






CREATIVE MARKETING AND INNOVATIVE BRANDING: AN EFFECTIVE WAY TO ATTRACT CUSTOMERS


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ABSTRACT

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Recently, the demand and application of creative marketing and innovative branding have been increased surprisingly because of its ability to grab the attention of customers more quickly than any other media. The objective of this study is to investigate the dimension of effectiveness in creative marketing and innovative branding to attract customer in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. Purposive sampling was applied to take a sample of 150 including 117 customers and 33 service providers of the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. Descriptive analysis, chi-square goodness of fit, chi-square test of independence, and binary logistic regression were performed to obtain the purpose of the study. In the bivariate test (chi-square test of independence) all of creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools were found significantly effective to attract customers in that specific industry. But binary logistic regression analysis identified only launching mobile apps and promoting Bangladesh's tourism is significant for customer attraction in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh among different creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools. Bangladesh tourism and hospitality industry should practice creative marketing and innovative branding tools and strategies to attract more customers.

Contribution/Originality: The paper's primary contribution is to investigate the dimension of effectiveness in creative marketing and innovative branding to attract customer in the tourism and hospitality industry. The findings of the study will provide some useful marketing and branding strategies and tools for the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh.

1. INTRODUCTION

According to Amabile and Pratt (2016) creativity is about producing novel and useful ideas, whereas innovation is its successful implementation. Amabile and Pratt (2016) defined creativity as "the production of novel and useful ideas by an individual or small group of individuals working together." Therefore, creativity marketing is the extent to which the marketing actions of a product (or service) are meaningful and novel for customers compared to usual practices in the product category (Andrews & Smith, 1996). Moreover, creativity and innovation are recognized as

important drivers of an organization's performance, which also applies to the hotel industry (Yfantidou, Spyridopoulou, Chatzigeorgiou, & Malliou, 2019). Both creativity and innovation are important elements of an organization's so-called dynamic capabilities (Ferreira, Coelho, & Moutinho, 2020; Lawson & Samson, 2001) which are required for a competitive advantage and high performance in unstable surroundings (Teece, Pisano, & Shuen, 1997; Teece, 2017). So in the hotel industry, creativity has been applied to a large extent by managers to govern hotels (Kattara & El-Said, 2013). Tourism is defined as the social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes (UNWTO, 2008). Bangladesh is one of the few countries in South Asia that is certainly not on the hunting list of tourists such as Nepal, India, Maldives or Sri Lanka; but it has its own delicate and distinctive attraction to offer (Nabi & Zaman, 2014). Bangladesh Parjatan Corporation has come up with a study, which once again confirmed immense prospect of country's tourism. The study Called 'Bangladesh Tourism Vision 2020' forecast those tourist arrivals to Bangladesh likely to exceed 1.30 million by 2020. Bangladesh will soon be one of the world's biggest tourist attractions (Rashid, 2016). In the study of Bangladesh, Al-Masud (2015) found Bangladesh to be a fresh attraction for travelers. To get success Bangladesh needs effective planning appropriate strategies for doing the right thing at the right time. In this circumstance, service providers may take some creative marketing and branding strategies so that they can capture new customers and attract them.

The growing interest in creativity and innovation may seem new to some, but in the marketing discipline its importance has long been recognized (Eriksson & Hauer, 2004; McIntyre, Hite, & Rickard, 2003; Titus, 2000). In his classic book titled *The Marketing Imagination*, Levitt (1986) argued that the practice of marketing was intimately linked to creative thought and imagination. Levitt went on to conclude that all marketing success begins with an imaginative thought or idea. Creativity includes the creation of new and fresh ideas or plans. This has the trait of using imagination and expression (Adams, 2005). Innovation is imagination putting into practice. This includes the adoption, adaptation or use of the innovative ideas of another; transforming them into reality (Priya & Vishal, 2007). The branding goal is to build an emotional connection between a company and its customers. Branding comes from the sum of several different parts like brand name, logo, colors, etc. This helps companies to separate themselves in an increasingly competitive market. The advent of digital technologies affects how companies interact with customers and how they use branding (Lavoie, 2015). Finally, we can describe the brand as "Perceptible sign to the human senses of the organization and its products, from which the consumer can distinguish an organization and its products from others" (Chovanová, Korshunov, & Babčanová, 2015).

