THE EFFECT OF BRAND CREDIBILITY ON CONSUMERS’ PERCEPTION ABOUT BRANDS AND THEIR PURCHASING BEHAVIORS IN SPORT GOODS

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Abstract
The present study was an attempt to explore the effect of brand credibility on consumers’ satisfaction, continuance loyalty and loyalty to a brand. The main sample of this descriptive -correctional research comprised Nike-sport-products consumers (N=171), selected through convenience sampling procedures. The outputs related to the relationship among the variables obtained by means of the EQS 6.1 and the Structural Equation Modeling statistics indicated that the proposed diagrammed model was appropriate. In other words, the obtained data fitted well with the proposed model. Results indicated that brand credibility significantly affects consumers’ perception about the brand and their purchasing behaviors. Accordingly, it is recommended that the sports-products companies should attempt to create positive images about their goods in the minds of their customers.

Key words: brand, credibility, satisfaction, commitment, loyalty, word

Introduction
Mullin, Hardy, and Sutton (2007) define sport marketing as all the activities planned to meet the needs and demands of sport consumers through a series of exchanging processes. One of the significant issues of sport marketing that warrants investigation is Branding Management. Nowadays, with the increased competition among traders, creating prominent brands can be considered as an appropriate path to overcome some of the problems (Heding, Knudtzen, & Bjerre, 2008). Brand, according to Tafreshi Motlagh and Khandani (2010) is known as a name, phrase, items, sign, plan or a mixture of these used by the companies to make their products and services known to everyone. However, as Takali (2012) maintains brands do not just signify the name, rather it represents exactly what an organization/company is attempting to have and maintain in the long run. A brand communicates with the consumers not only through its literal meaning, but also more importantly by means of its long term effect and nature identified by its users. Generally speaking, brands help the consumers to permanently consider the products and services. They can also affect one’s image of the product, the services and even the company that provides them. However, as Takali (2012) maintains brands do not just signify the name, rather it represents exactly what an organization/company is attempting to have and maintain in the long run. A brand communicates with the consumers not only through its literal meaning, but also more importantly by means of its long term effect and nature identified by its users. Generally speaking, brands help the consumers to permanently consider the products and services. They can also affect one’s image of the product, the services and even the company that provides them. Heding et al. (2008) propose that In the intelligible marketing, nowadays, rather than competing on the prices, companies mainly focus on to attract consumers in the long-term (reliability), and (3) Being attractive and entertaining and being worthy of the expenses (the desirability of the brand), then, it will enjoy the required credibility on the part of the consumers. Put another way, credibility is a yardstick which evaluates the degree of the enthusiasm of the consumer toward the organization to which the brand belongs. The importance of credibility stems from the fact that
incomplete and unparallel expressions lead in the
lack of the consumer’s trust about the qualities of
the product, and this ends in the perceived risk of
the consumer. The credibility of the brand reduces
the perceived risk because it increases the
consumers’ trust about the promises of a product
of a company. Also, credibility reduces the
expenses for information because consumers may
use the credible brands as a database to
economize the expenses of gathering data and
processing those (Erdem & Swait, 2004). In
