INVESTIGATING FASHION ORIENTATION AND MALL PERSONALITY IMPACTS ON CONSUMERS SHOPPING VALUE AND MALL PATRONAGE TENDENCY

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Abstract

The current study aims on investigating consumers shopping value and mall patronage intention which are results of the store fashion orientation and mall personality. In this research we had a sample population of Iranian students who had a shopping experience in ZARA stores in Iran. Results of the research would be helpful for mall managers and operator in order to distinguish themselves from their competitors. Findings of the research indicate that fashion orientation and mall personality have positive influence on consumers shopping value and mall patronage intension.

Keywords: Mall personality, Fashion orientation, Shopping value, Mall patronage intention.

I. INTRODUCTION

China has shown excellent economic growth in recent years and has been converted to the second largest economy in the world. Li and Fung investigated this issue and found out that during 2008-12, total retail sales of consumer goods have increased from 10.8 trillion to 20.7 trillion Yuan. This rapid growth was welcomed by residents of the inland cities and citizens benefited from it. For instance, in Wuhan, the capital of Hubei province, consumer goods have shown more than 100 percent increase in retail sale and improvedfrom129.3 billion RMB in 2006 to 295.9 billion RMB in 2011. Wuhan is regarded as one of the greatest economic hubs and the wealthiest city in the central region.

Economic growth has encouraged global retailers and property developers to travel to China to utilize different business opportunities, including development of mega-malls in its large and small cities. Reports suggest that the space devoted to mall construction in just one of the cities in

China exceed 86 cities of Europe, excluding Russia and Turkey. In 2014, China was known as no.1 developer of shopping malls as the present symbol of consumer capitalism.

In order to maximize sale opportunities and space productivity of shopping malls, all mall owners should apprehend consumer behaviors thoroughly. The present research is going to study shopping behaviors of Chinese consumers and examine the proposed conceptual framework including constructs such as mall personality, fashion orientation, shopping value, and mall patronage intention. The main objective of this study is to 1) increase our understanding about present shoppers of China and 2) examine the relationships among the abovementioned constructs.

The hypotheses discussed in the research include: 1) Fashion orientation significantly influences perceived shopping value; 2) Fashion orientation significantly influences shoppers' perceptions of mall personality; 3) Mall personality significantly influences shopping value; and 4) Shopping value significantly influences mall patronage intention.

To analyze survey responses of 324 shopping mall patronages participated in the survey, Partial Least Square Equation Modeling (PLS SEM) was the structural equation modeling technique used for exploring relationships among various constructs. The second hypothesis was approved and structural model results showed that mall personality has the most effect on shopping value. The present research concludes that international mall developers should use different strategies, based on shopping mall type, location and consumer demographic profile, to connect to their target shoppers

II.   LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Retail market in China, despite the impact ofthe2008/2009global financial crisis, has preserved its strength and consumers spend money in them. Shopping malls are welcomed by Chinese shoppers and in this relation, the consumer behavior of Western societies have been studied thoroughly.

AlthoughresearchabouttheChineseretailmarkethasprogressedoverrecent years, but still many points should be explored. Thus, this study intends to generate meaningful information and contribute important knowledge to literature of mall shopping in China at both the cortical and practical levels. In this research, a number of theories developed in the West (personality scale, shopping value, fashion orientation) have been tested in non-Western retail markets. Besides, most previous studies about consumer behavior and retail market focused on the first-tier cities including Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou, and little research has addressed second-tier cities such as Wuhan.

"Shopping orientation" describes shoppers' styles or patterns in certain activities, interests, and opinions concerning shopping process" Prior research showed that shopping orientation is a multi-dimensional construct including personal, economic ,social, and recreational motivations.

Meanwhile, "fashion orientation, "is a latent construct which include fashion leadership, fashion interest, importance of being well-dressed, and anti-fashion attitudes. Studies suggest that consumers' fashion interests relate to their shopping behaviors. Darley and Johnson, (1993) found that's hopping behaviors of American female adolescents' were influenced by fashion orientation. Shoppers who are fashion leaders seem to be more involved in shopping in general, and more concerned about shopping value and shopping mall environment specifically, than those with less interest in fashion. The present research shows that "shopping value" consists of indicator variables relating to "utilitarian" and "hedonic" shopping values. It means that shopping value is the way that consumer sasses the worth of their shopping experiences. Research has shown that fashion orientation is linked to shopping value with its utilitarian and hedonic components meaning that individuals may prefer specific shopping environments according to their fashion orientation. It worth mentioning that utilitarian and hedonic value should not be viewed as two opposed shopping motives; sometimes, they even are positively correlated and complement each other. According to Michon and Chebat (2004), the perceived shopping goals may motivate hedonic shoppers and so, it is believed that both utilitarian and hedonic benefits play an important part in behavior of shoppers, and it is suggested that fashion-oriented consumers influence shopping value. The following hypotheses were developed to examine the relationship between fashion orientation and shopping value:

