




“Interdependence of selected socio-demographic characteristics of consumers and consumer preferences toward brands”

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INTERDEPENDENCE OF SELECTED SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CONSUMERS AND CONSUMER PREFERENCES TOWARD BRANDS

Abstract

Given the changing market conditions due to the globalization of the economy, legal environment, competitiveness, and consumer base, brand management must apply innovative approaches that reflect these changes. This paper aims to analyze the relations between selected socio-demographic characteristics of consumers and their preferences toward brands (i.e. the reasons they would replace their preferred brand with another one). The survey targeted 2025 consumers from the eight regions of Slovakia in March 2019. The respondents' age had to be at least 15. Thirty-four questions formed the survey questionnaire, which was separated into three sections. Three socio-demographic factors were selected for analysis: age (three categories), education (three categories), and social status (six categories). The correspondence analysis was carried out via IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 25. The results were plotted on a multidimensional map. The average age is 40.24; the largest frequency is associated with primary/vocational graduates, 51.11%; 50.67 % of employees are recognized as having the greatest frequencies for social status. The findings indicate that the higher the age of consumers, the lower the effect of the image; the higher the level of education, the lower the effect of price on consumers' motivation to replace their preferred brand with the alternative one. Furthermore, social status is mostly contingent upon the age. Hence, this paper observed similar correspondence analysis results between these socio-demographic characteristics; the most specific groups are students and the unemployed.

Keywords

brand, categories, consumer loyalty, correspondence analysis, multidimensional map

JEL Classification

M31, M37

INTRODUCTION

Manufacturers and sellers are interested in differentiating their offers, as it becomes more efficient in addressing the target groups. A brand is a key tool for implementing product policies in consumer markets, and at the same time, it is the carrier of differentiation. The phenomenon of the brand has become a highly efficient tool for affecting consumers' decision-making. Consumers perceive the brand as a vital component of the product's quality and are more inclined to choose the well-known brand without considering the alternatives. Therefore, both the manufacturers and the sellers implement branding strategies, which are considered a critical tool to help them differentiate their offer from the competitive one; the proper strategy helps them sell their products at higher prices than the alternative products.

The differentiation is based on the product characteristics; however, it either needs to be more motivating for the consumers or more qualified to identify the hidden benefits of the offer. As for the consumers, the concept of a brand is based on both product differentiation and

product identification, also involving the aspects of brand image, which is, for example, the emotional aspect of exclusivity that the competitive product can hardly even try to offer; hence, the brand brings identity and confidence. Nowadays, consumers are notoriously flooded with many various alternative offers and brands; however, to pull the consumer on one's side and keep them is contingent upon understanding the consumption patterns. Moreover, consumers involve individuals of different socio-demographic characteristics and incomes showing different needs, attitudes, and preferences. Considering all the above, at this stage of the development of the market environment, there is a need to consider brand management from the customers' point of view, especially their characteristics.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

In marketing management, brand management is becoming increasingly crucial, particularly when organizations attempt to transmit intangible and complex messages (Hazudin et al., 2022). These actions are equally important to share the key brand values with internal and external stakeholders of companies (Samoliuk et al., 2021). Brand and branding are the core of marketing ideology and practice (Conejo & Wooliscroft, 2015). Today, branding is viewed as a specific marketing tool and a key product attribute. It is the symbol and one of the crucial identifiers of the products that set it apart from the competitors (Moravcikova et al., 2017).

A brand is a set of characteristics that develop over time in the consumer's mind to differentiate between competing products (Yoo & Donthu, 2001). A company's brand is one of its most precious assets, and concepts like brand equity, brand management, and brand recognition can help it occupy its proper position in customers' thoughts (Atashfaraz & Abadi, 2016). Drūteikienė et al. (2023) singled out the term employer brand: a capture of momentum used for strengthening the perceptions of employees.

The philosophy of brand management has also changed recently, and brand owners are now interested in the need to improve their brands in both socio-psychological and aesthetic dimensions. As evidenced by a glance through news channels, publications, and social media, brands have firmly disseminated into all facets of our daily lives in many countries (Levy & Luedicke, 2013). Therefore, marketers must carefully analyze their branding and marketing strategies while developing a radical new brand extension to leverage the competitive advantage brought about by innovation. Since

there are many different ways to innovate, it is critical to comprehend what consumers think and feel about new products with high levels of creativity. Therefore, companies typically create particular customer profiles to evaluate consumer innovation when introducing a new product. These profiles consider internal and external variables that affect consumer behavior concerning radical brand extensions (Munteanu & Florea, 2014).

