

## **SPORTS EQUIPMENT PURCHASING CHOICES AMONG INDIAN ATHLETES: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY W.R.T INDIAN SHOOTERS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*The purchase decisions of Indian athletes are multifaceted and influenced by a combination of performance-related factors, brand perception, cost considerations, accessibility, and social influences. Manufacturers and marketers need to consider these factors to effectively meet the needs of Indian athletes. Additionally, policymakers should focus on making quality sports equipment more accessible and affordable to support the development of sports in the country*

**KEYWORDS:** *Sports Equipment Purchasing*

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### **INTRODUCTION**

- **Performance and Quality:** Consumers prioritize equipment that promises high performance and durability. Advanced technology and innovative features are significant attractions.
- **Brand Reputation:** Well-known and trusted brands are favored due to their perceived reliability and endorsements by professional athletes.
- **Price Sensitivity:** The cost of equipment is a crucial factor, with consumers seeking value for money. Discounts and promotions play a significant role in the decision-making process.
- **Accessibility and Convenience:** The availability of sports equipment in local stores and online platforms, along with a seamless purchasing experience, greatly impacts consumer choices.
- **Social Influence:** Recommendations from peers, coaches, and online reviews strongly influence purchase decisions. Social media and influencer endorsements also play a notable role.
- **Aesthetic and Personal Preference:** Design, style, and personal affinity towards certain brands or types of equipment influence consumer preferences.
- **Health and Safety:** The perceived safety and health benefits associated with the equipment are important considerations for consumers.

The tools, gadgets, and gear that athletes and sports lovers use to partake in a variety of sports and physical activities are referred to as sports equipment. It consists of a wide variety of goods made to improve performance, ensure safety, and maximize comfort when engaging in sports and leisure activities.

For athletes to succeed in their chosen sports, the appropriate sports equipment is essential because it can impact their performance, technique, and general safety. Each activity has specific equipment needed for it, from more mainstream sports like rock climbing, skiing, and surfing to more conventional ones like basketball, soccer, and tennis.

There are many different sorts of sports equipment, including safety gear, equipment that improves performance, training equipment, playing equipment, and clothes. Sports gear examples include balls, bats, rackets, sticks.

Athletes' decisions to buy sports equipment might be impacted by a variety of circumstances. When choosing to purchase sports equipment, athletes may want to keep the following factors in mind:

**Performance:** Sports equipment that can improve an athlete's performance and assist them reach their athletic goals is often sought after by athletes. They might take into account things like the equipment's functionality, quality, and longevity as well as any special characteristics that might help them perform better in their chosen sport. A basketball player, for instance, could think about the grip and cushioning of their shoes, while a swimmer might seek for a swim cap that lessens drag in the water.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Reputation of the brand that produces the sporting equipment can also be important

- To find out the customer trends in purchasing sports equipment
- To analyze the changes of purchasing decision
- To compare yearly sales of shooting equipment companies in India
- To study the strategies which sports equipment companies are following

### Research Objectives

- To investigate the factors influencing sports equipment purchasing choices among Indian shooters, taking into consideration their specific needs, preferences, and performance requirements.
- To examine the impact of brand reputation, product quality, and pricing on the purchasing decisions of Indian shooters when selecting sports equipment for shooting sports.
- To explore the role of personal experiences, recommendations, and expert opinions in shaping the purchasing choices of Indian shooters regarding sports equipment, with a focus on the influence of peers, coaches, and professional associations.

## LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

### Sample Size and Generalizability

The study includes a limited number of Indian athletes, which may not be representative of the entire athlete population in India. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to all Indian athletes.

### **Geographic Representation**

The sample might not fully capture the geographic diversity of India. Athletes from different regions may have varying preferences and constraints influenced by regional cultures, economic conditions, and availability of sports facilities.

### **Diversity of Sports**

The study may focus on a specific set of sports, potentially overlooking the diverse range of sports practiced in India. Athletes from lesser-known or less popular sports might have different purchasing behaviors that are not reflected in the study.

### **Economic Backgrounds**

Athletes come from various economic backgrounds, and the study may not fully represent this economic diversity. Financial constraints can significantly impact purchasing decisions, and a homogeneous sample might overlook these differences.

