

Examining the Impact of Digital Mobile Advertising on Purchase Intention

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ABSTRACT

In today's digitalized world, the usage of internet is on its rise. It provides opportunities to business organisations to use internet-based apps for advertising. The purpose of this study is to examine the impact of digital mobile advertising on customers' purchase intention, and to examine the mediating role of customer motivation and customer perception. Following positivism approach, this empirical study was carried out in a public university in Pakistan. A sample of 318 university students was recruited and the data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed through SPSS 20 and AMOS 21 software. The results show that digital mobile advertising positively influences purchase intention.

Keywords: Digital, smartphone, mobile, advertising, marketing, purchase intention.

1. INTRODUCTION

The development of social media platforms has revolutionized the marketing practices by enabling organizations to communicate with their customers in an interactive way, which ultimately enhances the brand awareness among consumers (Miller, 2020; Radwanick, 2010). Organizations use social networking appeals in their advertisements to attract new customers. Social networking platforms allow users to share their experiences and perceptions about brands. Unlike traditional advertising platforms, e.g. print media, television, and radio, mobile based digital advertising platforms allow organizations to target their customers in an interactive way (Leppaniemi & Karjaluto, 2005). However, the effectiveness of social media marketing has not yet been studied much (Waters, Canfield, Foster, & Hardy, 2011), especially in the context of developing countries like Pakistan.

Consumers' purchase decision depends on their perception about the product/service. Perception refers to a consumer's thinking about a particular product or brand. The literature suggests that promotional communications can affect consumer perception

and purchase intention (Elliott & Speck, 1998). Researchers claim that individuals from 16-45 years of age are the frequent users of mobile phones and show positive attitudes towards mobile advertising (Leppaniemi & Karjaluoto, 2005). Before the development of smart phones, mobile advertising campaigns were carried out through SMS messages. However, the advancement of communication technology has changed the marketing trends. Due to the interactivity of smart phones, people spend much of their time on using mobile phone apps. The statistics show that most of the people use social media on smart phones, tablets and laptops, thus, advertising on these platforms can enhance customers' purchase intention which increases sales.

Previous studies have recommended the adoption of interactive advertising (Rowley, 2004) to better understand customer perceptions. As an advertising channel, social media allows customers to read other customers' reviews and comments on advertised products (Cha, 2009). Many firms are using social media advertising, e.g., Facebook advertising through which customers can be linked into a virtual relationship, and organizations can see their likes, shares and comments on different posts/advertisements which can be useful for their brand (Andriole, 2010).

The information which is available on the social media can be effective for users who join a particular social media community. The contents on web pages can influence consumers' perceptions about a brand (Zhao, Grasmuck, & Martin, 2008). Holzner (2008) proposed that social media platforms help build brand image thereby increase sales. Even so, the impact of mobile based digital social media marketing on customers' purchase intention has not been properly studied. Thus, the purpose of this research is to investigate the impact of digital mobile advertising (i.e. social media apps) on customers' purchase intention, and to examine the mediating role of customer motivation and customer perception. Accordingly, an integrated model has been developed that demonstrates the vibrant linkage between independent variable, i.e. digital mobile advertising, mediators, i.e. customer motivation and customer perception, and dependent variable, i.e. purchase intention (Dehghani & Tumer, 2015).

This study has both theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the findings of this research contribute to the literature on mobile marketing, social media marketing, and consumer behavior. Practically, the findings provide helpful insights to mobile and social media marketers about the effectiveness of digital mobile advertisements.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Mobile advertising

Smart phones are penetrating in market with every passing day. Roughly two billion individuals were smart phone users (1.91 billion to be exact) till Oct 13, 2015, with an increase of another 12% users in 2016 (Kissonergis, 2017). Mobile advertising refers to the use mobile phones for advertising. Researchers suggest that mobile advertising will become a dominant marketing channel in the coming years (Leppaniemi & Karjaluoto, 2005). There are various definitions of mobile advertising in different academic and industrial publications. The Mobile Marketing Association defines mobile marketing as the use of the mobile medium as a communications and entertainment channel between a brand and an end-user. After the introduction of multi touch screen mobile phones in

2007, a number of people adopted the smart phones though out the world (Iqbal & Ashraf, 2017). There is an increasing trend of smart phone usage as most of the retailers are receiving more than 50% of the online traffic from the smart phones instead of computers or laptops. Google play and Apple App store statistics show that the number of downloads through smart phones is more than 268 billion.

