



RESEARCH ARTICLE

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A DETAILED STUDY OF INNOVATION IN SHOES TO SWITCH STYLES ACCORDING TO SITUATION

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ABSTRACT

Our start-up aims to give the consumer the option to customise shoes according to the occasion. Provide customers with a variety of shoes that the shoe industry has contrived and has been experimenting with, with an all-in-one feature. The shoes have a variety of different soles that can be changed depending on the occasion, and the main objective of the product is to provide all-in-one, space-saving technology that is both convenient and beneficial to individuals in many ways. Another objective of the product is to develop a 't in the lifestyle' code as the product is compatible and adjustable to various situations, only further leading to increased customer satisfaction in terms of the quality and price. Finally, the product aims to remove problems like overloading of shoes, dissatisfaction regarding the designs and prices, etc. Internal Operation: Planning or trying what they're doing to the organisation's strategy. Having the discipline to organise people, gather resources, and then create a strategy that others can commit to will increase execution collectively. Deadlines for goals and tasks. Setting stretch goals aids the group's achievement of its objectives and increases team members' engagement and satisfaction. Feedback is an essential element. Rather than goals and deadlines, this is all about enhancing execution through intrinsic drive. Leaders that are good executors know how to give feedback. Resolving Conflict & Unity. Good execution necessitates the development of such a team culture. While there's a lot that goes into developing high-performing teams, we've found that the most important item for leaders to focus on is conflict resolution.

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INTRODUCTION

Our innovative startup aims to revolutionise the shoe business by offering consumers the unparalleled ability to customise their favourite footwear for any occasion. Our product boasts intricate features, allowing users to change the soles of their shoes to suit their needs, whether it be for work or casual settings, providing a seamless blend of functionality and style. Drawing inspiration from India's rich heritage of traditional footwear craftsmanship, with examples such as leather chappals from Kolhapur, embroidered Juttis from Jodhpur, Indo-Tibetan felt boots from Sikkim, and vegetable fibre shoes from Ladakh, our product embodies the evolution of footwear from a mere commodity to an expression of image, attitude, and lifestyle, shaped by historical context. Recognising the significance of the footwear industry in India, which serves as a breeding ground for entrepreneurial talent, the Ministry of MSME has implemented cluster development initiatives to foster collaboration and shared strategies among enterprises and the government, propelling the industry forward.

Notably, Agra, with its renowned shoe industry and esteemed partners such as the Central Footwear Training Institute and MSME DI Agra [7], stands as one of the world's largest leather-shoe clusters, boasting impressive annual production value and driving private capital growth in the organised segment. Through the establishment of modernised production centres and footwear park complexes, the industry has been poised to meet future growth opportunities and elevate the footwear sector to new heights.

Factors Affecting Footwear Industry: Unemployment, wages rates, taxation, inflation and interest rates are those economic factors that can affect Adidas' performance and profitability. Adidas and Nike are both the giants of the sports footwear industry.

Here are four factors — good and bad — that could impact shoe companies this year.

Weather & Inventory; FX Pressure. Changing Consumer Shopping Patterns; Oil Prices, Unemployment, Higher Wages.

ECONOMIC FACTORS

Unemployment: - It is one of the factors which affects the footwear industry. Unemployment is caused by various reasons that come from both the demand side, or employer, and the supply side, or worker. Demand side reductions may be caused by high interest rates, global recession, and financial crisis. From the supply side, frictional unemployment and structural Employment play a great role. Unemployment is more the less is production.

Taxation: - increase in taxation can reduce margin in our product, decrease in taxation can increase our profit margin.

Interest Rates: -Higher interest rates on money borrowed means a higher cost of production. Consumers will also not buy if the cost is too high, lower the interest rate, lower the cost of production & hence consumers will buy more. The worldwide footwear market is highly competitive and fragmented, with a few major competitors and an almost infinite number of smaller firms contending for market share, including designers, marketers, manufacturers, and retailers. In the year 2020, the worldwide footwear market will be worth almost USD 235.5 billion. Between 2021 and 2026, the footwear market is predicted to increase at a CAGR of 3%, reaching a value of almost USD 281.2 billion.



