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A Study on Consumer Preference Towards Branded Shoes

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ABSTRACT: This study explores the key factors influencing consumer preference and satisfaction toward branded footwear among young Indian consumers. Conducted among 104 respondents, primarily students aged 18–20, the research analyzes attributes such as comfort, quality, price, brand loyalty, aesthetics, and sustainability. Results indicate that comfort and quality are the most valued features, with Bata emerging as the preferred brand for its affordability and availability. However, dissatisfaction was noted in areas like style, eco-friendliness, and after-sale service. Using statistical tools including T-tests, Chi-square tests, correlation analysis, and weighted averages, the study examines demographic influences on brand perception. Significant gender differences were observed in physical attribute preferences, while brand value perceptions remained stable across age groups. A strong correlation was found between physical and functional attributes, showing that visual appeal shapes expectations of performance. The study suggests that brands focus on innovation, sustainability, and improved service to build stronger customer loyalty in a competitive market.

KEYWORDS: Brand Preference, Buying Behavior, Consumer Influence, Purchase Intent, Physical Attribute.

I. INTRODUCTION

In India, the footwear industry is a significant contributor to the global market. As the world's second-largest footwear producer, India is expected to surpass ₹1.5 trillion in market size by 2025 (Statista, 2023). Factors such as increased disposable income, a growing middle class, and enhanced digital access contribute to this growth. Branded segments led by Bata, Liberty, Red Tape, Adidas, and Nike have benefited immensely from strategies like celebrity endorsements, product innovation, digital marketing, and immersive customer experiences. Given these developments, studying consumer preferences toward branded shoes is vital for understanding both the rational and emotional motivations that influence buying behavior. These insights are essential for firms aiming to enhance product development, strategic branding, and customer satisfaction in a dynamic and competitive marketplace.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This study investigates the influence of brand image and product quality on consumer satisfaction among the users of Nike sports shoes in Palembang. The approach was quantitatively constructed with 100 basketball athletes, data being analyzed through SPSS 26. The findings determine whether brand image and product quality affect satisfaction either singly or simultaneously. **(Zou Y et al., 2025)**

The present study evaluates the customer satisfaction toward Bata India Ltd., drawing data from a questionnaire survey of 50 respondents. The study captures the connection about consumer expectations and product performance, bringing out the relationship by which satisfaction leads to repeat purchases and brand advocacy. Limitations of the study include time and a small sample size. **(Subiksha A et al., 2025)**

An investigation into how brand image, product quality, and celebrity endorsement affect customer loyalty in the basketball shoe market in Guangzhou. Based on a sample of 400 respondents, findings indicate that brand reputation and celebrity popularity hold a significant level of influence over loyalty compared to other factors. The research shows that branding and celebrity endorsements are very important to customer loyalty. **(Qiu Juntao, Nathanicha Na Nakorn, 2024)**

The impact of brand image on customer loyalty was assessed, the surveys and quantitative analyses highlighting product quality, emotional value, and brand awareness. The authors emphasize brand image as a critical factor in long-term customer loyalty. **(Adeel Abbas 2023)**

The relationships among brand loyalty and brand image affect customer satisfaction at PT. Telekomunikasi (Telkom) Plaza Indonesia was examined using a multiple regression model. The findings show that brand image was a stronger influence on customer satisfaction than brand loyalty, therefore, the authors contend that improvement in customer satisfaction and customer loyalty arises from improvement of the brand's image. **(Setya Ega Susanto et al., 2022)**

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Understanding consumer satisfaction is critical for brand success in the competitive footwear market. Brands must adapt to rapidly changing consumer expectations related to aesthetics, affordability, and sustainability. By investigating key influencers of brand loyalty and dissatisfaction, this study enables footwear companies to tailor product design, pricing, and promotion strategies to better serve their target audiences. Moreover, it provides actionable insights that can help brands foster long-term engagement and differentiate themselves in an increasingly saturated and brand-conscious market.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess satisfaction levels regarding branded footwear.
2. To identify the influence of product attributes like quality, price, and design on preference.
3. To examine the effect of marketing and branding on consumer perception.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on examining consumer satisfaction and preference towards branded footwear with specific attention to factors such as product quality, durability, design, pricing, brand image, and emotional connection. The research is primarily based on primary data collected through structured questionnaires administered to individuals who have experience purchasing and using branded shoes. It further explores the influence of digital marketing, advertising, and social media engagement on consumer perception and brand loyalty.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

This study adopts a descriptive research design aimed at analyzing the characteristics and preferences of consumers toward branded footwear.

PRIMARY SOURCES

Primary data was gathered directly from respondents through structured questionnaires specifically designed for this research. These firsthand insights help capture authentic consumer experiences and preferences regarding branded shoes. It was carefully structured to ensure clarity, relevance, and comprehensive coverage of the research objectives.

SAMPLE SIZE

The study engaged 104 respondents, a size deemed statistically sufficient for analyzing consumer trends and drawing generalizable insights. This number also balanced the need for accuracy with practical constraints like time and resources.

T-TEST

The T-test was used to evaluate gender-based differences in perceptions related to footwear attributes. It helped determine whether observed differences were statistically significant or occurred by chance.

H-TEST (KRUSKAL–WALLIS TEST)

The Kruskal–Wallis H-test analyzed differences across more than two independent age groups. This non-parametric method was appropriate for evaluating ordinal data and non-normally distributed responses.

