

Review of: "Shopping bags: own or plastic? Theoretical explanation of pro-environment consumer behavior in Vietnam"

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Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

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Abstract

The abstract attempted to provide succinct and clear description of the research topic, its theoretical framework and methodology. However, it failed to provide the specific contributions of the study to theory and practice. The methodology component could have indicated the specific form of SEM analysis performed (i.e. was it a PLS-SEM or CB-SEM ?) and the software used for the SEM (i.e. SmartPLS or AMOS).

Introduction

The introduction attempts to state the broad research topic, with reference to some relevant literature. However, the discussions could have been better structured. There is a large body of information provided but the narrative does not always follow a logical flow.

Paragraph 4 indicated that the TPB has extensively been used to analyse purchase behavior. Therefore, the introduction could have included some previous studies that have modified the TPB using an integrative model by outlining the limitations of such studies and how this study intends addressing such limitations (the novelty surrounding this study from a theoretical perspective). Additionally, the study used an integrative model of combining TPB and NAM. However, the introduction failed to briefly explain the concept of NAM and how the constructs of both models/theories interact in explaining consumer bag shopping behavior.

Deductively, the theoretical importance of the study could have been clearly highlighted in the introduction.

Theoretical Model and Hypotheses

The multidimensional nature of consumer behavior implies it is difficult and impossible to use a single theoretical model to adequately address all the factors that influence consumer bag shopping behavior. Therefore, the use of an integrative model in this study could increase the predictive ability of the model.

The literature review is comprehensive, although it could have covered other more recent studies on consumer bag shopping behavior. Nevertheless, the empirical basis for setting the hypotheses could be justified further. For example, with the NAM, only one study (Munerah, et al., 2021) was cited as the basis for the revision of the model for which six hypotheses were set.

The hypotheses do not have much empirical basis and have not been largely justified empirically. The basis for setting the hypotheses has not been well defined, and justified enough using pro-environmental literature.

Methods

In the application of SEM, constructs and items must be operationalized consistently with variables of the theoretical framework. Table 1 attempted operationalizing the constructs of the TBP and NAM for quantitative analysis using a questionnaire. However, the methodology failed to indicate that application of the constructs of the models (TPB and NAM) and modeling of the variables requires the use of the positivism paradigm which can support statistical and quantitative data which are suitable for SEM.

A sample size of 536 can be considered adequate for SEM in attaining statistically stable estimate. Nevertheless, justification of the sample size can be linked to other similar empirical studies.

Though other studies have used a five-point likert scale, the scale has limited data points for performing statistical analysis. It is also not nuanced and sensitive enough to record consumer true behavior as compared to a seven-point likert scale. Therefore, the use of a seven-point liker scale has been the predominant scale for consumer behavior surveys. The use of a seven-point likert scale in this study could have provided a more accurate result.

The study also failed to indicate how it addresses potential problems and sources of bias in the research process, particularly the online survey. For example, a potential challenge with online surveys is getting respondents who are not part of the target population. How was this addressed?

Statistical analysis

The relationship between dependent and independent variables is accurately revealed when essential moderating-mediating variables are considered. In SEM, the inclusion of moderating and mediating variables helps to produce an accurate statistical power of the test. Therefore, controlling socioeconomic factors through mediation analyses in reporting the mediating effects of IN and PN was commendable. However, the analysis failed to indicate whether there was partial or full mediation.

SEM Efficacy

It was unclear whether the questionnaire was pilot-tested in determining the efficacy of the SEM. Several initial considerations regarding validity and reliability must be taken when using SEM. Using Cronbach alpha alone for determining the efficacy of the SEM is statistically inadequate. The internal consistency reliability of the items should be determined using composite reliability. The traditional cronbach alpha generally underestimates internal consistency reliability due to its sensitivity to the number of items in a scale.

A requirement in using SEM is also the determination of convergent validity of each construct using Average Variance Extracted (AVE) as well as Discriminant validity using the Fornell-Lacker criterion.

According to Hair et al. (2019; 2017), if the measurement model meets all the require criteria, the structural model can be assessed. Therefore, in the absence of the reliability and validity assessments, it is difficult to confirm that the measurement model was satisfactory and valid for SEM.

Practical and theoretical contribution

The author should consider highlighting the implications of the findings of the study for practice and theory.