

[Original Article]

The Effects of Shopping Motivation and an Experiential Marketing Approach on Consumer Responses toward Small Apparel Retailers

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Abstract

The objectives of this empirical study were to examine the relationships between shopping motivations, Pine and Gilmore's four experience realms (4Es), the emotional components of pleasure and arousal, and patronage intention toward small apparel retailers. Data from 128 college students were collected through an online survey. Regression analysis results revealed the positive impact of shopping motivations on the hypothesized experiential realms and partial effects of the 4Es on pleasure and arousal. Pleasure and arousal were found to affect patronage intention. This research benefits small retailers by identifying the experiential marketing strategies that positively affect consumer emotional experiences, which are important to consequent patronage intention toward small apparel retailers.

Keywords: small apparel retailers, motivation, emotion, experiential marketing, consumer patronage intention

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I. Introduction

Experiential marketing is an emerging approach catering to consumers' desire for engaging experiences. Schmitt (1999) defined experiential marketing as the process of offering customer-centric activities that foster recognition of the company or brand and increase likelihood of purchase of its goods or services. Value generated from experiential marketing includes the perceived benefit of positive emotional experiences, derived from either consumer usage of or anticipated interaction with a product or service (Holbrook, 1986; Mathwick, Malhotra, & Rigdon, 2001; Shobeiri, Mazaheri, & Laroche, 2014). In comparison to a traditional marketing approach, an experiential marketing approach builds

abundant consumer interactions with products, services, and brand representatives (Schmitt, 1999; Smilansky, 2017; Yan & Wu, 2008). In line with this emerging marketing approach, Pine and Gilmore (1999) conceptualized a shift in the source of economic growth from a service economy to an “Experience Economy” (EE). Pine and Gilmore (1999) identified four experiential realms important in the EE—entertainment, educational, escapist, and esthetic experiences - which they called the “4Es” and claimed that engaging the consumers in the relevant experiences to lead to more successful marketing efforts.

However, empirical research (Fernandes, Agapito, & Mendes, 2015; Jeong, Fiore, Niehm, & Lorenz, 2009; Oh, Fiore, & Jeong, 2007) has found that (a) not all 4Es are equally effective in influencing consumer response, and (b) the effectiveness of each experience may depend on the specific consumer environment (e.g., online fashion retailer and hospitality setting). Experiential marketing has been noted to be a way that brick-and-mortar retailers can compete with online retailing (Mathwick *et al.*, 2001; Pine & Gilmore, 1999), which increasingly replaces offline retailers. Thus, there is a need for a study of the 4Es in the context of offline retail formats, which are struggling to compete with online retailers, in order to find an opportunity to survive in the current market.

Among the offline retailers, in particular, independently owned small retailers have been challenged by the big box retailers (e.g., Wal-Mart, Best Buy, and Home Depot) (McCune, 1994; McGee & Peterson, 2000) and the online/mobile retailers due to small retailers own lack of competitive strategies (e.g., pricing, advertising/promotion, and assortment strategies) (McGee & Peterson, 2000). To sustain their growth and prevalence in the U.S. economy, it is imperative for them to have effective marketing strategies that cope with these challenges and differentiate them from competitors such as discounters, department stores, and other emerging retail formats (e.g., m-commerce) that can beat small retailers on price. Experiential marketing may be a viable competitive strategy for small, independently owned retailers because these merchants many times have dedicated, knowledgeable staff known for creating personalized experiences as well as unique store designs, often lacking in larger retail venues (Achua & Lussier, 2001; Bradley, Spice, & Rubach, 2006; Niehm, Fiore, Hurst, Lee, & Sadachar, 2015). Accordingly, in the present paper, we will look at a subset of small retailers—small apparel retail stores—to understand the impact of experiential marketing, the 4Es in particular, on consumer responses. The study aims to examine a conceptual model, which includes antecedents of the 4Es and consumer response outcomes towards small apparel retailers. The relationships among shopping motivations, the 4Es, emotion, and consumer patronage intention toward small apparel stores will be examined. This study will contribute to both consumer behavior and small business literature. Additionally, small retailers may benefit from the study by learning a new marketing approach for attracting and better serving consumers.

