

A Cross Cultural Study of Online Shoppers in London and Bangkok

ALAN HIRST and MARIE ASHWIN

Abstract

This paper reflects upon the qualitative data collected from cultural research evaluating the attitudes of online shoppers living in Bangkok and London. The study identified two negative aspects identified by both groups in respect of home delivery; having to make arrangements to wait for delivery (inconvenience), and returning unwanted products (time-consuming). Whilst a positive experience is reported by consumers up to the point of transaction, the research indicates that they will have a negative experience resulting from late or inconvenient delivery or issues related to the return of unwanted goods. Generally the positive features of online shopping (“usefulness”, “ease of use”, and “enjoyment”) appear to be more important to consumers than the negative features (“Internet security”, “privacy of personal information” and “post purchase fulfilment”). The online retailer would benefit from making the experience of shopping online more accommodating and more user-friendly, to encourage the high street shopper onto their site, and meet their expectations.

Keywords

Online shopping, demographics, online shopping behaviour, framework for managing qualitative data

Dr. Alan Hirst is at the Faculty of Business Computing and Information Management, London South Bank University, 103 Borough Road, London SE1 9AB. UK. Email hirsta@lsbu.ac.uk

Dr. Marie Ashwin is at the Department of Management, Leadership and Organisation, Business School, University of Hertfordshire, Hatfield, Herts. AL10 0AB UK

Correspondence Address: **Dr. Alan Hirst**, Faculty of Business Computing and Information Management, London South Bank University, 103 Borough Road, London SE1 9AB. UK. Email hirsta@lsbu.ac.uk

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Introduction

Over the past five years the researchers have been developing a picture of online retailing, with a focus upon the consumers’ views within a cross cultural context. Cohorts of respondents from student populations in both Bangkok and London were surveyed as they represent a technology-literate generation, sometimes referred to as “digital natives”, which demonstrates high levels of Internet usage. One objective of the survey was to compare and contrast positive and negative views towards online retailing. In addition to collecting comprehensive quantitative data the questionnaires provided respondents with the opportunity to air their views in their own words. The collection of this qualitative data enabled the researchers to investigate individual views more thoroughly and provided a greater depth of understanding of the motivations behind Internet shopping. This paper reviews the qualitative data to gather insights into the underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes and feelings towards online shopping.

Global Internet Growth

The global usage of the Internet has grown phenomenally with the introduction of new technologies including broadband high speed connections. The figures for 2006 in Table 1 represent the global Internet usage and its relationship to population figures (www.internetworldstats.com).

World Regions	Population 2006 est.	Population % of World	Usage	% Penetration	Usage % World	Usage growth 2000 - 2005
Africa	915,210,928	14.1%	23,649,000	2.6%	2.3%	423.9%
Asia	3,667,774,066	56.4%	364,270,713	9.9%	35.6%	218.7%
Europe	807,289,020	12.4%	291,600,898	36.1%	28.5%	177.5%
Middle East	190,084,161	2.9%	18,203,500	9.6%	1.8%	454.2%
North America	331,473,276	5.1%	227,303,680	68.6%	22.2%	110.3%
Latin America/ Caribbean	55,908,632	8.5%	79,962,809	14.4%	7.8%	342.5%
Oceania/Australia	33,956,977	0.50%	17,872,707	52.6%	1.7%	134.6%
World Total	6,499,697,060		1,022,863,307	15.7%	100.0%	183.4%

Table 1: World Internet Users and population Statistics (2006)

It can be seen that in Europe, which represents 28.5 percent of world usage, there was 177.5 percent growth between 2000-2005. By contrast in Asia where the usage rate is 35.6 percent, the growth rate was almost one quarter higher at 218.7 percent. To develop their business beyond the traditional western markets, online retailers need to pay attention to Asian consumers' behaviours. Later statistics from Internet World Stats., (2006) report that although Asia had seen a slight decrease as a percentage of world usage (35.2 percent), user growth has increased to 231.2 percent, compared with the world figure of 198.1 percent growth.