1. **H1: Fashion Orientation Significantly Influences Perceived Shopping Value.**

Aaker's (1997) brand personality scale (BPS), in the recent years, has been widely applied in different domains and various countries including Germany, South Korea and website brand communication in United States. Despite widespread application of BPS, its universal applicability across industries and countries has been questioned and criticized. Musanteetal. (2008) believe that "the primaryfaultisthatmanyofthe42traits used in the scale were not easily applicable," and Zentes et al. (2008) states that "generalization of this scale to other European markets should be investigated." Due to the concerns of scale appropriateness, some researchers presented their own personality scales for different domains. Store personality scales (SPS) were developed for the retail market and while many studies have examined the store personality in different countries, the specific topic of "shopping center/mall personality" was not paid so much attention. For this research study, the personality traits of the store personality scale(SPS)developed by d'Astous and Lévesque(2003) were adapted in order to elucidate how mall personality is linked to fashion orientation, shopping value and mall patronage intention in the context of these shopping environment in Wuhan, China. We chose to use the SPS scale of d'Astous and Lévesque because the shopping motives and activities at bother tail stores and shopping malls are similar. Some prior studies demonstrate the relation of fashion orientation with store environment. A number of researchers have found that fashion leaders tend to patronize clothing stores more frequently than do other consumers. Shoppers with high fashion orientation are more likely to shop at upscale department stores. The study in Belgium showed that consumers' perception toward a store is influenced by its personality. It seems that them all environments contributes significantly to the behavior and experience so fashion oriented shoppers and consumers' perceptions of a shopping mall may be related to their affective

responses to different stimuli, including attributes of mall personality. So, the following hypothesis explores the relationship between fashion orientation and mall personality:

2. **H2: Fashion Orientation Significantly Influences Shopper's Perceptions of Mall Personality**

Mall personality and shopping value: Prior research showed that shopping activities may have both hedonic and utilitarian outcomes for consumers. Utilitarian values refer to functional, instrumental, practical, and task-related benefits, while hedonic values refer to ones that area esthetic, experiential, emotional, and pleasure-related. Utilitarian benefits are gained through problem-solving or tangible/ objective outcomes, but hedonic benefits are often presented by consumers' self-fulfillment/-gratification. These values describe shopping experiences and benefits. In shopping mall environments, shoppers do not merely focus on utilitarian aspects and seek hedonic benefits, too. So, it maybe asserted that mall personality could influence perceived shopping value as whole. Prior research concluded that shopping experience can generate both hedonic and utilitarian values. Therefore, the following hypothesis examines the relationship between mall personality and shopping value:

3. **H3: Mall Personality Significantly Influences Shopping Value.**

Shopping value and mall patronage intention: Retailer sand shopping mall operators try to attract new shoppers and at the same time retain their existing ones. Jin and Kim (2003) believe that shopping outcomes explain a shopper's level of excitement, satisfaction, and involvement. Thus a mall operator must be prepared for an optimum shopping experience for their customers. The study showed that approach behavior is a latent construct that includes indicator variables – mall preference, re-patronage intention, customer recommendation and loyalty. Approach behavior will be better understood when the concept dichotomized into "approach behavior" and "avoidance behavior". Approach behavior is presented by those shoppers who engage and show interest in exploring the retail environment, but, "avoidance" describes the behavior of people not interested in exploring or returning to certain shopping environments, and unwilling to do so. Approach behaviors include: time spent browsing and exploring the store; tendency to interact with others in the store; eagerness to spend more time and money than expected; probability of returning to the store; willingness to buy; and chance of recommending the store. Studies show that shopping value perceived by consumers has an important and direct impact on their mall patronage intentions. So, if consumers experience positive and beneficial shopping encounters in a particular shopping environment, they will possibly patronize the venue again, and recommend it to others. To confirm findings of previous literature, the fourth hypothesis explores the relationship between shopping value and mall patronage intention:

4. **H4. : Shopping Value Significantly Influences Mall Patronage Intention**

Results suggest that shoppers' fashion orientation has great influence on their assessment of shopping value and perception of shopping mall personality. It was expected that the perceived mall personality significantly influence shopping value. The present study claims that shopping value is an endogenous variable and other latent constructs such as mall personality and

fashion orientation influence shopping value, which in turn affects shoppers' patronage intentions. It means that shopping value plays a mediatory role between fashion orientation/ mall personality and mall patronage intention

The Guangzhou International Shopping Centre is a newly established regional mall in Hubei Province which was used for data gathering. Its target market consists of 18to38year-oldprofessionalswhoaremorefashion forward than their older counterparts. According to studies made in China, younger consumers are increasingly savvy, sophisticated, and demand higher quality products and services compared to old consumers. Beside sage factor, the positioning, merchandise offering, and target clientele of this particular mall converts it to a suitable place for examining the shopping behavior so fashion- oriented shoppers.
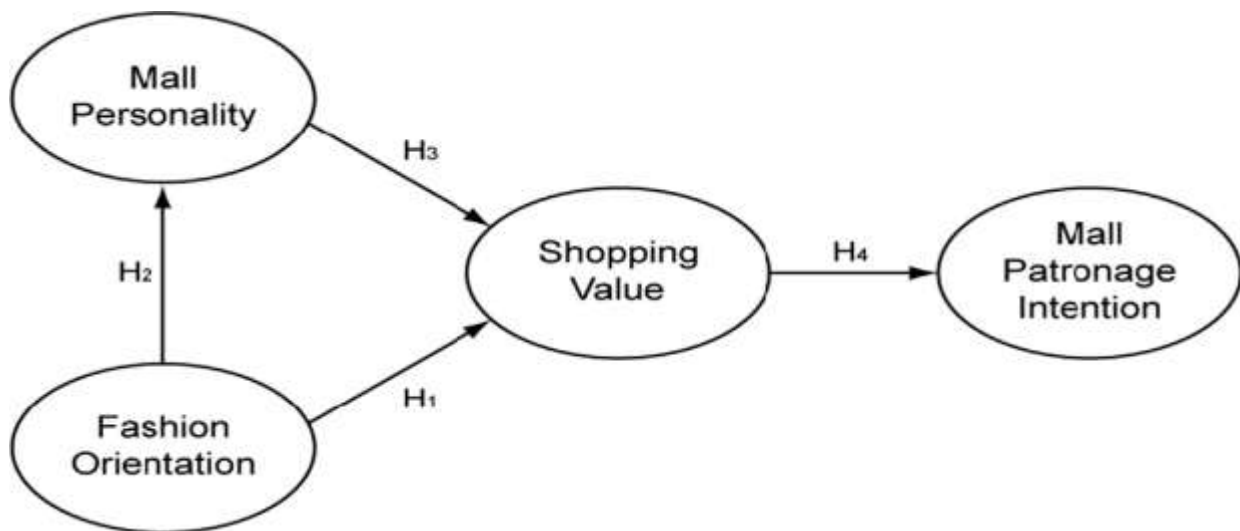

Fig1. Conceptual Model

III.   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA COLLECTION

A survey carried out in Molana University among the students who had a shopping experience in ZARA apparel stress in Iran. The questionnaires were hand out to the 480 students. A total of 425 questionnaires were returned and used for data analysis.

The respondents were asked to reflect on four major areas:
(1)Fashion orientation (2) mall personality (3) shopping value (4) mall patronage intention using Likert measurement scale from 1 to 5 (strongly disagree to strongly agree).

IV.   RESULTS

Descriptive Results, Measurement Model and Convergent validity

As noted, all constructs were assessed using 5-point Likert type scales. Table 1 shows the descriptive statistics, Bivariate correlations, average variance extracted (AVE), composites reliability (CR) and Cranach's alpha (CA) for the model constructs. As depicted in Table 1, the means of the constructs range from 3.31 to 4.04. Before testing the model, normality and validity of the measures were established by statistical normality tests and factor analysis (Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1998; Malhotra, 1987). The calculated z- values and graphical analysis of the variables suggested that the data distribution was normal (i.e., z-values were between +1.96 and -1.96). The convergent and discriminant validity of the Fashion Orientation, Mall Patronage Intention, Mall Personality and Shopping Value were tested by confirmatory factor analysis using the ordinary Least Squares estimator of LISREL 8.73 (Joreskog & Sorbom, 1996). The discriminant validity of the scales was checked by the Fornell and Larcker's (1981) formula. Discriminant validity is present when the square of the AVE from each construct is greater than inter correlations. As can be seen from Table 1, it can be seen that the values in the diagonals are greater than the values in their respective row and column thus indicating the measures used in this study are distinct. We used the factor loadings (see table2); composite reliability and average variance extracted to assess convergence validity (see table1). The recommended values for loadings are set at > 0.5(, the average variance extracted (AVE) should be > 0.5 and the composite reliability (CR) should be > 0.7. From Table 1 it can be seen that we have startup intention as first order constructs. From table 1 it can be seen that the results of the measurement model exceeded the recommended values thus indicating sufficient convergence validity. In order to assess the reliability of measurement items, we compute composite construct reliability coefficients and Cronbach Alpha. Composite reliabilities range from 0.805 (for Fashion Orientation) to 0.907 (for Mall Personality), which exceed the recommended level of 0.7. The results (see table 1), therefore, demonstrate a reasonable reliability level of the measured items.