II. Literature Review

1. The 4Es of the Experience Economy

Providing goods and services is no longer enough to compete in today’s increasingly commoditized world. A company, as an “experience stager,” could provide and utilize the 4Es in its stores to engage customers in memorable ways for achieving and sustaining a competitive advantage (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). The 4Es – entertainment, educational, escapist, and esthetic experiences – are distinguished by their combination of type of *customer participation* and *connection*. *Customer participation* is identified as a continuum from passive to active participation. Passive participation is “where customers do not directly affect or influence the performance” and active participation

is “where customers personally affect the performance or event that yields the experience” (Pine & Gilmore, 1999, p. 30). *Connection* refers to one’s relationship with the environmental and is represented by the continuum of absorption—immersion. Absorption is “occupying a person’s attention by bringing the experience into the mind” and immersion is “becoming physically (or virtually) a part of the experience itself” (Pine & Gilmore 1999, p. 31).

Based on these two constructs, Pine and Gilmore (1999) positioned the 4Es within quadrants created by the intersection of the passive—active participation axis and the absorption—immersion axis (Figure 1). Entertainment and educational experiences involve absorption, while esthetic and escapist experiences involve immersion. Education and escapist experiences are created by active participation, whereas entertainment and esthetic experiences are created by passive participation. Among the 4Es, entertainment experiences are one of the familiar forms of experience developed in a retail format (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). These experiences occur when consumers passively participate and observe a theatrical performance, thus absorbing and sensing the events in store. With educational experiences, consumers actively participate in the activities to learn and enhance their knowledge and skills (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), such as practicing cutting techniques in an in-store cooking class. Escapist experiences engage consumers in the middle of the excitement by making them actively participating in the events or activities, for example, offered by theme parks, casinos, or virtual reality game environment. Within a store, consumers feel positive feelings by just being in an attractive store, generating esthetic experiences. These 4Es were found to be effective tools for small retail firms to implement an experiential marketing approach; profitable retailers reported higher use of the 4Es (Niehm, Dorie, Jablon, Fiore, & Hurst, 2016).

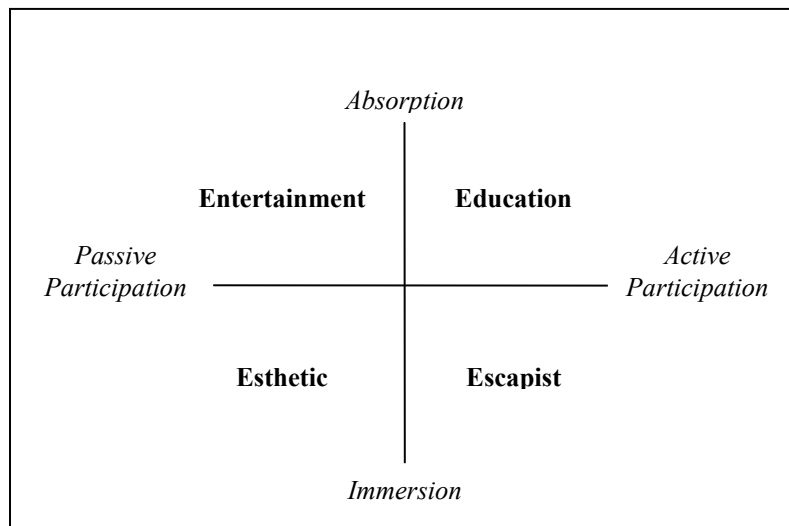


Figure 1. The experience realms proposed by Pine and Gilmore (1999)

2. Shopping Motivations and the 4Es

Previous researchers have empirically tested the effect of shopping motivation on consumer responses to explain consumer behavior (e.g., Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Childers, Carr, Peck, & Carson, 2001; Westbrook & Black, 1985). Whereas various typologies of motivations have been developed, they are commonly divided into two types, hedonic and instrumental or utilitarian motivations (e.g., Childers *et al.*, 2001; Westbrook & Black, 1985). Hedonic motivations are based on the ideas of shopping for fun, and play arising from the consumption experience (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Babin, Darden, & Griffin, 1994; Childers *et al.*, 2001; Fisher & Arnold, 1990; Sherry, 1990). In contrast, consumers are motivated to shop for achieving their goals (i.e., purchasing products) with minimum irritation in the utilitarian view. In the context of the apparel shopping environment, such as shopping at small retailers, consumers can be motivated to shop for fun and/or for achieving a specific goal, for example, purchasing a scarf for a holiday gift while enjoying the festive holiday store decorations. Accordingly, the present study examined utilitarian and hedonic shopping motivations to explain consumer shopping behavior.

