ABSTRACT

An e-commerce website is evaluated, using a well known Indian website, Flipkart.com as the target website. 269 valid responses are analyzed, using a 7-point Likert scale for measurement of participant responses to our questionnaire. The present study uses tried and tested variables including 'perceived usability' and 'ease of use' as defined by Davis's Technology Acceptance Model (TAM). The variables used here are mostly from earlier studies (Green & Pearson 2011, Agarwal & Venkatesh 2002), with some significant modifications. Visual PLS, a Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) statistical package was used for our analysis. In addition, the regression component of the SPSS statistical package was used to reinforce our findings. The results validated all our hypotheses.

Two diverse streams of literature, one relating to website usability and the other to e-commerce acceptance, are synthesized to derive a composite e-commerce acceptance model. In this thesis, the first model successfully creates and measures website usability; the second model, the inclusive e-commerce acceptance model, incorporates website usability and introduces additional variables, such as perceived risk and trust, to complete the synthesis of the themes in the two diverse streams of literature referred to above.

Web IQ is the quality of information presented on a website, while web SQ is the customer's perception of a web site's performance in delivering and retrieving information (Delone & McLean 1992). Disconfirmation is defined as consumer subjective judgments which arise from consumers' comparisons of expectations versus performance received (McKinney et al 2002. In dealing with issues pertaining to relevance, timeliness and accuracy of information, the importance of IQ and SQ in perceived usefulness and user

satisfaction (DeLone & McLean1992) is emphasized. McKinney et al (2002) argue that the distinction between web IQ and web SQ is important in website development and in assessing customer satisfaction with the site. They illustrate this point by asserting that even if an e-commerce website's SQ is sound in terms of entertaining design and ease of use, customers will desert the site if the information quality is not acceptable to them; conversely, even where the website has high information quality, if the website's delivery and retrieval mechanisms are not satisfactory, customers cannot be expected to stay and do their online shopping (McKinney et al 2002). With respect to measuring IQ and SQ expectation, performance and disconfirmation, the salient dimensions of IQ and SQ have neither been pre-established, nor are they directly measurable. Consequently, the salient dimensions of IQ and SQ need to identified and measured as latent variables (McKinney et al 2002). This thesis has used latent variables in the two models employed to complete this research.

A number of statistical tools including Visual PLS, SPSS's regression package, AMOS and ANOVA have been used in this thesis, with all our analyses providing satisfactory results.

Keywords: Intention to Transact, Ease of Use, Perceived Usability, Perceived Risk, Trust, Design Credibility, Content, Interactivity. Navigability, Responsiveness.