A study on the effect that cyber atmospherics have on customers shopping on a variety of online retailing sites

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Abstract

The retail industry has undergone a dramatic upheaval as a result of the explosion in internet use, the creation of the necessary infrastructure, and the widespread adoption of various internet-capable devices. Customers who are comfortable using the internet today are prepared, both technologically and mentally, to make the most of these shifts in the industry. The online channel is now being used to sell products in a variety of categories, including but not limited to apparel, gifts, accessories, and even groceries. E-retailers have embarked on the path of developing outstanding online atmospheres in order to provide excellent shopping experiences for their customers, which in turn helps them to win and keep the customers' continued patronage. The "online" or "cyber" atmosphere has been dissected by researchers into its component variables. The time has come for people in the academic world as well as those working in the e-commerce industry to evaluate the effect that cyber atmospherics have on customers, specifically how these effects influence customer satisfaction, customer reliance, and customer adhesion.

Keywords: *cyber atmospherics, consumer contentment, consumer reliance, consumer adhesion*

Introduction

Background

The internet is currently receiving the largest amount of priority from the majority of business owners. Not only has the internet become important for businesses, but it has also been instrumental in the development of high levels of customer satisfaction. The disruptive force of e-commerce has resulted in the emergence of a number of lucrative new business models in recent years. E-commerce has taken off all over the world, but particularly in India thanks to the proliferation of both internet connections and telecommunications networks. The benefits of e-commerce are being leveraged to a significant extent across a diverse range of sectors, including the airline industry, the retail sector, banking and financial services, and the tourism sector. These businesses are tapping into the potential of e-commerce as an additional communication channel with their customers, which is ultimately resulting in an increase in sales. In point of fact, a number of traditional forms of social interaction have moved online, including long-distance education and business transactions. According to the findings of a survey (Clarke, 2000), more than sixty percent of shoppers are open to the possibility of doing their shopping online. In point of fact, 41% (Pastore, 2000) have already made purchases through an online retailer. Similarly, a survey that was conducted by Forrester Research in May of 1999 discovered that the average personal consumption of electronic

media had increased from 4.3 percent to 7.4 percent in the span of a single year. The existing body of literature has not actively dealt with the behaviour of online shoppers. In order to explain how people behave when shopping online, O'Keefe and McEachern (1998) applied an outdated version of the consumer behaviour model. It is also important to point out here that the behaviour of online consumers is driven more by advancements in the internet than by advancements in the products themselves.

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According to Babin and Dardin (1996), retailers invest a significant amount of their time and energy into developing strategies to attract customers, cultivate customer relationships, and convince customers to buy goods and services. The modern consumer is highly informed and has high standards for the products and services they purchase.

As a consequence of this, any action on the part of the retailer is certain to have some kind of effect on the relationship that they have with their customers. The ambiance of the store, which includes the lighting, scent, and sound, is one of the most important factors in producing a positive word-of-mouth impact on the customers.

Objective

The purpose of this study is to investigate, using the proposed model as a guide, the influence that a variety of cyber atmospherics variables have on the purchasing attitudes of consumers. The following are the most important goals that the study aims to achieve:

a. To investigate the possibility of a relationship existing between the various components of cyber atmospherics and the field as a whole.

b. To understand the interrelationships that exist between different constructs of consumer's buying attitudes and intentions in the context of online retailing (i.e. consumer contentment, consumer reliance, and consumer adhesion).

c. To identify the potential connections between demographic factors, cyber-environmental variables, and the shopping habits of consumers

Hypothesis

H0. There is no significant change in possibility of a relationship existing between the various components of cyber atmospherics and the field as a whole.

H1. Tere is significant change in possibility of a relationship existing between the various components of cyber atmospherics and the field as a whole.

H0. There is no significant change the interrelationships that exist between different constructs of consumer's buying attitudes and intentions in the context of online retailing (i.e. consumer contentment, consumer reliance, and consumer adhesion).

H2. There is significant change in the interrelationships that exist between different constructs of consumer's buying attitudes and intentions in the context of online retailing (i.e. consumer contentment, consumer reliance, and consumer adhesion).

