

THE MEDIATING ROLE OF EXCITEMENT IN CUSTOMER SATISFACTION AND REPATRONAGE INTENTION OF DISCOUNT STORE SHOPPERS IN KOREA

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Overview

This study examined how shoppers' internal orientation (i.e., enduring shopping involvement and shopping motives) and store-level external variables (i.e., store attributes) affect the excitement that shoppers experience at discount stores. A conceptual model of excitement as a mediating variable between selected internal and external factors and shopping outcomes (i.e., satisfaction and repatronage intentions) was built and tested in the context of the Korean discount store retail industry.



■ Introduction

Traditionally the market is the place where people go to shop. People shop not only for product acquisition, but also for diversion, stress relief

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and fun as they can exchange information, meet and watch other shoppers in the market. In other words, there has always been some excitement in the market for people to enjoy. Positive emotion or excitement has characterized the marketplace throughout history.

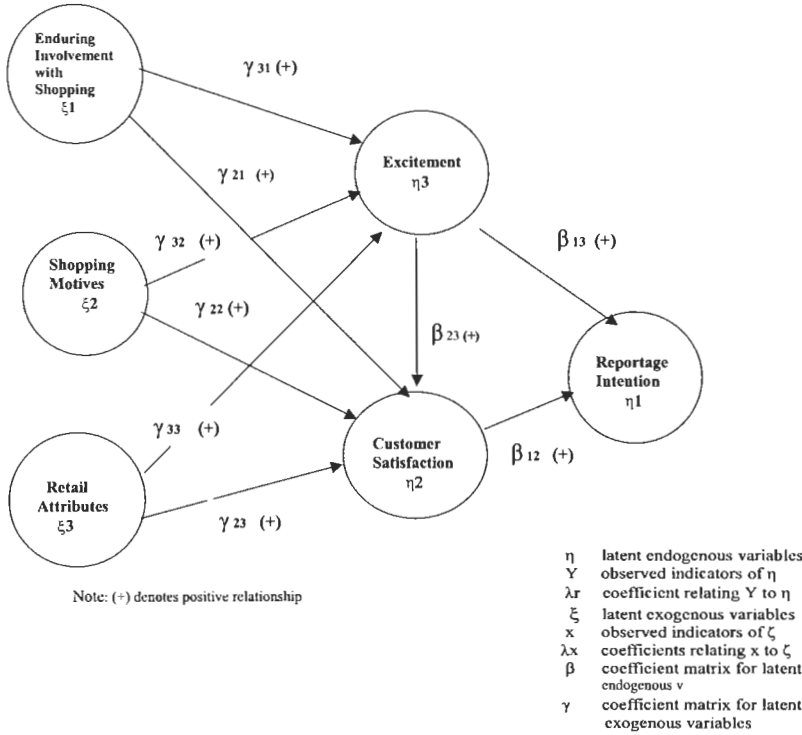
Recently, emotions that consumers experience during shopping have received considerable attention from both academics and practitioners. Although emotions have been shown to be significant determinants of consumer shopping behavior (Babin and Darden, 1996; Sherman and Smith, 1987), the antecedents and outcomes of the emotions have been studied to a lesser extent in the marketing literature. Among many dimensions of emotion, excitement has been widely used as a key concept in helping revitalize declining mall businesses in the United States (Lotz, Eastlick and Shim, 1999). Hence, many of the studies on excitement have mainly been directed to mall settings (Wakefield and Baker, 1998).

However, we can posit that regardless of the type of retail format, consumers can enjoy shopping. Unlike the mall business, discount stores in the U.S. traditionally have no frills; rather their focus is to keep prices down and offer value for the money. These stores are not usually equipped with facilities like movie theaters or fancy food courts to increase shoppers' excitement. Then does excitement still play an important role in shopping behavior at the discount store? If it does, what are the retailing elements that elicit excitement in the discount store shopping experience? Are excitement-inducing factors universal across international markets or are they country-specific? This study has attempted to address these questions through a focus on South Korean (Korea hereafter) discount retailing.

When a newly renovated store or a new format of retailing is introduced to consumers, it usually attracts shoppers' attention because the new retail format or unique features of the new stores could provide shoppers with some types of feeling of excitement while shopping. For some Korean consumers, a relatively new format, e.g., a discount store with wide open aisles, free mobile shopping carts and a wide selection of merchandise, may itself evoke a feeling of excitement. This is an example of excitement-eliciting factors that may vary across different retail formats in the international markets.

