Designing a Model of Consumer Purchase Behavior towards Domestic Brands of Sports Apparel

[1]Yaser Ahmadi, [1]Zahra Sadat Mirzazadeh[*], [1]Seyyed Morteza Azimzadeh

[1]Department of Sport Manegement, Faculty of Physical Education &Sport Science, Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran.

ABSTRACT

Iran's apparel market is currently filled with foreign brands that are generally ranked as high quality goods with high prices. With a surface examination of the apparel market and customers' opinions, it can be concluded that Iranian apparel, despite having lower prices, is not in a suitable status in comparison with its foreign counterparts. Accordingly, the purpose of this paper is to explore the impact of individual characteristics and brand-specific features, and finally design a model of consumer purchase behavior towards domestic brands of sports apparel that are available in the Iran market. The method of this study is descriptive-correlational and in terms of the aim, is applicable. The statistical population of the study consisted of sports experts. 141 individuals as sample size were studied out of 220 individuals of the population. A questionnaire used by Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) was also used to collect the data, and the validity of the model and the relationship between the studied variables was supported by the techniques of structural equation modeling. The research findings showed that self-concept of individuals has no role in their orientation towards domestic brands of sports apparel, but need for uniqueness was effective on individual's orientation towards brand. On the other hand, brand orientation also had positive impact on both emotional value and perceived quality of domestic brands of sports apparel. Also, according to the findings, increasing brand orientation did not increase their purchase intention. All the dimensions of brand in this study, both perceived quality and emotional value had significant positive impact on consumer's purchase intention towards domestic brands of sports apparel.

KEY WORDS: *Purchase Behavior, Brand, Individual Characteristics, Sports Apparel, Sports Experts.*

INTRODUCTION

Today, we live in an attention-based economy. There are so many options to be chosen and the uncertainty is high. However, customers cannot spend a lot of time in comparing options. If they have enough time to do so, they are not able to confidently identify the right product or service (1). On one hand, the development of products, globalization and intense competition make markets differentiate their products from those of other firms and create value for their buyers. In this type of markets that the products and services increasingly match together, a strong brand may be the only characteristic that differentiates the offered product or service from that of competitors (2). A brand is a set of unique tangible and intangible values (1). In other

*. Corresponding Author:
Zahra Sadat Mirzazadeh
E-mail: z.mirzazadeh@um.ac.ir

words, a brand is a name or symbol that is used for identifying a product (2). Experts express that we do sell product any longer, we sell the brand and consume the product. A brand means the persistent commitment of a seller to offer a set of special features, advantages and services to buyers and the most professional skill of marketers is their ability and capability to create, maintain and improve the brand. In general, it can be stated that the creation of a brand is considered as one of the powerful methods of differentiation for organizations and differentiation is one of the key strategies of competitive positioning. A brand is the direct result of the strategy of market division and differentiation of the product (3).

The sport industry is one of the most important and interesting industries in the world that its products are faced with so much competitions across the world. The behavior of sport consumer includes various psychological and social processes that occur before and after activities related to the purchase and consumption of sport products and services (4); but one of the most important fields of studying consumer's behavior is the behavior of purchase. That is, a process which the buyer uses to decide which sport product, service and idea he/she must purchase which is called the decision-making process of purchase. Some sport marketing specialists have considered this process to be in five stages (2).
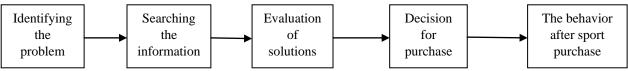
| Identifying the problem | → | Searching the information | → | Evaluation of solutions | → | Decision for purchase | → | The behavior after sport purchase |

Fig.1. The process ofdecision-making purchase (2)

Sport apparel. A part of sport products that have an important role in completing and development of sport courses and is welcomed by the world is sport clothes (5). Sport clothes are an important part of the sport product markets and in the first instance, are defined as clothes and shoes used in participating in sports, however, at present, they include clothes that are used by people for daily activities (2). The results of researches show that in the early 2000s, sport clothes had 22% of the whole share of the market of world clothes and this amount gradually increased in the following years. Since the market of sport clothes allocates a considerable percent of the whole market of clothes to itself, the study on the consumers of this section of the market is beneficial both to the manufacturers and researchers working on sport clothes (6). According to the properties of sport clothes, brand has a special and important value in these products and usually the selection of a product in this industry is done based on its brand (2).

