

Shopping Orientations towards Online Purchase Intention in the Online Apparel Purchase Environment

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Abstract

Online apparel shopping is growing at a very fast pace in spite of the fact that online apparel shoppers face problems in online apparel shopping such as colour, size, quality etc. So it is vital to explore the factors affecting customer's online apparel purchase intention. The objective of this study is to find the impact of shopping orientations on customer's online apparel purchase intention and to find the construct which has strongest impact on customer's online apparel purchase intention. It is found that impulse purchase orientation, quality orientation, brand orientation and convenience orientation, shopping enjoyment orientation are positively related to the customer's online apparel purchase intention. It is also found that convenience orientation is the most important contributor to customer's online apparel purchase intention.

1. Introduction

Online apparel purchase constitute a significant portion in the online purchase environment. Online apparel purchase is a new form of consumer behavior in the "Computer mediated shopping environment" Hoffman et al., (1996) but online apparel retailers are facing intense competition. Apparel e-tailers offers variety of products and services to online apparel shoppers. For this apparel e-tailers have to understand the factors affecting online apparel purchase. Some of the identified factors affecting customer online purchase intention include impulse purchase orientation (Zhang, et al., 2007), quality orientation (Gehrt et al., 2007), brand orientation (Moye, 1998), shopping enjoyment orientation (Vijayasathya et al., 2000) and convenience orientation (Shim et al., 1993). These constructs will be tested in this research in the online apparel shopping context. With a good understanding of the online shopper's online purchase intention, apparel e-retailers will be able to develop strategies that can help to retain existing customers and attract new ones.

2. Literature Review

According to Alba et al., (1997) web shopping allows consumers to search and compare various products from different online retailers that may be too far from the consumer's place. So online shopping enables consumers to do multi attribute comparisons and also reduce prospective buyer's information search costs. Shim et al., (2000) described online shopping as the process that consumers go through to buy any product online. This online shopping is an e-commerce application that is used as Business-to-consumer (B2C) or Business-to-Business (B2B) model. Lumpkin et al., (1985) explained that the reason behind the growth of online shopping is advancement in the internet technology.

In spite of the problems faced by consumers related to colour, size, quality, fabric content, duration life of fabric etc., there is growth of online apparel shopping. So it is important to identify the shopping orientations which affects online apparel shoppers to shop apparel online. Thus the research aims to identify those shopping orientations that induces customers' to shop apparel online and the shopping orientation which has maximum contribution to affect customers' online apparel purchase intention.

2.1 Online Purchase Intention

Day (1969) stated that purchase intention is one of the elements of consumer cognitive behavior on how a consumer intends to purchase a specific product. Intentional measures are more effective than behavioral measures while attracting customer's attention as customer is most likely to purchase due to constraints rather than real preference. Laroche et al., (1996) explained the variables that measure consumer intention to buy are customer expectation to buy

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a specific brand and customers' preferences while buying a specific brand. Ajzen et al., (1980) mentioned in the Theory of Reasoned Action that consumer behavior can be derived from intentions that can be described in terms of action, target and context. Pavlou (2003) described purchase intention as a condition where a customer is not only willing but also intend to do online transaction. Online transaction involves a number of steps which includes information retrieval, then information transfer and then product is purchased by a customer. In this process information retrieval, information transfer are considered as intention to use a website. Product purchase is a part of intention to handle a website. For an apparel e-tailer it is important to understand the impact of shopping orientations on customer online purchase intention. So in the present study the impact of customer shopping orientations on customer online purchase intention is explored.

2.2 Shopping Orientations

According to Vijayasathya et al., (2000) there are seven types of shopping orientations, such as in-home shoppers who prefers in-home shopping; economic shoppers who shops around before finalizing purchase decision; mall shoppers who shop at malls; personalized shoppers who prefers to shop where they already know the salesperson; ethical shoppers who shops in local stores to encourage the community; convenience shoppers who prefers to have convenience while shopping; and enthusiastic shoppers who enjoyed shopping. In this study it was found that customers who prefer traditional way of shopping that is in-home shopping, such as by mail order via catalogs, is likely to have high intentions toward online shopping, whereas customers who prefers mall shopping is likely to have low online shopping intentions.

