Utilizing Digital Functional Touchpoints to Formulate Brand Loyalty among Millennial Consumers

Brand Loyalty

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Abstract

Brand loyalty has become a vital need in today's competitive market. It's not only about repeat purchase intention that creates brand loyalty but also about the content of digital platforms. Brand loyalty among consumers should be formulated by carefully selecting digital channels and placing appropriate content called touchpoints. Based on touchpoint categorization of functional, social, community, and corporate this study has focused on formulating brand loyalty among millennials. The study has segmented into millennials in Sri Lanka and measured their loyalty level for mobile phone brands. Based on the results, the study shows the importance of managing functional touchpoints to formulate brand loyalty among millennials. Study shows the importance of managing the contents of functional touchpoints to influence trust as a brand trust founded as a mediator for the impact of functional touchpoint contents on brand loyalty.

Keywords: Digital functional touchpoints, Digital marketing, e brand loyalty, e brand trust, Millennials.



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Introduction

During the past decade, digital presence has become a thriving force in world's business domain. Due to that fact, retailers have been progressively transferring their products and services to digital channel-based businesses. According to the statistics, most brick-and-mortar stores have stepped into digital channels (Hallikainen et al., 2019; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Ertemel, & Başçı 2015; Nuseir et al., 2023) . Consumer behavior has entered digital channels to find product information before purchase decision. Theoretically, this phase is considered a zero moment of truth (Biçer, 2020; Ertemel & BAŞÇI, 2015). It is vital to have a satisfying customer journey through zero moments of truth to influence customers to a purchasing phase (Bicer, 2020) ; Ertemel & BAŞÇI, 2015). This should be done by carefully selecting digital channels and placing appropriate content. The particular selection should be able to reach and engage with the target customer segment which is called a touchpoint (Hallikainen et al., 2019). Placing touchpoints throughout the consumer journey can create a satisfying experience that can lead the brand to to achieve marketing goals (Baxendale, Macdonald & Wilson, 2015; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Ertemel, & Başçı 2015). Brands need to understand the touchpoint types needed to influence people to obtain their marketing goals cost- and resource-efficiently. In today's competitive world, most brands try to achieve marketing goals by placing touchpoints on social media platforms which considered as social touchpoints (Straker et al., 2015; Suartina et al., 2022; Wu & Luong, 2021)

Not only brands but also studies that followed the touchpoint categorization of Straker et al (2015) highly focused on exploring social touchpoints.

Few studies have explored multiple touchpoint arrangements. In the categorization of Staker et al (2015) functional touchpoints show contents that are placed inside functional diversification channels. Website content, Blog articles, Mobile app content of the particular brand, email newsletters of a particular brand etc are main examples of functional tocuhpoints (Hallikainen et al., 2019; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Nuseir et al., 2023; Ertemel, & Başçı 2015) However, it is very hard to find studies focused on functional touchpoints especially achieving brand loyalty (Wagner et al, 2020; Lemon & Verhoef, 2016; Hallikainen, Alamäki and Laukkanen, 2019).

Brand loyalty denotes consumers' positive behavioral or attitudinal motivation toward a brand. It crafts a brand with a consumer base that is resistant to switching. Thus, it constructs barriers to competitors through high sales with low customer acquisition costs Purani, Kumar & Sahadev, 2019; Quoquab, Mohammad and Sobri, 2021; Boateng et al, 2020).

In today's highly competitive market brand loyalty is an influential sales force. It drives a brand to a high level of dominance in a competitive business (Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2018; Quoquab et al., 2020; Boateng et al,2020). McKinsey Quarterly, which introduced a new consumer journey shows brand loyalty as a loop that triggers after a successful purchase journey. But a review they have done after a decade shows brand loyalty as a declining factor, especially in upcoming generations (Bommel et al., 2014).

