

Internship Report
On
How Consumers' Choose Cement for Construction: Insights from
Unique Cement Industries

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Session: 2022-2023
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Date of Submission: 29th June, 2025

LETTER OF TRANSMITTAL

29 June, 2025

Md. Abdullah Al Jamil

Associate Professor,

Department of Marketing

Comilla University

Subject: Submission of the Internship Report

Dear Respected Sir,

It gives me great pleasure to submit the final internship report titled “**How Consumers’ Choose Cement for Construction: Insights from Unique Cement Industries**” that I prepared as part of the requirements for completion of the MBA degree at Comilla University. Thank you very much for allowing me to work on this fascinating topic.

I would like to extend my sincere thanks for providing support and guidance throughout this process and for allowing me to work on this fascinating subject. Any sort of suggestions regarding this report would be greatly appreciated.

Sincerely Yours,

Md. Nahidul Islam Akash

Id: 22307032

Session: 2022-2023

Department of Marketing

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DECLARATION OF STUDENT

I thereby declare that the internship report titled “**How Consumers’ Choose Cement for Construction work: Insights from Unique Cement Industries**” is unique and was prepared by me. It is submitted in fulfillment of the Masters’ of Business Administration (MBA) degree requirement from the Department of Marketing, Faculty of Business Studies, Comilla University.

I further confirm that the report was written only for my academic purpose and that there are no issues of interest.

.....

Md. Nahidul Islam Akash

ID: 22307032

Session: 2022-23

Department of Marketing

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DECLARATION OF SUPERVISOR

This is to certify that Md. Nahidul Islam Akash, ID: 22307032, completed the internship report “**How Consumers’ Choose Cement for Construction: Insights from Unique Cement Industries**” as part of the Masters’ of Business Administration (MBA) degree requirements from the Department of Marketing, Faculty of Business Studies, Comilla University. I also attest that the internship report is unique and has not previously been submitted for publication in any way. Under my supervision, he finished the internship report. During his internship, he was shown to be sincere and hardworking. I wish him the best of luck in his future undertakings.

.....

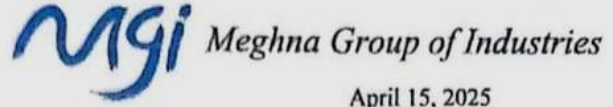
Md. Abdullah Al Jamil

Associate Professor

Department of Marketing

Comilla University

INTERNSHIP ACCEPTANCE LETTER



MGI/HR/3325/2025

April 15, 2025

Professor Dr. Meher Neger
Head,
Department of Marketing
Comilla University, Comilla

Subject: Acceptance of Internship

Dear Sir,

With reference to your letter on the above subject, this is to inform you that the management has accepted your request and decided to allow your student of **MBA program (Major: Marketing), Comilla University** an internship program for a period of 3 months effective from April 15, 2025 as per as information.

SL	Name	ID No.
01	Mr. Md. Nahidul Islam Akash	22307032

In this connection, the student has to report to **Mr. Hedayet Hossain Lumen, Sr. Deputy General Manager- Sales & Marketing, Unique Cement Industries Ltd.** (a sister concern of Meghna Group of Industries), Head Office: Fresh Villa, House-15, Road- 34, Gulshan- 1, Dhaka-1212.

During the internship period, his services will be governed by the rules and regulations of the company. After completion of practicum, he will submit his report based on his project/findings to the undersigned.

Thanking you,

For Meghna Group of Industries,

Atiquz Zaman Khan
Chief Human Resource Officer
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First and foremost, I express my deepest gratitude to Almighty Allah for bestowing upon me the strength, patience, and guidance to successfully complete this research study within the allocated timeframe and without major obstacles. This achievement would not have been possible without divine blessings.

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My sincere thanks also go to my friends, classmates, and peers, whose moral support and insightful suggestions kept me motivated throughout the research journey. I am particularly grateful to the respondents who participated in the survey and contributed their valuable time and honest feedback, which formed the backbone of the primary data for this study.

In addition, I would like to acknowledge the numerous researchers and authors whose work and literature served as crucial resources for the conceptual and theoretical framework of this study. Their contributions laid the foundation for the development and completion of this research.

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ABSTRACT

This study explores the key factors that influence consumers' preferences when selecting cement for construction purposes, focusing on Unique Cement Industries in Bangladesh. As the construction industry rapidly expands, understanding consumers' behavior becomes essential for building competitive advantage. The research investigates five critical determinants—brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility—and their impact on customer preference. A structured questionnaire was used to collect primary data from 300 respondents through a convenience sampling method, and the results were analyzed using SmartPLS 4 for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM).

Findings reveal that brand image, price, word of mouth, and sales promotion have a statistically significant positive influence on consumer preference, with sales promotion emerging as the most influential factor. However, accessibility was found to have an insignificant impact. The study addresses theoretical gaps by integrating the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB) into a model that better captures consumer decision-making in the cement sector. It also identifies practical and managerial gaps, offering insights for cement companies to refine their marketing strategies and product positioning. The research concludes with recommendations to optimize branding, promotional campaigns, pricing strategies, and customer relationship management in a competitive market landscape.

Keywords: Consumers' Preference, Cement Industry, Brand Image, Sales Promotion, Word of Mouth, Price Sensitivity, SmartPLS.

CHAPTER I

Introduction

This chapter presents an overview of the study and articulates why this study has been conducted. It clearly defines the background of the study, the problem definition, research gap, research question, objectives, significance, scope, and the limitations of the study. This part also includes the organization of the report.

1.1 Introduction

In an era of rapid urbanization and infrastructure expansion, the construction industry is critical to determining nations' economic landscapes. The selection of construction materials plays an essential role in this industry, and cement is one of the fundamental building blocks upon which constructions are built. In the context of Bangladesh, a country undergoing significant development and transformation, Customers' choice of cement brand has far-reaching consequences that go beyond traditional building methods. It is a decision that affects the durability, safety, and aesthetic appeal of structures, reflecting the preferences and priorities of the people.

The purpose of this study is to explore deeply into the complex fabric of Customers preferences in the context of cement brands, with particular reference to 'Fresh Cement', a significant and well established brand in the Bangladeshi cement market. Fresh Cement was chosen as the primary brand due to its high identification and use across the country. By better knowing Customers preferences for this brand, we seek to provide insight into the factors that influence consumer cement selection.

This study utilizes a comprehensive framework by taking into account five important independent variables, each of which is expected to have a considerable impact on Customers preferences. These variables include Brand image, price, Word of Mouth, sales promotion, and Accessibility. We form an in-depth understanding of the factors that influence Customers choices in the cement market. We intend to provide valuable insights not just to Fresh Cement but also to other stakeholders in the construction sector which can help them to tailor their strategies in order to better respond to Customers preferences.

1.2 Background of the Study

Cement is a critical component in the construction industry and plays a pivotal role in shaping the infrastructure and development of any nation. The choice of a cement brand by Customers is influenced by a variety of factors, reflecting their preferences and priorities in terms of construction materials. Understanding Customers preferences toward cement brands is critical in the context of Bangladesh, a country with a developing construction industry.

One such well-known brand in the Bangladeshi cement market is "Fresh Cement." Fresh Cement has a significant market share and a reputation for quality in the building industry. In an increasingly competitive industry, however, it is critical to look further into the aspects

that influence Customers' preferences for this brand. Using a comprehensive analysis of many independent factors, this study aims to shed light on the determinants of Customers choice for Fresh Cement.

According to (Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019) a brand's image and reputation are critical in shaping Customers perceptions and preferences. A strong and favorable brand image may foster Customers trust and loyalty. Price is a major factor in purchase decisions. (Anjay Kumar Mishra, 2019) Defined that, Customers' selections can be considerably influenced by the cost of cement, particularly in a price-sensitive market. Customers' personal evaluation of a product's Word of Mouth is based on their experiences and the information accessible to them. As stated by (Phan Minh Duc, 2022) he strength, longevity, and dependability of cement are important factors determining Customers preferences. Discounts, offers, and other promotional activities can impact Customers preferences by giving increased value or incentives for choosing a specific brand.

1.3 Problem statement

While previous study has investigated numerous factors influencing Customers preferences in the cement business, Fresh cement in the context of Bangladesh has received less consideration. Furthermore, there needs to be more clarity in studying how sales marketing activities like discounts, promotions, or loyalty programs influence Customers choices. Furthermore, while accessibility is an important part of Customers decisions, previous studies do not emphasize it as a significant variable. Researchers gave insufficient attention to the variable of accessibility and its impact on Customers preference towards cement brands. Accessibility refers to the ease with which Customers can obtain or purchase a particular cement brand. In accordance with (Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019) accessibility is a fundamental factor in the decision-making process of Customers. If 3 Customers cannot easily access a cement brand, it can significantly impact their preferences and choices. However, this factor has not been adequately explored. To bridge this research gap, this study focus on exploring how accessibility, in terms of distribution networks, availability, and accessibility, influences Customers preferences towards cement brands.

