

PSYCHOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS INFLUENCING CONSUMER BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS ONLINE PURCHASE INTENTION: A STUDY ON GENDER DIFFERENCES

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Abstract

E-commerce has emerged as an important method of business. With nearly 2.5 trillion internet users worldwide and surpassed USD1 trillion sales in 2012, it is essential to understand the behavior of the online shoppers. Previous studies have explored the relationship of customer innovativeness, market mavenism, shopping enjoyment, shopping orientation towards online purchase intention. Thus this study would like to understand further on the gender differences upon the psychographic characteristics that influence online purchase intention. A survey technique using national sample of online shoppers resulted in 174 valid responses. Analysis using SPSS was done to investigate the difference between genders in terms of the variables involved. This paper analyzed and demonstrates empirically how consumer psychographic characteristics that affect the online purchase intention differ from gender perspective.

Keywords: Online shopping, Purchase intention, E-commerce, Psychographic characteristic, Gender

1.0 Introduction

In the year of 2012, business-to-consumer electric commerce (B2C ecommerce) sales grew 21.1% and surpassed the threshold of USD1 trillion for the first time and the increase trend is forecasted to continue with sales of USD1.4 trillion in 2014 (eMarketer,2013).

The increase of sales are due to many reasons such as the B2C e-commerce providing an effective method for online retailers and their consumers to perform online transactions through commercial Web sites (Ranganathan & Ganapathy, 2002). Also are the other benefits of online shopping, such as saving time and energy, convenience, competitive pricing, broader selection, and greater access to information (Verhoef & Langerak, 2001). Many researchs has been done to understand the functions and benefits of the B2C e-commerce system that entice the consumer to purchase online but very little research has been done to understand the underlying inner characteristics of the consumer that influence the behaviour on online purchase.

This study attempts to gain insights to the matter and choses Malaysia for the location of study. This is due to the fact that more than one-third of global B2C ecommerce sales comes from the Asia-Pacific region, amounting to USD433 billion in 2013. Malaysia is one of the country in the region with more than USD1 billion B2C ecommerce sales in 2013 from its 17 million internet users (e27, 2013). Furthermore, reports have shown that in Malaysia, the male shop online more than females (Wong, 2014; Talented, 2012) which corresponds to the findings of (Girard et al.(2003) and Zhang et al. (2011) where gender was found to be the most common predictor for preference for shopping online and that men were more likely to buy online than women. Therefore, this study would like to understand this matter further by analysing Malaysia's situation through the use of

psychographics. This study will attempt to do this by extending the works of Rahim et al (2014) on online purchase psychographics.

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Consumer behaviour and Psychographics

Schiffman et al. (2007) described “consumer behaviour as the study of the processes involved when individuals or groups select, purchase, use or dispose of products, services, ideas or experiences to satisfy needs and desires.” Consumer behavior can also be explained as “the behavior that consumers display in searching for, purchasing, using, evaluating, and disposing of products and services that they expect will satisfy their needs” (Arens, 1996). The main aim for analyzing consumer behaviour is to explain why consumers act in certain ways under certain circumstances. Adelaar et al. (2003) suggest consumer behavior resulted from emotional response and that the consumers can make on the spot purchase of a product or service. This emotional response is affected by three independent factors; that is pleasure, arousal and dominance. Pleasure is the situation in which a person feels good, happy or joyful. Arousal relates to the varying state of feeling by different person in different situations. This can be the feeling of excitement, active, bored or sleepy. Dominance is explained by the individual feelings of a person, in which he/she can control or act upon in a particular situation.

One of the three often used methods in understanding consumer behaviour is psychographics. Psychographics is defined as: “The use of psychological, sociological, and anthropological factors, such as benefits desired (from the behaviour being studied), self-concept, and lifestyle (or serving style) to determine how the market is segmented by the propensity of groups within the market and their reasons to make a particular decision about a person, a product, ideology or otherwise hold an attitude or use a medium.” (Demby, 1994).