The millennial cohort considered the online generation exceeds 25% of the world population and technically savvy than other generations (Purani et al., 2019). Recently this group has grab the market attention of buying power by showing the representation of 85% growth in the luxury sector. According to the forecast of D'Arpizio & Levato (2018) millennials will represent 55% of the personal luxury goods market in 2025 which shows the high buying power within all generations (Haug, Reinecke & Tomczak, 2020). This millennial cohort is more connected and connected through social media (Haug et al., 2020) digital technology influences a major part of life (Purani et al., 2019). Therefore formation of brand loyalty through digital channels will be the main strategy that any business should follow to attract the attention of millennials. Brands invest on mainly in social touchpoints because millennials spend a significant level of time on social media (Rolando & Mulyono,2024; Piartrini et al.,2024; Vetrivel et al.,2024; Bui et al., 2023).

Some brands ignore functional touchpoints by focusing only on social touchpoints for their digital marketing activities (Dhewi & Kurnianto , 2023; Boisvert & Khan, 2023; Ibrahim et al,2021).

Consumers tend to absorb different content from different touchpoints. Therefore, to get maximum return on investment from digital marketing campaigns, brands should focus on different types of touchpoints to achieve marketing goals(Wagner et al , 2020; Muthaffar et al , 2024; Boisvert & Khan ,2023).

This paper focuses on filling the literature gap of identifying the impact of functional touchpoints on brand loyalty targeting millennials. Special consideration has been given to the analysis mediation effect of brand trust which is a part of the attachment theory.

Research Questions

- RQ 1 : Does functional touchpoint content have an impact on the brand loyalty of mobile phone brands?
- RQ 2 :Does functional touchpoint content have an impact on the brand trust of mobile phone brands?
- RQ 3 :Does brand trust mediate the impact of functional touchpoint content on brand loyalty of mobile phone brands?

Literature Review

According to the definition given by Oliver(1997), brand loyalty refers deep commitment of consumers to rebuy or re-patronize a brand regularly, without switching behavior caused by rivalry marketing efforts and influences (Boateng et al, 2020; Nyadzayo & Khajehzadeh, 2016; Salem & Salem, 2019). Attitudinal loyalty is one of the brand loyalty types that has been discussed from two types of loyalty. It shows commitment and intention to purchase the brand (Salem & Salem, 2019) and the disposition of a consumer to buy a brand by overcoming obstacles or price for purchase (Boateng et al., 2020)

The next type of loyalty that has been discussed in the literature is behavioral loyalty. Repeat purchase behavior frequency reflects behavioral loyalty. Overriding all the above definitions,

The latest definition describes brand loyalty as an emotional connection between the consumer and the brand (Bidmon, 2017; Boateng et al., 2020; Cornelia & Pasharibu, 2020)

brand loyalty is an emotional connection between the consumer and the brand (Aaker, 2019; Miremadi & Ghanadiof, 2021; Wu & Luong, 2021; Bidmon, 2017; Boateng et al., 2020; Cornelia & Pasharibu, 2020). Bonding-based attachment of attachment theory describes the consumer's emotional connection with a brand as a connection between the caregiver and the infant. (Adam et al., 2018; Bidmon, 2017; Boateng et al., 2020; Li et al., 2020) .Based on these definitions, the purchase is not a vital requirement to formulate brand loyalty. Consumer journey through digital touchpoints can construct an emotional connection with a brand which can formulate brand loyalty (Boateng et al., 2020; Giovanis & Athanasopoulou, 2018; Khan et al., 2020; Mostafa & Kasamani, 2020)

Lemon and Verhoef (2016) definition shows touchpoints as "all the interactions that take place between the customer and the company with in-store technologies or sales personnel within the journey that the customer makes; in other words during his/her dynamic customer experience or the purchase cycle across different touchpoints" (Vannucci & Pantano, 2019). Hallikainen et al(2019) have defined touchpoints as "episodes of direct or indirect contact with a brand or a firm that individuals can initiate "(Hallikainen et al., 2019). This study focuses on digital touchpoints that flow through digital channels with consumers.

