Comparison between Competitive and Non Competitive Runners on Purchasing Style of Running Shoes

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Abstract
This study explores the purchasing behaviors of competitive and non-competitive runners concerning running shoes using the Purchaser Style Inventory for Sport Products (PSISP-II). The research compares nine key factors: quality, brand, fashion, recreation, price, impulse, confusion, habit, and endorsement. Data were collected from 198 respondents, analyzed using descriptive statistics, and tested with the Mann-Whitney U test to identify significant differences between the two groups. The findings revealed that competitive runners prioritize quality and endorsements significantly more than non-competitive runners, aligning with previous literature on the importance of performance and athlete influence. Other factors such as brand, fashion, recreation, price, impulse, confusion, and habit showed no significant differences between the groups. Integrating consumer behavior models like the Engel Kollat Blackwell (EKB) Model, Black Box Model, and Hawkins Stern Impulse Buying Model provided a comprehensive understanding of these behaviors. The study's insights can aid marketers in tailoring strategies to meet the specific needs of competitive and non-competitive runners, emphasizing quality and endorsements for the former and a balanced approach for the latter.
Keyword: Purchasing Behavior, Competitive Runners, Non-Competitive Runners, Running Shoes, Consumer Behavior Models.

Introduction
Understanding consumer behavior is essential for businesses aiming to thrive in a globalized market. With the increasing interconnectivity of markets worldwide, companies must recognize the diverse needs and preferences of consumers from different cultures and economic backgrounds. This knowledge allows businesses to tailor their products and marketing strategies to meet the specific demands of their target markets, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The study of consumer behavior is a critical area of economic research, especially within the context of the globalized market for goods and services (Matyushenko et al., 2020; Ramazanov & Petrova, 2020). Consumer behavior examines how individuals, groups, or organizations select, secure, use, and dispose of products, services, experiences, or ideas to satisfy their needs, and the impact of these processes on both the consumer and society. A customer is an individual who buys a product, and they become a consumer if they use the purchased product (Riaz, 2015).

Additionally, consumer behavior research provides insights into the psychological and social factors influencing purchase decisions. By understanding these factors, businesses can develop more effective advertising campaigns that resonate with their audience on a deeper level. For example, emotional appeals in advertising can significantly impact consumer choices, especially in industries like fashion and technology where personal identity and lifestyle play a crucial role. The global athletic footwear market was valued at USD 129.52 billion in 2022 and is anticipated to grow at a CAGR of 5.83% from 2022 to 2032, according to research by The Brainy Insights in 2023.

The global athletic footwear market has experienced significant growth from 2019 to 2023, driven by several key trends. One of the primary drivers is the increased awareness of the health benefits associated with sports and fitness activities. As more people become conscious of issues such as weight gain, high blood pressure, and diabetes, particularly post-COVID-19, there has been a surge in the number of individuals engaging in physical activities to improve their health (Research and Markets, 2024). This awareness has translated into higher demand for athletic footwear, as people seek appropriate gear for their fitness routines.

Additionally, there is a growing interest in healthy lifestyles among young people, which has significantly boosted the athletic footwear market. This demographic shift has led to greater participation in various sports and fitness activities, further driving the demand for sports shoes (Mordor Intelligence, 2024). The trend is not just limited to athletes but extends to individuals who incorporate fitness into their daily lives, thereby increasing the market for athletic footwear.

The expansion of the retail e-commerce industry has also played a crucial role in the market's growth. The convenience of purchasing athletic footwear online, coupled with the ability to compare a wide range of products and prices, has made it easier for consumers to buy these products. This ease of access has significantly contributed to the market's expansion, as online retailing becomes an increasingly popular channel for consumers (Econ Market Research, 2024).

Lastly, rising disposable incomes have enabled more people to afford athletic footwear. With increased purchasing power, consumers are more willing to spend on health and fitness products, including sports shoes. This trend has led to higher spending in the athletic footwear market, contributing to its overall growth (Research and Markets, 2024). The statistical report on the global sports apparel market indicated a valuation of US$167 million in 2018, with predictions of reaching US$248.1 million by 2026, growing at a

compound annual growth rate of 5.1% from 2019 to 2026. This growth is further supported by recent data on the market's total revenue from 2021 to 2028 (Statista, 2022).

