



## Dimension of Sports Brand Loyalty Among Youths in Perlis

Khor, P. H.<sup>a</sup>, Lim, K. C.<sup>b</sup>, Siti Norshilla Mohd Aris <sup>a</sup>

<sup>a</sup>Universiti Teknologi MARA Cawangan Perlis, Arau 02600, Malaysia

<sup>b</sup>Universiti Utara Malaysia, Sintok 06010, Malaysia

Corresponding Email: khorpoyhua@perlis.uitm.edu.my

---

### Article Information

#### Keywords

loyalty; youths; internal influence; external influence; gender

---

### Abstract

Nowadays, sportswear turns into a mutual plan and a famous topic of discussion between the youths as it suits their unsophisticated, suppleness and ease lifestyles. Numerous societies, mainly people involve in the sports industry want to showcase brand loyalty among their customers. In Malaysia, sports brands such as Nike, Adidas, Reebok, and Puma are well-known amongst sports enthusiasts. Although the topic has been researched, focuses from youths' perspective remain unknown. Today youths are considered the main consumers of sports product. Thus, this study relates the perspective of brand loyalty as perceived by youths in Perlis using two validated dimensions, namely internal brand loyalty and external brand loyalty. Self-administered questionnaires were randomly distributed to 318 members of Rakan Muda program. Descriptive analysis and independent T-test were adopted to analyse the data. It can be concluded that both internal and external factors are highly influenced by brand loyalty among youths in Perlis, with the external factors recorded a higher effect. The female youths perceived higher internal and also external influence towards brand loyalty compared to male youths. This study could facilitate marketers to plan and coordinate their marketing strategies in sports industries. For future study, understanding of brand loyalty among sports customers of all walks of life is recommended for the development of sports marketing.

---

### INTRODUCTION

Brand loyalty is an essential component in marketing strategy. Branded sports products are available in various designs and colour. Youths' selections of sports brand are usually for the reasons of outdoor activity participation or being up-to-date style. Brands have become one of the valuable assets for a company in marketing process. A brand is the main component source of competitive advantage that motivates brand loyalty (Kinuthia, Mburuga, Muthomi, & Mwhaki, 2012). Hence, sports companies are working hard to sustain their brands as a priority in sports market.

As defined by Soonarong (2011), internal brand loyalty, also known as consumer brand-knowledge is a personal meaning on brand that is placed in consumer mind. This relates closely to brand information and consumer does not shift to alternative brands even with the cheapest price offered. External brand loyalty can be seen through brand name, product quality, and price (Kinuthia et al., 2012). This study focuses on youths, as according to Mise, Nair, Odera, and Ogutu (2013), the most essential and foremost segment of consumer that has been segmented is youth. Youth has been identified among global population as the main segment of brand consumer. It is a challenge to attain and sustain the loyalty of youth towards a company's sport product due to various internal and external influences. This study focuses on the internal and external factors that influence sports brand loyalty among youths in Perlis.

Understanding differences in the internal and external factors that influence brand loyalty among youths are associated with gender which *displays the overall picture of a youth segment* which is useful for marketing sports products. Based on the problem statements, four hypotheses were generated:

- (i) There are differences between gender groups on the internal factors that influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis.
- (ii) There are differences between gender groups on the external factors that influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis.

## **RESEARCH METHODS**

The 318 respondents consist of members of Rakan Muda Negeri Perlis. Cluster random sampling design was used to draw samples among the members from team sports and individual sports. The items for the self-administered questionnaire were adopted from studies by Kinuthia et al. (2012) on factors influencing sportswear brand loyalty among students of Kenyan University.

### *Data Analysis*

Both hypotheses were tested using the independent T-test. A significance level  $p < .05$  was adopted to decide the significance level of the research hypotheses.

### *Results*

Factor analysis and reliability of measurement scales

The item loading value for the measurement scale was greater than .40, with eigenvalues-greater-than-one for each subscale. The item-total correlation value for each subscale measurement scale was more than .45. The overall Cronbach's alpha for the internal motivator scale is .79 and external motivator scale is .90.

