



## INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

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## FACTORS EFFECTING PURCHASE DECISION OF BRANDED SPORTS ACCESSORIES WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO REEBOK

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### ABSTRACT

*A brand should move beyond its physical character to acquire a perceptual character hence representing itself as a means to achieve what is sought by a customer. A Brand to some may be a simple name, logo or symbol whereas to others it may be a promise, guarantee, reputation or identification. Reebok is an American-inspired, global brand that creates and markets sports and lifestyle products built upon a strong heritage and authenticity in sports, fitness and women's categories. The brand is committed to designing products and marketing programs that reflect creativity and the desire to constantly challenge the status quo. This paper is empirical and explains the main factors which effect the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.*

### KEYWORDS

Brand, Effect, Identification.

### INTRODUCTION

A brand resides in the minds of consumers" A brand should move beyond its physical character to acquire a perceptual character hence representing itself as a means to achieve what is sought by a customer. **"A Brand exists in perceptual space and is a perceptual entity"**. Strong brands have a distinct place for themselves in the minds of the consumers. Of course, all strong brands are differentiated and command a lot of awareness in mind space of consumers; still the attribute that actually results in increased sales hence generating billions of dollars is the powerful appeal these brands generate. In today's scenario brands are the basis of consumer relationship. A Brand to some may be a simple name, logo or symbol whereas to others it may be a promise, guarantee, reputation or identification. But most importantly, brands are conduits. They bring together consumers and marketers closer and bind them together.

Consumer is a broad label for any individuals or households that use goods and services generated within the economy. The concept of a consumer occurs in different contexts, so that the usage and significance of the term may vary. The consumer drives the economy by purchasing goods and services from vendors.

Footwear is no longer viewed as a commodity that just offers protection for feet. What was hitherto considered a 'Want' is today a basic 'Need'. Today, the footwear trade is a vast and dynamic operation involving huge economies of scale. The low-cost countries are gaining foothold in international markets leading developed countries to import and outsource so as to meet their requirements. The athletic shoe segment is highly competitive in nature with the major players such as Nike, Adidas, Reebok and New Balance striving to retain their market share and the smaller players such as Puma trying to gain market share. Important features of this competitive segment are heavy advertising, celebrity endorsements, brand awareness programs etc.

Reebok is an American-inspired, global brand that creates and markets sports and lifestyle products built upon a strong heritage and authenticity in sports, fitness and women's categories. The brand is committed to designing products and marketing programs that reflect creativity and the desire to constantly challenge the status quo.

**Reebok International Limited**, a subsidiary of German sportswear giant Adidas, is a producer of athletic footwear, apparel, and accessories. English brothers Joe and Jeff Foster founded Mercury Sports in England. In 1960, the brothers renamed the company **Reebok**, having discovered the name in a dictionary won in a race by Joe Foster as a boy. The name comes from the Afrikaans spelling of rhebok, a type of African antelope or gazelle. The dictionary was a South African edition, hence the spelling.

### SUB BRANDS OF REEBOK

- Above The Rim (A.T.R)
- Weebok
- Reebok Classic
- Scarlett Hearts
- G-Unit Footwear

**"Footwear** Reebok uses footwear factories in 14 countries. Most factories making Reebok footwear are based in Asia — primarily China (accounting for 51% of total footwear production), Indonesia (21%), Vietnam (17%) and Thailand (7%). Production is consolidated, with 88% of Reebok footwear manufactured in 11 factories, employing over 75,000 workers.

**"Apparel** Reebok has factories in 45 countries. The process of purchasing products from suppliers is organized by region. Most (52%) of Reebok's apparel sold in the United States is produced in Asia, with the rest coming from countries in the Caribbean, North America, Africa and the Middle East. Apparel sold in Europe is typically sourced from Asia and Europe. Apparel sold in the Asia Pacific region is typically produced by Asian-based manufacturers.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Though many researches could be found related to this study but there are certain findings which can be quoted here in relevance to the research work. All the research works mentioned here relates to the purchase decisions made by consumers of sports accessories.

Gabay Gillie(2009):- The purpose of this paper is to empirically test the consumer- centered approach to brand management theorized by Rust, Zeithaml and Lemon in 2004 to assist companies in reducing the depreciation of brand equity. Brand equity was operationalized in the context of conjoint measurement. In total, 5,364 respondents participated in interviews testing drivers of brand equity for six brands each in apparels. It was found that brands did not hold much beyond their name. Companies holding strong brands will need to define product design & Faison in terms of their perceived functionality across consumer

cutting edge methodology to test mindset segmentation by combinations of product features as a new basis for brand management was used. In contrast to traditional segments. Companies are to build and position brands around customer segments. The study focused on brands in the textile industry requiring the replication to additional industries. Data from the large-scale study revealed that across categories brand value may not hold much beyond the name in the minds of consumers. It was found that mindset segmentation may be a basis for brand management. Messages that focused on product functionality were found to be stronger drivers of preference of one brand over another. Product quality & design instead of brand names emerged as the primary source of value across segments.