Theoretical framework. The customers' selection in special brands more indicates a set of individual and independent decision-makings; these selections include interpersonal relations (personality characteristics), product and brand (7). In the present research, the components related to personal characteristics and the individual's personality (including self-concept and the need for uniqueness) were studied.

Self-concept. Self-concept is the individual's notions about himself/herself (8); in addition, the individuals see themselves as they think they are seen by others. Since the notion of others and the way of thinking about individuals are influenced by clothing, jewelry and so on, therefore, these products typically indicate the individual's self-concept (7).

Need for uniqueness. The customer's tendency for being uniqueness is defined as the inclination to differentiation from the others, and this differentiation is provided through purchasing, using and showing the goods in order to create and improve the personal image and social position (9). In many researches, two factors (emotional value and perceived quality) have been introduced as the factors influencing selection of a brand (7, 10-12).

Emotional value. The emotional value towards a brand is related to a positive sense resulting from using a brand which increases the consumer's intention to re-purchase the brand; in

other words, the consumers that have a good sense about a brand and enjoy buying it may purchase it again, even when he/she is presented with other choices (12).

Perceived quality. The perceived quality is defined as the consumer's mental judgment about the general preference and priority of a product. Thus, the high perceived quality drives the consumer towards selection of a brand than other brands (12). The concept of the brand and its relationship with the consumer's behavior and also with customer's purchase behavior has not been considered so much in Iran. The lack of brand knowledge and its correct management in Iran will not have any result except the increased selling of foreign brands among teenagers, and the young and the seclusion of internal products (13).
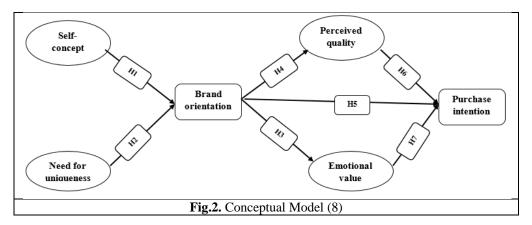
Background Research. The result of research that was conducted by Jinzhao and Yingjiao (2015) showed that young Chinese consumers have more tendency to buy domestic brands sports apparel than the foreign brands. Also, in this study, the perceived quality mentioned is one of the factors influencing consumer behavior (14). Rizwan *et al.* (2014) showed that two key factors, brand trust and brand attachment are effective in consumer purchase intention towards foreign brand (15). Also, Chaudhary and Jain (2013) found that sole quality, comfort and durability are given more weightage while purchasing branded sport shoes (16). The results of a research by Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) showed that self-concept and the need for uniqueness cause the tendency of individuals towards foreign and internal brands of clothes. Also, inclination towards a brand has a positive effect on perceived quality and emotional value of foreign (American) brands. The emotional value is an important factor influencing the intention of purchase of an American brand. However, the perceived quality was not effective in the Indian consumers' purchase intention towards an American brand (7).

In a similar research, Lee *et al.* (2008) found that emotional value has a positive effect on the intention of purchasing American goods, while the perceived quality has a negative effect on the intention of purchase (10). In a research conducted by Lee, Knight, and Kim (2008) on

