

Investigate sport clothing's market segmentation in public sport based on demographic variables

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The aim of this study is to divide the marketplace of sport clothing in public sport based on Demographic variables. The sample was 300 participants that were participated in public sports in several cities in Iran. The research tool was research-made questionnaire that its validity was proven by ten masters of sport management and its internal reliability was the Alfa coefficient of 0.751. To analyze the results, X^2 descriptive and deduction statistics were used. The results revealed that there is no meaningful relationship between age, education and the rate of using sport clothing. Also there's a meaningful relationship between Gender (gender) and the rate of utilization, between income level and the rate of utilization, and between occupation and the rate of utilization

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Introduction

Most of market experts think about market segmentation as a panacea for modern marketing and they believed that lack of sources is a reason of this point (Kuo, An, Wang, Chung, 2006). When users of something or a service go beyond two, there can be a market segmentation that caused incongruous market divided to minor markets with congruent features. Market segmentation or market division is central core of marketing strategy that includes two essential sections: target market election and develop as well as codification of successful marketing plan in target market (McDonald, Milne and JinBae, 2002). Common definition of market segmentation is to identify customers' groups with common needs or features that have similar purchase behavior (Wendell R, 1956).

Beside market segmentation is also a marketing tool to find class of customers who can be classified normally based on available information. Through better identification and classification scheme of market's different segments, there can be better prospects and predictions. Kittler referred to market segmentation as an identification of customers' special subsets in which subset as a target market can be reached through separate marketing (Silk and Amis, 2000). To identify these subsets, consumers should be divided in homogenous groups in a way that merchants be able to use specific marketing combinations of that section that is for effective target and to predict probable consumers. The value of market segmentation's marketing analysis is that it is able to give better understanding of suitable place for a product in market, it identifies better sections for marketing and look for opportunities in related markets and based on product's diversity, it uses competitive advantages (Kotler, 1980).

The act of market segmentation into distinct and significant groups of customers is definable by consumers' characteristics (Reeder, Brierty, 1991; Freathy, O'Connell, 2000). Market segmentation's analysis can help companies to evaluate their facilities and design better marketing

methods. This is a logical extension of the concept of marketing and for the organization of the marketing and strategic planning to reduce operational costs by eliminating redundant efforts and effective allocation of resources as well as forklift company to target markets, a sphere of decision-making is important (Dickson, 1982; Berrigan, Finkbeiner, 1992; Dibb, Wensley 2002).

Market segmentation process is called markets' customer grouping to various sections in a way that customers in each section have their similar needs and features and each section is being targeted and it gained special marketing combination (Freathy, O'Connell, 2000). Segmentation of a method is creative and by obtaining customers' needs, competitive advantage is gained for companies, this definition focus on customers' needs except company's need. Segmentation is to create a format or infrastructure for effective marketing plan and it must be customer-orient or market-orient instead to be production - orient (Kotler, 2001). Market segmentation is process of segmenting heterogeneous market into similar groups of (homogeneous) customers who respond to the same methods of marketing activities (Wind, 1978). The process of segmentation does not prescribe solutions to marketing problems, but instead describe the market. Market segmentation is a process of "methodology" from market division to special groups by dividing the market into groups that may require experiences individually or combined marketing services (McDonald and et al, 2002). Customers' classification is one of the most important techniques used to identify these sections (Saarenvirta, 1998).

Market segmentation has various advantages, for example it helps companies to have balance between customers' transitive needs and transitive sources' restrictions during markets' heterogeneous condition. For most of businesses it is clear that to obtain all customers' needs in markets is impossible or non-homogeneous and by concentrating marketing's efforts over special sections, markets'

needs can be obtained in better ways (Grover, Srinivasan, 1989). Segmentation for successful marketing strategy is inevitable. Experts believed that businesses that adapt themselves with a way of segmentation will have several advantages. Market segmentation strategy is looking for to reach competitive advantage through concentrating over special kind of customers and designing current services and products based on their expected values or economical and social factors as well as demographic features (Funk, Mahoney, Havitz, 2003). Using market segmentation, organizations are able to identify sections that their products and services have more customers and consumers, therefore current marketing sources will not be missed (McDonald and et al, 2002). Market segmentation, when properly done, because it allows organizations to targeting specific segments of the market that the organization is more likely to hold facilities, it can improve sales and profits (Fullerton, Dodge, 1995).

