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Designing an information technology-enabled framework in the retail service ecosystem

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ABSTRACT

Despite the significant importance of service innovation in a value-centered retail environment, less is explored regarding its conceptualization through firms' information technology (IT) based strategic capabilities to promote the value formation process in a retail service ecosystem. To address this gap, this study aims to develop an integrated framework based on the concepts of service-dominant logic and resource advantage theory. By conducting 24 in-depth interviews (12 with employees and 12 with customers) across various non-fuel retail stores commonly referred to as tuck shops, this study highlights the significant role of firms' strategic IT-enabled capabilities in enhancing service process innovation and customer service. These IT capabilities, combined with service process innovation and customer service, not only create opportunities for value co-creation through resource exchange (*value-in-exchange*) but also enable customers to create value through individual service consumption (*value-in-use*). The findings further suggest co-creation experience within the retail ecosystem is shaped by customers' emotional involvement, role projection, and escapism, which collectively determine their *value-in-experience*. Finally, the proposed framework offers valuable implications for practitioners, emphasizing the need to design more integrative IT-enabled platforms to achieve improved customer value outcomes.

1. Introduction

Academic research on the acceptance and use of information technologies (IT) has experienced remarkable growth in recent years (Quach et al., 2022; Battisti et al., 2022). Discussions about sustaining innovation drivers have fostered integration among social communities and service environments, enhancing economic value (Vargo et al., 2024). The literature highlights the key role of information systems in addressing environmental and social impacts and facilitating cohesive knowledge sharing, creating pathways for economic growth. This growth provides various implications for implementing technological innovations (Dwivedi et al., 2019), improving relationships between service providers and customers, and converting resources into economic value (Palmié et al., 2022). IT capabilities refer to the

perspectives such as infrastructure, process transformation, power relationships and coordination in delivering online systems (Bhatt and Grover, 2005; Mulligan, 2002; Chen and Tsou, 2012). These are in other words firms' ability to 'acquire, deploy, combine, and reconfigure IT resources in support and enhancement of validating the measures' (Lu and Ramamurthy, 2011, p.932) to achieve the organizational objectives. Based on these advancements in information technology, service innovation is pivotal in enhancing customer experience by continuously improving service offerings (Barbu et al., 2021) and delivering customer value (Lin, 2022). It differentiates from traditional innovation by focusing on process innovations and service strategies to create value through new or improved offerings (Gustafsson et al., 2020; Snyder et al., 2016).

Service innovation (SI) which refers to the strategic utilization of

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Value creation or value destruction: Conceptualizing the experiential nature of value-in-use

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Abstract

The studies to date on service research have provided a generic overview on customer's positive value-in-use (value creation) as well as negative value-in-use (value destruction). Surprisingly, very little attention is made to exploring the experiential nature of value-in-use. This study aims to conceptualize the experiential nature of value-in-use where positive value-in-use results in value destruction in some situations (and value creation commonly), and negative value-in-use results in value creation in some situations (and value destruction normally). By integrating value-in-experience and value-in-context, the study proposed experience-dominant logic (EDL) as an important paradigm for value creation in the customer journey. The EDL is backed by the four foundational premises for which the insights are taken from literature as well as through in-depth interviews with customers and managers of the E-beauty services. The research also provides a framework for future research avenues as well as various future research directions.

1 | INTRODUCTION

Rapid technological advancements have brought a shift in marketing strategies and consumer behavior (Ameen et al., 2021; Chan & Li, 2010). Companies have quickly moved on using information technological capabilities (ITC) to meet the ever-changing customer expectations (Djellal & Gallouj, 2001; Gallouj & Savona, 2009; Tanrikulu, 2021). These technological implications have changed the market dynamics from offline to online (Ostrom et al., 2015). Firms continuously strive to innovate their product and service offerings (Broadie et al., 2011). Creating value is one of the main challenges for online platforms, especially for service sectors (Kohda, 2020). For achieving competitive advantage, value creation is paramount (Grönroos, 2000). The goods and services are considered means of exchange rather than the basis of exchange (Vargo & Lusch, 2008). The exchange that matters is the offerings that provide value (Gummerus, 2013). Firms are the potential value facilitators, and customers are the real value creators (Grönroos, 2011). Unlike earlier thoughts on value creation, the new stream of research

