

Original Article (Quantified)

providing a model of the effect of brand knowledge and understanding of the quality on future purchase of sport products sport science

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Abstract

The aim of the present study was to provide a model of the effect of brand knowledge and quality perception on future purchase of sports products among sports science students at public universities in Tehran. The present study is a descriptive-survey type and falls into the category of applicable research. The statistical population included physical education students at public universities in Tehran. Since the number of the statistical population was unknown, the size of the population was considered unlimited, and using the Krejci and Morgan table, 384 people were considered as a sample. A researcher-made questionnaire was used to collect data by combining several questionnaires. The questionnaire consisted of 24 questions, the face and content validity of which was confirmed by sports marketing professors. An exploratory factor analysis test was also used to determine the construct validity, and all questions had a factor loading higher than 0.3. The structural equation modeling analysis method was performed using AMOS24 software. The findings from structural equation modeling showed that brand knowledge, emphasizing the mediating role of the quality perception has an impact on future purchases of sports products. The fit indices also confirmed the suitability of the model. Sports product manufacturers can help customers select and purchase their products by identifying product quality signs and considering these signs in the product production plan. This strategy can increase customer trust and encourage future purchases, which will ultimately lead to improved brand performance in a competitive market.

Keywords:

Brand knowledge,
Brand quality,
Future purchases,
physical education
students,
Sports products

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Introduction

Throughout history, registering personal symbols and works has always been of interest (Jafari et al., 2020). The term "brand" emerged in the field of marketing in the early 21st century (Dasic et al., 2021), and today the issue of branding in sports has many supporters (Zakerian et al., 2020). Peters (1997) defined personal branding as a marketing tool for self-promotion and achieving business goals (Park et al., 2020).

Customer perceptions of a brand direct their behavior and are critical for organizations. Positive perceptions lead to sustainable competitive advantage that allows them to sell products at higher prices, increase market share, develop effective relationships, and build consumer loyalty (Dedeoglu et al., 2019). On the other hand, purchase intention indicates a customer's interest in a brand or product and the likelihood of purchasing it, and is related to attitude and preference towards the brand (Wang & Chen, 2019). In today's dynamic market with intense competition and changing consumer behavior, maintaining brand loyalty is a serious challenge (Nengsih et al., 2023). This loyalty is influenced by positive experiences, emotional connections, and perceived value (Agnihotri, 2023). However, constant changes in consumer preferences make it difficult for brands to adapt to changing needs (Othman et al., 2022). Also, prioritizing factors such as convenience, price, and quality over brand identity has led to a decrease in the importance of brand loyalty (Kato et al., 2021). Therefore, the present study aims to answer the question: how brand knowledge affects perceived quality and future purchase, and how perceived quality affects future purchase of sports products?

Theoretical Framework

Brand Quality

Brand quality, as an important component of customer-based brand equity, refers to customers' overall perception of the quality of a brand's product. Brand recognition and perceived quality significantly affect future purchases of sports goods. High brand awareness and trust increase consumers' willingness to purchase, strengthen loyalty, and repeat purchase intention, especially when consumers prioritize quality and reliability in their purchase decisions. The increasing emphasis on brand awareness and perceived quality necessitates companies to invest in effective marketing strategies that resonate with their target audiences, ultimately increasing sales and strengthening customer loyalty (Ramadhani et al., 2022). Perceived brand quality refers to consumers' evaluation of the overall superiority or inferiority of a brand. It should be noted that higher perceived brand quality significantly positively affects consumer purchase decisions (Wakirva et al., 2024).

Future purchase

Purchase intention refers to the prediction of the consumer's likelihood of willingness to purchase a product, such that the higher the likelihood of willingness, the stronger the purchase intention, and consequently, the higher the purchase intention, the more likely the occurrence of actual purchase. Purchase intention can be predicted from attitudes, subjective norms, and observed behavioral control. Behavioral intention indicates the intensity of an individual's intentions and will to perform the target behavior. The relationship between behavioral intention and behavior indicates that individuals tend to engage in behaviors that they intend to perform (Eskandari et al., 2021). Purchase intention refers to a consumer's decision to purchase a product after making an evaluation in the future. The purchase intention process begins with product evaluation. People use their existing knowledge, experience, and external information to make the evaluation (Chen & Lee, 2020).