Research aim and objectives

The aim was to carry out cross cultural research and investigate consumers' intentions to shop online and the issues which affect them. The study focuses on the extended Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) framework to identify key characteristics of online shoppers living in London and Bangkok, in order to seek new insights into their behavioural patterns. To develop an in-depth understanding of these influences qualitative as well as quantitative data were collected. This paper discusses the qualitative data collected and seeks to develop a deeper understanding of key individual concerns within an interpretivist research framework. With a focus upon online shopping behaviours in Bangkok and London, both actual and intended, the objectives of the research are: (i) to explore the individual characteristics of Internet users; (ii) to assess differences based on demographics and usage; and (iii) to investigate the perceived barriers to online shopping

The justification for this research is that an understanding of what causes purchasing differences between online shoppers is valuable for retailers responsible for both developing and implementing online services. The research will contribute knowledge through testing the key characteristics of online shoppers as defined by the extended TAM framework (Monswé et al., 2004) to provide a better understanding of online purchase intentions.

Literature and theoretical background

The literature review identified a US bias in relevant research, with some focus upon European markets and limited coverage of the SE Asian markets. Thompson, Wang, and Leong (2004) investigated the difference between the shopping cultures in different countries, focusing on Chinese and US consumers. Their results showed that behavioural uncertainty and asset specificity are positively related to transaction cost whilst convenience and economic utility are negatively related to transaction cost, among both consumers groups.

Dependability is negatively related to transaction cost among US consumers but positively related for consumers in China. Transaction cost is positively related to willingness to buy online amongst both consumer groups. US consumers perceive less product uncertainty, behavioural uncertainty, asset specificity and dependability than consumers in China, as well as more convenience and economic utility.

The Hong Kong population is described as urban and prosperous, with an increasingly sophisticated computer literate younger generation, and rising number of dual income families. Because of the prevailing culture it is reported that they lack leisure time. They also have high levels of computer ownership, low ISP subscription rates and free Internet access. Consequently broadband penetration rates are amongst the highest in the world, with 58.50 percent having an Internet connection (HK 2002 Census; Nielsen/NetRatings, 2002).

A survey of Internet usage of Hong Kong and Singapore consumers by Wee and Ramachanra (2000) showed that 43.20 per cent of respondents had purchased online. Liao and Cheung (2001) investigated the initial reactions and relationships between consumer attitudes and Internet based shopping in Singapore. They used a regression analysis model to interpret the willingness of consumers to accept the Internet as a shopping medium and measure changes in their shopping behaviour. At the time of writing the Internet in Singapore had made little impact on the lives of Singaporeans compared with consumers in the US and the UK. An opportunity exists to develop Internet usage in Singapore as the population are technology “savvy” and the state’s future development is linked electronically to enhance its global trading position.

Liao and Cheung (2001) reported that content of products, transaction security, price, vendor quality, level of IT education and Internet usage significantly affected the intentions of Singaporeans to shop online. They commented that in order to cultivate the preferences of consumers accustomed to traditional shopping retailers needed to offer goods that do not require touching or feeling before purchase. They also said it was important for the Internet retailers to develop the online market, making the virtual marketplace more attractive and enjoyable, improving the shopping experience of the customers.

Lynch and Beck (2001) investigated the profile of Internet buyers in 20 countries to identify any regional differences in their beliefs, attitudes and perceptions, and their Internet buying behaviour depending on user experience. The focus of their research was upon social, cultural and economic differences. They sampled 15 to 25 individuals’ mainly young males in 26 major cities including the Asian cities of Bangkok, Beijing, Hong Kong, Singapore, Seoul and Tokyo. The results revealed that Asians exhibited the highest levels of “shopping fear” compared with US consumers, whilst at the same time being the “most comfortable” shopping on the Internet. They also reported the Asian

sample expressed the highest level of shopping enjoyment and demand for brand name products.

These findings indicated that motivations behind traditional shopping enjoyment could be different to those driving attitudes towards Internet shopping. They thought Asians may place a higher value on the social aspects of shopping, relative to individuals in other world regions. Consequently they display the highest levels of general shopping enjoyment and find the relatively solitary endeavour of shopping on the Internet less attractive, evidenced by less favourable attitudes towards the Internet.

Lynch et al. (2001) carried out extensive research on the global Internet shopper and surveyed shoppers in twelve countries to find out how important Internet sites were in terms of quality, trust and how these three key characteristics impact upon consumers' attitudes towards a retailer's website.

