

## The Mediating Role of Adjusted Expectations in the Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Online Repurchase Intention of Sportswear Retailers in the UK

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### Abstract

This research aimed to identify the influence of customer satisfaction on customers online repurchase intention, and a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of sportswear retailer in UK. The target populations of this study were Customers of online sportswear retailer in UK. The study employed the questionnaire method as a tool to collect data from 106 respondents. Single linear regression analysis was used to identify the influence of customer satisfaction on customers online repurchase intention, and a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. Result of hypothesis prove that customer satisfaction influence online repurchase intention [ $R^2 = .328$ ,  $F = 50.220$ ,  $p < .001$ ]. Secondly, customer satisfaction influences adjusted expectations [ $R^2 = .271$ ,  $F = 38.354$ ,  $p < .001$ ]. Lastly, adjusted expectations influence online repurchase intention [ $R^2 = .366$ ,  $F = 58.907$ ,  $p < .001$ ]. In order to increase sportswear online customers and their repurchase intention, the retailers should focus on improving the level of customer satisfaction and adjusted expectations towards online purchase.

**Keywords:** Customer Satisfaction, Adjusted Expectations, Online Repurchase Intention

### Introduction

The Internet has become a borderless medium that is rapidly extending its coverage to sectors ranging from education to business. Meanwhile, internet shopping has been widely accepted as a way of purchasing products and services. It has become a more popular means in the Internet world (Bourlakis *et al.*, 2008). It also provides consumer more information and choices to compare product and price, more choice, convenience, easier to find anything online (Butler & Peppard, 1998). Online shopping has been shown to provide more satisfaction to modern consumers seeking convenience and speed (Yu & Wu, 2007). Moreover, in Thailand the number of people who shop online through internet is increasing every year (Kinasih, 2018).

### Online Sportswear Industry

Nowadays website is used as one of the significant marketing tools because website is one of platform that marketer can develop different marketing strategy which can lead to efficient way of customer satisfaction. Moreover, most of the companies have their own website and other e-commerce platforms such as social media or application to contact customer. Therefore, choosing a significant platform important for the company to lead customer

satisfaction, example trading company may use Amazon, eBay, or Alibaba.

In this research study, the researcher focusses on sportswear industry. According to the one question of Stern (1999) how important is a website for companies in the sportswear sector in terms of sales and how are they looking to make use of their websites going forward?'. Website become one of marketing channel to sales the product through e-commerce which is the processing of selling product via the internet. Moreover, website can generate selling as retail store but significant bigger and more efficient than traditional or brick and mortar over the last few years. In 2016, 77% customer in UK purchase sportswear via online purchase, which increasing 16.2% over the 2015 and prediction to increase 14.9% each year. Therefore, the researcher can indicate e-commerce is significant marketing tool to increase sale and there are a lot of opportunity in the future via e-commerce.

Back to the question of Stern (1999) that mentioned earlier, the answer would base on the usage of website for each company to meet the customer satisfaction via online channels; however, online channels is proved with the revenue growth and expected to growth more in the future (Stern, 1999).

Since keeping the customers repurchase any product is essential to maintain the profitability of a business, the continuance of purchasing through the Internet is vital to business. In this case, customer satisfaction and adjusted expectations are major factors to be considered contributing a positive result in online repurchase intention.

Moreover, there are several researchers who have focused on the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention (Qureshi, 2009), however today's studies have shown that higher customer satisfaction alone does not necessarily result in the higher repurchase (Pavlou, 2003). Adjusted expectations are a mediating variable of the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention. For instance, an analysis of adjusted expectations has recurrently been used about the new paradigm of post-consumption (Ha, Muthaly, & Akamayi, 2010).

In post-consumption the adjusted expectations of online shoppers will guide purchase behavior in the next period (Yi & La, 2004). Adjusted expectations not only are the consequence of customer satisfaction, but also serve as an anchor in evaluating future customer satisfaction in repurchasing (Ha *et al.*, 2010). As post hoc expectations after the consumption experiences, adjusted expectations will lead the customer to heighten sensitivity to product (Liao *et al.*, 2010).