Digital touchpoints can be divided into several categories. Straker et al. (2015) suggested the categorization of digital touchpoints as functional touchpoints such as email and the website of a brand or business. Based on Straker et al. (2015) definition, social touchpoints are considered as brand presence in different kinds of social media which can facilitate user engagement with the brand. Community touchpoints facilitate cohesion among users with information. Straker et al. (2015) have defined corporate touchpoints as channels that take customer feedback directly via online customer feedback from frequently asked questions (FAQ).

The consumer journey has been considered as different touchpoints that consumers refer or to connect with a brand (Lee, 2021; Susanti, Rafika & Melinda ,2021; Wu & Luong, 2021). Edelman and Singer (2015) suggested the creation of loyalty among customers by satisfying their customer journey as a vital factor in building an emotional connection between the consumer and the brand. Herhausen et al., (2019). This concept has been proven by Boateng et al., (2 020) by operationalization of attachment theory. Boateng et al., (2020) show the influence of a strong emotional tie between the consumer and the brand to create brand loyalty. However, both studies have not specifically searched for functional touchpoints. According to the attachment theory brand trust is a mediating factor between service excellence and brand loyalty(VanMeter, Grisaffe & Chonko ,2015; Boateng et al., 2020). Khan et al. (2020) showed the relationship between brand experience and brand trust. On deep analysis of this paper shows. Lou & Xie(2021) have proved that by showing a positive relationship between functional value and brand experience in an online environment. Khan et al. (2020) have considered the brand's representation of

functional touchpoints in the online environment as a brand experience. That shows a direct relationship between functional touchpoints and brand trust. Based on Athapaththu & Kulathunga (2018) study web website has a direct influence on brand trust. Web site considered a functional touchpoint (Hallikainen et al., 2019; Vannucci & Pantano, 2019; Wagner et al., 2020). Therefore Athapaththu & Kulathunga (2018) findings indicate the influence on brand trust by functional touchpoints in the Sri Lankan context. However, this study has focused on purchase intention, not brand loyalty. Diallo, Moulins & Roux (2021) study shows brand trust as a mediator between the relationship between functional image and brand loyalty. In this study functional image is defined as the ability to solve a problem and functional touch point is about the diversification of functionalities (Baxendale, Macdonald & Wilson, 2015; Hallikainen et al.,2019). Based on definitions one functional touchpoint is a functional image of a brand. Therefore it is valid to consider brand trust as a mediator for the relationship of functional touchpoints and brand loyalty. Lin & Lee (2012) show a relationship between website experience and brand loyalty. The website of a brand is considered a functional touchpoint (Hallikainen et al., 2019; Vannucci & Pantano, 2019; Wagner et al., 2020). Therefore, the conclusions of Lin, & Lee (2012) study can be generalized as a relationship between functional touchpoints and brand loyalty.

Digital touchpoint optimization for better consumer journeys has taken vast attention in the literature (Hallikainen et al., 2019; Vannucci & Pantano, 2019; Wagner et al., 2020). Stimulus—organism-response (SOR) theory has taken the vast attention of scholars who have considered the optimization of digital touchpoints experience to build brand loyalty (Kwon et al, 2020; Hu & Chaudhry,2020; Mostafa & Kasamani,2020; Quoquab et al., 2020; Lou & Xie, 2021). Based on SOR theory most research shows digital touchpoint experience as an environmental stimulus that creates a response as brand loyalty with the organism of brand trust(Kwon et al, 2020; Mostafa & Kasamani ,2020) exposed that brand experience as an influencing factor for brand loyalty by conceptualizing SOR theory. Same as Lou & Xie (2021) these scholars have considered functional touchpoints content as the brand experience. However, this research has ignored the mediating effect of brand trust which has been exposed as the vital factor in many studies for formulating brand loyalty in an online environment.

