

ABSTRACT

‘Showrooming and Webrooming’ have emerged as the two most critical challenges in the present multi-channel retailing dynamics. While showrooming denotes the buying behavior of those consumers who first inspect a product offline but later purchase online, alternatively, webrooming depicts the shopping behavior of those consumers who first visit an online channel for collecting product related information online but later close the purchase of the product offline. Both the concepts are challenging for marketers in today’s day and age. While the former makes it difficult for offline retailers to survive, and the latter hits hard on the profitability of online retailers. Despite the rising statistics, and endorsed negative impact of these behaviors on the profitability of online and offline retailers respectively, these have not been given much attention. The present research work makes a novel attempt by integrating varied factors derived from multi-channel choice literature like perceived search and purchase channel benefits online and offline, anticipated regret, online trust, online risk and online risk suitably, and proposes two integrated TAM-TPB models intertwined with uncertainty reduction theory and anticipated regret view distinctively for examining consumers’ motivation behind showrooming and webrooming behavior. Purposive sampling was utilized for data collection, and subsequently the partial least squares-structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to test the proposed models. As regards showrooming behavior, the results of the study revealed that perceived search benefits offline and purchase benefits online, perceived ease purchasing online and perceived usefulness of showrooming significantly determined consumers’ attitude towards showrooming behavior. The notable impact of anticipated high-price regret and sub-optimal choice regret, and perceived behavioral control was also observed on the intentions toward the behavior, except for subjective norms. However, the impact of online trust was only observed on the intentions, but not on the attitude towards behavior. With respect to webrooming behavior, it was identified that perceived ease of searching online and perceived usefulness of webrooming along with perceived search benefits online and purchase benefits offline significantly determined consumers’ attitude towards webrooming behavior. The notable impact of online risk perceptions, anticipated sub-optimal choice regret and e-distrust was also observed on the intentions towards behavior, barring perceived behavioral control, which however significantly determined actual webrooming behavior. Supporting results were observed for the moderating impact of product involvement in both the models. Findings of the study are expected to aid online and offline retailers for combating showrooming and webrooming customers respectively.

Keywords: Showrooming, Webrooming, Anticipated Regret, Trust, Online Risk, Online Distrust, Multichannel Self-efficacy, Channel Benefits