

Effects of Integration Quality Perception and Attitude toward Information Seeking on Perceived Shopping Value in Omni-channel Shopping Experience

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Introduction

Omni-channel shopping experience involves not only simultaneous use of multiple shopping channels, but integrated connection of them (Lazaris & Vrechopoulos, 2014). Omni-channel retailing has become imperative when more than 80% of smartphone shoppers use their mobile phone during in-store shopping and 67% of consumers start shopping across channels (Worldpay, 2015).

Considering the extended service connections with mobile devices and blurred boundary between channels, the channel integration needs to be understood in an omni-channel environment.

Thus, this online survey study aims to investigate how perceived integration quality and a personal disposition character, information seeking tendency, influence shopping values in an omni-channel shopping context.

Literature Review

Integration quality refers to “the ability to provide customers with seamless service experience across multiple channels” (Sousa & Voss, 2006). Unified integration of channels is associated with what customers expect in omni-channel shopping experience (Verhoef et al., 2015).

In a shopping environment where consumers use more than one channel, perceived integration quality of channels is likely to be an important contributor to diverse shopping outcomes. (Herhausen, Binder, Schoegel, & Herrmann, 2015) Service quality literature emphasizes the importance of perceived service quality in forming shopping value perception (Bauer et al., 2006).

H1. Perceived integration quality is likely to be an important aspect of service quality, will be positively related to perceived utilitarian and hedonic shopping values .

Consumers would have a high level of perceived brand innovativeness, “the degree to which consumers perceive a brand to be innovative” (Barone & Jewell, 2013), when they perceive a high level of integration quality. According to Shankar et al. (2011), perceived brand innovativeness can influence customers’ evaluation of shopping experience (e.g., shopping value).

H2. Perceived brand innovativeness derived from seamlessly integration of retail channels will be positively associated with perceived utilitarian and hedonic values

Consumers who are inclined to search information (i.e., high in information seeking tendency) are likely to appreciate seamless integration of channels because they are more likely to use multiple channels concurrently to search information.

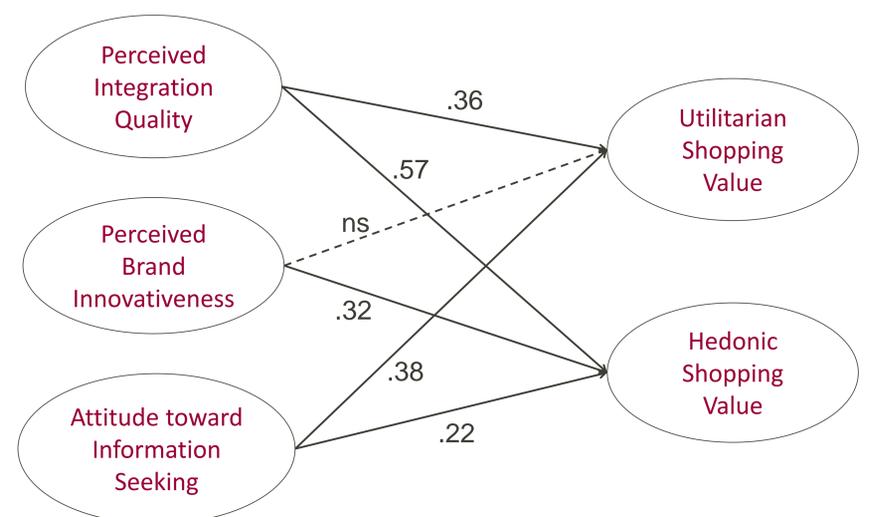
H3. Consumers’ attitude toward information seeking will be positively related to perceived utilitarian and hedonic values.

Method & Result

US adults (N= 184) who have used multiple channels of a single retailer for a shopping trip conducted an online survey through Amazon Mturk. Those who indicated only one retail channel or chose different product categories than apparel were excluded. The measurements were adopted from Sousa and Voss (2006), Pappu and Quester (2015), Das et al. (2003), and Babin et al.(1994).

The measurement model presented an acceptable fit ($X^2=479.837$, $df =265$, $p < .001$; $CMIN/df=1.811$, $CFI =.929$, $RMSEA =.067$) and convergent and discriminant validity was confirmed. The proposed model ($X^2=534.392$, $df =269$, $p < .001$; $CMIN/df=1.987$, $CFI =.912$, $RMSEA =.073$) mostly supported the hypotheses.

Perceived integration quality was positively related to perceived utilitarian ($\beta = .36$, $p < .001$) and hedonic value ($\beta = .57$, $p < .001$), supporting H1. The perceived brand innovativeness was positively associated with perceived hedonic ($\beta = .32$, $p < .001$) but not with utilitarian value ($\beta = .09$, $p > .05$), which partially supported H2. Consistent with H3, information seeking tendency was positively related to perceived utilitarian ($\beta = .38$, $p < .001$) and hedonic value ($\beta = .22$, $p < .001$).



Discussion & Conclusion

This study contributes to the omni-channel shopping experience literature by extending and testing the effects of integration quality between multiple channels.

The results provided support for importance of integration quality in consumer evaluation of omnichannel shopping experience in consistent with Herhausen et al. (2015) on two-channel integration effects

The findings imply providing seamless experience for consumers with information seeking tendency can be extremely important because they are more motivated to use multiple channels concurrently.

The results showed no relationship between perceived brand innovativeness and utilitarian shopping value. This may suggest enhanced brand innovativeness perception is a symbolic quality, which increases hedonic shopping value but not utilitarian shopping value.