Mobile apps enable users to perform various tasks, such as searching, retrieving and sharing the information, bill payment, map navigation, purchasing, etc. Due to the high customer involvement in mobile apps, business organizations have developed their own smart phone apps to communicate and advertise their products to their customers (Kim, Wang, & Malthouse, 2015). A survey shows that about 69.5% of smart phone owners have viewed smart phone advertisements, and 62.3% have purchased advertised products (Kim & Han, 2014). It shows that customers are connected with social media and internet through smart phone apps. Therefore, mobile apps platform can be an effective advertising media. A high penetration of smart phones enables marketers to target millions of customers through smart phone apps.

The increase in the number of smart phone users will cause an increase in mobile app advertising, an opportunity for organizations to communicate with their existing and potential customers in an efficient and interactive way.

2.2 Customer perception

It is difficult to understand customer perception (Issanchou, 1996). However, it can be defined as a customer's impression, awareness or consciousness about a company or its products/services. Kazmi (2012) proposed that perception is how a human recognizes and interprets stimuli. In other words, perception is the very first impression drawn by a person, on the basis of this impression, he/she selects and interprets the information to shape a meaningful image of the world (Munnukka, 2008). Due to this, it is believed that customer perception influences their purchase intention. Perception can be influenced by advertising, reviews, public relations, social media, personal experiences and other stimuli. In the present era when smart phones are used by millions of individuals, mobile advertising can positively impact customer perception. The literature suggests that awareness plays a significant role in generating positive customer perception about a company/brand, it can be created by advertisements which influence their purchase intention (Aaker & Joachimsthaler, 2000). Customer perception and purchase intention are independent to each other, i.e. perception can be influenced by purchase intention (Nandagopal & Chinnaiyan, 2003). Perceptions are not consistent, they may vary from time to time (Köster, Mojet, Frewer, Trijp, & others, 2006). Thus, advertisements can work as a driving force to alter individuals' perceptions (Akaka & Alden, 2010). However, selecting appropriate advertising media is a critical process, thus it is a crucial to select appropriate advertising media (Liligeto, Singh, & Naz, 2014).

2.3 Customer motivation

Motivation refers to a condition when a person encourages the desire to undertake activities to achieving a goal (Setiadi, 2003). Dharmestha and Handoko (2008) stated

that motivation is an individual's need and desire directed on a specific purpose to obtain satisfaction. The literature suggests that internal and external factors influence customers' purchase process. Psychological motivation works as a stimulator to drive customers' behavior to purchase product/service to fulfill their need (Ok Kim & Jin, 2001). Tauber 1972 firstly studied purchase motivations and proposed that customers are motivated to purchase because of several psychosocial motives. These motives can be divided into two types, i.e. personal motives and social motives. Personal motives include entertainment, physical activity, desire to learn about new trends, whereas social motives are past social experience, communication, social status, authority, and pleasure of bargaining (Tauber, 1972). Celsi and Olson 1988 proposed a positive association between motivation and advertisement. Customers with higher level of motivation show higher devotion while watching advertisement. Various emotional and rational appeals are used in advertisements. These appeals work as an arousal to motivate customers to purchase products. Thus, advertisements alter a customer's perception about a product and motivate them to purchase it (Fatima & Lodhi, 2015). Previous studies show that advertisements are source of motivation and help customers to remember the product and purchase it (Pope, Voges, & Brown, 2009). It shows a positive relationship between advertisement, advertising media, and customer motivation.

