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Behavioral intention in internet shopping

Seyed Alireza Mosavi^{1*}, Mojtaba Kaveh¹ and Mahnoosh Ghaedi²

¹Department of Business Administration, Firoozabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Firoozabad-Iran.

²Firoozabad Branch, Islamic Azad University, Firoozabad- Iran.

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The main purpose of this study is to develop a new model to investigate the effects of subjective norm, attitude and perceived behavioral control on behavioral intention and explore the effects of behavioral intention on repurchase intention and word-of mouth in the context of internet shopping. Data were collected from 860 online customers in Shiraz (Iran) with a questionnaire methodology. The questions used in this study were taken from the relevant literature, contained 34 questions addressing all the variables. Confirmatory factor analysis was conducted to examine the reliability and validity of the measurement model and the structural equation modeling technique was used to test the research model. The findings of the study supported all of the seven hypothesized relationships. The findings suggest that behavioral intentions most influenced by subjective norm (27%), attitude (23%) and perceived behavioral control (21%). Beside, this study shows that the most impacts of behavioral intentions are on repurchase intentions (37%) and word-of-mouth (WOM, 28%). The findings also suggest that attitude most influenced by brand image (26%) and marketing mix (20%).

Key words: Word-of-mouth, repurchase intentions, subjective norm, behavioral intention, attitude, brand image, marketing mix, perceived behavioral control, e-shopping.

INTRODUCTION

Much research has addressed the antecedents of technology use (Mahmood et al., 2001). The overwhelming majority of the studies have focused on users in developed countries. Developing regions of the world have much to gain from the internet and IT in general but have received relatively little research attention (Hasan and Ditsa, 1998).

Technology is an important component of the economy in Iran. The country has a prominent information and communication technology sector therefore, internet use is widespread. Internet penetration for the population is 28.2%, compared to 63.3% for South Korea and 67.8% for the USA (Internet World Stats, 2005). Education is a potential key to fostering greater internet use. Internet infusion into a country's post-secondary educational system seems critical for increasing its use in the economy as a whole (Marcelline et al., 2005).

Strides in information technology and improvements in

networking technology have set the pace of the rapid growth in new application of internet shopping in a variety of settings. Business-to-business (B2B), business-to-customer (B2C), customer-to-business (C2B) and customer-to-customers (C2C) are the most important business channels that have reshaped the marketplaces. Recent trends and forecasting show that no business enterprises can afford to ignore the tremendous potential of these emerging technologies in creating, processing and distributing the value of business through each channel (Ya-Yueh and Kwoting, 2005).

The proliferation of the web, with its enormous potential for doing business and gathering customer information, offers an alternative sales channel for a growing number of firms and has stimulated extensive research on the incidents effect for customer satisfaction with internet shopping. The increase in B2C trade has caused many firms to develop new online shopping strategies to attract and retain customers (Ranganathan and Ganapathy, 2002).

Since the cost of retaining an existing customer is lower than that of developing new customers, understanding

*Corresponding author. E-mail: Ali_Mosavi75@yahoo.com.

potential customer defection is an important issue in the fiercely competitive environment of electronic commerce.

In these days, everyone talks about the e-commerce and e-business revolution and the internet of the new knowledge-based economy. The web allows e-businesses to provide customers with increasingly accurate, timely and inexpensive information. As a result, customers can immediately compare prices and choose the supplier with the lowest price. However, amount of information or internet presence and price alone do not rule the web (Reichheld and Scheffer, 2000; Zeithaml et al., 2002). To be successful in a fierce competitive environment, e-companies need to insulate themselves by developing an appropriate differentiating strategy. A key component of such a strategy needs to focus on services and relationships that demonstrate a company's appreciation to its customers (Smith, 2000). E-companies must deliver superior service experiences to their customers, if they want to earn their businesses, their repeat patronage, and eventually their loyalty (Dobie et al., 2001).

It is well recognized though that the web represents a fundamentally different shopping environment than a traditional shopping channel (Hoffman and Novak, 1996). As such, classical marketing paradigms, theories and activities as well as consumer attitudes and behaviors need to be re-evaluated in this new context, as several researchers have called upon (Cox and Dale, 2001; Menon and Kahn, 2002; Zeithaml et al., 2002). The reason is that some recent empirical studies (Keaveney and Parthasarathy, 2001) show that there may exist differences in key marketing constructs and associated relationships between traditional and e-business contexts. This study is one more attempt to answer this research call and help fill this gap in our knowledge (Spiros et al., 2008).