Fig. 1. Global Footwear Market Share by Region

The EMR report shows the regional market share of footwear industry of countries like North America, Europe, the Asia Pacific, Latin America, and the Middle East and Africa.

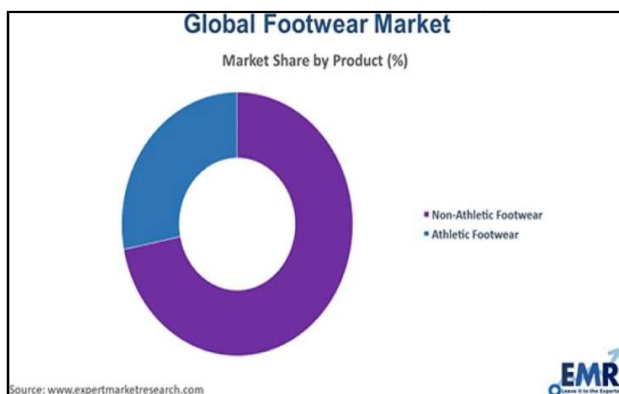


Fig. 2. Global Footwear Market Share by Product

Athletic and non-athletic footwear are the two types of footwear available on the market. Several firms break the \$1.0 billion margin footwear sales globally, but only Nike, Inc. and Adidas AG exceed \$5.0 billion.

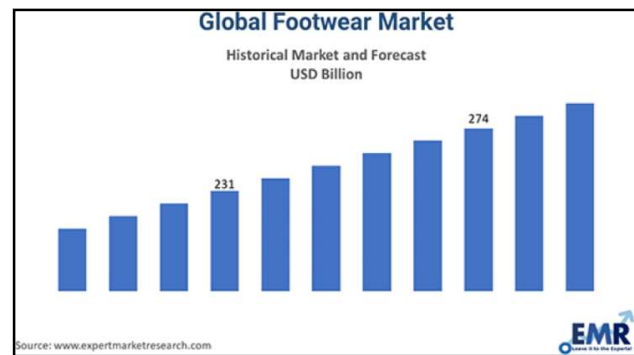


Fig. 3. Historical Footwear Market and Forecast

The global footwear market attained a value of nearly USD 1.92 billion in 2020. The market is further expected to grow in the forecast period of 2023-2028 at a CAGR of 8% to reach nearly USD 3.04 billion by 2026.

BACKGROUND

HISTORY & ORIGIN

Footwear has a long and varied history, with different styles developed in different parts of the world. During the Migration Period and the Crusades, people in different parts of Europe began wearing different types of shoes, inspired by what they had seen in other parts of the world. The discovery of heels led to the development of Western footwear fashion, which was influenced by social class in the Middle Ages. Italy and Spain, with their thriving seaports, craftsmen's shops, and emerging financial centres, were the birthplace of footwear and attire fashion, and their unique styles set the trends for other countries. Foreign countries started producing high-end custom shoes but making them after production was difficult and expensive. Our startup aims to make customisation easier and more affordable by focusing on the outer soles of shoes. We draw inspiration from history while introducing innovative ideas, and our goal is to make a significant impact on the footwear industry.

SOME INNOVATIONS IN SHOES SO FAR

The Nike Waffle Trainer was released in 1973 and made waves with its innovative sole design. The concept stemmed from track spikes, only without the spikes. Instead, the wafflemold left small, protruding squares to better grip surfaces.[1]

At the 1984 Los Angeles Olympics, Adidas unveiled its Micro Pacer shoe, which included the first in-sneaker computer technology. The sneaker had a built-in calculator that recorded and saved distances logged while running.

In the mid-1980s, Adidas launched its Adidas Torsion technology, which provided advanced support. In the 1980s, Adidas unveiled sneakers with new and improved stabilisation: Torsion technology. Many of Adidas' sneakers today use the original Torsion stabilising system, including some of the brand's most popular Adidas Boost versions.

Adidas began using recycled materials for textile in its collaboration Adidas x Parley for the Oceans in 2015. A big step for sustainability includes Adidas' recycled shoes.