Internal factors that influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis

The internal factors do influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis. As displayed in Table 1, the youths are loyal to a certain sports brand because of their interest in the beauty, creativity, and artistic value of the products design. This is true as good design inspired customers to start physical work-out and feel powerful (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello (2009). Besides that youths prefer sports brand that makes them feel good, trendy, charming, glamour, and also could make them an outstanding leader in fashion among their friends. They feel satisfied with sports brand that they obtained significant added value (Cengiz, 2010). There are youths who prefer to choose similar sports brand as their team members for excitement and bonding purpose. Some youths go for brand that symbolized the specific game of their interest, while others follow their idol sports personality's brand. It could be concluded that excitement based factors highly affect sports brand loyalty among youth in Perlis. As stated by Brakus et al. (2009), sports brand could initiate consumers' effort in practicing active lifestyle. Cheerful feelings among consumers can be observed when they experience energised effects which consequently create special feeling (loyalty) towards a specific sports brand.

TABLE I  
MEAN AND PERCENTAGE OF FREQUENCIES OF INTERNAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BRAND LOYALTY AMONG YOUTHS  
IN PERLIS (N=318)

Internal Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage of Frequencies (%)			
			1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly Agree
Beauty and creativity of the brand.	3.28	.822	2.5	15.8	32.5	49.2
Artistic value of the brand.	3.26	.825	4.2	11.7	38.3	45.8
The brand makes me feel good.	3.19	.863	4.1	16.7	35.0	44.2
The brand enhances me as leader in fashion among friends.	3.16	.733	1.6	15.0	49.2	34.2
Using this brand makes me feel unite with my team members.	3.14	.938	7.5	15.0	33.3	44.2
The brand makes me look trendy.	3.08	.940	7.5	17.5	34.2	40.8
The contemporary design of this brand reflects my creativity in fashion.	3.03	.957	8.3	19.2	34.2	38.3
I feel excited wearing the same brand as my team members.	3.02	.935	8.4	17.5	38.3	35.8
I love to use the same brand as sport usually use.	2.99	.903	5.0	25.8	34.2	35.0
I can be like others who wear this brand.	2.98	.907	6.7	21.7	38.3	33.3
Teams brand enhance my teamwork feeling.	2.96	.873	6.6	20.0	44.2	29.2
I feel gorgeous wearing products of this brand.	2.95	.906	7.6	20.8	40.8	30.8
The brand makes me feel unique than others.	2.95	1.091	16.6	11.7	31.7	40.0
All my team members choose this brand.	2.94	1.048	13.4	17.5	30.8	38.3
The brand makes me feel charming.	2.93	.972	10.1	20.8	35.8	33.3
The brand makes me feel glamorous.	2.54	1.129	25.0	21.7	27.5	25.8
The brand helps me to express myself.	2.45	.969	20.8	26.7	39.2	13.3
<b>Overall</b>	<b>2.99</b>					

#### *External factors that influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis*

Results imply that the external factors significantly influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis compared to the internal factors. Table 2 shows that styles of the brand plays important roles in influencing brand loyalty among youths in Perlis. Youth mostly prefer styles in fulfilling their desire in fashion (Kinuthia et al., 2012). Youths in Perlis choose sports brand that has distinctive features suitable to them, such as trendy and fashionable. Besides that, their choice of sports brand is also related to the service provide by the salesperson promoting the related brand. Salespersons significantly reflect the image of a brand and also the shop store (Lovelock, 2010). Youths in Perlis prefer sports brand that has many outlets situated at good locations. Promotion through attractive advertisements could easily encourage the purchasing power of specific brand sports product which indirectly enhance brand loyalty among these youths.

TABLE 2  
MEAN AND PERCENTAGE OF FREQUENCIES OF EXTERNAL FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE BRAND LOYALTY AMONG YOUTHS  
IN PERLIS (N=318)

External Factors	Mean	Standard Deviation	Percentage of Frequencies (%)			
			1 Strongly Disagree	2 Disagree	3 Agree	4 Strongly Agree
Styles of the brand have distinctive features.	3.23	.739	1.7	13.3	45.8	39.2
Styles of the brand are suitable for me.	3.19	.833	5.8	9.2	45.0	40.0
The brand has sufficient outlets.	3.17	.823	5.8	9.2	47.5	37.5
Salesperson of the products brand is experience.	3.15	.847	5.8	11.7	44.2	38.3
Styles of the brand are trendy and fashionable.	3.13	.784	2.5	17.5	45.0	35.0
The brand has good store location.	3.13	.740	0.8	19.2	46.7	33.3
Brand reflects my own personality.	3.12	.791	4.2	13.3	49.2	33.3
Advertisement of that brand is attractive.	3.10	.883	5.8	16.7	39.2	38.3
The brand provides good value for money.	3.09	1.004	10.8	13.3	31.7	44.2
Salesperson of the store willing to help.	3.08	.805	3.4	18.3	45.0	33.3
Salesperson of the store is well trained.	3.08	.885	7.5	12.5	44.2	35.8
The brand is reputable.	3.03	.819	3.3	21.7	43.3	31.7
Advertisement of the brand attracts me to buy.	2.97	.859	5.0	23.3	41.7	30.0
The brand provides wide variety of styles.	2.84	.935	10.8	20.0	43.4	25.8
<b>Overall</b>	<b>3.10</b>					