Mexican students, it was found that the perceived quality had a positive effect on the emotional value of foreign brands. Also, the emotional value has a positive effect on the intention of purchasing American brands, but the perceived quality has a negative effect on the consumers' purchase intention (11). Few researches have been done in Iran on the studied subject, like that of Nalchi Kaashi, Rasoulian, and Bujaari (2012) and the results show that the individuals' need for uniqueness increases their tendencies towards foreign brands of furniture, and by increasing intention towards foreign brands, the consumers better consider the emotional value and perceived quality of the foreign brands, and the more the adoption of the emotional value and as the perceived quality of the foreign brands increases, the more the consumers' purchase intention also increases (12). The results of a research by Keshkar, Salman, and Jabbari (2013) showed that most female athlete bodybuilders in Tehran (80%) prefer sport clothes with foreign brands, and they state the reasons for this selection: the appropriate quality, design and cost of these products (6). Also, Ghafari Ashtiani, Charsetad, and Loni (2010) concluded that the two components: emotional and social values among the factors effective on intention towards purchasing foreign products, are the factors which have the highest impacts on Iranian costumers (17).

Tendency towards the global good quality products and brands in developing countries is a reality, and Iran is not an exception (18). On one hand, according to the limitation of external and internal studies in the field of costumers' purchase behavior and its relationship with brand and lack of a comprehensive research on the effect of personality characteristics and the special features of brand on costumers' purchase intention towards a brand in sport industry and also according to the use of the results of the research in the development of the goals of the manufacturers, sellers and marketers of sport clothes in the field of purchasing their products, the researcher has studied the purchase behaviors of doctorate students and faculty members of physical education course which is one of the most important communities consuming sport apparel, and finally has answered this question:

"what is the reason for selecting the internal brand of sport apparel by the intended population? And, the appropriate model was presented.

Fig.2. Conceptual Model (8)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Participants: The statistical population included sport experts (all doctorate students and faculty members with PhD) in three provinces: Khorasan Razavi, North Khorasan and South Khorasan. 141 individuals as sample size were studied out of 220 individuals of the population.

Tools: In this research, the questionnaire used by Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) was used to collect data. The questionnaire was designed with 25 questions and 6 sub-scales. Each item in the scale rated on a five-point scale was anchored by "strongly disagree" (1) and "strongly agree" (5). The questionnaire included 2 parts: Demographic and research questions. The first part included questions related to personal characteristics and the second part included 25 questions (self- concept: 5, need for uniqueness: 5, brand orientation: 5, emotional value: 4, perceived quality: 4, purchase intention: 2). To obtain the validity of the questionnaire, it was given to specialists, professors and experts of the sport management course, and their opinions indicated its validity. To measure its reliability, the reliability coefficient index was used. The Cronbach's alpha for the questionnaire of the present study was equal to 0.959. Since in survey studies the value of 0.70 and higher is acceptable; therefore, the items of the questionnaire had the appropriate reliability.

Statistical Analysis: Structural equation modeling with AMOS graphics version 22 was used to analyze the data and the parameters were estimated using the maximum likelihood method.
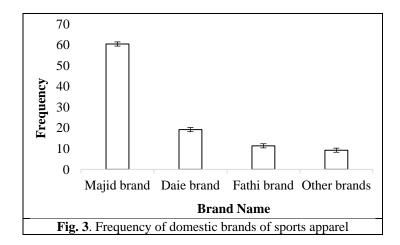
RESULTS

The average age of the participants was 33.41 years and 69.5% of them were married. They had an average of 16 years of professional or semi-professional sport background and most of them have had activities in football, volleyball, basketball and handball. As shown in Figure 3, priority in purchasing internal brands of sport apparel in the consumers' viewpoint is as follows: Majid brand, Daei brand, Fathi brand and other brands.

As shown in Figure 4, 41.1% of the study sample had a monthly income of less than $ 300.

The fitness, correctness and adequacy of data for the model were studied; that is, if the fitness indices indicate the fitness of the model, the data is correct and adequate for analysis and conclusion of relations in the model. As shown in Table 1, the fitness indices of conceptual model at the 0.05 level of significance indicate the goodness of the research conceptual model. In the methods of structural equations, the effectiveness of each of the studied variables can be interpreted using path coefficients and critical factors.