has considered value creation mainly as value-in-use rather than value-in-exchange (Grönroos & Voima, 2013; Grönroos, 2011; 2006). While enough evidence is available on a new stream of thoughts on value creation, the research still lacks conceptualizing the experiential nature of value-in-use and drawing its outcomes in the online service context. The experiential value-in-use is an essential aspect of value creation, especially in online contexts, as customers are primarily looking for value creation and experience creation (Medberg & Grönroos, 2020). The customer's behavior is changing rapidly due to ever-changing competition and the availability of the offerings. The customers' journey from thinking to planning to purchase to buying and then consumption to post-consumption is full of unexpected interferences (Jaakkola & Alexandar, 2014). The experience in one situation is not necessarily the same as in another. Therefore, limiting the value creation to value-in-use may not provide a wholesome experience to customers at all stages of the customer journey. Hence, addressing the experiential value-in-use is of most significant concern that needs to be addressed.



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Videogames-as-a-service: How does in-game value co-creation enhance premium gaming co-creation experience for players?

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ABSTRACT

The games as a service model have enabled game developers to reach worldwide audiences and regard games as services rather than products, opening up new avenues to establish value propositions. Freemium-premium gaming models of value co-creation have been studied in the past. Fostering the conversion of free users to premium subscribers and retaining those premium users are critical objectives for premium service providers. It is critical to effectively enable value co-creation through appropriate value propositions when the logic shifts from products to services such as depicted in the service-dominant logic. Since value propositions are the cornerstone of value, they must include insights about the customer's preferences, capabilities, and expectations, which can be gathered through the customer's value co-creation activities. Furthermore, little is known about the value realization that is assessed after using premium gaming services. The current study, which builds on the conceptual foundations of S-D logic, intends to investigate the gaming players' in-game co-creation experiences in the premium gaming setting through value co-creation activities. The model was tested using structural equation modeling (SEM)-based partial least based on survey data collected from 346 online gamers who used in-game premium services. The findings indicate that superior functionality, competition, sociability, personalization, and self-indulgence all have a substantial impact on players' desire to co-create with gaming service providers. Furthermore, the data revealed a significant outcome of value realization, which is appraised based on the premium gaming players' co-creation experience aspects. The findings of study 1 were further validated through qualitative intuitions to ensure the robustness of the valuable key insights, which confirms that different premium gaming motivations are necessary to enhance the value co-creation ties and gamer's overall co-creation experience positively. To improve premium players' co-creation experiences, online game service providers should route co-creation media into premium gaming settings.

1. Introduction

Online games are goal and experience-driven services, where each player is subject to achieving some milestones (Kokko et al., 2018). Freemium games allow the players to enjoy the basic gaming environment; however, it restricts to uplift the players' in-game stability, compatibility, sociability, and self-indulgence (Hamari, Alha, et al., 2017). The major features that freemium gaming services lack include superior gaming functionality, game competitiveness (Trepte and Reinecke, 2010), social connection (Mäntymäki et al., 2020), personalized gaming ventures (Wu et al., 2018), and self-indulgence (Syahrivar et al., 2021). Customers' ability to attain a satisfactory self-mark in the gaming world is limited by the absence of these characteristics in

freemium gaming. The desire to attain more leads to the purchase of premium packages by the players (Abbasi et al., 2021; Brockmann et al., 2015).

Furthermore, when it comes to premium gaming services offered by the gaming providers, players desire more agility and customization (Meng et al., 2021). The rise of the free-to-play (F2P) service paradigm in the online game industry has presented new issues for game developers and publishers. Due to fierce rivalry in the industry, 500 new games are developed and published online daily, with significant financial investment. However, only 2% of players are retained as premium customers, which is the key source of revenue generation for the F2P game services model (Hussain et al., 2021). The fundamental reason for this difference is that the game developers lack market orientation,

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Holistic customer experience: interplay between retail experience quality, customer in-shop emotion valence and in-shop involvement valence

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Abstract

Purpose – This study examines the roles of retail experience quality dimensions, customers' in-shop emotion valence and in-shop involvement valence in shaping the holistic retail customer experience.

Design/methodology/approach – We conducted a total of 25 interviews with customers who have used services at non-fuel retail stores in Malaysia, commonly known as tuckshops, which are located adjacent to fuel stations. The data were analyzed using thematic analysis, which led to the identification of key themes and categories that informed the development of our conceptual framework.