One of the main points of these benefits is that it can be used as an ideal point to reflect customers and consumers' needs. Ideal points can help companies to plan for new potentially products and let decision makers to boost or improve resources more effectively. They also can be used to identify specific competitive strategies to produce new products with higher profits (Frank, Massy, Wind, 1972). Marketing specialists and writers in successive years introduce variety of methods to market segmentation such as behavioral and psychological factors, demographic variables and so on. Methods of market segmentation are based on logical principle that in order to achieve the goal of targets that is commercial purpose; market can be divided into sections (Venugopal, Baets, 1994). It is also noteworthy that choosing consumers' segmentation method depends on products' characteristics and benefits gained from them. One of these methods is segmentation based on demographic factors such as age, gender, income level, marital status, level of education and etc that are used more than other variables. One reason is that wishes, preferences and the amount of

using the products has close relationship with demographic variables and the other reason is that these variables can be measured in a more simple way (Kotler, Keller, 2006).

One of the commodities and products that have more usage in societies is sport. All sport customers are not identical or similar. Different people have different reasons to use sports. This is also true to say that various sport fields or courses attract various types of people. Sports marketers have to regard variety of different consumers to attract them in the future. Market segmentation is with the fact that a sport organization cannot prepare all things to all consumers. When a particular part of market is chosen by sport organization, it can customize market's strategy and products to fit certain needs. By dividing sports' consumers to different parts, a sport organization can use its' limited resources in a more effective way. Segmenting sport markets like other organizations is done in a variety of ways (Stewart, Smith and Nicholson, 2003).

Today, participation in sport is an increasing process and we can perceive all kinds of sports activities in various communities. On the other hand sport is a hybrid products, it means to do sports activities caused to use variety of sports goods and services. In this way, public sports due to their characteristics required special regard. Due to low cost and the optional nature, most of people take part in public sports. Universal sports or sport for all is been regarded since 1900 among different countries. In our country from 1979, public sport at first titled neighbors' sport and in 1983 as a legal association, it was titled physical education recognition (Dickson, 1982). The importance of public sports and its impact on all classes of society is clear and obvious and to analyze it in various aspects of the social, cultural, environmental and economic importance can be necessary. Universal sports participated at recreational units and public sport increase in the quality of life and the value of community leisure time (Freathy, O'Connell, 2000).

Reports have shown that the number of people that participated in public sports in Germany were 3204005 in 1952, means 6.7 percent of the total population of the country and in 2000 participated population were 26.815.717 that were 28.5 percent of that country's population. In Japan, 15 percent of participants in 1957 were increased to 68 percent in 1979 (Grover, Srinivasan, 1989; Berrigan, Finkbeiner, 1992). Statistics of doing public sports in some countries: Australia 52%, Denmark 45%, Norway 35%, Canada 42%, France 35%, Italy 30% and in the United States 57% of female and 72% of male participated in public sports. Results showed that in Europe approximately 400 million people (25% female and 75% male) is participating in sport activities (Freathy, O'Connell, 2000; Berrigan, Finkbeiner, 1992). Public sports and touring, according to many scientists and researchers, are considered to be the most important parts of the sport in every nation, because most of countries have broad and great planning for this section (Dickson, 1982).