### **Subjectivity and Bias**

Qualitative research relies on personal interviews, which can introduce subjectivity and bias. Participants' responses might be influenced by their personal experiences and perceptions, leading to biased or incomplete information.

### **Temporal Changes**

The study captures a specific period and might not account for changes over time. Economic shifts, technological advancements, and evolving sports trends can influence purchasing decisions, making the findings potentially outdated in a different context.

### **Reliance on Self-Reported Data**

The study relies on self-reported data, which can be affected by recall bias, social desirability bias, and inaccurate memories. Athletes might not accurately recall their decision-making process or might present it in a favorable light.

### **Scope of Exploration**

Given the depth-oriented nature of qualitative research, the study may not cover all potential factors influencing purchase decisions. Some relevant factors might be overlooked due to time and resource constraints.

### **Influence of Sponsorships**

Many athletes receive sponsorships or discounts from sports equipment brands, which can significantly influence their purchasing decisions. This factor might not be fully accounted for in the study, affecting the general applicability of the findings.

### **Technological Accessibility**

Differences in access to technology and online shopping platforms across urban and rural areas can impact the purchasing behavior of athletes. The study might not fully address these disparities, leading to a skewed understanding of the purchase decision process.

### Cultural and Social Factors

Cultural and social influences play a significant role in decision-making. The study might not comprehensively explore these aspects, particularly in a diverse country like India where cultural norms and social expectations vary widely.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research aims to investigate the factors influencing the purchase decision of sports equipment among consumers. Specifically, the study will focus on understanding the decision-making process of consumers when purchasing sports equipment, including factors such as brand reputation, product quality, price, product features, and personal preferences. The research will also explore the impact of demographic variables, such as age, gender, and income, on the purchase decision for sports equipment.

The problem statement for this research is to identify the key factors that influence consumers' purchase decision for sports equipment and understand how these factors interact with each other to impact the decision-making process. By addressing this problem, the research will contribute to the existing literature on consumer behavior and provide insights for sports equipment manufacturers, marketers, and retailers to better understand consumer preferences and design effective marketing strategies to meet consumers' needs and expectations

- Type of research: qualitative research
- Type of data collection: primary data
- Population: unknown
- Sampling technique: convenience sampling
- Sample size: 50
- Respondents: Indian athletes
- Research tool: Semi structured questionnaire

### DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Why do you given first preference to shooting rather than other sport?

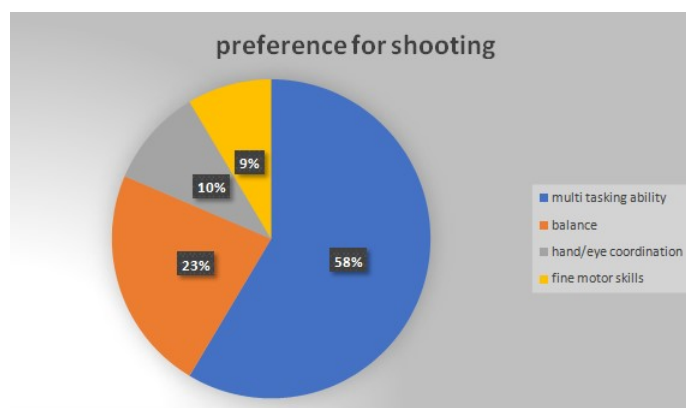
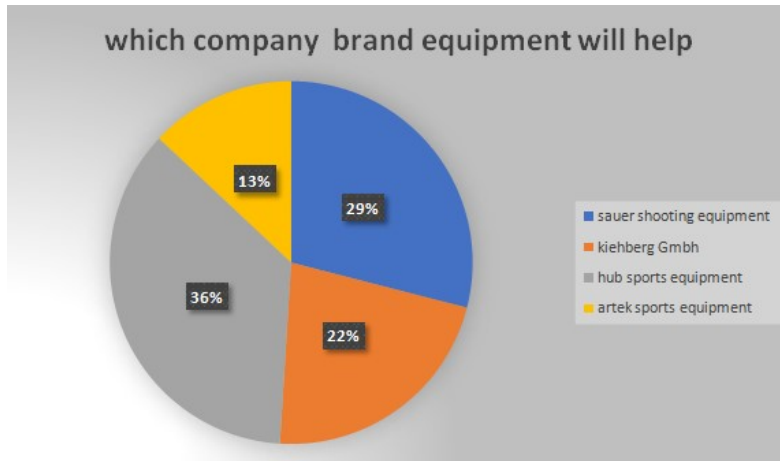