Statement of the Problem

There have been numerous studies and research conducted internationally within the sports industry; however, Malaysia lacks sufficient studies and research on decision-making styles for purchasing sports products using the PSISP-II method. Future researchers should revisit the PSISP with samples from various countries to further investigate its factor structure and invariance across different demographics, such as gender and race (Lam & Bae, 2014).

This gap in research presents an opportunity for Malaysian researchers to contribute significantly to the global understanding of consumer behavior in the sports industry. By conducting studies that focus on the decision-making styles of Malaysian consumers, researchers can provide valuable insights into how cultural, social, and economic factors influence purchasing behaviors. Additionally, reexamining the PSISP-II with diverse samples will help validate the tool's applicability and reliability across different populations, ensuring that it accurately reflects the factors influencing sports product purchases worldwide. This approach not only enhances the robustness of the PSISP-II but also promotes a more comprehensive understanding of global consumer behavior in the sports industry.

An analysis of the literature on consumer behavior reveals two primary perspectives: the traditional view of buyer motivation and behavior (traditionally positivistic paradigm) and the interdisciplinary marketing approach (interpretive paradigm) (Markovic et al., 2021; Christofi et al., 2023; Kastanakis et al., 2022).

These two perspectives provide a comprehensive understanding of consumer behavior. The traditional positivistic paradigm focuses on observable and measurable aspects of consumer actions, relying on quantitative methods to predict and analyze buying patterns. On the other hand, the interpretive paradigm, through an interdisciplinary marketing approach, delves into the subjective and contextual factors that influence consumer behavior, employing qualitative methods to understand the deeper meanings and motivations behind purchasing decisions. Together, these paradigms offer a balanced view, integrating both quantitative and qualitative insights to explore the complexities of consumer behavior in various market contexts. In Malaysia, research conducted by Trading Economics indicated that consumer spending increased from RM 162,567 million in the first quarter of 2018 to RM 165,795 million in the second quarter of 2018. The average spending from 2005 to 2018 was RM 107,269.22 million (Puteri & Suhaimi, 2021).

Significance of the Study

This research focuses on the purchasing styles of both competitive and non-competitive runners when buying running shoes. The study aims to identify the most influential factor affecting the purchase of running shoes for these two groups. What sets this study apart from others is the use of PSISP-II questionnaires, with a particular emphasis on running shoes. Despite the growing global interest in consumer behavior within the sports industry, there is a significant lack of studies focusing on the purchasing styles of competitive versus non-competitive runners, particularly in the Malaysian context. This study aims to bridge that gap

by providing new insights into the factors that influence the purchasing decisions of these two distinct groups.

Literature Review

The study of consumer behavior aims to predict how consumers will respond in the market. According to Sonam and Vikramjit (2022), a company's success depends on understanding its customers. By studying purchasing styles, we can identify the reasons and factors that influence decision-making when buying sports products. Walsh (2001) emphasizes that understanding consumer decision-making styles is crucial for developing strategic marketing and effective communication with diverse consumer segments.

The study emphasizes the need for businesses to adapt their marketing strategies to cater to various consumer segments. Recognizing that different consumer groups have distinct decision-making styles allows companies to customize their approaches, thus enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty. In conclusion, the study of consumer behavior is fundamental for predicting market responses, understanding and meeting customer needs, and developing targeted marketing strategies. This knowledge enables companies to thrive by making informed decisions that resonate with their diverse consumer base.

