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What are the factors that are influencing purchase decision related to footwear among consumers?

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Abstract

Footwear has been one the trendy lifestyle products in modern times. It's not just a product to protect your feet. The footwear products have been linked with the personality traits of individuals in some literature. This research examines into the main factors that influence purchase decision related to foot wear. The majority of the respondents were youth. The data was collected through survey. Multivariate technique of exploratory factor analysis was used to reduce the variables into two factors. The study will be able to do further research in the area on consumer behavior and the changing attitudes of consumers.

Keywords: Footwear; Factor analysis; Lifestyle; Purchase decision; Consumer Behaviour

1. Introduction

Footwear has become an essential commodity in the modern world compared to the previous era where people walked bare footed in many parts of the globe. This product has now evolved into a lifestyle commodity rather than just an essential part of people's life. Globalization has altered the way the Indian consumer also looks towards this product. The increased earning power of the Indian households has created demand for branded footwear over the years.

According to the global footwear market – industry trends and forecast to 2028 report published by Research Dive, the footwear market is projected to grow at 12.83% in the forecast period of 2021 to 2028.

The changing living habits, growing economies, and growth and awareness in health, especially due to the Covid pandemic, and reopening of lockdowns have given a boost to the demand for footwear across the globe. Further, the demand for fashionable, trendy, athletic, and sports shoes has opened the scope of development and growth for the footwear Industry.

According to Invest India's report on the 'Non-leather footwear Industry in India', India, the 2nd largest consumer, and producer of footwear in the world is projected to increase 8 folds by 2030. India is the 2nd largest producer of footwear, 2nd largest exporter of leather garments, and the 5th largest exporter of leather goods. This presents an India to the world, full of opportunities in the footwear sector.

The footwear industry in India is divided into two segments- leather and non-leather. It is driven by a robust domestic market. However, the non-leather footwear sector presents India with huge potential to grow in the years to come. In terms of worldwide consumption, 86% of global footwear consumption has shifted to non-leather by volume.

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It has been projected as part of your personality also based on reviews by experts in the fashion industry. There have been previous literature relating to the connecting footwear choice with personality traits (Shivaram, 2020).

The Indian footwear industry is expected to reach growth of eight to ten percentage in the coming financial year according to media reports.

A healthy way of living has paved way for more and more consumers to be attracted to the branded footwear sector. This has increased among the urban population spread across the major cities of the country. Some of the prominent players in the Indian footwear market include Bata, Khadim, Liberty, Metro, Paragon, Relaxo and Mirza International Ltd. We have the international brands of Nike, Reebok, Puma, and Adidas etc competing in the group.

Apart from clothing, the footwear industry is the one that is affected by the fashion waves existing in the society at a time. The increased globalization has led to proliferation of a number of brands in the footwear industry and has thus intensified the competition like never before.

This paper attempts to investigate the factors that influence the purchase decision among consumers related to footwear. There have been references of multiple attributes of shoes which are identified by consumers while selecting the product (Banerjee et al, 2020). Previous literature shows that the consumers are interested to buy shoes based on their colour and style compared to other factors. (Mehra, 2017).

1.1. Need of the study

The need of study is that, it will provide information on how the customers are satisfied with the current brand of footwear they own and what the footwear brand can improve on to increase customer satisfaction which thereby can increase the sales of the company.

Objectives of study

This study is aimed at determining consumer preference of the branded footwear there are various factors which influence consumer purchase decision such as Price, Quality, Comfort, Design and Brand Image. This research paper aims to investigate the major contributing variables that lead to final purchase decision by consumers.

1.2. Literature review

The footwear industries aims to persuade customers by linking its brand to quality and influence the quality perception of the customers (Heding et al., 2009). The footwear products that are used for daily wear, office/work wear, and sports/running wear etc are required to be especially durable and comfortable. On the other hand, fashionable footwear is required to have unique and exotic material. Therefore, in either categories, quality is important for customer satisfaction (Thongchai , 2013). Studies have been able to identify factors like style, comfort, colour and price that influence the purchase decision (Kanti Deb et al, 2018).