Figure 1

**Interpretation**

The above graph shows that 58% of respondents prefer shooting because of multi tasking ability 9 %of respondents prefer shooting because of fine motor skills which brand equipment will help you the most in shooting.



**Figure 2**

**Interpretation**

From the above graphs it show that the 36% of the respondents are prefers that hub sports will help and easy to purchase the sports equipment from the hub sports and 29% of the respondents are prefers to sauer brand sports is the best for shooting which company product you like to wear while practicing and how comfortable they are?



**Figure 3**

**Interpretation**

In the above graph it shows that 35 % of respondents prefer the north face because of best performance 7% of the respondents prefer Columbia because of lack of advertising which company sports drink you prefer to heal yourself from dehydration?

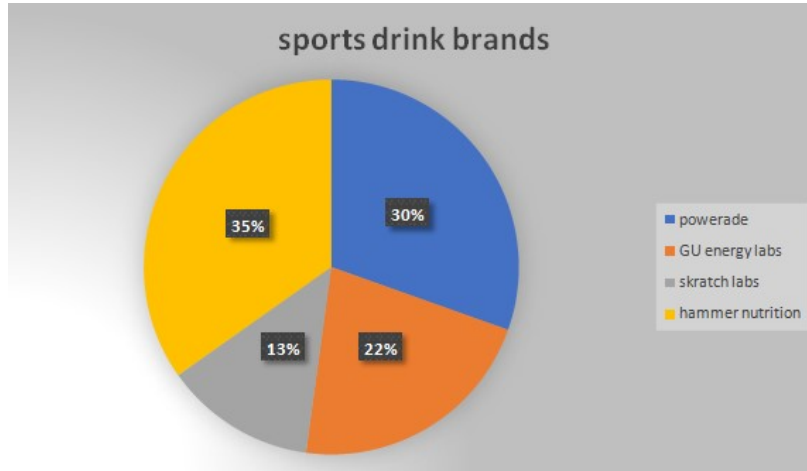


Figure 4

**Interpretation**

In the above pie chart 35% of respondents prefers to hammer nutrition sports drink best of it's a best supplement for dehydration 13 % of the respondents prefers to take sketch labs sports drink what factors influence your purchase decision when buying sports equipment?.

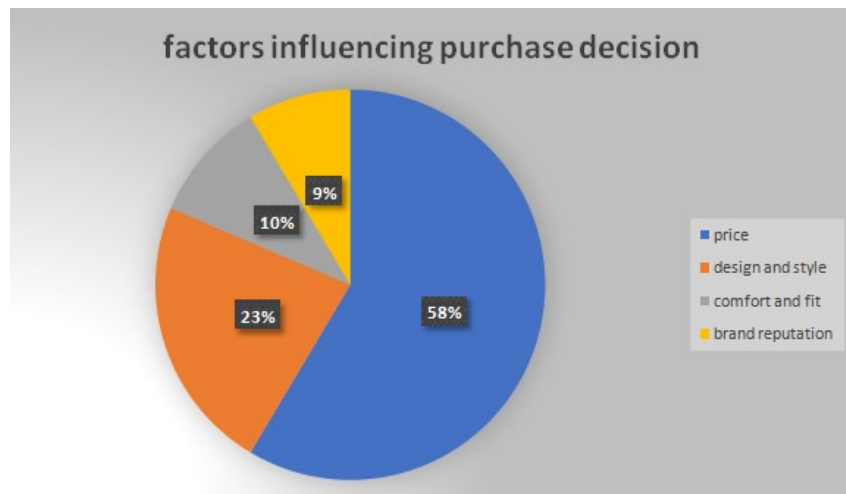


Figure 5

**Interpretation**

From the above graph 58 % of respondents are refer to influence because of price to make a purchase decision which and 9% of the respondents are refers to influence from brand reputation which it help to make decision making of purchasing of sports equipment how important is the brand reputation in your purchase decision for sports equipment?

