

CHALLENGES OF SPORTS SHOE BRAND PREFERENCE (SYNDROME) IN DELHI- NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION OF INDIA

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study are to understand and identify the brand name, mind makeup and influence level on the sports shoe customers in Delhi, national capital region of India. 100 respondents were involved for the blind brand experiment. The respondents who had earlier filled the questionnaire were studied further, by asking them to pick out their preferred brand sports shoe from a basket of collection of unbranded (i.e., brand concealed) shoes. 96 respondents had the brand preference syndrome and only 4 respondents were decisively able to pick out the right sports shoe brands. Hence, it is proven that the brand name has the mind makeup impact on customers during purchase.

KEYWORDS: Shoe Brand & Influence Customer

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, sports shoes are very popular and more in demand. It gives a sense of lifestyle, comfort and image in the society.

The aim of this research is to understand and identify the brand preference syndrome in Delhi, national capital region, for branded sports shoes. What are the customers' views on selection and preference for particular brands? The name of the brand may have the psychological impact on the customers' mind. Already this fixation in their mind has the actual reason to play before preference of a particular brand from the collection of products in the market. Nowadays, the market values are customer centric rather than seller centric. Hence, objectively, we have to think and work out to understand the reality of the customers' brand preference and the story behind them.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Aaker, (1996): brand name creates the image; has the products' choice increased by the customers. Jacoby (1973): brand image has a value among the customers in the market due to the product quality. Tepcci (1999): if more than one brand is available in a similar category of choice for the customer in the market, then the customer's choice of the particular product may increase the product's image rapidly. Evans (1996): price is not a matter for the brand-based customers. Wererfelt (1991), customers are willing to pay more for the brands because of the image and quality of the product.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives of the study

- Whether Delhi, national capital region, customers can truly distinguish the branded sports shoes without the label marks (blind brand experiment).

- To understand the level of brand preference syndrome of the sports shoe using customers.

This research study directly focused on the shoe customers/users in Delhi national capital region. Delhi national capital region is a capital city and major hub of cosmopolitan people.

The research design of this study is intended to:

Study a sample of branded sports shoe used in Delhi national capital region.

Objectively, conduct a blind brand experiment on various branded sports shoes (i.e., brand concealed) to find out the level of brand preference syndrome.

The collection for primary data was through structured questionnaire and blind brand experiment on the shoe customers. The respondents who had earlier filled the questionnaires were led further by asking them, to pick out their preferred brand sports shoes from a basket of collection of unbranded (i.e., brand concealed) shoes. If the respondents, who decisively picked the one right shoe were deemed not to have the brand preference syndrome. (BPS).

100 customer respondents were involved in this research study. They were instructed to fill the questionnaire following which they were asked to pick up their preferred choice of sports shoe from the basket of collection of concealed (blind brand experiment) branded sports shoes.

3.2 Hypothesis

H1: Customer cannot truly distinguish the branded sports shoe without the label mark (blind brand experiment).

Note: That means brand name has the psychological impact on customers during branded sports shoe preference.

H2: Customer can truly distinguish the branded sports shoe without the label mark (blind brand experiment).

Note: That means brand name does not have the psychological impact on customers during branded sports shoe preference.

4. FINDINGS

92 respondents were not able to pick out the right brand, hence they have brand preference syndrome. Table 1.

Only 8 respondents were decisively able to pick out the correct brand and hence they do not have the brand preference syndrome. Table 1.

The blind brand experience is significantly effective to understand and identify the level of brand preference syndrome.

Therefore, the label or the brand name has the perpetuated mind makeup by the customers.

Customers are directly influenced by the brand name or logo of the branded sports shoes. If it is concealed, then they shall prefer the shoes according to the design attributes. Hence, it is proven that brand name has psychological impact on the customers during branded sports shoe preference. Brand preference syndrome level is higher among the customers. Therefore, H2-null hypothesis rejected and H1-hypothesis accepted.