Nike recently began experimenting with auto lacing E.A.R.L. (Electro Adaptive Reactive Lacing) technology for shoes called Adapt BB. Danforth explained that sneakers are controlled either by a button on the side or through an app on the owner's phone; the motor connected to cables, which tighten or loosen the shoes.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE/ Limitations of Certain Studies

Table 1. Review of literature

S. No.	Title of the Research Paper	Research Paper Link
1	The Art and Science of Fitting Shoes	Research Paper 1
2	Shoes as a source of first impressions	Research Paper 2
3	Adhesives in footwear industry	Research Paper 3
4	Improving comfort of shoe soles through experiment based on CAD-FEM modeling	Research Paper 4
5	Do you get value for money when you buy an expensive pair of running shoes	Research Paper 5
6	A new methodological approach for shoe sole design and validation	Research Paper 6
7	Post consumer waste management shoes in the footwear industry	Research Paper 7

- Title: The Art and Science of Fitting Shoes. Author: Dennis J. Janisse, President Elect, Prescription Footwear Association (PFA), and President, PFA Research Foundation.** This research is about the two primary components of achieving proper shoe fit which are shoe shape and shoe size. Shoe shape refers to the shape of both the sole and the upper. Proper fit is achieved when shoe shape is matched to foot shape. Shoe size is determined by arch length rather than overall foot length. The proper shoe size is the one that accommodates the first metatarsal joint in the widest part of the shoe. But one thing that this study lacks is COMFORT, good cushioning is an essential part of a good fitting, it also elevates the quality of the shoe. Hence this should be incorporated. [14]
- Title: Shoes as a source of first impressions. Author: Omri Gillath, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS, United States. Corresponding author. Address: Department of Psychology, University of Kansas, Lawrence, KS.** This study found that people can accurately judge others' personality, status, and politics based on their shoes. Participants provided photographs of their shoes, and ratings of these photographs were found to correlate with personal characteristics of the owners. A new group of participants was able to accurately judge the age, gender, income, and attachment anxiety of the shoe owners based on the pictures. The one point that this study lacks is customisation- a great way of portraying the personality of an individual. The styles, the colours, if customised, show a better picture of the individual.
- Title: Adhesives in the footwear industry. Authors: Rosa MM Paiva, Eduardo AS Marques, Lucas FM da Silva, Carlos AC Antonio, Francisca Arán-Ais [14].** This paper discusses the mechanical properties of adhesives and their relevance to footwear. It also looks at the various adhesive constituents and their effects on these properties. This paper also aims to help us understand the significance of adhesives in the footwear industry, as well as to identify the various adhesive processes used in shoemaking, as well as the various adhesive joints produced and their technical requirements. Our product focuses on the same topic and supports the concept discussed in the preceding research. Understanding and identifying adhesives is essential for creating a customisable product. The main component of our product is an adhesive sole. We provide a broader framework for understanding the role of adhesives in the shoe industry on both a basic and technical level, and it strongly supports the research work.
- Title: Improving comfort of shoe sole through experiments based on CAD-FEM modeling. Author: Pasquale Franciosa, Salvatore Gerbino; University of Molise. Antonio Lanzotti; University of Naples. Luca Silvestrica; SAFE WAY srl, Italy.** In footwear, comfort is the second most important factor after style. The shoe sole is a key component of footwear, and its design is influenced by several factors, including foot shape and size, comfort, and materials. This study is using parametric analysis to improve the comfort of a shoe sole. We use elements such as FEM (finite element method) and fractional factorial design array in our product. The research is still focused on

determining how comfortable a shoe will be, but by using the same technology to assess sensitivity and comfort level, our product can be used to change customers' perceptions of comfort. The term "comfort" refers not only to the size and shape of the foot, but also to the circumstance. As a result, we've combined comfort and style with this product.