Brand awareness plays a substantial role in the customers' choice (Keller, 1998). Brands are linked to unique and creative design, quality, durability and more importantly status. In a highly competitive market like the footwear industry, branding is essential for product differentiation and for demanding premium prices (Anand and Alkeya, 2014). Literature has shown that Brand awareness, brand image, perceived quality, and brand association also significantly contributed to brand equity (Menon, 2021). The willingness to pay a premium price, brand preferences, and brand loyalty positively impacted consumer response behaviour.

There have been previous literature on some factors that affect the consumer preference towards products like footwear which include factors like CSR activities done by the company, quality, durability (Roy et al, 2016; Achabou et al, 2020). Influences by others, brand awareness was found to be a significant factor in selection of footwear products in literature (Brakus et al., 2009; Khanna and Bajaj, 2017).

Previous literature shows that Brand equity is a major factor in purchase intentions towards footwear. (Arshad, R. M., & Victor, S., 2020). The association between brand images and brand loyalty while selecting branded foot wear in India was highlighted in some papers (Gupta and Tandon, 2018).

Literature has also identified four factors such as comfort, aesthetics, perspiration and belief as the general criteria related to buying decision, and tactile (size, texture, feeling inside the shoe, and inside shoe climate), auditory (sound

produced) and olfactory (unpleasant odors) senses are the main differences between comfortable and uncomfortable shoes.(E.Y. et al, 2007).

2. Research Methodology

2.1. Research Design

The research design adopted for the purpose of study is descriptive in nature. Likert Scale was part of the questionnaire framing. The data collected will include the demographics of the respondents.

2.2. Sampling method

Primary data was collected through a Questionnaire. Secondary data was collected from journals and websites/related Reports on the E-learning platforms. For selecting the respondents, non-probability convenient sampling technique was adopted as it well suits exploratory studies like this (Tull & Hawkins, 1993, p. 544).

2.3. Sample Size

The sample size consisted of 120 people in the age group above 18 years for the purpose of the research. The sampling method was convenience sampling. The people were from different.

2.4. Data Collection method

A structured questionnaire designed using Google forms was used for executing this survey.

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Demographic Details

The demographic data of the respondents are given in table 1. From the data collected, majority of the respondents were from the younger generation (18 to 25 years). Males formed a major portion of the responses. Most of the respondents were graduates. The responses were concentrated from the student community which formed a significant number among the responses. The major share of the respondents were from the lower income band.

Table 1 Demographic Data of Respondents

Demographic characteristic	Percentage of Respondents (%)
Age Group	
Below 18 years	7.7
18 - 25	85
25 - 40	6.79
Gender	
Male	73.8
Female	26.2
Level of Education	
Plus Two	25.2
Graduate	66
Post Graduate	8.8
Occupation	
Student	86.4
Business	3.9

Salaried	9.7
Annual Income	
Less Than 50000	16.2
50000-200000	49.5
200000 and above	34.3

3.2. Exploratory Factor Analysis: Factors Influencing the Purchase Decision of Footwear

Table 2 KMO and Bartlett's Test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.899
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	819.651
	df	55
	Sig.	0.000

The KMO value is .899 and Bartlett's test is significant. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity (Bartlett, 1950) revealed a statistically significant number of correlations amid the variables. This indicates that factor analysis is permissible with given data. Eleven variables have been reduced to two factors which account for 71.737 % of the variance in the data.