Perhaps the strongest factor is the rise of "athleisure", or the trend of wearing gym clothes as everyday attire. It was one of the most Googled style terms in 2014 and sales of athleisure items. For example, yoga leggings that are acceptable to wear outside of the gym. Moreover, there are many websites and online retailers that reflect the online platform that gives customer access to a wide range of local and international sportswear brands, from apparel to accessories, will be a good analysis example for this research.

### **Understanding Online Consumer Behavior**

Understanding online consumer behavior is important in today's digital economy. Learning how satisfied the customers are with online shopping is crucial to retaining customers. Research indicates that the cost needed to attract new customers is about five-times that of retaining customers (Lin, Fang & Tu, 2012). The success of online shopping is thus depending on customer's purchase continuance (Siali, Shakur & Rasool, 2017). Moreover, the major

key of company success and long-term competitiveness is customer satisfaction and repeat purchase in the future (Hackl & Westlund, 2000). If the customers already have satisfactory experience with the online entrepreneur, consequently, they will be likely to continue to shop online with e-retailer (Siali, Shakur & Rasool (2017).

Therefore, it is important for the online marketer to know the factors that can influence customers to create repurchase intention in the future. Moreover, during the time after customer who ever purchase, what happens to customer's expectations and their satisfaction over the product that customer had purchased also able to influence repurchase intention.

The study on the influence of customer satisfaction on online repurchase intention is therefore relevant and timely. Furthermore, the adjusted expectations as a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention is based on the studies of Lin and Lekhawipat (2014); Ha, Janda and Muthaly (2010). Based on the above rationale, the researcher has constructed 3 objectives, which will help to identify the factors between customer satisfaction and online repurchase intention.

To identify the influence of customer satisfaction on online repurchase intention of sportswear retailer

To identify the influence of customer satisfaction on the adjusted expectations

To identify the adjusted expectations on online repurchase intention of sportswear retailer

This research aimed to identify the influence of customer satisfaction on customers' online repurchase intention, and a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of sportswear retailer in UK. Furthermore, the adjusted expectations as a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention is based on the studies of Lin & Lekhawipat (2014); Ha, Janda and Muthaly (2010). A convenience sampling of customers with no limitation on gender, education, and occupation was used.

Independent variables: Customer satisfaction

Mediating variable: Adjusted expectations

Dependent variable: Online repurchase intention

### **Literature Review**

#### **Customer Satisfaction**

Basic objective of many corporations was customer satisfaction as a determinant which can lead to effect on customer retention. Recently, the most accepted and recognition of customer satisfaction that reflect

the notion of customer was “affective beings”. Term of affective being was specific mental processes included emotional, feeling (pleasure/displeasure, contented/frustrated), attitude and moods of customer (Chen *et al.*, 2012). Emotional was the psychological of the customer toward product which grow in the customer’s mind which reflected by prior experience (Jang & Namkung, 2009). The reason that corporation need customer satisfaction because customer satisfaction is a significant factor for corporate’s profit via purchasing and repurchase later (Jang & Namkung, 2009).

According to the online or e-commerce world, customer satisfaction was one of the significant determinants which can lead the increasing of customer repurchase intention and profitability, and long-term organization’s growth (Chen *et al.*, 2012). Based on previous research of García Sánchez, Passio, and Rodríguez-Trigo, (2012), the importance of customer satisfaction can lead to repeat purchase behavior which mean that if the customer increase satisfies then the repeat purchase will increase as a result in the future. Especially in the e-commerce, customer satisfaction was a significant role in the further purchase for online shopping moreover increasing the repeat purchase or repurchase intention in the future again and again (Gupta & Kim, 2010).

