



Antecedents and Moderating Factors for Consumers' Adoption of Fashion Subscription

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Subscription retailing is a fast-growing innovative online shopping medium. This market experienced more than 100 percent growth annually over the last five years, with the most successful retailer making more than \$2.6 billion in sales in 2016 compared to \$57 million in 2011 (Chen, Fenyo, Yang & Zhang, 2018). Similar trend has shown in the fashion subscription retailing market. In light of the tremendous growth of subscription services in the fashion retail industry and the limited research on consumer behavior toward this emerging innovative retailing format, it is timely and needed to investigate factors influencing consumers' adoption intention toward fashion subscription retailing.

The purpose of this study is to discover the antecedents of consumers' adoption intention of fashion subscription services following the Technology Acceptance Model. The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) (Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1989) suggests that perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use are the two key determinants of information technology adoption. Perceived enjoyment was further added to the original TAM in addition to the initial two constructs (Davis, Bagozzi & Warshaw, 1992). Perceived usefulness refers to the degree that an individual believes using a particular system could help his or her job performance (Davis *et al.*, 1989, p. 320). In the context of fashion subscription, perceived usefulness is interpreted as the degree that a customer believes using fashion subscription retailing services will help him or her gain utilitarian benefits in the shopping process. Four different utilitarian benefits were discovered in Tao and Xu's (2018) study, including convenience, social benefits, economic benefits and style opportunity. Perceived ease of use describes the extent of a person's belief of using a particular system would be free of efforts (Davis, 1989). Perceived enjoyment refers to the extent to which using the technology is perceived to be enjoyable by its own, apart from any performance variables (Davis *et al.*, 1992). Based on prior theoretical and empirical researches, it was hypothesized in this study that consumers' intention to adopt fashion subscription retailing services will be affected by their perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoyment related to fashion subscription.

Additionally, this study aims to investigate the moderating effects of two shopping relevant traits, including hedonic shopping orientation (HSO) and experiment with appearance (EA). Hedonic shoppers enjoy the shopping process and value the emotional benefits of traditional retail shopping (El-Adly & Eid, 2016). Experiment with appearance refers to an individual's readiness to try new and different things for the only purpose of gaining existential enjoyment from the novel experience and without concern for the consequential effect (Gurel & Gurel, 1979). It was hypothesized in this study that the influence of perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoyment on consumers' adoption intention will vary among consumers with different levels of hedonic shopping orientation and experiment with appearance.

A total of 256 complete questionnaires were obtained via an online survey. Questions used to measure perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoyment were developed based on the findings of Tao and Xu's (2018) study. Hedonic shopping orientation measurement was adopted from the hedonistic shopping consciousness scale in Sproles and Kendall's (1986) consumer style inventory. Experiment with appearance measurement was adopted from the Gurel and Gurel (1979)'s scale.

Reliability analyses for all multi-item measurements indicated good internal consistencies among the items for each latent variable. The Cronbach's Alphas for the variables were all above 0.7 except for perceived usefulness-economic benefits with a Cronbach's Alphas of 0.68. A regression analysis was conducted to investigate the influence of the identified antecedents of consumers' adoption intention for fashion subscription services according to the TAM model. The results of the regression model ($R^2 = 0.684$, $F(6, 238) = 86.03$, $p < .001$), revealed significant influences of the following factors, including perceived convenience, perceived economic benefits, perceived style related benefits, perceived ease of use and perceived enjoyment. In order to test the moderating effect of hedonic shopping orientation, the data was divided into two groups based on the median score (5.1667) of HSO: low HSO group vs. high HSO group. For the low HSO group, the regression analysis results ($R^2 = .665$, $F(6, 115) = 38.05$, $p < .001$) revealed perceived usefulness, in terms of convenience and economic benefits, and perceived enjoyment are significant factors for consumers' adoption intention of fashion subscription retailing services. For the high HSO group, the regression analysis results ($R^2 = .669$, $F(6, 113) = 38.12$, $p < .001$) revealed a different group of factors that significantly influenced consumers' adoption intention: perceived usefulness, in terms of economic benefits, social benefits and style, perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoyment. That is, consumers' hedonic shopping orientation exerted a moderating effect on consumers' adoption intention.

Similar picture was shown when using EA as the moderating factor. For the low EA group, perceived usefulness, in terms of convenience, economic benefits and style related benefits, and perceived ease of use were significant factors. For the high EA group, perceived usefulness, in terms of economic benefits and style related benefits, perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoyment were the significant factors that influence consumers' adoption intention.

In conclusion, following the TAM model (Davis et al., 1989), this study empirically examined and confirmed the influence of consumers' perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use, and perceived enjoyment of fashion subscription retailing services on their adoption intention. Additionally, the multi-group analyses of the study suggested that the consumers' perceptions variably influenced adoption intention depending on their shopping related traits. Specially, the moderating effects of hedonic shopping orientation and experiment with appearance were tested and confirmed. This study not only contributes to the literature by providing empirical evidence on consumer behavior toward fashion subscription retailing, but also provides managerial insights to the practitioners in their marketing and segmentation efforts. The convenience sample prevents generalization of the results to all Internet shoppers.

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