Examine the Causal Relationship between Satisfaction and Expectations of Product Quality and Services and the Post-Purchase Behavior of the Sport Consumers with the Mediating Role of Brand Awareness

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ABSTRACT

When products and services are purchased, consumers expect certain results from their purchase. The aim of this study was to investigate the relationship between satisfaction and expectations of product quality and service on consumer buying behavior after sports with mediate role of brand awareness. Due to the nature and purpose of the present study, functional and in terms of descriptive and correlational in terms of searching for data, quantitative survey was carried out in a way. The number of samples to questionnaire of 500 people of Fila, randomly and voluntarily responded. 0/91 reliability test using Cronbach's alpha was calculated. In order to analyze the data, descriptive and inferential statistical methods and also for the calculation and information processing software packages SPSS was used. Results showed that between expectations and satisfaction, product quality and service After buying consumer behavior in sport with mediate role of brand awareness there is a significant relationship. According to the results, Confirmed the findings of other researchers of the study can be said to consent or not consumer behavior will affect his future Dissatisfied consumer will separate reaction, he tries to minimize internal conflict and to act in one of two ways or to cancel and return the goods or with the cancellation and return of the goods or by searching for information that may They have confirmed the high value reduces the conflict created.

KEY WORDS: Satisfaction, Expectations, Product quality, after buying behavior, Brand awareness, consumers sport.

INTRODUCTION

Today, organizations operate in a dynamic, ambiguous and volatile environment. One of the most prominent features of the present era is the dramatic and continuous changes that occur in their social, cultural, political, economic, technological and transnational conditions. In these difficult conditions, successful organizations can satisfy their customers and give them extra value. In recent years, the development of customer relationship with the brand has been a significant discussion for the executives of organizations. Brand is viewed as one of the most important communicative tools in the entirety of the customer relationship management and is of great value to customers for two reasons: first, it reduces consumer risk and secondly, it saves the decision-making costs. Furthermore, brand is one of the most effective marks in the market which the organization uses due to asymmetric (non-uniform) information on

the market. In addition to the fact that information asymmetry exists among the customers of the goods, it also applies to the field of services and exposes the customer to losses. Accordingly, the organization fulfills a customer's requirements to prevent customer uncertainty and acts in accordance with obligations made to the customer in relation to its services (1).

Moreover, in recent years, increased competition among companies in finding customers to sell their products and services and the increased power of the customer in today's competitive world have led the companies to not only seek new customers, but also make an effort to maintain and keep their previous buyers. Over the past decade, many organizations of varied types and sizes have realized the importance of satisfying their customers and have found that maintaining the existing customers is far less costly than attracting new customers (2). If we have a glimpse at the history of the activities involving 'quality' in recent times, we will find out that paying attention to satisfaction and expectations regarding the quality of the goods and the tangible products have a history that goes back to nearly a century ago. However, the concept of quality expectations in services had never been considered seriously until the early 80's. Research has made it unequivocally clear that satisfaction with the good quality of services can be guaranteed if the customer's service expectations are met or services exceed the expectations (3).

Palmer (2005) stated that the quality and affordability of services constantly provide a competitive advantage for such organizations at an excellent level. This includes the creation of competitive barriers, increased customer loyalty, the production and provision of distinct services, the decrease in marketing costs, setting higher prices and so on (4). Yet another important variable associated with the quality of service in most studies which affects the future behavior of consumers is customer satisfaction. Richard Oliver who is one of the leading researchers on

customer satisfaction is of the opinion that customer satisfaction or dissatisfaction is caused by the difference between customer expectations and the quality that one has received. In other words, this relationship can be used to measure satisfaction: Customer Expectations – Customer Inference of Quality = Customer Satisfaction (5). Bashir Abbas (2012) stated that managers should pay specific attention to the development of strategies that have an impact on the market with respect to the development of the competitive environment in various service areas. In this connection, creating innovation and creativity in the provision of services can provide the grounds for the success of service organizations (6). Based on the study of customer behavior, it has been proven that providing customer satisfaction will gradually create a sense of loyalty and trust in the organization among the customers. In addition to visiting the favorite organization repeatedly for purchasing the products or using services again, the loyal customer acts as an additional factor in promoting the organization's products and services through his or her post-purchase behavior such as recommendations for the relatives, friends or other people. Thus, the customer plays an important role in raising the profitability and improving the image of the organization and brand awareness in the minds of potential customers (6 & 7).

