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Investigating the Effect of Promotional Gifts on Customer Attitude and Observational Learning; A Case Study of Ofogh Koorosh Store

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Abstract

Promotional gift is one of the tools to promote non-monetary sales including various dimensions which can affect the attitude of customers and ultimately their intention to buy. The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of promotional gifts on customer attitude and observational learning. This research used descriptive correlational method to meet the research goals. The statistical population of the study included all customers of Ofogh Koorosh store branches in Birjand. The size of the sample was determined, using Krejcie and Morgan Table, to be 384 gathered through convenience sampling method. To collect the data, the standard questionnaires of promotional gifts of Zhu et al. (2015), observational learning of Khawaja (2013), and the customer attitude of Stafford (1996) were used. The reliability coefficients of the questionnaires in this study were 0.885, 0.894 and 0.743 respectively. Descriptive indicators and structural equation modeling were used to analyze the data applying SPSS and PLS software. The results of data analyses showed that promotional gifts had a significant effect on customers' attitude (β=0.694) and observational learning (β= 0.790).

Keywords: Customer attitude, observational learning, promotional gifts

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Introduction

Modern marketing is more than just the production of good products, good pricing and ease of access to consumers. In today's world, service organizations encourage their customers to buy products through advertising, sales promotion, personal selling, public relations and direct marketing (Ghazizadeh et al., 2015). In this competitive environment, it is very important for manufacturers and distributors to understand the ways in which the effectiveness of advertising can be maximized in order to induce positive behavioral intentions of customers. Today, marketers understand the need for a practical model to make the connection between the characteristics of successful advertising and the behavioral intentions of consumers (Hyun et al., 2011).

All manufacturing and service companies use every trick to achieve their goals in order to achieve more market share, such as: advertising, gaining customer satisfaction and trust. Among these, advertising is one of the most widely used tools utilized by the organizations to attract customers' attention to their goods and services, and they can be divided into two types of monetary (e.g. cash discounts and commodity sheets) and non-monetary (e.g. promotional gifts, lotteries and competitions). Promotional gifts are one of the most

common non-monetary advertisements that are often used (Palazon & Delgado, 2009).

Organizations use promotional gifts to attract the attention of customers among competitors and show their goodwill, or to convey their message to customers and generally encourage customers to buy or increase their intention to buy. Promotional gifts can be a variety of goods and services, such as bags, pens, calendars and various promotional plans. To choose a promotional gift, they need to see which one is closer to their goal; if they want to convey a specific message, make a habit, introduce their new products, and show the quality of their products. The more specific and clearer these goals are, the easier the gift selection process will be. Organizations should also remember that the image of the company will be reflected in the selection of these gifts (Morteza Zadeh et al., 2016).

Promotional gift is one of the tools to promote non-monetary sales and has various dimensions, which can be effective on the overall evaluation of customers and ultimately their intention to buy (Ghazizadeh et al., 2015). Gifts are used to influence the attitudes and intentions of potential customers and to increase the purchases of existing customers (Bodur & Grohmann, 2005; Montaner et al., 2011). Consumers' attitudes toward an offer are related to behavior or decisions. In the case of promotional gifts, this general assessment refers to how consumers evaluate a particular promotional gift. The overall evaluation of advertising is the result of a set of cognitions as well as a set of effective answers.

Theory of action is logically used to explain the relationships between views, decisions, and behaviors. This theory suggests that thematic attitudes and rules influence decisions, which in turn influence behaviors. In this theory, it has been discovered that consumers' attitudes toward advertising play a key role in their material acceptance. Vaidyanathan et al. (2000) showed that approaches to advertising have a strong effect on buying desire. Similarly, Laroche et al. (2003) proposed a multidimensional cognitive-effective-intrinsic model stating that because consumers had positive feelings about sales advertising, consumers' behavioral responses to advertising tools (coupons and promotions are two numbers instead of one) increased (Ghazizadeh et al., 2015). If the customer has a positive attitude towards a company, probably associates it with that company and has a greater proportion of its relationship with that company (Maggon & Chaudhry, 2018).

On the other hand, consumers are faced with a variety of products, companies and extensive information about the characteristics of each of them. In principle, if the information provided about a product or company is accurate, relevant and sufficient, it enables the consumer to make more informed choices and buy products or choose a company that better meets his or her individual preferences and values (Wansink & Sobal, 2007); this means that fully informed choices are needed in every situation. Many consumers do not pay attention to much of the available information or are unable to manage the information (Verbeke, 2005). However, the information provided in the advertisements of companies or stores offering products is one of the channels for consumers to obtain information about them (Caswell, 2006).

In addition, information about other consumers' choices can be a conscious or unconscious part of an individual's decision-making process, which is referred to as observational learning (Edenbrandt et al., 2020). In economic theories and models, it is assumed that consumers process information accurately to carefully evaluate the features of existing products and select the product that is most used among any number of alternatives. However, the influence of peers is often overlooked in economic analysis, and the important question is whether the inclusion of such influences can help us explain how individuals choose to consume (Manski, 2000; McFadden, 2010).