Brand Knowledge

Brand knowledge can be interpreted as knowledge about a brand in a person's mind that is stored in the consumer's memory, that is, all information about a brand is both descriptive and evaluative (Revaliana & Susilawaty, 2023). It has also been shown that brand knowledge is based on constant communication with consumers that evokes a real understanding of the product or service, so brand knowledge can understand explicit and tacit knowledge; so that Keller (Cheung et al., 2020) states that brand awareness and brand image are important components of brand knowledge.

Firmansyah et al., (2024) conducted a study titled Repurchase Intention in Chinese Smartphone Brands. The results showed that the important role of country image, perceived quality, and perceived value in influencing the willingness to repurchase Chinese smartphone brands. This study also proves the important role of perceived quality in perceived value and repurchase intention in Chinese smartphone brands.

Shabrina Wafa et al., (2022) in their study titled The Effect of Brand Awareness, Brand Associations, and Perceived Quality on Nike Basketball Shoes Purchase Decisions show that brand awareness and perceived quality significantly affect Nike basketball shoes purchase decisions and indicates that increasing these factors can have a positive impact on future purchases of sporting goods among consumers, especially in the basketball community in Venusobo.

Rafdinal & Suhartanto (2020) in a study titled Loyalty Model for Ethnic Restaurants: The Role of Quality and Value show that consumers make repeat purchases when they feel the added value they receive from using a product, such as ease of access to the product, reasonable price, and product benefits.

Research Methodology

The present study is of a descriptive-survey type and falls into the category of applicable research. The statistical population consisted of physical education students at Tehran state universities. Due to the uncertainty of the population size, a sample size of 384 people was selected based on the Krejci and Morgan table (for an unlimited population). Data were collected with a 24-question researcher-made questionnaire (a combination of several questionnaires). The face and content validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by sports marketing experts, and the construct validity was also examined with exploratory factor analysis (factor loadings >0.3). Data analysis was performed by structural equation modeling in AMOS24 software.

Research findings

The results of the path analysis showed that brand knowledge has an effect on perception of quality with a standard coefficient of 0.43, on future purchase with a standard coefficient of 0.19, and on quality perception with a standard coefficient of 0.67. These findings indicate that brand knowledge, especially by creating positive experiences for customers, can affect their purchasing decisions. In addition, a positive perception of product quality is an important factor in increasing the likelihood of future purchase.

Conclusion

This study aimed to present a model of the effect of brand knowledge and quality perception on future purchase of sports products among sports science students of public universities in Tehran. The results of the study are consistent with the results of Konjkav et al., (2019), Ayuni & Porwanto (2023), Babayifarsani et al., (2022), Almursyid et al., (2024), Hernandez

& Lewis (2019), Behrozi & Sohrabi (2022) and Ezati & Mazaheri (2021), and the findings of Chen & Lin (2019). The results of the study showed that successful experiences of purchasing sports products can lead to increased consumer trust and increased brand loyalty. It was also suggested that sports brands should improve brand knowledge and quality perception by focusing on improving product quality, providing transparent information, and using effective advertising.

Based on the present study, the following suggestions are made:

- Considering the importance of brand knowledge and quality perception, sports brands should develop marketing and advertising programs tailored to customers' needs and expectations.
- Examining consumer behavior and using their feedback can help improve the shopping experience and promote customer loyalty.
- Sports brands should pay special attention to transferring accurate knowledge and information about the quality and features of their products.
- Sports brands should try to create a positive perception of their brand quality in the minds of customers by emphasizing the quality of their products, especially through advertising and introducing outstanding product features.
- Providing clear and accurate information about the features and benefits of products can help increase customer trust and loyalty and pave the way for future purchases of these brands.