This study seeks to provide useful insights into the elements that affect Customers preferences towards cement brands. By addressing these research difficulties, it will assist the cement industry in establishing more successful marketing and branding strategies.

1.4 Theoretical gap

While prior research has addressed various elements of consumer behavior in the construction and cement industries, there remains a lack of comprehensive models that integrate all five key variables—brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility—as simultaneous predictors of consumer choice. According to Mishra et al. (2019), understanding consumers' preferences is critical in competitive markets like cement, yet most existing studies analyze these variables in isolation. Moreover, John (2022) and Fahmy et al. (2018) primarily emphasize product quality and pricing, while the cumulative influence of marketing- and accessibility-related variables has been underexplored. Additionally, there is a notable absence of theoretical grounding in many empirical studies in this domain. Specifically, the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB)—a widely accepted model for explaining how attitudes, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control influence behavioral intentions—has been underutilized in the context of the cement industry. Despite its relevance for understanding consumer decision-making, TPB has rarely been applied to evaluate the psychological and social drivers of cement purchasing behavior. This study addresses these theoretical and empirical gaps by proposing an integrated framework that incorporates TPB along with key market factors to assess their combined influence on consumer preferences in the cement sector.

1.5 Social gap

There is limited consumer awareness about the technical and qualitative aspects that define cement performance, leading many customers' to base their decisions predominantly on price or informal recommendations. As highlighted by Abhishek Jha (2020), Consumers' choices are often driven by perceived value rather than informed technical evaluation. Furthermore, Goitumetswe Pitso (2019) notes that variables like accessibility and accessibility have been underrepresented in past literature. By investigating the role of word of mouth and other underemphasized factors in shaping purchase decisions, this study addresses the social gap by providing insights that can empower Consumers' to make more knowledgeable and sustainable choices in their construction activities.

1.6 Managerial gap

Many cement companies, including Unique Cement Industries, invest in promotional activities and branding without fully understanding which factors most strongly influence customers' preferences. As noted by Anjay Kumar Mishra (2019), sales promotions can influence customers' behavior when executed effectively, yet their specific impact on the cement industry has not been adequately quantified. Similarly, John (2022) and Nartey (2012) discuss aspects like brand perception and price but provide limited empirical direction on prioritizing these in marketing strategies. This study helps fill the managerial gap by offering data-driven insights that guide decision-makers in optimizing marketing expenditures, enhancing brand positioning, and better meeting customer expectations through targeted strategies.

1.7 Objective of the study

1.7.1 Broad Objective

The main objective of this study is to investigate the key factors that influence consumers' preferences when selecting cement for construction work, particularly focusing on Unique Cement Industries, and to provide actionable insights for strategic decision-making in the cement market of Bangladesh.

1.7.2 Specific Objectives

1. To examine the impact of brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility on consumers' cement selection preferences.
2. To evaluate which of these factors most significantly affect consumer decision-making in the context of Fresh Cement.
3. To assess the relationship between marketing strategies and consumer preference in a highly competitive cement industry.
4. To offer strategic recommendations for cement companies to enhance customer satisfaction and loyalty.

1.8 Research Questions

This descriptive study tests what factors impact Customers choice towards cement brands. The research is made from a Customers perspective to see what is essential. This study would like to look into the answer to these questions:

1. What are the key marketing and perceptual factors that influence consumers' preferences when choosing cement brands?
2. How do brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotions, and accessibility individually and collectively affect consumer preference for cement?
3. What strategies can cement companies implement to align with customer preferences and improve market competitiveness?

1.9 Significance of the study

Knowledge and learning become excellent when paired with theory and practice. Practical application perfects theoretical knowledge. Because our educational system is predominantly text based, including a practical orientation program as an academic component is unusual. Doing business is becoming more difficult. Companies are putting forth tremendous effort to acquire Customers by increasing Customers value. Without conducting market research, it is difficult to grasp the wants and desires of Customers. Market research enables companies to have a deeper understanding of their Customers and their behavioral intentions. This study will help Fresh Cement by identifying the factors that determine Customers choices in cement purchase.

1.10 Scope of the Study

This research paper delves into the dynamics of Customers preference within the competitive cement industry in Bangladesh, with a specific focus on "Fresh Cement." The study explores the multifaceted relationship between five independent variables, namely brand image, price, Word of Mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility, and the dependent variable of Customers preference. This report will investigate of how Customers perceive Fresh Cement's brand image, including its reputation, credibility, and associations, and how these perceptions influence their preferences. Furthermore, this study also examine of Fresh Cement's pricing strategies and their impact on Customers preference, taking into account affordability, value

for money, and price sensitivity. In addition, this report will analyze Customers perceptions of the quality of Fresh cement's products and how these perceptions contribute to their preferences. This includes assessing attributes such as durability, reliability, and performance. Moreover, evaluate Fresh cement's sales promotion efforts, including advertising, discounts, and special offers, and their role in shaping Customers preferences and availability of Fresh Cement products in the market, considering factors such as distribution channels, location of retailers, and accessibility.

1.11 Limitations of the study

Like any empirical research, this study has certain limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study focused solely on customers of Fresh Cement, which may limit the generalizability of the findings across the broader cement industry in Bangladesh. The geographical and brand-specific scope may not capture regional or brand-wise variations in customer behavior. Second, some respondents were reluctant to provide detailed or honest responses, potentially affecting the accuracy of the data. Third, the study only examined a limited number of independent variables brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility which means that other important factors influencing customer preference, such as product quality, brand loyalty, or sustainability concerns, may have been overlooked. Lastly, external conditions such as market dynamics, economic shifts, and time constraints may have influenced participant perceptions during the data collection phase.

1.12 Organization of Report

Chapter I: Introduction

This chapter introduces the study by outlining the background, problem statement, research objectives, research questions, and the significance of the study. It sets the context and direction for the research.

Chapter II: Review of Literature

This chapter presents a summary of relevant literature on consumer behavior in the cement industry. It identifies knowledge gaps and introduces the theoretical framework and hypotheses used in the study.

Chapter III: Research Methodology

This chapter describes the research approach, including design, sample selection, data collection, questionnaire development, and data analysis techniques. It provides a clear view of how the research was executed.

Chapter IV: Presentation and Analysis of Data

This chapter displays the collected data using tables and figures, followed by interpretation and discussion. It focuses on the impact of brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility on customer preference.

Chapter V: Summary of Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter summarizes the major findings, draws final conclusions, and provides practical recommendations for industry stakeholders. It also highlights the implications and suggests areas for further research.

Chapter VI: Company Profile

This chapter provides a brief overview of Unique Cement Industries Ltd. and Meghna Group of Industries. It includes the company's history, mission, product portfolio, market presence, and business operations.

Chapter VII: Internship Experience

This chapter describes the internship journey of mine within the organization. It reflects on the learning outcomes, tasks performed, and the practical skills gained during the internship period.

CHAPTER II

Literature Review and Conceptual Framework

This chapter outlines the theoretical framework and presents a comprehensive review of relevant literature for the study titled “How Consumers Choose Cement for Construction: Insights from Unique Cement Industries.” It explores previous research and findings from various scholars to establish a foundation for the current investigation. The focus of this study is to assess how five key factors brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility influence customer preference in the context of cement purchasing behavior.

The objective of this literature review is to explore existing studies related to consumer behavior in the cement industry and identify the factors influencing brand preference. It aims to examine how variables such as brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility impact consumers' cement choices. The review helps justify the selected variables, and establish a strong theoretical foundation for the study.

2.1 Customers' Preference (DV)

Customers' preference refers to the subjective inclination or choice that an individual or group of Consumers'' has for a particular product, service, or brand, when presented with multiple alternatives (John, 2022). It reflects the favored option among several available choices, often driven by personal tastes, needs, experiences, and perceptions. According to (Abhishek Jha, 2020), understanding consumer preferences is critical for efficiently designing products and tactics to satisfy their demands. Understanding consumer preferences is critical for efficiently designing products and tactics to satisfy their demands. Concurring with (Fahmy, 2018) a positive brand image can boost Customers' preference for purchasing cement.