Three characteristics which significantly affect a consumer's purchase intentions were identified, namely: site quality, retailer trust and positive effect. They reported that a website's trustworthiness is critical in encouraging consumers to shop online and return for repeat purchases. They suggest that adding features such as customer service guarantees, third party certification of a site's credibility, and former buyers' testimonials would be the most important additions an online retailer could make to their site. Site usability is part of a consumer's experience and this factor can either persuade or deter them from buying online and returning to the site for future purchases. Both loyalty and purchase intentions appear to be influenced by the experience of positive emotions whilst shopping online.

Internet retailers can improve the combination of their business models, offerings and site presentations to yield real returns (Buckley and Carlton, 2000; Quick, 2000). The importance of consumers making repeat purchases was emphasised by Hof (2000) who used the example of the Amazon.com book selling operation. The Amazon site had become profitable as repeat purchases formed over 70 per cent of sales.

Theoretical Framework

In order to develop an in-depth understanding of consumer attitudes towards online shopping and their intention to shop on the Internet, Monsuwé et al. (2004) proposed a framework based on previous research on consumer adoption of new technologies and services (See Davis, 1989; Moon and Kim, 2001; Dabholkar and Bagozzi, 2002; Monsuwé et al., 2004). The Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) appears to be the most widely used by information system researchers because it is known to be useful for measuring attitudes towards the introduction of new technology in the workplace and has the benefit of a wealth of recent empirical research (Amoako-Gyampah and Salam 2003). The TAM model has been used extensively as a basis for past research in computer systems dealing with behavioural intentions and usage of information systems in the workplace (see Davis, 1989; Schlosser et. al., 1999; Mathieson, 1991; Adams et al., 1992; Igarria and Tan, 1997; Kunz, 1997; Haubl and Trifts, 2000; Lederer et. al., 2000; Shim et. al., 2001; Gefen et. al., 2003; Vijayasathy, 2003).

As Venkatesh (2000) suggested, additional factors including "control" (computer self-efficacy), "intrinsic motivation" (computer playfulness), and "emotion" (computer anxiety) were integrated into the existing technology acceptance model. It is proposed

that these factors act as significant determinants for “ease of use” (Monsuwé et al., 2004). The introduction of “consumer traits” and “situational influences” variables to the TAM framework by Dabholkar and Bagozzi (2002) resulted in their attitudinal model of technology-based self-service. Although other researchers had modified the original TAM framework to suit their investigations, Monsuwé et al. (2004) integrated six further factors with the three primary variables of “ease of use”, “usefulness”, and “enjoyment” in order to develop a better understanding of consumer intentions to shop online. These variables are “consumer traits”, “situational factors”, “product characteristic”, “previous online shopping experience”, “trust in online shopping”, and “product attributes”.

The conceptual framework shown below (Figure 1) identifies these key variables.

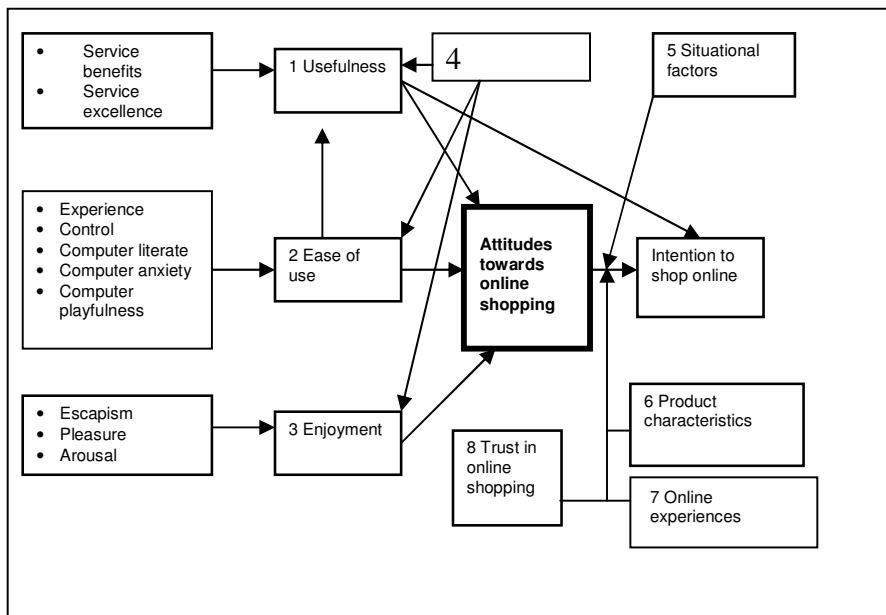


Figure 1: Framework for shoppers' intention to buy online Monsuwé et al. (2004)

