

Gratifying the Gratification: Pragmatic Approach Toward E-Shopping Behavior

Dr. Benny J. Godwin *

Department of MBA

Aloysius Institute of Management & Information Technology, St. Aloysius College (Autonomous)
Mangalore – 575022

Dr. Beena Dias, Professor

Department of MBA

Aloysius Institute of Management & Information Technology, St. Aloysius College (Autonomous)

Abstract

The purpose of this article is to investigate the role of Consumers' Electronic Attitude and Online Purchase Intention towards Electronic Shopping Gratification. This paper also measures the mediating effects of Social Commerce on Online Purchase Intention towards Electronic Shopping Gratification. A conceptual framework - "BeeBen e-Gratification Model" that formulates the structure of regarded constructs is proposed after reviewing the extant literature. The primary data are collected from the Gen Y respondents enrolled at an eminent educational institution in South India. The research instrument employed for this study is a standardized questionnaire. The authors preferred Snowball Sampling, which is a non-probability sampling design, due to the inaccessibility of central repository of online shoppers' database. After eliminating and revising double-barreled and misleading statements, 276 entirely filled questionnaires remained. The hypotheses are tested using multiple linear regression analysis – stepwise, mediating effects- path analysis, and structural equation modeling (SEM) with maximum likelihood estimation. In the later of this article, the managerial implications and recommendations for future research are discussed.

Keywords: Consumers' e-Attitude, Online Purchase Intention, Social Commerce, and e-Shopping Gratification.

1. Introduction

The evolution of e-commerce has essentially metamorphosed the consumers' attitude by offering businesses and customers a powerful channel to communicate (Lee, 2005; Legner, 2008; Sumanjeet, 2010). By furnishing ample information (Hu and Tang, 2014; Lee and Chan, 2015; Rahman, 2015), compounding image (Lim, 2013), meliorating the business processes (Goparaju, 2015), and amending the customer services (Oliveira and Toaldo, 2015), e-commerce has commenced reaping enormous market share. Ascertained by the influential role of information technology, the structural reality of the new etailers has progressively enforced a postulate for consumers' gratification towards electronic shopping.

1.1 Problem Statement

It is observed by the recent investigators that the e-shopping gratification is determined by consumers' e-attitude and online purchase intention. There subsist only a limited number of research studies that have foregrounded the substantial antecedents of e-shopping gratification (Mosavi and Ghaedi, 2012; Park, Ahn, and Kim, 2010; Rutter and Southerton, 2000; Shobeiri, Mazaheri, and Laroche, 2014; Warrington, 2002; Yazdanifard, Wada, Sade, and Yusoff, 2011). Furthermore, as a matter of fact, it is also not crystallized whether social commerce mediates electronic shopping gratification. Considering the grandeur of online purchase intention mediated by social commerce toward electronic shopping gratification, it is astounding to know how only very few researchers have focused in these arenas. Consequently, this article would enlighten these enormously authoritative but less researched domains.

1.2 Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this article is to formulate more discursive discernment of electronic shopping gratification. By depicting a literature sum-up on behavioural studies with regard to online shopping, this article furnishes how e-attitude and online purchase intention may perhaps be associated with the didactical variables (Demangeot and Broderick, 2006; Gehrt et al., 2012; Gong, Stump, and Maddox, 2013; Hsu, Chuang, and Hsu, 2014; Jiang, Yang, and Jun, 2013; Khalifa and Liu, 2007; Koo, Kim, and Lee, 2008; Liu, Burns, and Hou, 2013; Ozen and Engizek, 2014). This paper also measures the mediating effect of social commerce on online purchase intention towards electronic shopping gratification is also evaluated in this article.

1.3 Research Questions

In this backdrop, this article attempts to answer the succeeding research questions:

- What is the influence of consumers' e-attitude and online purchase intention in ascertaining electronic shopping gratification?
- Does spousal support mediate online purchase intention towards electronic shopping gratification?

1.4 Objectives

With regard to answering the above listed research questions, following objectives are formulated:

- To examine the role of consumers' e-attitude and online purchase intention towards electronic shopping gratification.
- To ascertain the mediating effects of social commerce on online purchase intention towards electronic shopping gratification.