To understand the role of excitement in retailing, excitement-eliciting factors and relevant shopping outcomes and their relationships should be explored. For this purpose, we proposed a conceptual model of excitement for discount store retailing in Korea (see Figure 1). We build our theoretical model based on Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) work with the incorporation of Lazarus's (1991) cognitive models of emotion. Following Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) model which posited that affect mediates the relationship between the physical environment and an in-

FIGURE 1 A PROPOSED CONCEPTUAL MODEL



dividual’s response to that environment, we posit that excitement plays a mediating role between excitement-inducing factors and shopping outcomes. In addition, we posit that shoppers’ internal orientations also play a role in determining an individual’s emotions. For excitement-inducing factors, we employ Lazarus’ (1991) cognitive models of emotion. According to his model, emotions are outcomes of the cognitive appraisal of an event, and an individual’s appraisal of a situation depends on both internal (i.e., personality, beliefs) and external (i.e., product performance) conditions. This study particularly focuses on understanding how shoppers’ internal orientations (i.e., enduring shopping involvement and shopping motives) and store-level external variables (i.e., store attributes) affect the excitement that shoppers experience at discount stores. In this study, the mediating role of the excitement was examined by integrating the relationship between excitement and customer satisfaction and repatronage intention; i.e., ultimately the goal of the store.

The purpose of this study is to build a conceptual model of excitement as a mediating factor in shopping outcomes by incorporating ex-

citement-inducing internal and external factors and shopping outcomes, and to test the model in the context of the Korean discount store retail industry.

■ Discount Store Retailing in Korea

The history of Korean discount retailing is relatively short. The first discount store in Korea, E-Mart, was introduced in 1993 by Shinsegae, a leading Korean retailer. When this discount store first opened in Korea, the self-service format with shopping carts, wide aisles and a full array of merchandise stacked on the shelves might have been new to Korean consumers. Before the introduction of the discount store, most Korean consumers shopped at the smaller retailers or at the department stores for groceries as well as for other fashion goods. From 1993, when the first Korean discount store opened, to 1998, discount store sales have increased two thousand times (Dong-A Il Bo, 1998). In the first half of 1998, the sales of the Korean discount store market reached 2.49 trillion won (US \$2.08 billion). Since the Korean retail sector was fully liberalized in 1997, three multinational retailers, Carrefour, Costco and Wal-Mart, have entered the Korean retail markets, intensifying competition. These three multinational discounters hold a market share of 18.7% in Korea (Korea Herald, 1998). Wal-Mart, the biggest U.S.-based discount retailer, opened stores in Korea in 1998 by acquiring Makro, a Dutch retailer. It operated five superstores in Korea as of 1999 (Discount Store News, 1999). Among 87 discount retailers operating in Korea, Wal-Mart and Costco (Price Club: another U.S.-based discounter), achieved the seventh and the tenth highest sales in 1999 respectively. E-Mart, a Korean discounter, took the top position with sales of 695.2 billion won (US \$579 million) in the first half of 1999, while French hypermarket retailer Carrefour took the third position with sales of 298.1 billion won (US \$248 million) (Korea Economic Daily, 1999).

Each of these discount stores keeps its own company policy in selection of store sites, presentation of merchandise and human resource management. For example, E-Mart, which claims to understand Korean shoppers best, offers Korean department store-style management in a tall multi-story building with parking space in the basement and free shuttle bus service from near home to the store on a regular schedule. Carrefour and Wal-Mart provide flat buildings only a few stories tall, with wide and spacious floors and parking space either in the top level or in a connected building, which makes it easy for shoppers to find parking spaces. Regardless of differences of these discount retailers in their management style or in-store layout, the impact of discount stores on retail market restructuring and competition has been tremendous.

■ Literature Review and Model Development

The conceptual model of excitement suggested in this study (Figure 1) summarizes determinants and shopping outcomes of excitement experienced during shopping at discount stores. We next suggest the conceptual rationale for the hypotheses represented in the model with a literature review focusing on the concept of excitement and its outcomes.

Excitement and Shopping Outcomes

Although numerous factors affect retail store choice or preferences, a consumer's emotion in the store has recently received increased attention as an important factor in shopping behavior. Researchers have found that consumers' mood positively affects retail related appraisals and outcomes (e.g., Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer, 1999; Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway, 1990; Donovan and Rossiter, 1982). A consumer's emotion, however, has many underlying dimensions such as pleasure, excitement, pride and anger (Bagozzi, Gopinath and Nyer, 1999). Among these, excitement is one of the emotions that has been considered a key experience during shopping, an experience that also attracts customers to a shopping mall (Lotz, Eastlick and Shim, 1999). Excitement is defined as a positive emotional state that consists of high levels of pleasure and arousal (Russell, 1980).

There is general agreement that store-induced excitement results in many favorable purchase behavior outcomes, such as amount of money and time spent in the store, frequency of mall shopping and willingness to interact with sales personnel (Babin and Darden, 1996; Westbrook, 1987). However, other shopping outcomes such as customer satisfaction and repatronage intention have not been extensively researched as surrogate behavior outcomes of store-induced excitement.