According to the International Association of Scientific Experts in Tourism, "tourism is the sum of the phenomena and relationships that emerge from traveling and researching non-residents in so far as they do not lead to permanent residents and are not related to any earning activity" (Nabi & Zaman, 2014). The hospitality industry is the very core of tourism that includes food, drink, and lodging consumption in an environment away from the usual home base. Hospitality as a tourism category "is a fundamental part of the leisure market, both domestic and inbound. Consistent tourism demand helps the hospitality industry to predict demand and find opportunities to increase customer spending, thereby generating a surge of secondary financial impacts" (Benea, 2014). Garrido-Moreno and Lockett (2016) reported that, in recent years, the emergence of social media platforms has become one of the most important technological advances and has greatly affected the tourism industry. Hays, Page, and Buhalis (2013) pointed out that social media is gaining popularity as an aspect of the marketing strategy for the Destination Marketing Organization (DMO). Their study was to explore the usage of social media among the DMOs of the top 10 most visited countries by international tourists & argued that social media usage among top DMOs is still largely experimental and that strategies vary significantly. In his research, Kang (2011) suggested some techniques to effectively develop Facebook fan pages for hotels and restaurants that can improve interactions with current customers and attract future consumers. Web 2.0 applications such as social networks, blogs, content aggregators, online forums, and user communities are identified by Yap, Cheng, and Choe (2014) which can serve as

powerful marketing communication tools for disseminating product information, getting customer feedback, and building an online community. Dzhandzhugazovaa, Blinovaa, Orlovaa, and Romanovaa (2016) reveals the impact of the creative marketing mix on the success of enterprises in the hospitality industry. Sharma (2014) has shown that a business is going to thrive more than rivals because of certain innovative marketing ideas. The first measure of any business, small or large, when compared to its competitors, is its uniqueness. Terkan (2014) mentioned advertising as having a crucial role in the competitive marketing world of today. His research has examined two significant convincing methods often used in business management: Creative Advertising and Marketing Strategy. Debanoo (2015) described that the internet revolution has shifted business practices into a more complex and interactive manner through the development of Web 2.0 applications. As time goes by, businesses particularly in the hospitality industry have recognized the benefits of using social networking sites to promote their branding strategies online, providing easier access to target audiences and generating brand equity across selected channels. Fatima, Aftab, and Iqbal (2014) conducted a research about the impact of branding on consumer behavior. Brand knowledge is a very important factor. As the consumer is more aware of the brand and he has all the knowledge about its price, quality etc., the more he will be attracted towards that brand. Malik et al. (2013) observed the impact of brand recognition and brand loyalty on the intention to purchase. Brand recognition and brand loyalty correlate closely with purchasing intention. According to the findings, Satvati, Rabie, and Rasoli (2016) there seems to be a relationship between brand equity and consumer behavior, including payment of extra costs, brand preference, and purchasing intention. Ashton (2014) mentioned while the development of tourist destinations brands is well known, there is little work on the brand identity creation definition process. Kalembe (2015) has demonstrated, branding has a major positive impact on tourism performance in Rwanda. Hossain (2013) tried to investigate how the use of promotional activities would contribute to the growth of the tourism industry by giving the Bangladesh case special emphasis. Specialized consumer technique can help policymakers identify market visitors and customize their operation to achieve ideal promotional goals and address current downward income Islam and Jubery (2016). To gain insight and information on promotional methods used by Bangladesh tour operator Hasan, Rahman, and Hossain (2015) and Nabi and Zaman (2014) point out that due to a lack of knowledge, lack of facilities, and appropriate marketing methods, the tourism industry struggles to hit its destination.

1.1. Hypothesis

1. *Social media engagement can strongly attract customers.*
2. *User friendly web page has positive impact on customer attraction.*

1.2. Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 shows the framework of customer attraction through creative marketing and innovative branding tools and strategies.