2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

2.1 Consumers' e-Attitude

Fishbein and Ajzen (1975) specified individual's attitude as a learned response that concerns to an individual's evaluation of a conception. Delafrooz et al. (2005) determined the relationship between consumers' e-attitude towards online shopping using shopping orientations and perceived benefits sub-scales. It was demonstrated from the regression analysis that utilitarian orientations, convenience, price, and wider selection influenced consumers' attitudes towards online shopping. Similar findings are reported by many existing research studies that consumers' attitude directly and significantly influences behavioral intention to use an online shopping (Jonker and Kosse, 2013; Khitoliya, 2012; Makhitha, 2014; Saprikis, Chouliara, and Vlachopoulou, 2010).

H₁ Consumers' e-attitude will have a positive effect on electronic shopping gratification.

2.2 Online Purchase Intention

Online purchase intention refers to the construct that gives the strength of a customer's intention to purchase products using e-tailers (Ling, Chai, and Piew, 2010; Salisbury et al., 2001). Thamizhvanan and Xavier (2013) sought to identify the determinants of online purchase intention amongst youth in the Indian context. It was established from the findings that hedonic orientation, experience, and trust have significant impact on the customer purchase intention. Chiu (2009) conceptualized a model based on a mediating mechanism of relationship quality towards the understanding of online purchase intention. It was found that perceived incentive, perceived service quality, perceived ease of purchasing, and perceived usefulness influence customers' online purchase intention indirectly through the mediation of relationship quality.

H₂ Online purchase intention will have a positive effect on electronic shopping gratification.

2.3 Social Commerce

Noh et al. (2013) deduced the rise in popularity and use of propelling user-generated content on commercial websites, so called social commerce. Baghdadi (2013) ascertained social commerce as practicing commerce in a conjunctive and participative manner, id est, through social media. Huang and Benyoucef (2003) declared social commerce as the incorporation of quadruple spheres, comprising: marketing management, sociology, psychology, and computer science. Noh et al. (2013) identified from a survey of 375 social commerce users that preference, reliance, norm acceptance, and goal priority had significant effects on perceived usefulness online shopping. It was also found that social commerce significantly moderates the relationship.

H₃ Social commerce will significantly mediate online purchase intention towards electronic shopping gratification.

2.4 E-Shopping Gratification

A plethora of researchers is consecrated towards better empathizing the consumers' shopping behavior on the Internet (Darley, Blankson, and Luethge, 2010; Lian and Lin, 2008; Srinivasan, Anderson, & Ponnayolu, 2002; Wu, 2003). Building on the cognitive content of online shopping, the relationship among entertainment gratification, web irritation, and web atmospherics is found to be largely neglected. Gao and Koufaris (2006) point out web irritation as the degree of annoyance felt by a consumer during online shopping. Lim & Ting (2012) proposed entertainment gratification in online shopping as the degree of enjoyment which an individual acquires from online shopping. A proliferation of online shopping atmosphere induces the website design and its layout, such as: background color and pattern, hyperlinks, icons, interactive web applications, color scheme, music, typeface, and web borders (Lim 2013). Wu, Cheng, and Yen (2008) observed that practicing synergistic features in the design of web atmospherics makes the web experience more dynamic.

2.5 Conceptual Model

The conceptual framework, "BeeBen e-Gratification Model", of this study is presented in Figure I:

3. Research Methodology and Research Strategies

A standardized research instrument is employed to gather data from the respondents. The items that perceive each attribute are adopted from standardized scales developed by previous investigators. The sub-scales of Consumers' Electronic Attitude are adopted from Broekhuizen and Huizingh, 2009; Lim and Ting, 2012; and Ajzen, 1991. Social Commerce Adoption Model explicated by Hajli (2013) is used to measure Social Commerce. The sub-scales that capture Online Purchase Intention are modified from four-factor model formulated by Forsythe, Liu, Shannon, and Gardher (2006). The items that capture e-Shopping Gratification are assumed from the study "Formation of e-satisfaction and repurchase intention: moderating roles of computer self-efficacy and computer anxiety" by Lee, Kang, and Choi (2009). Eventually, the questionnaire is submitted for reliability and validity tests using Cronbach's Alpha, face and construct validity, and Confirmatory Factor Analysis. The Cronbach's Alpha reliability scores of the selected constructs are found to be over 0.7 (Nunnally, 1967). Hence it is interpreted that each attribute has adequate internal consistency.