Shopping experiences and environmental perceptions can be influenced by hedonic and utilitarian motivations. Childers *et al.* (2001) found the importance of usefulness and enjoyment of the environment on attitudes towards online shopping was affected differently based on the consumer's hedonic and utilitarian shopping motivations. In the quantitative study of Hibbert and Tagg (2010), shopping goals (i.e., shopping motivations) were found to influence consumers' evaluation of the shopping experience and behavioral intentions in the context of craft fair shopping. In line with previous research, the present study proposes that hedonic and utilitarian motivations are related to a consumer's experiences at small apparel retailers.

Hedonic motivations entail seeking fun, amusement, fantasy, arousal, sensory stimulation, and enjoyment (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982; Holbrook, 1986; Holbrook & Gardner, 1998). Consumers with hedonic motivations will engage in the four realms of experiences (entertainment, educational, escapist, and esthetic), which will consequently lead to favorable emotional responses (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Entertainment experiences, which include observation of performances, lead to aroused pleasure and excitement. These emotional experiences may be derived from hedonic motivation, because those emotions are based on the shopping experience itself rather than the pursuit for the intended rewards (Babin *et al.*, 1994). Hedonic motivation is concerned with the task of experiencing fun, amusement, and entertainment, not the task for goal achievement (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003; Babin *et al.*, 1994). Because the outcomes of the entertainment experiences are driven by the experience itself, they may not significantly related to utilitarian shopping motivation (Babin *et al.* 1994; Fiore & Ogle, 2000).

Among the four experience realms, educational experiences, corresponding to the information search process of consumption, have been recognized as having utilitarian motivations (Babin *et al.*, 1994). However, Arnold and Reynolds (2003) found that shopping for keeping up with trends and new fashion can generate enjoyment and pleasure as well. They defined this information search process as "idea shopping" which can be derived from hedonic motivations. Therefore, educational experiences may be associated with both hedonic and utilitarian motivations.

Escapist experiences allow consumers to embark from everyday experience and feel as if they have voyaged to some specific place/time (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Arnold and Reynolds (2003) identified "adventure shopping", shopping for stimulation, adventure, and the feeling of being in another world, as connected with hedonic motivations. Furthermore, Fiore and Ogle (2000) suggested intrinsic and hedonic value of shopping include an "alternative existence" experience in which consumers can imagine a new identity and fantasies through the events of a real or

virtual shopping environment. This relates to the escapist experiences requiring immersion and active participation (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). However, the escapist experiences may not have the significant relationship with utilitarian shopping value, because they are not motivated by achievement of a utilitarian shopping purpose or goal (Babin et al., 1994; Fiore & Ogle, 2000).

Esthetic experiences engage consumers in a passive manner, where they just enjoy “being” in an attractive environment (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Esthetic experiences from the retail atmosphere were found to influence a variety of emotions and shopping behaviors (Donovan & Rossiter, 1982). As noted by Holbrook and Hirschman (1982), hedonic consumption is related to appreciation of the aesthetic aspects of a product, rather than its functional utility. Thus, esthetic experiences are likely to be related with hedonic motivation rather than utilitarian motivation (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). Accordingly, the following hypotheses were proposed.

Hypothesis 1a-d: Level of hedonic motivation will positively affect the level of each of the perceived 4Es ([a] entertainment, [b] educational, [c] escapist, and [d] esthetic) in a small apparel store environment.

Hypothesis 2: Level of utilitarian motivation will positively affect the level of the perceived educational experience in a small apparel store environment.

3. The 4Es' Impact on Emotional Dimensions

Emotion includes “subjective feeling states within the individual, such as joy, anger, and excitement” (Fiore & Kim, 2007, p. 429). To explain the dimensions of affective or emotional experiences, Mehrabian and Russell (1974) offered the Pleasure-Arousal-Dominance (PAD) paradigm and a multi-item measurement scale. They defined emotional pleasure as a degree of happiness and pleasantness; arousal as the degree of stimulation, excitement, and alertness; and dominance as the degree of control and influence. Their paradigm has been successfully used to explain consumer responses (e.g., Fiore, Jin, & Kim, 2005; Havlena & Holbrook, 1986; Mano & Oliver, 1993). Whereas pleasure and arousal are commonly used to measure a consumer’s emotional response, dominance is a frequently excluded dimension because of earlier findings of non-significance (Donovan, Rossiter, Marcoolyn, & Nesdale, 1994; Eroglu, Machleit, & Davis, 2003; Russell, 1979). Therefore, only pleasure and arousal dimensions were included as predictors to explain consumer experiences and patronage intentions in the present study.