This study focused on finding out of the contribution of creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools applied by these sectors and their effectiveness in attracting new customers from the perspective of the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. Apart from generating new knowledge and information which are useful to a various range of users this study can add value to the tourism and hospitality industry in terms of capturing new customers, increasing its revenue, and strengthening its current market position. The findings of the study will provide some useful marketing and branding strategies and tools for the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. The rest of the paper is structured as follows. The “materials and methods” section describes the study area and sampling techniques, variable descriptions, and analytical models. The “results and discussion” section detailed the finding of the study. The “conclusion” section provides the summary and some policy measures in related matters.

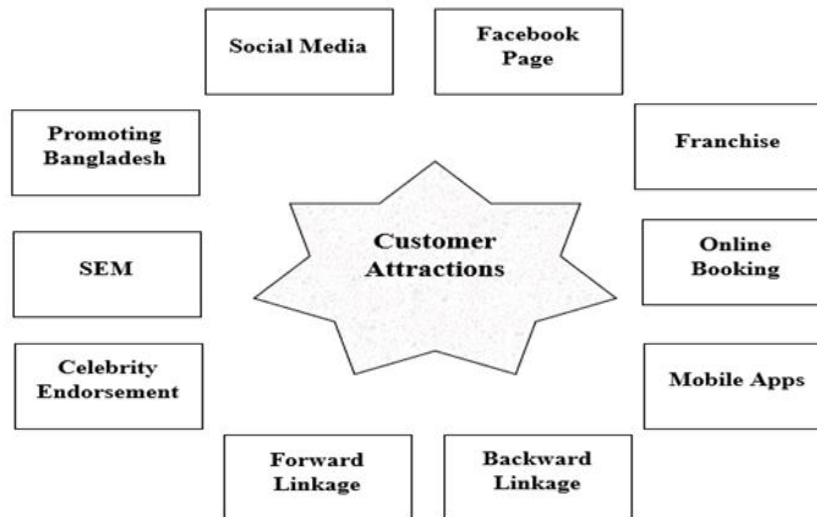


Figure-1. Conceptual framework of customer attraction by creative marketing and innovative branding.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

2.1. Data Sources

Purposive sampling was applied to collect data from two respondent groups namely customers and service providers in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. A sample was drawn of 150 respondents including 33 service providers and 117 customers. In this study, a structured questionnaire was used as an instrument that contains open and close-ended questions to achieve the study's objectives. The data was collected by face to face interviews. All participants willingly took part. All queries were in Bangla, which respondents speak fluently. Customers and service providers were asked by the researcher to fill out the questionnaire after the purpose of the study was clearly explained. The questionnaire was piloted on a group of 5 respondents to check for language clarity, duration of administration, and overall comprehension of statements.

2.2. Response Variable

In this study, customer attraction has been used as the response variable. The variable was categorized into a binary outcome (1 as "Yes"; 0 as "No"). Customer attraction through creative marketing strategies and innovative branding tools in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh were coded as "1" and "0" was for the rest.

2.3. Explanatory Variables

For the purpose of the study, social media, user-friendly and interesting web page, brandings like franchising, online booking, mobile apps, establishing forward business relation (linkage with target customers) and backward business relation (linkage with suppliers & personnel), promoting Bangladesh's tourism, launching Facebook page, search engine marketing (SEM), celebrity endorsement and evaluation site were used as predictor variables. Response regarding every explanatory variable was categorized into three as agree, neutral, and disagree.

2.4. Statistical Analysis

In the univariate stage, we conduct Chi-square goodness of fit test (single-sample nonparametric test) which allows us to test whether the observed proportions for (creative marketing strategies and innovative branding tools) variables differ from hypothesized proportions. In the bivariate setup, the chi-square test of independence was considered. The Test of Independence assesses whether an association exists between creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools with drawing consumer attraction.

The calculation of the Chi-Square statistic is quite straight-forward and intuitive:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(f_o - f_e)^2}{f_e}$$

Where, f_o = the observed frequency (the observed counts in the cells).

f_e = the expected frequency if NO relationship existed between the variables.

As depicted in the formula, the Chi-Square statistic is based on the difference between what is actually observed in the data and what would be expected if there is truly no relationship between the variables.

2.5. Binary Logistic Regression Model

Logistic regression can be used to predict a categorical dependent variable based on continuous or categorical independence; to determine the effect of the independent variables on dependent; to rank the relative importance of independence: to assess interaction effects. The impact of predictor variables is usually explained in terms of odds ratios.