#### *Internal factors that influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis in terms of gender*

Findings show that there were significant mean differences of some internal factors that influence brand loyalty between males and females youths in Perlis. The female youths perceived higher internal influence which affects brand loyalty compared to male youths. According to Tan, Tan, Lee, Ong, and Liew (2012), females are considered as customers with higher brand loyalty and they have higher probabilities to re-purchase a branded product compared to male customers even though both males and females have the same level of satisfaction. Female youths prefer sports brand that helps them to express themselves,  $t(100) = 4.229$ ,  $p = .000$  (Male:  $M = 2.10$ , Female:  $M = 2.80$ ); makes them feel good,  $t(94) = 2.715$ ,  $p = .008$  (Male:  $M = 2.98$ , Female:  $M = 3.40$ ); trendy,  $t(92) = 2.169$ ,  $p = .033$  (Male:  $M = 2.90$ , Female:  $M = 3.27$ ); charming,  $t(108) = 2.395$ ,  $p = .018$  (Male:  $M = 2.72$ , Female:  $M = 3.13$ ); and unique among their circles of friends,  $t(89) = 4.510$ ,  $p = .000$  (Male:  $M = 2.53$ , Female:  $M = 3.37$ ). Female consumers are usually influenced by their experience on self-contact with a brand (Tan et al., 2012). The females also go for contemporary design of brand that could reflect their creativity in fashion, while some females follow their idol sports personality's brand.

#### *External factors that influence brand loyalty among youths in Perlis in terms of gender*

Analysis identifies significant mean differences of some external factors that influence brand loyalty between males and females youths in Perlis. The female youths observed higher external influence that affects brand loyalty compared to the male youths. The female youths go for sports brand which reflects their personality,  $t(118) = 2.108$ ,  $p = .037$  (Male:  $M = 2.97$ , Female:  $M = 3.27$ ). As so, branded sports products marketers are offering varieties of sports attires for different occasions in order to cater the fashion conscious female customers (Taleghani and Jourshari, 2012). Besides that, it would be of great help to the female youths if the sports brand salesperson is well-trained to provide assistance in deciding which choice or design of the specific brand to purchase,  $t(118) = 2.756$ ,  $p = .007$  (Male:  $M = 2.87$ , Female:  $M = 3.30$ ).

## DISCUSSIONS

Loyalty of customers towards a brand could be perceived through quality identification and differentiating since it gives impact on consumer's choice primarily (Che Aniza Che Wel, Syed Shah Alam, & Sallehuddin Mohd Noor,

2011). As revealed by Cengiz (2010), there are many ways to satisfy a customer. The respond of youth consumers should be considered as they could be partner in developing better business in future (Kulkarni & Belgaonkar, 2012).

Sports brand loyalty among youths in Perlis is highly influenced by external factors. Youths in Perlis choose sports brand that has distinctive features suitable to them, such as stylish and fashionable. The sports brand of interest is naturally influenced by the reputable variety of styles available which give good value for money paid. Consumer's perception and impression towards a brand is affected by style which includes design, colour, and fashion appearance (Yee & Sidek, 2008). Ego and style can be met by wearing the latest fashion (Taleghani & Jourshari, 2012). The characteristics of the salesperson of the specific sports brand do influence the choice of sports products purchase. Youths like salesperson that is well-trained and could provide good knowledge about the specific sports brand products. Service provided and security of service right at particular store will attract customer to purchase the products (Lovell, 2010). Youths adore sports brand products that are easily accessible at many outlets situated at good locations. High quality service will enhance evaluation of products and will encourage customer to stay with particular brand due to high comfortability (Yee & Sidek, 2008). Youths in Perlis are also easily attracted by eye-catching advertisements which encourage their purchasing power of specific brand sports products. The advantage of advertisement is it can attract and maintain customer's loyalty towards a brand (Taleghani & Jourshari, 2012), especially in exploiting youth customer in building their self-identity (Soonarong, 2011). This is a concrete reason for sports brand marketers to communicate their brand through advertisement.