Nukhet Harmancioglu (2009): An executive summary for managers and executive readers can be found at the end of this article. Scholars have taken an interest in impulse purchasing for over 50 years. Not surprisingly, many crucial insights emerge from these studies. For instance, proposed that consumers attempt to control their innate impulsive tendencies because they perceive impulse buying as normatively wrong and do not want to be perceived as immature or lacking behavioral control. Despite the risks and the negative normative associations with such behavior, found that impulse buying is present in most product classes. Their study also reveals that between 27 and 62 percent of department store merchandise is bought on impulse.

Agnes Nairn (2008): A total of 40 sites popular with children were inspected and their commercial content discussed with a range of young people and parents across the country. By and large the internet is a safe, exciting and stimulating environment for children. However, it is also clear that current regulations to protect children from the risks of harm and deception from online commercial agents need to be tightened and more rigorously enforced or self-policed. One of the most important findings is that 70 percent of sites visited by children are not created with a child-only audience in mind. The advertising space and merchandising activity is therefore often unsuitable. The majority of TV programmes watched by children are, of course, also viewed by adults but the existence of the watershed is one attempt made to protect children. Of the adverts encountered across sites, 25 percent were for dating, gambling, credit, surgery and age-restricted products and services. Children were upset by intimate dating material and parents worried about the long-term impact of ubiquitous incitement to borrow and gamble. Advertising on sites specifically targeting children was often unfair and deceptive. Almost three-quarters of adverts were not labeled and over one-fifth hidden in the site content. While children gradually learn how to tell entertainment from commerce the true nature of advergames was not even understood by 16 year-olds. "Free" offers were prolific and many employed pressure tactics to urge children to buy immediately using mobile phone or solo cards.

Götze Elisabeth (2008):- The purpose of the paper is to analyze children's impact on innovation decision making empirically. This paper is a diary study with 14 parents depicting their experiences with regard to the topic of interest over a period of two weeks. This paper helps marketers tailor appropriate marketing and innovation strategies. Special attention is given to the familial dynamics in the innovation decision-making process. This is to prevent inter-family conflicts fuelled by the children's requests. This is one of the first attempts to test Rogers' innovation-decision process. Moreover, despite its many bonuses, the diary method has rarely been applied in the context of familial purchase decision making. Children's influence is stronger in earlier stages of the innovation buying process, based on different communication strategies with differing effects on their parents' purchasing behaviour.

Ian Phau (2008): The research findings indicate that status-seeking teenagers have overall, a more positive attitude toward foreign luxury brand apparel as compared to Australian luxury brands, with the exception of Chinese brands. On the other hand, non-status seeking teenagers reported that they have more positive attitude towards Australian brands than foreign brands, and consider Australian luxury brands superior to all three foreign brands with regards to ease of care and comfort. The research findings indicate that status-seeking teenagers have overall, a more positive attitude toward foreign luxury brand apparel as compared to Australian luxury brands, with the exception of Chinese brands. On the other hand, non-status seeking teenagers reported that they have more positive attitude towards Australian brands than foreign brands, and consider Australian luxury brands superior to all three foreign brands with regards to ease of care and comfort.

Matzler Kurt (2008):- The purpose of this paper is to explore the relationship between the customer's risk aversion and its relationship with brand loyalty and to test empirically whether this relationship is mediated by brand trust and brand affect. A randomly selected sample of Austrian mobile phone users was drawn. Their risk aversion, two forms of loyalty (attitudinal and repurchase loyalty), brand trust and brand affect have been measured with existing and tested scales. The hypothesized model has been tested using PLS (Partial least squares) findings are limited to mobile phone users. The generalization of the results could be extended by broadening the list of products, for example with other durable products and services in which brand affect and brand trust may be even more important in developing brand loyalty. This paper explains why certain customers have more trust and experience more affect than others and how this is related to loyalty. Hence, marketers can increase brand loyalty by targeting more risk averse customers. Customer's risk aversion is significantly related to the two forms of loyalty (attitudinal loyalty and brand loyalty). When brand affect and brand trust are introduced into the model, the previously highly significant relationship between domain-specific risk aversion and attitudinal loyalty becomes insignificant and the risk aversion-repurchase relationship becomes much weaker, while risk aversion strongly influences brand trust and brand affect.