Customers' are more likely to choose a particular brand's cement over competitors if it is associated with attributes such as reliability, quality, and environmental responsibility. In line with (Phan Minh Duc, 2022) Customers' choices might be influenced by price sensitivity. Some clients may prioritize cost-effectiveness, whereas others may be willing to pay a premium for Word of Mouth. Pricing tactics that are in line with client expectations might have an impact on preferences. (John, 2022) State that Customers' preference is heavily influenced by Word of Mouth. If cement brands are seen to be of superior quality, they may become the preferred choice for clients who looking for durability and performance in construction projects. As reported by (Anjay Kumar Mishra, 2019) sales promotions that are well-executed can attract and retain Customers'', shaping their buying habits. Customers' may be persuaded towards a specific cement brand if they perceive increased value via promotions such as discounts, offers or loyalty programs. According to the findings of (Abhishek Jha, 2020) Customers''' preferences can be positively influenced by easy access to cement in buying with a well-distributed network and comfortable purchasing alternatives. Customers' can choose cement with accessibility because it is easily accessible.

2.2 Brand Image

Brand image refers to the consumer's perception of a brand based on its visible and intangible attributes, values, and overall identity. It is a vital aspect of brand equity and plays a central role in influencing consumer preferences, attitudes, and purchase behavior. According to Nartey (2012), a positive brand image can significantly impact consumer decisions by generating emotional connections that foster brand loyalty and long-term commitment. As mentioned by John (2022), a strong brand connection contributes to improved brand recall and heightened awareness, enabling Consumers'' to differentiate a brand from its competitors in crowded marketplaces. As stated by Keller (2013), brand image encompasses the associations and impressions that Consumers'' form about a brand, which may include attributes such as quality, trustworthiness, and reliability. These associations not only influence how Consumers'' feel about a brand but also how they behave toward it. In line with this, Aaker (1996) emphasized that a favorable brand image can serve as a strategic asset, fostering consumer trust and encouraging brand preference even in the absence of detailed product knowledge.

In the cement, building, and construction materials sector, where Consumers'' may lack extensive technical knowledge, brand image often acts as a heuristic—a mental shortcut that helps in evaluating alternatives. As observed by Phan Minh Duc (2022), Consumers'' are more inclined to choose cement brands with a long-standing reputation for delivering high-quality and durable products. Similarly, according to Jha (2020), qualities such as durability, dependability, and strength are closely associated with brand image in the construction materials industry, making it a decisive factor in purchasing decisions. Furthermore, as highlighted by Kotler and Keller (2016), brand image can reduce perceived risk and simplify the decision-making process, particularly in high-involvement purchases like cement. Consumers'' tend to rely on familiar and reputable brands because they associate them with consistent performance and lower uncertainty. As noted by Ghodeswar (2008), a strong brand image also contributes to customer satisfaction by reinforcing positive expectations and experiences.

2.3 Price

Price is a prominent factor in consumer decision-making. (Phan Minh Duc, 2022) contends that while making purchasing decisions, people frequently consider perceived value against cost. Cost variables and Word of Mouth might be crucial in influencing client preferences. Price has a significant impact on consumer preferences and purchase behavior. According to (Nartey, 2012) 8 price-quality relationship theory, Customers' frequently associate higher prices with higher quality.

However, (Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019) argue that the availability of extra qualities such as packaging and branding might impact Customers' choices, making pricing a complex variable in consumer decision-making. It is of the utmost importance to investigate how Customers' perceive the value proposition of cement's pricing strategy in the context of the cement sector, which is characterized by intense price competition. Per the research of (Fahmy, 2018) price is a major factor in client choices, particularly in the cement sector, where cost considerations are frequently crucial. Price sensitivity varies among Consumers'' and is impacted by a variety of factors such as income, brand perception, and market conditions. Supporting with (Anjay Kumar Mishra, 2019) Consumers'' may interpret greater pricing as indicating higher quality. This perception, however, can be altered by the brand's reputation and previous experiences. (Abhishek Jha, 2020) investigated the relationship between price and Word of Mouth, claiming that Customers' use price as an indicator to assess product quality.

2.4 Word of mouth

Word of mouth (WOM) refers to the informal communication between Consumers'' about the characteristics, performance, or ownership of a product or service. It is a powerful tool that influences consumer decisions, especially in industries where technical expertise and reliability are critical, such as cement (John, 2022). As explained by (Abhishek Jha, 2020), word of mouth serves as a credible and trustworthy source of information because it is perceived to come from unbiased, personal sources. Consumers'' tend to rely on recommendations from friends, family, and professional contractors when making decisions about cement brands, reflecting the significance of interpersonal influence.

According to (Fahmy, 2018), positive word of mouth can significantly enhance a brand's image and accelerate customer acquisition, while negative word of mouth can severely damage a company's reputation. In industries like cement, where product quality cannot always be immediately assessed, the shared experiences of others act as critical reference points for new customers' (Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019). As supported by (Phan Minh Duc, 2022), the reliance on word of mouth grows in high-involvement purchase decisions, where buyers perceive significant financial and functional risks.

Moreover, as pointed out by (Ernst Worrell, 2014), in emerging markets personal networks often play a dominant role in influencing purchasing behavior due to the lack of standardized and easily accessible product information. Word of mouth, therefore, not only shapes initial perceptions but also reinforces long-term brand loyalty. In the context of cement purchase decisions, it functions as a strategic mechanism that companies must nurture through consistent quality and customer satisfaction initiatives (Ali, 2011).

2.5 Sales promotion

Although sales promotion has been recognized as an important marketing tool in various industries, its specific influence on consumer choice in the cement sector has not been sufficiently studied. As mentioned by (Anjay Kumar Mishra, 2019), sales promotions—including discounts, offers, and loyalty programs—can significantly impact consumer purchasing decisions by enhancing perceived value. However, research on cement consumer behavior has largely concentrated on intrinsic product factors such as quality and price, often neglecting the role of sales promotions.

In the words of (John, 2022), sales promotion strategies are critical for driving immediate sales, yet in the cement industry, prior researchers have not placed significant emphasis on how these tactics shape customer preferences. (Abhishek Jha, 2020) suggests that well-executed promotional activities can alter customer loyalty and buying patterns, but the specific effects of such initiatives on cement purchasing behavior have remained relatively underexplored. Similarly, (Fahmy, 2018) noted that Consumers'' respond positively to promotional incentives in general; nonetheless, the application of these findings to the cement market context remains sparse.

(Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019) argues that sales promotions must be relevant and trustworthy, especially for products like cement where long-term quality matters. Yet, previous studies have predominantly focused on core attributes like strength and durability, overlooking the influence that short-term marketing strategies might have on immediate purchasing behavior. (Nartey, 2012) emphasized pricing strategies, but little attention has been given to temporary promotional offers within the cement industry.

2.6 Accessibility

Although accessibility plays a vital role in shaping consumer satisfaction and purchase decisions, it has received limited attention in existing research related to the cement sector. According to (Ernst Worrell, 2014), accessibility is a significant determinant of customer satisfaction and choice. However, despite its importance, many studies in the cement industry have predominantly focused on product attributes like quality and price, giving less emphasis to how ease of access influences consumer preferences.

As reported by (Ali, 2011), accessibility which includes factors such as distribution, product availability, and simplicity of purchase can have a substantial impact on customer preferences. Yet, previous research has not deeply explored how these elements contribute to the decision-making process for cement purchases. Although (Ernst Worrell, 2014) stated that customers' preferences for cement can be strongly influenced by consistent and widespread availability across different regions, the variable of accessibility remains underrepresented in the broader literature.

(John, 2022) examined the significance of distribution networks and accessibility for customers, highlighting that having cement readily available at building sites, hardware stores, and retail outlets could serve as a competitive advantage. Despite this, most researchers have not fully recognized the critical role that accessibility plays relative to other more traditionally emphasized factors. Furthermore, although (Abhishek Jha, 2020) acknowledged the growing importance of online ordering and rapid delivery options in today's digital age, the application of e-commerce and supply chain strategies in influencing cement brand preferences has been scarcely investigated.