Consumer behavior refers to a set of behavioral responses that the consumer shows after using the services of the center or organization. Theodorakis (2013) has expressed positive verbal advertisements, and the willingness and desire to order and purchase again as the criteria of consumer behavioral intentions. For the first time, brand awareness and mental image were defined by Martineau (1958) as significant factors in the development of retail characteristics. The mental image of a store is a general impression in one's memory which is related to the outcome of the perceived features in customer's memory based on previous and current exposures which are motivated directly or indirectly. Brand awareness is one of the key and often neglected elements of

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brand equity. According to Aakar (1991), brand awareness refers to the potential of the customer in recognizing and remembering a brand that belongs to a specific category of products. The customer has some expectations before making the purchase. They are based on his or her mental image and this image is shaped by customer's previous experience of purchasing or those of people who are close to the customer (e.g. colleagues, relatives, friends, etc.) and the company's form of advertising.

In a study entitled as "the features of the mental image of the store and customer satisfaction among different types of customers in the supermarket sector in Greece" which was conducted by Theodoridis and Chatt Panagioto in 2009, the authors sought to achieve two goals: 1. Extending the functional survey of the relationship between the properties of mental image regarding the store and customer satisfaction in Greek market environment, 2. Studying the stability of structural relations between the properties of the mental image of the store and customer satisfaction among different groups of customers (8). In a study entitled as "the effect of customer satisfaction and mental image on loyalty" which was conducted by Fallante et al. (2008), variables such as the dimensions of mental image, satisfaction, behavioral intentions and customer loyalty were investigated. The results show that customers with the highest degree of brand satisfaction and knowledge have greater loyalty. In the first visit, the general satisfaction is more important than mental image but the importance of general satisfaction declines in creating loyalty and the importance of mental image increases relatively with more purchases.

The mental image is the consumer's perception of a product, institution, trademark, business or individual that may or may not reflect the reality. In commerce, the image of everything can be more important than its truth. Mental image is the understanding of the sensory and non-sensory features that describe a brand and mark (9).

Consumer behaviors include all actions that consumers take to obtain, use, and dispose goods or services after consumption. Buying a product or service, providing verbal information for another person about a product or service, the tendencies after consuming a product and collecting information for purchase are all examples of consumer behavior. Han et al. (2009) hold that behavioral intentions include customer revisits and verbal advertising that might predict the future consumer behavior among consumers. Other researchers point out that if behavioral intentions are positive, they can lead to customer loyalty and can also positively increase the likelihood of customer revisits and positive verbal advertising. On the other hand, when these intentions are negative, the result will be the opposite (10).

The present research confirms the findings of others, expands the research literature on this topic, and additionally seeks to examine the conceptual model of the relationship between satisfaction and the expectations of the quality of product and services with post-purchase behavior and the mediating role of brand awareness among sport consumers. However, few studies have investigated the impact of service quality and variables related to consumer behavior. Figure 1 shows the hypothesized research model.
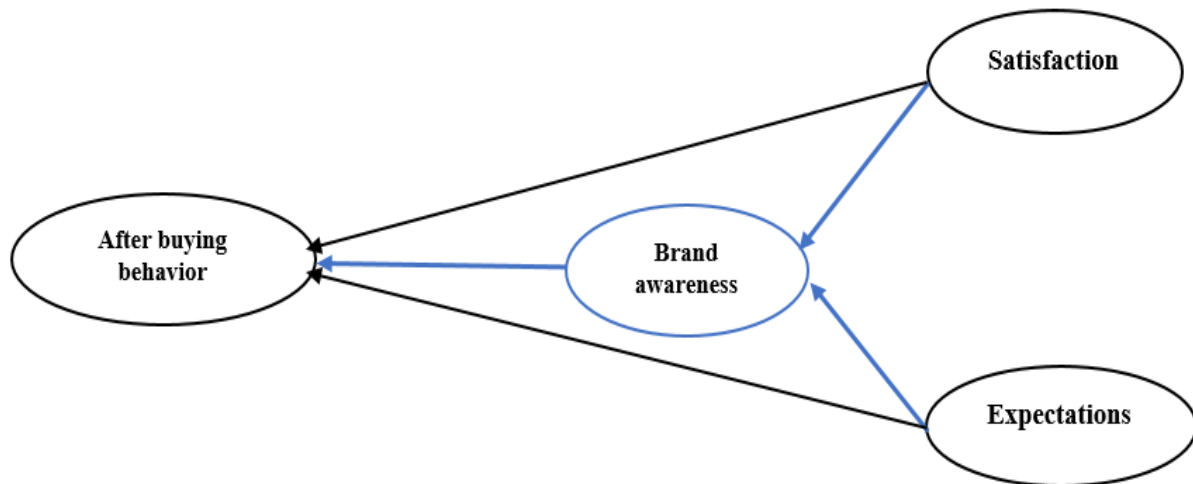
Figure 1. The hypothesized model of the relationship between research variables

