

# The analysis of the mediating role of customer attitude on purchase intention of electronic tickets of football matches

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**ABSTRACT:** This study aims to analyze the mediating role of customers' attitude on purchase intention of e-tickets. The research is developmental in terms of purpose and is a descriptive survey in terms of the nature. The population of this research is spectators of sports events. According to the infinity of the population, the sample was selected using random sampling based on Morgan table. Data collection was through library studies and also a standard questionnaire. Kolmogorov - Smirnov test was used to determine the normality of the population and Smart PLS was used to test the hypotheses. The results showed that the attitude affects the ticket purchase intention, but it seems the attitude with a mediating role of other factors (perceived relative advantage, perceived compatibility, trust, perceived risk and perceived complexity), have a basic role on ticket purchase intention. Hence the clubs should always be watchful and careful about their interaction between themselves and their customers and with a clear understanding of customers' needs and values, provide goods and services via the internet in order to make them satisfied and trustful.

**Keywords:** Attitude, purchase intention, Electronic tickets, football.

## INTRODUCTION

The term "attitude" has numerous Persian equivalents such as notion, prestige comments, feedback, mood and tendency. But now the attitude has general tendency and has been defined in different ways. Attitude is a hypothetical construct, because it is not directly visible, but is more associated with verbal and behavioral statements. Due to the importance of attitude in the lives of people, some experts go so far as to approach this fact that the subject matter of social psychology is attitude and define that, the attitude of people (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

So the "attitude" is defined as a person's psychological tend to respond or behave in a positive or negative way due to a stimulus as a result of their attitude to the stimulus (Verdurme & Viaene, 2003). Attitude variables are trust, perceived compatibility, relative benefits perceived, perceived risk and perceived complexity and the variables of perceived relative benefits are including convenience, timesaving, the economic advantages, product variety and enjoyment (Amaro and Durate, 2015).

Today, purchase intention is one of the issues that most researches are done about it in universities and specialized centers. There are many scientific products on this issue and there are debates that remain unanswered. (Mandhachiatra & Poolthong, 2011). According to the theory of reasoned action, purchase intention is the result of attitudes about beliefs and behaviours (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). Elsewhere, intention is considered the people future, expected and planned behavior as a determining factor of that behavior (Chen, 2007).

With the rapid growth of the internet, e-commerce is also making a rapid progress. From the electronic exchange of information and development of the internet, more people do their buys and sales electronically with the advent of the internet. The benefits of this purchase system is the less gap between the seller and buyer and shorten the intermediaries and brokers.

Because of these benefits, the international trade organization designed websites to offer online commercial services (Ming Pi, 2012). So, the online shopping is defined as the process by which a customer buys the product or service through the internet (Zhou, 2004).

Today, the activities in the area of physical education and sports are increased and investment in this area will end in increased demand for products and services that all these collections, formed sports industry. Sports industry, is a market that sells products and services such as sports, health, recreation, leisure, places, and ideas to its customers. To be successful in the sports industry, application of sports marketing is essential. In the meantime, soccer is one of the most beautiful and popular events. Football is a phenomenon that influence many economic, social and even political issues of countries and due to an extraordinary extent, countless athletes and spectators, macro-financial investments and extensive media coverage goes far beyond other sports (Hosseini et al, 2009 ).

Although, the ticket sale shares a basic part of total revenue of soccer matches, but it is not implemented and managed correctly, while this action is entirely tactical. Of the most important advantages of mechanization of ticket system is, to control the flow of cash in society, as well as establishing a direct path with the customer in order to obtain the necessary information that is needed for marketing activities (Allen and Bowdin, 2006). Today, online ticket sales of sports events is the most important way of income in clubs, but still there are so many clubs in the world which are unaware of this (Forest, 2002). Online ticket sales could be more enthusiastic to crowd to go to the stadium and that, this work will result in their consent during a match (Donihue et al, 2002).

The studies show that, to raise confidence in online shopping, internet service providers must provide security for the repayment to customers and formal assurances of services and products to them to reassure people that their information in the site will remain confidential and they, the providers, should deal with criticism and feedback with open arms (FAM Et Al, 2004). Also, providing any any explanations regarding the prices, offering reliable security, hiding credit card details, using the latest encryption technology, explaining how to use the collected data, provide excellent orientation and designed applications and websites are the other things that they can do to increase trust in online shopping (Austin et al, 2006; Chen, 2006; Kim et al, 2011; Wen, 2010). The results show that the economic benefits are considered as the most important factor of online shopping (Amaro and Durate, 2015).