The paper begins with the theoretical background and hypotheses development of this study. We then describe the research design and methodology. Finally discussion and conclusion are presented.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

A large body of research has addressed the psychological variables that influence technology use or non-use. Two frequently investigated models in this area are the technology acceptance model (TAM) (Davis, 1989; Davis et al., 1989) and the theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985, 1991). The theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) is an extension of the well-known Theory of reasoned action (TRA) (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). TRA models, behavioral intention as the weighted sum of attitude and subjective norm (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

In TRA, attitude is equated with the attitudinal belief that performing a behavior will lead to a particular

outcome, weighted by an evaluation of the desirability of that outcome. Subjective norm is formed as an individual's normative belief concerning a particular referent weighted by the motivation to comply with that referent. Like the TRA, TPB postulates that behavioral intention is a function of attitude and subjective norm (Ya-Yueh and Kwoting, 2005). However, an additional construct, perceived behavioral control is added to the TPB model to account for situations in which an individual lacks complete control over his or her behavior (Ajzen, 1985, 1991; Ajzen and Madden, 1986). Notably, numerous empirical studies have found a relationship between perceived behavioral control and intention (Ajzen, 1991; Madden et al., 1992; Sparks et al., 1992). Perceived behavioral control is the individual's control belief weighted by the perceived facilitation of the control factor in either inhibiting or promoting the behavior. Control beliefs reflect the perceived difficulty (or ease) with which the behavior may be performed (Ajzen, 1991). Perceived facilitation acts as an important weight (Ajzen, 1991). Linkages between control beliefs and perceived behavioral control have been demonstrated empirically (Ajzen and Madden, 1986; Ajzen and Driver, 1992).

According to Ajzen (1985, 1991) and Ajzen and Driver (1992), perceived behavioral control reflects beliefs regarding access to the resources and opportunities needed to perform a behavior. Perceived behavioral control appears to encompass two components. The first component is "facilitating conditions" (Triandis, 1979), which reflect the availability of resources needed to engage in a behavior. Such resources may include the time, money and other specialized resources required to engage in behavior. The second component is self-efficacy (Ajzen, 1991), which is, an individual's self-confidence in his/her ability to perform a behavior (Bandura, 1977, 1982).

Basic versions of TPB and TAM were tested with the addition of a user experience variable. The version of TAM is a simplification and refinement of earlier formulations in that it does not include an attitude component. Arguments in favour of the omission of attitude as a predictor has been elucidated by Venkatesh (1999) and Venkatesh and Davis (2000).

The theory of planned behavior posits that behavioral intention to perform an activity is determined by attitude, perceived behavioral control and subjective norm. An alternative approach to predicting behavioral intentions that is widely used in consumer behavior research is the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991, 2002). It postulates three conceptually independent determinants of intention: attitude, subjective norm and perceived behavioral control (Ajzen, 2002; Armitage and Connor, 2001; Ouelette and Wood, 1998). The relative importance of each antecedent varies across behaviors and situations. Most empirical applications of the TPB try to explain or predict newly introduced behavior (Armitage and Connor, 2001; Davies et al., 2002), also in a

marketing context (Bamberg, 2002; Chiou, 2000; Cook et al., 2002; Klöckner and Matthies, 2004). The contexts of these studies are, however, fundamentally different from the customer–firm relationship context, insofar as the majority of them, model and study the impact of intentions to shift from a habit to a newly introduced behavior. Within the customer–firm relationship framework of the present study, the models are used to assess how attitudes, subjective norm, perceived behavioral control and intentions predict the extent to which existing behavior will be repeated or reinforced in the future. This may be an even more relevant application than the ‘new behavior’ one. Foxall (2005) suggests that attitudes that were formed on the basis of past behavior may be more stable predictors of subsequent behavior than attitudes that are not based on behavioral experience. A study by Chiou (2000) in the family restaurant business indeed shows that the TPB constructs can be effective predictors in such a repeat patronage context.