- Title: Do you get value for money when you buy an expensive pair of running shoes? Authors: R Clinghan, G P Arnold, T S Drew, LA Cochrane, R J Abboud Professor R J Abboud, Institute of Motion Analysis and Research (IMAR), TORT Centre, Ninewells Hospital and Medical School, University of Dundee, Dundee DD1 9SY, UK.** This research paper aims to determine if more expensive running shoes provide better cushioning of plantar pressure and are more comfortable than low-cost alternatives from the same brand. Three pairs of running shoes were purchased from three different manufacturers at three different price ranges: low (£40–45), medium (£60–65) and high (£70–75) and their plantar pressure and comfort were evaluated. As a result, no significant difference was observed between shoes in terms of comfort. The author focuses mainly on the plantar pressure, comfort and the price but the author hasn't tested the quality and durability of the shoes in extreme situations. Our product, having all the three above tested aspects, also has a layer of wax coating that helps the shoe to bear and protects it in extreme situations.
- Title: A new methodological approach for shoe sole design and validation. Authors: Miguel Davia-Aracil & Faustino Salas, Spanish Footwear Technology Institute (INESCOP), Polígono Campo Alto, 03600, Elda, Spain Miguel Davia-Aracil & Antonio Jimeno-Morenilla, Department of Computer Technology, University of Alicante Citra, San Vicente del Raspeig S/N, 03690, Alicante, Spain.** The author explains how the shoe soles are extremely complex to design and manufacture due to their organically shaped but technically precise nature and their manufacturing constraints. He, therefore, mentions the need for the increased design process flexibility offered using specific CAD methodologies and techniques. Recent advances in additive manufacturing systems have given designers more options for designing shoe soles. A new methodology for designing and validating shoe soles is described in this article. The methodology assists designers in the design concept process and in transferring designs to manufacturing. Although the article mentions some effective tools for manufacturing shoe soles, it does not mention or address the price of these tools. It is possible, based on the technologies mentioned, that the price of shoe soles would be high. Our product, new to the market, would provide efficient soles that are resistant and durable, all the while being within the pricing limit. Moreover, our product is a pair of shoes with different attachable and detachable soles, so the consumers must spend comparatively less on buying our product as it provides all-in-one technology, rather than spending more by buying different kinds of shoes.
- Title: post-consumer waste management issues in the footwear industry. Authors: T Staikos and S Rahimifard, Wolfson School of Mechanical and Manufacturing Engineering, Loughborough University, Loughborough, UK.** The research reported in this paper is an initial investigation into realisation of a holistic approach to application of recovery and recycling in the footwear industry. It also presents an integrated waste management framework by combining a mix of design and material improvements, as well as reuse, recycling, and energy recovery activities, and concludes by examining the challenges in establishing end-of-life product recovery procedures for post-consumer shoes. We plan on implementing certain features to our products to make them reusable and as well as all environmentally friendly. The goal is to produce as much footwear and other accessories as required to prevent wastage. We found this research paper interesting as they have some really feasible ideas regarding the above-mentioned changes.

OBJECTIVES

The main goal of our product is to provide a convenient and affordable solution that benefits both individuals and businesses. Another goal is to develop a code of ethics for the shoe industry that is applicable to various situations. As a beginner in the shoe sales business, we hope to offer a wide variety of shoes at a low price that will attract customers. We also hope to provide complete customer satisfaction while not damaging the environment.

NEED

Our product is unique; hence we have good chances of attracting a large customer base in a short time. Our product is necessary for most age groups as we see people attending various events and going to school and office too. The needs for our product are as follows:

- **Storage**-The storage problem is relatable to all the frequent travellers. We see that it's tough carrying and storing all these shoes. Some people with specific religious values hesitate in keeping shoes in bags or anywhere near books and it is very tough to carry them around. As our product amalgamates various genres of shoes into one shoe, it saves a lot of space and it's convenient to transport too.
- **Durability**-Wear and tear and natural causes are one of the main reasons for the destruction and fading of shoes. Hence, we coat all our parts and accessories with wax to enhance its durability and to keep it guarded even when it's not in use.
- **Convenience**-We are establishing a business structure that reduces costs while increasing value and flexibility across the business. Oracle systems and cloud services assist us in reducing IT overhead and allowing us to respond to market opportunities more quickly.