Traditional brand management theory has failed, as evidenced by market realities. This theory has to be revised, strongly emphasizing behavioral approaches. The theory has been primarily constrained in modern times to prevent the precise identification of specific sources of brand value in certain nations (Kliestikova et al., 2019). A brand is a very broad concept. It is a culmination of all the factors that a client weighs while making a purchasing choice.

Along with being a trademark, it also refers to people's connections when thinking of a particular brand. Customers experience emotion when using the brand. This is a culmination of the consumer's interactions with the brand starting with their first product "touch" (Krizanova et al., 2013).

According to Valaskova et al. (2018), the respondent's age, income, and status are some of the demographic factors that influence how they feel about private-label products. According to Waladali and Rabaiah (2022), these demographic characteristics include job type, contract type, gender, educational qualifications, and age. There is a marginal relationship between the identified demographic factors and customer attitudes in all three scenarios. Customers that buy private label goods more frequently also mention cost effectiveness, quality, and retailer loyalty as their motivating factors. Due to the social and financial factors associated with the respondent's

family status, the sort of private-label products a customer purchases are highly influenced by their status. Gender, age, and educational level can be essential demographic factors influencing the purchase decision and customer satisfaction (Shava, 2021).

According to Aaker (2009), brand loyalty is seen as consumer and brand engagement. Loyalty reflects how likely the consumers are to replace their preferred brand, which they are loyal to, with another one, mostly because the brand is about to change either price or quality or it is to modify the product itself (Aaker, 2009). Therefore, brand loyalty is a crucial factor; it increases brand value and makes the brand more competitive in the markets. Brand love, affinity, and loyalty are the variables that act as switching barriers (Arun Kumar et al., 2023).

When a well-known brand is recognized as a high-quality brand by a consumer, and a consumer comes back, it is considered the critical loyal consumer consumption pattern. For companies, brand loyalty is one of the critical factors associated with company longevity and success (Kuchinka et al., 2018). Bisschoff and Els (2023) state that service quality, customer care, trust, customer loyalty, and reputation are vital to managing brand loyalty. Customer loyalty leads to maintaining competitive advantages under challenging circumstances, like unfavorable taxation policy changes (Tovmasyan, 2021). Furthermore, developing many national brands is closely connected with developing patriotic entrepreneurship (Sułkowski et al., 2022).

By enhancing the value of goods and services in consumer marketplaces, trademarks assist sellers in gaining a competitive advantage (Sheth & Sinha, 2015; Gomes et al., 2016). The competitive perspective views “brand” as a unique competitive advantage that influences how well consumers view the quality of goods and services (Aaker, 1991; Lee et al., 2017).

Companies encounter various degrees of strategic brand orientation (Mitchell et al., 2015). The three stages of brand orientation are integrated, embryonic, and minimalist (Wong & Merrilees, 2005). A low level of brand orientation refers to brands as the short-term centralization and modest branding activity of corporations’ subsidiaries. Progressive marketing actions comprise the em-

bryonic level of brand orientation, and the brand is integrated with marketing activities at the brand-centric level (Mitchell et al., 2015).

There are two ways to provide brand communication: a functional approach and an emotional one. Brand awareness, brand association, brand loyalty, and positive brand equity are the main goals of brand communication in consumer markets (Keller, 2013). These goals often became crucial for the company’s strategy within its social net development (Mishchuk et al., 2022). Customer perception of a brand’s products or services increases as brand equity increases. In fact, some marketing research on brand equity asserted that brand equity positively affects loyalty. Successful marketing techniques such as competitive price, quality control, and advertising can be utilized to build more substantial brand equity, which can ultimately be combined to increase loyalty (Atashfaraz & Abadi, 2016). This is aligned with the findings on links between brand credibility and consumers’ purchase intention. Park et al. (2022) argue that it is mediated by perceived quality, information cost saved, lower perceived risk, and relative price.