Brand image and marketing mix

Advertisement, promotion activities or brand reputation are more or less capable of arousing the desire to buy and enhance the motives of consumers. This model reflects the influence of internal and external factors on consumer behavior. Especially, the stimuli imposed by marketing staff on consumers during their shopping are identified and evaluated via the internal information processing procedure of the consumers. Consumers will assess the contents of promotion activities and compare the cost with the post-purchasing benefit. They will take a positive attitude toward purchasing if the benefit is greater than the cost based on their perceptive assessment. Otherwise, they will take a conservative attitude. However, the actual purchasing behavior of consumers is dependent not only on the difference in their perception of service quality, but also on the opinion of their family members and peers. For example, Keller (1993) thinks that brand image is the perception of consumers to the brand and reflects in the brand association stored in the memory of consumers. This memory is formed mainly by staff impressions, learning background of consumers, and impression of the origin of the brand. Aaker (1996) stresses, in his five approaches to create value for brand image, that brand image reflects the product attribute and customer benefit which give customers the reason for purchasing. The brand image affects the motive and attitude of a consumer positively when he or she plays an important role in the decision-making process of consumption behavior (Wen-Bao, 2008).

H₁: The “brand image” of products has a positive effect on the “attitude” of consumers.

H₂: The “marketing mix” of products has a positive effect on the “attitude” of consumers.

Attitude and subjective norm

Attitude can be considered as one of the most important concepts in the study of consumer behavior; it is the direct determinant of this behavior. This functional view of attitude suggests that people hold attitudes to determine how to respond to their environment (Shavitt, 1989). Therefore, if we know what attitudes are relevant to particular stimuli, we should be able to predict behaviors in response to those stimuli. Indeed, historically, the concept of attitude has commonly been defined in terms that emphasise its predictive relation to behavior. For example, in one highly influential definition, Allport (1935) referred to attitude as “a mental and neutral state of readiness... exerting... (an) influence upon the individual's response”. Similarly, Campbell (1963) defined attitude as an acquired behavioural disposition (Alberto et al., 2008).

Attitude can be described as “a learned predisposition to respond in a consistently favorable or unfavorable manner with respect to a given object” (Fishbein et al., 1975). An individual's attitude toward an object is basically determined by the set of his or her beliefs about the objects. However, research demonstrated that only a relative small number of beliefs serve as determinants of his or her attitude at any given time. For instances, the belief of an individual is usually determined by no more than five to nine beliefs about the object (Fishbein et al., 1975). On the other hand, attitude toward an object is related to the individual's intentions to perform the behaviors. Consistent with findings of most IT adoption studies, research in consumer-based electronic commerce found that attitude has a strong, direct and positive effect on behavioral intention of Internet shopping (Chen, 2002; Hansen and Vijayasarathy, 2004).

Subjective norm means the influence on an individual of other people or organizations' opinions when making the decision to take action. This study uses the opinion of family members or peers of a consumer and their previous consumption experience as major variables. Harrison et al. (1997), find that the willingness to use small enterprises has an effect on their use behavior intentions. Bhattacharjee (2000), finds in his research on effect of e-brokerage systems of the behavior intention of users that variables such as “attitude” and “subjective norm” have an effect on the behavioral intention of users to use e-brokerage systems. Chau and Hu (2001) researched the effect of the telemedicine technology application on the willingness to use medical devices and found that attitude and other variables have a positive effect on behavioral intentions. Moon and Kim (2001) researched effect of user's perception of the e-shopping and found that there is a positive and significant relationship among the perception, attitude, and behavioral intentions of users (Wen-Bao, 2008).

H₃: “Subjective norm” has a positive effect on “behavioral intention.”

