


Consumer Perceptions of Factors Affecting Online Shopping Behavior: An Empirical Evidence From Foreign Students in China

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ABSTRACT

Online shopping is an emerging trend throughout the world. Likewise, it is used in China among Chinese consumers, but not all foreigners use it frequently due to several factors. This study discussed those factors which cause hindrance for foreigners to use online shopping and their behavior towards it. To do so, the authors have proposed the model by extending the technology acceptance model (TAM). The data were collected from the international students in China through a survey questionnaire and analyzed by SPSS to draw the results of the proposed relationships. The findings show that the online shopping behavior of international students in China is negatively related to financial risk and positively related to trust and ease of use. Moreover, purchase intention mediates these relationships. The results will be useful for consumers and online sellers to retain existing consumers and attract more foreigners studying in China. Moreover, the paper mentioned the implications and future directions of the study.

KEYWORDS

Ease of Use, Financial Risk, Online Shopping Behavior, Purchase Intention, Trust

INTRODUCTION

Recently, online shopping has emerged as a growing trend among people worldwide for several reasons, regardless of age and gender. In China, almost every Chinese person uses online shopping to buy things of his or her choice. The prevailing reasons include; first, they can purchase anything at any time just by using our laptops and mobile phones without visiting the stores, as it takes time to go and buy things from different stores. Second, they can buy things online at a lower price than by visiting stores and shopping malls. As the big stores and shopping malls are costly, they can buy the same items online at a lower price from several websites and stores (Han and Kim, 2017). Third, some people feel uncomfortable while interacting face-to-face with the salesman at shopping malls and stores; therefore, they prefer online shopping rather than offline, which is also at their ease.

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Fourth, online shopping helps to get rid of waiting and facing the crowd of people in big malls and stores (Van Kerrebroeck, Brengman, et al. 2017). They can buy things online at the click of a button.

Past studies have mainly discussed online shopping in the context of specific population and cities, and some have also discussed the factors which influence online shopping and the behaviors of consumers preferring it (Vaghela, Babar, Rasheed, et al. 2014, Fu, Manogaran, et al. 2019). But the factors which affect the online behavior of consumers haven't been given much attention, which makes it inconsistent to understand. Unlike these studies, we seek to investigate the online shopping behavior of consumers and the factors which affect it. Also, we analyze the mediating effects of purchase intention, which gives new insights to the field. The international students in China have been taken as the study sample to draw the results regarding their online shopping behavior. It is due to the reason that online shopping is prevalent in China, but the foreigners are not very used to it and feel particular hindrance and obstacles because of some factors which we choose to address in this study.

Our study contributes to the literature in multiple ways. First, the constructs of this research did not involve how consumers and influence to shop online. It resolves the inconsistency among online shopping behavior and the factors affecting it. Furthermore, the mediating role of purchase intention adds to the literature on online shopping. Our research also focuses on international students in China. These students (undergraduate and postgraduate, including language programs) feel it is difficult to make online purchases due to some factors such as financial risk, trust, ease of use, and purchase intention. They are afraid of losing their money and maybe wary of online sellers (Suki and Suki 2017). Moreover, many sites are in Chinese, which creates language barriers for many students.

THEORY AND HYPOTHESES

Theoretical Frame Work

The theoretical framework of the present research is designed from the concept of the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) by (Davis 1989; Siyal, Ding, et al. 2019), which provides the basis for investigating the consumers' adoption of technologies. It represents a framework that observes the adoption of technologies. Technology Acceptance Model (TAM), proposed by Davis (1989), is the commonly used innovation adoption model, which has been the principal predictor of consumers' intention as well as the determiner of the factors which affect their adoption of modern technologies (Venkatesh and Davis 2000). Its foundations focused on the "theory of reasoned action" (Fishbein and Ajzen 1980; Procter, Angus, et al. 2019) and the "theory of planned behavior" (Schifter and Ajzen 1985; Yadav and Pathak 2016). Also, to find out the users' acceptance and adoption of computer and related technologies, which are measured by intention and stimulus of attitude, perceived usefulness, and perceived ease of use towards the preferences of consumers to use (Davis et al., 1989).

(Çelik and Yilmaz 2011) extended TAM incorporated perceived information quality, service quality, system quality, enjoyment, and trust. They investigated the Turkish consumers' acceptance of online shopping. The findings revealed that the strong influence of perceived usefulness over the intention, whereas the perceived ease of use had a slight impact over it. Besides, the relationship of perceived effectiveness and ease of use to use was partially mediated by attitude. Subsequently, due to the inadequate role of attitude, the TAM was altered by eliminating the perspective and replacing it with intention as a new mediator in the relation of perceived usefulness and ease of use with the usage behavior of the consumers (Venkatesh and Davis 2000). The results declared the perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use as the determinant factors of the intention to use. Similarly, few scholars such as (Venkatesh 2000, Li and Huang 2009) excluded attitude in the studies using TAM. They recommended that the relationship between perceived ease of use, perceived usefulness, and behavioral intention becomes straightforward and easy to understand. In line with this, we have amended TAM as per our study framework. Later on, many studies have investigated and witnessed these findings (Van der Heijden, Verhagen et al. 2003; Kim and Hong 2010; Kim and Song 2010;

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