Let Y_i =Customer attraction denote the dependent variable for the i^{th} observation and $Y_i = 1$ if the customer attraction is “Yes”, and $Y_i = 0$ if the customer attraction is “No”. The explanatory variables can be quantitative or indicator variables referring to the level of categorical variables. Since Y is a binary variable, it has a Bernoulli distribution with parameter π_i ,

$$P(\text{Customer attraction} = 1) = \pi_i = \frac{e^{\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_i}}{1 + e^{\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_i}}$$

$$P(\text{Customer attraction} = 0) = 1 - \pi_i = \frac{1}{1 + e^{\beta_0 + \beta_1 x_i}}$$

2.6. Maximum Likelihood Estimation

The maximum likelihood estimator (MLE) of β_0 and β_1 can be obtained by maximizing:

$$L(\beta_0, \beta_1) = \prod_{i=1}^n [\pi_i]^{Y_i} [1 - \pi_i]^{1-Y_i} \tag{1}$$

So far the likelihood only deals with the product of the probabilities. Replacing the value of π_i and $1-\pi_i$, in Equation 1 we get.

$$L(\beta_0, \beta_1) = \prod_{i=1}^n \left[\frac{e^{(\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i)}}{1 + e^{(\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i)}} \right]^{Y_i} \left[\frac{1}{1 + e^{(\beta_0 + \beta_1 X_i)}} \right]^{1-Y_i}$$

We want to choose β_0 and β_1 so as to maximize the log-likelihood. These choices will also maximize the likelihood.

The SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) 25 version was used for data management and analysis.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

At first we studied statistics to see if the three categories (Agree, Neutral, and Disagree) given among the creative marketing strategies and innovative branding tools-based variables were equally effective for the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. Table 1 demonstrates the contrast of strategies and tools of creative marketing and innovative branding’s attractiveness of the respondent. The sample consisted of 150 (33 service providers and 117 customers). The result (table-1) indicates that all creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools, except the evaluation site ($p < 0.001$), are highly relevant. A significant percentage of respondents (87.3 percent) agree that social media can draw consumer attention ($P < 0.001$). In comparison to the Web page, 10 out of 7 respondents are in agreement that user-friendly and interesting web pages will attract new customers' attention ($P < 0.001$).

Table-1. Perception of stakeholders regarding the effectiveness of creative marketing strategies and innovative branding tools to attract customers of tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh.

Variables	Number of Customer	Percentage	Mean \pm SD	p-Value
Social Media				
Agree	131	87.3	1.20 \pm 0.56	p<0.001***
Neutral	8	5.3		
Disagree	11	7.3		
Web Page				
Agree	108	72.0	1.39 \pm 0.67	p<0.001***
Neutral	26	17.3		
Disagree	16	10.7		
Franchise				
Agree	83	55.3	1.55 \pm 0.67	p<0.001***
Neutral	52	34.7		
Disagree	15	10.0		
Online Booking				
Agree	119	79.3	1.37 \pm 0.75	p<0.001***
Neutral	7	4.7		
Disagree	24	16.0		
Mobile Apps				
Agree	95	63.3	1.59 \pm 0.83	p<0.001***
Neutral	22	14.7		
Disagree	33	22.0		
Forward Linkage				
Agree	98	65.3	1.47 \pm 0.71	p<0.001***
Neutral	33	22.0		
Disagree	19	12.7		
Backward Linkage				
Agree	96	64.0	1.50 \pm 0.73	p<0.001***
Neutral	33	22.0		
Disagree	21	14.0		
Promoting Bangladesh				
Agree	102	68.0	1.46 \pm 0.73	p<0.001***
Neutral	27	18.0		
Disagree	21	14.0		
Facebook Page				
Agree	114	76.0	1.38 \pm 0.72	p<0.001***
Neutral	15	10.0		
Disagree	21	14.0		
SEM				
Agree	96	64.0	1.44 \pm 0.64	p<0.001***
Neutral	42	28.0		
Disagree	12	8.0		
Sponsorship Branding				
Agree	131	87.3	1.20 \pm 0.56	p<0.001***
Neutral	8	5.3		
Disagree	11	7.3		
Celebrity Endorsement				
Agree	92	61.3	1.65 \pm 0.87	p<0.001***
Neutral	18	12.0		
Disagree	40	26.7		
Evaluation site				
Agree	43	28.7	2.01 \pm 0.76	p=.079
Neutral	63	42.0		
Disagree	44	29.3		

Note: Statistical significant at level of ***p<0.001.