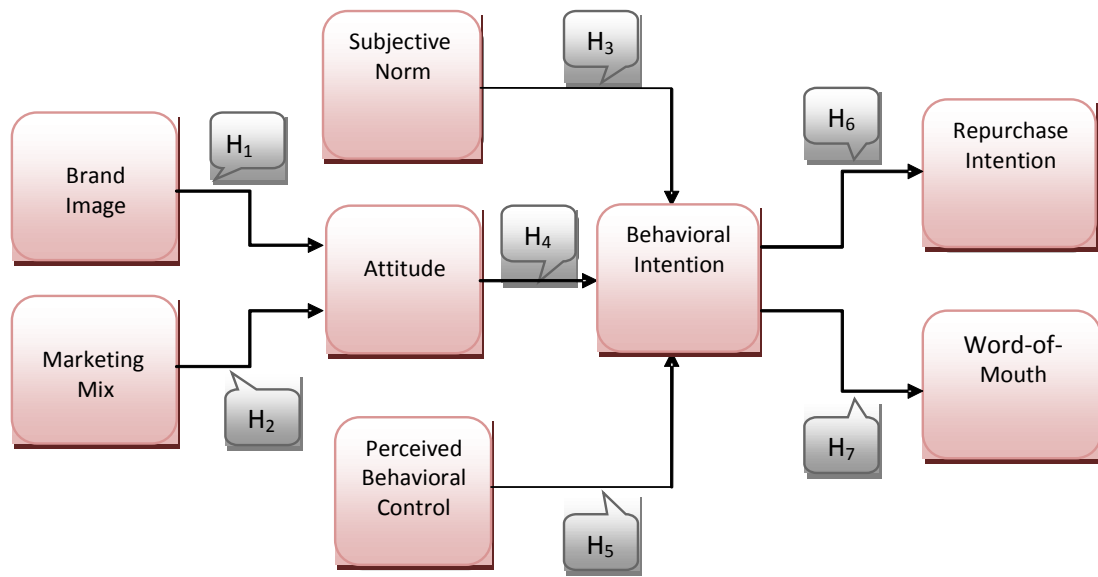


Figure 1. Hypothesized model.

H₄: “Attitude” has a positive effect on “behavioral intention.”

Perceived behavioral control

Perceived behavioral control is expanded to two facets based on internal intention and external restriction on resources. One is the “convenience status” for individuals to take an action, or the “perceived ease-of-use” degree of an on-line shopping. The other facet is the assessment of “self-efficacy” that an individual makes when taking an action.

Notably, numerous empirical studies have found a relationship between perceived behavior control and intention (Ajzen, 1991; Madden et al., 1992; Sparks et al., 1992). Perceived behavior control is the individual's control belief weighted by the perceived facilitation of the control factor in either inhibiting or promoting the behavior. Control beliefs reflect the perceived difficulty (or ease) with which the behavior may be performed. Perceived facilitation acts as an important weight (Ajzen, 1991). Linkages between control beliefs and perceived behavior control have been demonstrated empirically (Ajzen and Madden, 1986; Ajzen and Driver, 1992). According to Ajzen et al. (1992), perceived behavior control reflects beliefs regarding access to the resources and opportunities needed to perform a behavior. Perceived behavior control appears to encompass two components. The first component is “facilitating conditions” (Triandis, 1979), which reflect the availability of resources needed to engage in a behavior. Such resources may include the time, money and other specialized resources required to engage in behavior.

The second component is self-efficacy (Ajzen, 1991), which is, an individual's self-confidence in his/her ability to perform a behavior (Bandura, 1982; Ya-Yueh and Kwoting, 2005).

H₅: “Perceived behavioral control” has a positive effect on “behavioral intention.”

Behavioral intention

Behavioral intention refers to “a person's subjective probability that he will perform some behavior” (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975). In the context of electronic commerce, behavioral intention refers to the likelihood that a consumer actually buys online. As mentioned before, there exists a strong relationship between attitude and intention. The more favorable an individual's attitude toward Internet shopping, the more likely he / she will intend to shop online. Although, intention to shop is currently treated as a dependent variable in the research model (Figure 1), several researchers suggested that understanding behavioral intention is necessary for predicting behavior from attitudes. Past research (Chen et al., 2002) found that consumers' intention to shop is an important factor determining consumers' Internet shopping behavior. More specifically, two types of consumers' intentions are studied in this research: Word-of-mouth (WOM) and repurchase intention.

WOM refers to the informal communication between consumers about the characteristics of a business or a product (Westbrook, 1987). It provides consumers with information about a firm that assist them to decide if they should patronize it (Lundeen et al., 1995; Zeithaml et al.,

1993). Therefore, as Hennig-Thurau et al. (2002) suggest, WOM is a key service relationship outcome. Considering the importance of WOM in services, most service providers have done little to implement specific strategies to foster WOM (Gremler et al., 2001).

The recent focus in the literature on relationship marketing highlights potential responses that can emerge from efforts directed at forming relationships with consumers (Verhoef et al., 2002). Of all these responses, some scholars and practitioners suggest that WOM may be among the most important (White and Schneider, 2000). The basic idea behind WOM is that information about products, services, stores, companies and so on can spread from one consumer to another. In its broadest sense, WOM includes any information about a target object (company, brand) transferred from one individual to another either in person or via some communication medium (Brown et al., 2005). Reichheld (2006) argues that the ultimate test of strong customer relationships is their willingness to recommend the firm.