As markets throughout the world becoming increasingly more competitive, understanding consumers determines the practice of making sports goods and accessories (Baker et al., 2018). The discipline of sport consumer behavior has evolved from the broader field of general consumer behavior. As such, it can be described as a process of individuals selecting, paying for, using, and owning sport-related product and service that meet their needs (Funk et al., 2016). Therefore, as sport markets continue to grow, understanding the nuances of sport consumer behavior is essential for businesses aiming to succeed in this competitive environment. This knowledge allows companies to adapt their offerings to meet the specific needs and preferences of sport consumers, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Sport consumer behavior pertains to how consumers interact with products and services in the sport and leisure industry (Terason et al., 2019). As sport and leisure activities become central to promoting healthy lifestyles and fostering integrated communities, the sport market is likely to be at the forefront of efforts to enhance the quality of life (Sid, 2021).
Decision-making plays a crucial role in consumers' choices when purchasing sport products. A consumer decision-making style is defined as a mental orientation that characterizes how a consumer approaches making a choice (Sproles & Kendall, 1986).

Overall, three primary approaches are utilized to identify consumer decision-making styles: (a) the psychographic/lifestyle approach, (b) the consumer typology approach, and (c) the consumer characteristics approach (Bae, 2009). These methods offer valuable insights and future directions for consumer research.

The Psychographic/Lifestyle Approach

In marketing studies, researchers have traditionally used demographic profiles of consumers, such as age and household income, as standard tools (Lam & Bae, 2014). These demographics are among the factors that influence the decision-making outcomes for sport products.

The Consumer Typology Approach

The consumer typology approach classifies general consumers into various categories based on their lifestyles and shopping orientations. Shoppers have been categorized into a four-way typology according to their level of store loyalty and the number of different outlets they search. These categories are: (a) store-loyal shoppers (high loyalty, low search), (b) compulsive and recreational shoppers (high loyalty, high search), (c) convenience shoppers (low loyalty, low search), and (d) price-bargain shoppers (low loyalty, high search). Darden and Reynolds (1971), later added "special shoppers" and "quality shoppers" to the list. Research by Stephenson (1969), also demonstrated that lifestyles and shopping orientations strongly relate to various aspects of shopping behavior, such as store loyalty and preferences for certain types of retail stores.

In simpler terms, this approach divides shoppers into different groups based on their loyalty to specific stores and their extent of searching for products across various retailers. For example, store-loyal shoppers stick to one store without much searching, while price-bargain shoppers look for the best deals across many stores. Understanding these categories helps businesses tailor their marketing strategies to meet the needs of different types of shoppers.

The Consumer Characteristics Approach

The consumer characteristics approach focuses on the driving forces or motivations that influence consumers' choices of products and services. According to Sproles (1985), consumers' purchase decisions are primarily shaped by their mental and cognitive orientations. Specifically, consumer decision-making is influenced by one or more distinct decision-making traits that ultimately guide the process. These consistent and predictable traits are the major driving forces in decision-making (Sproles, 1985). Additionally, Murray (1968) argued that an individual's decision-making process is affected by both internal needs and external stimuli perceived by the consumer.

Discussing this information highlights the complex nature of consumer decision-making. Sproles (1985), emphasizes the role of inherent cognitive orientations and specific traits that consistently guide consumer choices. These traits provide a predictable framework for understanding consumer behavior, suggesting that individuals have stable decision-making patterns. On the other hand, Murray (1968), introduces the influence of both internal needs and external stimuli, indicating that consumer decisions are also responsive to external factors and personal motivations. Together, these perspectives underscore the multifaceted nature of consumer behavior, combining intrinsic cognitive traits with external influences to shape purchasing decisions.

Engel Kollat Blackwell Model (EKB)

Referring to the Engel Kollat Blackwell Model, individuals approach the market to purchase products, whether high-priced or low-priced, based on essential needs. Consumer behavior is influenced by personal needs as well as social pressure and norms (Mehta et al., 2020). According to this model, consumers go through five stages in their decision-making process. The first stage is need recognition, where the consumer identifies a need for a product. The second stage involves searching for alternative solutions or options, during which the consumer gathers information about the products available. The third stage is the evaluation

of alternatives, where the consumer assesses the strengths and weaknesses of each option. The fourth stage is making the purchase decision, where the consumer chooses a product and makes a purchase. Finally, the fifth stage involves post-purchase behavior, where the consumer reflects on their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the purchase (Tan, 2010).