Support for the TAM framework came from a critical review of the technology acceptance model (TAM) by Legris et al. (2002) who reviewed over 80 published articles from 1980 to the first quarter of 2001. The documents were critically analysed using the following criteria: a) TAM is used in an empirical study, b) the integrity of TAM is respected, c) the research methodology is well respected, and d) the research is available and complete. Further support for the extended TAM model came from Shih (2004) who tested the model with a survey of 203 Taiwanese office workers using their organisation's Intranet. The empirical results confirmed TAM as an appropriate model and demonstrated that relevance of information needs strongly determine perceived usefulness, perceived ease of use and user attitude towards the Internet for information seeking, as well as strongly influencing individual performance during the gathering of information stage. The sample reported a more positive attitude towards the Internet and more positive perceptions of a system's effectiveness for supporting office tasks. The perceived ease of use was the strongest determinant of user attitude towards the Internet applications. Shih (2004) confirmed that the extended TAM framework had been extremely useful to explain the behaviour of Intranet users within the enterprises researched.

This extended TAM framework developed by Monsuwé et al. (2004) has been adopted by the researchers as the most suitable for developing an understanding of the determinants of consumers' attitudes towards the Internet. Additionally it helps to highlight both the direct and positive effect on shoppers' intentions to actually use the Internet for shopping (Davies, 1993; Bobbitt and Dabholkar, 2001).

Research Design and Methodology

The literature on online shopping behaviour was extensively reviewed and critically analysed to identify and evaluate the various online shopping models. As a result it was decided to use the extended TAM framework (Monsuwé et al., 2004) to measure the extent of online shopping adoption in London and Bangkok. In order to obtain an understanding of online shopper's underlying belief systems and the main issues considered when purchasing goods online in London and Bangkok, a combination of qualitative and quantitative data was collected. Firstly, the concept was operationalised to produce research variables developed from the literature. An initial pre-test of the items, followed by a pilot test of the instrument enabled the researchers to develop an appropriate questionnaire.

Data Collection and Sample

The sample consisted of two groups of respondents, one each in Bangkok and London. The respondents were chosen because they were Internet literate and likely to represent young, well-educated online shoppers. The London group represented European consumers, for whom the Internet as a shopping medium is highly developed. Bangkok represents a leading developing market in Asia, where the Internet is beginning to penetrate deeper. In this part of the world usage of the Internet is still mainly as information medium, as it has not yet fully developed as a shopping medium. The data was gathered by distributing over 1,000 questionnaires in Bangkok and London. Of the 360 returned by the deadline, 210 were found to be usable for analysis, giving a response rate of 21 percent.

Measurements

The data was measured using seven demographic questions and 31 statements base on the seven key TAM variables. These statements covered items such as how the respondents accessed the Internet, their concerns with online shopping, the product categories they purchased online and their overall reactions to shopping online. The qualitative items within the questionnaire were designed to provide an insight into the underlying motivations, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and associations with online shopping to complement the quantitative statistics gathered. The freedom to use their own words was considered essential to collect data which reflected their feelings, and deliver a richer profile of online shopping characteristics.

Data Analysis and Results

In order to conduct the analysis of the data from the focus groups, the data was transcribed, reduced and detextualised using the Ashwin and Hirst (2007) framework for

the management of qualitative data. The framework comprises of a series of templates which guides the researcher through the stages of transcription, reduction and interpretation, and clearly identifies the stages from initial development of the research objectives and operationalisation of the concepts, through how to present and reduce the data, to the identification of key issues and their linking back to the research objectives.

Stage	Document title	Detail
Stage One	Schedule development for interview/observation/focus group	Using the theory as a guide a schedule is produced ensuring that the focus is upon the research objectives
Stage Two	Coding frame	Research variables are used to develop meaningful codes to assist with reduction and management of the data
Stage Three	Transcription of interviews onto prepared template	Line and page numbering Columns for coding
Stage Four	Level One data reduction	In-depth data analysis using theoretical framework Transcript contents detextualised using framework developed from theory
Stage Five	Level Two data interpretation	Synthesis and interpretation of data using themes and key points relating to theoretical concepts
Stage Six	Level Three data comparison	Identification of issues Similarities/differences Combined conclusions Links to research objectives

Table 1: Model for the management of qualitative data (Ashwin and Hirst, 2007)

This paper focuses upon the results from Stage Six of the framework. It identifies key issues, the similarities and differences between respondents and evaluates them in terms of various demographic characteristics. This analysis reviews the language used to identify the strength of feeling towards a range of issues as well as the specific interests and concerns of individuals. The findings are grouped around key research variables. To illustrate more clearly the range of responses gathered, this paper offers tabulated highlights together with a brief commentary.

