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Lawyers’ litigation forecasts play an integral role in the justice system. In the course of litigation, lawyers constantly make strategic decisions and/or advise their clients on the basis of their perceptions and predictions of case outcomes. The study investigated the realism in predictions by a sample of attorneys (*n*=481) across the United States who specified a minimum goal to achieve in a case set for trial. They estimated their chances of meeting this goal by providing a confidence estimate. After the cases were resolved, case outcomes were compared with the predictions. Overall, lawyers were overconfident in their predictions, and calibration did not increase with years of legal experience. Female lawyers were slightly better calibrated than their male counterparts and showed evidence of less overconfidence. In an attempt to reduce overconfidence, some lawyers were asked to generate reasons why they might not achieve their stated goals. This manipulation did not improve calibration.

*Keywords:* legal decision making, case predictions, confidence judgments, metacognitive realism

Outcome Predictions in Legal Decision Making[[1]](#footnote-2)

Human cognition is not only retrospective but also prospective: People look toward an imagined future and make various assessments and judgments on the basis of possible future events (Flavell, 2004; Kahneman, 1973; Meeks, Hicks, & Marsh, 2007). As an important part of prospective reasoning, people establish goals that they attempt to accomplish (Gollwitzer & Schaal, 1998). These goals are associated with confidence judgments, which are defined as subjective assessments of the probability of attaining the desired goal (Koriat, 2002; Perfect & Schwartz, 2002). In the course of regular legal practice, judgments and meta-judgments of future goals are an important aspect of a wide range of litigation-related decisions (English & Sales, 2005). From the moment when a client first consults a lawyer until the matter is resolved, lawyers must establish goals in a case and estimate the likelihood that they can achieve these goals. The vast majority of lawyers recognize that prospective judgments are integral features of their professional expertise. For example, a survey of Dutch criminal lawyers acknowledged that 90% made predictions of this nature in some or all of their real-life cases (Malsch, 1990). The central question addressed in the present study was the degree of accuracy in lawyers’ forecasts of case outcomes. To explore this question, we contacted a broad national sample of U.S. lawyers who predicted their chances of achieving their goals in real-life cases and provided confidence ratings in their predictions. To explore this question, we contacted a broad national sample of U.S. lawyers who predicted their chances of achieving their goals in real-life cases and provided confidence ratings in their predictions.

Confidence and Calibration in Lawyers’ Predictions

We contend that lawyers’ forecasts related to the achievement of important goals play a pivotal role in practical legal decision making, but little is known about the reliability of these predictions. To what extent are they realistic? Psychological studies of human decision-making processes in a wide variety of contexts have revealed that overconfidence is a ubiquitous phenomenon. Recently psychological researchers distinguished three forms of overconfidence: overestimation, overplacement, and overprecision (Moore & Healy, 2008). Overestimation is the inflated perception of one’s ability, performance, or chance of success. Overplacement describes the relative judgment of oneself in comparison with others. Overprecision is “excessive certainty regarding the accuracy of one’s beliefs” (Moore & Healy, 2008, p. 4). Overconfidence has been observed in social judgments, self-predictions, and professional predictions, in retrospective as well as prospective judgments (Allwood & Granhag, 1999; Dunning, Griffin, Milojkovic, & Ross, 1990; Lichtenstein & Fischhoff, 1977; Paese & Feuer, 1991; Vallone, Griffin, Lin, & Ross, 1990; Von Winterfeldt & Edwards, 1986). With regard to confidence judgments about achieving future goals, this calibration deficit implies that decision makers systematically overestimate their capacity to reach stated goals.

Theory and Hypothesis

In accordance with the order: from the awareness of B2C e-commerce companies to the generation of online shopping expectations, the experience of purchasing goods and thus the perceived value towards goods online shopping, and then the determination whether you can get a satisfying service and finally whether to retain customers, the study will try to extract the customers loyalty-related variables, and then constitute a theoretical assumption.

Online Shop Image

Online shop image refers to the overall impression of e-commerce businesses formed through a variety of signs such as the shop features, marketing strategies, operating style, etc. A good shop image that offers users cost-effective products and services to guarantee them satisfaction and gain customer loyalty attracts users to conduct online shopping more easily. Accordingly, the assumptions can be made as the following.

HA1: Online shop image has a positive impact on online purchasing expectation.