CHI-SQUARE TEST

The Chi-square test was applied to assess associations between categorical variables such as gender, education, and brand preference. It determined whether observed differences were statistically meaningful.

STATISTICAL ANALYSIS:
T- TEST
HYPOTHESIS:

❖ **Null Hypothesis (H_0)**: There is no significant difference in the Physical Attribute scores between male and female participants.

❖ **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)**: There is a significant difference in the Physical Attribute scores between male and female participants.

Showing Independent Samples T-Test for Physical Attribute Based on Gender

Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	t	df	Mean Difference
Male	70	3.22	0.473			
Female	34	3.94	0.694	-5.43	48.4	-0.715

The T-test results reveal a **statistically significant difference** in the perception of physical attributes between male and female respondents ($p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Female respondents rated the physical attributes of branded shoes more positively than males. Thus, the null hypothesis is rejected.

KRUSKAL-WALLIS H TEST:
HYPOTHESIS:

❖ **Null Hypothesis (H_0)**: There is no significant difference in brand price and value perceptions among different age groups.

❖ **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)**: There is a significant difference in brand price and value perceptions among different age groups.

Showing Kruskal-Wallis H Test for Brand value and price Across Age Groups

Test Statistic	Value
Chi-Square (H)	3.601
Degrees of Freedom	3
Asymptotic Sig. (p-value)	0.308

The Kruskal-Wallis H test indicates no statistically significant difference in brand price and value perceptions across the different age groups ($\chi^2(3) = 3.601$, $p = 0.308$). Since the p-value (0.308) is greater than the 0.05 significance level, we fail to reject the null hypothesis.

CHI SQUARE TEST:
HYPOTHESIS:

❖ **Null Hypothesis (H_0):** There is no significant association between gender and preferred brand of shoes.

❖ **Alternative Hypothesis (H_1)**: There is a significant association between gender and preferred brand of shoes.

Table 2.2.4 Showing Chi Square Test Towards Preference of brand and Gender

Test Statistic	Value	df	p-value (Asymp. Sig.)
Pearson Chi-Square	20.393	7	0.005
Likelihood Ratio	20.637	7	0.004
Linear-by-Linear Assoc.	1.382	1	0.24
Valid Cases	104	–	–

The Chi-Square test revealed a statistically significant association between gender and preferred shoe brand (χ^2 = 20.393, df = 7, p = 0.005). This means that brand preference is not independent of gender and may vary between male and female respondents.

FINDINGS

The majority of respondents were male (67.30%) and fell within the age group of 18–20 years (60.60%). Students comprised 75% of the sample population. Most respondents (73.10%) belonged to households with an annual income below ₹5,00,000.

Bata was identified as the most preferred brand by 60.60% of respondents, followed by Adidas (9.60%) and Nike (8.70%). A total of 80.77% of respondents reported high satisfaction with the availability of branded shoes. Satisfaction with color options was noted by 79.81% of respondents. Only 20.19% expressed high satisfaction with style variety.

Functionality dissatisfaction was reported by over 57% of respondents. Comfort satisfaction was reported by 82.69% of participants. Quality satisfaction was observed in 73.08% of responses. Durability received a neutral response from 62.50% of the sample. Dissatisfaction with shoe design was reported by 57.69% of respondents.

A total of 56.73% of participants were highly dissatisfied with eco-friendliness. Value for money satisfaction was indicated by 76.92% of respondents. Satisfaction with premium pricing was reported by 71.15%. Neutrality toward discounts was noted by 78.85%, and 56.73% were dissatisfied with current promotional offers.

Brand name satisfaction was reported by 80.77% of respondents. Brand loyalty satisfaction was indicated by 76.92%. Neutral responses regarding enhancement of social status were given by 60.58%. Celebrity endorsements were viewed unfavorably by 55.77% of participants. Advertising impact dissatisfaction was reported by 52.88%.

The T-test showed a significant difference in physical attribute preference between male and female respondents. The Kruskal–Wallis test indicated no significant difference in brand value and price perception across age groups. The Chi-square test showed a significant association between gender and brand preference.

SUGGESTIONS

Brands should prioritize innovation in functionality and visual appeal, as a considerable portion of consumers expressed dissatisfaction with both performance and design elements. With high dissatisfaction noted in eco-friendliness, brands should integrate environmentally responsible materials and production methods to meet growing consumer expectations for sustainability. Poor ratings in post-purchase service indicate a gap in customer support. Introducing responsive customer service and flexible return/exchange policies may improve brand reputation and trust. Since brand preference and perception vary significantly by gender, differentiated marketing strategies targeting male and female consumers separately can enhance engagement. s the majority of respondents are young students, footwear brands can focus more on trendy, comfortable, and affordable products that align with youth preferences and lifestyles.

IV. CONCLUSION

This study explored consumer preferences and satisfaction towards branded footwear among a demographically diverse sample. The results highlighted that while consumers value comfort, accessibility, and value for money, there is

considerable dissatisfaction in areas like product design, athletic performance, eco-friendliness, and after-sale services. Brand loyalty and recognition remain strong, especially for brands like Bata, but global brands such as Nike and Adidas also maintain niche appeal. Statistical analysis confirmed that gender significantly influences brand preference and perception, while age has limited impact on price-value evaluation. The correlation between physical appearance and functional performance suggests that aesthetic and practical aspects are interlinked in consumer perception. In conclusion, while branded footwear is generally well-received for its comfort and affordability, there are key improvement areas that, if addressed, can significantly enhance overall consumer satisfaction and brand competitiveness in the Indian market.

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