In this way, the clubs are facing with challenges to choose the best type of strategy to buy e-tickets when entering to a market for sports marketing in which identifying and providing solutions for the elimination and facilitation of them is necessary and inevitable. However, with a careful examination of papers, we know the impact of attitude on customer purchase intention. Buying match tickets was and is done manually in our country. Recently, some teams have chosen online ticketing system for ticket sales of matches.

Studies conducted abroad are in various fields including: airplane tickets, household appliances, etc, but little research has been done about football ticketing systems and the purchase intention of it in the country and abroad. Therefore, in this sector, we need to research about people’s attitude towards online ticketing and if there is a willing to buy a ticket online or not? In this study the attention is paid to the effect of attitude on online shopping.

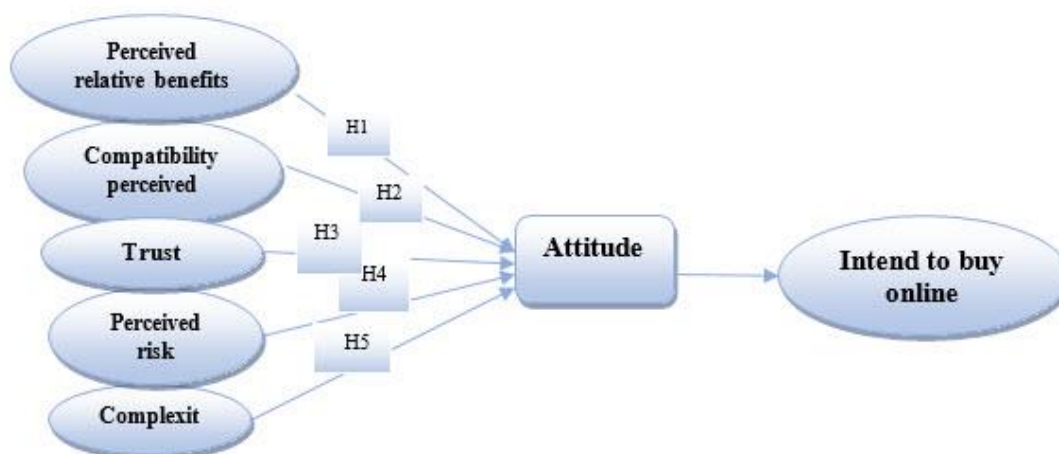


Figure 1. Conceptual model of the study

**Research methodology**

This Study is applicable in terms of purpose and is a descriptive survey regarding to data collection. The study population is comprised of customers of sports events that in this research, the events are spectators of Iran’s football

Premier League. The variables were qualitative and the Morgan table was used to determine the sample size. For the infinity of the population, the maximum number of samples, that is 384, were selected according to Morgan table. The Random sampling was used for the sample selection. Necessary information is collected through observation, literature review and Amaro and Duarte (2015) standard questionnaire. The questions of the Questionnaire were conducted in two parts: (1) Demographic characteristics (age, gender, marital status, education level, etc.) and (2) Attitude factors affecting customers' electronic tickets purchase intention (perceived relative advantage, perceived compatibility, confidence, perceived risk, complexity, attitude and purchase intention). To ensure the content validity of questions, the comments of some of the sports management professors who were an expertise in this field were used. After data analysis, the reliability of the questionnaire using Cranach's alpha coefficient for all the variables is close to (0.92), which shows the reliability scale (Table 2). According to the respondent's characteristics, the hotels sports service sectors managers were selected as the respondents. The descriptive statistics (indices of abundance, average and standard deviation) were used for the statistical analysis of the results and the Smart PLS and SPSS soft wares were used for the inferential statistics of the study.

**Research findings**

**Table 1** shows the descriptive statistics of demographic variables. Check the validity of the combination of the structures

Table 2. hybrid structures Validation

	AVE	Composite Reliability	R Square	Cranach's Alpha	Shared credit	Redundancy
Perceived relative benefits	0.84	0.97		0.97	0.84	
perceived Compatibility	0.85	0.94		0.91	0.85	
Trust	0.73	0.91		0.87	0.73	
Perceived risk	0.81	0.96		0.95	0.81	
Perceived Complexity	0.85	0.96		0.94	0.85	
Attitude	0.72	0.95	0.79	0.94	0.72	0.09
Online purchase intention	0.89	0.96	0.89	0.94	0.89	0.67

The results of Table 2 shows that all the structures have acceptable combined credit and this represents the fulfillment of a condition about the reliability. Also the Cranach's Alpha reliability coefficient of all the variables is above the minimum (0.92) in this study.

