

Factors Affecting User's Repurchase Intention towards Chinese Internet Shopping Malls

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ABSTRACT

More and more researchers and practitioners in the field of e-commerce are paying attentions to the retention of online customers. However, only a few researches can be addressed in the context of internet shopping mall repurchase intention. This study aims at investigating and delineating the important characteristic factors which affect consumers' repurchase intentions by conducting an empirical analysis. In order to fulfill this purpose effectively, a comprehensive review of previous studies regarding information system success model was performed in order to render a stronger theoretical foundation for our study. Finally, based on the DeLone and McLean (2003) IS success model, information quality, system quality, service quality, customer satisfaction and repurchase intention were employed as five constructs in the research model and hypotheses on mutual relationships between these constructs were established accordingly. Structural equation modeling was employed to analyze the data collected from 204 internet shopping mall consumers in China. Our theoretical model exhibited a good fit with the observed data. The empirical results showed particularly strong support for the effects of information quality, service quality and user satisfaction. The findings of this research contributed to the extension of repurchase intention study in the context of Internet shopping malls. Our research also offered implications for practitioners in regards to devising internet shopping malls so as to increase consumers' repurchase intention to use these services.

Keywords: Chinese Internet Shopping Malls, Quality of Information Systems, Customer Satisfaction, Repurchase Intention.

1. INTRODUCTION¹

With the advancement in information communication infrastructure, coupled with the rapid increase in the number of Internet users, Internet shopping mall market in China has quickly become a new market which possesses a huge development potential. According to the survey report released by iResearch in January, 2010, the market scale of Chinese

Internet shopping malls increased to 248.35 billion CNY yuan which was 93.7 percent higher than the figure of last year [3, 7]. Internet shopping mall market was one of the fastest growing areas in China which was relatively lesser be affected by external environment even under global economic crisis background in 2009. In addition, the number of Internet shopping mall users in China had already reached at 100 million CNY yuan which took a growth of 37.5% compared to the figure of last year. This number also accounted for 28.2 percent of total netizens in China [3]. Thus, in tandem with the development of Chinese information and communication

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infrastructure as well as the rapid increase in number of netizens, the prospects for the development of Internet shopping mall market in China are bright.

Notwithstanding, beneath the apparent growth in Internet shopping mall market, drastic competition, profitability controversy, customer loss and other uncertainties are also undertaken potentially. In recently, China has become Korea's largest trading, investing and visiting partner, thus, for Korean companies, in order to enter into China market successfully, a carefully planned strategy should be developed in advance, correspondingly, there is a pressing need for analysis on the characteristic of Chinese market as well as Chinese Internet shopping malls.

In this study, the determining factors, which are proposed to influence user's repurchase intention towards Internet shopping mall, were delineated through an empirical study with a survey target of Chinese users.

The results of this study could be served as a strategic implication for Korean industry practitioners to attain user's satisfaction and continuous use no matter whether they are conducting business in China now or planning to advance their businesses in China.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 User's satisfaction and repurchase intention

Repurchase intention is an important factor that decides business success or failure, the value from the loyal customers is far greater than the disloyal ones. Therefore, it is important to make a first time visitor to become a regular customer so that customers could purchase regularly. An effective customer-retention strategy can be developed based on the understanding of the factors that influence customers' repurchase.

However, under the network environment, it's more difficult to maintain customers because entry and departure becomes much easier. Nevertheless, researchers gradually realized the importance of satisfaction as an antecedent of the repurchase intention towards technology acceptance. User's satisfaction is the degree to which user's expectation of a product or service is met or exceeded based on an overall evaluation of user experience [9]. Such satisfied or dissatisfied experiences can be formed after user's purchasing activities, based on such experience, a variety of other behaviors, such as continuously purchase or not, will be decided subsequently [8].

Despite the claim that satisfaction is linked to repurchase behavior, few attempts can be found in the context of Internet shopping malls. This article aims at filling this void by establishing a link between satisfaction and repurchase behavior in the context of Internet shopping malls.