Based on the above literature findings vast number of scholars have considered functional touchpoint content as an influencing factor for brand loyalty based on digital platforms. Brand trust is considered a mediating factor in this relationship. But it is hard to above studies done on targeting millennials, especially in the Sri Lanka segment.

Methodology

Hypothesis Developments

Brand loyalty, within the cyber environment, has been associated with the frequency of repeat visits to brand websites (Thorbjørnsen & Supphellen, 2004; Ruparelia, White & Hughes, 2010). This loyalty is influenced by both the attitude towards the website and the intention to revisit it (Supphellen & Nysveen, 2001). Given these findings, it is essential to examine the relationship between digital touchpoints and brand loyalty. Accordingly, we can suggest

H1: Functional touchpoints have an impact on brand loyalty

The case study conducted by Roto et al. (2013) highlights how Rolls-Royce Marine strategically utilizes functional touchpoints to enhance brand trust among its consumers. The study demonstrates a clear positive relationship between functional touchpoints and the establishment of trust in the Rolls-Royce Marine brand (Roto et al., 2013).

Moreover, Tran and Strutton (2019) investigated the relationship between digital touchpoints and brand trust through the lens of the Stimulus-Organism-Response theory and the Network Co-production model of e-word of mouth (eWom). Their findings indicate a strong and positive correlation between the e-servicescape, which encompasses functional touchpoints, and brand trust (Dwivedi et al., 2020), thus

H2: Functional touchpoints have an impact on brand trust.

Brand trust plays a pivotal role in formulating brand loyalty, as evidenced by research drawing on attachment theory and consumer behavior literature. Hinson et al. (2019) operationalized brand trust through two lenses: identity-based attachment and bonding-based attachment. Bonding-based attachment, particularly, establishes an emotional connection between individuals and brands. This concept aligns with the definition proposed by Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2002), who describe brand trust as "the willingness of the average consumer to rely on the ability of the brand to provide its stated function."

Empirical evidence supporting the positive impact of brand trust on brand loyalty has been demonstrated by Chinomona (2016), who identified a robust relationship between brand trust and brand loyalty (Boateng et al., 2020). This hypothesis posits that higher levels of brand trust will lead to increased brand loyalty among consumers, affirming the importance of cultivating trust as a strategic imperative for brands, thus

H3: Brand Trust an impact on brand loyalty

Caruana and Ramaseshan (2015) showed the impact of website service quality on online loyalty and verified the mediating effect of trust. Hung et al. (2019) reported the mediating effect of trust on consumer loyalty. Attachment theory shows how brand trust mediates experiential value and brand loyalty(Bidmon, 2017; Boateng et al., 2020). In this experiential value "service excellence" is a major factor that mediates brand trust to brand loyalty(Bidmon, 2017; Boateng et al., 2020). Accordingly, we can suggest

H4: Brand trust is mediating the impact of functional touchpoints on brand loyalty

Conceptual Model

Based on the bonding-based attachment of attachment theory combined with the above literature, the following conceptual model has been implemented for the research

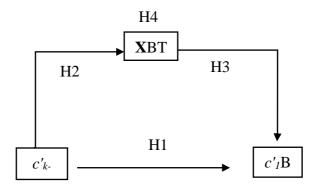


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

H4-Mediation effect of BT for the relationship between FTP and BL

Methodology

To measure brand trust and brand loyalty, questions were adapted from a previous study conducted by Boateng et al. (2020), which employed attachment theory within the context of the telecommunications services industry. To tailor the questions for our study, the name of the telecommunication company was replaced with a specific mobile phone brand. This adjustment ensures the relevance of the questions to the chosen context(See Appendix A).