Table 1: Blind Brand Experiment

Respondents	Basket of Collection of Branded Sports Shoes						Respondent Preference	Pick up from the Basket Collection (i.e. Concealed)	Syndrome Yes or No
	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas			
1	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Reebok	Yes
2	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Adidas	Yes
3	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Action	Yes
4	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Action	Yes
5	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Reebok	Yes
6	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Relaxo	Yes
7	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Relaxo	Yes
8	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Puma	Yes
9	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Action	Yes
10	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Relaxo	Yes
11	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Reebok	Yes
12	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Liberty	Yes
13	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Action	Yes
14	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Liberty	Yes
15	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Liberty	Yes
16	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Action	Yes
17	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Adidas	Yes
18	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Puma	Yes
19	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Puma	Yes
20	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Relaxo	Yes
21	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Liberty	No
22	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Liberty	Yes
23	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Action	Yes
24	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Reebok	Yes
25	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Action	Yes
26	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Action	Yes
27	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Relaxo	Yes
28	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Liberty	Yes
29	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Reebok	Yes
30	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Action	NO
31	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Reebok	Yes
32	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Relaxo	Yes
33	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Puma	Yes
34	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Liberty	Yes
35	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Puma	Yes
36	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Reebok	NO
37	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Liberty	Yes
38	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Relaxo	Yes
39	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Adidas	Yes
40	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Relaxo	Yes
41	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Action	Yes
42	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Liberty	Yes
43	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Adidas	NO
44	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Action	Yes
45	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Relaxo	Yes
46	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Puma	Yes
47	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Relaxo	Yes
48	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Liberty	Yes
49	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Liberty	Yes

50	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Action	Yes
51	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Adidas	Yes
52	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Reebok	Yes
53	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Relaxo	NO
54	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Puma	Yes
55	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Liberty	Yes
56	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Action	Yes
57	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Reebok	Yes
58	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Liberty	Yes
59	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Adidas	Yes
60	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Liberty	Yes
61	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Relaxo	Yes
62	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Action	Yes
63	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Relaxo	Yes
64	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Adidas	Yes
65	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Puma	Yes
66	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Adidas	Yes
67	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Puma	NO
68	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Puma	Yes
69	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Adidas	Yes
70	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Relaxo	Yes
71	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Relaxo	Yes
72	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Adidas	Yes
73	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Reebok	No
74	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Adidas	Yes
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87	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Adidas	Yes
88	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Adidas	Puma	Yes
89	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Adidas	Yes
90	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Liberty	Yes
91	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Adidas	Yes
92	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Action	NO
93	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Puma	Yes
94	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Puma	Yes
95	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Relaxo	Yes
96	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Liberty	Adidas	Yes
97	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Reebok	Liberty	Yes
98	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Action	Liberty	Yes
99	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Relaxo	Adidas	Yes
100	Liberty	Relaxo	Action	Reebok	Puma	Adidas	Puma	Relaxo	Yes

