



Hedonic and utilitarian shopping values in airport shopping behavior



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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine airport travelers' shopping decision mechanisms based on a value–attitude–behavior framework. In particular, the proposed model investigates the complex relationships between pairs of shopping values (hedonic versus utilitarian), attitudes (cognitive versus affective), and behavior (repatronage intention versus retailer interest) to compare the relative importance between hedonic- and utilitarian-oriented decision paths. A survey was administered at Taiwan Taoyuan International Airport, where 300 valid questionnaires were collected. Using structural equation modeling, this study finds that the direct effects of shopping values on shopping behavior are stronger than their indirect effects through attitudes. Compared with utilitarian shopping values, hedonic shopping values exert a stronger effect on airport shopping behavior, implying that airport shopping involves more multisensory decisions than cognitive decisions. In addition, avoiding negative feelings (e.g. regret) appears to be a stronger antecedent of airport shopping behavior than pursuing positive feelings (e.g. excitement). Marketing strategies of airport retailing are discussed.

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1. Introduction

Since retailing is an important component of modern commercial airports, understanding airport shopping behavior is crucial to the retail strategies used. Shopping at airports is not entirely the same as street or mall shopping. A fundamental difference between these shopping modes is that shoppers visit a mall with the primary purpose of shopping, while travelers at an airport are to travel.

Partly for this reason, shopper motivation has been a vital issue for airport managers and concessionaires. Increasingly, airports are considering, or have adopted, a “developer” approach to optimize their retail mix, including high-quality brands and guaranteed regular mall prices, rather than a master concessionaire approach, which considers airport travelers as captive and mostly one-time shoppers, thus, exploiting them through limited choice and higher prices to maximize concessionaires' profits (Knight, 2009). Meanwhile, airport concessionaires are advised to choose products with a strong sales history, or product categories that fit travelers' needs, such as souvenirs, unique products, or seasonal items. They are also advised to design eye-catching shops and store displays that recognize the traveler's perceived time pressure and their unfamiliarity with the airport. Although the aforementioned

principles have been well recognized by airport managers and concessionaires, further investigation about airport shopping behavior is necessary to develop retail or marketing strategies based on these principles.

A few studies have investigated the motivations of airport shopping behavior, notably Geuens et al. (2004), Chung et al. (2013), and Lin and Chen (2013). The shopping motivations explored by Geuens et al. (2004) were “Airport related,” “Atmospheric,” “Experiential,” and “Functional”; those explored by Chung et al. (2013) were “Functional,” “Experiential,” and “Rational”; and those explored by Lin and Chen (2013) were “Environment and communication,” “Favorable price and quality,” and “Culture and atmosphere.” The results varied because of the exploratory research design in these studies; in other words, the possible underlying motivational structure was explored without imposing any preconceived structure on the outcome. The identified motivations are useful; however, the varied structures may be insufficient for airport or concessionaire managers who want to devise marketing strategies.

It is relevant to investigate the extent to which these shopping motivations can be connected to airport shopping behavior. Lin and Chen (2013) study was the only one among the aforementioned studies to investigate this association; they focused exclusively on impulse shopping behavior. The result suggested that “Environment and communication” was the only motivation that exerted a significant influence on airport shopping behavior. The non-

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significant association of other motivations, such as atmosphere, is inconsistent with consumer behavior studies that have stated that impulse buying is typically related to hedonic rewards (e.g. Hausman, 2000). Moreover, impulse buying is only one aspect of airport shopping; a certain proportion of airport shopping behavior is pre-planned.

This brief literature review suggests the need to develop a theoretical model of shopping behavior that provides a general framework applicable to various airports and can effectively explain airport shopping behavior. This study involves using the value–attitude–behavior theory to develop a model of airport shopping behavior and validating the model by using a confirmatory approach. In particular, this study builds on marketing literature to identify the distinction between hedonic and utilitarian shopping values (USVs), structured under the value–attitude–behavior hierarchy. Hedonic and utilitarian shopping values represent two fundamental motivations that could effectively explain various shopping behaviors (Childers et al., 2002); in other words, these two values are expected to embrace the various airport shopping motivations that have been found in previous studies. In the following sections, we will show that the proposed model exhibited satisfactory psychometric properties; in addition, the explained variances of airport shopping behavior were significant, indicating the effectiveness of the proposed model.