This model highlights the systematic approach consumers take when making purchasing decisions. Understanding these stages helps marketers identify key points where they can influence consumer choices, ensuring that their products meet the needs and expectations of their target audience. The EKB model emphasizes the complex and multi-stage nature of consumer decision making, incorporating both psychological and behavioral aspects. It is widely used in marketing to understand and predict consumer behavior, allowing businesses to align their strategies to better meet the needs and preferences of their target audiences

Black Box Model
The Black Box Model is not attributed to a single person but rather is a general concept used in the study of consumer behavior. It is widely referenced in marketing and psychology literature to illustrate the relationship between stimuli and consumer responses. The Black Box Model also known as The Stimulus Response Model. The theory posits that behavioral responses such as avoidance or approach are influenced by aroused emotions, which is initially influenced by environmental stimuli (Yunduk, Euisoo and Suk-Kyu, 2020). This theory emphasizes that external factors, like advertisements or social influences, can trigger emotional responses in consumers, ultimately shaping their purchasing decisions. Understanding this model helps marketers design strategies that effectively appeal to consumers' emotions and drive desired behaviors.

The stimulus response model (Kotler, 1997) of consumer behavior is useful to understand the buying behavior of individual consumers in the context of individuals buying consumer products. The Black Box Model provides a straightforward framework for understanding consumer behavior by examining the relationship between external stimuli and observable responses, without detailing the intricate internal processes of the consumer's mind.

The Hawkins Stern Impulse Buying Model
It is a situation wherein a purchase is made without planning in advance (Stern, 1962). The Hawkins Stern Impulse Buying Model, developed by Stern in 1962, is a framework that categorizes different types of impulse purchases and helps to explain why and how consumers make these spontaneous buying decisions. Impulse buying is an unplanned decision to buy a product or service, made just before a purchase.

Stern (1962), stated that impulse buying does not always connote that the consumer did not plan to purchase ahead of time. Moreover, previous researchers (Stern,1962; Chun et al. 2020) indicated that women tend to carry out planned impulse buying, changing their purchases depending on sales, price specials, and coupon offers, among others. He pointed out that impulse buying isn't always completely unplanned. Sometimes, consumers intend to make a purchase but are flexible about what they buy, especially when they come

across promotions or discounts. This type of impulse buying is known as planned impulse buying.

Stern (1962), identified four types of impulse buying. Pure impulse buying occurs when a consumer makes a purchase with no prior planning, driven purely by an urge, often triggered by products placed near the checkout counter. Reminder impulse buying happens when a consumer is reminded of a need upon seeing a product, like noticing batteries on display and recalling the need for them at home. Suggestion impulse buying involves a consumer seeing a product for the first time and visualizing a need for it, often influenced by marketing or packaging. Planned impulse buying is a hybrid where a consumer intends to make specific purchases but ends up buying additional items due to attractive deals, discounts, or promotions, such as going to buy a shirt but also purchasing more items due to a buy one get one free offer.

Different Perception between Competitive and Non-Competitive
The perception and choice of running shoes can differ significantly between competitive and non-competitive runners, influenced by their specific needs, goals, and running habits. Recently, it has been suggested that a holistic approach is needed to better understand runner behaviors (Hulme and Finch, 2015).

According to Ramsey, Lamb, and Ribeiro (2022), three main themes emerged from the interview data regarding runners' footwear choices: economics, influence from others, and personal shoe characteristic preferences. The economic theme highlighted runners' concerns about the costs associated with their footwear. Additionally, runners often seek information from others when deciding on their shoes. Despite the influence of economic factors and advice from others, personal preferences ultimately drive the final decision on footwear.

This indicates that while runners are mindful of the costs and value opinions from others, their personal preferences regarding comfort, style, and performance features are the most significant factors in their final choice of running shoes. Understanding these themes can help marketers and shoe manufacturers tailor their products and marketing strategies to better meet the needs and preferences of runners.