Similarly, Reichheld and Sasser (1990) indicated that retained customers attract new customers through positive WOM. In addition, Zeithaml (2000) advanced the notion that continuing customers may validate the firm's good reputation to new customers. Keaveney and Parthasarathy (2001), in their study of customer switching behavior in online services, found that switchers of online services were relying on WOM sources when making their subscription decisions. Moreover, Srinivasan et al. (2002) results indicated that when consumers are loyal to an e-retailer then they are willing to say positive things about the e-retailer to others. Other researchers (Richins, 1983; Scaglione, 1988; Singh, 1988) have indicated that when consumers perceive to have experienced worse service performance than expected they are likely to complain to third parties (engage in negative WOM). In fact, in the e-context, word-of mouth is much more accentuated than in a physical setting, since according to Poleretsky (1999) unhappy customers tell their negative experiences to five friends, while on the Internet tell to 5,000.

Repurchase intention refers to the individual's judgement about buying again a designated service from the same company, taking into account his or her current situation and likely circumstances. Some studies have concentrated on determining the basic antecedent variables to repurchase intention (Hocutt, 1998; Storbacka et al., 1994). Still others have considered the predictive validity of repurchase intention for subsequent repurchase behavior (Bemmar, 1995; Mittal and Kamakura, 2001). Despite the fact that research in this area largely relies on stochastic and deterministic approaches to customer retention analysis (Ehrenberg, 1988; Howard, 1977), few comprehensive, empirically tested, structural models of the customer retention process are evident in marketing literature. In the marketing literature, there is wide agreement on the crucial role of repurchase as the key behavioral outcome

for relationship marketing success (Crosby and Stephens, 1987; Reichheld, 1996).

Repurchase intention in this study refers to the consumer's willingness to buy more through the internet. In general, a large number of classical researches has substantiated the relationship between behavioral intentions and repurchase intentions. For example, Cronin and Taylor (1992) suggest that convenience, good value for money and product availability may enhance customer repurchase intentions. Similarly, Bitner (1990) advocates the effects of time, access to information, money constraints and lack of credible alternatives, which may affect repurchase intentions. In addition, Zeithaml et al. (1996) concluded that poor services are associated positively with propensity to leave. Nevertheless, the only empirical evidence reporting on consumer's decision to buy more from an online store comes from the Boston Consulting Group's study (2001), which showed that customer's behavioral intentions intend to make more on line repurchases (Spiros et al., 2008).

H₆: "Behavioral intention" has a positive effect on "repurchase intention."

H₇: "Behavioral intention" has a positive effect on "WOM."

Respondents

The experimental task required subjects to decide whether to make online purchases of tickets in a cinema website. To augment realism in the experimental task, we used a real cinema website. An invitation to participate in this study was via email broadcasting. One thousand college students from three university (Shiraz University, Oloom College and Payam-e Noor University) campuses in Shiraz (Iran) took part in this study in the autumn of 2011. Of the 860 students participating in the study, 48% were males and 52% were females. Over 50% of them aged 18 - 22. The participating colleges and the numbers of students from each were Engineering (15%), English Language (19%), Social Studies (20%), Sciences (16%), Accounting (7%) and Arts (23%). Most of the participants were experienced Internet users, with over 80% have used the Internet for more than 4 years. All of them used the Internet regularly, with 94% using the Internet more than once per day. The sampling unit of this study is believed to be the most active Internet user group

DATA ANALYSIS METHODOLOGY

This study uses descriptive statistics, reliability, validity, factor analysis, and LISREL to analyze-related data. The LISREL is mainly used for analyses of measurement and the structural models to assess the goodness-of-fit and explanation of the model. The purpose to assess the goodness-of-fit of the model is to identify whether the theoretical model is capable of explaining the data derived from observation. The criteria to assess the

Table 1. Validity analysis of variables.

Variable	Questions	Cronbach's α value
perceived behavioral control	2	0.9712
marketing mix	4	0.8445
brand image	4	0.9029
attitude	6	0.8817
behavioral intention	8	0.9180
subjective norm	4	0.9525
repurchase intentions	3	0.8376
word-of-mouth	3	0.9624

goodness-of-fit of the model includes the preliminary fit, overall model fit, and the internal structure fit of the model.

Reliability and validity analysis of samples

Since the measurement and operation of all variables are made based on previous literature and the questionnaires are completed by online customers, the effectiveness of the returned samples is ensured. To identify the validity of returned samples, we use the item analysis methods to delete the questions in high- and low-groups that have no significant difference and calculate the Cronbach's α value of each variable using the factory analysis method. The result of the calculation is shown in Table 1. The Cronbach's α value of all variables is higher than 0.8, indicating a guaranteed level of validity.

The composite reliability (CR) of potential variables in this study model indicates the inner consistency of facet indicators. High reliability stands for high-inner consistency of these indicators. Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggest a CR value of more than 0.6. As Table 2 shows, the CR value of each variable is more than 0.7, indicating an excellent inner consistence of the model.