The remainder of this paper is as follows. The subsequent section presents the literature review and hypotheses development, followed by a methodology section outlining the developed scales, questionnaire design and collected dataset. The next section provides the results, followed by a discussion section. Limitations of the study and future research prospects are presented in the last section.

2. Literature review and hypotheses development

2.1. Hedonic and utilitarian shopping values

Extant research has addressed the importance of hedonic and utilitarian shopping values, especially their effects on various shopping behavior. Hedonic shopping values (HSVs) reflect the value received from “multisensory, fantasy, and emotional” aspects of the shopping experience, whereas USVs reflect the value received from the “task-oriented, cognitive, and non-emotional” outcomes of the shopping experience (Jones et al., 2006). From the utilitarian view, consumers may desire to purchase products in an efficient and timely manner to achieve their goals with minimum irritation, and spend their remaining time in the terminal on other “important” tasks. Conversely, from the hedonic view, consumers may tend to immerse themselves in the shopping environment and enjoy the excitement or pleasure during the “hunting” process. Shopping is normally characterized by both values and with different weights, depending on the shoppers, products, shopping conditions, and their interactions. Airport travelers' shopping experiences lead them to form various values about shopping at airports. These values may be formed because of direct observation, indirectly acquired by receiving information from friends and relatives, or self-generated through an inference process (Fishbein and Ajzen, 2011).

2.2. Shopping behavior

This study considers two aspects of shopping behavior—retailer interest and repatronage intention—both are thought to comprise affective as well as cognitive components. Retailer interest is defined as the level of interest that a consumer has in given retail stores in the airport terminals (Jones and Reynolds, 2006).

Repatronage intention reflects consumer intention to shop at a retail store again (repeat patronage). In general, interest would provoke approach and exploration behavior related to the object of interest, and therefore, retailer interest is expected to be related with repatronage intention. Referring to Jones and Reynolds (2006), we develop the following hypothesis:

- H1. Retailer interest will positively influence repatronage intention in airport retail stores.

2.3. Shopping values and behavior

Prior studies in environmental psychology show that affective experiences within the store are important antecedents of retailer interest and repatronage intention (Jones et al., 2006); retail research at airports also empirically supports this connection (Chung et al., 2013; Geuens et al., 2004). Given the increasing importance of entertainment as a retailing strategy at airports, HSV is thus expected to be related to retailer interest and repatronage intention.

Utilitarian value is also expected to relate to retailer interest and repatronage intention. Consumers may perceive utilitarian value from their shopping experience by accomplishing the shopping “task” of product acquisition (Jones et al., 2006; Overby and Lee, 2006). Consumers who perceive higher quality from various aspects of the experience will be more likely to demonstrate stronger retailer interest and repatronage intention. For example, travelers may shop at airports because of convenience (e.g. souvenir). Given this reasoning, therefore, the following hypotheses are developed:

- H2a. HSV will positively influence repatronage intention and interest in airport retail stores.
- H2b. USV will positively influence repatronage intention and interest in airport retail stores.

2.4. Shopping values and attitudes

The expectancy–value model suggests that value is an important antecedent of attitude, which is defined as a latent disposition or tendency to respond with some degree of favorableness or unfavorableness to shopping behavior. According to Fishbein and Ajzen (2011), attitude consists of both instrumental and experiential aspects: the former aspect appears to reflect the behavior's perceived instrumentality, and the latter aspect appears to reflect the positive or negative experiences perceived to be associated with performing the behavior. Consumers who obtain a higher value from accomplishing shopping tasks (i.e. USV), or from affective experiences (i.e., HSV), will have a stronger attitude toward shopping. Given this reasoning, the following hypotheses are proposed:

- H3a. HSV will positively influence attitudes toward shopping at airport retail stores.
- H3b. USV will positively influence attitudes toward shopping at airport retail stores.

2.5. Attitudes and shopping behavior

The Theory of planned behavior (TPB) has been one of the most influential theories in explaining and predicting behavior, including shopping behavior (Pavlou and Fygenonson, 2006). According to TPB, behavioral intention is determined by attitude, subjective norms,

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