Historically, research has shown that consumer attitudes are influenced by advertising. Accordingly, most companies have invested heavily in advertising (Leonidou et al., 2014). Consumers' reliance on their peers' opinions can also change companies' motivations to rely on advertising as a tool for service quality (Yogesh et al., 2020). This is especially the case in service organizations such as stores, which continue their activities to be heavily dependent on satisfied customers. These organizations actually invest in customer relationship management in a way to continue their activities. Ofogh Koorosh store with different branches in Birjand and different strategies to promote its sales in the field of promotional gifts is regarded as one of the service organizations that can be evaluated considering the effectiveness of advertising in this store. Therefore, this study sought to answer the question of whether promotional gifts have a significant effect on customer attitude and observational learning of customers of Ofogh Koorosh store branches in Birjand.

Theoretical Foundations and Literature Review

Observational Learning

Observational learning is a technique that has been widely used to learn and enhance the performance of physical skills as well as to modify physiological behaviors (McCullagh et al., 2002). Research evidence has shown that by observing a skill, the observer perceives phenomena about the pattern of coordination of that skill (Ross et al., 1985; Scully & Newell, 1985). Observational learning leads to the emergence and development of cognitive or perceptual representation

by the observer and, as a reference, helps the observer to acquire a behavior before it is fully activated. According to this theory, observational learning is often an activity for information processing (Bandura, 1977; Carroll & Bandura, 1990). Schmidt and Lee (1999) stated that by observing the pattern, individuals create a response that is stored in two separate memories (reminder, recognition).

Yogesh et al. (2020) conducted a study entitled "When consumers learn, burns money: The quality of signaling through advertising through observational and mouth-to-mouth learning." This study analyzed a company's investment in advertising, which shows quality when consumers learn about quality not only from such advertising but also from interaction with other consumers in the form of observational or mouth-to-mouth learning. In addition, verbal interactions may include underreporting (not everyone shares their experiences), positive thinking (positive experiences are transmitted more than negative experiences), or negative thinking (negative experiences are transmitted more than positive experiences). This analysis focused on whether a company should be more or less aggressive in the presence of such consumer interactions compared to their absence, and offered four key insights. First, consumer interactions can enhance the signaling effect of advertising, and therefore, to avoid imitation, it may be more aggressive for a high quality company and pay more for advertising for signal quality in the presence of such interactions than without it. Second, by increasing low reporting, reducing ads, sometimes can be significantly optimal. Third, by increasing the positive experience, the increase in advertising can be optimized. Fourth, even with increasing negative experiences, in certain circumstances, it may still be optimal to increase advertising rather than reduce it.

Promotional Gift

Advertising spreads a huge flood of information and ideas in the community, although some of this information may not be properly understood by people, or its importance and value may not be considered. Organizations introduce their goods and services to their customers by offering advertisements. In this way, due to the efforts of organizations, customers do not have to bother to meet their wants and needs. By offering promotional gifts, organizations give their customers practical souvenirs that they can always remember the goods, services and brand of the organization by maintaining and using them continuously. A gift is a product or service that is offered either for free or at a relatively low price for the purchase of one or more products (Dastous & Landrevill, 2003) and acts as a tool for advertising, sales promotion, and marketing communications (Cooper et al., 1991).

Different theories are used to explain how consumers evaluate sales advertising. Price is usually an important aspect of these theories (Sinha & Smith, 200) and has generally been used as an exploratory factor influencing brand perception such as product quality (Zeithaml, 1988). In relation to price perceptions, the reference price theory is based on the fact that when a purchase decision is made, consumers compare commodity prices with their reference prices, which gives them an overview of commodity prices (Winer, 1986). Business gifts are used to: a) influence the attitudes and intentions of potential customers to buy and b) maintain or increase purchases by current customers (Bodur & Grohmann, 2005). Organizations also use gifts to thank their current customers for their purchases from the organization in the past (Beltramini, 1992). Giving gift periodically shows that it improves customer loyalty (Friedman & Rahman, 2011) thus, promotional gifts have the potential for a sustainable business investment (Beltramini, 2000).

Ghazizadeh et al. (2015) also investigated on the effect of various dimensions of promotional gifts on the intention to buy. The results of this study showed that the attractiveness of the gift is effective on customers' evaluation of the promotional gift. The effect of willingness to trade on entertainment and expression of value (enjoyable benefits) has also been confirmed. The expression of value and entertainment also affects the overall evaluation of customers, and ultimately the overall evaluation of the customers in terms of shopping intent has been effective.

Mortezazadeh et al. (2016) conducted a study on the effect of promotional gifts on the overall consumer evaluation. The results of this study showed that there is a significant relationship between the nature of the product and the overall consumer evaluation (customer attitude). Also, the nature of the promotional gift has a direct impact on the overall evaluation of the consumer, but the perceived fit between the promotional gift and the product has no effect on the overall consumer evaluation.

Moreover, Arasteh (2017) conducted a study on the relationship between customers' attitudes toward promotional gifts and the intention to purchase services. The results of this study showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between customers' attitudes about promotional gifts and its dimensions (cognitive, emotional and behavioral attitudes) with the intention to purchase services from the Hamrah Aval Company.