**Check the quality of the model:**

The last stage in the model is to check the quality of measurement tools.

Table 1. Distribution of the research demographic variables

Percentage	Abundance	Levels	Percentage	Abundance	Levels
9	6	Under 5 years	75.93	6	Under30 years
89	60	5 to10 years	21.87	54	30 to 40 years
1/49	1	10 to15 years	3.9	5	50 to 40 years
0	0	15 to20 years	1.00	2	50years and above
0	0	20and above	4.42	0	Diploma
90	60	Men	16.66	1	Associate Degree
10	7	Female	57.55	60	BS
			31.20	5	MA
			1/04	1	PH.D

The Share credit (Commonality) measures the quality of structures and the redundancy index (Redundancy) with respect to the measurement model measures the quality of the structural model for endogenous structures in which indicates the good quality of measurement model.

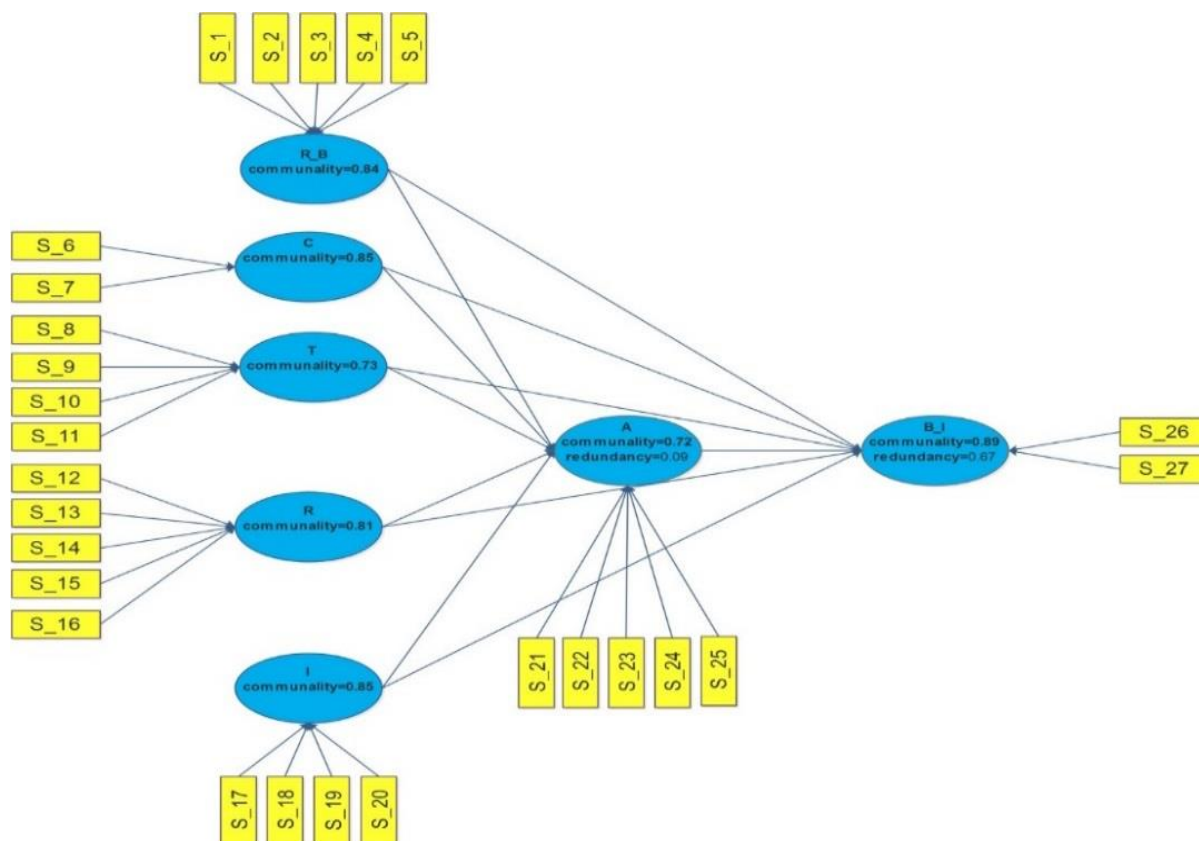


Figure 2. The reliability and redundancy structures index

**Moderating effects of variables**

Table 3. Moderating effects of variables

	Indirect effect
Perceived relative benefits on the online purchase intention	0.68
Compatibility on the online purchase intention	0.24
Trust on the online purchase intention	0.49
Perceived risk on the online purchase intention	0.07
The complexity on the online purchase intention	0.03

