

Add to Cart or Buy It Now? Factors Influencing the Usage Intention of Online Shopping Cart

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Abstract

This study examines the reason why consumers try to use the online shopping cart more, and especially analyzes the influence of personal psychological factor such as regulatory focus. Hypotheses are tested with a two-way ANOVA model using experimental data collected from 210 undergraduate students at a business school in South Korea. We found that prevention focused consumers try to use online shopping cart more than promotion focused consumers. It is possible that prevention focused consumers try to consider as many alternatives as possible to ensure safety as they focus on negative results or losses during shopping online. However, we also found out when the buying purpose is utilitarian, promotion focused consumers are not different from the promotion in terms of the usage intention of online shopping carts. Marketing managers can provide different messages customized for their consumers by leading them to use the online shopping cart in a more effective way.

Keywords : Online Shopping Cart, Online Consumer, Regulatory Focus, Purpose of Purchasing, Usage Intention

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1. Introduction

With the advent of the Internet have come a lot of changes in our life. Consumers' shopping style has changed, as they have become multi-channel shoppers, buying products through various channels, not only offline stores but other channels such as internet shopping mall, TV and telephone [Kumar and Venkatasan, 2005; Weinberg et al., 2007].

Especially, consumers use online channels often, such as Amazon.com, eBay.com. According to the KOLSA (Korea On-Line Shopping Association), Korean online shopping market has grown to about 89 trillion Won in 2017 from 34 trillion Won in 2010. Furthermore, the mobile shopping market has grown to about 42 trillion Won in 2017 from 300 billion Won in 2010. Chinese mobile payments has also grown substantially, which has increased to 58.8 trillion yuan in 2016 from 1.2 trillion yuan in 2013 according to the iResearch Consulting Group. These changes mean that the Internet affects the consumers' purchasing behavior more than a little.

This study tries to examine new factors which can affect consumers' decision making when shopping online. We especially focus on consumers' usage intention of online shopping cart. In general, online shopping cart means a virtual space for consumers where they can place the items on the shopping website [Close and Kukar-Kinney, 2010]. Of course, consumers sometimes store the product in the online shopping cart and hold on, or remove it without buying. However, companies expect many consumers to utilize the online shopping cart actively because they think

that once a product is put in a shopping cart, the chance of buying the product will increase.

Then, what can be the variables that affect consumers' intention of using the online shopping cart? Will it be the consumers' psychological variable or situational variables such as the purpose of buying? By giving answers to these questions, this study will broaden the understanding of online consumers' purchasing behavior.

This study is differentiated from prior research on online shopping cart in three aspects. Whereas some studies focused on online shopping cart abandonment [Cho et al., 2006; Egel and Joseph, 2012, Kukar-Kinney and Close, 2010; Moore and Matthews, 2006; Rajamma et al., 2009; Xu and Huang, 2015], we focus on the reason of using the online shopping cart because it is necessary to understand the motivation to use an online shopping cart at the beginning of the shopping process [Close and Kukar-Kinney, 2010]. Second, this study analyzes the effect of internal factors (or, psychological variables) of consumers such as regulatory focus on online purchasing behavior, whereas other studies mostly focused on external or environmental factors (e.g., website quality, website user interface, etc.) which affect online consumers' decision making process. Third, this study extends the method of former studies on online shopping cart. Although former studies on online shopping cart used multivariate data analysis such as regression analysis based on the survey data, this study applied experiment research which is more appropriate for cause and effect analysis. Moreover, this study focused on Korean consumers whose us-

age of the Internet is very high whereas most studies focused on consumers in the Western countries.

This study is summarized as follows. First, we review prior research on online consumers and online shopping cart use, and present hypotheses by introducing the concept of regulatory focus and buying purpose. Based on the results of 2×2 between subjects experiment, we then discuss the managerial implications of our findings and directions for future studies.