2.4 Purchase intention

Purchase intention is defined as a customer's perception to purchase a particular product. Keller 2001 claims that various internal and external factors impact customers' purchase intention. Purchase intention has been vastly studied, however, the impact of digital mobile advertising on customers' purchase intention has not been much. Digital mobile advertising, customer perception and customer motivation may influence customers' purchase intention (Dehghani & Tumer, 2015; Maseeh, 2019). Purchase intention is influenced by customer perception. It is an important factor to make evaluation about a specific product or brand (Keller, 2001). Purchase intention can predict customers' buying decisions (Jayanti & Ghosh, 1996). It drives customers to make decision to buy a specific product. Usually, customers are prone to buy well reputed and familiar products which is created by advertising (Keller, 1993; Macdonald & Sharp, 2000). Purchase intention can be divided into three categories including "unplanned buying", "partially planned buying", and "fully planned buying".

When a customer decides to buy a product, it is called "unplanned buying", it can also be called the "impulse buying behavior". "Partially planned behavior" is when a customer decides the product category before going to store. However, the brand of that product category is decided inside the store. On the other hand, when a customer decides product specifications, category and brand prior to visiting store, it is called "fully planned purchase behavior" (Engel, Blackwell, & Miniard, 1995). Customer purchase intention for a well-known brand is higher than an unpopular brand. Dodds, Monroe, and Grewal (1991); Grewal, Krishnan, Baker, and Borin (1998) and Hsu (2000) proposed that a well-known brand obtains higher market share than an uncommon brand. Therefore, customers' purchase intention for a familiar product is higher (Kamins & Marks, 1991). More a customer is encountered with the advertisement of a product, more he/she becomes familiar with that product. Alba and Hutchinson (2000) proposed that customers' purchase decisions are influenced by their

perceptions. Thus, advertising plays a significant role in building brand familiarity that triggers purchase intentions.

3. PROPOSED MODEL AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Based on the literature discussed above, we have developed a conceptual framework and proposed five hypotheses to examine the impact of digital mobile advertising on customer purchase intention, customer motivation and customer perception. The measurement items were adopted by Sinkovics, Pezderka, Haghirian, and others (2012); Wang & Sun (2010) and Xu, Liao, and Li (2008). The hypotheses of our research are as follows;

H1: “Digital mobile advertising has a positive impact on customer motivation.”

H2: “Digital mobile advertising has a positive impact on customer perception.”

H3: “Customer motivation has a positive impact on customers’ purchase intention.”

H4: “Customer perception has a positive impact on customers’ purchase intention.”

H5: “Digital mobile advertising has a positive impact on customers’ purchase intention.”