The geographical area of this study refers to South India. The primary data are collected from the Gen Y respondents enrolled at an eminent educational institution in South India. Owing to the unavailability of central repository of online shoppers' database, Snowball Sampling Technique, a non-probability sampling design, is used to gather data. As per Krejcie & Morgan (1970) sample size determination model, the sample size approximated for this study is 330 respondents. After eliminating and revising double-barrelled, ambiguous, and misleading statements, 276 entirely filled questionnaires remained (83.63% response rate), which are used for further analysis (Churchill, 1979). The hypotheses are tested using multiple linear regression analysis – stepwise, mediating effects - path analysis, and structural equation modeling (SEM) with maximum likelihood estimation.

4. Data Analysis and Findings

Objective 1: In order to examine the role of consumers' e-attitude and online purchase intention towards electronic shopping gratification, Multiple Linear Regression analysis is applied. The results revealed that the regression value 'R' is at 63.4%, the R Square value is at 46.1%, and the adjusted R Square value is at 42.6%. From the R Square value, it can be empathized that the weighted combination of the predictor variables explains 46.1% of the divergence of dependent variable. It can be concluded that 46.1% variance in electronic shopping gratification is accounted by consumers' e-attitude and online purchase intention.

Objective 2: The degree to which the effect of online purchase intention (independent variable) on electronic shopping gratification (dependent variable) is influenced via social commerce (mediator) is measured by employing the mediating effect. It is determined that there is a significant relationship between online purchase intention and social commerce; electronic shopping gratification and social commerce. It is also observed from the path diagram that social commerce does significantly mediate online purchase intention towards electronic shopping gratification.

Conceptual Framework: Satisfying all the assumptions of SEM, the proposed "BeeBen e-Gratification Model" is tested using AMOS (Arbuckle, 1997; Hancock and Mueller, 2006; Schumacker and Lomax, 2004). The Chi-Square value of the proposed BeeBen e-Gratification Model is found to be significant. The model fit indices are observed as: CMIN/DF value at 3.147 - demonstrating an adequate fit, GFI value at 0.966 - establishing an estimable fit, AGFI value at 0.934 - depicting a good fit, RMR value at 0.031 - manifesting an ideal fit, CFI value at 0.911 - evidencing an acceptable fit, IFI value at 0.917 - expressing a reasonable fit, and PCLOSE value at 0.000 - indicating a precise fit. Consequently, the proposed BeeBen e-Gratification Model is accepted.

5. Results and Conclusion

The proposed "BeeBen e-Gratification Model" is the exceedingly endowed conceptual framework that integrates the emphasizing relationships of consumers' e-attitude, online purchase intention, social commerce, and electronic shopping gratification. This paper reveals that better electronic shopping gratification is for the most part imputable to two components: first, the consumers' e-attitude of an individual, especially the Gen Y consumers; and second, the online purchase intention in terms of the product or service. The findings of this investigation contribute to the existing literature by distinguishing the modern-day exercises that ascertain the roots of electronic shopping gratification. The results of this study count on the responses rendered by the respondents, which are relational. Furthermore, cross loading were noted while performing the confirmatory factor analysis. Aforementioned limitations should be considered before performing future research. Despite the fact that the proposed "BeeBen e-Gratification Model" established an unimpeachable fitness, there is invariably a probability for a better conceptual framework to exist.

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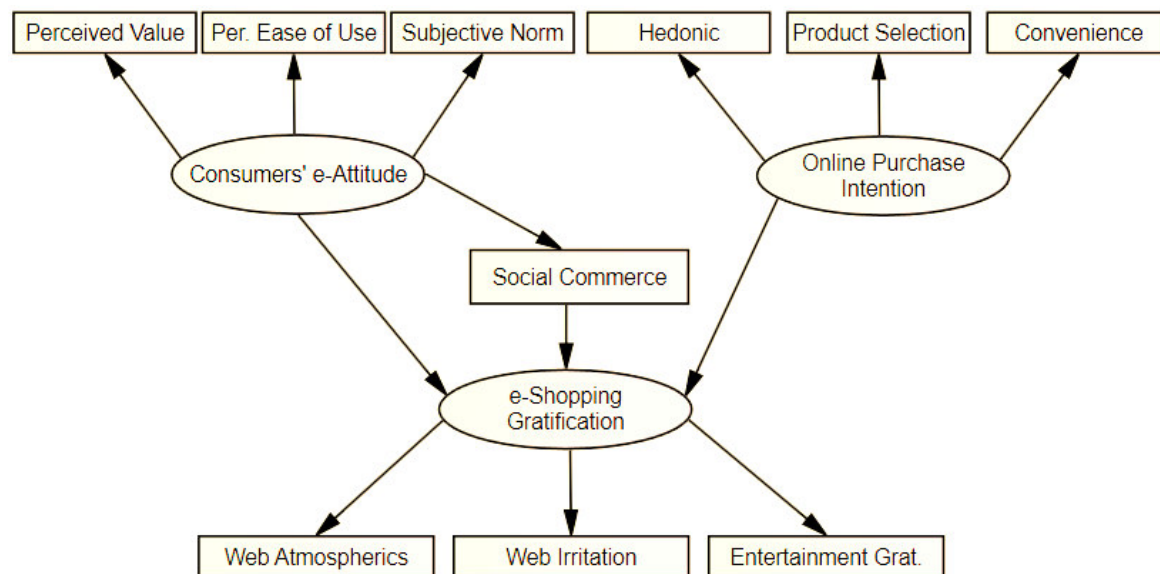