Quality factor
"Product quality" is defined as the customer's assessment of a product's overall quality or superiority, based on their expectations (Zeithaml, 1998). It encompasses characteristics from marketing, engineering, manufacturing, and maintenance that ensure the product meets customer expectations (Feingenbum, 2015). Research has shown mixed results regarding the impact of product quality on purchasing decisions. For instance, Steven and Purba (2021) found that product quality positively and significantly affects the purchasing decisions for Adidas running shoes. However, Winnie et al (2022), found that while product quality had a positive impact, it was not statistically significant in influencing purchase intentions ($\beta = 0.061$; $p = 0.202$; $t = 0.837$). These differing outcomes suggest that while product quality is important, other factors may also play a significant role in influencing consumer purchase decisions.

Quality is the most important attribute for customers, with 34% of respondents rating it as their top priority (Nazmus, 2023). This study has proven that product quality has an effect

positive and significant impact on the decision to purchase Specs soccer shoes (Wijanarko wt al. 2023).

Brand Factor

Based on the findings and discussion, as well as the results of data collection through questionnaires distributed to 150 consumers who buy Nike sport shoes, it can be concluded that brand image has a positive relationship and influence on purchase intentions. Takaya (2023) highlighted that a strong brand image, both directly and indirectly, positively affects consumers' decisions to purchase Nike sport shoes. This is further supported by the results of hypothesis testing in Table XXX, which shows that the brand image variable influences the purchase decision of Adidas running shoes by 46% (Steven & Purba, 2021).

However, the influence of brand image on purchase intentions is not always consistent across different studies. For example, research by Morris (2021) with female inline skaters (n=54) found that brand names are particularly important to athletes when selecting sports clothes, indicating a significant role of brand image in their purchasing decisions. Contrarily, Winnie et al. (2022) revealed that the product brand had no significant positive impact on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.022$; $p = 0.384$; $t = 0.295$). These mixed results suggest that while brand image can significantly influence purchase decisions in some contexts, its impact may vary depending on the specific consumer group or product category being studied. Therefore, it is crucial for marketers to consider these variations and tailor their branding strategies accordingly to effectively target their intended audience.

Price Factor

Price is a crucial element of the marketing mix that generates revenue, as other elements typically incur costs (Wijaya, 2018). For sports consumers who are mindful of their spending, thriftiness becomes an important factor. Thriftiness, characterized by careful money management and avoiding waste, is associated with utility maximization (Gatersleben et al., 2019). This is supported by hypothesis testing results in Table XXX, which show that the price perception variable influences the purchase decision of Adidas running shoes by 28.9% (Steven & Purba, 2021).

Further analysis of Hypothesis 2 revealed that product price has a significant positive impact on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.267$; $p < 0.001$; $t = 3.828$) (Winnie et al., 2022). These findings suggest that consumers' perception of price plays a significant role in their decision to purchase sports products. When consumers perceive a product as being fairly priced, they are more likely to consider purchasing it. This highlights the importance for marketers to strategically price their products to attract cost-conscious consumers and maximize sales. Balancing price with perceived value can enhance purchase intentions and drive revenue in the competitive sports market.

Fashion Factor

According to a recent study by Saatchin, Azizi and Talebpour (2021), the trend of wearing sportswear in daily life is expanding due to the potential for enhancing an individual's image and social lifestyle. Deng et al (2010), and Mehra (2017), examined colour preference, as it relates to sport shoes. Mehra explains that shoe colour influences consumers' decision-making. Comfort and design are also highly valued by customers, with 25% and 22%

respectively rating them as their top priority (Nazmus, 2023). Now a day due to the fashion consciousness and style people prefer casual shoes as everyone wants to look perfect. Most of the top brands deal in both sport shoes as well as casual shoes (Sood, 2022).

Endorsement Factor
Endorsement is a widely used marketing strategy in the sports apparel sector (e.g., Min et al., 2019; Oodith, 2019). The study for Hypothesis 4 demonstrated that endorsements have a substantial positive impact on purchase intention ($\beta = 0.335$; $p < 0.001$; $t = 4.856$) (Winnie et al., 2022). This suggests that when athletes or celebrities endorse sports apparel, it significantly boosts consumers' intention to purchase these products. Endorsements leverage the popularity and credibility of the endorser to create a positive image of the product, making it more appealing to consumers.