The importance of public sports and its' increasing participation is regarded by Iranian governors as well, and they have various program and plans in this field. On sport development prospect in the fifth plan, it is been stated that there should be 50% active people in public sport till 2025. On the other hand, Iran's population is passing to the middle age, a period in which most of the people are willing to do public and general activities. Participation's rates in public sport in most countries are developing. With increasing public participation in sport, there will be more changes. One of these changes is to increase the amount of goods and services that will be used in various sports. To do any sports activity, providing a series of goods and services is an essential point. The importance of market segmentation and consumption of goods and services in various sports is due to multitude and various groups of people who participated in it, due to recreational nature and free sport activities, many people take part and in order to do their sport activities, they used all kinds of goods and

services in sports. Market segmentation among consumers of goods is based on the demographic characteristics of applied subject. So consumers of sport goods are classified based on their ages, genders, income levels, employment statuses, and marital status as well as education levels.

McKechnie, Grant, Korepina, Sadykova, (2007) in the study entitled "Women: segmenting the home fitness equipment market", indicates that women are a viable market. Cross tabulations and chi square significance note the associations between respondents' age, occupation, nationality and religion and the various equipment purchased including treadmills, workout equipment, stationary cycles and abdominal machines. Belief in advertising claims was higher for cardio equipment and least for abdominal machines. Post purchase satisfaction was greater for products that favored noticeable physical changes and by businesswomen who arguably, may be more discerning shoppers (pp: 18 – 26).

Harcar, Kaynak (2008) in "Life-style orientation of rural US and Canadian consumers: Are regio-centric standardized marketing strategies feasible?" showed that, indeed, differences among the consumers' life-styles in the two countries which were similar in demographics and as such may have been previously treated the same way by marketers, but in reality have very different lifestyles. Based on the survey findings, managerial and/or public policy implications are offered for orderly marketing decision-making purposes (pp: 433 – 454).

Zurcher Wray, Nelson Hodges, (2008) in the study entitled "Response to active wear apparel advertisements by US baby boomers: An examination of cognitive versus chronological age factors" A total of 50 female participants aged 41-65 were asked to view two print advertisements: one showing active wear apparel worn by a cognitive-age model and the other by a chronological-age model. Participants then responded to a four-part questionnaire that included a

measurement of cognitive age, physical activity, response to the advertisements, and purchase intent. The responses indicated that the participants view themselves as younger than their chronological age and were more inclined to respond favorably toward the advertisement using the cognitive age model (pp.8 - 23).

The results of the survey Michon, Yu, Smith and Chebat (2008) in a study entitled "The influence of mall environment on female fashion shoppers' value and behavior", show that a favorable perception of the mall atmosphere elicits a positive perception of the merchandise offering and triggers hedonic shopping experiences. The effect of the mall environment, mediated by product perception, significantly impacts the shopping objectives of middle-of-the-road female fashion shoppers. Mall atmospherics has no or little effect on the utilitarian value of low- or high-fashion oriented shoppers. Hedonic response of fashion forward shoppers is not stronger than that of other fashion shoppers (pp.456 - 468).

Howarton, Lee (2010) in the study "Market analysis of fit preferences of female boomers" indicates that respondents were frustrated that the apparel industry did not cater to their apparel and fit needs more effectively. While they felt that they knew how to judge proper fit, they indicated that store personnel should be knowledgeable about products in general and clothing fit in particular. They also had distinct clothing design preferences and chose fit, product quality and price considerations over designer and brand names (pp: 219 – 229).

Narang (2011) in a study entitled as "Examining the role of various psychographic characteristics in apparel store selection: a study on Indian youth", concluded that Cluster analysis found four psychographic clusters: "Get Going Adopters", "Disinterested Introverts", "Confused Followers" and "Independent Life Lovers", and the differences between these segments were found to be statistically significant. The findings suggest that "Independent Life Lovers" consider apparel shopping to be a recreational activity,

whereas “Get Going Adopters” prefer to spend less time in stores; both these segments were driven by layout, ambience and the availability of the latest designs and styles in apparel store selection. “Confused Followers”, who struggle to maintain their old dress style, consider convenience, entertainment and recommendations from friends/relatives to be important in store patronage, while “Disinterested Introverts”, the fashion-resistant group, are lured by attractive sales promotion techniques and the availability of preferred brands (pp: 133 - 144).