2.3 Impulse Purchase Orientation

Rook (1987) summaries that the sudden urge to purchase immediately without any additional information induces impulse purchase. Piron (1991) described that a specific stimulus induces an individual to go for an unplanned action. Ko (1993) explained impulse purchase as an unplanned behaviour which is related to objective evaluation and emotional preferences in shopping. Donthu et al., (1999) stated that online shoppers are more likely to be do impulse purchase. According to a study by Zhang et al. (2007) impulse purchase is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. Wolman (1973) defined impulsiveness as a psychological characteristic that results in response to a stimulus.

2.4 Quality Orientation

Foster et al., (1996) defined Quality as a strategic component of competitive advantage. Therefore to boost the quality of product or service is a matter of concern to the firms. For manufacturing firm Crosby (1979) defined quality as conformance to specifications. It refers to the extent to which a product meets certain design standards. Garvin (1984) described that differences in the quantity of some ingredient or attribute possessed by the product are considered to reflect differences in quality. Whereas in the user-based definition,

quality is the extent to which a product or service meets or exceeds customers' expectations. Bellenger et al., (1980) explained that recreational shoppers considers various factors while choosing the store such as quality, variety of products and pleasant store ambience. In the context of web-shopping environment. Gehrt et al. (2007) found that customers from the shopping enjoyment cluster are inclined toward recreation, quality, and impulse orientations while doing online shopping.

2.5 Brand Orientation

Aaker (1991) described brand as a name or symbol, trademark and design that uniquely identifies the product or service of a retailer, and differentiates them from those of its competitors. It gives a retailer an edge over its competitors. Jayawardhena (2007) stated that brand orientation is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. Ward et al., (2000) explained that brand name can be defined as the company's name itself. In online retailing environment corporate brand name is used by customers as a substitute for product information when they intent to purchase online.

2.6 Shopping Enjoyment Orientation

Menon et al., (2002) identified types of shopping enjoyment construct. It includes escapism, pleasure and arousal. Escapism refers to enjoyment linked with activities that are attractive and then move towards the point of an escape from demands of day-to-day world. Pleasure refers to the extent to which the customer is feeling happy, joyful or satisfied with online shopping. Lastly, Arousal refers to the extent to which an individual feels active or stimulated during online shopping. Pleasure or arousal experience will have impact on the next experience encountered. So when customer is presented with a pleasing and arousing stimuli while doing online shopping, customers are likely to engage in subsequent online shopping experience. Beatty et al., (1998) described shopping enjoyment as the pleasure obtained during online shopping process. Babin et al., (1994) described shopping enjoyment in terms of the difference between utilitarian and hedonic shoppers. Utilitarian shoppers takes shopping as a work to be done while hedonic shoppers treat shopping as a way to have fun and to get entertained. Seock et al., (2008) found that there is a positive relationship between shopping enjoyment orientation and customer online purchase intention.

2.7 Convenience Orientation

Meuter et al., (2000) explained Convenience as the most important factor affecting customers to shop online. Bhatnagar et al., (2000) described that when customer's perception of convenience related to online shopping increases the likelihood of online shopping also increases. Gehrt, Yale, and Lawson (1996) stated that convenience include time, space and effort dimension as online shopping eliminates the time to drive and checkout time. Moreover it allows online shoppers to have access to distant stores. Jarvenpaa et al., (1997) and Burke (1998) described convenience is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. Meuter et al., (2000) also stated convenience as one of the motivational factor affecting online shopping. Alba et al., (1997) stated that shoppers should consider various types of convenience that is offered by retailers while shopping. Seiders et al., (2000) mentioned the types of convenience throughout the shopping process such as "access convenience" "Possession convenience", "search convenience", "transaction convenience", "time convenience" and "place convenience".

3. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated for the research and the conceptual framework is presented in Figure 1.

H1: Convenience orientation is positively related to customer online apparel purchase intention.

H2: Impulse purchase orientation is positively related to customer online apparel purchase intention.

H3: Quality orientation is positively related to customer online apparel purchase intention.

H4: Brand orientation is positively related to customer online apparel purchase intention.

H5: Shopping enjoyment orientation is positively related to customer online apparel purchase intention

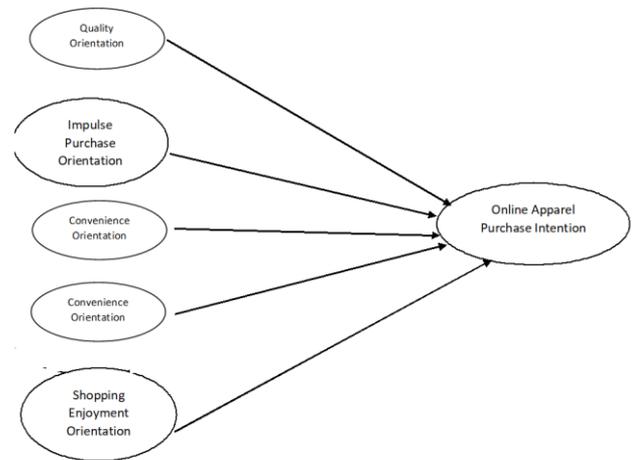


Fig. 1: Conceptual framework for the research

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Research Design

Descriptive research design is used for this study. Descriptive study has clear problem statements, specific hypotheses and detailed body of knowledge. (Malhotra, 2004).

3.1.2 Questionnaire Design

Part A of the questionnaire includes general information about the online apparel shopping behaviour of the respondents. Part B of the questionnaire includes both independent variables and dependent variable that would be tested in this survey. Questions are scaled-response questions as "scaling permits measurement of the intensity of respondents' answers" (Churchill and Brown, 2004, p.329). Part C of the questionnaire includes demographic profile of the respondents. The items for independents variables (Impulse Purchase Orientation, Quality Orientation, Brand Orientation, Convenience Orientation, and Shopping Enjoyment Orientation) are adapted from Gehrt, et. al. (2007) and Seock (2003). The items for Dependent variable (Online Apparel Purchase Intention) are adapted from Chen and Barnes (2007). A 5-point Likert scale from "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (5) is used for measurement of independent and dependent variables.

3.2 Sampling and Administration of Survey

The questionnaires were distributed to both undergraduate and post graduate students in colleges in west Delhi. Students who had actual online apparel purchase experience were targeted. The targeted sample size was 250. The technique used for sampling was convenience sampling technique. Respondents were asked to answer the questions based on their most recent online apparel purchase experience with online apparel retailer.

Self-administered survey method in the form of drop-off survey method was used to ensure the confidentiality. The survey was conducted in colleges in West Delhi where respondents returned the questionnaires directly into the box provided. The participation in the survey was voluntary and it was communicated as well as mentioned in the survey. 250 questionnaires were distributed. Out of that 8 set of 16.0 questionnaires were incomplete. So only 242 questionnaires were used for data analysis using SPSS.

4. Research Results

4.1 Respondents' Demographic Profile and Online Apparel Purchasing Behaviour

In this present survey, 51.05 percent of the respondents were Male respondents and 48.95 percent of the respondents were Female respondents. Majority of the respondents were between the ages of 21 to 23 (76.86 percent). 56% of the respondents purchased more than 7-9 apparel items in the past 12 months. More than half of the respondents (63.72%) use credit card as a mode of payment in the

online apparel purchasing process. 14% of the respondents purchased 10 or \geq 10 apparel items. 12% of the respondents purchased 1-3 apparel items and the remaining 18% of the respondents purchased 4-6 apparel items.