METHODS

The present research is applied in terms of its nature and objective and is descriptive and correlational in terms of its method. Furthermore, the study is quantitative in its data search that is done by field method. A total of 500 samples (that is, consumers) of Fila sports products completed a 35-item researcher-made questionnaire randomly and voluntarily on a five-point Likert scale (from completely disagree to completely agree). The reliability of the instrument was calculated as 0.91 using Cronbach's alpha test. For data analysis, descriptive and inferential statistics were used and LISREL software version 8.8 was used for computing and processing the information.

STATISTICAL RESULTS

The results of the test of structural equations show the investigation of the causal relationship between satisfaction and expectations regarding the quality of product and services with post-purchase behavior and the mediating role of brand awareness in sport consumers (Figure. 2).

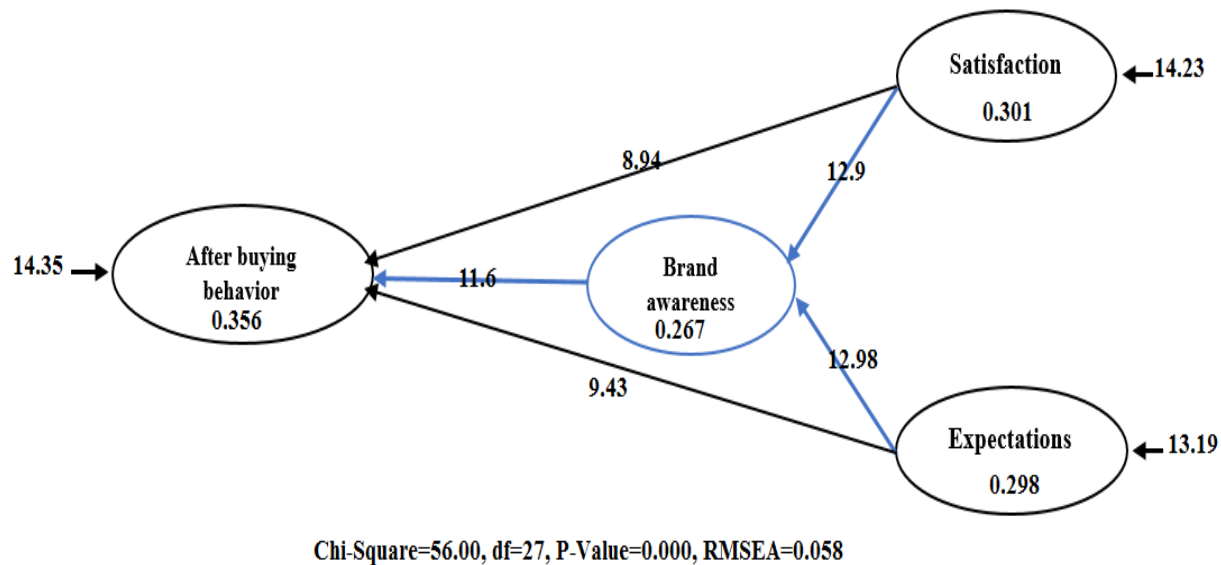Chi-Square=56.00, df=27, P-Value=0.000, RMSEA=0.058

Figure 2. The analysis of the relationship path between satisfaction and expectations of product and service quality with post-purchase behavior and the mediating role of brand awareness.

Table 1 The results of path analysis of fitness indicators show the relationship between satisfaction and expectations of product and service quality with post-shopping behavior with the mediating role of brand awareness.