There is no set approach in doing psychographics but all of them seem to converge on a similar purpose; that is to unearth more information about the consumer above and beyond what is obtained through the use of demographics data. Currently, the most approach is the use of consumer attitudes, interests and opinion first advocated by Wells and Tigert (1977). While the most used tool for psychographics is the VALS Scheme proposed by Rokeach (1973).

With regards to online psychographics, a recent research by Rahim et al (2014) have explored the relationship of customer innovativeness, market mavenism, shopping enjoyment and shopping orientation towards online purchase intention. In their study, it shows that customer innovativeness and shopping enjoyment mediates shopping orientation and market mavenism towards online purchase intention. This study however did not explore the possibility of gender differences in their findings. It would be interesting to see if there is such difference since there are studies that indicated there is gender difference in their approach towards online shopping particularly in Malaysia. This study attempts to address that by using the elements within the research as basis to look for differences.

2.2 Customer Innovativeness

Innovativeness is associated with the predisposition of an individual to adopt new ideas faster than other members of a system and to make a purchase of new products rather than remain with traditional choices and consumption patterns (Steenkamp et al.1999; Rogers and Shoemaker, 1971). It relates to ‘consumption of newness’ among consumers and taking risk (Agarwal and Prasad, 1998). It is a known fact that certain consumers purchase new products faster and more often than other consumers (Midgley and Dowling,1978). Certain people have a tendency to be attracted by new products (Steenkamp et al., 1999) and to make early purchase of a new product (Rahim et al., 2014). Consumers with high innovativeness level are associated with the following characteristics: (1) willing

to make changes in concepts and things (Blackwell et al., 2006), (2) able to influence others to adopt concepts, products and inventions that are new and innovative (Boone, 1970), and (3) helpful in solving problems and making decisions (Greenleaf and Lehmann, 1995). The use of new products by consumers known to be innovative act as a motivation for other consumers to seek and purchase the same products (Hoffmann and Soye, 2010).

2.3 Market Mavenism

The market maven are consumers who share with other consumers varied information about products, stores, market phenomena. Market mavens are often product innovators, heavy information seekers and opinion leaders. They tend to be smart shoppers (Feick and Price, 1987), heavier users of coupons (Price et al., 1988) and have higher perceived level of price-quality relationships (Lichtenstein and Burton, 1990). They are more likely to discuss attributes of retail store images, and read more than the average shoppers, women's magazines and direct mail ads (Slama et al., 1992). They also discuss more than the average shoppers the various attributes of stores including prices, sales, product quality and product variety (Higie et al., 1987). They also offer information on a wide variety of products (Slama and Williams, 1990). As such, market maven are good targets for advertising, ranging from marketing mix changes to messages related to low involvement products to products that do not attract consumer interest. (Feick and Price, 1987).

2.4 Shopping Enjoyment

Shopping enjoyment is explained as the characteristic in a consumer that makes shopping experience more enjoyable and pleasurable than others. Those who enjoy shopping often do not have a pre-planned purchase in mind, and often will not commit themselves to a specific store (Bellenger and Korgaonkar, 1980). For this group, shopping enjoyment equates to "recreational shopping" and is a fun and pleasurable leisure time activity which leads to feelings of joy (Jin and Sternquist, 2004). They are the so-called hedonic shoppers who find fun and – +6589* Ahtola, 1991). They do not consider shopping as performing consumption duties, like the utilitarian shoppers. Holbrook and Hirschman (1982) relates shopping enjoyment to a hedonic attitude whereby shopping enjoyment is seen as shopping with a goal and not as shopping as a goal (Babin et al., 2005). Literature has shown that positive images create higher levels of pleasurable feelings among buyers. This is also reflected in the buyer enjoyment of spending time in shopping activities (Bell, 1999).