Social media also significantly affects purchase intentions, particularly among youth who regularly access various platforms (Pei Shi & Siti, 2021). Consumers are more likely to buy sports apparel associated with their favorite athletes, which enhances product appeal (Lee, 2021). Furthermore, the rise of the internet has amplified informational influence, where reviews and ratings from previous consumers heavily impact potential buyers' decisions. As consumers increasingly rely on social media and online reviews for information, marketers must ensure their products receive positive endorsements and maintain a strong presence on social media to effectively influence purchasing decisions.

Based on this study (Schouten & et, 2019) influencer endorsements are more effective than celebrity endorsement, which can be explained by processes of wishful identification, similarity, and identification.Followers often see influencers as more relatable and trustworthy compared to celebrities.

Celebrity endorsements remain a common strategy for leveraging secondary brand associations. Celebrity endorsement has been noted as one of the most prevalent strategies for levering secondary brand associations and prior work suggests that leveraging the associations of other entities allows for two types of strategies: commonality and complementarity strategies (Keller & Swaminathan, 2020). Understanding these differences helps brands choose the most effective endorsement strategy for their marketing efforts.

Impulse Factor
Impulsive Buying or Impulse Buying is a purchase where consumers do not consider buying , or consider it but have not yet decided what product to buy. Usually, The decision-making process is done quickly without thinking and wisely (Salam & Fandi, 2023) and the result of this study shows that the store atmosphere construct does not have a significant effect on impulse buying.

This finding suggests that other factors might be more influential in driving impulsive buying behavior. For example, personal factors such as mood, emotions, or the presence of compelling promotions and discounts could play a more significant role. Additionally, product placement and visual appeal might trigger impulse purchases more effectively than the overall store environment. Understanding these nuances can help retailers focus their strategies on elements that more directly influence impulsive buying, such as attractive

displays and limited-time offers, rather than relying solely on enhancing the store atmosphere.

Methodology

This study has selected a comparative design to identify the differences in purchasing styles between competitive and non-competitive runners. This research will employ a quantitative method, which is suitable for a comparative study. The researcher will distribute questionnaires to the respondents to gather the necessary data. This study employs a combination of purposive and random sampling methods to ensure a comprehensive and representative sample of both competitive and non-competitive runners. For competitive runners, purposive sampling is utilized, targeting individuals who are active members of running clubs and athlete groups. This method ensures that the sample comprises dedicated runners who regularly engage in competitive events. The sample size for this group is set at 50 participants, which provides a focused dataset on the purchasing behaviors of competitive runners. For non-competitive runners, random sampling is conducted at running tracks and parks in Bandar Baru Bangi and Kajang. This approach involves selecting participants randomly from these public locations to capture a wide range of non-competitive runners with varying levels of engagement in running activities. The target sample size for non-competitive runners is 150 participants, which ensures a robust and diverse dataset for analysis. The Purchaser Style Inventory for Sport Products (PSISP), contains 42 questions aimed at identifying the factors influencing the purchase of sports products. These questions are categorized into nine groups: quality factor, brand factor, fashion factor, recreation factor, price factor, impulse factor, confusion factor, habit factor, and endorsement factor. Each question is rated on a scale from 1 to 5. The PSISP helps to identify the reasons and influencing factors behind purchasing sports products. Descriptive analysis will be employed to identify the factors influencing the purchasing styles of competitive and non-competitive runners. The collected data will be analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS version 27). The analysis will utilize the independent t-test (parametric) method.

Descriptive Statistics of Demographic Data of the Runners

Section A of the questionnaire gathered information about the demographic background of the runners. It included questions regarding gender, age, reasons for participating in running events, total weekly running distance in kilometers, and the running events they have participated in. The demographic data results are displayed below.