H0. There is no significant change in the potential connections between demographic factors, cyber-environmental variables, and the shopping habits of consumers

H3. There is significant change in the potential connections between demographic factors, cyber-environmental variables, and the shopping habits of consumers

4. Material and method:
Study design

This research was carried out on the basis of surveys taken in East Indian cities' various educational institutions and shopping centres. The majority of participants in the study were consumers who were students. The respondents came from a variety of educational backgrounds, ranging from higher secondary to doctoral degrees. The question of whether or not the respondents engage in online shopping was posed to them immediately prior to the completion of the questionnaire.

After receiving responses in the affirmative to the questionnaires, we gave them the questionnaires.

This study relied on primary sources for its data collection. A questionnaire with a predetermined format was used to collect the data.

Data collection

In order to collect information from the respondents, we made use of the structured questionnaire that was mentioned earlier. Specific aspects of the study were determined after conducting a comprehensive literature review of the relevant prior research. After that, an initial questionnaire was constructed using the specific dimensions that were taken into consideration. After that, a preliminary study called a pilot study was carried out to investigate whether or not the questionnaire was appropriate for the subsequent research. The items of overall cyber atmospherics were collected for the questionnaire. The components of cyber atmospherics were acquired through the research conducted by Mckinney(2004. In terms of the reliance of customers, the data presented here came from studies conducted by Ribbink and colleagues (2004). In the case of customer satisfaction, the data was compiled using information from the studies conducted by Oliver (1997). In the end, information regarding consumer adhesion was gathered from the studies conducted by Fullerton (2003).

Data analysis

The survey's responses were entered into a spreadsheet, tabulated, and combined into a single document before being run through the statistical analysis software SPSS. The interrelationships as well as the statistical significance of age, educational qualifications, earnings, purchase frequency, and category were investigated with the cross tabulation and Chi-square tests, respectively. In order to determine whether or not there are statistically significant differences between demographic factors and cyber atmospheric variables, a one-

way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and a F test were carried out. Chi-square statistics were utilised so that the question of whether or not the distribution was a good fit could be answered. In this particular study, correlation as well as various forms of multivariate analysis such as multiple regression, factor analysis, and structural equation modelling were utilised.

5. Result and Discussion:

The following is an itemised list of the findings from the study:

(a) The reliability assessment was performed using Cronbach's Alpha Score as the basis for the calculation.

The fact that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each of the items came out to be greater than 0.7 indicates that there is a satisfactory degree of internal consistency among the items that make up each construct as well as reliability of the constructs.

(b) Exploratory Factor Analysis: The results of the loading of the EFA are described as follows, according to table 5.35:

Table 6.1: EFA Loading Results

Construct	Total Items	Loaded Items
External Features	9	7
Internal Features	7	6
Ambience & Design	5	5
POP	4	4
Customer Service	11	9
Social Aspects	6	6
Overall Cyber Atmospherics	4	3
Consumer Reliance	10	9
Consumer Contentment	5	5
Consumer Adhesion	9	8

(c) Validity Analysis and Pattern Matrix: It was discovered through the use of the Pattern Matrix that each construct possessed both Convergent Validity and Discriminant Validity.

(d) Chi-Square test to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant association: A Chi-Square test was performed to determine whether or not there is a statistically significant association between gender and purchase frequency, gender and category,

educational qualification and purchase frequency, educational qualification and category, earnings and purchase frequency, earnings and category, age and purchase frequency, and age and category. A statistically significant association was discovered to exist between gender and category, educational qualification and purchase frequency, earnings and purchase frequency, earnings and category, and age and purchase frequency. The statistical significance of these associations was determined using a correlation coefficient.

Conclusion:

Based on the findings, the study has significant repercussions for academic researchers because of its comprehensive view of consumer behaviour and its increased focus on online retail, ambience, major categories, recommend items, and social media. In the event that cyber atmospheric strategies are applied for differentiation, entry of global retailers, trying to target and segmentation strategies, profitability, emotional connection with e-tailers, and customer preferences of cyber atmospheric variables, it also has significant managerial implications. The impact of brand, promotions, discounts, and freebies on consumer behaviour; the selection of categories for the study. These are the limitations of the study in regard to media attention of cities; demographic variables; factors other than cyber atmospherics which affect consumer behaviour; impact of brand on consumer behaviour; and selection of categories for the study. In addition, research can be conducted in the areas of India-specific factors, demographic, behavioural, and psychographic variables, the business model of online retailers, the impact of technology, device usage, retailer omnipresence, and the inclusion of additional categories.

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