

## Chapter 3

# Shopping Well-Being and Ill-Being: Toward an Integrated Model

**Dong-Jin Lee**

*Yonsei University, South Korea*

**Grace B. Yu**

*Duksung Women's University, South Korea*

**M. Joseph Sirgy**

*Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State  
University, USA*

**Ahmet Ekici**

*Bilkent University, Turkey*

**Eda Gurel-Atay**

*University of Puget Sound, USA*

**Kenneth D. Bahn**

*James Madison University, USA*

### ABSTRACT

*In this chapter, the authors make an attempt to review and integrate much of the research on shopping well-being and ill-being experiences. The integrated model identifies the antecedents of these two focal constructs in terms of situational, individual, and cultural factors. The consequences of shopping well-being and ill-being experiences on life satisfaction (or subjective well-being) are explained through a bottom-up spillover process. Managerial implications and avenues for future research are also discussed.*

### INTRODUCTION

Over the last several decades much research in retailing has focused on various consequences of shopping activities. One important consequence of shopping is its impact on consumer well being.

Studies found that shopping contributes to the consumer well-being providing consumers with experiences of hedonic enjoyment and satisfaction of various needs (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003, 2012; Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Timothy,

2005). Other studies found that shopping can have a negative impact on consumer well-being as in the case of compulsive buying and impulse buying (Schor, 1991; Rojek, 2006).

Despite the seemingly significant impact of shopping on consumer's lives, there is a lack of consensus on the impact of shopping on consumer well-being. There is still a need to integrate research from various disciplines to provide answers to effect of shopping on consumer well-being. The question remains. Do shopping experiences

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have a positive or negative impact on the well-being of consumers? What are the factors affecting these negative and positive shopping experiences, which in turn influence consumer well-being? There is a great need to integrate the two diverging perspectives.

The main purpose of this chapter is, therefore, to develop a model that integrates antecedents and consequences of shopping well-being and ill-being experiences. The proposed model developed in this chapter treats shopping well-being and ill-being experiences as two distinct concepts. Shopping well-being experiences deal with the positive aspects of consumers' retail activities, whereas shopping ill-being experiences deal with the negative aspects. The integrated model identifies the antecedents of these two focal constructs in terms of situational, individual, and cultural factors. The consequences of shopping well-being and ill-being experiences on life satisfaction (or subjective well-being) are explained through a bottom-up spillover process.

Understanding those factors affecting shopping well-being experiences and shopping ill-being experiences allow policy makers and retailers develop marketing programs that can effectively enhance consumer well-being while minimizing the negative impact of programs on consumer well-being.

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Positive Impact of Shopping on Consumer Well-Being**

In some cases, shopping contributes to the well-being of consumers by paving way to hedonic enjoyment and satisfaction of self-expressive needs. Retailing scholars have argued that shopping is associated with hedonic value (e.g., Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; 2012; Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994), excitement and delight (e.g., Oliver, Rust, & Varki, 1997; Wakefield & Baker, 1998),

and enjoyment (e.g., Beatty & Ferrell, 1998). Hedonic retail activities have been described as a form of "recreation" (e.g., Backstrom, 2006; Guiry, Magi, & Lutz, 2006), entertainment (e.g., Moss, 2007), or related to enthusiasm that creates emotional arousal and joy (e.g., Jin & Sternquist, 2004; Pooler, 2003).

More recently, researchers expressed interest in the idea that retail activities (i.e., shopping) help shoppers express themselves (Timothy, 2005). As such, it can be argued that shopping activities are not only hedonically enjoyable but also self-expressive in that they allow the consumer to become emotionally involved with the purchase thus serving to actualize the consumer's potential in becoming a good mother/father, wife/husband, etc. Much of this discussion is related to *shopping well-being experiences*. This construct is explicitly defined as the degree to which consumers experience hedonic enjoyment and satisfaction of self-expressive needs through their shopping activities.

### **Negative Impact of Shopping on Consumer Well-Being**

By the same token, consumer shopping experiences have a negative impact on the overall sense of well-being of consumers. Shopping ill-being has much to do with the potential dark side of consumers' retail/shopping activities. Studies have argued that shopping may lead to compulsive buying, which creates much ill-being (Faber & O'Quinn, 1992; Hosch & Loewenstein, 1991; Kwak, Zinkman, & Crask, 2003; O'Guinn & Faber, 1989).

Compulsive shopping refers to consumers' tendency to be preoccupied with buying that is revealed through repetitive buying and a lack of impulse control over buying (Ridgeway, Kukar-Kinney, & Monroe 2008). It has been found that internet versus brick and mortar retail shopping has created a tendency toward compulsive shopping manifested in avoiding social interactions (Kukar-Kinney, Ridgeway, & Monroe, 2009).

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