TYPES AND SCOPE OF RESEARCH

- We see that more people prefer wearing shoes than any other footwear. India is the youngest country in the world and majority of them prefer wearing shoes. As the standard of living among Indians increased, we see that people prefer quality and design in shoes rather than a lower price. This gives us the upper hand with our product.
- Enthusiastic students of this generation fearlessly practice and play various sports during school hours. School students face a real issue with their shoes. They have formal shoes for school and during the physical education period they have to play with the same shoes. So, damage to shoes isn't uncommon. A lot of them have to carry extra athletic shoes just to play physical education. When we incorporate both formal and athletic quarters in one shoe it becomes easy for them to adapt to the environment.
- Those who go to work do a lot more than just sitting in front of computers. They go for a meeting. Some of the employees even cycle or jog to increase productivity. As all employees have to wear shoes, they find it tough to bring and change shoes during their fitness time. As an outfit is important for a meeting and shoes are the most noticeable in a sales representative or general people for that matter, it's important to wear the right shoe to the right event.

NOVELTY

Shoes are necessary for many different activities, and people have different preferences for how they want to wear them. Our product combines three different types of shoes - sports, formal, and casual - into one single pair. It is convenient to change between these different styles, and it is also space-saving. The outer wax coating provides protection against harsh weather and provides protection against wear and tear and long-term damage. This unique feature provides long term durability of the shoes. Moreover, customisation would allow the customers to design and style their own pair of shoes, thus increasing consumer satisfaction.

RELEVANCE

- **Fast fashion:** Fast fashion is a phrase fashion retailers use to describe how designs travel rapidly from the catwalk to catch current fashion trends. The emphasis is on optimising specific supply chain components to enable these trends to be developed and produced quickly and affordably, allowing the mainstream customer to purchase current apparel designs at a reduced price.[15]
- **Niche retailing:** A product or service that includes features that appeal to a specific minority market segment. A typical niche product will be distinguishable from other goods and will be manufactured and sold for specialised purposes within the niche market associated with it. Direct-to-consumer and direct-to-business internet sales channels have dominated niche retail. Everything except the brand is the niche retail slogan.[15]
- **Evolution:** Since its inception, the shoe industry has expanded a lot. However, the fundamental aspects or foundations of innovation have remained largely unchanged since the nineteenth century. We were introduced to automated customisations in the twenty-first century. However, it is not widely known. We are taking the initiative to introduce something revolutionary into the footwear industry with our product. Further, the increasing demand for shoes is only going to get bigger in the coming years and so our product will prove to be an effective turning point in the shoe business.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

Being a newly invented product, at that and innovative and futuristic one too, A lot of expectations from the product are given. The product would generate a lot of curiosity regarding the working, benefits and design of the newly found features. The product is for me to tackle several problems.

Firstly, it prevents shoe-rack overloading through its space-saver feature. This is useful for everyone, but it mainly helps those people who love to travel. They have to often make a decision on what to take and what not to take and due to the limited carriage weight and they most often have to compromise with their footwear. With our product, one can stay within the weight limit all the while having to take a pair of shoes that is ready for any situation.

Secondly, it provides an opportunity for individuals to express their own personality. Each and every individual has his/her own story and style, and they show it in several ways. The customisation feature of a product helps solve this. Through our product, an individual can show their own vibe and style. Although many might say that customisation provides only for the visual status, it is indeed more than that. It creates a balance between price and quality. Our product has the feature of customisation and having been made with good quality materials- is priced moderately. This would bring nothing but satisfaction and happiness to the customers.

Lastly, there are several environmental concerns linked with the footwear industry, especially with the waste generated at the end-of-life phase of the shoes. Our product is developed in a proactive approach wherein all the measures are taken with the aim of minimising waste during both the production and the end-of-life phase. This would contribute in a small percentage to global waste production, thus helping to solve some environmental issues.

TARGETED MARKET SEGMENT

- **Teenagers:** Today teenagers like to be on the run with cool and fashionable trends. Customisable shoes are a product that allows them to change the look of the shoes and match it accordingly.
- **Students:** As a student there are many roles to play in the class and outside. Sometimes in formal settings, sometimes on the sports grounds and at social events. Our product comes in handy for them as it can be customised according to the juncture. Just by changing

the outer sole of the same shoes, it could be used in casual settings, for sporting events and others as well.

