

CONSUMER BUYING BEHAVIOR WITH REFERENCE TO ATHLETIC SPORTS PRODUCTS: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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Abstract

Buying athletic sports products isn't a simple decision; lots of things shape what consumers choose. You've got the product itself, of course – what it's like. But who's doing the buying, and even the situation they're in, matter too. When it comes to athletic shoes, people often think about things like how long they'll last, how comfy they are, and the brand's name. These are biggies. Moreover, purchase intentions are affected by demographic composition and overall engagement with sports within a given population. Durability is consistently rated highly by survey respondents as a factor when choosing athletic footwear. Then there's comfort, which really affects how happy you are with the product in the long run. The brand's good name and how good the product seems definitely matter to consumers as well. Especially with clothing, how it looks and feels can sway purchase decisions. In addition to this, fit is a major consideration, especially when athletic apparel meets the consumer's specific needs. The material used matters since it affects how well something holds up and performs. Price matters, of course, even though durability and comfort are usually top of mind. This is especially true in markets where people are watching their wallets. This paper reviews recent literature on consumer buying behavior related to athletic sports products.

Keywords: *Consumer Buying Behavior, Literature Review, 4Ps, Consumers. Athletic Sports Products*

Introduction

Consumer decisions about buying athletic sports products are complex. The product itself – its features and attributes – naturally matters. But the consumer and the context also play significant roles. When selecting athletic shoes, considerations like durability, comfort, and brand reputation tend to stand out. Indeed, many surveys indicate durability is consistently rated very highly by consumers. Comfort, also, significantly impacts long-term satisfaction. A brand's perceived reputation and overall image also matter considerably. With athletic clothing, aesthetics and tactile experience also play a role in consumer behavior. Fit also emerges as a crucial attribute, particularly where specific athletic demands are involved. Of course the materials used inevitably factor into purchase decisions since they influence performance. The price point matters, too – though consumers often prioritize comfort and longevity, especially in cost-sensitive markets. Purchase intentions are affected by demographic composition and overall engagement with sports within a given population. This paper offers a review of current research on consumer purchasing behaviors regarding athletic sports products.

Literature Review

Hasanzadeh et al. (2022) pinpoint and subsequently rank the various factors that exert influence on customers' inclination to purchase sports products manufactured domestically. Conducted as a field-based study, the research gains practical insights

from a statistical population encompassing a diverse group: customers, sellers, manufacturers, athletes, and also sports coaches located in Mashhad. Considering the entirety of this statistical population, a sample size of 384 individuals was judiciously selected, a determination guided by Morgan's sample size table. Information gathering was conducted through a dual approach: interviews with both experts and sports marketing specialists, alongside a thorough examination of their professional backgrounds. This foundational work then informed the construction of a questionnaire, and upon collecting the relevant data, SPSS version 23 facilitated organization and analysis. Friedman's test was subsequently employed to effectively rank these identified factors. Our research highlighted that products' quality, boasting an average rating of 5.63, exhibits the most significant impact on the inclination to purchase domestic sports brands, followed closely by price (5.04), appearance and packaging (4.88), and domestic brand loyalty (4.60). Fashion and product variety also hold considerable sway, rated at 4.40, succeeded by social factors (4.20), brand awareness/advertisements (3.97), and ease of access to products (3.28). Identifying and ranking these factors in this manner provides information vital for manufacturers of sports products, potentially guiding key business decisions.

Abbasian et al. (2023) sought to understand what influences consumers' decisions to buy sports products they see on social media. Our approach

combined quantitative and qualitative research. To begin, we conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 48 experienced sports teachers and experts to gather crucial initial data. Then, to broaden our understanding, we developed a questionnaire, ensuring its accuracy and consistency, and distributed it to 349 physical education students active in sharing sports products on social media. These students provided valuable data about their behaviors and attitudes. We used the Delphi method alongside SPSS version 16 and AMOS software to analyze all the collected data. Our findings suggest that social networks exert influence over both technical and socio-cultural factors. Furthermore, various behavioral aspects impact both technical and cultural variables, alongside the impact of social networks themselves. Crucially, our research underscores the significant influence of social media on diverse facets of consumer behavior. Social media appear to play a vital role in marketing strategies and fostering brand loyalty. We recommend that organizations' managers integrate social media as a key element in their overall marketing plans; generally speaking, it's clear that a comprehensive approach that includes a strong social media component is essential in today's landscape.

Jayasingh et al. (2023) claim that omnichannel retailing, a relatively new business approach, aims to enhance customer shopping journeys by enabling interaction through diverse channels and touchpoints. This study explores what drives shoppers to embrace omnichannel methods when buying sporting goods. Utilizing the UTAUT2 model, the research examines the factors influencing omnichannel shopping intention among 406 Indian participants, with data collected between December 2021 and January 2022. Applying the structural equation model, the findings indicate that performance expectancy, social influence, effort expectancy, hedonic motivation, habit, and perceived value all play a role in shaping omnichannel shopping intentions for sporting goods. Performance expectancy, in particular, stands out as the strongest driver, followed by hedonic motivation, habit, perceived value, effort expectancy, and social influence. Furthermore, the research investigates how gender moderates these relationships, revealing that performance expectancy, habit, perceived compatibility, and hedonic motivation exert different effects on omnichannel shopping intention based on gender. These results offer valuable insights for researchers and sporting goods retailers alike, informing the development of targeted marketing strategies.