2. Theoretical Background and Hypotheses

2.1 Online Shopping Cart Use

Consumers are known to go through five steps on decision making, what is problem recognition, information search, evaluation of alternatives, purchase decision, and post purchase behavior [Engel et al., 1995; Engel et al., 1973; Howard and Sheth, 1972]. Online consumers also experience the similar process, but more additional issues should be considered because of the unique characteristics of online shopping environment. For example, recent studies on online consumer behavior has extended to the area of social networks [Shriver et al., 2013; Ha et al., 2016], online review and word of mouths [Chiou et al., 2014; Jeong and Koo, 2015; Wang et al., 2013], online privacy and data breach [Chakraborty et al., 2016; Lili and Min, 2014], and the role of emotion [Richard and Chebat, 2016; Mazaheri et al., 2012], etc.

This study especially focuses on consumers'

using the online shopping cart. Both offline and online shopping channel have shopping carts as a storage tool before purchasing products. Whereas offline shopping cart, or on-ground shopping cart is a physical cart for the consumers to gather and save products for immediate purchase, online shopping cart is a virtual space provided on the shopping website. Offline shopping cart is a physical tool before going to the checkout counter, but online shopping cart doesn't always lead to the purchasing immediately.

Many online shopping sites provide two options, "add to cart" or "buy it now." Of course, products in the shopping cart can be purchased later or abandoned. Then which consumers tend to use the online shopping cart more often? Why do they delay the purchase of the products in the shopping cart? And in which case do they abandon the product? Such questions are critical for the internet shopping companies in making decision.

Before starting with the questions, we will review former studies on online shopping cart. As the reason for online consumers using the online shopping cart, Close and Kukar-Kinney [2010] mentioned several factors such as current purchase intent, taking advantage of price promotion, entertainment purpose, organizational intent, research and information search. And through the online survey, they showed that current purchase intent, taking advantage of price promotion, and organizational intent significantly influenced the use of the online shopping cart. And also the intention of using the online shopping cart positively affected actual buying.

Other studies focused on the abandonment of the online shopping cart. Online shopping cart abandonment means that consumers put the items in the online shopping cart and finish shopping at that shopping session without purchasing [Kukar-Kinney and Close, 2010]. Why do consumers delay purchasing the items in the shopping cart? Greenleaf and Lehmann [1995] mentioned that there are several reasons when consumers generally delay their purchases such as consumers not having sufficient time, needing advice from others whether to buy it or not, having monetary or psychological risk with regard to purchasing, or needing more information. When applying this to online purchasing, consumers are predicted to delay their purchasing in order to search more information since they perceive risks greatly or the searching cost is considerably low. Hasan [2016] also mentioned that when a customer feels irritated (whether at a conventional or virtual store), the customer would abandon the shopping cart without making a purchase.

Cho et al. [2006] defined online shopping hesitation as delay of purchase by going through an extra process before making the final decision. They conducted a study on online shopping hesitation by classifying it into three categories, overall hesitation, shopping cart abandonment, and hesitation to click the payment button. Moreover, they proposed that perceived uncertainty factors, channel innovation factors, contextual factors, and consumer characteristic factors would influence hesitation. Especially, perceived uncertainty factor affected shopping cart abandonment highly, and as the needs on information

through comparison shopping increased, shopping cart abandonment also showed an increase.

Through the expectation-disconfirmation model, Rajamma et al. [2009] mentioned that online consumers' dissatisfaction aroused when the checkout process falls short of their expectation and this would lead to shopping cart abandonment. They showed that when the perceived transaction inconvenience and perceived risk become higher, there will be more shopping cart abandonment. Through their qualitative research, Moore and Matthews [2006] mentioned that when the consumers' perceived risk is higher, shopping cart abandonment becomes higher, and especially online retailer's negative reputation is highly related with the shopping cart abandonment. Kukar-Kinney and Close [2010] empirically proved that when online consumers shop for entertainment value, use the online cart for shopping research and organizational tool to search for the product information, or search online for lower price, their shopping cart abandonment becomes higher. Eglen and Joseph [2012] proposed that when the perceived ownership of the product to purchase becomes higher, the shopping cart abandonment will decrease, and therefore the online retailers should focus on increasing the consumers' perceived ownership when developing their website. Also, Xu and Huang [2015] showed that a high degree of organization and research of products within the shopping cart positively influenced cart abandonment as the more consumers studied a product, the more likely they would be cautious about making the purchase.