addition, the credibility of a brand and its
expertise has a great role in bringing about loyalty
in the consumers, which in turn, leads to three
kinds of emotions in them: satisfaction, loyalty
commitment, and continuous commitment. A kind
of commitment to loyalty and satisfaction emerges
among the consumers if the company and the
brand are able to bring about a sense of loyalty in
the consumers. This helps the consumers feel
committed to the brand continuously. With the
advances in technology and the market becoming
more competitive in different sections of
production and services, a loyal consumer is
considered as the main asset of any corporation. If
the consumers are loyal to the brand, they will
spend a lot of money on the products, marketing
programs will be more effective, and this will
cause the company to achieve the privilege of a
firm competition (Dunne & Moulden, 2009).
Loyalty is traditionally used to commonly describe
adherence and a big, strong interest to a country,
individual or an ideal (Hoseini, Nasr, Javani, &
Salimi, 2011). In the same vein, Oliver (1997) has
described loyalty to a brand as “making a big
commitment to purchase again or supporting a
product or preferred service continuously in the
future, and repeating purchasing the brand
regularly against the situational impact and the
existing marketing attempts, which may cause a
change in behavior”. Kressmann et al. (2006)
measured two groups of theoretical scale for
loyalty to brand, namely, ‘Behavioral scale’ and
‘Theoretical scale’. Behavioral Loyalty is described
as loyalty to a trade mark through observable
purchase within a priod of tim., Indeed, Behavioral
Loyalty relates to the number and the amount of
purchase; Theoretical Loyalty, on the other hand,
is described based on statement of ones
preferances, his commitment or the aim to
purchase (Taylor, Celuch, & Goodwin, 2004). Morgan
(2000) maintains that the word ‘loyal’ can
be interpreted in different ways ranging from
emotional loyalty (How do I feel?) to behavioral
loyalty (Why am I loyal?). The American Marketing
Association (AMA) defines loyalty to a brand as: “A
priviledge that a customer buys a product
repetitively from the same producer instead of
buying it from different producers” (p. XX).
Cuonsumers’ loyalty is beneficial to a company in
many different ways. Among these advantages,
decrease in the expense of attracting customers,
increase in payments made by a loyal consumer
for a good or service, benefits gained from having
a customer for a long time, positive performance
through increasing the power of predicting, and
increasing obstacles for the competitors can be
enumerated. Loyal consumers are referred to as
sort marketing agencies acting for the company
(Heding et al., 2008). SEYED, AMINI, and AMINI
(2010) found a positive correlation between
behavioral and theoretical loyalty, and satisfaction
and trusting a brand. Similarly, Singh and
Sirdeshmikh (2000) proposed a model in which
trust is a primilanry step for satisfaction and
loyalty. Swait, Erdem, Louviere, and Dubelaar
(1993), in a study on sports shoes, concluded
that the expense which a customer is willing to pay for
purchasing a trademark is a tool for measuring the
degree of credibility the brand has for the
customer. A similar trend was observed in
Sweeney and Swait’s (2008) investigation which
indicated that the credibility of a brand has a
positive effect on loyalty. However, Amirkhani,
amani, Taab, and Arjomadi (2012) showed
contradictory results: that the credibility of a brand
has no effect on loyalty. Many studies including
Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012), Alam, Arshad, and
Shabbir (2012), Heidarzadeh et al. (2011) and
Ghorban (2012) conclude that the credibility of a
brand has a positive effect on loyalty. In line with
these therorectical frameworks and findings ,
the first hypothesis is proposed as the follows: H1:
The credibility of a brand significantly affects