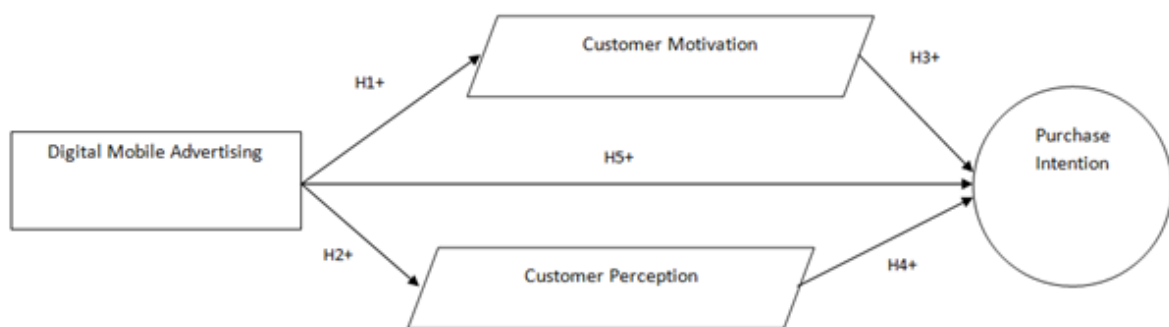


Figure 1: Model

4. METHODOLOGY

Our study is based on positivism philosophy; thus, the results of the study are derived from real facts and figures, and sensory experience. This is a cross-sectional study by nature as data were collected for once only. The research was carried out in a public university in Pakistan. The data were collected from undergraduate, and postgraduate university students. They were in different years of their education and from different departments i.e. business administration, commerce, information technology, and law. University students were selected for the data collection because majority of the students own smart phones and they are familiar with mobile phone apps. Using inductive approach, the findings can be generalized to the whole population to the country, i.e. smart phone users. A sample of 300 is considered appropriate for social sciences research, accordingly, we collected the data from 318 respondents. Simple random sampling technique was employed to recruit the respondents as almost every one of our targeted population (higher education students) owns a smart phone and has the experience of using mobile internet and smart phone apps. A structured questionnaire was used to record the responses, consisting of demographic section, average time spent on mobile internet daily, and the items to measure customer perception, customer motivation and the purchase intention. Before data collection, the

objectives of the study were briefly explained to respondents. They were free to ask any questions before and during the survey. All of them were volunteer participants. We used a seven-degree Likert scale to record the responses (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Somewhat Disagree, 4=Neither Agree or Disagree, 5=Somewhat Agree, 6=Agree, 7= Strongly Agree). We also designed an online questionnaire on Google Docs and sent to 50 respondents through Facebook messenger and email. A total of 41 respondents submitted their responses through online questionnaire. The data were analyzed using SPSS 20 and AMOS 21.

5. RESPONDENTS' PROFILES

The data were collected from 318 students. 51.9% of them were male and 48.1% were female respondents. Most of the respondents were 18-25 years old. About 62.3% of the respondents were undergraduate students and remaining 37.7% were postgraduate students. Results show that 35.5% of the respondents use the internet for more than 5 hours in one day. Remaining 64.5% use the internet for less than 5 hours daily.

6. RESULTS

Table 1 represents the mean values, standard deviations and α for each of the variables. The mean values indicate that most of the individuals are agreed that digital mobile advertising positively influence their purchase intention. The values of α for all the variables are acceptable and prove that the data is reliable. Table 1 also shows the correlation among the variables. Values indicate that all the variables are significantly correlated with each other. The highest value of correlation exists between digital mobile advertising and customer perception. This indicates a higher association between digital mobile advertising and customer perception.

Table 2 represents the goodness of fit indices of the proposed model. The ideal value for GFI should be above 0.8, for CFI, it should be greater than 0.95 and RMSEA should be less than 0.5. Table 2 shows that all the values are under the acceptable range.

The results of convergent and discriminant validity are shown in Table 3. In order to prove the convergent and discriminant validity, factor loading should be greater than 0.7, average variance extracted should be greater than 0.5 and CR should also be greater than 0.5 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 4 indicates the index values for standard error of mean (SEM). The level of fitness between existing and the recommended matrix of variance is determined by the values of df, GFI, AGFI, NFI, CFI and RMR which are 2.80, 0.904, 0.957, 0.982, 0.963 and 0.030 respectively. These values are under the acceptable range, showing a goodness of fit.

The regression weights for the hypotheses are shown in Table 5. The results provide the significant evidence to accept the proposed hypotheses (H1, H2, H3, H4 and H5). As p value is less than 0.05 for all the hypotheses, therefore, it is concluded that there is a positive impact of digital mobile advertising on customer motivation, customer perception and customer purchase intention.

Table 5 shows the path analysis, i.e. direct, indirect and total effect of the independent variable i.e. digital mobile advertising on the dependent variable i.e. customer purchase intention. It can be seen in Table 5 that the value of indirect effect is greater than that of direct effect which proves a mediation of customer motivation and customer perception between digital mobile advertising (independent variable) and customer purchase intention (dependent variable).