While numerous research studies have focused on emotion and satisfaction (Mano and Oliver, 1993; Oliver, 1993), the relationship of these two variables was rather confusing. It was unclear from these studies whether emotion is part of satisfaction or the antecedent. A series of studies posits the view that emotion should be incorporated into understanding of customer satisfaction, since providing customer satisfaction based merely on store attributes is not enough to retain customer loyalty to the store (Oliver, 1993; Schneider and Bowen, 1999).

A series of studies has reported the mediating role of excitement in satisfaction. Mooradian and Oliver (1997) found that fundamental per-

sonality traits determine satisfaction via mediating affective experiences. Mano and Oliver (1993) found that arousal determines positive affect and positive affect, in turn, determines satisfaction. Spies, Hesse and Loesch (1997) also found a direct effect of store atmosphere on store satisfaction as well as an indirect effect through mediation of customers' mood.

The review of previous research asserts that store-induced excitement determines satisfaction, but emotion (e.g., excitement) should be considered part of satisfaction. However, emotion and satisfaction could be separately understood to help marketers develop effective marketing strategies. In other words, excitement doesn't necessarily ensure satisfaction, but without excitement, the satisfaction may not be achieved. Thus we hypothesize that:

H₁: Shopping excitement experienced at discount stores affects shopping satisfaction.

Another outcome of excitement may be repatronage intention. Lotz, Eastlick and Shim (1999) confirmed that mood states had a direct causal effect on future patronage intentions. Similarly Yoo, Park and MacInnis (1998) found that positive emotions experienced in a store result in more favorable consumer attitudes toward the retailer. Wakefield and Baker (1998) found that among three retail variables (i.e., excitement at the mall, desire to stay at the mall and involvement with shopping), excitement most strongly influenced mall repatronage intention. They also reported that excitement at the mall positively influenced desire to stay at the mall. Baker, Levy and Grewal (1992) found that emotions evoked by a store's environmental characteristics, such as music, lighting and service level influenced store repatronage intentions. Thus, we hypothesize that:

H₂: Shopping excitement experienced at discount stores affects repatronage intention.

Considerable research has agreed on the role of satisfaction in consumer's intent of repurchase and repatronage (Rust and Williams, 1994). Sivadas and Baker-Prewitt (2000) reported that satisfaction was found to influence both repurchase from and recommendation of the particular department store by shoppers. Thus, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₃: Customer satisfaction experienced at discount stores affects repatronage intention.

The preceding hypotheses allowed us to examine the relationship between consumer's excitement and its outcomes, i.e., satisfaction and repatronage intention. Since excitement-inducing factors have been found to affect customers' shopping satisfaction with the store, we propose three hypotheses regarding the relationships between excitement-inducing factors (i.e., shopping involvement, shopping motives and store attributes) and excitement and additional three hypotheses regarding the relation-

ships between those same factors and satisfaction. These determinants of shopping excitement and satisfaction will be reviewed in the following section.

Enduring Shopping Involvement

Enduring involvement is one of many facets of involvement, and is defined as the stable trait that represents an individual's degree of interest or arousal for a product. A product or activity that is related to self-image and fun provides motivation for enduring involvement (Richins and Bloch, 1986). Based on this definition, we define enduring shopping involvement as an individual's ongoing and long-term interest toward shopping. From a broader perspective, consumers with high enduring shopping interest may be conceptually similar to hedonic shoppers or recreational shoppers (Babin, Darden and Griffin, 1994) in that they enjoy the shopping trip itself.

Identifying people who are high in enduring involvement has practical significance since they are more likely to be opinion leaders for the product or activity (Bloch and Richins, 1983; Venkatraman, 1990). Previous studies also indicate that shoppers with higher involvement are more easily aroused emotionally with the consumption experience (Wakefield and Baker, 1998; Wakefield and Blodgett, 1994). Thus, we hypothesize that:

H₄: Korean consumers' level of shopping involvement affects the level of shopping excitement during shopping at discount stores.

Satisfaction is a fulfillment state that is typically determined by appraisals of attributes. Consumers who are enduringly involved in shopping may be more sensitive about the store attributes since they are more informed and knowledgeable about shopping due to their ongoing shopping interest. Thus shoppers' enduring shopping involvement may influence not only evaluations of store attributes but also customer satisfaction. Mano and Oliver (1993), however, found no direct relationship between involvement and satisfaction. Enduring shopping involvement itself may or may not affect satisfaction. Therefore, we propose the following hypothesis:

H₅: Korean consumers' level of shopping involvement affects the level of customer satisfaction during shopping at discount stores.