As shown in Table 2, the individuals' self-concept did not have effect on their tendencies towards brand, but the need for uniqueness affects the inclination towards brand. Also, the inclination towards brand influences the consumers' emotional value and perceived quality, but does not play any role in their purchase intention. Both components: emotional value and perceived quality had effect on the consumer's purchase intention.
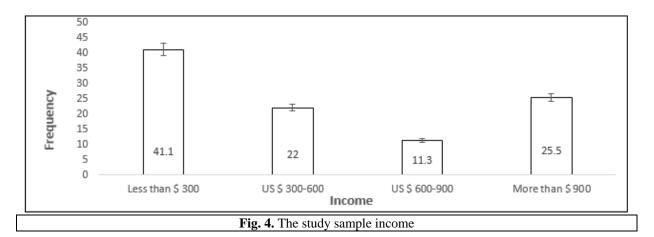
Fig. 3. Frequency of domestic brands of sports apparel

Fig. 4. The study sample income

Table1. structural model indices using a structural equation model

Indicator	Amount	Allowable range
Chi-Square /df	2.67	Less than 3
RMSEA	0.79	Less than 0.08
CFI	0.93	Higher than 0.9
GFI	0.94	Higher than 0.9
AGFI	0.87	Higher than 0.8

Table 2. Standardized coefficients and t- statistics for the structural model

Hypothesis	Structural path	Path coefficient	p- value	t-statistic	Test results
H1	Self-concept- Brand orientation	-0.17	0.06	-2.06	rejected
H2	Need for uniqueness- Brand orientation	0.67	0.001	7.13	accepted
H3	Brand orientation- Emotional value	0.84	0.001	6.86	accepted
H4	Brand orientation- Perceived quality	0.37	0.001	3.98	accepted
H5	Brand orientation- Purchase intention	0.10	0.044	0.77	rejected
H6	Perceived quality- Purchase intention	0.54	0.001	5.04	accepted
H7	Emotional value - Purchase intention	0.52	0.037	2.08	accepted

Based on the results obtained from the output of Amos software, the type of relationship and the rate of effectiveness of each factor listed in the conceptual model were determined.
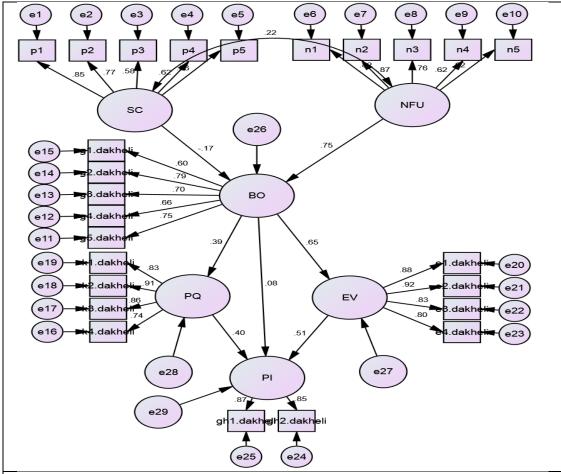
Ahmadi, Y., Mirzazadeh, Z., Azimzadeh, S. M. (2016). Ann Appl Sport Sci, 4(1): 31-38.

Fig. 5. Research model in path coefficient mode. (**SC:** Self-concept, **NFU:** Need for uniqueness, **BO:** Brand orientation, **PQ:** Perceived quality, **EV:** Emotional value, **PI:** Purchase intention)

DISCUSSION

From the customers' perspective, the brand is like a concept which includes a set of emotional benefits and functional advantages.

Hypothesis 1: The results suggest that the self-image of people has no effect on their tendencies towards internal brands of sportswear, which reflects the fact that Iranian consumers do not consider the type of apparel as a way to improve their self-concept. The result of this study is not congruent with that of Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) and the difference in the results may be due to the type of study population and also the type of studied brands (foreign or internal); and one can conclude that with increase in age, their views towards the branded clothing become different (7).