Literature suggests a relationship between consumer shopping experiences and the emotional aspects of consumption that can be used to support the relationship between the 4Es and a consumer’s emotional response (e.g., Fiore & Ogle, 2000; Jeong *et al.*, 2009; Pine & Gilmore, 1999; Wakefield & Baker, 1998). For instance, entertainment experiences offer an emotional response such as pleasure from watching performances that lead to aroused emotions (Fiore & Ogle, 2000; Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Wakefield and Baker (1998) also found that entertainment influences perceived consumer excitement or arousal in a mall setting. Educational experiences, defined by Pine and Gilmore (1999) as involving more active participation by the consumer than found in entertainment experiences, may relate to idea shopping. Arnold and Reynolds (2003) discussed idea shopping as shopping for learning trends and seeing new products. During idea shopping, consumers felt enjoyment and excitement when they are not purchasing any product. Related to educational experiences, Arnold and Reynolds (2003) found consumers enjoy browsing to obtain information about products, in general, without the goal of purchasing a specific product. Other studies have discussed the escapist aspects of shopping (Babin *et al.*, 1994; Mathwick *et al.*, 2001). Shopping in a flea market or for a special occasion, such as Christmas, provides customers

with fantasies and active imagination that may take them away from the mundane world, and those experiences result in enjoyment, increased arousal, and pleasure (Fisher & Arnold, 1990; Sherry, 1990). In esthetic experiences, consumers enjoy being immersed in a sensory environment. Esthetic appeal from the store design and atmospheric details (e.g., store layout, interior details, and visual presentation of products) provide immediate pleasure and arousal to consumers, which facilitates browsing, searching, and purchasing (Wakefield & Baker, 1998). Thus, in the present study, all 4Es – entertainment, educational, escapist, and esthetic experiences – are expected to positively affect pleasure and arousal.

Hypothesis 3a-d: The level of each of the perceived 4Es ([a] entertainment, [b] educational, [c] escapist, and [d] esthetic) will positively affect pleasure in a small apparel store environment.

Hypothesis 4a-d: The level of each of the perceived 4Es ([a] entertainment, [b] educational, [c] escapist, and [d] esthetic) will positively affect arousal in a small apparel store environment.

4. Emotion and Patronage Intention

Consumer patronage intention is defined as the customer's willingness to consider, recommend, or purchase from a retailer in the future (Mathwick *et al.*, 2001). Researchers have used patronage intention to evaluate consumer responses toward a retailer and consumer decisions during the consumption process (e.g. Baker, Parasuraman, Grewal, & Voss, 2002; Fiore *et al.*, 2005). Literature supports that emotional feelings such as pleasure and arousal predict patronage intention toward a store (i.e., desire to browse, spend more than anticipated, recommend the store, buy at the store, and enjoy the store) (Chitturi, Raghunathan, & Mahajan, 2008; Menon & Kahn, 2002; Sweeney & Wyner, 2002). For example, Chitturi *et al.* (2008) found a positive relationship between emotion (e.g., feelings of delight) and likelihood to recommend the store to others and to repurchase from the store. They also suggested that emotion mediates between hedonic and utilitarian oriented goals and positive responses toward a store. In the study of Menon and Kahn (2002), pleasure and arousal enhanced by product and website attributes were found to influence consumer shopping behavior. Accordingly, emotional pleasure and arousal are expected to predict patronage intention.

Hypothesis 5a: Pleasure will positively affect patronage intention toward a small apparel store.

Hypothesis 5b: Arousal will positively affect patronage intention toward a small apparel store.

III. Method

1. Data Collection

The study employed a quantitative survey method using an online questionnaire. The email addresses of the student sample were obtained from course instructors, and the link to the survey was sent via email by a researcher. Incentives for participation included extra credits in a course. During the survey procedure, respondents were first asked to recall their previous experiences of shopping at a small apparel store. To help participants recall their experiences, a brief explanation of small apparel stores and a sample list of small apparel stores near the university were offered. Then, participants self-reported the specific small apparel store they had shopped at most recently and answered the subsequent questions based on their experiences at that store. The respondents who answered "never shopped at a small apparel store" were included for the sake of fairness in incentive opportunities, but their responses were excluded from the analysis as the responses did not fit the context of the study.