Repurchase intention, willingness to recommend, emotional attachment, and preference over competitors have been considered as scales to build questions for brand loyalty based on Boateng et al. (2020). Additionally, to assess the relationship between functional touchpoints and brand trust, questions were derived from a questionnaire utilized in prior research by Liyin (2009), focusing on dimensions and determinants of website brand equity. Given the nature of this research, which primarily addresses web-based interactions, the questionnaire primarily includes items related to website functionality. However, to encompass a broader range of touchpoints, modifications were made to incorporate questions addressing other touchpoints beyond the website. This approach allows for a comprehensive evaluation of the relationship between various functional touchpoints and brand trust within the context of our study. Abundance, usefulness, accuracy, and timeliness have been considered as scales to measure functional touchpoint contents based on Liyin (2009) questionnaire.

The questionnaire consisted primarily of 5-point Likert scale questions, except two questions designed to measure sample quality, specifically education level and type of phone. Given that our research targeted staff within IT companies in Sri Lanka, the representation of education level necessitated a more nuanced approach. The staff demographic ranged from entry-level to entrepreneur levels, hence a 7-point Likert scale was employed to capture the varying educational backgrounds accurately. The sampling method used in this research was convenient sampling. Selected staff members were born between 1981-2000 with the help of human resource management departments of a few IT companies in the Colombo area and distributed Google form-based questionnaires.

According to Krejcie and Morgan (1970) suggestions of sample size, 384 elements are adequate for a population exceeding 1,000,000, as per their table. Given that the current study

population is roughly 6.6 million (according to the Mid-year Population Estimates by the Department of Census and Statistics Sri Lanka, 2018), a sample size of 384 has been chosen.

Special attention was given to selecting millennials, in alignment with the study's focus on digital natives. Google Forms was distributed to 475 millennials who were initially selected from different IT companies in Sri Lanka. Received responses from 244 within 1 month. It represents 63% of the expected sample. Due to the time limitation, authors have decided to continue with these responses. The final sample composition revealed a gender distribution of 70.5% males and 29.5% females. Notably, millennials, defined as individuals born between 1980 and 2000, constituted a significant portion of the sample, with those born in 1995 representing the highest percentage, comprising 16.8% of the sample and thereby providing valuable insights into the later cohort of this generation.

1980, 1981 and 1986, 1987, 2000 born millennials represent 1% equal percentage in this sample which is the lowest representation from the generation. Only 33.2 % represent the first half of the millennial generation which is considered as people born between 1980-1991. It indicates the majority of this sample represents the latter part of millennials.

The highest density of elements in this sample represents graduate level 63.1%. That shows more than half of the sample is bachelor's degree holders. Doctoral candidates hold the lowest density of the sample which is 1%.

Occupation-wise, this sample contains engineer-level people which represent 75.4%. Senior management represents the lowest percentage in this sample which is 3%. The special thing that see in this sample it consist of 3 % of entrepreneurs from ICT industry.

Majority of the sample (37.3%) are users of the Apple brand and SAMSUNG takes the nest highest user base of this sample which is 29.9%. Compared with these two mobile phone brands other brands represent a low percentage of this sample.

IBM SPSS version 26 software has been used to generate the above descriptive statistics to get the sample profile and other descriptive statistics about the sample.

Validly and Reliability of Scales

According to the Kolmogorov-Smirnov normality test of SPSS version 26 none of FTP, BL, BT show significant levels of normality in data distribution. Therefore, for further analysis, nonparametric tests have been used.

To analyze the reliability of the data set, corn batch alpha has been calculated

Table 1. Reliability Test Results

| Question Segment | N of Items | Cronbach's Alpha |
|------------------|------------|------------------|
| FTP | 4 | .737 |
| BL | 5 | .866 |
| BT | 4 | .846 |

According to the table 1, all three parameters show good reliability (George & Mallery, 2003) with Cronbach's alpha > 0.7.

Data Analysis

H10: Functional touchpoints have an impact on brand loyalty.

H20: Functional touchpoints have an impact on brand trust.