A wide range of responses was given when respondents were asked about their reasons for using the Internet as a shopping medium. Differing views were demonstrated across and within the respondent groups, ranging from some with a view upon the ease or difficulty of use, to the convenience and even highlighting the other

uses of the Internet. (Table 2, Item 1) When asked about the ease of use of the Internet specifically the majority of respondents (74.31 percent) agreed strongly with the quantitative item “I feel the Internet is easy to use”. The four qualitative responses shown below reflect these views. Interestingly the negative response comes from the older age group in Bangkok, the less developed market. (Table 2, Item 2) Barriers to online shopping were investigated to reveal general concerns about credit card security and privacy of information. The importance of security varied from general statements of it being “very important” to strong feelings of distrust of the Internet “I do not trust Internet shopping”. (Table 2, Item 3)

LONDON	BANGKOK
1. Reasons for using the Internet as a shopping medium	
<i>I think it has a wider range of sources to search information (male 35)</i>	<i>Internet is easy and convenient because you can see the details of the products, some web sites help customers to compare which brand or which model is helpful or suitable for you (female 23)</i>
<i>I use the Internet to check email, chat with friends and buy products online such as airplane or train tickets (female 21)</i>	<i>Internet is not easy to use because in terms of the process of putting information on some web sites are quite complicated and require many details that waste time to register (male 32)</i>
2. Ease of Use	
<i>I like the to use the Internet because it is easy to access, I can easily navigate myself around the Internet to find what I want (female 22)</i>	<i>I think the Internet is not easy to use because its complicated and wastes my time to search for information (female 44)</i>
<i>The Internet is very simple and everyone can use it everywhere because its widely available (male 26)</i>	<i>The Internet is not complicated, its is quite simple to use (male 29)</i>
3. Barriers to online shopping	
<i>Privacy and security are very important because of fraud and someone can steal my money (male 26)</i>	<i>In my opinion, privacy is not only the most important factor as I do not want others to know it (female 25)</i>
<i>At first I did not feel confident using online shopping as I though my personal information would be passed on (female 22)</i>	<i>I do not trust Internet shopping in terms of credit card security systems in Thailand (male 29)</i>
4. Trust in and Knowledge of Online retailer	
<i>I only buy from online retailers from companies that I know or have heard of and therefore trust, I never use new online companies as I do not know if I trust them (female 22)</i>	<i>If there is an unknown retailer, I will not take the risk and buy products from them (female 28)</i>
<i>Companies have to be open in dealing with their customer, recently I was going to purchase a hotel room from an online hotel advert for £27, when you start the payment process they wanted £45, they have to stop confusing customers and be more honest with their pricing policies (male 31)</i>	<i>I have brought products from unknown brands and they are cheating customers in terms of price (male 24)</i>

Table 2 – Reasons, Use and Barriers

Moving from the issues of security and privacy several respondents also highlighted the need for trust in the online retailers. One respondent revealed that the advertised price increased with no warning as they went through the purchasing process online, leaving them with a negative feeling towards the company. Indeed in their words the online retailer needed to be “more honest with their pricing policies”. Knowledge about the company also figures strongly in the responses and reveals that if the retailer is known the respondent is more likely to have a positive attitude towards them. One respondent linked their attitude to the brand itself. (Table 2, Item 4). Questions about more practical issues revealed that being able to touch products was an important element of the purchasing process for many female respondents. As can be seen in Table 3, Item 1, there

is a difference in the qualitative responses between the genders, with the males less concerned about touching the product before purchase.