The average variance extracted (AVE) of potential variables reflects the average variance explainability of each measuring variable for the potential variables. The higher the AVE is, the higher the benefit of potential variables will be. As shown in Table 3, the AVE values of this study model are higher than 0.5, the standard value suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). Besides, the discriminant validity is determined by verifying that the average variance of each variable is greater than the relationship value of each pair of variables by 50% (Fornell and Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 1998). The average variance of the variables in this study is greater than the relationship value of each pair of variables, indicating sufficient discriminant validity.

Linear structural relation (LISREL) analysis

The hypothesized research model was tested using the

structural model. The overall fit statistics suggest that the model has adequate model fit ($\chi^2 = 423.92$, $df = 193$, $\chi^2/df = 2.21$, $GFI = 0.93$, $AGFI = 0.90$, $CFI = 0.91$, $RMSEA = 0.044$). The model fit indexes all exceed their respective common acceptance levels, indicating that the displayed fitted the data well.

The statistical significance of all the structural parameter estimates was examined to determine the validity of the hypothesized paths. Table 4 lists the structural parameter estimates and the hypothesis testing results.

The hypotheses of the present study were tested by analyzing the t-values and path coefficients of the proposed research model. All paths were shown in Figure 2 supported by the experimental data. Furthermore, all the paths (H_1 to H_7) were found to be significant ($p < 0.001$ and $p < 0.01$). Attitude to use Internet was most influenced by brand image and marketing mix. Behavioral intention to use Internet was found to be predicted by attitude, subjective norms and perceived behavioral control. This finding implied that the most impacts of behavioral intention are on repurchase intentions and word-of-mouth (Figure 2).

The analytical results showed that attitude most influenced by brand image (Path coefficient = 0.26, $p < 0.01$) and marketing mix (Path coefficient = 0.20, $p < 0.001$), providing support for H_1 and H_2 . Subjective norm has a strong positive effect on behavioral intention (Path coefficient = 0.27, $p < 0.001$) therefore, H_3 was supported. From H_4 , attitude shows a positive relationship with behavioral intention (Path coefficient = 0.23, $p < 0.01$). Thus, H_4 is supported. Perceived behavioral control has a strong positive effect on behavioral intention (Path coefficient = 0.21, $p < 0.001$) therefore, H_5 was supported. The results also showed that behavioral intention positively affects repurchase intention (Path coefficient = 0.37, $p < 0.001$) providing support for H_6 . Finally, behavioral intention was found to significantly affect WOM, so H_7 is supported (Path coefficient = 0.28, $p < 0.01$).

Conclusions

The development of e-commerce and the challenge of

Table 2. Reliability analysis of each variable in this study model.

Variable	Factor loading	t-value	SD	Composite reliability
Subjective norm				0.894
1	0.79	13.22	0.31	
2	0.84	12.78	0.25	
3	0.88	11.29	0.54	
4	0.73	13.80	0.34	
Perceived behavioral control				0.726
1	0.85	10.45	0.22	
2	0.84	11.61	0.46	
Attitude				0.871
1	0.73	13.15	0.21	
2	0.76	12.69	0.26	
3	0.80	9.28	0.59	
4	0.86	10.41	0.48	
5	0.79	11.55	0.37	
6	0.78	13.63	0.41	
Brand image				0.883
1	0.71	10.21	0.55	
2	0.89	13.99	0.26	
3	0.80	12.64	0.34	
4	0.76	8.73	0.39	
Marketing mix				0.755
1	0.88	12.33	0.57	
2	0.84	10.87	0.43	
3	0.77	9.28	0.28	
4	0.81	13.95	0.36	
Behavioral intention				0.829
1	0.89	11.36	0.35	
2	0.87	12.54	0.27	
3	0.80	10.88	0.42	
4	0.78	10.23	0.28	
5	0.73	9.97	0.58	
6	0.82	13.70	0.33	
7	0.88	13.44	0.23	
8	0.71	12.58	0.49	
Word-of-mouth				0.868
1	0.70	10.77	0.55	
2	0.89	13.61	0.47	
3	0.81	13.59	0.36	
Repurchase intentions				0.813
1	0.86	10.55	0.48	
2	0.82	13.61	0.53	
3	0.76	13.20	0.24	

building sustainable competitive advantage on the net create the necessity to better understand how consumers