Like any social science study or field, brand management should consider its broader or social influence in addition to the more focused brand manager-specific answers and recommendations. Brand management research would be better positioned to solve the current, urgent concerns that the global society is currently grappling with by tackling topics that matter to various stakeholders and people in general and that have the power to influence their everyday lives. Additionally, the political, social, and technological advancements that affect the environment in which brands exist and function force branding research to reexamine issues like those on the environment, sustainability, ethics, and trust (Golob et al., 2019). Consumer adoption is a key factor in brand extensions’ success; therefore, understanding consumer wants must be the foundation of the innovation process needed to build a powerful brand extension. Typically, businesses pinpoint those needs and develop long-term solutions through products or services (Moon, 2005).

Therefore, the paper aims to study the impact of socio-demographic characteristics on consumers’ loyalty (or lack thereof) to a preferred brand.

2. METHODOLOGY

The survey was conducted as a part of a long-term research project that aimed to develop an integrated financial-behavioral brand management model to support brand building in the unique circumstances of the Slovak Republic. Regardless of gender, social standing, monthly income, or location of residence, Slovak consumers made up the survey sample (also referred to as the target group). The information was gathered in March 2019. The respondents' age, which had to be at least 15, was the sole socio-demographic constraint.

Thirty-four questions formed the survey questionnaire, most of which were closed-ended (select-ed) questions, which most respondents often favor. According to the context, the questionnaire was separated into three sections. The first part addresses consumer preferences and attitudes toward automobiles, banks, cola drinks, and sports-wear brands. The second part considers particular cost-saving scenarios in certain areas. Finally, the last one maps the socio-demographic characteristics of consumers, i.e., gender, age, place of residence, other persons living in the common household, education, social status, and net monthly household income.

Two thousand twenty-five respondents in the target group – 1003 men (49.53%) and 1022 women (50.47%) – represent the eight regions of Slovakia and are deemed to be sufficiently prominent and balanced (Table 1). Furthermore, since the target group should be regarded as roughly equal in age, the average age is 40.24. Regarding education, the largest frequencies

are associated with primary/vocational graduates (1035; 51.11%), followed by secondary graduates (741; 36.59%), and then university graduates (249; 12.30%). Additionally, the employees (1026; 50.67%) are recognized as having the greatest frequencies for social status, and the range of EUR 501-1000 is where the most significant frequencies for net monthly income are found (676; 33.38%).

The respondents were asked to explain why they would choose to replace their preferred product brand with the alternative one. The closed-ended questions were answered by choosing one of four answers: i) quality of the branded product (1048; 51.76%), ii) price of the branded product (771; 38.07%), iii) availability of the branded product (141; 6.96%), and iv) image of the branded product (65; 3.21%). In addition, the variables included selected socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and the respondents' attitude toward replacing their preferred product brand with another one.

The correspondence analysis is involved in verifying the strength of relations between analyzed variables, and so as it would disclose the hidden relations and associations of the variables in the form of comprehensive and visual means (Hebák, 2007; Coss, 2017; van de Velden et al., 2020; Beh & Lombardo, 2019).

Statistical methods analyze relations between categories of two or more variables compiled into a pivot table. There are growing trends in implementing correspondence analysis in market research as it enables finding the correlation

Table 1. Socio-demographic data overview

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Gender	Male			Female		
Frequency	1003 (49.53 %)			1022 (50.47 %)		
Age	16-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	55-65	over 66
Frequency	421 (20.79 %)	419 (20.69 %)	407 (20.10 %)	383 (18.91 %)	309 (15.26 %)	86 (4.25 %)
Education	primary/vocational		secondary		university	
Frequency	1035 (51.11 %)		741 (36.59 %)		249 (12.30 %)	
Social Status	student	employed	unemployed	self-employed	retired	maternity leave
Frequency	316 (15.60 %)	1026(50.67 %)	115 (5.68 %)	138 (6.81 %)	306 (15.11 %)	124 (6.12 %)
Net Monthly Household Income (EUR)	<500	501-1000	1001-1500	1501-2000	2001-2500	>2500
Frequency	297 (14.67 %)	676 (33.38 %)	577 (28.49 %)	284 (14.02%)	97 (4.79 %)	94 (4.64 %)

between analyzed variables and provides the structure of interdependencies. Categorical variables are the input variables given as absolute and relative frequencies. There is the advantage of involving nominal, ordinal, or quantitative discrete variables. However, this paper uses the explorative method to analyze and demonstrate the relations between variables rather than the verificative one to prove the appropriateness of achieved results. The ordinate axis (dimensions) of the declining level of importance was set, including the multidimensional row and column profiles vector space reduction pursuing the maximum information from the initial research data. The results are plotted on a multidimensional map known as the correspondence map.

