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Title: Acceptance of novel products: the role of religiosity, ethnicity and values

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Times Cited in Web of Science Core Collection: 3

Total Times Cited: 3

Usage Count (Last 180 days): 3

Usage Count (Since 2013): 12

Cited Reference Count: 101

Abstract: Purpose - The purpose of this paper is to establish and test the role of religiosity, ethnicity, individual basic values, and consumer innovativeness in influencing consumer acceptance of novel products. This paper specifically addresses: the driving force of religiosity and ethnicity and mediating roles of individual basic values and consumer innovativeness in influencing acceptance of novel products.

Design/methodology/approach - A questionnaire was constructed and distributed to 700 respondents in the urban area of Malaysia based on convenience sampling. The data collected data were analyzed using structural equation modeling.

Findings - Findings show that religiosity and ethnicity are the main drivers that influence the acceptance of new products. Specifically, religiosity and ethnicity have negative relationship with openness to change (stimulation, self-direction, and hedonism) and positive relationship with conservation value (traditions and conformity); conservation values have negative effects on consumer innovativeness and acceptance of new products; openness to change values show the positive relationship with innovativeness and acceptance of new products; openness to change and conservation value mediate the relationship between religiosity and consumer innovativeness; conservation value mediates the relationship between ethnicity and consumer innovativeness; and consumer innovativeness mediates the relationship between individual basic values and acceptance of novel products. The model has been able to explain 34 percent of the variance in acceptance of novel products.

Originality/value - Different from previous research that often focussed on demographic and observable (e.g. age, race, religion) antecedents of innovation acceptance, the current research emphasized on the influence of behavioral and psychological characteristics (e.g. religiosity, ethnicity, values and innovativeness) on the consumer acceptance of novel products.

Accession Number: WOS:000355726600003

Language: English

Document Type: Article

Author Keywords: Religion; Innovation; Consumer behaviour; Developing countries; New products

KeyWords Plus: INNATE CONSUMER INNOVATIVENESS; PERSONALITY-TRAITS; ADOPTION BEHAVIOR; IDENTITY; INNOVATIONS; CONCEPTUALIZATION; SPIRITUALITY; ADOLESCENTS; DIFFUSION; FRAMEWORK


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Publisher: EMERALD GROUP PUBLISHING LIMITED

Publisher Address: HOWARD HOUSE, WAGON LANE, BINGLEY BD16 1WA, W YORKSHIRE, ENGLAND

Web of Science Categories: Business

Research Areas: Business & Economics

IDS Number: CJ8CJ

ISSN: 0263-4503
eISSN: 1758-8049

29-char Source Abbrev.: MARK INTELL PLAN


Source Item Page Count: 28

Open Access: No

Output Date: 2017-11-15