Online shopping cart is an important factor to

affect online consumers' purchasing behavior as mentioned above. It is not easy to save, add or abandon items to the shopping cart offline. On the other hand, online shopping cart is an important factor, affecting consumers' purchase behavior as it can be managed usefully in the virtual space. However, most research on online shopping cart have focused on online shopping cart abandonment.

This study will focus on the use of the online shopping cart. Using the online shopping cart is the first stage of purchasing products online before clicking the "Buy it now" button, and also a good method to increase the chance of consumers' purchase for companies. We will examine the reason why consumers' try to use the online shopping cart more, and especially analyze the influence of personal psychological factor such as regulatory focus.

2.2 Regulatory Focus and Online Shopping Cart Use

Higgins [1997, 1998] mentioned that one's motive to control the behavior is needed to achieve one's goal. He introduced promotion focus and prevention focus to explain this theory. Promotion focused people generally try to align themselves with what they want to be and focus on whether there are positive results or not. On the other hand, prevention focused people try to avoid discrepancy with what they want to be and focus on whether there are negative results or not. Promotion focused people are highly related with desires such as advancement, growth, and accomplishment and tend to take risks. On

the other hand, prevention focused people are risk-averse, highly related with desires of security, safety, and responsibility and passive to the new environment. Prevention focused people generally tend to show diffident manner as they try to ensure safety from negative situation such as losses and risks [Crowe and Higgins, 1997; Han and Kang, 2016; Higgins, 1997, 1998; Higgins et al., 1997].

This study proposes that this kind of regulatory focus will affect consumers' usage of the online shopping cart, as the intention of using the online shopping cart differs with one's regulatory motivation. According to Liu and Forsythe [2010], risk perceivers who have high motives of risk-averse search information more often than benefit perceivers who put high motivation on taking benefits. Risk perceivers put more cognitive resources in searching information in order to prepare for potential damages, as they highly perceive risks and uncertainty in online shopping.

Brockner et al. [2002] mentioned that there are more alternatives to consider on prevention focus than promotion focus. This is because prevention focused people tend to think conjunctively and consider various alternatives, whereas promotion focused people tend to think disjunctively. Promotion focused people place emphasis on achieving goal, and therefore when target is acquired, there will not be any other alternatives to consider. However, prevention focused people tend to check as many alternatives as possible to ensure safety because they focus on preventing negative results or losses.

Therefore, we expect that prevention focused consumers will try to secure more alternatives than promotion focused consumers by actively using the online shopping cart as they are sensitive to negative results. This is because prevention focused consumers who are more sensitive to perceived risks of online shopping, have difficulty in evaluation of alternatives and therefore consider carefully over alternatives in the shopping cart than promotion focused consumers. Kukar–Kinney and Close [2010] also mentioned that as the online consumers consider the total cost (product price, shipping cost, taxes, other fees) more, they use the online shopping cart as a shopping research. This also shows that consumers who focus on costs during shopping online (e.g., prevention focused consumers) will use the online shopping cart more often. Therefore, we propose the first hypothesis as follows.

Hypothesis 1 : The online shopping cart usage intention will be higher for the prevention focused consumers than the promotion focused consumers.

2.3 Moderating Role of Purchasing Purpose on Online Shopping Cart Use

As we mentioned above, the usage intention of online shopping cart for the prevention focused consumers would be expected to be higher in general than the promotion focused consumers. However, the effect of regulatory focus on online shopping cart would be moderated by the purpose of purchasing.

Dhar and Wertenbroch [2000] mentioned that some consumers focus on hedonic attributes (e.g., sporty design) when buying a car, and others focus more on the utilitarian attribute (e.g., gas mileage). Product attributes for the alternatives can be classified as utilitarian and hedonic attributes [Dhar and Wertenbroch, 2000; Okada, 2005]. Okada [2005] mentioned that consumers prefer utilitarian goods when they cannot justify the costs of purchasing hedonic goods. Dhar and Wertenbroch [2000] showed that hedonic goods are preferred under forfeiture choice conditions than acquisition choice condition.