Sports brand loyalty among youths in Perlis is also affected by the beauty, creativity, and artistic value of the products design which suits their young souls as youth's life is active lifestyle oriented (Brakus et al., 2009). Besides that they are loyal towards sports brand that makes them feel good, fashionable, attractive, glamour, and also could make them an outstanding leader in fashion among their friends. As revealed by Keller (2009), these feelings exist as youths feel comfortable and secured with the sports brand. Brands that provide more fashionable variety will have more advantage in maintain youth's loyalty towards the brand (Kinuthia et al., 2012). Some youths in Perlis tend to be loyal to sports brand that symbolized the specific game of their interest, while others tend to adopt their idol sports personality's brand. There are youths who choose similar sports brand as their team members for excitement and bonding purpose. They felt satisfied with a specific sports brand when they obtained significant added value (Cengiz, 2010).

Female prefers brand that give them excitement and they have higher level of brand loyalty towards re-purchase of products compared to the male customers (Tan et al., 2012). The female youths in Perlis perceived higher influence that affects brand loyalty compared to the male youths. They select sports brand which reflects their personality. They prefer sports brand that makes them feel good, trendy, charming, and unique among their circles of friends. They also prefer contemporary design of brand that could reflects their creativity in fashion, while some adopts their idol sports personality's brand. It would be of great help to the female youths if the sports brand salesperson is well-trained to provide assistance in deciding which choice or design of the specific brand to purchase. Females tend to look at service performance rather than males who do their next purchase based on product performance (Tan et al., 2012).

## CONCLUSIONS

A brand is the main component necessary in developing strategies in sports industries. It is a source of competitive advantage that enhances customers' loyalty. The real sports brand loyalty is perceived once customers have shown high related behaviour to a particular sports brand by purchasing the particular brand sports product continuously and endlessly. All customers are loyal towards a sports brand. For this reason, studies on brand loyalty among sports customers of all walks of life should be acknowledged in future studies. This will provide specific perceptions of customers' sports brand loyalty to facilitate sports marketers in planning marketing strategies to draw existing as well as to attract new customers.

## REFERENCES

- Brakus, J. J., Schmitt, B. H., & Zarantonello, L. (2009). Brand experience: What is it? How is it measured? Does it affect loyalty? *Journal of Marketing*, 73, 52–68.
- Cengiz, E. (2010). Measuring customer satisfaction: Must or not? *Journal of naval Science and Engineering*, 6(2), 76–88.

- Che Aniza Che Wel, Syed Shah Alam, & Sallehuddin Mohd Noor (2011). Factors affecting brand loyalty: An empirical study in Malaysia. *Australian Journal of Basic and Applied Sciences*, 5(12), 777-783.
- Keller, K. L. (2009). *Measuring brand equity*. Cambridge: Dartmouth College.
- Kulkarni, R., & Belgaonkar, D. (2012). Purchase behavioural trends and brand loyalty of Indian youth with special reference to Nashik City. *International Conference on Humanity, History and Society*, 34, 129-133.
- Lovelock, C. H. (2010). *Services marketing* (4 th ed.). New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Mise, J. K., Nair, P. C., Odera, O., & Ogutu, P. M. (2013). Factors influencing brand loyalty of soft drink consumers in Kenya and India. *International Jurnal Business*, 4(2), 706–713.
- Soonarong, T. (2011). Factors affecting brand loyalty toward taekwondo martial arts of Jinya Gym in Bangkok. *American International Journal of Contemporary Research*, 1(3), 15–20.
- Taleghani, M., Jourshari, M. T. (2012). Assessment of gender differences in brand loyalty of sportswear consumers. *Journal of Basic and Applied Scientific Research*, 2(3), 20138–2144.
- Tan, T. M., Tan, S. M., Lee, W., Ong, M. B., & Liew, T. W. (2010). Does gender contributing moderating effect in brand equity model? *International Journal of Research in Management*, 3(2), 1–15.
- Yee, W. F., & Sidek, Y. (2008). Influence of brand loyalty on consumer sportswear. *International Journal of Economics and Management*, 2(2), 221–236.
- Kinuthia, L. N., Mburugu, K. G., Muthomi, H. N., & Mwihaki, M. (2012). Factors influencing brand loyalty in sportswear among Kenyan University students: The case of swimmers. *Asian Journal of Social Sciences Humanities*, 1(4), 223–231.