The correspondence analysis was done via IBM SPSS Statistics, Version 25. The chi-squared distance, standardized values, symmetrical normalization, and preferred dimensions equal to two values were set as the preferred degree of distance.

3. RESULTS

The first-row variable subject to analysis was the age of respondents with six defined categories (Table 2). The goal was to determine if and how the respondents are about to replace their preferred product brand with the alternative one, depending on their age.

Table 2. Pivot table of absolute frequencies

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Age	Quality	Price	Availability	Image	Active Margin
16-25	219	139	29	29	416
26-35	227	145	26	17	415
36-45	209	165	26	8	408
46-55	209	153	23	4	389
56-65	149	123	27	6	305
Over 65	35	46	10	1	92
Active Margin	1,048	771	141	65	2,025

Subsequently, row and column profiles were calculated (Tables 3 and 4), enabling the conversion of the absolute joint frequencies into a comparable format.

Table 3. Row profiles

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Age	Quality	Price	Availability	Image	Active Margin
16-25	.526	.334	.070	.070	1.000
26-35	.547	.349	.063	.041	1.000
36-45	.512	.404	.064	.020	1.000
46-55	.537	.393	.059	.010	1.000
56-65	.489	.403	.089	.020	1.000
Over 65	.380	.500	.109	.011	1.000
Mass	.518	.381	.070	.032	

As many as 51.8% of respondents find quality the most important criterion when replacing their preferred brand with another one. Conversely, the image is the least interesting (only 3.2%).

Table 4. Column profiles

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Age	Quality	Price	Availability	Image	Mass
16-25	.209	.180	.206	.446	.205
26-35	.217	.188	.184	.262	.205
36-45	.199	.214	.184	.123	.201
46-55	.199	.198	.163	.062	.192
56-65	.142	.160	.191	.092	.151
Over 65	.033	.060	.071	.015	.045
Active Margin	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	

The column profiles (Table 4) show the age structure of respondents for individual frequencies of possible reasons to replace their preferred brand. The highest number of respondents, who consider image important enough to replace their preferred brand with another one, are aged 16-25, representing 44.6%. The row variables prove the uniform distribution of respondents into the given age categories.

The chi-squared test value (47.513) of variable independence confirms the correlation between the age of the respondents and the reasons they would replace their preferred brand with another one, a prerequisite for accurately interpreting the correspondence analysis results (Table 5). The significance (sig.) value is lower than any selected importance level, and it is possible to reject the variable independence hypothesis; thus, the paper declares the interdependence between the analyzed variables. Inertias show the points' distribution level, in descending order, in given dimensions. The first dimension illustrates 77.6% of the variability of relations in the pivot table. The cumulative percent-

Table 5. Summary

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Dimension	Singular Value	Inertia	Chi-Square	Sig.	Proportion of Inertia		Confidence Singular Value	
					Accounted for	Cumulative	Standard Deviation	Correlation 2
1	.135	.018			.776	.776	.023	.076
2	.070	.005			.208	.984	.022	
3	.019	.000			.016	1.000		
Total		.023	47.513	.000a	1.000	1.000		

Note: a. 15 degrees of freedom.

age of illustrated variability favors the two-dimensional map as it can bear as much as 98.4% of the initial points' variability with negligible information loss.

Table 6 shows the row category coordinates to be drawn into the correspondence map. The distribution rate of individual categories is represented by inertia. Upon the contribution of point to inertia of dimension values, the most significant effect on the orientation of the first dimension axis shows the 16-25 age category (54.2% of the effect). In comparison, the over 65 category (49.2%) shows the most significant effect on the orientation of the second dimension axis. The total column values show a total correlation between the row profiles and map axes. Moreover, high correlation values

prove a very high quality of mapping of row variable category using two axes.

