CHAPTER 1.
INTRODUCTION

1.1. Introduction

The Indian sportswear market has experienced substantial growth over the past decade, driven by increasing health consciousness, rising disposable incomes, and a growing enthusiasm for fitness and sports activities among the population. This burgeoning market is characterised by a diverse range of consumers, from professional athletes to casual fitness enthusiasts. The proliferation of sports events, coupled with the influence of social media and celebrity endorsements, has further accelerated the demand for sportswear in India. This dynamic market is dominated by both international and domestic brands, each vying for a substantial share of the rapidly expanding consumer base.

A brand is more than just a name or logo; it represents a promise of quality, performance, and style to the consumer. In the Indian sportswear market, leading international brands such as Adidas, Nike, Puma, and Reebok, along with domestic brand Nivia, have established a strong presence. These brands are constantly innovating and adapting to the unique preferences and needs of Indian consumers, striving to enhance their market position through targeted marketing strategies and product offerings.

Brand equity refers to the value a brand adds to a product or service, which can be reflected in consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours. It encompasses various elements such as brand loyalty, brand awareness, perceived quality, and brand associations.

Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) is a specific approach to understanding brand equity from the consumer's perspective. It focuses on the importance of consumer perceptions and their impact on brand value. CBBE is measured through factors such as brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty. For sportswear brands operating in India, understanding CBBE

is essential to crafting effective marketing strategies that resonate with local consumers and foster long-term brand loyalty.

1.2. Research Gap

Numerous empirical studies have been undertaken to examine Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) in various markets. Many investigations have specifically targeted the sportswear

market , focusing on international contexts such as China and Malaysia. These studies often concentrate on different brands and do not comprehensively address the unique dynamics of the Indian sportswear market. Furthermore, the few studies that do exist within the Indian context typically focus on individual brands rather than offering a comparative analysis. This results in a noticeable research gap in understanding the comparative CBBE of leading sportswear brands such as Adidas, Nike, Puma, Reebok, and Nivia in India. This study aims to fill that gap by investigating and comparing the CBBE of these brands in the Indian sportswear market, providing insights into the key drivers of brand equity from an Indian consumer perspective.

1.3. Statement of the Problem

Understanding Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) is paramount for brands to secure a competitive edge. However, amidst the diverse array of sportswear brands catering to Indian consumers, there exists a gap in research regarding the comprehensive evaluation and comparison of CBBE across leading players. While individual brand studies exist, there is a notable absence of a holistic analysis that compares the CBBE of prominent international brands like Adidas, Nike, Puma, and Reebok with a key domestic player like Nivia. This study seeks

to address this gap by investigating and comparing the CBBE of these leading sportswear brands in the Indian market.

1.4.   Scope of the Study

The study intends to examine Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) within the dynamic landscape of the Indian sportswear market. Focusing on leading brands such as Adidas, Nike, Puma, Reebok, and Nivia, the research aims to delve into the perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours of Indian consumers towards these brands. Through a comprehensive analysis, the study will assess key dimensions of CBBE, including brand awareness, perceived quality, brand associations, and brand loyalty.

1.5.   Significance of the Study

The study on Customer-Based Brand Equity (CBBE) in the Indian sportswear market holds significant implications for multiple stakeholders. Brand managers and marketers stand to benefit from valuable insights into consumer perceptions, attitudes, and behaviours towards leading sportswear brands like Adidas, Nike, Puma, Reebok, and Nivia..For sportswear companies, understanding the drivers of CBBE and the relative strengths and weaknesses of their brands in the Indian market is crucial for product development, pricing strategies, and brand communication efforts.

Investors and shareholders, meanwhile, can leverage insights into brand equity to inform investment decisions and gauge future performance expectations. Academics and researchers will find the study valuable for advancing understanding of brand management and consumer behaviour in the Indian sportswear market, paving the way for further exploration and analysis.

1.6. Research Questions

- Which sportswear brands have the strongest CBBE in India?
- How does CBBE differ across different customer segments in the Indian sportswear market (e.g., age, gender, income level)?
- What are the key drivers of CBBE in the Indian sportswear market?

1.7. Objectives of the Study

1. To Measure and compare the CBBE of leading sportswear brands in India.
2. To Identify the key drivers of CBBE in the Indian sportswear market.
3. To examine consumer perceptions, attitudes and loyalty towards major sportswear brands in India.
4. To analyse how demographic variables such as age, gender and education influence CBBE in the Indian sportswear market.
5. To evaluate the impact of brand awareness, brand associations, perceived quality, and brand loyalty on overall brand equity.

1.8. Research Methodology

1. Research Design

- The study follows a descriptive and comparative research design.

2. Research Approach

- Quantitative approach using structured questionnaires.
- Cross-sectional study conducted at a single point in time.

3. Sources of Data

a) Primary Data

- Collected using a standardized questionnaire based on David Aaker's CBBE model components:

o Brand Awareness

o Brand Associations

o Perceived Quality

o Brand Loyalty

o Overall Brand Equity

- Responses collected through Google Forms.

b) Secondary Data

- Academic journals, research articles, company websites, industry reports, and publications from:

o Statista

o Euromonitor

o Business Today, Economic Times

o Previous research studies on brand equity

4. Sampling Method

- Non-probability sampling, typically:

o Convenience sampling

o Purposive sampling (sportswear users only)

5. Sample Size

- Ideal sample size:50 respondents

- Must represent different demographic segments:

o Age

o Gender

o Income

o Fitness/sports participation level

6. Data Collection Instrument

- Structured questionnaire with:

o 5-point Likert scale (Strongly disagree → Strongly agree)

o Sections on:

▪ Basic demographics

▪ Usage pattern of sportswear

▪ Rating of each CBBE dimension for selected brands

7. Tools and Techniques of Analysis

- Comparative analysis between brands.

- Charts and graphs using Excel.

8. Research Variables

Independent Variables

- Brand awareness

- Brand associations

• Perceived quality

• Brand loyalty

Dependent Variable

• Overall customer-based brand equity

Limitations of the Study

1. Limited Sample Size

   o The study relies on a restricted number of respondents, which may not fully represent the entire Indian sportswear market.

2. Non-Probability Sampling

   o Convenience or purposive sampling limits the ability to generalize the findings to the whole population.

3. Geographic Constraints

   o Data collected from selected regions or cities may not reflect consumer perceptions across all parts of India.

4. Subjective Responses

   o Brand equity is based on personal perception, which may vary from person to person and may not always reflect actual brand performance.

5. Focus on Selected Brands

   o Only certain major sportswear brands are included, so the findings do not cover the entire range of brands available in the Indian market.

6. Time Constraints

o The study is conducted within a limited period, which may restrict sample diversity and depth of analysis.

7. Lack of Longitudinal Data

o The study is cross-sectional and does not track changes in brand equity over

8. Dependence on Questionnaire Method

o Respondents may provide socially desirable answers or may not fully understand certain questions, affecting accuracy.

9. External Market Factors Not Considered

o Factors like market competition, advertising spend, economic conditions, and influencer campaigns may influence brand equity but are not fully analyzed