### Adjusted Expectations

Customer satisfaction was not an only factor to predict repurchases intention of consumer, but adjusted expectation was also an effective tool to predict repurchases intention of consumer also (Yi & La, 2004). Adjusted Expectations was defined changing of expectation which spontaneously adaptive when customers are confronted with an expected consumption experience and the previous satisfaction (Lin & Lekhawipat 2014). Moreover, adjusted expectations was influenced by customer satisfaction and along influence toward online customer repurchase intention of consumer. Based on previous research of Mattila (2003), customer satisfaction can influence repurchase intention but with the support of customer’s consumption experience or previous satisfaction. It can be concluded that the more customer satisfaction in the experience the higher expectation is adjusted which can lead to increasing repurchase intention from the higher expectations of customer (Szymanski and Hise, 2000).

### Online Repurchase Intention

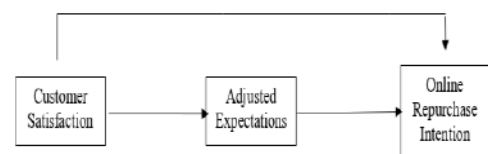
Hellier, Geursen, Carr, and Rickard (2003) defined the definition of online repurchase intention as “The individual’s judgment about buying again a designated service from the same company, taking into accounts his or her current situation and likely circumstances”. From the marketing point of view, cost of finding a new customer was five times higher than cost of maintain current customer (Kotler & Keller, 2006). Therefore, company prefers more to keep current customer and motivate them to increase repurchase intention. Moreover, Jones and Sasser (1995) also supported that repurchase intention would happen, once customer satisfy their purchasing. Kotler (1999) also pointed that customer satisfaction was a factor that lead to repurchase intention not only for service but also product also the same. The more satisfy the higher expectation requires, and then customer will repurchase and recommend to others (Kotler, 1999).

Therefore, it can be concluded that the reason that company would like to keep relationship with old customer because it’s cheaper cost than finding a new customer. In this research, the researcher would like to study the influence of customer satisfaction and adjusted expectations over the online repurchase intention.

### Conceptual Framework

This conceptual framework is developed based on the relevant previous studies. The link between customer satisfaction and online repurchase intention is based on the studies of Hellier, Geursen, Carr, and Rickard (2003), Ha and Janda (2008), Ha, Janda, and Muthaly (2010), Ha, Muthaly, and Akamavi (2010), Fang, Chiu, and Wang (2011), Pappas, Pateli, Giannakos, and Chrissikopoulos, (2014), Lin and Lekhawipat (2014), Chang, Chou, and Chien (2014), Izogo, (2016), Kim and Lee (2016).

Furthermore, the adjusted expectations as a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention is based on the studies of Lin & Lekhawipat (2014); Ha, Janda and Muthaly (2010).



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

## Hypotheses Development

Ho1: Customer satisfaction does not have a significant effect on online repurchase intention for the online shopping

Ha1: Customer satisfaction has a significant effect on online repurchase intention for the online shopping

Ho2: Customer satisfaction do not have a significant effect on adjusted expectations

Ha2: Customer satisfaction have a significant effect on adjusted expectations

Ho3: Adjusted expectations do not have a significant effect on online repurchase intention for the online shopping

Ha3: Adjusted expectations have a significant effect on online repurchase intention for the online shopping

## Research Methodology

### Research Design

A quantitative method was used to collect data from customers of online sportswear retailer who had experiences in online shopping at least four times. The researcher employed surveys, which is one of the most expedient data collection tools in terms of speed, efficiency, and accuracy (Zikmund, 2003). Single linear regression analysis was used to test research hypotheses. The target populations of this study were Customers of online sportswear retailer in UK and had experiences in online shopping at least four times. The sample size was calculated according to Green (1991)'s formula for calculating minimum sample size. The formula was based on specific type of statistical analysis employed in this study, multiple linear regression. Green (1991) stipulated that minimum sample size was calculated based on number of independent variables. In this study, number of independent variables was 2 as per customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation. The formula was as followed:  $N \geq 104 + m$ , where N was minimum sample size and m was number of independent variables. For this study, the minimum sample size was:

$$N \geq 104 + m$$

$$N \geq 104 + 2$$

$$N \geq 104 + 2$$

$$N \geq 106$$

Thus, a minimum of 106 samples was required in this study to ensure the sample was representative of the population (Green, 1991). The non-probability sample which was convenience sampling method was used to select respondents to represent the

population of customers who had experiences in online shopping at least four times.