Figure 1: Conceptual Model - “BeeBen e-Gratification Model”

Factors	Items	Factor loading	Eigenvalue	Cronbach's α
Perceived Value / Usefulness	I require less effort in searching for what I want when shopping online	0.82	1.12	0.87
	The prices of products sold online are lower than of products sold in brick-and-mortar retailers	0.78		
	Shopping online is very convenient	0.81		
Perceived Ease of Use	I find most online shopping sites easy to use	0.85	1.08	0.76
	I find it easy learning to use most online shopping sites	0.86		
	I find it easy to use most online shopping sites to find what I want	0.84		
Subjective Norm	My relatives and friends approve my decision to shop online	0.92	1.09	0.81
	My relatives and friends think that I should shop online	0.89		
Convenience	Can shop in privacy of home	0.83	1.02	0.77
	Can shop whenever I want	0.87		
	Can save the effort of visiting stores	0.83		
Product Selection	Can get good product information online	0.84	1.07	0.71
	Broader selection of products	0.89		
	Access to many brands and retailers	0.85		
Hedonic / Enjoyment	To try new experience	0.92	1.08	0.88
	Exciting to receive a package	0.91		
	Can buy on impulse in response to ads			
Rating & Reviews	I search for the product rating before making a purchase decision	0.93	1.02	0.81
	I take much time to read the product/user reviews	0.95		
	I never mind the rating or reviews are they are generally paid or fake	0.89		
Recommendations & Referrals	I consider others recommendations to decide on a product	0.84	1.14	0.70
	I do not shop unless someone refers it	0.81		
	I hate to seek others recommendation	0.83		
e-Shopping Experience	I usually have a fruitful time shopping online	0.88	1.07	0.87
	I am pleased with my shopping activity	0.87		
	Overall, I am happy with my online purchases	0.81		
	I have a safe shopping experience over the Internet	0.86		
	I hate online shopping	0.91		

Dr Benny J. Godwin, as a Full-Time Research Scholar, has earned his Doctor of Philosophy in Management,

thesis entitled “Valuating the Verdict: Antecedents of Psychodynamic Customer Citizenship Behavior – An Intercontinental Approach”. He is currently working as an Assistant Professor at PG Dept. of Business Administration, Aloysius Institute of Management & Information Technology (AIMIT), St. Aloysius College (Autonomous), Mangalore. He has a couple of years of international work experience in Cotton Ginning Industry at Tanzania – East Africa. He is a Manuscript Reviewer for African Journal of Business Management and European Management Review. He has been a Resource Person at quite a few Faculty Development Programs. He has published over 20+ International and National peer-reviewed Journals. His research interests are Psychodynamics, Consumer Citizenship Behavior, and Consumer Personality.

Dr Beena Dias holds a Masters degree in Commerce with specialization in finance from Mangalore University and Post Graduate Diploma in Human Resource Management from Karnataka State Open University, Mysore. She has completed her Doctorate in the area of HRD on topic titled “Roles, Outputs and Competencies of Human Resource Development Practitioners – A study with reference to large and medium scale industries in Karnataka State”. She has served as a lecturer at St Philomena College, Puttur, Department of Postgraduate Studies and Research in Commerce, Mangalore University, and a senior lecturer in Business Management at St Aloysius College, Mangalore. She has presented and published in various national and international seminars in the areas of HRD and finance. She is also a counselor for IGNOU, Mangalore center.