2.7 Conceptual Framework

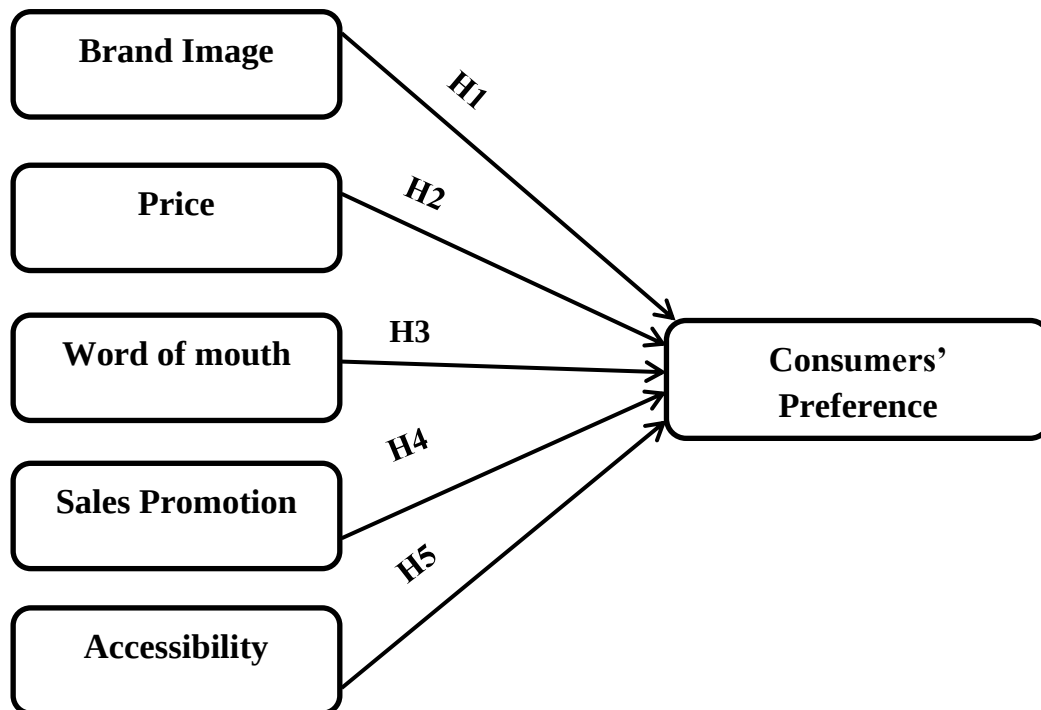


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

Source: Researchers' development based on literature review

2.8 Hypothesis Formulation

H1: There is a positive relationship between Brand Image and Consumers' Preference.

H2: Price has a significant impact on Consumers' Preference

H3: Word of Mouth significantly impact on Consumers' Preference

H4: Sales Promotion has a positive effect on consumers' Preference

H5: Accessibility has a positive relationship with Consumers' Preference

H1: There is a positive relationship between Brand image (BI) and Consumers' Preference (CP).

Per the research of (Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019), an increase in the positive perception of a cement brand's image leads to a corresponding increase in Customers preference for that brand. (Fahmy, 2018), argued that Consumers' perceptions of a brand significantly influence their preferences and purchase decisions. Furthermore, (K.Syamala Devi, 2017), highlighted the role of brand personality and its impact on consumer preference, underscoring that a strong and favorable brand image can enhance brand preference. In the context of the cement industry, research by (Ali, 2011), emphasized the importance of branding in establishing a competitive advantage. They argued that a cement brand's image, encompassing attributes like quality, reliability, and trustworthiness, can strongly influence Customers' choices and preferences, leading to increased market share and loyalty. As reported by (Anjay Kumar Mishra, 2019), when Customers perceive a brand positively, they are more likely to prefer and choose it over competitors' offerings.

H2: Price (PR) has a significant impact on Consumers' Preference (CP).

In line with (Ernst Worrell, 2014), price is a crucial determinant of consumer preference. According to (Eugeniusz Mokrzycki, 2007), price can significantly affect consumer choice, as it often represents a trade-off between the perceived value of the product and its cost. (John, 2022), further emphasize that Consumers' tend to make choices based on their perception of the overall value proposition, which includes the price of the product. Reported by (Phan Minh Duc, 2022), in the context of the cement industry, product attributes may be relatively similar across brands, pricing becomes a key factor in influencing Customers preference. (Nartey, 2012), stated that price plays a pivotal role in shaping Customers' preferences for cement brands. (K.Syamala Devi, 2017), found that price sensitivity significantly influences consumer preferences. They argued that Consumers' often weigh price as a primary factor when making purchase decisions and this factor can significantly influence their preference for one product over another.

H3: Word of Mouth (WOM) significantly influences Consumers' Preference (CP).

(Anjay Kumar Mishra, 2019), emphasize the importance of Word of Mouth in influencing consumer choices. They argue that when Customers perceive a product or service as having higher quality, it positively impacts their preference for that product. (Ernst Worrell, 2014), suggested that brands with a strong Word of Mouth tend to have higher levels of Customers preference. (Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019), found that perceived product quality plays a critical role in shaping Customers preferences, particularly in low-involvement purchase situations. (Abhishek Jha, 2020), highlighted that Word of Mouth is a key determinant of Customers preference for cement industry. According to (Goitumetswe Pitso, 2019), Customers are more likely to prefer services that they perceive as having higher quality. (John, 2022), argue that Word of Mouth is a critical driver of Customers satisfaction, which in turn influences Customers preference.

H4: Sales promotion (SP) has a positive effect on Consumers' Preference (CP).

(John, 2022), explained that there is a positive relationship between sales promotion activities in the cement industry and Customers preference for cement products. According to (C.A. Hendriks, 2013), when cement companies implement sales promotion strategies, such as discounts, special offers, or promotional events, it leads to an increase in Customers' preference for their products. (K.Syamala Devi, 2017), stated that sales promotions in the cement industry can significantly influence consumer purchasing decisions and preferences. Their study demonstrated that Customers were more likely to prefer cement products from companies that offered attractive sales promotions 13 compared to those that did not. This aligns with the notion that sales promotion strategies can enhance Customers preference for specific brands or products.

H5: Accessibility (AC) has a positive relationship with Consumers' Preference (CP).

In the words of (Ernst Worrell, 2014), there is a direct and positive connection between the accessibility of cement products and Customers preference in the cement sector. (John, 2022), stated that as the ease of access to cement products increases, Customers are more likely to prefer and choose those products over others. In accordance with (Phan Minh Duc, 2022), improved accessibility to construction materials, such as cement, positively influences Customers preferences, as Customers tend to favor products that are readily available and convenient to obtain.

CHAPTER III

Research Methodology

This section outlines the specific procedures followed to carry out the research.

It describes the type of research design employed, the approaches used for collecting both primary and secondary data, the scaling methods, and the development of the questionnaire. Additionally, it explains the sampling technique and the data analysis process. The section also provides justification for the chosen methodologies applied in the study.

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative, explanatory research design to determine how brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility shape customers' preference for cement produced by Unique Cement Industries. A positivist stance was chosen because the objectives require measurable evidence and statistical verification of the proposed relationships.

The design is cross-sectional, collecting data at a single point in time through a structured questionnaire comprising five-point Likert scales. Numerical responses allow for rigorous statistical analysis, including reliability testing, validity assessment, and path modeling in SmartPLS. By quantifying each construct and examining their interrelationships, the design clarifies the relative strength of every factor in influencing customer choice.

Overall, the chosen framework ensures systematic data collection, objective measurement, and transparent procedures providing a clear pathway from problem identification to empirical explanation of consumer behavior in the cement market.

3.2 Data Collection Technique

This study employed quantitative approaches to analyze the elements that could have a significant impact on the cement industry. This study was prepared using a combination of primary and secondary data sources.

3.2.1 Primary Data

A questionnaire survey was used to acquire primary data. A accessibility sample was given questionnaires. Accessibility sampling is useful when it is difficult to elicit a sufficient level of response. Online questionnaires have been given to Fresh cement's Customers in order to collect data from them. Data was collected for more than three weeks in order to survey a selected sample of Customers.

3.2.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to information that has been obtained previously by individuals or organisations for purposes other than the current issue under investigation. This information was obtained from a variety of publications, articles, books, and online resources. Furthermore, by including the reference lists of the assembled papers, this study has established links with similar articles.

3.3 Questionnaire Development and Item source

The questionnaire was divided into two parts. The first portion dealt with generic demographic questions such as gender, age, degree of education, occupation, and monthly income, among other things. The second segment looked at respondents' assessments of Customers preference for cement brands, focusing on five important factors: brand image, price, Word of Mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility.