	FO	MP	MPI	SV	AVE	CR	CA	Mean
Fashion Orientation	0.762				0.580	0.805	0.646	3.997
Mall Patronage Intention	0.247	0.850			0.723	0.887	0.809	3.319
Mall Personality	0.425	0.393	0.875		0.765	0.907	0.847	3.835
Shopping Value	0.418	0.423	0.492	0.797	0.635	0.839	0.712	4.045

The diagonal figures in bold indicate the average variances extracted (AVE) for constructs. The scores in the upper diagonal are Pearson correlations.

TABLE I. DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS, BIVARIATE CORRELATIONS, AVE, CR, CA AND MEAN

construct	items	Loading factor	t-value
Fashion Orientation	Fo1	0.72	12.84
	Fo2	0.54	9.55
	Fo3	0.64	11.43
Mall Personality	Mp1	0.83	-
	Mp2	0.78	15.65
	Mp3	0.83	16.57
Mall Patronage Intention	Mpi1	0.68	-
	Mpi2	0.67	11.58
	Mpi3	0.64	9.13
Shopping Value	Sv1	0.76	-
	Sv2	0.86	14.26
	Sv3	0.73	13.21

TABLE II. LOADING FACTORS AND T-VALUE

V.   GOODNESS OF FIT STATISTICS

The primary method for model testing was structural equations modelling by means of LISREL 8.73 and the polychromic correlation matrix as input. Ordinary Least Squares was used as the model estimation method due to using ordinal scales for measurement (Joreskog&Sorbom, 1996). This testing confirms a model's goodness of fit, and the hypothesized paths. The overall fit of the structural model is deter-mined initially by examining the chi-square statistic which, along with the associated probability value. The X2 test was statistically significant which indicated an inadequate fit. However, this statistic is mostly influenced by sample size and model complexity. Therefore rejection of a model on the basis of this test alone is inadequate (Hair et al., 1998). The other fit indices such as Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted GFI, Norm Fit Index (NFI), and Critical Fit Index (CFI) are also used to assess goodness of fit (Hu & Bentler, 1999).The results of the Model indices support a good overall model fit (Chi-Square=85.74, DF=49($\chi2$/df=1.750), RMSEA=0.045, CFI=0.99, NFI=0.98, NNFI=0.99, GFI=0.96, RFI=0.96).
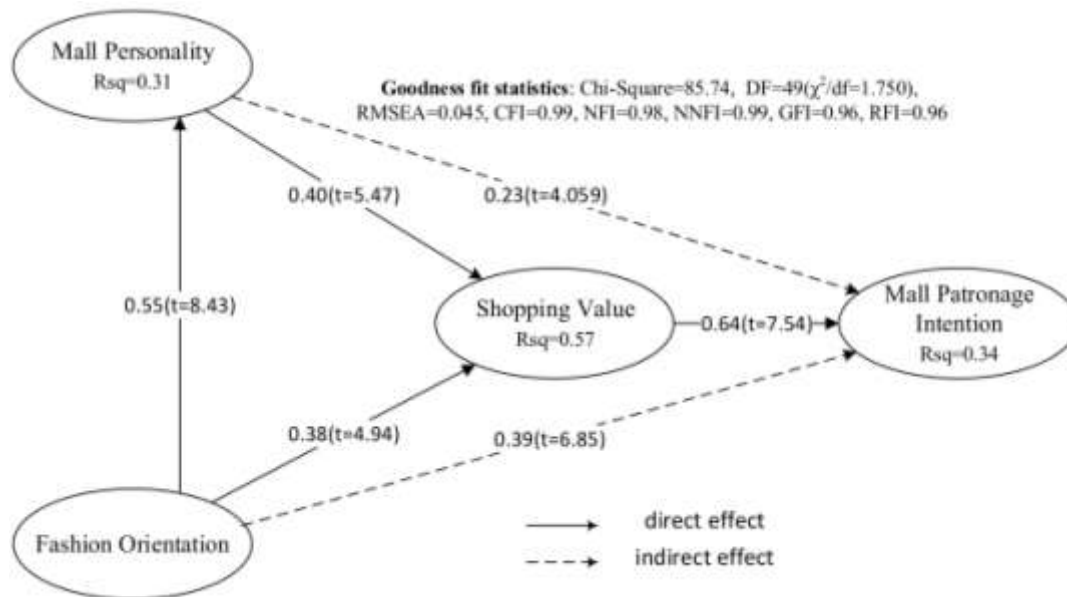
Fig2. Research Model in Estimation and Significant situation