Consumers' choice also depends on whether their purpose of purchasing is hedonic or utilitarian goal [Dhar and Wertenbroch, 2000; Okada, 2005; Carmon et al., 2003]. According to Carmon et al. [2003]'s option attachment research, consumers are more attracted by forgone option after purchasing under hedonic goal than utilitarian goal. In other words, consumers showed more option attachment under hedonic choice. For example, consumers was more attractive to the forgone option after purchase when purchasing a CD for hedonic purpose than for utilitarian purpose (e.g., for studying).

Internet shopping could also be classified into utilitarian and hedonic purpose. Papacharissi and Rubin [2000] said that one's motivation of using the Internet is on interpersonal utility, pass time, information seeking, convenience, entertainment, etc. Online consumers buy products to get utilitarian satisfaction, or to satisfy their hedonic desire.

This study suggests that the purpose of purchasing can affect consumers' final choice on

online shopping. Specifically, we expect that when purchasing hedonic products, prevention focused consumers will use the online shopping cart more than the promotion focused consumers as mentioned on H1. On the other hand, we expect that when buying utilitarian products, there will be no difference on the use of the online shopping cart between prevention and promotion focused consumers. The study introduces regulatory fit theory to explain this.

Regulatory fit is that when one's regulatory orientation and one's means to achieve the goal aligns, he or she puts more value on this [Higgins, 2000]. That is, promotion focused people put more value on the information or means such as hope, ideal, passion, achievement, challenge which coincide with their propensity of regulatory focus, whereas prevention focused people put more value on the information of the duty, stability, obligation, responsibility, etc.

When one experiences the regulatory fit, he feels additional value through feeling it right. There are many studies on the regulatory focus using regulatory fit as an important variable. For example, Aaker and Lee [2001] showed that there were more effect of persuasion when one was exposed to the information according to one's regulatory focus propensity. Chernev [2004] mentioned that promotion focused consumers chose products by putting more weight on the hedonic attribute appropriate for their regulatory focus, and prevention focused consumers chose products by stressing more on the utilitarian attributes. Ashraf and Thongpapanl [2015] also tested the regulatory fit theories in an online decision-making context. Specifically, they showed

that promotion-focused consumers had more favorable attitudes toward a hedonic website, whereas prevention-focused consumers facing a website with more utilitarian shopping experience were more likely to have a favorable attitude toward it.

We also expect that promotion focused consumers are highly related with the hedonic purpose whereas prevention focused consumers are highly linked with the utilitarian purpose of purchasing. In the case of hedonic purpose, prevention focused consumers feel more uncomfortable when buying a product, and therefore put the product in the online shopping cart to compare with other alternatives. In other words, prevention focused consumers with low regulatory fit use the online shopping cart more often than they usually do. However, promotion focused consumers will use the online shopping cart less because their regulatory propensity accords with the purpose of buying and they feel right through the purchase process. They might buy it immediately through using the 'buy it now' option.

In the case of utilitarian purpose, promotion focused consumers will consider the purchasing more carefully as their regulatory fit becomes low. Therefore, promotion focused consumers will use the online shopping cart more than they usually do. On the other hand, prevention focused consumers feel it comfortable as the utilitarian purpose of purchasing and their regulatory fit conform, and they will use the online shopping cart less than they usually do. Therefore, in the case of utilitarian purpose, there seems to be no such difference between them in using the online shopping cart. In sum, we suggest that in the

case of utilitarian purpose, there will be no difference for using online shopping cart for both promotion and prevention focused consumers. We propose hypotheses as following.

Hypothesis 2-1 : In the case of hedonic purpose of purchasing, prevention focused consumers will show higher intention to use online shopping cart than the promotion focused consumers.

Hypothesis 2-2 : In the case of utilitarian purpose of purchasing, there is no significant difference between the promotion and prevention focused consumers in intention to use online shopping cart.

3. Methodology and Findings

3.1 Research Design and Methodology

In order to verify the hypotheses above, 210 undergraduate students in South Korea participated in the experiment, and research design is explained in <Table 1>. Specifically, this study utilized a 2 (regulatory focus: promotion vs. prevention)×2 (purpose of purchasing : hedonic vs. utilitarian) between-subjects design. Subjects were allocated randomly by four scenario-based situation and the size of each group was 50~54.