2.5 Shopping Orientation

Consumers go shopping for various reasons such as wanting to purchase a particular product, collecting information for potential purchase decision, or getting an overview of the latest market trends (Kaltcheva and Weitz, 2006; Bloch, et al., 1989). Consumers also differ in other shopping experiences such as how they select products, shop, or process information (Van Osselaer et al., 2005). When consumers seek pleasure while shopping, this is an experiential shopping orientation (Babin et al., 1994). When shopping is done as a task to be completed, the goal is often to finish it as efficiently as possible (Kaltcheva and Weitz, 2006). This is task focused shopping orientation.

Generally a consumer shopping orientation is the range of attitude, interest, and opinion statements that relates to the topic of shopping. Moschis (1992) defines shopping orientation as a pattern that is displayed during shopping that represents interests, consumer activities and opinions about shopping behaviors. Brown et al. (2001) define shopping orientations as a general disposition toward the general act of shopping. Shopping orientation reflects differences in consumer shopping styles for products and services (Shim and Kotsiopoulos, 1993). It relates to activities, interests and opinion statements relevant to shopping (Li et al., 1999). Generally, the shopping orientation is known to moderate the impact of the store environment on customers' experiences and behaviors (Baker and Wakefield, 2011).

2.6 Gender Differences in Online Purchases

Girard et al. (2003) highlighted that gender was the most common predictor for preference for shopping online. In virtual communities, gender plays an important role in communication and e-commerce transactions (Ulbrich et al., 2011). Women communicate differently than men (Gefen and Ridings, 2005). Their e-commerce transactions are more emotional (Dittmar et al., 2004). Men use the internet to increase and protect social position (Awad and Ragowsky, 2008). Their communication and e-commerce transactions are more pragmatic (Dittmar et al., 2004). Women are more concerned about privacy when using the internet. They are also more concerned about risk during e-commerce transactions (Garbarino and Strahlievitz, 2004). As a result, it is important to consider the gender differences in e-commerce transactions to support female participation and to thereby promote the sustainable growth of online shopping (Bae and Lee, 2011). Women are more involved in traditional shopping than men. With proper virtual community design and support, women can become as involved in online shopping as men (Yang and Wu, 2006).

30 Research Hypotheses And Methodology

Based on the literature discussed, this study outlined five hypotheses to be tested:

- H1: There is statistically difference of customer innovativeness based on gender.
- H2: There is statistically difference of market mavenism based on gender.
- H3: There is statistically difference of shopping enjoyment based on gender.
- H4: There is statistically difference of shopping orientation based on gender.
- H5: There is statistically difference of online purchase intention based on gender.

The study adopts face to face survey using standardized questionnaire. This resulted in 174 randomly selected, valid nationwide responses from the general population of Malaysia. As the survey is done by interview method, we managed to achieve a 100 percent response rate. The study adapted the measures used to operationalize the constructs included in the model from relevant previous study done by Rahim et al. (2014) All items were measured using a five-point likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The hypothesized models are empirically tested using SPSS using t-test procedure.

4.0 Findings

4.1 Descriptive Statistic

The descriptive statistics of the respondents is shown in Table 1. The respondents are Malaysian nationwide, which consists of female (n=87) and male (n=87). Majority are between the age of 21 to 30 years old (n=73). Most shop online 2-3 times per month (n=83) with average spending of RM100 and below (n=80). Lastly most of them spend more than 60 minutes per month on online shopping (n=73).

Table 1: Sample characteristics (n = 174)

Variable	Description	N	Variable	Description	N
Gender	Male	87	Average Spending	RM 100 and below	80
	Female	87		RM 100 – RM 500	57
	Total	174		RM 500 – RM 1000	26
Age	20 and below	62		RM 1000 and above	11
	21 - 30	73		Total	174
	31 - 40	32	Shopping Time	30 minute and below	43
	40 and above	7		30 – 60 minute	58
	Total	174		60 minute and above	73
Shopping Frequency / Month	1 and below	75		Total	174
	2 - 3	83	State	Wilayah Persekutuan	21
	4 - 5	34		Selangor	28
	6 and above	8		Perak	30
	Total	174		Pulau Pinang	17
				Kelantan	7
		Terengganu		5	
		Pahang		25	
		Johor		15	
		Melaka		9	
		Kedah		8	
		Perlis	3		
		Sabah	2		
		Sarawak	4		
		Total	174		

4.2 Frequency analysis

Table 2 describes the frequency analysis of the questions involved in each variable. It can be seen that all of the variables are deemed important by the respondents based on the mean of the variable. The most important variable was the shopping orientation which has the highest mean ($\mu=3.90$).