HA2: Online shop image has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

HA3: Online shop image has a positive impact on customer loyalty.

Online Shopping Expectation

Online purchasing expectation is its level of expectation to the product before customers use an online store to purchase it. It is the important psychological standards before the online purchasing, and has a significant impact on online purchasing experience. Therefore, the following assumptions are put forward: Online shopping expectation has a positive impact on purchasing experience.

**Purchasing experience.** Online shopping experience is concerned with the actual psychological feelings after purchasing goods in stores. Shopping experience is bound to generate the comparison of the online purchase value before and after the purchasing and the ideal shopping experience can make customers feel satisfied easily. So, the assumptions are listed as following: Purchasing experience has a positive impact on customer satisfaction.

**Customer satisfaction.** Customer satisfaction is some kind of well-pleasing experience psychologically after online purchase. It is often measured by a certain degree to which the customers’ actual experience about the online stores’ goods and services compares with the original expectations. Although customer satisfaction is the purpose of B2C e-commerce companies, they more depend on customer loyalty in order to survive. So, assuming that: Customer satisfaction has a positive impact on customer loyalty.

**Customer loyalty.** Customer loyalty refers to some kind of dependence and recognition for the e-business products or services, and further a high degree of confidence in the thoughts and feelings shown by adhering to a long-term purchase and use of the products or services in the online stores.

This article will demonstrate the assumption of customer loyalty constructed by the five latent variables via SPSS17.0 and AMOS17.0 and then look forward to acquiring some important management inspiration for improving customer loyalty.

Research Design

Research Framework

On the basis of the famous American Customer Satisfaction Index (ASCI), this study will establish the theoretical framework by the logical deduction and group discussions as shown in Figure 1. In this theoretical framework, the model consists of five factors (latent variables): online shop image, online shopping expectations, purchasing experience, customer satisfaction and customer loyalty, in which the first three elements are endogenous latent variables, the latter two are the exogenous latent variables. The former influence and determine the latter. This paper attempts to analyze the relationship between variables through the structural equation modeling (SEM).

Online shop image

Online shopping expectations

Purchasing experience

Customer satisfaction

Customer loyalty

HA1

HB1

HC1

HA2

HA3

HD1

*Figure 1.* Structural path diagram of theory and hypothesis.

Definition and Measurement of Variables

To insure the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, this research consulted the mature scales in foreign references in the process of operational definition and measurement of the variables like customer satisfaction and customer loyalty. The other latent variables as online shop image, online shopping expectations and shopping experience also adopt operational definitions, but due to the lack of the scale suits to the theory framework of the research, on the basis of empirical research, we developed the measurement variables of the relative scale.

The preliminary questionnaire was examined carefully and critically by the specialists of the field, and revisions are made according to the feedbacks. Two CEOs of B2C businesses were interviewed, the expression of some questions were modified in line with their suggestions, and some questions that are too hard to understanding were deleted as well. Through the process of specialists examine, case interview, pre-test and pilot study the final questionnaire includes five elements and seventeen dimensions as shown in Figure 2. According to [5] the questionnaire adopts 10-point Likert scales (1=extremely bad, 10=very good).

Online shop image

Online shopping expectations

Purchasing experience

Customer satisfaction

Customer loyalty

T8

T9

T100

T11

T12

T13

T14

T17

T15

T16

T7

T6

T5

T4

T3

T1

T2

*Figure 2.* Evaluation path diagram of customer loyalty. For figures, make sure to include the figure number and a title with a legend and caption. These elements appear **below** the visual display.

Research Method

Research Subject

The subjects for the present study are students (including full-time undergraduates, full-time master students and full-time doctor students) that live in a university in Beijing, and they have received merchandise on-campus from Dangdang and Weilan online bookstores and Amazon and also have on-line shopping experience. The subjects are randomly chosen, and in order to avoid repetition the online shops that are often visited by the subjects were controlled. The present research distributed 300 questionnaires and 230 valid samples are collected with the rate of reclamation of 76.67%, which accord with the requirements of SEM.