In addition, determinants of user's satisfaction can be measured from various perspectives which can be divided into two categories: including IS-oriented factors and non-IS-related factors. Instead of the factors unrelated to IS, we studied the independent variables from the view of user's perception of IS quality. Hence, IS success model was adopted as the foundation to further our theoretical framework

2.2 Information systems success model (ISSM)

Although a lot of researchers have already carried out many researches concerning evaluation of Information system performance from diverse perspectives, it still remains as an important study field that many researches are joining and undergoing [1]. Researchers and practitioners tried to make an assessment of the quality of information system offering as perceived by their customers. The IS-oriented views explain and predict consumer repurchase behavior by examining the technical specifications such as system quality, information quality. In DeLone & McLean [4]'s research, system quality and information quality were assumed as two important factors affecting the degree of user's satisfaction and final use. Although DeLone and McLean [4] did not consider service quality in their first model, other researchers believed that service quality was an important element in information system success. Especially for Internet shopping mall, because of the lack of face-to-face contact on its website, it is more necessary for it than other website because Internet shopping mall should provide online services in finding, ordering, and delivering the physical products. Pitt et al. [12] proposed a model of information system success similar to DeLone and McLean's [4] model, in which service quality was included as one of the dimensions that affect use and user satisfaction.

DeLone and McLean [5] agreed with Pitt et al. [12]'s premise that service quality was an important variable. They [5] proposed an updated model of IS success by adding a service quality measure as a new dimension of the IS success model. In the new model, quality has three major dimensions: information quality, system quality and service quality. The modified information performance evaluation model could be further applied to evaluate user's satisfaction as well as IS success. Numerous empirical studies tested DeLone and McLean [5]'s IS success model and had found it to be a robust and parsimonious model with high explanatory power of the variance in IS success across a wide variety of contexts including e-government, e-auction etc. [1, 13].

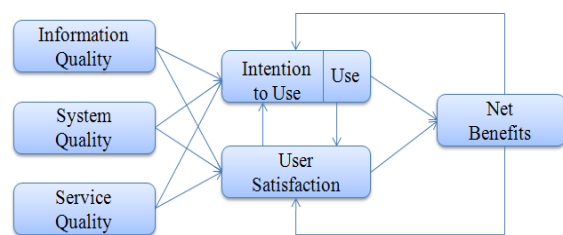


Fig. 1. DeLone & McLean's IS Success Model

Internet shopping mall is a kind of e-commerce system which fits nicely into the DeLone and McLean updated IS success model. In our study, we assumed that the updated IS success model can be adapted to the system measurement in Internet shopping mall context. According to the findings presented in previous studies, it assumes that the information quality, system quality, and service quality automatically generate user satisfaction

3. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 Research model and hypotheses formation

While IS success models have received much attention among researchers, little research has been conducted to examine the relationship between IS success models with repurchase intentions. An exception is Taylor and Baker [14]'s research, who examined the relationship between IS quality and consumer satisfaction, as well as how these two constructs combined to impact consumer repurchase intentions in four unique service industries including health care, recreation services, transportation, and communications services. The results of their study indicated that satisfaction appeared to moderate the relationship between IS quality and repurchase intention in the proposed models for the formation of consumers' repurchase intentions. As far as we know, no study has been done to address on the casual relations between IS quality, consumer satisfaction and repurchase intention under online environment. Thus, a goal of this study seeks to see if such relationships are supported in the context of Internet shopping malls. In addition, there is a need to investigate whether traditional information system success models can be extended to investigating the success of Internet shopping malls. Accordingly, based on the review of previous literatures concerning IS evaluation, customer satisfaction and repurchase intention, our study developed and validated a multi-dimensional repurchase intention model of Internet shopping malls based on the DeLone and McLean's [5] undated IS success model. The research model was developed and shown in Fig. 2.

As we can see from the research model, information quality, system quality and service quality are set as three determining factors that could affect the degree of user's satisfaction. Among it, user's satisfaction and repurchase intention are also included as dependent variables.