The present study used a convenience sample of college students at a large midwestern university in the United States. A total of 220 completed questionnaires were received from 465 email invitations, which yielded a response rate of 47%. After deleting cases with missing data and cases in which shoppers had selected non-small apparel stores, 128 usable responses remained. The majority of respondents in this study were female (82.0%) and aged 21 to 23 (62.5%). The majority of the respondents were Caucasian American (74.2%); 62.5% of the respondents visited 1-2 small retail stores in a shopping trip; and most of the respondents spent \$100 or more shopping at small retail stores (78.9%) per year (Table 1).

Table 1. Sample characteristics

Variables	Frequency (<i>n</i> = 128)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	22	17.2 %
Female	105	82.0 %
Age		
20 and younger	30	23.6 %
21 – 23	80	62.5 %
24 – 27	18	13.9 %
Major		
Consumer Sciences	104	81.3 %
Business	15	11.7 %
Other	9	7.0 %
Ethnicity		
Asian American	11	8.6 %
African American	12	9.4 %
Hispanic American	6	4.7 %
Native American	1	0.8 %
Caucasian American	95	74.2 %
Other	3	2.3 %
How many small retail stores visited in one shopping trip?		
None	10	7.8 %
1 – 2	80	62.5 %
3 – 5	33	25.8 %
6 – 10	4	3.1 %
More than 10	1	0.8 %
How much spent on shopping at retail stores per year?		
Less than \$100	2	1.6 %
\$100 – 299	7	5.5 %
\$300 – 499	21	16.4 %
\$500 – 799	31	24.2 %
\$800 – 999	9	7.0 %
\$1000 – 1199	23	18.0 %
\$1200 or more	35	27.3 %
How much spent on shopping at small retail stores per year?		
Less than \$100	27	21.1 %
\$100 – 299	43	33.6 %
\$300 – 499	24	18.8 %
\$500 – 799	18	14.1 %
\$800 – 999	3	2.3 %
\$1000 – 1199	7	5.5 %
\$1200 or more	5	3.9 %

2. Measures

The design of the questionnaire was based on multiple-item measurement scales that were validated and found to be reliable. All constructs, except emotions, were measured on a 7-point Likert-type scale. “Strongly disagree” and “Strongly agree” were anchors for shopping motivation and experiential items, and “Not at all likely” and “Extremely likely” anchored the items for patronage intention. Emotion items were measured using semantic differential scales. All items were modified to be applicable to the small apparel store context.

Fifteen modified items from Babin *et al.*'s (1994) scale were used to capture consumer shopping motivations (11 for hedonic motivations and 4 for utilitarian motivations). Whereas the initial items were developed to measure hedonic and utilitarian values, the items for the present study were modified to measure hedonic and utilitarian motivation/orientation for the shopping context. Examples of hedonic motivation items include going shopping for joy, because I wanted to, to spend enjoyable time. Examples of utilitarian motivation items include going shopping to accomplish what I wanted to do, to buy what I really needed, to find the items, etc. For the 4Es, 27 items were adapted and modified from Oh *et al.*'s (2003) experiential scales that were initially developed for a tourism setting; the items were modified to fit the small apparel store context. These items consisted of seven items for the entertainment construct (e.g., browsing products was amusing to me, entertaining, fun), eight items for the educational construct (e.g., shopping was highly educational, provided a learning experiences, stimulated my curiosity), 6 items for the escapist construct (e.g., I felt like I was a different persona, in a different place) and six items for the esthetic construct (e.g., this store was very attractive, very pleasant). The emotional dimensions were assessed using 12 bipolar adjective pairs developed by Mehrabian and Russell (1974). Pleasure consisted of the original six items – unhappy-happy, annoyed-pleased, unsatisfied-satisfied, melancholic-contented, despairing-hopeful, and bored-relaxed. Arousal also consisted of the original six items – relaxed-stimulated, calm-excited, sluggish-frenzied, dull-jittery, sleepy-wide awake, and unaroused-aroused. The order of each adjective pair was reversed to be consistent with the rest of the questionnaire; negative anchors of the scale were on the left side and positive anchors were on the right side. As noted, items to measure dominance were not included in the questionnaire. For consumer patronage intention, five items were modified from the scales developed by Zeithaml, Berry, and Parasuraman (1996) (e.g., I say positive things about this store, recommend this store). Finally, demographic (age, gender, major, and ethnicity) and store patronage-related information were obtained.

