

Attitudinal Components and Repurchase Intention With the Mediating Role of Personality Traits: Case of Bangladeshi Mobile Handset Users

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to investigate the impact of cognitive and affective attitude on repurchase intention of mobile handsets of Bangladeshi consumers with the mediating role of innovativeness, materialism, and self-uniqueness. The researchers collected survey data using simple random sampling method from selected areas of Barisal division. Total number of respondents of the study is 264. The results of this study showed that cognitive and affective components of attitude have a significant impact on repurchase intentions of mobile handsets in Bangladesh which is partially and fully mediated by innovativeness and self-uniqueness. However, materialism has no mediation on the impact of cognitive and affective attitude on purchase intention. The study also shows that innovativeness has negative influence on repurchase intention, but self-uniqueness and materialism has significant positive influence.

KEYWORDS

Affective Attitude, Bangladesh, Cognitive Attitude, Innovativeness, Materialism, Mobile Handset, Repurchase intentions, Self-Uniqueness

INTRODUCTION

The mobile phone industry is a very innovative segment within the ICT sector and the smartphone is becoming the standard configuration among the different types of mobile devices. Technical change and new product proliferation have made this industry extremely dynamic (Cecere et al, 2014; Martins et al, 2019). Global sales of smartphones to consumers totalled 349 million units in Q1 2016, a 3.9% rise over the same period in 2015. Moreover, smartphone sales represented 78% of total mobile phone sales in Q1 2016 (Gartner, 2016). The pioneers of Smartphone manufacturers such as Palm Inc, Nokia and blackberry have lost their business to the firms (i.e. Apple, Samsung) who offer more technologically advanced and customer oriented offerings to the customers. However, those big players in mobile handset market are now facing tough challenges in various markets from emerging competitors. Both Samsung and Apple are losing their market shares to smaller players such as Huawei, Xiaomi and Micromax. For instance, in China, Xiaomi has surpassed Samsung phone market within four years. (Ha, 2016). Therefore, it has become a great challenge for the

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mobile handset manufacturers to ensure repeat purchasing of their product to defend their market share and stay ahead of competition. Bangladesh performs close to the regional averages across metrics of mobile market development, despite having lower income than neighbouring countries. In 2015, mobile technologies and services generated 6.2% of GDP in Bangladesh, a contribution that amounted to around \$13 billion of economic value. The mobile industry also generates more than 760,000 jobs and made a significant contribution to public funding of more than \$2 billion in 2015. This economic contribution comes from the direct impact of the mobile ecosystem as well as the indirect impact and the increase in productivity brought about using mobile technologies (GSMA, 2019). Since 2005, full liberalization of the mobile phone sector including the launching of a mobile phone service by a state-owned mobile firm and a strong rival as well as the emergence of an effective regulator brought stiff competition in the sector (Yusuf et al, 2010). The total number of active mobile phone subscribers has reached into 147 million at the end of January, 2018 (BTRC, 2019). The competitive landscape of mobile handset market in Bangladesh has showed rapid ups and downs in previous years. During the period between 2008 and 2012, international brands were losing their business to local brands, Symphony and Walton, which gathered momentum with their over 50% market share. The local brands served customers with low-cost smartphones priced at between Tk3,000 and Tk6,000. In recent years, particularly over the last two years, most international brands made a comeback with their quality products, strong Research and Development (R&D) strategy and after-sale services. There are hardly any districts where international brands have not opened up their showrooms to reach out their products to smartphone users (Husain, 2017). The above mentioned information showed that mobile handset market is a big and potential market in Bangladesh but the market has not got proper attention from the academic researchers

Consumer attitude evaluation is a significant issue in the field of consumer behavior and a vital component for developing any successful marketing program. The attitude construct occupies a central role in theories and research regarding consumer behavior (Ajzen, 2008). Few concepts in the marketing literature have proliferated like the concept of attitude. (Argyriou & Melewar, 2011). Kotler et al. (1996) stated that attitude directly influence decision making. Attitude research often describes cognitive and affective components of an attitude in relation to an overall evaluation. (Berg et al. 2006). Prior studies have showed that cognitive and affective attitudinal components have significant influence on formation of loyalty where repeat purchasing is in central importance (Touzani and Temessek, 2009; Back and Parks, 2003; Silva and Alwi, 2006).

Recent advances in personality psychology can help to predict consumer response by analyzing their personality traits. Traditionally, researchers were interested in understanding how individuals differ, and so they put a great deal of effort into discovering how to measure, map, and define personality traits (Howel, 2014). Numerous research works have been conducted to identify and analyze the role of specific personality traits in consumer behavior. A group of customers has been segmented as innovative customers who like to adopt new product quickly, experience uncertain purchase situations and purchase technological products more than other customers (Schreier and Prögl, 2008, Schiffman and Kanuk, 2003, Rogers 1995, Lassar et al. 2005, Wang et al. 2008). The effect of materialism on consumer behavior has been investigated in various contexts and proven as a significant determinant of purchase intention by previous researchers (Herstein et al. 1994, Richins and Dowson 1992, Fitzmaurice, 2008, Joung, 2013). Another significant personality trait which is strongly related with purchase intention is self-uniqueness or need for uniqueness (Knight and Kim, 2007 ;Bertrandias and Goldsmith 2006). Therefore, these inner psychological traits are vital to understand different customer groups and predict their repeat purchase behavior for developing appropriate strategies in mobile handset industry.

The strong competition among the mobile phone manufacturers have made the mobile phone manufacturers face a great challenge to ensure whether the customers will repeat their purchase within the same brand or not when it is time for customers to replace their mobile phone (Seduram, 2016). Several studies have been conducted on various contexts to identify and analyze factors which

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