Fig 2. Conceptual Research Model

Based on above review, the hypotheses on mutual relationships between each variable are established as follows:

Information quality is characteristics of the output offered by the IS such as accuracy, timelines, reliability, and completeness. The most commonly used items for information quality are accuracy, currency, completeness, timeliness, and understandability [5]. Extensive researches over the past decade provided evidences of the significant effect information quality had on customer satisfaction [1, 8, 10, 13], thus, the following hypotheses can be established

H1. Information quality of Internet shopping malls has positive(+) impact on user's satisfaction.

System quality is a measure of the information processing itself. It is the performance of the IS in term of reliability,

convenience, ease of use, functionality, and other system metrics. System quality is measured by attributes such as ease of use, functionality, reliability, data quality, flexibility, and integration [5]. There are extensive researches in IS extents that provide evidences of the significant effect of system quality on customer satisfaction [10, 13, 14]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H2. System quality of Internet shopping malls has positive(+) impact on user's satisfaction.

Service quality is a measure of the quality of information system services. It is the degree of discrepancy between customers' normative expectations for service and their perceptions of service performance. Service quality is often measured by the tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. Extensive literature has also found that customer satisfaction would be determined by service quality [10, 11, 13, 14]. Thus, we posit that:

H3. Service quality of Internet shopping malls has positive(+) impact on user's satisfaction.

User Satisfaction is a subjective evaluation of the various individual, organizational, and societal consequences of IS Use. A number of studies in Internet-enabled contexts have shown the link between overall satisfactions and repurchase intentions [13]. Therefore, the following hypothesis is posited:

H4. User's satisfaction towards Internet shopping malls have positive(+) impact on repurchase intention.

3.2 Measurement of research variables

In order to assess the performance of Internet shopping malls and clarify the influencing factors of user's satisfaction and repurchase intention, all research variables are defined as follows in Tab. 1. Deriving from existing literature, although each variable demonstrated appropriate validity and reliability, it was also modified and supplemented so as to fit the actual state of Internet shopping malls in this study. All of the constructs used in our study are followed by a seven point scale anchored by '1 = very low' to '7 = very high' likert-scales.

Table 1. Operational Definitions of Research Variables and Related References

Variables	Operational Definitions	Items	Related References
Information Quality	The overall quality of information relating to products and services provided by Internet shopping malls	5	DeLone & McLean[4,5]
System Quality	The overall quality of Internet shopping system itself	5	Liu & Arnett [11]
Service Quality	The degree of various services support established at an Internet shopping mall	6	Pitt et al. [12]
User Satisfaction	The overall degree of customer's satisfaction towards the product or service provided by an Internet shopping mall	4	Zeithaml et al. [15]

Repurchase Intention	Whether constantly or repetitive use an Internet shopping mall in the future or not.	4	Zeithaml et al. [15]
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3.3 Data collection and general information of samples

The main objective of our study was to delineate the factors that affect Chinese user's satisfaction and repurchase intention towards Internet shopping malls. To achieve our purpose, a survey was conducted with Chinese users who had transaction experiences in local Internet shopping malls. The printed questionnaires were distributed through the mail, personal visits and e-mail to people who were working in diverse industries and social institutions, including 2 universities and 3 offices in Northeast China. It took appropriate one month to gather the questionnaires and 220 samples were collected finally. After carefully reviewing, 16 questionnaires were eliminated because of dishonest and invalidated answers and other reasons. Finally 204 copies were adopted in our empirical testing which would render support for the robustness and generalizability of the research model and hypotheses. As we can see from the samples, college students who are well educated constitute the majority of respondents in this paper.

The general information of samples collected from survey were analyzed and shown in Tab. 2.