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Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

This study adopts Structural equation modeling, an approach for simulation of the complex relationship in socio-economic systems with analysis software AMOS17.0. It is a multivariate statistical analysis technique for establishing, estimating and testing the causality model. It is a very generic, linear statistical modeling technique which tests hypotheses in accordance with theories. The modeling is set up according to the hypotheses with ellipse for latent variable and rectangle for observable variable which is shown in Figure 2. The modeling is set up according to the hypotheses with ellipse for latent variable and rectangle for observable variable which is shown in Figure 2.

Table 1

*Regression Weights of Perceived Value*

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Path | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P |
| Online shopping expectations←Online shop image | 0.327 | 0.058 | 5.676 | \*\*\* |
| Purchasing experience←Online shopping expectations | 0.585 | 0.099 | 5.919 | \*\*\* |
| Customer satisfaction←Online shop image | 0.582 | 0.043 | 13.654 | \*\*\* |
| Customer satisfaction←Purchasing experience | 0.599 | 0.052 | 11.454 | \*\*\* |
| Customer loyalty ←Customer satisfaction | 0.560 | 0.072 | 7.801 | \*\*\* |
| Customer loyalty←Online shop image | 0.306 | 0.069 | 4.446 | \*\*\* |

Correction Model

After the operation of the model, the chi-square test value of structural equation is 448.4 and df is 142. The chi-square test value is big enough for us to accept the equation.

In addition, due to the covariance of online shop image and purchasing experience is 0.544, and increasing the path from online shop image to purchasing experience HA4 can reduce the chi-square value by 75.951, this study revised the model as shown in Figure 3.

Online shop image

Online shopping expectations

Purchasing experience

Customer satisfaction

Customer loyalty

T8

T9

T100

T11

T12

T13

T14

T17

T15

T16

T7

T6

T5

T4

T3

T1

T2

HA4

*Figure 3.* Simulation results of structural equation.

The overall data in the amended model will be tested with AMOS again by using maximum likelihood estimation, and evaluated from the absolute goodness of fit indicators, simple goodness of fit index and incremental goodness of fit index. The absolute goodness of fit index: chi-square value (degrees of freedom) is 230.4 (108), GFI = 0.889, RMR = 0.028, RMSEA = 0.070; Value-added goodness of fit index: AGFI = 0.843, NFI = 0.927, IFI = 0.960, CFI = 0.959; Streamline the goodness of fit index: AIC = 320.402, CAIC = 520.116, Goodness of fit index has basically reached the accessible range, indicating the high availability of this structural equation model, that is, its results can be used to validate the research hypothesis. It can be seen through the modified model results in Table Ⅱ corresponding to the assumption that the path HA1, HB1, HA4, HA2, HC1, HD1, and HA3 of p are lower than 0.05, and therefore supporting all hypotheses.

The Effects of Modeling Variables

The impact of variables includes three aspects: direct effect, indirect effect and total effect. The direct effect refers to the direct impact from cause variables to the result variables; the path coefficient from cause variables to result variables is used to measure the direct effect, so the direct effect is the path coefficients for the above hypotheses. According to the result of Table Ⅲ, the standardized path coefficient from online shop image to online purchasing experience is 0.763, and it means the direct effect from online shop image to purchasing experience is 0.763. This shows that when other conditions remain unchanged, with online shop image enhancing for every unit, purchasing experience will increase 0.763 units directly. Indirect effect refers to the indirect impact on result variables which is caused by cause variables’ affecting one or more intermediate variables. When only one intermediate variable exists, the indirect effect is equal to the product of two path coefficients. For example, the results of Table Ⅲ shows that the desired standardized path coefficient from shop image to online shopping expectation is 0.374, the standardized path coefficient from the expectation of online shopping to purchasing experience is 0.160, then the indirect effect from the image of supermarket to quality perception is 0.374 × 0.160 = 0.060. The total effect is equal to the summation of direct effects and indirect effects, and is the overall impact from the cause variable to the result variable. According to the Table Ⅲ, the total effect from online shop image to purchasing experience is expressed as 0.763 +0.060 = 0.823.

Table 2

*Solutions of Structural Equation*

| Path | Estimate | P | Hypothesis | Solution |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Online shopping expectation←Online shop image | 0.374 | \*\*\* | HA1 | Support |
| Purchasing experience←Online shopping expectation | 0.160 | 0.004 | HB1 | Support |
| Purchasing experience←Online shop image | 0.763 | \*\*\* | HA4 | Support |
| Customer satisfaction ←Online shop image | 0.426 | \*\*\* | HA2 | Support |
| Customer satisfaction←Purchasing experience | 0.553 | \*\*\* | HC1 | Support |
| Customer loyalty ←Customer satisfaction | 0.514 | \*\*\* | HD1 | Support |
| Customer loyalty←Online shop image | 0.400 | \*\*\* | HA3 | Support |

*Note.* \*\*\* means P<0.001.