## Questionnaire Development

Questionnaires were one of the most primary techniques used to collect data for surveys (Sekaran & Bougie, 2010). The questionnaire for this research was separated into four parts: the first part was Customer satisfaction, the second was adjusted expectations, the third was online repurchase intention, and fourth part was demographic characteristics of respondents. Moreover, the questionnaire was rated based on a 5-point Likert Scale, ranging from "Strongly agree" (5) to "Strongly disagree" (1).

This research questionnaire was adopted from previous research by Lin and Lekhawipat (2014) for customer satisfaction, adjusted expectation, and online repurchases intention.

## Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted to measure the reliability of the questionnaire. A Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha of 0.6 or higher was considered "acceptable" (Zikmund, 2003). Reliability was referred to the degree of grouping questions in a questionnaire that measure the similar concept (Healy & Perry, 2000). This research measured the reliability of its questionnaire from data collected from 30 respondents.

## Data Collection and Processing

The researcher screened only the respondents who have 4 times or more over online sportswear in UK with screening question "Have you ever experiences in sportswear online shopping more than 4 times". The self-administered questionnaires were hand delivered to a sample of 110 participants, and 85 questionnaires were returned. The questionnaires were also distributed via email and LINE attached with the Google form's link to fill the survey. Altogether the total 106 sets of questionnaires were completed and valid.

The data was encoded in SPSS for analysis. Frequency analysis was used to describe respondents' demographic characteristics. Mean evaluation was used to determine the respondents' agreement level on each questionnaire item. For hypothesis testing, single linear regression analysis was used to identify the influence of customer satisfaction on customers online repurchase intention, and a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention.





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### Data Analysis

As depicted in Table 1, there were 56 of male respondents (52.8%) and 50 female respondents (47.2%). There were 4 age groups. These were the age group of 18 – 25 years old with 11 respondents (10.4%), the age group of 26 – 40 years old with 64 respondents (60.4%), the age group of 41 – 50 years old with 18 respondents (17%), and the age group of 51 – 60 years old with 13 respondents (12.3%).

**Table 1:** Respondents Profile

Categories	Frequency	%
Gender		
Male	50	52.8%
Female	56	47.2%
Age		
18-25 years old	11	10.4%
26-40 years old	64	60.4%
41-50 years old	18	17.0%
51-60 years old	13	12.3%
Income Per Month		
Less than 1,500 GBP	9	8.5%
1,500 – 2,500 GBP	57	53.8%
2,500 – 3,500 GBP	33	31.1%
Higher than 3,500 GBP	7	6.6%
Education		
Lower than bachelor's degree	5	4.7%
Bachelor's degree	49	46.2%
Master's degree	51	48.1%
Doctorate's degree	1	0.9%
<b>Total</b>	<b>106</b>	<b>100%</b>

In terms of income, the first group (9 respondents or 8.5%) was the group with the income less than 1500 GBP / month. The next group was the group with the income between 1500 – 2500 GBP / month (57 respondents or 53.8%), followed by group with the income between 2501 – 3500 GBP / month (33 respondents or 31.1%), and group with the income higher than 3500 GBP / month (7 respondents or 6.6%).

The education group was separated into 4 groups. The first group was a lower than bachelor's degree (5 respondents or 4.7%). The next group was bachelor's degree (49 respondents or 46.2%) followed by Master's degree (51 respondents or 48.1%), and the last group was with a Doctorate's degree (1 respondents or 0.9%).

### The Effect of Customer Satisfaction on Online Repurchase Intention

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict online repurchase intention based on customer satisfaction. A significant regression equation was found ( $F(1, 104) = 50.220, p < .001$ ), with an  $R^2$  of .328. Predicted online repurchase intention is equal to  $1.591 + .632$  (customer satisfaction).