Michael and Juliano (2013) examined the effectiveness of uncertainty in marketing advertising including free gifts. The authors provided a framework

for predicting when uncertainty will have a beneficial or detrimental effect on marketing advertising, including free gifts. While uncertainty (i.e. not knowing which gift is offered for free) reduces the likelihood of purchase when the decision is cognitive, it increases the likelihood of purchase when the decision is effective. Using field and laboratory studies, the authors of this study showed that when the consumer's decision is effective, people like to be surprised and appreciate the uncertainty in the buying process. When the decision is cognitive, consumers welcome having information about a product offer.

In the same way, Montaner et al. (2011) explored customers' responsiveness to promotional gifts. This study examined four variables: the nature of the promoted product, the proportion between the product and the gift, the type of brand used in advertising, and the willingness to trade. The findings of this study showed that the enjoyable nature or usefulness of the promoted product has no effect on sales promotion. Customer evaluation of a promotional gift is desirable when the product brand has high value and credibility and the proportion between the product and the gift is high. Also, when the proportions of the product and the gift are high and have a high brand value, it has a positive effect on the purchase intention. Also, the willingness to trade has a positive effect on the intention to buy.

In another study, conducted by Raghubir and Celly (2009), the effect of the visual size of a gift in free gift advertising on consumer attitudes was investigated. The results showed that promotional offers that highlight the free gift (instead of the product) are less effective than offers that highlight the product. Increasing the visual size of the free gift leads to a weaker perception of product quality and has adverse consequences for the intention to buy. The results of this study also displayed that the larger the size of the gift in an advertisement, the higher the perceived component of the value of the gift in the whole advertising offer and accordingly the value of the promotional product is lower. Therefore, larger visual gifts can backfire and damage the overall promotional offer. The presence of price information about the product moderates these effects.

Customer Attitude

In this regard, some basic concepts help marketers to be able to justify the process of consumer attitudes. From a consumer's point of view, the product has a set of features. Consumers differ in the features and what they pay attention to, and they pay more attention to the features that are relevant to their specific needs. Consumers, depending on their unique wants and needs, attach different importance to different features of a product. How consumers evaluate a brand, a product or a service depends on how they perceive each of them (Ghaedi et al., 2007). Wilkie (1986) defined attitude as "overall consumer evaluation of the brand" (cited in Kheyri et al., 2013), based on this, the overall consumer evaluation can be considered the same as consumer attitude.

Omidi et al. (2017) conducted a study on the effect of commercial advertising on the attitude and intention of consumers to buy green products. The results showed that relevant news in advertising, brand strengthening, entertainment and empathy have no effect on consumers' perceived values. Familiarity with advertising affects consumers' perceived values. Perceived values affect consumer attitudes. Perceived values affect the intention to buy green products. Also, Pham et al. (2019) investigated the consumer attitudes toward sales promotion techniques. The findings showed that discounts and coupons as two sales promotion strategies in the studied countries had a high rank in influencing customer attitudes.

Moreover, Boyle et al. (2013) studied the factors affecting consumers' attitudes towards promotional gifts. The results of this study showed that the attractiveness of gifts is the most important stimulus for consumers' attitudes toward promotional gifts, this is followed by the attitude towards the advertised brand, the perceived fit between the advertised product and the gift, the hedonistic nature of the gift, in addition to expressing value and entertainment. The results also showed that willingness to bargain is positively associated with the pleasurable benefits of gift value and entertainment. Finally, the overall evaluation of promotional gifts with both brand attitude and willingness to trade has a positive effect on consumers' intention to buy.

Method

This research used descriptive correlational method to meet the research goals. The statistical population of the study included all customers of Ofogh Koorosh store branches in Birjand. The size of the community in this study was unlimited as the number of samples using Krejcie and Morgan Table was 384 and the sample was gathered through convenience sampling method.

Instruments

To collect the data, the standard questionnaires of promotional gifts of Zhu et al. (2015), observational learning of Khawaja (2013), and customer attitude of Stafford (1996) were used. The reliability coefficients of the questionnaires in this study were 0.885, 0.894 and 0.743, respectively.

Procedure

Considering the Morgan Table, the number people selected as the samples was 384 people who were selected using available sampling method. Then, the questionnaires were distributed among the participants and the accumulated data were analyzed using SPSS and PLS software.

Data Analysis

Descriptive indicators and structural equation modeling were used to analyze the data applying the above-mentioned software.

Findings

Descriptive statistics are presented in Table 1

Table 1.
Descriptive Statistics of the Studied Variables

Research variables				Kolmogorov–Smirnov test	
	Mean	Variance	Standard deviation	Kolmogorov–Smirnov value	Significance level
Perceived usefulness	3.70	0.64	0.80	0.122	0.00
Perceived quality	3.32	0.42	0.65	0.132	0.00
Perceived costs	3.42	0.63	0.79	0.102	0.00
Perceived genius	3.22	0.75	0.86	0.080	0.00
Promotional gifts	3.41	0.36	0.60	0.078	0.00
Attention	3.42	0.73	0.85	0.120	0.00
Preservation	3.58	0.68	0.82	0.169	0.00
Produce	3.71	0.59	0.76	0.168	0.00
Motivation	3.54	0.81	0.90	0.135	0.00
Observational learning	3.56	0.40	0.63	0.085	0.00
Customer attitude	3.43	0.52	0.72	0.137	0.00

Structural Equation Modeling

For analyzing the data, structural equation method (SEM) with Partial Least Squares approach applying smartPLS3 software was used. Researchers have mentioned several reasons for using the PLS method.