Shuk-Ching Liu (2008) Tourism is a vital factor for the Hong Kong economy and tourists contribute a substantial amount of purchases to the fashion retail industry. In the following, we review some related literature on how tourists, especially those from the mainland China, affect retail businesses in Hong Kong indicate that in the year 2000, shopping expenditure accounted for more than HK\$30 billion (50.2 percent) of the total tourism receipts. The shopping expenditure of tourists, therefore, has a great impact on the local economy of Hong Kong. says that the retail sector contributes a significant proportion to the tourism industry and is playing an important role in maintaining a destination's attractiveness. The author points out that tourists spend a considerable amount of time and money on shopping because shopping is an underlying motivation and incentive for people to travel. According to the Tourism Receipts Report for 2001 by the Hong Kong Tourism Board (HKTB), shopping represents the largest part of total spending by the mainland Chinese tourists, taking 63.7 percent of their total spending. In addition, the per capita spending on shopping of the mainland Chinese tourists in Hong Kong is HK\$3,295, which is ranked at the top position compared to the tourists from other countries.

Frank Jacob (2006): During the past decades, marketing research has significantly increased its focus on the study of buyer-seller relationships driven by practitioners' request for advice and a perceived theoretical challenge. The growing importance of relationships in business calls for an attempt to explain how relationships develop and evolve. A commonly accepted explanation of this phenomenon is that relationships are established as a means to overcome the uncertainty as perceived by a potential customer in a market transaction. In this sense relationships are understood as an institution. New institutional economics provides the theoretical foundation for this approach to relationship research. This risk-based explanation has gained widespread acceptance and has been empirically tested several times.

Isabel J. Grant (2006) Isabel J. Grant in his study "Buying behaviour of "teenage" girls and key societal communicating factors influencing their purchasing of fashion clothing" said that The term "teenagers" is relatively new in marketing terminology, but has captured the attention and interest of marketers and many commercial stakeholders in different fields of business, who are or are becoming aware of the huge potential of this group. "Teenagers" are those young people whose ages range from "pre-adolescent to 14 years" and have been described as "the richest generation" in history and the spending of this age group "has roughly doubled every ten years over the last three decades".

## RATIONAL OF THE STUDY

As lot of research work has been done in this field, this study will be an add on for the upcoming researchers to conduct their findings in an easier way. The research work may also help the retailers in providing services to their clients according to their age and gender. The study will be helpful to the sports accessories manufacturers in launching their new variants in a way that it will help them in increasing the market penetration of that particular brand. The firm can plan its marketing strategies for the upcoming accessories in accordance with the demands of a consumer. The study throws some light on the factors that can be kept in mind by a manufacturer in making the new variants a success. This study will be able to help out consumers also in order to choose a better brand according to their age & gender.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the factors that effects the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.
- To study the impact of age and gender as the determinants of buying a particular brand.

## METHODOLOGY

### THE STUDY

The study is exploratory in nature. It is attempted to explore the factors that affect purchase decision of branded sports accessories. It has also examined the impact of age and gender (independent variables) on identified factors (dependent variables). The level of independent variables that were ascertained are:

#### AGE

Youngsters (below 35 yrs) & Seniors (above 40 yrs).

The gap of 5 yrs between the youngsters and the seniors is kept to identify the difference of opinion.

#### GENDER

Female and Male

### THE RESEARCH DESIGN

The study is based on a 2x2 factorial design. The research design is shown below:

TABLE NO- 1: RESEARCH DESIGN

Age (in yrs)	Gender	Male	Female	Total
Below 35				
Above 40				
Total				

### THE SAMPLE

The sample of the study constituted of 126 consumers located in Indore and nearby areas. The respondents were selected with the help of non probability convenience sampling method. Non-probability method is selected because there is no sampling frame available that represents the list of all the consumers located in Indore and nearby areas. The classification of sample according to above research design is as follows:

TABLE NO- 2: SAMPLE

Age (in yrs)	Gender	Male	Female	Total
Below 35				65
Above 40				61
Total		68	58	126

### TOOLS FOR DATA COLLECTION

Primary data of the study was collected through a self-structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed following a wide review of the literature on factors affecting purchase decisions. It was divided into two parts – the first part was based on the personal profile of the respondents. The second part consisted of 20 closed ended items based on five pointer Likert scale (from Strongly Agree-5 to Strongly Disagree-1). The questionnaires were filled and collected from the respondents after conveying the purposes of the study. The additional data needed to support the study was collected from secondary sources like online publications, journals, magazines, newspapers, books, etc.