Shopping Motives

Research suggests that shoppers have a variety of shopping motives (Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway, 1990; Tauber, 1972, Westbrook and Black, 1985). Westbrook and Black posit three categories of shopping motives:

product-oriented, experiential and a combination of product and experiential. Product-oriented shopping motives refer to consumers' visits to retail stores for product and information acquisition; that is, for utilitarian purposes. Experiential motives are conceptually similar to hedonic or recreational purposes, and pleasure is inherent in the visit itself. Lotz, Eastlick and Shim (1999) view shopping motives as a combination of extrinsic and intrinsic motivations. Extrinsic motivation is associated with purposive shopping (Tauber, 1972), while intrinsic motivation is associated with recreational shopping (Bloch and Richins, 1983).

Motives are known to be the drivers of behavior that brings consumers to the marketplace; therefore, consumers' shopping motives are considered to influence the level of excitement that consumers experience during shopping. Lotz, Eastlick and Shim (1999) found that both intrinsic and extrinsic shopping motives affect mood (i.e., excitement), but intrinsic motives had the most direct, as well as indirect effect on future patronage intention. Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway (1990) reported that consumers with higher experiential motives feel higher arousal and pleasure than consumers with lower experiential motives. Chung and Kim (1999) found that emotions Korean customers experienced during shopping at department stores varied by their shopping motives. From the discussions above, we propose a hypothesis as follows:

H₆: Korean consumers' shopping motives affect the level of shopping excitement during shopping at discount stores.

Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway (1990) contend that theory is lacking for addressing the relationship between shopping motives and shopping outcomes e.g., satisfaction, because of many confounding situational factors. They suggest, however, that emotions are an important intervening variable that helps to explain the relationship between shopping motives and shopping outcomes (e.g., satisfaction). Thus, we posit that customers' shopping motives may be related to satisfaction with the store.

H₇: Korean consumers' shopping motives affect the level of customer satisfaction during shopping at discount stores.

Store Attributes

While considerable research has examined retail store attributes, little research has been directed to the relationship between store attributes and consumers' emotional state. Most prior studies followed Mehrabian and Russell's (1974) environmental psychology framework and have examined store atmosphere at a global level, but did not clarify how different store attributes create shoppers' affective responses. That is, store atmosphere is a part of the gestalt, or whole, that stores offer to customers. Different store attributes such as price/value, product assortment, or ser-

vices that a store offers may arouse shoppers' excitement differently. For example, Yoo, Park and MacInnis (1998) suggested that consumers' emotional states could be induced by the store environment as well as by merchandise value and service quality. Thus, it is important to know which specific store attributes evoke shoppers' positive emotion. In addition, the importance of various store attributes varies by store format and customer base (Kim and Kang, 1995). Thus, in discount store settings in Korea, attributes that evoke excitement may differ from the results found in the earlier studies of other retail channels and/or other countries. Therefore, our next hypothesis is:

H₈: Discount store attributes affect the level of shopping excitement experienced at discount stores in Korea.

Satisfaction itself is influenced by cognitive processes. For instance, the expectation-performance model, the most accepted satisfaction model, defines satisfaction by comparing actual store performance to expectations; that is, this model assumes satisfaction as a cognitive appraisal of the attributes of products and posits product attributes as a key determinant of satisfaction. Empirically, Mano and Oliver (1993) found that product evaluations were causal antecedents to both affect (pleasantness and arousal) and to product satisfaction. Oliver (1995) found that satisfaction was related to product-level fulfillment and attribute performance. Bitner (1992) has suggested that the facility itself, or the service-scape, may have a substantial effect on customers' satisfaction with the service experience. Thus, it is important to understand how a wide variety of store attributes of the discount store, e.g., service quality, time factor and servicescape, affect discount store shoppers' satisfaction. Thus, we hypothesized as follows:

H₉: Store attributes affect the level of customer satisfaction experienced at discount stores in Korea.

■ Method

Sample Population

Married female consumers were chosen as respondents since they are the primary shoppers at discount stores in Korea. Two suburban satellite cities of Seoul, Ilsan and Bundang, were selected as research sites since all major large-scale discount stores operating in Korea compete in these two markets. Our research sites were three discount stores (E-Mart, Carrefour and Wal-Mart) located in each of these cities.