More than half of respondents in the study agreed that branding like franchising can expand the international market for tourism and hospitality of Bangladesh (55 percent, $P < 0.001$). According to the study done by Zaitseva (2013) branding has a major positive impact on tourism performance. While nearly 80 percent of respondents assent online booking can fascinate customers ($P < 0.001$). Gregory and Breiter (2001) also found that the growth in the value of the Internet as a booking medium and found that half of the investigated hotels increased their occupancy and average daily rates due to online booking system. The results are very similar for other creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools (except evaluation site) such as mobile devices, the establishment of forwarding business relationships (linkage with target customers) and backward business relationships (linkage with suppliers and staff), the promotion of Bangladesh tourism, launching Facebook page, the use of search engine marketing (SEM) and the help of celebrity endorsement.

Figure 2 indicates that the average score value of the above data is 1.48, roughly equal to the value of the agreement scale 1, suggesting that the majority of respondents agreed with the effectiveness of creative marketing and branding that attract tourism and hospitality industry customers in Bangladesh.

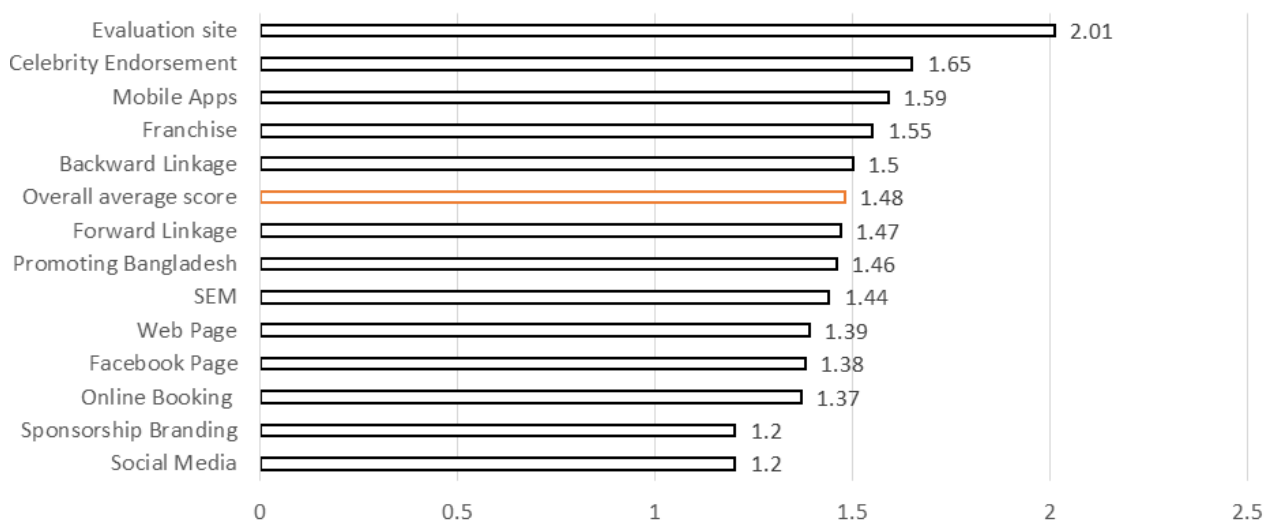


Figure-2. Overall average score of creative marketing and innovative branding tools to attract customers of tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh.