The modeling method with Partial Least Squares approach consists of the following three steps :

1- Fitting the measurement model
2- Fitting the Structural model
3- Fitting the General model

Figure 1.
Research Model with Standardized Coefficients Factor Load and Path Coefficients

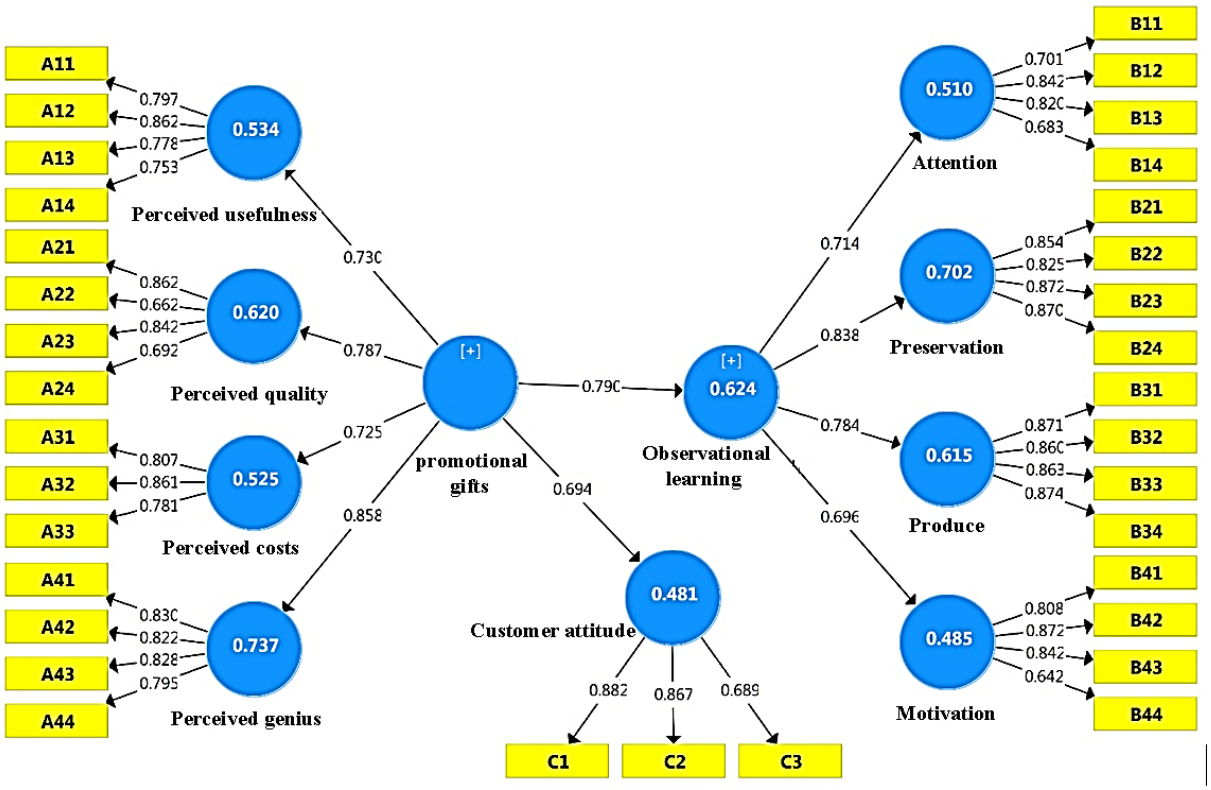
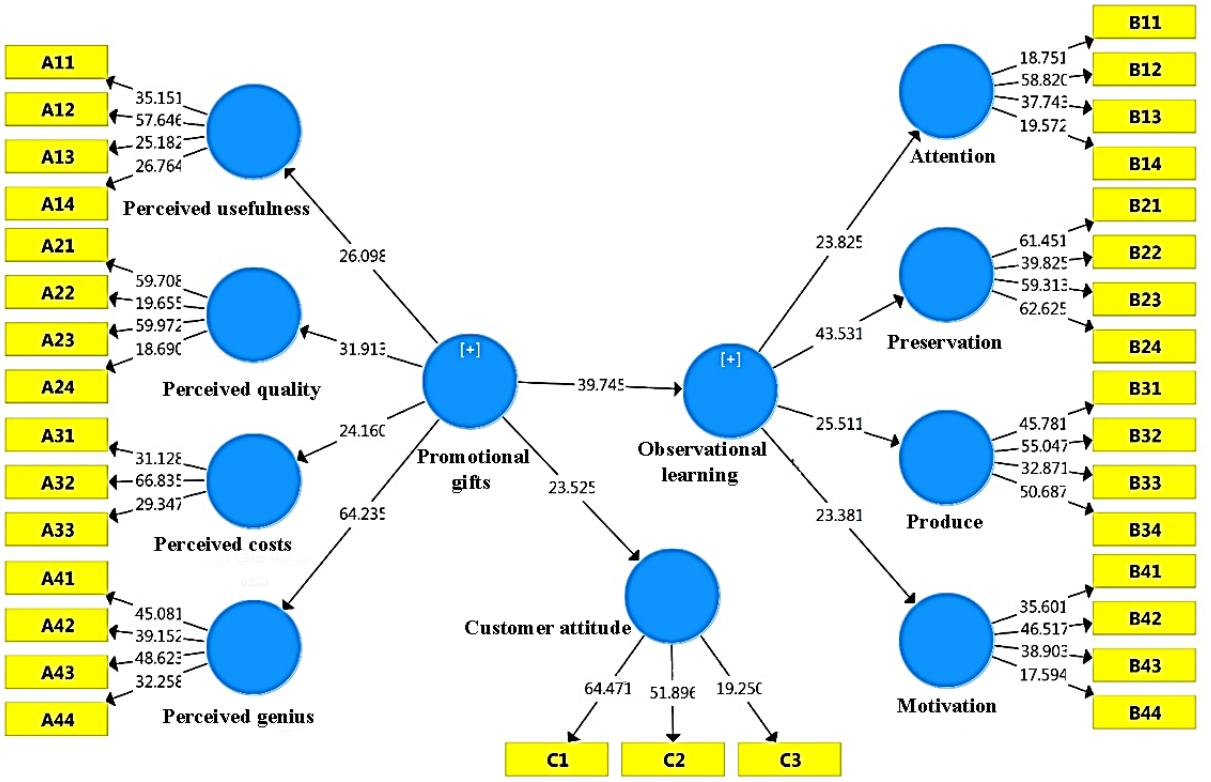