For the manipulation of the regulatory focus, the participants completed a priming task. For example, promotion focused consumers were required to describe three things about “What you

<Table 1> Experimental Design and Cell Size

		Regulatory Focus	
		Promotion Focus	Prevention Focus
Purpose of Purchasing	Hedonic	N = 54	N = 52
	Utilitarian	N = 54	N = 50

want to achieve or attain such as good results, hope, passion or dream, etc.” On the other hand, prevention focused consumers were required to describe three things about “What you have to be responsible for, or wish not to happen such as bad results, duty, responsibility or prevention.”

In order to manipulate the purpose of purchasing, subjects were randomly assigned to one of the two conditions (hedonic vs. utilitarian). This study chose a single product (buying casual shoes) and manipulated it by different purpose of purchasing, not multi products. The reason is, as Voss et al. [2003] mentioned, whether a product is utilitarian or hedonic cannot be positioned in one-dimensional. It can be classified as whether it has a high or low attribute in utilitarian or hedonic. Therefore certain product isn't always utilitarian or hedonic Okada [2005]. So we manipulated the purpose of buying by applying different scenarios on a single product like Carmon et al. [2003]'s research. Specifically, we chose casual shoes for the experiment and manipulated the purpose of purchasing as training or working (utilitarian purpose), or for fashion (hedonic purpose). For the dependent variable (intention to use online shopping cart), it was measured by four items (I intend to use it, I predict that I would use it, I will use it, I will consider to use it) on a seven point based on Venkatesh and Davis [2000].

3.2 Experiment Results

For the manipulation check, promotion focused participants were made to answer how much they think about achievement, ideal, hope, etc. on a seven-point scale, whereas prevention focused participants were made to answer how much they think about safety, protection, evasion, etc. As a result, both promotion and prevention focused groups were significantly higher than 4 (test value), which indicates that it was well manipulated (promotion focus : M = 5.02, t = 5.82, p < .001, prevention focus : M = 4.76, t = 4.51, p < .001).

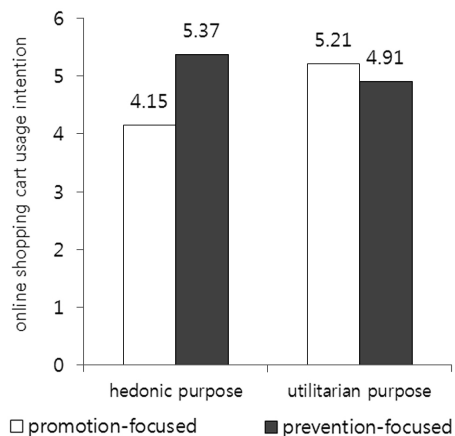
Also, in order to check whether the purpose of purchasing is well manipulated, questions were presented following 9-point scale measures based on Dhar and Wertenbroch [2000]. The questions were as following “Mark the degree of the purpose of buying this product, which is utilitarian (useful, practical, functional) or hedonic (joyful, fun, sensual), 1 = highly utilitarian, 9 = highly hedonic.” As a result, both group of utilitarian and hedonic purpose showed a significant difference which indicated that it was well manipulated (hedonic : M = 6.42 vs. utilitarian : M = 3.76, t = 8.72, p < .001). In addition, reliability test was performed to measure the intention of using the online shopping cart. Cronbach’s alpha of the four items regarding the usage intention was .950. Based on Nunnally and Bernstein [1994]’s rule-of-thumb, internal consistency between the items were secured. The experiment results were analyzed by ANOVA and showed in <Table 2>.

First of all, we found that the usage intention

<Table 2> ANOVA Results

Source	d.f.	MS	F	Sig.
Regulatory focus	1	10.85	5.29	.022
Purpose of purchasing	1	4.64	2.26	.134
Regulatory Focus× Purpose of purchasing	1	30.51	14.88	< .001
error	206	2.05		

of online shopping cart was higher for prevention focused consumers (M = 5.14) than promotion focused consumers (M = 4.68), and this was statistically significant as shown in <Table 2> (F(1, 206) = 5.29, p = .022). This shows that the usage intention of the online shopping cart for prevention focused consumers are higher than the promotion focused consumers as suggested in Hypothesis 1. Secondly, we examined the interaction effect of regulatory focus and the purpose of buying in order to verify Hypothesis 2. As a results, significant interaction effect between regulatory focus and the purpose of buying were observed as shown in <Table 2> (F(1, 206) = 14.88, p < .001).