The relationship between creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools with drawing consumer attraction is shown in Table 2. A strong relationship exists between social media and consumer attraction in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh through creative marketing and innovative branding ($p < 0.001$). Nearly 86 percent of respondents agree that social media is highly effective for attracting customers through creative marketing and innovative branding while less than 10 respondents find social media to be not that effective for attracting customers. Hampton, Goulet, Rainie, and Purcell (2011) also showed in their study that in the recent year emergence of social media has greatly affected tourism and hospitality industry. Via creative marketing and innovative branding in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh, there is a substantial positive association between user-friendly and fascinating web page consumer and customer attraction. Approximately 100 percent of respondents believe new consumers will be highly attractive to user-friendly and fascinating web pages ($p < 0.001$). Web 2.0 applications such as social networks, blogs, content aggregators, online forums, and user communities are identified by O'Connor and Frew (2002) which can serve as powerful marketing communication tools for disseminating product information, getting customer feedback, and building an online community. Creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools like franchising, online booking, mobile apps, establishing forward business relation (linkage with target customers) and backward business relation (linkage with suppliers and personnel), promoting Bangladesh's tourism, launching Facebook page, search engine

marketing (SEM), evaluation site and celebrity endorsement have a strong positive relationship with consumer attraction in tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh ($p < 0.001$).

Table-2. Association between creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools with customer attraction.

Background Characteristics	Customers attraction through creative marketing and innovative branding		p-value
	No	Yes	
Social Media			
Agree	14.5	85.5	p<.001***
Neutral	75.0	25.0	
Disagree	90.9	9.1	
Web Page			
Agree	0.0	100.0	p<.001***
Neutral	76.9	23.1	
Disagree	93.8	6.3	
Franchise			
Agree	0.0	100.0	p<.001***
Neutral	48.1	51.9	
Disagree	66.7	33.3	
Online Booking			
Agree	7.6	92.4	p<.001***
Neutral	28.6	71.4	
Disagree	100.0	0.0	
Mobile Apps			
Agree	11.6	88.4	p<.001***
Neutral	0.0	100.0	
Disagree	72.7	27.3	
Forward Business Relation			
Agree	10.2	89.8	p<.001***
Neutral	30.3	69.7	
Disagree	78.9	21.2	
Backward Business Relation			
Agree	9.4	90.6	p<.001***
Neutral	27.3	72.7	
Disagree	81.0	19.0	
Promoting Bangladesh			
Agree	12.7	87.3	p<.001***
Neutral	33.3	66.7	
Disagree	61.9	38.1	
Facebook Page			
Agree	9.6	90.4	P<.001***
Neutral	33.3	66.7	
Disagree	90.5	9.5	
Search Engine Marketing			
Agree	35.4	64.6	P<.001***
Neutral	0.0	100.0	
Disagree	8.3	91.7	
Sponsorship			
Agree	22.9	77.1	p=.065
Neutral	0.0	100.0	
Disagree	45.5	54.5	
Celebrity Endorsement			
Agree	1.1	98.9	p<.001***
Neutral	0.0	100.0	
Disagree	85.0	15.0	
Evaluation site			
Agree	0.0	100.0	p<.001***
Neutral	38.1	61.9	
Disagree	25.0	75.0	

Note: Statistical significant at level of *** $p < 0.001$.

And this result is also supported by the study conducted by Mabry and Porter (2010) and Kim, Jin-Sun, and Kim (2008). According to Hotelmarketing.com, 2011 75% hotel uses social media to effectively interactions with current customers and attract future consumers. There is no significant relationship between sponsorship (for various events such as sports competitions, music festivals, and tourism occasions) and attracting consumers through creative marketing and innovative branding (p=.065).

We considered logistic regression models to determine the modified effects of the selected explanatory variables on consumer attraction through creative marketing and innovative branding. In Table 3, binary logistic regression analysis of consumer attraction through creative marketing and innovative branding is illustrated. We have stated at the start of the study that the sample size is small. The outcome of the binary logistics due to sample size is not ideal, but only five variables provide results in the below table which is less optimal for any analysis. Here only launching mobile apps and promoting Bangladesh’s tourism is significant for customer attraction in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh among different creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools.

Table-3. Binary logistic regression analysis of customer attraction through creative marketing and innovative branding.

Variables	Customers attraction through creative marketing and innovative branding	
	OR	p- Value
Social Media		
Agree(ref.)	1.000	
Neutral	.000	.999
Disagree	4.622	1.000
Mobile Apps		
Agree(ref.)	1.000	
Neutral	N/A	.997
Disagree	.009***	.000
Promoting Bangladesh		
Agree(ref.)	1.000	
Neutral	.005***	.000
Disagree	.000	.996
Sponsorship		
Agree(ref.)	1.000	
Neutral	N/A	.999
Disagree	.202	.299
Evaluation site		
Agree(ref.)	1.000	
Neutral	.000	.995
Disagree	.000	.995

Note: Significant at ***P<0.001.