consumers’ loyalty to sports products. Nowadays,
it is totally accepted that the satisfied customers
are less sensitive to the price and are less affected
by the competitors’ attack. They also stay more
loyal to the product of the company for a longer
time in comparison with the unsatisfied
consumers. Customer satisfaction has been the
strategic center of many organizations in the last
two decades. Satisfaction has been described as
measuring the perceived difference between the
previous expectations and the real performance of
the product (Heidarzadeh et al., 2011). Oliver
(1997) defines satisfaction as a pleasant
realization, i.e., the consumer feels as if
consumption has fulfilled a need, desire, or a
goal). The high levels of general satisfaction
reflect a positive reaction with regard to fulfilling
the needs of the consumers through time, which
ends in loyal consumers. The satisfaction of the
consumer can create long-term benefits such as
positive recommendation through word of mouth,
multiple purchase, and the loyalty of the consumer
for the company. The satisfaction of a consumer
has been defined as a plausibility completion
response toward the good, service, profit, or
reward (Yoshida & James, 2010). Comparing
expectations with perceptions leads to positive or
negative disconfirmation if perceptions decrease or
increase the short-term expectations, respectively.
The outcome of perceptions being in line with the
expectations is confirmation, and as a positive
disconfirmation, it most probably will lead to
satisfaction (Westerbeek & Shilbury, 2003).
Studies of Sweeney and Swait (2008), Ghorban
and Tahernejad (2012), Heidarzadeh et al. (2011)
and Ghorban (2012) have all reported that the
credibility of a brand has a positive effect on
satisfaction.
Similary, Singh and Sirdeshmukh (2000) proposed a model in which reliability is an introduction to satisfaction and loyalty. In their study, Amirkhani et al. (2012), however, concluded that the credibility of a brand has no effect on satisfaction. Accordingly, the second hypothesis is proposed as follows: H2: The credibility of the brand significantly affects customers' satisfaction with sports products. Commitment has been conceptualized differently in sports marketing and, in general, in marketing studies, in particular. One of the triaxial models developed by Kim and Alen (1991) is continuance commitment, which relates to the sense of 'being locked' in a specific organization (J. W. Kim, James, & Kim, 2013). In many definitions, it is common that commitment is a stable or necessary factor which directs one's behavior (Engelberg, Skinner, & Zakus, 2011). Customer relationship commitment has been considered important as far as decreasing rearrangements (R. M. Morgan & Hunt, 1994), increase in one's purchase and in causing favorable tendencies such as loyalty in the future in a marketing concept are concerned. Commitment has usually been considered as a relationship booster (Heidarzadeh et al., 2011). Continuance commitment reflects a knowledgeable assessment of the expenses when one intends to quit an organization and the recognition of the need to preserve a relationship, which includes the perceived expenses of rearrangements or the lack of an appropriate option (Sweeney & Swait, 2008). It is expected that a continuous commitment decreases switching propensity when: (a) the company is able to act its promises, and (b) when the company is able to be trusted for acting its promises. It must be mentioned that when the other conditions are stable, a brand with high credibility enjoys a higher continuous commitment compared to a brand with lower credibility (Heidarzadeh et al., 2011). Based on the outcomes of Sweeney and Swait (2008) and Amirkhani’s et al. (2012) studies, the credibility of a brand has a positive effect on continuous commitment. The third hypothesis is, thus, formulated as follows: Hypothesis 3: Brand credibility significantly affects consumers' continuance commitment.