Methodology

The present study is descriptive - analytical and based on related purpose, it was applied and was done in free or field method. Its' general goal was to survey annual usage of sport clothes based on demographic variables. Study's population of this research was people who participated in a public competition that was held in several cities of Iran. Also, Study's sample was 300 participants. In order to collect data, substantiated questionnaire was used, which its validity was approved by several sports management masters. Questionnaire was distributed and collected among participants in a free or field method. In order to analyze the data, Chi-square descriptive-inferential statistics was used.

Research's findings

Description of Collected Data from Statistical Sample

Respondents' descriptive information to the questionnaire for this study is explained in Table 1.

Table 1

Description of the demographic variables

| Statistical features | indexes | Frequency | Percent |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|---------|
| Age | Less than 20 years | 33 | 15.33 |
| | Between 20 to 30 | 57 | 26.4 |
| | Between 30 to 40 | 35 | 16.2 |
| | Between 40 to 50 | 52 | 24.1 |
| | More than 50 years | 39 | 18.11 |
| Education | Under- Diploma | 75 | 25.8 |
| | Diploma | 57 | 19.6 |
| | Associate degree | 35 | 12.1 |
| | Bachelor | 103 | 35.5 |
| | Higher than Bachelor | 21 | 7.2 |
| Income level | Without income | 33 | 12.1 |
| | Less than 150000 Rials | 32 | 11.7 |
| | Between 150000 to 300000 Rials | 46 | 16.8 |
| | Between 300000 to 500000 Rials | 66 | 24.2 |
| | More than 500000 Rials | 95 | 34.8 |
| | | | |
| Gender | Female | 99 | 34.3 |
| | Male | 190 | 65.7 |
| Marital Status | Unmarried | 94 | 38.4 |
| | Married | 151 | 61.4 |
| Occupational situation | Employed | 150 | 51.9 |
| | Unemployed | 139 | 48.1 |

According to the results of table 1, based on age of the respondents to the questionnaire, most respondents were between 20-30 years and the lowest respondents were less than 20 years of age. On the basis of education among respondents to questionnaire, most of respondents have a Bachelor degree. Based on amount of income among respondents to the questionnaire, most of respondents had more than 500 thousand Rials monthly. Based on the status of Gender, most respondents to the questionnaire were male. On the basis of marital

status among respondents to the questionnaire, most of respondents were married and ultimately regarding employment status of the respondents to the questionnaire, most respondents were employed.

Inferential analysis results

Table 2

Results of Chi-square test based on the gender, age and education variables

| Variables | Test | Sport shoes | Jacket-jeans | Sport shorts | shirt-shirt | T-shirt |
|-----------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|-------------|---------|
| Gender | Meaningful level | 0/018 | 0/008 | 0/005 | | 0/000 |
| | Frequency rate | 3 | 2 | 5 | | 5 |
| | χ^2 | 10/011 | 9/781 | 67/595 | | 43/465 |
| Age | Meaningful level | 0/083 | 0/526 | 0/158 | | 0/321 |
| | Frequency rate | 8 | 8 | 8 | | 8 |
| | χ^2 | 13/965 | 7/101 | 11/851 | | 13/693 |
| Education | Meaningful level | 0/822 | 0/805 | 0/805 | | 0/348 |
| | Frequency rate | 9 | 6 | 6 | | 9 |
| | χ^2 | 11.113 | 2/898 | 3/030 | | 10/029 |

As it can be seen in the table 2, there is significant relationship between gender and sports apparel. This means that using sports apparel is related to gender. There is no significant relationship between age and using sport shoes and apparel, means that using sports apparel is independent from age. Between level of education and using sports apparel, there is no significant relationship. This means that the annual use of sports apparel is independent from education.