H30: Brand Trust an impact on brand loyalty

H40: Brand trust is mediating the impact of functional touchpoints on brand loyalty

To analyze the relationship between these parameters' correlation analysis has been conducted based on Spearman's correlation coefficient. This is a nonparametric test conducted when data is not normally distributed. This assumes two parameters have a monotonic relationship which is not always linear. Therefore, confirming linearity is vital for hypothesis acceptance or rejection in this study

Table 2. Correlations

| | Descrip | tion | FTP | BL | BT |
|----------------|--------------|----------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| Spearman's rho | FTP | Correlation Coefficient | 1.000 | .655** | .764** |
| | _ | Sig. (2-tailed) | | .000 | .000 |
| | = | N | 244 | 244 | 244 |
| | BL | Correlation Coefficient | .655** | 1.000 | .717** |
| | = | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | • | .000 |
| | - | N | 244 | 244 | 244 |
| | ВТ | Correlation Coefficient | .764** | .717** | 1.000 |
| | - | Sig. (2-tailed) | .000 | .000 | |
| | = | N | 244 | 244 | 244 |

Note: **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Based on Table 2, FTP and BL show a strong positive relationship which is significant at the level of 0.01. To confirm the linearity of this relationship linear regression has been conducted considering FTP as an independent and BL as a dependent variable. It shows a significant linear relationship with R2 value of 0.474 which confirms 47.4% model fit for this relationship. Such that, the null hypothesis of H1 has been accepted.

Considering FTP and BT from Table 2 , shows a significant strong positive relationship with 0.655 Spearman's correlation coefficient. Linear regression analysis between these parameters shows a significant relationship with R2 = 0.661 by confirming linearity and model fit. Such that, the null hypothesis of H2 was accepted.

BT and BL show the strongest positive relationship with Spearman's correlation coefficient of 0.764(Table 2). Leaner regression analysis shows a significant relationship with R2 =0.566, such that the null hypothesis of H3 has accepted

Sobel test was performed to test H4,

Table 3. Sobel Test Results

| Model | | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients t | | Sig. |
|-------|------------|--------------------------------|------------|--------------------------------|--------|------|
| | | В | Std. Error | Beta | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .817 | .131 | | 6.226 | .000 |
| | FTP | .799 | .037 | .813 | 21.722 | .000 |

Note: a. Dependent Variable: BT

Ta = 21.722

Table 4. Regression Results

| | Model Unstandardized Standardized Coefficients Coefficients | | t | Sig. | | | |
|---|---|------|-------|------|-------|------|--|
| | | В | Std. | Beta | | | |
| | | | Error | | | | |
| 1 | (Constant) | .646 | .155 | | 4.154 | .000 | |
| | FTP | .220 | .070 | .226 | 3.16 | .002 | |
| | | | | | 0 | | |
| | ВТ | .563 | .071 | .569 | 7.96 | .000 | |
| | | | | | 4 | | |

Note: a. Dependent Variable: BL

Tb = 7.964

Providing Ta, Tb values for Sobel test online calculator p-value was generated as 0, which is between -1.96 and +1.96, showing significant mediation from BT. Therefore, from hypothesis H4, the alternative hypothesis is rejected and the NULL hypothesis is accepted. That proves mediation of brand trust for the relationship of functional touchpoints to brand loyalty

Based on these findings another linear regression analysis has been conducted considering all 3 variables (FTP,BT, BL). In this R2 showed 0.583 which confirms 58.3% model fit (See Table 3). It clearly shows the increment of model fit by having BT as a mediating factor.