Figure 2.
Research Model with T-Values



Investigation of the indicators of the measurement models

A measurement model is a model in which the relationships between observable and latent variables are considered and measured. The following criteria have been used to evaluate the fit of measurement models:

1- Significance of factor load between items and latent variables related to themselves.
2- Reliability measured by Cronbach Alpha coefficients and Composite Reliability.
3- Convergent validity which is checked by the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) criterion.
4- Divergent validity measured by Fornell and Larker methods.

Significance of the factor load

As shown in Figures 1 and 2, factor loads and T-values are more than 0.4 and 1.96 respectively, and this shows the all path coefficients are statistically significant.

Cronbach Alpha coefficient and Composite Reliability coefficient

As it is observed in Table 2, the value of the Composite Reliability coefficient, Cronbach Alpha for all research structures has been calculated and it is clear that the Composite Reliability and Cronbach Alpha values for all variables are greater than 0.7 and show the appropriate reliability of the model.

Convergent validity

The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was used to evaluate the convergent validity. A value above 0.5 indicates that this criterion is sufficient and appropriate. As it is seen in Table 2, the value of AVE is above 0.5 and suitable for all structures.

Table 2.
Results of Cronbach Alpha Coefficient, Composite Reliability and Convergent Validity

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Promotional gifts	0.885	0.904	0.603
Perceived usefulness	0.810	0.875	0.637
Perceived quality	0.765	0.851	0.592
Perceived costs	0.750	0.857	0.668
Perceived genius	0.836	0.890	0.670
Observational learning	0.894	0.910	0.577
Attention	0.761	0.848	0.585
Preservation	0.878	0.916	0.732
Produce	0.890	0.924	0.752
Motivation	0.802	0.872	0.634
Customer attitude	0.743	0.856	0.668

Discriminant Validity

To investigate discriminant validity, a matrix developed by Fornell and Larker (1981) was used. The value of the AVE square root of the latent variables is in the principal diameter of this matrix, and other matrix cells is the value of correlation between latent variables. As shown in Table 3, because the values of the square root of the AVE are greater than the values in the cells below and to the left of the original diameter, it can be stated that in the research model the latent variables interact more with their own questions than with other structures. In other words, this Table shows the desirability of the discriminant validity of the model.

Table 3.
Discriminant Validity Results

First-order variables	Perceived usefulness	Perceived quality	Perceived costs	Perceived genius	Attention	Preservation	Produce	Motivation	Customer attitude
Perceived usefulness	0.798								
Perceived quality	0.386	0.769							
Perceived costs	0.497	0.365	0.817						

First-order variables	Perceived usefulness	Perceived quality	Perceived costs	Perceived genius	Attention	Preservation	Produce	Motivation	Customer attitude
Perceived genius	0.423	0.657	0.499	0.819					
Attention	0.494	0.456	0.468	0.527	0.765				
Preservation	0.481	0.448	0.504	0.506	0.477	0.856			
Produce	0.373	0.479	0.473	0.555	0.386	0.542	0.867		
Motivation	0.474	0.395	0.436	0.445	0.403	0.448	0.367	0.796	
Customer attitude	0.468	0.583	0.520	0.584	0.538	0.544	0.518	0.470	0.817

Structural model

The structural model examines only the relationships between the latent variables. The Structural model fit was evaluated using coefficient of determination (R2) and prediction power (Q2) criteria.

Table 4.
Results Related To Coefficient of Determination and Prediction Power of the Dependent Variables

Dependent variables	R^2	Q^2
Observational learning	0.624	0.240
Customer attitude	0.481	0.316

R^2 values are very suitable for endogenous (dependent) latent variables, i.e. observational learning (0.624) and customer attitude (0.481). Therefore, it can be concluded that promotional gifts alone could predict 62.4% of observational learning changes and 48.1% of customer attitudes changes. Also, the research findings show that Q2 values for the endogenous variables of the model, i.e. observational learning (0.240) and customer attitude (0.316) are positive and has been calculated at the desired and acceptable level, So that it shows the acceptable power of the model in predicting the mentioned variables.