Table :1 Correlations

Construct	Mean	SD	A	DMA	CM	CP	PI
DMA	5.88	0.526	0.806	-	-	-	-
CM	6.12	0.531	0.813	0.594	-	-	-
CP	5.06	0.502	0.803	0.663	0.508	-	-
PI	5.27	0.500	0.771	0.609	0.641	0.551	-

Abbreviates: Digital mobile advertising (DMA), customer motivation (CM), customer perception (CP), purchase intention (PI)

Table: 2 CFA Model Fit Index

Index for fit	CMIN/d.f	p	GFI	AGFI	CFI	RMSEA
Values	2.50	0.002	0.964	0.905	0.983	0.069

Table: 3 Convergent and discriminant validity

Construct	Items	Factor Loading	AVE	CR
Digital mobile advertising	DMA 1	0.865	0.639	0.867
	DMA 2	0.904		
	DMA 3	0.750		
	DMA 4	0.801		
	CM 1	0.669		
Customer motivation	CM 2	0.878	0.566	0.926
	CM 3	0.931		
	CM 4	0.812		
	CM 5	0.774		
	CM 6	0.961		
	CM 7	0.852		
	CP 1	0.682		
Customer perception	CP 2	0.774	0.603	0.890
	CP 3	0.805		
	CP 4	0.784		
	CP 5	0.808		
	CP 6	0.793		
Purchase intention	PI 1	0.792	0.518	0.872
	PI 2	0.850		
	PI 3	0.911		

Table :4 Model Fit

Index for fit	CMIN/d.f	p	GFI	AGFI	NFI	CFI	RMR
Values	2.80	0.000	0.904	0.957	0.982	0.963	0.030

Table: 5 Standard Error of Mean (Regression Weights)

Relationship	Hypothesis	Estimate	Std. Error	CR	p	Decision
DMA→ CP	H1	0.596	0.061	0.496	0.031	Accepted
DMA→ CM	H2	0.534	0.070	0.561	0.008	Accepted
CP → PI	H3	0.619	0.031	0.520	0.027	Accepted
CM → PI	H4	0.663	0.048	0.559	0.013	Accepted
DMA→ PI	H5	0.586	0.089	0.517	0.006	Accepted

Abbreviates: Digital mobile advertising (DMA), customer motivation (CM), customer perception (CP), purchase intention (PI)

Table: 6 Path Analysis

Independent Variables	Effects	PI
“Digital Mobile Advertising”	Indirect	0.378**
	Direct	0.349**
	Total	7.27**

7. DISCUSSIONS AND CONCLUSION

The findings indicate that digital mobile advertising is informative, personalized, entertaining, and attractive for customers and helps them decide to purchase a product. The results show that there is a significant relationship between digital mobile advertising and purchase intention with mediating effects of customer motivation and customer perception. Therefore, it can be concluded that digital mobile advertising is accepted by customers and is a source of motivation for them. The latest advancements in information technology has revolutionized the advertising trends. It is the era of interactive and trust-based advertising; thus, advertisers should increase their social medial advertising budget to obtain the advantage of the changing trends of the industry. The companies can remain in touch with their customers with the help of mobile phone apps/digital mobile advertising. It enables them to get feedback from their customers and offer them after sale services to motivate them to buy a particular brand which will trigger positive customer perceptions and push them for repetitive purchases. The respondents stated that people’s comments on the social apps influence their perception about a particular product/brand.

It is vital for companies to focus on relationship marketing to compete with their rivals. Digital mobile advertising provides a platform to interact with their customer in an interactive way and maintain a long term and trusty relationship with them by providing values according to their needs and wants. The results of this study provide insights to

advertisers/companies to design their advertising plan and considering apps platform as a primary advertising channel.

There are some of the limitations of the present research. First, the data were collected from university students only. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized to the whole population. Therefore, it is recommended for future researchers to recruit non-student samples as well. Second, this study was carried out in developing country, future researchers can carry out a cross-national study to compare the findings from developed and developing countries.

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