Variables	No of Items	Adopted from
Brand Image	4	M. Punniyamoorthy et al. (2011) Rafida Zunaini et al. (2021)
Price	4	Mukhammad Alfian Abdillah & Moh Agung Suriyanto (2023) Ibrahim Wahab & Widiyanti Shihab (2021)
Word of Mouth	4	Stanley Owuotey Bonney & Song Jianxue (2022) Md. Manik Hossain et al. (2021)
Sales Promotion	4	Allen Joshua Mbwambo (2019) Anjay Kumar Mishra & Bishal Sharestha (2020)
Accessibility	4	Stanley Owuotey Bonney & Song Jianxue (2022) Manjunatha Lr et al. (2014)
Consumers' Preference	4	Stanley Owuotey Bonney & Song Jianxue (2022) Anjay Kumar Mishra & Bishal Sharestha (2019)

Table 1: Constructs and Item Source

3.3.1 Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire included sections for demographic information, followed by targeted questions addressing the independent and dependent variables. Questions were framed to reflect respondents' experiences and perceptions of mobile marketing strategies and their loyalty to brands. A copy of the questionnaire is included in the Appendix for reference.

3.3.2 Scaling Technique

A 5-point Likert scale was employed for all questions to measure the degree of respondents' agreement or disagreement with statements related to the study variables. The anchors for the scale were as follows: (1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Neutral (4) Agree (5) Strongly Agree This scaling technique enables the capture of nuanced responses, allowing for detailed statistical analysis of the data.

3.4 Sampling Design and Procedure

A convenience sampling approach was adopted because it allowed rapid access to respondents who actively purchase or recommend cement within a limited timeframe and budget. Both online (Google Forms, social media groups of builders and homeowners) and offline channels (retail outlets, construction sites, contractor networks) were used to reach participants, ensuring a mix of perspectives from urban and semi-urban areas.

Target Population

The study focuses on current cement buyers and purchase influencers in Bangladesh—including individual homeowners, contractors, site engineers, and retail dealers—who have experience selecting cement for construction projects.

Sampling Technique and Sample Size

Using convenience sampling, 300 valid questionnaires were obtained and retained for analysis. This sample size balances resource constraints with the statistical power required for Structural Equation Modeling in SmartPLS.

3.5 Techniques of Data Analysis

The data collected from respondents was analyzed using SmartPLS 4, a widely used software for Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). This technique was selected due to its suitability for analyzing complex models with multiple constructs and indicators. The study employed measurement model evaluation to assess the reliability and validity of constructs through indicators such as Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability (CR), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE). Discriminant validity was tested using both the Fornell-Larcker Criterion and the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT). For the structural model, path analysis was conducted to examine the relationships between independent variables and the dependent variable (Customers' Preference), using standardized path coefficients (β), T-values, and P-values generated through bootstrapping. The coefficient of determination (R^2) was also used to measure the model's explanatory power. This comprehensive approach enabled both the verification of measurement accuracy and the evaluation of hypothesized relationships.

CHAPTER IV

Data Analysis and Findings

This chapter presents and interprets the data collected for the study. It begins by outlining the procedures followed during data preparation. The analyzed results are displayed in tabular form for clarity, and each table is accompanied by a detailed interpretation. The findings are explained in a straightforward and meaningful way to highlight their relevance.

4.1 Data Analysis and Interpretation

4.1.1 Demographic Background of Respondents

Variables	Category	Frequencies	Percentages
Gender	Male	153	50.7%
	Female	147	49.3%
Age	15-20	62	20.5%
	21-25	227	75.2%
	26-30	10	3.3%
	Above 30	1	1%
Educational Qualification	(SSC)	3	1.7%
	(HSC)	32	10.6%
	Under Graduate	216	71.5%
	Graduate	33	10.9%
	Post Graduate or Above	14	4.6%
	Others	2	0.7%
Monthly Income	Less Than 10000	251	83.8%
	10001-20000	32	10.6%
	20001-30000	13	4.3%
	30001 or above	4	1.3%

Table 2: Demographic Profile

Table 01 provides an overview of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. The gender distribution is nearly balanced, with 50.7% male and 49.3% female participants. In terms of age, the majority of respondents (75.2%) fall within the

21–25 age group, followed by 20.5% in the 15–20 age range. A smaller portion of respondents are aged 26–30 (3.3%) and above 30 years (1%), indicating that the sample primarily consists of young individuals. Regarding educational qualifications, the largest group comprises undergraduate students, accounting for 71.5% of the total sample. This is followed by graduates (10.9%), HSC holders (10.6%), postgraduates or above (4.6%), SSC holders (1.7%), and others (0.7%).

In terms of monthly income, a significant majority (83.8%) reported earning less than 10,000 BDT, which aligns with the student-dominated nature of the sample. Additionally, 10.6% have a monthly income between 10,001 and 20,000 BDT, 4.3% earn between 20,001 and 30,000 BDT, and only 1.3% earn 30,001 BDT or above. Regarding travel frequency per year, half of the respondents (50.7%) reported traveling 2–4 times annually, while 32.1% travel less than twice a year. A smaller percentage travels 3–6 times (9.3%) or more than six times (7.9%) annually. Overall, the data reflects a young, educated, and low-income population with moderate travel habits, which is consistent with the characteristics of student respondents.

4.2 Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Name	Mean	Standard deviation
Brand Image	300	BI1	3.79	0.848
		BI2	3.94	0.802
		BI3	3.963	0.801
		BI4	3.923	0.815
Price	300	PR1	3.493	0.896
		PR2	3.75	0.963
		PR3	3.513	0.907
Word of Mouth	300	WOM1	3.623	0.88
		WOM2	3.517	0.877
		WOM3	3.797	0.789
		WOM4	3.623	0.88
Sales promotion	300	SP1	3.737	0.766
		SP2	3.917	0.772
		SP3	3.843	0.765
Accessibility	300	ACC1	3.667	0.858
		ACC2	3.71	0.844
		ACC3	3.497	0.911
		ACC4	3.667	0.858
Customers' Preference	300	CP1	3.937	0.787
		CP2	3.757	0.915
		CP3	3.947	0.755
		CP4	3.8	0.829

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive analysis reveals that respondents generally hold a positive perception across all constructs, with the highest mean scores observed in Customers' Preference (mean range: 3.757–3.947) and Brand Image (3.79–3.963), indicating strong alignment and favorable attitudes in these areas. Sales Promotion also received consistently high ratings (3.737–3.917) with the lowest standard deviations (0.765–0.772), suggesting strong agreement among participants. Word of Mouth showed moderately positive perceptions (3.517–3.797), though with slightly more variability. Price and Accessibility were rated positively but had higher standard deviations (up to 0.963 for price and 0.911 for accessibility), indicating a wider range of opinions, possibly influenced by individual affordability or access differences. Overall, the data suggests that while participants appreciate brand-related attributes and promotional efforts, pricing and accessibility may require more tailored strategies to address diverse customer expectations.

4.3 Reliability and convergent Validity

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (CR)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
ACC	0.857	0.903	0.702
BI	0.826	0.884	0.656
CP	0.764	0.849	0.585
WOM	0.807	0.873	0.633
PR	0.77	0.868	0.687
SP	0.793	0.831	0.622

Table 4: Reliability and convergent Validity

The reliability and validity statistics indicate that all constructs in the model demonstrate acceptable internal consistency and convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha values range from 0.764 to 0.857, exceeding the common threshold of 0.70, confirming good internal reliability. Composite reliability (CR) values are all above 0.80, with Accessibility (0.903) and Brand Image (0.884) showing the highest consistency across items, suggesting that the indicators reliably measure their respective constructs. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values range from 0.585 to 0.702, with all constructs meeting the recommended threshold of 0.50, indicating that over 50% of the variance is captured by the latent variables. Notably,

Accessibility (AVE = 0.702) and Price (AVE = 0.687) demonstrate particularly strong convergent validity.

Overall, these results confirm that the measurement model is reliable and valid, supporting the use of these constructs in further structural analysis.

4.4 Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity checked through two methods:

4.4.1 Fornell-Larcker criterion:

Constructs	ACC	BI	CP	WOM	PR	SP
ACC	0.838					
BI	0.562	0.81				
CP	0.517	0.608	0.765			
WOM	0.599	0.555	0.556	0.796		
PR	0.516	0.444	0.498	0.418	0.829	
SP	0.542	0.58	0.666	0.553	0.435	0.789

Table 5: Fornell-Larcker criterion

The Fornell-Larcker Criterion confirms that discriminant validity is generally established in the model, as the square root of the AVE (diagonal values) for each construct is greater than its correlations with other constructs (off-diagonal values). For instance, Accessibility (ACC) has a square root of AVE of 0.838, which is higher than its correlations with BI (0.562), CP (0.517), WOM (0.599), PR (0.516), and SP (0.542). Similarly, all other constructs such as Brand Image (0.81), Customers' Preference (0.765), Word of Mouth (WOM, 0.796), Price (0.829), and Sales Promotion (0.789) also meet this criterion, indicating that each construct is more strongly related to its own indicators than to those of other constructs. The strongest correlations are seen between CP and SP (0.666), and CP and BI (0.608), which are still lower than their respective square root AVE values, ensuring that discriminant validity is not violated. This means the constructs are empirically distinct and can be used reliably in the structural model.