Table 1

The analytic results of the path of fitness indicators regarding the relationship between satisfaction and expectations of product and service quality with post-purchase behavior and the mediating role of brand awareness

Indicators	Allowed amount	Numbers obtained	result
X^2/df	$X^2/df < 3$	2.07	
P – Value	P – Value <0.05	0.000	
RMSEA	0.08<RMSEA<0.03	0.058	Accept of H1
Coefficient of influence	More than 0.3	0.48	
t statistics	More than 1.96 and less than 1.96	11.6	
GFI	Higher than 0.9	0.93	
AGFI	Higher than 0.85	0.87	
CFI	Higher than 0.9	0.94	
NFI	Higher than 0.9	0.93	

According to the results of Table 1, while establishing the conditions of the structural equation, it can be said that there is a significant causal relationship between satisfaction and expectations of the quality of products and services with post-purchase behavior and the mediating role of brand awareness.

DISCUSSION

The results of this study showed that satisfaction and expectations of the quality of services with

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the mediating role of brand awareness can affect the post-purchase behavior directly and significantly. Of course, different interpretations of consumer's post-purchase behavior have been proposed in various studies, but what is meant by consumer's post-purchase behavior in this research has been considered as positive and negative advertising, the desire to return and the intention to re-purchase sports products belonging to Fila brand fashion. These results were consistent with those concluded by Theodorakis (2013), though the author had emphasized the role of the mediating variable of customer satisfaction in the relationship between the two variables (11). Of course, few studies have examined the effect of service quality on consumer behavior in a straightforward way. Moreover, the study conducted by Bashir Abbas (2012) is consistent with the findings of the present study (7). Chang (2012) and Huang (2010) have also indicated the direct and indirect relationship between the quality of services and consumer's future behavior.

In recent years, due to the effect of brand awareness on consumer behavior, this variable has become of paramount importance and is considered a key factor for any organization. Developing and maintaining a desirable image of the store is essential for retailers in order to maintain or improve their position in the market. Brand awareness can lead to the promotion of brand equity by affecting the mental image and perceived quality.

According to the research results and in comparison with perceived quality, it can be concluded that the brand awareness of consumers has a significant effect on their post-purchase behavior. The importance of raising strong brand awareness by the organization helps to increase its long-term and short-term success. Therefore, one of the major goals of organization is to create a powerful and sustainable image for the organization through the creation of positive associations in the minds of the customers.

Thus, the stores can publicize their brand and create a positive image in the minds of the customers by improving the quality and variety of their services, using up-to-date technologies to provide their customers with their services, reducing the complexity of the process and the hampering regulations in giving services and facilities to customers, increasing the level of knowledge among their employees, increasing the speed and reducing the time of service delivery to customers and so on to improve the perceived quality of their brand services and consequently increase their brand value.

As there are many factors affecting customer loyalty, some customers may be satisfied with the services of a center while they are not loyal to it. The results of Sabiyut (2013) suggest that 58 percent of bank customers in Lithuania would be willing to leave the previous bank in spite of their strong loyalty, if there are other banks providing better services. Ang et al. (2010) also stated that satisfaction can have a mediating role in relation to the quality of services and customer's revisit intention (12) which corroborates the findings of this research. In a broad sense, based on author's investigation, few research studies have examined the relationship between brand awareness and consumer behavior.

Based on the results of the present research, since customer satisfaction affects the buyers' behavioral intentions, the continuous measurement of customer satisfaction and providing the grounds for such satisfaction are among the important measures that the store should realize and provide the required contexts in this connection.

According to the results of the present research, the study suggests that the space of the stores should be able to attract the customers and bring about a significant advantage over other rivals to improve brand awareness among customers. The design of the store must be such that customers' visits can be facilitated. The main corridors must be wide enough. Moreover, the store managers

must pay attention to all the research variables, try to provide appropriate services with safe and proper equipment, design programs to develop customer satisfaction, organize special training courses for staff in accordance with customer needs and consider reasonable prices with continuous evaluation of customers' satisfaction and loyalty in order to attract loyal customers to the center which will involve less costs compared to attracting new customers. Moreover, they should take steps in line with brand goals and profitability to shape the post-purchase behavior of customers.

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