Cox (1967) has defined verbal advertisements in a very simple way, in which they are not more than a dialogue about products. The key factors influencing word of mouth advertisement are: (1) Personal factors including reliable resources, credibility, opinion leadership, experience, previous perceptions of the institute, (2) Interpersonal factors encompassing power requirements, (3) Message characteristics such as clarity of the message, message delivery power, nonverbal communication, and (4) Situational characteristics that comprise low risk of product/situation, low complexity of the service/multiple separate sources, receiver without information, etc. Arndt (1967) stated that verbal advertisement is a face to face across-sender-receiver communication. In this communi-cation, the receiver receives information about a brand or a service through noncommercial channels.

Three main parts of verbal communication are as follows: (1) Interpersonal communication, person to person recommendation, no use of mass communication (2) Transformation of information based on a product, brand, or service, and (3) Impartial connector or the person in touch. Word of mouth recommendation indicates a kind of behavior in which the consumer informally shares his/her experience, evaluation and recommendation of the product or service with other potential consumers. Word of mouth communication is a very influential factor affecting decision-making of consumers in terms of purchasing the goods, and usually is stronger than other methods of promoting, which can be used by marketers extensively since the personal communication is perceived as a more reliable method of impersonal information. While consumers’ awareness of the product is usually enhanced by mass media, in many cases WOM is more effective in real purchase decision (Kim & Traill, 2011). The main components of WOM marketing according to the statement of the International Institution of Verbal Advertisement Marketing Association are as follows: (a) providing people with needed training regarding the products and services, (b) identifying people who we doubt to share their points of view more than other people, (c) providing mechanisms which facilitate sharing information among people, (d) Investigation and the necessary study in this field that how, where, and when people’s attitudes are shared, (e) hearing the statements and points of view of supporters, slanderers, and impartial people (Jafarpishe, 2012). Sweeney and Swait (2008) found that brand credibility has a key role in increasing word of mouth activity. A somehow similar trend was observed in the study conducted by Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012) who concluded that brand credibility has an indirect role on word of mouth. The fourth hypothesis is accordingly formulated as follows: H4: Brand credibility significantly affects consumers' word of mouth of sports products. In general, advertisement can have a significant effect on purchasing tendencies of consumers and their satisfaction of the products and services. Switching propensity and to suggest others to purchase stems from the theory of Social Exchange (reference). Purchasing certain brands happens due to two incentives: (1) Evaluating the benefits the customer perceives to get from this relationship, and (2) queries done by the customer about other benefits to maintain relationship in the future (reference). Marketers believe that most of the satisfied customers, if they are satisfied, may switch to a competitor brand for many different reasons. This issue depends on factors such as: sense of variety seeking, presentation of brands with higher qualities by the competitors and the customers' tastes, etc. (Amirkhani et al., 2012). Aaker (1991) considers three levels for loyalty to a brand: in the highest level, that is, level 5 the customer has a commitment to the brand; in level 4 the customer has an interest in the brand; in level 3 the behavior of the customer is satisfactory with the change in costs; in level 2 the customer
has a habit of continual purchase but there is a possibility of switching propensity without any reason; and in the first level the customer is not loyal. Thus, in the first two levels of the five levels of loyalty, there is a switching propensity. Sweeney and Swait (2008) found that brand credibility has a key role in decreasing the consumers' switching propensity. Based on the theoretical frameworks states above, therefore, the fifth hypothesis predicts that: \( H_5: \text{Brand credibility has a negative role on consumers'} \) switching propensity of sports products. To sum up, then, the proposed model for research is illustrated in Figure 1.

![Figure 1. The Proposed Model of Study](image)

### Methods

#### Sample

The participants of this research were the Nike sport products consumers. Since the number of the Nike brand consumers are uncertain, infinite population size was considered. To determine the sample size, the following formula was used (Johnson & Bhattacharyya, 1977):

\[
n = \frac{(z)^2 \cdot \sigma^2}{d^2}
\]

In the above formula, \( Z \) with a confidence interval of 95% is equal to 1.96 and "\( d \)" is error rate that equals .07 was considered. A pilot study \( (n=30) \) Nike sport products consumers) was executed to evaluate the sample variance and instrument reliability. Sample variance (.194) was obtained that ended in a number of 153 participants as the final sample. The 180 questionnaires distributed among consumers yielded 171 complete and appropriately responded questionnaires \( (i.e., 95\% \) overall response rate). A convenience sample \( (N = 171) \) of NIKE consumers were, therefore, recruited from both men \( (51.5\%) \) and women \( (48.5\%) \). The participants' average age was 24.23 \( (\pm 5.06 \) years). 32.2% of those over five times, 20.5% twice, 19.9% at least once, and 15.2% three times and 12.3% four times had been using the Nike sport products.

### Instrument and measurements

This section describes the measurement tools used to measure each variable involved in the proposed model of the study. Loyalty commitment in this study reflects the underlying affective notion of commitment, including the desire to maintain a relationship in the future. Loyalty commitment was measured by a 6-item scale extracted from Meyer and Allen (1984). Brand credibility, representing the belief that the brand is capable and willing to act on its promises, and comprising aspects of expertise and trustworthiness, was measured based on scale used by Erdem and Swait (1998). The 5-item satisfaction measures were taken from Oliver (1997). Items for the switching propensity and word of mouth recommendations were taken from Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) and Sweeney and Swait (2008) scales of behavioral intentions. All items were measured on 7-point Likert scales. The 3-item continuance commitment measures were taken from Sweeney and Swait (2008).