4.4.2 Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT):

Constructs	ACC	BI	CP	WOM	PR	SP
ACC						
BI	0.659					
CP	0.619	0.755				
WOM	0.713	0.661	0.691			
PR	0.625	0.551	0.639	0.522		
SP	0.687	0.76	0.711	0.72	0.584	

Table 6: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

The HTMT results demonstrate that discriminant validity is acceptable across all constructs, as none of the HTMT values exceed the conservative threshold of 0.85, indicating that the constructs are empirically distinct from one another. The highest HTMT value is between Sales Promotion (SP) and Brand Image (BI) at 0.76, followed by SP and Word of Mouth (WOM) at 0.72, and Customers' Preference (CP) and Brand Image (BI) at 0.755. These relatively higher but still acceptable values suggest that while some constructs are moderately correlated, especially those related to promotional and perceptual aspects, they remain conceptually distinct. The lowest HTMT values are observed between Price (PR) and WOM (0.522) and between PR and BI (0.551), indicating clearer separation in perception of pricing versus other constructs.

Overall, the HTMT analysis supports the validity of the construct differentiation, reinforcing the robustness of the measurement model.

4.5 Direct Path Coefficients

	β (Standardized)	T Values	P values	Support?
BI -> CP	0.230	2.225	0.022	Supported
PR -> CP	0.167	4.103	0.02	Supported
WOM -> CP	0.144	2.149	0.032	Supported
SP -> CP	0.373	2.951	0.003	Supported
ACC -> CP	0.014	0.225	0.822	Not supported

Table 7: Path Coefficients

Hypothesis 1: Brand Image (BI) → Consumers' Preference (CP)

The path coefficient between Brand Image and Consumers' Preference is $\beta = 0.230$, with a T-value of 2.225 and a P-value of 0.022. Since the T-value exceeds the minimum threshold of 1.96 and the P-value is below 0.05, the relationship is statistically significant. This indicates that brand image positively and significantly influences customer preference, meaning customers are more likely to prefer brands with a strong and favorable image. Hence, hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 2: Price (PR) → Consumers' Preference (CP)

For the relationship between Price and Consumers' Preference, the results show a $\beta = 0.167$, T-value = 4.103, and P-value = 0.020. The high T-value and a p-value below 0.05 confirm a statistically significant and positive relationship. This suggests that perceived fair or reasonable pricing contributes meaningfully to shaping customers' preferences. So, hypothesis is supported.

Hypothesis 3: Word of Mouth (WOM) → Consumers' Preference (CP)

The standardized coefficient for Word of Mouth influencing Consumers' Preference is $\beta = 0.144$, with a T-value of 2.149 and a P-value of 0.032. These results show a significant and positive effect, meaning that positive word of mouth can effectively shape or enhance customer preferences toward products or brands. Hence, hypothesis supported.

Hypothesis 4: Sales Promotion (SP) → Consumers' Preference (CP)

Sales Promotion shows the strongest effect on Consumers' Preference with $\beta = 0.373$, a T-value of 2.951, and a P-value of 0.003. The relationship is highly significant and suggests that sales promotion activities (e.g., discounts, offers, limited-time deals) have a strong positive influence on customer preference. Among all variables, this path has the highest impact. Hypothesis Strongly Supported.

Hypothesis 5: Accessibility (ACC) → Consumers' Preference (CP)

The relationship between Accessibility and Consumers' Preference is $\beta = 0.014$, with a T-value of only 0.225 and a P-value of 0.822. Despite a small positive coefficient, the T-value is below the acceptable threshold of 1.96, and the P-value far exceeds 0.05, indicating no

statistically significant effect. This implies that accessibility does not significantly influence customer preference in this model. Hypothesis Not Supported.

4.6 Smart Pls Model

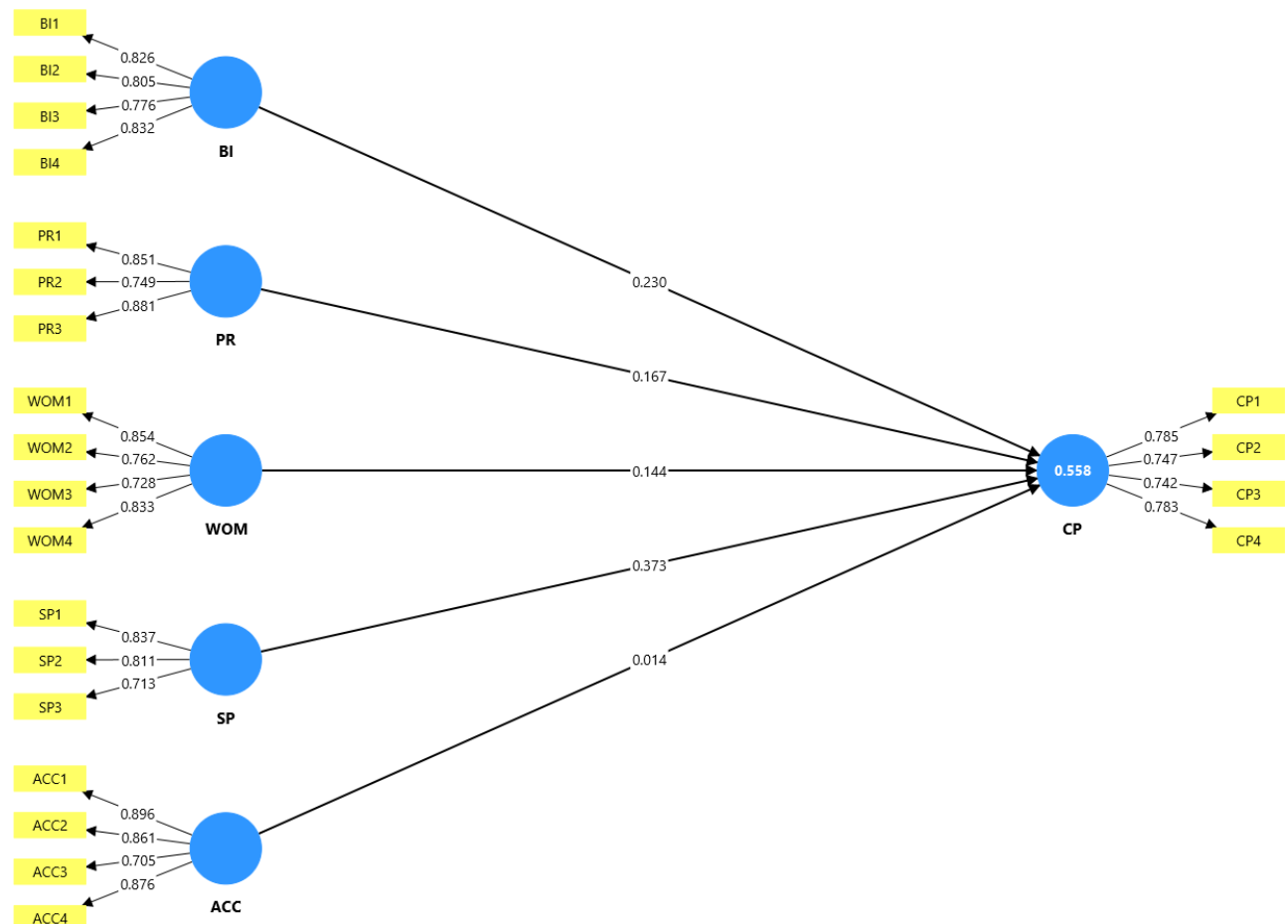


Figure2: PLS Structural Model Results with Standardized Path Coefficients (on arrows) and R^2 value (in blue circle).

Note: BI= Brand Image, PR= Price, WOM= Word of Mouth, SP= Sales promotion, ACC= Accessibility, CP= Consumers' Preference.