Table 2: Frequency analysis of the construct

No	Question	Mean
1	I am very cautious in trying new/different products	3.75
2	I am more interested in buying new than known products	3.54
3	I like to buy new and different products, new products excite me	3.67
4	I am usually among the first to try new products	3.41
5	I am the kind of person who tries every new product at least once	3.47
Customer Innovativeness		3.57
1	I like introducing new brands and product to my friends	3.65
2	I like helping people by providing them with information about many kinds of products	3.65
3	People ask me for information about products, places to shop, or sales	3.52
4	If someone asked where to get the best buy on several type of products, I could tell him or her where to shop	3.65
5	My friends think of me as a good source of information when it comes to new products or sales	3.59
Market Mavenism		3.61
1	Shopping online is the way I like to spend my leisure time.	3.66
2	Shopping online is entertaining to me.	3.56
3	I enjoy shopping online more than most people do.	3.79
4	Shopping online is a good way for me to relax.	3.77
5	Shopping online refreshes me on a dull day.	3.66
Shopping Enjoyment		3.69
1	I read the advertisements for announcements of sales	3.57
2	The shopping experience is important to me	3.74
3	It is important to me that online retail store are fast and easy to reach	4.01
4	It is important to me to that information about products are fast and easy to find	4.09
5	It is important to me to be able to compare prices of products in advance	4.09
Shopping Orientation		3.90
1	I would recommend that others visits online retail store that I purchased a product from	3.61
2	I would be willing to shop more than one online retail store	3.70
3	I would purchase at online retail store	3.73
4	I want to experience online retail store in the future	3.81
5	My willingness to buy from online retail store is very likely	3.83
Online Purchase Intention		3.74

4.3 Reliability Test

Table 3 describes the reliability of the constructs. The Cronbach's Alpha value ranges between 0.838 and 0.926, with overall value of 0.958 which is within the recommended value. (Hair et al.,1998).The result shows that the measures used in this research are reliable.

Table 3: Reliability of the constructs

No	Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
1	Customer Innovativeness	.912
2	Market Mavenism	.926
3	Shopping Enjoyment	.891
4	Shopping Orientation	.838
5	Online Purchase Intention	.887
Overall		.958

4.4 Hypotheses Testing

Table 4 illustrates the customer innovativeness based on gender. Based on the result, it shows that female has higher customer innovativeness (3.79) compared to male (3.35). However, based on the t-test analysis (Table 5), the Sig. (2-tailed) value is lower than 0.05 ($p=0.002$) thus demonstrating that there is statistically difference of customer innovativeness between gender.

Table 4: Customer Innovativeness' Mean Values Based on Gender

No	Gender	Customer Innovativeness
1	Male	3.35
2	Female	3.79

Table 5: T-test on Customer Innovativeness and Gender

	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.720	.397	-3.208	172	.002
Equal variances not assumed			-3.208	171.729	.002

Table 6 illustrates the market mavenism based on gender. Based on the result, it shows that female has higher market mavenism (3.86) compared to male (3.37). However, based on the t-test analysis (Table 7), the Sig. (2-tailed) value is lower than 0.05 ($p=0.001$) thus demonstrating that there is statistically difference of market mavenism between gender.

Table 6: Market Mavenism's Mean Values Based on Gender

No	Gender	Customer Innovativeness
1	Male	3.37
2	Female	3.86

Table 7: T-test on Market Mavenism and Gender

	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.660	.418	-3.302	172	.001
Equal variances not assumed			-3.302	171.999	.001

Table 8 illustrates the shopping enjoyment based on gender. Based on the result, it shows that female has higher shopping enjoyment (3.89) compared to male (3.48). However, based on the t-test analysis (Table 9), the Sig. (2-tailed) value is lower than 0.05 ($p=0.001$) thus demonstrating that there is statistically difference of shopping enjoyment between gender.