- **Travellers:** The objectives of the product are such that it strongly appeals to travellers. The matter of storage are some things they will relate to. Travellers or individuals once traveling face the problem of storage with luggage. Our product solves that issue. Rather than carrying completely different pairs of shoes, they can carry their favourite pair and customise it accordingly.

Expected Outcomes

The marketing mix includes strategies such as demographic, geographic, and psychographic segmentation, in order to understand the needs of customers and target them with the best product. Our start-up aims to personalise, starting from bottom line i.e, the to the marketing strategies for every stage of the customer's journey, through AI - driven personalisation, and offers using the customer through zero & first party data collection.

- Due to increase in digital behaviour, the scope of personalisation has rose. Performance and superior customer outcomes are driven by personalisation. Bringing 40% more revenue to fast-growing companies than slow-growing companies.
- The target around which we segment our customer base, 80 percent out of which the consumers are more likely to purchase from brands that offer personalised experiences.
- All the leading footwear brands made headlines with their shoe marketing campaigns.
- Knowing the target and which emotions will resonate with them the mostly can allow you us to properly use emotion into the marketing campaigns and involve it into advertising our brand.
- Therefore, we focus on creating meaningful stories that evoke emotions and have emerged as a brand built on innovation.

In the phase of R&D, the first and foremost tactic that we are executing is 'laser-targeting the audiences'. A fictional representation of the typical consumer that takes into account their spending patterns, preferences, level of wealth, etc. Then, making the customisation and personalisation techniques; specific to this group of audiences. Further, taking into consideration an important factor, i.e, the 'consumer's consume information'. Understanding what goes into there buying decisions and comprehend the buying cycle of different segments of the market we aim to target as well. The target market for smart shoes is mainly supermarkets and hypermarkets, with it having a large presence on online platforms. In recent years, Internet penetration has increased, which has made online shopping more popular among consumers. Aiming to start and grow on the online platforms and since the targeted market conducts those who hold a large online presence; once garnered the attention of the niche online, directing them to the website's landing page. By using website links or by investing in sponsored ads. The goal of all of this is to focus the marketing efforts on the hypothetical average customer who is most likely to purchase the product or service. Instead of those, on low-performing, low-earning prospects.



Fig. 4. Global Smart Shoe Market by Distribution Channel

FINDING AND CONCLUSION

We plan to achieve a cultural shift by replacing outdated, dull shoe styles with more bold and stylish designs that are handcrafted. This would allow the product to reach a wider audience, and they would run influencer campaigns in which they approach influential bloggers and ask them to write about their products on social media. This is a good strategy for the target demographic of teenagers, college students, and travellers who are interested in things that are visually appealing. In the running, we want to create a brand image that is similar to that. Relevant and aesthetic, with an edge of Gen Z. So, in the future, we'll be looking for specific types of inspirations and brands with whom to partner and boost our company's brand image. Collaborations with high-end online fashion sites like Myntra, for example. This would allow our fashion-conscious customers to easily explore the brand's proposition under one roof while also providing a personalised shopping experience. Collaboration with a platform such as Pinterest to provide our customers with a wide range of ideas from which to choose. Our startup is based in India, and we only focus on the country right now. However, we hope to expand our business internationally in the future, with the help of a specialised brand campaign and influence marketing. Our priority is to make shoes that are comfortable, which will be increased based on client feedback. We use modern technologies, such as AI touch, to make shoes more comfortable. Style, on the other hand, is in the hands of the purchasers and they are developing it as our brand establishes itself in the market. Result of the Survey conducted on customisable shoes that come with different soles that can be customised depending on the occasion.

Similar responses for the following questions

- Do you prefer customised shoes that portray your personality?
- Would you prefer having one set of shoes that serve multiple purposes when traveling?
- Is the sole of the shoe important in terms of the occasion for which it will be worn? (Fig. 5.)