4.2 Reliability Test

Cavana, Delahaye and Sekaran (2001) explained that the reliability of a measure indicates the stability and consistency with which the instrument measures the concept and helps to assess the 'goodness' of a measure. All the constructs in this research were tested for the consistency and reliability of the items within the constructs by using the Cronbach Alpha. Table No. 1 showed the results that the Cronbach alpha for all the constructs were well above 0.7 as recommended by Cavana et al. (2001). Cronbach alpha for the constructs ranged from the lowest of 0.802 (quality orientation) to 0.867 (brand intention). In conclusion, the results indicated that the scores of the Cronbach alpha for all the constructs used in this research exceeded 0.70 and this showed that constructs were stable and consistent.

4.3 Validity Test

| Factor's Name | Variable | Factor Loading | Eigen Value | Percentage of Variance Explained | Cronbach's Reliability Coefficients |
|-----------------------------------|--|----------------|-------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Convenience Orientation | I usually buy apparel product from the most convenient online retailer. | 0.805 | 1.655 | 11.356 | 0.830 |
| | I put a high value on convenience when shopping for apparel products from online retailer. | 0.788 | | | |
| | I shop for apparel product from the website which saves my time. | 0.862 | | | |
| Impulse Purchase Orientation | I am impulsive when purchasing apparel products through online retailer. | 0.789 | 2.242 | 13.292 | 0.812 |
| | When I purchase apparel products spontaneously from online retailer, I feel released. | 0.825 | | | |
| | When my intention is to merely browse through the website, I sometimes purchase apparel product. | 0.772 | | | |
| | I plan my online apparel purchase carefully. | 0.783 | | | |
| Quality Orientation | The availability of high quality apparel products provided by online retailer is very important to me. | 0.852 | 1.347 | 11.042 | 0.801 |
| | I find better quality apparel products from online retailer. | 0.793 | | | |
| | My standards and expectations from apparel products I buy from online retailers are very high | 0.833 | | | |
| Brand Orientation | If I buy apparel products from online retailer that I am familiar with, I would prefer to buy well-known brand name. | 0.871 | 1.715 | 11.845 | 0.865 |
| | Once I find an apparel brand I like through online shopping, I stick with it. | 0.772 | | | |
| | It is important for me to buy apparel product from online retailer with well-known brand name. | 0.885 | | | |
| Shopping Enjoyment Orientation | I enjoy shopping for apparel products from online retailer. | 0.793 | 5.486 | 13.865 | 0.836 |
| | I enjoy spending time to browse for apparel products provided by online retailer. | 0.851 | | | |
| | Shopping for apparel products from online retailer puts me in good mood. | 0.775 | | | |
| | I do not like to spend much time shopping for apparel products provided by online retailer. | 0.782 | | | |
| Online Apparel Purchase Intention | It is likely that I will transact for apparel products with online retailer in the near future. | 0.865 | 2.202 | 12.051 | 0.865 |
| | I intend to use online apparel retailer's website. | 0.845 | | | |
| | I predict that I should use online apparel retailer's website in the future. | 0.854 | | | |

Cavana et al., (2001) states that Construct validity is used as validity measurement through the factor analysis. The Factor analysis for this research is presented in Table No. 1. Based on the output, factor analysis was appropriate as the value of Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) was 0.806 (between 0.5 and 1.0) and the statistical test for Bartlett test of sphericity was significant ($p = 0.000$; d.f. = 190) for all the correlations within a correlation matrix (at least for some of the constructs). Further based on the Principal Component Analysis and VARIMAX procedure in orthogonal rotation, the results showed that the Eigenvalues for all the constructs were greater than 1.0, ranging from the lowest 1.344 (quality orientation) to the highest of 5.480 (shopping enjoyment orientation). In terms of convergent validity, the factor loadings for all items within a construct were more than 0.50. Discriminant validity indicated that all items were assigned as per different constructs. Therefore, the items were not overlapping and they supported the respective constructs.