IV. Results

SPSS 20 was used to perform exploratory factor and regression analyses. Principal component analysis was conducted with varimax rotation to confirm the dimensionality of the variables. An eigenvalue of 1.00 or greater was used to determine the number of factors extracted in the exploratory factor analysis. Items were excluded if they yielded low factor loadings less than .40, high cross-loadings above .40, or low communalities less than .30 (Arnold & Reynolds, 2003). As a result, one hedonic motivation, one utilitarian motivation, four entertainment experience, three arousal, and one patronage intention items were removed. All the factors showed an acceptable level of reliability with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from .67 to .95 (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006).

Regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses using the mean scores of the individual items for each construct. Standardized estimates (B) and *t*-values with the statistical significance ($p < .05$) were reported in Table 2.

The regression results revealed that hedonic motivation positively affected all four dimensions—perceived entertainment (H1a: $\beta = .63$, $t = 8.99$, $p < .01$), educational (H1b: $\beta = .39$, $t = 4.64$, $p < .01$), escapist (H1c: $\beta = .27$, $t = 3.12$, $p < .01$), and esthetic experiences (H1d: $\beta = .61$, $t = 8.57$, $p < .01$)—which provides support for H1. H2 was also supported, which confirms the positive impact of utilitarian motivation on the level of the perceived education experience ($\beta = .26$, $t = 3.14$, $p < .01$). H3 was partially supported; among the 4Es, only the level of the perceived esthetic experience positively influenced pleasure (H3d: $\beta = .58$, $t = 5.82$, $p < .01$), supporting H3d. However, entertainment (H3a: $\beta = .07$, $t = .78$, $p = .44$), education (H3b: $\beta = -.03$, $t = -.29$, $p = .77$), and escapist experiences (H3c: $\beta = -.15$, $t = -1.78$, $p = .08$) did not have a significant influence on pleasure. H4 was also partially supported, revealing the positive impact of perceived entertainment and esthetic experiences on arousal (H4a: $\beta = .26$, $t = 2.55$, $p < .05$; H4d: $\beta = .22$, $t = 2.01$, $p < .05$, respectively). The perceived educational and escapist experiences did not affect arousal (H4b: $\beta = .04$, $t = .45$, $p = .66$; H4c: $\beta = .06$, $t = .70$, $p = .49$, respectively). Supporting H5, pleasure (H5a: $\beta = .37$, $t = 4.02$, $p < .01$) and arousal (H5b: $\beta = .20$, $t = 2.23$, $p < .01$) positively affected patronage intention toward a small apparel store).

Table 2. Regression results

Independent variables	Dependent variables						
	Entertainment	Educational	Escapist	Esthetic	Pleasure	Arousal	Patronage intention
Hedonic motivation	.63** (8.99)	.39** (4.64)	.27** (3.12)	.61** (8.57)			
Utilitarian motivation		.26** (3.14)					
Entertainment					.07 (.78)	.26* (2.55)	
Educational					-.03 (-.29)	.04 (.45)	
Escapist					-.15 (-1.78)	.06 (.70)	
Esthetic					.58** (5.82)	.22* (2.01)	
Pleasure							.37** (4.02)
Arousal							.20* (2.23)
R^2	.39	.18	.07	.37	.35	.22	.26
Adjusted R^2	.39	.16	.07	.38	.33	.19	.24
F	80.75**	13.02**	9.73**	73.47**	16.18**	8.52**	21.06**

Notes: Standardized regression coefficients are reported with t -values in parentheses.

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$

V. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of motivations, consumer experiences, and emotions on patronage intention towards small apparel retailer. Regression analysis results supported the positive impact of shopping motivations on the experiential realms and partial effects of the 4Es on pleasure and arousal, which, in turn, predicted patronage intention. As hypothesized, all of the 4Es were positively influenced by hedonic motivation, and utilitarian motivation had a positive association with educational experiences. These findings suggest that hedonic motivations may be satisfied by the addition of any or all of the 4Es, whereas adding educational aspects may appeal to utilitarian, goal-oriented consumers. These consumers may likely find educational experiences in the store to provide desired information helpful in making the right purchase (Babin *et al.*, 1994).