General model

GOF is used to examine the general model fit and three values of 0.01, 0.25 and 0.36 have been introduced as weak, medium and strong values respectively. According to Table 5, the criterion value of GOF was equal to 0.487, which indicating a strong fit of the overall research model.

Table 5.
Results of the Overall Fit of the Model with the GOF Criterion

$\overline{R^2}$	$\overline{Communalities}$
0.583	**0.407**
$GOF = \sqrt{0.407 \times 0.583} = 0.487$	
Three values of 0.01, 0.25 and 0.36 are weak, medium and strong fit, respectively	

Analysis of the Main Hypotheses
Decisions to confirm or reject hypotheses will be made based on the Statistical value of T (T-VALUE) and the level of significance (p-value). A significance level less than 0.05 or T value more than 1.96 indicates confirmation of the hypotheses. The following table examines the hypotheses.

Table 6.
Results related to the Main Hypotheses of the Research

Research hypotheses	Direction: Independent variable → dependent variable	β	*T-value*	Significance level	Result
Hypothesis I	Promotional gifts → Observational learning	0.790	39,745	0.00	Confirmation
Hypothesis II	Promotional gifts → Customer attitudes	0.694	23,525	0.00	Confirmation

As can be seen in the Table above, the value of T-statistic in both main paths of the model (promotional gifts to observational learning and promotional gifts to customers' attitudes) is more than 1.96. Therefore, it is

inferred that both main hypotheses of the research are statistically confirmed. Also, it should be noted that the standardized path coefficients in the mentioned paths and hypotheses are positive and this shows that the effect of promotional gifts on observational learning and customer attitudes is direct and positive.

Analysis of the Sub-Hypotheses

In order to examine the sub-hypotheses of the research, the modeling was done again and the results are as follows.

Figure 3.
Sub-Model With Standardized Coefficients of the Factor Load and Path Coefficients