The equation showed that customer satisfaction was a positive predictor of online repurchase intention, meaning that online repurchase intention increased with the raising of customer satisfaction. The t-Test result ( $p < .001$ ) corroborated the result of the F-Test, which indicated that online repurchase intention was significantly influenced by customer satisfaction. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

### The Effect of Customer satisfaction on Adjusted Expectations

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict adjusted expectations based on customer satisfaction. A significant regression equation was found ( $F(1, 104) = 38.354, p < .001$ ), with an  $R^2$  of .271. Predicted adjusted expectations is equal to  $2.585 + .429$  (customer satisfaction).

The equation showed that customer satisfaction was a positive predictor of adjusted expectations, meaning that adjusted expectations increased with the raising of customer satisfaction. The t-Test result ( $p < .001$ ) corroborated the result of the F-Test, which indicated that adjusted expectations was significantly influenced by customer satisfaction. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.

### The Effect of Adjusted expectation on Online Repurchase Intention

A simple linear regression was calculated to predict online repurchase intention based on Adjusted expectation. A significant regression equation was found ( $F(1, 104) = 58.907, p < .001$ ), with an  $R^2$  of .366. Predicted online repurchase intention is equal to  $.611 + .811$  (Adjusted expectation).

The equation showed that Adjusted expectation was a positive predictor of online repurchase intention, meaning that online repurchase intention increased with the raising of Adjusted expectation. The t-Test result ( $p < .001$ ) corroborated the result of the F-Test, which indicated that online repurchase intention was significantly influenced by Adjusted expectation. Therefore, the null hypothesis was rejected.



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## Results

### Results from Frequency Analysis

The respondent profile for this research consisted of gender, age, income per month, and level of education. From 106 sets of completed questionnaires, the results showed that most respondents were male (52.8%), and most of them were between 26 – 40 years of age (60.4%). The majorities earned income per month was between 1,500 – 2,500 GBP (53.8%). In terms of education, 48.1% of respondents graduated with Master's degree.

### Results from Mean Evaluation

This part summarizes the average mean score of each variable in this research study, which consisted of customer satisfaction, adjusted expectation, and repurchase intention.

The mean scores showed that customer satisfaction and repurchase intention were rated at the Agree level, meaning that most respondents were satisfied with online sportswear retailer, and were likely to repurchase sportswear online. While adjusted expectation was ranked in strongly agree.

Summary of the Results from Hypothesis Testing

There were three Hypotheses in this study. Results of hypothesis revealed that Customer satisfaction was a positive predictor of online repurchase intention [ $R^2 = .328$ ,  $F = 50.220$ ,  $p < .001$ ] meaning that online repurchase intention increased with the raising of customer satisfaction. Secondly, customer satisfaction was a positive predictor of adjusted expectations [ $R^2 = .271$ ,  $F = 38.354$ ,  $p < .001$ ], meaning that adjusted expectations increased with the raising of customer satisfaction. Lastly, adjusted expectation was a positive predictor of online repurchase intention [ $R^2 = .366$ ,  $F = 58.907$ ,  $p < .001$ ], meaning that online repurchase intention increased with the raising of Adjusted expectation.

## Discussion and Conclusion

The results showed that most of the respondents were male, aged between 26 – 40 years, and master's degree graduates. Their income per month was between 1,500 – 2,500 GBP. According to the respondents' profile, there is one-point worth discussing in this study, the researcher found that the result conforms to the previous research of Lin and Lekhawipat (2014) that most people who purchase sportswear online mostly were male, aged between 26-40 years. Therefore, the target customers of online sportswear retailers are male, aged between 26-40 years. Three research hypotheses of this study

used to identify the influence of customer satisfaction on customers online repurchase intention, and a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of sportswear retailer in UK; therefore, the results of hypothesis testing are discussed as follows.