Table 2

		n	Percentage
Gender	Male	160	80.8
	Female	38	19.2
Age	Less than 20 years old	21	10.6
	21 to 40 years old	131	66.2
	41 to 50 years old	38	19.2
	More than 51 years old	8	4.0
Join Running event for	Fun / Hobby / leisure	147	74.2
	Competition	51	25.8
Total weekly run in KM	Less than 5 km	49	24.7
	5 km - 10 km	57	28.8
	11 km - 20 km	46	23.2
	More than 20 km	46	23.2
Running Event that participated	Less than 5 km	51	25.8
	5 km - 10 km	59	29.8
	11 km - 20 km	24	12.1
	More than 20 km	64	32.3

The data provides a detailed overview of the demographic and behavioral characteristics of runners.

Descriptive Statistics of Factor Data of the Runners
Table 3

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Brand Factor	198	3.2462	.71357
Fashion Factor	198	3.1465	.76162
Recreation Factor	198	2.9677	.59248
Quality Factor	**198**	**3.8068**	**.55539**
Price Factor	198	3.2311	.65587
Impulse Factor	198	3.2155	.73171
Confusion Factor	198	3.1578	.89558
Habit Factor	198	3.4343	.85226
Endorsement Factor	**198**	**2.8182**	**.89732**
Valid N (List wise)	198		

Table 3 present the results regarding the factors influencing the purchasing styles of running shoes, based on descriptive items in this study. A total of 198 respondents answered

questions on nine different items. These questions utilized a Likert scale ranging from 1 to 5, where 1 signifies "strongly disagree," 2 indicates "disagree," 3 represents "neutral," 4 stands for "agree," and 5 means "strongly agree."

Overall, the data indicates that while quality is a consistently important factor for runners, endorsements are not as universally influential, and perceptions of their importance vary significantly among participants.

Normality Test

Table 4

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Statistic	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Sig.	Shapiro-Wilk Statistic	Shapiro-Wilk Sig.
Brand Factor	0.102	< .001	0.915	< .001
Fashion Factor	0.102	< .001	0.973	.001
Recreation Factor	0.118	< .001	0.968	< .001
Quality Factor	0.110	< .001	0.971	< .001
Price Factor	0.105	< .001	0.968	< .001
Impulse Factor	0.103	< .001	0.973	.001
Confusion Factor	0.107	< .001	0.969	< .001
Habit Factor	0.112	< .001	0.971	< .001
Endorsement Factor	0.090	< .001	0.981	.008

The "Tests of Normality" table provides results from the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests, which assess whether the data for each factor is normally distributed. Each factor is evaluated using both tests, and the results indicate significant deviations from normality across all factors.

In summary, all the factors Quality, Brand, Fashion, Recreation, Price, Impulse, Confusion, Habit, and Endorsement exhibit significant deviations from normal distribution as indicated by the p-values from both the Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-Wilk tests. This suggests that non-parametric statistical methods may be more appropriate for analyzing these data due to their non-normal distribution is Mann- Whitney Test for comparison.

Hypothesis Testing

Table 5

Factor	Mann-Whitney U	Wilcoxon W	Z	Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)
Quality	2575.000	13453.000	-3.342	< .001
Brand	3703.500	5029.500	-0.129	.898
Fashion	3580.500	14458.500	-0.479	.632
Recreation	3512.500	4838.500	-0.674	.500
Price	3693.000	5019.000	-0.159	.874
Impulse	3593.500	4919.500	-0.444	.657
Confusion	3074.500	4400.500	-1.924	.054
Habit	3621.500	14499.500	-0.363	.716
Endorsement	2322.000	13200.000	-4.057	< .001

Given these findings, we reject the null hypothesis for the quality and endorsement factors, as there are significant differences between competitive and non-competitive runners in these areas. For all other factors, we fail to reject the null hypothesis, indicating no significant differences between the two groups.

Table 6

Hypothesis	Result
HA : There is Significant difference between competitive and non competitive runners in purchasing style running shoes.	Rejected
HO : There is no Significant difference between competitive and non competitive runners in purchasing style running shoes.	Accepted

Discussion

Mann-Whitney U Test

The results of the Mann-Whitney U test indicated significant differences between competitive and non-competitive runners in the quality and endorsement factors. Competitive runners place a higher importance on the quality of running shoes (U = 2575.000, Z = -3.342, p < .001) and are more influenced by endorsements (U = 2322.000, Z = -4.057, p < .001). This finding aligns with previous literature suggesting that serious athletes prioritize the performance and durability of their gear to enhance their competitive edge (Bae et al., 2021). Conversely, the lack of significant differences in brand, fashion, recreation, price, impulse, confusion, and habit factors indicates that both groups share similar attitudes towards these aspects. These

results support the notion that while competitive runners are discerning about quality and endorsements, their overall purchasing behavior is not drastically different from that of non-competitive runners (Lin, 2012).