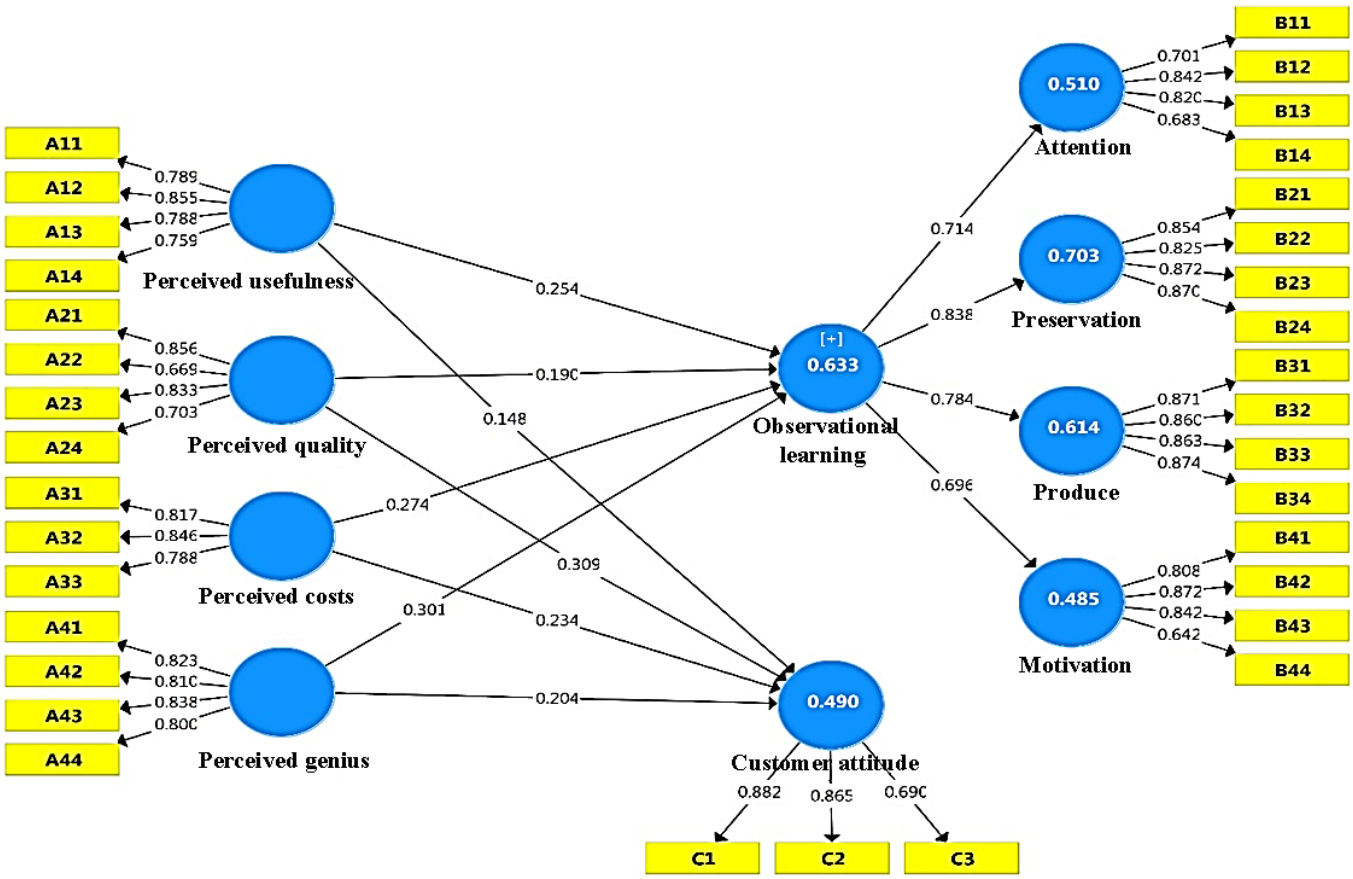


Figure 4.
Sub-Model with t-Values Coefficients

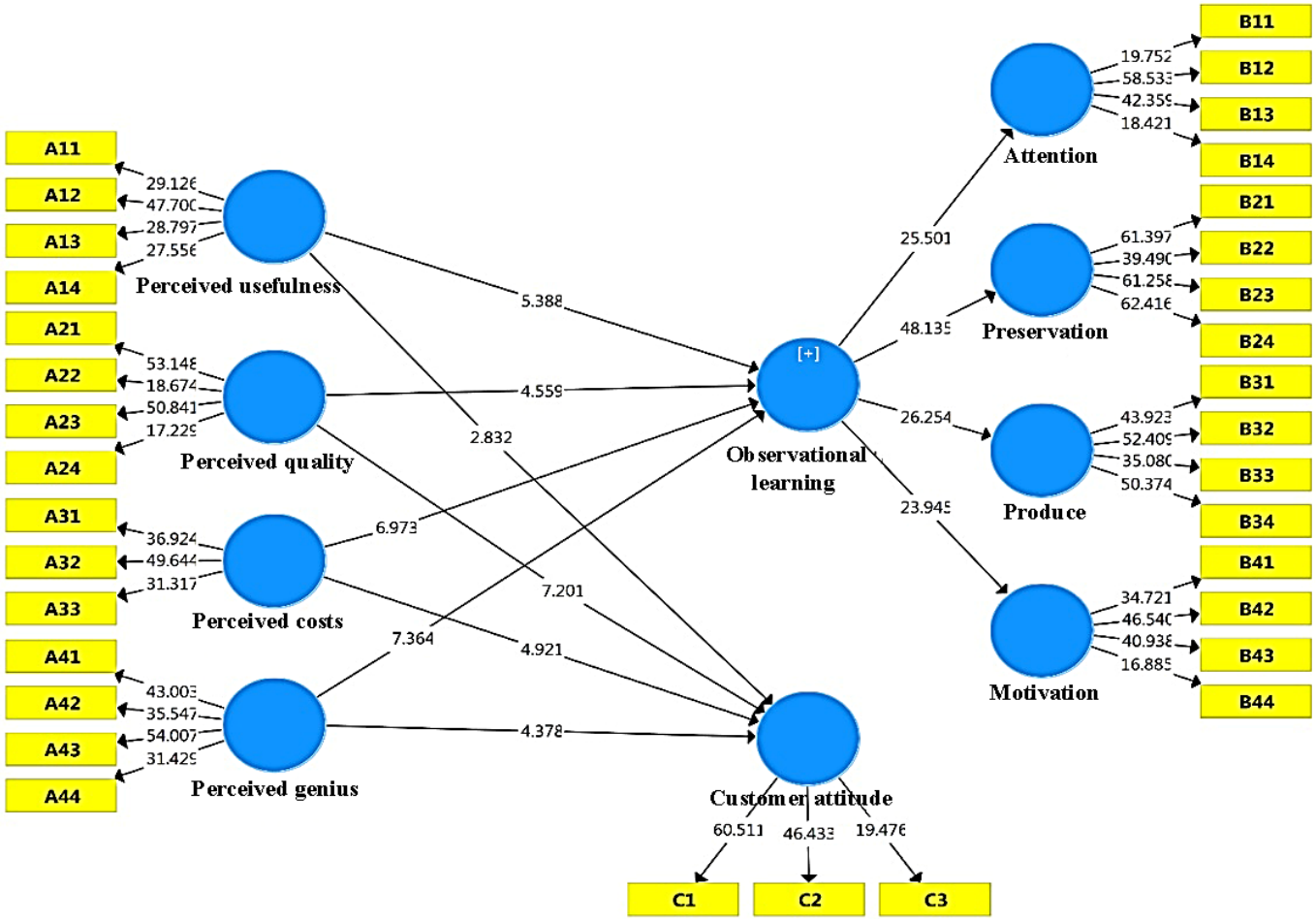


Table 7.
Results of Sub-Hypotheses of the Research

Direction: Independent variable → dependent variable	β	T-value	Significance level	Result
Perceived usefulness → Observational learning	0.254	5,388	0.00	Confirmation
Perceived quality → Observational learning	0.190	4,559	0.00	Confirmation
Perceived costs → Observational learning	0.274	6,973	0.00	Confirmation
Perceived genius → Observational learning	0.301	7,364	0.00	Confirmation
Perceived usefulness → Customer attitude	0.148	2,832	0.05	Confirmation
Perceived quality → Customer attitude	0.309	7.201	0.00	Confirmation
Perceived costs → Customer attitude	0.234	4,921	0.00	Confirmation
Perceived genius → Customer attitude	0.204	4,378	0.00	Confirmation