**Findings**

However due to meaningful relationship between the research hypotheses, it is possible to test the research hypotheses. The results of the research hypotheses based on the structural equation modeling have been shown at Table 4. As it can be seen in the table, all research hypotheses were confirmed at 99% confidence level. According to the path coefficients, it can be concluded that there is a significant meaningful relation between the mediating role of attitude factors (Perceived relative advantage, perceived compatibility, trust, perceived risk and perceived complexity) and the online purchase intention.

Table 4. The results of path coefficient

Amount	To affect	Level of significance	test T	Beta coefficient	Directions (hypothesis)	Row
S	+	0.05	1.98	0.78	Customer confidence → purchase intention	1
M	+	0.01	3.54	0.51	Attitude → purchase intention	
S	+	0.05	2.41	0.89	Attitude → Customer confidence	
W	+	0.05	2.42	0.16	Compatibility understanding customers → purchase intention	2
M	+	0.01	3.54	0.51	Attitude → purchase intention	
W	+	0.05	2.52	0.19	Compatibility understanding customers → Attitude	

M	+	0.01	24.40	0.48	Perceived relative benefits customers	➔	3
M	+	0.01	3.54	0.51	Attitude	➔	purchase intention
M	+	0.01	80.40	0.46	Perceived relative benefits customers	➔	Attitude
W	-	0.05	-2.24	0.14	Customers perceived risk	➔	purchase intention
M	+	0.01	3.54	0.51	Attitude	➔	purchase intention
W	-	0.05	-2.09	0.11	Customers perceived risk	➔	Attitude
W	+	0.01	-10.68	0.07	complexity of understanding customers	➔	5
M	+	0.01	3.54	0.51	Attitude	➔	purchase intention
W	-	0.01	-15.64	0.05	complexity of understanding customers	➔	Attitude

S = Strong                  W = Weak                  M = Middle  
 The ultimate model based on research findings