Table 2. General Information of Samples

Divisions		Frequency	Percent(%)
Gender	Male	79	38.7
	Female	125	61.3
Age	Less than 19 years	2	1.0
	19-25 years old	163	79.9
	25-30 years old	37	18.1
	30-35 years old	2	1.0
Educational Background	High School	7	3.4
	In College	128	62.7
	Post-graduate	33	16.3
Average Monthly Income	Less than 1,000 yuan	134	65.7
	1,000-3,000 yuan	45	22.1
	3,000-5,000 yuan	22	10.7
	More than 5,000 yuan	3	1.5
Overall		204	100.0

4. ANALYSIS RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Measurement model analysis

In order to verify the hypotheses, a two-step analysis, often used as the sequential tests measurement, was performed in our study [2]. The relationships among variables were examined by an analysis of covariance structure model, in order to do this, Amos Ver 5.0 was employed as our statistical tool.

The confirmatory factor analysis on measurement items of each construct was performed and results could be referred in

Tab. 3. As we can see from table 3, the value of fit of each constructs is above the satisfactory level as a whole.

Table 3. Results of Construct's Confirmatory Factor Analysis

Constructs	Items	X ²	d.f	GFI	AGFI	RMR	NFI
Information Quality	5	3.279	5	.994	.981	.028	.992
System Quality	5	25.184	5	.953	.858	.099	.933
Service Quality	6	34.586	9	.946	.873	.078	.928
User Satisfaction	4	7.820	2	.982	.911	.037	.983
Repurchase Intention	4	8.436	2	.979	.893	.058	.978

Next, additionally, endogenous variables (namely customer satisfaction, repurchase intention) and exogenous variables, (namely information quality, system quality and service quality) are put into a secondary confirmatory factor analysis. The results of confirmatory factor analysis on exogenous variables and endogenous variables were presented in Tab. 4 and Tab. 5 respectively.

Table 4. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis on Exogenous Variables

Constructs	Items	Factor Loadings	Standard Error	t-Value	P	Concept Reliability	AVE
Information Quality	qb1	.756	.123	9.713	.000	0.889	0.615
	qb2	.770	.119	9.958	.000		
	qb3	.803	.127	10.255	.000		
	qb4	.719	.118	9.342	.000		
	qb5	.688	-	-	-		
System Quality	xt1	.558	.136	6.655	.000	0.867	0.572
	xt2	.693	.155	7.885	.000		
	xt3	.824	.156	8.796	.000		
	xt4	.761	.148	8.309	.000		
	xt5	.615	-	-	-		
Service Quality	fw1	.632	.114	8.207	.000	0.863	0.514
	fw2	.680	.105	8.618	.000		
	fw3	.664	.107	8.654	.000		
	fw4	.781	.111	10.014	.000		
	fw5	.788	.115	9.951	.000		
	fw6	.680	-	-	-		
Fit Indices	X ² =137.692, df=92, X ² /df=1.497, p=0.001, RMR=0.095, GFI=0.923, AGFI=0.885, NFI=0.918, CFI=0.971						

Table 5. Results of Confirmatory Factor Analysis on Endogenous Variables

Constructs	Items	Factor Loading	Standard Error	t-Value	P	Construct Reliability	AVE
User Satisfaction	my1	.776	.094	11.518	.000	0.852	0.510
	my2	.859	.082	12.942	.000		
	my3	.837	.084	12.578	.000		
	my4	.776	-	-	-		
Repurchase Intention	gm1	.744	.096	9.680	.000	0.843	0.573
	gm2	.869	.084	13.014	.000		
	gm3	.754	.093	11.180	.000		
	gm4	.794	-	-	-		
Fit Indices	X ² =46.545, df=18, X ² /df=2.586, p=0.000, RMR=0.066, GFI=0.950, AGFI=0.899, NFI=0.954, CFI=0.971						

According to the analysis results, p-value of X² is not satisfied well with the recommended criteria. X²/df, GFI, AGFI, RMR, NFI, CFI and other indicators surpass the recommended criteria for acceptance and have attained satisfactory level. p-value is lower than statistical significance level of 0.05 thus ensuring the convergence validity and discriminant validity.

