

The online flow and its influence on awe experience: an AI-enabled e-tail service exploration

AI-enabled
e-tail

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Abstract

Purpose – The study applied the stimulus–organism–response (S–O–R) framework to investigate the influence of flow elements (e.g. perceived control, concentration and cognitive enjoyment) on artificial intelligence (AI)-enabled e-tail services in evoking awe experience in online fashion apparel context.

Design/methodology/approach – Data of 739 active users of online fashion retail shoppers were collected using Amazon Mechanical Turk (MTurk). Partial least square-structural equation modeling was used for analysis.

Findings – This study suggested the relevance of AI-enabled services in evoking flow and stimulating the customers' awe experience in online fashion shopping.

Practical implications – The use of AI could help online fashion retailers to improve the experiential elements by using stimuli that evoke feelings of vastness, novelty and mysticism.

Originality/value – The study offers insights about the relevance and applicability of AI in enhancing the flow elements and awe experience on online fashion apparel shopping in an emerging economy.

Keywords AI-enabled e-tail, Services, Awe experience, Flow, Online fashion apparel, eWOM

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly being used to transform business operations, deliver services efficiently and enhance customer experience (Chopra, 2019; Zhang *et al.*, 2021). It refers to the use of technology to process and integrate information like the human brain (Menon *et al.*, 2020). Watson *et al.* (2018) suggested that AI relates to the use of computers and machines to perform human-like functions of learning, reasoning and adapting (p. 2). Globally, AI has witnessed exponential growth and according to Accenture, AI is expected to add US\$ 957 billion to India's gross value added by 2035. AI and automation like chatbots, recommendation systems, price comparison tools, use of images to search products, improved services and cybersecurity are being adopted by Indian e-commerce firms to improve consumer service experience (Bhargava, 2019; Kautish *et al.*, 2023). With the Indian retail sector expected to touch the US\$ 1.4 trillion mark, the growth in e-commerce during the pandemic has presented AI as an alternative to personalized selling (Majumdar, 2020). Consumers increased focus on safety, health and social distancing in retail fostered the adoption of smart technologies (Adapa *et al.*, 2020; Moore *et al.*, 2022). AI tools promise to improve supply chain visibility, address demand on a real-time basis, offer interactive retail edge, and facilitate the customization of products and services (IANS, 2020; Pillai *et al.*, 2020).

Research on AI adoption in online shopping websites has discussed its relevance in creating customer engagement, improving search, payment and interaction functions