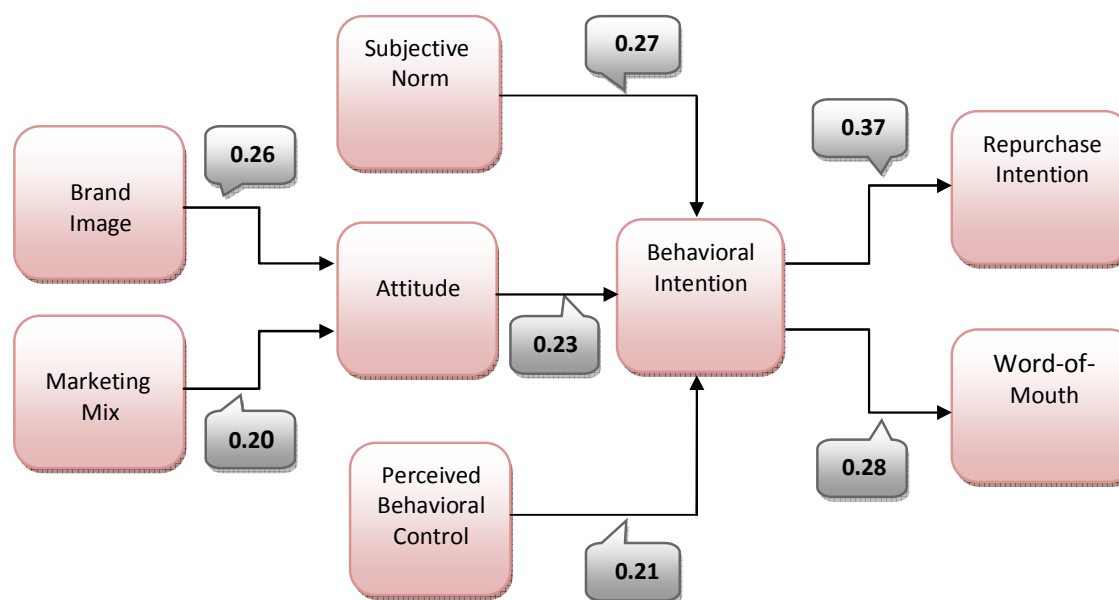
perceive and react to e-companies' offerings. In this context, construct such as behavioral intention and its

Table 3. Correlation matrix for measurement models.

Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Brand image	1							
Marketing mix	0.98	1						
Attitude	0.96	0.92	1					
Subjective norm	0.81	0.99	0.82	1				
Perceived behavioral control	0.76	0.8	0.92	0.81	1			
Behavioral intention	0.96	0.96	0.98	0.87	0.73	1		
Repurchase intention	0.74	0.9	0.93	0.89	0.82	0.97	1	
Word-of-mouth	0.89	0.77	0.78	0.8	0.86	0.99	0.81	1

Table 4. Results for linear structural relation.

Path from	Path to	Hypothesis	P	Path coefficient	Result
Brand image	Attitude	H ₁	p < 0.01	0.26	Supported
Marketing mix	Attitude	H ₂	p < 0.001	0.20	Supported
Subjective norm	Behavioral intention	H ₃	p < 0.001	0.27	Supported
Attitude	Behavioral intention	H ₄	p < 0.01	0.23	Supported
Perceived behavioral control	Behavioral intention	H ₅	p < 0.001	0.21	Supported
Behavioral intention	Repurchase intentions	H ₆	p < 0.001	0.37	Supported
Behavioral intention	Word-of-mouth	H ₇	p < 0.01	0.28	Supported

**Figure 2.** Structural model.

consequences need to be re-examined.

Theory of planned behavior (TPB) (Ajzen, 1985, 1991) received support as predictors of intentions to use the internet. This suggests that the models may be appropriate for explaining internet usage intentions

among Iranian customers.

Contrary to the findings of Davis et al. (1989) and Mathieson (1991), the present research found that subjective norm was related to intention. This may derive from the differences in the national culture of the data

collection contexts. Taylor and Todd (1995) suggested that subjective norm is more important for inexperienced users. Unlike many other technological systems, which to some extent isolate the user, the internet can be interactive, through e-mail, chat rooms, etc. These interactive uses are popular with college students (Jones, 2002). Consequently, study participants who had stronger subjective norm influences and skill may have had greater motivation to use the internet. Having competence, they lacked that excuse for not responding when important others attempted to communicate electronically.

