



CONSUMER ADOPTION OF THE INTERNET FOR APPAREL SHOPPING: THEORETICAL MODEL DEVELOPMENT

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The present study examined the influence of three components-psychological factors (beliefs, attitude), social factors (social support, social acceptance), and prior experience (prior experience with mail order shopping, the Internet)-on apparel buying intention through the Internet. Study objectives were (1) to examine consumers' experience with mail order and Internet apparel shopping and (2) to propose a theoretical model describing consumer adoption of the Internet for apparel shopping by incorporating two social-psychological theories-the theory of reasoned action (Fish-bein & Ajzen, 1975) and the theory of innova-tion adoption (Rogers, 1995).

A questionnaire was mailed to a random U.S. sample of 1,600 households. A total of 448 questionnaires were returned, generating a 27.4% return rate. Of these, 355 usable questionnaires were submitted for data analysis. Respondents were hesitant to shop for apparel through the Internet and indicated that they would shop via the Internet if there were market incentives such as free and easier products returns, innovative functions (e.g., view of how the garment looks on their own body), and ensured credit card safety.

Structural equation modeling via LISREL VII indicated that the theory of reasoned action and the theory of innovation adoption were most effective in an integrated explanation of consumer adoption of the Inter-net for apparel shopping. Prior experience with the Internet had the strongest impact on apparel buying intention through the Internet. Age, education, and income were important demographic variables influencing consumer adoption of Internet apparel shopping.

Fishbein, M., & Ajzen, I. (1975). Beliefs, attitude, intention, and behavior: An introduction to theory and research. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.

Rogers, E. M. (1995). Diffusion of innovations (4th ed.). New York: The Free Press.