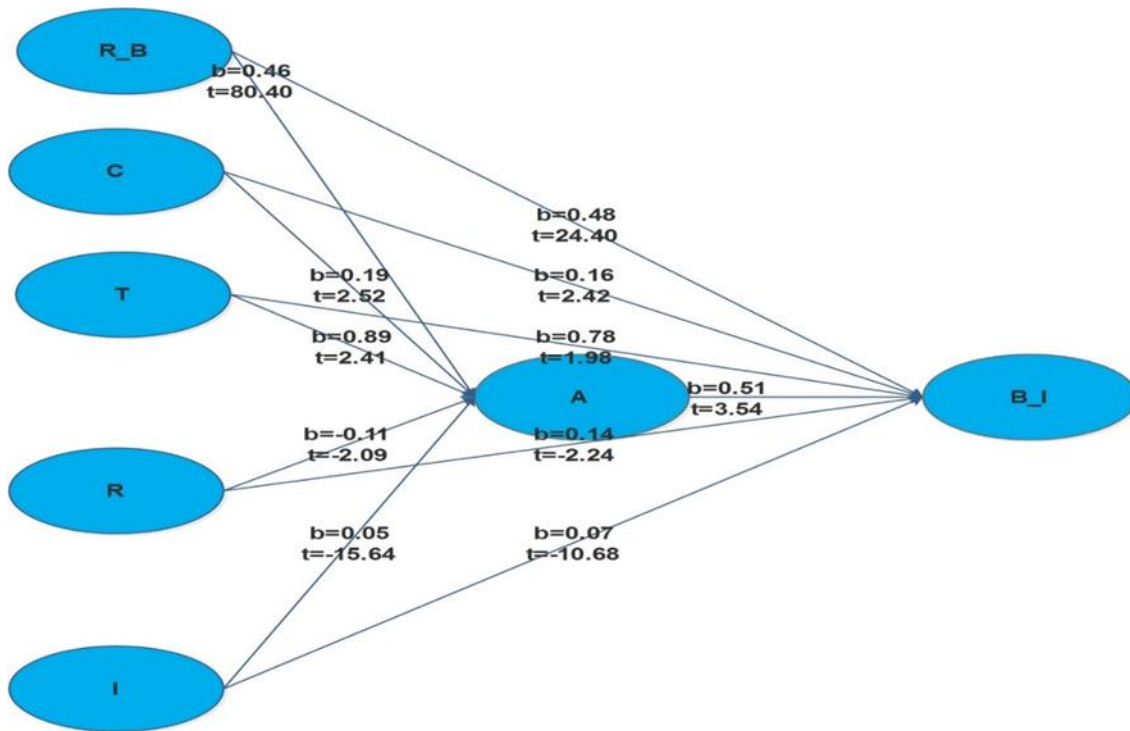


Figure 3. Final research model

**Discussion and conclusion**

The results showed that the perceived relative benefits indirectly affected the mediating role of attitude on purchase intention of e-tickets. The results of these findings are consistent with Amaro and Durate, 2015; Josue and Ling (2012) and Solomon et al (2008). In addition, the relative advantage is a degree of the benefit that online shopping provides it for sports fans. Although the attitude is the most characteristic and most essential concept in sports social psychology, thus providing ticketing facilities and services according to the needs and desires of people (online sales, etc.) will also be considered as elements of the strategy of buying tickets.

The results showed that perceived compatibility with the mediating role of attitude indirectly affected the ticket purchase intention that these findings are consistent with Amaro and Durate, (2015); Josue and Ling (2012) and Solomon et al (2008). While compatibility is the certain level of stability with the values of consumers, experiences and their needs, there are two fundamental mechanisms that perceived compatibility makes the attitudes and behaviors of sports fans. One of these two mechanisms is the attitude process model theory to predict the immediate and involuntary behaviors and the theory of planned behavior to predict intentional behaviors. Prediction of spontaneous behaviors: attitudes can only predict involuntary behavior that is highly available. Attitudes with high availability can possibly predict the mechanical behaviors, because people when they are called into action, their

attitudes quickly come to mind. But when attitudes are not available, perceived compatibility of fans is more influenced by situational variables of ticket purchase.

The results showed that trust indirectly affected the mediating role of attitude on e-ticket purchase intention that the results of these findings are consistent with Amaro and Durate (2015); Josu and Ling (2012); Solomon et al (2008); Montazeri et al (1393) and Ghazizadeh et al (2011). Trust in online ticket purchase is as an attitude of confidence expectation in a dangerous online situation that this would not abuse the vulnerability of a person in this situation. So, the absence or lack of proper utilization of management systems and new technologies are as barriers in sports marketing. With the establishment of trust in sports institutions, we can promote online ticket purchasing in sports marketing.

The results indicated that the perceived risk indirectly affected the mediating role of attitude on purchase intention of e-tickets. These results are consistent with the findings of Amaro and Durate, (2015); Josu and Ling (2012) and Solomon et al (2008). The awareness about perceived risk will largely enable the individual to predict the certain behaviors. Although, it is clear that the behaviors were caused by numerous factors and different situations affect the formation and proliferation of them, but all of these factors and conditions, will orient the behavior consistent with the attitude ticket purchase intention and with the passage of time and duration of action, some primitive conflicts, which usually occurs between the two, give the way to adapt and heal up, although it is not unlikely that in some people or groups, based on some behaviors and under some socio-cultural circumstances, the conflict will always remain between their behavior and attitude.

And the results of the study showed that the complexity indirectly affect the mediating role of attitude on e-tickets purchase intention. The results are consistent with the findings of the Dehdashti and Tokenejad, (2004); Amaro and Dorate, (2015); Josu and Ling (2012) and Solomon et al, (2008). However the complexity reflects the difficulties of understanding and using. It is therefore essential to recognize one of the most basic and fundamental sports organizations that is active in the economic cycle and marketing, so that we can orient sports fans to buy e-tickets.

However, the sport with its influential nature, affects almost all aspects of our daily lives. Thus, the managers insist on providing the possibility to buy tickets through the internet for the tournaments and connects fans with the players and coaches to the websites of the clubs, which may be modeled by other teams as well. In recent years, with the development of science and technology, buying and selling goods and services took a new shape and is removed from its traditional form. Undoubtedly, the mediating role of attitude and intention to purchase tickets online has been effective. It is therefore essential that the organizations in charge of sports, increase the trust among the fans, because, buying tickets online for sports events will save the macro costs.

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