The national differences in views on delivery have not been investigated further but show a clear division between Bangkok and London respondents. Even though a significant percentage (59.4 percent) of respondents considered delivery-related issues as “important” or “very important” many revealed a more tolerant attitude than this might suggest. The representative examples from Bangkok included here (Table 3, Item 2) support the literature findings that the retail shopping experience is of great importance in the Far East. Another issue linked to the logistics is the return of unwanted products – significantly 66.3 percent of respondents considered the issue of returning goods to be “important” or “very important”. The qualitative responses reveal this is not an easy area to address as reasons vary from the “hassle” and “expense” of returning the items to the disappointment when something looked “nice on the Internet but the real product is not as nice and it takes a long time to replace or exchange” (Table 3, Item 3).

Confirmation of convenience was obtained when respondents were asked about the usefulness of the Internet. The views ranged from the timesaving aspect to the collection of information before the decision is made. (Table 3, Item 4) The majority of the respondents (68.06 percent) agreed strongly that the Internet is enjoyable to use, reinforcing their perceptions in a positive way and meeting their hedonistic needs. Other uses were identified in addition to online shopping, such as chatting and playing games. (Table 3, Item 5)

LONDON	BANGKOK
1. Physical contact with products	
<i>I rarely buy clothes or shoes online as you can never be sure of the fit (female 28)</i>	<i>I think it is very important because if the product is high involvement, I need to see and touch products such as jewellery or an expensive product (female 26)</i>
<i>Unable to touch products is not important because I can see the products on screen (male 26)</i>	<i>I do not care about touching the products before purchasing online (male 22)</i>
2. Delivery	
<i>I have always found delivery times to be very good and the products usually come when they are supposed to come and at time convenient for me (female 22)</i>	<i>I would not like to wait for the products long time when I shop online (female 29)</i>
<i>Its fine, I will go to pick the items up at the post office or can I mention the delivery time at the weekend (male 26)</i>	<i>I do not shop online because it is not convenient for the delivery of good to me, I can go to a retail stores to get products which I want to, its is faster and more convenient (female 27)</i>
3. Return of unwanted products	
<i>I do not need to return products and will make sure what is the product before I purchase online (male 26)</i>	<i>Some times the products look nice on the Internet but the real product is not as nice and it takes a long time to replace or exchange another products (female 32)</i>
<i>Returning things are always hassle and can be expensive (female 35)</i>	<i>When the customers receives the product and is dissatisfied or the products have some defect, the customers should have the right claim their cash back (male 25)</i>
4. Convenience of the Internet	
<i>I like shopping online because I do not have to go at the retailers stores by myself or carry goods anything and it saves me time as well (female 44)</i>	<i>The Internet is convenient and saves time, I do not need to go to a store to buy a products and there are many web sites to search for products and services (male 28)</i>
<i>Its is useful in terms of communication and information because it provides a lot of information sources, search for products and service, and its cheaper and more accessible (male 30)</i>	<i>I always spend time to use the Internet to buy the products because it is convenient (female 32)</i>
5. Enjoyment	
<i>I find it enjoyable to use the Internet because there are many</i>	<i>I enjoy using the Internet to chat with my friends, keep in touch</i>

<p><i>web sites I can search for buying products (male 26)</i></p> <p><i>Its fun to use the Internet because there are many web sites to search for information, products or services (female 25)</i></p>	<p><i>with friends and sometimes I like to play games with friends online (male 25)</i></p> <p><i>I prefer to use my time shopping to see the real thing on the high street than shopping online. I think the Internet needs to be improved in terms of updated product information (female 31)</i></p>
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Table 3 – Practical and emotional elements

These findings reveal differences not only between gender and national cultures, but also identify age as an intervening variable, especially in the sample from Bangkok, which has been linked to the current stage of technological development in Thailand.

Discussion and Implications

Both groups of respondents use the Internet for gathering information, keeping in touch with friends or searching for products and services. The barriers to online shopping include concerns about privacy of information and credit card security. Both groups report these as their most overriding concern when using the Internet. Being unable to touch products prior to purchase is of concern to females in both London and Bangkok; however males are not at all concerned about not handling products prior to purchase. When asked about inconvenient delivery times the London group was generally positive about their experiences. The Bangkok group was negative about delivery of products. Both respondent groups were concerned about the inconvenience factor regarding the return of unwanted products.

