of the Study

The methodology used in the study is as follows:

Area of Study

Area of study used in this research is Cochin City which is one of the fast developing cities in India in all aspects.

Source of Data

The primary data have been collected by using questionnaire as a tool. It helps in collecting the primary data in simple and understandable manner so as to fulfill the prime and other objectives of the study.

Sampling Design and Size

The study involves the collection of data from 100 respondents using Convenient Sampling Technique.

Statistical Study Used In the Study

- Percentage analysis
- Chi square test
- Rank analysis
- Average score analysis

Limitations of the Study

- This study has been done in Cochin City only, that the attitudes of the people dwelling on other cities are ignored.
- The study has been confined to hundred samples only.
- The study has been made within the short period of time.

Review of Literature

Sungwon Bae and John Miller and *et al.* (2005) ^[1] aimed to identify the decision-making styles of college students for sports apparel. Modifying the Consumer Style Inventory (CSI) developed by Sproles and Kendall (1986), a quantitative research design was developed to analyze the effect of seven factors. Eight-hundred and twenty-two subjects composed of 376 male and 446 female college students enrolled at three public universities. The results indicated that male and female college-aged consumers had different decision-making styles in relation to fashion, impulse, and brand consciousness. There were, however, no statistically significant differences between college classifications or interactions between gender and college classifications.

Behrooz Gharleghi and *et al.* (2005) ^[2] in their study, aims to identify the predictor of consumer preferences in choosing an international brand of sports products among Malaysian young consumers. Of the 200 respondents from Klang district, the study found that country-of-origin perception has the strongest predictor towards consumer preferences followed by perceived product quality, promotion stimulation, perceived brand image and lifestyle. This study is important to the marketers to understand the consumer preferences in choosing an international brand of fashion products in developing countries. The marketer also could understand the market segmentation and accordingly formulate competitive marketing strategies and utilize target market wisely.

Findings

Percentage Analysis

1. Majority of the respondents belong to the age group of 18-25 years (72%).
2. Majority of the respondents belong to the gender male (84%).
3. Most of the respondents are under graduated (42%).

4. Most of the respondents are students (46%).
5. Most of the respondents have family monthly income more than `30000 (36%).
6. Most of the respondents belong to the sport basketball (30%).
7. Most of the respondents are practicing the sport for 2-3 years (41%).
8. Most of the respondents prefer the brand Adidas (25%).
9. Most of the respondents are influenced by friends and relatives towards their preferred brand (38%).
10. Majority of the respondents purchase their preferred brand of sports apparel from retail shops (61%).
11. Most of the respondents purchased jersey (48%).
12. Majority of the respondents spends between `1000-`5000 for their sports apparel (65%).
13. Majority of the respondents purchase the sports apparel occasionally (52%).
14. Majority of the respondents opined that the price of the sports apparel which they prefer is reasonable (58%).
15. Majority of the respondents prefers their brand to others (97%).

Rank Analysis

- Majority of the respondents are highly satisfied by the quality of the brand (85.85).

Weighted Average Score Analysis

- Majority of the respondents are highly satisfied with the quality (3.64).

Chi Square Analysis

- There is significant relationship between the monthly income and amounts spend.
- There is no significant relationship between the educational qualification and brands preferred.
- There is significant relationship between the occupation and sports to which they belong.
- There is no significant relationship between the family monthly income and brands preferred.

Suggestions

Many of the consumers feel that the price of the branded sports apparels are costly and it should be made reasonable so that it reach both high income and low income groups in the society. Branded sports apparels should be provided in all the sizes. Certain brands lack variety, so the availability of varieties should be improved. Branded sports apparel should be provided with many discounts and offers like rebate, buy one get one free, seasonal discounts etc. More designs should be provided with the branded sports apparels. More number of outlets for branded sports apparels should be opened for the convenience of the respondents. Quality of the other local brands can be improved so that its demand will also increase.

Conclusion

Consumer's preference is the basis of all sound marketing strategies. Consumers form judgment about the value of marketing offers and make their own buying decisions. In a market the "Consumer is the King" who decides the value of the product through the payment made for the product. All marketing decisions are based on assumptions and knowledge of consumer preference.

The study reveals that the branded sports apparels are mostly preferred by the respondents of age group 18-25 years and income level of more than `30000. Majority of the

respondents are not willing to choose unbranded sports apparels due to their prestige value, status symbol and comfort. This shows the increased standard of living of the people. On the other hand some respondents feel that the price of the branded sports apparels are very high, this will result the respondents of low income group to prefer unbranded sports apparel. Thus the branded sports apparels should reduce the price level to attract all income groups. The unbranded sports apparels should concentrate on their quality, durability and bring more collections equal to branded sports apparel. This study will help the manufacturers to know the customer's views about the sports apparels and satisfy them with better fittings, quality and price factor that are expected by them.

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Magazines

1. Apparels view
2. Garment line

Website

1. www.sports.ndtv.com
2. www.bbc.com