

The future of omnichannel retailing: Will apparel shopping habits be permanently impacted by COVID-19? A cross cultural proposal.

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INTRODUCTION

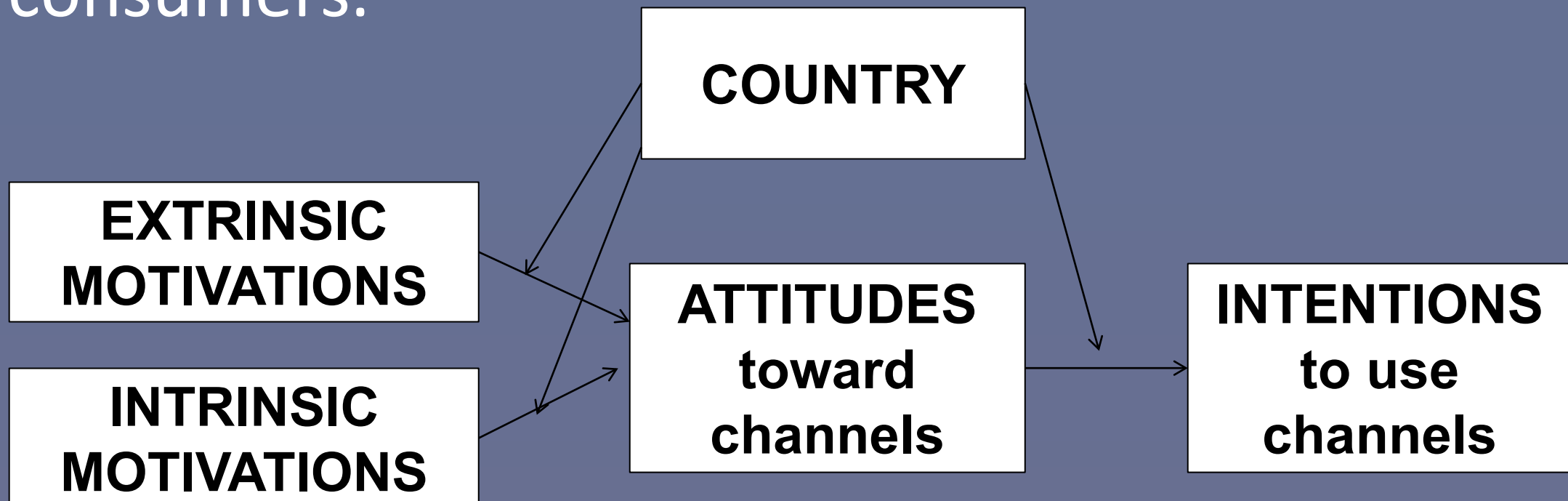
Channels are now used interchangeably by consumers during the decision-making process (Verhoef, Kannan, & Inman, 2015).

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON RETAIL

Supply chain disruption has impacted consumer habits due to shortages of essential products and bare retail shelves (Knowles et al., 2020). Lockdowns caused the closure of many retail stores and new social-distancing regulations have modified the typical retail experience (Sheth, 2020). Shift in channel behavior toward online and delivery for essential goods (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). Realization of benefits of these channels, safety and convenience, caused consumers to review shopping habits (Pantano et al., 2020).

PROPOSAL

- Understand the intrinsic and extrinsic motivations that have arisen due to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Examine consumer attitudes toward different retail channels
- Predict consumer intentions to use channels and identify similarities and differences between past and predicted future behavior.
- Highlight cross-cultural variables that may impact the motivations, attitudes, and intentions of consumers.



METHOD

APPAREL CATEGORY

Many consumers are foregoing non-essentials during the pandemic (Roggeveen & Sethuraman, 2020). 67% consumers expect to spend less than usual on apparel in the near future (McKinsey & Co, 2020). Apparel retailers accelerating the development of omnichannel integration (Adhi et al., 2020).

QUALITATIVE STUDY

- 9 participants, 7 female, age between 31 to 44.
- Collected via semi-structured interviews.
 - Participants were from either Spain or the U.S.

Participants were asked to discuss their shopping behavior and channel use during the COVID-19 pandemic, generally and in the case of apparel.

RESULTS

Behavior during COVID-19 pandemic

- Only the essential products were purchased.
- Less visits to the stores.
- Distrust, insecurity and scrupulousness → the feelings.
- Reduced the frequency of clothing purchases significantly during the height of the pandemic.
- Clothes were not priority: “If I cannot go out, I do not need new clothes”.

Motivations for presential channel use during COVID-19 pandemic

- Help small business (Sp).
- Evaluate and try on clothing (Sp and US).
- Obtain the opinion of vendors (Sp).
- Few people in the store (Sp).
- Comfort in stores where regulations were being enforced (US).

Motivations for non-presential channel use during COVID-19 pandemic

- Less contact with people (Sp and US).
- Convenience (US).
- Comfort (Sp).
- Safety (US).
- Conditions: Ease shipping, secure payment, good info or lower prices (Sp).

Brakes for presential channel use during COVID-19 pandemic

- SAFETY: crowded stores, other consumers not following regulations, unclear about regulations and measures (Sp and US).
- Insecurity (Sp).
- Distrust (Sp).
- Discomfort (Sp).

Brakes for non-presential channel use during COVID-19 pandemic

- Conditions: Unease shipping, information, manage the return (Sp).
- No evaluation and try on clothes. Try on unless very familiar with store/brands (Sp and US).
- Security of delivery person (Sp).

Future intentions

- People who adopted non-presential channels (mobile/online delivery services) for essentials like groceries, for convenience and safety (avoid going in stores) → will continue because of convenience.
- People who adopted omnichannel behavior in the clothing category to reduce the need to go in stores unnecessarily → will continue in the future.

DISCUSSION

EXTRINSIC MOTIVATIONS

- ☐ Abide by regulations during pandemic.
- ☐ Safety / unclear regulations / fear.
- ☐ Decision comfort.
- ☐ Easy shopping process.

INTRINSIC MOTIVATIONS

- ☐ Perceived control and/or risk aversion.
- ☐ Socially conscious.
- ☐ Trust.
- ☐ Need for interaction.

ATTITUDES

- ☐ Relative to baseline prior to pandemic.

COVARIABLES or MODEDATORS

- ☐ Tech innovativeness.
- ☐ Political view.
- ☐ Fashion innovativeness.

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