Quality was identified as the most significant factor for both groups, but particularly for competitive runners. This emphasis on quality is consistent with findings by Steven and Purba (2021), who reported that product quality significantly affects purchasing decisions for Adidas running shoes. High-quality running shoes are essential for competitive runners to ensure optimal performance and injury prevention (Hulme & Finch, 2015). Endorsements by athletes or celebrities significantly influence competitive runners' purchasing decisions. This is in line with the research by Schouten et al. (2019), which found that influencer endorsements can be more effective than traditional celebrity endorsements due to processes of wishful identification and perceived similarity. Competitive runners may be more influenced by endorsements as they often look up to successful athletes and aspire to replicate their success by using the same products (Jin et al., 2021).

The absence of significant differences in brand, fashion, recreation, price, impulse, confusion, and habit factors suggests a more generalized purchasing behavior in these areas. For instance, price sensitivity (U = 3693.000, Z = -0.159, p = .874) does not significantly differ between the two groups, indicating that both competitive and non-competitive runners consider cost when making purchasing decisions. This finding is consistent with Gatersleben et al. (2019), who highlighted that thriftiness and careful money management are common among sports consumers.

The Engel Kollat Blackwell (EKB) Model

Integrating consumer behavior models provides further insight into these findings. The Engel Kollat Blackwell (EKB) Model outlines a five-stage decision-making process: need recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post-purchase behavior (Tan, 2010). Applying this model, both competitive and non-competitive runners recognize the need for running shoes based on their engagement in running activities. Competitive runners likely seek more detailed information on product quality and endorsements due to their performance needs. They prioritize high-quality and endorsed products during the evaluation stage, while non-competitive runners might consider a broader range of factors equally. Satisfaction levels post-purchase are likely higher for competitive runners when quality and endorsement align with their expectations.

The Black Box Model

The Black Box Model emphasizes the impact of external stimuli on consumer responses without detailing internal processes (Yunduk et al., 2020). Advertisements, endorsements by athletes, and product quality information serve as external stimuli, with competitive runners exhibiting a strong response to quality and endorsements, translating into higher purchase intentions for products meeting these criteria. Non-competitive runners respond similarly to a range of stimuli, with no single factor dominating their decision-making process.

The Hawkins Stern Impulse Buying Model

The Hawkins Stern Impulse Buying Model categorizes impulse purchases into pure, reminder, suggestion, and planned impulse buying (Stern, 1962). Non-competitive runners may engage

in planned impulse buying, where they intend to purchase running shoes but are influenced by promotions or endorsements at the point of sale. Visual merchandising and attractive displays can trigger impulse purchases among non-competitive runners.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the findings suggest that marketing strategies targeting competitive runners should emphasize the quality and endorsement aspects of running shoes. Highlighting product durability, performance features, and endorsements by well-known athletes can appeal to this demographic. For non-competitive runners, a more balanced approach addressing a wider range of factors, including price and brand reputation, may be effective. The study contributes to the understanding of consumer behavior in the sports footwear market by highlighting the key factors influencing the purchasing decisions of competitive and non-competitive runners. Quality and endorsements are particularly important for competitive runners, while other factors such as brand, fashion, recreation, price, impulse, confusion, and habit are similarly valued by both groups. Integrating consumer behavior models like the EKB Model, Black Box Model, and Hawkins Stern Impulse Buying Model provides a comprehensive understanding of these purchasing behaviors. These insights can help marketers tailor their strategies to better meet the needs of different segments within the running community.

Recommendations

Future research should include a diverse range of demographics to see if purchasing trends are consistent across different populations. Long-term studies can help track changes in runner purchasing behaviors over time.

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