### Data analyses

For testing the hypothesized model, a two-step approach was used. First, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to assess the measurement model using the EQS 6.1 statistical package. After the CFA was conducted, a general Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique was used to examine the structural relationships among loyalty commitment, satisfaction, switching propensity and word of mouth constructs. For each scale, internal consistency measures (Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability) were calculated to indicate reliabilities. In addition, the average variance extracted (AVE) value was measured, which demonstrated whether each of the items contributed to the scale's underlying theoretical construct.

### Results

#### Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Table 1 summarizes descriptive statistics, reliability estimate and CFA item statistics of the scales. The descriptive statistics showed that the skewness and kurtosis values of the 21 items were all within \( \pm 1.00 \), meeting the criteria suggested by Kline (2005): Brand credibility item skewness values ranged from -.36 to -.08 and item kurtosis ranged from -1.06 to -.49. Continuance commitment item skewness values ranged from -.16 to -.05 and item kurtosis ranged from -1.04 to -.67. Loyalty commitment item skewness values ranged from -1.04 to -.67. Loyalty commitment item skewness values ranged from -.16 to -.05 and item kurtosis ranged from -1.04 to -.67. Loyalty commitment item skewness values ranged from -.16 to -.05 and item kurtosis ranged from -1.04 to -.67. Loyalty commitment item skewness values ranged from -.16 to -.05 and item kurtosis ranged from -1.04 to -.67. Continuing commitment item skewness values ranged from -.24 to -.11 and item kurtosis ranged from -1.04 to -.71. Satisfaction item skewness values ranged from -.50 to -.23 and item kurtosis ranged from -1.09 to -.12. Switching propensity item skewness values ranged from .08 to .37 and item kurtosis ranged from -.97 to -.88. Word of mouth item skewness values ranged from -.37 to -.26 and item kurtosis ranged from -.92 to -.90 (Table 1). For multivariate normality, Mardia's coefficient was examined in both CFA and SEM models.
Table 1 Descriptive statistics, reliability estimate and CFA item statistics of the scales

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<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<th>SKWNNESS</th>
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Note: * composite reliability

Figure 2 Standardized Weights for the Structural Model

Its normalized estimate was higher (CFA & SEM Mardia = 50.75) than the required range of values for this indicator (-3 to +3 Bentler, 1989)). To address this departure from multivariate normality, robust analysis methods were requested through EQS, and indicators such as the Satorra Bentler $\chi^2$ and robust statistics were examined which correct for such departures.

First, CFA results indicated an adequate fit for the four factor model: Satorra Bentler $\chi^2 = 125.41$, df = 98, $p < .05$, NFI = .96, NNFI = .99, CFI = .99, RMSEA = .041, with a 90% confidence interval between .013 and .060, satisfying the scientific criteria (Hair, 2006; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Kline, 2005). Second, reliability of the measures was evaluated by computing the average variance...
extracted (AVE), Cronbach’s alpha and composite reliability for each construct. Internal consistency levels were acceptable, ranging from 0.75 to 0.96 ($\alpha \geq 0.7$; Nunnally (1978)). The results indicated acceptable levels of composite reliability for all constructs, ranging from 0.65 to 0.89. Since values exceeded the .60 cut-off point (CR $\geq 0.6$; Aubert, Rivard, & Patry, 1996); Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). The AVE values were all above 0.50, which also implied that the scales had good construct reliability, ranging from 0.59 to 0.75 (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988; Bagozzi & Yi, 1988). Thus, convergent validity of the measures was achieved.