<Figure 1> The Interaction Effect of Regulatory Focus and Purpose of Purchasing on the Usage Intention of Online Shopping Cart

Specifically, we found that, for hedonic purpose, the usage intention of online shopping cart was higher for the prevention focused consumers ($M = 5.37$) than the promotion focused consumers ($M = 4.15$, planned contrast $t = -4.28$, $p < .001$). On the other hand, there were no significant differences between the promotion ($M = 5.21$) and prevention focused consumers ($M = 4.91$, planned contrast $t = 1.10$, $p = .274$). Therefore, hypothesis 2 is supported.

4. Discussion

We have examined the usage of online shopping cart which affects significantly on online consumers' purchase process. While prior research focused on shopping cart abandonment, this study examines on the former phase, the usage intention of online shopping cart. Moreover, it is meaningful that we have considered the psychological variables and purpose of buying to understand the consumers' usage of online shopping cart.

As a result, prevention focused consumers tried to use the online shopping cart more than promotion focused consumers. This is because prevention focused consumers try to consider as many alternatives as possible to ensure safety as they focus on negative results or losses during shopping online. Moreover, this study has shown that when the buying purpose is utilitarian, the usage intention of online shopping cart was not different between the promotion and prevention focused consumers. The reason is that, for utilitarian purpose, promotion focused consumers with low regulatory fit tried to use

the online shopping cart more than their propensity, whereas prevention focused consumers with high regulatory fit tried to use the online shopping cart less than their propensity. Therefore, the usage intention of the online shopping cart showed no significant difference between two groups. On the other hand, for hedonic purpose, prevention focused consumers with low regulatory fit who are more difficult to find reasons to justify their purchase tried to use the online shopping cart more aggressively than the promotion focused consumers.

Applying the results from this study, online shopping companies can discuss the marketing strategy according to the consumers' regulatory focus. As we have seen from the H1 results, prevention focused consumers tend to use the online shopping cart more. Therefore, it is meaningful for the online shopping companies to help them search more alternatives easily by leading them to use the online shopping cart more. For example, companies can provide consumer review and evaluation, or recommend alternative products within the online shopping cart to lower consumers' perceived risk by tracking consumers' purchase history or survey to figure out their regulatory focus.

Marketing managers can provide appropriate messages in the online shopping cart customized for their consumers' regulatory focus. In other words, it may induce the purchase if they provide prevention focused framing messages for the prevention focused consumers like how their purchase is related with their safety, responsibility, protection, etc., while provide promotion focused framing messages for promotion focused

consumers such as achievement, passion, etc. Managers can also promote the purchase by sending emails appropriate for consumers' regulatory fit if a consumer postpones their purchase for a long time, saving the item in the online shopping cart. Effective marketing strategies according to the product are also available. For the hedonic products, prevention focused consumers generally tend to hesitate their buying by leaving the items in the online shopping cart. In this case, it may be effective to provide prevention focused framed messages as it was more suitable to the prevention-focused consumers.

However, this study has some limitations and further research is needed. First of all, in order to generalize our findings, we need to apply our experiment to various products. It would be interesting to examine how the online shopping cart is used differently on diverse products such as financial products, travel packages, or high-tech products such as smart phones, computers, etc. Second, this study considered only the purpose of buying and regulatory focus to understand the usage intention of online shopping cart. Further researches can be conducted by considering other psychological variables or situational variables. Third, this study may not have controlled exogenous variables enough. Internal validity will increase if other control variables such as gender, involvement, purchasing experience, product familiarity are considered. Studies on difference between the internet shopping based on PCs and mobile smart phone will also extend the research on online shopping, as mobile shopping is increasing rapidly these days.

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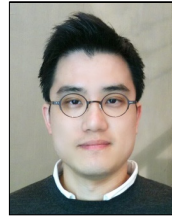
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