In addition, the indicators for column categories were calculated in a similar way (Table 7). The most significant effect on the first axis inertia shows as much as 77.4% of the image category. The most considerable effect on the second axis orientation shows the availability category (39.8%). The quality of mapping of column variable is very high since the illustrated variability of categories makes up over 91% of total.

The final correspondence map (Figure 1) shows the relations and the interdependencies structures of the respondent age and the reasons they would replace their preferred brand with another one.

Table 6. Overview of row points

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Age	Mass	Score in Dimension			Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2	Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		Total		
						1	2			
16-25	.205	-.597	-.162	.010	.542	.077	.962	.037	.999	
26-35	.205	-.205	.153	.002	.064	.069	.767	.222	.989	
36-45	.201	.209	.083	.001	.065	.020	.858	.070	.927	
46-55	.192	.291	.297	.003	.120	.242	.650	.350	1.000	
56-65	.151	.248	-.215	.002	.069	.100	.644	.250	.894	
Over 65	.045	.644	-.870	.005	.139	.492	.510	.483	.993	
Active Total	1.000			.023	1.000	1.000				

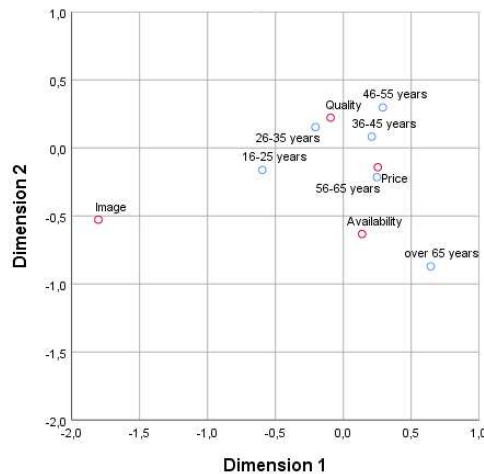
Note: a. Symmetrical normalization.

Table 7. Overview of column points

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Category	Mass	Score in Dimension			Inertia	Contribution				
		1	2	Of Point to Inertia of Dimension		Of Dimension to Inertia of Point		Total		
						1	2			
Quality	.518	-.094	.222	.002	.034	.365	.253	.735	.987	
Price	.381	.254	-.142	.004	.182	.109	.835	.134	.969	
Availability	.070	.138	-.632	.002	.010	.398	.077	.839	.917	
Image	.032	-1.804	-.527	.015	.774	.128	.956	.042	.998	
Active Total	1.000			.023	1.000	1.000				

Note: a. Symmetrical normalization.



Source: Authors' elaboration.

Figure 1. Correspondence map (Age/Motivation)

The analyzed age categories are distributed near the center in the correspondence map i.e. taking no significant profile, except for the over 65 category. Consumers in the post-productive age represent a specific group when it comes to their attitude toward branded products. Despite the fact that branded products enable manufacturers and sellers to offer such products at higher prices, the price, if compared with the age categories of respondents, is considered the most balanced determinant, and as far as the analyzed age categories, the position of price is somewhat centralized within defined dimensions.

As another determinant of deciding on preferred brands, product quality is the most sensitively perceived by economically active consumers. The higher the age, the less critical the quality of products. As for the consumers of higher age categories, the availability of products is a rather significant determinant, whereas for the over 65s, it is an even dominating determinant, then the price follows. Image is the least significant determinant when deciding on replacing the preferred brand with

the alternative one, and given the other analyzed determinants, it is secondary. It is considered an isolated element based on the correspondence analysis results. The higher the age of consumers, the lower the effect of the image as the determinant when deciding on replacing their preferred brand with the alternative one. It is impossible to hold that image means nearly anything concerning the characteristics of branded products; however, given the other analyzed determinants, it takes the least significant part.

The two remaining socio-demographic characteristics, row variables, were calculated similarly by employing the analogous procedures of the correspondence analysis: level of education of the respondents (at three categories) and social status of the respondents (at six categories). Again, the goal was to determine if and how the respondents were about to replace their preferred product brand with the alternative one, depending on their education level and social status. Tables 8 and 9 show the critical results of the correspondence analysis related to the given variables.