**Structural Equation Modeling**

The results of the proposed model revealed an excellent fit of the model to the data. The fit indices were as follows: Satorra Bentler $\chi^2 = 536.07$, $df = 270$, $p < .05$, NFI = .89, NNFI = .93, CFI = .94, RMSEA = .076 (with the 90% confidence internal .066 to .085). As can be observed in Figure 2, the model results support all of the five hypotheses. Brand credibility was found to significantly influence loyalty commitment ($\beta = .90$, $p < .05$; $H_2$ supported), satisfaction ($\beta = .77$, $p < .05$; $H_2$ supported), continuance commitment ($\beta = .74$, $p < .05$; $H_3$ supported), word of mouth ($\beta = .92$, $p < .05$; $H_4$ supported) and switching propensity ($\beta = -.77$, $p < .05$; $H_3$ supported).

**Discussion and conclusion**

Nowadays, most of the companies come to believe that brands of the products and their services are their most valuable assets. In today’s complex and challenging world, all of us, either individually or as business managers, face an increase in options and decrease in time for making decisions and choices. Accordingly, the role of brands in simplifying customer decisions, reducing risk and defining their expectations is invaluable. One of the duties of senior management of each organization is to build strong and powerful brands that not only act their promises and commitments, but also improve and enhance their capabilities over time (Keller, 2008). Brands are like floating icebergs that the small and visible part of them which is above the water represents things that are linked with brands over time. However, the invisible massive and important part which is under water implies the power of brand. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of brand credibility on brand perception variables including, satisfaction, continuous commitment, and brand loyalty. According to results of the study, brand credibility had a significantly direct effect on loyalty. The outcomes are in line with Sweeney and Swait (2008), Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012), Ghorban (2012), and Heidarzadeh et al. (2011) who reported the same findings. However, these findings are in contrast with the findings of Amirkhani et al. (2012) who suggested that brand credibility did not have a significant effect on consumer loyalty. Levin, Beasley, and Gamble (2004) believed that brand loyalty is not just continuous purchasing of produces, but a deep commitment to repurchase. In other words, if customers are loyal to a brand, they are likely to pay higher prices for it and the effect of marketing programs on them will be stronger; accordingly, companies will achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. Therefore, building and maintaining the value of a reputable brand name is one of the ways of increasing customer loyalty. In addition, results indicated that brand credibility had significantly positive effect on continuous commitment, this, corroborates with the findings of Sweeney and Swait (2008), Ghorban (2012), (Amirkhani et al., 2012), and Heidarzadeh et al. (2011) who considered commitment as a necessity in strengthening the relationship and as a marketing concept. It is thought that commitment increases favorable behaviors like loyalty in future. Thus, based on the findings, brands with high reputation encompass higher levels of commitment. Given the high levels of satisfaction, a positive reaction is reflected towards meeting customer needs over time, which in turn, leads to customer loyalty. Findings of the current study also verified that consumers’ satisfaction had a positive effect on brand loyalty. These findings are in accordance with the study of SEYED et al. (2010) who reported that attitudinal and behavioral loyalty affect satisfaction. Consumer loyalty leads to satisfaction and the motivation that have been the strategic focus of many companies in the last two decades. Oliver (1997) defined satisfaction as a pleasurable fulfillment. That is, the customer senses that consumption fulfills some need, desire, goal, or so forth and that this fulfillment is pleasurable. Customer’s support of marketing processes by means of authority that they have in giving a high credit to a brand can be helpful. Findings of some studies also confirm this and mention that brand credibility has a significant positive effect on customer satisfaction. These findings are in agreement with Sweeney and Swait (2008), Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012), Ghorban (2012), Heidarzadeh et al. (2011), however they do not confirm the findings of Amirkhani et al. (2012). Findings, furthermore, showed brand credibility had a significant positive effect on verbal advice; this positive effect is in accordance with findings of Sweeney and Swait (2008). This effect is also observed in findings of Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012), although Ghorban and Tahernejad (2012) reported that credibility had an indirect effect on verbal advice and its effect was the result of certain other variables, such as.But, the current study investigated the effect of brand credibility on word-of-mouth. Credibility of a brand refers to the perceived trust in the capabilities and desire to continuously deliver what has been promised. So, it is expected that based on brand credibility and customer’s trust in this continuity, customers will verbally advice brands to others – a point that the findings of this study confirm.