Table 3 Communalities

	Initial	Extraction
How satisfied are you with the brands [Price]	1.000	0.638
How satisfied are you with the brands [Quality]	1.000	0.847
How satisfied are you with the brands [Size]	1.000	0.733
How satisfied are you with the brands [Design]	1.000	0.763
How satisfied are you with the brands [Colour]	1.000	0.722
How satisfied are you with the brands [Durability]	1.000	0.736
How satisfied are you with the brands [Availability]	1.000	0.573
How satisfied are you with the brands [Brand image]	1.000	0.697
How satisfied are you with the brands [Variety]	1.000	0.655
How satisfied are you with the brands [Discounts]	1.000	0.816
How satisfied are you with the brands [Comfort]	1.000	0.710
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.		

From the output of Communalities table which shows how much of the variance in the variables has been accounted for by the extracted factors. Normally accepted values of communalities are amid the range 0.40 to 0.70 (Costello and Osborne, 2005). In the current study, all communalities are within this range. Large communalities suggest that a large amount of variance has been accounted for by the factor solution. In the current study, all the communalities are above 0.51. The variable -"Quality" accounts for 84.7 % of the variance. The lowest variance was shown by the variable," Availability" with approximately 57.3 % was accounted for.

Table 4 Total Variance

Component	Initial Eigenvalues			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	6.585	59.861	59.861	6.585	59.861	59.861	5.227	47.517	47.517
2	1.306	11.876	71.737	1.306	11.876	71.737	2.664	24.22	71.737
3	0.638	5.8	77.537						
4	0.588	5.35	82.887						
5	0.417	3.793	86.68						
6	0.382	3.475	90.155						
7	0.301	2.741	92.895						
8	0.288	2.616	95.511						
9	0.241	2.19	97.701						
10	0.136	1.238	98.939						
11	0.117	1.061	100						

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis

From this table, the first Component accounts for “47.517%” of the variance, the second “24.22%”. All the remaining factors are not significant. According to Kaiser Criterion (Kaiser, 1960, 1970), which proposed that an eigenvalue greater than 1.0 is a good lower bound for expecting a factor to be meaningful.

Table 5 Component Matrix^a

	Component	
	1	2
How satisfied are you with the brands [Price]	0.650	0.464
How satisfied are you with the brands [Quality]	0.872	-0.295
How satisfied are you with the brands [Size]	0.841	-0.160
How satisfied are you with the brands [Design]	0.865	-0.124
How satisfied are you with the brands [Colour]	0.847	-0.076
How satisfied are you with the brands [Durability]	0.772	-0.374
How satisfied are you with the brands [Availability]	0.722	0.229
How satisfied are you with the brands [Brand image]	0.828	-0.108
How satisfied are you with the brands [Variety]	0.731	0.349
How satisfied are you with the brands [Discounts]	0.460	0.777
How satisfied are you with the brands [Comfort]	0.826	-0.167

Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.^a

The first component was identified as "Customer Priority Factors" which includes quality, design, size, brand image, durability and colour. The second component was identified as "Purchase Decision factors" which includes price, attractive purchase discounts, availability, variety and comfort. Some previous research have suggested that like any

other product, consumers see a shoe as a bundle of attributes capable of fulfilling their expectations. (Endalew Adamu , 2011). Some the majors factors are style, price and quality (Endalew Adamu , 2011; Mehra, 2017;Rohit & Kirti, 2014). Among different factors, some studies have shown that sole quality, durability and comfort are the major reason for purchase of shoes compared to prices (Rohit & Kirti, 2014). Literature has highlighted that quality, comfortableness, price, and innovation played a major role in the purchase aspects (David et al, 2021).

4. Conclusion

The footwear industry is a major player in the Indian Market. The lifestyle of Indians have also influenced the way they select their footwear compared to previous decades. The Indian youth are much updated in the modern trends of the fashion industry. The investigation was able to shed light on the major purchase factors considered by the Indian consumers which included around 11 variables. These were reduced to two factors based on exploratory factor analysis. The two factors were 'customer priority factors' and 'purchase decision factors'. The study would support further research in consumer purchase behaviour.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of conflict of interest

The authors have declared that there is no conflict of interest.

Statement of informed consent

Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study.

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