Table 8. Cumulative results

Source: Authors' elaboration.

Variable	Summary		Cumulative Proportion of Inertia (2-dim.)	Row Points				Column Points			
				Contribution of Point to Inertia of Dimension (max. value)		Total Contribution of Dimension to Inertia		Contribution of Point to Inertia of Dimension (max. value)		Total Contribution of Dimension to Inertia	
	Chi Square	Sig.		1	2	min. value	max. value	1	2	min. value	max. value
Level of Education	25.262	.000	1.000	.473 (basic)	.619 (university)	1.000	1.000	.412 (quality)	.427 (price)	1.000	1.000
Social Status	63.432	.000	0.983	.716 (student)	.309 (unemployed)	.73 (self-emp.)	.999 (student)	.772 (image)	.426 (price)	.534 (availability)	1.000 (image)

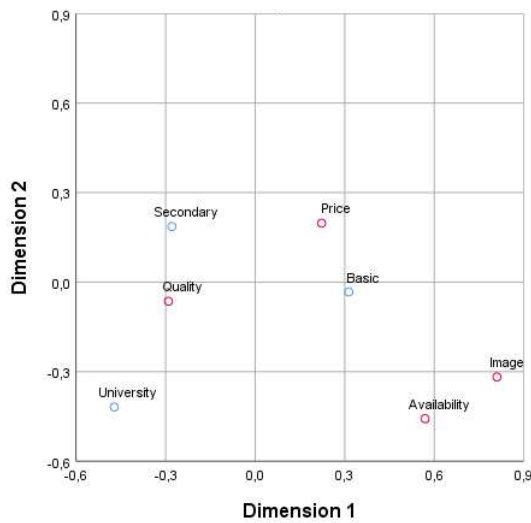


Figure 2. Correspondence map (Education/Motivation)

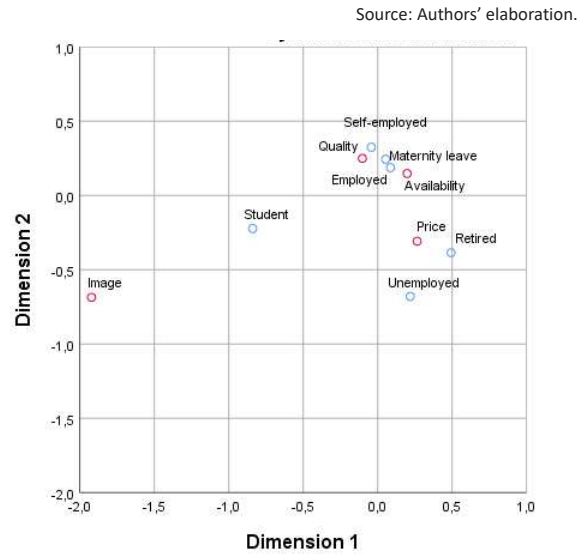


Figure 3. Correspondence map (Social status/Motivation)

The chi-squared test of independence values proves the correlation between analyzed variables. It is possible to reject the variable independence hypothesis because of the sig. values, and thus declare the interdependence between the analyzed variables. Moreover, the cumulative percentage of illustrated variability favors the two-dimensional map as it can bear as much as 100% or 98.3% of the initial points' variability with negligible information loss. The total contribution of dimension to inertia values of row and column variable again prove the high quality of mapping of categories using two axes. Figures 2 and 3 show the correspondence map of results.

The socio-demographic characteristic of respondents' education level scattered price, quality, availability, and image into a greater area within the defined dimensions. The analyzed categories of education level are located outside the map center. Given the analyzed determinants, the respondents with a secondary and basic level of education show comparable values. In contrast, respondents with a university education view product quality as the most significant determinant. At the same time, they find an image the least significant determinant. It also applies to the respondents with secondary education; however, they are more sensitive to price. The respondents with basic education show the most incredible sensitivity to price, as well as those who find the other determinants comparable, i.e., quality, image, and availability. Thus, the higher the level of education, the lower

the price effect on consumer motivation to replace their preferred brand with the alternative one; again, image is recognized as the least significant determinant for loss of consumer loyalty.