The majority of respondents were homemakers (60%), while 24% had full-time jobs and the rest (16%), part-time jobs. Approximately half

(52%) were in their thirties; 22% in their twenties; 21% in their forties and 5% were fifty years or older. One-third of the respondents had a high school education and 46% held a bachelor's degree. Approximately 70% of the respondents reported an average monthly income of US \$1,000 to US \$3,000. These respondents usually go to discount stores once a week (62%); 57% went in their own car. They reported an average of twenty minutes of travel time to the discount stores (73%) and two hours for shopping (81%). They spent an average of US \$60 (85,000 won) per shopping trip. This result is consistent with Lee's (1999) report that Korean consumers go to discount stores on an average of 3.5 times per month, and spend US \$50 per shopping trip. Therefore, respondents of this study can be considered as representative shoppers at discount stores in Korea.

Questionnaire Development

The questionnaire developed was based on multi-item scales of prior research studies and the results of the telephone interviews. The questionnaire consisted of seven sections that measured: (1) extent of enduring involvement with shopping; (2) level of shopping motives; (3) store attributes; (4) level of shopping excitement; (5) level of shopping satisfaction; (6) repatronage intention and (7) demographic variables. The questionnaire was written in Korean and pre-tested using a convenience sample of approximately 50 female students and shoppers in Seoul. The questionnaire was revised based on the pretest responses to increase clarity of questions with regard to Korean discount retailing.

Data Collection

Data were collected via intercept surveys conducted at each discount store by trained interviewers over a two-month period. Shoppers who agreed to participate in the study were asked to complete a questionnaire. Six hundred twenty four questionnaires were administered, and 467 completed questionnaires (Ilsan 281, Bundang 186) were available for data analysis.

Measurement

Shopping Motives

Fourteen items related to shopping motives were developed from previous studies (Dawson, Bloch and Ridgway, 1990; Lotz, Eastlick and Shim, 1999) and the preliminary telephone interviews. A principal component

factor analysis with varimax rotation was conducted to identify underlying dimensions of shopping motives. Using eigen values of one or greater, three factors (i.e., Socialization, Diversion and Utilitarian) emerged. Whereas Lotz, Eastlick and Shim (1999) found shopping motives grouped as intrinsic versus extrinsic, for Korean consumers, intrinsic motives seem to be further divided into Diversion and Socialization. Cronbach alpha coefficients for these three factors ranged from .63 to .83, indicating good reliability (Table 1).

Store Attributes

Thirty-seven items related to store attributes were developed based on previous studies (Dickerson and Albaum, 1977; Hansen and Deutscher, 1977–78; Wakefield and Baker, 1998) and results of the preliminary telephone interviews. Respondents were asked to rate each attribute for the discount store they patronized. After running exploratory factor analysis, items with low factor loading and cross loading were deleted, and six factors were identified (see Table 2). Cronbach alpha coefficients for these four factors ranged from .53 to .76 (Table 2) and were regarded as acceptable reliability considering the exploratory nature of the study.

Shopping Excitement

The shopping excitement measure was adopted from Wakefield and Baker's (1998) measure, which consisted of five items (exciting, stimulating, sensational, interesting and appealing). In addition, we added one more item, pleasant. Respondents were asked to evaluate shopping excitement at the discount store they patronize, using a seven-point Likert-type scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). The original scale of Wakefield and Baker (1998), a semantic differential scale, was changed to a seven-point Likert-type scale because bi-polar adjectives were not conceptually equivalent when translated into Korean. The Cronbach alpha coefficient for excitement was .94, indicating a fairly high degree of reliability.

Enduring Involvement with Shopping

Four statements adopted from Wakefield and Baker (1998) included "matters to me," "is appealing," "is exciting" and "interesting".

Two items added by the authors: "is pleasant" and "is enjoyable activity with family." Respondents were asked to rate these six items on a seven-point scale (1 = strongly disagree, 7 = strongly agree). One item with low Cronbach alpha coefficient (an enjoyable activity with family) was deleted from the analysis, and the coefficient with the remaining five items was .92, indicating a fairly high degree of reliability.

Customer Satisfaction and Repatronage Intention

For shopping satisfaction, two items were included and for repatronage intention, three items were adopted from Wakefield and Baker (1998). The Cronbach alpha coefficient for shopping satisfaction was .84 and for repatronage intention was .89, indicating a good reliability.

■ Results and Discussion

Estimates for the Measurement and Structural Model

The measurement model specifies how the latent variables are measured in terms of the observed variables and is used to describe the measurement properties (such as discriminant and convergent validity) of the observed variables. We initially performed confirmatory factor analysis upon all the constructs to be included in our theoretical model. For the shopping motives and store attributes, we used the factors found in exploratory factor analysis (see Table 1 and 2), and for the other constructs, each item was treated as an indicator. Results of the initial confirmatory factor analysis of the data showed that *t* values of two store attributes factors (Service Convenience and Congestion Inconvenience) were not significant, and the chi-square values were relatively large ($\chi^2_{260} = 764.70$, $p = .00$, d.f. = 260). This meant that the data did not fit the model well. Thus we ran several confirmatory factor analyses by omitting improper variables each time. The resulting confirmatory factor analysis (Table 3) showed that the data fit the measurement model fairly well ($\chi^2_{104} = 131.31$, $p = .036$, GFI = .96, AGFI = .94, RMSR = .04, RMSEA = .03). As table 3 shows, all indicators were significant at *p*-value of .001 levels, suggesting that all latent variables were measured well by indicators. Therefore, the measurement model was deemed valid for testing hypotheses.