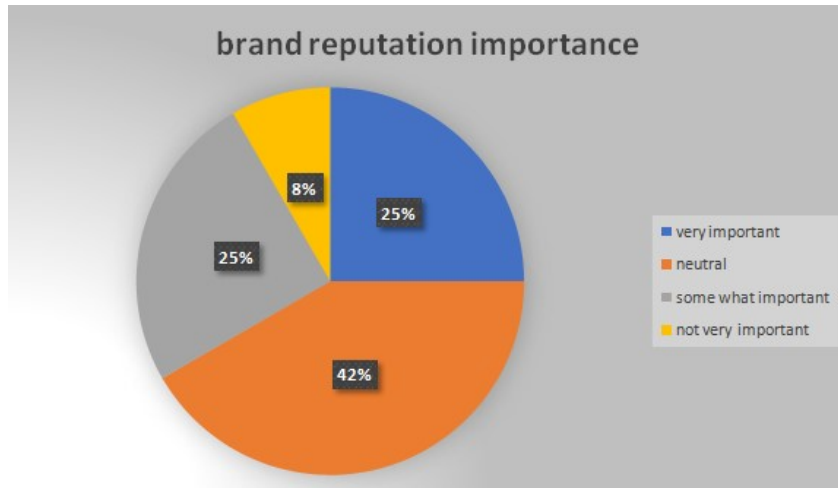


Figure 6

**Interpretation**

In the above graph 42% are neutral of the respondents prefer to brand reputation is important for the purchase decision on sports equipment and 8% are of the respondents are prefer that its not that much important of brand reputation in decision making purchasing of sports equipment.

Do you consider the overall cost of ownership (including maintenance, accessories, etc.) when buying sports equipment ?

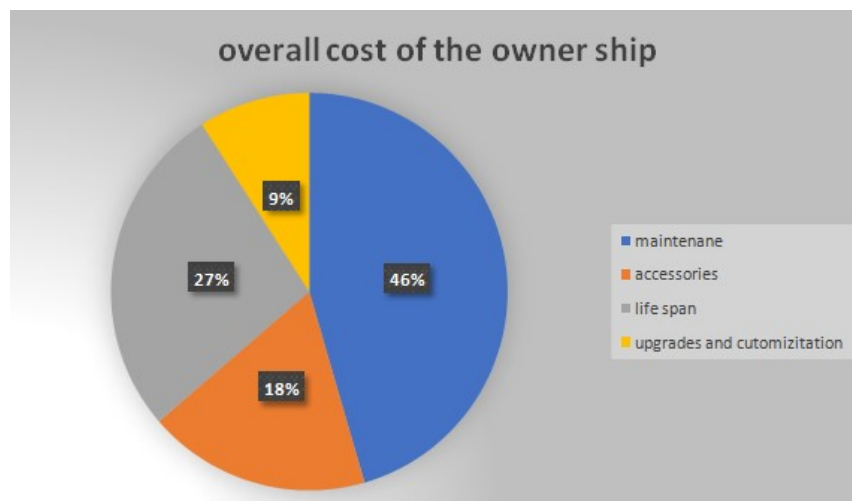
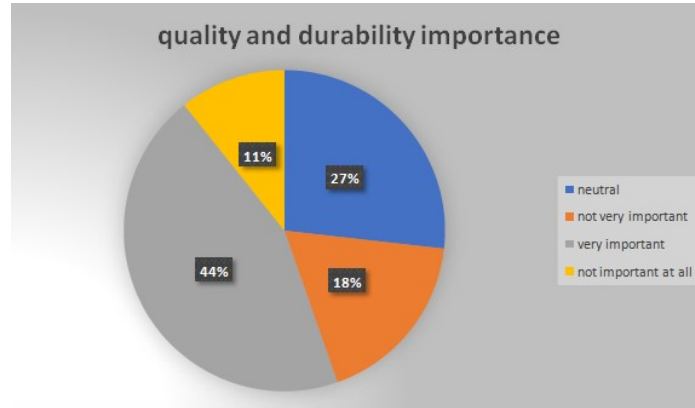