Koronios et al. (2022) sought to pinpoint precise elements of favorable consumer attitude alongside behavior connected to sports sponsorships. Specifically, the goal was to develop a detailed sponsorship framework, one that combines sponsorship beliefs, the sponsor's image, fan attachment to their team, team performance, fan sport involvement, sponsor sincerity, sponsor awareness, attitude toward sponsors, purchase intentions, and even actual purchases. A quantitative approach was employed, with 2,752 questionnaires collected and subsequently analyzed via SPSS and AMOS. The outcomes of a structural equation model offer an insightful conceptual framework. They underscore the importance of understanding key factors in sponsorship effectiveness. Indeed, this paper sets the stage for a robust discussion, demonstrating that several factors exert a noteworthy impact on real purchase behavior – not merely intentions – regarding a sponsor's offerings. From the suggested model, we can derive various implications for upcoming research, in addition to strategies designed to maximize benefits for both sports clubs and their sponsoring organizations. Until now, sadly, only a small number of studies have empirically investigated sponsorship's impact on consumers. Most studies measure the impact of sponsorship on sponsor recall and recognition. However, such results are often inconclusive, with studies showing strong recall rates sometimes, while at other times, only a slight impact is seen. This current research puts forth a broad framework that might guide upcoming investigations by isolating sponsorship's effect on actual consumer buying behavior, instead of just looking at their purchase intentions.

Channa et al. (2022) investigate the impact of various environmental factors on consumers' inclination to buy eco-friendly athletic wear. Specifically, it draws upon three theoretical frameworks—Organismic Integration Theory (OIT), the Values-Belief-Norm (VBN) theory, and Gender Schema Theory (GST). We explore whether environmental attitudes, concerns, perceived responsibility, and peer influence affect purchase intentions. To test our hypotheses, we surveyed 380 Pakistani consumers. Data analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS version 3.3.3. Our findings suggest a positive correlation between these environmental factors and green purchasing behavior. Furthermore, individual green values significantly moderate the influence of peers on purchase behavior. Interestingly, the data also showed that gender plays a role: the impact of environmental attitudes, concerns, peer influence, and

responsibility on purchasing behavior differs between men and women. This research marks one of the initial efforts to examine how these motivational environmental factors affect intentions related to eco-friendly athletic wear, leveraging OIT, VBN, and GST. Notably, the study uses PLS-SEM to establish the predictive relevance of the model. It also conducts a multi-group analysis, something relatively new within the context of sports management and marketing.

Orunbayev (2023) state that social campaigns are vital for fostering public acceptance of new ideas and driving shifts in thinking and behavior – and they need to be far-reaching. Effective social campaigns, in turn, rely on marketing. Social marketing encompasses marketing activities designed to spark positive behavioral changes within society, encouraging adoption of a particular social message. For example, countries are putting effort into promoting sports through outreach. This is because popularizing sports increases public health. The expectation is that people will lead healthy lifestyles and adopt positive behaviors, steering clear of risky ones. Identifying and working with people's existing attitudes toward sports is key. Social change hinges on altering the networks of social relations and the institutions that underpin society. These alterations can be significant or small, but their effect on society is what truly counts. To get those who see value in exercise but don't do it to actually participate, we must reshape misconceptions, link exercise to daily routines, and bolster abilities in physical education. In order to leverage sports to mitigate violence, a community analysis and action plans are necessary. Therefore, carefully planned social sports marketing is a must. Given society's resistance to change, collaboration with anthropologists, heightened private and public support, enlisting opinion leaders in activities impacting society, and effective presentation, are all required. Think of classroom sports for kids. For children who are far from studying military discipline, fun and interesting sports activities in the classroom are the key to success.

Bonfanti et al. (2023) claim that the design of memorable customer shopping experiences in sporting goods retail is the central focus of this study. The study endeavors to pinpoint the needs and expectations of phygital customers—specifically those that can be met through in-store tech—and to find strategies that utilize these technologies to make the store both attractive and experiential. Adopting a qualitative research methodology, this exploratory study took the form of a multiple-case study. To do this, semi-structured interviews were conducted with sporting

goods store managers. As it turns out, sporting goods retailers leverage various in-store technologies to shape the phygital customer shopping experience. This includes a range of devices, such as mobile apps, wireless communication tech, in-store activations, support devices, intelligent stations, and sensors. Meeting customer needs for utilitarian, hedonic, social, and playful experiences is key for retailers looking to enhance the phygital customer journey. Purely physical or digital strategies are identified along with phygital ones. Furthermore, this research puts forward a model of in-store phygital customer shopping experience design tailored for sporting goods retailers. Generally speaking, sporting goods managers might invest in diverse technologies by intentionally designing a physical environment that considers customers' needs for those utilitarian, hedonic, social, and playful experiences. In turn, they can improve the overall phygital customer shopping experience with certain push strategies that increase customer engagement and, eventually, brand and store loyalty. This study ultimately highlights the creation of the phygital customer experiential journey through these new technologies and enhanced designs with a specific focus on sporting goods stores.