### TOOLS FOR DATA ANALYSIS

For analyzing the collected data, MS Excel 2007 and Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS 16.0) were used. Initially item-total correlations were calculated for all the 20 items to identify which items significantly contributed towards measuring the perception of purchase decision of branded sports accessories taking 0.196 as standard value of coefficient of correlation for more than 100 respondents. Out of 20 items 14 fell below standard value hence they were not considered for the analysis and only 6 items were accepted for the final scale and subjected to principle component method of factor analysis using varimax rotation. As a result of factor analysis 2 factors were derived out. The 2 factors are listed below.

1. Value
2. Publicity

On the basis of these 2 factors, following 6 hypotheses were framed. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to test these hypotheses.

## HYPOTHESIS

### For factor 1- VALUE

H01 = There is no significant effect of age on Value factor affecting the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.

H02 = There is no significant effect of gender on Value factor affecting the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.

H03 = There is no significant effect of interaction between age and gender on Value factor affecting the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.

### For factor 2 – PUBLICITY

H04 = There is no significant effect of age on Publicity factor affecting the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.

H05 = There is a significant effect of gender on Publicity factor affecting the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.

H06 = There is no significant effect of interaction between age and gender on Publicity factor affecting the purchase decision of branded sports accessories.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### FACTORS AFFECTING PURCHASE DECISION OF BRANDED SPORTS ACCESSORIES

The factor analysis was carried out on 20 significant items that resulted into 2 factors that affect purchase decision of branded sports accessories. The total percent of variance for factors is 44.115 and the Eigen values for each factor is more than one.

First factor Value constituted of two items viz. Awareness about the brand (item load = 0.43) & the Pricing of the brand (item load = -0.256). The total load of this factor is 0.174. This factor highlights the main criteria for selecting a particular brand. The word Value signifies the worth of a particular brand in monetary terms as well as how a particular brand holds its place in the minds of the consumers.

Second factor Publicity constituted of four items viz. Variants (item load =0.677), Endorsing Celebrity (item load = -0.106), Advertisements (item load =0.31) & importance of Internet (item load =-0.455). The total load of this factor is 0.426. This factor includes some of the important points which are considered while choosing a particular brand. Today's youth considers Internet & Advertisements as important channels which provide them information about new brands & new arrivals in existing brands. Apart from these, Celebrity endorsements act as a medium to reach to the masses.



TABLE NO- 3: HYPOTHESIS TESTING

S. No.	Factor	Hypotheses	Result
1	VALUE	H01	Accept
		H02	Accept
		H03	Accept
2	PUBLICITY	H04	Accept
		H05	Accept
		H06	Accept

6 hypotheses that were set on the basis of 2 factors were tested and the results are tabulated above. The results indicated that the sigma value ('p') for none of the hypotheses was less than 0.05 and therefore, all the hypothesis was accepted at 5% level of significance. It was found that there is no significant difference in the effect of age and gender in the selection of branded sport accessories. It was found that there is no significant difference in the effect of youngsters and senior group of consumers.

## CONCLUSION

The two factors derived out of 20 items indicate that the consumers generally look for reasonable branded sports accessories which have a high brand value. The consumers mainly focus on the medium of gaining information through which they can decide which brand to buy for the first time or for repetitive purchases. The purchase decision of the consumers mainly depends on the value of the brand in monetary terms as well as the position it enjoys in the minds of the people.

This study has revealed that age & gender does not make much difference in the opinion of a consumer while choosing a brand. In fact, any age group would consider pricing and variants before choosing a particular brand in sports accessories.

## IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

### WITH RESPECT TO CONSUMERS

The study will be helpful for the consumers in understanding the factors which they can consider while selecting any sports brand. The various factors included in the study like variants & pricing may help them in identifying a better sports brand.

### WITH RESPECT TO MANUFACTURES OR RETAILERS

The study will help the manufacturers or retailers in serving their customers in a better way as they would be aware what a customer is actually looking for in a sports brand. Apart from this the study will help the manufacturer in conducting a need analysis which will eventually make them understand the needs of a consumer or a customer.

### WITH RESPECT TO RESEARCHERS

This study will be an add on for the upcoming researchers who wish to conduct research for any branded items .The study broadens the horizon for a new research as there are various factors which can be studied on individual level which a broader spectrum.

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