The last analyzed socio-demographic characteristic is the respondent's social status, primarily contingent upon their age; hence, similar correspondence analysis results between these socio-demographic characteristics are observed. It is the appropriate way of verification of the age and social status of respondents. The average economically active consumer (employed, self-employed) prefers quality and availability to price. The product image is recognized as the least significant determinant, though student consumers identified it as the most significant determinant. For students, price, quality, and availability are proximate determinants when deciding on replacing their preferred brand with the alternative one. As for the retired and the unemployed, considering the economic reasons (income), the most crucial determinant is price, then availability, and quality; thus, as far as the social status of respondents is concerned, the most specific groups are students and the unemployed.

4. DISCUSSION

The correspondence analysis discloses the similarities and differences of the row variable categories (socio-demographic data of respondents)

given the various levels of column variable (reasons respondents to replace their preferred brand with another one) and vice versa. It also identifies the correlation between row and column categories (mutual interdependencies between socio-demographic characteristics and recognized motivations of consumers to replace their preferred brand with the alternative one).

The results prove the hypothesis of considering the basic socio-demographic characteristics of consumers when winning and fostering the loyalty of consumers or attracting new customers. The most significant differences are identified with education, which stands out as the critical socio-demographic characteristic concerning the segmentation of branded product consumer markets. The findings should be considered when developing brand strategies, emphasizing the unique demands and requirements of various consumer groups while acknowledging their demographic variances. The price is considered the most important determinant, having the greatest impact on average consumers to replace their preferred brand with the alternative one.

The contemporary period of business is referred to as “quality time” since perceived quality has emerged as a crucial element of competition in the market-

place. Marketing theorists view the quality of products and services as a potent competitive advantage. The preservation and strengthening of customer loyalty for businesses concerned about developing their competitive market position are strategic. Because in today’s competitive era, people witnessed a sharp increase in the number of brands in various industries, making survival in the industrial market more difficult (Atashfaraz & Abadi, 2016).

Consumers have become more aware, and they have more information. Moreover, the growing trends in incomes and living standards allow for buying products at higher prices and quality; such matters also affect the degree of consumer loyalty. Based on the consumer’s age, brand loyalty differs. However, consumer preferences for branded products are expected to decline by the end of their working age. This is because brand loyalty increases with age, favoring the brands that target consumers in higher age groups of the working age. By contrast, for consumers in lower age groups, branded products are not a priority but rather a wise choice or a specific need matter of choice. Consumers of lower age groups are more readily persuaded; they want to try new things and quickly fall for new trends and developments. Therefore, they tend to behave spontaneously and are more likely to be brand loyal.

CONCLUSION

The paper investigated to what extent the selected socio-demographic characteristics (age, education, and social status) affect consumers so that they would replace their preferred brand with the alternative and more attractive offer as of quality, price, availability, or image. Consumer loyalty toward a brand is undoubtedly a significant determinant of how powerful the brand is.

The analysis determined the socio-demographic characteristics of the consumer markets that are key determinants the branding strategies have to consider. In consumer markets, both quality and price are considered to be the dominant characteristics of branded products, having a key impact on consumers to replace their preferred brand with the alternative one. In contrast, availability and image are secondary determinants. The least dominant characteristic of all the analyzed characteristics is the image of the branded product.

The following is found as a result of creating the correspondence map Age/Motivation. The most significant effect on the first axis inertia shows the category of image (77.4%); the most significant impact on the second axis orientation shows the category of availability (39.8%) at the illustrated variability of 91%. As for the correspondence map Education/Motivation, the most significant effect on the first axis inertia is quality (41.2%); the most significant impact on the second axis orientation is price (42.7%). In line with the conclusion above, the correspondence map Status/Motivation demonstrates the most

significant effect on the first axis inertia – image (77.2%) and the most significant impact on the second axis orientation – price (42.6%).

Loyalty to a brand brings positive economic effects only when the consumer's attitude turns into a consumption pattern, i.e., buying. Additionally, brand loyalty has significant marketing advantages such as reduced marketing expenses, increased market value, decreased competition, brand adoption rate, increased profitability, etc. Therefore, a loyal consumer is a potential for future income.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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