We next examined the structural model to test hypotheses 1–9. Overall fit indices, with the exception of the chi-square statistic, showed that the data fit the structural model well ($\chi^2_{108} = 180.70$, $p = .0000015$, GFI = .94, AGFI = .92, RMSR = .01, RMSEA = .08). The chi-square statistic is very sensitive to sample size, and with a very large sample (>200) it can generate significantly poor fit even though the model explains the data well (Bagozzi and Yi, 1998). Although chi-square was significant, other robust fit measures, such as GFI and RMSR suggests that this model is considered to be a good fit for this study with the relatively large sample size. The RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation) value of .08 represents a reasonable fit. We further considered modification indices to make the model fit better. However, none of the modification indices exceed 5.0, indicating no path changes will significantly improve the model.

Hypothesis Testing

Figure 1 and Table 4 show the results of the final structural model, including the standardized path coefficients. Hypothesis 1, stating that

TABLE 1. EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS AND RELIABILITY TEST FOR SHOPPING MOTIVES

Factor Labels and Statement	Factor Loading	Eigen Values	Percent of Variance	Alpha Coefficients
Socialization		2.32	24.4	.83
To visit a place that I see for myself conveys the level of achievement	.64			
To receive promotional gift	.79			
To enjoy crowds	.78			
To watch other people	.68			
To participate in a promotional event	.77			
Diversion		1.75	22.1	.83
To be energized	.63			
To meet and spend time together with friends	.71			
To forget about day-to-day anxiety	.67			
To escape from routine life	.82			
To have a good time	.73			
Utilitarian		1.47	12.7	.63
To find value for the money	.75			
To take a look at the products being considered to purchase	.64			
To find product assortments that I need	.74			
Cumulative Percent of Variance explained			57.2	

TABLE 2. EXPLORATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS AND RELIABILITY TEST FOR DISCOUNT STORE ATTRIBUTES

Factor Labels and Statement	Factor Loading	Eigen Values	Percent of Variance	Alpha Coefficient
Facility Convenience		2.57	14.3	.76
It has good parking facilities	.79			
It offers comfortable temperature	.72			
It is convenient to move from one floor to another or to a parking lot	.67			
It is a good place for shopping with children	.70			
Service Convenience		2.10	11.7	.70
It is convenient because it accepts credit card for payment	.66			
It offers convenient time schedule for shuttle bus service	.84			
It is convenient since payment can be made with a store credit card	.75			
Congestion Inconvenience		2.02	11.3	.66
It is too crowded with people	.70			
It takes too much time to be checked out	.78			
Package units are too bulky to purchase	.63			
It is inconvenient to move around with a cart due to narrow aisle	.61			
Neat/Spacious Atmosphere		1.84	10.4	.63
Merchandise is sparsely and well arranged	.73			
It is pleasant to shop in	.76			
The store is neat	.68			
Price Competitiveness		1.40	7.8	.53
The price is rather high (R)	.77			
The price is reasonable for the value	.76			
Fashion Goods		1.38	7.6	.61
It carries a variety of fashion goods	.74			
It carries many famous brands	.75			
Cumulative Percent of Variance Explained			63.1	

R: Score reversed.

**TABLE 3. CONFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS:
STANDARDIZED COEFFICIENTS**

Constructs	Indicators	Standardized Coefficients (t-value)
Enduring involvement with shopping	In general, going shopping	
	Means a lot to me	.76 ^a
	Is interesting	.88 (16.83)
Shopping motives	Is appealing	.88 (16.88)
	Socialization	.43 ^a
Store attributes	Diversification	.64 (24.66)
	Facility convenience	.61 ^a
	Neat/Spacious atmosphere	.63 (13.66)
	Price competitiveness	.37 (3.44)
Excitement	Fashion goods	.25 (2.97)
	Shopping at this discount store is	
	Exciting	.93 ^a
	Interesting	.95 (35.68)
Customer satisfaction	Pleasant	.92 (32.18)
	Very satisfied with shopping at this store	.87 ^a
Repatronage intention	Enjoyed shopping at this store	.85 (18.86)
	Will visit this discount store frequently	.84 ^a
	Likely to visit this discount store	.88 (20.76)
	Probably visit this discount store	.90 (21.18)