Regarding trust in online retailers both groups said that they will only purchase well known brands. The London group reported concerns with the negative practice of online retailers who offer one price at the start of the transaction and escalate the price during the course of the transaction. This practice is of major concern and has been reported in the national press. Dishonesty in pricing also concerned the Bangkok group. The London group had a positive attitude towards online shopping and agreed that the Internet is convenient and saves time. Only half of the Bangkok group thought that the Internet was convenient and saves time. The Bangkok group prefers to shop on the high street and not be bothered with the inconvenience of waiting for goods to be delivered. One reason given for this is that Internet connections are expensive in Bangkok as broadband is not yet available as in the UK. The younger Thais have a more positive attitude towards the Internet as a shopping medium than the older group. The London group were not concerned with online delivery times. Both groups preferred to shop for well-known brands online and were reticent to purchase from online retailers they did not know.

In terms of usefulness both groups had positive attitudes towards Internet shopping and thought the Internet was more convenient and cheaper than the high street for shopping. They also reported that the Internet was convenient in terms of sourcing information, time saving on high street shopping, locating products and comparing prices. When asked whether they enjoyed using the Internet, the London group was positive in its endorsement of the Internet. Amongst the Bangkok group, the younger members thought the Internet was enjoyable whilst the older group disagreed and said they preferred to shop on the high street.

Finally, when asked whether or not the Internet was easy to use, the London group reported a positive attitude towards the Internet and found it easy to use and

navigate. The Bangkok group was again divided by age, the younger group said that they found the Internet easy to use whilst the older group found the Internet complicated and difficult to use.

Limitations

This qualitative study, like others, is subject to common limitations due to many factors, such as respondent bias and error. Qualitative findings cannot be generalised because of their nature but are beneficial in terms of enriching the discussion as they provide insights and valuable information about complex behaviour issues. Clear differences between the respondent groups appear in the research in terms of gender and national characteristics. Whilst cultural differences are likely to be influenced by many factors the writers wish to emphasise that these aspects have not been evaluated in the paper. The main focus of the paper was on usage difference between online shoppers living in Bangkok and London.

The framework adopted for the handling of qualitative data has had limited empirical application to date. Evidence of the usefulness and benefit of this approach has been gathered from a number of post graduate dissertations and doctoral theses but it should be considered to be work in progress.

Future research directions

On the basis of the findings of this research, profiles for respondents living in Bangkok and London who purchase online were developed. Overall online purchasers were more likely to perceive online shopping as having relative advantages providing a safe, secure and easy way to shop. In order to effectively compete with brick-and mortar stores or other main distribution channels, such as catalogues, online retailers must address the factors identified in this research. The most important is providing a secure and safe online shopping environment. They should provide information on their web sites that draws the shoppers' attention to their financial security and emphasises the safeguarding of personal information. Information should also be provided which identifies the advantages of shopping online, as compared to using other retail outlets. The most important point is that online retailers must provide information which guides the shoppers by giving clear instructions on how to access the website without difficulty.

Conclusions

Online retailers need to be aware of the overall shopping process and how its various components affect the consumers' total shopping experience. The research findings support theoretical contributions in this area of research into value of using the extended TAM framework to investigate online shopping behaviour. The extended TAM model provided the key variables to measure behaviours, which are discussed below. The importance of the "usefulness", "eases of use" and "enjoyment" factors has been manifested by their strong association with overall satisfaction. The transaction factor is an integral part of online shopping. For many consumers who buy online, convenience, ease of use, security, usefulness, and value are unmistakably the fundamental benefits. Online retailers need to create and maintain superior performance in various convenience and value factors to build long-term sustainable competitive advantages. Ability to conduct careful product evaluation is another distinctive advantage for virtual retailing.

Online retail managers need to continue to provide adequate and easy-to-access product and comparison information to facilitate online transactions. Enjoyment (fulfilment) is a factor that cannot be ignored as shown in this framework. It is an important means to improving the shoppers' confidence in online transactions. The major area of concern for the online retailer is the post-purchase phase as they often outsource the delivery of products to third parties. The study identified two negative aspects in respect of home delivery: one having to make arrangements to wait for delivery (inconvenience), and the second returning unwanted products (time-consuming).

Finally, online shopping represents a new segment that retail management must address in order to develop capabilities to serve their customers better. McKinsey (2007), in a quarterly update on marketing online, predict that globally by 2010 the majority of consumers will discover new products or services online and one third will purchase goods online. In order to survive online retailers will have to address the negative issues that have been identified, in particular ensuring their consumers of the confidentiality of personal information and the security of their credit card numbers.

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