CHAPTER V

Discussions, Recommendations and Conclusions

5.1 Discussion on Findings

The findings of this study reveal that several key marketing factors—brand image, price, word of mouth, and sales promotion—have a positive influence on customers' preferences in the cement industry. Among these, sales promotion appears to play the most influential role, suggesting that attractive offers and deals can significantly sway customer choices, especially in a price-sensitive market like cement. Brand image also emerged as an important factor, indicating that customers tend to trust and prefer well-known, reputable cement brands. Price continues to be a relevant consideration, as affordability remains a critical concern for builders and contractors, although it is not the sole determining factor. Word of mouth contributes positively by reinforcing trust through peer recommendations and shared experiences.

However, accessibility, while operationally necessary, does not have a notable impact on shaping customer preferences, possibly because basic availability expectations are already being met. Overall, the study highlights the importance of strategic branding and marketing efforts in influencing customer decisions in a highly competitive industry.

5.2 Implications

5.2.1 Research Implication

This research contributes significantly to the limited academic literature on consumer behavior in the cement industry, particularly within the context of developing countries like Bangladesh. Unlike earlier studies that often isolated variables, this study integrates five major factors—brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility—into a comprehensive model of consumer preference. The findings validate the role of perception-based marketing elements (e.g., brand and promotion) over traditional assumptions like price dominance or pure product availability. The use of SmartPLS and Structural Equation Modeling adds methodological rigor, enhancing reliability and replicability. The study also bridges a theoretical gap by applying consumer behavior theory to a less-studied industry, cement, which is often ignored in mainstream marketing discussions. Future researchers can expand on this model by integrating new variables such as sustainability, after-sales service, or digital engagement. This research, therefore, establishes a robust foundation for subsequent academic inquiry into industrial consumer behavior in emerging markets.

5.2.2 Social Implication

The findings highlight the increasing importance of awareness, education, and informed decision-making in the cement-buying process, particularly among individual home builders and small contractors. Many consumers still rely heavily on word of mouth or visual cues like packaging rather than understanding technical quality indicators. This reliance may lead to choices based on perception rather than actual performance, risking the long-term integrity of structures. The research underscores the need for community engagement and consumer education programs led by cement manufacturers and government bodies. By promoting transparency and knowledge-sharing, companies can empower customers to make better, safer choices. Social responsibility can be demonstrated by ensuring that promotional activities are not misleading and that product claims are substantiated. Promoting ethical communication and informed decision-making can lead to safer construction practices and stronger trust between consumers and cement brands.

5.2.3 Business Implication

For businesses, the study provides actionable insights into how marketing strategies can directly influence consumer preferences in the cement sector. Sales promotion emerged as the strongest factor, indicating that time-bound discounts, loyalty rewards, and bulk incentives significantly drive consumer choice. However, the overuse of promotions without strong brand backing may damage credibility, so businesses must balance short-term incentives with long-term brand building. The importance of brand image suggests that consistent messaging, visible quality standards, and corporate responsibility initiatives can boost trust and loyalty. Furthermore, pricing should not only reflect cost but perceived value, reinforcing the need for value-based pricing strategies that align with customer expectations. Word of mouth also plays a critical role, suggesting that businesses should actively manage customer feedback and referrals, especially among contractors and construction professionals. Ultimately, cement companies should view marketing as a holistic system integrating quality, price, reputation, and access to effectively compete and thrive in the Bangladeshi market.

5.3 Recommendations

The cement companies should follow the following guidelines to ensure high-quality products and Customers satisfaction.

1. Strengthen brand identity

Cement companies should focus on building a strong and consistent brand identity. This includes maintaining uniform messaging across all marketing channels and showcasing third-party quality certifications. Incorporating Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) initiatives, especially those emphasizing environmental sustainability, can enhance brand perception. A trusted and credible brand image encourages customer loyalty and preference.

2. Implement value-based pricing

Introduce tiered pricing strategies to cater to varying customer needs and budgets. Offer standard cement for general use and premium options for high-performance construction. This approach aligns the perceived value of the product with customers' willingness to pay. It also helps in maintaining competitiveness without compromising profitability.

3. Design targeted sales promotions

Cement companies should develop strategic promotional calendars offering discounts, bundle deals, and bulk purchase incentives. Tailored promotions can attract contractors, dealers, and large-scale buyers more effectively. These initiatives should be time-sensitive and linked to demand cycles. Loyalty rewards can help retain long-term customers and encourage repeat purchases.

4. Optimize distribution coverage

Companies should expand their dealer and retailer networks, especially in rapidly developing districts. Real-time inventory tracking can ensure consistent product availability and prevent stock-outs. An efficient supply chain strengthens customer satisfaction and trust. Accessible distribution is key to increasing market penetration.

5. Invest in (R and D)

Research and development efforts should focus on producing specialized cement types like rapid-setting, high-strength, or eco-friendly variants. These innovations can differentiate the brand in a saturated market. Offering advanced options allows companies to command

premium pricing. Product innovation also positions the company as a forward-thinking industry leader.

6. Track market trends

Continuously monitor the market for changes in consumer behavior, regulatory shifts, and competitor strategies. Staying informed allows companies to adjust pricing, promotions, and product offerings in a timely manner. A proactive marketing mix ensures relevance in a dynamic environment. Market responsiveness helps maintain a competitive edge.

5.4 Conclusions

This study on consumer preferences in the cement industry, with a focus on Unique Cement Industries, reveals critical insights into the factors influencing purchasing decisions in a competitive market. The research examined five key variables brand image, price, word of mouth, sales promotion, and accessibility and their impact on customer preference. Findings indicate that brand image plays a significant role, as customers tend to trust and prefer cement from companies with a strong and reputable identity. Price also influences decisions, with many consumers associating higher prices with better quality, suggesting that value-based pricing can positively impact preference. Word of mouth was another influential factor, where recommendations from peers and professionals reinforced trust in product quality. Sales promotion showed the strongest positive impact, indicating that well-timed offers and incentives can effectively shape consumer behavior. However, accessibility did not significantly influence preference, likely because product availability is already sufficient in most regions. Overall, the study recommends that cement companies focus on strengthening brand perception, implementing strategic pricing, delivering consistent product quality, and using promotional campaigns wisely to meet customer expectations and drive long-term business growth.

CHAPTER VI

Company Profile

6.1 Meghna Group of Industries

Meghna Group of Industries is one of Bangladesh's largest and most successful companies. Meghna Group presently operates in 42 companies, 30 industries, and has over 40000 employees, 3000 distributors, and 1000 suppliers under its umbrella, with a revenue of USD 3 billion and assets of USD 1 billion. Meghna Group of Industries' history stretches back to 1976, when its predecessor Kamal Trading Company was founded. The humble beginnings of the firm happened in 1989, with the establishment of Meghna Vegetable Oil Industries Ltd on a small plot of land in Meghnaghat, Narayanganj. The group now operates 30 industrial units on over 350 acres of land. Meghna Group of Industries has been marketing numerous Fast Moving Consumer Goods (FMCG), Cement, Commodities, Chemical, Seed Crushing, Fish and Poultry feed, Power Plant, and other bulk and industrial products under the brand names 'Fresh', 'No.1', and 'Pure'.

Furthermore, the group is involved in Ship Building Dockyard, Shipping, Securities, General Insurance, Media, Aviation, and a variety of other companies. The Group has over 35 years of national and international experience. One in every three households in Bangladesh uses Meghna group brands and goods. Meghna Group has begun to expand its presence outside of Bangladesh, particularly in the Middle East, Southeast Asia, Europe, North and South America, through exporting its diverse products. Most notably, Meghna Group of Industries has already invested USD 1 billion in new business lines and major expansion programs such as chemical complexes, power plants, salt, seed crushing, cement, and media.

6.2 Mission

Meghna Group of Industry (MGI) looks forward to enhance its capability in a competitive and globalizing environment delivering superior and sustainable value. It shall be a professionally managed Bangladeshi conglomerate committed to consumer delight and enhancing stakeholder value. MGI is determined to be an innovation entrepreneurial and empowered team constantly creating value and attaining international benchmarks which fosters a culture of caring, daring, trust and continuous learning while meeting expectation of employees, stakeholders and society at large.

6.3 Vision

Meghna Group of Industries (MGI) is passionately creating sustainable economic value forth country and stakeholders by contributing to the industrial development of the nation and fundamental requirements of Consumers’.

6.4 Marketing Strategy

6.4.1 Market segmentation

Meghna Group of Industries employs demographic segmentation by targeting customers based on income and social class. Their primary focus includes the upper class, upper middle class, and middle class, who are the key consumers in the construction material market. This approach ensures that their products are aligned with the purchasing power and expectations of these income groups.