### The Influence of Customer Satisfaction on Customers' Online Repurchase Intention

The research findings revealed that customer satisfaction with sportswear retailer influence online repurchase intention of customer. This research result was supported by Hellier *et al.*, (2003) confirm that customer satisfaction positively related with repurchase intention. Izogo, (2016) supported that satisfaction of customer positively related with repurchase intention. Fang *et al.*, (2011) concluded that satisfaction significantly predictors of customers repurchase intention toward online shopping. Moreover Ha, Muthaly, and Akamavi (2010) customer satisfaction positively influence repurchase intention.

### A Mediator Linking in the Relationship between Customer Satisfaction and Repurchase Intention

It was found that customer satisfaction with sportswear retailer influence adjusted expectation, and adjusted expectation influenced online repurchase intention of customer. Meaning that adjusted expectation was a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of sportswear retailer in UK. This research results were supported by the studies of Lin and Lekhawipat (2014) that adjusted expectation was significantly affected by customer satisfaction and adjusted expectations was a moderating factor repurchase intention toward online. Moreover, Pappas *et al.*, (2014) also supported that customer satisfaction influence adjusted expectation then lead to repurchase intention. Hong-Youl *et al.*, (2010) concluded that customer satisfaction led to expectations of customer which supported by Fadilah *et al.*, (2017) who also confirmed that customer satisfaction influence customer's expectations for further purchase.

According to the results of study, customer satisfaction influence on repurchase intention towards online sport wears, which could be indicative of the nature of customers who repurchase online sport wears base on satisfaction. The respondents rated customer satisfaction at the agreed level which means that they were satisfied with

sportswear online retailer. Respondents had confirmed the answer of all items in the customer satisfaction at agree level. This maybe because online sportswear retailers provide relevant information of their products or the efficiency of payment via online system. If the sportswear online retailer would like to increase its customers repurchase intention towards online sport wears, it should focus on improving the level of customer satisfaction toward online purchase.

### Adjusted expectations on Online Repurchase Intention

According to the results of study, adjusted expectation was a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of sportswear retailer in UK. The customers of online sportswear strongly agreed to adjusted expectation which means that they strongly agreed that changing of expectation which spontaneously adaptive when customers are confronted with an expected consumption experience and the previous satisfaction. This maybe because sportswear online retailer in UK support the customer not only during after sale but also before selling to offer customer what the product that customer want. Moreover, in term of “expecting sportswear online retailer will be very convenient” which can lead to efficient transaction process. Lastly was information of the product being informative to support customer to make decision which lead to pleasing shopping experience. Sportswear online retailers should improve all aspects of adjusted expectation to improve repurchase intention of their customers since adjusted experience mediated linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention toward sportswear online retailer.

The respondents rated repurchase intention in the agreed level which means that customers were likely to repurchase sportswear online retailer soon. Though respondents were likely to repurchase sportswear online retailer soon, it is recommended for the sportswear online retailers to improve the level of customer satisfaction and adjusted expectation to increase their customer repurchase intention towards online sport wears.

### Recommendations

According to Hellier, Geursen, Carr and Rickard (2003), there may have other factors that can influence online repurchase intention such as brand preference. Therefore, future research may study on

the influence of brand preference on online repurchase intention. The study also focused on online sportswear industry in UK; Hence, the results may not be translated to other countries. The future research may include samples from a greater geographic area or be expanded to a multi-country analysis.

### Significance of the Research

The outcome of this research would help the management of sportswear retailer to understand customer perception toward online repurchase intention of sportswear retailer. In additionally, this research focuses on customer satisfaction, and adjusted expectations and online repurchase intention of sportswear retailer. Therefore, this research would be beneficial to owner of sportswear retailer to understand customer, because manager of sportswear retailer would develop marketing and service. If sportswear retailer was developed to meet customer 'satisfaction, they will be able to increase the number of online repurchase intention. Secondly, customer would earn the benefit that sportswear retailer had developed their marketing and service and website to fulfill customers 'need. Finally, this research study which aimed to identify the influence of customer satisfaction on customers online repurchase intention, and a mediator linking to the relationship between customer satisfaction and repurchase intention of sportswear retailer would be benefit other researchers who are interested in customer satisfaction and adjusted expectations for online business.

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