^aThese were set to 1, thus t-values cannot be computed.

shopping excitement experienced at discount stores affects shopping satisfaction, was supported ($\beta_{23} = .64, p \leq .001$). This result supports the position that store-induced excitement is determinant of customer satisfaction (Chung and Kim, 1999; Spies, Hesse and Loesch, 1997; Westbrook, 1987) rather than incorporating emotional satisfaction (including excitement) as a part of overall customer satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2 predicted that shopping excitement experienced at discount stores affects repatronage intention; however, it was not supported in our structural model. This finding does not correspond to the findings of the previous studies that store-induced excitement determines customers' repatronage intention (Baker, Levy and Grewal, 1992; Lotz, Eastwick and Shim, 1999; Yoo et al., 1998). This discrepancy can probably be attributed to differences in store formats. In the mall setting of most previous studies, store-induced excitement alone was enough to bring customers back to the store to repatronize. In contrast, in the discount store setting, store-induced excitement may not be enough to ensure revisits to the store since the primary purpose of discount store visiting is to purchase products. In other words, excitement experienced

TABLE 4. STRUCTURAL MODEL: STANDARDIZED PATH COEFFICIENTS

Hypothesized Path	Standardized Coefficients (t-value)	Hypothesis
Excitement → Customer Satisfaction (H ₁)	.64 (7.52)	Supported
Excitement → Repatronage Intention (H ₂)	.09 (1.26)	Failed
Customer Satisfaction → Repatronage Intention (H ₃)	.81 (8.91)	Supported
Enduring Involvement → Excitement (H ₄)	.82 (5.04)	Supported
Enduring Involvement → Customer Satisfaction (H ₅)	.01 (0.11)	Failed
Shopping Motives → Excitement (H ₆)	-.31 (0.57)	Failed
Shopping Motives → Customer Satisfaction (H ₇)	-.02 (0.04)	Failed
Retail Attributes → Excitement (H ₈)	1.77 (2.13)	Supported
Retail Attributes → Customer Satisfaction (H ₉)	.08 (0.24)	Failed

$\chi^2_{108} = 180.70$ ($p = .000015$), GFI = .94, AGFI = .92, RMSR = .01, RMSEA = .08

during shopping at discount store affects shopping satisfaction, but does not lead shoppers to be emotionally motivated to repatronize the discount store. Rather, the shopping trip to a discount store is to fulfill the shoppers' utilitarian purposes of shopping.

Hypothesis 3, predicting that customer satisfaction experienced at discount stores affects repatronage intention, was supported ($\beta_{12} = .81$, $p \leq .001$). This result is consistent with previous studies (Rust and Williams, 1994).

Hypothesis 4, stating that Korean consumers' enduring shopping involvement affect the level of shopping excitement during shopping at discount stores was also supported ($\gamma_{31} = .82$, $p \leq .001$). This finding supports previous studies of Mano and Oliver (1993), Wakefield and Baker (1998) and Wakefield and Blodgett (1994). Thus, it can be said that shoppers with higher enduring shopping involvement tend to get more excited during shopping at discount stores than do their counterparts.

Hypothesis 5, predicting that Korean consumers' enduring shopping involvement affects the level of customer satisfaction during shopping at discount stores, was not supported ($\gamma_{21} = .01$). As with Mano and Oliver's (1993) result, enduring shopping involvement does not have a direct relationship to customer satisfaction. However, in that hypothesis 1 and 4 are supported in our structural model, we believe that enduring shopping involvement has an impact on customer satisfaction indirectly through mediating the emotional variable of excitement. That is, enduring involvement with shopping affects the customers' level of excitement

during shopping at discount stores and excitement, in turn, determines shoppers' satisfaction.

Hypothesis 6, stating that Korean consumers' shopping motives affect the level of shopping excitement during shopping at discount stores was not supported. This finding is not consistent with the prior studies (Chung and Kim, 1999; Lotz, et al, 1999). This result can be explained taken together with the results from testing hypothesis 7.

Hypothesis 7, predicting that Korean consumers' shopping motives affect the level of customer satisfaction during shopping at discount stores, was not supported ($\gamma_{22} = -.02$). This finding supports Dawson, Block, and Ridgway's 1990 finding that shopping motives do not have a direct effect on satisfaction; rather they found shopping motives indirectly affected customer satisfaction via the mediating variable of excitement. However, in this study, hypothesis 6 was also rejected, indicating that the path between shopping motives (i.e., Socialization and Diversion) and excitement failed. Thus, motives did not affect customer satisfaction via excitement in the discount stores.