In addition, according to the value of AVE (Average Variance Extracted) which is calculated to determine whether criteria for each configuration concept can represent its research unit, all reliability values of research units in our research model are confirmed to be higher than standard value of 0.7 and AVE value is also confirmed to be higher than standard value of 0.5, these facts represent the appropriateness of measurement model in our research [6].

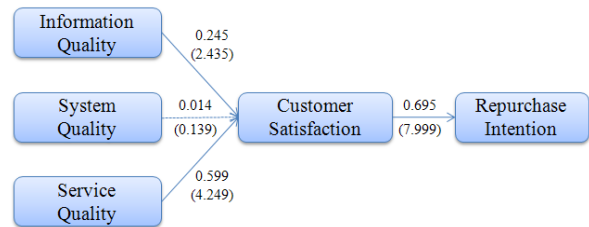
4.2 Structural model analysis

In view of above analysis on research model, structure model analysis was performed to delineate the factors which can affect Chinese users' satisfactions towards Internet shopping malls as well as their repurchase intentions at Internet shopping malls. Goodness of fit was analyzed before testing hypotheses and analysis results can be referred in Tab. 6.

Table 6. Test of Structure Model's Goodness of Fit

Divisions	Absolute Goodness of Fit Index				
	χ ² (p,df)	χ ² /df	GFI	RMR	RMSEA
Recommended Acceptance Criteria	-	≤2.0	≥0.9	≤0.05	≤0.08
Analysis Results	274.968 (0.004,215)	1.279	0.907	0.102	0.037
Divisions	Incremental Goodness of Fit Index			Parsimonious Goodness of Fit Index	
	AGFI	NFI	CFI	PGFI	PNFI
Recommended Acceptance Criteria	≥0.8	≥0.9	≥0.9	≥0.6	≥0.6
Analysis Results	0.870	0.912	0.979	0.650	0.710

According to the 'goodness of fit' results of our proposed research model, the value of RMR (0.102) doesn't meet the recommended accepting standard very much. The value of χ²/df (1.279) is somewhat less than the recommended acceptance criteria of 3, other 'goodness of fit' indexes well satisfy the recommended accepting criteria thus validating an overall convincing research model as well as a generally good fit of structure model.



Notice 1) standardized path coefficient(t value)

Notice 2) solid : accepted path(p<0.05)

dashed : denied path(p<0.05)

Fig. 3. Result of Structural Model Testing

Table 7. Results of Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses	Hypothesized Paths	Direction	Stand. Path Coe.	Stand. Error	t-Value	Accept or Not
H1	Information Quality → User Satisfaction	+	0.245	0.122	2.435**	Accept
H2	System Quality → User Satisfaction	+	0.014	0.125	0.139	Denied
H3	Service Quality → User Satisfaction	+	0.599	0.163	4.249**	Accept
H4	User Satisfaction → Repurchase Intention	+	0.695	0.076	7.999**	Accept

Notice) *: p<0.05, **: p<0.01

After performing goodness of fit analysis, structure model test, often utilized to verify proposed hypotheses, was performed accordingly and results are shown in Fig. 3. and Tab. 7. In order to examine the statistical significances of path coefficients, t-test was conducted. The results of t-test greater than 2 obtained p-values lower than significance level of 0.05 thus dismissing corresponding null hypothesis. Thus, hypotheses 1, 3 and 4 were accepted while hypothesis 2 was denied. It is not surprising that the effect of system quality on customer satisfaction was not significant. Perhaps the main cause is that the majority of survey respondents are college students in China who possess higher computer self-efficacy, Internet self-efficacy and Internet experience than other groups. Thus, the system quality or ease of use of an Internet shopping mall is not critical for them in determining whether to repurchase or not at Internet shopping malls.

5. CONCLUSION

In order to understand the features of Chinese Internet

shopping malls market which has showed rapid growth in recent years, we examined the casual relationships between the three attributes of Internet shopping malls (namely: information quality, service quality, system quality) and customer satisfaction & repurchase intention with a target of Chinese Internet shopping mall users. By doing this, our research could provide significant implications for academia and industry practitioners.