Findings – This study identifies three dimensions of retail experience quality: physical surroundings experience quality, interaction experience quality and service innovation experience quality. These dimensions, which were



Make every interaction count - assessing the role of customers' self-construal on value co-creation at service encounters

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ABSTRACT

This research examines the role of dual types of customers' self-construal (i.e., independent vs. interdependent) on value co-creation attitude and behaviour in retail service encounters. Using a mail-intercept survey, 463 responses were collected. Structural equation modeling was employed to analyse the results. Findings suggest that customers' independent self-construal does not affect their value co-creation attitude, implying that such customers solely create value on their own but do not participate in co-creation in service encounters. On the other hand, the interdependent self-construal has a strong significant impact on their value co-creation attitude; as a result, such customers create value independently as well as co-create value with the service employees by collaborating in service encounters. We argue that for service providers who want to encourage co-creation in retail markets, understanding the significance of consumers' self-construals is essential. This study has a number of implications. For instance, it shows that businesses might enhance the shopping experience by co-creating value with interdependent self-construal customers. Customers that have interdependent self-construals benefit from direct connection with frontline staff during service interactions, and as a result, they can play a crucial part in bringing creative ideas to the retail market. This study adds to our understanding of who independently create value and who co-creates value with others by analysing the relative influence of two types of self-construal in retail markets.

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KEYWORDS

Self-construal; value co-creation; experience; retail markets; Malaysia

1. Introduction

The importance of value co-creation in business is increasingly recognized in the literature. In contrast to the goods-dominant phenomenon (Vargo and Lusch 2004), the service-dominant logic (SDL) emphasises on value-in-use, where customers and service providers deliberately and experientially co-create value (Prahalad and Ramaswamy 2004; Vargo and Lusch 2017). The SDL is the first paradigm to regard service as the fundamental

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basis of exchange, with value created in-use rather than in-exchange (Grönroos 2019; Gummesson, Grönroos, and Gummesson 2012). The value-in-use concept highlights the importance of resource use or consumption (Grönroos 2017). The value co-creation phenomenon has aroused interest since its inception (Vargo and Lusch 2004). It allows various actors to see value as wholesome when they engage in service-to-service exchange for mutual value creation (Siddique et al. 2021). The exquisiteness of this phenomenon is that it provides 'real value' to the actors involved in the service-to-service exchange ecosystem. Customers' views as co-creators of value remain central to the service logic (Chen et al. 2017; Frassetto-Deltoro, Alarcón-del-Amo, and Lorenzo-Romero 2019).

The service logic (SL), a transformative extension of SDL in explaining the co-creation process, has clarified the role of customers and service providers in the value co-creation process (Grönroos). According to the SL, the service providers embed potential value in products/services during the production and delivery phases (Grönroos and Gummerus 2014) and act as value facilitators in service exchange (Grönroos and Voima 2013). Customers then apply their knowledge and skills to the products/services to convert the potential value into real value, thus are referred to as real value creators. The customers also co-create value when they interact and engage in dialogue with the service providers (Grönroos and Voima 2013). The customers, therefore, play an active





S–O–R based experiential framework for measuring in-store customer satisfaction in non-fuel retailing

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ABSTRACT

Past studies have provided a solid understanding of the role of various customer experience dimensions as stimuli to enhance customer satisfaction. Additionally, previous research has primarily concentrated on in-store shopping and/or in-store service experiences, asserting that each retail stimulus improves the service and shopping experience. However, the specific role of various customer experience dimensions, such as sensory experience, intellectual experience (design and employees), social experience, and pragmatic experience, as stimuli to enhance in-store customer service and shopping experiences remains somewhat unclear. Furthermore, the concept of the in-store customer experience is gaining increasing popularity, significantly improving in-store customer satisfaction. Nevertheless, its development through two key experience taxonomies (in-store service experience and in-store shopping experience) has remained largely unexplored. Moreover, research has not yet offered comprehensive evidence on in-store customer experiences and satisfaction in non-fuel retail settings or how fuel stations transform into retail centres. In addressing these gaps, this study aims to develop a stimulus-organism-response (S–O–R) based experiential framework for measuring in-store customer satisfaction, with a focus on non-fuel retail stores in Malaysia. Employing a mixed methods approach, we conducted 30 in-depth interviews using qualitative methods to explore five customer experience dimensions. Additionally, we collected 337 responses through multistage and systematic sampling from non-fuel retail stores in Malaysia. The findings provide intriguing insights into how these customer experience dimensions influence in-store service and shopping experiences differently. Furthermore, our findings strongly suggest that the in-store customer experience results from both the service and shopping experiences, ultimately enhancing overall in-store customer satisfaction.