Table 1: Factors Identified by the Principal Components Factor Analysis

Note: KMO Measure of Sampling Adequacy = 0.809; $p = 0.000$ ($p < 0.05$); df = 190

Cumulative Percentage Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings = 73.271

4.4 Regression Analyses

The result of the multiple regression analysis is presented in Table no. 2 and Table no. 3. Table No. 2 shows that the p value for convenience orientation is 0.006 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. It means convenience orientation is positively related to the customer online apparel purchase intention. Hypothesis 1 is therefore supported. According to Jarvenpaa and Todd (1997) and Burke (1998), convenience orientation is positively related to the customer online purchase intention and the present study confirms past research.

The p value of the impulse purchase orientation is 0.015 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. So it can be concluded that an impulse purchase orientation is positively related to the customer online apparel purchase intention. Hence Hypothesis 2 is supported. This finding is in consistence with the existing literature which states that the shopping orientations in terms of impulse purchase positively affects the online apparel purchase intention (Zhang et al., 2007).

The p value for the quality orientation (p = 0.035) is also less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore, it can be concluded that quality orientation is positively related to the consumer online apparel purchase intention. So Hypothesis 3 is supported. This finding supports the existing literature that quality orientations positively influence the customer online apparel purchase intention. Gehrt et al., (2007).

Finally the study also found that the brand orientation is positively related to the customer online apparel purchase intention, as the p value is 0.036 which is less than the alpha value of 0.05. Therefore Hypothesis 4 is supported. According to Jayawardhera et al. (2007), brand orientation is positively related to the customer online apparel purchase intention. However, hypothesis 5 is not supported in this research as the p value of the shopping enjoyment orientation (p = 0.261) is more than the alpha value of 0.05. This indicates that the positive relationship between shopping enjoyment orientation and the customer online apparel purchase intention is not accepted. According to Childers et al. (2001), shopping enjoyment is a strong predictor of attitude toward online shopping. If customer enjoys online shopping, customers form a positive attitude toward online shopping and when customer forms positive attitude towards online shopping then customer is more likely to engage in online purchasing. In addition to this a study by Monsuwe et al. (2004) added that customer is also likely to engage in unplanned online shopping behavior. Based on the results given by Childers et al. (2001) and Monsuwe et al. (2004) it can be concluded that shopping enjoyment orientation is positively related to the online purchase intention, mediated by the attitude toward online shopping.

Table 2: Result of Multiple Linear Regression Analysis

| Model | Unstandardized Coefficients | | Standardized Coefficients | T | Sig. |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| | B | Standard Error | Beta | | |
| (Constant) | 4.328 | 1.099 | | 3.938 | 0.000 |
| Convenience Orientation | 0.188 | 0.068 | 0.182 | 2.716 | 0.006 |
| Impulse Purchase Orientation | 0.113 | 0.042 | 0.150 | 2.456 | 0.015 |
| Quality Orientation | 0.124 | 0.057 | 0.132 | 2.128 | 0.035 |
| Brand Orientation | 0.112 | 0.054 | 0.143 | 2.104 | 0.036 |
| Shopping Enjoyment Orientation | 0.057 | 0.054 | 0.074 | 1.121 | 0.261 |

a Dependent Variable: Online Apparel Purchase Intention

Independent variables: Impulse purchase orientation, quality orientation, shopping enjoyment orientation, brand orientation and convenience orientation.

