Impact of Hedonic Evaluation of Technological Innovations on Revisit Intention in a Store Digitalization Context

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this research is to investigate how hedonic evaluation of technological innovation affects directly store revisit intention and indirectly through the mediation of customer satisfaction and shopping experience. 257 real customers assessed the introduction of four innovative tools (automatic check-out, Internet kiosk, Smartphone and self-scanning) in supermarkets. Structural equation modeling results show that customer hedonic evaluation of technological innovation affects positively store revisit intention. However, while technology pleasantness influences it significantly, technology interactivity does not. Furthermore, the authors establish significant mediation effects of customer overall satisfaction and shopping experience on the relationship investigated. FIMIX-PLS segmentation identifies two specific groups (low versus high hedonic technology seekers). This research stresses retail companies to focus on hedonic aspects of innovative technologies and to invest in personnel and accompanying measures that enable a smooth use of technological innovations.

KEYWORDS

Interactivity, Mediation Effects, New Technologies, Pleasantness, Satisfaction, Segmentation, Shopping Experience, Store Revisit Intention, Technology-Human Interaction

INTRODUCTION

Like many industries (Vasudeva & Singh 2017), the retail industry is now experiencing various evolutions due to new technologies (Internet, smartphones, etc.) (Grewal, Roggeveen & Nordfält, 2017; Inman & Nikolova, 2017) that are altering the relationships between retailers and their customers (Pantano & Viassone, 2014). These increasing uses of technological innovations can enhance consumers’ experience (Oh, Teo & Sambamurthi, 2012; Papagiannidis, Pantano, See-To & Bourlakis, 2017), as well as retailers’ competitiveness and business performance (Inman & Nikolova, 2017). However, many technological innovations also fail (Chiesa & Frattini, 2011), which is an outcome with significant financial consequences. Furthermore, retailers use new technologies in their various channels (e.g., stores, websites, mobile applications) to offer seamless experiences and make shopping more convenient for consumers in omnichannel retailing ecosystems (Piotrowicz & Cuthbertson, 2014; Verhoef, Kannan & Inman, 2015).

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Prior studies show that cross-channel integration can increase retailers’ performance and improve consumer satisfaction (Van Birgelen, De Jong & De Ruyter, 2006), yet it is not clear how the introduction of technological innovations might create value for consumers (e.g., shopping experience, satisfaction) or retailers (e.g., store loyalty). But the consequences of introducing innovations are critical, because companies invest heavily in innovative technologies (e.g., interactive kiosks, self-scanning, contactless payment), often without clear knowledge of their effects on consumers and thus on the companies’ performance (Inman & Nikolova, 2017).

Most of prior research investigated the adoption of technological innovations and its cognitive evaluation (Davis, 1989; Renko & Druzijanic, 2014). However, shopping is not just about obtaining utilitarian value but also pleasure. An enjoyable shopping experience can lead to higher shopper satisfaction and spending (e.g. Donovan, Rossiter, Marcoyln & Nesdale, 1994; Papagiannidis et al., 2017).

Consequently, the objective of this research is to investigate how positive hedonic evaluation of technological innovations affects directly or indirectly customer satisfaction, shopping experience and store revisit intention. We specifically analyze how customer satisfaction and shopping experience mediate the relationship between hedonic evaluation of technological innovations and store revisit intention. Understanding factors affecting directly and indirectly revisit intention is critical in an omnichannel context where customer “showrooming” has become a major threat to physical stores.

This research contributes to existing research in three main ways. First, it shows that hedonic evaluation of technology (including both pleasantness and interactivity aspects) has positive and homogeneous effects across the value creation chain, for both consumers (increased satisfaction and better shopping experience) and retailers (higher store revisit intention). Thus, this study complements existing research on the effects of new technologies in retailing (Inman & Nikolova, 2017; Papagiannidis et al., 2017). Second, this research brings further insights about the relationships between hedonic evaluation, customer satisfaction and store revisit intention. This paper specifically establishes a significant mediation effect of customer overall satisfaction on the relationship between hedonic evaluation of technological innovations on store revisit intention. Thus, this result enriches the recent study of Inman & Nikolova (2017) who showed that satisfaction mediates the effect of retail technology on retail patronage intentions. Furthermore, these results highlight differences between pleasantness and interactivity dimensions. Specifically, this research shows that technology affects positively store revisit intention while technology interactivity does not. Both technology pleasantness and interactivity influence indirectly store revisit intention through the mediation of customer satisfaction and shopping experience.

Third, this research establishes the significant mediation effect of customer shopping experience on the relationship between hedonic evaluation of technological innovations on store revisit intention. Identifying such a mediation effect is important because experience has over the past become the key variable differentiating retail companies one from another (Papagiannidis et al., 2013). Furthermore, while store digitalization has become a significant trend in retailing (Papagiannidis et al., 2017), it not yet clear how hedonic evaluation of innovative technologies affects shopping experience, nor is it obvious how the latter affects behavioral intentions in digitalized stores.

In the next sections, the theoretical framework will first be presented and the related hypotheses. Next, the research methodology will be exposed, followed by the results. Finally, some theoretical and managerial implications are proposed and discussed, as well as some limitations and suggestions for further research.
Considering Complexity in Simple Solutions: What’s So Complicated About Skype?
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