Table 8: Shopping Enjoyment's Mean Values Based on Gender

No	Gender	Customer Innovativeness
1	Male	3.48
2	Female	3.89

Table 9: T-test on Shopping Enjoyment and Gender

	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	.003	.957	-3.421	172	.001
Equal variances not assumed			-3.421	169.052	.001

Table 10 illustrates the shopping orientation based on gender. Based on the result, it shows that female has higher shopping orientation (3.98) compared to male (3.81). However, based on the t-test analysis (Table 11), the Sig. (2-tailed) value is higher than 0.05 ($p=0.128$) thus demonstrating that there is no statistically difference of shopping orientation between gender.

Table 10: Shopping Orientation's Mean Values Based on Gender

No	Gender	Customer Innovativeness
1	Male	3.81
2	Female	3.98

Table 11: T-test on Shopping Orientation and Gender

	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	4.710	.031	-1.529	172	.128
Equal variances not assumed			-1.529	164.998	.128

Table 12 illustrates the purchase intention based on gender. Based on the result, it shows that female has higher purchase intention (16.47) compared to male (14.76). However, based on the t-test analysis (Table 13), the Sig. (2-tailed) value is lower than 0.05 ($p=0.000$) thus demonstrating that there is statistically difference of purchase intention between gender.

Table 12: Online Purchase Intention's Mean Values Based on Gender

No	Gender	Customer Innovativeness
1	Male	3.53
2	Female	3.94

Table 13: T-test on Online Purchase Intention and Gender

	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Equal variances assumed	0.815	.368	-3.688	172	.000
Equal variances not assumed			-3.688	171.252	.000

Table 14 illustrates the result of the hypotheses testing. It shows that all of the hypotheses were supported except for hypotheses 4.

Table 14: Result of Hypotheses Testing

No	Gender	Result
H1	There is statistically difference of customer innovativeness based on genders.	SUPPORTED
H2	There is a statistically difference of market mavenism based on genders.	SUPPORTED
H3	There is statistically difference of shopping enjoyment based on genders.	SUPPORTED
H4	There is statistically difference of shopping orientation based on genders.	NOT SUPPORTED
H5	There is statistically difference of online purchase intention based on genders.	SUPPORTED

5.0 Discussion

This study is able to investigate the gender differences on how psychographic characteristics influence the customer behaviour on online purchase intention. The result has highlighted a few interesting points:

1. There are element of gender differences in terms of online purchase intention and the predictive variables (customer innovativeness, market mavenism and shopping enjoyment) except for shopping orientation. It shows that male and female have different behaviour in online shopping except for its purpose of doing so which was determined by the shopping orientation.
2. Female scored higher in terms of online purchase intention and the predictive variables; customer innovativeness, market mavenism and shopping enjoyment. It means that female is more incline to purchase something over the internet when they chose to shop. However, report has suggested that online shoppers are mostly consisting of male. These contradicting findings may be concluded as that there are more male online shoppers compared to female but female are more incline to purchase products online compared to men. Thus this finding contradicts with the findings by Zhang et al (2011) that argued men were more likely to buy online than women.
3. Past study has shown that female shows indication that they experience dissatisfaction in online shopping compared to men (Kahttab, 2012). This is inline with point number two, as it may be interpreted as female is reluctant to shop online compared to men.

This study has been able to contribute by further extending the literature in this field. In terms of practical contribution, online business owners should be able to understand their customer better and do not consider both gender has the same behaviour in terms of online shopping. As this study have proved that there differences in terms of psychographic characteristic on online purchase intention, it is suggested that further research to be done by generating a conceptual model for each gender for online purchase intention. Another research could be done to understand why female are reluctant to shop online compared to me

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