Brand credibility, moreover, turned out to have a significant negative effect on switching propensity. This finding supports Sweeney and Swait (2008) who found that brand credibility had a crucial role in reducing consumers’ switching propensity. Brand credibility represents the summary of brand-to-consumer and consumer-to-brand communication over time because consumers can have a relationship with the brand; in the meantime, brands create a close relationship with the consumer. For companies, a credible brand means that marketing efforts would be more economical as a result of the increase in the acceptability of the messages. As a consequence, company sales increase due to the growth in consumer’s visit and repurchasing of the products. Desire to change the brand unlike desire to repurchase – which is another perception variable - does not have a direct effect on priorities and indicators of decision making. According to the marketers, most of the satisfied consumers, in spite of their satisfaction, can switch to the rival brands for no reason. Brand credibility consists of two main components: trustworthiness and expertise. Trustworthiness refers to the willingness of companies in acting what they have promised. Expertise refers to a company’s ability in acting what they have promised. This concept indicates consumer-to-brand and brand-to-consumer communication. As mentioned before, brand credibility represents the summary of brand-to-consumer and consumer-to-brand communication over time. Based on these findings, therefore, sporting goods manufacturers should attempt to build and stabilize a proper understanding of trademarks in consumers’ minds. In this regard, factors that strengthen loyalty, continuous commitment and satisfaction of consumers should be improved and the facts that undermine them should be avoided. The proposed research model illustrated through Figure 1 illustrates all these factors. Sporting goods marketers, by using brand credibility, thus, should focus on strengthening the brand perception. Behavior of a consumer who is looking for brand credibility is affected by social motives and self-expression. Although the potential impact of verbal advertisement /WOM and its value for a company is of utmost importance, it is difficult to manage verbal advertisement and to identify the signs and opportunities for companies or organizations in a non-official channel. Managers should seek the ways to stimulate positive verbal advice and expand or develop the steps that reduce negative verbal advice and its effect. In order to build brand credibility among consumers, the following recommendations are suggested to managers and sport marketers: (1) Make sure that their organization’s (company’s) products and services are good and are beneficial for the consumers, (2) make sure that consumers’ experience of the products or services over time is positive, (3) make sure of the regular and continuous satisfaction of the consumer, (4) Make sure that they do not just rely on previous experiences, (5) make sure that their brand acts the promises made to consumers, (6) provide evidence of the benefits delivered in the form of facts or figures, so as to develop trust in consumers, prompt word of mouth marketing (verbal advice) where satisfied consumers talk appropriately about you (organization/company) officially or non-officially.

References


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**UTJEĆAJ KREDIBILITETA BRENDU NA PREDODŽBU POTROŠAČA O BRENDU I NJIHOVOG KUPOVNOG PONAŠanja U SPORTSKIM DOBRIMA**

**Sažetak**

Ova studija je pokušaj istraživanja učinka brand kredibiliteta na zadovoljstvo, odanost kontinuiranih potrošača i lojalnosti brandu. Glavni uzorak ovog opisnog istraživanja sastoji se od potrošača Nike-Sport-proizvoda (N = 171), odabranih kroz postupke praktičnog uzorkovanja. Izlazi se odnose na odnos između varijabli dobivenih pomoću standarda kakvoće 6.1 i statistike Structural Equation Modeling pokazuju da se predloženi dijagram model bio pravilno zamišljen. Drugim riječima, dobiveni podaci dobro opisuju predloženi model. Rezultati su pokazali da brand kredibilitet značajno utječe na percepciju potrošača o brandu i njihovo kupovno ponašanje. U skladu s tim, preporučuje se da se stvaraju pozitivne slike o sportskim proizvodima tvrtke u svijesti njihovih kasnijih kupaca.

**Ključne riječi:** brand, kredibilitet, zadovoljstvo, posvećenost, odanost, riječ

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