As can be seen in the Table above, the value of T-statistic in all paths in the sub-model is greater than 1.96. Therefore, it is inferred that all sub-hypotheses of the research are statistically confirmed. It should also be noted that the standardized path coefficients in all paths and sub-hypotheses are positive and this shows that the relationships between all variables are direct and positive.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of promotional gifts on customer attitude and observational

learning. Based on the results of the first main hypothesis analyzing the effect of promotional gifts on observational learning, the value of T-value is estimated to be 23,525. Therefore, considering that the value of t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05; it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the level of 0.05. Therefore, according to the collected data, it can be stated that this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability. Based on the results of the second main hypothesis analyzing the effect of promotional gifts on customers' attitudes, the value of T-value is estimated to be 23,525. Therefore, considering that the value of t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05; it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at 0.05. Therefore, according to the collected data, it can be claimed that this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability.

Based on the results of the first sub-hypothesis on the effect of perceived usefulness of observational learning, the value of T-value is estimated to be 5.388. Therefore, considering that the value of t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05; it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at 0.05 and it can be claimed that this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability. Also, based on the results of the second sub-hypothesis considering the effect of perceived quality on observational learning, the value of T-value is estimated to be 4.559. Therefore, considering that the value of t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant and this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability.

Based on the results of the third sub-hypothesis examining the effect of perceived costs on observational learning, the value of T-value is estimated to be 6.973. Therefore, considering that the value of t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05, it can be said that this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability. Moreover, regarding the results of the fourth sub-hypothesis on the effect of perceived genius on observational learning, the value of T-value is estimated to be 7.364. Therefore, considering that the value of t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the level of 0.05 and this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability.

Considering the fifth sub-hypothesis on the perceived usefulness effect on customers' attitudes, the value of T-value is estimated to be 2.832. Therefore, considering that the value of t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05, it can be stated that this path coefficient is significant at the level of 0.05. Therefore, according to the collected data, it is assumed that this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability.

Additionally, based on the results of the sixth sub-hypothesis on the effect of perceived quality on customers' attitudes, the value of T-statistic is estimated to be 7.201. Therefore, considering that the t-value is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05, it can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the level of 0.05. Therefore, according to the collected data, it can be claimed that this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability. Also, the results of the seventh sub-hypothesis on the effect of perceived costs on customers' attitudes, the T-value is estimated to be 4.921 and since it is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05, it is concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the level of 0.05 and thus, this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability. Furthermore, the analysis of the eighth sub-hypothesis on the effect of perceived genius on customers' attitudes showed the T-value is 4.378 which is more than 1.96 and the level of significance (0.00) is less than 0.05; It can be concluded that this path coefficient is significant at the error level of 0.05. Therefore, according to the collected data, it can be said that this research hypothesis is confirmed with 95% probability.

In the studies of Mortezazadeh et al. (2015), Ghazizadeh et al. (2015), Fam et al. (2019) and Boyle et al. (2013) examining the effect of promotional gifts on the overall evaluation of the consumer, the findings showed its positive effects. The research by Yogesh et al. (2020) also examined advertising and observational learning and found this relationship to be positive.

Conclusion

Considering today's competitive market conditions and the aim at gaining a proper position in the mind of the consumers, it can be stated that customers' attitudes is of great importance. Various factors affect consumer attitudes. Advertising is one of the most widely used tools to attract customers' attention to a company's goods and services. The ultimate goal of most advertisements is to increase sales, and they can be divided into two types: monetary (such as cash and merchandise discounts) and non-monetary (such as promotional gifts, lotteries, and contests). Promotional gifts are one of the most common non-monetary advertisements that are often used and affect the customer's attitude as a person who can pass this attitude on to others. Numerous factors affect the consumer attitude towards promotional gifts and observational learning.

In this study, some factors such as perceived usefulness, perceived quality, perceived costs and perceived genius were examined and the results showed that they have positive and direct effects on consumer attitudes and observational learning. However, perceived quality has a greater impact on customers' attitudes. It was also found that perceived genius has a greater impact on observational learning. What is important for a product distributor is that the product is successful in the market and the criterion of its success depends on the purchase of that product by the consumer. But what makes a consumer buy products with a particular brand? The answer to this question should be sought in the attitude and general evaluation of the consumer. Marketers sometimes offer promotional gifts to enhance their consumers' attitudes, thereby influencing their attitude and observational learning. But considering the findings of this study, the important point for the managers and marketers is that promotional gifts can have a positive effect on consumer attitudes and motivate them to buy, which supports the nature of the product, and on the other hand, the gift alone can create a positive image in the buyer with its appropriate nature.

Like all other studies, this study has several limitations. Due to the cross-sectional nature of the study, the direction of causality cannot be ascertained. The research population was limited to one province, which makes it difficult to accurately generalize the results. It is suggested that research be conducted in other cities to increase the power of generalizing the results. Also, since the questionnaires were self-reported, there is a possibility of dishonesty or bias in the reports, thus, it is better to use other methods of data collection such as interviews in future research to ensure the accuracy of the results.

Conflicts of Interest

No conflicts of interest declared.

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