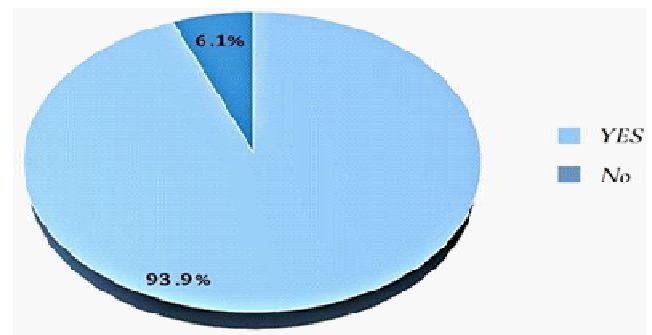


Fig. 5.

- Do you agree that customisable products are worth it?

When asked if they trust customised products, the majority are unsure, with some disagreeing. We discovered what people think about customised products based on our research, and the short answer is that customised products are very expensive, and the cheaper ones are simply of poor quality. Customisation is successful if it adds value by solving a problem or fulfilling a purchaser's dream.

We want our product to reach a point where personalisation is more than just a perk for consumers who are acutely aware of their wants and needs; there are instances where problems other than not being able to find exactly what they want are solved. To achieve the highest level of customer satisfaction, plan ahead of time and offer a reasonable price. We also hope to change people's perceptions and persuade them that custom-made products are well worth the investment (Fig. 6.)

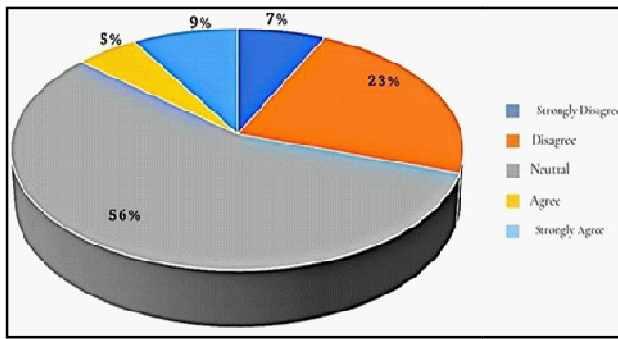


Fig. 6.

- Do you think buying different soles of shoes is worth their price?

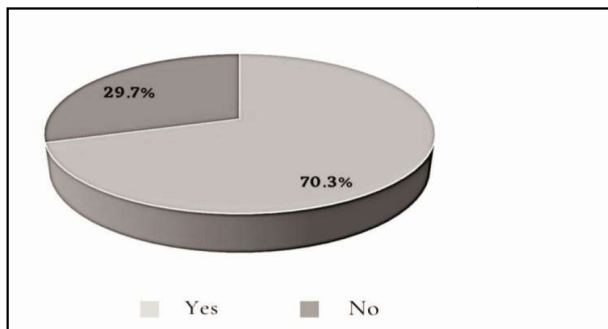


Fig. 7.

According to the poll, shoe sole is a new type of adhesion in the footwear industry that the general public appears to be skeptical of when compared to the ratio of certainty with other questions. As a result, while some people refuse to buy the shoe sole separately, the vast majority do, demonstrating that a substantial number of people are willing to experiment with such a product and innovation.

FURTHER STUDY

Our brand represents innovation, and as we continue to develop our product in the market, there are specific features that we hope to introduce and emphasise as our product gains traction. App for mobile devices: As digitisation has invaded every part of our lives, it has also influenced marketplaces.

The mobile application we'd provide would allow users to quickly access all of our product's capabilities. From personalising the shoes to choosing the material, the consumer can have it delivered right to their house. We want to create a supply chain that is extremely dependable and trustworthy. This aspect of digital retailers is a critical component of our business model's success and expansion. This would provide us with an understanding of differentiated client experience and assist us in developing an outstanding service, ensuring that our customers' purchasing experience is enhanced. The fundamental features of reviews and ratings must play a significant role in this. Our product's growth would be aided by our mobile application. In our app, we want to provide a 3D design feature/customisation tool that will enable our customers to better comprehend the shoes. Our main goal is to make the customer's model both durable and fashionable. Various shoe materials, shafts, lengths, and other features are available. Another feature of our shoe sole customisation is that we provide the types of soles that can be entirely transformed for a different purpose. Our customers control everything from the length of the sole to the type.

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