Hypothesis 8, stating that discount store attributes affect the level of shopping excitement experienced at discount stores in Korea, was supported ($\gamma_{33} = 1.77$, $p \leq .001$). This result corresponds to the previous studies (e.g., Wakefield and Baker, 1998; Yoo, Park and MacInnis, 1998), and supports our precept that store characteristics, including store atmosphere, do affect shoppers' excitement level. While this finding indicates that store attributes of the discount store format in international markets affect consumers' emotional state, we do not know the relative contribution of each specific store attribute to excitement. We ran further regression analyses to address this void (Table 5). Among four store attribute factors, three factors significantly contributed to shoppers' excitement. Neat/Spacious Atmosphere and Facility Convenience most affected the shoppers' excitement level, followed by Fashion Goods. While the two factors (Neat/Spacious Atmosphere and Facility Convenience) are considered as necessary conditions for running a discount store business in the U.S., these factors seem to provide some excitement with newness and freshness to Korean discount store shoppers. Discount stores usually do not carry fashion goods (e.g., name brand apparel). However, carrying a variety of fashion goods and famous name brands may provide excitement to discount store shoppers. We suggest further implications of this finding in the next section.

Hypothesis 9, predicting that discount store attributes affect the level of customer satisfaction experienced at discount stores in Korea, was not supported ($\gamma_{23} = .08$). This result is very surprising in that most traditional assumptions for satisfaction have been based on store attribute evaluation (i.e., Oliver, 1980). That is, if the performance of attributes is

TABLE 5. DISCOUNT STORE ATTRIBUTES EFFECTS ON EXCITEMENT

Independent Variable (Discount Store Attributes)	Dependent Variable (Excitement)		
	Standardized Coefficients	R ²	F Value
Facility convenience	.18***	.13	16.060***
Neat/spacious atmosphere	.19***		
Price competitiveness	.03		
Fashion goods	.13**		

***p < .001, **p < .01.

equal to or above customers' expectations, shoppers are generally satisfied. This finding may result from the satisfaction measurement in that satisfaction was measured by a holistic approach (e.g., "overall I am satisfied with this store") rather than against an expectation of each attribute. On the other hand, discount store attributes may have no direct effect on the level of customer satisfaction. Discount store shoppers get excited with new neat/spacious atmosphere and convenient facilities, but their overall shopping satisfaction may result more from meeting their utilitarian needs such as good price or values rather than emotional needs. However, taking hypothesis 8 together with this result, we can infer that discount store attributes do indirectly affect customer satisfaction via mediating customers' excitement.

■ Conclusions and Implications

Findings of this study confirmed the role of excitement as a mediating variable between excitement-inducing factors (enduring involvement with shopping, shopping motives and store attributes) and shopping outcome variables (customer satisfaction and repatronage intention). That is, enduring shopping involvement and discount store attributes do affect the level of customers' excitement, and, thus, customer satisfaction. This customer satisfaction in turn determined shoppers' repatronage intention of the discount stores.

We have posited that once a new format of retailing business is introduced in the local market, the format itself is the essence of excitement the store gives its customers. This precept is evidenced in our empirical study. Most Koreans had never had such a large-scale discount-shopping store before. Likewise, the true appeal of Internet shopping right now is its novelty. Once the customers get acquainted with the format, retailers will have to think of new ways to inspire excitement.

In short, the most important theoretical contribution of this study is the application of the “excitement” concept to other retail formats (i.e., discount stores) and other cultures (i.e., Korea). Prior studies have considered the conceptualization of affect or emotion as useful only for the revitalization of the declining U.S. retail industry. However, excitement is shown to be an emotional variable that marketers need to understand even for development of marketing strategies in discount retailing in international markets. All human behavior has both rational and emotional aspects. Therefore, shopping behavior also should be understood to possess both rational and emotional aspects. Shopping, definitely, should be a pleasant event and we suggest that the concept of excitement is universal across retail format and cultures.

■ Limitations and Future Research

The findings of this study provide an encouraging start in understanding the mediating role of shopping excitement for discount retailing in international markets. However, this study has limitations in generalizing the findings in that it examined only one country, Korea. Therefore, further application of the proposed model in this study to other international markets, where the concept of discount retailing is relatively new, is needed. In addition, comparing the excitement-inducing store attributes by different store formats may be another area for future research since the store attributes that evoke excitement may vary by store format. Obtaining and maintaining genuine loyal customers against competitors is extremely important. To determine relative contributions to excitement, how specific tangible and intangible aspects of store characteristics are linked to customers’ emotional state should be researched.

Finally, most importantly, cross-cultural comparison is needed. For example, the level of excitement may differ by a country’s history of discount stores. This cross-cultural research may add an additional insight to viewing operating retail formats of the advanced western countries as well as in the countries where retailing is underdeveloped. Future research is warranted in this area.

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