This study makes several contributions, which are summarized as follows.

First, our research provided a comprehensive examination of the three IS quality attributes: system quality, information quality, and service quality. Our results showed that service quality (e.g., speed of response) has the greater impact than information quality (e.g., usefulness) and system quality (e.g., ease of use), thus highlighting its importance to both internal efficiency and strategic benefits. From practical perspective, despite the rapid development, mechanism of Internet shopping malls in China is far from perfect. Many acute problems (such as commercial fraud, after-sale service, etc.) still exist. Thus, compared to information and system quality, consumers show more concern about issues in services. From the theoretical perspective, service was found to be the most influential factors affecting user's satisfaction in many other fields. On the other hand, in view of the lack of face-to-face contact, more aspects referring to service should be considered to satisfy customer's demand (such as finding, ordering, and delivering the physical products), which also strengthens the importance of service. Based on this view, whether premium service is well set in place should be taken into account on a priority basis. Hence, IS managers can allocate resources accordingly and thus plan for an effective IS quality management program.

Second, despite the claim that satisfaction is linked to repurchase behavior, few attempts can be found in the context of Internet shopping malls. This article fills this void by establishing a link between satisfaction and repurchase behavior in the context of Internet shopping malls. The degree of user's satisfaction towards Internet shopping malls was found to positively affect repurchase intention. Consistent with most previous studies, the findings of our research reconfirmed the importance of user's satisfaction to repurchase intention's formation.

According to the results of this study, we should try to provide a high level of product-related information and premium service so as to enhance user's satisfaction and then ensure an ongoing repurchase as well as greater value.

However, our study is not absent from the following limitations.

First, questionnaire survey should be conducted randomly in a broader sampling size so as to generalize the findings of this research. In addition, all levels of society should be reflected in survey sampling. However, only convenient sampling method was adopted in this research due to the limit of data collection process. Therefore, random sampling considering all ranks and classes is required in future research so as to increase the representation of our research findings.

Second, only three constructs, namely information quality, system quality and service quality, were used as influencing

factors of user's satisfaction and repurchase intention in this research. Hence, additional factors can be added into research model through a more extensive review of literature in future research.

Third, our study provided an empirical analysis in order to delineate the factors affecting consumers' repurchase intention towards Internet shopping malls. However, the lack of qualitative study would render it to be risk to make generalization into industry, hence, follow-up researches in which qualitative and other complementary approaches are performed would be necessary in future.

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Appendix A: Questionnaire Items

Information Quality

1. Internet shopping mall provides the precise information you need
2. Internet shopping mall provides the accurate information you need
3. Internet shopping mall provides the reliable information you need
4. Internet shopping mall provides the complete information you need
5. Internet shopping mall provides the relevant information you need

System Quality

1. Internet shopping mall is easy to learn
2. Internet shopping mall is user friendly
3. Internet shopping mall is easy to use
4. Internet shopping mall is devised in a clear and understandable way.
5. Internet shopping mall has short time lag between data input and output for processing.

Service Quality

1. Internet shopping mall makes it easy to find what you need
2. Internet shopping mall is always available for using
3. Internet shopping mall makes reliable promises about delivery of products
4. Internet shopping mall responds to my inquiries promptly
5. Internet shopping mall provides me with convenient options for returning items
6. When you have a problem, Internet shopping mall shows a sincere interest in solving it

User Satisfaction

1. In general, the products/services of Internet shopping malls meet my expectations
2. Overall, Internet shopping malls are good platforms for shopping
3. My choice to purchase from Internet shopping malls was a wise one
4. In general, I am satisfied with the services or products that Internet shopping malls provide

Repurchase Intention

1. I consider myself a loyal patron of Internet shopping malls
2. I will do more transaction from the Internet shopping malls
3. I consider Internet shopping malls as my first choice for shopping
4. I intend to purchase from Internet shopping malls again in the next few weeks



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