This study reaffirmed the efficacy of the theory of planned behavior as a means of identifying the major factors influencing discretionary behavior such as online shopping. Analysis of the aggregated data revealed a strong correlation between attitude and behavioral intention. The disaggregated data provided evidence of attitudinal-behavioral consistency with use or non-use being strongly related to attitudes. Price considerations and special occasion usage were found not to be important determinants of the decision to online shopping.

The magnitude of the relationships reported here are consistent with previous tests of TPB as a predictor of internet technology criteria in the context of Asian users (Moon and Kim, 2001; Oh et al., 2003). However, the present results were not as strong as those found in studies that used other types of technology as criteria and Western samples (Mathieson, 1991; Taylor and Todd, 1995). At this point, it is difficult to determine whether these differences in the amount of variance explained are due to the criterion (internet versus other types of technology), culture, or infrastructural issues such as internet access opportunities. Kucuk and Arslan (2000) applied a variation of TPB to web users in Britain, Denmark and Turkey.

They attributed differences between users in Turkey and the other countries to infrastructural problems rather than cultural background.

Consumers easily affected by "subjective norm" because they have sufficient online information and select products joyfully. Managers should strive for the support of sub-groups and enhance the willingness of consumers to buy by using push or pull strategies. They should also investigate the implication of subcultures as a basis for planning marketing mixes.

In addition, the findings of the present study showed that WOM, a powerful mean to create awareness, positive image and thus to attract new customers, was also a strong consequence of behavioral intention. This is important news for managers since satisfied customers do become, in the online markets, advocates of the company. As they are a very credible communication source to other customers, their recommendation will have a strong effect on bringing more visitors to the site.

Finally, our findings suggest that ensuring high quality of the online presence of the company and positive experiences with the encounter and process of buying online may constitute a fundamental way to motivate

customers to buy more online. Traffic and online sales development seem thus to be a function of how easy, pleasant and efficient (in terms of accomplishing quickly all they need to do on-line) customers perceive the e-shopping experience.

LIMITATION

Like all research, this study has its limitations. A limitation of this study was that it analyzed only one type of web site – the cinema website. We propose repeating this study in the future with respect to the different types of destination sites identified by Hoffman et al. (1995), which would make generalization of our results possible.

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APPENDIX

Subjective norm

- 1) My family considers it a good idea if I purchase ticket at least once at the Cinema Website during the upcoming season.
- 2) Friends who influence my behavior consider it a good idea if I purchase ticket at least once at the Cinema Website during the upcoming season.
- 3) People who influence my behavior think that I should purchase ticket at the Cinema Website during the upcoming season.
- 4) People who are important to me think that I should purchase ticket at the Cinema Website during the upcoming season.

Perceived behavioral control

- 1) It does not fully depend on me whether or not I will purchase ticket at the Cinema Website at least once during the upcoming season.
- 2) I do not fully control the fact that I buy ticket at the Cinema Website at least once during the upcoming season.

Attitude

- 1) Buying tickets at the Cinema Website is a good idea.
- 2) Buying tickets at the Cinema Website is a wise idea.
- 3) I like the idea of using the Cinema Website to buy ticket.
- 4) Using the Cinema Website to buy tickets would be pleasant.
- 5) The Cinema Website is a better way for shopping.
- 6) In general, my opinion about the Cinema Website is good.

Brand image

- 1) I feel this Website suits my needs.
- 2) This Website has a good functional image amongst customers.
- 3) This Website has a good symbolic image amongst customers.
- 4) This Website has a good empirical image amongst customers.

Marketing mix

- 1) The Cinema Website price.
- 2) The Cinema Website channels.
- 3) The Cinema Website promotion.
- 4) The Cinema Website products.

Behavioral intention

- 1) The Cinema Website is an option for future shopping.
- 2) Willingness to recommend the Cinema Website to families and friends.
- 3) I am very likely to buy tickets from the Cinema Website.
- 4) I intended to use the Cinema Website to buy tickets.
- 5) I intended to use the Cinema Website frequently to buy tickets.
- 6) I would seriously contemplate buying from the Cinema Website.
- 7) It is likely that I am going to buy from the Cinema Website.
- 8) The Cinema Website is an option for shopping ticket.

Word-of-mouth

- 1) I am willing to recommend the Cinema Website to my friends.

- 2) I am willing to encourage individuals to e-shopping.
- 3) I have only good things to say about the Cinema Website.

Repurchase intentions

- 1) I will definitely use internet shopping in the near future.
- 2) If I purchase ticket in the next 30 days, I will use the Cinema Website.
- 3) I strongly recommend that others use the Cinema Website.