4.1 Model of Syndrome finding through Blind Brand Experiment

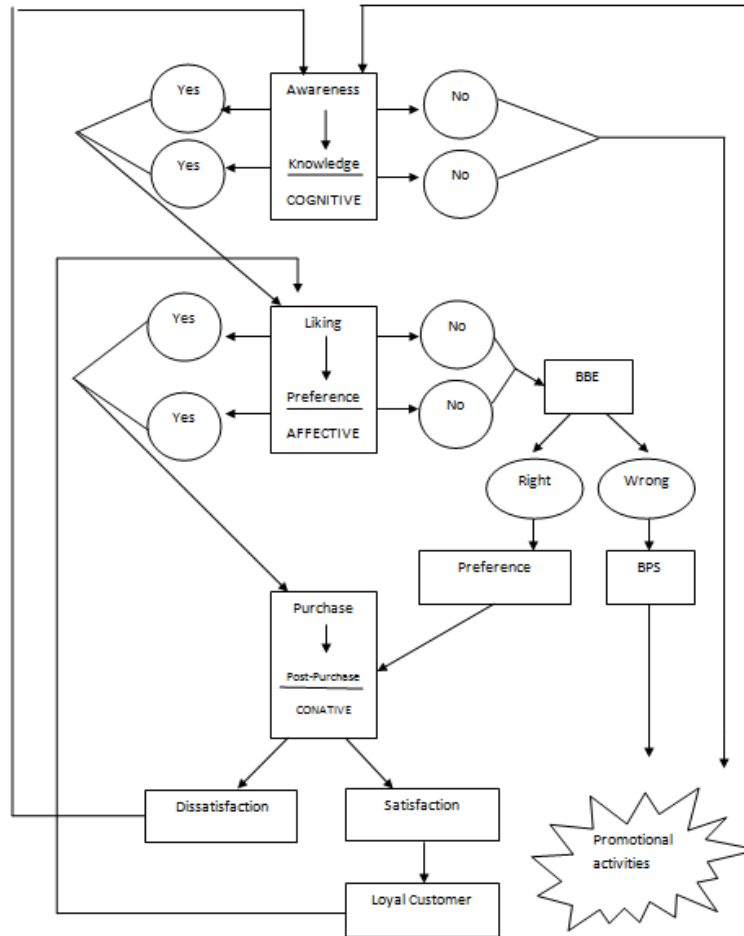


Figure 1: Model of Syndrome Finding through Blind Brand Experiment.

4.1.1 Cognitive

If the participants have the awareness or knowledge about the brands, their preference will be affective. How it could be possible?, because he or she may have utilized the brands. If they say “no”, then the candidates have to move and get awareness about the brand through promotional activities.

4.1.2 Affective

If, in the second step, i.e., in the affective part, the participants are indecisive about their preference through the blind brand experiment, then it denotes they have brand preference syndrome and so they are directed to follow the promotional activities. If it is found that there is confusion initially but subsequently the right brand is found out through the experiment, then he or she could go for the purchase.

4.1.3 Conative

Third part of this model, here purchase and repurchase can be taken by the respondents, but the satisfaction of the candidates will decide further loyalty and continue for purchase and repurchase, etc., or not satisfactory will lead to promotional awareness activity.

This is a cyclic process; the entire preference and its links are making the customers aware in terms of brands and its values.

5. DISCUSSIONS OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- Out of 100 respondents, 92% of respondents could not distinguish the correct preferred sports shoe brands without logo (i.e., concealed brand names).
- Only 2% of respondents could find out the preferred sports shoe brands.
- Hence, it reveals that there is a brand preference syndrome emerging in customers.
- It is also proven that the brand name has the psychological impact on the customers' mind.
- Blind Brand Experiment plays a significant role to find out the brand preference syndrome of the customers.
- H1-hypothesis accepted and H2-null hypothesis rejected.

6. CONCLUSIONS

- The actual design of the branded sports shoe plays a major role on the customers rather than the brand name.
- Brands may differ in the customers' view because of the different designs of the branded sports shoes.
- The Blind Brand Experiment can be applied on any other products in different regions.
- Brand preference syndrome is well understood and proven.
- Modified experimentation can be utilized for future challenges.

This research shows that majority of the public is psychologically impacted by the brand names. Otherwise, the customers can distinguish the branded sports shoes without the label mark. Only 8% have identified their preferred branded sports shoes. Hence, the manufactures and the brand promoters have to keep in mind to develop the customers' preferred design, so that they could prefer sports shoe brands with and without the label mark .

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AUTHOR PROFILE



Mr. Muthu Kumar is currently working at SGT University, Gurgaon, Delhi-NCR, India as a Professor & Dean. His nineteen years of experience towards the fashion and academics visually appeared and he is not only innovator of fashion products but also a creator of designers. He is a specialist in leather, footwear, accessories and customer views. Fashion course founder and board of studies members in many Universities in India. Active Member of Fashion Design Council of India. Achiever and motivator in terms of fashion education and innovation. Mr. Kumar is having a long academic track record, he has published 3 research papers in Scopus level reputed journals. 6 paper presented in seminars and conference. Written 1 News paper article about fashion and received India Fame award for the dedication towards fashion education which was organized by India Fame and Dainik Basker. He has the capacity of Board of Studies member in 3 government Universities and other State private Universities too.



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