Hypothesis 2: The results indicate the fact that the need for uniqueness of the people intervenes in their tendencies towards internal brands. In other words, Iranian consumers try to show themselves to be different from the others by wearing sport clothes with internal brand. Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) and Nalchi Kaashi, Rasoulian, and Bujaari (2012) also found this important issue in their studies (7, 12). Therefore, manufacturers of sportswear can boost their sales by producing products which can differentiate the individuals from the others.

Hypothesis 3 and 4: The findings of this research show the positive impact of brand orientation on both emotional value and perceived quality of internal sportswear brands and this impact is larger in the emotional value; the results of Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) and Nalchi Kaashi, Rasoulian, and Bujaari (2012) support this fact (6, 7, 12, 15). Therefore,

the more eminent and well-known the internal brands of sportswear, the more popular the internal sportswear quality will be evaluated by the consumers than those of their competitors, and if they use it, they feel satisfied. Therefore, strategies such as advertisements may be useful in the attitude towards the brand of a firm and consequently in the creation of a competitive advantage in comparison with competitors.

Hypothesis 5: The results also show that the brand orientation does not play any role in increasing the intention to buy internal brands of sport apparel brand. However, Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009), Rizwan *et al.* (2014) and Nalchi Kaashi, Rasoulian, and Bujaari (2012) stated that the brand orientation increases the costumers' purchase intention (7, 12, 15). Therefore, the consumers of sportswear may refuse to buy sportswear with internal brand due to some reasons which includes their economic status or the internal branded sport apparel being expensive.

Hypothesis 6: Among the aspects of the brand studied in this research, both perceived quality and emotional value had an impact on consumers' purchase intention. Internal researches show the fact that the perceived quality of the brand plays an important role in consumers' purchase intention towards products having a brand, and the results by Keshkar, Salman, and Jabbari (2013) showed that most female athlete bodybuilders in Tehran (80%) prefer sport clothing with foreign brands, and showed the reasons for this selection to be appropriate quality, design and cost (6). Also, Jinzhao and Yingjiao (2015) and Chaudhary and Jain (2013) in their study found that perceived quality was one of the factors influencing consumer behavior (14, 16). In contrast, the research by Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) indicated the fact that the perceived quality of internal brands of sportswear did not affect the Indian costumers' purchase intention (7) and this can be due to low quality of products with internal brand in this country. Since, the quality of sport clothing has a determining role in performing sport activities and body pleasure during sport, manufacturers of internal sportswear must pay more attention on the quality of their products in order to create a strong brand among the global sportswear brands.

Hypothesis 7: The emotional value, like perceived quality increases the intention of purchasing built-in brand of sport apparel. The results of the present study are compatible with those of Nalchi Kaashi, Rasoulian, and Bujaari (2012) and Ghafari Ashtiani, Charsetad, and Loni (2010) among internal studies (12, 17), and also with those of Lee, Knight, and Kim (2008), Kumar, Kim, and Pelton (2009) and Lee, Kim, and Pelton (2008) among the foreign studies, suggesting that the emotional value affects costumers' purchase intention (7, 10, 11). Sport marketers can increase the effectiveness of this aspect of brand on consumers, especially athletes, by further emphasis on the emotional aspects or pleasure resulting from the use of the branded products.

CONCLUSION

According to the findings of the present study and based on the results of the researches on the subject maters, it can be argued that the individuals, especially those who have used sportswear for longer time, due to some characteristics such as the quality and emotional value of the branded products and also in order to reinforce their sense of differentiation in comparing with others, choose the branded sport clothes. According to the mentioned subjects, the internal manufacturers of sport products, especially sport clothes, should develop the brand of their products considering the important factors related to brand. Also, the sellers of sport products can sell the well-known internal brands of sport clothes in their shops to increase the sales.

APPLICABLE REMARKS
- The use of successful sport persons who are using the company's product in the advertisements.
- Financial support of sporting events so that the company's brand is always being seen by consumers.
- Constantly doing marketing research in the field of designing a product with good quality.
- Comparing the company's product with similar samples produced by competitors to provide the best products.
- The use of various and attractive designs and colors in designing and manufacturing the sport goods.