Figure 7

**Interpretation**

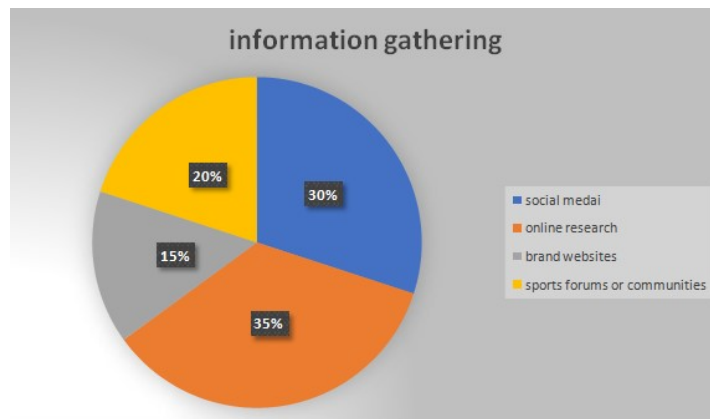
From the above graphs 46 % of the respondents are prefers that the maintenance will be consider while purchasing of the sports equipment and 9% of the respondents are prefers to upgrades and customization will make them ot purchase the sports equipment how important is the quality and durability of sports equipment in your purchase decision?



**Figure 8**

### Interpretation

From the above graph 44% of the respondents are prefers to quality and durability of sports equipment is much important in purchase decision and 11% of the respondents are prefer to quality and durability are not at all important in purchase decision of sports equipment. How do you typically gather information about sports equipment before making a purchase?



**Figure 9**

### Interpretation

In the above graph and the data collection 35% of the respondents are prefers that they will gather the information form the online research before the purchase of sports equipment and 15% of the respondents are prefers that they will purchase the equipment after the research on brand websites

### FINDINGS

- From the above graphs it is shown that 36% of respondents prefer hub sports equipment due to updating features everyday
- Only 7% respondents are feeling comfortable by wearing Columbia brand dresses while shooting
- Most respondents prefer to drink hammer nutrition and powerade while less respondents are choosing skratch labs
- Price factor playing a major role in influencing purchase decision and brand reputation , comfort and fit having less chances of effecting purchase decision



- Quality and durability plays an important role in purchase decision of sports equipment
- Morini arms weapons having best performance and Walther arms having least

## **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the purchasing choices of sports equipment among Indian athletes are influenced by several factors.

Firstly, the performance and quality of the equipment play a crucial role. Indian athletes prioritize equipment that helps enhance their performance and enables them to compete at their best. They look for well-known brands that offer advanced technology, durability, and functionality.

Secondly, cost is a significant consideration for Indian athletes. Many athletes in India come from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, and affordability plays a crucial role in their equipment choices. While some athletes can afford high-end equipment, others opt for more budget-friendly options without compromising quality.

Thirdly, the availability and accessibility of sports equipment also impact athletes' choices.

Athletes prefer to purchase equipment that is readily available in the Indian market or can be easily imported. They consider factors such as local distribution networks, retail outlets, and online platforms that offer a wide range of options.

Furthermore, athletes often seek recommendations and guidance from coaches, trainers, and fellow athletes. They value the opinions and experiences of trusted individuals within their sporting community, which can influence their decision-making process.

## **SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

As only 13% are preferring artek sports equipment the company should increase their features and advertising tactics in order to increase their sales

- Columbia brand dresses should increase features like light weight and easy to put on and take off so that people will feel comfortable
- Skratch labs drinks should increase nourishment factor and decrease sweeteners as sports people didn't prefer
- As price factor playing a major role in effecting purchase decision company's should make to focus on cost element when compared to brand reputation
- Walther arms can increase features like adjustable stocks, improved triggers, improved weight materials, customized weight systems in order to increase their sales

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