The findings revealed the relationships between each of the 4Es and the two aspects of emotional experience (i.e., pleasure and arousal). Specifically, perceived esthetic experience was positively associated with both aspects of emotional experience, entertainment experience was positively associated with arousal alone, and educational and escapist experiences did not have a significant relationship with either pleasure or arousal. Thus, it appears that, among the 4Es, entertainment and esthetic experiences, the passive participation dimensions, were more effective than the active participation dimensions (education and escapist) at triggering the positive emotional aspects of pleasure or arousal in small apparel stores. Perhaps this has to do with the limited availability of time and financial resources faced by small businesses (Scarborough, 2012). Small apparel retailers may need to focus their limited resources on core retailing practices, such as unique products, visual merchandising, and store design, as well as more engaging staff. Therefore, esthetic and entertaining experiences in the store environment may become rich enough to produce measurable effects on pleasant and arousing emotional states.

Interestingly, the present study was consistent with the previous findings in that consumer behavior is not significantly affected by all of the 4Es (Fernandes *et al.*, 2015; Jeong *et al.*, 2009; Oh *et al.*, 2003). In Jeong *et al.*'s (2009) study of online apparel retailing, a positive influence of escapist experiences on pleasure was found in that retail setting. A small, physical apparel store environment may provide fewer escapist experiential elements than an online store environment due to the difficulty of delivering virtual fantasies and the imagination of being in a different world. Along with the aforementioned time and financial resources limitations, small apparel retailers tend to have more limited knowledge of marketing strategy trends (Fiore, Niehm, Hurst, Son, & Sadachar, 2013). This combination of limitations may deter small retailers from providing all of the 4Es to fully engage consumers in the store environment, resulting in the study's lack of support for all of the 4Es influencing emotional pleasure and arousal. However, consistent with the previous research (Fiore *et al.*, 2005; Wakefield & Baker, 1998), the present study confirmed the significant effects of pleasure and arousal on patronage intentions toward small apparel stores. Thus, it appears that both pleasant and aroused feelings could contribute to consumers' patronage intentions toward small apparel stores.

The present study contributes to knowledge regarding consumer shopping behavior by empirically examining all of the 4Es in a small retail setting, particularly in the apparel sector. Specifically, this empirical study not only illustrated that the entertainment and esthetics experiences can be influential marketing tools to enhance consumers' patronage toward small apparel stores, but it also identified antecedents and outcomes of the 4Es. Thus, this study illustrated the psychological mechanism underlying the impact of the 4Es on consumer responses. The current study has implications for small apparel retailers; it confirms the appeal of new experiential marketing strategies (i.e., 4Es) to

consumers. Therefore, these retailers should identify the hedonic or utilitarian motivations of their target customers and offer particular combinations of the four experiences depending on these motivations. By knowing their shoppers, retailers can use their limited resources more effectively to focus on experiences that are not only relevant to their target customers, but also influence patronage intention. That is, for hedonic shoppers, small apparel stores need to delight and arouse consumers by delivering entertainment and/or esthetic experiences (e.g., trunk show, entertaining in-store events, seasonal changes of store design, and pleasant scents) in order to improve shoppers' patronage intentions toward the stores. For utilitarian shoppers, traditional marketing strategies offered by small apparel retailers, such as educational trunk shows where consumers learn about new trends or styles, may not be sufficient to lead to patronage intention. Instead, the retailer should ensure these experiences are also immensely entertaining and set in a rich esthetic environment, because entertaining and esthetic experiences were found to lead to arousal and pleasure associated with patronage intention.

Whereas this study makes a meaningful contribution to the small retail business literature, there are some limitations. The sample in this study consisted mostly of female college-aged students. Thus, future research is needed to ensure the results can be generalized to the general population of small apparel store shoppers. In addition, asking questions about shopping experiences at only small apparel stores near a campus limits the application of the results to other retail store types (e.g., online stores, music stores, big retail stores) as well as stores not located near a campus. Lastly, examining the effects of other organism variables (e.g., delight, perceived risk) within a stimulus-organism-response (SOR) theoretical model may also be appropriate for investigating the psychological factors underlying the role of the 4Es on emotional aspects and patronage intention.

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