Note that the equation is centered using a center tab stop. Be sure that the symbols in your equation have been defined before or immediately following the equation. Use "Eq. 1" or "Equation 1", not "(1)", especially at the beginning of a sentence: "Equation 1 is . . ."

VI.   STRUCTURAL MODEL

As shown in Table 3. To evaluate the structural models' predictive power, we calculated the R^2, R^2 indicates the amount of variance explained by the exogenous variables (Barclay et al.1995). Using a T-value technique with a sampling of 369, the path estimates and t-statistics were calculated for the hypothesized relationships. All hypotheses were supported in the testing at $P<0.05$: As shown in Table 3 and fig 1, the path coefficients ant result of hypotheses. The current research predicts, in H1, that Fashion Orientation has a positive relationship with Mall Personality. The results of the study support this proposition (Standardized Path Coefficient (beta) = 0.55, t = 8.43, $p < 0.05$). The findings of the model testing also support H2 (beta = 0.40, t = 5.47, $p < 0.01$),H3 (beta = 0.38, t = 4.94, $p < 0.01$) and h4 (beta = 0.64, t = 7.54, $p < 0.01$) and therefore confirms that have Mall Personality and Fashion Orientation a positive influence on Shopping Value.H5a–H5b suggests that Shopping Value mediates the effects of the Fashion Orientation and Mall Personality on Mall Patronage Intention. As can be seen from the results of the partial mediation model in Table 3, Fashion Orientation (beta = 0.39, t = 6.85, $p < 0.01$), Mall Personality (beta = 0.23, t = 4.049, $p < 0.01$). Approximately, 31% of the variance of Mall Personality is explained by Fashion Orientation, Approximately 57% of the variance of Shopping Value is explained by Fashion Orientation and Mall Personality and finally 34% of the variance of Mall Patronage Intention are explained by Shopping Value.

Hypothesis	Beta	t-value	R²	Result	Sign
H1:Fashion Orientation → Mall Personality	0.55	8.43	0.31	Supported	+
H2:Mall Personality → Shopping Value	0.40	5.47	0.57	Supported	+
H3:Fashion Orientation → Shopping Value	0.38	4.94		Supported	+
H4:Shopping Value → Mall Patronage Intention	0.64	7.54	0.34	Supported	+
H5a:Fashion Orientation------> Mall Patronage Intention	0.39	6.85	0.15	Supported	+
H5b:Mall Personality -------> Mall Patronage Intention	0.23	4.059		Supported	+

|t|>1.96 Significant at P<0.05, |t|>2.58 Significant at P<0.01,

TABLE III. HYPOTHESIS TESTING

VII.   CONCLUSION

Although many researches have been conducted on consumers shopping behaviors literature that focuses on Iranian consumers population is still limited. The current research extends the understanding of consumer behavior in context of Iranian consumers . In this study we had a sample population of Iranian students who had shopping experience in ZARA apparel stores in Iran，young consumers are good sample for fashion related researches in the context of consumer behavior. Results taken from this research express that fashion orientation has a positive relationship with mall personality and also both mall personality and fashion orientation has influence on shopping values and it results in a more positive mall patronage intention. Like most research investingations the current study has some shortcomings. First of all，the focus on ZARA stores in Iran may limit the generalibity of the results. Also we only investigated young consumers that may not produce a general result. It can be conducted a many all age groups. Generally，the results of this study may be useful for mall operators in order to design and manage their shopping mall in a way that creates a more positive shopping value and patronage intention and by this way they can have some advantages over their rivals in their industry and market.

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