This study mainly focuses on the relationship that influences the loyalty of customers in net shop, where the satisfaction of customers exerts a positive direct impact on the loyalty of customers, and the shop image exerts both positive direct impact and positive indirect impact. The total effects of loyalty from those four latent variables which affect the loyalty of customers, namely, satisfaction of customers, expectation of online shopping, shopping experience and shop image rank in descending chronological order as following: online shop image>customer satisfaction > purchasing experience >online shopping expectation.

It can be known that customer loyalty of B2C companies mainly depends on online shop image which is formed in a long period. Especially, the inexperienced online customer trusts a net shop with good reputation more. It is the purpose of B2C companies to make customers satisfied, only through providing customers with satisfactory products and services, can the customers be retained despite of many online retailers, therefore, the effective way to retain customers is to make online shopping customers have satisfactory shopping experience.

Table 3

*The Effects of the Modified Model (Standardization)*

| Effects | Online shop image | Online shoppingexpectation | Purchasing experience | Customer satisfaction |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Online shoppingexpectation | Direct | 0.374 |  |  |  |
| Indirect |  |  |  |  |
| Total | 0.374 |  |  |  |
| Purchasing experience | Direct | 0.763 | 0.160 |  |  |
| Indirect | 0.060 |  |  |  |
| Total | 0.823 | 0.160 |  |  |
| Customer satisfaction | Direct | 0.426 |  | 0.553 |  |
| Indirect | 0.455 | 0.088 |  |  |
| Total | 0.881 | 0.088 | 0.553 |  |
| Customer loyalty | Direct | 0.400 |  |  | 0.514 |
| Indirect | 0.453 | 0.045 | 0.285 |  |
| Total | 0.853 | 0.045 | 0.285 | 0.514 |

Place direct quotations longer than 40 words in a free-standing block of typewritten lines, and omit quotation marks. Start the quotation on a new line, indented five spaces from the left margin. Type the entire quotation on the new margin, and indent the first line of any subsequent paragraph within the quotation five spaces from the new margin. The parenthetical citation should come after the closing punctuation mark. E.g.，Jones’s (1998) study found the following:

Students often had difficulty using APA style, especially when it was their first time citing sources. This difficulty could be attributed to the fact that many students failed to purchase a style manual or to ask their teacher for help. (p. 199)

Conclusion

Based on e-commerce and Internet marketing theories, using the survey data of B2C e-commerce customer loyalty relationship consisting of 17 observable variables and applying the structural equation modeling method, a practical test is done to the ways of customer loyalty including 5 latent variables. Conclusions are drawn as follows:

(1) The image of B2C company is the most important factor for the online shop to achieve consumer loyalty. In order to obtain a good brand image, various market strategies are needed to shape the brand (brand building and management) in the long process of marketing. The image of B2C e-commerce company is delivered to customers and potential customers by means of different promotion techniques which are used to communicate to customers the brand feature repeatedly. Thus, a high-profile image could help contact and stimulate customers to purchase repeatedly from a psychological angle.

(2) Expectation of online shopping plays a small role for B2C e-commerce to achieve customer loyalty. However, as an intermediate variable, appropriate incentives and encouragement can help produce expectation of online shopping and establish loyalty to the E-shop after getting good service through online shopping.

(3) Only first-hand online purchasing experience can help customers identify whether the B2C e-commerce service is worth purchasing again.

(4) Customer satisfaction is the direct dynamic power for B2C companies to achieve customer loyalty. Repeated purchasing is because they can have a satisfactory shopping experience and enjoy good products and services. Also, they believe they can get at least the same treatment in this online shop. Therefore, B2C e-commerce companies need to pay attention to their service quality while strengthening their brand image.

(5) The image of B2C e-commerce company is delivered to customers and potential customers by means of different promotion techniques which are used to communicate to customers the brand feature repeatedly. Thus, a high-profile image could help contact and stimulate customers to purchase repeatedly from a psychological angle.

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