Izadi et al. (2023) observe that Neuromarketing, a field focused on understanding our subconscious choices and actions, offers insights into consumer behavior. This research sought to explore how consumers neurologically react to different promotional approaches when considering sports products, with the goal of identifying the most compelling strategy. Specifically, an experiment was designed to see if measurable differences existed in neuropsychological responses depending on whether a promotion emphasized charity, endorsements, straight advertising, or discounts. The research team worked with 40 young adults, carefully balanced with 20 men and 20 women between 25 and 35 years old. Brainwave activity was monitored using a 20-channel Enobio electroencephalograph (EEG). Purchasing decisions were gauged with a brief two-question form, and self-assessment forms captured levels of arousal and pleasure experienced by participants. The collected data then underwent analysis using Friedman's statistical methods, supplemented by logistic regression using SPSS 22. Analysis of alpha wave patterns indicated that strategies centered around charitable tie-ins and endorsements appeared to most effectively capture consumer attention. The discount strategy yielded the highest reported levels of pleasure, while charity-based promotions led to the greatest sense of arousal. It's also worth noting that these neuropsychological

responses seemed to significantly predict a consumer's ultimate purchase decision. One challenge in this area of study, however, lies in gaining access to research participants. Potential subjects sometimes express hesitation, owing both to a lack of understanding about the procedures and anxieties surrounding imaging or brain scanning techniques and the possibility of harm. Neuromarketing is a science that can examine human subconscious decisions and activities.

Von Felbert and Breuer (2022) state that while much endorsement research examines the impact of single endorsers, it's common marketing practice to use several endorsers for brands and products. Given the limited and sometimes unclear research on multiple endorsers, this study aims to figure out how different combinations of endorsers affect consumers' intentions to buy a sports-related product and whether endorser-product fit, along with consumer involvement, changes the influence of the endorsers. An online experiment gathered 233 usable responses, and the direct and indirect influences of endorsers on consumers' purchase intentions were analyzed using serial mediation. We also tested if endorser-product congruence, as well as consumer involvement, might change the effects of the endorsers, using moderated regression analyses. The findings suggest that, overall, using multiple endorsers positively impacts consumer purchase intentions, and this is influenced by their views on the advertisements as well as the brand itself. Moreover, the effectiveness of an endorsement depends on how well the endorser fits the product. Though, the study didn't find a moderating effect for consumer product involvement. This research builds on what we already know about endorsements by confirming that using multiple endorsers can boost intentions to purchase the endorsed product. Furthermore, the study broadens the scope of current research and provides helpful advice for marketers on combining multiple endorsers by demonstrating that endorser-product fit plays a role in endorser effectiveness.

McDonald et al. (2024) posit that sports fans, their behaviours and reasons why, have been studied extensively. Much of this prior research has drawn a line between "fans" and "supporters"—mainly based on their involvement with teams or athletes. It has also identified "non-fans," those folks showing little or no interest in sports. However, it is the latter group that often remains un-investigated. Sport is everywhere. It is all over our media and ingrained in our society, which means that those disinterested people are, unusually, quite often interacting with it. Therefore, it stands to reason that gaining a better handle on who these non-fans are could really help grow sports markets and

encourage engagement. This paper presents a study (or rather describes it) using a mix of machine learning and theory-driven ideas that looks at types of self-identified non-fans of a professional sport. A sample representative of the nation, with 3,496 adults, made it possible to properly investigate this "non-fandom." Five segments of non-fans were found, and they differ when it comes to how much professional sport they consume and how passionate they are about it. There seems to be a pretty clear ladder in terms of how likely they are to consume sport, influenced by social connections, opportunities and access to the games. It's also affected by whether or not they have satisfying alternatives. Finally, to make this research easier to use in the real world, this paper also shows a simpler way to segment the audience. It only takes four questions to do, and it does a good job of keeping a high level of accuracy.

Conclusion

Generally speaking, several factors shape how consumers buy athletic sports products. These include things like the product's features, who the consumer is demographically, and the purchase setting itself. It's generally observed that a population with a greater interest in sports tends to buy more athletic gear. You'll often see differing preferences for brands and product types depending on age and education. Gender, as studies suggest, can be a factor; some brands or types of products are simply favored more by one gender. Many shoppers still like to buy from brick-and-mortar stores, particularly for brands such as Nike and Adidas; although online shopping is becoming increasingly popular, and celebrity endorsements or the trustworthiness of a site plays a big role here. Brand loyalty is common among many consumers of athletic products, who often link certain brands to quality and trustworthiness. Certain athletic products, like winter apparel, or, maybe gear for particular sports, often see higher demand in particular seasons. Consumers particularly keen on certain brands are more likely to buy their products. Social media, too, can influence how consumers see brands, which may then drive purchasing decisions.

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