In addition to demographic segmentation, the company adopts sectoral segmentation to better address the needs of different construction markets. Their key focus areas include the residential sector, commercial sector, and infrastructure sector. By catering to these distinct segments, Meghna Group effectively positions its cement products for various types of construction projects across Bangladesh.

6.4.2 Market Positioning

Fresh cement emphasizes on their brand image and market share. They are in the 3rd position with more than (8%) market share in the cement industry of Bangladesh. Their greatest strengths are high quality, durability and performance. From this strategy they have created a distinct position in this competitive industry. The most important fact is they have the 2nd manufacturing unit in Bangladesh with the capacity of 10000tpd. Through this they can fulfill the demand of their Consumers’’ very quickly.

6.5 Marketing Mix

6.5.1 Product

Product Varieties

Fresh cement offers different types of cement products, including Fresh super Portland cement, Fresh special Portland composite cement, and Fresh Portland composite cement.

Product Quality

Quality is a critical factor in the cement industry. Fresh cement emphasizes the quality and consistency of their products to gain trust among Consumers'' and contractors. The quality of Fresh cement is approved by BUET.

Packaging

Attractive and informative packaging is used to distinguish Fresh cement than others brands and convey important information such as cement type, brand, and usage instructions.

6.5.2 Price

Competitive Pricing

Fresh Cement often engages in price competition, offering competitive pricing to attract Customers. For cement products price is very crucial. Customers switch to other brand for low price. So, Fresh cement set a fair price to attract the Customers.

Bulk Discounts

Fresh cement offers Discounts and special pricing schemes for bulk purchases, which are common in the construction industry. Mostly they offer trade promotion to attract the dealers and wholesalers and inspire them to buy in bulk quantities.

6.5.3 Place

Distribution Network

Fresh Cement established an extensive distribution network to ensure their products are readily available across the market. They have many depots in different important locations in the country to make their distribution work more easier.

Geographical Presence

Fresh cement strategically position their production facilities in different regions to reduce transportation costs and serve local markets efficiently. Their production unit is located in Meghnaghat, Sonargaon, Narayanganj. They can easily deliver their products to different parts of the country due to the facility of fast communication.

Retailers and Dealers

Cement is sold through a network of retailers, dealers, and distributors. Building strong relationships with these intermediaries is crucial for market reach. Fresh cement has many dealers and distributors across the country.

6.5.4 Promotion

Advertising

Fresh Cement engage in advertising campaigns to create brand awareness and promote their products. These campaigns include TV and radio commercials, print media, and digital advertising.

Trade Promotions

Fresh cement offers incentives to contractors, builders, and retailers through trade promotions, such as discounts, gifts, world tour etc. Each promotion depends on some requirements which have to fulfill for specific incentives. There have 500-6000 bag purchase requirement to get gifts, world tour etc.

Public Relations

Fresh Cement engage in public relations efforts to build a positive image and address environmental or community concerns related to their operations.

Digital Marketing

With the growth of digital channels, Fresh cement use online platforms, including websites and social media, to reach a wider audience and provide information about their products. Nowadays almost every purchase order take through whatsapp or other digital platform.

CHAPTER VII

Internship Experiences

During my two-month internship at renowned Meghna Group of Industries, I had the opportunity to gain valuable insights and hands-on experience in various aspects of the company's operations. My role primarily revolved around pricing, gift management, advertising projects, and document conservation.

7.1 Pricing

One of the significant aspects of my internship involved working on pricing-related tasks. I was tasked with analyzing market trends, competitor pricing strategies, and the cost structure of our products. This experience allowed me to understand the intricacies of pricing strategies in a highly competitive industry. I had the chance to collaborate with the pricing team and contribute to the development of pricing models that could optimize profitability while remaining competitive in the market.

7.2 Gift Management

Another interesting facet of my internship was managing gift-related activities. I was responsible for coordinating the selection and distribution of corporate gifts to clients and stakeholders. This role helped me develop excellent organizational and communication skills as I liaised with suppliers, created gift lists, and ensured timely delivery. It was gratifying to see how such gestures of appreciation and goodwill could strengthen business relationships.

7.3 Advertising projects

In the realm of advertising, I had the opportunity to work on various projects aimed at promoting Unique Cement Industries' products and brand. This included collaborating with the marketing team to develop advertising campaigns, creating content for social media platforms, and analyzing the performance of our marketing efforts. I gained valuable experience in the creative and strategic aspects of advertising and learned how to measure the impact of different marketing initiatives.

7.4 Documents Conservation

One of the unique aspects of my internship involved document conservation. I was responsible for maintaining and organizing records related to the corporate gifts we distributed. This task required meticulous attention to detail and a strong commitment to record-keeping. It underscored the importance of accurate documentation in a business setting and taught me the significance of preserving historical data for future reference.

7.5 Trade Promotion

As part of my internship responsibilities, I was also involved in trade promotion activities. This included assisting in the planning and execution of trade shows, exhibitions, and promotional events. I helped coordinate logistics, prepare promotional materials, and engage with potential clients and partners during these events. This experience deepened my understanding of trade dynamics and the importance of face-to-face interactions in building business relationships.

Throughout my internship at Unique Cement Industries, I had the privilege of working with a diverse and talented team. They provided guidance, mentorship, and opportunities for learning and growth. I also gained insights into the corporate culture and values of the Meghna Group of Industries, which prioritize innovation, sustainability, and excellence in all aspects of their operations.

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Appendix

Sample Questionnaire

Survey on “How Consumers’ Choose Cement for Construction: Insights from Unique Cement Industries”

Dear Sir/ Madam,

Thank you for taking the time to participate in this survey. I’m Md. Nahidul Islam Akash, studying in Marketing Department at Comilla University. As part of my academic purpose, I am conducting a research titled “**How Consumers’ Choose Cement for Construction: Insights from Unique Cement Industries.**” The objective of this research is to understand the factors that influence brand perception and Customers’ preferences regarding cement products. Your valuable input will help us to gain insights into consumer behavior and contribute to the understanding of the cement market dynamics. All responses will be kept anonymous. For any questions, kindly contact me via my details provided below.

Best regards,

Md. Nahidul Islam Akash

Session: 2022-23

Department of Marketing

Comilla University

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Part A: Demographic Information

1. Gender

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

2. Age

- ☐ 22 to 25
- ☐ 26- 35
- ☐ 35-45
- ☐ 45-above

3. Education

- ☐ SSC
- ☐ HSC
- ☐ Graduate
- ☐ Post Graduate

4. Occupation

- ☐ Employed
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Businessman
- ☐ Others

5. Income

- ☐ Below 10000
- ☐ 10000–25000
- ☐ 26000–50000
- ☐ Above 50000

Part B

Using the 5- point Likert scale, please respond to the following statements to indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

No	Brand Image Rafida Zunaini et al. (2021)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I trust particular cement brand due to positive brand image	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
2	The reputation of any cement brands influence my purchasing decision	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
3	The brand image of the cement affect my satisfaction with the product	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
4	Negative brand image discourage me from purchasing a particular cement brand	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

No	Price Mukhammad Alfian Abdillah(2023)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I prioritize price over brand reputation when purchasing cement	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
2	I am willing to switch to a different cement brand if it offers a lower price	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
3	I compare prices of different cement brands before making a purchase	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
4	I associate higher prices with better durability in cement products	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

No	Word of mouth Md. Manik Hossain et al. (2021)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Recommendations from friends or family influence my choice of cement brand	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
2	I trust the opinions of professionals (e.g., engineers, contractors) when choosing a cement brand	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
3	I am more likely to choose a cement brand that is frequently recommended by others	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
4	Negative feedback from others discourages me from selecting a particular cement brand	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

No	Sales promotion Anjay Kumar et al. (2020)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I am more likely to purchase cement brands that offer promotional gifts	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
2	Discounted prices influence my choice of cement brand	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
3	I choose cement brands that provide credit facilities	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
4	I switch to cement brands that offer better promotional deals	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

No	Accessibility Manjunatha Lr et al. (2014)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	The availability of cement in nearby shops influences my brand preference	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
2	I prefer cement brands that offer free delivery services	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
3	I am more likely to choose cement brands that offer flexible delivery schedules	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
4	I switch to cement brands that offer more convenient purchasing processes	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

No	Customers' preferences (DV) Anjay Kumar Mishra et al.(2019)	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I stick with a cement brand once I am satisfied with its performance	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
2	My cement brand preference is influenced by the company's after-sales support	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
3	I prefer cement brands that have been in the market for a long time	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]
4	The innovation level (e.g., low-dust, faster curing) of a cement product affects my preference	[1]	[2]	[3]	[4]	[5]

Thank you for your participation