R = 43.2 per cent; R Square = 18.2 per cent; Adjusted R Square = 16.9 per cent;

F = 10.808; P = 0.000 (p<0.05)

Table 3: Summary of the Five Hypotheses and Outcomes

| Independent Variables | Tested Hypotheses | Outcome |
|--------------------------------|---|---------------|
| Convenience Orientation | H1: Convenience orientation is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. | Supported |
| Impulse Purchase Orientation | H2: Impulse purchase orientation is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. | Supported |
| Quality orientation | H3: Quality orientation is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. | Supported |
| Brand orientation | H4: Brand orientation is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. | Supported |
| Shopping enjoyment orientation | H4: Shopping enjoyment orientation is positively related to the customer online purchase intention. | Not Supported |

Multiple regression equation is formed which is as:

$$\text{Customer's Online Apparel Purchase Intention} = 4.328 + 0.188 (\text{Convenience Orientation}) + 0.113 (\text{Impulse Purchase Orientation}) + 0.124 (\text{Quality Orientation}) + 0.112 (\text{Brand Orientation})$$

The results shows that the values of unstandardized beta coefficient amongst independent variables ranges from 0.112 (brand Orientation)

to 0.188 (Convenience Orientation). From this it is found that the factor which has weakest relationship is Brand Orientation and the factor which has strongest relationship is Convenience Orientation. Therefore "Convenience Orientation" is the most important factor which affects customer's online apparel purchase intention.

"Quality Orientation" (0.124) is the second and "Impulse Purchase Orientation" (0.113) is the third ranked most important factors which affects customer's online apparel purchase Intention. In addition, the customer online apparel purchase intention is explained 18.2 percent by the combination of various independent variables (r square = 0.182), which includes Convenience Orientation, Impulse Purchase Orientation, Quality orientation, Brand Orientation.

5. Conclusions

5.1 Implications of the Research

The result found from the study supported the relationship between Independent variable (Customer's Online Apparel Purchase Intention) with Dependent variables (Convenience Orientation, Impulse Purchase Orientation, Quality Orientation and Brand Orientation). But the relationship between Customer's Online Apparel Purchase Intention with shopping enjoyment orientation is not supported in this research which is inconsistent with previous research which states that there is positive relationship between Shopping Enjoyment Orientation and Online Purchase Intention Seock et al., (2008). Both Childers et al. (2001) and Monsuwe et al., (2004) also states that shopping enjoyment orientation is positively related to the online purchase intention, but with a mediating variable (attitude) toward online shopping. This necessitates further research to investigate the mediating effect of attitude towards online apparel shopping.

Further, the result found from the research provides some insights to the online apparel retailers which will help them in formulating strategies to increase customer's online apparel purchase intention. To attract and retain "Convenience Oriented" Customers, online apparel retailers should offer convenience in placing the order,

minimize the time required to process the order and offer different modes of payment to this category of online shoppers. For “Impulse Purchase Oriented” customers online apparel retailers can e-mail or message customers about promotional schemes or new product arrivals. To focus “Quality Oriented” customers online apparel retailers should provide complete detail about the product quality information. For “Brand Oriented” customers online apparel retailer should offer customer loyalty programme for those online apparel customers who has strong brand orientation.

5.2 Limitations of the Research.

The present research findings provides some insights to researcher about the customer’s online apparel purchase intention however these findings has some limitations. Firstly, the sampling unit is undergraduate and postgraduates students from Colleges in West Delhi only. So the results found from this study could not be generalized to represent Indian Population. Secondly the scope of this study is limited to Quality Orientation, Brand Orientation, Convenience Orientation, Shopping enjoyment, Impulse Purchase Orientation only. It does not cover the impact of gender differences in moderating the relationship between online shopping orientations and customer’s online apparel purchase intention. So Gender construct should be studied to study the relationship between online shopping orientations and customer’s online apparel purchase intention. Jayawardhena et al. (2007) found that gender has a significant impact on customer’s online purchase intention. Finally the study does not cover the population who do not have experienced online apparel shopping but have intention to do online apparel shopping.

5.3 Findings

For future research the researcher should include wider representation of Indian Population across different age groups. The sample size should also be large to generalize the results. Secondly it is recommended to study gender as mediating variable in studying the relationship between online shopping orientations and customer online apparel purchase intention. Further the study of impact of online shopping orientations on the customer online apparel purchase intention among the potential customers who have strong intention to engage in online apparel purchasing transactions is recommended.

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