Table 3. Model Summary of Regression Analysis of FTP, BT, BL

| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------|-------------|----------------------|----------------------------|
| 1 | .764a | .583 | .580 | .4147 |
| | D 1' | 10 | \ D/H D/HD | |

Note; a. Predictors: (Constant), BT, FTP

Conclusions and Recommendations

This study was conducted with a group of tech-savvy millennials to identify the effects of functional touchpoint content on brand loyalty. Functional touchpoint content effects on brand trust were also tested. Content of digital media such as websites/blogs/emails/ Mobile apps, in which a particular brand has diversified its functionalities have been considered functional

touchpoints. Our results suggest that functional touchpoint content is a vital factor in formulating brand loyalty among millennials. Elaborating on these results shows that 47% of brand loyalty for a brand can be generated from digital functional touchpoints. This finding is highly vital because most studies have not focused on brand loyalty through functional touchpoints. In most studies, functional touchpoints have been considered to increase purchase intention not as a tool to formulate brand loyalty. This finding exposes that almost half of the factors needed to have loyal customers for a brand can be developed by placing appropriate content on functional touchpoints

Furthermore, the findings also provide support for the effect of functional touchpoints on brand trust. It shows contents of digital functional touchpoints can formulate 66.1% of brand trust(based on R2=0.661 of relationship). Most of studies that have been conducted studies to find out the impact on brand trust by functional touchpoints shows highly positive relationship. Our findings demonstrate the validation of that relationship for Sri Lankan millennials.

Our results have validated the findings of preceding studies for the segment of millennials in Sri Lanka. Another finding based on these results is the vitality of having functional touchpoints for a brand. As functional touchpoints provide 66.1% factors to formulate brand trust we can suggest functional touchpoints as a must-have content for a brand to generate trust among their consumers.

Study shows a significant mediation effect of brand trust for the impact of functional touchpoints on brand loyalty. By the regression analysis with adding brand trust as a variable regression analysis shows 58.3% of overall model fit. It is a 10.9% increment of model fit than only having brand loyalty and functional touchpoints. Therefore, our suggestion is for brands to target the digital contents of functional touchpoints to increase the trust of consumers. based on this study's results not only it increases brand trust but also brand loyalty of your consumers

Limitations

This study was done by selecting people from ICT field of Sri Lanka with the involvement of 244 people which is less than the expected sample size to represent the population of Sri Lankan millennials.

This study has been conducted with convenience sampling, therefore,

- 1. Only people from IT industry are included in the sample, It included both technical and non-technical staff but it cannot reflect the exact proportion of the technical and non-technical people from the Sri Lankan millennial population. , thus future studies should focus on collaborating with different industries.
- 2. The gender distribution of the sample does not reflect the population. Future studies can be more focused on this factor.

This research has considered only bonding-based attachment of the attachment theory, therefore brand trust is the main mediating factor that has been considered in this study but there can be other growing factors such as brand engagement that are vital to take into consideration in the future studies.

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Appendix A

Questioner

Your Birth year (Year)

Gender (Male/Female)

Education level (Undergraduate/ Bachelors degree or equivalent qualification (Eg:CIMA,CIM,BCS)/ Reading for master's degree/ Master's degree/ Doctoral candidate/ Doctor/Other)

Occupation level (Internship/ Entry level (Associate Engineer)/ Senior tech levels (snr engineer, tech lead)/ Management level/ Senior management level/ Director/ Entrepreneur/Other)

Your preferred mobile phone brand (Apple/ SAMSUNG/ HUWAWI/ Google/ HTC/ LG/ Lenovo/ NOKIA/other)

- [1.1] I do check the website and search through search engines about the product before buying it
- [1.2] I check this brand website at least once a month to see updates
- [1.3] I check this brand with search engines to see ratings and reviews
- [1.4] I chat or email to this company to get more information

- [2.1] I will recommend mobile phone brand to my family and friends
- [2.2] I will continue to use this brand for future mobile phone requirements
- [2.3] I will continue to use the other products by this brand
- [2.4] I will continue to use products of this brand even if their charges exceed the average charges
- [2.5] I encourage others to use this brand
- [3.1] I trust this brand as the best mobile phone brand
- [3.2] This mobile brand is reliable