REFERENCES

1. Kapferer JN. The New Strategic Brand Management: Advanced Insights and Strategic Thinking. 5th ed: Kogan Page Publishers; 2012. 512 p.
2. Azadi R, Yousefi B, Eydi H. The role of media and advertising, to promote brand equity in the sports apparel industry. Communication Management in Sport Media. 2015;2(6):66-75 [Article in Farsi].
3. Kotler P, Armstrong G. Foundations of Marketing (Custom Edition). 3rd ed: Pearson Custom Books; 2014.
4. Hasangholipor T, Yasory, Estiri M, Yazdani H, Hosseini F. A Survey of Factors Influencing (University of Tehran) Higher Education Students' Orientation to Sport Events. Journal of Sport Management. 2009;1(3):97-213 [Article in Farsi].
5. Cowie LS. Relationship Between Male Cyclists' Sport Clothing Involvement, Sport Clothing Interests, and Commitment to Cycling. Ohio, USA: Ohio State University; 2001.
6. Keshkar S, Salman Z, Jabbari J. The Relationship between Satisfaction and Loyalty with Domestic and Foreign Sport Garments in Female Bodybuilders. Journal of Sport Management. 2013;5(3):117-36 [Article in Farsi].
7. Kumar A, Kim YK, Pelton L. Indian consumers' purchase behavior toward US versus local brands. International Journal of Retail & Distribution Management. 2009;37(6):510-26.
8. Jafari A, Siyadat A, Delavari H. The relationship between self-concept of management and their performance from the perspective of high school teachers in the Lenjan city during the academic year 2000-2001. Journal of Educational Psychology Studies. 2006;2(3):17-30 [Article in Farsi].
9. Ranjbarian B, Zabih zadeh K, Berari M. Status and Role-Relaxed models Consumption Patterns among Students of University of Isfahan. Women in Development & Politics. 2011;9(2):155-80 [Article in Farsi].
10. Lee MY, Kim YK, Pelton L, Knight D, Forney J. Factors affecting Mexican college students' purchase intention toward a US apparel brand. Journal of Fashion Marketing and Management: An International Journal. 2008;12(3):294-307.
11. Lee MY, Knight D, Kim YK. Brand analysis of a US global brand in comparison with domestic brands in Mexico, Korea, and Japan. Journal of Product & Brand Management. 2008;17(3):163-74.
12. Nalchi Kaashi A, Rasoulian M, Bujaari H. Surveying Consumer Purchase Behavior Toward Foreign Versus Local Brands. Journal of Development & Evolution Mnagement. 2012;1391(8):47-56 [Article in Farsi].
13. Parhizgar M, Ebrahimi Abed M. Investigate the effect of dimensions of Aaker's model brand equity on brand equity from the perspective of consumer (Case Study: Samsung brand). Business Investigations. 2012;53:61-71 [Article in Farsi].
14. Jinzhao L, Yingjiao X. Chinese young consumers' brand loyalty toward sportswear products: a perspective of self-congruity. Journal of Product & Brand Management. 2015;24(4):365-76.
15. Rizwan M, Qayyum M, Qadeer W, Javed M. The impact on branded product on consumer purchase intentions. Journal of Public Administration and Governance. 2014;4(3):57-74.
16. Chaudhary R, Jain K. A study of purchase behavior towards branded sports shoes in national capital region. ZENITH International Journal of Business Economics & Management Research. 2013;3(12):68-81.
17. Ghafari Ashtiani P, Charsetad P, Loni N. Analysis of Factors Affecting Consumer Preferences for Foreign Versus Domestic Brands. Jounal of Marketing Management. 2010;5(8):227-53 [Article in Farsi].
18. Ghasemi H, Dehdeshti Z, Seyfi A. Factors affecting consumer ethnocentrism. Jounal of Business Management. 2011;11(11):143-56 [Article in Farsi].