From Figure 3 we can see that only 4.7% of respondents said very significant when they were asked about the effectiveness of traditional marketing while 42.7% and 44.7% said significant and average respectively. On the other hand, 64.7% of respondents strongly agreed with the statement that creative marketing is more effective than traditional marketing to attract customers in tourism and hospitality industry. And this result is also supported by the study conducted by Dzhandzhugazovaa et al. (2016) While 10%, 16.9%, 5.3%, and 4% respondents agreed, remain neutral, disagreed, and strongly disagreed respectively with the statement.

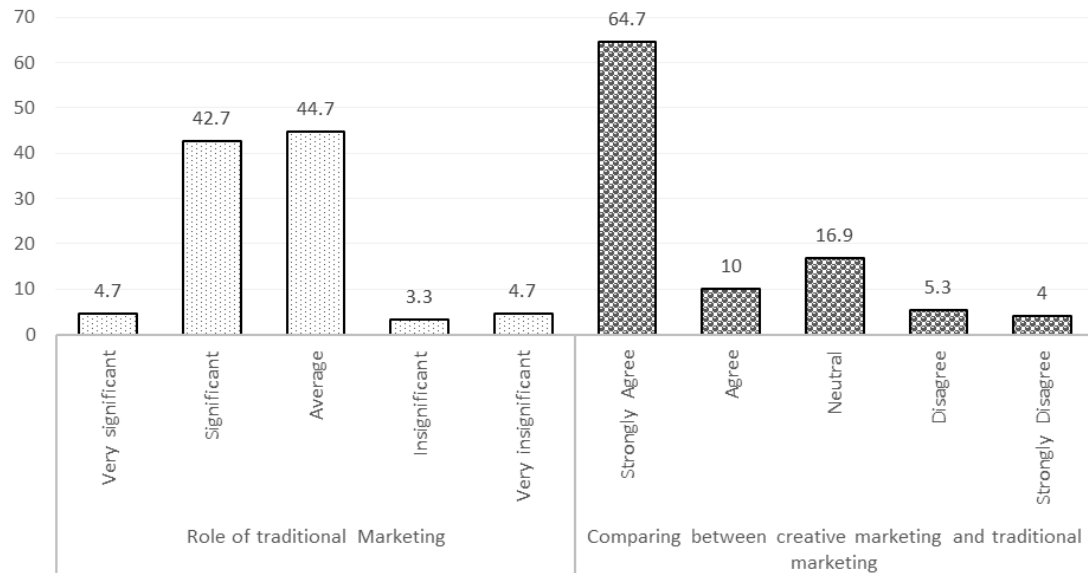


Figure-3. Comparison between creative marketing and traditional marketing.

4. CONCLUSION

This study attempts to assess the dimension of the effectiveness of creative marketing and innovative branding to attract customer in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. It is shown that most respondents are positively responding that creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools are very effective to attract customer in the tourism and hospitality industry of Bangladesh. Different creative marketing and innovative branding strategies and tools like using social media for marketing, user-friendly and fascinating web page, branding through franchising, online booking facility, launching mobile apps, establishing forward business relation (linkage with target customers) and backward business relation (linkage with suppliers and personnel), promoting Bangladesh’s tourism as a part of branding, launching Facebook page, search engine were found effective as most of the respondents replied positively. These strategies and tools have a long customer reach at a time than traditional marketing and branding. As the marketing concept is changing with time and situation one should capitalize on the opportunity given by globalization through electronic social media to attract a large number of the customer at a time and quickly. As the tourism and hospitality industry are important matters for generating income, creating opportunity for employment and earning foreign currency, Bangladesh should utilize its potential in this industry to improve its economy. The recent development of tourism and hospitality industry around the world and open market for globalization has introduced difficult threats and challenges for every country to sustain in the tourism and hospitality industry and retain its customer base but Bangladesh can face the challenges and move further by practicing creative marketing and innovative branding to attract customers.

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