Table 3

Results of Chi-square test based on employment status, marital status and monthly income variables

| Variables | Test | Sport shoes | Jacket-jeans | Sport shirt-shorts | Sport T-shirt |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------|
| Occupational situation | Meaningful level | 0/034 | 0/346 | 0/001 | 0/000 |
| | Frequency rate | 3 | 2 | 4 | 4 |
| | χ^2 | 6/741 | 2/120 | 17/677 | 23/560 |
| Marital status | Meaningful level | 0/060 | 0/118 | 0/041 | 0/046 |
| | Frequency rate | 3 | 2 | 4 | 5 |
| | χ^2 | 11/264 | 9/951 | 4/278 | 7/396 |
| Monthly income | Meaningful level | 0/200 | 0/031 | 0/019 | 0/863 |
| | Frequency rate | 8 | 4 | 8 | 8 |
| | χ^2 | 11/023 | 10/658 | 18/275 | 3/930 |

As it can be seen in the table 3. There is significant relationship between annual use of sport shoes and shirts, sport T-shirt and occupation. This means that using that kind of clothing depends on being employed or non-employed participants in the public sports. But there is no significant relationship between using jacket-jeans and employment. This means that using sport jacket-jeans is independent from being employed or non-employed participants in public sports. There is no significant relationship between sport shoes and sports shirt with monthly income. This means that using these two sports apparels is independent from monthly income. But between sport jacket-jeans and sport shirts as well as monthly income, there is a significant relationship. This means that using them is depending on monthly income.

Discussion and Conclusion

The aim of this study was to investigate the annual use of sports apparel based on demographic variables. The benefits of market segmentation are obvious for everyone and it is also applied for sports segmentation market. Marketers, manufacturers and sellers of sports products can also investigate this subject and use it.

The findings of this study showed that between age and sport shoes and apparel, there is no significant relationship, in other words using sports apparel is independent from age variable. This subject could be regarded by manufacturers, sellers and sports products to produce and distributes variety of shoes and sports apparel and do not have limitations for age.

Between Gender and using sports apparel, there is significant relationship that is consistent with Anjeiko and et al and it can be regarded to males and females in product presentation. To use sport shoes, except for the employment, that has relationship with annual usage, it has no significant differences with variables that can be regarded, however participants will buy sports shoes. Maybe one of the reasons is that they experience or accept that sports activities without sport shoes cause damage or due to public sports' nature and activities in open area, using sport shoes is essential. The level of education is a variable that has no significant relationship with sports apparel at public sports. There was significant relationship between usage, monthly income as well as gender, while there was no significant relationship with other variables. Perhaps one of the reasons for that is that women have fewer tendencies to wear sport jackets- jeans and it is common among men. Employment status has meaningful relationship with all types of sports apparel that refers to the impact of employment on the use of sports apparel. The results of research were similar to the results of the studies of McKechnie & et al, (2007), Harcar, Kaynak (2008), Zurcher Wray, Nelson Hodges, (2008), Michon & et al (2008), Howarton, Lee (2010), Narang (2011).

That the population of Iran is passing towards middle age, an age that doing sport and recreational activities is going to a way that classified in public sport. On the other hand, the government showed a high tendency to increase participation in sports and recreational activities. Thus with perceive increasing rate of participation in public sport. This can show importance of investigating procurement of goods and services needed for people. Because public sport covered abundance population, broad market will be provided for consumption of goods and services for public sports activities. To supply needs of these individuals in better way, market segmentation must be done based on customers' needs. The market segmentation of these people can affect designers, manufacturers, retailers and all those involved in the process of procurement of goods and services required for people, in a way that it can meet clients' needs and at the same time it has highest sales and maximum profit. Desires, preferences and usage of products has close relation with demographic variables and this matter could be regarded and emphasized.

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